DEIHL, Ernest Roderick, 1930–
GEORGE SCHAEFER AND THE HALLMARK
HALL OF FAME: A STUDY OF THE PRO-
DUCER–DIRECTOR OF A LIVE TELEVISION
DRAMA SERIES.

The Ohio State University, Ph.D., 1964
Speech–Theater

University Microfilms, Inc., Ann Arbor, Michigan
GEORGE SCHAEFER AND THE HALLMARK HALL OF FAME: A STUDY OF THE PRODUCER-DIRECTOR OF A LIVE TELEVISION DRAMA SERIES

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate School of the Ohio State University

By

Ernest Roderick Deihl, B.S., M.A.

* * * * *

The Ohio State University 1964

Approved by

[Signature]

Advisers
Department of Speech
PLEASE NOTE:
Figure pages are not original copy.
They tend to "curl". Filmed in the
best possible way.

University Microfilms, Inc.
The writer wishes to thank Professors Roy Bowen and James Lynch, whose knowledge of theatrical and television arts is highly respected. Their confidence in this work was especially valued.

A special thanks must go to George Schaefer; through his co-operation this academic research became an exciting experience. Appreciation is also expressed to the Compass staff -- particularly Sybil Trubin, Robert Hartung, Adrienne Luraschi, and Joyce Meckler -- for interviews, copy reading, and over-all assistance; and to Bill Alexander of Carl Byoir and Associates who provided numerous materials and friendly encouragement.

Finally, to my wife, Sally, for editorial assistance and endless patience.
VITA

March 9, 1930

Born - Hamilton, Ohio

1952 .................... B.A., Bluffton College, Bluffton, Ohio

1952-1954 .............. United States Navy

1954-1956 .............. Teacher, Crawford County (Ohio) Schools

1957 .................... M.A., The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio

1957-1959 .............. Radio, Television Announcer, WKBN Broadcasting Corp., Youngstown, Ohio

1959-1964 .............. Instructor, Ohio Wesleyan University, Delaware, Ohio

FIELDS OF STUDY

Major Field: Speech

Studies in Broadcasting. Professors Richard M. Mall and Harrison B. Summers

Studies in Theatre. Professors Roy Bowen and John McDowell

Studies in Dramatic Literature. Professors Harold Walley and Robert Shedd
CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BACKGROUND OF THE HALLMARK HALL OF FAME</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hallmark Company</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beginnings in Television</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Hamlet&quot; and George Schaefer</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The 1953-54 Season</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The 1954-55 Season - Year of &quot;Macbeth&quot;</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The &quot;Specials&quot; Climate</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specials and the Hall of Fame</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Producer-Directors</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NBC Television Directors</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBS Television Directors</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABC Television Directors</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Producer-Director Schaefer and the Hallmark Specials, 1955-59</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The 1955-56 Season</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The 1956-57 Season</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The 1957-58 Season</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The 1958-59 Season</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influence of Schaefer as Producer-Director</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Nature of Television as a Theatrical Medium</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter</td>
<td>THE INDEPENDENT PRODUCER-DIRECTOR: GEORGE SCHAEFER AND COMPASS PRODUCTIONS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>Early Independent Producers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Theatre Guild</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>American National Theatre and Academy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Talent Associates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Showcase Productions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>J. Walter Thompson Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hall of Fame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Compass Productions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Compass Productions: Script selection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Compass Productions: Promotion, Publicity Interrelationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Carl Byoir and Associates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rogers and Cowan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Foote, Cone, and Belding and the &quot;Good-Will&quot; Image</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Compass Productions and the Hallmark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hall of Fame - 1959-1964</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The 1959-1960 Season</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The 1960-1961 Season</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The 1961-1962 Season</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Network Control and the Independent Company, 1961-62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The 1962-1963 Season</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The 1963-1964 Season</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Hall of Fame, Schaefer and the Television Critics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Summary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>A PRODUCTION ANALYSIS OF &quot;THE PATRIOTS&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Criteria for Selection, Adaptation, and Production - &quot;The Patriots&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kingsley's Play and the Broadway Reviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Hallmark Adaptation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scenic Break-down of the Hallmark script</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pre-production Planning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plate</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Interior of Front Hall, Act III, &quot;The Patriots&quot;</td>
<td>341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Dining Room Setting, Act III, &quot;The Patriots&quot;</td>
<td>342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Drawing Room Setting, Act III, &quot;The Patriots&quot;</td>
<td>343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Street Scene, Act II, &quot;The Patriots&quot;</td>
<td>344</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table

| 1. Hallmark Audience Ratings, Production Costs for Programs, 1959-1963 | 15 |
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Historians will observe that a major influence on the art form of the live anthology television play in the 1950's was the work of creative producer-directors. These artists, encouraged by the networks' desire to initiate and sustain dramatic series, applied traditional theatrical standards to television's unique conditions.

The Hallmark Hall of Fame in 1964 is the last vestige of the "live" drama of that era, drama then characterized by both weekly and "special" anthology works. The Hallmark series is an anomaly in television programming chiefly dominated by filmed television series.¹ The Hall of Fame has been a successful program concept, a series which has given stature to the television industry far beyond the scope of the individual programs.

As producer-director of the Hallmark series, George Schaefer is credited for much of its success. Theatre-oriented

¹The film-for-television series is characterized by sustaining characters, themes and situations which do not change markedly from week to week. As products of the Hollywood film-makers, these dramas have been criticized for their unrealistic treatment of theme, glibness, and quick-production methods. An anthology series is a regularly-presented
like many of his colleagues, he has served in this dual capacity since Hallmark's first "specials" season in 1955-56.

**Purpose of the Study**

The study is concerned specifically with the relationship of George Schaefer to the Hall of Fame, assessing his influence on that series. In his present capacity as independent producer-director his contribution is considered significant: his production company, Compass Productions, maintains creative control over the production of the series. The thesis does not, however, concentrate on one man and a television series; for Schaefer and Hallmark only exemplify the larger emerging influence of the creative television-producer-director in the 1950's. It is in this historical setting that Schaefer's past and present status can be fully assessed.

**Type of Research**

The research could be best described as descriptive-historical. Through the case study method the thesis will
explore the operation of Schaefer's independent company and present a descriptive analysis of a production in rehearsal. The research will also show the interactions of many elements: the relationships among producer, advertising agency, network, and public relations firms.

The study is historical in revealing the influence of the producer-director on live television drama -- drama emerging in 1948 and disappearing by 1958. As a representative example of this genre Hallmark must be viewed within this larger sphere of dramatic programming.

Jeffrey Auer states the intention of this type of research when he remarks that "beyond our interest in determining present status by means of case studies, we are also concerned with patterns of growth and development among individuals and groups ...".

2 For Hall of Fame productions the terms "live" and "tape" (or a combination) could be used interchangeably. Mr. Schaefer considers either type the basis for a theatrical performance. Either the live or taped show is rehearsed sequentially (in three acts) and is, therefore, "directed" as a play. Although he utilizes tape almost exclusively today (and may even tape scenes out-of-sequence on occasion) Schaefer prefers not to edit and splice for in this process there is always some loss of continuity.

Scope of the Research

The study will be primarily concerned with the first ten years of the Hall of Fame "specials" programs under the direction of Schaefer, to the current season's production of "The Patriots" broadcast in November, 1963. This ten-year period, (1953-1963) marks the extent of time in which Hallmark presented the "special" dramatic work over NBC. Prior to 1955, Hallmark had sponsored a thirty minute, then sixty minute dramatic series on the same network. The shows, billed as "classics, great works of modern authors and occasional outstanding original stories dramatized by celebrated performers of television, Broadway, and Hollywood," were produced by Albert McCallery and hosted by Sarah Churchill.4

Importance of the Study

This research grows out of the need to recognize the influence of the producer/director and the independent production company on a television drama series. Previous research into television drama has left uncovered this vital area, but instead has centered in four related areas:

1. Theses exploring the historical development of television drama. (Two were written in 1960.)

---

4NBC News Release, January 2, 1952. It is interesting to note that this series continued even after the special Shakespearean programs of "Hamlet," "Macbeth," and "Richard II" were inaugurated in 1953 and 1954. The "specials", as format, did not begin until the 1955-56 season.
2. Concepts of dramaturgical techniques which have developed in the television medium (in 'live' original as well as 'live' adaptation plays.) Two written in 1959.

3. Descriptive analyses of program series - either for dramatic or other types of programming. (This type seen in the following series: See It Now, Voice of Firestone, Armstrong Circle Theatre, US Steel - to be completed.)

4. Studies of television critics with respect to standards imposed for the television drama.

This research would also extend, and make contemporary, the M.A. thesis completed on the purposes of the Hallmark series, written in 1961. This study traced the man behind the series (Joyce Hall), three individual programs, and the Hallmark commercials.  

The stature of the Hallmark Hall of Fame is unquestioned; it has, for over a decade, reflected a high quality "special" dramatic series on television, receiving forty-three major television awards for acting, directing, and writing. Some of these awards and nominations for the following shows stress the fame of the series:


1956. "The Corn is Green." Sylvania Award for Outstanding performance by supporting actress: Joan Lorring.

---


Two Sylvania Awards, (1) Outstanding Dramatic Series, and (2) George Schaefer for Outstanding Producer/Director.

George Foster Peabody Award: Hallmark Hall of Fame for outstanding television entertainment.

George Schaefer received Radio-Television Daily Award as Director of the Year.

1958-59. "Little Moon of Alban" received the Sylvania Award; Four Emmy Awards (one to Schaefer for Best Direction of a Single Dramatic Program) and The Christopher Award.

"Johnny Belinda." Radio-Television Daily Award as Best Dramatic Show of Year.

1960-61. "Macbeth." Five Emmy Awards (one to Schaefer for Outstanding Directorial Achievement in Drama); TV Guide Award for Best Single Dramatic Program; Radio Television Daily Award for Dramatic Show of Year.

George Schaefer received Director's Guild of America award for Best Television Direction and Radio-Television Daily Award as Director of the Year.

1961-62. "Victoria Regina." Saturday Review Special Commendation for Notable Production, and six Emmy nominations, three of which became Emmy Awards: Show of Year; Julie Harris, Best Actress in Leading Role; Pamela Brown, Best Actress in Supporting Role.

1962-63. "Invincible Mr. Disraeli." Three nominations; Trevor Howard won Emmy Award as Best Leading Actor.

"Teahouse of the August Moon." Paul Ford nominated for Best Actor in Leading Role.

In 1963, Schaefer received the Radio-Television Daily All-American Award as Director of the Year and Producer of the Year, the first time both awards have been bestowed on the same person. He was also honored by his alma mater, LaFayette
College, with an honorary Doctor of Literature degree that year.  

Joyce Hall, president of Hallmark Cards, was himself the recipient of a television Emmy; this "sponsor Emmy," the first of its kind, was presented to Hall in 1961. The citation was for his "personal interest in uplifting the standards of television through sponsorship over a ten-year period of the Hall of Fame, which has brought many enriching hours of entertainment to the viewing public; and for furthering the interests of young playwrights by establishing the Hallmark Teleplay-writing competition."

The professional critics have, generally, heaped praise on the series and on individual productions; this fact, has, undoubtedly, contributed to the stature of the series through the years. In fact, the Hallmark company has long felt that the promotional material supplies by critics, most of it unsolicited, has continued to place the series so high in the public image. Variety recalled in a recent article that

Hallmark has an identification with quality that is unmatched and so strong that viewers and even newspaper writers, when recalling the most memorable shows on TV, often mistakenly ascribe some of the finer Playhouse 90 or Show of the Week offerings to the Hall of Fame."

6Biographical Data on George Schaefer, Carl Bvoir and Associates and Rogers & Cowan, Public Relations Firms, New York.

These dramatic specials have earned such a respect from the press that each of them captures a large amount of print space before and after the telecasts so that the viewership is supplemented by a readership, which adds immeasurably to the circulation factor.\(^8\)

Jack Gould, respected New York Times critic, has often commented on the work of the director in appraising the Hallmark productions. Brief mention of several reviews can emphasize the concern for "direction" as artistic function in the television drama.

1956. "Cradle Song": Schaefer's direction was altogether superb. His groupings of the sisters and novices were achieved effortlessly and highlighted by little details that made the women seem individuals as well as nuns. Composition of many scenes was extraordinarily striking.\(^9\)

1957. "Green Pastures." Producer-Director Schaefer mounted the play with masterful understanding of the medium. Many individual scenes breathtaking in simplicity.\(^10\)

1958. "Dial M For Murder." Schaefer's direction with his usual fluidity. The sense of dimension he achieves in live television is seldom matched elsewhere.\(^11\)

1960. "Macbeth." "... measure of Mr. Schaefer's skill is that despite temptation to emphasize spectacle and pageantry, he did not forget the dominant drama inherent in personal conflict of the individuals ..."\(^12\)

\(^8\)Ibid.
\(^10\)Ibid., October 18, 1957.
\(^11\)Ibid., April 26, 1958.
\(^12\)Ibid., November 21, 1960 (Mr. Gould was not as complimentary of the first Macbeth broadcast. Cf. post, page 66.)
In other productions Schaefer's direction has come under attack by this same critic:


1963. "Pygmalion." "Direction was fiercely methodical, bereft of gay and impish touches . . ." 

As noted above, the thesis will consider the work of Schaefer as producer, exploring how this function interacts with other functions in the present-day system of network television. As executive producer of an independent production company, his relationship to advertising agency, public relations firm, sponsor, and network is extremely important to the Hall of Fame. The importance of investigation into this "independent" system is obvious: What is the extent of control (and by whom) under this system? What is the division of responsibility at the network level, and at advertising agency level? What is the effect in quality of dramatic programming in this system?

Compass Productions, as producer of the Hall of Fame, reflects the growing trend through the years to the "outside package" system which dominates broadcasting today. The

---

13 Ibid., December 8, 1962.
14 Ibid., February 8, 1963.
networks, once lords of creation, have largely relinquished this producing function to the independent companies, many of them film companies on the West coast. The networks, for the most part, have merely been distributors (or means of communication) for programs "packaged" and sold to the networks.

The production of Hallmark shows would differ from that of most "outside" companies, however, in two important ways: (1) although Schaefer and Compass have creative control, the shows are produced under direct supervision of the advertising agency, Foote, Cone & Belding,\textsuperscript{15} and (2) employees of the network (NBC) are used in technical and production capacities.

In addition to the use of a "case study" method in observing a production company, a case study is made of a particular Hallmark production in rehearsal. The writer was given the opportunity during the summer of 1963 to observe rehearsals and video taping of Sidney Kingsley's "The Patriots." This provided valuable source material and gave

\textsuperscript{15}Mr. Homer Heck, Vice-President for Broadcasting, Foote, Cone, and Belding commented: "There really isn't any comparable situation. DuPont attempted the same control with Show of the Week with different producers, but they couldn't do it." Personal statement, December 30, 1963.
a first-hand observation of a director at work. There are several reasons why this particular play could serve as a typical Hallmark production: (1) it is a play of biographical history. This type (both in original writing and adaptation) has characterized many of the recent Hallmark shows: "Invincible Mr. Disraeli," "Victoria Regina," "Abe Lincoln in Illinois." Mr. Homer Heck, of Foote, Cone, & Belding agency, said that "we will see a spate of historical, biographical plays in the next few seasons. Dramas on Florence Nightingale and the last days of Napoleon are scheduled for the next two seasons."16 (2) it is a play of adaptation. Of the forty-six plays presented as "specials" on a regular basis since 1955, forty have been primarily adaptations of theatre works. As Mr. Heck further commented:

Adaptation will remain the staple of Hall of Fame for some time. You can envision your production before you buy. This is the simple reason for relying on them. There is no longer a market for anthology (original) drama today . . . to compound the problem, you run out of sources for adaptation works: the rights (of many stage productions) are hard to buy. You can adapt after 7 years for live production, but we want them for tape for re-run purposes.17


17 Ibid. Plays mentioned (in footnote 16) would further emphasize the concern of Hall for plays which reflect an affirmation of the human spirit. Early 30 min. and 60 min. teleplays of Hallmark usually focused on little-known aspects of events in history: "The Founder of Rotary International," "Man Who Spied for Washington" were two such themes.
George Schaefer's comment on the necessity for relying on adaptation works is also worth noting:

As creative people we would rather do original plays. The question is: Can you ask the sponsors who are footing fantastic bills to gamble with you at the frequency with which television cries out for these things? In the theatre you search for four or five years and finally find a play. You say, "This is it," and you go out and raise $125,000 to put it on; if you're lucky you will be a success, or at least get part of your money back.

In television, you go to a sponsor and say: "Look, next November this goes on the air. There can be no postponement; you can't wait another year while its rewritten. At that moment, ready or not, it goes!" Its then that you've got to have the courage of your conviction that the piece of original writing you are buying is going to impress people the way the best of them did. You aren't even talking about $125,000 any longer, but about $250,000.18

As noted above, the position of Hallmark today is unique. It will stand alone in the 1964-65 season as an anthology drama series. There is the need, then, to show the patterns of "live" television drama which have emerged and declined in the past ten years. Hallmark is the last vestige of live/tape anthology drama, leaving in its wake the demise of US Steel Hour (1962-63) and DuPont Show of the Week (1963-64). Prior to this (in the 1948-1958 era), the live television drama was a staple of network programming: Philco-Goodyear Playhouse, Robert Montgomery Presents, Studio One, Playhouse 90 were

---

18George Schaefer and Lewis Freedman, "Dialogue," TV Quarterly, Summer, 1962, p. 16. Mr. Schaefer in this excerpt is referring to costs for production only, not for time costs charged by the network.
weekly anthology dramas on the networks. It was during these years that the two dominant networks, CBS and NBC, competed feverishly for strong dramatic vehicles; when creative producers such as Albert McCleery, Worthington Miner, and Fred Coe, as well as executives such as Sylvester (Pat) Weaver of NBC formulated a "theatre for television" in dramatic programming; when writers such as Paddy Chayefsky, Rod Serling, Reginald Rose, Tad Mosel, Horton Foote, Gore Vidal, wrote compelling dramas in television's sometimes-called "golden era."

There were other factors which spurred the interest in live television anthologies: high cost of film in television's early years, economic boycott of television by film industry, and a necessity to fill the programming gap with "something." The decline has been noted by Francis Sturcken in his excellent chronicle of television drama's history:

1. Commercial considerations (Low Ratings)
2. Rush of Feature Films - 1955-1957
3. Rush of Films-for-Television
4. Competition. ABC Challenged the Leaders
5. Sponsor Identification. When Long Runs ended no one picked up the tab, and no new series were started
6. Technical restrictions inherent to the nature of live television
7. "Follow-the-leader" cycles that are generic in the entertainment industries, but especially true of television.19

These are the incidents which surround the growth and sus­
tenance of the Hallmark Hall of Fame series as live drama.

The Hallmark series seems even more anomalous when
one considers the continued interest of the sponsor amid
rising costs and only average ratings of 15. The Hallmark
specials are running a time-and-production cost of almost
$500,000 per program, which, according to Variety, makes the
cost-per-thousand viewers delivered the highest in tele­
vision. 20 (Page 15 indicates a more complete break-down of
costs and rating figures for the past three seasons under
Hallmark.)

Sources and Methods

The primary sources for the study were developed
after permission was obtained to observe a Hallmark production
in rehearsal, and to have access to scripts and files per­
taining to the operation of the producing company (Compass).
A preliminary trip to New York was undertaken in early June,
1963 for purposes of gaining data. Clipping files of Hallmark
shows are kept in a scrapbook and contain reviews from nu­
merous newspapers. The National Broadcasting Company also co­
operated in providing access to press releases and information
relative to Hall of Fame.

### TABLE I

**Hallmark Audience Ratings, Production Costs for Programs, 1959-1963**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Season</th>
<th>No. of stations</th>
<th>Average Rating</th>
<th>No. of Average Audience (000)</th>
<th>Est. Cost of Program (000)</th>
<th>Cost per 000 viewers</th>
<th>Cost per 1000 Viewers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1959-60 Season</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winterget</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>7,966</td>
<td>15,922</td>
<td>425,000</td>
<td>47,109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Doll’s House</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>6,008</td>
<td>12,617</td>
<td>415,000</td>
<td>46,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christmas Fest.</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>5,396</td>
<td>10,531</td>
<td>321,000</td>
<td>39,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Tempest</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>8,362</td>
<td>17,560</td>
<td>441,000</td>
<td>49,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gracida Song</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>7,342</td>
<td>17,712</td>
<td>402,000</td>
<td>44,766</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capt. Brassbound</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>5,153</td>
<td>9,500</td>
<td>425,000</td>
<td>47,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1960-61 Season</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shangri-La</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>5,876</td>
<td>14,396</td>
<td>459,000</td>
<td>51,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macbeth</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>5,147</td>
<td>12,900</td>
<td>615,000</td>
<td>51,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golden Child</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>3,332</td>
<td>7,654</td>
<td>454,000</td>
<td>50,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Remembered</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>7,316</td>
<td>15,364</td>
<td>422,000</td>
<td>46,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Give Us Barabbas</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>6,800</td>
<td>13,600</td>
<td>413,000</td>
<td>45,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Joke &amp; Valley</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>6,700</td>
<td>15,197</td>
<td>425,000</td>
<td>47,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1961-62 Season</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macbeth (repeat)</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>4,690</td>
<td>9,300</td>
<td>403,000</td>
<td>33,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria Regina</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>8,400</td>
<td>18,995</td>
<td>488,000</td>
<td>54,273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arsncio &amp; Old Lace</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>5,635</td>
<td>11,045</td>
<td>487,000</td>
<td>54,163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Give Us Barabbas</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>6,011</td>
<td>13,600</td>
<td>295,000</td>
<td>32,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1962-63 Season</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teahouse of Aug. Mn.</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>24.9</td>
<td>13,400</td>
<td>24,600</td>
<td>512,000</td>
<td>56,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olyroco de Bergerac</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>6,925</td>
<td>12,450</td>
<td>476,000</td>
<td>52,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pygmalion</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>10,300</td>
<td>20,600</td>
<td>485,000</td>
<td>53,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Levinoble Mr. Disraeli</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>6,200</td>
<td>12,500</td>
<td>497,000</td>
<td>55,200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Average audience, according to Nielsen, constitutes number of television homes tuned to program during the average minute. Total audience rating figure (which is always higher than average rating) is that audience viewing all or any part of a program, for six minutes or longer.

(Nielsen television Index 1/30/63 - Media Dept.)
The New York Public Library also made available various files on television drama. Clipping material and Metropolitan Edition of *TV Guide* provided unique sources not found in most libraries.\(^2\)

A second trip to New York was undertaken in late August, 1963 for purposes of observing the production-in-rehearsal of "The Patriots." During the nineteen day rehearsal and taping period, the writer was given the unique privilege of observing and recording notes pertaining to the work of Schaefer, to participate in conferences with production associates, and to interview persons involved in the show. Actor Charlton Heston and other actors in "The Patriots," NBC personnel, and Compass's staff co-operated in answering interview questions.

In order to make an objective and comprehensive analysis of the work of Schaefer (and to study the role of the independent producer more completely), a third trip to New York was made to interview independent producers of television programs. This proved quite successful and interviews were conducted with Fielder Cook and Franklin Schaffner of *The Director's Company* (producers of *Dupont Show of the Week*), Willard Levitas (associate producer of *That Was The Week That Was*) and Robert Markel (producer of *The Defenders*).

\(^2\)Personal letter from George Freedley, Curator, Theatre Collection, New York Public Library.
Mrs. Mildred Freed Alberg, former producer of the Hall of Fame, consented to answer a detailed questionnaire.

Because of the limited time available, it was not possible to extend the list of producers and directors for possible interviews. It was especially difficult to make contact with television directors. The Directors' Guild of America agreed to forward letters requesting interviews, but several were returned with "address unknown." Producer Norman Felton replied that he worked out of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer in Hollywood and would not be in New York at the time of interviews. Worthington Miner, who developed the Studio One series on CBS in 1948, could not be in New York at the requested time. Both expressed interest in the research. The only negative reply regarding the research topic was from Arthur Penn, former director of Philco Playhouse under Fred Coe. Penn did not agree with the writer that "more academic research was needed in the area of television drama."

As supplement to the personal interview, a questionnaire form was prepared and mailed to television critics writing for major metropolitan newspapers. Open-end comments

---

were sought pertaining to the Hallmark series, the work of George Schaefer, the present status of television drama, and the development of the independent production company in network broadcasting today. A list of fifteen critics was compiled from a November, 1963, *Television* article; to this list was added two critics representing weekly periodicals. Completed forms were received from eleven critics representing newspapers geographically located throughout the country.

The final list consisted of the following critics:

Richard Doan - NY Herald Tribune
Lawrence Laurent - Washington Post
Donald Kirkley - Baltimore Sun
Rex Polier - Philadelphia Bulletin
Anthony LaCamera - Boston Record-American
Frank Judge - Detroit News
Terry Turner - Chicago Daily News
Jack Anderson - Miami Herald
Del Carnes - Denver Post
Cecil Smith - Los Angeles Times
Rick Du Brow - United Press International

Television Critic Jack Gould, *New York Times*, indicated that because of the pressures of time, he could not reply to the questionnaire, and Marya Mannes, noted free-lance writer, felt "disqualified" from answering the form since she "sees

---

25 Mr. Judge noted the survey and research in his daily television column, March 10, 1964.

26 Mr. DuBrow was especially complete in his replies to questions. As a syndicated columnist (based in Los Angeles) his remarks are of particular value.

very little television these days except for news and public events."²⁸ She no longer writes for The Reporter magazine.

A trip to Chicago was undertaken in December, 1963, to interview the Director of Broadcasting for Foote, Cone & Belding, advertising agency for the Hallmark account. The writer was granted over an hour of interview time with Mr. Heck and was given copies of Nielsen Reports of Hallmark shows, as well as a tabulation of audience mail response to specific programs. A secretary in that agency records the "pros" and "cons" from audience mail before forwarding letters to the Hallmark company, Kansas City.

Special promotional materials released by the public relations firm employed by Hallmark were of special help. Mr. William Alexander employed by this firm in New York, and Carl Byoir and Associates were extremely gracious in lending time, materials, and encouragement to the study.

The thesis is divided into four main parts: (1) the beginning section traces the development of the Hallmark series as it intertwined the evolution of live television drama, and notes the early work of Schaefer as director, 1953-1955; (2) the work of Schaefer as director in his early association with the Hall of Fame (1955-1958), placing him in the larger sphere of directing achievements during these

years; (3) the work of Schaefer as independent producer (1959-Present), analyzing his production company, and the rise of the independent package producer; (4) a case study of a Hallmark production in rehearsal - the specific operation of Schaefer as producer/director.

The writer makes these assumptions as introduction to the study: (1) The Hallmark Hall of Fame is a unique television drama series; as an anthology series, it is an anachronism in dramatic programming today. Although its recognition and stature in the industry is unquestioned, Hallmark has not prompted other sponsors to follow suit in the usual "follow-the-leader" imitation of successful ventures; (2) because of the scope of Schaefer's responsibility, the success of Hallmark is, in large measure, the result of his direct influence; (3) there are recognizable standards for evaluating the work of Mr. Schaefer as producer/director of the Hall of Fame. These standards should consider both a sensitivity to art of directing, as well as mastery of organization and procedures in producing and directing the drama.
CHAPTER II

BACKGROUND OF THE HALLMARK HALL OF FAME

Like many other successful television series, The Hall of Fame had its beginnings in radio. Hallmark programs, however, had a distinctly different format in the early stage of the series, and shifted to the drama from music and interview programs after approximately seven years. In 1937, Hallmark began sponsorship on a Chicago radio station. On a program called "Radio Scrapbook," a local "personality" read verses from the back of Hallmark cards, thereby calling attention to the slogan on the back. He was, therefore, the first to urge the public to look at the back of greeting cards for the now familiar Hallmark crown of quality. The slogan would later be termed "When You Care Enough To Send The Very Best."^1

The same show went on the CBS network the following year for only a short time; then, during the war years, Hallmark, joined the patriotic bandwagon of wartime entertainment programs, sponsoring a coast-to-coast network series called "Meet Your Navy." This was broadcast from 1942 to 1944. In 1946, Charlotte Greenwood, actress,

starred in a new radio series which made use of interviews and human interest material.²

In 1946, after almost ten years on the air, Hallmark went to radio drama series. A series called the Radio Reader's Digest was later (1948) to become the Hallmark Playhouse with James Hilton as host. The series under Mr. Hilton lasted for two years. Again, the drama series was presented over the CBS network.

In 1951 Lionel Barrymore assumed the role of host for the Hallmark Playhouse. The title was now changed to the Hallmark Hall of Fame. The series under this title continued until the death of Mr. Barrymore in 1954.³

This ended the Hallmark era in radio. It had, in a seventeen-year period extended itself into numerous types: musical variety, poetry reading, drama, and interview. Although Mr. Hall considered that television would be ideal since it afforded a visual product the opportunity to be seen, he had achieved some definite advantages in the radio broadcasts: "No publisher," reported Sponsor, "had ever promoted cards on the air because of general belief that

²Kramer, op. cit., pp. 16-20.

³Ibid.
people buy cards for their design and sentiment, not their brand name. Hall set out to prove this wrong."\(^4\)

**The Hallmark Company**

Before the study considers the major development of this chapter -- the involvement of the company in live television drama -- brief comment concerning the Man and the Company should be made to give orientation to the reader.

Joyce Hall, founder and owner of Hallmark, Incorporated, runs an 80-100 million dollar a year corporation\(^5\) with net profit of four-five million, despite unusually generous employee benefits, large advertising budget and profit-sharing plan. Since it is a family corporation and unlisted in the New York Stock Exchange, the exact financial status is unknown.

Hall, at seventy-three, heads an organization of 5000 employees and the world's largest art department at his Kansas City-based company. Thirty-five writers and editors are employed to write the numerous verses appearing on Hallmark cards. About four million cards a day are produced, and it is estimated that Hallmark outsells the next three manufacturers combined.


\(^5\)Ibid.
Joyce Hall started his business career as a distributor for a picture postcard firm in 1910, then moved to Kansas City to begin his own company. His older brother joined him and together they founded Hall Brothers, Incorporated, (and later changed the name to Hallmark Cards in 1954). Hall felt, however, that the postcard business fad would end, and began distributing Christmas and Valentine Cards.

As a manufacturer in the 1920's, Hall soon gave Eastern card companies serious competition; in the 30's he expanded to gift shop distribution. (Other companies had concentrated their sales efforts in department stores.)

The company developed a staff of competent salesmen who were sent out in small, mobile units, each man thoroughly educated in the business of selling cards. Through such competency, geniality, and perseverance, the Hallmark Company was able to pull ahead of competition.

In the 1930's, experimentation led to an inventory reorder system far in advance of the time, a system which has continued to be used to note the change in public taste. In the post-World War II era, Hall sensed an elevation in taste and responded in greeting card changes: the sentiment, color, and design were upgraded to reflect these changes.

6Kramer, op. cit., p. 28.
In the 1950's, along with other card manufacturers, Hall moved in the contemporary card line.

Although Hall is known to rely on hunches in the business (which he terms the "vapor of past experience"), he has relied on quality to guide him generally in all decision-making. He states three aims in advertising campaign: "(1) to sell firm's product in a dignified, tasteful and effective way; (2) to create a greater acceptance for firm's slogan; (3) to do such an outstanding job the Hallmark will set a standard."7

The co-ordination of the company with dealers (and the relation to Hall of Fame) is a very intricate and important process. Party decorations, gift wraps and ribbons, as well as cards, are distributed directly to some 18,000 retail stores. Before each Hall of Fame broadcast, it is necessary that each retailer be apprised of exactly which cards or specialty items will be featured on the program.

Before the season begins, the dealers are told the scheduled shows for that year and the classification of cards to be promoted. The next notice is as soon as specific card lines are selected. Hallmark salesmen then call on

---

dealers, show them exactly card to be seen on show, then get dealers to order.\textsuperscript{8}

It is, of course, surprising that such low-cost items sell in sufficient quantity to gross over 80 million annually.

\textbf{Beginnings in Television}

Hallmark officially entered sponsorship of television programming in the 1951-52 season, just two years before George Schaefer became affiliated with the series. And although "quality" live drama would be its claim to fame, Hallmark, ironically, entered the media relatively late in television's history. \textit{Philco Television Playhouse}, \textit{Kraft Theatre}, and \textit{Studio One} had already appeared on the networks (the first two on NBC, and the latter on CBS).

Like the parallel situation in radio, Hallmark did not begin with the drama. In September, 1951 the company sponsored a 15-minute weekly interview show on CBS-TV, \textit{Hallmark Presents Sarah Churchill}, on which the actress-daughter of the British statesman chatted informally with prominent guests from many nations. In January of the next year, the sponsor's first dramatic series appeared with the same Miss Churchill as hostess and featuring well-known

\textsuperscript{8} Sponsor, loc. cit.
stars of stage and screen. The show, a 30-minute series, was called Hallmark Television Playhouse.\(^9\)

The Television Playhouse premiered on January 3, 1952. This series, which was to present "the classics, the great works of modern authors and occasional outstanding original stories", was produced and directed by William Corrigan.\(^10\) The program originated in NBC’s Hudson Theatre in New York. The advertising agency was, and still is, Foote, Cone and Belding.

The play, presented that Sunday, was entitled "Dr. Serocold" adapted for television by Jean Holloway from a novel by Helen Ashton. It was billed as the story of an "English country doctor who continues to bring comfort and cheer to patients after learning that he may be a cancer victim."\(^11\)

The program would serve as the archetype of those to follow in the half-hour series for the year. Whether adaptation of novel or original plays, these dramas in large measure dealt with an affirmation of the human spirit. None

\(^9\) It is interesting to note that the CBS interview series did not last one full season. The series shifted in format (to the 30-minute drama), retained hostess, Sarah Churchill, and moved to NBC.

\(^10\) Corrigan, an NBC-TV staff director, was to later produce numerous documentary-drama programs on the Armstrong Circle Theatre. NBC News Release.

of these would be a memorable production, despite the ferment in original live television anthology soon to be developed on other series.

The following programs and titles from the first season indicate the intent of the sponsor to focus on the little known aspects of famous people, events, and institutions:

May 11, 1952: "A Woman of the Ages" - story of Abigail Adams - only woman whose son and husband were presidents.
   (starring Sarah Churchill)

May 18, 1952: "Reign of Terror" - the "true story of the French Revolution"
   (starring Sarah Churchill)

   (starring Beatrice Straight)

June 1, 1952: "King's Author" - story of Ben Jonson and the struggle against stage censorship and how he triumphed over a king's vanity.
   (starring Richard Newton)

June 8, 1952: "Nefretiti, Queen of Egypt" - first ruler in world history who, believing in one God, tried to interest monotheism 1400 years before coming of Christ.
   (no star indicated)

June 15, 1952: "Mr. and Mrs. Freedom" - trial of journalist Zenger, 1734, in New York which established freedom of the press.  

There was an interest in historical material, and an effort made to present these on dates which were appropriate

to specific dates: In February 10, 1952, the drama "Woman With A Sword" was presented in the series. It was billed by NBC in this way: "Although a southerner, brilliant Ann Carroll was devoted to the Union cause, and her formidable intellect was used by Lincoln for high level planning." One week later, on Washington's birthday, the **Hallmark Playhouse** presented "The Plot to Kidnap General Washington."

In April of that same year, Hallmark presented its first hour-long program. It was one which would be repeated with the same success for twelve times in NBC's history. It was Gian Carlo Menotti's "Amahl and the Night Visitors," the brilliant American opera commissioned by NBC. Hallmark's production on April 13 was not the first presentation, but a repeat of the premier production on December 24, 1951.

Hallmark again sponsored it in December of 1952, 1953, and 1954. "Amahl" has been presented under a number of different program series during its 13-year reign.

During the 1951-52 season, **Hallmark Playhouse** had certainly not made a major impact as anthology drama series. The industry, itself, was experiencing, however, an evolution of live drama which the next three seasons would title the "golden age of drama." The writers who would write a "new drama" were yet to achieve fame, but the "live drama"
as genre in television was firmly established. (Actually, by the end of this season, there were nine full hour live dramatic shows on the networks!) Some critics expressed dissatisfaction with the "thinning out process," but they still hailed the full hour dramas as the "most satisfactory television to be offered on a regular basis."\(^{14}\)

The problems experienced by Hallmark (as well as other series in live television drama) were mostly concerned with the desperate search for story material. The constant complaints made that television was distorting accepted works of literature only emphasized the dramatic show's most important problem: television was consuming more material than was available. The saturation point of adaptations had been quickly reached.\(^{15}\) Fred Coe, producer-director of the successful Philco-Television Playhouse on NBC, pointed to the problem in this way:

> We were running out of material. Broadway did fifty or sixty plays a year, many of which were unsuitable or unavailable ... Our emphasis was almost completely on the original television play, and in the process developed a group of television playwrights.\(^{16}\)

In the summer of 1952, the Hallmark series shifted to

---

\(^{14}\)Sturcken, *op.cit.*, p. 131.

\(^{15}\)Ibid, p. 101.

a new time, 10:00-10:30 PM on Sunday nights. It ended the series with Sarah Churchill and began with a new director, Albert McCleery. The program series would now concentrate on the "lighter dramatic side with typical American themes slanted toward the entire family." Although the series was billed as an "entirely new format," it would not be the subject matter to change as much as directing style under Mr. McCleery. McCleery would bring with him an enlargement of the "cameo theatre" technique, his innovation during the summer of 1950. This style of directing utilized both realistic and symbolic facilities to create authentic atmosphere for each scene, without resorting to conventional scenery. Decor was used sparingly under the new setup by McCleery to enhance the actor's relationship to the individual scene, as in the arena style of theatrical staging.

McCleery stated that

arena theatre doesn't mean "no scenery." We carefully select elements which more than

18 Albert McCleery was born December 30, 1911 in Lawrence, Kansas. He was educated at Northwestern U. and Pasadena Playhouse. He organized an arena theatre in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, in 1933, and subsequently directed stock in Columbus, Ohio, and at Fordham U. in 1939. Following the war, he headed the theatre department at Fordham from 1946-49. He became a producer-director at NBC in 1949 and developed Cameo and Matinee Theatre, and produced and directed the Hall of Fame Theatre.
adequately set the stage without cluttering it, and generally heighten production values. Even in Elizabethan times, when physical sets were used sparingly, actor's costumes were so elaborate that the audience applauded.\(^\text{19}\)

The McCleery technique did not meet with complete approval despite its inventive procedures. Jack Gould, in reviewing his "Socrates Wife," said that

arena techniques best described as just using close-ups and saving on production costs. Several close-ups are all right but a steady diet robs characters on stage of any real individuality. On screen there is only unrelieved intensity which wears out because there is no contrasting mood for purposes of comparison.\(^\text{20}\)

One of the more noticeable features of dramatic programming from 1949 to this time was the emphasis on half-hour programming. Although this format was to later pass into the hands of the film makers ("a brief, slickly presented dramatic incident with room for a middle commercial")\(^\text{21}\), it was part of the emphasis on experimentation at this time, was fairly easy to sell, and was low-budgeted. The Big Story and Lights Out (latter produced by Fred Coe) were of this type during the 1949-50 season. In the summer of 1950 Armstrong Circle Theatre and Cameo Theatre joined this group on NBC.

\(^{19}\)NBC News release, July 1952.


\(^{21}\)Sturcken, op. cit., p. 69.
It is perhaps not surprising that the "live," half-hour drama made such an impact in programming. Chester & Garrison describe some of the hazards of such an undertaking:

... the half hour program form, so firmly established in network radio, was transferred to television intact, and the evils that followed this transfer were numerous. Certain aesthetic forms like radio drama lent themselves to the half-hour form: the radio drama, utilizing the imagination to the fullest was very successful in establishing characters, plot, and mood in a few minutes and then developing and resolving the story within 30 minutes. In live television drama, however, the half-hour form proved weak, with the writer rarely able to establish real characters or to develop plot adequately. . . 22

This may have been the reason for an interest in experimentation on a number of NBC programs at this time. The NBC Half-Hour Series along with Armstrong Circle and Big Story differed from conventional drama in attempting a mood or "a thematic style-type continuity from production to production." 23 It was in the same spirit of experimentation that NBC's Albert McCleery turned to the cameo technique for the Hallmark Summer Theatre in July 1952.

23 Sturcken, op. cit., p. 76. Sturcken continues this excellent notation: "They did not, however, fall into that class of comedy, mystery or western situation series that maintains the same hero from week to week. Lights Out under Fred Coe, was noted for its "first person" technique wherein
There were numerous original scripts during the summer by Harold Callen, Robert Mason Pollock, and Jean Holloway. Writer Rod Serling turned out some of his earliest scripts for television on the Hallmark series. Two of his scripts were presented in a three-week period in August: On August 3, his Carlson Legend depicted the story of "an idealistic young man newly elected to state senate." It starred Tod Andrews who was then appearing in the Broadway success, Mr. Roberts. On August 17, Serling's I Lift My Lamp presented the story of Anna Svadba, a Czech refugee faced with a major decision. It starred actress Maria Riva.24

Hamlet and George Schaefer

In the fall of 1952, McCleery put his cameo techniques into the new season with the show's title now changed to The Hallmark Hall of Fame. The season would start like the previous seasons under Hallmark (i.e. as a half-hour format based on original scripts or adaptation of novels, but with use of "cameo technique") but include in the season the camera became the eyes of a central character who was never seen. It was also cited for the first utilization of the "split screen" technique; for example, when viewers witnessed simultaneously both sides of a telephone conversation of a frantic wife who was trying to save her husband from the electric chair."

24 NBC News release, July 1952.
a production which would turn the Hall of Fame inexorably toward the "special." This was the Hallmark presentation of Hamlet on April 26, 1953. Hamlet would mark the debut of Schaefer as "stage director," Maurice Evans as a performer, and Mildred Freed Alberg's career as producer. The very nature of its two-hour format, the great expense involved, and the universal prestige of its star performer demanded public and professional interest across the nation.

Generally, the popular critics hailed it as a success and ascribed accolades to star Maurice Evans. Time commented that "his was a gripping, powerful performance."25 Jack Gould, in commenting on the production, stated that "the tragedy was played for all its sheer dramatic value and proved superbly arresting theatre."26 Two articles in the Quarterly of Film, Radio and Television, indicate two distinct viewpoints regarding the presentation. Marvin Rosenberg commented:

the greatest failing affecting its presentation was in attempting to do a successful job in the time allowed. It lost much of its mood, character, and even plot due to the "cutting" of important scenes. Actual playing time was 108 minutes.


In noting the background "clutter" to the complex Shakespearean production, he noted that

the great genius of the medium - the selectivity of focal points - no longer became an advantage with the confusion which often appeared. The form of speech must be unblurred by visual distraction. Unfortunately this was not always adhered to. A trick used extensively was to end scenes on a long close-up of the face of a character expressing some emotion. This grew to be very painful, especially when the actor was Shildkraut, a "high style," whose frozen agony as he awaited for the camera to leave him was as embarrassing to him as to the audience. "27

Flora Schreibner in the same Quarterly did not find such objections. She considered the production "an experiment belonging uniquely and indigenously to television itself and showing that television has an aesthetic all its own."28

It is interesting to note that although "Hamlet" was a "radical departure"29 from the regular season's offerings (especially in being a two-hour production) the series did not break stride from the week-to-week offerings. "Hamlet"


29 Chester and Garrison & Willis, op. cit., p. 58. "The specials concept meant a departure from traditional programming practices; it meant big programs, (an hour, 90 minutes, or two hours in length,) depending upon the needs of subject matter, and it meant scheduling these programs once a month or sometimes as a 'single-shot'. 
therefore was "sandwiched" between two programs bearing similar themes to those which had preceded them in the schedule: April 19, a week prior to "Hamlet", Hallmark presented an original play by the McCrackens (a husband and wife writing team) called "World on a Wire" - the story of Samuel S. B. Morse and the telegraph. Following the "Hamlet" broadcast on April 26, the Hall of Fame presented "No Man Is An Island" by Helen Hanff, a study of John Donne.30

The special production of "Hamlet" also brought together other personalities and incidents worth noting. Mildred Freed Alberg, whose husband had worked with Maurice Evans in theatrical undertakings, convinced him that sponsorship of a two-hour "Hamlet" could be found, and got Evans to agree to star in it if this block of time could be secured from the network. She was apparently largely responsible for bringing Evans, NBC, and Shakespeare to television for the first time.

Albert McCleery, the series' regular producer-director, considered his role in bringing "Hamlet" to TV greatly underplayed. He commented to this effect in the Sturcken dissertation:

Mrs. Alberg's husband had worked with Evans and she asked him if he would like to do "Hamlet" on TV. She came to NBC and asked them. All she had was

---

30 NBC News Release, April 19 and May 3, 1953.
Evans — she sold him. Jack Rayle of NBC called me in and asked if I thought Mr. Hall would do it. I flew to Kansas City and talked for one solid hour to Mr. Hall and sold him. I insisted on a two hour production and he agreed to take half the expense. Schaeffer Pen was going to sponsor the second half but backed down and NBC took a 50,000 loss on the show.31

This account seems to agree with a Variety report that NBC sought two advertisers, each to pay $75,000 for time and talent. However, when no one could be found, Hall "stepped into the breach" with a sole offer of $100,000.32

Regardless of the merits of the issue, it is significant that Evans, in playing the title role, had made his debut in television drama, that Mrs. Alberg was producer for the show, and George Schaefer was "stage director."33 For the first time in The Hall of Fame's rather short career, "outside" creative personnel were involved in the performance.

The first production of Shakespeare on television was possibly a matter of coincidence. Evans was available for the play and (despite McCleery's comments on 'persuading Hall') Hall was ready for a new and better program. In

31Sturcken, op. cit., personal interview with McCleery.
32Variety, April 8, 1953.
33Schaefer referred to this more specifically as "directing the actors" (personal interview). His background is treated more completely in Chapter III, his relationship to Evans is presented fully in that Chapter.
casual conversation with employees, he found that most were indifferent to the thirty-minute series now on the air; if they missed it one week they could see it the next. It would be misleading, however, to assume that Hall had now decided on Shakespeare and the classics and would immediately give up the thirty-minute series. Actually, the regularly-scheduled "specials" of the Hall of Fame were still two seasons away. Hallmark finished the 1952-53 season as the "Hamlet sponsor" but ending the series for the year still dramatizing biographical "little known facts."

