

75th Anniversary Special Edition

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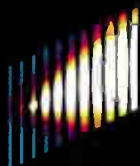


The men and women, moments and machines that created an industry
Plus: TV's best and brightest on what's ahead

Half a century ago, legendary CBS exec Frank Stanton presented a prototype for broadcasting's future, the color television. The best was yet to come.

May 22, 2006

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75 GREAT YEARS



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World Radio History

TABLE OF CONTENTS

S6 AND THAT'S THE WAY IT WAS ... AND IS

The Innovators, Rebels and Events That Made a Medium

S8 HE SPOKE DIRECTLY TO THE PEOPLE

President Roosevelt delivers his first "Fireside Chat"

S8 NO STATIC AT ALL

The invention of FM radio

S10 AN INVENTION THAT RATES

A.C. Nielsen proposes his first audience-measurement system

S10 "WE HAVE ADDED SIGHT TO SOUND"

Television makes its debut at the New York World's Fair

S12 THE NIGHT TV WON OVER AMERICA

The Louis-Conn heavyweight title fight

S12 MR. RERUN

Frederick Ziv invents syndication

S14 OUR FAVORITE WIFE

I Love Lucy premieres and shapes the sitcom

S14 TODAY, TODAY; TOMORROW THE WORLD

Today begins, and the morning show booms

S15 THE PEACOCK COMES TO TV

FCC approves the start of color

S16 AND THEN THERE WERE ... 2 1/2

ABC antes up during TV's Golden Age

S16 TRUTH AND CONSEQUENCES

Murrow takes on Sen. McCarthy

S17 NEWSCASTERS BECOME STARS

Huntley-Brinkley ushers in a new era

S18 THE TALE OF THE TAPE

Video comes to TV

S18 TANGLED WEBS THEY WEAVED

Payola rocks radio; quiz-show scandal shocks TV

S20 THE GREAT DEBATE

Kennedy and Nixon face the nation

S22. TELEVISION DOES WHAT IT CAN FOR ITS COUNTRY

Coverage of the Kennedy assassination

S24. THE WAR COMES HOME

TV changes the way America views war

S24 STREET CRED

Sesame Street remakes kids TV

S26 GAME BREAKERS

Monday Night Football transforms sports coverage

S28 SKY KING

HBO and the start of pay TV

S28 GETTING WIRED

Unprecedented growth of cable and satellite

S30 EMERGING MARKET

ABC-Cap Cities deal begins media-merger mania

S30 FOX ON A RUN

The first true fourth network

S32 THE CRISIS NEWS NETWORK

Gulf War turns CNN into a major player

S32 BLACK TUESDAY

TV leads the nation through its greatest tragedy

S34 GONE DIGITAL

The Digital Age rules the airwaves

S36 TAKING ONE STEP BEYOND

B&C asks 14 industry veterans to gaze into the crystal ball

S44 THE POWERS THAT BE

Seventy-five of the most influential forces in radio and TV's past, present and future



1951: The Great One and "The Greatest" begin the Honeymoon.



1962-91: Carson the Magnificent occupies the late-night throne.



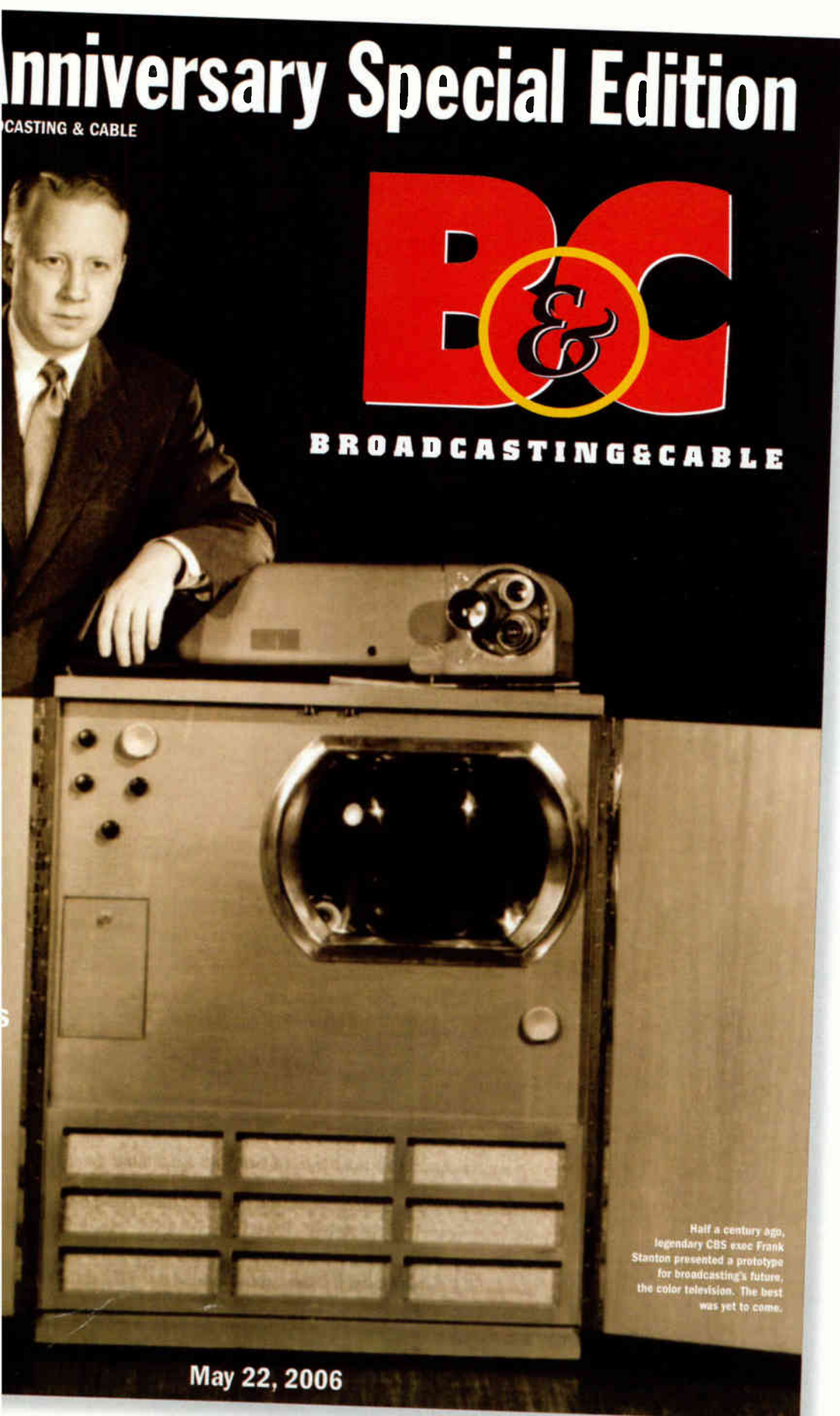
1984: The Macintosh ad makes Super Bowl spots must-see TV.



1983: First Lady Nancy Reagan brings an anti-drug message to a "very special" *Diff'rent Strokes*.

Photos: Ronald Reagan Presidential Library, "Diff'rent Strokes"

OUR STORY, YOUR HISTORY



Fifty years ago this October, CBS newsman Edward R. Murrow took time out to address a meeting of the Radio-Television News Directors Association. It was there that, famously, he said this about television:

“This instrument can teach, it can illuminate; yes, and it can even inspire. But it can do so only to the extent that humans are determined to use it to those ends. Otherwise it is merely wires and lights in a box. There is a great and perhaps decisive battle to be fought against ignorance, intolerance and indifference. This weapon of television could be useful.”

By the time Murrow uttered those words, *Broadcasting* was already 25 years old, and as strong an advocate for using the power of television and radio as Murrow was at CBS. We have been ardent supporters and sometimes cautionary critics. But from the inception of *Broadcasting* to this very day some 75 years later, this publication has never forgotten the promise and the power of television and radio.

Your trust has been earned. We were tuned in to radio before Jack Benny had his own show, and we were covering cable when it was merely a way to get a television signal sent over the hills of Pennsylvania. It seems as if we've always been around. As we've discovered over the years, many of the industry's brightest lights landed jobs through our classifieds.

Like the industry, we've changed. In our 75 years, we've been known as *Broadcasting* and *Broadcasting, Telecasting*, then *Broadcasting & Cable*, and these days, to our friends, simply *B&C*. Just as television is finding a new world of multiplatforms, *B&C*'s reports come to you these days via our Web site updated day and night, an irreverent and insightful blog, and via fax, e-mail blasts and multiple specialty newsletters, as well as targeted seminars.

B&C has thrived because of the dedicated work of hundreds of men and women, and because of the standards set by its founder Sol Taishoff and other top editors, including Don West, Harry Jessell, Ed James, Len Zeidenberg and our current editor in chief, J. Max Robins.

We have changed, of course. But we have never changed our

course. We are here to serve the industry, with the same dedication and single-mindedness we brought to our readers beginning 75 years ago. And we are here to push our boundaries and the boundaries of the industry we so proudly serve.

We are humbled. We know we could have done none of this without the support of our readers and advertisers. From all of us, thank you for continuing to give *B&C* the opportunity to be a part of your professional life. It is a privilege we do not take lightly.

Lawrence W. Oliver

Lawrence Oliver
VP/General Manager
Reed Television Group

Chuck Bolckom

Chuck Bolckom
Group Publisher

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**\$10,812 to suck up to
the editors of this media rag?
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weapons-grade plutonium!**



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World Radio History

REBORN AT 75

The legacy we celebrate inside this 75th-anniversary issue began with a fireside chat and arrives at the dawn of a digital revolution. Although a humble chat would seem insignificant compared with the turbulence of revolution, both are about the medium and the message. They are about communicating information that enlightens and entertains, and reaching as large an audience as possible.

That has been the charter of *Broadcasting & Cable* throughout its storied history, ever since legendary editor and publisher Sol Taishoff, with partner Martin Codel, decided radio needed “its own *Editor & Publisher*.”

The first issue of *Broadcasting* arrived on Oct. 15, 1931, and quickly won praise from the then most powerful man in the industry, RCA-NBC chief David Sarnoff. When asked whether he, in fact, owned the magazine—and whether “that fellow Taishoff” was his nephew—Sarnoff said, “No, but it would be all right with me. It’s a good publication.”

From the beginning, Sol rightly insisted that the heart and soul of this enterprise was to give voice to the industry, and through the decades, we have fought doggedly to get the word out. We’ve defended broadcasting and cable’s First Amendment rights with passion. When we’ve uncovered malfeasance, we’ve investigated thoroughly and fairly. We’ve reported on countless innovations in every area of the business, from technology to programming to distribution.

In truth, there has never been a more exciting time to cover this business than right now. The tremendous growth in digital capabilities, the breadth of programming, the cross-pollination of content and technology, the way a mega-merger can reset the business landscape completely. The machinations of the media keep us in a perpetual state of energized engagement.

No doubt, every editor of this magazine has been convinced that his tenure coincided with the most exciting time in the industry. Given the events covered in this anniversary issue, you can’t blame them. Rob Edelstein, who so masterfully guided this project, delved through each era in a constant state of amazement

at the industry’s dynamism and perseverance.

Inside, we look back on innovations (the advent of FM, color TV and video, the birth of syndication, and the growth of cable, satellite and HDTV), as well as the way we’ve covered—and were changed by—major events in broadcasting (McCarthyism, the quiz-show scandal and payola) and the world at large (the Kennedy assassination, the wars in Vietnam and the Persian Gulf, and 9/11).

While we celebrate our legacy, it is central to our charter always to be looking forward. In that spirit, 14 industry innovators graciously offer their perspectives on what they believe the future holds.

In addition, we present *Broadcasting & Cable’s* Powers That Be: 75 of the most influential and extraordinary movers and shakers, from those who shaped the business in the past to those who no doubt will be guiding the industry for years to come.

For 75 years, we have aimed to be your voice, to hear you out and report on what’s best and worst, biggest and brightest. Advanced in years as we may be, we have no intention of slowing down. Indeed, on our diamond anniversary, we feel reborn.



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And That's The Way



It Was...

And Is...

The Innovators, Rebels and Events That Made a Medium

BY ROBERT EDELSTEIN



Television as it is now, during a typical moment of *Idol* worship. The digital picture is on screens big and small, and the message is interactive between viewer and vision.

"I've come clean to my job with no experience and no prejudices. I am literally starting from the bottom at the top."

Merlin Aylesworth in 1926, after being named NBC's first president although he brought no previous knowledge of radio to the job.



"[In 1930], the NAB itself was not located in Washington. It was a speakeasy in New York. It was a place you could get a drink during Prohibition, and that was the NAB headquarters. [Back then], the NAB was an avocation."
Sol Taishoff, founder, *Broadcasting* magazine, on the National Association of Broadcasters and the early days of the business.



FDR "faced the nation" through the all-access power of radio.

HE SPOKE DIRECTLY TO THE PEOPLE

President Roosevelt delivers his first Fireside Chat

March 12, 1933

Franklin D. Roosevelt recognized a good thing when he heard it. The newly elected U.S. president understood the power, reach and immediacy of radio, seeing it as the medium of the future, and the networks did their best to earn his trust. NBC and CBS went to town covering FDR's March 4 inauguration, and in the midst of the March 1933 banking crisis, broadcasters placed their facilities at the disposal of the new administration. As *Broadcasting* wrote at the time, "It was a period of radio news re-

porting on a magnificent scale, with the networks sparing no effort [or] expense." Radio was suddenly more than just a conduit for distraction and entertainment.

Roosevelt had earned nearly 23 million votes in winning the White House, but the radio listening public numbered 60 million in 1933, and it was this wide swath of America that he addressed in a friendly, confident tone one March evening a week into his first term. The results were dramatic: Much of the listening public felt as if the president was speaking directly to them, allaying their fears in crisis.

Veteran Montana broadcaster Ed Craney called Roosevelt the biggest single force in the development of radio. Even newspaper execs, who had grudgingly regarded radio as the biggest cause—bigger than the Great Depression itself—of their decreasing ad sales, heaped praise. By the time Roosevelt addressed the nation again on May 7, CBS' Washington Radio Office

Director Harry Butcher coined the phrase "Fireside Chat," which warmed the public and captivated the president, who asked to see the overnight ratings every day.

The Fireside Chats placed radio in the center spotlight, "its force suddenly revealed, its promise newly seen, its influence on social and on business thinking so swiftly accelerated overnight," wrote *Broadcasting*. Eight years later, when Americans were glued to their radios for the speech after Pearl Harbor, they'd already long learned to regard that box with wires as their portal to the events of an ever more confusing world, a friend who could help them make sense of it all.

NO STATIC AT ALL

The invention of FM radio

July 1, 1936

It is ironic that the most extraordinary early quality of FM radio was its boast of "no static," compared with AM signals at the time. You'd be hard pressed to find another development in media history that carried more static than the creation and growth of "frequency modulation" radio. It's a growth that mirrors the development of broadcasting itself, a battle over patents, profits and progress.

In 1936, as *Broadcasting* reported, the powers that be in radio were looking forward to their first \$100 million year in time sales; three-fourths of the country owned a radio, and the number was growing. But radio was all AM, and the FCC was open to new services in a burgeoning market.

Edwin Armstrong, a one-time boy genius and ham-radio enthusiast who created his first invention

while still in college, developed FM in 1936, a frequency technology much cleaner and clearer than AM. The FCC created an FM band, but wary broadcasters who had thrown all their money into AM were uneasy about something that could sap their growth.

Armstrong, already involved in a protracted patent lawsuit against fellow sound pioneer Lee DeForest over another invention, faced an uphill battle to convince listeners that his way was soundest. He chose a novel method: In the early '40s, he helped market a few high-powered FM stations throughout New England. Armstrong's Yankee Network was meant to prove FM's viability, and the inventor hoped to get rich from royalties on every FM radio sold.

This development would no doubt prove costly for AM visionaries, such as Armstrong's friend and employer, RCA's David Sarnoff. RCA went to battle to control FM, allegedly to keep the status quo. In a landmark—and needless to say, controversial—decision, the FCC changed the frequency allotted to FM, dealing an under-



Tragically, Armstrong won the battle but lost the FM war.

TIMELINE

1931
The first issue of *Broadcasting* magazine appears on Oct. 15.
⚡ Radio is king,

and Bing Crosby and the Mills Brothers are the hot new crooners.
1932
CBS, NBC and New York area stations go round-the-clock to cover the Lindbergh-baby kidnapping, radio's biggest

spot-news reporting job to date.
⚡ GE and Westinghouse agree to divest themselves of their stock control of RCA, which becomes a completely independent company.
⚡ Allen DuMont invents radar for the U.S. Army.

