

CORRIGE

This document is an article from the history.com website, published in 2009 and telling us about how Orson Welles frightened/scared a whole nation with his radio play in 1938.

The document is composed of 6 paragraphs.

The first one just introduces the context, reminding us that everything happened in 1938 and how his radio play interfered with realistic elements such as a weather report.

In the second paragraph, the article explains us what story was told to the listeners : basically, all started with explosions on Mars and a meteor crash in New Jersey.

The next paragraph consists in a detailed description of an alien followed in the fourth paragraph by the landing of several Martian spaceships : the fictitious Martian invasion is on its way.

As a matter of fact, his programme was so realistic that many people thought that it was true news and started panicking. Indeed, the actors were very convincing and the use of sophisticated sound effects made the programme even more puzzling. Not to mention the subtle mixing of fiction and reality such as musical interludes or weather reports.

Furthermore, the invaders and their supposed/pseudo spaceships were depicted in such detailed ways that people couldn't but believe that all of this was true. On top of that, the Martians were depicted in a terrifying way : they are supposed to have « tentacles » (l17) and to be « awful » (l 21) and the fake announcers also mentioned a « widespread panic » (l27)

As a consequence, many listeners started rushing out of their houses, trying to escape the Martians and face their attack, as it is said in the fifth paragraph.

The last paragraph deals with the aftermath of the radio play. Firstly, when Welles heard about the generalizing panic, he interrupted the programme to remind listeners that all of this was just fiction, but the effects of the radio play were so real that the authorities and the networks realized that it was necessary to be more cautious with this kind of programmes in the future.

Surprisingly, the controversy had no negative effects on Welles' career and on the contrary, it boosted it since he became a renowned actor, director, producer and writer.

The goal of this document is to inform us about an event which became very famous in the history of American media. It helps us to understand how powerful media can be and how easily they can influence or manipulate people.