The end of the 1952-53 season in television dramatic programming marked a number of major developments affecting the network, sponsor, and some specific influences contributing to the live television status. They can best be assessed by noting Hallmark's growth after two seasons in the larger perspective of television programming.

1. The Hallmark television series had been mediocre to this date. There was indication, though, that the "Hamlet" Production would have far-reaching effects on the series. The forces at NBC contributing to the growth of "better drama" were evidenced in such persons as Albert McCleery, and Sylvester "Pat" Weaver, president of NBC.

---

34 Kramer, op. cit., p.
McCleery, who had an exceptionally lengthy career in theatre directing in summer stock and universities, brought a theatrical technique to the television scene. Pat Weaver, as president of NBC, had an imaginative approach to programming and would become known primarily as the man who would devote his time to a systematic destruction of the strategic approach which television derived from radio. Both men, and their ideas, would, along with a sponsor who felt that people "reach up for a social custom," have a marked effect on the "early" Hallmark specials. People such as Mrs. Alberg, Schaefer, and Maurice Evans would also be intertwined in this creative complex.

2. *Live Television Drama* stood in the middle of its golden years. Although there is considerable disagreement as to the consistency of quality reflected (in this period from 1950-1955), there is little doubt that some of the outstanding writers of drama were writing for the television medium. At this time *Philco Television Playhouse* was in

---

35 *Supra*, Page 31. (The footnote outlines more completely the career of McCleery).


37 In posing the question of "quality in television drama in the period 1950-55 compared to anthology drama today, ten critics gave a resounding vote for the former. It is virtually impossible to speak accurately of a
the middle of its noted career, counting Horton Foote ("Trip to Bountiful," "Young Lady of Property"), Tad Mosel ("The Lawn Party," "Ernie Barger is Fifty") and Paddy Chayefsky ("Marty," "Bachelor Party," "The Mother"), in comparison since few anthology series are "contemporary.

Only Dick Powell Theatre, Bob Hope Chrysler Theatre, DuPont, and Richard Boone can be considered "recent" or "contemporary.

Jack Anderson (Miami Herald) and Cecil Smith (Los Angeles Times) felt that "golden years" was a misnomer, that there was not consistency in dramas of the fifties:

The old Philco, Kraft, Studio One shows would be laughed off the air. As Fred Ooe says, "Sure, we made "Marty," but do you think anybody remembers the twenty shows we did before "Marty" and the twenty that followed."

(Cecil Smith, personal ltr. Dec. 10, 1963)

"I think the same unevenness of quality prevails in today’s presentations . . . The level of writing was perhaps a little higher in the days of Philco. I can recall plays that were exceptionally memorable, but there were a great many mediocre ones too. There are fewer peaks and valleys today . . ."

(Jack Anderson, per ltr. Dec. 9, 1963)

Other critics felt that the drama of the 1950’s was more outstanding:

"Main difference was that early TV focused upon life and its problems naturally and realistically."

(Polier, Philadelphia Bulletin 3/11/64)

"With an exception now and then, the current anthologies are a few billion light years away from shows of the past . . ."

(Judge, Detroit News 3/10/64)

"On sheer memory and after speaking to some of those involved intelligently in the business at the beginning and now, the answer would tend to be that the present-day anthology drama is pretty weak in
its famous "stable of writers." Producer-Director Fred Coe has been recognized for producing a drama of meticulous literalness.

Although the work of the producer-director is noted in Chapter III, it should be noted that Coe also organized a talented group of directors under his aegis — Gordon Duff, Arthur Penn, Delbert Mann, and Vincent Donahue.

Rod Serling and Reginald Rose rose to prominence via the "problem" play. Serling, who was introduced to the drama by the J. Walter Thompson agency, was more a plot-maker and less a designer of personal character studies than the writers associated with Philco. His two biggest successes were "Patterns," a story of power struggle in big business (on Kraft Theatre) and "Requiem for a Heavyweight," set in the dramatic background of the fight game (for Playhouse 90 in 1957). Rose's works (primarily for Studio One, CBS) often protested unthinking conformity and the individual's

comparison . . . Simply ask yourself: Who are the outstanding writers in the country today, and how many write for television? The answer is a monstrous indictment of the entertainment end of the television business. The good writers write books, plays, movies — but TV? Forget it. And if, by chance you mention someone like Rod Serling, all I can say is that he is the exception that proves the rule—and even he is doing projects elsewhere, tho the "Twilight Zone" still is admirable because of his working touch.

(Rick DuBrow, UPI Television Editor, Per. ltr. 4/17/64)
right to be "different" ("12 Angry Men", "Thunder on Sycamore Street").

Serling scripted several dramas for the Hallmark series but none were notable writing pieces.

The Hall of Fame would be influenced by this continued emphasis on the hour-long format, for Hallmark would turn to the sixty-minute drama in the next season.

3. The Need for network programming grew more rapidly than television itself. The new programs proved quite fragile; those which might have been good for a decade in radio became "drop outs" within a year or two. New ideas were needed more rapidly than outside sources (advertising agencies) could supply them. The networks were forced to produce shows that appeared opposite leading attractions on rival networks. NBC, as a subsidiary of RCA, had high stake in developing television programming as soon as possible. If nobody else would pay to produce programs, NBC would foot the bill. In addition to supplying new programs with new ideas, the networks had realized the need to recapture control of programs. Pat Weaver, particularly, was instrumental in wrestling major control back to the networks.

Chester & Garrison & Willis succinctly sum up the

---

38Mayer, op. cit., Page 27.
radical differences between radio and television programming at this time:

Until the advent of television, radio programming had become fairly well stabilized in content and pattern. Networks concentrated during evening hours on half-hour weekly program series in news, commentary, comedy-variety, situation comedy, mystery, etc. Programs like "Jack Benny," "Lux Radio Theater" and "Bob Hope" occupied the same time period week after week for years on end. Most of the big network shows were actually produced by ad agencies with the network supplying only the studio facilities, engineers, and musicians. The networks themselves produced few commercial programs other than news shows. Although radio presented enormous demands on writers for new material, top performers seemed to have an unending welcome in the American home.39

Another factor which would return to the networks the major control over programs was that of the "magazine" concept of program sales; this was a form of multiple sponsorship on a participation basis. As program costs rose, becoming five and ten times as expensive as radio shows, few advertisers could afford the single show. The "magazine" idea gave sponsors the opportunity to "insert an ad" into the program proper rather than sponsor the entire show, but the advertiser would have no control over the content of the program.

Weaver was aware of the fragility and ephemeral nature of the programming business; but, unlike later network

39 Chester & Garrison & Willis, op. cit., Page 55.
executives who played the "ratings game" with imitative efforts, Weaver considered innovation the key to survival.

4. The "Specials Concept" Broke Habitual Viewing Pattern. The "Hamlet" production during the 1952-53 season and the two "irregular" specials ("Richard II") and ("Macbeth") to follow in two seasons, should be considered in the light of spectacular "single shot," 90 minute-or-longer production now taking place. The "single shot" program during the summer of 1953 (Ford Motor's) "50 Anniversary Program" starred Mary Martin and Ethel Merman, and appeared on both NBC and CBS. It was hoped that by breaking the regular viewing habit, large audiences might be obtained through their outstanding quality and special promotional campaigns. The Hallmark "special" to this date, "Hamlet," was, of course, one program amidst the half-hour shows which surrounded it during the season. For that reason, it was only partially "special" and did not at this time establish the "specials" pattern. Nevertheless, the Hallmark company promoted the Shakespearean production heavily, and plans were soon underway for the "Richard II" production during the 1953-54 season.

---

Pat Weaver, who would coin the term "special," considered irregularity in programming necessary in order to ensure excitement in the medium. His influence would be more complete during the next two seasons at NBC.\textsuperscript{41}

5. **Television Film.** The live television drama could rise meteorically during the 1950-55 period because there was no competition from filmed drama. At this stage of television's development there was a financial disadvantage in using film. The film industry, apparently, preferred not to give encouragement to any kind of film programming. One exception, was the *Fireside Theatre*, an anthology series significant in being the first filmed series; it was also the first which indicated an exceptionally high rating.\textsuperscript{42}

*Time* reported as early as 1950, however, that a slow, unspectacular rise of filmed drama was taking place. It reported that the Hollywood production "strikes directly at New York's ambition to make Eastern TV the television center of the United States. Not only is *Fireside* produced

\textsuperscript{41}The development of the "specials" concept is explored later in the chapter; it is mentioned here to show its inception at approximately the time of *Hamlet*.

in Hollywood, but it is done on film and costs less than $20,000-and-up New York productions such as Philco."^43 Ford, Lux Video and Schlitz Playhouse of Stars were originally live but now switched to film. Regardless of the minor surge to Hollywood filming, the New York live shows had still not reached their high watermark seasons.

1953 - 1954 Hallmark Season

Hallmark announced a departure from the thirty-minute format for the 1953-54 season. It was now to be "the first sixty-minute network series to be telecast "live" from the West Coast."^44 McCleery would continue his style of directing based on the arena theatre concept, and the chief works would be largely based on biographies of famous persons (and many not so famous). Lux Video had already moved to the West Coast as a half-hour series, but at this point in television's history, there was no trend to Hollywood-based drama, either live or filmed.

Albert McCleery described his fondness for the West Coast in this way:

I was very enthusiastic about working out west. We had facilities, space to move around in, young enthusiastic crews . . . We weren't a slave to the

^44NBC News Release, Sept. 23, 1953.
transportation companies as in New York. Also the props, scenery, and costumes were better. The costumes on the west coast are the most beautiful in the world. Every costume in NY is old and shabby. The props are exquisite out there; we have no prop houses in New York to compare with them; and they can give you almost everything . . . the original. You ask for a Napoleonific carriage and you get the carriage Napoleon rode in --- in top shape.45

Harold Callen, who had written numerous dramas in the old thirty-minute format, was commissioned to write the first hour-long Hall of Fame in the 1953-54 season. It was entitled "A Smile for Danger" and starred Sarah Churchill. Miss Churchill was to be "narrator-hostess and occasional star of the dramatizations."46 The time was also changed to 5-6:00 P.M. on Sunday evenings.

"A Smile for Danger," which initiated the new hour-long format, was not a radical departure from the bulk of biographical drama previously presented. This play was the story of Christine Manville, the Polish-born woman who worked for the British Secret Service in the last war and became its most decorated female member. She was instrumental in organizing the French underground, and aided the Allied victory.

45Sturcken, op. cit., p. 183. Personal interview between Sturcken and McCleery.

46NBC News Release, loc. cit.
The hour-long format did permit, however, the opportunity for the adaptation of better-known stage works and novels. A repeat of the successful Menotti opera "Amahl and the Night Visitors" in December, an adaptation of Moliere's "Imaginary Invalid," and adaptations of two American novels, "Of Time and the River" and "Moby Dick" were highlights of the season. "Of Time and the River," starring Thomas Mitchell, dealt with the last days of a Southern patriarch and the effect of his death on relatives and friends. *Time* said that "the show was alive with cross-currents of affection and hate, small tyranny and big-souled resignation, all set to the orchestration of Wolfe's sonorous words."47 The play was directed in screen-filling close-ups which had been characteristic of the McOleery concept. *Variety* reported that the Hall of Fame distinguished itself from other series due to the fact that it was the first hour-long live drama to originate from the Coast.48 Actually the first thirteen shows were from the West Coast, but several were produced from New York.

Although Hallmark had intended in its second season to do "real stories of great individuals," its most important

---

48 Television Reviews, *Variety*, Sept. 30, 1953, p. 34.
achievement during the year was the second Shakesperean production in two years, "Richard II." The production was a two-hour drama, starting an hour earlier than the usual time of 5:00. The play (presented live on January 24, 1954), followed the McCrackens' story of Oglethorp's battle against England's debtor prisons ("Crusade to Liberty"), and preceded James Truex's "Lone Star" - the saga of Sam Houston, starring Sarah Churchill.49

The production of "Richard II" was part of the "flexibility" concept initiated by NBC's Pat Weaver. Weaver, who was made president of NBC during this season, gave most of his energies to the "specials" development during the next few years. He had written "pre-empt" clauses in sponsor contracts giving the network the right to take away advertising time when the special came along.50 There were some seventy-five television "specials" during this season, many of them the "single shot" variety initiated the previous season by Ford to promote its 50th Anniversary. Max Liebman became associated with spectaculars during this time, presenting a ninety-minute Show of Shows every fourth Saturday and fourth Sunday.

50Mayer, op.cit., p. 27.
"Richard II" would once again bring together the producer-actor-director team of Maurice Evans, Mildred Alberg, and George Schaefer. Despite the fact that the "outside" team was again brought in to supervise direction, the relationship between Schaefer and McCleery was seemingly a compatible one. Schaefer refers to him as the one who "sort-of guided me in to television. He is one of the pioneers in the medium." McCleery referred to their relationship during "Richard II" in this way:

They (?) bent over backwards hoping we would fight, but we co-operated. Schaefer is an extraordinary Christian talented guy. He is a superb craftsman, close to genius. Schaefer was co-director with McCleery for this production, whereas for Hamlet he had "directed the actors."

The selection of "Richard II" was a natural choice for Maurice Evans. He explained in an NBC News Release his reason for the selection:

When I was asked to do a second Shakesperean production for Hall of Fame, it was logical that I should pick King Richard II. For one thing this is the play which brought me fame, if not fortune, in the United States and is the classic which I have played the greatest number of times. Familiarity

---


52 Sturcken, op. cit., Personal interview between Sturcken and McCleery, p. 185.
with the part of the 'skipping king' is a great asset; the intricacies of the technical aspects of television leave little time for the actor to concentrate on creating new characterization, whereas if you know a part backwards, you can devote your rehearsal time to adjusting to the special problems posed by the medium... 

McCleery was not receptive to the "Richard II" choice for the second Hall of Fame Shakesperean production. He spoke about his relationship with Evans in an interview with Francis Sturcken:

I fell out with Maurice Evans next year after "Hamlet." He insisted on "Richard II." I wanted to wait. I felt "Richard II" would be a good color production if we could wait, but he absolutely insisted on doing it then. He had his eye on NBC's big new studio in Brooklyn, but I still believe it would have been an ideal production for color. 

In bringing the "outside" team with him, Evans was aware of the need to bring a theatrical presence to the production of "Richard II." Schaefer was especially gifted in knowing the special interpretation and directing problems of the theatre. He had directed more than fifty musicals, plays, and vaudeville units that were "flown and jeeped to advance combat bases." One of the productions was G. I. Hamlet, starring Maurice Evans. He later redirected

53 NBC News Release.
54 Sturcken, op. cit., p. 185.
the G. I. Hamlet for Producer Mike Todd in New York, and was hailed by the late critic George Jean Nathan as the "best director of the year."56

Evans' earlier affiliation with Schaefer (he was Schaefer's top sergeant during the war) would certainly be the primary reason for Schaefer's "stage directing" and "directing the actors" during the first two Shakespearean works. For until this time he had done no television directing.57

Evans was aware of the special requirements of the new medium and made every possible adaptation to ensure the success of the production. In relating his experiences in the Saturday Review, he commented:

The consciousness that in television, some of the viewers are thousands of miles away makes problems

56 In KOPFEE KLATCH interview (tele-tape) with Pennsylvania State students, Schaefer mentioned that Army "Special Services" had helped him in this respect: "G. I. Hamlet' had caught fancy of Mike Todd and wanted it brought to NY, after the war. Evans wanted me to direct it. Todd was forced to hire me, and I probably wouldn't have gotten the break otherwise. I hadn't worked in New York before."

57 Schaefer directed the performance during dry-run rehearsals for Hamlet and Richard II. He had not done any camera work prior to the 1952 Hamlet and was not a member of the Directors' Guild. This was not an uncommon practice: stage directors often directed theatre adaptations through 'performance and acting' with a technical director and/or staff director (such as McCleery) handling camera and television staging. (Telephone conversation between writer and Miss Trubin, Mr. Schaefer, Compass Prod.) (June 13, 1964.)
for the actor . . . Al McCleery, NBC executive di­rector and George Schaefer, my own stage director, had constantly to remind me of the actual proximity of the audience. Although people would be sitting before their sets in all parts of the country, I had to remember that on the screen the distance between their noses and mine would average six feet—not six miles.

Accustomed to playing . . . in the wide spaces of the theatre, I found it excruciatingly difficult to deliver certain passages with the requisite vehemence without looking ridiculous at such close quarters.58

Evans insisted that a major boom television conferred upon the actor was the absence of coughing during a performance. He compared television's respect for silence to the "catarrhal cacophony which greets me nightly when I face a 'live audience' at Dial M For Murder."59 Evans did feel that the absence of the audience seemed very strange at the end of the perform­ance:

Instead of the descent of the final curtain and the applause across the footlights, the tele­vision actor is required to remain motionless until a voice from the control booth says 'OK . . . wrap it up'.60

Despite the reluctance of McCleery to direct the production of "Richard II," it seemed to have come off with

58 Robert Lewis Shayon, The Saturday Review, May 16, 1953, p. 34.

59 Maurice Evans, NBC News Release.

60 Evans, NBC News Release. Schaefer's numerous com­ments regarding stage/television relationships in acting and directing are reserved for Chapter III.
honors and a Shakespearean drama was certainly the high point once again of the Hallmark Hall of Fame season. Donald Kirkley of the Baltimore Sun wrote one of the most vividly descriptive reviews of the "Richard II" production:

Two hours went rapidly by. All sense of time was lost as the electronic pencil traced its millions of millions of lines across the cold, gray Looking Glass . . .

A wooden box masking tubes and wires and electric current coming by complicated waves from Susquehanna; we were saddened, enraged, soothed, exhilarated, by the thundering music, compassionate singing words. This is where television meets and merges with the living theatre. It is not the means of communication between playwright and spectator which counts: it is the response in the spectator's mind. When the history is written, last Sunday may well be the date set for television coming of age.61

A less emotional impact was expressed by Jack Gould, of the New York Times, who commented that for the first two acts "the tragedy of the playboy ruler all but lost amid the bewildering preoccupation with settings, props and effects." He was particularly critical of the lack of close-ups "for over an hour and made it difficult for viewer to identify himself with performers."62

61Donald Kirkley, Baltimore Sun, Jan. 24, 1954. (Though Schaefer was not in charge of direction of Richard II, and he did not refer to above review, his comment on Kirkley is worth noting. "He is one of the few competent critics writing." Personal Interview September 4, 1963.)

62Jack Gould, New York Times, Jan. 25, 1954. (Although Gould has been praise-worthy of many Hallmark productions and is perhaps the most quoted television critic of our times, his
Gould felt that the last act redeemed itself to some extent, noting that the "staging had the virtue of simplicity and pictorial composition." But during the first two acts "it was hard to believe the same man had been in the control. The staging was little short of abominable."63

John Crosby, in the New York Herald Tribune, agreed somewhat with Gould, commenting on the "confused" and "cluttered" scenes.64 George Rosen in the weekly Variety felt that it was a major triumph . . . "with laurels going to the production, a tribute to a combination of technical and artistic execution blended with a masterful control."65

The production of "Richard II" was the major production for Hallmark during the season. Further, it brought the series back for its origination in NBC's large, new studio in Brooklyn where forty-foot battlements for Berkely Castle were included as part of the twelve-set decor.

---

work and fellow New York critics were referred to by Schaefer thusly: "Gould tries . . . his heart is in the right place. O'Brian is impossible." He felt that "none in New York are competent." Interview statement, September 4, 1963)

63 Gould, ibid.
Mildred Alberg, producer for the show, was instrumental in adapting the production to two hours; many critics felt that this production was more easily adapted to two hours (than was "Hamlet") and preserved Shakespeare's basic stories and characters. 66

The production of "Richard II" was the outstanding event of the 1953-1954 season for the Hall of Fame. The adaptation of Melville's "Moby Dick," starring Victor Jory, is worth noting as a production coming near the end of the season, on May 16. But this was only a fair success getting an unfavorable review by Jack Gould:

McCleery demonstrated resourcefulness as craftsman but as dramatic presentation . . . it was lacking. In overcoming the limitation of space he achieved close-up effect . . . but limitation of time the biggest drawback. 67

Although Variety reviewed the production as "a fluid dramatic hour . . . everything was top-notch," 68 Joyce Hall was not satisfied with the production (along with the other

66 Marvin Rosenberg, op. cit., p. 166.
adaptations "Of Time and the River" and "Imaginary Invalid"); these productions essentially led to the dismissal of Albert McCleery as director for the Hall of Fame."69

McCleery, in his relationship with the Hallmark productions, had engendered new techniques (through the "cameo style" of directing), ushered in the season from the West Coast, and had a part in the development of the first "specials". One could say, however, that it was a lack of consistency of quality on a week-to-week basis which stands out in close review of the three seasons.

It was, apparently, obvious to Hall that the chief benefits derived to this date were from the Shakespearean productions each year. And since it was primarily the team of Evans and Schaefer which had brought about much of the success of each, the thinking of Hall must have been toward the classical production and extended-time "specials" concept. Undoubtedly it was this factor (as much as the unfavorable reviews for three productions during the 1953-1954 season), which speeded the dismissal of director McCleery.

The 1953-1954 season was fast approaching the year

69 Mr. McCleery was absent from directing responsibility during the 1954-1955 season at NBC. He returned to produce the most formidable undertaking in 'live' anthology drama, the NBC Matinee Theatre, five days a week, hour-long drama, from Hollywood in October, 1955.
of complete establishment of the "specials" concept and domination of network time by "live" anthology drama. The Philco Television Playhouse had been on the air continuously since 1948 and was more than just a contributory factor in the development of the live television drama: it influenced more specifically the writing and style of production. Playwrights such as Foote, Chayefsky, and Tad Mosel wrote of the realistic, unexceptional events of life, vividly and poignantly. For these writers, the keynote was "sensitivity on part of writer's techniques, character studies in terms of purpose, intimate realism in terms of style." This was the last season in which Ooe would devote full-time to Philco. In the fall of 1954, he was assigned to Producers Showcase, and his status with Philco Playhouse became that of Executive Producer with several producers working under him. The Playhouse was awarded the George Foster Peabody Award for "outstanding entertainment" and cited Fred Ooe as "the most consistent producer of fine television drama."

By this season, NBC dominated dramatic programming closely followed by CBS. Perhaps the most exciting entry in the field in 1953-1954, however, was ABC's U.S. Steel Hour.

70Sturcken, op. cit., p. 146.
In June of 1953, the Theatre Guild had dropped its radio show, "Theatre Guild on the Air," and now considered the possibility of theatrical productions via the television medium. Alex Segal was director for the series and his talents and organizing genius were largely responsible for the series' success. The Steel Hour was on the ABC network but two seasons; it was the target of the larger networks after its initial success, and it appeared on CBS on an alternate (twice-monthly) basis.

After six years of success with NBC's Kraft Television Theatre, Kraft opened a second series on the ABC network in October of 1953. This was a major departure in programming economics and format, unprecedented before or after that date, but Kraft, until this time, had been exceptionally pleased with the results of advertising impact on

---

71 The Theatre Guild had first entered dramatic TV presentations in October 1947 when it contracted with NBC for a joint presentation of a series of six plays on television. There was no sponsor, but NBC paid heavily for the best talent and production. (New York Times, Nov. 10, 1947, p. 19); Production, John Ferguson by St. John Ervine chosen as premiere; it received bad reviews generally; other productions (including The Late George Apley and Shaw's Great Catharine) drew unfavorable criticism). After the first six programs, the Theatre Guild contracted with NBC to sponsor another six but a sponsor could not be found. Several sponsors were reportedly willing to pay $12,000 every week but the Guild felt that with its many interests it could not do justice to more than one show a month. (Variety, May 5, 1948, p. 42).
the NBC show and decided to redouble its efforts.\textsuperscript{72}

The move from half-hour to hour-long drama by Hallmark during this season provided greater opportunity for expansion of plot, treatment of theme, and penetration of character. It undoubtedly was influenced by trends of hour-long programs at the time and switched to the longer format. One should note, however, that Hallmark continued to style its productions toward the biographical drama -- adaptations of the novel, fictionalized accounts of "real incidents" -- with only two or three well-known sources for material ("Of Time and the River," and "Moby Dick").\textsuperscript{73} The 1953-1954 season would be marked by much more than the "Richard II" production by Hallmark. Live anthology drama had reached its second 'golden' year, the writers mentioned earlier in the 1952-1953 years continued to write some of the best original works, and the second Kraft series and the \textit{U.S. Steel Hour} first appeared on network television.

\textsuperscript{72}George Rose, \textit{Variety}, Oct. 24, 1953, p. 33. (He estimated that Kraft would spend six million dollars a year for the two shows.)

\textsuperscript{73}The semi-documentary formula established by Hall of Fame would suggest the \textit{Armstrong Circle Theatre} to follow. Chief difference, though, would be that in the latter, issues and events of contemporary problems were highlighted; in Hallmark the individual in history (and his achievement) was dramatized.
1954-1955 Season - the year of Macbeth

Ironically, after two seasons with Shakespeare (along with more unsuccessful dramas), Hallmark had not considered the possibility of classical drama as a series of specials in a single season. Nevertheless, the impact from a single Shakespeare production each season had left its mark; because The Hall of Fame had first presented Shakespearean drama on the networks, the association with "quality" would not be diminished, despite numerous mediocre productions during the 1954-1955 season. The impact of the first two productions was noted, in fact, by a Hallmark spokesman when he commented:

We have been extremely pleased with the reception given Mr. Evans' Shakespearean plays. We have received thousands of complimentary letters from viewers and so has Mr. Evans. So many of them asked that we do "Macbeth" next that it seemed a logical choice, especially in view of the great success Mr. Evans and Miss Anderson enjoyed with it in the theatre.74

Maurice Evans and Judith Anderson had toured principal cities with "Macbeth" following a lengthy Broadway run of the play in 1941 and a later re-staging of the play in Hawaii by and for the Armed Forces.75 Evans personally

---

74 NBC Release.

75 Ibid. Evans and George Schaefer had had a continuing interest in Shakespeare productions starring Armed Forces personnel. It was when both were in the Army that the directing-acting team was formed and it would continue for many years in both stage and television productions. Schaefer commented that it was Evans more than any other
produced the work, as he had the two previous Shakespearean works, all two hours in duration. As he had done for "Richard II" (but unlike "Hamlet"), Evans adapted the production for television. Unlike later Hallmark specials, it would be written for presentation in two major acts of fifty minutes each.

Schaefer's directing role was much larger for Hallmark's "Macbeth." For "Hamlet" he 'coached the actors' and for "Richard II" he co-directed the production along with McCleery. He "staged" this production of "Macbeth," — i.e., he rehearsed and directed the on-the-air performance.

For this production, Schaefer staged the performance by utilizing one piece, in the nature of a stage setting. This differed from the previous production of "Richard II" in which the setting was circular with the cameras in the center. Studying blueprints of the settings for months prior to rehearsal, Schaefer began his first major directing assignment. 76

The emphasis on colorcasting was significant to Hallmark at this time as well as to NBC, generally. It had person who was responsible for his entering television directing. "I learned to respect him . . . the things he did during our three years in the Army." Telephone conversation with Mr. Schaefer, July 29, 1964.

76 NBC Release.
been the Hall of Fame telecast which had presented the first sponsored color "special" at Christmas of 1953 ("Amahl and the Night Visitors"), and for the production of "Macbeth" the color cameras were expected to "catch the full panoply of the Scotch pageantry, replete with tartans and plaids."\(^7\) Hallmark's interest in color had extended from the earliest specials as an effort to make better use of product visualization:

Pace setting use of color has always been a prime consideration in maintaining leadership of Hallmark productions. It seems only natural, therefore, that Hallmark should pioneer color programs on network TV. . . . Hall of Fame has led the field in color production, bringing new richness not only to entertainment it presents, but to product messages as well.\(^8\)

Homer Heck, Vice-President for Broadcasting, Foote, Cone, & Belding, commented that "it is true there were (and are) few color television sets proportionally, but there are enough, and in the right hands of the class of people Hallmark is anxious to reach."\(^9\)

\(^7\) NBC Release. (Hallmark had long been on list of would-be color sponsors and happened to be at top of list when system of NBC compatible color was approved in 1953. Amahl was colorcast two days after the approval had been made by FCC.)

\(^8\) Ibid.

\(^9\) Kramer, op. cit., p.28. Interview between Miss Kramer/Mr. Heck.
Schaefer's direction and the production, generally, were praised by television critics:

Plot and theme of original play came through most clearly in this production. Interpretation of characters and their relationships followed text closely and Shakespearean devices for clarity were admirably handled.80

Robert Lewis Shayon's column is worth noting as he summed up some differing concepts in staging Shakespeare plays:

Shakespeare on TV has explored two schools of thought. One opens on the play, pushing it back and letting us see more of the scenery; the other closes in and gives us greater detail. Fine supporting acting on Hallmark's "Macbeth" suggests an obvious, perhaps overlooked third school — accent on good actors.81

John Crosby considered it a "dazzling display of live television's ever increasing virtuosity and flexibility,"82 and Variety, "a worthy companion piece to Hallmark's two previous excursions into Shakespeare (if anything, an even greater artistic triumph)."83

---

83 Television Reviews, Variety, December 1, 1954.
In contrast to noticeably good reviews, the remarks of Jack Gould are significant, particularly since he criticizes the use of color in this production over the normal black/white production:

The underlying excitement was lost, sense of ambitious urgency that drives "Macbeth" to doom, the compelling sweep of unified whole appeared sacrificed to demanding technical gods of TV.

Schaefer sought to resolve, by TV's personalization and intimacy, the awkwardness of "Macbeth." Capsule scenes and close-ups made the play seem episodic. Tricky camera angles, overly studied visual perspectives, confusion of entrances and exits gave too much emphasis to players, not enough to dimension of play.

By eliminating physical proscenium arch, TV "Macbeth" lost play's unifying arch of tragic human greed. Story of man versus man, not man against fate as played.

The realism of modern TV is sometimes less to be preferred than stark emotionalism of Elizabethan drama. . . . Evans seemed more facile than forceful which could be attributed to the complexity of TV production. He should have portrayed a stronger suggestion of man's inner turmoil.

Black and white would have been preferable to color: the blood on Lady Macbeth's hands the most vivid of red colors; a lamentable slip in theatrical judgment.84

Despite this negative criticism, Hallmark had established the course of action for the years to come: Variety had expressed

an idea which would be much repeated through the Hall of Fame years:

It isn't often that TV can woo the muses and emerge with such stunning success. The American public owes Hallmark its gratitude for underwriting such ambitious programming, for its whole collective approach toward the medium which not only encompasses the annual Bard festival, but also brings "Amahl" to fresh reality at least once a year.  

"Amahl and The Night Visitors" was again repeated December 19 following fairly closely on the heels of the successful "Macbeth" in November. There were no other special productions following these programs. The Hall of Fame was simply marking time until the end of the season. The scheduling of "Macbeth" and "Amahl" rather early in the season made it difficult to end gloriously: for example, the drama of "Milton Hershey - Orphans' Benefactor" (the chocolate tycoon) was the next-to-last production for the Hall of Fame.

Although "Macbeth" was the only outstanding dramatic vehicle for Hallmark, "live" anthology drama (on the whole) reached new heights on the networks. The range of quality

---

85 Variety.

86 The "regular" production of "Cradle Song," adapted from the Broadway play, is worth noting: The sixty-minute drama, presented on May 8 starred Osa Massen and became a ninety-minute "special" during the 1955-1956 season (NBC News Release).
extended from "Patterns" to "Peter Pan" that season with quite a bit in between. There were nine hour-long live dramas being broadcast every week compared to four a few seasons back; the writers who had gained fame during the early fifties continued to make this season one of television's best. Reginald Rose's "12 Angry Men," which opened the Studio One season on CBS, won the Emmy Award as the "best dramatic script" of the year; it also won a Sylvania award for camera direction, and later became a highly successful motion picture. His other plays of the year - "An Almanac of Liberty," and "Crime in the Streets" helped establish him as the "conscience" playwright.

The Philco Playhouse, under Gordon Duff as producer, featured several new playwrights this season. Robert Alan Aurthur won a Sylvania Award for his "Man on a Mountaintop;" J. P. Miller gained recognition for "The Rabbit Trap," and Gore Vidal's "Visit to a Small Planet" had a successful run.

Despite the fact that Hallmark had presented only three Shakesperean productions to this date, numerous persons had associated Hall of Fame with "specials," For this reason "Peter Pan" (Producers' Showcase) was mistakenly credited as a Hallmark production, according to fan mail received at Hallmark.

Rose is one of the few writers of this era still involved in television writing. He has continued his involvement with the "thesis" drama as independent producer, story editor, and occasional writer for the series The Defenders, (personal letter 2/15/63).
on Broadway and become a hit motion picture. Tad Mosel began his writing career on the Playhouse with "My Lost Saints," starring Eileen Heckart, as the housekeeper, in a "moving and entirely believable characterization." By this year, Paddy Chayefsky had written over a dozen scripts for this series; his greatest hits, "The Mother," "Marty," and "Bachelor Party," were behind him, but he turned out the highly praised "The Catered Affair" during the 1954-1955 season.

Although Hallmark had been unable to create a niche for writer Rod Serling (though he wrote several biographical dramas for the Hall of Fame), the Kraft Television Theatre, produced by J. Walter Thompson Agency, did. "Patterns," written by Serling in 1954 shortly after he came to New York from Ohio, was considered by many critics as one of the soundest, best constructed plays written; it seemed to justify the Emmy Award as "best original teleplay" and Sylvania Award as "best dramatic play." The themes of "ambition and the price tag that hangs on success" were, as

Serling points out, a collaborative effort. He considered the direction by Fielder Cook "creatively and artistically a total triumph."92

Mr. Cook, who produced and directed numerous Kraft Productions, provided this comparative analysis of the live drama in 1954 (such as "Patterns") and the filmed drama of today:

When the networks started out, there was an hour anthology a night; this was a fantastic average. But there was only so much you could say. You cannot keep writing and tell something . . . First of all you must want to say something . . . to stimulate, to entertain. You must create characters to do this and the drama must (and did at this time) come out of the hero, not secondary characters.

Today you may have a writer who turns out a compelling piece of drama - Kim Stanley as a nymphomaniac. You are looking at an incident of her life, but its still an incident of her life not the hero's. The hero -- that is the doctor, lawyer, western hero in the series drama -- does not change. You know that he is going to come out unchanged . . . oh perhaps a little wiser, a little illuminated. We can have the worst possible deprivation displayed in minor characters but you know Kildare will stand up O.K.

They are plays of ideas, but only incidents. Plays of ideas detached from the hero. You know that you are going to end up exactly where you started in the beginning. Protagonist must give up something . . . but today its incidents. If a writer has a good incident, he can go to Kildare . . . They'll

say its been done . . . he'll go back to his office and rewrite for E. G. Marshall of Defenders. I know this happens.93

The "specials" climate

The above discussion of live television drama is meant to crystallize the dramatic ferment on the networks during these seasons of the mid-fifties. It is significant (and to some extent ironic) that the Hallmark presentations (except for Shakespeare) did not stand out as creative vehicles. In theme, plot, characterization, they did not reflect the individual writer's efforts; instead this anthology series indicated a weakened biographical drama (usually adapted freely from nonfiction works or original plays written from factual data regarding the person dramatized) always affirming the human spirit. Because the attitude of "uplift" was nearly always present, the drama was shaped to this end by all writers who were contracted for the assignments. It was not possible, then, for Hallmark to encourage the creative talents as had been done by Philco Playhouse, Studio One, Kraft, and Robert Montgomery Presents.

93 Personal interview with Fielder Cook, January 30, 1964. Further comments by Mr. Cook are explored in this discussion of Mr. Schaefer as producer-director and independent producer, in the following two chapters.
It was the success of the Shakespeare productions which gave shape to the newly stated policy at Hallmark, noted simply in an NBC news release: "the series will return October 23, 1955, under a new format. It will be seen once a month as an hour-and-a-half series, produced by Maurice Evans."94

A contributing factor in determining the new format for Hallmark was the special monthly drama series now underway on NBC. The big impact in television "specials" was, of course, at NBC under the creative urge of Pat Weaver. One major undertaking was the musical-variety format styled by Producer Max Liebman who, earlier, had presented Your Show of Shows every fourth Sunday and fourth Saturday. The NBC spectacles, a striking element of the NBC "year of color," featured "Satin and Spurs" with Betty Hutton (which Gould said "erred by staking everything on the personality of one star"95); other shows included "Lady in the Dark" with Ann Southern, "Sunday in Town," a musical revue, and "Naughty Marietta" starring Patrice Munsel.96 Gould liked "Lady in the Dark" (perhaps the only 'smash hit') calling it "real

94 NBC News Release.
96 Sturcken, op. cit., p. 205.
theatre . . . had vitality, mood and had illusion. The viewer had no idea how rewarding the show was in black/white but color gave a breath-taking beauty. "97 He was not happy about the series' sum-total, however,

There has been something a little unreal about the spectacular shows. Except in spots they have been very big, very ungainly, and on the whole, cold.

The fanfare over color has put an acute emphasis on production for its own sake just at a time when television desperately needs to pay more attention to content.98

Producers' Showcase, a series of dramatic specials, was the second part of "operation special," and it would be a format which Hallmark would imitate during the next season under Maurice Evans. The Showcase was a series of ninety-minute monthly dramas, primarily adaptation, with Fred Cое as producer, Delbert Mann and Arthur Penn (from Philco Playhouse) serving as directors. From the showcase would come such theatrical works as "Tonight at 8:30," "State of the Union," "Yellowjack," "The Women," and "Peter Pan." It was estimated that approximately sixty-five million persons watched the Mary Martin performance in the James M. Barrie's production of "Peter Pan." Reviewers

98Ibid.
were unanimously lavish in their praise, considering it one of the outstanding productions in television's history. George Rosen headlined it "A Major Television Triumph" in his weekly column⁹⁹ and Gould remarked that "surely there must be a trace of fairy dust from coast to coast this morning" in his review.¹⁰⁰ The production won the Sylvania award as best television show of the year and an "Emmy" award as best single program.¹⁰¹

The Producers' Showcase may be considered the fore­runner of the "regular specials" in a dramatic form. The aim at Hallmark would be slightly different -- a series of "irregularly spaced" special productions throughout the year, scheduled unevenly on different days of the week and at different times. Homer Heck described the programming conflict with NBC at this time:

The networks simply had never heard of doing an irregularly spaced series. They wanted us to do one every month on a certain day or every two weeks . . . but to have them scattered where some would be six weeks apart and then some every three weeks . . . We had quite a struggle for the first year to get them to accept an unevenly scheduled series; but we were determined at that point that this was what we wanted to do, that it was

commensurate with Hallmark's attitude, their general policy of wanting to do things that are important and new and fresh.\textsuperscript{102}

The decision to discontinue the half-hour and hour-long series in favor of "specials" came after the favorable publicity, reviews, and viewer response recorded for the three Shakesperean productions plus "Amahl and the Night Visitors."

Hallmark announced that the Hall of Fame would undertake a seven-show series, ninety minutes each, on Sunday afternoons from 4:00 to 5:30 PM. Maurice Evans was to be producer for his "Maurice Evans Productions," Mildred Freed Alberg was Associate Producer, and George Schaefer, Director.\textsuperscript{103}

In many ways, Evans was a logical choice to head the Hall of Fame fortunes for the next season: (1) his production company was responsible for the 1953 Pulitzer Prize play Teahouse of the August Moon, and No Time for Sergeants; an astute businessman, it was reported that Evans had never lost money on a production; (2) in the leading acting roles, he had contributed, in large part, to the success of the Shakesperean plays in Hallmark's previous three seasons;

\textsuperscript{102}Kramer, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 26. Personal statement between Miss Kramer and Mr. Heck.

\textsuperscript{103}NBC News Release.
(3) more importantly, he had an interest in the classics and a belief in the audiences' desire for quality.\textsuperscript{104}

Hall himself had been desirous of this quality for sometime. He was motivated, in part, by an interest in bringing to the youth of America the kind of culture which had been deprived him in his youth. There were, therefore, personal interests as well as basic economic motives. He realized after the third Shakespearean production that the "halo" effect was operating: "the transference of good feeling from the show to the product."\textsuperscript{105} He felt that if the show is good, the audience will feel the same way about the product. "Hallmark products, intimately connected as

\textsuperscript{104}Maurice Evans was born in England in 1901, and began his career as an actor at an early age. He was a leading man in Old Vic-Sadler's Wells Co; The Broadway tours included productions of Romeo and Juliet, Richard II, and Hamlet. He produced Macbeth for Judith Anderson and himself in 1941. After the tour in 1942, he went into the Army and was placed in charge of a Special Service detachment in the South Pacific (after becoming a citizen in 1941). From December, 1942 until June, 1945, he was in charge of Army entertainment; he produced G.I. Hamlet as one production which gained him critical acclaim, left the Army with the rank of Major in 1945 and brought G.I. Hamlet to Broadway. In 1946-1947, he turned from Shakespeare to Shaw with Man and Superman, Devil's Disciple in 1950; he also produced Richard II in 1951, Apple Cart in 1956. He played the roles of Crocker-Harris in The Browning Version, Tony Wendice in Dial M for Murder.

\textsuperscript{105}Cards Magazine, Summer, 1960, p. 4.
they are with human feelings, are ideally associated with the positive emotional forces produced by great drama." 106

It was this same concept originating by Weaver which would be significant to Hall: the "special" was a powerful corporate image-builder. Hall himself would comment several years after the decision to do "specials" his personal philosophy:

An average of 35 million viewers per show are learning each production is "coming to you from the fine stores where you buy Hallmark cards; awards received, good critic reviews . . . these comments mold public opinion and encourage public to think highly of retailers and sponsors . . . people reach up when they take part in a fine social custom. Our advertising must reach up to reflect the quality of our product. It is not how many people we've reached, but how we reach them. 107

106 Ibid.


Fielder Cook, in personal interview, disagreed strongly with the advertising philosophy expressed by Hall despite his high regard for the series: ". . . My point is that Hallmark is a mass appeal item. Purpose is to sell greeting cards. A lot of people buy greeting cards, therefore, I can't understand his philosophy that 100 satisfied customers are better than 1000 dissatisfied. It would seem that he must consider the large numbers to stay in business. Somebody who follows Hall is going to have to make the decision. It would make sense if Cadillac or DuPont decided they wanted magnificently produced shows . . . Hall is one of the few individuals who runs a company (and he's an old
In order to achieve such a public image, it would be necessary to aim for high quality in production. Outstanding theatre could not be condensed into a short time period, as Hallmark had discovered in its three previous seasons. And it was felt that a ninety-minute show dominates the evening, attracting a larger audience, and gaining many viewers grown weary of routine, regularized programming. It was also obvious that the program could not sustain high-calibre productions on the weekly basis. Therefore, doing approximately one play a month (as a ninety-minute special) would give the valuable time needed for establishing the mood, character, and action of the productions.

Hallmark was aware of the seasonal impact for card buying. There were particular times of the year important for this type of retailing. For this reason a flexible, rather than a rigid, schedule permitted an opportunity to place the show squarely in advance of the particular card buying season, at the moment it would benefit the retailer most.108

---

Specials - And The Hall of Fame

For some years, the live anthology drama had been a vehicle for large corporations trying to gain good will: Westinghouse, Philco, U.S. Steel, Armstrong Cork Company, Kraft Foods, and Hallmark would bear witness to this concern for corporate image. The Sunbeam Corporation co-sponsored TV's third spectacular during the 1953-1954 season, "Satin and Spurs." The $300,000-production rated second to "The Ed Sullivan" program that night, though ratings indicated that the audience diminished near the program's conclusion. The company was satisfied with the impact, however, and brought in ten additional "specials" before dropping the idea in 1956. Apparently costs of $100,000-150,000 for co-sponsorship were a deciding factor in the company abandoning the series. 109

The Schwerin Research Corporation, in 1959 studies, stressed the corelation between corporate-image advertising and an increase in use of the spectacular efforts on television to establish these images. Their research indicated that "specials" leave a "strong taste of good will even when

not well received by the public and critics." The conclusion was that viewers will applaud the sponsor for his effort to bring forth a quality show above the level of conventional half-hour format, even when the show fails as a critical success.

Since the Hall of Fame's beginnings, it has never participated with other sponsors in order to defray expenses, either for the weekly or the "special" productions. It has, therefore, realized the following benefits which come from full sponsorship:

1. Hallmark can exercise considerable control over content.
2. Hallmark can merchandise the show. (Close relationship between manufacturer/dealers has previously been noted.)
3. Hall of Fame shows can take commercial time in large portions to "spell out" institutional or other messages which could not be squeezed into a minute spot.
4. Studies show that if the viewer likes a program, he is more attentive to commercials. (Obviously a single sponsor reaps more benefits than multiple sponsors.) In case of Hallmark, great concern is given to high quality in commercial message; intent is low-key selling.

110"TV Specials Promise Quality and Image Values, but will Sales be Bigger," Printer's Ink. Sept. 18, 1959, p. 10.

111Joyce Hall's comment is worth noting: "I want the commercials to be as entertaining as the show. I'm opposed to 'hard sell' because people at home are our quests." (Sponsor, April 25, 1959, p. 42.) Fan mail also bears out this fact: of 1200 favorable pieces of mail on "The Patriots," fifty unsolicited comments were favorable to commercial message.
5. Big productions can have greater sales impact.
6. Identification of sponsor with a quality show over a period of time inevitably builds a favorable image in the consumer mind.\textsuperscript{112}

John Oakson, Advertising Director for the company, indicated the policy in 1958; toward "specials" and full sponsorship:

People begin to take a weekly show for granted. It is increasingly difficult to create any excitement on part of your dealers or public. The firm gets fan mail everytime any TV special is produced, no matter who sponsors it. Hallmark has received such close identification that 75\% of fan mail comes to Hallmark, not the stars. This is important. So many advertisers are splitting a ninety-minute sponsorship into three parts. We believe its extremely important to have full sponsorship.\textsuperscript{113}

Homer Heck commented on the economic factors which influenced the 1953 decision to present "specials":

"... Hallmark started in 1953 (with "Hamlet") when costs were low. We have built up a reputation for quality to the point where high costs of dramatic specials are commensurate with the total promotion, prestige "sellability," and corporate image attained. To start at high costs is too difficult. Today Hallmark has built a reputation - and the show is used as a criterion for what is best in television today. The industry, critics look to it with pride ... as what the best in television offers.\textsuperscript{114}

\textsuperscript{112} "Participation vs. sponsorship," \textit{Television}, XVIII (May, 1961).

