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THEATRE ADMINISTRATION SUPPLEMENT

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ADMINISTRATION NOTES

Harold Oaks

Early this year, I received a request for information from the Forum of National Arts Organizations (formerly the President's Council on the Arts) regarding recruitment and training for administration in the arts. In preparing the report, I became aware of two things. First, I noticed the amount of progress we have made in this area in the last few years in introducing courses in theatre management, working out some corporate programs with business departments, and in a few isolated cases, setting up arts administration programs that are capable of bridging several areas to provide administrators with both a background in the arts and the management tools needed to develop these arts in the society. I also became painfully aware of how much remains to be done if the arts are to be seen as more than a peripheral fringe to the more practical, income-producing functions of the society. This kind of basic change in attitude must be founded on sound reasoning and most assuredly on an ability to communicate, not only with other artists in an in-group confirmation of the importance of the arts, but with the business, professional and with all segments of the society. The individual responsible for the most consistent and potentially effective contact with that larger community and the one who will assist in cooperatively shaping and carrying out the artistic policy of the arts organization, is the administrator. We still tend to allow these individuals to graduate slowly and painfully from the School of Hard Knox rather than attempting to utilize the information that has been accumulated and found effective in other administrative areas. The result is that we have too few of these administrators to face the growing demand in the nation and our training processes are responding only very slowly to this need. I would like to challenge educational theatre to accept the responsibility of looking at the broader picture and to consider the feasibility of expanding the view beyond the narrow speciality the "the arts."

Mr. Alvin H. Reiss, Editor of ARTS MANAGEMENT magazine, described a related problem in a recent article in CULTURAL AFFAIRS. He discussed the much publicized "cultural explosion" which is taking place in the United States today. As he suggests, one of the dangers of this catch phrase is the implication that suddenly everything is going our way and that we need do little more than run out to gather up the manna deposited by the explosion. This is simply not the case. If we intend to have the arts assume a permanent position of prominence, then we must be willing to engage in long-range programs that will educate the entire community and in particular the community leaders to its value. Mr. Reiss suggests that we establish a rationale for supporting the arts, that the search for beauty by members of the community not directly engaged in the arts must be woven into the very fabric of the state, the city, and must touch the daily life of each citizen. The

arts and the good life must become synonymous. This kind of basic attitude change cannot come by simply selling a set of season tickets to the manager of the local dry goods store. It involves exposure to all art forms and a sensitive and thorough person-to-person training process. Some organizations have begun this process by establishing arts retreats to which business executives are invited for two or three days away from their daily routine, engaging in two-way conversation with the artist about the work and about why he does what he does. I would suggest the need for such training is not restricted to members of the business community but is also demanded on the university campus. We need to create the opportunity to talk with our administrators about the artistic approach to life even more than we need to talk with them about next year's budget, staff problems, and new shop equipment. I would suggest that a series of retreats for administrative personnel carefully structured, organized and carried out, would bring us closer to the long-range goals than any short-term crash program in getting season ticket holders. With proper training, the arts have the potential of becoming a pleasure rather than an obligation to the administrator. A part of our responsibility is to provide an atmosphere and opportunities in which that attitude can be developed. Unless we become more adept in the future than we have in the past in meeting this responsibility, the "cultural explosion" could end up dropping us flat rather than boosting us up to new heights.

DEATH AND CRITICISM T. Bruce Birkenhead

What is the relationship between reviews on the part of the New York Press and the length of run of a new production? The general assumption, certainly, is that the reviewers of the N.Y. dailies determine life and death; a favorable review guarantees success, whether or not the production has real "value" (whatever that is) and a negative review means that the closing notice is posted almost immediately. Related to this is another generally held belief that shows of merit are killed by mixed reviews because the public will not gamble given the high price of sampling and judging for one's self. A hit therefore requires a favorable, if not a rave reception, on the part of the TIMES, POST, NEWS and in the dim past, WORLD JOURNAL TRIBUNE.

To shed some analytical light on the above we have gone back to the season of 1966-67. This is necessary because it is the most recent season we can use from which only one show still survives (Cabaret). Also, in order to minimize the problem of evaluating each review and placing it in one of five categories, we have drawn on VARIETY's summary of press reception; 1966-67 was the latest season available for research purposes. VARIETY's categories are, Enthusiastic, Favorable, Modified Favorable, Mixed, Non-committal, Inconclusive, Unfavorable and Pan. For purposes of analysis, Modified Favorable, Mixed, Non-committal and Inconclusive are considered as one category, called Mixed. Eliminated from consideration are limited runs, solos and repertory performances.

