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Mediating women: the International Council of Women and the rise of (trans)national broadcasting

Kristin Skoog and Alexander Badenoch

ABSTRACT

Almost from the start of radio broadcasting, the International Council of Women (ICW) took particular interest in the medium, founding a Broadcasting Committee in 1936. This article examines the organisation's approach to radio as it emerged in the late 1920s and 1930s. It explores these developments through the identities of three women who steered the ICW's broadcasting work: the internationalist French-American Laura Dreyfus-Barney; the Swedish journalist and women's rights campaigner Margareta von Konow; and the 'model fascist' Italian mathematician Maria Castellani. It reveals the range and scope of ICW feminisms, the roles of its members as both activists and professionals, how women's radio expertise was defined, and, finally, how radio broadcasting became a key part of ICW strategy.

KEYWORDS

Radio; broadcasting;
International Council of
Women; international
feminism; 1930s

Introduction

In July 1938, the International Council of Women (ICW), an international women's organisation founded in 1888, celebrated its Golden Jubilee in Edinburgh in Scotland. More than 900 delegates and visitors were present from 31 countries with members representing the various National Councils of Women (NCW) affiliated with the ICW.¹ The historic occasion, with a programme across eleven days, was built around the usual social activities, and meetings of boards and standing committees, among them the ICW's Standing Committee on Broadcasting, which had been formally established in 1936. Its convenor, the Italian Maria Castellani, used the occasion to set out several points of focus for the coming years, such as: 'To bring into real effect a feminist Radio Programme ... touching all the problems of fundamental importance to women' and 'To promote international radio exchanges and organise periodical feminine international broadcasts'.² They not only talked about broadcasting: Castellani, together with four prominent ICW members, took part in a broadcast on the British Broadcasting Corporation's (BBC) Scottish Service. The broadcast included Belgian ICW President Baroness Pol Boël and the President of the National Council of Women of Great Britain (NCWGB) Lady Ruth Balfour and focused on the birth and aims of the ICW as well as the importance of modern media such as radio and the cinema.³ Castellani told listeners how broadcasting could 'help the

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cause of women' while Lady Balfour stressed the universal role of women as promoters of peace. She was quoted as ending the broadcast:

We have countries belonging to us that are not members of the League of Nations. We also hope to make a great family of Nations, and because we are women and most of us mothers or potential mothers, perhaps we shall achieve that family union first.⁴

Coming as it did in the middle of the Sudeten crisis, the talk of peace was no abstract matter, and raises the question of what 'feminism' might mean and offer to that cause at that moment. While Lady Balfour's concluding words reflected the ICW's essentialist conviction that women's biological and social role as mothers had a unifying effect, Castellani's Italy was working against many peace-making efforts. By this point, Italy had invaded Ethiopia in 1935, left the League of Nations (LoN) in 1937, and had not signed the 1936 International Convention Concerning the Use of Broadcasting in the Cause of Peace which, as we discuss below, another ICW member, Laura Dreyfus-Barney, had been instrumental in creating. The Convention implemented by the LoN came into effect on 2 April 1938 and recognised the important communicative role of broadcasting in preventing the spread of propaganda, false information and news in an increasingly tense and politically volatile context.⁵ Castellani herself was no dissident to fascist Italy; in the 1930s, she led the Fascist Association for Women Artists and Degree Holders (ANFAL-*Associazione Nazionale Fascista Artiste e Laureate National*, founded in 1929), and she was later described as the 'model of the modern fascist professional woman'.⁶ She did not downplay this association in Edinburgh. *The Scotsman* newspaper described Castellani as giving a 'Fascist salute' before her address on 'Women and Broadcasting'.⁷

The ICW's Broadcasting Committee, and the broadcast for the BBC Scottish Service, reflect the organisation's commitment to peace and its insistence on international cooperation. It also illustrates the ICW's fraught stance on political neutrality.⁸ In the interwar period, international women's organisations were united in the belief that all women shared a sense of 'sisterhood'—that simply being women was a defining factor underpinning shared interests, agendas and unique qualities and characteristics—an ideal not necessarily easily upheld in reality.⁹ Recent ICW historiography has examined national councils in northern, southern and southeast Europe and points to the tension between national and international agendas. It has been noted that 'despite their proclaimed commitment to neutrality', national councils, 'nonetheless became entangled in the political controversies of the nations where they worked'.¹⁰ Evidently, as historians Ingrid Sharp and Matthew Stibbe have observed, it is because of this multitude and variety in questions and scope that the period 1919–1939 'ranks as one of the most difficult periods to categorise in the history of women's international activism'.¹¹

The ICW's troubled universalism, as well as its nationalist/internationalist tensions, are brought into sharp relief when we explore their efforts to engage with media more generally and broadcasting specifically. As we have argued elsewhere about the postwar era, broadcasting represented a parallel—and no less troubled—universalism to that of the ICW's essentialist feminism.¹² Visions of broadcasting that would reach across borders and promote international understanding went hand-in-hand with visions of broadcasting as a force that would strengthen national ties across social divides. As the prominence of the fascist Castellani in the ICW's broadcasting committee indicates, following the ways in which the organisation attempted to entangle these universalisms can shed important

light on issues such as the range and scope of ICW feminisms, definitions of women's media expertise and the powers and limits of the organisation itself. It allows us to explore how they addressed the tensions of class and gender raised by women's participation in broadcasting. What was women's radio to be about? How did one define a 'woman's interest'? How should one address the 'women audience', as housewives, mothers, workers, professionals, consumers or citizens? In this article, we will trace these tensions from the ICW's initial engagements with broadcasting in the late 1920s through to the 1936 birth, and further development, of the ICW's Broadcasting Committee in a decade the ICW themselves described as the 'troubled thirties'.¹³ We will explore conceptions of the medium by specifically looking at the identities and activities of three women who steered development of the committee: the internationalist French-American Laura Dreyfus-Barney (1879-1974) who led the ICW's first initiatives in broadcasting and convened the cinema, and joint cinema and broadcasting, committee, between 1927-1936; the Swedish journalist and women's rights campaigner, Margareta von Konow (1897-1999), vice-convenor of broadcasting in 1936; and the Italian mathematician Maria Castellani (1898-1985), who was vice-convenor of the joint committee from 1935 and convenor of the broadcasting committee at its start in 1936.

The ICW's interest in radio reflects the gendered entanglements of the then still relatively new medium. Radio developed as a material structure and institution within several countries in the interwar period. As a 'domestic' medium, with listening taking place in the domestic sphere, it would have had an established place in most of the homes of the relatively wealthy women of the ICW by the end of the 1920s. By the 1930s, most nations had developed some level of national broadcasting, whether public service with varying levels of state control, or commercial broadcasting, and usually some combination of both.¹⁴ In most countries broadcasting came under increasing state regulation, and in countries such as Italy (starting in 1928) and Germany (starting in 1933) it came under direct control of the authoritarian regimes.¹⁵ These twin developments saw both the ideological articulation of the national borders within the walls of the family home, as well as a profound reworking of public and private spheres, which highlighted the porous nature of both national and domestic 'home territories'. As domesticated radio programming developed within this ideological framework, women became increasingly recognised and addressed as daytime audiences.¹⁶ Specific programmes, and even departments, for women developed in both public service and commercial stations that addressed women in varying overlapping roles from housewife to consumer and citizen. While the scope of roles for women working in broadcasting varied widely from country to country, one place where women very often found roles was in developing programmes that would speak to this domestic audience of women.¹⁷ As we show here, women linked to the ICW were influential in advocating for, and within, such dedicated niches of radio programming, as well as for representation beyond this.

