

Strange As It May Seem

1939 -1940, 1947 - 1948

195-?



Strange As It Seems cartoon panel by John Hix.

The original [*Strange As It Seems*](#) was a 30 minute series which aired in the late 1930s, and a 15 minute series that ran in the 40s. The first host was Alois Havrilla, and the 15 minute version was hosted by Gayne Whitman (Dunning, 643). They recreated oddball stories with cast and sound effects. The stories themselves were *Believe It or Not* type tales, only instead of being based on Ripley's famous newspaper cartoon panels, they used a competing cartoon series drawn by John Hix (Dunning, 643). One of the few remaining recordings reenacted a historical legend about a writer who was sentenced to eat his book about democracy by his Swedish king or else face execution. (The writer succeeds by shredding the book and mixing it with his soup.) These tales were interesting, but not scary.

Then there was a later *Strange As It Seems* series, but with spookier and shorter tales (3 minutes long). The date of this series is uncertain as well, but based on the original synthesizer music that played in the background of the stories, it was probably the mid 1950s or beyond. No name is provided for the host who told the stories, but considering the writer was always credited as C.B. Colby, there's a good chance the same man was also the narrator. The stories sounded like urban myths and regional ghost stories, which is in line with the tag line "from the *collected* stories of C.B. Colby" (as apposed to the stories *by*

Colby). It's a pretty interesting series, especially with the custom music providing dramatic atmosphere throughout. The only put-off is the muffled sound quality, which is probably the result of several generations of tape dubbing. Considering these are one of the more recent radio series, there is a decent chance better recordings will surface.