When shows and reviews of a complete season are set down on one piece of paper some interesting patterns immediately present themselves. Of the thirty nine shows which opened during the 1966-67 season, nine received reviews of the same nature on the part of all of the dailies. What is most interesting is that of the nine, only two were not at either extreme of our range of categories; and of the remaining seven, five were panned unanimously by the critics. Examining the seasonal record of each daily, we can see general differences in tendencies on the part of the reviewers. More Pans were awarded by the TIMES (14) than any other newspaper. When that is added to the willingness of the same newspaper to hand out more Unfavorable reviews than any other, we find thirty of the thirty-nine openings dismissed as unworthy. In fact, the TIMES reviewer demonstrated enthusiasm for only two shows that opened during the season. The remaining three papers (the WORLD JOURNAL TRIBUNE was to exist through thirty eight of the thirty nine openings) are more in line with one another, with some differences that are interesting, although not significant as we shall see below. The POST was least willing to Pan, but Unfavorable reviews exceeded both the NEWS and the WJT. The NEWS was able to "enthuse" more than any other daily, but handed out fewer Favorable reviews than the POST. The NEWS was also least willing of all the papers to take the middle ground, Mixed.

Evaluating the significance of reviews, the first problem to be faced is whether one paper appears to have greater weight than the others, or at least predicts more accurately. When the reviews are grouped by category and newspaper and set against the length of run we find that generally shows which received enthusiastic reception had healthy runs, with a few exceptions. The TIMES is least significant here because of the limited awarding of either Enthusiastic or Favorable reviews. And of the TIMES two Favorable reviews, one went to a production that lasted for only twenty performances. Productions receiving Favorable reviews from the rest of the New York press had a very mixed fate, not much better than those received with mixed reactions. The News is an exception, with only one of the shows which was given a Mixed review enjoying more than fifty two performances. This is largely

due to the NEWS limiting a Non-committal position to four productions. It must also be noted that the differences in run between shows receiving Enthusiastic and Favorable notices is not great whether viewed on an overall press reception basis or broken down by individual daily. This is due in part to the fact that Cabaret, which is still running, received three Favorable rather than Enthusiastic reviews, and the DAILY NEWS greeted it unfavorably. If we remove Cabaret from consideration the difference is still not great on an overall basis. On an individual basis the TIMES, for reasons already stated, can be dismissed. Only in the case of the WJT do we find an Enthusiastic review associated with a significant difference in length of run compared to shows received only favorably.

The length of run experienced by shows receiving Unfavorable reviews is also mixed, although in the case of the WJT and the NEW YORK POST, more suffered and early closing than enjoyed at least a limited run. Just as many productions received Unfavorably by the TIMES and the NEWS had a healthy run as folded early. The Pan stands out as significant. All shows panned by the POST and the NEWS were failures. Only one show panned by the WJT and the TIMES (both papers panned more shows than the other two) had a limited run of 132 performances.

The record indicates that no one newspaper enjoys an overall record that is better than any other regarding its impact on the chances of success of a production, or its ability to at least correctly evaluate public acceptance. The one possible exception is the TIMES' Pan record. Not only did the TIMES Pan more shows than any other newspaper, but thirteen out of the fourteen had fewer than fifty-three performances. We cannot say even in this one category that the critics position caused a show to fail. The TIMES reviewer may only have called his shots very clearly on opening night in cases of obvious theatrical disaster, whereas the other papers tended to be gentle. Many of the same productions panned by the TIMES were given Unfavorable or Mixed notices by the rest of the New York press. The doubt surrounding cause and effect is not dispelled when one observes the healthy runs enjoyed by half of the shows receiving Unfavorable reception on the part of the TIMES, and the generally mixed record of shows receiving Mixed or Favorable reviews from the press in general.

Given our findings, a rather simple index was employed to analyze the relationship between general critical reaction and the life expectancy of new productions. A rating scale from 0 to +4 was employed to cover the five categories of reviews from Pan to Enthusiastic. The overall index computed is a simple mean, equal weight being assigned to each newspaper. The results are surprising. As can be expected in the light of earlier remarks, a Pan on the part of the entire press is associated with death. Also, given that only one of the shows panned by the TIMES had even a limited run, it is not surprising that, with one exception, very low indices in the .25 to 1.50 range are also associated with an early demise. The exception is Don't Drink the Water with an index of excellence of 1.50. The surprise is that a sharp break occurs at an overall rating of only 1.75 (lower than mixed). The four productions rated 1.75 enjoyed runs of from 205 to 320 performances, whereas the shows rated 1.50, excluding Don't Drink the Water, have records ranging from nine to 132 performances. Of equal interest is the mixed nature of performance records earned by shows with indices of critical reception above 1.75. The general record of productions rated 2.0 and 2.25 is below that of those rated 1.75. The number of performances runs from 20 to 303; and if the one real success is eliminated then the high is only 127. The same inconclusive picture occurs among shows of higher ratings, with one of two productions which earned scores of 4.0 folding after 104 performances. As has already been noted, the longest run of all is being enjoyed by Cabaret which secured an overall press reception of 2.50. In general, shows in the 2.50 to 3.50 range had fairly healthy runs. It is of importance that only six productions fall into this category.