Histories of women and broadcasting point to important relationships and connections between women broadcasters, feminism, women's groups and organisations.¹⁸ Many women's organisations quickly saw the potential of radio, both as a medium that challenged and negotiated the perceptions of public and private space, *and* that could reach beyond the nation. The institutionalisation of radio broadcasting shortly after the First World War coincided in several countries with some women being granted the legal right to vote, whilst in other countries the struggle for women's suffrage continued.¹⁹ *Jus*

Suffragii (or *The International Woman Suffrage News*, as it would later be called), the official journal of another international women's organisation, the International Woman's Suffrage Alliance (IWSA, later the IAW), published in its June 1925 edition a small notice about the possibilities of broadcasting for suffrage propaganda. Under the headline 'The Month's Miscellany' it was noted that 'in broadcasting women's news from one national centre, the news may quite likely be heard in far distant countries'.²⁰ The author enthusiastically proclaimed that such an invention must be used by international organisations such as their own. The German Social Democrat Adele Schreiber argued in 1928 that radio could educate women as citizens of the state, and of the world.²¹ Radio was also perceived by 'internationalist women' as a key instrument on a national level to educate female listeners about the wider world and their place within this as 'world citizens'.²² Such concerns for the way feminist internationalism entered radio broadcasting have given us valuable perspectives on programmes for women. However, we argue that we can often learn more about the entanglements between broadcasting and women's history by stepping away from studying broadcasting as 'media history' and exploring, from the other direction, the way that broadcasting and broadcasters entered into internationalist feminism on the world stage.²³ Our own work has pointed to important connections and links between the ICW and organisations such as the International Association of Women in Radio and Television (IAWRT) founded in 1951. As we discovered, in the 1950s, many of the women involved became connected not via their broadcasting activity, but via their connections to a number of international organisations including the ICW.²⁴ This has led us now to shift focus to the early work of the ICW itself, and the approaches and entanglements of women who shaped their early activity.

For its part, the ICW had long taken an interest in modern mass media. Already in 1899, the organisation had set up the Press and Public Relations Committee. This was mainly to publicise the work of the ICW, to liaise between headquarters and press committees of National Councils and, from 1922, to cooperate with the organisation's international publication, the *ICW Bulletin*.²⁵ Furthermore, the ICW prided itself on being the first international women's organisation to take modern media such as the cinema and radio seriously.²⁶ In 1927, the ICW Executive acknowledged that radio broadcasting was a powerful tool that could bring women 'of all countries into closer touch' and promote the work of the women's movement.²⁷ In 1926 a sub-committee on Cinema was set up under the Standing Committee on Education, to which broadcasting was added in 1931. This joint committee was given full status as a Standing Committee in 1934, and in 1936 the Cinema and Broadcasting committee was separated into two Committees.²⁸ Despite this early interest in broadcasting, the ICW's engagement with modern mass media appears to have received little scholarly attention to date.²⁹

In this article, we follow the development of the ICW's broadcasting work by tracing the work of three important figures driving the committees devoted to it. By focusing on these three women, and what we see as three phases of development, it allows us to see different versions of feminism found within the ICW and further how national and international contexts influenced the committee's agenda. Notably, none of the women involved were solely, or even mainly, broadcasters. Each brought a different kind of expertise, a different agenda, and a different vision of women and radio to the fore. In what follows we show how these various interests were brought to bear on the organisation's work.

Laura Dreyfus-Barney—an internationalist turned media expert

The ICW's first separate Broadcasting Committee was formed in 1936, but an interest in broadcasting existed already in the mid to late 1920s. The key driver behind this was Laura Dreyfus-Barney, who was appointed as the convener for the Cinema Sub-Committee in 1927.³⁰ Arthur Burrows, the Secretary-General of the International Broadcasting Union (IBU, founded in 1925) described Dreyfus-Barney as being 'much behind the scenes in international affairs'.³¹ Dreyfus-Barney was in essence a diplomat: a well-connected mediator and facilitator who brought together people and ideas. She played an important role in putting radio on the ICW agenda. Her approach to the new medium seems to have derived from her internationalist standpoint that radio could educate, contribute to international relations and enhance understanding between people—in effect promote peace. This was a prevalent position within the international women's movement after the First World War, especially in the form of 'social feminism', that promoted the belief in women's civilising influence on society and natural opposition to war and violence.³²

Dreyfus-Barney was born in the US to a wealthy family and spent most of her childhood and education in Paris, France. A large part of her life was divided between these two countries. In France she was introduced to the Bahá'í Faith, a religion that promoted the unity of all people, rejected nationalism and racism, and supported feminist views. Together with her husband, she would become a dedicated representative for the faith and travelled far and wide, beyond the US and Europe, visiting Iran, Egypt, Turkey, Japan and China.³³ From a young age she was curious and displayed an 'over developed sense of duty'.³⁴ In 1928 her husband fell ill and died, which prompted Dreyfus-Barney to devote more of her time to the ICW, humanitarian activities, social issues, and the promotion of peace and co-operation.³⁵

Media formed only one part of Dreyfus-Barney's wide-ranging career at the ICW, which spanned from the 1920s to the 1970s.³⁶ When she became the Convenor for Cinema in 1927, she was already the ICW's Vice-Convenor of the Peace and Arbitration Committee, a post she had held since 1925, becoming its Convenor in 1936.³⁷ She was also well-connected to the LoN. In 1925, Dreyfus-Barney became the Liaison Officer between the ICW and the International Institute for Intellectual Co-operation (IIIC) based in Paris, and from 1930 the International Institute for Educational Cinematography (IIEC) in Rome.³⁸ Both the IIIC and the IIEC were bodies of the League of Nation's International Committee on Intellectual Co-Operation (ICIC, formed in 1922). She further contributed to the work of ICIC by being an expert member on the League's committee 'for the Instruction of Youth' and from early on promoted the potential of both cinema and broadcasting for education.³⁹ Through her connections with ICIC she came into contact with the IBU who were pressing the League to take propaganda broadcasting seriously.⁴⁰ In 1937 and 1938, Dreyfus-Barney would serve as an expert advisor on the LoN's 1936 International Convention Concerning the Use of Broadcasting in the Cause of Peace.⁴¹

In the early 1930s, the sub-committee's work on cinema and broadcasting intensified and Dreyfus-Barney was instrumental in organising the ICW's first joint conference on Cinematography and Broadcasting held at the IIEC in Rome in October 1931. The conference was organised with the collaboration of the National Council of Italian Women

(CNDI, *Consiglio Nazionale Donne Italiane*) and the director of the IIEC, Dr Luciano de Feo.⁴² Despite financial restrictions due to the Great Depression, delegates from National Councils represented China, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Iran, Romania, Sweden, Switzerland and the US.⁴³ The conference gives us clues to a range of different positions that were taken on the relationship between women and broadcasting. Not surprisingly, considering the various stakeholders present, the focus centred on educational aspects and international cooperation, and how women, through the radio, could contribute to this. The conference was promoted in the ICW *Bulletin*, both in the lead up and after. A short report on proceedings was also published in the 1931 December issue of IWSA's *Jus Suffragii*.⁴⁴ The news of the conference and its findings therefore reached a large audience within the international women's movement.