1933
President Roosevelt uses combined CBS-NBC network power for his fireside chats.
1934
The Communications Act of 1934 births the Federal Communications Commission, which regulates

broadcasting and creates new rules on commercial and non-commercial broadcasting. It replaces the Federal Radio Commission.
⚡ Start of the Mutual Broadcasting System.
1935
RCA takes television out of the laboratory for \$1

million field test.
1936
Don Lee Broadcasting System starts first public demonstrations of cathode-ray television in U.S.



Photos: Courtesy of Fox, American Idol (previous page); Courtesy of CBS Archives; FDR.

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We salute Broadcasting & Cable
on its 75th anniversary.



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MSNBC
BRAVO
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SCI FI
SLEUTH
TELEMUNDO
MUN2

"I've come to talk to you about 30 minutes tonight. I'm not going to have anything



very important to say for the first few minutes, so you call up your friends and neighbors and tell them that Huey P. Long is talking at you—United States senator from Louisiana."

Long, in a typical beginning to a 1930s radio address.

the-belt blow both to Armstrong (the receivers he sold didn't work on the new frequency) and the development of FM. Adding insult to injury, RCA also claimed its own patent on FM and, in a court battle against Armstrong, won again. In 1954, a distraught Armstrong committed suicide.

By then, the battle for eyes and ears was between AM radio and television, and FM remained a struggling stepchild until the early 1960s, when high fidelity and FM stereo helped make it sing. By the 1970s, it became the popular renegade radio stop, as FM DJs ushered in the era of the rock album.

FM's growth has been historic. There are nearly twice as many FM stations in the U.S. as AM. Armstrong must have envisioned as much. As *Broadcasting* wrote in an obituary, "Armstrong, in life, erected for himself a monument that is timeless."

AN INVENTION THAT RATES

A.C. Nielsen proposes his first audience-measurement system

October 1936

RCA, CBS, ABC, NBC, Westinghouse—there have been a handful of monoliths in broadcasting history. But how many have wielded the same continuous, consistent power as the company keeping an eye on who tunes in?

Engineer Arthur C. Nielsen Sr. invented the concept of market research in 1923, helping his Evanston, Ill., clients track sales by visiting stores and measuring profits of different brands in various locations. But he was savvy enough to spot the mother lode when, at

an MIT demonstration in the mid 1930s, he watched two professors introduce their "Audimeter," meant to track radio listening. Nielsen purchased the machine faster than you could say "40 share."

Nielsen saw the writing on the wall—and in the pages of *Broadcasting*, which trumpeted record annual radio time sales of \$117 million—leading broadcasting and advertising execs to form a Joint Committee on Radio Research to create a ratings system comparable to the one in place for newspapers. In October 1936, Nielsen proposed attaching his Audimeter to a sample of radio sets and reading the results. By 1942, the Nielsen Radio Index was sampling 800 homes.

Nielsen's real talent was his insistence on staying ahead of the times—that and always supplying information that remained heavily in demand. Meters were created for television when the medium began its golden age, and in time, such phrases as "Nielsen family," "people meter," "ratings points/share" and "self-reporting diary" entered the lexicon; and it's a good bet we wouldn't be quite so obsessed with "the 18-34 demographic" without the company that measures it.

The Nielsen ratings have seen



Arthur C. Nielsen Sr. covered TV where it counted most.

their share of controversy—conjecture about the level of accuracy, issues with the inability to monitor viewing outside the home, and the dilemma of keeping pace in a digital world. But last we checked, networks were still forking over big bucks for research info and putting on their shiniest programs during four billboard periods of the year, hoping to earn the highest advertising dollars possible.

There is, in fact, only one good word to describe the across-the-board influence of the Niensens: sweeping.

"WE HAVE ADDED SIGHT TO SOUND"

Television makes its debut at the New York World's Fair

April 20, 1939

The visual signal traveled eight miles, from the RCA Pavilion at the 1939 New York World's Fair to receivers at the Radio City building in New York. *Fortune* estimated the research leading to this moment had cost \$13 million. The signal was a bit primitive, but it was television. For those in attendance, it was impossible to look away—and there was no looking back.

"Now we have added sight to sound," trumpeted David Sarnoff, RCA-NBC president on April 20, 1939. "It is with a feeling of humbleness that I [announce] the birth of a new art so important in its implications it is bound to affect all society."

Development had taken years of painstaking research. Dr. Vladimir Zworykin, an electronics engineer who had emigrated from Russia in 1919, had developed the icono-

BEST OF OPEN MIKE

Quotes from letters to the magazine:

"The Gagwriters Institute Comedy Development Center has been in existence six years. In that time, NBC and CBS have not sent one executive to scout the possibilities of utilizing this as an affiliation. ... Comedians need time, and sustenance, and encouragement. And they need coaching and help ... The net-

works should put their shoulders to these wheels."

—George Lewis, *National Laugh Enterprises, New York, 10/22/51*

"In all the words which have been written and spoken about television and radio, nothing has been said about 'Audiovision'."

"Audiovision concerns that wonderful picture which a radio listener paints for himself from the things he hears. Nothing that can be put on any screen

can approach all that the mind's eye can create when stimulated by the ear.

"For proof, one may recall the radio personalities who have been 'one-shot' stars. To put it bluntly, they didn't look like they had sounded when they appeared on screen. The mind's eye had created a clearer, better picture of what they *should* have looked like!

"Audiovision gets the job done!"
—Gustav K. Brandborg, assistant GM, KVOO Tulsa, Okla., 11/12/51

⚡ Political parties spend \$2 million for pre-election radio time. The Republican party tries something new: negative campaign ads. ⚡ There are 33 million radios in the U.S.



1937

Herbert Morrison's live account of explosion of the Hindenburg ⚡ In May, RCA demonstrates projection TV with images enlarged to 8 by 10 feet.



color is first demonstrated. ⚡ Martians attack the Earth ... at least according to Orson Welles' CBS radio drama, *War of the Worlds*.



1939

After 15 years of litigation, Dr. Vladimir Zworykin is granted patent for iconoscope-kinescope tubes, basis of electronic television. ⚡ The networks draft a "code for war coverage": The goal is full, factual reporting

with minimum of horror, suspense and undue excitement.

1940

CBS demonstrates system of color television developed by Chief TV Engineer Peter Goldmark.

1941

The first television commercial

is broadcast in New York. Base rate is \$120 per evening hour. ⚡

General Foods signs unprecedented contract with Jack Benny giving the comedian control of his Sunday-night



period on NBC Red Network. ⚡ FDR's declaration of war, broadcast to nation on Dec. 9, has largest audience in radio history, about 90 million.

⚡ Commercial TV begins, but war intervenes.

THE TURNER NETWORKS SALUTE

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A Time Warner Company



“Broadcasting in the United States today stands in grave jeopardy. Politically powerful and efficiently organized groups, actuated by a selfishness and



with a mania for power, are now busily at work plotting the complete destruction of the industry we have pioneered and developed.”
Walter J. Damm, president, NAB, at the association's 1931 convention

scope-kinescope tubes, the basis of electronic television. The iconoscope mirrored some of the visual capabilities of the human eye.

In the 1920s, Zworykin's contemporary, Philo T. Farnsworth, had been at work on the orthicon, another necessary step in the medium's technological evolution, and his research laid the groundwork for the cathode ray tube, the industry standard until liquid crystal displays. Farnsworth had conceived of the vacuum-tube television display in 1920, at age 14, drawing it on his high school blackboard.

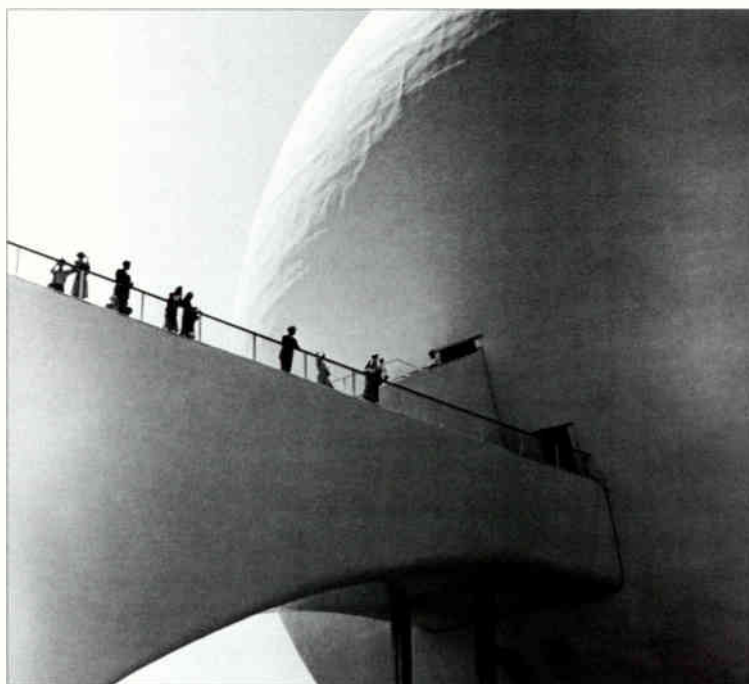
Ten days after Sarnoff's announcement, Franklin D. Roosevelt became the nation's first "TV president," when his speech at the World's Fair signaled the start of daily broadcasting on RCA-NBC. TV receivers cost a whopping \$200-\$600, and one could watch a slate of programs dominated by operas, cartoons and fashion shows; skaters at Rockefeller Center was late-1930s reality TV.

Two years later, World War II suspended television production and much of the programming in the United States. But by the mid-1940s, TV was ready to rise with the post-war boom and live up to the words *Broadcasting* published in 1939: "The broadcasting industry must realize that it cannot afford to sit back."

THE NIGHT TV WON OVER AMERICA

The Louis-Conn heavyweight title fight June 19, 1946

In this corner, hailing from the United States of America, please welcome: a wary public. In that



At the 1939 World's Fair, visitors got a glimpse into the future—through television.

corner, hailing from the northeast, the challenger: the medium of television. To some, that was the battle in June 1946.

At the start of the post-war era, owning a TV station was a big financial risk, with the public trying to adjust to life during peacetime. Only six stations existed in the U.S., all in the Northeast.

But boxers Joe Louis and Billy Conn changed everything.

Four years earlier, in a 1942 fight, Conn, a most unlikely challenger to Louis, was actually manhandling the legendary champ until, with a decisive win in sight, Conn decided to go for the knockout. The strategy backfired, and the challenger ended his night in a horizontal holding pattern with two seconds left in the 13th round.

Both fighters went off to war, and on their return, a sports-loving public clamored for a rematch.

In what would be the first-ever televised heavyweight title

match—described as no less than the first "television sports extravaganza"—Conn met Louis at Yankee Stadium on June 19, 1946, with Gillette sponsoring the NBC event. It was clear early on that both fighters had lost a step; it was also clear that Conn was no match for the Brown Bomber. Louis KO'd him in the eighth.

But sports fans were enthralled by the spectacle. In a country with somewhere between 5,000 and 10,000 TV sets, the fight was viewed by nearly 150,000 people; for every set, there were, on average, perhaps 30 people watching. Many were seeing television for the first time, and it wouldn't be the last. With Louis-Conn, as *Broadcasting* put it, even the skeptics realized that television had arrived. The following June, Louis took on Jersey Joe Walcott, and 1 million people tuned in.

Ahh, the wary public—they never had a chance in this one.

They were destined to be knocked out by television. As Louis-Conn proved, TV had the longer reach.

MR. RERUN

Frederick Ziv invents syndication

February 1948

In 1948, getting a TV show on the air meant selling an idea to one of the major networks; buying ad time for your product required either sponsoring a series or paying whatever high rates the networks set. The process didn't exactly favor the little guy.

Frederic Ziv discovered that, if you add up a lot of little guys, it'll turn you into a great big guy. In 1937, he co-founded Frederick W. Ziv Co., which produced syndicated radio shows—sports, soap operas, action-adventure programs, other genres—and sold them at discount to a collection of sponsors in local or regional markets. The programs were taped (industry standard practice was to go live) and sold to different radio stations, and business boomed.

The formula worked when Ziv expanded into television in February 1948. His company became the largest producer of programming in the U.S., apart from the networks.

Many of his radio hits translated well to television, notably *The Cisco Kid*, a rollicking action-adventure series filmed for some reason in color—which meant it would look good as new into the 1990s. For a decade, Ziv was a wealthy thorn in the side of the big guys. His hits just kept coming: *Highway Patrol*, *Boston Blackie*, *But Mastererson*, *Men into Space* and *I Led Three Lives* among them. After *Sea Hunt* was turned down by the ma-

1942
Due to war, CBS cuts time allowed for commercials on newscasts by 20% and bans jingles or other "undue gaiety."
⚡ U.S. Office of Censorship bans any mention of weather during baseball broadcasts.

1943
General Dwight D. Eisenhower himself broadcasts news of Italy's surrender, the first such event



to be announced over the radio.
1944
Military authorities and radio networks join forces to provide American public full coverage of the invasion of Europe. ⚡ The Blue Network changes its name to the American Broadcasting Co.

1945
Edward R. Murrow's report from Buchenwald is the height of uncompromising radio during the war. ⚡ The FCC creates VHF channels numbering 2 through 13. ⚡ Radio tells the world of Japan's acceptance of Potsdam terms

and the end of World War II. ⚡ *Broadcasting* becomes *Broadcasting-Telecasting*.
1946
Army Signal Corps Officer John H. DeWitt "shoots the moon" by bouncing radar signal off the moon

some 240,000 miles away and getting an echo back. ⚡ RCA and CBS demonstrate color-TV film programs.
1947
The first telecast from the White House is made when President Truman addresses

the nation. ⚡ The House Un-American Activities Committee begins its investigations of the entertainment industry. ⚡ *Meet the Press* begins a run that's still going strong.
1948
Texaco launches NBC-TV series starring Milton



congratulations

to
**Broadcasting
& Cable**
on their
**75th
Anniversary**

FOX



Through on-screen chemistry and on-set innovation, *I Love Lucy* steered the way to the modern sitcom.

TODAY, TODAY; TOMORROW, THE WORLD

Today begins, and the morning show booms

January 14, 1952

When *Today* premiered Jan. 14, 1952, ushering in the era of the morning news/entertainment show, critics socked it hard. As *Broadcasting's* review put it, "*Today* arrived after an avalanche of advance bulletins suggesting it would be of greater historical consequence than the invention of the printing press. Now ... it is possible to report that Gutenberg's reputation is not threatened." But *Today* was never meant to shake up the world so much as to offer bits of it—half-hour news updates, weather, sports, interviews, even sketches—for busy men and women tuning in whenever time permitted between 7 and 9 a.m.

The concept was such a hard sell that creator Sylvester "Pat" Weaver, NBC's resident genius who also launched both *Your Show of Shows* and *The Tonight Show*, originally incentivized skeptical stations by offering them a share of ad revenues. But it took two years for the show to catch on. That's when ever-relaxed host Dave Garroway was given a new cast member: a rambunctious chimp named J. Fred Muggs, whose antics made millions of kids—and their parents—tune in.

Muggs left after four years (reportedly for biting staffers), but viewers didn't. By then, *Today* had found its stride.

Through five decades, while collecting more airtime than any other show in TV history, *Today* helped define the medium. It went, for in-

major networks, Ziv scooped it up and made it into a prime-time hit, and star Lloyd Bridges laughed all the way to the riverbank.

Fathering syndication, Ziv created one of the most lucrative media revenue streams, the veritable promised land for any first-run series hitting the magic number of 100 episodes or for first-run syndication shows from *Star Trek: The Next Generation* to *Wheel of Fortune* to *The Oprah Winfrey Show*.

starring the vivacious redhead Lucille Ball and her bandleader husband Desi Arnaz, was an instant hit after its premiere that night. Less than six months later, it became the first TV show to be seen in more than 10 million U.S. homes.

A remarkable mix of slapstick and salsa, seasoned by excellent chemistry and a hint of Vitameatavegemin, it never ranked outside the top three TV shows during a six-year run.

Yet its popularity, remarkably, may be the least of its accomplishments. Ball, a successful radio performer (*My Favorite Husband*), convinced CBS that her new TV series should costar real-life husband Arnaz; it was the first of the couple's many fine ideas.