If we can generalize from this one season, and certainly more must be done not only using recent and future seasons, but also taking TV reviews into account, then the press appears to have much less impact than is assumed. Although the absolute Pan, and to a much lesser degree an Unfavorable review, is associated with failure, less than a mixed reception on the part of the press in general means that the production has a chance of success. If we had found strong correlation between favorable reception and length of run it would not have proved that the critics can sell a show. But a lack of correlation certainly does indicate that not only is the record mixed regarding similarity in taste between critics and the theatre goers who pay for their seats, but also that critical reception other than a Pan has little or at most a limited effect on a show's chances of acceptance and success. The play or book, score or star, advertising, word of mouth, curiosity and the theatre goer's income appear to be the determining factors, and enough so that critical reception is generally swamped.

A SURVEY OF TRENDS AND NEEDS IN THEATRE MANAGEMENT TRAINING
Margaret Bennett, A. Martial Capbern

(This article is part of a full study, submitted to the AETA Theatre Administration Project, and originally titled: "An Investigative Analysis of Trends and Needs Pertaining to Educational Instruction in the Field of Theatre Management and Administration. Editor.)

In an attempt to further determine the amount of interest evidenced on the part of educational dramatists in the area of curricula pertaining to theatre management/administration, a questionnaire was developed and circulated to one hundred institutions of higher education in the country. Of this number 43 replied, but only 11 of these accompanied their completed questionnaires with a copy of their respective syllabi for courses presently offered in this area of specialization.

In the development of the questionnaire, particular emphasis was placed upon our attempt to discover the following:

1. The number of institutions presently requiring a theatre management/administration course for matriculating theatre/drama majors.
2. The number of institutions indicating concurrence that such a requisite for theatre majors should be a requirement.
3. The number of inquiries re graduates for placement holding degrees in theatre/management/administration.
4. The number of those who felt that an interdisciplinary theatre/business administration (business administration/theatre) curriculum would satisfy the need for such a degree and subsequent placement.
5. An indication of a consensus of opinion as to the structure of a single course offering in this area of study that would most adequately prepare and equip the general theatre major for eventual placement in either educational theatre or professional theatre.

The initial question, it seemed, of primary importance was to learn how many institutions presently offering this type of course now hold the content of the course to be of such value as to require it of their students.

An immediate inconsistency presented itself when information submitted indicated that while 41% of the reporting educators feel such a course should be required of theatre majors, 85% of these same reporters DO NOT make such a requirement of their own students. This seems to be compounded when our analysis of the positions held by the reporters shows that 73% of those are presently holding the positions of chairman or administrative officer in their respective departments. In an attempt to determine the value of implementing such a requirement for theatre majors -- and further to explore the value of developing a specialized major in this area, it was asked whether inquiries were received for graduates holding special degrees in theatre administration/management.

Interestingly, 27.5% of those replying to this inquiry indicated that they had received such inquiries re graduates available for placement with this type of specialized degree. These supplied the following information:

72%	had	1-5	inquiries	this	year
18%	"	6-10	"	"	"
10%	"	11-15	"	"	"
27%	"	1-5	"	last	"
36%	"	6-10	"	"	"
10%	"	11-15	"	"	"

It therefore is indicated that inquiries of this type have sharply increased during the past year and it may be correct to assume that if placement offices and outside hiring sources were familiarized with the availability of such properly trained graduates the area of specialization would satisfy a growing need in both the academic and professional theatre areas.

It is unfortunate that only 11 of the reporting institutions complied with our request that a copy of their currently offered course syllabus accompany their completed questionnaires since greater compliance might have enabled us to do a more in-depth analysis in planning a proposed syllabus for the project's study and evaluation.