\textsuperscript{113} \textit{Printer's Ink, op. cit.}, Feb. 21, 1958, p. 46.

\textsuperscript{114} Personal Statement, Homer Heck, Dec. 30, 1963.
As previously noted, the decision to sponsor a "specials" series, beginning with the 1955-1956 season, was logical in the light of past success. The criteria for selection and adaptation of plays have not changed greatly through the years. The Hallmark philosophy could best be summarized in Heck's succinct description of the Hall of Fame's purpose: "We are looking for a well-known classic property that has not been done, that is adaptable to television, and of such high quality that it will stand with Shaw and Shakespeare."\(^{115}\)

The decision to do adaptation works was, perhaps, similar to that which turned Producers Showcase and Best of Broadway\(^{116}\) toward plays of adaptation. The "original" play had been successful until this season; but critics were complaining of the "thinning out" process of some of these productions:

There's only one dominant theme on television Life is Hell . . . Television is becoming dour and and unentertaining . . . The little person in a Little Job in a Little Office who lives in a Little

---

\(^{115}\) Ibid.

\(^{116}\) Best of Broadway was CBS's first color series and the network's counterpart to "spectaculars" on NBC. It was a monthly hour-long series with high budget using adaptations of proven plays and top-flight stars. Martin Manulis/Felix Jackson were producers. (Sturcken, op.cit., p. 232.)
Home with a Little Wife and Little Children. He lives in a Little Neighborhood where there are Little Minds.  

Variety also commented on "programming cycles that flood the networks with imitations of successful types."  

On the other hand, there were numerous advantages to the "specials" and "adaptation" concept. Specials would gain stature due to their irregularity, differentness in style, and lack of exposure time in comparison to the regular 'live' dramas. The decision to concentrate on adaptations ("well-known classic properties") was based on the success of the Shakespearean productions, uncertainty of "originals," and high production costs.  

---


118 Sturcken, *op. cit.*, p. 238. Interview between Sturcken and Edmund Rice, NBC Executive. (It is difficult to imagine today that the "follow-the-leader" cyclical programming would be an accusation of live anthologydrama - much like the western drama of some years later. Nine hours of live drama were being broadcast each week, however, and repetition of style and theme were inevitable.)

119 These were fortuitous decisions since this type of drama would bear the mark of longevity so well -- nine consecutive years of specials to date.
Summary

This chapter has chronicled the development of the 
Hallmark Hall of Fame through the radio era and early stages 
of the television series, from the thirty and sixty minute 
dramas to the emergence of the "specials" concept.

These years, 1952-1955, saw 'live' anthology drama 
(primarily original plays), reach its zenith on Philco-
Goodyear, Studio One, Robert Montgomery Presents, and 
Hallmark. Writers Paddy Chayefsky, Rod Serling, Reginald 
Rose, Horton Foote, and Tad Mosel gained fame for pene-
trating character studies and "thesis" dramas reflecting 
"personal decision." This was also the era of the "specials."
Forerunners such as Producers' Showcase and Best of Broadway 
featured ninety minute and two-hour adaptations of estab-
lished Broadway plays.

It is ironic that the Hall of Fame would continue for 
three complete seasons as a weekly series before focusing on 
Shakespearean and adaptation of classics as dramatic fare. 
Inconsistency of quality is seen in seasons which featured 
"Nefretiti, Queen of Egypt" and "Story of Rotary Inter-
national", along with "Macbeth" and "Hamlet." For the most 
part, these non-special productions were biographical dramas 
focusing on little-known aspects of famous people, and 
affirming the human spirit.
The work of Albert McCleery stands out in this early period. His productions showed inventiveness in direction, and the success of "Hamlet" and "Richard II" were largely due to his supervision. McCleery himself indicated difference of opinion with Evans on the selection of "Richard II", and this factor may have led to his dismissal as director for Hallmark.

There were a number of reasons for Hallmark's decision to turn to "irregular" specials for the 1955-1956 season rather than to pursue the weekly format.

1. The "specials" concept, especially under Pat Weaver at NBC, provided a fertile climate in which to move into this flexible pattern of irregular programming. Despite Mr. Heck's comments on difficulties encountered establishing an irregular concept at NBC, the positive influence of Weaver gave encouragement to its development.

2. Hallmark had received critical acclaim for its three Shakespearean productions in three seasons. Since this success came about chiefly through the combined efforts of Maurice Evans, George Schaefer, and Mrs. Alberg, it was inevitable that this creative group would produce and direct the 1955-1956 season's plays.

3. The specials would be an ideal way to promote the Hallmark product, seasonal in nature, five or six times a year. The additional time would ensure a more quality-
conscious production, a fact important to Hall who con-
sidered greeting cards as part of a "quality social custom."
After "Macbeth" it was obvious to Hall that the potential
of Hall of Fame, as a corporate image-builder, lay in this
type of "special."

The 1955-1956 season would be the first of many
seasons of "irregular specials," ninety minute in length,
presented five or six times during the year. The aim of
Hallmark would be to focus on plays similar to the three
which had gained it fame. The team of Evans and Schaefer
would be the concrete expression of that aim.
CHAPTER III

The Rise of the Producer-Director:
George Schaefer and the
Hallmark Hall of Fame

The 1955-56 season was another significant year for television drama. The entrance of five-days-a-week Matinee Theatre on NBC (under the direction of McCleery) brought the total dramatic output on the networks to an all-time high of thirteen hours per week. Several dramatic specials also added luster to television’s rising dramatic star: Playwrights '56, a new arrival on NBC, alternated with the expanded hour-long Armstrong Circle Theatre; Producer's Showcase, also on NBC, was in its second season; and Ford Star Jubilee, a monthly series, made its debut on CBS.

Although they were presented once-a-month (except for April), from October to May, 1956, the 1955-56 Hallmark productions were considered "irregular" specials. This was not only the first year for the new format of "specials" on the Hall of Fame, but the first season in which there was a consistency of time throughout: each production was scheduled for ninety minutes, from 4:00 to 5:30 on Sunday afternoons.

This chapter will chronicle the developments of the Hall of Fame during the seasons 1955 through 1959, discussing
how the productions were related to and influenced live
drama as a whole. More importantly, however, the study will
consider the director, particularly George Schaefer, as an
evolving influence on this series' development. It is
necessary to know something of the directors contemporary
with Schaefer and of television as a theatrical medium before
his influence on the Hallmark series can be fully assessed.

The Early Producer-Directors

The producer-director function in the television
drama has been incisively defined by Chester and Garrison:

The person who takes the script from the writer
and actively guides its progress until it has been
brought to life through the telecast is the director.
The supervisor of a series, a producer, may direct
the program in addition to his executive work.1

As the "supervisor of a series," the producer is concerned
with the budget estimate, with scheduling production facili­
ties and personnel, and, quite frequently, with functions
directly related to those of the director, i.e., casting of
the production and the script selection. Since much of the
producer's responsibility is non-business and "production­
conscious," a combination of these concerns would be quite
logical.2

1 Chester, Garrison, Willis, op. cit., p. 565.

2 The executive producer in many large organizations
will often establish the basic policy of a program series.
More removed from the program production itself, he may
Television's early years saw the development of the combination of these functions. In fact, most of the men who pioneered television drama series were directors first and producers second. Perhaps the main reason for this was that originators of drama series—such as Fred Coe and Worthington Miner—were theatre-oriented and brought theatre directing techniques to television. Since "live" drama was fashioned after the stage drama (maintaining the 3-act structure) and numerous Broadway productions had earlier been adapted for television, the thinking seemed obvious. Another reason for combining the two roles in one individual was economic. In order that expenses might be kept at a minimum, scripts from unknown writers which required a limited number of persons in the cast, few big-name talents, and inexpensive scenery were chosen. A third reason for establishment of the producer/director might be that at this time no firmly designated titles or responsibilities had been made. Before 1945, for example, video dramatic production had not achieved stature as a

---

define the over-all theme, characters used, kinds of scripts—and in general, is more often executive or administrative rather than creative. Chapter IV considers more fully the work of the independent production company and the producing function.

3 Hawes, Jr., op. cit., p. 58.
medium with concepts and techniques of its own. Fred Coe was hired by NBC's WNBT as production assistant. By the next year he was writing, directing, and producing full-length network dramas. As he became a producer/director, Coe's chief tasks were to determine what special theatrical conventions were possible for the television drama, and, at the same time, to break down the previously held notion that television simply provided the opportunity to photograph a play.

Commenting on this joining of artistic functions, Fielder Cook states:

Fred Coe started the trend; although no more than 20% were both producer-director it was not uncommon. It varied. I did both. I began with Kraft Television in 1953. Franklin Schaffner (Cook's present associate) worked for Tony Miner on Studio One. Marty Manulis was one of the brilliant producer-directors ... then the group producers came along.

NBC Television Directors

The work of Fred Coe. The outstanding career of this producer-director exemplifies the position of the "early" director and the achievements of one individual in

---


developing and sustaining live drama. Like George Schaefer who was to follow him, Coe had a strong theatrical background. During 1937 and 1938 he directed the Nashville Community Theater while on a dramatic fellowship, and studied at the Yale School of Drama from 1938 to 1940. Following his studies at Yale he directed the Civic Theater of Columbia, South Carolina, for four years. At NBC he directed the Theater Guild, A.N.T.A., and Kraft Theatre, and became producer, occasional director and writer for the famed *Philco Television Playhouse, Producer's Showcase* and *Playwrights '56.*

In contrast with the well-known "stable of writers" under Fred Coe at Philco, another group of artists received little public recognition at the time. These were the directors for that same series, all of whom have gone on to major theatrical directing accomplishments: Vincent Donehue, Delbert Mann, Arthur Penn, and Gordon Duff. Coe and the staff around him drew considerable praise from the principal writers of *Philco Playhouse,* indicating that the producing/directing function had not gone unnoticed. Horton Foote (who wrote "Trip to Bountiful," and "A Young Lady of

---

Property") was one of those writers who noted the work of Fred Coe:

Coe believes deeply in writers and his belief, in turn, gives the writer a feeling of confidence in himself, his talent, and his craft. The staff around Coe -- Arthur Penn, Delbert Mann, Gordon Duff, Bill Nichols, Vinc Donehue all reflected and supported this belief.7

Tad Mosel commented in this way:

Fred Coe was the first man to raise the writer to a position of importance in television and to a writer he is a combined father, friend, buffer, psychiatrist and newspaper critic.8

Because Coe had spent years in theatre directing before coming to NBC, and because before the advent of Philco Playhouse he had assumed numerous directing duties as a staff director at NBC, he could select persons who would best carry out creative assignments. As has been noted, Coe attempted, and succeeded in his effort, to preserve as much of the original spirit and technique of the theatre as could be carried over into a different medium. The following directors helped to achieve this transformation by the 1955 season.

Delbert Mann. Mann was one of the first directors working for the Playhouse (of those mentioned previously), and seems to have been directly influenced by Coe in his

7Sturcken, op. cit. pp. 181-182.

8Ibid.
theatrical and television career. Born in 1920, he was a Vanderbilt and Yale Drama School graduate and director of the Columbia, South Carolina, Town Theatre from 1947-1949. He subsequently came to NBC as an assistant director and joined the Philco Television Playhouse in 1949, continuing through the 1955-56 season. Delbert Mann became best known as the "Chayefsky director," guiding the three principal works of Paddy Chayefsky -- "Marty," "The Mother" and "Bachelor Party" -- to resounding critical acclaim.

Chayefsky's world of city lower-middle class life required a sense of meticulous literalness which Mann successfully achieved. These plays of the world of the mundane, the ordinary and the untheatrical portrayed "characters which were typical, rather than exceptional; situations easily identifiable by the audience, and relationships as common as people." Chayefsky himself said of this literal reality:

They (Marty and The Mother) both deal with the world of mundane . . . I tried to write the dialogue as if it had been wire-taped. I tried to envision the scenes as if a camera had been focused upon the unsuspecting characters and had caught them in an untouched moment of life.\(^9\)


\(^{10}\) *Ibid.*
Mann's creative talents as a director were particularly noted by Chayefsky for *The Bachelor Party*. Because of the "complex and frightening" job of the television director of the drama, Chayefsky felt that Mann should have all the credit:

I am not sure to this day where the basic approach was wrong; but obviously the line of the story is six inches off from beginning to end, and the third act resolution is hardly an inevitable outgrowth of the preceding two acts... I wanted to show the emptiness of an evening about town, and emptiness is one of the most difficult of all qualities to dramatize. What Delbert Mann did was to balance each scene delicately so that the emptiness became heavier and heavier.  

Delbert Mann ended his television career in 1955 and thereafter devoted himself to film and theatre direction.  

Arthur Penn. Born September 1922, Penn began his theatrical career as an actor, studied with Michael Chekhov and began a stage career with the Neighborhood Playhouse in Philadelphia in 1940. He did not make his entrance on the *Philco Playhouse* directing staff until 1953 - directing

---

11 Ibid.

12 Mann won an academy Award as Best Director for the 1955 film version of *Marty*. He also directed film production of *Bachelor Party*, *Middle of the Night* (also Chayefsky) and *Dark At the Top of the Stairs* (Int'l. Television Almanac, Aaronson, Charles, ed. New York: Quigley Pub, 1964).
works of Tad Mosel and Horton Foote. Mosel, like Chayefsky, noted the work of the Playhouse's directors - particularly Penn, who had directed his Lawn Party, and Ernie Barger is Fifty during the 1953-54 season:

I can't begin to say how much I rely on a director. I like to give him my play unconditionally to do with as he sees fit.

. . . Arthur always announces at the first rehearsal that he is not quite sure what the play is about. That sometimes startles the actors, but it pleases me. Because there is an anticipation in his voice, an eagerness to get to work, and I know that by the time rehearsals are over, he will not only know what the play is about but will have made a major creative contribution to it.13

Penn did not continue television directing, but has found notable success in the theatre.14

Gordon Duff and Vincent Donehue. Donehue, born in 1920, was an actor, writer for Shakespearean Theatre in England and on Broadway, 1939-1941. While in the Air Force during World War II, he wrote radio shows - then shifted back to a theatrical career, teaching at the American Wing in 1950. Shortly after, he came to NBC-TV and directed

13 Mosel, Tad, Other People's Houses (Simon and Shuster, New York) pp. 5-37, cited by Sturcken, op. cit., p.148.

14 Following Playhouse, Penn directed Two for the Seesaw in 1958; The Miracle Worker, 1959; Toys In the Attic, 1960; All the Way Home, 1960. (Who's Who In Theatre, John Parker, ed. London: Putname & Sons)
for the Playhouse. In addition to Playhouse credits, he directed shows on Producers' Showcase, Robert Montgomery Presents, and Playwrights '56.15

Gordon Duff, born in Dundee, Scotland, in 1909, did not have a theatrical career prior to television, but joined the Playhouse in its early years. Duff became producer of the Philco Playhouse during the 1954-55 season, replacing Coe who became executive producer of the series and producer of Producers' Showcase that season.16

Fred Coe best exemplifies the producer-director at this time because he combined the qualities of both; just as he had experimented with new techniques while a director at NBC, he later showed the same genius for experimentation in developing new dramatic series. His was a direct influence on the creative directors of the Playhouse, and an indirect influence on the "theatrical climate" into which George Schaefer would enter as Hall of Fame director in 1955.17

15Donehue's later Broadway accomplishments would include: Sunrise at Campobello, Trip to Bountiful, Daughter of Silence and The Music Man. Following Playhouse he directed for CBS, including Playhouse 90. (Television Almanac, 1964).

16Duff moved to CBS in 1956; directed over 25 shows for Studio One, Playhouse 90, DuPont and 4 Hemingway specials.

17Fred Coe, after 11 years at NBC, resigned in 1957 when live TV drama virtually came to an end there. He was signed by Hubbell Robinson of CBS to "group produce" the Playhouse 90 series, (the one and a half hour weekly special originated in the 1956-57 season with Martin Manulis as
**Producer-Directors of Kraft Television Theater.** It would be incorrect to assume that the networks performed all of the directorial function at this time. Despite the influence of Coe and the staff directors on the *Philco Playhouse*, at least one other pioneering series employed "outside" producer-directors. *Kraft Television Theater*, the first hour-long dramatic series on television, exemplifies the advertising-agency produced series as early as 1947. The production of "Double Door" on Wednesday, May 7, 1947, illustrates the division of labor between network and agency, in this instance J. Walter Thompson. The agency planned the show (with Producer-Directors Maury Holland and Stanley Quinn), provided the writer and casting director, and Holland called the shots in the control room. A network producer, who made sure that network interests and policies were followed, was 

producer) along with Herbert Brodkin and John Houseman. Coe was critical of NBC at the time, believing that they gave him very little to do. He said (in an interview with John Crosby, *New York Herald Tribune*) that "TV must experiment or it will shrivel into a parlor game." He also added that when he joined CBS he had high hope for an experimental, off-Broadway TV repertory theatre group: "Let's say I would have a night as guest producer; the following week would be John Houseman's. Maybe Manulis would have an idea that wouldn't fit Playhouse 20, or maybe a comedian would like to do "Hamlet" in colloquial English with additional dialogue by Goodman Ace." (Current Biography, Ed., Chas. Moritz, 1959 Yearbook, p. 74). Coe's Broadway accomplishments after CBS include *Two for the Seesaw* and *Miracle Worker* which he produced, Arthur Penn directing.
also included, as well as a network production staff. 18

By this 1955 season Kraft Television Theater had been on the air for eight years with the NBC version and for two years on a second sponsored Kraft on ABC. 19 The number of directors rose from two to six to handle the annual output of over one hundred plays. Fielder Cook and George Roy Hill were two of them. Cook is best remembered for directing Rod Serling's "Patterns" in 1954, while Hill is remembered for the 1955-56 production of "A Night to Remember." The latter play (written by an agency employee from the book by Walter Lord), which re-enacted the last hours of the H.M.S. Titanic, demonstrated the unusual skills of director Hill.

This production elicited the following praise from Gould and Grosby:

Gould: Production was an extraordinary demonstration of staging technique that imparted a magnificent sense of physical dimension to the home screen. 20

---

18 NBC also insisted (as did ABC) on a staff director in the control room. Because so few people were trained in technical operations in the television studio, the network stated that an outside director must relay orders to cameramen only through a staff director. A later modification of this rule specified that "staff" director was to be the "technical director" -- a rule which stands today. The outside producing agency is further discussed in Chapter IV.

19 Kraft would have the longest run of any weekly series -- eleven years. The ABC version of Kraft Theater lasted but two seasons, however.

Agency executive Edmund Rice, in a statement to Francis Sturcken, commented that this play "stands out above all others on Kraft . . . I think Hill is the only one who could have done it, and I doubt if he could do it again. Everything was perfect. Hundreds of cues and not a single one missed."\(^22\)

One might summarize the NBC position by stating that the above examples indicate a fluid situation regarding the directing responsibility. While Philco Playhouse reflected a "staff directing" concept, Kraft Theater exemplified "outside" production and direction by an advertising agency. There is no indication, however, that the latter series suffered from commercialized interests. Philco, in its approximately seven-year history, probably excelled because of its concentration on a limited number of creative writers and directors. It styled a "characterization" drama often based on "meticulous literalness," highly successful with


\(^{22}\) Sturcken, op. cit., Statement between Sturcken and Rice, 157.
critics and audience at the time. Rice, commenting on the aims of Kraft Theater, wrote:

Our aims from the very beginning were to build in our audience the habit of tuning into Kraft. The actors were not top stars and the play was usually unfamiliar so we attempted to get them to expect a good story. 23

CBS Television Directors

Worthington Miner. Mr. Miner, like Fred Coe, was an innovator of program development on the networks. His early background spanned a long career in both theatre and radio before his association with CBS Television. Born in 1900, Miner graduated with honors from Yale and studied at Cambridge University until 1924. Following World War I, he became stage manager and assistant to Broadway producers Guthrie McClintic and Jed Harris. By 1929 he had become a director on Broadway, and in the next ten years staged more than twenty-seven productions (including Uncle Vanya and Reunion in Vienna). During this time he affiliated himself with the Theatre Guild, but left it in 1939 to become manager of program development for CBS Television. Although his association with Studio One (as originator-writer-producer) was relatively brief (1948-1952), his experimentation in production effects and establishment of a core of highly-talented directors, were notable

achievements in the industry which certainly outlasted him. Miner, along with his directors Franklin Schaffner and Paul Nickell, was recognized for his ability to present a moving, well-integrated production. When Miner left Studio One in 1952 it was a highly regarded television anthology series, winning more awards that year than any other dramatic program. In the years to follow, producer-directors Felix

---

24 Franklin Schaffner, born in 1920, attended Franklin and Marshall College, served in the US Navy and became a staff director at CBS. Production credits include Person to Person, Studio One (winning Emmys for Reginald Rose's "12 Angry Men" and "Caine Mutiny Court Martial"). Since forming an independent production company with Fielder Cook, Schaffner has directed two films: The Stripper, 1962; The Best Man, 1963 (International Television Almanac, p. 221).

Paul Nickell, educated at Morehead, Kentucky State Teachers and University of North Carolina, is a former English Instructor at North Carolina State College; he joined CBS in 1948 as assistant director WPTZ, Philadelphia, one of the first stations on the CBS network. He has directed exclusively for CBS -- Studio One, Best of Broadway, Climax, Playhouse 90 (International Television Almanac, p. 189).

25 Miner resigned from CBS because they had "restricted his need to experiment" and was quickly signed to an NBC contract by Pat Weaver. His only assignments were half-hour dramatizations, Medic and Frontier, until he launched the 1956-57 Kaiser Aluminum Hour. The latter was a Unit Four production (which included Schaffner, Fielder Cook, and George Roy Hill) and had a brief, stormy career. The Unit was ejected when differences between sponsor and producers arose over story material. (Sturcken, op. cit., p. 281, Current Biography, 1953.)
Jackson and Norman Felton would give the series further stature.\footnote{26}

Worthington Miner is noteworthy for his pioneering of such effective devices as blending of film and live acting, using recordings for unspoken thoughts, and combining long shots and close-ups to achieve greater depth on the screen. He had even experimented with remote broadcasts of dramatic programs before declaring in 1948 that the "studio is probably the natural home for most dramatic productions."\footnote{27}

\textbf{Martin Manulis.} CBS Television had presented The Best of Broadway in color in 1954. Martin Manulis, along with Felix Jackson, was producer for the series, a "special" which would compete with NBC's \textit{Producers' Showcase}. During the 1956-57 season Manulis would be called on once again to...

\footnote{26}{Felix Jackson wrote and produced Schlitz Playhouse before producing Studio One. From Schlitz he carried over idea of productions featuring well-known stars. (Hawes, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 91,92.)}

\footnote{27}{Hawes, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 88 (Quote from Worthington Miner "On Location," \textit{Television}, January 1948).}

Norman Felton. A University of Iowa graduate, he gained theatre direction background at St. Paul and Cleveland. He directed radio programs on NBC from 1943-48 and the Robert Montgomery \textit{Presents} show on NBC-TV from 1950-55. He came to CBS in 1955, subsequently directed \textbf{US Steel Hour, Studio One}. In 1959 he was appointed Director of Programs \textit{CBS-West Coast}. Subsequently he has become executive producer of MGM Films in association with his own company -- Arena Productions. (Personal letter and \textit{International Television Almanac}, p.87.)
lend his producing talents to one of CBS's best-known

dramatic anthologies, Playhouse 90. Productions, which

included Serling's "Requiem for a Heavyweight" and Gibson's

"The Miracle Worker," adaptations of Odets' "Clash by Night"

and Fitzgerald's "The Last Tycoon," were budgeted at

$100,000 per show. It was television's first hour-and-a-

half weekly dramatic anthology series. Stars were signed

from every part of the world to appear in the first year's

programs consisting of thirty-one live and eight filmed

productions.28

Manulis concentrated more on the spectacle than did

his predecessors. With high initial budget, longer pro-
ductions, and established stars, his plays reflected a

growing trend toward the "special" in the late fifties.29

---

28 Manulis, born in 1915 in New York, was more pro-
ducer than director of this series. But like numerous pro-
ducer-directors at this time, his background reflects strong
theatrical interest. He directed the Westport Country Play-
house from 1945-1950. Producer-Director at CBS-TV from
1951-58 (Suspense, Climax, inc.) before becoming Head of
Production: 20th Century Fox Television; now President,
Martin Manulis Productions, Ltd, producers of film Days
of Wine and Roses with Warner Bros. (International Tele-
vision Almanac, p. 186.)

29 The specials begun in the middle fifties were

still present, but shows such as Best of Broadway and Play-
wrights '56 (1955-56 season) had only one season "runs.
A resurgence of "specials" in the late fifties (DuPont, 
Sunday Showcase) would stand out in seasons which featured
very little anthology drama.
Two directors who came to prominence for Playhouse 90 work were John Frankenheimer and Ralph Nelson.\(^3\) Frankenheimer, one of television's youngest directors, was a former NBC staff director. Nelson, a former actor, directed Serling's "Requiem for a Heavyweight" and several seasons of Chrysler Corporation's Climax anthology.

**ABC Television Directors.**

ABC Television's success in the field of anthology drama centered on but two major series, US Steel Hour and Celanese Theater. The US Steel Hour -- on ABC only two seasons before being lured away by CBS -- and Celanese Theater (1951-52) evidence the brief but high-calibre drama on that network. The work of producer-director Alex Segal is prominent in these series' achievements. The Motorola Hour, as an alternate program to US Steel, enjoyed only a moderate success but was headed by a producer who would later gain greater recognition -- Herbert Brodkin.

**Alex Segal.** Mr. Segal enjoyed a lengthy theatrical career before joining ABC to direct the Steel Hour. He

\[^3\]Frankenheimer had a brief but spectacular career with Playhouse 90. He has subsequently directed for films (Seven Days in May, 1964). Nelson directed the Old Vic company in "Hamlet" for the Show of Month series in 1959. He also turned to film direction; Requiem for a Heavyweight and Lilies of the Field.
received his M.A. degree from Carnegie Tech and, following World War II, played in summer stock and directed at the Provincetown Wharf Theater. His teaching career at the University of Montana was short-lived because of a conflict of ideas with the dean; he subsequently resigned and became affiliated with ABC as a production-assistant. In addition to Oelanese Theater, Segal's directing achievements lie with the two-year reign of US Steel (1953-1955) on ABC.

In 1953 the Theatre Guild had contracted with ABC for the production of live drama (on a cost-plus-fixed-fee basis). ABC was to provide the technical personnel, including Segal, for the productions. By a union policy similar to that of NBC at this time (but unlike CBS's) Segal could relay directions to crew and cameramen only through a technical director.

Segal apparently drove himself and those who worked with him at a furious pitch of excitement and exhaustion.

In the field of hour-long drama, where competition was unusually keen, Oelanese during this one season achieved unusual distinction. The show was packaged from the William Morris Agency which had access to established Broadway hits by playwrights identified with the Playwrights Co. -- Maxwell Anderson, S. N. Behrman, Phillip Barry, Elmer Rice O'Neill, Robert Sherwood. It offered the most authentic reproduction of stage hits since concentration was on script, not the star or production. Supposedly, each author was given the opportunity to control adaptation of the script. (Hawes, op. cit., p. 66)
His dictatorial policy often incensed established stars unaccustomed to such discipline. His rule, simply stated, was: "I have a rule: everything is done my way -- it's best!"32

Before the US Steel Hour shifted to the CBS Network in the 1955-56 season, its last season featured two productions worth singling out: "The Rack" by Rod Serling and Mac Hyman's "No Time for Sergeants." Although Segal's approach to directing was highly emotional and autocratic, he worked repeatedly with the same crews at ABC and gained highly professional results.33

Herbert Brodkin. Brodkin, like many of his contemporary producer-director associates, gained theatrical

32Sidney Shalett, "TV's Shrieking Genius," The Saturday Evening Post, October 16, 1954, page 23. As Chapter V will note, Schaefer's directing style is radically different from Segal's approach; nevertheless, it was the work of Segal, as much as that of any director which impressed Schaefer. Schaefer "was not really conscious of directors during these years, but Segal, (Franklin) Schaffner, (Robert) Mulligan used cameras to tell a story, matching television techniques with the performance, to make a unified production . . . They were not merely photographing a play." Telephone conversation with Mr. Schaefer, July 29, 1964.

33Segal's career was brief with US Steel at ABC, and the series did not rise to the heights of the 1953-55 period when it shifted to CBS. Nevertheless it remained on CBS until 1963. After television, Segal directed Compulsion and Who Was That Lady I saw You With on Broadway.
training at the Yale School of Drama. Born in New York in 1912, he was also scenery designer, production manager, and director for summer stock and Broadway. Brodkin also worked in the film industry as production executive at Paramount and Universal Studios.

Mr. Brodkin's career has been almost exclusively as a producer rather than director. During the years 1953-55, he supervised the Motorola and Elgin Hour productions which alternated with US Steel Hour. (The "Motorola" title was simply shifted to "Elgin" when the former sponsor felt that the expenses were too great to continue in the 1954-55 season.)

In the 1955-56 season Brodkin organized Showcase Productions to produce the Alcoa-Goodyear Hour with Philip Barry, Jr. as associate producer and Sidney Lumet as director. This marked the end of the much-honored Philco-Goodyear Playhouse which, for eight years, had gained fame under the Coe-producing influence.34

From the above discussion of television's early

---

34 Brodkin's brief career with Alcoa was for the extent of that series — two years. He subsequently formed his own production company, producing The Nurses and Defenders on CBS.
directors in the mid-fifties, several concluding observations can be made:

1. **Network Rivalry to secure Top Directors and Dramatic Vehicles**

   Although by 1955 ABC had given up in the competitive battle for dramatic supremacy, the period from 1950-1955 marked major achievements in the anthology plays (and production/direction accomplishment). Worthington Miner, who established *Studio One*, and Fred Coe, creator of *Philco Playhouse*, were innovators who encouraged directing skills and writing achievements. (The keenness of competition was observed by *Variety* at this time: "*Studio One* and *Philco* are in a dead heat for the best in their class. *Studio* combats *Philco*’s general superiority in scripts with the slickest producing-directing on television.")\(^{35}\) Ironically, this was as true in 1954-55 as it was in 1948-49. ABC had made a valiant attempt to compete on a high artistic level with its rivals (*Celanese Theater* and *US Steel Hour*), but withdrew completely in 1955. The directing talents of Alex Segal were a contributing factor in the brief but successful series.

2. **Producer-Directors were generally theatre-oriented.**

   With few exceptions, the outstanding directors and

\(^{35}\) *Variety*, July 20, 1955, p. 27.
producers during these years had extensive theatre backgrounds. Careers encompassed technical theatre (including scene design) as well as directing and acting. Although Miner had directed on Broadway, this was more the exception than the rule. Most of these men had directed in summer stock or in community theatres. Several had been educated at the Yale Drama School (including Coe, Delbert Mann, Herbert Brodkin, and Schaefer), and three, as stated earlier, had brief teaching careers in theatre (Alex Segal, Paul Nickell, and Albert McCleery).

Although in the early years television dramas were often highly imitative of stage productions, the directors soon brought inventiveness and technical skill to these works. By the 1954-55 season the producer-directors had applied television's uniqueness to traditional theatrical standards.

3. **Some Producer-Directors were "independent" of the Network**

Although the networks generally staffed producers and directors for dramatic shows, the Kraft Theater was produced and directed by the J. Walter Thompson Agency and, therefore, reflected an "outside" concept of production control.

---

36 Supra, p. 31. The work of McCleery is described in Chapter II.
The networks maintained, in varying degrees, creative control, however. A network executive producer represented the network "interests," and at two networks (ABC, NBC) a "staff" (or technical) director was also in the control room. The networks were unable then to completely wrest control from outside agencies which had dominated radio programming.

**Producer-Director Schaefer and the Hallmark "specials" Seasons**

**Schaefer's Background.**

Prior to the 1955-56 season Schaefer had "staged" the Shakespearean productions of "Hamlet" and "Richard II" under Albert McCleery, and had directed the "Macbeth" adaptation. His background in theatre was far more extensive than that of his contemporaries, however, including State Fair Musicals as well as producing accomplishments at New York's City Center and on Broadway. In Honolulu, as a member of the Army entertainment section, he directed more than fifty musicals, plays, and vaudeville units that were flown and jeeped to advance combat bases. One of the productions was G.I. Hamlet which starred Major Maurice Evans.

Schaefer's producing and directing responsibilities included co-producing John Patrick's Teahouse of the August Moon on Broadway (with Evans) as well as in London. He was also artistic director and producer for two years at the
New York City Center Drama Company in the early fifties and, prior to this time, was executive producer for the company. During this engagement (which extended for eight weeks during the summers) Schaefer presented sixteen productions, among them *Devil's Disciple* with Maurice Evans and *The Male Animal*, starring Elliot Nugent. Both moved to Broadway theatres for extended runs following City Center engagements.

Schaefer's interest in musical comedy is evident from the numerous musical plays he staged both overseas and, later, at the Dallas State Fair Musicals; in Dallas he had staged over twenty musicals before the Hallmark season in 1955.37 And like many of his colleagues in television, he was educated at the Yale Drama School.38

---

37 Schaefer would prefer more musical comedy offerings on Hallmark, and, generally, expresses dislike for the "arty" reference to *Hall of Fame* which he feels conveys a stuffiness. But he notes: "We have had more success with the serious play probably because you can get an emotional excitement which is pretty universal. There is a basic difficulty in special comedy shows. You have to treat it almost like a New Yorker cartoon—which will appeal to some people, not to others. To that extent I have been more successful with the serious "Little Moons," and "Disraelis" . . . but if I didn't have the chance to do others I would be complaining bitterly." (personal interview, September 9, 1963, and interview with Pennsylvania State students) *TV Guide* reports that for the 1964-65 season "Schaefer hopes to present a musical comedy as a change of pace among the six specials scheduled." (*TV Guide*, March 28, 1964, p. 29)

38 Schaefer's early life was spent in Wallingford, Conn., where he was born in 1920. He attended high school in Oak Park, Illinois, and graduated from Lafayette College,
The 1955-56 Season

The Hallmark Hall of Fame joined Producers' Showcase (then in its second season) for the 1955-56 season as a ninety minute once-a-month specials series. NBC continued to lead CBS in live dramatic anthologies, adding the daily Matinee Theatre and Playwrights '56 (weekly) to the above "specials" productions. CBS again indicated its interest in the drama by competing with its own "special" series: The Ford Star Jubilee was a once-a-month ninety minute special on that network, replacing Best of Broadway. Ford would offer a musical version of Maxwell Anderson's "High Tor" in January of that season.

Hallmark news releases for the new format this season would include: Maurice Evans, producer, host and "to star in several;" Mildred Freed Alberg, associate producer, and Jack Rayel as NBC executive producer. George Schaefer was to be director.39

Easton, Pennsylvania (which honored him with a Doctor of Literature degree in 1963). Mr. Schaefer is married to actress Mildred Trares; they reside in New York City.

Schaefer's father was a jewelry and trophy salesman, and a "preacher on Sundays." Both his mother and father were interested in amateur theatre; his mother was also musically inclined, singing in various concert choirs. Schaefer's two brothers are both professors of English, one at U.C.L.A. and one at Miami University (Oxford, Ohio). Telephone conversation with Mr. Schaefer, July 29, 1964.

39Mrs. Alberg was a producer of radio programs for fifteen years before her association with Evans in the theatre. In 1950 she "took a breather from radio to
The Hall of Fame 1955-56. In its new format Hallmark offered the following plays: "Alice in Wonderland," "Devil's Disciple," "Dream Girl," "The Corn is Green," "The Good Fairy," "Taming of the Shrew," and "Cradle Song." Each production lasted ninety minutes, once a month (at irregular dates) from 4:00 to 5:30 P. M. on Sunday afternoons. Evans, as producer, also appeared in two of the productions, "The Devil's Disciple" and "Taming of the Shrew."

Jack Gould, critic for The New York Times, took note of Schaefer's direction in the productions that season:

"Alice in Wonderland:" (starred Eva LeGallienne and Bobby Clark.)

Alice deprived of her adventure. Instead of finding a wonderland, she was overcome by it. . . . production consciously tried to be funny which took nonsense and fun out of it. Episodic glimpses . . . lacked virtue of simplicity and unifying influence of a child's imagination, making unreal both completely plausible and utterly enchanting(?).

accompany my husband (an actor) touring the country with Evans' company of The Devil's Disciple." As a gracious gesture, Evans added her to the crowd scenes. "I had an opportunity to observe his craftsmanship at close range . . . convinced me that TV needed more of the same." She subsequently adapted Evans' Hamlet TV production in 1952, and became associate producer for the up-coming season. Mildred Freed Alberg, "Our Fight Against TV Taboos," Saturday Evening Post, March 21, 1959, pp. 57-58.
When Alice should have been ethereal in quality too often it was literal. 40

"Devil's Disciple:" (starred Evans, Ralph Bellamy, and Teresa Wright.)

Schaefer's direction had the merit of effective simplicity. Evans, in observing the gentlemanly amenities that precede an appointment with the hangman was articulate and sincere but always debonaire. 41

"Dream Girl", by Elmer Rice, was adapted by S. Mark Smith for the Hall of Fame production on December 11. Gould was critical of the direction, casting, and the adaptation:

The play, as Elmer Rice wrote it, ended up with more an actress' vehicle than a dramatist's triumph. Miss Blaine deserves recognition for her earnestness, but the role was not really for her. Demeanor was crisp, assertive (which is reason why she is so effective in musical comedy) and (Vivian Blaine) she did not capture contrast between reality and make-believe.

Schaefer had a busy afternoon. Because of episodic nature of "Dream Girl" scene transitions were quick and fast. Viewer was impressed by resourcefulness of costume change and backstage shortcuts. The only disadvantage was that tricks tended to show and get a little in the way of make-believe. 42

Gould praised the remaining four plays of the

41 Ibid., November 21, 1955.
42 Ibid., December 12, 1955.
1955-56 season, commenting favorably on the work of George Schaefer.

"The Corn is Green" had a cast of established stars and newcomers. At the time James Dean and John Kerr had relatively brief theatrical and television careers behind them. The production also starred Eva LeGallienne, Joan Lorring, and Melville Cooper. Gould said that "Miss LeGallienne and Mr. Kerr contributed sensitive and perceptive portrayals of the English school teacher and Welsh mining boy. Schaefer's direction facile and unobtrusive."^43

"The Good Fairy," an adaptation of Ferenc Molnar's work, on February 5, featured a number of prominent celebrities: Julie Harris, Walter Slezak, Cyril Richard and Roddy McDowell. Gould said that

the story of the movie usherette who takes a hand in activities of everyone she meets . . .

a whimsy ideally suited to TV. Julie Harris contributed a kind of incandescent performance. Staged in high comic style by Schaefer.^44

"The Taming of the Shrew," which starred Maurice Evans and Lili Palmer, drew praise from the critics for directing, acting, and adaptation:

Schaefer's direction inspired. Composition of some scenes can rank with the best . . . A most

^43 Gould, January 9, 1956.

^44 Ibid, February 6, 1956.
infectiously inventive production. Done in Commedia dell'arte, the Shakespearean comedy emerged as a free-wheeling lark replete to the appearance of Kate and Petruchio in a boxing ring.45

Gould and Kirkley both commented on the "unusual production techniques," such as masks and costumes, which greatly aided the production.46 Gould called the performance "the cleverest, gayest, most satisfactory Shakespearean comedy staged in a lifetime of any medium . . . "47

Paul Jorgenson commented that "many loyal Shakespearean scholars doubtless approached the performance with a dutiful sense of pleasure." He further noted:

Apprehension seemed justified, for Evans, with his slight physique, soulful eyes, was not an obvious choice for the swashbuckling, whip cracking wife-taming Petruchio . . . but any advance notices were dispelled after a few minutes of the performance.48

46 Donald Kirkley, Baltimore Sun, March 20, 1956.
47 Gould, Ibid. Jakes notes that "ordinarily critics had scorned unusual production techniques because they felt that the story had been sacrificed. This was not true in the case of "Taming of the Shrew." (Frank Jakes, "A Study of Standards Imposed by Four Leading Television Critics with Respect to Live Television Drama) - unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Ohio State University, 1960, p. 63.
"Cradle Song," starring Siobhan McKenna and Judith Anderson, drew the most laudatory review by Gould for the season thus far:

To have missed it was to miss one of the most beautiful and deeply stirring programs that television has offered. The beloved story of the little girl who is raised in a convent and finally bids farewell to the nuns in order to become a wife was told with an exaltation of spirit, a stirring loveliness . . . emotional intensity. . . .

Schaefer's direction was altogether superb. His groupings of the sisters and novices were achieved effortlessly and highlighted by little details that made the women seem individuals as well as nuns. Composition of many scenes was extraordinarily striking.49

The play was adapted for TV by James Costigan from the work by Gregorio and Maria Martinez Sierra.50

"Cradle Song," on May 6, completed the seven ninety-minute productions under Maurice Evans as producer.

Burdened with too many theatrical commitments, Maurice Evans bowed out of the Hall of Fame productions with the understanding that they "make room for me when I wanted to do another show."51

50 Costigan undoubtedly drew ideas from this play for his award-winning, 1958 production "Little Moon of Alban."
51 Kramer, op. cit., p. 27.
Evans' Shakespearean and Shaw productions generally came off with honors; "Cradle Song" and "Corn is Green" had strong emotional and human interest appeals (and were critically praised), while "The Good Fairy," "Dream Girl," and "Alice in Wonderland" (though two received unfavorable comments) helped lend balance to the season. The season, then, seemed to reflect the criteria for selection which led Hallmark into the "specials" season:

1. must have weight and importance
2. appeal to wide variety of viewers
3. must be in good taste
4. lend balance and diversity to entire season

Schaefer's direction had been commented upon in most of Gould's longer reviews. It was called "superb," and "inspired," achieving "merit of effective simplicity" and "The Good Fairy" staged in high comic style. Productions which were criticized also received unfavorable comment on direction. This was particularly true of "Dream Girl" in which Gould pointed out the inappropriateness of Vivian Blaine and also the "episodic nature of the production . . . scene transitions were quick and fast."

---

52Homer Heck, commenting on the first season, said that "Evans rather high-handedly selected a few shows which Mr. Hall didn't like. 'The Corn is Green' was one of them." (Personal Interview, December 30, 1963)

The 1956-57 Season

At this time, as Sturcken has noted, no one was aware that the end was in sight for anthology drama series. But by the end of the season Alcoa-Goodyear, Kaiser Aluminum, Robert Montgomery and Producer's Showcase would be dropped by the networks.\(^5^4\)

Just a few years earlier industry personnel were predicting that the two-hour drama as a regular series was inevitable. The "spectaculars," such as Best of Broadway, Producer's Showcase, Playwright's '56, Hallmark, and Ford Jubilee, had infused a new excitement into dramatic programming. There were ominous signs, however, to indicate that sponsors were beginning to re-evaluate the rush into "specials." In terms of audience response many of them had been disappointing. Perhaps sponsors had hoped for more of the results that "Peter Pan" received and felt short-changed. Ford, for example, declined to renew the Jubilee for its second season. Critics had also become harder to please: a series of eight reviews in the New York Times gave eight Kraft Theatre productions unfavorable criticism. Sturcken summarizes in this way:

Television drama had survived the many program upheavals because series such as Philco, Kraft,

\(^{54}\) Sturcken, op. cit, pp. 263-264.
Studio One had maintained steady ratings, large audiences, and a satisfying sales report for the sponsor. Thus, in spite of the fact that they had been pace-setters in terms of quality, they had withstood the flood of mysteries, situation comedies, and quiz shows. Live television, at its best, had achieved great dramatic production and great original playwriting.55

Despite the slackening pace of television specials, the season would usher in a new ninety minute "special" weekly series which would temporarily delay the complete decline of the anthology series: Playhouse 90. Producing and directing talents would be markedly revealed in this new CBS series initiated by vice-president Hubbell Robinson.56

The Hall of Fame -- 1956-57. Mrs. Alberg, who was associate producer under Maurice Evans, became executive producer of her own (newly created) company, Milberg Productions.57 Mr. Schaefer returned with the title of "producer" as well as "director."58

---

55 Ibid.

56 Supra, Pages 102, 103.

57 Supra, Page 113.

58 Schaefer's responsibilities did not actually change from the previous year, however. He would now receive "title credit" for the producing work carried on in the 1955-56 season. He had produced jointly (with Evans) Hall of Fame in the last season, but since it carried the title of "Maurice Evans Presents Hall of Fame," he was not credited with producing title on the program series. "Producing" referred to the creative, non-business, production work closely related to the directing function. Mrs. Alberg, as "Executive-Producer,"
The productions were: "Man and Superman," "The Little Foxes," "The Lark," "There Shall Be No Night," "Yeoman of the Guard," and "Born Yesterday."

"The Lark" brought together the artistic combination of Schaefer and actress Julie Harris. Both the staging by Schaefer and acting of Miss Harris were highly praised.

Jack Gould (who noticeably included "directing" in his reviews) extended himself even further in praising the directing accomplishment of "The Lark"; he commented on the work of Schaefer in both the review and Sunday article following the production on February 10, 1957:

... the production had a majestic simplicity and cleanliness of pictorial line that were striking.

