

minute format performed by a full cast of actors before a live audience. More important, Gosden and Correll were joined and eventually replaced by a team of comedy writers who transformed the once complex characters into exaggerated stereotypes. Slowly, the intimacy and texture of the original serial was replaced with broad slapstick and outlandish story lines that critics perceived as demeaning to African Americans. This transformation continued when a televised version of the program was introduced on the Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) network in 1951, providing even more ammunition for the program's critics.

Despite *Amos 'n' Andy's* popularity with both black and white audiences, the show was the target of criticism. Leading the initial charge was the *Pittsburgh Courier*, the second-largest black newspaper in the United States. In 1931, the *Courier* began an unsuccessful campaign denouncing the show's racial stereotypes. Black leaders continued to attack the show throughout its broadcast history, but it was the demeaning imagery evident in the televised version of *Amos 'n' Andy* that reignited a national protest in 1951. This protest, led by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), failed to convince the network to discontinue the program, but the show's slumping ratings did eventually prompt its cancellation in 1953. The program continued to air in television syndication until 1966, making it the longest-running show in broadcast history.

Impact *Amos 'n' Andy* became embedded in the American consciousness. Competitors attempted to capitalize on the show's success by creating similar programs employing ethnic humor. Department stores and movie theaters aired the program on their public address systems to keep customers in their establishments. Manufacturing plants modified their work shifts to oblige faithful listeners. Even President Calvin Coolidge left state dinners to listen to the show. Merchandisers sold *Amos 'n' Andy* toys, candy bars, card games, and novelty products. Additionally, the show contributed several popular catchphrases to the national lexicon, including "I'se regusted!" and "Buzz me, miss Blue!"

Beth A. Messner

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See also African Americans; Jim Crow segregation; Migrations, domestic; National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; Racial discrimination; Radio in the United States.

■ Anderson, Marian

Identification Singer of classical music

Born February 27, 1897; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Died April 8, 1993; Portland, Oregon

Anderson was a brilliant vocalist and an advocate for the struggle against racial discrimination. Her captivating performances brought people of all races together.

Marian Anderson displayed an interest in music at an early age. Before she was two years old, she would sit at her toy piano, playing original melodies and singing them back. By the time Anderson was four, her family had become aware of her gift for singing. During her teenage years, she participated in every musical opportunity. She was heavily involved in the Stanton Grammar School choir and the Union Baptist Church choir. She received rudimentary music training because her parents could not afford to give her music lessons. The first professional musician to recognize Anderson's extraordinary vocal ability was Alexander Robinson, Union Baptist Church's choir director. Robinson found it unusual for a child as young as Anderson to have a mature voice that extended upward almost three octaves. Anderson credited Robinson for stimulating her love of singing.

Anderson encountered racial discrimination throughout her life. During one instance in 1914, she tried to receive formal training at the Philadelphia Music Academy, but she was rejected because of the color of her skin. During the 1920's, Anderson and her accompanist, Billy King, booked tours to churches and black colleges. During their travels they experienced racial discrimination. They could not eat at certain restaurants, and they were turned



Marian Anderson (left) shakes hands with Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes, after the conclusion of her 1939 concert at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. (Library of Congress)

away from hotels. Anderson learned that living in the United States as a black classical artist was not easy. Black classical artists had sparse musical opportunities; those they did have were confined to churches, semiprofessional choral societies, and black schools and colleges.

Anderson often traveled to Europe in order to study, as most serious musicians did. While in Europe from 1930 to 1931, she presented concerts and found enthusiastic audiences. She did not experience the racial tension that she did in the United States. She felt personal and musical freedom. When she returned to the United States, she was a more confident and skilled musician.

Her tours during the early 1930's numbered more than thirty. During this time, ticket sales were few and the audiences were sparse because of the economic depression. Despite these obstacles, Anderson believed she could be recognized as an

American singer. She knew the odds were long as a black woman singing predominantly white music.

Anderson did not let her race or gender hinder her. She performed in numerous venues, such as New York's Town Hall, before some of the most intimidating critics. She won first prize in a singing competition sponsored by the New York Philharmonic orchestra and was given an opportunity to perform in a concert with the orchestra. She received rave reviews from both audiences and music critics.