The General Secretary of the IIC in Paris, M. Belime-Coeuroy, outlined how in countries such as France, Norway, the US, Germany and Great Britain, 'talks on the international mind are broadcast at regular intervals' and that teaching by wireless was now a practice found in every country.⁴⁵ The conference adopted several recommendations as reported in the ICW *Bulletin*. These focused mainly on the possibility of radio for education, information and international relations, reflecting the view adopted by the LoN. For example, it recognised that broadcasting played an increasing role as a form of 'information, instruction and amusement', and there was hope it would assist in 'raising the moral level and in the bringing together of peoples'. The conference further emphasised the importance of broadcasting as a public service (as opposed to commercial or state-run models), which it noted was already in existence in a number of countries; that broadcasting should be of an 'independent character' so as to 'retain at all times the confidence and respect of the public'.⁴⁶ By the early 1930s, the social, cultural, political and economic landscape led to competing models of how best to organise broadcasting and address growing concerns about the new media's potential impact on public opinion and social transformation.⁴⁷ This was also a concern amongst women who saw radio's educational mission as key and so were often involved in cultural and educational programming.⁴⁸ In the same talk, Belime-Coeuroy pointed to the role women generally, and the ICW specifically, could play by suggesting ICW members should find a place on 'school broadcasting organising committees' that already existed or were forming in various countries.⁴⁹ This observation resonates with the trend we noted above in a range of national contexts as broadcasting industries and institutions were becoming established. Women often entered broadcasting through experience or expertise in education, and as such, became restricted to educational, women's and children's talks and programming.⁵⁰ This was perceived and expected as an appropriate and traditional space/expertise for women.

Belime-Coeuroy further suggested that the ICW should ensure women 'with eminently suitable voices' be considered as announcers on air, citing the 'Italian lady announcers' who were admired in the world of broadcasting for the quality of their voices.⁵¹ Women's voices on air were however a highly contested topic. Women announcers appeared on air in Italy, Spain, Poland, Denmark and Switzerland, but, in the UK, Germany and the US, they tended to be confined to women's and children's programming, and daytime output aimed at the female audience.⁵² Women's voices were often criticised for being 'weak, shrill, and irrational'; in essence, they were a threat or challenge

to the male-dominated soundscape, reflecting concerns and anxieties over women's increasing presence in the public sphere.⁵³

In pointing specifically to the role of women, the conference adopted the recommendations that, 'qualified and competent women in each country be appointed on the Committees created to deal with broadcasting; that authorities agree to the creation of specialists Committee for the handling of women's problems'.⁵⁴ This indicated a first tentative step by the ICW towards women finding a voice and representation on national broadcasting committees or having an influence within broadcasting institution, something that was further pressed by the Swedish women, as will be discussed next. At the same time, we already see a focus emerging of an insistence of a place specifically to *speak to women*, laying the groundwork for the development of what Karen Lee Ashcraft and Catherine Ashcraft have referred to as the 'glass slipper' of occupational identity surrounding women's roles in broadcasting.⁵⁵

The ICW Sub-Committee on Cinema and Broadcasting, as it was now called, continued its work. Soon after the conference was held, in November 1931, Dreyfus-Barney sent out a questionnaire to the presidents of national councils and 'my correspondents' asking members to contribute to a survey, 'Inquiry on the educational aspects of the wireless'. The survey was supplied by the LoN's International Commission on the Social and Educational use of Films and Broadcasting (founded in 1927, and of which Dreyfus-Barney was a member) to be added to a report by the IIIC in Paris and submitted to the LoN.⁵⁶ Questions were focused on members' opinions on the educational value of broadcasting, for example in rural settings, for adult education or 'as a means of bringing the nations together', and whether members were representative on committees preparing educational programming.⁵⁷ Furthermore, in June 1932, Dreyfus-Barney wrote to members on the sub-committee about the forthcoming ICW meeting to be held in Stockholm 1933, which due to the limitations of the financial crisis, were focussed on the Standing Committees on 'Education', 'Peace', 'Child Welfare and Public Health' and 'Trades and Professions'. Dreyfus-Barney, wrote, 'We shall therefore prepare for each of these committees a short report on the possibilities of Cinema and Broadcasting along these lines', and continued by asking members to send information or suggestions.⁵⁸

Undoubtedly, Dreyfus-Barney's personal faith, internationalist approach and connections to the LoN influenced the development of the ICW's engagement with cinema and broadcasting. Joyce Goodman suggests the remit of the ICW Sub-Committee on Cinema broadened under her convenorship. Initial questions around cinema going and hygienic conditions, moral aspects (its potential to influence individuals especially the young) and the need for censorship, were widened to an agenda that pursued a focus on international cooperation.⁵⁹ According to Goodman, Dreyfus-Barney believed that intellectual cooperation could free the mind of 'prejudice, hostility, and ignorance', and that important work was to be done, to safeguard 'the school, the book, the press, the radio, the cinematograph and all public platforms from pernicious influences working against Peace'.⁶⁰ Dreyfus-Barney described cinema and radio as 'two mighty inventions'.⁶¹ Her understanding of them points to a sophisticated analysis and recognition of how modern mass media were changing the experience and perception of the world:

In fact, Cinematograph and Broadcasting are as it were a prolongation of ourselves; they push back the limits of space and of time; they permit us to penetrate into conditions

and environments which would otherwise remain foreign to us; they make science and art alive even to the uninitiated. Like every other force in our hands, they can destroy as well as construct. It is for this reason that men and women of good will should interest themselves in an influence which effects beings of all races and of all classes.⁶²

Dreyfus-Barney was neither a media professional nor a broadcaster, but arguably she spoke like one. In an age of political and economic anxiety, her internationalist approach set out a vision and agenda for how women and the ICW could use radio for education and to foster international cooperation via a public medium entering the private space. By using radio to educate and enlighten, women could exercise influence on the world stage, particularly within the parameters afforded to them by broadcasts *for* women. In this initial stage, the ICW reaffirmed women's expertise as educators and promoters of peace. Dreyfus-Barney's position within the ICW and the various committees and bodies connected to the LoN, along with her faith, were all formative in shaping the ICW agenda on broadcasting.

Margareta von Konow—a social reformer on the international stage

An important moment in the development of the ICW's broadcasting committee came in the summer of 1933 when the ICW met in Stockholm, Sweden (26 June to 6 July). It was at this meeting, and in the months after, that Swedish women posed an intervention to further challenge the space of broadcasting institutions as an inherently male domain. This was particularly within senior roles and management, but also on air—as experts, demonstrating a good example of what historian Lucy Delap describes as, 'the deep, persistent concern of feminists with the politics of space'.⁶³ This intervention would eventually become a resolution in 1936.

During the 1933 congress, the Sub-Committee of Cinema and Broadcasting met, with delegates attending from Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Finland, France, Great Britain, Latvia, Netherlands, Norway, South Africa, Sweden and Yugoslavia.⁶⁴ At the meeting, the Swedish member Margareta von Konow from the Swedish NCW (SKN, *Svenska Kvinnors Nationalförbund*) had 'insisted on the necessity of women serving on the Committees of Broadcasting societies'.⁶⁵ Konow was a journalist, editor, women's rights activist and a degree holder, with a BA in History of Literature, English, German and Political Science. In 1933, she became the Editor of *Hertha*, the magazine of the Fredrika Bremer Association (FBF, *Fredrika Bremer Förbundet*), the oldest women's rights organisation in Sweden.⁶⁶ At the same meeting of the sub-committee, Konow also 'protested' against the 'habit of representing woman as a 'creature of luxury and an object for pleasure on the screen', and asked members of the sub-committee to exercise its influence to ensure that, '*modern woman* in the best sense of the word—that is the intelligent woman, who loves, but also knows how to work—make her appearance in films'.⁶⁷

Konow spoke from first-hand experience and frustration. In the same month as the ICW meeting in Stockholm, the FBF had written to the Swedish government requesting that women should be represented on the newly-appointed committee investigating the future organisation of Swedish radio and that women should be appointed to more senior management positions within the broadcasting institution.⁶⁸ The Swedish radio broadcaster (*AB Radiotjänst*) was formed in 1925, but local radio clubs and experimental

transmissions had taken place from 1921, the same year Swedish women had gained the vote.⁶⁹ Konow and others were critical of the first women's programmes that appeared in the mid-1920s on *AB Radiotjänst*. These tended to be dominated by male voices and did not seem to take women's talks or programming seriously; instead, they were rather patronising and degrading.⁷⁰ As radio was becoming a national medium, and a large part of the audience were women, the FBF argued that the institution controlling the new medium could no longer afford to ignore the influence of women on the organisation and its output. Yet the request was rejected and met with no consideration.

