

Don Pardo

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Don Pardo (born **Dominick George Pardo** on February 22, 1918 in Westfield, Massachusetts) is a legendary radio and television announcer. Since the 1940s, Pardo has been an in-house announcer for the NBC television network. He is the last of the "lifetime" staff announcers at NBC to still be working (following the retirement of Howard Reig and the death of Fred Facey). His best-known announcing work is for the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade on NBC (which he gave up after the 1999 telecast) and the television series *Saturday Night Live*; he has been with the show since it premiered in 1975, except for one season (1981-82), when it was announced by Mel Brandt.

On one memorable *SNL* episode in December 1976, Pardo participated in a musical performance by Frank Zappa, reciting a verse of the song "I'm The Slime." Pardo subsequently reprised this role on the live-recorded version of the song for the *Zappa in New York* album (it was, however, not featured on the first release in 1978, but it appears on the 1993 CD re-release). He also provided narration for the songs "The Illinois Enema Bandit" and "Punky's Whips" (an ongoing business dispute between Zappa and his then record company led to "Punky's Whips" being removed from the 1978 album, but the song was reinstated on the 1993 CD).

Prior to *SNL*, Pardo made his mark on game shows for NBC as the booming voice of *The Price is Right* from 1956 until it moved to ABC in 1963. The next year, he moved over to *Jeopardy!*, which he announced from 1964 until the original version of the series ended in 1975. Pardo reprised that role with a cameo voiceover in "Weird Al" Yankovic's 1984 song "I Lost on Jeopardy" (a parody of the Greg Kihn Band 1983 hit). He also announced numerous lesser-known New York-based NBC games such as *Three on a Match*, *Winning Streak*, and *Jackpot!* (all three of which were Bob Stewart productions).

In addition, Pardo has also been the announcer for WNBC-TV's *Live at Five* news program, *NBC Nightly News*, and *Wheel of Fortune* (during special on-location weeks, when the show originated from New York).

Pardo was the on-duty live booth announcer for WNBC-TV in New York and the NBC network on November 22, 1963, and it was he who first announced to NBC viewers that President John F. Kennedy had been shot in Dallas, Texas. (His first bulletin interrupted a local WNBC-TV broadcast of "Bachelor Father" before the entire NBC network went live with the story.) Because NBC was slow to begin videotaping the assassination coverage, for decades it was believed that Pardo's historic bulletins were lost. However, almost 40 years later an audio tape of the bulletins was discovered in a private collection.

Pardo's voice is heard during the open and close of Len Berman's "Spanning the World" segments on WNBC and *Today*. Also, during the 1980s and 1990s, Pardo recorded announcements for radio stations affiliated with The Source programming service [1] (<http://www.geocities.com/Hollywood/Academy/5515/kgbr.html>) (syndicated by Westwood One). Recordings from those days are still used on some programs, such as "Ten At Ten" on KFOG-FM, San Francisco and *The Bob and Tom Show*.

External links

- Don Pardo (<http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0661094/>) at the Internet Movie Database
- The Illinois Enema Bandit lyrics inc. Don Pardo's contribution (http://globalia.net/donlope/fz/lyrics/Zappa_In_New_York.html#Illinois)
- Punky's Whips lyrics inc. Don Pardo's contribution (http://globalia.net/donlope/fz/lyrics/Zappa_In_New_York.html#Punky)
- I'm The Slime lyrics inc. Don Pardo's contribution (http://globalia.net/donlope/fz/lyrics/Zappa_In_New_York.html#Slime)

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