The most pivotal moment in Anderson's life was in 1939, when she performed in a concert on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. Prior to this concert, the Daughters of the American Revolution refused to allow Anderson to sing before an integrated audience in Constitution Hall. As a result of this discrimination, First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt and other members resigned from the Daughters of the American Revolution and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People became involved. It persuaded Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes to arrange an open-air concert for Anderson on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. The concert took place on Easter Sunday. She sang "My Country, 'Tis of Thee." More than seventy-five thousand people of various races and ethnicities were present for the successful event.

Anderson toured and performed until she retired in 1965. Following her retirement, she continued to make public appearances. She received many awards throughout her lifetime. Some of these awards include the United Nations Peace Prize, the Congressional Gold Medal, the Kennedy Center Honors, and a Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award. In 1984, she was the first recipient of the Eleanor Roosevelt Human Rights Award of the City of New York. Anderson died in 1993 from congestive heart failure.

Impact Through her ability as a classical singer, Anderson was one of numerous African Americans of the 1930's to disprove long-held racial stereotypes. Working in a field regarded as off limits to African Americans, she symbolized an emerging class of

nonwhite Americans who gained prominence on the national stage and helped pave the way for subsequent generations of minority artists and entertainers.

Monica Tripp-Roberson

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See also African Americans; Bethune, Mary McLeod; Jim Crow segregation; Music: Classical; Racial discrimination; Roosevelt, Eleanor.

Anti-Chain-Store Act. See Robinson-Patman Act of 1936

■ Anti-Racketeering Act of 1934

Identification Federal legislation protecting trade and commerce from organized crime groups

Also known as ARA

Date Enacted June 18, 1934

Passed to protect American labor efforts from exploitation from organized crime syndicates, the Anti-Racketeering Act of 1934 made purposely interfering with commerce and trade practices illegal.

The Anti-Racketeering Act of 1934 was enacted at a time when Congress was concerned about racketeering activities stemming from organized crime. Despite these concerns, the act was written in broad language, never mentioning or defining what was meant by racketeering. The principal congressional committee working on the act determined that the word “racket” had for some time been used freely to describe every conceivable kind of behavior or activity that was problematic, unethical, fraudulent, or even detested, whether criminal or not. The committee opted to develop its own working definition

of racketeering but chose not to incorporate this definition into the act.

The law made it illegal to obtain, or attempt to obtain, money or property through force or threat of force across state lines. It was created in large part to protect legitimate businesses and their workers from predatory Mafia gangs, groups that earned celebrity status during the late 1920's and the early 1930's, largely from bootlegging, gambling, and involvement with labor unions. Thus, the intentions of this federal law were both to address and to cope with nefarious actions associated with organized crime figures such as Al Capone, Dutch Schultz, and Legs Diamond. For example, it prohibited the use of violence, intimidation, and injury to extort money or other items of value from individuals or to force individuals to join or make payments to organizations against their will.

The original bill was enacted in 1934 and passed by the Senate without debate; however, it contained no specific mention of legitimate labor or wages. It did outline a basic prohibition against violence or coercion in connection with racketeering and interstate commerce. Subsequently, when fear was expressed by the American Federation of Labor, the first organized federation of American unions, regarding the vague language of the act and how it might result in serious harm to legitimate activities of American businesses, including activities of actual labor unions, the bill was redrafted to make an exception for legitimate workers engaged in legitimate activities.

Noting that the clear language of the statute protected only lawful actions of the unions, courts soon interpreted the act as protecting violence and intimidation by unions during strikes on the grounds that strikes are legal and are carried out to achieve legal ends such as improvements for American workers. The Supreme Court made this understanding of the law official in its ruling in *United States v. Local 807, International Brotherhood of Teamsters* (1942). Congress reacted promptly to that decision by enacting the Hobbs Act in 1946. With the passage of the Hobbs Act, Congress stated that union acts of violence, extortion, and intimidation that cross state lines, not just similar acts carried out by organized crime syndicates, would be deemed illegal by the federal government. However, the federal courts did not agree with Congress. In fact, federal judges continued to apply the *Local 807* decision in various