Whether their next action was inspired by the discussions at the ICW meeting in Stockholm in June—or whether the plans were already in place—remains at this point uncertain. Nevertheless, the FBF, with Konow as its initiator, organised and formed the Broadcasting Committee of Swedish Women's Organisations (SKR, *Svenska Kvinno-föreningars Radiokommité*). The committee brought together fourteen prominent Swedish women's groups in December 1933 (including the Swedish SKN) and worked as a lobby group to put further pressure on *AB Radiotjänst* and the ongoing investigation. The women's committee continued to ask the government and *AB Radiotjänst* for Swedish women to be represented in senior posts within Swedish radio and also to be represented on air in the form of experts.⁷¹ This time it paid off and cooperation was established. As Swedish radio scholar Karin Nordberg suggests, this was about enabling women to influence and access the public sphere. Nordberg further observed that as a strategy, the SKR used women's difference and women's experiences as different (from men) as an argument as to why women's experts were needed on air. At the same time, though, the SKR were against a specific women's section or department as they believed this would neither benefit nor promote equality.⁷² Their position was outlined in February 1934. Both the IWSA's *Jus Suffragii*, and the ICW *Bulletin* reported on the initial meeting of 'The Broadcasting Committee of Swedish Women's Organisations':

... attention was drawn to women's urgent desire to have their say, along with men, in matters connected with the Broadcasting movement as one that concerns the community as a whole ... At least half of Sweden's adult listeners to the wireless being women, it seemed only just that women should be allowed to make their influence felt in that important domain. The letter further stressed the fact that this influence ought to be made to bear on *all* aspects [of] broadcasting and not only on such which were generally described as "women's domain." Women experts should serve on the National Board of Broadcasting and take part in all its activities, the drawing up of the programmes in particular.⁷³

The Swedish women wanted to depart from a practice that was common in many national contexts, that is—the use of a separate section, department or 'slot' for women's talks, expertise and output. By the mid-1930s, so-called women's or housewives' 'hour' (or 'half-hour'), formed a key part of the radio schedules in a range of countries, having both a liberating as well as a subordinating effect.⁷⁴

Returning to the Swedish example, it seems the SKR exercised some influence. Women's expertise and knowledge were not utilised on Swedish radio until the mid-1930s. Talks by women would increase from twenty-nine in 1932 to 101 in 1936, and in 1935, three out of the fifteen members on the newly created programme board (*Radionämnden*) were women.⁷⁵ The Swedish women continued to promote the directive to increase women within broadcasting institutions—on boards and committees, in both senior and managerial roles—and within programme making. Based on the

activities and success of the SKR, the Swedish SKN proposed in 1936 a resolution that called on the ICW and national councils, 'to do all in their power in their respective countries to introduce or increase the influence of the women upon the Broadcasting [*sic*], its administration and the drawing up of its programmes'.⁷⁶ They further urged national councils to establish a committee of representatives that would then cooperate with the broadcasting institution within their countries. There are indications that Konow wrote directly to national councils informing them about the work of the Swedish women. For example, a letter from the General Secretary of NCWGB, Monica C. Grobel from June 1936, thanked Konow for sending information about the 'Swedish women's endeavours to acquire some influence over the broadcasting activities of their country'. Grobel continued that the information was of particular value since they themselves were about to form a broadcasting committee.⁷⁷ Additionally, in the US, a Women's National Radio Committee (WNRC) was formed in 1934 to protect cultural and educational programming within an increasingly commercial structure. The WNRC acted as an 'umbrella' group for a variety of US women's organisations (including the NCW) and according to Jennifer M. Proffitt, the WNRC exercised a certain influence on the US broadcasting industry.⁷⁸ There is no evidence linking the WNRC's actions directly to the Swedish women but the timing of these examples is significant as it indicates a 'mobilisation' on radio institutions and industry by women's organisations as a platform for expression, participation and influence.

The 1933 Stockholm meeting, and the preceding and following actions of the Swedish women, had a longer term impact on the agenda of the ICW broadcasting committee. First by further challenging the broadcasting institution and the idea of an 'expert' as a male domain and placing emphasis on access by women, or women's organisations, to the airwaves. Secondly, the Stockholm gathering should also be considered important for its influence on the ICW's perception of the new medium—what it could do, and for whom? It was at this meeting that the wider Council consolidated and acknowledged the agreed upon recommendations developed at the ICW's 1931 Rome conference on Cinematography and Broadcasting—in their own words, the ICW 'pledged itself to work on these lines'.⁷⁹ The reports Dreyfus-Barney had prepared for the Standing Committees on Education, Peace, Public Health, Child Welfare, and Trades and Professions were discussed and welcomed by members of the Sub-Committee of Cinema and Broadcasting, who in turn suggested that similar reports be made for other Standing Committees in time for the next conference.⁸⁰ We can therefore see here a beginning of collaboration between the Sub-Committee on Cinema and Broadcasting and other ICW standing committees. An example of this can be found in 1935, at the ICW meeting in Brussels, where joint meetings took place between the cinema and broadcasting committee and the ICW Standing Committees on Public Health, and Education, respectively. In the meeting with Public Health, Dreyfus-Barney referred to a report that showed the importance of wireless 'during epidemics', 'the usefulness of wireless talks on health' and the 'significance of the wireless for urban and rural homes'. In the joint discussion with Education, it was noted that cinema and radio were increasingly used in schools, and that radio had the potential for adult education and should be better utilised in small towns and villages.⁸¹

This period thus strengthened the commitment by the ICW as an international organisation dedicated to modern mass media and is further evidenced by the fact that the sub-committee was made into a formal standing committee in 1934. In 1936,

the ICW conference was held in Dubrovnik and the proposition to separate the Cinema and Broadcasting Committee into two committees was accepted. This was proposed by the NCWGB who felt two committees would consolidate expertise and focus.⁸²

Maria Castellani—representing the professional woman

In 1936 Dreyfus-Barney took over as convener for the ICW's Peace and Arbitration Committee, and the Broadcasting Committee was formed under the convenorship of the Italian Dr Maria Castellani.⁸³ Under the convenorship of Castellani, the ICW Broadcasting Committee continued the development of a feminist agenda, as understood by the ICW, with a focus on peace and international cooperation. This returns us to the question raised at the beginning of the article of how was it that an Italian fascist, whose authoritarian regime actively inhibited women's emancipation, ended up as the convenor of the ICW Broadcasting Committee—a committee that believed its key mission was to use radio to defend women's rights and to promote peace?