However, even from the limited information provided it is immediately evident that a major problem suggesting immediate discussion is the wide variance existing in the various course offerings; in some cases the great number of subjects touched upon in a single course offering would certainly seem to militate against the student's acquiring any degree of proficiency or thorough grasp of essentials in the very limited time allowed. There does seem to be common agreement that four essential areas of material should be given major emphasis in a theatre administration/management course offering and these are listed with their respective percentile values:

Budget preparation	19.2%	
Advertising/publicity	16.8%	(It should be noted that publicity refers to the selling of a particular production or series of productions while p.r. refers to the development of a general climate in which publicity will be most effectively received.)
Play Selection	15.7%	
Public relations	12.8%	

Following these in order of indicated importance are:

Box Office	9.6%	
Staff Organization	5.6%	
Scheduling	4.0%	
Ticket Sales	4.0%	(Block sales - not box office)
Programs	1.6%	
History of Theatre	1.6%	

Pertinent to the above information is data provided by the same reporting institutions that indicates that while it was commonly felt that the four major areas of information and study should be as shown (64.5% emphasis) these same institutions indicated they presently include in a single course the following subject matter:

Touring	Actor's Equity Regulations
Government Regulations	Budget Control
Purchasing	Costume Design

It should be evident that too much is being attempted in too little allotted time, or possibly that a more definite end might be determined for which the student is being prepared so that more proper emphasis be given these areas of study that will best equip the student for a particular area of employment upon graduation.

One of the major problems may well hark back to the various institutions' aim to be all things to all students, i.e., offering a course of academic study that will immediately equip him to serve equally well both the educational theatre and the professional theatre. It should be fairly evident that the future teacher will be better enabled to direct and administer a drama program if adequately prepared in the areas of budget preparation and planning, advertising and publicity, play selection and public relations, while the student committed to professional theatre would more greatly benefit by greater exposure to Actor's Equity Regulations, Governmental Regulations, Touring and Scheduling.

It has also been reported that the greatest number of college trained drama students find occupational placement in educational theatre or fields closely allied to education. This prompted our making a secondary survey of school administrators in an attempt to determine their thinking re the value of this type training for prospective teachers whom they themselves might employ. These educational administrators were also requested to indicate their own evaluation of six suggested areas of emphasis that might be included in a theatre management/administration course syllabus. Thirty-eight inquiries of this type were circulated and of this number thirty-seven administrators felt that a course in theatre management/administration should be made a requisite for all drama majors planning to teach at the secondary level. 27.5% of these same administrators felt that publicity

and advertising should be the major emphasis in such a course and 15% felt that budget planning was the second most important area of emphasis that should be included in such a course.

37.5% of the drama educators reporting indicated that they felt that a major in business administration coupled with a minor in drama would be a most effective method of properly preparing students interested in the field of theatre management/administration and of this group 67% indicated that they had discussed such interdisciplinary training with educators in business administration at their respective institutions.

One further attempt to determine the need for this type of academic instruction was our contacting twenty resident business managers affiliated with professional and community theatres in the greater Metropolitan Los Angeles area. An opening inquiry was whether or not, in the opinion of the business managers interviewed, previous experience was a requisite of their own employment.

60% had no prior experience

40% had experience in box office or p.r.

Seventy-five of those interviewed considered their employment a full-time responsibility. All of those interviewed felt that a special program for training would be most beneficial and of this group 80% felt that P.R. and publicity should form the core of such training and of this same group 65% admitted having had no formal training in these areas. The entire group indicated they would have taken such a course if such had been offered earlier in their careers.

85% of those interviewed felt that adequate personnel with desired basic training in theatre management/administration were not available to handle job openings in this area but that in all too many cases the drama graduate had little training in the practical aspects of management.

(The full study, of which the above is the opening section, goes on to propose two syllabi; the first for students working toward a degree in drama/theatre and at the same time pursuing a teaching credential, and the second for students with a professional emphasis. Both syllabi are developed for institutions working on the semester basis and the quarter system. The full report may be requested by writing to Dr. Harold Oaks, Chairman, AETA Theatre Administration Project, Department of Speech Arts, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, Colorado 80521. Editor.)

THEATRE ADMINISTRATION TRAINING IN THE U.S.S.R. (Excerpts from correspondence between V. F. Shiskin and Harold R. Oaks)

Mr. V. F. Shiskin, Rector of the Leningrad Institute of Theatre Arts, Leningrad, U.S.S.R., sent a letter to the Curator of the Brander Matthews Dramatic Museum at Columbia University on December 25, 1967, requesting information about management and administrative training in the United States. Copies of this letter were forwarded to several interested theatre representatives, including Harold R. Oaks, Chairman of the Theatre Administration Project of the American Educational Theatre Association. There ensued in the following months an exchange of letters and information dealing with management/administration training programs in the two countries.

