



The approved "stance" for television reception. The set is a C. Lorenz model using a von Ardenne cathode-ray tube.

FEW PEOPLE realize how little we know about the possibilities of television entertainment or education. In one foreign country the public is admitted into rooms of modest size, somewhat like a very small theater, where the lookers are permitted to witness a television program. Home receivers are not available for the assembly of information as to the public reaction. In some other countries television experiments are planned. In no other country is there a regular television broadcasting service with a large audience in the home whose reactions can be studied. So that we have no direct experience from which to judge.

To those particularly interested in radio and scientific achievement, television is certain to be attractive. The thought that pictures in motion can be carried through the air and reproduced on a glowing screen in the home is most appealing to the experimenter or the scientifically-inclined individual. The size and quality of the image and the nature of the program will be a minor matter to such enthusiasts.

TELEVISION AS HOME ENTERTAINMENT

Spotlighting television against the background of existing facilities, many vitally important conclusions concerning a workable plan for television become evident. (The author of this article—which was written exclusively for RADIO-CRAFT — was formerly vice-president of RCA.)

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However, television broadcasting will face a majority audience who will make other and more difficult demands. The average citizen who purchases a television receiver at some little cost will, after the first novelty has begun to wear off, seriously consider whether he is being entertained and instructed by the television pictures which reach him. Upon his individual reaction will be built a great body of public opinion which will determine the acceptance and rate of development of television broadcasting.

We cannot be sure that radio telephone broadcasting of today gives us a definite answer as to the response which will be given to television broadcasting. Broadcasting today requires little from the listener who may wander around the room carrying on other tasks or even reading a book against a background of soft music. In other words, broadcasting adapts itself to the listener and asks little from him unless his good taste or interest in the program prompts him to listen carefully.

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TELEVISION AS HOME ENTERTAINMENT

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TELEVISION'S DEMANDS UPON THE ONLOOKER

Television broadcasting, on the other hand, absolutely fixes the looker. The room must be partially darkened, the looker must go to a specific place and must keep his eyes fixed on a small picture area (at this time about 5 x 7 ins. in size). If his attention is distracted, he completely loses the program. *There is no chance to do other things nor can wandering attention be tolerated during a television broadcast.* In fact, it demands in the home, and with relation to a small picture, all the attention which the audience must focus on the large screens in a motion picture theater.

Perhaps present broadcasting has taught the radio audience bad radio manners and perhaps television despite the nervousness or restlessness of many people, will help them to develop habits of attention to their own benefit.

The moral of all of this is that television is extremely new and untried; that its development will of necessity proceed experimentally and slowly; and that the burden upon those who create the programs will be indeed a heavy one. In fact, television programs must be so supremely interesting and attractive that they will justify, on the part of the lookers, the expenditure of (1) money, (2) time, and (3) attention—which are some of the most valuable things which the audience can give. Probably the needs of the situation will develop highly ingenious program creators who will accomplish what is needed in due course. But years of study, experiment, and program development must pass before the great television audiences of the future will be fully satisfied by the entertainment value of the programs sent to them.

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