Castellani was well-educated and internationally well-connected. She had received a PhD in Mathematics at the University in Rome in 1923 and spent the following year studying at Bryn Mawr College in the US.⁸⁴ She was a mathematician and statistician, and was employed in a high-ranking position as an actuary in 1930–31 at the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in Geneva (founded in 1919).⁸⁵ In the 1930s, her resume further included 'Head of the Statistical Bureau of the Italian State Insurance'.⁸⁶ After the Second World War, she took up a position at the University of Kansas City, which she held from 1946 to 1961, and continued a successful academic career in Mathematics.⁸⁷ As a professional woman, she was active and engaged in a range of women's groups both nationally and internationally. As already mentioned, in the 1930s, Castellani headed ANFAL which, according to the historian Victoria de Grazia, was 'in terms of following and political visibility, the most important female cultural grouping under the dictatorship'.⁸⁸ She was also active in CNDI, where she was listed as Vice-President in 1932.⁸⁹ As nationalism grew in Italy during the early twentieth century, this also found expression within the women's movement and among Italian feminists, including the CNDI, who in this period showed little interest in 'international pacifism' compared to their counterparts within the ICW.⁹⁰ After Mussolini's coup d'état in 1922, and the establishment of an authoritarian regime that was essentially anti-feminist, Italian women soon had to give up on the question of women's suffrage. In contrast to the German and Austrian national councils that ceased to exist in 1933 and 1938, respectively, the CNDI continued, but not without certain caveats. The CNDI replaced anti-fascist voices within its higher ranks, shifted focus to cultural rather than social issues so as not to compete with the women's section of the Italian Fascist Party, and, after the death of the council president in 1931, the regime nominated, as her replacement, the pro-fascist aristocrat Daisy di Robilant.⁹¹ Castellani was not only a key leader within Italian women's organisations, she was active within the ICW, and a 'member of the board' of the International Federation of Business and Professional Women.⁹² This was another organisation through which a number of broadcasting women networked with each other well into the post-Second World War era.⁹³

How did Castellani come into contact with the ICW Committee on Broadcasting? We know she was present at the ICW conference on Cinematography and Broadcasting held at the IIEC in Rome in 1931 where her organisation organised a banquet on the last day of the conference.⁹⁴ She was also present at the International Congress of Educational and Instructional Cinematography, a conference Dreyfus-Barney organised and attended as a delegate, in April 1934, also at the IIEC.⁹⁵ In 1935, Dreyfus-Barney recommended Castellani become the temporary vice-convenor for radio as part of the Cinema and Broadcasting Committee because Castellani had the relevant competence.⁹⁶ She had of course experience and connections via her time in Geneva at the ILO. However, Castellani was also involved in organising international broadcasts from Italy which might have given her added 'knowhow'. Castellani had been involved with international radio exchanges between women's organisations, organising monthly transmissions to foreign countries, as part of an Italian Feminine Radio Centre. This was composed of women who represented various women's groups with the aim to develop programmes and promote exchange. For example, a successful agreement had already been made with the US where broadcasts had been relayed on US stations.⁹⁷ It is unclear what this 'centre' was, and how she became involved in it, but by 1935 radio in Italy was increasingly being used by the authorities for mass communication and, of course, propaganda. Italian radio transmissions began in the 1920s, soon followed by the establishment in 1924 of the private company URI (*Unione Radiofonica Italiana*). In 1928, URI was renamed EIAR (*Ente Italiana Audizioni Radiofoniche*) and after falling under increasing government control, turned into an instrument of fascist propaganda targeting groups such as women, rural communities and youth.⁹⁸ Initially, Mussolini was not interested in radio, but in the early 1930s, its potential as a mass medium began to change the dictatorship's attitude. By the time of the Italian-Ethiopian war in 1935-36, radio was fully under regime control, and was used to mobilise the public in support for the war and to uphold Italy's reputation at home, and arguably abroad.⁹⁹ The Italian engagement in the ICW Broadcasting Committee could be read as an example of 'fascist internationalism', the idea that in the interwar period fascist states increasingly used and exploited the international agenda and international organisations to promote fascist ideology.¹⁰⁰ Because of her wide experience, Castellani was the obvious choice of ICW members to lead the Broadcasting Committee. In 1936, she was nominated vice-convenor by the Executive Committee and eight countries, the other two nominees were nominated by one country respectively; in 1938 she was nominated convenor by twelve countries.¹⁰¹

At the 1938 Golden Jubilee in Edinburgh, Castellani set out the Broadcasting Committee's agenda. One of her first tasks as convenor had been to reach out to the countries affiliated to the ICW to find out more as the new committee developed. By this point she was in contact with members in Australia, Denmark, England, South Africa, Austria, Finland, Norway, Hungary, Belgium, France, the Netherlands, Sweden, Canada, Greece, Poland and the US.¹⁰² The agenda was developed from two questionnaires sent out earlier to members, but which also reflected Castellani's vision of the committee's work. In a circular letter to the members, Castellani summed up these responses in four points. First listed was establishing contacts between countries to collaboratively develop a 'Feminine Radio Programme' that would focus on 'feminine activities, educational and social ones'—'Nothing silly or very frivolous: this may amuse for a moment, but certainly lowers our dignity'. Secondly, it highlighted the important role

of international radio exchanges where members of different countries could also use the broadcast to send messages to each other. Thirdly, reflecting her own professional experience, Castellani wanted to encourage 'special classes' for professional women such as journalists, doctors, nurses, academics on how to speak on the radio or to contribute in other ways to broadcasting, so facilitating a form of 'radio literacy'. Finally, the agenda encouraged national broadcasting committees to use radio as a way to share news and updates with members nationally, but also with international elements. The agenda continued to build on the work of Dreyfus-Barney, stressing the importance of the Broadcasting Committee for international relations. Castellani ended, 'my sincerest wish is that our work should bring us to a new period of intense and friendly co-operation'.¹⁰³ Following the proceedings, the Council passed two resolutions on broadcasting. First, it agreed that the ICW saw significant value in broadcasts for women as a way to defend women's rights, raise cultural levels and promote peace; it therefore urged 'suitably qualified women' to take an active interest in broadcasting, and further, that efforts should be made to encourage listeners to exercise their power by writing to broadcasters with suggestions and critique. The second resolution reiterated the ICW's desire that the 1936 International Convention Concerning the Use of Broadcasting in the Cause of Peace should be put into practice.¹⁰⁴

There are still many questions about how a fascist woman was perceived of on this committee that supported women's rights and equality, ideals that did not necessarily chime with the official Italian understanding of 'feminism'. Through a 1936 report on radio compiled by Adele Schreiber (then in exile in Switzerland) for the IAW, who were also turning their attention to broadcasting, we get a hint of the situation in Italy. Castellani was the 'rapporteur' and wrote enthusiastically about her organisation's work in developing a national and international programme of broadcasts for women. Yet, it was noted, 'The Rapporteur, however, states that a certain reserve must be observed as to the spirit of what we consider feminism and what may be understood as such in Italy'. Schreiber elaborated on the point—the 'official' viewpoint in Italy with regards to women was not in line with the aims of the women's movement since it prevented professional women from entering certain professions, and women's work was essentially limited to domestic work. The conclusion was that if radio solely promoted the 'official' view, women could not benefit; 'it is inevitable that in a country placed under fascist dictatorship other views than the official ones will not be allowed to make themselves heard'.¹⁰⁵ Grazia suggests that in fascist Italy middle-class feminists were forced to give up the question of suffrage, and many turned instead to social volunteering or 'cultural pursuits, so building up a new national women's subculture'.¹⁰⁶ For Italian feminists this was a way 'to articulate new female identities' across generations and regions in Italy and by 'supporting contacts abroad, albeit under official aegis, it fed an unquenchable female cosmopolitanism in the face of fascist nationalism. It seemed to nurture an inner confidence that girded cultivated, middleclass women against the regnant antifeminism'.¹⁰⁷ In light of the fact that many professional women faced discrimination and further obstacles in accessing employment, Castellani appears to have had a rather successful career.¹⁰⁸ Her international networking and contacts abroad must have made her attractive to the authoritarian regime. It is therefore further striking—and perhaps symbolically significant—that the ICW in 1938 emphasised how broadcasting was an instrument to defend women's rights.