They decided, along with series co-creator Jess Oppenheimer, to eschew the then-fashionable practice of broadcasting live from

New York City to a low-quality kinescope print and instead filmed the show on 35mm film from Hollywood (Ball, pregnant at the time, didn't want to commute). Using film created a much finer-quality print, making rebroadcasting a cinch.

The trio also chose to film in front of a live audience using the then-novel three-camera technique, which quickly became the industry norm. And the film quality also made it easier for the series to produce the 1956 Christmas episode, the first-ever instance of the now tried-and-true "flashback" retrospective.

Fifty years—and countless syndication viewings—later, the series continues to produce laughs. On the show, all Lucy ever wanted to do was make it to the stage at Ricky's Tropicana Club. Behind the camera, she and Arnaz did nothing short of birthing the modern sitcom.



"What this involves is body odor. We all have it. I don't see why we shouldn't mention it."

Yale University President-turned-NBC consultant Dr. James Rowland Angell, commenting, in 1937, about William S. Paley's declaration that CBS would run no deodorant advertising.

OUR FAVORITE WIFE

I Love Lucy premieres and shapes the sitcom

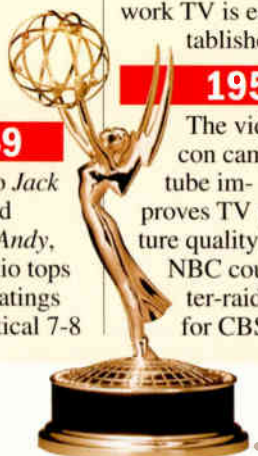
October 15, 1951

In 1951, TV was black-and-white; starting Oct. 15, it was also red all over. *I Love Lucy*,

Berle. ⚡ CBS raids NBC's talent pool, signing *Amos 'n Andy* and *The Jack Benny Show*.

1949

Thanks to *Jack Benny* and *Amos 'n Andy*, CBS Radio tops NBC in ratings in the critical 7-8



p.m. period. ⚡ The first Emmy Awards are presented. ⚡ Network TV is established.

1950

The vidicon camera tube improves TV picture quality. ⚡ NBC counter-raids for CBS

talent and signs Groucho Marx and Bob Hope. ⚡ In face of growing investigations into Communists in the media, CBS asks employees to sign loyalty oaths.

1951

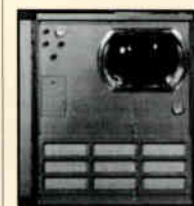
"Top 40" radio format is created. ⚡ Gillette signs four-year

contract with NBC to broadcast World Series games. ⚡ RCA board Chairman David Sarnoff, on completion of 45 years in radio, asks RCA scientists for three "gifts" for his 50th anniversary: an electronic amplifier for light for television, a television picture

recorder and an electronic air-conditioner for home use. He'll get them.

1952

CBS demon-



strates all-electronic color-TV receiver. ⚡ The "Checkers Speech" saves Richard Nixon's political career—for now. ⚡ Truman signs McFarland Bill, first major overhaul of Communications Act of 1934. ⚡ CBS coins a word: "anchorman."

1953

Bing Crosby Enterprises demonstrates its much improved magnetic-tape TV recordings. ⚡ This is only a test ... of Conelrad's emergency radio system, that is. ⚡ CBS-TV and NBC-TV inaugurate "hot kinescope" systems

stance, from a daily "Today Girl" describing the weather in one word ("hot!" must have been popular) to Barbara Walters as co-host in 1974. By then, the show had gone through several hosts (among them: John Chancellor, Frank McGee and, in time, Tom Brokaw, Jane Pauley, Bryant Gumbel, and Katie Couric and Matt Lauer) and inspired the other networks to wake up and smell the capital.

Good Morning America premiered on ABC in 1975, and the young upstart began besting *Today* in the ratings by '79 and had a 10-year run on top starting in



Dave Garroway woke the world up to *Today*.

the mid 1980s. CBS hit its stride in 1979 with what has become the *CBS Early Show*. The battle has led to record-breaking numbers (such as Couric's one-time five-year \$65 million contract), show-tweaking struggles for ratings points (*GMA*'s Diane Sawyer and Charlie Gibson may soon stop the clock on *Today*'s decade-long reign) and fat coffers (NBC reportedly takes in \$550 million annually in ad revenue from *Today*, and *GMA* is ABC's most profitable show).

In 1994, *Today* resurrected the original street-side studio on 49th Street in New York City, and *GMA* built its own glass studio five years later, drawing a direct line back to the days of Weaver and Garroway. And the current 13 million Americans who watch these three shows are only the latest of three generations of satisfied viewers who like their morning news the way some people take their coffee: light, sweet and strong.

THE PEACOCK COMES TO TV

FCC approves start of color
December 17, 1953

By 1960, color TV in the U.S. was fresh, new, exciting, revolutionary. It was ev-

erything a viewer may have wanted. Only problem was, nobody wanted it.

Serious research into color transmission had been going on since 1928, but it wasn't until the early '50s that RCA-NBC, CBS and CTI duked it out by presenting three different receiving systems to the FCC. CBS' won approval because the others had greater problems. But its system was incompatible with black-and-white signals, which doomed it.

The broadcasting industry got together soon after to form the National Television Standards Committee (NTSC), which ultimately took new, RCA-driven system ideas back to the FCC, and on Dec. 17, 1953, color television broadcasting was born. The party was on, and everybody was invited. Nobody came.

The reason was simple. Producing color series was much more costly, and with few Americans buying color sets, advertisers felt that they had no business kicking in for the extra cost. By 1964, only 3% percent of Americans owned a set.

This, of course, was no small source of frustration to RCA-NBC. So its executives decided to make the party more enticing.

The company poured millions into promotions. It subsidized shows in color, paying the extra costs for production. It trumpeted the glories of the im-

NAUGHTY ADS?

Looking through the history of *Broadcasting* print ads means taking a tour of catch phrases and images from a golden age of double entendre. For instance, a new piece of well-balanced camera equipment in the mid 1950s gains attention by promising "No More Groping" for your center of gravity. That's among the least of the offenders.

Little can top the risqué match of word and image in an ad for WJIM(TV) Lansing, Mich. Both the station and the lingerie provide "Coverage that Counts!" It's one of a series of ads making both promises. That this ad ran in 1954 seems oddly remarkable. The folks in the Hays censorship office must have taken that day off.



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RAINBOW



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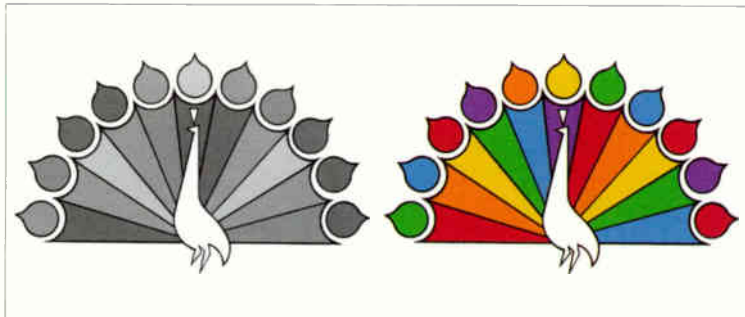
Rep. Eugene Cox (D-Ga.), referring to the FCC as the House approves Cox's resolution to investigate the agency, in 1943.



age and announced that its entire 1965 prime time schedule would be filmed in color—with the inexplicable exception of *I Dream of Jeannie*. And then there was its glorious peacock logo, turning from monochrome to "living color on NBC" between shows.

The plan worked. Within a year, the other major networks had followed suit after watching the public finally catching on. By the end of the decade, 37 million color sets were in use.

By 1972, color-set sales exceeded black-and-white for the first time, and better than 50% of U.S. homes owned one. No longer the novelty, it was standard living-room equipment. The party was going strong, leaving at least one network proud as a peacock.



For RCA-NBC, getting the TV world interested in color was a matter of pride.

AND THEN THERE WERE ... 2½

ABC antes up during TV's Golden Age

February 9, 1953

For the American Broadcasting Co., entering the arena of television must have felt like trying to catch up in a race against the world's two best marathoners.

ABC began its official TV life on April 19, 1948, but it was a

TV network in letterhead only. The network was a product of the FCC's demanded split of NBC's two-network radio system in 1943; ABC was originally the "Blue Network," NBC's news and cultural-programming arm. Five years later, ABC was still busy trying to keep its radio interests afloat.

But a second corporate divorce helped turn the fledgling network into a more precocious industry stepchild. After Paramount Pictures was forced to divest itself of its theater division, cash-rich United Paramount Theaters—and its president, Leonard Goldenson—were in the market for a good investment. ABC was an ideal target, and the FCC approved the \$25 million merger on Feb. 9, 1953. "We shall do our utmost,"

said Goldenson, "to keep faith with [all those] who see in this merger an opportunity to build a vigorous, public-minded and profitable broadcasting operation."

It wouldn't be easy. NBC and CBS, which could rely on the creativity and connections of their radio success, had made smooth transitions to television. In many cases, their programs aired first-run episodes on both radio and TV each week, encouraging the public to latch onto the new medium. By 1953, the two big networks were in the vaunted "Golden Age" of programming, offering stellar pro-

ductions of elite dramas, incomparable news reporting, and stalwart sitcoms and game shows.

ABC and the even-more-struggling DuMont network (which eventually folded) didn't share that radio cachet. But ABC had plans.

Goldenson's movie-business clout paid off when he signed a contract with Walt Disney, and *Disneyland* became a hit; a year later, *The Mickey Mouse Club* was a kid-show extravaganza. Goldenson, campaigning for the youth vote in household TV decisions, signed up Frank Sinatra and Pat Boone. And it was ABC that eventually welcomed the idea of multiple advertisers for a single show.

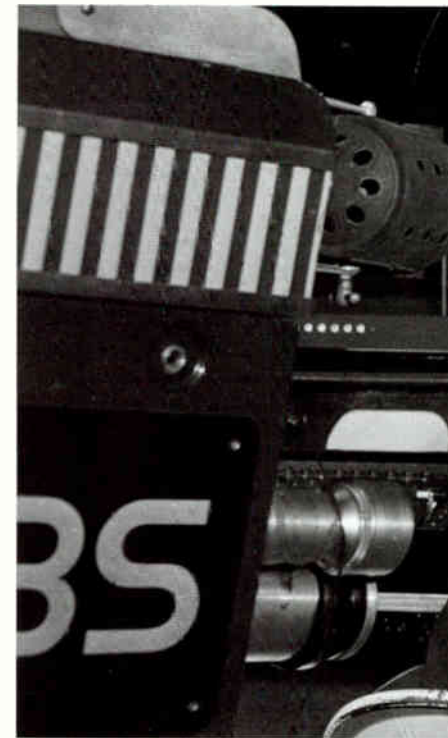
This didn't mean the network was getting near the head of the table. A perennial ratings also-ran, with fewer stations and hits, it was regarded as the fraction in the "2½-network" economy. But it was viable and adventurous and would remain that way into the 1970s, when *Monday Night Football*, *Roots* and the guiding hand of Fred Silverman put it on equal footing. That's when the marathon became a fascinating three-network race.

TRUTH AND CONSEQUENCES

Murrow takes on Sen. McCarthy

March 9, 1954

There's that old saying: "He who crows loudest will rule the roost." Few figures in American history prove the axiom better than Sen. Joseph R. McCarthy. By late 1953, he had so successfully played into the nation's fears of Communism in televised hearings that he was nearly given carte blanche to publicly question



With *See It Now*, Edward R. Murrow (right, with Don Hewitt) helped turn McCarthyism into "McCarthyism."

the loyalty of hundreds of Americans without, in most cases, the required damning evidence.

This fact did not escape TV's crusader journalist. CBS' Edward R. Murrow. Murrow and Fred Friendly's seminal documentary series *See It Now*, which debuted in 1951, had already been assailing the growing tide of McCarthyism. But the March 9, 1954, episode helped bring about the senator's downfall. In that half-hour show, the ever stoic Murrow voiced a new secret fear harbored by the nation: "The actions of the junior senator from Wisconsin have given considerable comfort to the enemy." The episode aired film clips that exposed the vicious, bullying tactics and reckless zeal of McCarthy's "witch hunts."

The show was eye-opening.

to put programs on air on West Coast at same clock hour as in East.

1954

Radio sets out-number daily newspapers around the world. RCA announces first all-electronic color tube. Fifty-four percent

of Americans have TVs. Radio time sales of more than \$453 million show 5% decline from previous year; first dip since 1938; for first time, TV revenues are higher than for radio. Combined, TV and radio revenues pass billion-dollar mark.

1955

About 65 million people watch *Peter Pan* on NBC. Theatre producers acknowledge that it would have taken the show 65 years to reach that many people on Broadway. Transistorized radio and an earth-satellite



relay station are introduced.

1956

Robert Adler

creates the "Zenith Space Command," the first practical wireless remote control. The unit has four buttons: channel up, channel down, sound on and off, and power on and off. Sadly, man must wait 10 more years for the invention of the Barcalounger.

1957

Tobacco advertisers say American Cancer Society report linking smoking with death will have little effect on cigarette advertising. FCC studies subliminal perception as stations experiment. Advertiser Koly-

nos quits Grey Advertising after agency president tells TV interviewer he used another brand of toothpaste.

1958

TV Q-Ratings are offered as measure of program appeal. The New York district attorney investigates



"Right there," wrote the New York *Herald Tribune's* John Crosby, "television came of age." As *Broadcasting* noted, "The [show] touched off one of the heaviest audience responses in CBS history," and although series sponsor Alcoa feared a backlash, the 12,924 calls to CBS in favor of the show (versus 1,367 against it) spoke loudly of the country's disgust. Three weeks later, McCarthy appeared on the show and heaped personal attacks on Murrow, all of which the host swatted away with the facts. With McCarthy's stock on the decline, the president even began referring to the movement as "McCarthywasm."

The *See It Now* episodes, filled with moments of incredible, angry theater, were a high-water mark in TV journalism and proof of the power of the

press. The McCarthy backlash, aided by the travesty of the Army-McCarthy hearings that followed, proved the power of a newer saying: "He who crows loudest will eat the most crow."

NEWSCASTERS BECOME STARS

Huntley-Brinkley ushers in a new era

October 29, 1956

With the 1956 political conventions looming and pressured to compete against the popular CBS coverage with Walter Cronkite, NBC execs found themselves in a quandary. Some wanted their convention reports anchored by the sober, authoritative Chet

Huntley, regarded by many as "another Ed Murrow." Others thought the sardonic tones of David Brinkley better suited the event. In the end, everybody agreed—on both. The Huntley-Brinkley chemistry proved a breakout success.

The network, facing the same question of who would replace outgoing nightly anchor John Cameron Swayze as news king settled again on their pair of aces. On Oct. 29, 1956, the *Camel News Caravan* became the *Huntley-Brinkley Report*, and the era of the newscaster, whose popularity transcended the news, was born.

Anyone watching from day one appreciated their repartee. Huntley, based in New York, was the straight man, a former radio announcer with a classic broadcasting voice who was never afraid to speak his mind (a newspaper editor once accused him of editorializing on the air—with his eyebrows). Brinkley reported from Washington with a dry wit and distinctive baritone. Their closing—"Good night, Chet" "Good night, David" "and good night from NBC news," a signoff they reportedly hated—became part of the American lexicon, and they ruled the news ratings till the late 1960s. A 1965 poll found that the pair was better-known among U.S. adults than James Stewart or the Beatles.

By then, Cronkite had succeeded Douglas Edwards, beginning a nightly-anchor career that would elevate him to his place as "the most trusted man in America."

Huntley-Brinkley's domination ended in 1968, and the pair bid their final on-air goodnights in July 1970. Cronkite then ruled nightly news until he va-

Twenty-One after a contestant claims fakery. ⚡ CBS-TV broadcasts *The Plot To Kill Stalin*—and the USSR closes CBS News' Moscow bureau. ⚡ Baseball's major leagues reject players' pitch for share in

TV profits.

1959

Ampex introduces a mobile videotape recorder—and uses it to tape



Nixon-Khrushchev "kitchen debate," which is then smuggled out of Russia for broadcast in U.S. ⚡ President Eisenhower calls quiz-show rigging "a terrible thing to do to the American public." ⚡ According

to station reps, TV quiz-show and radio-payola scandals and government probes haven't hurt time sales.

1960

There are TV sets in 7 of 8 U.S. homes and more than 500 TV stations are broadcasting. ⚡ Canadian

pay-TV families spend 80¢ per week to see movies at home.

