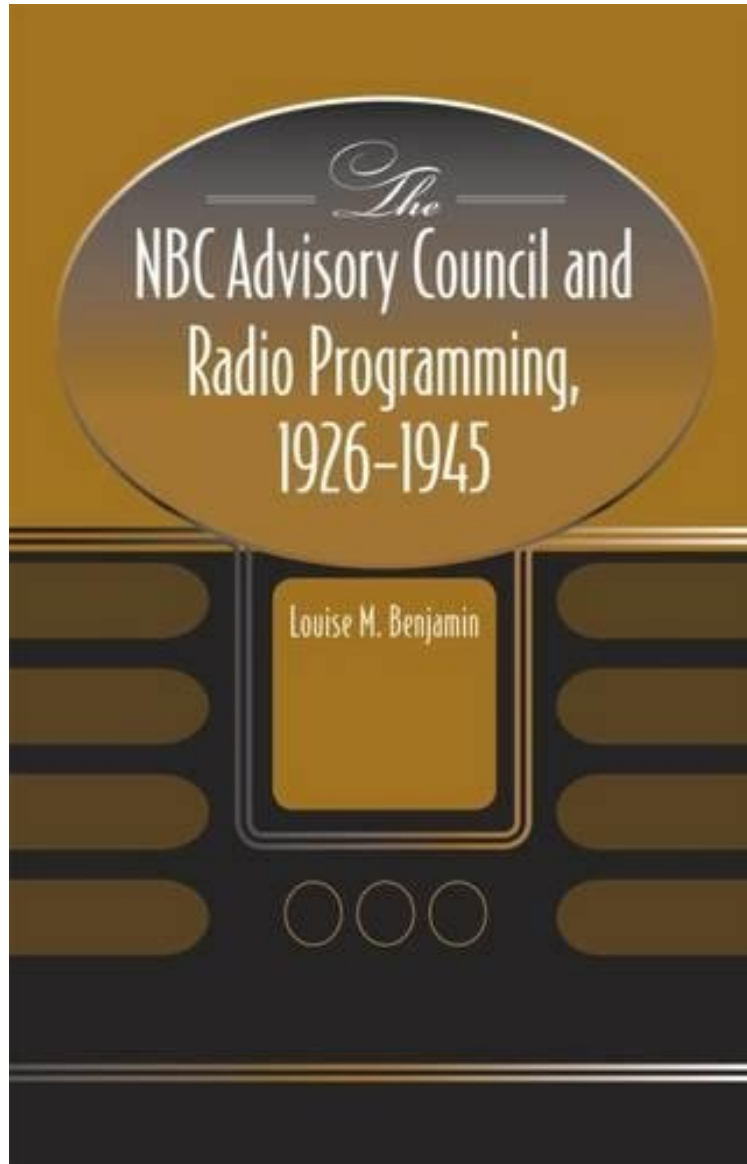


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The NBC Advisory Council and Radio Programming, 1926-1945

Professor Louise M Benjamin

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Professor Louise M Benjamin : The NBC Advisory Council and Radio Programming, 1926-1945 before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The NBC Advisory Council and Radio Programming, 1926-1945:

In 1926, the new NBC networks established an advisory board of prominent citizens to help it make program decisions as well as to deflect concerns over NBC's dominance over radio. The council, which advised NBC on program development—especially cultural broadcasts and those aimed at rural audiences—influenced not only NBC's policies but also decisions other radio organizations made, decisions that resonate in today's electronic media. The council's rulings had wide-ranging impact on society and the radio industry, addressing such issues as radio's operation in the public interest; access of religious groups to the airwaves; personal attacks on individuals, especially the clergy; and coverage of controversial issues of public importance. Principles adopted in these decrees kept undesirable shows off the air, and other networks, stations, and professional broadcast groups used the council's decisions in establishing their own organizational guidelines. Benjamin documents how these decrees had influence well after the council's demise. Beginning in the early 1930s, the council denied use of NBC to birth control advocates. This refusal revealed a pointed clash between traditional and modernistic elements in American society and laid down principles for broadcasting controversial issues. This policy resonated throughout the next five decades with the implementation of the Fairness Doctrine. *The NBC Advisory Council and Radio Programming, 1926-1945* offers the first in-depth examination of the council, which reflected and shaped American society during the interwar period. Author Louise M. Benjamin tracks the council from its inception until it was quietly disbanded in 1945, insightfully critiquing the council's influence on broadcast policies, analyzing early attempts at using the medium of radio to achieve political goals, and illustrating the council's role in the development of program genres, including news, sitcoms, crime drama, soap operas, quiz shows, and variety programs.

Louise M. Benjamin provides a detailed and closely-researched examination of an important influence on early U.S. radio that too many histories have overlooked in their focus on commercial imperatives. An excellent corrective to scholarship in the field of broadcasting history. Michele Hilmes, author of *NBC: America's Network*