In a succession of episodes stemming from the trial of Joan, cameras were moved about the stage with rare facility and deftness. Mr. Schaefer achieved fluidity of motion that was one of the season's directorial high spots.59

What a heavenly relief from the average awkward spectacular. "The Lark" was one of those ninety minute dramas that make ownership of a TV set so worthwhile. Direction was one of the season's finest examples of that much abused art. Schaefer achieved an uncanny fluidity of movement; his use of cameras was superb... he employed scenery most sparingly.

---

continued to handle the business responsibilities, now under her own enterprise. (Telephone conversation between writer and Miss Sybil Trubin of Compass Productions, June 18, 1964.)

The stark simplicity to whole setting made for exciting pictorial composition. Mr. Schaefer knows what he is about.60

Gould complimented Hallmark Cards as well as Schaefer for their "impeccable taste and judgment in matters theatrical."61 Donald Kirkley also remarked about the production technique in his review. He thought that the television version had "not only preserved the emotional impact and dramatic values, but had heightened them with intimate close-ups."62

Besides Miss Harris as Joan, the production featured Eli Wallach, Basil Rathbone, and Boris Karloff. Julie Harris, as Gould observed, gave a "performance of deep beauty, inspiration, and excitement."63 She, in turn, has often praised Schaefer's directing ability. In a recent letter she says:

He has the unique capacity... to grasp completely the author's intention in each scene and to make those intentions vividly clear to the actors. He has a marvelous capacity for organization. The rehearsal schedule is always adhered to and consequently actors are not forced to wait around when they are not needed. He allows ample time to polish each scene as it comes.

60 Ibid., February 17, 1957.
61 Ibid.
62 Donald Kirkley, The Baltimore Sun, February 8, 1957.
Mr. Schaefer is the best organized and comes better prepared than any TV director I have worked with. You know that he has worked on the script diligently and never comes to a rehearsal without knowing just what he wants.64

Newsweek magazine complimented Alberg Productions for the quality TV presented during the season, noting the direction of "The Lark": "Its tone of subdued pomp and tragedy was given extra dimension by a hovering agile camera." The article stressed the fact that the play's cost was only two-thirds that of other usually inferior ninety-minute color productions.65

A production of "Man and Superman" in the fall of this season (the second Shaw play in two years) starred Maurice Evans. The play and production were praised by critic


Schaefer echoed the important quality of organization in an interview statement: "Organization is the most appreciated value in directing . . . Can you get performances from people? Do you have imagination? These questions are asked as in other media. But in terms of television, it is organization, an understanding of the problems and delays and difficulties which are tied up in anything mechanical . . . lenses, cables, etc. (Tele-tape interview with Pennsylvania State students, March, 1964.)"

65 Newsweek, February 25, 1957, p. 66.
Jack Gould, New York Times:

... the individual direction of Schaefer ... and ... a beautifully balanced cast, gave a theatrical lark to the program. It was ninety minutes of stagecraft that restored the viewer's faith in the home screen.

Direction was constantly inventive and contributed many amusing touches ... a play to begin with and a company that knows what to do with it.66

The adaptation procedures in the production "There Shall Be No Night," the Robert Sherwood play adapted by Morton Wishengrad for television on March 17, 1957, were unfavorably reviewed by Kirkley and Gould:

I believe the play needed more time. The entire point of the play was missed because the adapter had to cut an hour of a compact story ... Extra time was badly needed to explain the complex situation.67

So much of original script cut that substance was sacrificed for straight story-telling with sound effects ... Temptation to be topical obscured the timeless dimension of the idealist who comes to the realization that bearing arms is the only solution ... Sherwood's specific eloquence and indignation was vitiated.68

Wishengrad had presented a modernized version of the Sherwood play (involving the Soviet invasion of Finland in 1939),


67 Donald Kirkley, Baltimore Sun, March 19, 1957.

updating it to correspond to the 1956 Russian invasion of Hungary.

Gould's most severe criticism for directing was for the production "The Little Foxes" by Lillian Hellman. The drama, adapted for television by Robert Hartung, featured a celebrity cast including Greer Garson, E. G. Marshall, and Franchot Tone. Schaefer's direction was judged "not... his best." "On more than one occasion, there was visual confusion and excessive concentration on actor speaking a given line rather than on the face of the actor affected by the line." He also commented on the role of Greer Garson in Hellman's portrayal of the South's new rich: "In a production which was interesting, if not too incisive theatre, the quality of evil (in Miss Garson) never seemed to have the dimension and depth needed." Schaefer's final production of the season was an adaptation of Gilbert and Sullivan's "Yeomen of the Guard."

---

69 Mr. Hartung, now associate producer for Compass Productions, has adapted numerous productions for Hallmark, including "Winterset," "Ah Wilderness," "Arsenic and Old Lace," "Pygmalion," "Cyrano de Bergerac," and "Teahouse of the August Moon." He received the TV-Radio Writers Annual award for his adaptation of "Victoria Regina." His background is further considered in Chapter IV.


71 Ibid.
which again reflected Hallmark's interest in "lending balance and diversity to the entire season." The operetta, starring Alfred Drake and Celeste Holm, also emphasized Schaefer's increasing interest in musical comedy. J. P. Shanley commented:

*Schaefer's direction:* a versatile craftsman with an enviable record on stage and TV successes was masterful in guiding "Yeoman." Under his direction the play maintained fine balance, with the emphasis transferred from music to comedy to music with great skill.72

"Born Yesterday," which opened the season, is worthy of special mention for several reasons; it was the only production during the 1956 season not directed by Schaefer, and it received, perhaps, more unfavorable publicity than any play in the series' history.

Mr. Thomas McAvity, Vice-President for NBC-TV said in a news release before the production that "we feel quite certain that "Born Yesterday" will prove to be one of the landmarks of the television season . . . the combined talents of a Mary Martin and a Garson Kanin virtually guarantee a sure fire result."73 With the words "sure-fire" and "landmark," Mr. McAvity had unwittingly described the

---

73 NBC Release, July 31, 1956.
impact which the production would have. Garson Kanin, who had written and directed the show on Broadway, insisted on complete control of the play and would not delete certain risque double-entendres which Mrs. Alberg had argued should be eliminated. Kanin insisted that the lines had been accepted in the context of the play by theatre-going adults, and that the lines had gone "over the heads" of youngsters in the movie version. Mrs. Alberg describes the uproar as a result of the television production:

The problem was that Mary Martin (as a "kept woman" in the play) had appeared on "Peter Pan" on two occasions and had established a different image. The 7:30-9:00 time on Sunday evening was the worst possible time. Telephone operators on duty at Rockefeller Center said the switchboard lighted up all night... Then the letters came. Mother Superior of a convent school in Chicago, guided by the Hall of Fame reputation for unimpeachable taste, had given nuns and students special permission to watch... Every protest from the public was answered with a letter of apology.

Obviously there are times when integrity must be tempered with artistic control to strike a balance acceptable to the public.74

Joyce Hall's new rule was set forth in a policy meeting following the show: every show was to be suitable for the entire family.75

74Mildred Freed Alberg, "Our Fight Against TV Taboos," The Saturday Evening Post, March 21, 1959, p. 28ff.

75Ibid.
The ninety-minute productions during this season illustrated a more flexible programming pattern in terms of time of presentation. Whereas the previous season's productions were scheduled from 4:00 to 5:30 P.M., program times for the 1956-57 season were at 7:30, 8:30 and 9:00 P.M.

The Hall of Fame season had once again brought major dramatic achievements (particularly "The Lark") and Schaefer's directing accomplishments were becoming more evident (with Gould, especially, noting his work.) After the disastrous results of "Born Yesterday" it was evident to Hallmark that Schaefer was extremely important to the Hall of Fame; it was one of the few productions he had not produced and directed.

The 1957-58 Season

Although the Hall of Fame would return on NBC, it had become apparent that it would soon stand alone as a television anthology drama series. The creative climate for the producer-director of live drama was coming to an end. By the end of the season every major dramatic undertaking by the network would be terminated. Symptomatic of the drama's upheaval was the resignation of Pat Weaver, president.

These would include: Kraft, Philco (Alcoa-Goodyear) Robert Montgomery Presents, Producer's Showcase, Playwrights '56, Kaiser Aluminum Hour, and Matinee Theatre.
of NBC, in the summer of 1956 and Producer Fred Coe's move to CBS in 1957. During Weaver's tenure CBS had overtaken NBC in nighttime program ratings and had stayed ahead.

Sturcken has observed that at this time in television history the period of daring experimentation had passed away, and with it, live television drama. Competition, commercial considerations and ratings were the keys to television's future... When the big networks approached their testing time, they panicked in the face of an onslaught of cheap filmed drama. NBC, which had been the leader in live dramatic programming, quickly abdicated to CBS.77

CBS, in addition to Playhouse 90 inaugurated the previous season, presented a "special" dramatic series which was also to gain considerable attention, the DuPont Show of the Month. DuPont's adaptation of Wilder's "The Bridge of San Luis Rey" was singled out for special critical acclaim. Robert Lewis Shayon was impressed by the faithfulness to the original work and the use of television techniques to intensify the story line:

The challenge was to retain something of enchanting power of the author's urbane, poignant and stoic narrative. The adapter achieved playing scenes out of the episodic tangle of relationships (even if the characters were simplified in most cases at the cost of a clear understanding of their motivation and depth).78

77 Sturcken, op. cit., p. 289.
At this time DuPont, like Hallmark, had decided that audience size should not take precedence over other marketing objectives. An agency spokesman gave an optimistic account of the new DuPont series on a once-a-month basis:

The advertiser who is interested solely in institutional values of "specials" is a rare bird but he is still present. DuPont Show of the Month has nothing aimed specifically at dealers nor are products pushed. All we want is the best possible atmosphere for DuPont to do business.\(^7\)

Talent Associates, producers of DuPont, presented "specials" over CBS patterned closely after the Hallmark format of ninety-minute productions, well-known stars, and feature of the adaptation play.

**The Films, Westerns.** Two aspects of film's invasion of network airtime that season were: (1) the tremendous increase in use of old feature films, and (2) the flood

\(^7\)Evelyn Konrad, "Coming Battle for Sponsor Identification,"*Sponsor*, February 22, 1958, p. 66. The Show of the Month became the Show of the Week in 1961. Fielder Cook, producer of several DuPont shows in the 1961-1964 seasons, commented about the changing philosophy at DuPont: "DuPont cancelled after this year (1964), but this was no surprise; even though they had good success (Peabody award, Emmy nomination) they wanted to get out of live drama ... DuPont and US Steel are companies which should go forth as Hallmark has done, but they haven't ... US Steel kept whittling down plays to something which lacked the dramatic excitement of a soap opera ... were not saying anything. They were expecting the woman of the house to buy a steel fence ... appalling." (Personal Interview, Mr. Cook, January 30, 1964).
of Hollywood westerns. Live drama faced a threat in both old and new films.

The economic boycott of television by the film industry was now past history. Part of the reason for Hollywood's withholding feature films became known as the "1948 bottleneck," a date which marked the time after which additional payments must be made to various personnel associated with a picture if re-run on television. When the film industry finally released the more current hits, there was, undoubtedly, proven entertainment to compete with live television anthologies. The scope of these operations is indicated by one sale of 750 Paramount pictures to the Music Corporation of America for $50,000,000. These included Mutiny on the Bounty, Foxes of Harrow, The Yearling, Les Miserables, The Ox-Bow Incident, Champion, Notorious, and Cry, the Beloved Country.

Probably more disheartening to the creative producers and directors at this time, however, was the surge of western drama which had engulfed the programming schedules of the networks. The New York Times noted that, while there had been one western series especially made for television in

80 Ibid., p. 275.
81 Ibid.
1954, "The Lone Ranger," next season would see twenty-three on the networks. And in just six months, between September, 1956, and February, 1957, eleven new western series were begun nationally.

The trend to western films was primarily the responsibility of the American Broadcasting Company. ABC, unable to compete with its larger network rivals in programming, soon saw a path to sales leadership which would be less costly as well. Although the great rush toward westerns was initiated by Gunsmoke in 1955, ABC had countered with Wyatt Earp and Cheyenne that same year. Numerous imitations quickly followed in successive years: Wells Fargo, Broken Arrow, Zane Grey Theater in 1956-57; Have Gun, Will Travel, Trackdown, Maverick, Sugarfoot, Tombstone, Colt '45, Restless Gun, Wagon Train, The Californians and Union Pacific in 1957-58. Nine of these were ABC shows, as compared to four for each of the other two networks.

Domination of West Coast Programming. The influx of western films and feature films meant that the West Coast had, for the first time, displaced the East as a major center of programming. In prime evening hours Hollywood produced seventy-one programs (fifty-nine were films and twelve were live) and New York originated thirty. The networks, pretending that the ratio of live to film was not as great as it seemed, listed their own set of figures. But these
figures were for the whole broadcast week and did not reflect the change in evening time.  

The artistic consequences of the shift to West Coast programming meant, in most cases, a minimum of creativity and a maximum of Hollywood escapism. The creative forces on the East Coast now turned to other outlets for their talents. A column by John Crosby best summarizes the death of live drama:

In this last season, television people rang up a record on Broadway that has been awe-inspiring. Two for the Seesaw was written by William Gibson, directed by Arthur Penn and produced by Fred Coe— all came out of television. Look Homeward Angel, which won Pulitzer and Circle Critics prizes was directed by another TV fugitive, George Roy Hill. Alex Segal directed Compulsion and Vincent Donehue directed the Antoinette Perry award winner, Sunrise at Campobello . . . And even more remarkable is the fact that everything that TV people had anything to do with was a hit. There were no flops that I know of. And in films, Delbert Mann is all but lost to the movies and rumor has it John Frankenheimer is joining them in those lush pastures.

The generally dwindling ratings for live anthology works (and, as a result, the search by sponsors for larger audiences with new types of attractions), would be an acid


test for a sponsor who would declare: "Its not how many people we've reached but how we reach them."


The productions of "Little Moon of Alban" and "Green Pastures," which highlighted the season, would establish Schaefer as one of television's finest producer-directors and generally enhance the Hallmark reputation for prestige dramatic programming.

"Green Pastures" was not only a directorial achievement, but also pointed up two problems successfully overcome by the production staff: (1) The Mike Todd Anniversary Party was scheduled opposite the production, and critics (who were to personally attend this "party"), were invited to a dress rehearsal of the Hallmark play the afternoon of the performance; (2) the play was acclaimed by critics as well as "pressure" groups for its tasteful handling of race

---

84 Schaefer received Sylvania Award for Outstanding Contribution—Producer—Director, Radio-TV Daily Award as Director of Year.
and religion. The mail was the heaviest Hallmark ever received and was overwhelmingly favorable, including the letters from the South.

Some fifty newspapers ran editorials deploiring the "Todd clap-trap and urged us to do the show again."\(^{85}\) The critics' reviews cited Schaefer's direction, the emotional quality of the play, and the unfortunate competition of the Todd program:

> The critics who saw the preview had agreed that it was one of the most beautiful things ever staged on television.\(^{86}\) Green Pastures was as fresh and endearing and as moving as ever . . . The play still has its tremendous moments. The color was superb and frequently looked like a religious painting.\(^{87}\) TV last night had one of its most glorious evenings . . . deeply moving, vastly entertaining. Producer-Director Schaefer (under Mrs. Alberg) mounted the play with masterful understanding of the medium. Many individual scenes breathtaking in simplicity and totally reflected Connelly's report on heaven and a mixed-up world. It was unfortunate that it was scheduled opposite Mike Todd but Milberg Production can take pride in their glowing achievement. It will long survive in the memory of everyone privileged to have seen it.\(^{88}\)

\(^{85}\)Alberg, op. cit., 60.

\(^{86}\)Donald Kirkley, *Baltimore Sun*, October 21, 1957.


Schaefer's production retained simplicity, dignity and was blessed by that rarity in television -- a cast of skillful and spirited actors. (Shayon contrasts the opposite Mike Todd party as a "degrading display to be broadcast nationally over publicly-franchised airwaves.")

Schaefer's skills as producer-director were fully taxed by the adaptation of this stage work to television. The play was a test of selectivity and refinement, as well as one of the ability to heighten qualities through the unique advantages of the television medium. Schaefer described the play and its problems this way:

Marc wrote this perfectly beautiful play and does not, I regret to say, always know what's so wonderful about it; so we had to go back to his play and really do our own which was what went on the air. He disapproved thoroughly of the show... which is incredible, hard to believe. The actual final adaptation was all Connelly's words but the treatment was done by Bob (Hartung) and me.

... Its such an episodic play. You have to deal with each little piece, polish it to perfection and then slowly fit them in. It was a most complicated mosaic... a gigantic, jigsaw puzzle with every little piece having to be in place.

The television cameras and "flashback" technique were

---


30 Kramer, op. cit., P. 51. Interview between Miss Kramer and Mr. Schaefer. (Schaefer's comments in second paragraph would seem to reflect Gould's awareness of "individual scenes" in his comment above.)
effectively used to clarify meaning and to condense the
action of the drama to the playing time of ninety minutes.

Connelly had taken the writings of Roark Bradford
and to them added his own interpretation which, as Stark
Young comments, often suggests a lack of taste. In the
adaptation, for example, the Harlem night life scene was
completely revised. Gone were the lines delineating the
mass of the people as lecherous; instead, a few well chosen
shots of the night club audience were used.

The original production had utilized the Sunday
School scene at the opening of the play to set the stage
for the entire play. It was used by Connelly only at the
opening; later the preacher's voice was used to cover scene
transitions with narrative. In the Hallmark adaptation,
however, with greater understanding of modern "flashback"
techniques, Schaefer used it more as a connective device,
to begin each act and to bridge scenes which span great
periods of Biblical history. "The result added bits of
humor to the totality of the play, as well as to remind


audience that the presentation exists in the minds of children, children in a poor, uneducated environment."93

"Little Moon of Alban" by James Costigan was the first "original" production in the Hall of Fame's new format of ninety-minute specials.94 Costigan had been "commissioned" to write the play under a special "Fund for TV" established by Schaefer to encourage the writing of new plays. Because of the dwindling dramatic series, many writers had been lured into other fields of writing. It was thought that Hallmark should serve as an outlet for creativity by establishing a financial guarantee for promising ideas. Homer Heck explained the operation of the fund:

The Fund for TV has now fallen into disuse. Schaefer used it to try and find original material. He would have a small amount of money available. If a writer would come to George and say "I've got an idea" and if it sounded good, Schaefer could advance a sum of money to prepare a treatment . . . But actually, writers know us, what we want . . . and will come to us.95

93Kramer, op. cit., P. 54.

94The first original production on Hallmark Hall of Fame was the first presentation of Menotti's American opera "Amahl and the Night Visitors." Supra, p. 118.

95Personal statement with Homer Heck, December 30, 1963. The "Teleplay Writing Competition" was also a program to stimulate the writing of original dramatic works for TV. It was initiated in 1960 and is discussed in the next chapter (in the 1960-61 Hall of Fame season).
The Fund represented the Agency's respect for Schaefer's judgment regarding writing craftsmanship and his thorough understanding of the television medium. (This fund could, perhaps, also illustrate the difference between the "creative" producer as opposed to the "business" producer.) The critical response to "Little Moon", as well as the awards given it, substantiates Schaefer's judgment. Four Emmy awards (one to Schaefer for Best Direction of a Single Dramatic Program), The Sylvania, Peabody, and Christopher Awards, made "Little Moon" the most honored play in Hallmark's three seasons.

Unlike the adaptation of "Green Pastures" (which Schaefer had termed "a most complicated mosaic") the Costigan play, Schaefer felt, was easier to rehearse. "It was so beautifully tightly written . . . it was almost like doing a classic. When you do an original you always have the problem of improving it; in this play there was little of this."96 The author, writing the play especially for Julie Harris, was highly praised:

In the midst of violence and emotional strife, Costigan related with tenderness and delicacy the moral struggle between two individuals uncertain of their faiths . . . words

96Kramer, op. cit., Interview with Schaefer, p. 70.
had almost a poetic quality in their deep reverence and awareness of man's frailty. 97

Schaefer's direction was considered "as having exquisite attention to detail and complete sensitivity; camera work was superb. As good theatre should be, it was also an experience." 98

"Dial M For Murder," starred Maurice Evans and John Williams, and included many persons from the cast which had starred in the Broadway success. Crosby, Kirkley, and Gould all praised the performance on the Hall of Fame:

I could not remember a more pleasant and expert ninety minutes of television. (He noted the Broadway comparison and said that it had been transplanted to television "honed and pruned and polished." ) 99

The season's closing production was a swell suspense drama and received a topnotch production. In comparison with the hurried and ill-prepared deluge of mysteries on TV, this show was a delight. Evans turned in a first-rate job. 100

Schaefer directed with his usual fluidity. The sense of dimension he achieves in live TV is seldom matched elsewhere. 101


98 Ibid.


101 Ibid. (Kirkley agreed with Gould, noting "excellence of over-all production . . . applause for production techniques . . . " Baltimore Sun, April 28, 1958.)
The Paul Osborne work, "On Borrowed Time," received only a brief review by Gould; nevertheless, Schaefer's work was cited for "capturing the charm and warmth that Osborne provides in the script." The same review commented briefly that there had been less a note of poignancy in this version than in the stage play, and that the beginning moved more slowly than it should have.

The remaining productions in the season, "Twelfth Night" and "Hans Brinker," were not directed by Schaefer. The Shakespearean comedy of February 9 would convince Hallmark (for a time) that these comedies were too complicated and too dated for audience appreciation. Gould criticized Director David Greene for "making the ethereal quality of the play eighteenth century vaudeville." He added that there was

little sense of ensemble but rather a surplus of indiscriminate and episodic close-ups that imposed handicaps on the performers. In light high jinks, a delicate illusion is not always enhanced by microscopic scrutiny of how it is created. Play labored under elaborate and involved settings which often cluttered up the screen and injected a literal note conflicting with fantasy concept.


\[103\] *The Tempest* was telecast on February 3, 1960 and got mixed reviews.

The "Hans Brinker" production, starring Tab Hunter and Dick Buttons, was scheduled at an earlier (6:30) time on Sunday, February 9, 1958, to assure a large youth audience, and, consequently, produced the highest rating of any Hall of Fame show, 28.2. Sidney Lumet directed the show, which was praised primarily for the acting and skating accomplishments of Dick Buttons.

The Hall of Fame was a critical success during the season, chiefly on the basis of two award-winning plays, "Green Pastures" and "Little Moon of Alban." The Peabody and Sylvania awards recognized Hallmark for the "Outstanding Dramatic Series" and "for outstanding television entertainment." The sweeping citations were an indication of the high-calibre productions.

The 1958-59 Television Season

The weekly anthology drama series was virtually at an end. Playhouse 90 and Armstrong Circle Theatre, alternating with United States Steel Hour, were the only regularly scheduled series on the air.

It was the "occasional" special, begun by DuPont the previous season and Hallmark much earlier, which would help to fill the void left by the regularly scheduled drama series. These sponsors would attempt to renew sponsor identification (which they felt had been declining) and to reject the idea that large audiences are correlated to
increased sales. *Printer's Ink* commented on problem of sponsor identity:

Network sponsors, faced with the rising costs (for alternate week sponsorship $2,500,000), are coming to grips with the evidence that not enough viewers can identify the host of advertisers buying participation sponsorships . . . National advertisers are concerned because viewers don't recall the products on view. Research by Norman, Craig, and Kummel and Trendex Agency Study revealed that "live, creative, and non-violent TV is the best commercial buy." By this standard Lawrence Welk, Ed Sullivan, I've Got a Secret, Jack Benny, Ernie Ford, Price is Right, and Lassie are the most successful. Yet only *Price is Right* is in top ten of Trendex . . . These ideas could indicate that ratings have scant meaning because so many top-rated shows have low sponsor identification.105

NBC programmed over one hundred specials during the season in both the dramatic and variety formats: *The Emmy Awards*, *Hallmark*, *Wide Wide World*, and *Omnibus* were programs reflecting this search for corporate identification. CBS was to program Lowell Thomas' *High Adventure* specials, *Wonderful Town*, *Wizard of Oz* and *See It Now*. ABC would do two ninety-minute specials featuring Bing Crosby and Frank Sinatra.

105"TV Advertisers Jolted on Sponsor Identity," *Printer's Ink*, April 24, 1959, p. 14. Robert Sarnoff, NBC president, gave every indication that the pursuit of ratings was inevitable. Three sources best cite his philosophy: An NBC news release quoted him as saying that "television has become a vast and complex business -- far bigger than radio ever was, with higher stakes, greater risks, and larger areas of conflict. Because of the variety of conflicting interests and the size of the stakes, television has generated fierce competition, perhaps unparalleled in American enterprise . . . Some of the highest risk
Despite the occasional heightening of program quality, it was obvious that programming was now being dominated by quickly-made, filmed series from the West Coast. The extent of this domination (in Westerns) is realized in a Tuesday night prime-time programming by the American Broadcasting Company:

7:30 Sugarfoot
8:00 Cheyenne
8:30 Wyatt Earp
9:30 Rifleman
10:00 Naked City

In addition to such consecutive programming on one night by that network, there were three other westerns throughout the weekly schedule. CBS programmed three on its Saturday night schedule (Wanted Dead or Alive, Have Gun/Will Travel, and Gunsmoke), and NBC scattered seven throughout the week.

The press was watching the "erosion of network leadership in the East" in trade journals and general enterprises such as networking, have relatively low profit margins . . . (Address at NBC affiliates Meeting, New York October 23, 1958. NBC Release.)

Ratings are here to stay. The type and number of rating services might change in the future; but broadcasters, those who sponsor broadcasts, and those who star in them will want some yardstick to measure national circulation. (Sarnoff, "Letter to Radio-Television Editors," NBC Release.)

In the end it is always the public that sets a trend, not the broadcasters. (Cosmopolitan, January, 1964, p. 68.)
publications. One article appearing in Fortune, was written by Robert Austin Smith:

The increasing mediocrity has come from a score of seemingly unrelated happenings: The exodus of creative talent from television; the erosion of the network leadership in the east; and the coming of age of the film packagers... The departure of Pat Weaver from NBC was the precipitating incident. 106

The Hall of Fame -- 1958-59. October 13, 1958

"Johnny Belinda," November 20, "Kiss me Kate," December 14, "The Christmas Tree," (directed by Kirk Browning), "Berkeley Square," "Green Pastures" (new production) and "Ah, Wilderness" (directed by Robert Mulligan).

Any season following such successes as "Green Pastures" and "Little Moon of Alban" would, no doubt, be less than spectacular. It was, perhaps, a repeat "live" production of the former play which brought the most

106 Robert Austin Smith, "Television: The Light That Failed," Fortune, December, 1958, p. 161. Sarnoff also commented on charges that the television industry was shifting to the West Coast: "The NBC Headquarters are in New York and will remain there. Our New York studios are being used to capacity. Our yardstick for deciding on East or West Coast . . . is availability of talent and production facilities." (Aspects of network control of programming will be considered in relationship to the independent producer, Chapter IV. It may be noted here, however, that many critics charged that the failure of network creativity in New York had been going on since 1955 when Lux Video, Climax, Studio One, (Playhouse 90 originated from the West Coast.)
acclaim to the **Hall of Fame** season. Gould asserted that "the entire company was recruited for a live second showing, one of those ensemble efforts where everyone rises to the occasion and achieves a radiance that envelopes the audience at home."\(^{107}\) Marie Torre, in her annual column for Grolier's Publication, noting the Hallmark season, spoke only of the "Hallmark Christmas Tree." This production, a colorcast of drama, yuletide music and pantomimes on ice, was considered a "warm and tender play which drew praise from critics and viewers alike."\(^{108}\) The other productions, she said, reflect a "playing it safe" approach.\(^{109}\) Except for "Green Pastures," the direction by Schaefer and Mulligan was not at its best, according to the New York Times staff:

(Mulligan Directing)

"Ah Wilderness" on the stilted side; achieving little of the original quality of warm humor. The medium of TV dictated extensive alterations in dialogue and pruning required for 80 minutes . . . O'Neil is yet to be adequately represented on the home screen.\(^{110}\)

---


\(^{109}\)Ibid.

(Schaefer Directing)

Cutting out good numbers . . . (in "Kiss me Kate") wouldn’t have mattered if there had been lilt and sparkle to the production. As it was the program was a workmanlike recreation . . . but naughtiness and nuances were not conveyed tellingly. Schaefer’s direction not burdened by many light or fresh touches . . . .111

"Johnny Belinda" leaves much to be desired as a play. Even with helpful editing, the highly stereotyped nature of subordinate characterizations and pivotal plot situations cannot be hidden . . . not a work that can be bracketed with "Little Moon of Alban" in which the two stars Julie Harris and Christopher Plummer triumphed last year.112

John Kerr, as Peter Standish in "Berkeley Square," did not convey the range and warmth to the role originally played on stage by Leslie Howard . . . The fragile drama of a modern-day American transplanted back in time to 18th Century London requires ingenious acting to make it effective . . . Schaefer’s direction technically sound . . . but play lacked magic element of effective make-believe.113

Despite what was considered to be a lackluster season for the Hall of Fame (the last season for Milberg), it had established itself as the outstanding series of dramatic


112Ibid, October 14, 1958. "Johnny Belinda" won the Radio-Television Daily Award as Best Dramatic Show of Year.

"specials" on television. In its four-year reign under the new format, Hallmark had presented Shakespeare and Shaw, to the critical acclaim of many, artistically produced serious works as well as musical comedy, and brought the first "original" work to its series. George Schaefer was largely instrumental in achieving these results.

It is interesting that among the critics considered above, there was general agreement as to those plays which were triumphs and those which were not. More significant is the fact that plays which were favorably judged in terms

114 DuPont that season presented "Wuthering Heights," "The Winslow Boy," "Count of Monte Cristo," and "The Browning Version" following the pattern of adaptations set by Hallmark. Playhouse 90 achieved fame for J. P. Miller's "Days of Wine and Roses," "The Time of Your Life" (with Jackie Gleason), and "Judgment at Nuremberg." Next year it would curtail to an alternate week schedule and emanate from West Coast.

115 Jack Gould is quoted extensively in the study. He is generally considered to be the most authoritative, widely-read critic, with the New York Times, undoubtedly lending prestige to his influence. Gould, along with Kirkley, Crosby, and Janet Kern (Chicago American) were considered in Jakes Ph.D. study, regarding standards imposed by "four leading television critics with respect to live television drama." (Miss Kern differed radically with the other three regarding live drama "specials." Throughout the dissertation Jakes comments on her "dislike for Shakespeare, egg-head programs, spectaculars that disrupt regular programs." She, therefore, offered few favorable reviews for these types.)
of dramatic presentations (i.e., acting, script adaptation, weight and importance of play) were also judged successful as productions (meaning pictorial composition -- handling of cameras, arrangement of subject and scene). Two exceptions were "On Borrowed Time" and "Berkely Square." For the latter production the critic considered "Schaefer's direction technically sound . . . but play lacked magic element of effective make-believe." One might conclude, therefore, that while both elements, presentation and production, were considered inseparable in the final analysis, Gould, particularly, gave distinct criticism to the "direction by Schaefer."

**Influence of Schaefer As Producer-Director**

Because Schaefer functions as both producer and director, the demarcation between these responsibilities is somewhat blurred; as a consequence the scope of his responsibility and influence on the Hallmark series is greatly enlarged. Television critics responding to a survey form in connection with this study seemed to consider his influence on the series quite extensive:

George Schaefer is one of the finest producer-directors in the business. In the milieu of television, he comes closest perhaps to fitting what the late theater authority, Sheldon Cheney, described as a "dramaturgist" a man whose participation in the theater is all-inclusive.
I think there can be no question but what the success of Hallmark is largely attributable to him.116

He is a highly skilled producer-director who has what has become a unique niche.117

Schaefer is outstanding, and I have never been disappointed in him. He has the faculty for being able to make such compromises with the TV medium as are necessary to put a show across, something that David Susskind, for example was unable to do in "Power and Glory" which was a horrible job of turning a novel into a TV play.

Schaefer is, of course, simply a man who knows his job — which is more than can be said of most of the phonies who deal with television drama. Schaefer's unique capacity, however, is in having Joyce Hall for a sponsor and a unique one to be sure.118

George is a close friend. He's a brilliant director, particularly of Shakespeare. Unlike my comments on directors, George is solely responsible for the outcome of a show. As I said, this is a producers medium and producer George allows director George to work on a project from the first line of script to the last flicker of picture.119

Television critics Lawrence Laurent, Donald Kirkley, and Rex Poller analyzed the role of the sponsor, Joyce Hall,

---

as he influences the work of Schaefer and Hallmark:

George has immense talent, versatility, taste, and above all integrity. And, although Mr. Hall is a jewel among sponsors, to whom we owe some of the best TV drama ever done, there is, understandably, a limitation on the subject matter. George must work within the requirements of the family audience and the self-imposed taboos of the medium. This is why not one Hallmark play has dealt honestly with a contemporary problem. Within these limits he has worked wonders, using the theatrical arts to build scenes of great beauty and emotional power. But he hopes to find greater scope for his gifts, now that production has been cut, in theatre and films.120

I think Mr. Schaefer is one of the most sensitive, perceptive and gifted men working in television. He has superb technical skills and an extraordinary ability to get good performances from actors. He gets credit for much of Hallmark's success. However, we must also credit Mr. Hall with having the good sense to hire such a man and for understanding that quality drama sells greeting cards.121

Schaefer does a good job, a singular one. . . . He starts with the full endorsement of the sponsor who I believe gives him a free hand in choice of vehicle, stars, etc. I don't think that the plays he produces are any better than Playhouse 90, etc. . . . they stand out because they are alone in a field of dross. . . .122

---

LaCamera remarked that, because Schaefer presents only five or six plays a season, "he works with the advantage of having more time to prepare each production than does one who must operate on a weekly basis." He considered Schaefer "of obvious creative ability and background . . . his work has borne the stamp of true professionalism."\(^{123}\)

The influence of the critic is difficult to measure. Their evaluation of dramatic productions should not, of course, be the sole source of judgment. Many, as mere reporters, continue to pander to sub-level programming by largely printing network news releases; others are more perceptive and set clear and valid standards for assessing program content.\(^{124}\) Homer Heck, in assessing critical reviews for Hall of Fame, commented that we would like to be reviewed favorably, but we don't lose our equilibrium if we don't get them. A unanimously adverse press (which we've had only once "Born Yesterday") would be bad. A "mixed" press doesn't bother us . . . (but) . . . we probably get more lineage on our corporate image than any show. All of this is the result of

\(^{123}\)Anthony LaCamera, Boston Record-American, letter March 12, 1964.

\(^{124}\)Mr. Gould did not respond to the survey form because of the pressures of work. He preferred not to "dash off a paragraph on a director" and felt that "special consideration" was necessary to give a complete accurate analysis of Schaefer's influence. His reviews, however, give the most comprehensive analysis of Schaefer and the
total promotion and free space in addition to the promotion we seek.125

At the end of the 1958-59 season, NBC announced that Hall of Fame would be produced "next season" by George Schaefer and Compass Productions, his newly formed company. The news release indicated that Mrs. Alberg "planned an expansion covering TV, theatre, and motion pictures."126 Homer Heck, speaking of the new arrangement said that

Mrs. Alberg would like to have retained George's services under the previous arrangement. But she was smart enough to know that George was a great director. A look at the shows she had to do without him convinced her of it. They were never very good. Not that he hasn't had his failures. But they haven't been catastrophic ones.127

The Nature of Television as a Theatrical Medium

It has been seen that the directors during this period in television history were primarily theatre-oriented. This experience helped to stimulate the early interest in the "live" performance. The concept of "immediacy," or the

---

125Mr. Homer Heck, personal statement, December 30, 1963.
127Personal Interview, Homer Heck, December 30, 1963.
impression that a "performance" being viewed on the screen is taking place at that very moment, was, in a sense, a theatrical tradition; and it was believed that the medium's unique ability to capture and preserve a "performance" should be exploited. Schaefer, noting this technique in Hall of Fame productions, said:

By a "performance" I mean that magical element of true theater that sometimes occurs when talents communicate with each other and a cumulative interplay of emotion and dramatic content develops. . . . Television has the truly extraordinary ability to observe actors giving such a performance, as if one were actually sitting on the footlights. 128

He stated that "taping is sometimes necessary as with extensive costume and makeup problems. But little is lost so long as tape is used to capture a performance and not as an inadequate substitute for edited film."129 Obviously, the use of video tape is beneficial since it enjoys the replay advantages of film and the impression of immediacy of live television.

Well-known theatre director Tyrone Guthrie, on the other hand, believes that television "is only incidentally concerned with drama," rejecting the idea that a performance

128 Publicity Release, Carl Byoir and Associates, and personal interview with Mr. Schaefer.

129 Ibid.
can be captured in the television medium. He says:

The public for dramatic programs for them is immense, but such dramatic fare . . . is just a more accessible substitute for people who cannot, or will not make the greater effort to see a play in the theatre. I do not deny that television occasionally offers good -- even excellent -- dramatic programs. And equally I do not deny that the live theater often offers ill-considered rubbish; but its average level is higher both in aim and achievement. And of course it should be. Its products are to TV drama what a custom-made article is to one mass-produced and mass-distributed. They are designed for a more discriminating public.

The Guthrie viewpoint seems to mistakenly surmise that television simply provides the opportunity to photograph a play "through the proscenium arch." Television at its best, however, seeks to determine what special television conventions are possible for the dramatic play; in fact, there was an early realization that television is essentially a visual medium closer to the motion picture than the legitimate theatre. In commenting on the work of Director


131 The viewpoint would also seem to reject the idea that some theatre adaptations-to-television have been greatly enhanced. Schaefer felt that "The Patriots" gained dramatic impact through condensation. (The play achieved success on stage in the war years -- 1943 -- partly due to general patriotism of the times.) Interview September 2, 1963.
Franklin Schaffner, Paul Gardner said in the New York Times:

Schaffner has learned that camera must break out of an invisible proscenium arch that still traps many shows and use its lens to tell a story. Schaffner believes that "the medium is full of textbook directing ... the rules are followed, the camera set-ups are perfect -- and nothing exciting happens."

Hilliard, in summarizing the unique characteristics of television, remarked that one advantage is fluidity:

Television has some advantages over theatre ... the most important of which is fluidity. The television writer can free himself from restrictions of the stage, and at the same time achieve some of the mobility of films. The ability to break away from bounds of time and place through cutting, dissolves, fades and other devices results in continuity of action of stage and the broad scope of film ... Early television directors, such as Coe, Miner, and McCleery, pioneered styles of directing (later adapted by Schaefer) which proved that the "live" performance of the theatre could be united with the unique video conditions to


achieve "dramatic" results. Their understanding of theatrical concepts and their applicability to television can be summarized in the following observations:

1. The Television Audience does not see the program from a fixed, single viewpoint. This concept sharply contrasts with the traditional theatre method of staging a play, framing it inside a proscenium arch and viewing it from one angle. The television audience sees the dramatic performance from moving viewpoints, via a number of cameras, all mobile and enhanced by sound and other visual effects.\(^{134}\) This chief advantage is best delineated in Gould's critical reviews of "The Lark:" "Schaefer achieved fluidity of motion that was one of season's high spots; his use of cameras was superb . . ."\(^{135}\)

Albert McCleery and Fred Coe, early experimenters in the new television drama, were clearly innovators in achieving multi-camera angles and intensifying dramatic effect. The

\(^{134}\)Richard Hubbell, *Television - Programming and Production* (New York: Rinehart & Co., 1956), pp. 26-30. "Open stage" and theatre-in-the-round staging often achieve great multiscene structure and, therefore, many different angles for the entire audience. Each individual, however, would still see the production from his single fixed position -- his seat.)

\(^{135}\)Gould, *op. cit.*, February 17, 1957. (Supra.)
The New Yorker, commenting on McCleery's "arena staging" concept, stated:

... the average television drama is often a mere photographing of a stage show performed on a traditional set ... Now along comes cameo theatre with the simple, rather obvious, notion that it is possible to photograph actors from many angles and that the audience can be taken anywhere the cameras want to take it.136

Fred Coe, in a half-hour series called Lights Out, utilized a "first person" technique wherein the camera became the eyes of the central character in the drama who was never seen.137

Hubbell observes that "in television, as in motion pictures, there may be three or four different scenes progressing simultaneously (in the audience's mind)." This effect can be achieved by the technique of "cutting back and forth from one scene to another or by superimposing of one picture on top of another."138 (The use of "flashback" technique was noted in a review of Schaefer's staging of "Green Pastures.")

In addition to the unique pictorial composition

---

137 Variety, July 13, 1949, p. 49.
(in both camera angle and staging of scenic elements), transitional or connective devices — such as "cuts," dissolves, and fades — have clarified plot line and unified the production.  

2. Directors were Influenced by Theatrical Conditions: Time and Space Limitations. Although camera flexibility gave a unique style and diversity to the productions, early television drama (particularly Philco Playhouse) was greatly influenced by the 19th century realistic play. Specifically, many of the works reflected the Ibsen tradition of unity and compression of action through the very nature of the television medium. There were few characters, limited settings, emphasis on indoor drama, psychological rather than physical conflict, continuing exposition throughout the play, and a late point of attack. Erik Barnouw stresses this similarity in style:

In a typical Ibsen last act we are still learning about things that happened twenty years before . . . (and) we find that every

---

139 Beyond purely production aspects (i.e., pictorial composition -- camera angles plus the arrangement of various elements of subject and scene) the director is involved with basic considerations of the rehearsal: characterization, revising script, directing the actors, interpretation of lines, plot structure. These aspects are discussed in Chapter V - Production analysis of "The Patriots."
Chayefsky play begins at a point where the characters are already deeply involved in the problem with which we are concerned.\textsuperscript{140}

Gassner notes, however, that there are plays which actually gain from a "multiplicity of characters, involvements, actions, localities, and from a free use of the time dimension."\textsuperscript{141} These plays include the Shakespearean plays, and such complexity is inherent in chronicle plays such as "Victoria Regina" and "Abe Lincoln in Illinois." He further adds that "a producer who insists upon pushing it into a nutshell is guilty of more crimes against art than can be forgiven."\textsuperscript{142} Since Hall of Fame has produced the above works with notable success, it therefore would be incorrect to say that all dramatic plays reflected a compression of dramatic time in their productions. It is true that most of the writers of "original plays" sought unity of time and place, primarily to conform to limited settings for the

\textsuperscript{140}Erik Barnouw, The Television Writer, (New York: Hill and Wang, 1962), p. 5. The author notes too that Reginald Rose (not a writer for the Philco series) also wrote on a "restricted canvas." Rose commented that "I try to keep my television plays moving in the shortest time span I possibly can . . . I have never written a television play which covers a time span of more than three days . . . ."

\textsuperscript{141}John Gassner, Producing the Play, (New York: The Dryden Press, 1941), p. 16.

\textsuperscript{142}Ibid.
realistic "live" play, but teleplays of adaptation
dramatized works with vast extensions of time and place.

"Program time" limitation was a far greater problem
for the Hallmark productions than "dramatic time" limi­
tation. The compression of a two-hour play into less than
eighty minutes must necessarily result in an editing of
the original dramatic work and the absence of sub-plot.  

Emphasis on Characterization. Another characteristic of
the realistic "original" plays, in addition to the concern
for condensed action, was the emphasis on character rather
than on physical or broad action.

As has been pointed out (in Number One Forty-three
above) fluidity of cameras provided unusual angles and a
multiple staging of the drama. Quite similarly, the use of
cameras gave the medium an unusually visual appeal; use of
close-up, medium or long shot could establish a mood (by

---

Hallmark has been criticized, however, for
trying to impose too much dramatic time into the short
program time available. Gould, for example, dismissed the
"Invincible Mr. Disraeli" as "patchwork drama" for at­
tempting to cover 40 years of "time;" on the other hand,
he praised "Victoria Regina," a chronicle of 60 years
English history as one of Hallmark's best.

The producers are well aware of the difficulties
involved in the historical play. Schaefer and Hartung
have commented that "the adapter has to stand back and be
able to see the scope of a play . . . he can eliminate
details but he wants to keep the ones which make a play
interesting." Robert Hartung, in the New York Times,
December 8, 1963, noted basic solutions in the adaptation
centering on "reaction" rather than "action" in character interplay), introduce a situation, establish locale, and deal with a few characters. In Short, the cameras could use photography and background, rather than dialogue, to project the ideas, situations, or characterization.144

3. The Television Medium Provided a New Relationship to the Audience. As has been previously stated, a theatrical convention most ineffective in television is the traditional method of staging a play -- framing it inside a proscenium arch and viewing it from one angle. Another

of "Abe Lincoln in Illinois:" "We snipped away extraneous data and concentrated on leading characters, the President and his wife. This is not merely a historical document, but a study of two people so I focused attention on them while hopefully preserving the play's structure." (Adaptation is considered in "criteria for the selection, adaptation of "The Patriots," in Chapter V).

144 There were notable exceptions to the "drama of character" plays on Philco Playhouse, however; plot-makers and thesis writers such as Reginald Rose and Rod Serling were writing exceptional plays on Studio One, Playhouse 90, and Kraft Theatre. Also, it should be noted that all writers did not concentrate on the "few characters" in drama. Rose and Serling were playwrights who "presented a broader action in which less emphasis is given to the few in order that additional characters can be given greater depth of treatment." A. William Bluem also states that "evidence indicates that consistency in application of such principles (as "intimacy") is lacking," in summary to his dissertation regarding dramaturgical style in selected plays and playwrights of the 1950's. (A. William Bluem, "Influence of Medium upon Dramaturgical Method in Selected Television Plays," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, The Ohio State University, 1960.)
purely theatrical convention rejected by the early producers was a "theatre style" acting, revealing an awareness that the "visual" medium imposed a more intimate relationship between actor and audience. Edward Wright asserts that "audience" may be the biggest single difference in the three media:

We are not concerned with those in the broadcasting studio, but rather the individuals viewing the performance before millions of receiving sets. There may be one, two, three, or any number located in homes, bars, service clubs, and hotel lobbies. Their ages, backgrounds, state of health, experience and demands run the gamut more varied than the stage or cinema. Even the time of day is not constant.145

It is, of course, not only the informality of the viewing situation, but the limitation in distance between viewer and the receiver which contributes to the intimate relationship. Wright adds that under these circumstances "it is far easier to detect falseness and cheapness . . . the viewer is not swayed by his neighbor nor by a feeling that he must like what he should like."146 Schaefer, in commenting on theatrical (or mechanical) effects in stage and television, states that

the actors don't mind the mechanical factors (in live drama) . . . (in fact) . . . I find that

146 Ibid.
television spoils one for the theatre when you have to fight more severe false elements, ... for example, whenever you are playing an intimate scene, and the director must shout "Louder . . . face front . . . I can't hear you." In television actors can give a full, sustained, exciting performance despite the mechanics. 147

Schaefer believes that most actors in Hall of Fame productions successfully make the transfer to the television medium. In an interview he noted the special directing problems related to actors trained in film and theatre:

A truthful quality is the main ingredient... because the whole trick of television is to watch the eyes, the face... thoughts which flick around. To be able to watch the actor closely. One tends to favor actors who can do this.