1961

FCC Chairman Newton Minow calls television a "vast wasteland" and warns broadcasters to improve programs or get off the air. ⚡ Writers tell FCC



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Chet Huntley (left) and David Brinkley brought chemistry to the nightly news.

ated the chair in 1981. Because of Huntley, Brinkley and Cronkite, that chair became an institution and a cash cow. As of late, it has lost some luster, and although it'll never become TV's version of heavyweight boxing—a once-vaunted institution laid low—the wealth has spread considerably. But with its share of controversial contenders (Katie Couric) and beloved pretenders (Jon Stewart), it remains highly relevant in an age of fierce competition for the next generation of news junkies. And that's the way it is.

popular singer Dorothy Collins in a performance that was jazzy and spirited and, incredibly, not live. The fact that it *looked* live meant that television had at last attained a level of visual diversity that was universally lauded as remarkable.

The technology had been introduced—after four years of top-secret research—six months earlier at the NAB convention in Chicago. The fairy-tale maker was Ampex, specifically six engineers—

including Ray Dolby, inventor of the noise reduction system—who toiled while facing stiff, well-funded competition. Years earlier, both RCA and Bing Crosby Productions had developed videotape recorders (VTRs), but each had poor resolution and significant flickering.

The race was on to come up with a replacement for the long-used kinescopes. While they did preserve performance, poor picture quality made kinescopes ultimately impractical.

Which is why, at the NAB convention in April 1956, when the Ampex machine was “dramatically introduced, broadcasters literally stood up and cheered,” wrote *Broadcasting*. They did more than that: They flooded Ampex with orders. “Buy Ampex” was the company’s slogan, and within days, it had \$4 million worth.

Symbolically enough, Ampex’s Quadruplex machine, with its four heads rotating at high speed, produced one thing other machines hadn’t: a clear picture. Video meant that news reports could combine pictures with words, and entertainment shows could be pre-

served with quality. In 1958, Ampex and RCA brought video technology to color. In the 1970s, VCRs brought all this technology home. And in 1981, marking the silver anniversary of Ampex’s great achievement, *Broadcasting* also lauded the continually restless spirit of the men who make the machines. “Ampex is one of several firms actively developing a digital videotape recorder, which all expect will sweep the analog machine out of the marketplace.”

TANGLED WEBS THEY WEAVED

Payola rocks radio; quiz-show scandal shocks TV

1959

In the year 1959, the entertainment business was in a state of double jeopardy.

On TV quiz show *Twenty-One*, handsome, affable Columbia professor Charles Van Doren had been coached on how to deliver



“Bill Paley took me up to the 20th or 21st floor [at CBS] and put me in front of a microphone. At a given signal, Paley said he wanted me to start speaking. He said, ‘We don’t care what you talk about. Just go ahead and talk.’ Then he left the room.”

Writer and commentator Lowell Thomas on his start in radio

THE TALE OF THE TAPE

Video comes to TV

October 23, 1956

Once upon a time, in 1956, a TV network put something revolutionary on the air, and nobody watching at home noticed it at all. And that was a *good* thing.

The revolution was video. For 2½ minutes of the Oct. 23 *Jonathan Winters Show*, audiences saw

WATCHING OUR LANGUAGE

Thanks to the more stringent tenets of the old Hays Code (replaced by MPA ratings in 1968), television has a storied history of censorship. The Petries on *The Dick Van Dyke Show* were not allowed to share a bed—unless one of them had at least one foot touching the floor at all times. And no one flushed a toilet on TV until Archie Bunker came along. But the pages of *Broadcasting & Cable* offer some less-known instances of government and network self-censorship worth noting. Here are some highlights:

1937: NBC refuses to let General Hugh S. Johnson speak over the air

about venereal disease.

1942: Among other wartime restrictions, the Office of Censorship forbids any mention of weather on baseball broadcasts.

1952: Although Lucille Ball is pregnant and plays a pregnant woman on TV, she cannot say the word “pregnancy” on the air.

1959: NAB TV code board is established and cracks down on Preparation H; 68 TV stations defy code and refuse to drop commercials for the hemorrhoid cream.

1960: *Tonight Show* host Jack Paar walks off his show after learning censors cut his joke containing refer-

ence to a “W.C.” (for “water closet,” a euphemism for bathroom).

1969: NAB code boards loosen restrictions on ads for personal products, approving feminine-spray ads on TV and tampon ads on radio; Westinghouse stations withdraw from NAB TV code, rejecting it as too weak and calling the loosened restrictions the “last straw.” Avco stations will ignore the code and use live models in lingerie commercials.

1970: Women’s liberation proponents boycott Silva Thins, Ivory Liquid and Pristine products after *Cosmopolitan* calls their advertising “offensive” and “insulting to women.”

that television’s promise of a “golden age” has hit a dead end. ⚡ ABC-TV engineers develop process for slow-motion video playback.

1962

John Glenn’s space flight is seen by 135 million on TV. ⚡ Possible harm

from smoking could endanger television’s tobacco billings of \$114.6 million a year. ⚡ Telstar,



AT&T’s orbiting satellite, makes glamorous, global TV debut. ⚡ Late-night-television income has tripled in five years. ⚡ Network news chiefs charge Pentagon with managing news in Cuban crisis.

1963

Astronaut Gordon Co-

per sends back first TV pictures from space. ⚡ Blacks campaign for more jobs in broadcasting; Sen. Strom Thurmond accuses networks of “following the NAACP line.”

⚡ Sony’s open-reel videotape recorder goes for \$995.

1964

Japan’s NHK begins developing HDTV. ⚡ The Beatles appear on *Ed*

Sullivan, and the glorious screams are deafening. ⚡ U.S. government, tobacco companies, broadcasters ponder next moves after report to U.S. surgeon general links cigarette smoking to lung cancer. ⚡ Republicans protest Johnson campaign spot linking little

girl and nuclear cloud as unfair scare tactics.

1965

Cigarette bill passed by Congress calls for health warning on package but not on advertising. ⚡ Los Angeles broadcasters use helicopters to cover Watts riots after mobile units



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the answers he had been fed, "to skip certain parts [of questions] and return to them, to hesitate and build up suspense." Months later, testifying about this before the House Legislative Oversight Committee, he didn't need to use such tactics to build suspense. "I would give almost anything I have to reverse the course of my life in the last three years," he said. "I was involved, deeply involved in a deception."

The admission that the men behind the nation's wildly popular TV quiz shows gave the right answers to contestants and rigged results wiped out some of television's most popular programs. But most disappointing of all was the painful tumble of Van Doren from genial genius to Average "Say-it-ain't-so" Joe. In all, he'd won \$130,000 through 14 game show appearances, with additional prizes that included a job as an NBC commentator, and the love of the American public. Losing that last prize may have been the most painful blow.

The coffers were also full for another group of folks taking the moral low ground. Radio disk jockeys had been benefiting from payola. "Booze, broads and bribes," as the papers put it, were being fed to them by record-company execs hungry to hear their songs played on the highly competitive pop-music airwaves. (Anywhere from 50 to 250 new records were being released per week at the time.) The FTC charged nine different companies with bribery, while the FCC did a sweeping investigation of all 5,326 radio and TV licensees.

Government leaders and press watchdogs were appalled at the misconduct on both counts. "Who was responsible for keeping *Twenty-One* clean? The answer is: Nobody," wrote



Charles Van Doren struggled—but not mightily enough—with his conscience.

Broadcasting. "Not one [person involved] felt a sense of editorial responsibility. ... If order is to be brought to television, networks and stations themselves must take command of all their programs." Echoing this disgust, President Eisenhower called the quiz-show rigging "a terrible thing to do to the American public."

And yet the public did not lose faith in either radio or television. According to a Roper study, while two-thirds of respondents thought the quiz rigging was wrong, they didn't condemn all of TV for those abuses, and three-fourths acknowledged that TV was now doing a better

job policing itself.

It would take years for quiz shows to return to that same level of favor; meanwhile, payola remade the way records were played on the radio. But the public reaction to both Van Doren and the Roper study proved some huge new truths about TV. First, it had an uncanny ability to create stars overnight. And second, in the new medium, style equaled substance: You weren't getting anywhere unless you could keep from melting in the glare of the spotlight.

These were the hard lessons Richard Nixon would learn one year later.

THE GREAT DEBATE

Kennedy and Nixon face the nation

September 26, 1960

"The whole course of political campaigning has been changed by a single broadcast," began the Oct. 3, 1960, article in *Broadcasting*, and 46 years after Richard Nixon and John F. Kennedy had at it in the first presidential debate, that broad message remains, as they say, perfectly on point. Not only did the four Kennedy-Nixon debates create a new forum for issues-hungry voters to judge candidates, they affirmed television's status as the premier tool for nominees to make the right impression upon America.

In the weeks leading up to the 1960 election, commentators quipped about the "stature gap" between Nixon, the vice president and experienced Cold Warrior; and Kennedy, the second-term senator with little world-issue experience. But just as FDR had embraced radio's power one generation removed, Kennedy knew that, when CBS President Frank Stanton raised the idea of televised debates, he'd have to be ready for his close-up.

What remains remarkable is that the vast majority of those who listened to the debate on radio—and the first debate attracted 17.2 million listeners—thought Nixon had trounced his young adversary. But the nearly 70 million Americans who watched the debate on TV got a different picture. Kennedy stood tall and spoke with confidence, facing the cameras when delivering his answers, as if speaking right to the public. Nixon

"I was on the ground floor of radio and dropped out of it, like a big dope."



Now I'm in on the ground floor of television, and I'm not giving up my lease until the landlord evicts me."

Ed Sullivan, in 1954

are destroyed and newsmen beaten. ⚡ Pope's historic visit to U.S. is seen in 90% of nation's homes and inspires radio evangelist Dr. Carl McIntire to seek free time to reply to what he calls "religious propaganda."

1966
FCC blocks

cable-TV wiring in large cities. ⚡ Fred W. Friendly quits as president of CBS News when new boss John Schneider cancels coverage of Senate hearing on Vietnam. ⚡ Network coverage of Gemini 8 splashdown brings thousands of calls from angry viewers who missed

regular programs. ⚡ According to reports, TV networks do fast, comprehensive election-reporting job, marred by some wrong predictions.

1967
AFTRA strikes networks; Chet Huntley stays on grounds that union dominated

by entertainers cannot properly represent newsmen, a move that angers David Brinkley. ⚡ Phil Donahue first takes his mike into the audience for his long-running show.

1968
60 Minutes premieres on CBS. ⚡ Sony develops the

color Trinitron TV tube. ⚡ NBC and CBS give GOP convention gavel-to-gavel coverage; ABC has late-evening summary, gains



rating advantage with early-evening entertainment. ⚡ Battles rage at—and outside of—the Chicago Democratic Convention. ⚡ The "Heidi Bowl," with NBC switching from a football game to start the movie *Heidi* on time, rouses ire in football fans.

⚡ *Laugh-In* premieres? You bet your sweet bippy.

1969
Armstrong and Aldrin walk on the moon as the world watches on TV. ⚡ Supreme Court Red Lion ruling limits



Photos: Courtesy of NBC Archives; Van Doren



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“What have you done to my child?”

Lee DeForest, whose invention of the audion tube in 1906 made broadcasting possible, addressing a group of broadcasters in 1956.



Kennedy had a handle on the great debate, while Nixon was shaken.

on, who'd recently been hospitalized, looked gaunt and uncomfortable in an ill-fitting shirt, refused additional make-up to cover his perennial five o'clock shadow, and tended to sweat. Viewers of that first debate preferred Kennedy by a margin of 3-2. Whether they were buying into his party's line or not, folks at home were at least able to see Kennedy as a man of intelligence and poise. By agreeing to debate in the first place, Nixon had little to gain, and in the end, he lost plenty. Perhaps this explains why he refused TV

debates in 1968 and 1972.

Yet he learned a valuable lesson, reinforced in every campaign since: When it comes to making a run for the oval office, TV can be best friend or foe. LBJ's "mushroom-cloud" campaign ad helped make his bid a landslide; Michael Dukakis' "tanking" and Al Gore's endless lock-box talk, helped turn viewer-voters off.

But no one benefited from TV's positive influence more than John Kennedy who, after his narrow win, declared that he wouldn't have won the White House had it

not been for the debates. Robert Kennedy seconded the emotion. Without the debates—without television—he said, "it wouldn't have been close."

TELEVISION DOES WHAT IT CAN FOR ITS COUNTRY

Coverage of the Kennedy assassination November 22-25, 1963

NBC correspondent Frank McGee first gave word to what all Americans already knew in their hearts: "Whatever you might have been doing when you received the word of the death of President Kennedy, that is a moment that will be emblazoned in your memory ... as long as you live."

And nobody has forgotten what they were doing for the next four days: Watching television. It was, without question, the first event that fully united Americans on both sides of the small screen, creating an intimacy that has never gone away. Beginning

with that painful event in Dallas, Americans turned to television at moments of crisis.

Some 42 years later, the indelible images still remain. CBS' Walter Cronkite collecting himself a moment before reading: "From Dallas, Texas, the flash, apparently official. President Kennedy died at ... two o'clock Eastern Standard Time ... some thirty-eight minutes ago," before swallowing hard, taking off his glasses and fighting back tears. The solemn arrival, later that night, of the dark coffin, accompanied by Jackie Kennedy—still wearing her blood-stained suit—and President and Mrs. Johnson. The absolutely surreal images on NBC, two days later, of Lee Harvey Oswald being murdered live on television. And the following day, Monday, the sight of 3-year-old John-John saluting his father's coffin on its way to Arlington.

But the crisis-situation media savvy we now take as rote—the ability of television news executives and commentators to spring into action, collect pundits, and offer historical perspective—did not exist in November, 1963. Nightly news reports had only recently been extended from 15 minutes to 30. As America lost its innocence, an entire industry also came of age.

At the time, cameras were required to be tethered to enormous electric systems, making on-the-spot coverage—not to mention quick editing—problematic. Raw film footage, some of it still wet from hasty development, went out over the air. NBC correspondent Bill Ryan referred to it all as "controlled panic." But the three networks, realizing the momentous turn of events, worked together: They combined resources, sharing the feed from 40 different camera angles needed to cover

STUDIES ON BROADCASTING

A 1934 study conducted by professor Frank Stanton of Ohio State University concluded that students remember advertising better when they hear it than when they read it. Later at CBS, Stanton would test TV vs. radio perceptions of candidates with the Kennedy-Nixon debate. Other studies on broadcast achieved somewhat less fame.
1957: In a report in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, Dr. Meyer Naide identifies "television

legs," blood clots that result from watching TV too long.

1958: An Indiana study shows that subliminal advertising works, but not as well as visible ads.

1960: Color commercials have 3.5 times the impact of black-and-white, a Cincinnati study finds.

1961: Viewers say they want culture, but it's pure entertainment they watch, researchers discover.

1970: TV commercials miss audiences completely 4% of time and hit only 27% sometimes, a study reveals.

1972: Study suggests there is a link between TV violence and aggressive behavior in some children.

1981: According to Television Bureau of Advertising, TV viewing in 1980 reached an all-time high of six hours 36 minutes per TV household per day.

1991: Neurologist reports that a woman is proved to have been afflicted with epileptic seizures caused by the voice of *Entertainment Tonight* host Mary Hart.

2006: One in 10 American adults has cast a vote on *American Idol*.

broadcasting's First Amendment rights as President Nixon goes to war against broadcasting. ⚡ CBS fires the Smothers brothers after Tom and Dick insist on being politically incorrect—and, rumor has it, after Nixon leans on CBS head William Paley.

1970
Pay TV gets green light. ⚡ House, Senate agree on legislation to outlaw cigarette advertising on radio and TV but change the date from Jan. 1, 1971, to Jan. 2, to

let commercials appear on New Year's Day football bowl games.
1971
FCC endorses agreement of TV networks to designate 8-11 p.m. as prime time in fall. ⚡ *All in the*



Family debuts and earns ratings and controversy for the way it handles bigotry.
1972
Satellite coverage of President Nixon's trip to Red China marks new milestone in broadcast history. ⚡ Citytv, with its unconventional, influential ap-

proach to news delivery, premieres in Canada.
1973
The Watergate hearings begin. ⚡ FCC grant for channel 32 WGPR-TV Detroit provides construction permit for what is to be first black-owned TV station in country. ⚡ Res-

ignation of VP Spiro T. Agnew, outspoken critic of media, defuses First Amendment controversy he stirred. ⚡ The Louds implode on PBS' *An American Family*.
1974
President Nixon's appearance at NAB convention in Houston is

marked by controversy over his exchange with CBS' Dan Rather. ⚡ NBC-TV to pay record \$10 million for single two-part showing of Paramount's *The Godfather*. ⚡ Up to 110 million witness President Nixon's resignation on TV.