In Mr. Shiskin's June 4, 1968 letter to Dr. Oaks, he said: "Our institute for the 1968-1969 school year will begin a preparation of (specialists in theatrical management) for the first time. The educational plan, divided into 5-year instruction periods, is being sent to you ..." The following extracts of that educational plan were translated from Russian to English by William Lewis at Colorado State University.

Circular for the
Leningrad State Institute of the Theatre, Music and Cinematography
Fundamental Rules for Acceptance for the Year 1968

The Institute admits citizens of the U.S.S.R. who have completed a secondary education, and are talently gifted and have successfully passed the entrance exams.

(Three Departments are mentioned in the circular; the Department of Dramatic Art, the Department of Theatre Producers and Directors, and The Department of Theatre Science. Since the Department of Theatre Science deals most directly with theatre economics and administration, we have extracted the description of this department. Editor)

Department of Theatre Science

The department prepares theatre scientists, personnel of culturally enlightened establishments, theatrical critics, pedagogics in the history and theory of theatrical art, administrative personnel of the theatre and cultural establishments, editors of radio and television (daily and by correspondence instruction) and specialists in economics and organization of theatrical production (daily section only).

According to the rule, only those may be admitted who have had a minimum of two years length of service in the cultural realm.

The term of study in both specialties is five years.

Those wishing to be admitted to the Department of Theatre Science must pass the following exams:

1. A written review of a performance or a movie or a play which is performed in the presence of a commission.
2. An interview to determine the faculty and general cultural level of the participant, to determine his knowledge in the realm of theatre and drama.

Those wishing to be admitted into the specialty Economics and Organization of Theatrical Business must pass the following exams:

1. An interview
2. Mathematics (oral and written)

All who wish to be accepted to the various departments must also pass examinations in the Russian language and literature (orally and written). They must pass the exam dealing with the history of the U.S.S.R. Those wishing to be admitted into the department of Economics and Organization of Theatrical Business do not take the exam dealing with the history of the U.S.S.R.

Those who have a higher and secondary special education do not need to take the entrance exams if they have a three year length of service in this direction after completing an educational institution.

The acceptance of documents is from the first June to the tenth of July. The entrance exams will be given daily from the 11th to the 25th of July. By correspondence from the 15th to 31st of July. The address of the Institute Leningrad, D28, Moxovaja Ulica, D34. Telephone 73-13-42.

Committee of Admissions

EDUCATIONAL PLAN FOR THE SPECIALTY OF ECONOMICS AND ORGANIZATION OF THEATRE PERFORMANCE PRODUCTION

The course runs for a total of five years, beginning September 11 to January 2 in course work, examinations January 3-23, vacation January 24 through February 6, educational practice February 7-22, classes February 28 through May 31, examinations June 1-30, vacation July 1 through October 31. This program is followed during the first three years, the last two years are without examinations or vacations.

(in addition to the deleted department description mentioned above, Mr. Shiskin also included charts showing a graphic plan of the educational process. These charts, together with other translated correspondence, may be requested by writing Dr. Oaks at Colorado State University in Fort Collins. Editor.)

ANTIOCH AUDIENCE RESEARCH
J. David Coldren

(The author is with the Office of Public Relations and Development, Antioch College, Yellow Springs, Ohio. This article is taken from a full report titled, "The Antioch Area Theatre's Audience Survey and Analysis." The survey was supported, in part, by the Ohio Arts Council. Editor)

Antioch College has a deep and abiding commitment to the encouragement of the creative arts. Both through its curriculum for liberal arts undergraduates and through the institution's influence on the larger community, Antioch College has endeavored to foster an appreciation

for the fine arts and has worked to create a social atmosphere where creative artists can thrive.

The college's most visible cultural activity for the past four decades has been the Antioch Area Theatre. Here students learn the craft and art of drama through the normal classroom situations, student workshops, and seminars in addition to Antioch's unique and invigorating public production program.

Since the heart of theatre is that moment of confrontation between audience and actor, audience and playwright, audience and designer, and audience and director, particular emphasis is laid on the importance of exposing Antioch students to many kinds of audiences in several settings. In a very real sense, the audience is a major part of the students' education.

Facing the pressure of increasing costs for theatre and aware, too, of the need for a more sophisticated approach to audience relations in order to maintain this important aspect of undergraduate education, Antioch College established an Office of Audience Services, Promotion, and Development in 1966.