We have to watch those in film training (especially in live/tape work)... it is sometimes difficult for them to pace themselves for a sustained performance (the way stage actors have done through the years.) In terms of techniques, listening, validity, use of faces... film people could teach a good deal to stage people who go overboard at times. But primarily a good actor/actress can work in any media. 148

147 Telephone-tape interview with Pennsylvania State students. (Schaefer's comments to actors on the set of "The Patriots" was similar: "As long as you are thinking the part it is right. It doesn't gain by pushing it, making it louder. It is not necessary to reach out and give it a false theatricality. Play to us, think about an invisible wall around your scene . . . a complete world of reality around those with whom you are playing." (Personal observation September 11, 1963.)

148 George Schaefer, Telephone-tape interview with Pennsylvania State students.
Although television may reject the "theatrical" concept of acting technique, the director is concerned with basic stage considerations in achieving a dramatic performance: characterization, interpretation of lines, plot structure, and script revision.

4. **Film Techniques Brought a New Concept to Television Drama.** It has been noted that because of rigid time limitations (forcing condensed action) and physical limitations of studio (forcing reduction in characters and limited settings), some early television drama had absorbed traditions of the Ibsen-style theatre. Also significant is that the limited size of the television screen (in comparison to both movie screen and the stage) influenced a style of "personal conflict" rather than physical action. There could, obviously, be less scope to the drama, more concentration on the "exclusion of irrelevant detail through use of close-ups."¹⁴⁹ Film directors, however, brought to television different habits and traditions. This rise of filmed drama has been observed by Erik Barnouw:

> Early in this century film people were already finding that their future lay not in drama resembling . . . the stage, but in something quite different. Finding that film could jump easily from Alexandria to Rome to Athens,

from tavern to canyon to ranch ... physical action, instead of being avoided, began to be sought. The late point of attack no longer held attraction, especially if an early attack made it possible to introduce a stagecoach robbery ... a chase ... or other alarms. If the Ibsen theatre drove the dramatist indoors into living rooms, film drove him outdoors again ... It drove him back to a fluid, multiscene structure.

These are the traditions and habits that film people brought to television. If live television has had Ibsen in its blood, filmed television — Cheyenne, Lassie, Hong Kong, and Hawaiian Eye — has tended to be Shakespearean, at least in structure.150

These two traditions are, perhaps, not as separable today. The development of studio equipment and, particularly, the coming of video tape recording have made it far easier for live/tape directors to explore more "spectacular," wide-scope, historical drama.151

---

150 Barnouw, op. cit., p. 6. The view that broad physical action in film-for-theatre has a direct relationship to the television film drama seems to overlook the fact that the television viewing screen (limited in size) remains the same whether for live or filmed drama.

151 The only exception to Hallmark's taped/live shows was the production of "Macbeth," in November, (1960), which was filmed by Schaefer in Scotland to "take advantage of Hermitage Castle, the bleak Scottish countryside, and the supporting cast of British actors not available here." (NBC News Release). Gould, New York Times, November 21, (1960) commenting on the production which won five Emmys, said that "it is the measure of Mr. Schaefer's skill that despite the temptation to emphasize spectacle and pageantry, he did not forget the dominant drama inherent in the personal conflict of the individuals."
Today the television film director has largely abdicated the role of responsibility (and any creativity) to the producer. One critic, speaking about the one-time "director's medium" in television drama, commented:

It is a producers' medium strictly. Directors come and go weekly, but the quality level of any show is directly attributable to the man who produces it. Brilliant creative producers like Bert Leonard of Naked City function with scores of directors, writers, actors, but the level of Naked City was maintained by Bert. Equally, The Defenders, by Herb Brodkin. The director exerts much less influence than his counterpart in films. Often he is not present for the cutting, has little knowledge of the finished show until he sees it on the screen.\(^{152}\)

Critic Rick DuBrow compared film and television in relation to producer and director functions:

... The director, the good one, is obviously more often a creative fellow -- note the current trend in movies, where independent producing companies hire the best directors and give them virtually complete artistic freedom (but) the television producer, as a rule, wants to subordinate any such directorial freedom because once a show is on the air it becomes a business proposition ... it is the cheapest and simplest way to carry it off. And to be specific it is not even the producer whose medium it is; he is more often subordinate to the agencies, networks, the companies like Revue.\(^{153}\)


The television directors of the early fifties considered television a theatrical medium; most applied theatre traditions to their concept of directing because of their own backgrounds in the theatre. Each director brought his own individual style to the drama; each analyzed the special video conditions, their limitations and advantages, in an effort to capture what Schaefer calls "the performance." Fielder Cook, commenting on individual directors during this time, said:

All directors are different . . . have different styles. If you asked an artist to paint a view from this window, each might approach it from a different standpoint. The same would be for directors. You could tell a director's work . . . he has a certain style . . . A director's work is there to be looked at.154

Summary and Conclusions

This chapter has considered the role of the early producer-director as a creative influence on the art form of the anthology television drama. It has spanned a period

154Fielder Cook, personal statement, January 30, 1964. Mr. Cook stated, "It seems to me you are writing about an era that quite literally died -- in 1959. Should anyone consider live/tape drama . . . and looking for a date like 1066 . . . you could pick Playhouse 90. Next season there will not be one hour of live/tape drama on the networks at any time . . . and no specials except for Hallmark." (Playhouse 90 was broadcast during 1959-60 season, but mostly as a film series, originating from the West Coast.)
of time from Philco Playhouse and Studio One (noting the work of pioneers Fred Coe and Worthington Miner) to the year 1959. The year 1959 is significant for two reasons. It was the year in which the last, new, weekly live drama series ended (Playhouse 90), and also the last year in which George Schaefer would work as a free-lance director under Milberg Productions. The next season would see the development of a new production company, Compass Productions, with Schaefer as president, to produce the Hallmark Hall of Fame.

The period of the fifties in television programming was marked by numerous developments in the establishment of the live anthology drama: initiation and sustenance of the hour-long live play by creative producer-directors (such as Coe, Miner, McCleery, Segal, and Manulis) who understood unique video conditions and applied to them theatrical traditions; development of a proving ground for talented writers (such as Serling, Rose, Chayefsky, Mosel, Foote, and Vidal) -- playwrights who would bring their works to motion pictures and the living stage; competition of networks, particularly NBC and CBS, for dramatic vehicles to lend prestige to programming: Philco, Kraft, US Steel, Studio One, Robert Montgomery, Celanese, Matinee Theatre. These series survived, in part, because of the creative milieu of producer-director/writer in a theatre-oriented
condition; but their survival was due mainly to the fact that they had maintained steady ratings, large audiences, and a satisfactory sales report for the sponsor.

The script problem was a major reason for decline in drama. In 1955 there were thirteen hour-long shows each week, plus spectaculars. As writers who had achieved fame in television were lured to more lucrative fields, there were simply not enough good plays to go around. Other factors were rising costs (coupled with less expensive costs for filmed series), the rush of feature films, popularity of a series type (particularly the western) and a developing follow-the-leader cycle.

This chapter has particularly concentrated upon the years of Hallmark Hall of Fame and producer-director George Schaefer from 1953-1959, as a series and a director evolved into the pattern of live drama. Schaefer, like most directors during this era, was theatre-oriented; because the Hallmark plays generally are adaptations of theatre works, this training would seem to be particularly valuable. As producer-director his influence has been extensive, governing not only production factors, but selection and revision of dramatic scripts. The critical comments of Jack Gould have been included, and are particularly comprehensive in dealing with the play as well as Schaefer's role as director.
The "special" drama, a product of the Weaver era at NBC, was partially nurtured by the Hall of Fame series. By 1957 DuPont, also seeking the prestige image often associated with the dramatic special, joined Hallmark. There were indications that a number of sponsors would also seek the "prestige special," often of the non-dramatic "one-time" variety type. NBC announced that for the 1959-60 season, for example, over two hundred specials were scheduled. David Levy, vice-president, described them as being "of distinctive quality, making them, by their nature, different from week-to-week standard network fare."155

Though most of the producer-directors during this time were affiliated with the networks, it was not uncommon for them to be employed by an outside agency. The producer-directors of Kraft Theatre were employed by an advertising agency. Milberg Productions and George Schaefer were examples of this flexible pattern of "outside" talent resources emerging during these years.

The next chapter will consider the role of the independent production company (Compass Productions), its interrelationships with sponsor, advertising agency, network and publicity firms, and its function as producer for the Hallmark Hall of Fame in the seasons 1959 to 1964.

---

155 Television Age, May 29, 1961, p. 50.
CHAPTER IV

The Independent Producer-Director:  
George Schaefer and  
Compass Productions

During the 1947-1948 season, over ninety-five per cent of the programs were produced entirely within the networks. Ten years later Robert Sarnoff, head of the National Broadcasting Company, would tell television critics: "About a third of the shows we now have scheduled for next fall on NBC are NBC produced, with the remainder coming from a great variety of outside sources."¹

As was discussed in Chapter III, early attempts by the networks to dominate programming failed because of the numerous outside sources that competed for production profit. Besides the advertising agency producing for Kraft Theatre (J. Walter Thompson), theatrical producers and talent agencies were sources of programming talent. And since 1955, the film packager, containing all production resources for producing and directing, has dominated

dramatic programming. At the same time, the networks, many argue, have a tighter control over programming content than ever before.

This chapter will consider the rise of the independent producer of live television drama, paying particular attention to the structure and function of Compass Productions, producer of the Hall of Fame from 1959 until the present. It will also consider the interrelationships of Compass with Foote, Cone, and Belding advertising agency, two public relations firms -- Rogers and Cowan and Carl Byoir and Associates, and with the National Broadcasting Company.

**Early Independent Producers**

In radio broadcasting the advertising agency was a dominant producer of programming material for the networks, which had contented themselves with the profits made from the sale of time. In the 1940's, however, each network made a determined and partly successful effort to develop packages for commercial sale, thereby preserving the profit of independent producers for the networks. As Erik Barnouw points out, the advent of television gave the network a distinct advantage:

The networks had the opportunity to pursue their goals with substantial success (that partially developed in radio). Technical knowledge was, at first, scarce. The network itself
had behind it a period of production experimentation and was, therefore, in an ideal position to make sales of network-owned, network-produced programs along with time sales.²

Three outside sources of early television drama which wrested some control from the networks are worthy of brief historical note: theatrical producers (Theatre Guild, American National Theatre and Academy), talent agencies (Talent Associates, The Jaffes) and advertising agencies (J. Walter Thompson).

The Theatre Guild

In October, 1947 the Theatre Guild made arrangements with NBC for joint presentation of a series of six plays on television. Although no sponsor could be found, NBC paid heavily for the productions -- a significant step in the encouragement of live drama. The Theatre Guild stated its purpose as a "strawhatter for the showing of new plays and talents," but unfortunately the productions were not favorably reviewed.³ Gould criticized a production of Shaw's "Great Catharine" because it had sacrificed intimacy "for a rather meaningless long view."⁴ It is significant that television was still trying to duplicate the

³Variety, November 5, 1947, p. 29.
⁴Jack Gould, New York Times, May 9, 1948,
broad view of the stage. After the Guild's unfortunate entry into the drama with a production of "The Drunkard," Edward Sobol, producer for NBC was given more freedom in staging the second presentation, "The Late George Apley." At the end of the 1947-48 season the Theatre Guild rejected an NBC offer to present a weekly production, determining that with its many interests it could not do justice to more than one show a month.

American National Theatre and Academy

A second entry into television by a major theatrical producer occurred in the same season, 1947-48. The A.N.T.A. entry was planned as a series of half-hour dramas to be shown in the fall of this year. The original production was Tennessee Williams' "The Last of My Solid Gold Watches," the story of an old salesman living on past glories and unwilling to accept the changing world.5

Sturcken remarks that in both of these early theatrical ventures into television drama, "the drama was

5New York Times, December 2, 1947, p. 58. The A.N.T.A. series ended when no sponsor could be found. This was, of course, not the last attempt of a theatrical producer to produce drama for television. The Theatre Guild in 1953 produced the US Steel Hour on ABC for two seasons, then on CBS where it continued on a bi-weekly basis until its demise in 1963.
largely legitimate and the productions were imitative of live Broadway shows.6 This close connection between television drama in its origin and the Broadway stage was influential in succeeding years with the emphasis on "live" programming. And although Kraft Theatre would continue to represent the Broadway adaptation drama in the early fifties, it was the original play which would gain most critical acclaim.7 Significantly, although these series originated outside the network, production control was retained by personnel of the network.

Talent Associates

In 1949 Alfred Levy and David Susskind formed Talent Associates to produce television programs and represent talent. The organization was associated with many of the early television dramas, most of them on NBC: Philco Playhouse, Armstrong Circle Theatre, Kaiser Aluminum Hour, and DuPont Show of the Week. Neither Levy or Susskind had a theatrical background and were not creatively involved in the productions, as were many producer-directors at that time. (For example, Talent Associates produced the Philco Playhouse for three summers but productions were

6Sturcken, op. cit., p. 45.

7See Chapter III, the work of Fred Coe as producer-director.
directed by NBC staff directors.) Levy commented on the basic operation of Talent Associates and how it differed from other production companies:

We sell what we create, not what somebody else made. We don't charge an agent's fee which is ten per cent over the price of the show -- so we sell the product for ten per cent less than that of other production firms which have "quality" products.®

Talent Associates was one of the first "package" producers for live television, hiring all creative talent and selling as a single production. The talent management function has subsequently been dropped from the organization.⁹

Henry and Paul Jaffe -- Showcase Productions

The Jaffes, much like Susskind and Levy, were agents


⁹Susskind, a former motion picture press agent, has often commented on the demise of live drama, and absence of more stimulating programming on the networks. In a recent New Yorker profile, Susskind said:

The hypocrisy of it all. The blatant hypocrisy of TV. This ugly and horrible crucible. And most of the people in the business are educated men like Dick Pickham (of the Ted Bates advertising agency) who go to the symphony, the ballet and theatre, -- they know its horrible and yet they divide the world into "they" and "I." Its always "that's what they want" or "they'll love it," never "that's what I want." Do these men sit at home and watch Maverick or The Rifleman or Donna Reed? You bet they don't. "Onward and Upward with the Arts" Thomas Whiteside. New Yorker, July 2, 1960, p. 35-55. (In a recent personal interview a broadcast executive, commenting on Susskind, said "... Susskind is a charlatan ... the talk of 'better quality' is a front ... All you have to do is look at his productions: enormously expensive, sprawling, careless, ill-thought-out, often bad. Results don't measure up to
for theatrical clients who were often interested in producing television specials. One of their clients was Leland Hayward who agreed to produce *Producers Showcase*, a ninety-minute special to premier during the 1954-55 season on NBC. Weaver, then president of NBC, was receptive to the idea since it would contribute to his "specials" emphasis during that season. When Hayward became ill Coe was brought in to replace him as producer.\(^\text{10}\) In 1955 Showcase Productions was associated with the *Alcoa-Goodyear Hour*. This was the old *Philco* (then *Philco-Goodyear*) *Playhouse*, the earliest of anthology drama series. Herbert Brodkin, former producer with the ABC Elgin and Motorola Hours, became producer of the series and Sidney Lumet, director. After two years the series ended.\(^\text{11}\)

---

\(^\text{10}\) The flexible system operating at NBC in terms of production of television programs is seen in the fact that Coe, an NBC producer-director, now became, temporarily, producer with Showcase Productions, an independent company. In a similar procedure in 1956 Worthington Miner, of NBC became "executive producer" for Unit Four, a producing team which included Fielder Cook, Franklin Schaffner, George Roy Hill, to produce *Kaiser Aluminum Hour*.

\(^\text{11}\) The death of *Alcoa-Goodyear* was particularly noted by drama devotees because even before *Philco Playhouse*, the hour long drama had been standard fare on Sunday nights on NBC since 1946. (Sidney Lumet became a CBS director in...
The J. Walter Thompson Agency

The Thompson Agency became the first advertising agency to serve as a producing agency for television drama programs. For eleven years as producers of Kraft Theatre the agency hired the creative staff to handle production. It has been noted that advertising agencies were active in program development in radio. They were not as active in program packaging in television, serving chiefly as a broker or "middleman."\textsuperscript{12}

Although the agency-produced Kraft Theatre was the exception, it helped to reflect a significant development in programming at NBC: networks attempts to completely dominate production of dramatic plays failed because of the many outside sources of talent and agencies competing with the network. For example, Music Corporation of America and the William Morris Agency controlled most of the talent needed to build and produce television programs, including

\textsuperscript{12}The directors of Kraft Theatre, their relationship to the agency and network, were considered in Chapter III.

1951, directing Best of Broadway, Omnibus, and other specials. Prior to this time he had been a child actor, directed in summer stock theatre from 1947-1949 and taught at the High School of Professional Arts in New York City. Following his association with Alcoa-Goodyear in 1957, he directed motion-picture films including Twelve Angry Men, The Fugitive Kind, Long Day's Journey into Night, and Fail-Safe, (Television Almanac, 1954, p. 180.)
writing, directing, and producing. This power gave them the opportunity to produce for themselves or to deal with other independent companies.\(^{13}\)

The flexible pattern of producing television drama meant that persons outside of NBC were often instrumental in the development of successful dramatic series. In these instances cited it is revealing that all of the independent sources, except the Thompson Agency, relied on the network to provide the creative production team.

Robert Sarnoff commented that "it is not possible to give a meaningful figure (of network producing) because you get involved in definitions of what a network sponsored show is." Of this absence of clear-cut distinctions he also said:

> In the entertainment area, you have producers on the network who help produce a show although the elements of the show are purchased on the outside. Then you've got shows obtained from the outside in which you assist in production or maintain creative control, and you have others where you don't. So there's no clear-cut picture.\(^{14}\)

\(^{13}\) Chester and Willis and Garrison, *op. cit.*, pp.59-60. (MCA, in addition to talent representation, produced programs through its wholly-owned Revue Productions. This mixture of talent representation and production was considered undesirable by the Justice Department which saw in such monopoly a threat to competition. When the Justice Department intervened, MCA divested itself from talent-representation.)

Hall of Fame and the Independent Producer

NBC's pioneer attitude toward program sources was seen in the earliest of the Hall of Fame specials. Mrs. Mildred Freed Alberg, as well as the producer-director Albert McCleery, was instrumental in convincing Mr. Hall to do the first "Hamlet" production in 1952. McCleery, of the NBC staff, (regular director for the series) staged the "Hamlet" and "Richard II" productions, but Schaefer was brought in as a free-lance director for the 1954 production of Macbeth. As a free-lance director he also coached the actors for the first two Shakespearean specials.

The title "Maurice Evans Presents the Hallmark Hall of Fame" was given to the series for 1955-56. Schaefer had been made "director" under this new production company. As Chapter II, "Background of the Hall of Fame" points out, Evans left after the first season and Mrs. Alberg, his associate producer, organized Milberg Productions, with Schaefer as producer-director.14

COMPASS PRODUCTIONS

"Compass Productions, Inc. was created to fulfill the ever-increasing demand for a single producing organization which could bring together

14The seasons of plays, showing Evans' influence as producer-director during these years, has previously been explored in Chapter III.
the many elements necessary to present prestige productions in all forms of the entertainment media."¹⁵

Schaefer had achieved critical acclaim during his four years as Hall of Fame producer-director. His influence on the series' success was calculated by a number of the critics: as producer-director his function and responsibility had been major. His interest in assuming a more "independent" role in the producing role of Hallmark arose from his complete involvement in the artistic function — and the opportunity to gain the financial advantages of the independent producer.

By 1959 Schaefer had developed a broad base of artistic accomplishment in television and theatre. He had worked closely with Evans throughout the fifties in theatrical undertakings, staging three productions for him on Broadway: Man and Superman, The Linden Tree, and The Apple Cart. Perhaps their most successful joint effort was their co-production of the John Patrick Play Teahouse of the August Moon which won the Pulitzer and Critics' prize for 1953.

Schaefer staged two productions on Broadway prior to forming his independent production company. Southwest

¹⁵Compass Productions, Biographical Data Sheet, April 4, 1963.
Corner by John Cecil Holm opened on February 3, 1955 and starred Eva LaGallienne and Parker Fennelly. Most critics considered the play lacking in sufficient stature and dramatic impact, although Atkinson commented that "Mr. Holm has managed to preserve most of the sensitivity of characterizations as revealed in Mildred Walker's pastoral novel." Chapman (New York Daily News) thought the play a story of a possessive and brassy widow who moves in on an aged and sensitive Vermont woman, a kind of "Vermont version of the Cherry Orchard." He added that in the play "hardly enough happens to keep its three acts in motion and audiences in emotion." Walter Kerr commented that Miss LaGallienne was "dignified and gracious as an aged Vermonter . . . groping for some sort of sustained scene that is worth playing."

Schaefer staged The Body Beautiful, a musical comedy in two acts and eighteen scenes, on January 23, 1958. This


\[17\] John Chapman, Ibid.

\[18\] Walter Kerr, Ibid. Theatre Critics Reviews.
story of a muscular idealistic lad from Dartmouth who hopes to make good as a social worker among city boys by becoming a prize fighter also drew unfavorable response. McClain of the New York Journal American praised the play as a "funny, swift, moving, and tuneful exhibition," but the majority of critics thought, like Watts, that it was the "veritable anthology of the cliches of musical comedy."

Prior to the formation of Compass, Schaefer had also established a reputation as free-lance director for television specials. There were four such productions during the four years - 1955-1959: "One Touch of Venus" for Oldsmobile in 1955; "Harvey" for DuPont Show of the Month in 1958; "Gift of the Magi" December, 1958, for Sheaffer Pen Company; "Meet Me in St. Louis" April, 1959, for Westclox and Philco Corporation.

Although Schaefer considers the Hall of Fame his chief artistic concern, as an independent producer he has moved into other areas of the arts. He directed three film "specials": "Turn the Key Deftly" (Brekck Showcase), "Hour of the Bath" (for Alcoa Premier), 1962, and "The

---


20 Richard Watts, Jr. Ibid.
Hands of Danofrio" (Fred Astaire Premier -- ABC) in 1962. The first Broadway production for Compass was the Frederick Knott suspense drama Write Me A Murder, starring Kim Hunter and James Donald, which had a season's run at the Belasco Theatre from October, 1961, until April, 1962. The play also appeared in London. The production opened to favorable reviews by Walter Kerr, New York Herald Tribune, John Chapman, New York News, and Howard Taubman, New York Times. Variety reported that the play would "earn $11,000 profit on an investment of $125,000 with additional profit probably $1,000, plus London production profits plus amateur rights.\textsuperscript{21}

Because an independent production company cannot rely on the success of a single activity (since a production series such as Hallmark may end at the whim of the sponsor), the need to establish a broad base is obvious. The

\textsuperscript{21}Variety, August 8, 1962. Schaefer noted this production, in commenting on the financial risks involved in "independent production:"
"In Write Me a Murder we had a hit show on Broadway . . . had excellent reviews, and the play ran for the season. It was produced as a single set mystery play, one which should not have been extremely expensive. And yet the return was only ten to fifteen percent return on the original investment to its backers . . . it should have realized several times the original investment. But because of union demands, extremely high costs, generally, in theatre there are tremendous odds against you . . . Hallmark is our principal interest. In our free time we are concentrating on films. Compass is working on several properties at this time. (Telephone conversation with Mr. Schaefer, July 29, 1964.)
accompanying financial risks may be great, as well. Schaefer's production of Zenda, a musical comedy based on the Anthony Hope novel The Prisoner of Zenda, could well illustrate the risks involved. The production opened on the west coast and played a total of fifteen weeks—seven week engagements in San Francisco and Los Angeles, plus a week's engagement in Pasadena. The production was offered as part of the Civic Light Opera Association program and was co-produced by Edwin Lester. Variety reported on the financial undertaking of the Zenda production:

The production, capitalized at $400,000 played to hefty subscription business on the Coast, and there's no disclosure thus far of the loss on the venture which, it figured, must have been more than fifty per cent of the investment. Alfred Drake, Anne Rogers, and Chita Rivera co-starred in the play for which Everett Freeman wrote the book, Vernon Duke the music...22

Schaefer commented on the production, which headed for Broadway in November, 1963:

It was three-fourths of a good show... Broadway economics are such that you can only come in with a blockbuster. I hope we can fix the show up and reopen it. It's an idea I have wanted to do for a long time.23


Variety, commenting on shows closing before Broadway engagements, stated that "most shows don't make it to the Main Stem, some occasionally do ..." Variety explained the reason for its failing to reach Broadway:

In the case of Zenda, its understood the decision to shutter followed the refusal of Freeman to permit major revision of his book for the musical. Samuel Taylor had agreed to attempt the rewriting, along lines worked out with stager Schaefer. When Freeman balked, Schaefer decided to withdraw from the project, on the ground that it was not good enough for Broadway presentation. Drake also quit and the production was abandoned.24

A recent activity of the company has been the formation of a new film company, Compara Films, Ltd., through which they will produce and direct three pictures for Paramount Pictures.

In 1963 Schaefer produced "To Broadway With Love" at the New York World's Fair. The show, a "musical spectacle covering one hundred years of the American Musical Theatre," will be presented in the Music Hall, a 2400 seat theatre, and is expected to run for both six-month periods of the Fair.

Schaefer, speaking on the formation of Compass, indicated that "it has its rewards as well as its headaches:

You can select your personnel, have a larger voice, generally in the selection of properties,

24Variety, loc. cit.
cast. One of the chief reasons is that I will be able to expand into other areas . . . films, theatre. I'm not sure I'll make more money; as free-lance I had worked up to a good salary. But I will have control, and I won't have to do anything unless I want to do it.25

The Production Staff

Herbert Brodkin, independent producer of The Defenders with playwright Reginald Rose, commented on the importance of "quality" in the producer's staff associates:

... It means exerting a strong standard of quality on all elements. You have to see that you have people who can bring quality ... and you have to insist on it. If you boil it down, a producer is a fighter. This medium can defeat you.26

The Compass staff, a closely-knit group of six people, works under Schaefer in all areas of the arts. Most are involved with the Hall of Fame productions in a creative or executive capacity, and are credited by Schaefer for much of the Hallmark success.

25Personal Interview, September 9, 1963, and Philadelphia Pennsylvania News, June 6, 1959. Schaefer commented that the name "Compass" was chosen because "we can go anywhere . . ." Fielder Cook of the Directors' Company said that production company titles are needed for distinction, something to be publicized. "Directors company" is a myth because it is made up of Eden Productions, my company, and Franklin Schaffner (Gilchrist Co.); ours grew out of a friendship and mutual admiration . . . Our contract for DuPont was for seven shows . . . to be dropped into a vat of some twenty-five badly done shows which NBC was responsible for. We could get lost in seven or eight shows so we needed a title which an audience might remember."

Sybil Trubin, Miss Trubin has been associated with George Schaefer for fourteen years. A graduate of the University of Wisconsin, Miss Trubin entered show business in 1949 as executive secretary of the Drama Company of the New York City Center. She was casting director for the Hall of Fame from 1955 to 1961 and has been talent coordinator of the Today show on NBC. Miss Trubin, as vice-president for fiscal matters, is responsible for the business affairs of Compass Productions. She is, therefore, involved in much of the "producing" aspect. In an interview she indicated her responsibility in the organization:

I make all the negotiations . . . Anything regarding the business relationship of Compass Productions is my responsibility. I started out with him when he was producer for the City Center Drama Program. This was in 1950 when I was a secretary.

Prior to organization of Compass, Schaefer worked for Milberg Productions -- Mildred Freed Alberg was the "business arm;" but George wanted to be responsible for the business practice of the production company he was associated with (even though he didn't want to do it himself).27

Gordon R. Wynne, Jr. Mr. Wynne is Vice-President of Compass Productions, Inc., in charge of production and promotion. An attorney from Texas, he became associated

---

27 Personal Interview with Miss Trubin, January 30, 1964. Miss Trubin later in this chapter discusses her relationship with NBC and the advertising agency in negotiation for Hallmark productions.

Joan H. Frank. Miss Frank is executive assistant to Mr. Schaefer and is co-ordinator of publicity and promotion. A graduate of Vassar, she has been associated with Hallmark since 1955. Her association with Mr. Schaefer began with the New York City Center Co. in 1950. Miss Frank, discussing the duties of her position, commented:

My job is to act as a clearing house for all promotion. I co-ordinate or initiate publicity involving both Compass and Hallmark. I, therefore, work with our two publicity agents who represent these concerns. We must be assured that proper publicity is given to functions of Compass. I do not contact newspapers directly. This will be done by the agencies involved.28

The "creative" staff at Compass forms a production team to do the "producing" and "directing" for the Hall of Fame.

Robert Hartung. Hartung has been associated with Schaefer since 1946 when he appeared in, and was stage manager for, the Broadway production of G. I. Hamlet. He is a graduate of Cornell College and has a Master of Fine Arts degree from the Yale University School of Drama. He acted in numerous Broadway shows, and has taught and

28 Personal interview with Miss Frank, January 30, 1964.
directed in college theatres at Cornell, Simpson, Bard, and Sarah Lawrence. In television since 1950, Hartung has served as stage manager for NBC's *Lucky Strike Hit Parade*, *Voice of Firestone*, *Kraft Playhouse*, and *Milton Berle's Texaco Star Theatre*. In 1955 he joined Schaefer on the Hall of Fame staff (under Maurice Evans) and is now associate producer for the series. His writing credits on Hallmark shows include adaptations of "The Little Foxes," "Winterset," "Ah Wilderness," "Arsenic and Old Lace," "Teahouse of the August Moon," "Cyrano De Bergerac," and "Pygmalion." For his work on the adaptation he was cited in an Emmy Award designating "Victoria Regina" Program of the Year.29 Hartung combines his theatrical background in acting and directing with the special writing work of television adaptation. He commented on the work of the associate producer:

I consider myself a director, not a writer, so I am particularly happy with the role of associate producer for the Hall of Fame productions. It is a position which involves me in

---

29A story line embracing a dozen scenes was developed from the monumental research material on Queen Victoria by the late playwright, Laurence Housman. Once scenes were selected, Hartung set about the work of cutting, revising, editing, and trimming the final script. (Carl Byoir release, April, 1962).
production details . . . in casting and in our involvement with NBC's technical people. It is important to think as a director in adapting.50

John Friend. Friend, story editor of Compass Productions, has been associated with Schaefer since 1955, serving as production stage manager and later assistant director for the Dallas State Fair Musicals. During this time he also worked for Schaefer in his two Broadway productions, *Southwest Corner* (1955) and *Body Beautiful* (1958). He appeared with Ray Bolger in *Where's Charley?* and at the same time began writing music and special material for night club entertainment. Friend has had an extensive career in ballet, opera, and musical comedy in Dallas, Houston, and various community playhouses. At the Barter Theatre of Virginia he designed and directed Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, a production ultimately adapted for Compass Production's second season with the *Hall of Fame*. Mr. Friend's primary responsibility is exploring new areas of television, motion picture, and theatrical developments for Compass Productions.

Adrienne Luraschi. Miss Luraschi began work with the *Hallmark Hall of Fame* in 1955 as associate director of that program series and has continued in that capacity. In addition to her activities on the Hallmark shows, she also

39 Personal interview with Mr. Hartung, September 13, 1963.
serves as Casting Director for Compass Productions as a member of the permanent staff. Miss Luraschi has a long career in television, first working as a script girl for Fred Coe, in 1947 producer of Philco Playhouse, and has moved through the ranks from program assistant to associate director. She explained her relationship to Hallmark and NBC through the years:

The "associate director" title came about when the Radio-Television Directors Guild merged with the Directors Guild of America to form a single union negotiating with the networks. I began with the Hallmark shows in 1955, joined Schaefer when he formed his company in 1959. During this time I was technically on the staff of NBC because the contract specified that the network must hire the Associate Director. All of my work was with Schaefer and Hallmark, however. In 1962 I "left" NBC since the new contract allowed freelance Associate Directors to be established.31

Two critics' advance the opinion that an independent producer such as Schaefer enjoys distinct advantages in dramatic production:

I think the independent producer or "packager" probably has a greater unity of purpose and achievement by working within his own organization with his own people. With few exceptions, most producers -- independent or otherwise -- find it hard to shake TV's formula way of doing things. But the independent producer, it seems to me, is more successful

31 Personal interview, Miss Luraschi, January 29, 1964.
than the others in preventing formula from hemming in his artistic judgment and attainment. His creativity is more flexible and more venturesome.\textsuperscript{32}

By the very fact of survival as an "independent," this individual is likely to have unusual abilities. He may simply be a better salesman than the organization men; but more often, it seems, he's likely to try new roads.\textsuperscript{33}

**COMPASS PRODUCTIONS: Script Selection**

The Hall of Fame series is supervised and controlled by the advertising agency of Foote, Cone and Belding. It would be more correct to say that Compass enjoys "creative" control and the agency "direct supervision." Homer Heck, of Foote, Cone, and Belding summarized the relationships in this way:

Schaefer is probably given more freedom than most producers because of his function as producer-director. The client and agency exercise most control in selection of properties. From this point of control, Schaefer is left to develop the show. The agency does review the script, sit in on final days of camera rehearsal (or taping) and is in charge of the commercial messages.\textsuperscript{34}


\textsuperscript{34}Personal Interview with Homer Heck, December 30, 1963.
Mr. Heck noted that "ideas come from many sources" in selecting the season of plays at Hall of Fame:

Sometimes clients, the men in the agency or the producer. We get ideas from the outside as well. When these ideas come to Hall in Kansas City, he considers them and brings them up for discussion. We evaluate them . . . the Hallmark series is the object of many writers who submit them for consideration.35

There is obviously a mutual relationship in the suggesting and selection of properties for each season's productions. Miss Trubin says that "Homer Heck and I will get together to discuss the possible properties. The sponsor has control over the play itself, and the two top stars . . . that's it."36

A producer's report, indicating a possible season of plays for the sponsor's approval, is initiated by Compass Productions:

In December, January, we begin negotiation for the shows which Hallmark will present for the coming season (October - May); a producer's report is sent from Compass which includes a synopsis of play, casting suggestions, George Schaefer's comments, critics' reviews (about the stage play considered for adaptation), and whether of not he recommends.37

35 Supra, III-138. Mr. Heck, personal statement. His comments regarding the Teleplay Writing Competition as a stimulus to "original" plays are discussed in the 1960-61 season.

36 Miss Sybil Trubin, personal interview.

37 Ibid. In a producer's report submitted for the 1961 season, a note was appended to the list of possible plays.
Miss Trubin added that the non-business part of producing (budgeting for each show) is an instrumental part of the production company:

> Each show is budgeted — that is, a figure is sent to the advertising agency — with the producer's report. When the client decides on a property, we must stay within that figure. Before a figure is submitted, however, I must know the "above" and "below" line costs. **Above-the-line** refers to those creative elements which Compass provides: stars (and rest of cast), literary rights, music, rehearsal space, the directing and producing supervision. **Below-the-line** are those for production/technical expenses provided by NBC: cameramen, lighting supervisor, technical director, costume designer, set designer, stage hands, stage managers, audio director, numerous production assistants, video tape operator. All of these network personnel are, in a sense, hired by Schaefer to mount the production.\(^{38}\)

The involvement with the National Broadcasting Company occurs at the beginning of the season on the administrative level (as well as during the production phase of each play). Mr. Heck outlined the involvement of NBC in the fiscal arrangement made at the time of selecting the season's plays:

> We buy the shows through NBC, not Compass. At the first of the year when the budget is determined and approved for the entire season indicating that *Abe Lincoln in Illinois* could be secured for live broadcast only. Since Hallmark prefers tape (for re-play possibilities) it was rejected. Subsequently, the play "was available for taping" and was broadcast in the 1963-64 season.

\(^{38}\)Personal interview, Miss Trubin.
(If all plays are known at that time), we deal through NBC to have them arrange through Schaefer to produce the shows. We deal through NBC because we want to get their participation in the series. Schaefer could probably get below-the-line costs cheaper outside of NBC but we would lose out on the total efforts of NBC in promotional matters.39

Although NBC negotiates with the advertising agency, it is merely a money-handling transaction to "involve" the network. Major transactions in budget and play selection are between the agency and producer.40

The "Non-creative" Function

Determining the Budget. Before the budget is submitted to Foote, Cone, and Belding for approval, it is necessary to determine exact cost figures for the individual shows. An estimation of these figures is necessary before it can be submitted. Miss Trubin explains the operation:

I estimate the above-the-line costs by determining the number of weeks devoted to Hallmark shows by member of the staff. This is not difficult to do since I know their salaries . . . can make the proper estimate.

Bob Hartung, associate producer can estimate

39Personal interview, Mr. Heck. Mr. Heck commented that NBC's participation in Abe Lincoln in Illinois was a good example. The play, before being broadcast February 5, was sent via closed-circuit to affiliate stations for a special preview by teachers. The broadcast was preceded by remarks from Mr. Schaefer who commented on the play, adaptation, and Hallmark's approach to the Sherwood work.

40Personal interview, Miss Trubin.
how many sets would be needed, costumes, number of actors even though sometimes script has not been prepared at the time estimates are made. Obviously, Hallmark can rely on a background of experience producing the ninety-minute play or adaptation. Many shows will be similar in style, historical period, cast size, and production aspects. A reference file on each element of the production can give a good over-all estimate of specific costs.\footnote{Miss Trubin, personal interview. She commented that "We put in a specific fee for Mr. Schaefer. Actually it is less than his asking price for free-lance directing/producing outside of Compass productions. There is no fixed percentage, however, as an advertising agency affixes on 'time' charges to a sponsor."}

**The Unit Manager.** For below-the-line (network) costs Compass must deal with the unit manager, an employee of NBC who co-ordinates the production work and costs for NBC employees. He acts as top-level management for the production facilities used for Hall of Fame shows, as well as the official liaison between the producer and the network. He is a budget adviser, assessing costs for all material used, every piece of scenery, and all technical expenses. The Unit Manager must bring together all supervisors of the production facilities. Hallmark also relies in estimating figures on the fact that "there is a top price for stars . . . and agency (talent) people know it."
technical phase of operation — lighting, sound, technical director, costume, make-up and set designer — and assure a competency of operation from each. 43 

Bruce Bassett, one of NBC's unit managers and often the liaison for _Hall of Fame_ productions, remarked of his work and the relationship to Compass Productions:

'It is important that a unit manager does not "price a show out of business." He must obviously be a bookkeeper as well as a good production man . . . Schaefer is quite exacting and naturally (like most producers) wants materials within a certain price. But Schaefer works for the best quality product in the _Hallmark_ series, and even when short cuts would be to his "pocket" advantage, he is not willing to take them.' 44

Miss Trubin, indicating that the entire budget costs must originate with Compass Productions, spoke of the necessary mutual relationship of compromise with the network:

'The Unit Manager is given the cost figures which have been estimated for the upcoming show. He is expected to stay within the figure. Perhaps

---

43 Since _Hallmark_ works with generally the same technical force for each show (all considered highly competent) there is a less rigidly defined relationship operating than may be the case for other network productions.

44 Personal Interview, Mr. Bruce Bassett, September 12, 1963. Mr. Bassett received his M.A. degree in Theatre from Northwestern with a background in college teaching. At NBC he has done all phases of television production: producing, writing, directing, and knows technical operation.
he can't but through compromise the matters are solved. Cost cuts can come from a number of sources: if a certain star is very expensive and we want him, we may cut some extras in a scene . . . perhaps costume changes can be effected . . . a tightening of rehearsal hours. If we can cut above-the-line costs, more can be put into below-the-line, if needed, and vice versa. 45

The business operation of the production company involves numerous areas of producing: buying the script, negotiating for adaptation (if not done by Compass), hiring composer for musical productions, negotiating for the stars and budgeting for actors. Fiscal matters do not end with the selection of plays and actors, but continue throughout rehearsals of productions; for alterations as to rehearsal hours and numbers of minor characters to be hired may be necessary due to rigid union requirement. 46 Of her relationship to Mr. Schaefer, Miss Trubin remarked:

George doesn't like to get involved with details of the business; nevertheless he is aware of administrative matters involving the company. For example, he won't bother to read all of the details of a contract which I have handled; but he will often do so and find pertinent facts which I may overlook.

Schaefer is good at giving you a job and

45 Miss Trubin, personal interview.

46 The AFTRA (Association of Federated Television, Radio Artists) contracts govern hours for rehearsal, type of role, etc. These minimum restrictions, or base rate, affect most of the actors hired. ("Stars" negotiate at rates up to Hallmark's top price.) AFTRA contracts, for example, state that a producer must pay $67.50 minimum
giving you the freedom to carry it out. He appreciates your work, your contribution to the staff . . . There is absolutely no temperament in the organization . . . It is probably the happiest group working in New York . . . He relies on people, accepts suggestions readily . . . this is one of his many virtues . . . Under strain, he is a remarkably calm man. I don't know how he does it."47

The "Creative" Function:

Casting the Play; Pre-Rehearsal. In producing, the functions of "business" and "creativity" are not clear-cut. (And as Bretz and Stasheff point out, the term "producer" can have a variety of meanings, depending on the size of the production or organization involved.) It is true, however, that those persons involved in casting and pre-rehearsal work are involved with problems directly related to script and production. These problems become less administrative and more production-centered as they relate to an interpretation of the play and the intentions of the playwright. Miss Luraschi, associate director, and Mr. Hartung, associate producer, work closely on the problems pay for extras (non-speaking roles) for a minimum use of eleven hours. Over the minimum period, time-and-a-half is in effect. If character has lines to speak, or lines over the specified minimum for base pay or assumes more than one minor role, he is paid more money, based on the prescribed AFTRA scales.

47 Personal Interview, Miss Trubin.
of casting the production once selections for the season have been confirmed. Miss Luraschi, as casting director, assumes a direct responsibility in the complex matter of casting for the Hall of Fame:

Before the first production meeting, a script is prepared. Each major speaking role is then considered for acting assignments. Names are suggested, checks are made with "Players Guide," and "Spotlight" (trade journals of the entertainment business), our own knowledge of previous shows' casts, knowledge of who is playing in theatres, television.

We also ask thirty or forty agents to give names from their files. Scripts are not sent to the agents, but instead we give them a brief description of the character ("a Stewart Granger type" for example). We then screen all possibilities. Bob and I finally get three possibilities for each role, and then check on availability for our rehearsal periods. Then we begin with number on question of contract which involves Sybil's (Trubin) department.

Schaefer does not become directly involved in the process of casting the productions, but relies almost completely on the casting department, especially for the "groundwork" in determining "available" possibilities. Although the sponsor has final choice of the two lead actors, Schaefer personally makes the selection and sometimes will actually make the deal. For example, for the second "Little Moon

---

48 Personal interview, Miss Luraschi, January 29, 1964.
49 When Schaefer decides on cast, he submits three choices each for the two leads, recommending one for the part. Sponsor may approve a second choice, but this rarely happens.
of Alban" production, Schaefer signed Dirk Bogard to a leading role when both were in England. The Compass staff rarely hears an actor read unless "a mild controversy develops" because they are quite familiar with actors in New York (and many return from previous Hall of Fame productions).  

In addition to casting, a major responsibility of the Hartung-Luraschi team is to aid in "getting the show into rehearsal." The inter-relationships with "below-the-line" network personnel and establishment of a timetable become major considerations in this pre-rehearsal work:

Once the property is chosen, such as "Little Moon of Alban" which was set in December, 1963, a rehearsal schedule is made, followed by meetings to decide settings, costumes, properties. In

Schaefer, commenting on the difficulties faced by young, aspiring actors, noted the lack of live TV drama in New York: "We are the only electronic drama . . . We have an occasional ingenue -- but only once in two years does this happen. We can go to the most incredibly talented people for most roles and they will do them for scale. It would be economically unsound for us to use unknowns when we can get established actors for the same fees. We could almost cast out of a book." (Interview with Pennsylvania State student.)

Though plays are selected and approved before casting begins, agency's approval of "top two stars" may necessitate scheduling a play only after the star's availability is known. Undoubtedly, this was the case in the second production of "Little Moon of Alban" which starred Julie Harris. The second "lead," Dirk Bogard, was chosen from a list of approximately 10 actors (after plays selection), including Stuart Whitman and Richard Basehart.
January 15, 1964, a kinescope showing of the previous "Little Moon" was shown to the new NBC technical crew. Then a meeting was held shortly after with make-up director O'Bradovich, costume director Noel Taylor, scenic designer Warren Clymer, graphic artist Stan Pyka, and technical director O'Tamburri. Rehearsal dates were set for February 13 - March 3. Show is to be telecast on March 18.

Set designer spent one week making up floor plans, brought them back before Schaefer went on vacation, and approved a property list which I had made up . . . A "hold" must also be placed on rehearsal space and the NBC color studios when schedule is made.52

Miss Luraschi said of her role in relation to Schaefer and Hartung:

Hartung is a director, essentially. I feel that I am an assistant. I have no real interest in directing -- that is, the theatre-directing approach . . . interpreting the script is not my line. Perhaps I lean more to the technical function of the business, prefer working with camera techniques, for film or television.53

COMPASS PRODUCTIONS: Promotion, Publicity Interrelationships

The total promotional efforts of an independent company, such as Compass, extend in numerous directions. Because Schaefer has established a broad base at the arts level, he does not rely completely on the Hall of Fame success, but must promote the affairs of Compass to

52Adrienne Luraschi, personal interview, January 29, 1964. A more complete analysis of the director's role in the rehearsal, pre-rehearsal, is presented in the next chapter.