Photos: Courtesy of CBS Archives, Heron.



Two Things Industry Execs
Can't Live Without.



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the funeral procession.

Broadcasting reported that the four days of coverage cost the networks \$32 million. But there was no arguing with the necessi-

When television finally joined the ground force and sent images back home for the nightly news, it had a profound affect on the nation. As *Broadcasting* noted,



Walter Cronkite puts a tearful, human face on a nation's collective grief in 1963.

ty. As we wrote then, "Americans have had the venom wrung out of them by a catharsis like no other in their history."

THE WAR COMES HOME

TV changes the way America views war

February 27, 1968

Vietnam must have looked good on television—at least from the air. During the early years of the war, many members of the TV press were transported over the conflict in military helicopters, listening to—and reporting on—the muscle of the United States army. The images increased American support of the war. Winning seemed a matter of time.

"Vietnam was the first war fully documented by broadcast coverage without censorship." By the mid 1960s, a public-relations battle to keep the people's support was being waged, with protests cropping up across the nation. And TV was in the eye of the storm.

The first salvo came from CBS' Morley Safer who, in 1965, reported on the razing of a village, an action that netted two elderly prisoners and two deaths: one baby and one Marine. "This is what the war is all about," he declared. President Lyndon Johnson told Safer's CBS bosses, "You boys just shat on the American flag."

Each news report brought more shades to the conflict, but the most compelling story came in 1968. Venerated CBS anchor Walter Cronkite visited Vietnam not long after images of the controversial Tet Offensive made clear just how far the war was from being over.

Cronkite decided to make a personal statement.

The conflicting things he saw—generals boasting of victories, military planes filled with body bags—cemented his long-brewing opinion that Vietnam was unwinnable. On Feb. 27, 1968, in a steady voice, he told his TV audience, "I'm more certain than ever that the bloody experience of Vietnam is to end in a stalemate." Watching Cronkite's report—and believing in him as steadfastly as most Americans—President Johnson said, "If I've lost Cronkite, I've lost middle America."

Within a month, Johnson's political career would become another casualty of the war with his shocking announcement that he wouldn't seek another term. It would take till 1975 for Cronkite's prescient words to come true, with the final evacuation of Saigon. By then, the networks had sent more than 600 personnel to Southeast Asia, spending a combined estimate of between \$40 million and \$50 million to bring the war home.

But the money mattered less than the influential place of television in helping shape decisions in the conflict. As we wrote at war's end, "The history of the Indochina war cannot be written without the documented fact of American free-enterprise broadcasting in action."

STREET CRED

Sesame Street remakes kid TV

November 10, 1969

We live in a world where we simply *assume* the existence of *Sesame Street*, much as we have come to expect a warm bed, three squares, and perhaps a piece of chocolate now and again. It's a given that

this most valued and valuable slice of educational sustenance is there, being clever and winning, translating the Beatles' "Let it Be" into "Letter B" and then updating itself during every one of its 38 years to be fresh for the next set of preschoolers and their parents. But before this groundbreaking series came around, something even more important did exist: the *need* for *Sesame Street*.

The idea began during a dinner among friends: Documentary filmmaker Joan Ganz Cooney and her social activist husband, Tim; Lloyd Morrisett of the Carnegie Foundation and his wife, Mary; and Lewis Freedman, Ms. Cooney's boss and mentor. Over dinner, the group discussed the absence of creative educational TV programming for pre-school children and the need to better bridge the learning gap for millions of underserved inner-city kids. The dinner ultimately sent Cooney on an odyssey to collect both the information and funds necessary to fulfill this pressing need.

Some grudging approvals, classic battles, reams of research and \$8 million later, *Sesame Street*, the most important teaching tool television has ever produced and the bedrock of modern children's television, came to be, premiering on Nov. 10, 1969. It had many step-parents—especially among those folks at the brand-new Corporation for Public Broadcasting—but, besides Cooney, the most important voice behind the show, literally and figuratively, was the brilliant Jim Henson, who gave the world Big Bird, Bert and Ernie, Cookie Monster, Kermit, and many other extraordinary Muppets.

The series, now seen in 120 countries, is one of the United States' most important exports, a magical jet stream of quick-cutting songs and sketches, street scenes,



"Arrogant, pompous, obnoxious, vain, cruel, verbose, a showoff. I have been called all of these. Of course, I am."

Sports commentator Howard Cosell

1975
Hollywood creative community files suit against the FCC, the Big Three networks and the NAB for imposing family-viewing on TV. ⚡ Bill Gates and Paul Allen form Microsoft. ⚡ Sony unveils its ill-fated Betamax videocassette

recorder. ⚡ *Wh—l of F—rt—ne* spins onto the schedule; in 1982, Vanna White will come on to turn letters, and heads.

1976
Apple Computer Inc. is formed. ⚡ The court rules that the "family hour" is unconstitutional. ⚡ Twen-

ty-eight-minute audio failure mars first debate between Jimmy Carter and Gerald Ford. ⚡ Ted Turner delivers TV nationwide via satellite. ⚡



JVC introduces VHS. ⚡ Barbara Walters becomes the first woman to anchor an evening newscast.

1977
ABC's eight-day telecast of *Roots* becomes the most watched program in his-



tory; 80 million people see at least part of the final episode. ⚡ ABC wins its first prime time ratings ever, ending CBS' 20-year reign. ⚡ Florida youth Ronnie Zamora's plea of "TV intoxication" as defense

in murder of elderly woman is rejected by jury in trial televised in Miami.

1978
Fred Silverman, president of ABC Entertainment, is named president/ chief executive officer of NBC.

1979
Ampex demon-

strates a digital videotape recorder. ⚡ Government announces closed-captioning of TV programs for hearing-impaired. ⚡ Ted Turner announces





Lifetime Networks congratulates

Broadcasting & Cable

on its Diamond Anniversary.

Here's to 75 more bright years ahead!





Sesame Street made stars (and educators) out of a colorful array of characters.

and sweet bits that work on multiple levels. Because of *Sesame Street*, we take for granted that we can now sit with our kids in front of Nickelodeon, or Disney Channel, or any number of series created by an ever-growing list of *Sesame* alumni. For many kids today, the great big world begins with a visit to "Elmo's World." Kid TV is an enormous business, reaching out for everyone from babies to tweens. It's a story with a "happily ever after," and *Sesame Street* was its "Once upon a time."

was a close one: Howard Cosell, the outrageously pompous tell-it-like-it-is commentator with the staccato speaking style, was besting his folksy cowboy co-analyst "Dandy" Don Meredith, the former Dallas quarterback, but only until Meredith got in another good dig. Between them, NFL legend Frank Gifford called the game with extraordinary neutrality, and the good sense to stay out of the line of fire.

Oh yes, football was going on as well.

Before *Monday Night Football*, NFL games airing Sundays on television had all the verve of high school science films. With the premiere of *MNF* on Sept. 21, 1970, on ABC, football went Vegas. By stressing the give and take between combatants both in the booth and on the gridiron, *MNF* shook up the sports-TV playing field. And it's safe to lay everything that followed—from the NBA's slam-dunking glitz to ESPN's modus operandi—at the feet of Roone Arledge, the ABC programming legend who saw

his new football show for what it was: sports entertainment.

NFL Commissioner Pete Rozelle had sold the idea to ABC for \$8.5 million. Conventional wisdom held that football wouldn't fly on Mondays, and CBS and NBC had no space in their dominant schedules to play

games. ABC, forever languishing in third place and eager to experiment, accepted the deal, and Arledge seized the opportunity.

At the time, most pro-football broadcasts used five cameras; Arledge insisted on nine, including one trolling the fascinating life on the sidelines. But the show's signature was its free-wheeling booth style. After using Keith Jackson through the first season, Arledge was then able to bring in his first choice, Gifford, to play middle man between Cosell and Meredith, and for the next several years, through much controversy—most of it generated by Cosell, who became TV's man you love to hate—the ratings soared like a Dan Marino bomb.

Through 35 years on ABC, *MNF* had high points and low stunts (think Terrell Owens and Nicolette Sheridan), and a rotating cast that included the likes of O.J. Simpson, Alex Karras, Dennis Miller, and finally the venerable Al Michaels and John Madden. Like *Saturday Night Live*, however, many fans still regard the classic cast as tops.



"Anybody who thinks that, by hanging on to a broadcast license or a cable franchise, they are, by virtue of that fact alone, forever wealthy, is wrong. It isn't going to happen. It has never happened. I think we've all earned a head start from them, but it is not an annuity."
Cablevision founder Charles Dolan in 1990

GAME BREAKERS

Monday Night Football transforms sports coverage

September 21, 1970

It was a typical *Monday Night Football*: electrifying action, great tension, bursts of speed and cheers from the crowd, both at the game and in the living room. The contest

the start of CNN. ⚡ ESPN debuts. ⚡ Federal judge in Los Angeles rules home taping of television programs is legal.

1980

Dan Rather is named as anchor successor to Walter Cronkite upon latter's retirement in 1981. ⚡ The "Who Shot

J.R.?" episode of *Dallas* makes history with a 53.3 rating/76 share.

1981

Entertainment Tonight debuts and propels satellite distribution of syndicated shows. ⚡ Shooting of President Reagan becomes history's most

heavily covered assassination attempt. ⚡ MTV debuts. ⚡ Republicans launch multimillion-dollar ad campaign to gain control of Congress. ⚡ Luke marries Laura on *General Hospital*.

1982

Late Night With David Letterman

bows on NBC.

1983

The *M*A*S*H* farewell episode on CBS is watched by 107 million viewers (still a record). ⚡ First Lady Nancy Reagan appears on NBC's *Diff'rent Strokes* to promote her



antidrug message. ⚡ ABC's controversial nuke drama

The Day After—with few advertisers—becomes the most watched TV movie in history.

1984

The Cosby Show

premieres on NBC. ⚡ AT&T fiber-optic cable service runs from Boston to Washington. ⚡ Making ad for Pepsi, Michael Jackson burns his scalp and ushers in the big-budget celebrity commercial.

1985

VHS defeats Betamax as the

VCR of choice; U.S. VCR ownership rises to 20%. ⚡ Pay-Per-View opens for business.

1986

Rupert Murdoch's Fox Television Network debuts.

BAD CALLS

The use of computers to "help" predict winners during coverage of presidential elections—so brilliantly on display in 2000—goes back to 1960's close battle between John F. Kennedy and Richard Nixon. As *Broadcasting* reported back then, ABC's Univac, CBS' IBM 7090 and NBC's 501 computers only compounded the confusion on TV.

Viewers tuning in at 7 p.m. on Election Night learned that Nixon's chances of winning were 10-1. Two hours later, Kennedy was listed as a 5-1 favorite; an hour after that, the

junior senator's odds ballooned to 332.2-1, and just as quickly fell to 250-1, 100-1, 90-1, 6.5 to 1 before jumping back up to 333-1.

At 7:30 p.m., CBS said the trend indicated that Nixon would be elected and might get a whopping 459 electoral votes—although, as the network noted, the projection was based on "completely inadequate information" (not unlike our present-day exit polls).

For the record, Kennedy earned 303 electoral votes to Nixon's 219; out of 68 million popular votes cast, Kennedy received 49.9% to Nixon's 49.6%. Or so said the computer.



National Association of
NAB
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Happy 75th!



Meredith, Cosell and Gifford tell it like it is on Monday night.

The show is now set to air on ESPN, and the new crew has much to live up to. Thanks to this gridiron institution, football itself remained the same, but the TV sports game changed forever.

SKY KING

HBO and the start of pay TV

September 30, 1975

In mid April 1975, cable TV was stuck in a frustrating holding pattern. With the National Cable & Telecommunications Association convention days away, talk of the same issues abounded: the deadline for systems to rebuild for 20-channel capacity and arguments over copyright payments. The 27-year-old industry was in need of a sea change, something to invigorate a promising business reaching about 10 million subscribers, or about 15% of U.S. households.

Enter Gerald Levin. At the 1975 convention, Levin, president of Home Box Office, was armed with

news that prompted *Broadcasting* to write, "pay television may have taken a quantum leap forward."

HBO announced a deal to launch a satellite network come fall, with UA-Columbia Cablevision ordering earth stations to pick up the signals. By the end of the convention, relieved and rejuvenated cable operators began assuming that a million TV homes would be subscribing to pay cable within two years, proving the viability of cable as a business with legs.

Predictions were fine, but first, Levin had to put UA-Columbia's money where his mouth was. For years, HBO was luring new subscribers, but its constant airing of the same movies made it more sampler than keeper. With its foray into satellite, the network now saw a chance to lure the subscriber base everyone dreamed about.

And its first event did the trick: On Sept. 30, 1975, HBO offered "The Thrilla in Manila," the corrosive third fight between Muhammad Ali and bitter rival Joe Frazier. Halfway through the bout, a spent Ali reportedly whispered, "Why, old Joe Frazier, they told me you

were washed up." To which Frazier replied, "They told you all wrong, pretty boy." Indeed, the same bravado could now be applied to the cable industry. As Levin had stated at NCTA, "for the last two years, I've told you we were alive and well. Now we really mean it."

It was the first of many adrenaline shots HBO has pumped into cable. In the years that pay cable has evolved from luxury to near-necessity, HBO has become home to the best of original programming. And the journey began, as *Broadcasting* put it, with "one cable operator willing to invest in one earth station. Home Box Office was ready to take it from there. Gerald Levin found his [company] ... and history was made."

GETTING WIRED

Unprecedented growth of cable and satellite

October 30, 1984

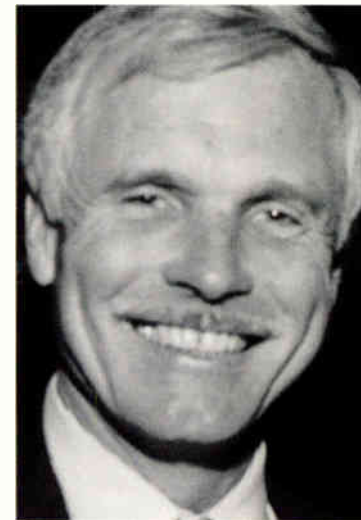
After HBO laid the groundwork for the creation of national satellite distribution, Ted Turner saw the opportunity to climb on board and begin sending his WTCG signal throughout the U.S. Doing so, he created the country's first "superstation." Suddenly, cable TV was not just a relay service for stations; it was a wide-open world of endless channel possibilities.

Turner, owner of the Atlanta Braves, began putting his team's games on the station he had rechristened WTBS. On June 1, 1980, he launched CNN on 172 cable systems; the 24/7 news channel would become a cable milestone. But by then, he had plenty of company in a spreading sea of new viewing options. Within a few years, USA, Showtime, ESPN, MTV, BET, C-

SPAN, Bravo and Nickelodeon were offering either new perspectives of information or envelope-pushing substance and style.

The engine that continued pushing the growth curve upward was the Oct. 30, 1984 passage of the Cable Communications Policy Act, which deregulated rates and stimulated investment. By 1992, cable-TV revenues would reach \$22 billion.

Although cable and broadcast networks remain engaged in a battle for eyeballs, cable's biggest new competition has been with satellite (DBS) services, starting in 1991 with PrimeStar and continuing, more notably, with DirecTV. With the 1999 Satellite Home Viewer Improvement Act giving satellite-TV broadcasters the right to offer local channels, the grudge match got nastier, but cable remains king of the market



Ted Turner's "super" idea broke the dam, and the channels flowed in.

at better than 4-1.

But what shouldn't be lost in the now-commonplace 500-channel universe is the astounding array of options that exist and the generation gap between those who grew



"They took a guy who looked nothing like me and with makeup and special camera angles, turned him into a guy who looked nothing like me, with red hair."

David Letterman, complaining about the casting of the role of "David Letterman" in the 1996 movie *The Late Shift*, based on Bill Carter's book on the late-night wars.

Space Shuttle Challenger explodes as millions watch in horror. **1987** Geraldo Rivera opens Al Capone's vault and finds lots of dirt, but hits pay dirt with the most watched syndicated show ever. **1987** *The Oprah Winfrey Show* goes national via syndication.

The Cosby Show breaks 30-second-commercial cost records. For the first time, ABC, CBS and NBC have trouble selling commercial time for sports programs.