Although no critical comments about Castellani have been identified within the ICW source material analysed to date, there are some hints that the ICW's relationship with Italian women was not entirely unproblematic. In correspondence between Dreyfus-Barney and the ICW President, the Scottish marchioness Ishbel of Aberdeen and Temair known as Lady Aberdeen, one can detect a subtle unease. In 1934, Dreyfus-Barney described the Italian CNDI as a 'clearing house' for international contacts particularly after the appointment of Robilant as president of the CNDI in 1931.¹⁰⁹ Lady Aberdeen responded, 'Of course, as you say, the Italian Council is very different to our other Councils, but what can we do in a country where there is a Dictator'.¹¹⁰ That an Italian fascist woman would come to lead the ICW Broadcasting Committee highlights the nationalist versus universalist tensions that we find in the international women's movement at this time—in particular within organisations such as the ICW—but also some of the ways in which these tensions were addressed. While other women and women's groups were more categorically dismissive of fascism, in Lady Aberdeen's response, there seems a hope that the universalist and essentialist feminism of the ICW would surmount the contradiction.¹¹¹ At the same time, whatever their ideological differences, Castellani is not only a model for a modern fascist woman, but she also fitted comfortably within the emerging model of broadcasting expert for the ICW: highly educated, generally modernist, internationally connected, and with a dedication to the using the radio as a tool for education—if not emancipation—of women.

Conclusion

As mentioned at the start of the article, in 1925, under the headline 'The Month's Miscellany', one author speculated on how the new medium of radio could aid the women's movement. By 1936 there was nothing 'miscellaneous' about radio; there was no doubt about its usefulness and importance to women. In just over ten years the medium went from a novelty, a potential, to being fully acknowledged and embedded within the strategies of the international women's movement and the ICW in particular.

After the upheavals of the First World War, despite some women in some countries gaining the vote, the period was characterised by a return to, and reaffirmation of, gender roles along traditional lines, as well as a continued fight for suffrage. The period was further characterised by the impact of the Great Depression and by political tensions, not least with the rise of fascism in Europe. A focus on the ICW and broadcasting allows us to see different responses in this context to the question of how to best utilise the new modern media and how these debates and discussions flowed between the ICW, national councils and international bodies connected to the LoN. The ICW recognised that radio had the potential not only to transform women's lives but also international relations. Radio challenged the perceptions of public and private space, and if women were barred from the high table of diplomacy and politics, radio could offer another platform for women to exercise intellectual cooperation, promote and defend women's rights and—theoretically, at least—support peace.

In her study of women's broadcasting in Britain, Canada and Australia, Justine Lloyd has shown how an internationalism has been a core aspect of women's radio programming, where programmers envisioned the new medium opening up the isolation of domestic spheres into a new form of international connection.¹¹² We have shown here a mirror

image in which internationalist feminists met to explore what women's approach to radio might be. A focus on the women involved in the development of the ICW's broadcasting committee reflects the different feminisms found within the ICW and how an American-French internationalist, a Swedish social reformer and an Italian professional—a feminist in a fascist state—each negotiated their national or international circumstances with universalist ideas. What is further noteworthy is that the women who drove the committee on broadcasting were themselves not first and foremost broadcasters. They all brought different expertise and agendas, influenced by their individual experiences, knowledge and professionalism, which were shaped by national as well as international contexts. Like the roles of many women broadcasters, these forms of expertise were partly gendered along ideological lines (and implicitly along lines of race and class), though within a wider professional remit. By looking at networks of women broadcasters in the 1950s, we have previously argued that to come to grips with a transnational and gendered history of broadcasting, we need to broaden the conceptual frame, and also the range of sites, of what constitutes broadcasting history.¹¹³ Our focus here on the ICW in the 1930s allows us, on similar lines, to show how a broadcasting expert on the international stage did not necessarily mean someone found in, or emerging from, a broadcasting institution or industry. It suggests, rather, that broadcasting expertise could be based on different experiences and perspectives to ones that encompassed similar gendered skills and concerns.

Notes

1. 'Our Golden Jubilee Conference', President's Memorandum, 11–21 July 1938, ICW (International Council of Women, Women's Library, London School of Economics, London), 5ICW/B/12, box 13 (Edinburgh 1938), 101.
2. 'Broadcasting Committee', President's Memorandum, 11–21 July 1938, ICW, 5ICW/B/12, box 13 (Edinburgh 1938), 81.
3. *Radio Times* 60, no. 772 (15 July 1938): 26, <https://genome.ch.bbc.co.uk/issues> (accessed August 22, 2022).
4. 'Our Golden Jubilee Conference', President's Memorandum, 11–21 July 1938, ICW, 5ICW/B/12, box 13 (Edinburgh 1938), 108.
5. See Suzanne Lommers, *Europe – On Air: Interwar Projects for Radio Broadcasting* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2012), 179–234. With the inauguration of the BBC's Arabic service in January 1938, which was designed to counter Italian Arabic propaganda from Bari, Lady Balfour's and Castellani's countries were in direct conflict on the airwaves at the time of their joint broadcast. See Andrea L. Stanton, *'This Is Jerusalem Calling' State Radio in Mandate Palestine* (Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 2013), 92–9.
6. Victoria de Grazia *How Fascism Ruled Women: Italy, 1922–1945* (1992; repr., Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 258.
7. 'Council of Women', *The Scotsman*, July 16, 1938, 18, The British Newspaper Archive.
8. The ICW has been described as an organisation dominated by European and North American women with an aristocratic leadership and elite membership, often conservative in outlook, that avoided controversial positions and claimed to be non-political. See Leila J. Rupp, *Worlds of Women: The Making of an International Women's Movement* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997); Karen Offen, *European Feminisms 1700–1950: A Political History* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2000); Karen Offen, ed., *Globalizing Feminisms 1789–1945* (London: Routledge, 2010); and Marie Sandell, *The Rise of Women's Transnational Activism: Identity and Sisterhood Between the World Wars* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2015).
9. For examples of tension and division within international women's organisations see Sandell, *The Rise*, 93–8.