53Ibid.
theatrical, television, and motion picture interests. As the producer of Hallmark, his interest in television is dominant and essentially touches all areas of the broadcast industry: agency, sponsor, and network.

Joan Frank, executive assistant to Schaefer, coordinates the promotional affairs (such as Compass Fair project) and the numerous publicity jobs which must be assimilated for Hallmark. Her primary work is to provide an effective means of publicity flow through three primary areas: (1) NBC, (2) Publicity Agent for Hallmark — William Alexander of Carl Byoir and Associates, and (3) Rogers and Cowan Public Relations firm, representing Schaefer.

The National Broadcasting Company

A recent issue of Variety declared that "... the prestige of the Hallmark shows has a way of rubbing off on all associated with them, and therefore the sponsor gets the bluechip treatment from NBC-TV despite the fact that its a relatively small advertiser in the scheme of things. Actually, the NBC promotion of Hallmark shows is minor and amounts to no more than routine-like publicity which might be given to most sponsors of regular programming.

The Program Publicity Department of the network employs a group of staff writers responsible for all NBC publicity. Each writer will "handle" eight or nine shows, submitting Daily News Releases to out-of-town newspapers,
local newspapers, and affiliate stations. The secretary to the department explained the procedure:

The staff writers will submit daily releases on various NBC shows to the television critics of newspapers and affiliate stations. They will often go to the studios and watch taping of shows, write feature articles on performers.54

The Promotion and Advertising Department at NBC also co-ordinates work with Program Publicity in the total promotional work for NBC network shows. Promotion and Advertising is more involved with on-the-air publicity, arranging for interviews with performers and "spot" announcements.55 It is quite frequently Miss Frank's job at Compass to initiate interviews with the Hallmark stars and augment the NBC promotional efforts.

54 Personal Interview, Carolyn Cinderg, Secretary to Program Publicity Department, January 31, 1964.

55 Just prior to the rehearsals for "The Patriots" in the summer, 1963, Compass and NBC arranged for Charlton Heston to tape numerous "spot" announcements promoting the Hall of Fame program. These consisted of announcements about the production and a repeat of each channel number. These taped announcements were then sent to affiliate stations so that a more personal identification with the station and program could be established. ("This is Charlton Heston . . . I play the role of Thomas Jefferson on . . . Friday night on Channel (4) etc. etc.") The repetition of each channel number prompted Heston to remark, "I have done more original work in my career."
Homer Heck, outlining NBC's promotional efforts in behalf of the specials for Hall of Fame, commented:

It is a working relationship which is revised from time to time. We are attempting to get more and more. We feel that the network benefits in great measure from Hallmark; the show has brought more Emmys to the network than any other show or series. They use this in all promotion to advance the image of the network as the 'quality-conscious' network. They have benefited largely from Hallmark; it is our contention that they should promote us as a series -- with more than on-the-air show plugs.56

Carl Byoir and Associates

The most complete promotional activity for the Hall of Fame is centered, not in Compass or NBC, but in the public relations firm of Carl Byoir Associates. Here one man, William Alexander, is a fulltime publicist for the Hallmark account. Because the Hallmark Company advertises exclusively through its television specials, Alexander's sole concern is "selling" the Hall of Fame image across the country. Whereas most sponsors would have the network handle normal promotional work, Hallmark obviously feels that the total efforts (and expense) are justified.57

56 Personal Statement, Mr. Heck.

57 For a fulltime publicity consultant Hall is willing to pay approximately $50,000 "for the privilege of picking up the phone and getting general public relations work." In addition, he is willing to pay for (1) salary of Alexander, (2) his secretary, and (3) additional expenses, which includes photos, messenger service, etc. (Everything done at
About the importance of the total promotion Mr. Heck observed:

It is certainly our impression that the only way to make specials pay is to exploit and promote them and take advantage of them in every possible way. It is too expensive to do otherwise. Whereas some sponsors' commercials are going to be seen by people simply because they are broadcast often enough, Hallmark doesn't have that advantage. We have to make the shows work for us, before and after, with the public, dealers, and sales force . . . and they do. With far-in-advance promotion -- and most of the trade following the shows -- the "quality" image has been well established.58

Alexander initiates publicity material to newspaper critics but deals primarily with the syndicated columnists and news

---

Carl Byoir -- not considered "general service" -- is charged to the Hallmark account. For example, the work of staff personnel not associated with Hallmark is "charged" to Hallmark account.) Interview, Mr. Alexander, August 27, 1963.

58Mr. Heck, personal statement. Commenting on the expensiveness of television specials in an address before the Chicago chapter of the American Women in Radio, Television, Heck proposed that "a new rate structure provide discounts for quality as well as quantity." He felt that "rate reductions ought to be given the advertiser such as Hallmark which buys a few expensive programs each year." The Editor of Broadcasting magazine stated that such views "ignore a number of practical points." He cited fact that the number of viewers reached by Hallmark advertising has risen by a larger margin than that of the increase in television costs. (i.e., "Abe Lincoln" broadcast in February, 1964, reached a thirty-nine per cent larger audience than "Little Moon of Alban," a 1958 production.) "In the same span of years Hallmark's time costs increased thirty-six per cent and, as nearly as NBC can figure, its program costs went up some thirty per cent." Broadcasting magazine, March 23, 1964, p. 112.
wire services in New York. He remarked about the close relationship with the National Broadcasting Company on the total promotional work for the Hallmark Hall of Fame series:

NBC will often provide newspaper TV editors with an all expense trip to New York -- from a Thursday to Tuesday -- to be "sold" on NBC shows. Each of the sponsors (usually for "special" programs such as DuPont, Bell Telephone, and Hallmark) is asked to contribute to the expense, dividing the costs among them for hotel, travel, meals, etc. Often Schaefer or Cone (head of Foote, Cone, and Belding) will speak at one of the dinners. As publicist, I can provide copies of magazines featuring Hallmark shows . . . We feel that the personal appeal on such rare occasions as "the trip" is more effective than mailing out mass pass-outs at inappropriate times.59

Alexander will also initiate publicity material, such as feature stories or biographical material, for magazines. This story material, featuring someone working in a current Hallmark production, is often written for new publications such as Realm and Poise.60

59 Mr. Alexander, personal statement. Another example of relationship to NBC concerned the network's feature magazine on the up-coming shows. "The NBC Startime" was a promotional venture of NBC including numerous shows. Alexander would know well in advance of such plans in order to "get Hallmark's fair share of promotion equivalent to the advertising spent."

60 Ibid.
Rogers and Cowan Public Relations

Because George Schaefer and Compass Productions function as an independent production company in endeavors other than Hallmark (or even the television industry), a public relations firm is employed to represent the interests of Compass in all its promotional and theatrical activities. The purpose of Rogers and Cowan is to advertise the name of Schaefer and Compass to the public, and specifically to people in show business with whom Schaefer must deal. Mr. Howard Haynes, of Rogers and Cowan, explained the operation of the company:

It is a kind of press agentry -- although public relations is a better word for the work for Compass. Some employees of the firm do immediate press agent type work getting out immediate news items, short gossip news . . . but for the most part it is concerned with the long range "image" . . . There are three employees in New York, two on the West Coast who will handle the Compass account (along with other "personalities"). Ideas may come from all of them as to ways of 'building the image'.

The work at Rogers and Cowan in promoting Schaefer approximates the work at Carl Byoir Association for Hallmark. Each publicist is concerned with daily "trade" items for release to news media, as well as the special projects.

61 Personal Interview with Mr. Howard Haynes, Rogers and Cowan Public Relations, January 31, 1964.
Mr. Haynes commented on the promotional work for Schaefer:

The more he can become known as a producer/director in addition to television production, the more attractive he will be to others as an artist... We may know of a film company that wants Schaefer; we must make the contact. In our overseas offices in London, Paris, and Rome we will set up interviews with foreign press when Schaefer is on a European vacation or business...

A number of trade stories are regularly sent to such publications as *Billboard*, *Variety*, *Motion Picture Daily*, and *Television Daily*. Information on Schaefer and his current activities in theatre and television is also supplied as feature material to syndicated services such as *TV Scout*, which in turn distributes to newspapers throughout the country.

There is obviously a close working relationship between the two public relations firms in promoting the *Hall of Fame* productions. Haynes adds that "although we are dealing with Schaefer and Compass, not Hallmark, the company will often make suggestions on direct "tie-in" between the two... and we often make suggestions in casting since we may handle personalities who may work into a Hallmark show."63

---

62 Ibid.

63 Mr. Howard Haynes, personal interview.
Foote, Cone, and Belding and the "Good-Will" Image

The sponsor, of course, is the recipient of the above promotion and publicity. The advertising agency, Foote, Cone, and Belding, has also responded, however, to the promotional efforts of the Hallmark "image"; for it is Hall's viewpoint that "viewers will respond to commercials presented with restraint, dignity, and good taste." The Hallmark commercials are widely hailed by the critics and viewers for not intruding into the program content as well as for being presented in a low key. Consequently, the Hall of Fame commercial messages occasion numerous letters which comment favorably on the good taste and dignity of the commercials. Mr. Heck affirms the direct relationship between promotion for goodwill and the commercialized concerns of the advertising business:

The philosophy is best expressed in the word: salesmanship. We do it the best way which good taste permits. Fairfax Cone, as you know from his public utterances, asserts a voice for dignity in advertising. He is a vocal opponent of the crass and ugly.66

64 Cards Magazine, Summer 1960, p. 5.

65 In the recent Abe Lincoln in Illinois broadcast, February 5, 1964, there were five commercial messages in the ninety minute program (totalling eight minutes in length). There were only two interruptions, however, in the three-act, seventy-six minute drama -- totalling four minutes.

66 Mr. Homer Heck, personal statement. Fairfax Cone, (chairman of the executive committee of Foote, Cone, and
Compass Productions, in its structure and function, is a small-staffed, flexible, producing organization -- one which brings together many elements necessary for productions in all forms of the entertainment media. It also represents the individual who "becomes a corporation" because of his comprehensive artistic skills.

Although Compass is not totally committed to the Hallmark Hall of Fame, it is this series which has brought its greatest fame and its sustenance. Because of Hallmark the organization today is unique among live drama producers. A similar venture, headed by two producer-directors with similar backgrounds to Schaefer's in television directing,

Belding) along with Emerson Foote and Don Belding, bought out the operating assets of the dissolved Lord & Thomas agency in 1942. Foote resigned in 1950 and heads McCann-Erickson agency; Belding retired in 1957. Cone, who now heads the Chicago-based agency, has been both a recent critic and defender of television programming: In the Saturday Evening Post (1959) he commented: "The public decides what to watch but it doesn't have many choices. Nobody knows what they might watch if they had choices . . . The real difficulty is that television set out to be a medium to make money instead of a medium of expression." ("Television USA," Saturday Evening Post, November 4, 1961, p. 35). He noted in a recent TV Quarterly, however, that " . . . even if costs were not a factor, the extravagant rate at which the television cameras consume artistic material is such that world's supply of old plays and new is not enough to furnish the viewing audience with a steady diet of first-rate drama. . . . The networks have little or no choice, that is if they are to keep on broadcasting entertainment, than to rely for the most part on conventional adaptations of well-known well-worn plots and even gags." (TV Quarterly, Summer, 1963, Vol. II, 36, 37.)
is The Directors Company. Upon completing the 1963-64 season, however, they will no longer be involved in television:

There is nothing we can do in television. No time on the air which Directors Company can produce for. It is all film now except for the very brilliant documentary programs. The public affairs shows are really the "curtain going up" excitement for television. They are needed to keep from filling the screens up continually with the same characters.67

The unique Schaefer-type organization does have its counterpart in the film television and feature film producing companies. Morris Gelman, in a recent Television article, remarked that

some of the best feature films in Hollywood these days are turned out by independent producing companies, not by the major studios. Most . . . like their film counterparts in television, are formed by actors, directors, and producers wanting to share in the profits of their labors. The major studios lost the advantage to the independents because they couldn't continue to maintain their costly facilities and stables of talent on a year-round basis.68

A leader of the independent movement in motion pictures is United Artists, a company that provides financing and leaves the creative work of moviemaking to the best team of


independent producers and directors. A division of United Artists, UA-TV, is precipitating a similar move. Executive Richard Dorso says:

There is no question that the knowledgeable executives within the networks tend to lean toward individual producers rather than the over-all label of companies.°9

COMPASS PRODUCTIONS and the Hallmark

Hall of Fame 1959-1964

The 1959-1960 Season

In 1959 National Broadcasting Company announced that "Hallmark Cards, Inc. . . . has contracted with George Schaefer to produce six ninety-minute programs beginning in October of 1959." At varying times throughout the season these productions would again feature Shaw and Shakespeare. And despite the success of "Little Moon of Alban" two seasons before, no "original" plays would be featured. Under Schaefer there would be the "same aims, the same working relationship" as there had been "between producer and advertising agency under Milberg and Maurice Evans Presents.°70

°9Ibid. Two productions co-financed by UA-TV to gain critical acclaim during the 1963-64 season were Hollywood and the Stars (co-production with David Wolper Productions) and East Side, West Side (co-production with Talent Associates.)

°70Personal Interview, Homer Heck, December 30, 1963.
The season offered the following plays: October 26, "Winterset"; November 15, "A Doll's House"; December 13, "Christmas Festival"; February 3, "The Tempest"; April 10, "The Cradle Song"; and May 2, "Captain Brassbound's Conversion."

It was reported that some 40,000,000 viewers saw "The Tempest," undoubtedly the highlight of the Hallmark season. In the role of Prospero, Maurice Evans appeared for the sixth appearance in a Hall of Fame presentation. Others in the cast were Roddy McDowell and Richard Burton.

As new production head, Schaefer brought in John Friend to the production staff to adapt the work. Friend had directed a similar version of The Tempest at the Barter Theatre in Virginia.

Some of the major changes in the Hallmark "Tempest" were the cutting of unnecessary lines and extra characters and some rearrangement of events to clarify the plot. For example, the storm scene opened the play, as it does in the Shakespearean work; but the next scene shifted to Ariel (who had been in the storm scene) rather than to the scene with Prospero explaining the past to Miranda. In this way the relationship between Prospero and Ariel, Prospero and the storm, and Prospero and magic were explained early in the production.
The more edited and streamlined version of "The Tempest" seemed to please some critics and disturb others. Fred Danzig, UPI correspondent, complimented Schaefer, "who has had such great success with Shakespeare for maintaining his record for quality, taste, and beauty." Terry Turner called the play "a highlight of the season."  

The production, which was taped in the summer of 1959, exceeded the budget by about $45,000 and featured the settings by famous Shakespearean designer Ruben Ter-Arutunian. Besides Turner and Danzig, who applauded the production, Lawrence Laurent and John Crosby thought that the play had succeeded. Jack Gould and Jack O'Brian (New York Journal American) cast negative responses. Martin Mayer, in a two-part series in Harper's, considered the play unadaptable to the medium of television, commenting that "the comedy scenes were written with the audience participation (the stage) in mind." He also criticized the musical opportunities muffed, both songs and dance numbers owing to mock-Mendelssohn rather than to any contemporary of the playwright.

73 Martin Mayer, "How Good is TV at Its Best?" Harpers, September, 1960, p. 85-90. Despite criticisms of numerous special dramas during the season, Mr. Mayer, interestingly, concludes that: "Television was not born great and has not
Schaefer defended the more modernized version of the play and the reverse order of scenes and events:

I think you must ask: did we succeed in capturing in a modern way what Shakespeare wrote about. My hope was that we did . . . Some people were disappointed, but in general I think most Shakespearean scholars felt we did . . . It was not a heavy ponderous production by any means.74

Productions of "Winterset" and "A Doll's House."

Critical response was somewhat mixed for these two productions which opened the 1959 season under Schaefer's new company. Those who cast unfavorable opinions maintained that timeliness was lacking in both plays. The "Winterset" TV production retained the blank verse of Maxwell Anderson's "modern tragedy" and emphasized Hallmark's usual concern for a well-known cast: Piper Laurie, Don Murray, George C. Scott and Charles Bickford.

achieved greatness and there does not seem to be anybody around who can thrust greatness upon it. But how high may standards be set before they become ludicrously unfair to people who are doing the best they can? He also cites a short-sighted selfishness in a drive by better-educated public for "more good television. Don't these people, he asks, have anything else to do at night?"

74Kramer, op. cit., p. 85.
While many thought the play "retained its beauty" on television, critics Shanley, O'Brian, and Laurant declared that:

The acting was not good in this performance, and the play no longer timely. There was an uneasy collection of stilted phrases in blank verse . . . the acting plodded to the point of near boredom. The play suffered in comparison to the movie version starring Burgess Meredith.  

Schaefer's production of "A Doll's House" on November 15, 1959, included the leading players from "Little Moon of Alban," Julie Harris and Christopher Plummer. Others were Eileen Heckert, Hume Cronyn, and Jason Robards, Jr. Despite the highly-renowned cast, some critics questioned, as they did in "Winterset," the quality of acting. In addition, critics O'Brian, Crosby, Gould, and Laurent judged the play as being one lacking enough contemporary values for a modern audience.  

Martin Mayer quoted from a letter by playwright Arthur Miller to the editor of the New York Times concerning


adaptations of Ibsen. Miller said:

"... profound work, orchestration of whose themes is quite marvelous ... became a superficial story at worst and a hint of something more at best."77

Mayer took note of the matter of compression of dramatic material but also stated that "Ibsen's greatness ... is in a controlled pace -- and that control is lost when the imminent audience is taken away."78 Three other critics praised the production and the acting as continuing the Hall of Fame tradition of fine plays: O'Flaherty praised "with some reservations"; Donald Kirkley and Joe Mills considered it a worthy contribution.79

There was an absence of critical attention for both "The Cradle Song" and "Christmas Festival." This second production of James Costigan's adaptation of "Cradle Song" was telecast on April 10, 1960, and starred the principal leading actors from the 1956 production: Helen Hayes, Judith Anderson, and Siobhan McKenna. "The Christmas

77Mayer, op. cit., p. 88.

78Ibid.

79Donald Kirkley, Baltimore Sun, Terrence O'Flaherty, San Francisco Chronicle, Joe Mills, Columbus Evening Dispatch, November 16, 1959.
Festival" represented Hallmark's major departure from the drama (as it did in 1958-59), presenting musical-variety vignettes featuring Dick Buttons, the Obernkirchen Children's Choir and the filmed Nativity Story.

The final production of the season was Shaw's "Captain Brassbound's Conversion." Several reviewers praised the acting of Greer Garson and Christopher Plummer. Jack Gould, however, took exception to the directing by Schaefer, contending that the production "lacked the light and sly touch that is conducive to Shaw." Similar to his criticism of "The Tempest," Martin Mayer in his Harpers article noted the basic problem of the theatrical comedy on the television medium: "The difficulty is worse for theatrical comedy in Shaw (than it is for Shakespeare) ... Shaw's sense of comic timing wrote the audience reaction into the plays."

Despite these two unfavorable reviews for the Shaw play, the Shaw Society of America asserted that Schaefer and the Hall of Fame had continued to "foster interest in the dramatic works of Shaw through television."

---

ceremony honoring Schaefer the officials of the Shaw Society lauded the Hallmark series for devotion to the dramatic works of George Bernard Shaw and for the high standard with which his works have been presented to a national television audience, all of which have contributed substantially to making the playwright's work more widely understood and appreciated. 82

Miss Garson, speaking of the Shaw production and her relationship to producer-director Schaefer, remarked:

... one of the main reasons for accepting the role was to work with a top-flight director such as Schaefer. ... equally important to me is the fact that Mr. Schaefer has formed, with his able assistants, a production group which functions with reliable efficiency. 83

Schaefer continued to free-lance in television directing during the season. In March of 1960 he directed the special production "Turn the Key Deftly" for Breck Showcase. The play was an original by Alfred Bestor and starred Julie Harris and Maximillian Schell.

The production of "The Tempest" was probably the major achievement of the season. Schaefer had used

82Ibid. The citation also noted Schaefer's other Hallmark productions, Devil's Disciple, Man and Superman as well as theatre productions of The Apple Cart, St. Joan, and Captain Brassbound's Conversion.

Shakespeare's language, but had rearranged scenes and events to clarify the plot line. The problem was similar to that which Fred Coe had written about some time earlier in *Theatre Arts*, when he said that "... it is necessary to put the whole into some observable order so that an audience including an Iowa farmer, New York taxi cab driver or Shakespeare student could observe." Gould, however, writing generally about the past two seasons, noted a lack of distinguished productions on the *Hall of Fame*:

Up until 1958 I thought they were pretty darn good and exciting. I thought 1958-59 was their slow season — "Johnny Belinda," "Kiss Me Kate," and "Ah Wilderness." It didn't seem to be very distinguished ... they were sort-of-obvious vehicles anybody can do. I think they lowered their sights in the last two years -- 1958-1960; I think they can regain it without too much difficulty.

Despite the almost-extinct weekly anthology drama the television season stands out generally for the "Hallmark approach" -- the adaptation play in the "specials" concept.

---


85 Kramer, op. cit., quoting conversation with Jack Gould, p. 36.
Specials Gain New Acceptance, 1959-1960. Although networks were defending (and programming) run-of-fare series drama, the independent company and the "specials" drama were finding renewed emphasis. For as Schaefer and his Compass Productions established the organization around a single drama series, a similar development occurred with two other series: The Ford Startime Specials (Hubbell Robinson Production Company) and DuPont Show of the Month (Talent Associates -- David Susskind). Unlike Schaefer, both men were more executive than production-conscious, and both had the producer's skills of creating and putting a show together.

There is also indication that some sponsors similar to Hallmark (in selling low-cost items) were finding new interest in creating a more favorable "image" through the ninety-minute dramatic play. Printer's Ink reported that

86 Robinson, executive producer of Playhouse 90 at CBS, left the network to organize his own production company. Opotowsky reported that "the promise of cash was so enticing that (he) quit the relative security of a six-figure salary as head of CBS-TV to assume the risks of an independent producer." Stan Opotowsky, TV: The Big Picture (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co, 1961), p. 55.
quality shows may "pull sufficiently but not based on high rating":

Instead, favorable image is created while doing a selling job of sponsor's product. (Breck, Rexall, US Time, Zerex, DuPont, Revlon, Olds, Ford, Allstate). Ford budget at fifteen million dollars for thirty-seven shows by Hubbell Robinson; advertisers feel that such elaborate programs will sell fast turnover items as well as costly wares.87

The National Broadcasting Company, which had faltered badly in live television drama during the past few seasons, now seemed ready to recapture its former status as an innovator of live dramatic programming. Ford Startime (alternating with the NBC Startime) presented Henry James "The Turn of the Screw," starring Ingrid Bergman and "My Three Angels." The Sunday Showcase (with alternating sponsors Breck, DuPont, Rexall) presented "The Devil and Daniel Webster," and "What Makes Sammy Run?" David Susskind's Talent Associates offered what many critics felt was one of the outstanding dramatic programs on television: an adaptation of Maugham's "The Moon and Sixpence" starring Lawrence Olivier. Gould lauded the production, directed by Robert Mulligan: "The depth and search for meaning surpassed the earlier stage and screen

87Printer's Ink, September 18, 1959, pp. 10,11. For example, Breck Company, and Rexall Products alternated in sponsoring Sunday Showcase as a dramatic special program.
versions . . . not only was the theme preserved but improved upon."\(^8\)

**Sunday Showcase** also was acclaimed for its original production "Secret of Freedom" by Archibald McLeish. The play, a censure of American mores, "decried the transformation of the American 'way of living' into a 'way of having' and to take refuge in the notion that this country necessarily is always the greatest."\(^9\)

CBS-TV, also relying on well-known novels for adaptation, presented "Ethan Frome," "Oliver Twist," and "Arrowsmith" on DuPont Show of the Month and an adaptation of Faulkner's "Tomorrow" on Playhouse 90, now in its last season.

The most experimental undertaking since television's earliest days would be the **CBS Television Workshop**, an hour-long drama series supervised by former **Hall of Fame** producer-director, Albert McOleery. The goal was the discovery and development of new talent. The production "Brick-the Rose" by Lewis Carlino exemplifies the return

---


to McCleery's earlier developed "cameo technique":

A living newspaper obituary of a product of the slums. Actors appear on a bare stage in front of large still pictures projected on a screen. The story of Tommy, who, as a youngster, seeks beauty and love, amid the sordidness of his surroundings.90

Aside from the short-lived experimental workshop at CBS, the anthology works were primarily adaptation. Novels had been generally well represented (and adapted), while the Hall of Fame had relied on five theatrical works. Some critics felt that this dearth of new material was the most disappointing feature of television, despite their praise of some adaptations. John Crosby lamented the status of the arts at this time:

We can't seem to produce new plays, new ideas, fresh personalities. But then I look around me in other fields and it occurs to me that this phenomenon is not isolated to television. This has been one of the worst seasons on Broadway. Movie houses are having a great day reissuing old movies. . . . most of fiction on the best sellers is trash. The conditions in TV's sister arts are not much better and may be worse.91

The new surge of dramatic specials on the networks would spark a slight flurry in the work of independent producers such as David Susskind, Hubbell Robinson, and

90Ibid. p. 48.

Henry Jaffe (who had earlier formed Showcase Productions). Despite over 250 specials on NBC during the season, this form did not dominate programming; for the filmed western and action program (by major studio "packagers" in Hollywood) would continue unabated.

**The 1960-1961 Season**

The season was one of the most diversified in the Hall of Fame's history. "Macbeth" was the series' first film; "Golden Child," the first American opera on Hallmark since "Amahl and the Night Visitors" (which was the first Hallmark Special); two original plays, "Give Us Barabbas" and "The Joke and the Valley," and the Jean Anouilh play "Time Remembered" rounded out this varied season.

"Macbeth" became Compass Productions' first opportunity to combine interests of the production company with the Hall of Fame. The two-hour film, mostly shot in Scotland at a cost of $1,000,000, was released through motion picture houses to defray costs. Schaefer wished to utilize the "bleak Scottish countryside" and take advantage of British actors not available in this country. The results were Hallmark's most honored production by the Academy of Arts and Sciences and three awards for directing
achievement for Schaefer.92 The production was hailed by the press and prompted Jack Gould to thank Hallmark "for (1) returning to its high dramatic standards after several lapses, (2) the unobtrusive nature of the commercials and (3) for presenting two hours of Shakespeare."93

Schaefer took the "live performance" directing skills with him when he directed "Macbeth" in Scotland. In a rather unusual move for a film director, he insisted on weeks of dry-run rehearsals before he exposed a foot of film. _Carts_ magazine commented that "British technicians scoffed at this technique since people in the movie business rarely bother with dry-run rehearsals."94

92Schaefer received an Emmy for Outstanding Directorial Achievement in Drama; Directors Guild of America Award for Best Television Direction and Radio Television Award as Director of the Year were given largely on the strength of the "Macbeth" production.

93Jack Gould, _New York Times_, November 21, 1960. In comparing Gould's two reviews of "Macbeth," one notes that: 1960 production was praised for Schaefer's concentration on the personal conflict of the individuals (intimacy) despite temptation to emphasize spectacle and pageantry. Yet, the 1955 production was criticized for "capsule scenes and close-ups which made play episodic . . . Schaefer sought to resolve by TV's personalization and intimacy, the awkwardness of "Macbeth." Supra p. 66.

94_Cards_, Fall, 1964, p. 11.
Aside from the success of "Macbeth" the season was most highlighted by the Hallmark International Teleplay Writing Competition to discover new dramatic writing talent for television and "to encourage established writers to submit their work to the medium." Of the 1,593 entries submitted between March and September of 1960, the production selected for a Hall of Fame performance was Jerry McNeely's "The Joke and the Valley." This production, starring Dean Stockwell, Thomas Mitchell, and Keenan Wynn, portrayed a modern parable of morality. A philosophical young wanderer arrives in a small valley town and finds no one caring about the death of an unpopular man. Wanting to force an interest in justice, he confesses. When this doesn't work, he confesses to the killing of a good man. When the boy is about to be hanged, the popular man turns up alive. Stockwell, in anger, stabs the prosecutor and he again stands trial for murder.


96 McNeely's play won second prize but was adjudged best for the Hall of Fame series, and won $3,500. Winning entrant was David Mark, 38 year old New York novelist and playwright whose entry "The Old Ball Game" won $5,000. McNeely, associate professor of Speech at the University of Wisconsin, has continued his writing of teleplays for Dr. Kildare and other film series.
The reviews by most papers (in the clipping file at Compass) were a mixture of praise and criticism. Donald Kirkley called it a "poor Billy Budd," suggesting that "the boy had ample justification for the impulsive homicide . . . there was a lack of motivating force (in script) to make the acting plausible." 97

Speaking on the demise of the Teleplay Competition Mr. Schaefer stated that "most of the work submitted to The Teleplay was not worth producing. We got few good scripts during the time it was in operation . . . but we are still looking for good original plays." 98

The other original play to gain some critical attention was the Henry Denker work "Give Us Barabbas," broadcast on March 26 and repeated during the next season. James Daly and Kim Hunter starred in the drama based on the New Testament story of Jesus, Pontius Pilate, and the condemned-to-die thief, Barabbas. Most critics praised

97 Donald Kirkley, Baltimore Sun, May 6, 1961.
98 Personal Interview, Mr. Schaefer, September 4, 1963. Marie Torre, New York Herald Tribune, March 24, 1961, criticized Hallmark for showing the Number two winner instead of Number one, adding that "there is more a desire to give the benefactor a respectable image than to aid new writers." In noting lack of purpose in numerous talent development projects she said the "ill-fated workshops in the past were without definite course with the result that they fizzled out after the flourish of trumpets and prestige values had been extracted."
the play for its inspirational message and its treatment of a religious theme. Gould seemed to sum up this viewpoint when he declared that the play "was shorn of the shabby, sensational devices that have often been introduced to enliven motion picture treatments of Biblical events."99

Two "plays with music" were included in the 1960-1961 season, neither of which was widely praised by the television critics. "Shangri-la," which opened the season, was a "mood fantasy" play which some critics felt was not aided by the music. It was adapted for television by its authors, playwrights Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee, who had based their Broadway production on the James Hilton novel "Lost Horizon." Laurent and Van Horne liked the play, but O'Flaherty objected to the "songs which gave it a Broadway look . . . the same stamp of quality."100


100 Terrence O'Flaherty, San Francisco Chronicle, October 25, 1960. Robert Lee commented that the Broadway production of Shangri-la was "one of the most expensive disasters in the history of the American theatre . . . I learned more from that play than anything else I've done. It was really a much better play on television." Personal interview with Mr. Lee, Delaware, Ohio, October 25, 1963.
"Golden Child," a Christmas folk opera directed by Robert Hartung, was the Hall of Fame effort to follow the much-celebrated "Amahl and the Night Visitors," presented originally on Hallmark in 1951. The opera, set in California's gold-rush era, came from the creative workshop of the University of Iowa. The libretto was by Paul Engle, music by Philip Bezanson. Many critics found the music an artistic achievement, but the writing less than suitable. To some critics it was not a work comparable to "Amahl and the Night Visitors."

"Time Remembered," the 1957 Anouilh play, was presented on February 7 and starred Christopher Plummer, Janet Munro, and Dame Edith Evans. The play, which involved the fantasy of a French milliner's assistant introduced into the household of a handsome aristocratic prince, was not reviewed by the major television critics. Brooks Atkinson, in his column "Critic at Large," praised Miss Evans' role in the production.

At the end of the 1960-61 season, in an unprecedented move the Academy of Arts and Sciences awarded Joyce Hall a "sponsor Emmy." The citation read:

... for his personal interest in uplifting the standards of television through complete sponsorship over a ten year period... which has brought many enriching hours of entertainment to the viewing public; and for furthering the interests of young playwrights by establishing the Teleplay Writing contest.
The production of "Macbeth" had contributed significantly to the Hallmark image of respected dramatic programming; it had perhaps done as much for Compass Productions and for Schaefer as an independent producer. The three "directing achievement awards" were clear recognition of Schaefer's capacities as a film producer, as well as television producer. The film's distribution was an important financial venture for the company, and brought this comment from the Milwaukee Journal:

In the early days when TV Program Directors were faced with the task of filling in time, free shows were the 'king of the roost'. But no longer. Now it is the reverse. Hallmark's "Macbeth" was distributed to numerous organizations through Associated Films.101

Aside from an occasional special program, the filmed series, including western, action-adventure, and situation comedy, completely dominated the television screens. The cutback in specials in just one season was significant: from a total of 325 placed on the network schedules in 1959-60 (250 on NBC), there were 95 on the air in 1960-61, and there was to be "a significant reduction" in the next season.102 "Special" series such as Ford Star Theatre,


Sunday Showcase, and DuPont Show of the Month had ended, with only Armstrong Circle Theatre/U.S. Steel remaining as alternating biweekly live drama.\textsuperscript{103}

In noting the obvious decline in high-level programming, Jack Gould singled out the Hallmark production of "Macbeth":

The television industry was saved from considerable embarrassment . . . Had it not been for "Macbeth," the Academy would have had quite a chore.\textsuperscript{104}

\textbf{The 1961-1962 Season}

The reduction in number of specials also applied to the Hall of Fame for this season. Fewer new productions were scheduled than in any previous season: October 20, "Macbeth" (repeat), November 30, "Victoria Regina," February 5, 1962, "Arsenic and Old Lace," and "Give Us Barabbas" (repeat on April 15). Spiraling costs had dictated a reduction of plays as well as repeat productions of two works.\textsuperscript{105}

\textsuperscript{103}Sunday Showcase was replaced by National Velvet and The Tab Hunter Show, both short-lived series. In a major departure from the trend to fewer dramatic specials, DuPont moved from a monthly series to weekly sponsorship.


\textsuperscript{105}"Give Us Barabbas," which was first produced "live," was taped in this new production of the 1960-1961 season.
"Victoria Regina," starring Julie Harris and James Donald, became the Emmy award-winning production for the season. It also received "Best Actress" and "Show of the Year" awards from the Academy of Arts and Sciences. Most critics hailed the acting of Miss Harris as a remarkable character study of Queen Victoria. Schaefer called Miss Harris "the ideal choice" to portray the nineteenth century monarch, noting:

This is one of the most sustained and arduous roles in the history of modern drama. It calls for the actress to span the reign of Britain's monarch from 1837 to her diamond jubilee in 1897.

The teleplay consisted of three acts containing ten vignettes, some of which were not seen in the Broadway production. Originally, playwright John Housman had collected forty-two one-act "plays" which were reduced to ten for the 1935 Broadway run.

106 The program received six Emmy nominations, three of which became Awards: Show of the Year, Best Actress, and Best Supporting Actress (Pamela Brown). It also received the Saturday Review of Literature Special Commendation.

107 Make-up problems were exceptionally acute for this production (greatly facilitated by taping rather than live production). In order to make Miss Harris "age" from 18 to 78 with "ages" in between, O'Bradovitch, make-up director, used numerous materials and devices. In final scene at age 78, Miss Harris wore a complete latex mask with openings for eyes and mouth. Mask was fitted so close to the skin that every facial movement showed on the mask.

108 Supra, p. 190.
The production was a good example of the advanced planning necessary to produce drama of this nature, planning which the small, independent company can more effectively achieve. While Schaefer was in England securing television rights to the material on Queen Victoria, inquiries were already being made for the various American and English stars. It was also necessary to reserve rehearsal space in New York and to begin the task of writing, editing, and revising the script.

Schaefer, remarking on efficiency in his operation and dependence on staff associates, said:

A great deal of advance planning is necessary for such a joint venture, and there are so many factors involved, human and otherwise ... there is no secret formula but if I had to sum it all up in a single word it would be 'style' -- and that includes quality in the selection of property itself, quality in the choice of cast, and quality in one's production associates. In "Victoria" we were blessed with all three.109

Jack Gould complimented the production as "a work of flowing ecstasy and poignancy, possibly the finest of Julie Harris' many contributions to theatre on television":

... Adapted to the requirements of television with sensitivity and discipline ... a drama admirably suited to the warmth of TV ...

yet each vignette has body and substance that fill in the characterization in the intensely human terms. Succession of scenes ... lean and direct in their penetration of the woman in life who is also a queen. Schaefer is one of the few impresarios with the good sense to minimize tampering with a proven script and devote all his energies to its faithful mounting.  

The only other new production of the year was Joseph Kesserling's "Arsenic and Old Lace." This production, which starred Boris Karloff and Tony Randall was the only "live" production in the 1960 season. The advantages of cast availability during summer months, flexibility in production due to costume and make-up problems, and the possible rerun values were major reasons for the almost complete adoption of video taped productions.  

Reviews for "Arsenic and Old Lace" were mixed; O'Flaherty, O'Brian, and Van Horne commented favorably,

---

110 Jack Gould, *New York Times*, December 1, 1961, p. 67. Jack Gould, in addition to writing a column praising the production, provided a follow-up criticism of the networks in scheduling "Victoria" opposite a "Yves Montand" special on ABC and also opposite a *CBS Report* documentary, "Biography of a Bookie Joint." His reaction was that "the carnivorous practice of allowing quality to devour itself should be avoided." (Gould, *New York Times*, December 10, 1961.)

111 Schaefer's words are worth noting since a gradual shift to taped productions had taken place: "... Ideally, all drama should be done live, with the viewer watching each performance at the moment it takes place. But little is lost so long as tape is used to capture a performance and not as an inadequate substitute for edited film ... At Hallmark we try to do at least one live show a season, and I delight in directing them." Carl Byoir and Associates News Release, December, 1963.
while Gould, Frank Judge, and Harrison (Washington, D. C. Star) gave unfavorable opinions. Those who favored the production were impressed by the acting and the production values, which preserved the "humor of the genteel and thoughtful homicide" comedy. Gould took the opposite view of the comic values of the teleplay. Because of the medium of television, he complained, the acting did not convey the intended irony:

"... the play requires the deftest touches in all departments to extract laughter; above all it is not a work that can be examined too closely if suspension of belief is to be maintained ... one of the biggest difficulties was lack of sincere belief that a graveyard in the basement and Teddy Roosevelt on the staircase were nothing extraordinary. It needs the proscenium arch for protection. ... The incessant close-ups turned the whole affair into a matter of reality." 112

Harrison asserted that "viewers' over-familiarity with the play was a major handicap to the production." 113

Productions of "Macbeth" and "Give Us Barabbas" were not as heavily reviewed on their second showing. For the "Macbeth" showing, particularly, there was little specific reviewing, most of the articles indicating the value of a "Macbeth" to the viewing season. The phrase "repeat by

popular demand" seemed, to most reviewers, a completely valid reason for the second production.

Network Control and the Independent Company. The curtailment of new Hallmark shows in the present season would call attention to the more serious situation faced by the television industry: collapse of regularly scheduled live anthology drama, severe decline in the dramatic specials, and as a corollary development, a reliance on the film packager by the networks.

The small, "creative" independent company such as Compass Productions (without the Hallmark tradition behind it) no longer had the opportunity to participate in programming, particularly in the dramatic area. There was a retrenchment by the networks to high-rated series which stabilized the schedule and sustained viewer interest over the entire season. Oscar Katz, vice-president for CBS-TV, gave the network position:

A good example is the Scarlet Pimpernel broadcast in the Rawhide time period. The Week before

114 Three examples are Hubbell Robinson (Ford Star-time), Talent Associates (DuPont Show of Month, other specials), and more recently Directors Company (DuPont Show of Week which ends in the 1963-64 season). Noticeable exceptions to the demise of the independent producer are: Herbert Brodkin, (Defenders and The Nurses) Leland Hayward (That Was The Week That Was) plus entertainment personalities who have formed independent companies for their own shows.
the special, Rawhide had a forty-one per cent share of audience... The Scarlet Pimpernel, mind you a special, got only twenty-five. We lost about forty per cent of the audience we normally have. But this isn't all: Route 66 which follows Rawhide lost twenty to twenty-five per cent of its audience because it didn't have a strong lead-in... There were, therefore, three bad effects to the special: (1) delivered less audience in the time period scheduled, (2) furnished a smaller lead-in, and this hurt following programs, and (3) created opportunity for the audience to sample competing shows and, as often happens, the competition often holds some of the samplers even after our regular schedule returns to the air.¹¹⁵

The network position at this time, then, was that the special dramatic program could be presented on the networks only if it was circulation-minded, a particularly "prestige" show, or could balance the entire programming schedule.

Equally detrimental to the creative, individual special has been the network's co-operative ownership of most filmed programs with the large package agencies. This has, undoubtedly, contributed to monopolistic conditions which the networks consider business necessity. Willard

¹¹⁵"Specials Become Special," Television Age, May 29, 1961, p. 50. Two examples of series cancelled over protests of their sponsors are Voice of Firestone and Armstrong Circle Theatre. Firestone had been on radio and television for thirty-one years, NBC and ABC; both shows were eased out by the networks because they did not contribute to "over-all lineup", (Jack O'Brien, "Problem of Ratings," Cosmopolitan January, 1964, page 53.
Levitas, of Leland Hayward Associates said of the network/ownership of programs:

Here's what happens if the network does not control part of the product: Let's say you develop a Wagon Train (done by Revue Productions). They "hold up" the network, making them take other Revue shows, before negotiating for Wagon Train. The network puts up most of the cash for a "pilot." If the show is a success, both packager and network benefit. The pilot may cost the network much money, but in the long-range financial terms it at least has a stake, win or lose.\(^\text{116}\)

Fielder Cook remarked that network control is "the greatest un-talked-about total monopoly which exists today. Everything is controlled by the network, but all of the programming is done by outside individuals."\(^\text{117}\) Mr. Cook added that "there may be an example here and there to the contrary, but as a rule if you want to get a show on the air you go into partnership."\(^\text{118}\)

\(^{116}\) Personal statement, Willard Levitas, associate producer, That Was The Week That Was, Leland Hayward Associates production.

\(^{117}\) Personal Interview, Fielder Cook, January 31, 1964.

\(^{118}\) Ibid. It is true, of course, that the small, "individual" producer (Compass) could also enter into co-production with the network and foster the same evils suggested by Mr. Cook. In most cases, however, the larger film packager -- by sheer numbers of productions and by producing a more formulized, ratings-conscious show -- has been in a much better position to dominate program content and to deal on a co-production basis with the networks.
The 1961-62 season generally marked a virtual
dominance by the film industry in television programming.
Three anthology-type filmed series were presented: The
Dick Powell Theatre, Alcoa Premiere, and Alfred Hitchcock
(moved to NBC as a one-hour series). Hour-long action
programs, medical series (Dr. Kildare and Ben Casey), and
a two-hour feature film by NBC contributed to this
dominance by 1961.119

The 1962-63 Hallmark Season

"The Teahouse of the August Moon," October 26;
"Cyrano de Bergerac," December 6; "Pygmalion," February 6,
1963; and "The Invincible Mr. Disraeli" were the Hall of
Fame offerings during the season. This season, like the
previous one, saw a curtailment in productions; and all were
video taped so that a more economic rerun might be possible.120

119 Television Age, June, 1961, p. 58. The
following figures indicate the dominance of film programming
in the past ten years on the networks:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Amount of Film (prime time)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>CBS 8 per cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NBC 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ABC 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956-57</td>
<td>CBS 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NBC 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ABC 52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961-62</td>
<td>Average will be eighty per</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>cent on all networks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

120 Supra, page 15 - a break-down of production costs
since 1958.
"Teahouse of the August Moon," which opened the season, was one of Hallmark's most expensive productions. The production, which was co-produced on Broadway by Schaefer in 1953, brought the leading actors of that endeavor to the Hall of Fame -- John Forsythe, David Wayne, and Paul Ford. Hartung, who adapted all three stage works during the season, believed that the play "was conceived very much like a teleplay," and was forced to cut just one scene in its entirety -- the wrestling scene.\textsuperscript{121}

The critics generally praised the play as being a good vehicle for television. Gould, Kirkley, and Adrian Slivka (\textit{Youngstown Vindicator}) thought that it retained the values of the theatre production. Gould said, however, that "a living audience was almost vital to a full savoring of the play, and that cameras tended at times to curtail the enveloping mood that is keenly felt in the spaciousness of the theatre."\textsuperscript{122} Nevertheless he thought that Schaefer had "preserved the kernel of the captivating make-believe . . ."\textsuperscript{123}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{121}Hallmark \textit{Playbill}, October, 1962, p. 3.
\textsuperscript{123}Ibid.
\end{flushright}
The only negative criticism (in addition to Gould's) appeared in the *Memphis Tennessee Commercial Appeal*, whose reviewer found the production "tedious . . . nothing in the entire ninety minutes as lively or fresh as some of the better repeat shows of "I Love Lucy.""\(^{124}\)

Productions of "Cyrano de Bergerac" and "Pygmalion" drew varied critical, negative reviews from newspaper editors. Most prominent among the comments were those for the adaptation and acting in the two plays. Although Donald Kirkley commented that *Cyrano* had "too much omitted . . . not time enough to project the subtleties and delicate character drawings in the original . . ." his judgment of the directing differs sharply from Gould's:

\[\ldots\] deft handling of direction by Schaefer who gave procedure to the poetic lines over the melodrama. There was none of the customary flamboyant horseplay in the famous duel scenes.\(^{125}\)

\[\ldots\] Awkward heavy-handed adaptation of a grand piece of theatre . . . staging in the unkind intensity of close-ups, emphasized the episodic quality of the evening. Reliance on technique bereft of even a trace of inventiveness . . .\(^{126}\)


Variety looked with favor on a "workable discerning script adaptation" despite Hartung's earlier comments that "Cyrano" suffered from a compression of time. A number of opinions were reserved for the acting -- leads played by Hope Lange and Christopher Plummer. O'Brien (New York Journal American) and DuBrow, UPI, felt that Hope Lange played her role ineffectively.