1987 *The Simpsons* starts making d'oh for



Fox TV. Dan Rather, angry that a tennis match causes delay in the start of the *CBS Evening News*, walks off the set, leaving dead air over the network for nearly seven minutes. First condom commercial

airs on a major station. **1988** Telemundo premieres. **1988** Sobbing TV preacher Jimmy Swaggart admits "I have sinned" after reports of his involvement with prostitutes. Ninety-eight percent of U.S. homes have at



least one TV.

1989 Television offers powerful messages in coverage of

the opening of the Berlin Wall, end of the Cold War era and the Tiananmen Square massacre. **1989** The broadcast networks reach an all-time low of 55% of total TV audience in July. Time-Warner's \$14



billion merger. **1990** In a significant first, the antidrug special *Cartoon All-Stars to the Rescue*, featuring ALF, Bugs Bunny, the Chipmunks, Daffy Duck, and other classic characters airs the same Saturday-morning on



IS PLEASED

TO CONGRATULATE

BROADCASTING
& CABLE

ON ITS

75TH

ANNIVERSARY



up with channels 2-13 and those for whom a network devoted entirely to gospel music is a given.

EMERGING MARKET

ABC-Cap Cities deal begins the era of media-merger mania

January 3, 1986

The announcement came on March 18, 1985, and was given emphatic—and somewhat snobbish—attention in *Broadcasting*. “The old order changed last week,” we wrote. “One of the Fifth Estate’s Big Three, American Broadcasting Companies Inc., accepted the \$3.5 billion blandishment of Capital Cities Communications Inc., another prominent media company but—until last Monday—one of conspicuously less eminence. At 1:16 p.m. that day, a new media giant was announced to the world.” The cover snipe called it “Broadcasting’s Deal of the Century.”

Given 20/20 hindsight, that last line seems amusing. The deal was a historic transformation to be sure: The first instance of a TV network’s being, as the *New York Post* put it that day, “gobbled up” by a larger conglomerate, forever shattered the aura of Big Three immutability. From then on, network TV would no longer be an untouchable institution.

But calling this the deal of the century in 1985 would have been like giving similar deference to the Scopes trial long before O.J. got into that white Bronco.

In fact, the deals were only beginning, and they would change the corporate-media landscape again and again, requiring at

times a long scorecard and a pencil with a good eraser to keep up. Before the end of the decade, GE would acquire RCA (and NBC), Sony would buy Columbia Pictures, and the \$14.1 billion Time-Warner merger would create the world’s largest media conglomerate—for a while.

With the Telecommunications Act of 1996 came deregulation of cable and greater competition, and the mega-media era would boom as a result, with new deals coming fast enough to spin heads. Viacom bought Paramount. Disney purchased ABC. Time Warner bought Turner. AT&T swallowed TCI for a whopping \$50 billion and became the largest cable operator. And then, the Viacom deal for CBS tipped the scale at \$36 billion at the end of 1999—one month before the frenzy hit the heights with AOL Time Warner’s ill-fated union during the Internet bubble. And the deals have continued as mega-corporations consolidate their outsized control in the blossoming marketplace. The pie

has gotten much bigger, and the slices are fatter.

“It is no overstatement to characterize the pace and scale of change in the media marketplace as staggering,” wrote FCC Commissioner Susan Ness—in 1985. Staggering indeed, and it went nowhere but up.

FOX ON A RUN

The first true fourth network debuts

October 9, 1986

“Our programs will have no fences, no outer perimeters. The only rule we will enforce is that the program must have taste, must be engaging, entertaining, original, whether it’s a comedy, drama ... or some new form not yet born.” Thus declared Rupert Murdoch at the INTV convention in January 1986. Although the programs were undefined, Murdoch and everybody else knew where they



Rupert Murdoch built Fox by turning his eyes toward the prized demo.

would air: on Fox Broadcasting Co., his attempt to compete with the Big Three broadcast networks. Although some competitors might now argue with parts of his declaration, nobody can deny that Fox has done what no other network before had: found an equal footing among broadcast history’s biggest network players.

The groundwork was laid in 1985, when Murdoch purchased both the 20th Century Fox movie studio and the stations in John Kluge’s Metromedia group, giving him the means and the outlet for production. By Oct. 9, 1986, Murdoch had an anchor series—*The Late Show Starring Joan Rivers*—and a viewing slot on 80% of the nation’s televisions.

Murdoch quickly realized there was no way to beat the Big Three through traditional methods; instead, he redefined the methodology and made everybody else follow his lead. Fox was the first network to cater to Nielsen’s most desirable, younger demographic: *Married ... With Children*, *The Simpsons*, *The X-Files* and *The*

“In New Hampshire, closest Senate race in the country, this race between Dick Swett and Bob Smith is as hot and tight as a too



small bathing suit on a too long car ride back from the beach.”

Dan Rather, painting quite a picture during CBS News 1996 Election Night coverage.

RISING COST OF SPORTS

When it comes to capturing eyes and ears, sports has always been a solid broadcasting hit. But the \$50,000 ABC, CBS and NBC each paid for a pooled telecast of the World Series in 1950 is, by today’s standards, an extraordinary bargain. Here are some ever expanding historical numbers for the cost that networks have paid to bring viewers the sporting life:

1965: NBC gets rights for baseball’s World Series, All-Star Game, Game of Week for 1967-68 for \$30 million.

1966: ABC gets rights to Summer Olympics for \$4.5 million.

1966: Networks pay \$44 million for

football rights.

1973: ABC gets 1976 Summer Olympics rights for \$25 million.

1977: NBC signs \$85 million deal for 1980 Summer Olympics in Moscow.

1979: ABC wins rights to 1984 Summer Olympics for \$225 million.

1982: NBC inks a \$550 million contract for six years of baseball coverage.

1996: NBC signs a five-year deal for \$400 million to televise only the All-Star Game and selected playoff series (including the World Series in odd-numbered years).

2000: NBC spends \$705 million for the rights to the 2000 Summer Olympic Games in Sydney, Australia.

2002: NBC pays \$545 million for the rights to the Winter Games in Salt Lake City.

seven networks. **1991** *Seinfeld* debuts on NBC. The Children’s Television Act limits the number of commercials on TV.

Home-video footage of Rodney King’s beating leads to police-brutality investigations and indict-

ments. The coup to depose Gorbachev and the rise of Boris Yeltsin dominate international TV reports; the Anita Hill-Clarence



Thomas Supreme Court hearings dominate domestically. The VCR becomes the fastest-selling electronic item in history. *The Jerry Springer Show* debuts and pulls no punches.

Johnny Carson departs *The Tonight Show* in

May. Cable-TV revenues reach \$22 billion. Infomercials are info-mazing, accruing \$750 million in revenue.

NBC makes humiliating apology to GM for a staged on-camera explosion during report on alleged



safety problems with GM trucks. *NYPD Blue* makes a torrid debut. Letterman bolts NBC for CBS, and the late-night wars begin.

Broadcasting becomes *Broadcasting & Cable*.

DirecTV offered in the U.S. Nancy Kerrigan and Tonya Harding prove to be ratings gold for CBS during the Winter Olympics. Two words: O.J. Viacom buys Paramount

and merges with Blockbuster. More than 43 million fans tune into *Baseball* on PBS.

UPN goes on the air. The V-chip is invented.

The Telecommunications Act of 1996—the first major policy



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“On this, my last word here on ABC, I quote Shakespeare who said ‘All’s well that ends well.’ My time here now ends extremely well. Thank you.”

David Brinkley on his final broadcast appearance, in 1997.



O.C. have each been appointment watching for advertisers’ choicest viewers. By greenlighting *Cops* and *America’s Most Wanted*, Fox jump-started reality TV. By outbidding CBS for the NFL’s NFC package in 1993, Fox sent a shockwave through the industry, stealing a storied sports franchise (football had been on CBS since 1952) and important affiliates as a result. And by airing fewer hours of programming than is required to be a “network” in FCC eyes, they’ve enjoyed the economic advantage of steering clear of “fin-syn,” the rules that excluded networks from profiting from domestic syndication and owning the series they aired. Fox’s outgrowth, Fox News Channel, is the industry’s vital voice of the right. In February 2005, Fox won its first-ever sweeps month. And then there’s *American Idol*, which ABC, CBS and NBC passed on.

“One does not have to be a seer to predict a ferocity of competition for the viewer’s eye,” Murdoch said in his 1986 INTV speech. But there’s no arguing with his 20 years of earning his way into the center of the fight.

THE CRISIS NEWS NETWORK

Gulf War turns CNN into a major player

January 16, 1991

For the initial 16½ hours of bombings, the Persian Gulf War was made-for-TV drama, the first war airing live. And the network of choice—of necessity, really—was CNN. As *Broadcasting* put it, “If there was any doubt that CNN is on par with the other three networks, it was dispelled as the 24-

hour cable network dominated the news, and the ratings.”

With all the other major U.S. radio and TV networks having lost their telephone connections from the Al-Rashid Hotel in downtown Baghdad as the fighting began, CNN’s three correspondents—Bernard Shaw, John Holliman and Peter Arnett—were the U.S. media’s sole link to the fireworks. The Iraqi government had given CNN approval to remain in touch, and the coverage gained the universal approval of all other news sources, many of which picked up the feed. “CNN used to be called the little network that could,” announced Tom Brokaw, after listening to Shaw’s coverage on NBC. “It’s no longer a little network.”

Colin Powell, then chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, also acknowledged the network’s premier position as source. “We have done some considerable damage to the ability [of the Iraqis to transmit information]—at least according to Bernie Shaw,” he said in a briefing.

The connection between the press and the story, however, would soon grow strained. Vietnam had been the first war covered without censorship, and, 16 years later, the U.S. military was still smarting from the negative results of its goodwill. During the Gulf War’s “Operation Desert Storm,” the Pentagon was much more vigilant about vetting stories and images, frustrating reporters with an ever tightening set of standards, all done in the name of protecting military intelligence. Press outlets, feeling the restraint not only from the U.S. military but from the governments of Iraq and Israel as well, did what they could with what they got.

Granted, there was plenty to talk about: Scud missiles, smart

bombs, Peter Arnett’s visit to a destroyed factory that had been a mass producer of either biological weapons or baby food (depending on which government you believed) and “Stormin’” Norman Schwarzkopf’s daily briefings. And CNN.

The network that easily won the ratings war the first night and established a reputation for innovation, became the go-to network in a crisis. Ted Turner had launched it 10 years earlier, but the Gulf War was its coming-out party.

BLACK TUESDAY

TV leads the nation through its greatest tragedy

September 11, 2001

At 10:29 a.m. on Sept. 11, 2001, CNN anchor Aaron Brown was filing his live report from the roof of the network’s New York headquarters, with a view of the smoke-en-

gulfed World Trade Center behind his shoulder. The South Tower had collapsed 29 minutes earlier under the strain of being hit by United Flight 175 and the unimaginable heat the explosion had created. And now, with Brown in mid-sentence, tragedy became surreal, as the North Tower—the first one hit, by the terrorist-steered American Flight 11—began to crumple to the ground. Brown turned to watch. “Good Lord,” he said. “There are no words.”

But there were words. And images. For days on end, television, as it had 38 years earlier in Dallas, would use them all to offer comfort, perspective, unity and, perhaps most important of all, a community of voices that kept on talking, an electronic insomniac partner also attempting to make sense of it all.

The JFK assassination and 9/11 are generation-defining events, with broad similarities in the depth of their effect on the nation. But in 1963, TV’s nightly news reports had only recently expanded to 30

BEST OF OPEN MIKE

Quotes from letters to the magazine:

“The editorial comment you have given the elections bill sponsored by Sen. Knowland and myself [B&T March 12] has been a genuine service. ...

“Eighty-five senators have now joined as co-sponsors in this legislation and it should come before the Senate soon.

“Thanks very much for your fine help on this.”

—Lyndon B. Johnson, Senate Majority Leader, Washington, 4/2/56
(The editorial Johnson mentions supported the modification of politi-

cal broadcasting Sec. 315 of the Communications Act, meant to free broadcasting restrictions related to political campaign coverage.)

“Thanks for your kindness in taking note of my move from the pussycat of MTM to the peacock of NBC. The former has been rewarding and fun, but the latter presents a challenge that I just can’t pass up.

“It’s good to find that a number of my friends like you seem to approve [“Editorial,” July 6]. You can bet that I’ll give it a real shot.”

—Grant A. Tinker, chairman, NBC, Los Angeles, 7/20/81 (Tinker was chairman/CEO of NBC from 1981 to ’86)

overhaul in 62 years—deregulates the cable industry and jump-starts the battle among phone, cable and broadcast companies. ⚡ Disney buys



ABC. ⚡ Time-Warner and Turner merge. ⚡ Working together, the cast of *Friends* secures a friendly contract renegotiation. ⚡

The four major broadcast net-

works begin using the voluntary system of TV ratings.

1997

Optical-fiber cable lines now run around the world. ⚡ DVD players and movie sales take off.

1998

HDTV broadcast begins in the



U.S. ⚡ There are 150 million Internet users by the end of the year, half of them in the U.S. ⚡ In January, President Clinton emphatically denies

having had sexual relations with “that woman, Miss [Monica] Lewinsky.” Seven months later, he kinda changes his mind.

1999

Sega Dreamcast 128-bit operating system helps expand videogame market. ⚡ TiVo comes out. ⚡ *The*

Sopranos debuts with a bada-bing. ⚡ The U.S. version of *Who Wants To Be a Millionaire* makes millions for ABC and revives a tired genre. Final answer.

2000

Courts limit Napster’s music-file-sharing. ⚡ It’s the year of

the DVD, and Sony PlayStation 2 uses DVD for home videogames. ⚡ AOL and Time Warner merge to become the largest media company. ⚡ *Sur-*



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Sept. 11, 2001: An American tragedy shared through the power of television



“When the hell is Warren Moon going to retire? I mean, this guy is older than the cuneiform in Nebuchadnezzar’s tomb.”

Dennis Miller, making a typically erudite comment during his short-lived and much maligned 2000-02 stint in the *Monday Night Football* booth

minutes, and equipment used to cover the sad events was archaic; TV rose to the occasion then. 9/11, however, was human tragedy in the Information Age, with scoop-centric 24-hour news channels already the industry standard.

The terrorists may have understood that idea better than anyone. As *Broadcasting & Cable* pointed out, “By crashing the first hijacked jetliner into the World Trade Center Tower 1 at rush hour, the terrorists caught the attention of the TV stations’ morning traffic helicopters ringing Manhattan island. Those choppers were well-positioned to deliver live pictures a few minutes later as the second passenger jet plowed into Tower 2.”

As they had in Dallas, the major networks shared the pool of feeds; given the story, the feeds were

even picked up by ESPN, MTV and TLC. Nielsen put the prime time audience on 9/11 at 79.5 million. In the first four days of coverage, networks lost between \$200 million and \$300 million in revenues.

Meanwhile, the human cost was immeasurable. Among the nearly 3,000 deaths, at least six broadcast engineers were killed tending the networks’ transmission facilities on top of Tower 1. “A lot of us are in this situation where we’re dealing with personal feeling but doing our jobs at the same time,” said WNBC New York reporter Scott Weinberger, who lost several friends in the attack. It was these stories that turned Americans on both sides of the screen into a single community, united in admiration, resolve and grief.

GONE DIGITAL

The Digital Age rules the airwaves

February 18, 2009

Unlike all the other dates listed among these seminal events, Feb. 18, 2009, isn’t set in stone. It is the FCC’s current deadline for U.S. TV stations to switch to digital transmission. With about 15% of U.S. homes not yet wired for cable, three years may not be long enough to coerce the nation into the so-called Digital Age. But it will happen regardless. Progress is like that: swift and pragmatic. Progress knows nothing about nostalgia—except how to digitize it.

The digital-TV revolution took

off, literally and figuratively, on Oct. 29, 1998, when the broadcasting industry celebrated the launch of high-definition television by offering high-def images of ageless Sen. John Glenn’s lift-off aboard the shuttle *Discovery*. “The medium of television turned a corner,” *Broadcasting & Cable* wrote then. The start of HDTV broadcasting had finally begun, “after years of inventing, negotiating, regulating and infighting.” Sounds familiar.

The digital *evolution* had been going on for years. Japanese engineers began designing HDTV analog systems in 1979, and Japan began broadcasting high-def signals in the early ’90s. DirecTV began mounting dishes in 1994. Then DVDs made their decade-long journey from novelty to necessity. From 1998 to 2001, Internet use in the U.S. doubled and hasn’t slowed. And TiVo, though still a niche product, is one of the Digital Age’s two proper-noun verbs (you can Google to find the other) and offers the freedom of choice that technology always seems to promise.