10. Ann Taylor Allen and Anne Cova, eds., 'Introduction: Transnational Women's Activism', special issue of *Women's History Review* 32, no. 2 (2023): 165–71. The issue explores Italy, Spain, Finland, Britain, and Yugoslavia, 166.
11. Ingrid Sharp and Matthew Stibbe, 'Women's International Activism During the Inter-War Period, 1919–1939', special issue of *Women's History Review* 26, no. 2 (2017): 163–72, 163.
12. Alexander Badenoch and Kristin Skoog, 'Lessons from Lilian: Is Transnational (Media) History a Gendered Issue?', *Feminist Media Histories* 5, no. 3 (2019): 9–35.
13. ICW, *Women in a Changing World: The Dynamic Story of the International Council of Women since 1888* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966), 61–8.
14. For a multi-nation overview of these developments, see Klaus Arnold et al., 'Organizing a New Medium: The Emergence of Radio Broadcasting in Europe', in *The Handbook of European Communication History*, ed. Klaus Arnold, Paschal Preston, and Susanne Kinnebrock, 1st ed. (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell, 2019), 79–95. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119161783>.
15. Patrick Merziger, Gabriele Balbi, Carlos Barrera, and Balázs Sipos Crises, 'Rise of Fascism and the Establishment of Authoritarian Media Systems', in *The Handbook of European Communication History*, ed. Klaus Arnold, Paschal Preston, and Susanne Kinnebrock (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell, 2019), 135–52; Kate Lacey, *Feminine Frequencies: Gender, German Radio, and the Public Sphere, 1923–1945* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996).
16. See for example Lacey, *Feminine Frequencies*; Michele Hilmes, *Radio Voices: American Broadcasting, 1922–1952* (London and Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997); Maggie Andrews, *Domesticating the Airwaves: Broadcasting, Domesticity and Femininity* (London: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2012); Kate Murphy, *Behind the Wireless: A History of Early Women at the BBC* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016); and Justine Lloyd, *Gender and Media in the Broadcast Age: Women's Radio Programming at the BBC, CBC, and ABC* (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020; paperback 2021).
17. For an exemplary study highlighting the full scope of women's work, see Murphy, *Behind the Wireless*.
18. See for example Lacey, *Feminine Frequencies*; for Sweden see Karin Nordberg, *Folkhemmets röst: radion som folkbildare 1925–1950* (Stockholm/Stehag: Brutus Östlings Bokförlag Symposium, 1998), 319–5; Murphy, *Behind the Wireless*; Christine Ehrick, *Radio and the Gendered Soundscape: Women and Broadcasting in Argentina and Uruguay, 1930–1950* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015); Jeannine Baker, 'Woman to Woman: Australian Feminists' Embrace of Radio Broadcasting, 1930s–1950s', *Australian Feminist Studies* 32, no. 93 (2017): 292–308; and Lloyd, *Gender and Media*.
19. See Sandell, *The Rise*, 5–6.
20. 'The Month's Miscellany', *Jus Suffragii The International Woman Suffrage News*, June 1925, 132, The British Newspaper Archive.
21. Schreiber in Lacey, *Feminine Frequencies*, 45.
22. Catherine Fisher, 'World citizens: Australian women's internationalist broadcasts, 1930–1939', *Women's History Review* 28, no. 4 (2019): 626–44.
23. Badenoch and Skoog, 'Lessons from Lilian'.
24. *Ibid.*
25. Rupp, *Worlds*, 175–6.
26. Dreyfus-Barney to ICW Cinematograph and Broadcasting Committee, February 1935, ICW, 5ICW/E/08, box 30 (Standing Sub Committee on Cinema and Broadcasting (Lady Aberdeen's correspondence folder 1)); see also ICW, *Women*, 165.
27. 'Broadcasting as a Means of Propaganda, ICW Resolutions, Geneva 1927, from Compilation by: E.E. Monro, 1979, http://www.ncwc.ca/pdf/ICW-CIF_Resolutions.pdf (accessed March 1, 2021), 145. No longer online.
28. Terms for cinema were not entirely settled in the 1920s and 1930s, which leads to variation in the name of the committee: sometimes the then-common terms 'cinematograph' or 'cinematography' are used interchangeably. To avoid confusion, we use the contemporary term 'cinema' throughout.

29. While Gubin and van Molle devote substantial attention to Laura Dreyfus-Barney, for example, the ICW's activities in press, radio, and cinema are summarised in a few paragraphs. Éliane Gubin and Leen van Molle, *Des femmes qui changent le monde: Histoire du Conseil internationale des femmes* (Brussels: Editions Racine, 2005), 110–11. One exception is Joyce Goodman who explores ICW and cinema. Joyce Goodman, 'The Buddhist Institute at Phnom Penh, the International Council of Women, and the Rome International Institute for Educational Cinematography: intersections of internationalism and imperialism, 1931–1934', *History of Education* 47: no. 3 (2018): 415–31.
30. 'List of nominations', Programme, 26 May–7 June 1930, ICW, 5ICW/B/09, box 12 (Vienna 1930), 61.
31. Burrows in Lommers, *Europe*, 196 (see note 64).
32. Offen, *European*, 359–60.
33. For discussion of Dreyfus-Barney's faith, marriage, and travels, see Mona Khademi, 'A Glimpse into the Life of Laura Dreyfus-Barney', *Lights of Irfan* 10, Wilmette, IL: Irfan Colloquia (2009): 71–106, https://bahai-library.com/khademi_life_laura_dreyfus-barney (accessed August 22, 2022).
34. Khademi, 'A Glimpse', 76.
35. *Ibid.*, 92–3.
36. She even personally paid the ICW archivist's salary and budget for materials at one point. See: Gubin and van Molle, *Des femmes qui changent*, 27; 78.
37. 'List of nominations', Programme, 11–21 July 1938, ICW, 5ICW/B/12, box 13 (Edinburgh 1938), 41.
38. Goodman, 'The Buddhist', 417.
39. Lommers, *Europe*, 196.
40. *Ibid.*, 179–234.
41. ICW, *Women*, 166.
42. Dreyfus-Barney to Cinematography and Radio Sub-Committee, December 1930, ICW, 5ICW/E/08, box 30 (Standing Sub Committee on Cinema and Broadcasting (Lady Aberdeen's correspondence folder 2)).
43. 'ICW Conference on Cinematography and Broadcasting', *Bulletin*, Year: X, no. 3 (November 1931), ICW, 5ICW/P/01, box 41, (volume 1931–36). [no page]
44. *Jus Suffragii The International Woman Suffrage News*, December 1931, 22, The British Newspaper Archive.
45. M. Belime Coeuroy, 'Thoughts on Broadcasting', *International Review of Educational Cinematography* December, no. 12 (1931): 1140–42, <https://archive.org/details/internationalrev03inte/page/1140/mode/2up> (accessed April 5, 2023).
46. 'ICW Conference on Cinematography and Broadcasting', *Bulletin*, Year: X, no. 3 (November 1931), 4.
47. See Kate Lacey, 'Radio in the Great Depression: Promotional Culture, Public Service, and Propaganda', in *Radio Reader: Essays in the Cultural History of Radio*, ed. Michele Hilmes and Jason Loviglio (London: Routledge, 2002), 21–40; see also David Hendy, *Public Service Broadcasting*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 7–29.
48. See Donna L. Halper's discussion of Ada Morgan O'Brien, an esteemed pianist and mezzo-soprano who became a programme director on US stations in the 1920s. Donna L. Halper, *Invisible Stars: A Social History of Women in American Broadcasting* (New York: M.E Sharpe, Inc., 2001), 16–18.
49. Belime Coeuroy, 'Thoughts on Broadcasting', 1141–2.
50. See Hilmes, *Radio Voices*, 130–50; Amanda Keeler, "'A Certain Stigma" of Educational Radio: Judith Waller and "Public Service" Broadcasting', *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 34, no. 5 (2017): 495–508; Murphy, *Behind the Wireless*, 115–39; 189–217.
51. Belime Coeuroy, 'Thoughts on Broadcasting', 1141–2.
52. See Murphy, *Behind the Wireless*, 241–9; Hilmes, *Radio Voices*, 141–3; and Lacey, *Feminine Frequencies*, 193–220.