The three main tasks identified for the Office of Audience Services were: sell more seats to reduce the annual operating deficit; develop a strategy and system for annual giving by patrons, corporations, and other constituents of the Theatre; and produce basic research on the nature of the audiences attending productions from time to time so that this kind of quantitative data could be used with other qualitative information in evaluating the effect of certain kinds of theatre upon an audience and to inform long-range program planning by both students and faculty.

Since the first two tasks seemed to involve (1) a critical need to introduce, explain, and promote the Theatre's educational and cultural programs/productions to Miami Valley residents not yet acquainted with the Area Theatre, and (2) a need to intensify identification with the Theatre and promote increased attendance of current patrons at productions both as an end in itself and a preparation for fund-raising later on, a monthly newsletter, OMNIBUS, was developed and circulated to both current patrons and potential audience members.

Early in the project, it became obvious that a monthly direct mail program was unwieldy without a fast, efficient, and inexpensive means of keeping the mailing list up to date and addressing the mailing pieces themselves. Therefore, the Addressograph system then in use was converted to punched cards and magnetic tape for use with an IBM 360 computer. After a few tense weeks during the conversion process, this system proved to be reliable and, after the initial programming expenses, relatively inexpensive.

The third task, the audience research, involved the manipulation of large quantities of data. The use of a computer in this phase of the project seemed absolutely essential. Furthermore, it was learned that by increasing the complexity of the computer program and adding only slightly to the cost, the computer could store and manipulate mailing list information for each patron and potential patron at the same time it was keeping track of his attendance record, business affiliation or employment, and contribution history. It took almost twelve months to merge the electronically stored mailing list with attendance and demographic information culled from file cards, directories and other sources. At the end of this period, however, the Theatre had a reasonably accurate file of current patrons and their attendance history. This file was relatively easy and inexpensive to update each month and the information contained in the file was presumably convenient to retrieve for future electronic calculations and manipulations.

In its current format the computer program allows the office of Audience Services to quickly and inexpensively address copies of OMNIBUS to active patrons (and exclude those who are out of town or away at school) and prospects. It also permits great flexibility in communicating with specific groups of patrons: teachers, newspaper editors, high school students, patrons who attended a particular play, season subscribers, patrons in certain geographic areas, etc.

It was this communications precision and flexibility, coupled with the attendance data and demographic data retrieved and stored from many sources by the computer, that made it possible for the office of Audience Services to assure the Theatre staff (with only slight hesitation) that the audience would respond well to last season's radical departure from the Theatre's normal production style. The attendance broke all existing records and the computer more than earned its keep!

At his point it was decided that enough information had been fed into the computer to derive a preliminary audience profile. A modest but helpful grant of \$1,000 from the Ohio Arts Council permitted us to add some additional elements to the computer program and to buy enough additional computer time to complete this profile.

The profile was to provide the following information about the current Antioch Area Theatre audience:

1. A statistical survey of the geographic distribution of the audience;
2. The percentage of families attending the Theatre in each recognizable geographical area;
3. The median annual income of families attending the Theatre;
4. A statistical representation of the educational attainment of the members of the audience over 25 years of age; and
5. A statistical device for distinguishing between the casual patrons and those that attended regularly.

Additionally, the system used to develop the profile was to be devised so that other arts organizations could use it to determine profiles for their audiences.

For demographic data, the "General Characteristics of the Population, by Census Tracts" published by the Census Bureau in 1960 is the most detailed and definitive source. However, this information is eight years out of date.

ZIP codes then became the geographic unit for the profile. Comparing ZIP codes with Census Tracts, it is clear that with a few exceptions, residents living within a ZIP code area have similar demographic characteristics. Furthermore, the direct mail industry has spent over two million dollars in programs which provide updated demographic data for most ZIP codes semi-annually.

ZIP codes are then grouped into sectional centers. Sectional Centers can be identified by the first three digits in the ZIP code. (Yellow Springs is in Sectional Center 453.)

For purposes of identifying ZIP codes with appropriate metropolitan areas, the 219 largest U. S. markets have been assigned Metro Market codes. Metro Markets are similar to, but not identical to, the Census Bureau's Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

Editor:

In the (last) SUPPLEMENT an error occurs in the brief report on building costs. The concert hall of the Music Center, Los Angeles, is shown as costing \$21,000,000 with the cost per seat at \$6,461.

The cost of \$21,000,000 includes a 2,000 car garage. The theatre with all furnishings, equipment, sound systems, seating, etc. cost \$16,500,000 and this figure also includes the restaurant equipment and furnishings. The cost per seat was \$5,384.