All this information keeps leading to that vaulted day when everything will be connected to everything else. Images will be broadcast digitally from everywhere, uploaded to home screens both small (iPod) and large (plasma). It *seems* inevitable. In the way that “Orwellian” used to mean the frightening future—and now means the distant past—we are always carried into a revised modern age. In broadcasting, that means high-def, with clearer pictures, more data squeezed into bandwidth, and MPEG-2 audio.

Of course, we may be wrong. There are no guarantees—except perhaps this: Years from now, someone will read these words about the Digital Age and find it all very quaint indeed. ■

vivor premieres; rats, snakes and a naked millionaire abound.

2001 More than half of all Americans now use the Internet. ⚡ U.S. ad spending sees its worst single-year downturn since World War II, due in part to 9/11.

2002 PS2, Xbox and GameCube attract online game users. ⚡ Simon says, “You’re appalling.” *American Idol* debuts, and bad singers weep.



2003 DVD sales surpass VHS sales. ⚡ The first DVD camcorder goes on the market.

2004 DVD becomes the most common format

for home-entertainment use. ⚡ HD car radios go on sale. ⚡ Digital AM and FM signals boast CD quality. ⚡ RCA sells 61-inch-wide TV sets that are 6.5 inches thick. ⚡ Major news coverage of the tsunami that hits the Pacific the day after Christmas.

2005 Hurricane Katrina coverage dominates newscasts. ⚡ Flat-screen TV, HDTV and plasma screen are



growing into industry standards. ⚡ Phone companies make bigger inroads wiring into the cable industry.

2006 Howard Stern gets Sirius. ⚡ ABC offers *Lost* and *Desperate Housewives* for Web and iPod viewing. ⚡ Katie

Couric signs to anchor the *CBS Evening News*. ⚡ *Broadcasting & Cable* celebrates 75 years of covering the industry.



PHOTOS: REUTERS/Chris Macabach, 9/11; COURTESY OF FOX, AMERICAN MAF; SHANE CRITCHER/FLOWINGC.COM; STERN

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TAKING ONE STEP BEYOND

B&C asks 14 industry veterans to gaze into the crystal ball

In 1981, *Broadcasting's* 50th anniversary issue featured a section titled "2001: What's Ahead." The introduction predicted only minor changes occurring by that mysterious, far-off year, but it also allowed for some dissenting opinions on the matter.

"There are those," it reads, "who maintain that the growing miracles of telecommunications, cable and computers—in combination with teleconferencing and in-home shopping and banking, with hundreds of new channels putting an almost endless variety of entertainment and specialized information at the consumer's fingertips—will turn many Americans into stay-at-homes, not needing to go out even to work, or cash a check, or buy a newspaper (which, in this case, will have been delivered electronically). ...

"In some versions [of this far-off vision], cable itself, instead of delivering scores or hundreds of programs into the home at the punch of a button, may prove inadequate and be replaced, eventually, by personal uplinks/downlinks capable of sending to and receiving from hundreds of other transponders—nationally, worldwide and into space."

The pinpoint prescience of such a "dissenting" statement now seems remarkable and says a great deal about how the speed of change in broadcasting has left more-conservative prognosticators in the dust.

Given this, it didn't seem fair to ask our present panel of seers to gaze too deeply into the crystal ball. There is no logical timetable in our journey from the worlds of George W. Bush to George Jetson. The questions and answers below have more to do with the relation between present and future, in terms of programming and the ever evolving technology that continues to bring it to us. And, as with any hazards at predicting the future, the answers prove fascinating.



"There are so many screens kids are looking at. It's scary to me—and it presents an opportunity as well."

Joan Ganz Cooney

WHAT FUTURE PROGRAMMING DEVELOPMENT DO YOU THINK WILL HAVE THE MOST IMPACT?

Jim Barton: The collapse of network-based local broadcasting due to lack of viewers.

Ted Koppel: At some point, in the not-too-distant future, it is going to occur to someone in authority at a network news division that developments beyond the borders of the United States are worthy of ongoing and detailed attention by a corps of smart, curious and courageous young men and women who are willing to live and

work in places like India, China and the Middle East for extended tours. We could call these people "foreign correspondents." Their reports could inform us of important and potentially dangerous developments at a time when we can ill afford to remain in the dark. Actually, ... never mind. It's too expensive and why would anything that anyone's hatching overseas have any kind of impact on us?

Joan Ganz Cooney: This country is really kind of scandalously illiterate. Cuba has a higher literacy rate by far than the U.S. We'd like to find a way of using the entertainment media that kids use—particularly TV, DVD, TV-on-demand, but other media and technologies as well—to see if one can insert educational material of value into the entertainment the way we did with *Sesame Street* that actually helps them learn to read and gain abilities in numeracy.

Brian Graden: Creative expression is a two-way superhighway now. The democratization of video tools allows any auteur anywhere to participate. Make no mistake: Creators of premium content will still be rare and in demand. We will still have an invaluable role finding, developing and championing first-rate content. But then, we must let go and let splice, let go and let interplay. It's not so revolutionary if

you consider hip-hop music, the super-fuel of MTV for a decade, has sliced and diced all of pop media to great, new and original effect. Now it's video's turn. ... The surest fact is, we will be surprised by something we least expect. And that's the fun of it.

Leslie Moonves: What we're seeing now is that viewers are seeking out additional material on their fa-

Continued on page S38

"Television, which has such an enormous capacity for greatness, remains the most timid medium in the communications universe."

Ted Koppel



The panel of prognosticators:

Jim Barton, co-founder of TiVo; sets company's tech vision

Tom Brokaw, journalist; former anchor/managing editor, *NBC Nightly News*; ratings leader from late 1990s to 2004

Joan Ganz Cooney, co-founder, Children's Television Workshop, and force behind 37 years of *Sesame Street*

Charles Dolan, chairman of Cablevision and founder of HBO

Brian France, chairman/CEO of NASCAR, TV's second-most popular sport

Brian Graden, president, entertainment, of MTV Networks Music Channels Group, who also helped develop *South Park*

Nicholas Johnson, former FCC commissioner who bashed TV

Ted Koppel, managing editor, Discovery Channel; former anchor and driving force behind ABC's *Nightline*

Sean McManus, president of CBS News and CBS Sports

Newton Minow, former FCC chairman and famed author of TV's "vast wasteland" speech

Leslie Moonves, president/CEO of CBS Corp.; developed *CSI*

David K. Rehr, president/CEO, National Association of Broadcasters; longtime force on Capitol Hill

Fred Upton, Representative (R-Mich.); chairman, House Subcommittee on Telecommunications and the Internet

Brian Williams: anchor/managing editor, *NBC Nightly News*, the most-watched evening newscast in the U.S.

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Taking One Step Beyond
Continued from page S36

favorite shows, whether it be bonus storylines on the Internet, alerts on their cellphones, downloads on their iPods or laptops, blogs from their favorite characters, etc.

This has been a gradual movement, and it's altered the way we are developing programs. When we make a pilot, we're going to be looking to see how we can exploit that programming through multiple channels, whether it be computers, cellphones, videogames, wireless. That's been a pretty dramatic shift; we didn't consider that four, five years ago, but today it's imperative.

Newton Minow: Television is at its best when it is live. Future programming developments will enable instant feedback from millions of viewers. Creative men and women in television will respond with imaginative, new ideas.

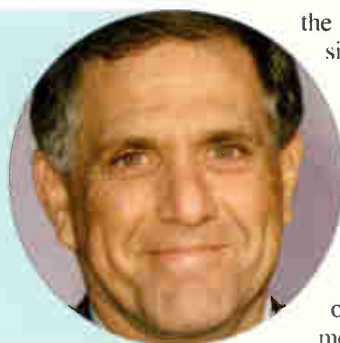
David K. Rehr: Broadcasters must embrace technology and recognize that every additional stream of programming is potentially an additional stream of revenue. Our future is a broadcast signal on every new gadget—whether it be iPods, cellphones, PDAs, personal computers, our stations' Web sites or the next yet-invented platform.

Charles Dolan: The biggest challenge to everybody is to go and figure that out. It's like trying to predict society: What are people going to be interested in?

WHAT FUTURE TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT WILL HAVE THE MOST IMPACT?

Barton: The television in the front room will remain its own

“The best storytelling is now being done on television, not in the movies.” Leslie Moonves



world, separate from PCs and cell phones and iPods and whatnot. Innovation will be around providing viewers total control of the ultimate video and audio experience in the comfort of the home.

Graden: We know all the toys that

we continue picking the iPod up to hear our favorite song 72 times in a row. How you find that song and how that song gets to you—that's the invisible technology that most connects people with ideas. But as technology gets to know us better

“Much of the news around the world is bad. Filtering it out of your day does not advance the public good.” Brian Williams



as individuals, expect the ability of machines to feed man exactly what he wants to improve, massively, and become more human in nature.

Dolan: IPTV [Internet Protocol TV] is really bringing the Internet to the video screen in the home, along with all of the depth, the variety, the interaction that will facilitate, to say nothing of capacity. Capacity is really not an issue anymore. We're becoming more and more like print, and if you want to do something in print, you don't worry about capacity: you have all the printing presses and newsprint you want.

Cooney: There are so many screens kids are looking at. It's scary to me—and it presents an opportunity as well. But it's very tough with older kids, from 6 on. My 9-year-old granddaughter has an iPod; now she wants an iPod video, and she's going to be able to download video onto the iPod. But it'll be very hard unless one can figure out how to get content that is useful for children in the new technologies because, at the moment, you're just downloading existing television. There has to be new product that somehow gets downloaded. That will be very tough. It will not be nearly as tough to get educational material on computers, but it'll be tough to get children to choose it. It'll have to be highly entertaining.

Minow: Technology will marry

the computer with television, placing the viewer in charge of scheduling.

The viewer will decide when, where and how to watch programs.

We can see the beginnings of this development today. Tomorrow will make today's way of doing things seem almost quaint.

Rehr: The impact and importance of digital multicast programming on our future can't be underestimated. Multicasting will give local broadcasters an even greater opportunity to connect with their communities. NAB is hopeful the FCC and Congress will continue to recognize the invaluable role local broadcasters play on a daily basis. Multicasting—and all the consumer benefits that come with it—will play a profound role in the future vitality of our industry.

Brian Williams: Portability and on-demand. And as a journalist, I must say, I see a profound danger in this. Our job is part civics lesson. Much of the news around the world (and the nation, for that matter) is bad. Filtering it out of your day does not advance the public good, and it hardly makes us better and more informed citizens of a complicated world.

Brian France: Wireless technology, in some meaningful way. I

Continued on page S40

“Our industry was wireless before wireless was cool.”

David K. Rehr



“We must give customers more opportunity to choose. We need to stop requiring customers who want a dozen eggs to also buy a pound of cheese.” Charles Dolan



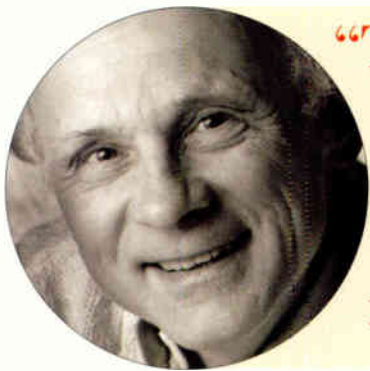
Photos: Todd Williamson/FilmMagic.com; Moonves: Chris Maddaloni/News.com; Minow

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“This business is the major competitor to our K-12 educational system and organized religion.” Nicholas Johnson

Taking One Step Beyond
Continued from page S38

say that because the digital world is evolving so rapidly right now and also because wireless technology has become such a staple of our everyday life. We've been using wireless devices, notably telephones, for 20 years. The technology will continue to advance.

Sean McManus: It'll be when the ability to receive the highest-quality video live on a portable device reaches critical mass. Once news programming is available live on a portable handset, it will necessitate all of us updating our programming much more regularly.

WHAT REPRESENTS THIS BUSINESS AT ITS WORST?

Barton: Local broadcasters' holding onto VHF spectrum while broadcasting the same old stuff on their new digital channels.

“No artist wakes up and dreams of net profits and a piece of syndication pie. Okay, maybe that happens later.”

Brian Graden

Dolan: Not giving the customer more opportunity to choose. We really need to catch up with the grocery store in this regard and stop requiring customers who want nothing more than a dozen eggs to also buy a pound of cheese. Customers should be able to buy what they want, as part of a package or independent of a package. In the end, they will be more satisfied and better customers.

Nicholas Johnson: The myopic focus on stock prices over programming. Management decisions based on the mathematical realization that, when revenues don't increase, profits can still appear to do so if the “costs” of good journalism and quality programming are eliminated. The mergers and acquisitions that tend to deprive the broadcasting and cable business of the only unique asset it has ever had: localism, an asset even more essential to financial success in today's and tomorrow's multimedia environment. And the industry's willingness to combine lap-dog support of the [Bush] administration with political pressure on the White House, Congress and FCC that results in these practices being defined as “the public interest.”

Minow: This great business is at its worst when it disrespects children by daily overdoses of violence and sex.

Moonves: In this business, as in any business, the worst thing a company can do is dig in its heels and resist change. We saw it happen in the music industry. While music executives were busy fighting battles in court, their whole business model got overturned

by teenagers. We're not going to repeat that mistake.

Williams: Aruba. O.J. Chandra. Monica. Sharks. We could all name 50. Pack stories, tabloid stories. A cheap kill for ratings. Forgetting our standards. Another joy of my job is that I am mostly immune from the pressures our friends on the cable side often face: find a big story, hop on and give it a good ride. Assess the damage later.

France: When people have to make decisions solely based on rights fees and they are unable to align themselves with the right platforms, the right partners and the right creative.

McManus: It's tough to deal on an ongoing basis with the financial pressures and time constraints we all face. Each night, we have 22 minutes to present the significant events that have



happened. All of us dream of what it would be like to present an hour newscast every night on the network, but we know that is highly unlikely.

Koppel: Television, which has such an enormous capacity for greatness, remains the most timid medium in the communications universe. It is marked by endless repetition, banality and lack of creativity. It continues to be strangled by its own commercial success, breeding endless copies of whatever mediocrity currently enjoys ratings success. Televi-

sion makes money by reacting to the market rather than achieving greatness (and perhaps making

“This business is at its best when it captures a live event in a way viewers cannot have imagined in the past.”

Brian France

even more money) by leading and producing genuine creativity.

HOW ABOUT AT ITS BEST?

Dolan: Without question, the original programming this industry has created represents cable at its best, and the exciting thing is that 30 years and thousands and thousands of high-quality hours in, we are really just getting started.

Graden: It's simple. It's utopian. And it's the same as it ever was. We live once, and most every creative person I know is born with an innate need to communicate, to feel and sing out loud. No artist wakes up and dreams of net profits and a piece of syndication pie. OK, maybe that happens later. ... But artists want to real-

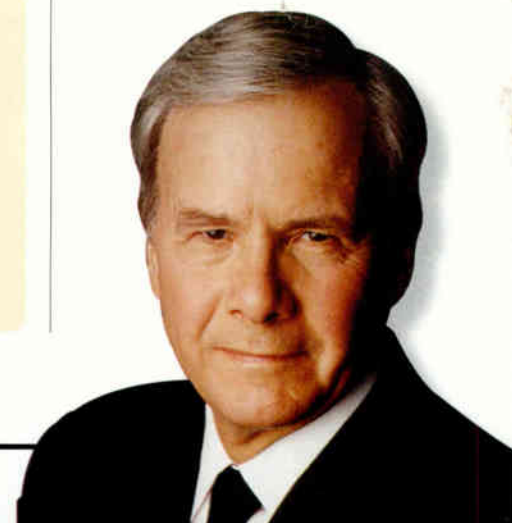
Continued on page S42

“The television in the front room will remain its own world.”

Jim Barton



“Television remains the most powerful and accessible instrument for keeping a democratic society informed.” Tom Brokaw



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Taking One Step Beyond
Continued from page S40

ize the art that is inside them. At our best, we enable artists to find joy and, on some fantastic occasions, impact culture. That isn't a job, ever; it's a privilege.

Barton: Lots of people making a lot of money off giving viewers what they want through lots of distribution outlets.

Johnson: "This business" is at its best when it realizes that it is ever so much more than "just another business." It's the major competitor to our K-12 educational system and organized religion. It bears a major responsibility for what Americans are and will become—physically, intellectually, spiritually and, therefore, economically. The unnecessary wars we fight and the health care

we don't have. It's not just an investment alternative to petroleum or pharmaceuticals.