The production of "Pygmalion" drew more praise than blame, although numerous critics were now taking issue with a teleplay which adapted a two-hour stage production into a seventy-six minute drama. The Hall of Fame presentation of "Pygmalion," starring Julie Harris and James Donald, received favorable reviews from the Toledo Times, Washington Post (Laurent), Indianapolis, Orlando, Florida, and Des Moines Register-Tribune. (An interesting comment was one indicating a loss due to "the missing songs from My Fair Lady"). Gould was more critical, pointing to the lack of running time "precipitating inevitable editorial deletion that snipped away characterization and many Shavian asides." He was also critical of acting and directing:

Julie Harris missed a sense of captivating electricity. James Donald's Professor Higgins a major disappointment: stoic, needed greater

warmth and charm to generate a middle-age sex appeal . . .

Direction fiercely methodical, bereft of gay and impish touches . . . 128

The original play of the season, James Lee's the "Invincible Mr. Disraeli," starred Trevor Howard and Greer Garson. This play, which explored the public and private life of Disraeli, won six nominations for Emmys (including one for Schaefer's direction.) 129 Although the production was favorably received by most of the critics noted, some indicated reservations. Van Horne, who liked the play, gave "praise for the play, generally, and the stars, but not some of the stilted writing." 130 A number of critics who praised the play commented on the shortage of time allowable for a major chronicle of English life. Horn, of the New York Herald Tribune, spoke of "a lack of time for


129Lee is a New York writer of motion pictures, television, and theatre. His "Career" was produced on Broadway in 1956. Television plays include works for the American Heritage series of original historical dramas. He also authored "The Life of Samuel Johnson" on Omnibus in 1957 which won a Sylvania Award. "Disraeli" won him a nomination for an Emmy award for "writing achievement"; the production won for Trevor Howard "leading actor" Emmy.

presenting a major chronology of English life."\textsuperscript{131} Jack Gould felt that "Lee's play was only a patchwork portrait of the Victorian figure . . . the measure of his influence on the evolution of the British Empire never effectively captured."\textsuperscript{132}

Generally, the critics praised the 1962-63 season of Hallmark; however, a basic criticism seemed to be (particularly for "Pygmalion" and "Cyrano de Bergerac") that too much of the play had to be omitted, with a resulting reduction in characterization and language.

At the close of the season, \textit{Television} reported that anthology drama "was making its way back into the networks via the action/adventure route":

> When violence reached the saturation point, TV was left with the idea of \textit{continuing characters} in a \textit{wide range} of setting -- doctors, lawyers, newspapermen. (The writers of "Naked City" have set a crew of three characters to move around in \textit{different situations}.\textsuperscript{133}

\textbf{The 1963-1964 Season}

During this season the \textit{Hall of Fame} presented three

"The Tempest" had been a production particularly pleasing to Schaefer. Though adapter Jack Friend rearranged some scenes, the play was more easily compressed into the running time of a ninety-minute production:

It is so constructed and written that it lends itself ideally to the television medium. Unlike many of the Bard's works, this one does not require several hours to tell its story completely. We eliminated, with no loss, the lengthy masque that was obviously employed for its Elizabethan court presentation, and cut much of the topical humor that may have been hilarious in the 16th Century but is obscure today.134

An adaptation of Sidney Kingsley's 1943 Broadway hit The Patriots elicited praise from some ("... a rare and fine combination of ... television's seldom-linked functions of entertaining and informing ...")135 and

criticism from others, whose "quarrel is with the play itself."136 The teleplay, exploring the philosophical clash between Jefferson and Hamilton was video-taped in the summer of 1963.137

Hallmark's Christmas production was an original play by Sherman Yellen; "A Cry of Angels," starring Walter Slezak as Georg Friedrich Handel, was a drama with music portraying Handel's struggle for musical acceptance and its culmination in "The Messiah." It was the Hall of Fame's first live production in several seasons. The teleplay also featured, in addition to Mr. Slezak, Maureen O'Hara as Susanna Cibber, Hermione Gingold, Hurd Hatfield, and singers from the Columbus Boy Choir.

Rick DuBrow thought that the production "had good intent," but the "hour was not enough for fleshing out . . . and the play was essentially a group of antecdotes and some caricature in search of substance."138 Jack Gould complimented Schaefer's direction: "The production had

---


137 A production analysis of The Patriots is the subject of the next chapter.

magnificent beauty and gentleness of movement." He believed, however, that

the rewards of the hour came in the exquisite and inspired tableau used to illustrate excerpts from the oratorio... the effectiveness of the tableau made a viewer wish the technique had been employed for an uninterrupted presentation of "The Messiah"... the soaring music and visual riches could have made it a masterpiece for TV.139

Productions of "Little Moon of Alban" and "Abe Lincoln in Illinois" were of particular interest to producer-director Schaefer. The "Abe Lincoln" production, which reached fifteen million homes, showed Lincoln "not in an official capacity but as a real person, growing and groping his way to greatness."140 He felt that "to direct this work with this cast was a rare privilege... I am pleased that it was one of the better ratings, that so many people could view it. This is satisfying to me. Even in film I don't think I could get that feeling of satisfaction."141 Jack Gould, writing the most laudatory


review in several seasons, praised the play, directing, and acting roles in the Sherwood production:

Once the play moves in to the awkward courtship of the frightening, ambitious Miss Todd, there emerges an enduring portrait of the human being who is heavy of heart as he leaves New Salem for his inauguration in Washington. Robards gave a uniformly disciplined and thoughtful portrayal of Lincoln; the supporting company reflected Hallmark's traditional concern for careful casting of secondary roles.

. . . Schaefer's direction lean and incisive and O'Bradovich's make-up of Lincoln noteworthy for subtlety with which the passing years were suggested. . . .

In a telephone-taped interview with Pennsylvania State University broadcasters, Schaefer commented about "Little Moon of Alban":

Six years ago it was so successful . . . always felt that it would be worthy for a repeat . . . Julie was available. Most of the other people were too famous to play their original roles. We decided to give it a new coloring, a new cast . . . Dirk Bogard gave it a completely different approach than Christopher Plummer who played in the lead in original production. Its a beautiful play . . . examination of faith which still holds up today. Julie is even better -- if that is possible -- than before. She seems to have grown in that beautiful role.

---


143 Schaefer, Pennsylvania State interview.
Paul Gardner in the New York Times, commenting on the return production of "Little Moon of Alban," stated that while cynics argue that special dramatic productions cannot possibly be worth anyone's artistic time or commercial trouble, the Hall of Fame continues to disprove this specious assumption.  

In praise of the play Gardner said that "... Costigan should be pleased that a Broadway adaptation was unsuccessful. His play is a model of television theatre; works of merit do not usually survive transplanting."

**The Hall of Fame, Schaefer, and the Television Critics**

The seasons of plays from 1959-1964 reflect the maturing years for the Hall of Fame, the years of Schaefer's independent company. In considering what (if any) changes have occurred in the Hallmark production values, type of plays presented, and whether critical acclaim has been more or less present in these years than in the preceding four seasons, one could note the following: (1) Since Schaefer's responsibility and abilities as producer as well as director have been employed in all nine years of productions, there

---

145 Ibid.
has been no major departure in the creative work of the series. And Mr. Heck of Foote, Cone, and Belding has stated that there "is the same working relationship" with Schaefer as under the previous production heads, Maurice Evans Presents, and Milberg Productions. (2) The staff at Hallmark has remained virtually the same through the years, (with Schaefer, Hartung, Miss Luraschi, and Miss Trubin); the relationship to NBC technical supervisors -- costume director, technical director, makeup director, and scene designer -- has been retained for most Hallmark productions.

A review of the major Award-winning, critically successful Hallmark shows would substantiate this consistency. Those shows reviewed most favorably occurred in the middle of both "phases" of Schaefer's career. "Green Pastures" and "Little Moon of Alban" were awarded numerous honors in the 1957-58 season, a year in which Schaefer was acclaimed "director of the year." As an independent producer in the 1960-62 seasons, his shows of "Victoria Regina" and "Macbeth" were critical successes, and Schaefer was named Director of Year by the Directors Guild and Radio-Television Daily. Recently his "Invincible Mr. Disraeli" won him a nomination for an Emmy award for directorial achievement.
Newspaper critics have generally praised the Hallmark shows, though a few (including Gould) have disliked as many productions as they have liked. These critics, for the most part, have cited the following limitations of the television medium when applying critical opinion:

1. **Dramatic Values in the Play Itself**
   - Are there values for present-day audiences? Are there values too difficult to present in any medium?

2. **Rigid Time Limitations**
   - Was there a "watering down" of original material because of time limitations (ninety minutes)? Did adapter exercise careful selectivity in choice of materials? Was there sufficient time to fully develop characterization, mood? Was original improved upon through television technique?

---

146 Gould, *New York Times*, the critic most often quoted in the study, has been increasingly critical in his columns toward the Hall of Fame. In the nine years of regular specials he has praised 16 productions, criticized 13, with 1 (A Cry of Angels) mixed. However, in the last five years with Schaefer as Compass head, he has found fault with 7 while praising 5 (the last figure -- 5 -- does not include two repeat shows). In two seasons, 1959 and 1962, he was critical of more than three productions in each season, 1959--"Winterset," "Doll's House," "Tempest," "Captain Brassbound's Conversion"; 1962--"Pygmalion," "Cyrano de Bergerac," and "Invincible Mr. Disraeli". His most lavish praise through the years has been for "The Lark," "Green Pastures," "Cradle Song," "Macbeth," "Victoria Regina," "Abe Lincoln in Illinois". Productions which received "awards" he had previously praised in his column.
3. **Size of the Television Screen**

   Because of small size, when compared with stage and movie screen, the television screen forces compromise. Most often problem resolved with close-up shot at sacrifice of width.

4. **A Living Room Audience**

   Television denies the psychological advantage of having an audience in a darkened auditorium under certain controls.147

   George Schaefer's influence as producer-director was partially explored in Chapter III, when critics' responses to the question "What is Schaefer's unique capacity as producer-director?" were surveyed.148 Of Equal significance

---

147 Jakes, Frank, op. cit., pp. 160-163. The criteria above in part reflect the limitations set forth by television critics Gould, Kirkley, Crosby, and Kern, in Jakes' study of "standards imposed by four television critics with respect to live television drama." Of special note is his concluding analysis of the first three: "John Crosby, then of the New York Herald Tribune, was more willing to accept compromises regarding the 'spirit of the original' being retained when adapted. He felt that TV's limitations — small screen, time, — forced many compromises. For this reason he approached many of his reviews with the expectation the show would be poorly done. When he found he was wrong, he was pleasantly surprised. On the contrary, Gould seemed to have set a level of expectation in advance and was unwilling to accept compromise." Kirkley has been less critical of Hallmark shows, and as Jakes comments, his basic departure from Gould and Crosby is in his "use of a kind of censorship; though limited . . . in frequent use in adaptations in which he thought religious themes were treated lightly."

148 Supra, Chapter III, pp. 150-153.
might be the question, "Has the reliance on stage adaptations (with large budgets and "name" stars) reflected a "safe formula," thereby diminishing the influence of Schaefer?" Critics responding to a Survey form indicated by an overwhelming majority that this factor did not diminish his influence on the series. The comments by newspaper critics (from major newspapers in a geographic distribution) are provided below:

There is no "safe formula." Some of television's worst bombs came from adaptations of classics, using big budgets and brand-name performers. There have been restrictions on Schaefer ever since Mary Martin appeared in *Born Yesterday*. These, however, are "moderate adversity" and George's one major failure was an attempt at an original drama. The answer is that Schaefer achieves excellence consistently, where others with the same factors have failed.149

I wouldn't call devoting two hours of air time in a mass medium such as television to a lavish production of Shakespeare's "The Tempest" exactly safe formula. Isn't the formula . . . the instrumentality of all commercial theatre -- whether stage, movie or television? To my mind it is, and it isn't by a long shot, always conducive of quality of success, as witness the annual casualty rate on Broadway.150

Regardless of how good a classic may be, it still has to be transposed to the TV screen -- and


this requires good directors, actors, and a
writer to adapt the material to the special
limitations. Money alone is not good enough.
It takes an outstanding producer.151

Yes, they rely on a safe formula; but I
fail to see how Schaefer is diminished because
he still has quality theatrical fare with which
to work -- which is more than you can say for
most directors -- and this is enough to maintain
his enthusiasm. Hall of Fame may be safe but
its worthwhile.152

Critics LaCamera, Judge, and Cecil Smith all
answered to the question of "safe formula," specifying
Schaefer's effective use of stars and large budget:

No, they do not. An example is Schaefer's
production of "Little Moon of Alban," an original
play which remains one of the finest dramas in TV
history. Considering the present plight of tele-
vision, I suppose we must be grateful even for
adaptations of good classics -- which otherwise
would have no outlet at all. If we must have
"name stars" and large budgets, I think these are
used to much greater advantage by Schaefer than
by TV's mass-producers. And if ratings are the
criterion, the Hallmark policy is not at all a
"safe formula."153

Not by any stretch of the imagination. It
actually makes it tougher for Schaefer to work
with proven works, because he is always being
challenged by having his work compared with the
original . . .

Schaefer is a man who would be good no matter
what he was working with, but happens to shine
brighter because he is working with quality.154

152Terry Turner, Chicago Daily News, letter, March
10, 1964.
153Anthony LaCamera, Boston Record-American, letter
March 12, 1964.
The same could be said of any theatrical venture. If you've got Rogers and Hammerstein, Mary Martin and kids, how can you miss? George is lucky to have big budgets and the casts he can get. Hallmark is not "off Broadway its on! As for "safe formula." "Hamlet" never outrated Beverly Hillbillies, but it is to Schaefer's great credit that it was seen by more people than ever saw it before.155

Other comments judged that Hallmark had failed to secure satisfactory "original" scripts, but only one respondent indicated that this definitely diminished the influence of Schaefer:

Yes I agree that I’m afraid it may diminish Schaefer's influence . . . I think he has the green light and anyone who couldn't come up with quality (presuming they are professionals to start with) wouldn't be worth much. Remember also that Hallmark's off-screen publicity (awards, etc.) seeks to strengthen the impression that it is a quality series.156

In my talks with him we never bring up this point. Because of loyalty to Hallmark he isn't free to discuss it. I do know that he has always tried to find suitable originals, with little results. Remember the $50,000 fund for encouraging writers, which came to nothing and was abandoned?157


Perhaps so, but his problem seems to be as much one of finding good story properties as of getting sponsor approval.\textsuperscript{158}

Mrs. Alberg considered Schaefer's unique capacity, "his tremendous experience and background in the theatre . . . it is this knowledge which distinguishes him from other directors." She was "disappointed," however, that "Hallmark programs have done more repeats of the classics than original programs in later years:"

Schaefer has been privileged to work with the largest TV dramatic budget today and there is some disappointment that the Hallmark programs have done more repeats of the classics than original programs . . . When Hallmark started many people were doing originals and Hallmark was the first sponsor to treat the classics as they deserve to be treated -- with time, budget, and with loving care. Today when there are no other ninety-minute opportunities for original TV drama, I do feel that Hallmark might well develop in this area.\textsuperscript{159}

The critics' viewpoints reflect an opinion about Schaefer over his entire producing-directing career, unlike specific production criticism included for the years 1959-1964. Since these chapters have been concerned with the culmination of Schaefer's career, however, the viewpoints would seem to provide a logical part of this chapter.


\textsuperscript{159}Mildred Freed Alberg, personal letter, March 11, 1964.
Summary and Conclusions

This chapter has explored the role of George Schaefer as head of an independent production company, Compass Productions, Inc. In 1959 Schaefer assumed the larger "independent" position of corporate owner in addition to his function of producer-director for the Hallmark Hall of Fame live drama series. The chapter has explored the development of the independent producer of live drama and analyzed the work of Schaefer as executive producer in this historical framework.

Schaefer became head of his own producing company because he wished to expand into other areas of the arts — motion picture production, and theatre; to assume the business responsibilities (and reap the financial benefits); and to have a larger "voice" in selection of properties and staff associates. His decision led him into other enterprises in addition to the Hallmark series: distributing the motion picture "Macbeth" through his company (in addition to presenting it as a Hallmark teleplay), and preparing two plays for the Broadway stage. His production company is the small-staffed, flexible, producing organization which brings together the many elements necessary for theatrical and television production.

The Schaefer-type organization is unique in being
the only producer of live/tape anthology drama on network television. As the chapter has indicated, the decline of the dramatic "special" series has prevented the creative, independent company from competing for programming resources.

As the networks assumed virtual control of television programming, stronger allegiances were made with larger film "package" companies which could guarantee faster, more inexpensive productions, rating-producing programs which would sustain audience interest over the long run. As networks moved into ownership of filmed series on a co-production basis with film companies, smaller independent companies -- which by tradition had sought a more "individual" program (often a dramatic "special" series) -- were forced to withdraw. The Directors Company, which had produced seven DuPont Show of the Month productions, was cited as an example of a company "which could not longer operate in television."

Compass Productions, on the other hand, largely due to the Hall of Fame special series, has successfully weathered the shift to film programming by all networks.

As the networks once again undertook program control (as they did in 1948) it is ironic that experimentation was no longer sought, either through the dramatic form or other
programming idea. An executive summed up this situation: "... they're not creating, they're not experimenting -- they're assigning someone else to make a show just like the one on another network."

This chapter, in analyzing live dramatic programming, has specifically considered the 1959-1964 years of Hallmark as an anthology series. Although Mr. Schaefer's creative function had not changed from that of previous years, as independent producer heading his own production company, he exercised a more dominant influence on the Hall of Fame during this time. Critical assessment from television editors of major newspapers and awards from the Academy of Arts and Sciences and the Directors Guild indicate that both before and after Schaefer organized his production company, he was an outstanding director of television drama. This judgment was based primarily on four teleplays unanimously cited by critics as major achievements: "Green Pastures," "Little Moon of Alban," "Victoria Regina," and "Macbeth." Critics assessing the work of

160 The "Macbeth" production for the Hallmark Hall of Fame exemplifies the flexible operation of the independent producer. The Shakespearean work was a co-venture for Hallmark as well as Compass Productions: it was the first presentation for the Hallmark season, 1960-1961, and it was also released as a motion picture to major theatres throughout the country.
Schaefer considered his influence major, despite the reliance on works of adaptation with large budget. Some critics, in applying specific standards of evaluation to the adaptation work, considered time limitation a major obstacle in faithfully preserving the intent of the playwright from whom the work was adapted.

Since Schaefer is producer as well as director, his influence would seem to be major. Although he does not have a "free hand" in selecting properties, his "creative control" has given him a large responsibility and influence. It is, however, the well-planned operations of the production company (often noted by the actors but unobservable by critics) which make creativity possible. A comment by Fielder Cook best illustrates this idea:

Schaefer is a most gifted man in organization . . . brilliant and efficient. He is a marvelous diplomat. What he has done adds to the longevity of the series. Producing must be a major function . . . perhaps ninety-five per cent; with only five or six shows a year, almost all of his efforts are devoted to the nondirecting function of the business.161

161 Personal statement, Mr. Fielder Cook, January 30, 1964.
CHAPTER V

A PRODUCTION ANALYSIS OF THE PATRIOTS

The previous chapters have traced the work of George Schaefer as producer-director of the Hallmark Hall of Fame through his earlier years in this capacity to his present status as independent producer-director. His influence in the success of Hallmark has been established by his background, awards received, and critical opinion by his associates and newspaper reviewers. His work has been placed in a historical framework of the producer-director in the era of live television drama and the development of the "specials" dramatic series.

This chapter will present a case study of a production in rehearsal, concentrating upon the directing and producing function of Schaefer. It is believed that the criteria for selection, adaptation, and production of "The Patriots" are those of a typical Hall of Fame production.
Criteria for Selection, Adaptation, Production -- "The Patriots"

I. Script: The Play Values
   A. Dramatic values, present-day values; has weight and importance (successfully illuminates ideas or characterization).
   B. Challenge to actors and director.
   C. Lends balance/diversity to entire season, and contributes to Hallmark's over-all purpose (good taste, appeal to wide variety of viewers).

II. Limitations Imposed by External Content Controls
   A. Network, Advertising Agency: Censorship of content by these outside sources.
   B. Legal: FCC Controls Regarding Obscenity, Profanity.
   C. Commercial: Production costs as a curtailment to artistic accomplishment.
   D. Audience: Possible low rating (increased cost per thousand viewers reached) as limitation. Selection of play as it reflects "audience expectation" of The Hall of Fame series.
   E. Writer: Is play available for television? Content control imposed.

III. Production and Direction: Influence of Video Production Conditions Upon the Play
   A. Preserving spirit of original material: time and space to fully develop characterization, mood, or ideas; selectivity.
   B. Physical Limitations: studio space or equipment, small size of television screen forcing compromise.
C. Director's Use of Television Technique:
Taking advantage of the medium's flexibility as compared to
stage production: camera concepts, stage composition,
transitional devices to achieve immediacy, intimacy.

D. "Special" Effects: achievement of satisfactory production through color, costumes (if historical),
settings and special visual and aural effects.

Kingsley's play and the Broadway Reviews

"The Patriots," which won the New York Drama Critics' Award in 1943, was written while Sidney Kingsley was serving
as an Army private at a base near Manhattan. The playwright's historical drama highlights the political struggle
between Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton in a critical
decade in American history, the period from 1790-1800.

The play opens with Jefferson recently returned from
Paris where he served as the infant Republic's ambassador to
France. A widower with a grown daughter, he plans to retire
to Monticello. His plans are reluctantly put aside, however,
when President Washington pleads with him to accept a
cabinet appointment as Secretary of State. The new nation,
he is told, is in a turmoil, the people torn between advocates of a strong central government bordering on a monarchy
and those who would prefer little or no government at all.

Alexander Hamilton, Secretary of the Treasury, appeals
to Jefferson to use his influence with his fellow Virginians
James Monroe and James Madison to win passage of Hamilton's
controversial bill to redeem the various states' war loans
at face value. Hamilton believes that only in this way can the new government prove itself and thereby establish foreign credit.

Jefferson accepts Hamilton's view and the bill is enacted. Although Hamilton's position is later justified, Northern speculators made huge profits in the bargain, and Hamilton is suspected of being in league with them. The latter charge is disproved, but it brings about the first of many differences between the two. The play progresses to the Presidential elections of 1801 in which Jefferson and Aaron Burr are the leading candidates and one must be chosen by a vote in the House of Representatives. In a confrontation late in the play both men recognize each other's patriotic motives, and Hamilton's influence in the House wins the election for Jefferson. As Hamilton had accurately predicted, he would pay with his life for the betrayal of Burr.

The critics. New York critics were generally favorable in evaluating the play. The "box score" reveals that seven praised the production, and only one reviewed it unfavorably. Louis Kronenberger of the New York "PM" commented that it is "a rhetorical play whose issues are portrayed far more vividly than its men." He adds:

But by concentrating on these issues, Kingsley, despite indifferently episodic structure and somewhat stiff and literary dialogue, has achieved a genuine unity . . . The play has its own kind of force, even
though the breadth, color and intimacy have been ruthlessly sacrificed to achieve it. It has, in short, most of the weaknesses that go with putting history on the stage. But it does have the strength of bringing one of the great crises of history graphically home to the audience.\(^1\)

Burns Mantle, *New York Daily News*, found a "parallel with the war years through which we are stumbling hopefully," but he remarked that "impact is in the characters and ideals of the political leaders involved, rather than in any similarity of events."\(^2\)

Burton Roscoe, *New York World Telegram*, the one dissenting reviewer found chief fault with the portrayal of "a lesson in elementary history which, if one finds analogies to the present, brings confusion." He claims that

Kingsley seems to identify Hamilton and Federalist party with the Republican party of today, and Jefferson and the Republican party of that day with the Democratic party of today . . . Issues much deeper than the drama presents. Hamilton argued that the state should cede to strong central government; believed executives should be elected for life and should have power to name governors of states. Jefferson was adamant throughout life that a government derives its power only from the consent of the governed and was opposed to a strong centralized government (which would make him not a "Democrat" today, nor a Roosevelt of this day).\(^3\)

---


The critics seemed to agree that Kingsley presented accurate history and used good material and timely incidents to capture a mood. The nation was at war in 1943, but most critics suggested that no parallel of events should be drawn but rather a parallel in the character and ideals of the political leaders involved. The critics also agreed that the issues involved gave the play absorbing interest. Here material had triumphed over defects in writing; usual weaknesses in the historical play (stilted and literary dialogue) were overcome, in part, by capturing a great crisis in history. Louis Nichols, *New York Times*, considered the play "quite clearly one of the best dramas in a long while."

He observed that the title is plural, showing that Kingsley believed "Hamilton was a patriot, too . . . and although Jefferson is the leading character in "The Patriots," democracy is its hero."

The production, staged by Shepard Straube at the National Theatre, opened on January 29, 1943; the leading characters were radio actor Raymond Edward Johnson as Jefferson, Madge Evans (Kingsley's wife) as Patsy, and House Jameson as Alexander Hamilton.

---

The Hallmark Adaptation

Selection of "The Patriots" derived from the original suggestions of Mr. Hall and the advertising agency, who thought that the production would contribute to the over-all theme of the Hall of Fame that productions should be well-known classics not done before, and adaptable to television. "The Patriots," never before televised, was a logical choice; it was also, typically, a play of adaptation. Further, Kingsley's play was cast from the same mold of biographical, historical works presented on recent Hallmark shows.5

In looking at the play by Kingsley, Schaefer stated:

Schaefer believed that the adaptation would enhance the production, and would therefore be well suited to the medium of television:

I believe it will definitely be improved; it will get away from the over-theatricality. The

5These have included Victoria Regina, Invincible Mr. Disraeli, Give Us Barabbas - and from the 63-64 season, Abe Lincoln in Illinois, A Cry of Angels. Of the 46 plays presented as specials on a regular basis since 1955, 40 have been adaptations of theatre works.

actors can "live it" more. The television version should eliminate over-speechiness and historical quality. We will be constantly striving to overcome the 'overexpressiveness' in both the play and actors' attitude to their roles.

The play, itself, has good pertinence to today... a personal insight into three major political figures.\(^7\)

Robert Hartung, associate producer for Compass, considered the play one in which the elimination of some scenes, pruning of the language, and condensing the story line would be the basic procedure in compressing the play to seventy-six minutes:

We go into rehearsal with 80 minutes; then prune down in the rehearsal to 76 dramatic minutes. For "The Patriots" Schaefer would like to go into "camera blocking" at 73 or 74 minutes because of added scenery and properties to work with, including mounting of horses... Most plays would not suffer in the cutting; but "Cyrano" was a good example of one which shouldn't have been done in a 90 minute show.\(^8\)

Once Compass had secured television rights to the play, Hartung began research on "The Patriots" while on vacation in March, 1963; one source for research into the early American historical events was Arthur Vandenberg, Jr., whose father had been an authority on the life and work of Alexander Hamilton. By early June the first draft had been written.

\(^7\)Personal interview, Mr. Schaefer, September 4, 1963.
\(^8\)Personal interview, Mr. Hartung, September 13, 1963.
Hartung commented that the responsibility of artistic control and rights belong to the producer:

The artistic control is in the hands of the producer-director once property is purchased. The Writers' Guild, in its contract negotiation, gives the responsibility for adaptations of other works to the producer. This is because TV is the director's medium; you couldn't afford to have a playwright come in and change things -- in a medium he knows little about . . . It is just the opposite in theatre: the playwright retains control of the work and can overrule the producer and/or director with regard to changes made in script or direction.9

The work of adaptation -- revising script, deleting lines, adding dialogue -- continues through rehearsals as timing and interpretation of the script become more significant to the finished production.

The Scenic Breakdown in the Hallmark Script.

As the teleplay was completed, it was essential to production planning that a breakdown of scenes be effected so that set designs could be made. The following scene outline was from the completed script and taken into the first rehearsal:

SCENES

PROLOGUE -- TEASER

Philadelphia - 1776

Scene: Continental Congress

---

9Interview with Mr. Hartung, September 13, 1963.
Hartung had retained the basic structure of the Kingsley's play; the three-act development above is the same conception as that of the author, as are the locations of New York, Philadelphia, and Washington; the span of years from 1790-1801 was retained as in the original play. Most of the compression in the adapted work resulted from the elimination of excessive language and shortening the play. The only other major changes occur at the very beginning and ending of the play. Kingsley opened his play with the Prologue, showing Jefferson and Patsy (his daughter) on the deck of a schooner returning from France. The prologue of the teleplay opened with a scene of the 1776 Continental Congress. This scene, in which Jefferson argues for a condemnation of the slave traffic, establishes impact and motivates the dramatic action.
to follow. A second difference in the two scripts occurs 
at the end of the play. The Kingsley play ends the third Act 
in the Interior of the Senate Chamber as Jefferson is sworn 
in as president and takes the oath of office from Chief 
Justice Marshall. The Hall of Fame production eliminated 
this scene, ending the teleplay with the preceding scene — 
the confrontation between Hamilton and Jefferson in 
Jefferson's room at the boarding house.

The work, termed a "play of ideas" by Mr. Hartung, 
is a timely classic, for many of the sincere and fundamental 
differences among eighteenth century Americans continue to 
plague the nation today -- not the least of which is states 
rights vs. the role of the federal government.\(^\text{10}\)

**Pre-production Planning**

With the script completed in early June, 1963, prepara-
ations can be made for a specific rehearsal schedule 
(specific as to individual scenes and actors involved) and 
negotiations with theatrical agents for the cast; and 
arrangements can be made with unit manager Bruce Bassett to 
alert the key NBC personnel of rehearsal dates and production 
meetings. By this date the rehearsal space has been reserved 
for three weeks in August.

\(^{10}\)Carl Byoir and Associates, News Release.
Casting the Production.

Chapter IV (Creative Function of Producing) has noted the work of the producing company in selecting and negotiation for the cast as continuing responsibilities of the associate director, associate producer, and executive assistant. After several suggestions are made for each major speaking character, negotiations to determine availability and "price" begin. Most shows center around one or two "top stars"; other actors are of lesser "name" but have long professional experience. Since there are no other live dramatic programs on the air, there is generally a large supply of talent for the few parts needed for each production.\footnote{Despite the fact that the lack of live television drama has persuaded many actors to move to the West Coast, Hallmark has little difficulty casting experienced actors at "scale prices"; taping \textit{Hall of Fame} productions and the scheduling of afternoon rehearsals permit many Broadway, off-Broadway actors to be available for acting assignments.}

Charlton Heston is selected for the role of Jefferson. He is the one "name" star in the production, although the roles of Patsy (Peggy Ann Garner), Hamilton (John Fraser) and Washington (Howard St. John) are "major" and "negotiable." Most other speaking and non-speaking roles would be at union scale.

Heston, better known for his screen roles, played John the Baptist in \textit{The Greatest Story Ever Told} for Director D.\footnote{Despite the fact that the lack of live television drama has persuaded many actors to move to the West Coast, Hallmark has little difficulty casting experienced actors at "scale prices"; taping \textit{Hall of Fame} productions and the scheduling of afternoon rehearsals permit many Broadway, off-Broadway actors to be available for acting assignments.}
George Stevens. His other recent screen credits include *El Cid*, *55 Days to Peking*, and an academy award performance in *Ben Hur*.

Peggy Ann Garner, popular as a child actress, has been recently featured on numerous dramatic series on television, including *Dr. Kildare* and *The Dick Powell Theatre*. She recently toured with the national company of *Bus Stop*.

John Fraser is a young English actor who co-starred with Heston in *El Cid* and played two seasons at the Old Vic in London. His other film roles have been in *Waltz of the Toreadors*, *The Trials of Oscar Wilde*, and *Tunes of Glory*.

Howard St. John starred three times as George Washington on *NBC*’s *Our American Heritage* series, and recently finished another Washington portrayal in the soon-to-be-released motion picture *Lafayette*.

**NBC Production Personnel.**

The negotiations for actors belong strictly to the production company; mounting the production, however, is largely in the hands of NBC (along with the associate producer and associate director of Compass). The completed scripts are mailed to the network supervisors who in turn alert their staffs to keep the production date in mind. Since there is an informal relationship between NBC and producer, established through numerous Hallmark shows, there is a direct relationship between Compass personnel and each
production head. The key network personnel who are contacted at this date are: Warren Clymer, Scenic Designer; 0. Tamburri, Technical Director (who will join the rehearsals later in production); Noel Taylor, Costume Designer; and Bob O'Bradovich, Make-up Director.

The scenic designer meets with Robert Hartung, who, in the absence of George Schaefer, will "put the play into production."12 Clymer then begins work on (1) ground plans in complete detail, (2) color elevation sketches of the major sets in the play, and (3) a mock-up of the set with small paste-board cut-outs made to scale of the settings to be built. The paper mock-up of the set is in complete detail, including the printing of letters on the exterior sets. This small miniature set is placed at the site of the rehearsal hall so that actors get a clear idea of exits, furniture, set dressings, etc. Approximately nine basic sets were to be constructed for the scenes in the play; these were to be made to Clymer's specifications and delivered to the Brooklyn color studio for the last four days of camera rehearsal and video taping.

12Schaefer at this time was in California directing the musical comedy Zenda for summer theatre programs in Los Angeles and San Francisco, and preparing to bring the production to Broadway. Plans were abandoned for a Broadway opening, however. Supra, Chapter IV, pp. 11,12.
Make-up Director O'Bradovich had already been consulted on the type of wigs to be used. During the second day of rehearsal, he would bring a wig to the rehearsal halls to gain Schaefer's approval.

Miss Luraschi of Compass Productions makes up a "property list" which eventually becomes the responsibility of Stage Managers Norman Hall and Dick Auerbach. She also is charged with preparing the rehearsal hall for the "dry run" rehearsals, a fifteen day period. She and her assistant, program manager Joyce Meckler, make "set" locations of the various scenes of the play by using color masking tape on the floor to approximate the settings used in the production. The rehearsal site is a large banquet-type room on the third floor of the Central Plaza Studios in New York City.

Meeting with the Costume Director. This writer was given the opportunity to sit in on a production meeting to discuss costume design for the "The Patriots." The meeting, held in the Compass offices three days before the first rehearsal, was attended by Robert Hartung, Adrienne Luraschi,

13The "property list" is the joint responsibility of Miss Luraschi and scenic designer, Mr. Clymer. When the production moves into camera rehearsal at NBC's Brooklyn studio, the stage managers assume responsibility for maintaining properties.
Jack Friend, and Noel Taylor of NBC, costume designer for the production.

Mr. Taylor had brought color sketches of the three main characters (in their costumes for three acts) to which he had attached swatches of cloth resembling the material to be cut; for the minor characters no sketches were presented but swatches of cloth attached to poster paper, for frontiersman, servant, etc. These were only preliminary drawings which would be discussed for suggestions or modifications in the final designs. Problems discussed related to three areas: (1) historical accuracy, (2) visual appeal, and (3) practical-technical considerations.

1. **Historical.** Every attempt is made by the Hall of Fame to give authenticity to the period considered in the drama. This is especially important in a color production (as all Hallmark shows are) where inaccuracies might be more easily detected. Mr. Taylor comments that the period of the play is that following the Revolutionary war, not during the war; and the years 1790-1803 were characterized by a transition in wearing apparel. Each scene is discussed in relation to the fitness of apparel for that time of day, or for appropriateness of personality. For example, it is suggested that "continental blue is often associated with Washington." Taylor notes that velvet and
wool were worn almost constantly, which was probably quite uncomfortable in the summer. Women's fashions changed drastically during this time; skirts were not as full as they were ten years earlier, stressing more femininity in the figure. Ideas regarding the style of the period (affecting set designs as well) were considered in the problem of authenticity. Friend, who had done research for the production, remarked that the period bespoke of good quality and elegance. They probably didn't want such craftsmanship in furnishings cluttered with pictures on the walls. It was necessary, he thought, to avoid clutter and excessive detail in costumes and setting.

2. **Visual appeal.** It is decided that much color should be used on the main three characters, Jefferson, Hamilton, and Washington; neutral grey and browns for the "complementary" characters, Madison and Monroe. Aprons are to be worn by the smithies, as well as leather vests and open shirts. The settings themselves will often determine style and color of clothing (i.e. avoidance of decorative costume against decorative set).

3. **Practical-Technical considerations.** Each act is discussed with camera angle in mind to determine the completeness of costuming. In the teaser-prologue it will not be necessary to give undue consideration to costume detail
since Schaefer will be directing this brief scene primarily with "head" shots. Other practical aspects, such as costuming the slightly built Fraser (Alexander Hamilton) to give stature, matters of cost (deciding that costume from stock from the now defunct American Heritage series on NBC will save on production expenses) selecting fabrics which hold shape during the performance, and giving actors opportunity to sufficiently play their roles. Taylor, in a study guide prepared by the National Council of Teachers of English, spoke on the influence of French life on Jefferson himself:

Jefferson and his daughter had spent a number of years in France and had just returned to America when our play opens. It was during his stay abroad that Jefferson, perhaps one of the most cultured men ever to live in the White House, was exposed to and influenced by the arts and fashions of Italy and France.14

Taylor, who has designed many of the shows for Hallmark, said at the close of the meeting that "you can get away with more in the theatre; the close-up of television (and color TV at that) makes historical accuracy and visual appeal a necessity."15


15Personal interview with Noel Taylor, August 27, 1963.
The standards of authenticity, visual appeal, and the technical considerations in costuming are also those of the set designer. Clymer continues to confer with Schaefer on these factors early in rehearsals, and minor modifications are made to conform with revisions in script.

Schaefer and Pre-Production Planning

The nineteen-day rehearsal period established by Schaefer allows considerable time for flexible operation, the opportunity for camera changes to be made well into rehearsals. The technical director does not join the rehearsals, for example, until eight days into the schedule; conferences are held even after this time. Director Schaefer, however, has given considerable thought to his function prior to the first rehearsal. It is not consistent, however, from show to show:

This varies and I often change it myself through the years. I try to have a good understanding of it...the values; I have the ground plan and know what it will look like. I rough in where the cameras will be...where the cables will start from and what kind of cameras (e.g., 3 pedestal, 1 crab, etc.) and then knowing that I go into rehearsal with actors almost as if it is a play. I can do things which make sense to the actors but I know what pictures I can get. I get the play on its feet immediately...then I go home put it on paper to make sure I'm not fooling myself.

By the time the actors know lines, I have already considered much of the mechanics. This
doesn't mean that I know specific shots, close-ups, wide, etc. But I know things I can do; during rehearsals from day-to-day I pin things down; after ten days more, specific camera shots are inserted.16

Schaefer's rehearsal schedule and pre-planning might be compared to two hour-long anthology series' rehearsals. Myron Shaw in a Ph.D. study of the Armstrong Circle Theatre, noted that the rehearsal time for the program of November 9, an original documentary drama, "The Antique Swindler," totaled ten days, or forty-six hours. This time included technical conferences and the telecast itself. The final draft of the script, written by Harold Gast, was presented on October 15, 1960, for the November 9 telecast. The Armstrong series, produced by Robert Costello for Talent Associates on a biweekly basis, was directed by William Corrigan. CBS provided below-the-line-personnel (thirty-five) for the final thirteen hours of rehearsal.17

In an article entitled "Case History of a Live Television Drama," James Lynch reported that a production consumed eight days, or thirty-five and one-half hours, for a US Steel Hour presentation "live" on August 31, 1956. The

16Personal Interview and taped interview between Mr. Schaefer and Pennsylvania State students.

production was an adaptation of J. B. Priestly's *Laburnum Grove*, produced and directed by Norman Felton for The Theatre Guild. Pre-production work began approximately four weeks before production with meetings involving scene designer and costume designer. A copy of finished floor plans went to director Felton for use in plotting pre-rehearsal blocking. Each camera angle, actor position, and microphone boom was located accurately and checked with a protractor. Because of limited time in the rehearsal period (for the hour-long program) Felton, perhaps, like many other directors at the time, "... planned every shot, movement, piece of business before the first rehearsal; but... was willing to change and improve the planning -- 'a system with flexibility'."18

In short, the *Hall of Fame* series reflects the same advanced planning but uses a more extensive rehearsal schedule than the two hour-long series above. The nineteen days (at six hours per day) totals 114 hours of rehearsal -- or roughly 21/2 times the length of time for Armstrong -- and three times the length of the US Steel Hour.19


19 The *Hall of Fame*, is, of course a ninety-minute program -- 1 1/2 times the length of those considered; figures would indicate, however, that Hallmark utilizes more time proportionately and an unusually extensive rehearsal period.
The Hallmark rehearsal time may be favorably compared with that of the average college theatrical production. Dietrich states that a production of "a contemporary prose play of average length and difficulty with average college actors and a moderately experienced director" would consume approximately five seven-day weeks with a maximum of two and a half to three hours rehearsal per day.20

The pre-production planning is a combination of efforts from both Compass personnel and NBC. To co-ordinate these efforts, encounter the problems of script revision and timing, and to utilize effectively the extensive three weeks of rehearsal time is what Schaefer has referred to earlier as "organization -- the most appreciated value in directing."

Directing the Production:

Outside Rehearsals

Rehearsals for "The Patriots," similar to other Hall of Fame shows, may be divided into two basic parts: outside and studio (or camera) rehearsals. The work in the dry-run, or outside rehearsal, totaling fifteen days, may be arbitrarily divided into three basic considerations: (1) reading

blocking and slow-work-through; (2) polish, review and (3) technical rehearsals. The work of revising the script continues throughout the rehearsal period, as does interpretation. Schaefer has put to work the maxim which Dietrich refers to in *Play Direction*: "A play should be rehearsed only as long as it continues to grow." New values are added throughout the rehearsals — changed dialogue to motivate clearer action, stage business, expressiveness detectable to the camera's close-up, characterization — to give new meaning.

**Reading, Blocking, Slow-Work-through**

This early phase of the fifteen day-outside rehearsal will comprise six days and include most problems encountered in the beginning rehearsals of theatrical productions: reading the play, learning of lines, the developing of characterization, and blocking of action. Unlike many theatrical productions rehearsing for five weeks, however, the Hallmark production does not devote a special time to "interpretation" rehearsals. Blocking the compositional pattern of the show begins almost immediately.

Schaefer meets with the entire cast for the first

---

Received without page(s) 288.

Filmed as received.

University Microfilms, Inc.
time on Thursday, August 29, 1963. Rehearsal schedules have been distributed to actors indicating scenic rehearsal times (in approximately one and one-half to two hour segments). The entire cast would not be assembled again until the end of the dry-run rehearsals when "non-stop run-throughs" would require all personnel within short intervals of time.\footnote{22}

The production staff of Compass -- Adrienne Luraschi, Robert Hartung, and Joyce Meckler, program assistant -- was joined by Taylor, costume designer, Clymer, scene designer, and two men representing Hallmark and Schaefer in public relations capacity, William Alexander of Carl Byoir and Associates, and Howard Haynes of Rogers and Cowan.

The rehearsals, set for approximately 10:30 to 5:30 each day and extending until the production is video taped on September 16 and 17, begin with a reading of the play, followed by blocking in the afternoon.\footnote{23} Schaefer first

\footnote{22}{A number of actors commented on Schaefer's concern for schedule; this would be important for most actors who, being contracted at union scale for the production, (or else negotiated for the part) would not always be compensated for "overtime" or extended hours of "waiting." Although Schaefer's rigid scheduling would seem to be basic to the industry, it was, obviously, not always adhered to by all television directors.}

\footnote{23}{Rehearsals were set originally to begin on Monday, August 26. Since Charlton Heston was unable to appear until Thursday, due to his participation in a civil rights march to Washington, rehearsals were delayed until Thursday. Schaefer does not deviate, however, from the total time period required for production; only one day was "freed" in revised schedule (rather than two), and two days were added to schedule.}
explains briefly the problems to be encountered with the work. He notes that it lacks one of the standard devices, a love story. But he speaks of the drama's pertinence to today, the fact that the characters portrayed were ordinary people of their day. One problem is in the language: it must be readable, not sound "talky," but must not sound like twentieth century colloquialism. In the reading actors give an "interpretation" to the roles, establishing characterization immediately.

At the end of the first act, Schaefer comments on the play itself. He remarks of the relationship between the superficiality in the "Hamilton Home" scene and the earthiness of the Smithy scene which precedes it. Schaefer's further comments at the end of the first day's rehearsal crystallize his production plans: the play will be done like a "live" show; one splice is planned for costume and make-up purposes, but it will be rehearsed like a three-act play with a prologue.

**The Blocking Function**

The fundamental aspect of composition and movement (building the visual picture) begins on the first day and includes three days of rehearsals. Although Schaefer enters rehearsal "as if it were a stage play" and can approach his work with imagination, technical facility is also required
in the immediate phases of rehearsal. He is "seeing the play" as a finished production ("here you will move along the table and camera will 'truck' with you . . . this will give me a good picture.") although no specific camera angles have been determined. Schaefer blocks the play, letting actors suggest much of the movement and "business." He rehearses the play from the beginning, staging each scene in sequence, as actors observe the pasteboard mock-up set, checking entrances, furniture, and set dressing.

During this blocking procedure, there is much "stop-and-go" development of the play, many interpretations of lines and character. Schaefer, seated in a wheel chair to gain a better camera perspective, continually makes suggestions as to acting style, movement, meaning of lines. Miss Luraschi, associate director, times the production and records composition and movement in the script. Mr. Hartung, associate producer and adapter of the script, observes rehearsals and consults with Schaefer on changes in dialogue. As a former theatre director and television director, he is aware of the technical requirements of the medium. Miss Meckler, production assistant, also times the production and "sets" the physical equipment for each of the scenes; she simulates each set with tables and chairs, and "masks" off the physical dimensions to approximate the studio sets.
Perhaps the key to this rehearsal phrase is "motivation of character" — the series of actions which motivate character. These "beats" (as Schaefer refers to them), or lines, are the interconnection, the logic and movement which shape the actor's part. Gassner states that "it is imperative for the actor to know what the character is trying to achieve at each moment of the play." For example, when Hamilton comes to Jefferson's study in the final scene of the play, he offers to use his influence to make Jefferson president, if he will promise to keep Hamilton's friends in their present offices. Originally, the dialogue was simply:

Hamilton: (AFTER SITTING) Mr. Jefferson . . . who is it to be? . . . Aaron Burr or you?