For your information, the costs of the two other theaters in the Music Center complex are as follows:

Ahmanson Theater	\$5,386,360	2,100 seats at \$2,570 each
Mark Taper Forum	\$1,954,450	750 seats at \$2,600 each

WELTON BECKET AND ASSOCIATES

John C. Knight, A.I.A.

Editor:

I have just finished reading (James Nuckolls') very fine article entitled "The Computerized Box Office" in Theatre Crafts, September/October, 1968, issue and your equally informative piece, "An Informal and Recent History of Commercial Computerized Ticket Handling Systems," which appeared in the Theatre Administration Supplement.

First, let me congratulate you for your fine explanations and understandings of the entire situation. They are well expressed.

Secondly, I would like to update the information in your file concerning TRS, its pricing and services. As you well appreciate, time means progress to us at TRS and we have expanded rapidly in the last several months.

TRS is now commercially implemented in eleven cities, i.e., New York, Philadelphia, Washington, Baltimore, Chicago, Detroit, Pittsburgh, Montreal, Los Angeles, San Francisco and Oakland, with central computer facilities in New York, Los Angeles and Chicago. Currently, we have more than two hundred remote terminals and over fifty Broadway and off-Broadway shows, motion pictures, concerts, sports and other entertainment events on the TRS system. Importantly, more than 40 per cent of these are a full seating dedication where there are no pre-printed tickets.

By mid-summer we plan to be operating in approximately twenty major trading areas (New York, Boston, New Jersey, Connecticut, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Washington, Baltimore, Virginia, Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland, St. Louis, Cincinnati, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Oakland, Phoenix and Montreal) with nearly five hundred terminals and one thousand before the end of 1969.

The principle subjects I would like to update you on concern Philosophy, Pricing and Services offered.

Philosophy

The TRS service philosophy is one of "total systems." We believe that the optimized, viable advantages of the system cannot be achieved without the seating inventory completely dedicated to computer sales. We know that the optimum, viable advantages cannot be achieved unless the preprinted "hard" ticket is eliminated. This, of course, means box office terminals -- not only for advance sales but also for same day sales at queuing times.

To prove this as completely feasible, TRS presently has over 40% of its subscribers not pre-printing a ticket.

We believe that the accounting system offered by TRS, while presently viewed as an "added possible advantage" will ultimately be considered as a very close second in value to the broad based sale of tickets. We believe that having "instant reports" printed out in the box office covering (1) Cash Settlement Reports, (2) Total Advance Sales Reports, (3) Specific Performance Advance Sales Reports and (4) Box Office Statements is not only a necessity but also a management tool, a cost reducer and an accurate information source on a timely basis not facilitated today. Advance sales control, for instance, can positively be controlled with the TRS system.

To accomplish this requires box office selling. Otherwise, any accounting statement is incomplete and contains error possibilities.

Any objection to box office selling centers around speed -- the speed of handling a customer transaction at the window today with a preprinted ticket versus drawing the ticket from a box office terminal.

We have conducted time-motion studies on transactions at box offices of all types of attractions and, in turn, with the TRS box office terminal. These time studies clearly indicate a total practicality of box office terminal. (As a matter of interest, we intend to publish such findings for the industry at a later date.)

Much of the ability to accomplish box office selling with a terminal has to do with the design of the terminal as well as the speed of the system. In contrast to our competitors, TRS has designed its board to be almost totally functional. When the keys on the TRS keyboard are once depressed for date and performance, they "stay down." Oftentimes, only the number of seats need be depressed to obtain a ticket from the high speed ticket printer. All such motions and key precision requirements are important to provide the speed needed in box office "same day selling."

So committed is TRS to the practicality and necessity of same day selling, we will not accept an attraction on an allotment basis (except under certain temporary extenuating circumstances) without a box office terminal installed in the attraction's box office with access to the allotted inventory of seats.

Examine briefly any system which accepts an allotment without a box office terminal. Unless the remote terminal sells out its entire allotment, it must print out the remaining tickets and return them to the box office in time for the accounting of a specific performance. Otherwise, the box office report cannot produce an accurate accounting "box office statement."

Just visualize how impractical such return of unsold tickets to the specific box office is when you consider any distance involved.

On the other hand, if the box office has a terminal, it can either draw off its printed report for combining to its box office statement or it can print out the "deadwood" left in the allotment. In any event the box office has a degree of control and, most importantly, has accuracy.

TRS does accept subscriber attractions on an allotment basis to obtain the complete confidence of management for total commitment and to evidence the increased sales and accuracy of the system.