53. Christine Ehrick, “‘Savage Dissonance:’ Gender, Voice, and Women’s Radio Speech in Argentina, 1930–1945’, in *Sound in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, ed. David Suisman and Susan Strasser (Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 69–91, 69.
54. ICW Conference on Cinematography and Broadcasting’, *Bulletin*, Vol. X, no. 3 (November 1931), 4.
55. Karen Lee Ashcraft and Catherine Ashcraft, ‘Breaking the “Glass Slipper”: What Diversity Interventions Can Learn from the Historical Evolution of Occupational Identity in ICT and Commercial Aviation’, in *Connecting Women: Women, Gender and ICT in Europe in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Century*, ed. Valérie Schafer and Benjamin G. Thierry (Cham: Springer International, 2015), 138. In our own work, we have noted that in the early 1950s, this role seems to have been taken for granted among women broadcasters, Badenoch and Skoog, ‘Lessons from Lilian’.
56. Dreyfus-Barney is listed as ‘Treasurer’ in 1936, see ‘International Commission on the Educational Use of Films and Broadcasting’, League of Nations Search Engine, Lonsea.org, <https://www.lonsea.de/pub/org/1000> (accessed May 12, 2023).
57. Dreyfus-Barney to Lady Aberdeen, 30 November 1931 [followed by questionnaire]; Dreyfus-Barney to ICW Standing Sub-Committee on Cinematograph and Broadcasting, November 1931; and Dreyfus-Barney to ICW Standing Sub-Committee on Cinematograph and Broadcasting, 3 June 3 1932. ICW, 5ICW/E/08, box 30 (Standing Sub Committee on Cinema and Broadcasting (Lady Aberdeen’s correspondence folder 1)).
58. Dreyfus-Barney to ICW Standing Sub-Committee on Cinematograph and Broadcasting, 3 June 1932, ICW, 5ICW/E/08, box 30 (Standing Sub Committee on Cinema and Broadcasting (Lady Aberdeen’s correspondence folder 1)).
59. Goodman, ‘The Buddhist’, 422.
60. Dreyfus-Barney in Goodman, ‘The Buddhist’, 418.
61. Dreyfus-Barney to ICW Standing Sub-Committee on Cinematograph and Broadcasting, 3 June 1932, ICW, 5ICW/E/08, box 30 (Standing Sub Committee on Cinema and Broadcasting (Lady Aberdeen’s correspondence folder 1)).
62. Laura Dreyfus-Barney, ‘Considerations on “The International Conference of Cinema and Broadcasting” Held by The International Council of Women’, *International Review of Educational Cinematography* December, no. 12 (1931): 1071–3, <https://archive.org/details/internationalrev03inte/page/1070/mode/2up> (accessed April 5, 2023).
63. Lucy Delap, *Feminisms a Global History* (Penguin Random House, 2020; Pelican Books paperback 2021), 102.
64. Our Stockholm Meeting’, *Bulletin*, Year: XII, no. 1 (July 1933), 9.
65. Ibid.
66. For a biographical sketch of Konow, see Kristina Lundgren, ‘Emma Margareta Isabella von Konow’, *Svenskt kvinnobiografiskt lexikon*, March 2, 2020, www.skbl.se/sv/artikel/EmmaMargaretaIsabellavonKonow (accessed August 28, 2022).
67. ‘Our Stockholm meeting’, *Bulletin*, Year: XII, no.1 (July 1933), 10. [emphasis original]
68. Konow to Dreyfus-Barney, 7 September 1936, SKN (Svenska Kvinnors Nationalförbund, Göteborgs universitetsbibliotek, KvinnSam, Gothenburg), B28 F IV:2 1934–1938, Margareta von Konows handl.ang ICW: radiokommitten 1937–1938.
69. Lennart Weibull, ‘New Media Between Technology and Content. The introduction of Radio and Television in Sweden’, in *A History of Swedish Broadcasting. Communicative Ethos, Genres and Institutional Change*, ed. Monika Djerf-Pierre and Mats Ekström (Göteborg: Nordicom, 2013), 33–54.
70. Nordberg, *Folkhemmet*, 323–4.
71. Konow to Dreyfus-Barney, 7 September 1936, SKN.
72. Nordberg, *Folkhemmet*, 325.
73. ‘The Broadcasting Committee of Swedish Women’s Organisations’, *Bulletin*, Year: XII, no.6 (February 1934), 5. [emphasis original]; see also ‘Sweden’, *Jus Suffragii The International Woman Suffrage News*, February 1934, 38, The British Newspaper Archive.

74. See Lacey, *Feminine Frequencies*; Hilmes *Radio Voices*; Murphy, *Behind the Wireless*, Lloyd, *Gender and Media*.
75. Nordberg, *Folkhemmet*, 324–5.
76. '24. Report of the Cinematograph and Broadcasting Committee and consideration of the following resolution', Programme, 28 September to 9 October 1936, ICW, 5ICW/B/11, box 13 (Dubrovnik 1936), 23–4; Konow to Castellani, 20 February 1937, SKN.
77. Grobel to Konow, 10 June 1936, SKN.
78. Jennifer M. Proffitt, '“A Finer Type of Radio”: The Women's National Radio Committee and Its Battles for Better Radio Programming', *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media* 63, no. 2 (2019): 339–55.
79. 'Our Stockholm meeting', *Bulletin*, Year: XII, no. 1 (July 1933), 9.
80. *Ibid.*
81. 'Joint Meetings', *Bulletin*, Year: XIV, no. 1 (July 1935), 5.
82. '24. Report of the Cinematograph and Broadcasting Committee', Programme, 28 September to 9 October 1936, ICW, 5ICW/B/11, box 13 (Dubrovnik 1936), 23.
83. 'The Council Sessions of the ICW', *Bulletin*, Year: XV, no. 3 (November 1936), 25.
84. Leon M. Hall, 'Founders, Feminists, and a Fascist – Some Notable Women in the Missouri Section of the MAA', in *Women in Mathematics: Celebrating the Centennial of the Mathematical Association of America*, ed. Janet L. Berry, Sarah J. Greenwald, Jacqueline A. Jensen-Vailin, and Maura B. Mast (Cham: Springer, 2017), 121–40, 10–11.
85. Valerio Torreggiani, 'The Italian Members of Staff of the International Labour Organization: A Collective Biography (1919–1939)', *Journal of Modern Italian Studies* 27, no. 5 (2022): 697–720, 701–6.
86. 'List of Nominations', Programme, 28 September to 9 October 1936, ICW, 5ICW/B/11, box 13 (Dubrovnik 1936), 54.
87. Hall, 'Founders', 10–11.
88. De Grazia, *How Fascism*, 258.
89. Listed as Vice-President of NCW Italy in 1932 in 'Women Will Push World Parley Plan', *The Indianapolis Times* (Indianapolis [Ind.]), 2 November 1932. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress. <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn82015313/1932-11-02/ed-1/seq-11/> (accessed March 21, 2023); see also 'List of Nominations', Programme 28 September to 9 October 1936, ICW, 5ICW/B/11, box 13 (Dubrovnik 1936), 54.
90. Daniela Rossini, 'Feminism and Nationalism: The National Council of Italian Women, the World War, and the Rise of Fascism, 1911–1922', *Journal of Women's History* 26, no. 3 (2014): 36–58, 38–9.
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107. *Ibid.*, 260.
108. Perry Wilson suggests Italian middle-class women were able to find new roles often within the Italian state, see Perry Wilson, 'Italy', in *Women, Gender and Fascism in Europe 1919–45*, ed. Kevin Passmore (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), 11–32.
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110. Lady Aberdeen to Dreyfus-Barney, 12 May 1934, ICW, 5ICW/E/08, box 30 (Standing Sub Committee on Cinema and Broadcasting (Lady Aberdeen's correspondence folder 1)).
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