Instead, Mr. Schaefer suggests a more logical "beat":

Hamilton: (UPON ENTERING): You've grown leaner.
Jefferson: And you . . . stouter.
Hamilton: Oh . . . not at all (Shrugging) . . . perhaps a few pounds . . . It's this waistcoat.
(PAUSE) So this is your city of Washington . . . a mudhole . . .

---

Jefferson: A few trees . . . some sidewalks and it will do.

Hamilton: The presidential mansion is not bad . . . Who is to occupy it?

While new "beats" are suggested, other lines are deleted to make the dialogue sound more playable and dramatic, and to get away from the "historical" overtones of the play; because the play is written "long" there is the possibility for this revision to take place. Schaefer is receptive to movement and "business" suggested by the actors; the "search for character" begins during the blocking, as both Schaefer and the actors enter into a mutual exchange of ideas. Schaefer does not encourage their learning lines at this point because of the numerous changes in dialogue. Despite the thorough professionalism of this cast, and an excellent understanding of the actors' roles, the search for a better interpretation based on character motivation continues. Heston, for example, raises the question of speech characteristics of these people, suggesting that the southern characteristics were not completely formed at this time. After discussing the point, the cast and Schaefer decide upon a moderate British accent to convey the colonialism of that time.

After four days rehearsal the play has been "blocked"
and "reviewed"; the slow-work-through will complete this first phase of the outside rehearsal. Now there is a more intensified rehearsal on each scene (i.e.,) Scene I-1 in "blocking" consumed one and one-half hours, but in slow-work-through two and one-half hours. Lines for Act One are memorized, resulting in a more meaningful discussion of characterization. For example, the character of Washington is discussed in Act II. When Jefferson has decided to leave Philadelphia and not continue the fight against Hamilton, Schaefer discusses Washington's viewpoint at this time. What is his motivation? He suggests that Washington and Jefferson not convey a farewell-appearance-type-leaving, but more a portrayal of two-friends-discussing-situation-man-to-man. Throughout this microscopic examination of interpretation of line and character motivation, there is the continual search for meaning behind the line for actor John Fraser. Schaefer explores the "building" tension in Hamilton as he comes to Jefferson in the third act (previously mentioned):

There is a calm air, a superficial attitude about you; underneath the calm you must portray the hidden volcano. When Jefferson turns his back on you, you really explode . . . In the line where Jefferson says to you that Burr would make
a better president than he [Jefferson], you are flabbergasted . . . this comes unexpected despite the difficulties between you . . . because he really doesn't know what kind of a man Burr really is.25

During the slow-work-through, Schaefer occasionally checks a scene with a small portable lens piece. He now works more earnestly in terms of cameras, noting if a character is "in" or "out" of the picture frame. Now the characters are establishing more definite stage movement to conform to this technical requirement. Miss Luraschi records the "camera directions" in his script; interestingly, Schaefer gives very little information to her, but is able to fill in the important camera details after rehearsal. As she commented: "He remembers so well . . . it is hardly necessary to take notes for him."

By the end of the sixth day of rehearsal, all acts (and scenes) have been blocked and reviewed, and the slow-work-through process completed. It is now that the polishing rehearsals begin.

25Personal observation, George Schaefer in rehearsal.
Polishing, Review Rehearsals

The production begins to take shape as a performance during these next five days. Dietrich finds a paradox in this significant stage of rehearsals:

During the polishing period, a seeming paradox exists. Polishing is concerned with detail. At the same time, continuity increases in importance as the play approaches the technical rehearsals and performances. A careful balance between the two must be maintained.\(^{26}\)

This might be an apt description of the Hall of Fame production. Rehearsals will now include the specific technical aspects (with the technical director joining rehearsals at this time) and specific detail in characterization, as well as the continuity of non-stop run through of the production.

As the polishing phase begins on September 4, one week after rehearsals have started, Schaefer continues to underscore the roles and give new meaning. He sees the interrelationship in characters, for example, where Editor Fenno rushes in to Hamilton's home to tell him of the execution of the King and Queen of France. Schaefer remarks: "You are obviously an old friend in the Hamilton home . . . you should know your way around." He also sees movement as meaningful when he adds to Hamilton: "Don't

---

\(^{26}\) Dietrich, *op. cit.*, p. 259.
grab Fenno when he enters with the news. It may relate
too incongruously with the previous scene (concerning
Hamilton's infidelity) when Hamilton's wife says 'Don't
touch me'."

The play continues to "grow," since the never-ending
search for line interpretation and characterization goes on.
Schaefer notes the "over-exaggeration" on Washington's
face. He says that in television, unlike theatre, a close-up
would over-theatricalize this mannerism. Schaefer
suggests to Madison (when confronting Washington about the
evils of Hamilton's bill) that he not give an important-
figure-in-history-with-momentous-decisions-kind of inter-
pretation, because at this time it is not known what
results will come of the bill. Madison should appear more
as if he were in a business conference or board meeting.
The scene should be brisk and swiftly paced, Schaefer feels.

Near the end of this polishing and review period,
September 9, the technical considerations become more
pronounced as actors' movement coincide with the picture
"frame"; Schaefer discusses reaction shots, suggesting that
actors should not "drop out of character" before the "shot"
is completed. Again, it should be emphasized that Schaefer
records no information, and suggests very little to the
associate director.
To co-ordinate the lighting and camera facilities, a new scene sequence is prepared, giving more specific "camera sets" from the previous settings in the original script. For example, the play has been rehearsed in Act III as two scenes:

Scene 1  Conrad's and McMunn's Boarding House
Scene 2  The Same

The new sequence outlines this information more completely:

Scene 1  (a) Exterior Boarding House (winter day, snow)
         (b) Interior Front Hall, Boarding House, (day)
         (c) Exterior Boarding House (day, snow)
         (d) Dining Room (day, snowing)

Scene 2  (a) Exterior Boarding House (snow, night)
         (b) Interior Front Hall, Boarding House (night)
         (c) Drawing Room in Boarding House (night)

The setting for this third act (in the Brooklyn studio) would consist of four scenic units joined as one setting to permit ease of camera operation. The exterior of the boarding house, including hitching post, opens by a door connecting the interior front hall (including staircase) which leads to the dining room on one side and to the drawing room on the other. The seven "Camera" scenes (above) are all included in these four scenic units.27

27See appendix, pages 340-343.
Technical Director, O. Tamburri, who joins the rehearsals at this date, has worked with numerous Hall of Fame productions; and this provides for a smooth working relationship with Schaefer and the production staff. His job is to set up the camera "shots" for each of the four cameramen, establishing a sequential number for each. He notes the camera directions which Schaefer has completed, watches the production, particularly observing actors' movements, business, entrances and exits. He takes note of the floor plan and any special problems cameramen may encounter. Tamburri commented about the work of the technical director with Hallmark:

I talk directly to the cameramen during the studio rehearsals and final performance. This means that technically I would take the cue from Schaefer. In actual practice, however, I often anticipate camera sequence and "take" shots without his orders. Schaefer prefers this system giving me more responsibility than most directors. He added that Schaefer marks his script (apparently during non-rehearsal hours) by camera "shot" (such as medium, close-up, etc) rather than by "lens" (i.e. 90 mm, 50 mm etc). Schaefer also has a good sense of technical direction.  

---

28 Approximately 280 shots were numbered for this production.

and, unlike many directors, marks cameras and "shots" with an understanding of camera position and shift of camera cable.

During the early polishing phase the meticulous work of characterization continues, each scene consuming approximately two hours; at the end, more continuity is possible as non-stop rehearsals of the entire play take place. Two minor characters are added to the production during this time -- both one or two line actors -- and, in general, more consideration for "timing" and adjusting to actual hand properties is necessary.

It is obvious that the rehearsal schedule, with individual scene times, permits a strict economy of time and avoids long delays; Schaefer's smoothly run rehearsal and his ability to underscore meaning in character become increasingly apparent. Two actors on the set of "The Patriots" commented on his work:

His is success based on several things: (1) a systematic schedule of rehearsal, (2) ability to get the most out of actors. Schaefer is known for his complete lack of temperament (and despite the fact that he is not an actor, he understands actors . . . what they can do.) (3) He knows styles of acting -- theatre, television, film -- and designates to actors the different approaches.30

---

30Personal interview with actor Robinson Stone. Mr. Stone was an associate of Schaefer at the Yale Drama School before the war, worked in summer stock theatre with him. Stone, who played a minor role in The Patriots, is studying for a graduate degree in theatre at New York University.
Because he is producer and director there is a smooth operating function of the production. In US Steel productions, for example, the Theatre Guild was the producer, and different directors were chosen. In many plays the producer would come in after several days to change things and be unaware, generally, of the artistic work of the director. Schaefer has his own company and has complete control. He also sticks to his schedule; I have never waited for the rehearsal of a scene.31

Technical Rehearsals

The basic considerations during these four days, beginning September 10, are to bring the play together as a cohesive performance, crystallizing stage business, movement, characterization; and to integrate technical considerations and additional non-speaking roles. The lighting director and audio engineer join the rehearsals to become aware of special production problems. They have also worked on previous Hallmark productions. Lighting Director Posage says that "few difficulties arise in the production since there would be no light changes during scenes ... the quick shifts to new scenes [the small scenic units, page 293] would give cameras and sound people more difficulty."32

31 Interview, Miss Paula Truman. Miss Truman, a veteran actress in the theatre, appeared in You Can't Take It With You in the 30's, and The Solid Gold Cadillac traveling company.

32 Interview, Alan Posage, September 10, 1963.
The "music selector" also attends rehearsals to analyze the mood of the show; she then "scores it" (selects the transcriptions) and auditions it for Schaefer before the Brooklyn rehearsals. Under union regulations she selects music but is not allowed to program it into the show. This job is handled by the turntable engineer. Other sound effects will be transcribed or simulated by actors. She remarks that "there will not be a great deal of music selected for this show." Unlike "Disraeli," there is no romantic tie-in, no theme music running throughout. "The Patriots" is largely historical/political ... many dramatic moments in the speeches would not be aided, but hampered with the intrusion of music."33

On Wednesday, September 11, the cast goes through the production twice in a "non-stop" sequence. There is a two minute "set-up" time before each scene. At this time Schaefer is getting the final "feel" of the performance; he no longer stops characters for individual comments, but makes notes (the first he has taken) to present to the assembled cast after the completion of the play. Throughout the rehearsals there has been an efficiency of effort on the

---

production staff, reflecting the thorough planning prior to production. Schaefer, as director, is completely calm in his approach, both to actors and production. He is extremely perceptive, responsive to suggestions from the crew and actors, and as a consequence no temperament is shown or disciplinary problems encountered. As he underscores the role, the actor seems to grasp the new interpretation and find new approaches to his character. And because the production has been well organized, Schaefer does not seem to feel the pressures of lack of time.

Schaefer assembles the cast for the first time for general, as well as specific comments regarding the performances. He has consulted, just prior to the group meeting, with Robert Hartung, and also with James Lee, author of Hallmark’s "Invincible Mr. Disraeli," who has also done some script revision on the current production. Schaefer comments about the play and special television acting problems which the actors may encounter:

There are some good individual performances; the story holds well together. The self-revealing moments and surprises can come through in television... the 'struggle' should photograph well. There is some 'turn' given to every scene to make it interesting... a unit which in itself is 'playable'. As long as you are 'thinking the part' it is right... build a complete world of reality around
those with whom you are playing. The distractions should not make you want to project. Do not talk louder... the microphones will pick it up.

In addition to crystallizing performances and re-iterating the "unrehearsed" spontaneity to actors, Schaefer is becoming increasingly concerned with the technical function of the play. During the last two days of outside rehearsals, Thursday and Friday, the two stage managers and four cameramen join the rehearsals. Numerous non-speaking roles are integrated into the production, and the blocking and cueing of crowd scenes which could not be delayed until camera rehearsals are undertaken.

Cameramen follow the sequence of the play with their individual "camera shot" list which has been prepared by the technical director. The list is a "routine" sheet which indicates the following information: (1) floor position (such as stage left); (2) lens of the camera angle (90 mm, 50 mm, etc); (3) the place in the scene where shot appears; and (4) the sequential numbers which are his "takes." Those numbers "in between", or those he is not responsible for, are not numbered on his sheet. The cameraman must depend,

34Personal observation, Schaefer's comments to actors, September 11, 1963.
then, on familiarity with the show and advance cue from
the technical director for his upcoming camera shot.

Two stage managers, Norman Hall and Richard
Auerbach, are also present for the remaining days of dry
rehearsal. From the time they appear on the set (in re­
hearsal) they are in charge of the "stage": cues for
actors, entrances and exits, having the properties on the
set for appropriate scenes. Because of the numerous scenes
and basic settings for "The Patriots," two stage managers
are needed to run the show smoothly from the floor.

At the end of the first complete "run-through" on
Friday, the last day of outside rehearsal, Schaefer comments
to the cast that the key to television is "seeing unexpected
ideas":

You must listen, play to other ideas, actors.
"Fresh" is the word. Needs vital, unrehearsed
appearance. We must see famous people going
through tribulations of everyday events which
later become monumental. 35

He sees two basic problems as they prepare for the final
rehearsal: (1) the problem of "over-playing," over­
theatricalizing to new people on the set (non-speaking roles,
the crew); and (2) anticipating the lines of other characters

35Personal observation, Schaefer's comments to
actors, September 13, 1963.
so that reaction does not always seem spontaneous — the reaction seems to anticipate the lines. He also remarks that the show will be taped as a "take" and will not be re-done "unless the scenery falls down." Actors are cautioned not to stop despite their recognition of errors in performance.

At the completion of the last run-through of the play, and the end of outside rehearsals, Schaefer feels that the contrast to the morning session is striking. Actors have captured the "internal vitality," and he believes that if the "on the air" performance has these values, the production will be a success.

Studio Rehearsals, Video Taping of Production

The production shifted to Brooklyn's block-long, color studio Number One for the final four days of camera rehearsal and taping. The first two days, Saturday and Sunday, were to be devoted to blocking of all three acts and a stop-and-go dress rehearsal of the entire play. The last two days would be for taping of the production.

Production Facilities

The scenic designer has transformed the mock-up drawings into the detailed recreations of eighteenth century life. Each set, interior and exterior, is constructed of
flats, wooden panels, simulated stone and brick cobblestone, and reflects the genuine atmosphere of the rich, but simple tastes of the times. The "street" scene has become a replica of a narrow, turning cobblestone street surrounded by small Early American shops. Interior sets (particularly those of the Hamilton home) reflect good taste (seen especially in the polished wood and floral-designed walls). The concern for authenticity and visual appeal in scene design was necessitated by the added dimension of color, factors which would also be evident in the costumes and make-up of characters.

As stated earlier, the related playing areas (or scenic units) are joined in one setting to permit an obvious ease of operation for both actors and technical personnel. For example, Scene 1 (a) "President's office" is joined to Scene 1 (b) "President's Study" in Act One. At the completion of Scene 1 (a), Jefferson opens the door of the office and enters the study; it is necessary for a camera to be "released" from the first scene to "pick up" Jefferson as he enters the study to greet Hamilton. The joining of the two sets would be an economical as well as a practical necessity for a smooth functioning performance.

36 See Appendix, page 344.
In addition to values of color, costumes, and rich scenic detail, Schaefer makes use of two special effects to lend realism to the production. One is a fog machine which will circulate a vapor fluid and suggest the ominous mood for the "yellow fever" sequence during the street scene. A snow machine is used in Act III when the messenger rides up to the boarding house with an election report for Jefferson. The machine consists of three large cylindrical drums suspended from the ceiling; they are rotated mechanically, forcing powdered flakes from the drums. Upright fans, placed on the studio floor, blow the flakes into the air, suggesting falling snowflakes. Several horses are provided by a nearby theatrical farm for use in the smithy scene and for the messenger who dismounts in front of the boarding house and ties to a hitching post.37

Camera Equipment; Personnel

Four cameras are used, three pedestal type and one crane dolly camera. The crane-type Houston dolly is approximately twelve feet long and is guided by two men, each wearing headsets to communicate with the director. In addition, there are two riders -- one the cameraman near the front, and a "rear rider" who is needed to turn the rear two

37 See Appendix, page 340.
wheels. Both the cameraman and rear rider have set monitors to view the picture the camera is "taking." Sheets of concrete are placed in the upper rear of the crane to weight it, permitting the unique operation of moving the camera into the scene for a high or low angle shot. Though this is the main feature, it is observed that because the camera is suspended out (and usually up for a "high angle" shot) it leaves more space in which the floor-based cameras can operate.

In addition to the four cameramen, one rear rider, and two stage grips, NBC provides approximately twenty-five personnel for below-the-line production work. Two microphone boom operators, each pushed by stage grip, four camera cable lifters, and additional property men, carpenters, and electricians complete the production personnel requirements. The "floor" is the responsibility of the two stage managers who clear the set, give "standbys" to actors and, during dress rehearsals, give directions to actors. (During the blocking function, Schaefer gives directions through the loud-speaker system.)

Camera Rehearsals

Bretz and Stasheff note that "the majority of directors separate the show by scenes or acts, work through all the shots in each scene, and then go back and run the
scene again to crystallize it all in everyone's mind. 38 Schaefer, in the blocking function, prefers greater continuity in the rehearsals phase and sets each act in sequence. Acts One, Two, and Three are camera blocked in sequence, and a stop-and-go dress rehearsal of the entire play is held at the end of the second day (Sunday). The authors also assert that "rehearsing the show in small sections lends itself to the video tape method since each section, once rehearsed and perfected, could be recorded once and for all." 39 As will be pointed out later in "taping the production," Schaefer is able to utilize this concentration of effort, but prefers camera rehearsals to reflect the continuity of a "live performance" during this blocking phase.

Ideally, if Schaefer has considered each angle of shot in pre-planning stages, all should run smoothly. This is virtually impossible, however, since changes will be necessary when cameras become involved in rehearsals. As a consequence dress rehearsal is not completed by Sunday night as the schedule directs. Because of increased production expenses for overtime, however, the rehearsals end at 6:00 p.m.

38 Rudy Bretz and Edward Stasheff, op. cit., pp.238,239.
39 Ibid.
The Director and the Control Room

In the blocking process Schaefer meticulously moves through the script, determining whether or not earlier judgments were correct. As was true of the earlier blocking in outside rehearsals, this is a slow, time-consuming procedure. He uses a "snap finger" to designate "takes" to the technical director who has usually anticipated the shot. Technical Director Tamburri continually converses with cameramen, letting them know what number shot is coming up and the camera "cuts" or "dissolves" to use as transitional devices.

Schaefer is blocking each shot of the scene, looking for pictorial quality, reaction shots, and relationship of actors to setting. It is this "photographic" advantage of television (over the stage media) which Schaefer tries to exploit. The "flashback" to Jefferson's bitter struggle in the assembly (the prologue) occurs in the second act as a stream-of-consciousness technique; transitional close-ups, such as the dissolve from the smithy branding iron to the more superficial tinkle of cut-glass in Hamilton's home, are possible only in the "visual medium."

Associate Director Luraschi will try to anticipate what Schaefer will want done and carry out much of the directing procedure herself. This is especially true during camera rehearsals when she makes direct suggestions to the
stage managers on the floor. She maintains a critical timing of the show during these rehearsals and keeps a script containing technical information. Being technically-minded, she functions much like the technical director (and often consults with him on camera blocking.) Other NBC staff members, the lighting director and audio engineer, operate from the control room and communicate to their crews on the studio floor.

**Taping the Production**

As Schaefer begins the last two days of "The Patriots" rehearsals, he has completed the blocking of the show and has almost completed the stop-and-go dress rehearsal. At this point Schaefer departs from his policy of rehearsing the play through from beginning to end. Instead, two days are set aside for taping the production.

---

40 Miss Luraschi observed the following on the unique capacity of Schaefer as director: "Other directors can give good pictures, but are not as good with actors. George is a combination. He is quick, well-organized, adaptable. He will never come to you later and want something . . . He will always accept suggestions, never make you feel that it isn't important. In Berkeley Square, I felt strongly about something . . . a piece of business. Bob [Hartung] later mentioned the idea to him. He was angry that I hadn't made the suggestion to him. He wants to know your ideas . . . if you don't like something . . . even if you have no alternative suggestion." (Personal interview, January 31, 1964).
in the following manner: each act will have a stop-and-go
dress rehearsal followed by non-stop dress rehearsal
followed by the taping of that act. The play is, there­
fore, not taped in continuity as one might expect, but each
act is thoroughly rehearsed and then taped. Schaefer thinks
that this gives the best results, and at the same time
continuity ("aliveness") is still maintained because of the
extensive sequential rehearsals.

Each act is, therefore, handled in the taping like
a small play in itself. Although Act One contains three
scenes, for example, there is no loss of continuity; that
act would be handled as a "live" performance. Schaefer
tapes Act Two in two phases, however, and reverses the
sequence -- taping Scene 2 followed by Scene 1; it is done
to facilitate a costume change and the "striking" of a set. 41
The prologue-teaser, opening billboard, flashback scene,
and closing crawl are also taped during the two days.

---

41 This occurs during a time lapse in Act II.
Jefferson, who has finally decided to leave his post, asks
his servant Jupiter to mail his resignation to President
Washington. As he announces that he is going home the
scene ends and tape is spliced. In the next scene, after
dramatic time has elapsed, Washington, having received
the letter, visits Jefferson's rooms which are now to
have a disordered look.
The following rehearsal schedule for the final two-days taping of the production indicates the specific procedures:

Monday, September 16, 1963

8:00 - 9:00  Technical conference
9:00 - 10:00 Show set-up for Prologue-Teaser and Act I
10:00 - 11:00 FINAL DRESS REHEARSAL AND TAPEING OF PROLOGUE TEASER

PROLOGUE AND OPENING BILLBOARD TAPEING

11:00 - 12:30 STOP AND GO DRESS REHEARSAL - ACT I
12:30 - 1:30 LUNCH (Heston to make-up for Act I)
1:30 - 1:45 Notes to Actors, Show set-up for Act I, Camera touch-up
1:45 - 2:30 FINAL NON-STOP DRESS REHEARSAL - ACT I
2:30 - 3:30 Notes to actors; Show set-up for Act I Make-up touch-up, Camera touch-up
3:30 - 4:15 TAPE ACT I
4:15 - 4:30 Show set-up for Act II -- Part 2 Actors to make-up and costume

TAPE CLOSING CRAWL

4:30 - 6:00 STOP AND GO RUN-THROUGH OF ACT II -- Part 2

Schaefer, who has warned the actors to consider the play as "live" during the taping, nevertheless finds reason to re-tape the first Act. Fraser (playing Hamilton), in mounting a horse during the smithy scene, breaks a stirrup and struggles to gain a foothold. Schaefer feels that the mishap is too
ludicrous to leave in, although the act was completed without a break in continuity. For reasons revealed in Chapter One, Schaefer prefers to retape rather than to splice and edit the single incorrect incident.\(^2\)
The second day's schedule is much like the first, rehearsing each act twice before video taping:

**Tuesday, September 17, 1963**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:00 - 10:00</td>
<td>Show set-up for ACT II -- Part 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00 - 10:30</td>
<td>FINAL NON-STOP DRESS REHEARSAL - ACT II -- Part 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30 - 11:00</td>
<td>Notes to actors; show set-up for Act II Make-up touch-up; camera touch-up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00 - 11:15</td>
<td>TAPE ACT II -- Part 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:15 - 11:30</td>
<td>Show set-up for ACT II, Part 1 Acts to make-up and costume</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr. Fraser to make-up for Act III Camera touch-up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30 - 11:00</td>
<td>STOP AND GO DRESS REHEARSAL - ACT II -- Part 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00 - 12:15</td>
<td>Notes to actors; show set-up for Act II, Part 1; Make-up touch-up; Camera touch-up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:15 - 12:30</td>
<td>FINAL NON-STOP DRESS REHEARSAL - ACT II Part 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:30 - 1:30</td>
<td>LUNCH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30 - 2:15</td>
<td>Notes to actors; show set-up for Act II Part 1; Make-up touch-up; Camera touch-up</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^2\)Supra, page I-3.
Two days for taping the production is an extensive time period. Many of the actors (non-speaking roles, minor characters) would, of course, not be involved continuously in rehearsals for both days.

During the camera rehearsals and video taping of "The Patriots," Schaefer has taken advantage of both "live" and "taped" conditions. He has camera blocked the play and has directed a stop-and-go dress rehearsal of the entire play (as a live performance), but has taped each act separately (after two dress rehearsals) to ensure polished performances. Although only twenty-five per cent of the total rehearsal period is devoted to cameras and taping of the production, many of the technical problems have been solved in the outside rehearsal time. And although the four-day period is an intensive period (and inevitably brings
"mechanical confusion"), the well-planned co-ordination between Compass and NBC relating to make-up, costumes, and settings has anticipated numerous production problems. More importantly, Schaefer, during the fifteen-day rehearsal at Central Plaza studios, has had ample opportunity to extract values of the play as a "stage production."

**Summary**

This chapter has presented a production analysis of the *Hall of Fame* production "The Patriots," which was broadcast on November 15, 1963. The play, written by Sidney Kingsley in 1943, highlights the political struggle between Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton in a critical decade in history -- 1790-1800. It won the Critics' Circle Award for drama.

It is representative of Hallmark's productions because it is both historical and a play of adaptation. It could also bear the mark of Hallmark's basic philosophy: "the work must be a well-known classic property that has not been done, adaptable to TV, and of such high quality that it would stand with Shakespeare and Shaw." Since the work had never been presented on television before, and the producer-director Schaefer considered that television's adaptation would actually enhance the production, it would seem a logical choice for the 1963-1964 season.
Basic criteria established for this production included the script, limitations imposed by external content controls, and the influence of video production conditions upon the play.

There is little agency or network censorship. NBC's continuity acceptance department passes on language and objectionable scenes, but this control factor has not really affected Hallmark.

Since the producer, Compass Productions, is given creative control over the production by the agency (Foote, Cone, and Belding) and "purchases" artistic control once the property is acquired, there is virtually no limitation imposed by outside sources.

The chapter has particularly noted the pre-production planning and extensive rehearsal periods undertaken by the producer-director. "Pre-production" included the script adaptation, casting the play, meeting with NBC supervisors (particularly scene designer, costume designer, unit manager and make-up director), and setting the rehearsal schedule. Rehearsals for "The Patriots" production compare to the average college theatrical production, and are considerably longer proportionally than *US Steel Hour* and *Armstrong Circle Theatre* "live" productions. Rehearsals of nineteen days included fifteen days "outside" rehearsals at the Central Plaza studios in New York (and included blocking, polishing,
technical rehearsals) and four days camera rehearsals and taping at Brooklyn's Color Studio #1.

Throughout the rehearsal periods Schaefer sought to preserve the spirit of the original work and to develop the full potential of the television medium to enhance the play. This was most clearly exemplified in (1) the well organized, efficiently planned rehearsal schedule; (2) co-ordination of efforts with his own staff and the NBC staff; as well as (3) his perceptive understanding of the play values and how they can best be expressed by the television medium.
CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS

The historical development of this study extends far beyond the scope of one man and a television drama series. The research could not be confined to this single factor, for the study of George Schaefer and The Hallmark of Fame only exemplifies the larger emerging influence of the creative television producer-director in the 1950's. As the producer-director concept arose during the "golden age" of drama, the inventiveness of these craftsmen became the basis for program development.

Observations in this chapter reveal general conclusions of the study, note the unique capacities of Schaefer and his influence on the Hall of Fame, and suggest areas for further research based on the findings of this thesis.

General Conclusions

The Producer-Directors of this era entered motion-picture and theatre directing when television could no longer accommodate their specific talents.

The thesis has observed the continuing directing achievements of these artists in media outside television. Philco Playhouse directors Coe, Penn, Duff, and Donehue,
Hall of Fame's McCleery and Schaefer, and CBS Directors Worthington Miner, Franklin Schaffner, and Martin Manulis were able to successfully relate television's video conditions to traditional theatrical methods. These directors reached their high artistic levels during years in which anthology plays were written on the networks; as live drama declined, due in part to dwindling ratings for this genre, these artists turned to theatre and motion picture directing, working, generally, as free-lance (or "independent") directors. One could conclude, therefore, that these men, theatre-oriented by background, preferred to return to the stage or to establish film-directing reputations, rather than to direct filmed television series.

Filmed "situation" Series Replaced Live Anthology Drama on the Networks

The Hall of Fame remains as the last vestige of television anthology drama. The era of live television drama ended in 1959 with the Playhouse 90 series. Hallmark, since that time, has continued to reinforce its position as the only exception to film-dominated drama programming by the networks. Filmed series are the products of Hollywood film makers and many have been criticized for their glibness, unrealistic treatment of themes, and quick production methods. It is for these reasons,
rather than for the filmic process, that the series drama has received unfavorable comment.

Although Networks Exert Greater Control Over Programming than Ever Before, there is less Origination of Programming by the Networks.

The networks continue to be committed to the ratings-conscious programming supplied, largely, by the film makers. As the networks moved into tighter control in 1961, they did not, as in the early years, experiment, but sought security in "proven" program successes. This could only be done by maintaining an open channel to large Hollywood production companies and by going into business on a co-production basis. This is unfortunate since, in the writer's opinion, commercial television possesses the personnel, facilities, and capital to once again stimulate creative programming. When these resources have been utilized in public affairs, broadcasts (such as in political convention coverage) programming has been exemplary.

The Independent Producer-Director Could No Longer Compete With Larger "Package" Agencies in Dramatic Programming

The thesis has shown the development of one independent production company while noting the demise of others. As networks moved into stronger allegiances with filmed program producer, smaller independent companies (which by
tradition sought a more "individual" program and often the dramatic "special") were forced to withdraw.

There is an obvious inter-connection to the above generalizations: low rating figures reflected audience disinterest in the anthology play and reinforced critics' opinions; the bulk of anthology works by the middle-to-late fifties was of questionable artistic merit. These rating figures became increasingly important to cost-conscious advertisers and networks at a time when film-for-television shows flooded the air-waves during the 1950's. As the latter form was a less expensive art-product, the death of live drama and dramatic specials was imminent -- along with the creative producer-directors.

Schaefer's Unique Capacity: A Summary of Research Findings

The following working hypotheses were stated earlier in the study: (1) because of the scope of Schaefer's responsibility, the success of Hallmark is, in large measure, the result of his direct influence; (2) it is also assumed that this influence is characterized by recognizable standards which can be measured in assessing his contribution as producer-director. These standards should consider both the artistic skills of the director as well as a mastery of organizational details. Clear-cut elements of
"influence," however, are difficult to determine. In contrast to the experimental method which usually attempts to isolate aspects in the subject's present status, the case study is a more comprehensive method and intended to reveal the interactions of many elements.

Nevertheless, certain observations may be made concerning Schaefer's contribution to the Hall of Fame and an evaluation of his unique capacity as producer-director. Schaefer's Influence on the Hall of Fame

The following conclusions may be made concerning his influence on the series:

1. The producer-director has a major responsibility in the television drama series. The influence of Schaefer must be considered major in terms of his over-all responsibility; his function includes complete "creative control" in the mounting of Hall of Fame productions. This incorporates pre-production planning -- casting, rehearsal schedule, determination of budget -- as well as the directing function (rehearsal through on-the-air performance). His only limitation is a lack of complete freedom in the selection of playscripts and the two leading stars for the shows. Schaefer personally makes the selections but the sponsor approval is necessary.
2. As producer-director of Hall of Fame, Schaefer's awards relate directly to the success of the series. Except for the first three Shakespearean specials, Schaefer has functioned as producer-director in Hallmark's nine-year history. In this capacity he has served longer than his predecessors, Albert McOleery, Maurice Evans, and Mrs. Mildred Alberg. He was associated with The Hall of Fame for both major award-winning productions, "Little Moon of Alban" (1958) and "Macbeth" (1961). In two seasons, 1958 and 1961, he was cited by the Directors Guild, Sylvania, and Radio Television Daily as the Director of the Year. In these directing achievements, there was, therefore, a recognition of Schaefer's direct influence on the above-mentioned productions.

3. As Independent Producer his Influence has Increased. Although his creative function has not markedly changed, as independent producer, heading his own production company since 1959, he has exercised a more dominant influence on the Hall of Fame. The "Macbeth" production was cited earlier as evidence of the flexible operation of an independent company. As a co-venture for both Hallmark and Compass, "Macbeth" was not only selected for the Hall of Fame but was also a feature release to theatres throughout the country.
4. **Television Critics considered his influence major.** Television critics, responding to a questionnaire, considered Schaefer's influence significant despite his access to a large budget, top acting talent, and generally, scripts adapted from proven stage successes. They expressed the idea that no "safe formula" for success exists in television any more than in theatre; that regardless of a play's merits, the transposition to television requires a producer-director who can adapt the material to television's special limitations.

The critics, have, generally praised the works of Hallmark and the directing of Schaefer. Columns by Jack Gould, *New York Times*, gave the most comprehensive reviews regarding Schaefer's work, performance, and general aspects of the production. Gould has been as critical of *Hall of Fame* shows as he has been praiseworthy. He, apparently, set a level of expectation in advance and was unwilling to compromise. His most frequent criticisms were based on rigid time limitations in adapting theatre works to ninety-minute teleplays. Productions which were critically acclaimed with awards had been previously praised by Gould in his columns.
Specific Standards of Evaluation: Creative

It would be far easier to assess the critical acclaim of Schaefer as a measure of his success -- awards received, reviews of plays, and critics and colleagues comments -- rather than to determine specific criteria by which this creativity is measured. Schaefer's comments, "you either think in terms of pictures or you don't," and Fielder Cook's, "all directors' work is different... it is there to be looked at," express the intangibles of artistic endeavor.

Personal observation and research into Schaefer's work seem to reinforce two commonly-held standards of artistic success: (1) Schaefer has the ability to visualize the production and to successfully accomplish his goals through well-planned organizational efforts; and (2) he possesses a perceptive understanding of the play values, and has the ability to communicate these values to actors. These creative capacities are reflected in an even-temperament, and (at least outwardly) an uncomplicated attitude toward his work. Such virtues are particularly striking in a business characterized by high emotional pitch. It is worth noting that in the three-week rehearsal and taping period of "The Patriots," no displays of ill-temper were shown, but always a mutual interplay of ideas between actors and director to overcome any impasse.
Specific Standards of Evaluation:

Organization

Through a scheduling of five or six programs a year, there is ample time to develop the productions in the calm, deliberate atmosphere of extensive rehearsals. Schaefer regards "organization" as the "most appreciated value in directing" and feels that a well-planned operation makes creativity possible. The following assessment may be made concerning Schaefer's thought on "organization":

1. A rehearsal schedule which is considerably longer than many anthology drama series. A schedule in such length (over 100 hours, comparable to a college theatrical production) permits extensive polishing of the drama.

2. A rigid adherence to times on the schedule. Many actors, commenting in personal interview and correspondence, remarked about the organization of rehearsal periods to ensure maximum use of acting talent.

3. The work of production associates which is especially valued in pre-production planning. This small group of highly compatible and knowledgeable personnel is given much of the credit by Schaefer for a remarkably facile operation.
Areas for Further Research

The thesis, in observing a single producer-director and his influence, may serve as a basis for other academic studies. The following areas are related to this study, and would lends themselves to further research:

Film-for-Television Directing Technique

The writer was unable to respond to an invitation by the producer of The Defenders series to observe production procedures of that series. The Defenders, one of the more widely-praised filmed series, bears the distinctive mark of its Executive Producer Herbert Brodkin and Story Editor Reginald Rose. A descriptive "case study" could be made of this series, observing film techniques, editing, producing, and directing procedures. Such research may indicate the importance of "immediacy" (evident in live drama) in the drama-to-audience relationship. Comparative studies of film and live drama directing techniques may determine whether or not the illusion of a "live" performance is necessary as a condition in film drama.

Stage-to-Television Dramatic Programming

The television production of a new play opening on Broadway which is produced by a "group broadcaster" was a recent approach to dramatic programming. This approach, for The Advocate (a play dealing with the unsuccessful
court appeal in the Sacco-Vanzetti case), was so conceived that the television drama would be video taped separately in a studio, not on a theatre stage at the time of a performance, so that both audiences would be served by the best form of production. Despite the fact that the two productions were separately staged, television audiences had the opportunity to observe an "opening night" at the same time the play opened.

The thesis has commented on unique characteristics of the television medium; studies of dual stage/television plays could make further specific comparisons of the dramatic elements characteristic in the drama. These could include the validity of the concept, promotional aspects involved, the effect on the play and on the theatre in general, and the role of the group broadcaster (Group W—Westinghouse) in an area which has previously been the domain almost solely of the networks.¹

There is strong argument, too, for the possibility of theatre origination of plays simultaneously viewed by both television and theatre audiences. The production and

¹Herbert Seltz, "Stage to Television: The Advocate," Television Quarterly, III (Spring, 1964), 33-45. Audience and critical reaction in the five Group W cities was extremely favorable. The Broadway version received mixed reviews and closed after one week at the ANTA Theatre in New York.
technical factors accommodating a synthesis of theatre and television conditions are now being undertaken by pay television systems.

Comparative Studies Analyzing Directing Styles

The study has shown one man's directing approach (in Chapter V) but has set forth no specific criteria for the successful producer-director. Studies of the directing technique of selected directors may give further information on directing styles, approaches to rehearsal scheduling, and pre-production planning. Such research may also show how the unique capacities of theatre-oriented directors can be successfully utilized in motion picture directing. Although the sequential rehearsing procedure (as in "live drama) is the exception in film industry today, artists such as Arthur Penn hold "dry run" rehearsals prior to filming "on location" to introduce actors to special interpretation problems of the script.

The Original Anthology Play as Content Matter

The thesis has pointed to the almost total reliance of Hallmark on the play of adaptation, primarily of theatrical works. Of some forty-six productions since 1955, forty have been adapted of stage works. Because of the tremendous production and time costs estimated at $500,000
each, the risks involved are obvious. Under what conditions, then, would the opportunity exist for original dramatic works? The networks may argue that such "original" matter is now included in the various dramatic series such as Defenders, Breaking Point, Dr. Kildare, and others; although there has often been significant content matter injected into some of these "series" dramas, Fielder Cook's criticism, noted earlier, has merit: "The drama today is largely 'incident.' The hero [sustaining lead character] does not change."

The demise of the Hallmark International Teleplay Writing Competition after one season has also impoverished the climate for original ideas. Studies revealing dramatic and documentary broadcasts of local stations may indicate new potentialities in these areas.

Studies of the Independent Producer-Director

Schaefer considers the Hall of Fame series as Compass Productions' major undertaking. The study has shown the influence of Schaefer's small, flexible staff of associates who work primarily on the six Hallmark shows. Aside from the Hallmark relationship, what status does Compass enjoy in the entertainment field? The Compass enterprises in motion picture production (such as the co-venture with Hallmark on "Macbeth" in 1960) and theatrical ventures
such as *Write Me a Murder* and *Zenda*, establish a broad base in the arts for an independent producer -- a producer well aware of the financial risks of his operation. Descriptive studies of other theatrical/motion picture producers could result in a detailed picture of present status or patterns of development in such companies.

**Influence of Television Critics on Dramatic Programming**

The influence of critics on the Hall of Fame's success could be further assessed. The questionnaire, which is included in this study, could be expanded to include more detailed information regarding the Hallmark standards of excellence. As the thesis has shown, critics' reviews have, to a large extent, contributed to the Hallmark image of quality. This opinion, often unsolicited by Hallmark, reflects the unique stature of the series. The network (NBC), advertising agency (Foote, Cone, and Belding), and producer Schaefer have reaped the financial and "institutional" rewards of such praise. (At the same time, it should be observed that both Homer Heck of the agency and Schaefer consider the importance of specific program reviews minimal, that a "mixed" press does not seriously impair the image sustained over the years.) Such research might better establish the critics' influence as opinion-makers in the television industry.
The Sponsor's Relationship to the Hallmark Series

Of significance is the over-all interest of the sponsor, Hallmark Cards, in the commercial success of the Hall of Fame. Studies could observe Hallmark's economic position as a result of the nine-year "specials" history. In light of the high cost-per-thousand viewers reached, further research based on the marketing concept of "good-will" values would be of interest. Descriptive studies might also compare major television advertisers to determine philosophies of advertising: participation vs. single sponsorship vs. "spot" advertising. These studies could explore the advertising question: Is the Hall of Fame necessarily the best commercial vehicle for Hallmark?

The Size, Composition, and Reaction of the Hallmark Audience

Viewer response to television programming has centered, primarily, on quantitative analyses of "ratings." The Nielsen service, considered to be the most reliable (and used by Hallmark), actually only measures how many are watching not who. Further criticism establishes the fact that only .00002 per cent of the TV homes (1050) are sampled, and that because of expenses of installing and removing the electronic devices (the "audimeter"), these homes may be the same 1050 checked for considerable periods of time.
What then do such ratings (even when accurate) tell Hallmark? In view of the lack of compositional data regarding the Hall of Fame audience, it is possible that each program simply reinforces previously-held opinions about the series, and does not continue to reach new "audiences."

The sponsor is, of course, greatly interested in who is watching, not just how many. Viewer response to commercial presentations as well as programming content is noted in mail received at the advertising agency, Foote, Cone, and Belding. There, a secretary records "likes" and "dislikes" and then forwards these responses to the Hallmark Company in Kansas City. A more extensive qualitative study -- based on respondents income, education, and socio-economic status -- might provide more complete information on the Hallmark audience. Investigation through diaries or questionnaires would be valuable methods for such studies, and mail response to Hallmark shows may also be explored as a research tool.

**Questionnaire Studies Evaluating Dramatic Programming on Networks**

A questionnaire study could be made of selected dramatic series on network television (or of Hallmark teleplays) to determine specific standards of quality. Studies of filmed drama could reveal specific criteria in such
dramatic elements as theme, characterization, plot, and dialogue.

With respect to Hallmark programming, surveys to teachers in dramatic arts and broadcasting fields could seek information of an evaluative nature — evidence which may prove valuable in assessing what stage productions could best be adapted to ninety-minute television productions.

Until the influence of educational TV, pay television, and UHF development is more widely felt, the basic framework for creative programming resides in network television. The fundamental issue is how network television shall be used, how there shall be an accommodation between economic interests and public responsibility. In the American system of broadcasting, these poles are often disparate and cannot always be merged. Apparently, Joyce Hall and George Schaefer have bridged them satisfactorily. For Schaefer and Hall it has been a solidly-based partnership of business and art which should be successful for other television sponsors.
Questionnaire to Television Critics

Influence of Producer and Director

Please comment on the rise of the independent producer (or 'program packager') in drama. How has this affected the current scope of drama - either anthology or series?

The television medium has been called "the director's medium" by some critics. Do you believe this to be true - that the director has more influence in creatively shaping the drama than the writer or producer? And that the director exerts more influence on his art form than does his counterpart in film or theatre?

Dramatic Content

Do networks exert more, or less, control today over the content of television drama in our "package" (or outside) dominated system than ten to fifteen years ago?

Does current television dramatic programming reflect the "public" wishes? Is the rise of "series" drama, for example, an indication that the public is "getting what it wants?"
Please comment on the present-day anthology drama compared to the writing of ten to fifteen years ago.
(Comparing Richard Boone series, Chrysler, Show of the Week, Dick Powell Theatre with Playhouse 90, Studio One, Philco Playhouse, Kraft Theatre.)

The Hallmark Series

Would you comment on the work of George Schaefer.
(What is his unique capacity as producer/director of the Hallmark series?)

Some have said that Hallmark programs rely on a 'safe' formula for success: (i.e., "name" stars, large budget, adaptation of successful Broadway plays). If you agree, do you feel that these factors diminish the influence of Schaefer?

Why hasn't the Hallmark "specials" concept been more successful for other sponsors - either for single or participation sponsors?
PLATE I

EXTERIOR OF BOARDING HOUSE, ACT III,
"THE PATRIOTS"
TABLE II

INTERIOR OF FRONT HALL, ACT III,
"THE PATRIOTS"
TABLE III

DINING ROOM SETTING, ACT III,
"THE PATRIOTS"
TABLE IV

DRAWING ROOM SETTING, ACT III,
"THE PATRIOTS"
STREET SCENE, ACT II,
"THE PATRIOTS"
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books


**Articles**


Cards. Fall, 1964.


Crosby, Joan. TV Scout, November 27, 1963.


"How Good is TV At Its Best?" Harper's, CCXVII (September, 1960), 85-90.


Newsweek, February 25, 1957, p. 66.


July 14, 1957, Section II, p. 9.

December 8, 1963.


San Francisco Chronicle, October 25, 1960.


Printer's Ink, December 12, 1958, pp. 45-46.


"Television Reviews," *Variety*, September 30, 1953, p. 34.


"TV Specials Promise Quality and Image Values, but will Sales be Bigger?" *Printers Ink*, September 18, 1959, pp. 10-11.


**Unpublished Materials**


Bassett, Bruce, NBC Unit Manager. Personal interview, September 12, 1963.


CBS Executives. Personal Correspondence, March 14, April 1, May 16, May 18, and May 28, 1963.

Cinderg, Carolyn, Secretary to Head, Program Publicity Department, NBC. Personal interview, January 31, 1964.

Compass Productions Biographical Data, April, 1964.


Crosby, Joan, TV Scout, November 27, 1963.


Freedley, George, Curator, Theatre Collection, New York Public Library. Personal correspondence, April 24, 1963.

Frank, Joan, Executive Assistant, Compass Productions. Personal interview, January 30, 1964.


Hartung, Robert, Associate Producer, Compass Productions. Personal interview, September 13, 1963.


Heck, Homer, Vice-president, Foote, Cone and Belding. Personal interview, December 30, 1963.

Heston, Charleton. Personal interview, September 13, 1963.


Luraschi, Adrienne, Associate Director, Compass Productions. Personal interview, January 29, 1964.


Penn, Arthur, Personal correspondence, December 5, 1963.


Schaefer, George, Producer-Director, Compass Productions. Personal interview, September 2, 1963.


Tamburri, O., Technical Director, NBC. Personal interview, September 9, 1963.

Trubin, Sybil, Vice-president, Compass Productions. Personal interview, January 30, 1964.

Truman, Paula, actress. Personal interview, September 13, 1963.