We do believe, however, that the attraction management, having successful experience, will totally convert the house and, in turn, receive the benefit of the total accounting system. And, again, we feel the benefit of the accounting system will run a close second in advantages to the sales ability of the system.

Pricing

Naturally, varying by the attraction's size and present costs, we believe we have priced the TRS system very close to present costs (without any calculation of sales and/or profit increases that are claimed by the broad based selling). To accomplish pricing close to the industry's present costs, we have determined "breakeven requirements" of TRS to be in excess of 25 million tickets per year nationally.

The following is our standard pricing which can be amended by other factors:

1. Ticket Service Charge -- This is to be 25¢ per ticket sold for the attraction owner through the remote terminals. No charges will be made with respect to tickets sold through box office terminals.

Tickets are commonly sold throughout various areas of the United States through agents who charge a fee for the service. It is estimated by TRS that the average exceeds 5 per cent of the price of the ticket, although this estimate cannot be precise because the prices vary with the attractions and the areas of the country. The Chicago Ticket Service, now owned by TRS, generally charges a fee in excess of 5 per cent. TRS thus designed the price of its services to attraction owners at what it regards to be competitive pricing. TRS estimates that revenue from this per ticket sale source will constitute approximately 85 per cent of the total anticipated revenue. TRS believes that making such a substantial part of its revenue contingent upon the attraction owner's success in selling more tickets will be a distinct sales advantage for TRS.

2. Box Office Service Charge -- This charge is to be 3¢ per seat per performance for those tickets sold at the box office through the TRS terminals.

On the basis of its investigations, TRS has determined that this is a fair average cost per ticket as compared to the printing and associated costs in handling preprinted tickets. It is TRS's belief that the charge should not involve a significant change in the attraction owner's cost. For this charge the attraction owner receives the following: (a) use of one box office terminal for which there is no charge, (b) the listing of the attraction on the system's remote terminal outlets, wherever they are, though the attraction owner will pay the sale service charge for the tickets sold through remote terminals, and (c) the accounting data and reports available from the system. It has been TRS's experience that this method of specifying this type of cost aids the attraction owner in understanding that a transfer to the TRS system involves no substantial increase in cost, yet it provides greater service.

3. Remote and additional Box Office Terminal Rentals -- TRS charges either a fixed monthly rental of \$150 or an amount based upon the volume of ticket sales for all remote terminals. The company charges a fixed monthly rental of \$150 for box office terminals in excess of one, the charge for the first box office terminal being included in the 3¢ per performance charge stated above.

Such charges for terminals are expected to recover TRS's costs (amortized or rental) for the terminals plus the cost of maintenance.

Services Provided

TRS offers Computerized Subscription and Patron Seat File Systems. For example, TRS has already printed the season subscription tickets for Hunter College, Los Angeles Forum's

Kings and Lakers, and the Saratoga Performing Arts Center.

The charges for this service are as follows:

1. complete initial setup of patrons or season ticket holders
- \$500 (one time) plus 30¢ per patron.
2. Annual operating of complete system
- \$600 per year
3. Operation includes --
 - Acknowledgement
 - Renewal notices
 - Mailing labels
 - Seat availability reports
 - Seat assignment reports
 - Accounts receivable reports
 - Alphabetical listing of patron file
 - Seat number listing
-95¢ per patron
4. Ticket preparation costs
 - \$5.25 per thousand (one method)
 - \$10.00 per thousand (another method)

In addition, TRS offers complete box office contracting to all theatres, arenas and stadiums where TRS will take total bonded responsibility and "Bank the Box," including all operations. This is done on a cost-plus basis ...

TICKET RESERVATION SYSTEMS, INC.

John C. Quinn, Jr.
President

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THIS ISSUE OF THE SUPPLEMENT

Ellen Banks, San Fernando Valley State College, Northridge, California (Assistant to Miss Bennett for the "Survey of Trends" article).

Margaret Bennett (Schlosser), San Fernando Valley State College, Northridge, California.

Thomas Bruce Birkenhead, Department of Economics, Brooklyn College, New York.

A. Martial Capbern, Loyola University of Los Angeles, California.

J. David Coldren, Office of Public Relations and Development, Antioch College, Yellow Springs, Ohio.

Laura Mae Jackson, Bolt Beranek and Newman, New York, N.Y.

John C. Knight, A.I.A., Welton Becket and Associates, Los Angeles, California

Barbara Jordan Moore, Bolt Beranek and Newman, New York, N.Y.

National Council on the Arts, Washington, D.C.

John C. Quinn, Jr., President, Ticket Reservation Systems, Inc., New York, New York.