

Canadian Television Programming Made for the United States Market: A History with Production and Broadcast Data

Marsha Ann Tate



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At the 1939 World's Fair and the Canadian National Exhibition (CNE), RCA introduced and promoted a novelty known as television. Two decades later, this technology was well on its way to permeating virtually every home in America and Canada as well, spawning a growing, thriving industry in the process. Canada's two official languages (English and French), easy transborder reception of U.S. broadcast television stations, and an overall television market approximately one tenth the size of the United States historically impeded the growth of Canada's television production sector. This situation led Canadian producers, directors, writers, performers, and other creative and technical personnel to increasingly turn their eyes--and their talent--to the international market. Canadians who had played a significant role in America's entertainment industry since the silent era, turned to their southern neighbor as the most natural market for their creative endeavors. With a mix of practicality, adaptability and entertainment ingenuity, Canadians became responsible for an everincreasing percentage of American television productions. This volume traces the history of Canadian involvement in America's television production industry and looks at the genres, time slots and viewing areas of the first Canadian television productions to appear on U.S. airwaves as well as the challenges that producers had to overcome to take their programming into American prime time. The book also discusses the reasons Canadian television producers have turned to a foreign market over their domestic one. The main focus, however, is the factors which led to an independent television production sector in Toronto, Ontario, and the Ontario-based companies that have successfully competed in the U.S. marketplace. Alliance Atlantis Communications is given particular attention as one of Ontario's most successful production companies. Economic and political influences as well as current and future prospect

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