Tom Brokaw: The best recent example was the blanket coverage of Katrina, in which the network and cable news divisions were far better prepared than the federal government.

Fred Upton: The business at its best is the local nature of broadcasters: local news, weather, sports, public affairs and their commitment to their communities of license. When there's a tornado or thunderstorm warning in southwest Michigan, it's the local broadcaster I turn to for information.

Williams: We perform best when we excel at what has become known as our "core business": reporting live on a big, powerful news story. Many critics and viewers enjoyed saying we had

"found our voice" during and after Katrina. The truth is, we never lost our voice. But Katrina made us witnesses as well as journalists. We beat the first responders to that story. The passion and immediacy were real. It left me with memories I'd like to forget.

WHAT MAKES YOU HOPEFUL ABOUT THE FUTURE OF TV?

Barton: Broadband distribution of television programming, if not blocked through innovation-draining Draconian copyright legislation.

Brokaw: That it remains the most powerful and accessible instrument for keeping a democratic society informed.

Rehr: Critics, from time to time, have written off the business of broadcasting as yesterday's technology. I have a message for them: We were wireless before wireless was cool. Underestimate our industry's ability to adapt at your own peril.

Upton: What makes me most hopeful about the future of broadcast television are my local broadcasters, both in southwest Michigan and northern Indiana. These folks are making tremendous investment to bring our communities local news, weather, sports and public affairs—and that's the differentiator.

Koppel: The enormous diversity that the new technologies are producing. The sheer number of people who can contribute bright, challenging ideas across the spectrum of broadband makes some explosions of greatness inevitable.

Cooney: I'm not so much concerned about the future of television as I am about the future of content on the screens—including TV—that children will be watching. What with children's cable channels, TV-on-demand, DVDs and so on, the opportunities to provide wonderful programming that enlighten and teaches children abound. Sesame Workshop intends to be one of the leaders in the effort to provide content for TV and other media that will raise the level of literacy among all children, with an emphasis on those who are struggling in the early grades.

Johnson: What makes you think I'm hopeful? See www.nicholasjohnson.org.

Minow: I am optimistic about the

future of television because I have faith in broadcasters who value their profession as a calling with high standards. As long as broadcasters remember they are obliged to serve the public interest, our country will be well-served.

Moonves: The fact that the best storytelling is now being done on television, not in the movies. ... That, when a major news story breaks, people still turn to network news. And the fact that, with online streaming, on-demand, DVRs and other devices, people have more ways than ever to watch. The future possibilities are endless.

McManus: This is still the place where most people come for their entertainment, information, news and sports. Other forms of distribution will continue to grow, but, for major events—the Super Bowl or coverage of a national election or something as horrific as 9/11 or Hurricane Katrina—more people still rely on network coverage than any other source. I don't see that changing in the foreseeable future.

Williams: When I see new people come up through the farm system, who got into journalism for the right reasons. I always tell students, if your heart rate just increased when you walked into our newsroom, we'd love to have you in this business. Only the passionate need apply. ■


"When there's a tornado, it's the local broadcaster I turn to for information."

Fred Upton




Photos: Scott J. Ferrell, Upton

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World Radio History

THE POWERS THAT BE

Seventy-five of the most influential forces in radio and TV's past, present and future



Roone Arledge: ABC's genius innovator and the man behind *Monday Night Football* and *Wide World of Sports*. His career matched a phrase he coined: "The thrill of victory."

Edwin H. Armstrong: The father of FM, who sadly didn't live long enough to see his invention revolutionize radio.

Lucille Ball: Hilarious redhead, exceptional businesswoman, and TV's most recognizable and beloved star—but clearly a little slow on the chocolate-factory assembly line.

Milton Berle: Uncle Miltie cross-dressed for success in the early days of TV, earning an 80 share some weeks. Businesses closed during telecasts, and TV-set sales soared. No wonder they called him Mr. Television.

Jeff Bewkes: Success in both creative and tech arenas and a great track record with HBO made him the ideal go-to exec for Time Warner.

Steven Bochco: Thanks to *Hill Street Blues*, *L.A. Law* and *NYPD Blue*, he was cutting-edge television for 20 years. He made the

medium safe for ensemble dramas, multiple storylines and Dennis Franz's backside.

Tom Brokaw: He was, at his height from the late 1990s through his 2004 retirement, the most popular news personality in the country, with a warm, highly accessible voice of reason. His half-smile look at the world often spoke volumes.

Mark Burnett: Who knew reality TV could outwit, outplay and outlast its fellow genres in the programming jungle? Burnett—who brought us *Survivor* and *The Apprentice*—turned stressed-out human drama and creative cutting into a ratings bonanza.

Sid Caesar: *Your Show of Shows* set the dial—and the bar—for TV sketch comedy in the '50s, giving early writing work to the likes of Mel Brooks, Neil Simon and Carl Reiner. Along with Milton Berle, he's one of TV's two early clown princes.

Johnny Carson: If the King of Late Night didn't birth the genre, he certainly perfected it, and nobody will ever match his ability to turn a *bad* show into a classic.

David Chase: *The Sopranos*, his groundbreaking psychodrama, is a brutal mix of style and *stugots*, and it elevated small-screen moral ambiguity to art. It's a rare show that proves TV to be more original than most theatrical films.

Peter Chernin: As president/COO of News Corp., he's a driving force behind Fox, specifically the Fox cable outlets that have achieved eye-opening success.

Dick Clark: We give his career a 92; it's got an excellent beat, and we haven't stopped watching his productions—from *Bandstand* to *Pyramid* to countless awards shows. And nobody at Times Square "braved the elements" last New Year's Eve more courageously than Clark.

Joan Ganz Cooney: As the determined, education-minded force behind *Sesame Street*, she invented what is perhaps TV's most necessary, useful genre and, in turn, raised up generations to follow her example.

Bill Cosby: A one-man television institution: the first African-American star of a drama series (*I Spy*) and the person who made NBC into must-see TV (not to mention a solvent network) in the 1980s with *The Cosby Show*.

Howard Cosell: He was, by his own admission, brilliant, arrogant, obnoxious and brilliant. No matter the weather, he made *Monday Night Football* blustery—and a hit.

Katie Couric: She will soon occupy one of the most storied seats in broadcast-dom, having earned the right after turning *Today* into a historic morning ratings success. She's a dynamic addition to the pantheon.

Walter Cronkite: The one-time "most trusted man in America" virtually invented what Katie Couric will do for a living. No

Continued on page S46

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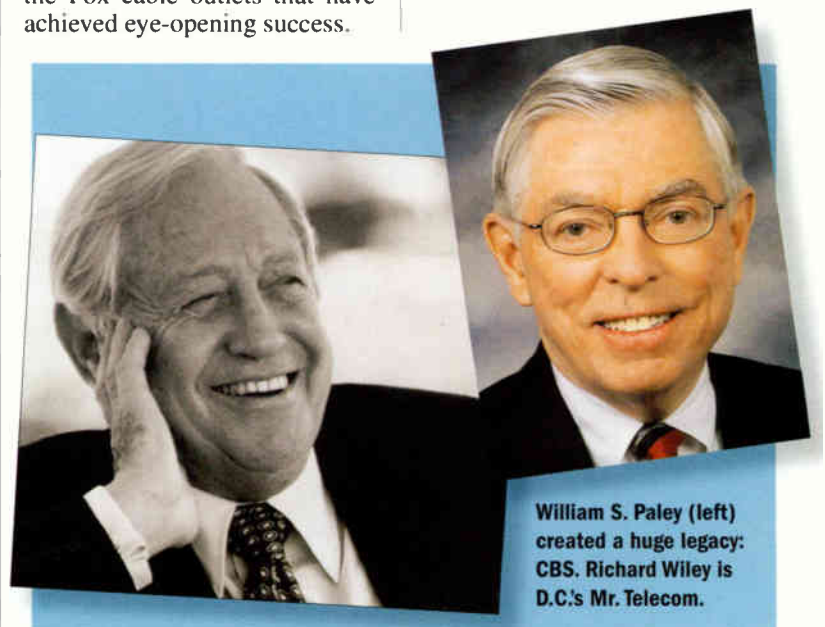
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William S. Paley (left) created a huge legacy: CBS. Richard Wiley is D.C.'s Mr. Telecom.

Photos: Courtesy of CBS photo archives, Paley

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(Clockwise from above) The Three Anchors: Jennings, Brokaw and Rather. Fox head man Peter Chernin. Hill Street's favorite son Brandon Tartikoff. Masters of the medium: Anne Sweeney (left) and Geraldine Laybourne



The Powers That Be
Continued from page S44

one has ever filled his shoes. What other newsman helped end a war? **Barry Diller:** One of the industry's ultimate execs, he ran Paramount during some of its glory years (1972-84: *Taxi* on TV and *Raiders of the Lost Ark* in theaters) and Fox during the creation of Fox Broadcasting; now pilots HSN and ask.com.

Charles Dolan: Created the nation's first urban cable company, giving a clear view to anyone who wanted one in Manhattan; then helped build the industry by founding Cablevision. Now if he could just get his Knicks to perform.

Phil Donahue: The first talk-show host to take his act into the audience to get the full range of American opinion—which he shaped by covering once-taboo social issues on his show.

Allen B. DuMont: The manufacturer of the first practical TV and founder of the DuMont TV network, he was a seminal figure in the early years of the medium.

Philo T. Farnsworth: Inventor of the cathode-ray-tube television and the orthicon; in short, he's one of two gentlemen responsible for everyone else on this list having a job.

Tom Freston: A founding exec of MTV, he gave up that coolest of

jobs to run the hip half of Viacom, which he does with an eye on the future of technology.

Jackie Gleason: The Great One could play it rich or poor, soused or serious, and even when ad-libbing on the extraordinary achievement that was *The Honey-mooners*, the hilarity looked as perfect as a June Taylor Dancers routine.

Leonard Goldenson: He bought ABC (through Paramount) in 1953, then raised it from also-ran to scrappy player, thanks to his Hollywood Rolodex and a feel for what kids like.

Mark Goodson-Bill Todman: The two names behind a host of series that turned the once disgraced game-show genre from dead meat to cash cow: *What's My Line?*, *Beat the Clock*, *Match Game*, *The Price Is Right* and *Family Feud*.

Merv Griffin: As the guy behind *Jeopardy!* and *Wheel of Fortune*, he brought both brains and beauty to an eager after-dinner TV viewership. And a different generation reveres him for his always enthusiastic talk-show persona.



Barbara Walters (left) and Mary Tyler Moore

Matt Groening: Eighteen years into a glorious, wildly improbable run, *The Simpsons*, Groening's animated adventures featuring Springfield's favorite dysfunctional family, continues to satisfy like an icy-cold mug of Duff.

Jim Henson: The goofy, lovely heart behind *Sesame Street* and the magical Muppets he created. As the original voice of, among others, Ernie and Kermit, he was, for many kids, the first teacher who counted.

Don Hewitt: In 1968, he invented *60 Minutes* (and, in turn, the TV newsmagazine), which remains the longest-running prime time series. He invigorated investigative journalism, giving it a combative, crusty and crusading style.

Bob Hope: He was, during half a century, the ultimate Oscar host and as much a Christmas TV fixture as the Yule Log.

Peter Jennings: For 20 years, he

was one of TV's Big Three superstar news anchors, splitting—and for years, gaining a bigger slice of—the evening-news ratings. His death in August 2005 closed a television era.

Robert Johnson: Launching BET in

1980, he provided the first spot on the remote specifically targeted to African-Americans. Selling to Viacom, he became one of that company's largest stockholders.

Mel Karmazin: Perhaps the only boss Howard Stern wouldn't think to call a dirtbag. The former top CBS and then Viacom exec gave it up to help make Sirius Satellite Radio a best buy.

Jamie Kellner: One of the key founders and architects of Fox TV and the man who got The WB off the ground.

John F. Kennedy: His victory in the "Great Debate" against Richard Nixon established TV as a winning campaign tool, and the sad and surreal coverage of his death and funeral forced the medium to come of age.

Roger King: It's King's World; we just watch it, thanks to the syndication giant's ushering of Oprah Winfrey and Dr. Phil onto the landscape, and his successful distribution of *Jeopardy!* and *Wheel of Fortune*.

Geraldine Laybourne: The innovative one-time head of Nickelodeon (and founder of Nick at Nite) has a knack for reaching out to both kids and those of us who still act like them.

Norman Lear: In the 1970s and '80s, he pushed the envelope—and, consequently, buttons—through controversial series (*All in the Family*, *Maude*) that changed what Americans talked about. By creating Archie Bunker, he proved that "lovable bigot" was not an oxymoron.

David Letterman: The brilliant, hand-picked successor to the Carson throne; his first broadcast after 9/11 made it OK for us to laugh through the mourning.

John Malone: Built TCI into a cable giant by rewriting the rules of business mergers and acquisitions, earning him the nickname "The Godfather of Cable."

Lorne Michaels: His *Saturday Night Live* made it cool to stay home late on Saturdays to watch TV. After 30 years, the show's brash, throwback sketch comedy remains a classic not-ready-for-prime-time fixture.

Leslie Moonves: The head of Viacom's CBS half and master of its content. While heading up Warner Bros. Television, he helped bring about an extraordinary string of hits, including *ER* and *Friends*. At CBS, he helped develop the *CSI* franchise.

Mary Tyler Moore: For two generations, she was the smirk-

Continued on page S48

Photos: Robin Pifer/Filmagic.com, Jennings, Rather, Brokaw, Michael Tamm/Filmagic.com, Davis, Courtesy of NBC, Tartikoff, Bruce Sills/Filmagic.com, Walters, Moore.

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The Powers That Be
Continued from page S46

ing, eye-rolling, excitable, unpredictable, beautiful face of the sitcom, a gal who could take a nothing day and suddenly make it all seem worthwhile.

Rupert Murdoch: The industry's unstoppable force and all-media titan who launched Fox, building the first true fourth network by understanding the power of the right demographic.

Edward R. Murrow: He represented the conscience of the growing medium of TV, a sullen, vital watchdog who bested Sen. Joe McCarthy and mastered the celeb profile with *Person to Person*.

Agnes Nixon: With her as guiding light, soap opera became high drama in the 1970s and beyond, and ABC's slate achieved unprecedented success. Most important, without her, Luke may never have met Laura.

William S. Paley: One of the most powerful figures in broadcast history, whose savvy and successful decades-long reign atop CBS kept radio and then television growing.

Dan Rather: For more than 20 years, he embodied the hallowed history of CBS news, anchoring the nightly broadcasts, turning the occasional odd phrase and keeping the anchor chair relevant in a sea of news choices.

Ronald Reagan: Went from radio sports announcer to Golden Age TV-drama host to Great Communicator (and memorable debater) in a career that kept climbing, thanks in part to his mastery of the medium.

Sumner Redstone: With a sense of Darwinian purpose, he built Viacom into one of a handful of media mega-giants and still oversees the split corporation that he ruled with a passion to win.

Brian Roberts: As chairman of Comcast, the biggest player in the cable ballfield with 21.7 million customers at last count, and chairman of NCTA, he's essentially the face of the cable industry.

Franklin D. Roosevelt: The first president to realize (and benefit from) the pervasive power of radio; with his Fireside Chats, he carried a nation through the jungle of fear itself.

David Sarnoff: Perhaps the most powerful single force in the formative years of radio and television, he created NBC and drew RCA and NBC to unbounded success through sheer will.

Jerry Seinfeld-Larry David: With a fine appreciation of nothing, the pair developed *Seinfeld*, master of the sitcom domain and anchor of the classic days of NBC's "Must-See TV." Even now, it's real, and it's spectacular.

Rod Serling: Submitted for your immediate approval, the gentle-

man who elevated weekly-TV-drama writing to an art form by taking us to *The Twilight Zone* and scaring the bejesus out of a generation.

Fred Silverman: Despite his darker, later moments at NBC, he did the impossible by hoisting ABC into first place in the ratings, on the strength of *Happy Days*, *Laverne & Shirley* and *Starsky & Hutch*.

Aaron Spelling: The acknowledged master of the steamy nighttime soap (*Dynasty*, *Beverly Hills 90210*, *Melrose Place*) and a great slate of sleek and gorgeous crime series (*Charlie's Angels*, *Mod Squad*, *Hart to Hart*).

Frank Stanton: The diligent architect of CBS, who, along with Bill Paley, set the standard (and standards) for excellence at the company. And by creating the first presidential debate, he pioneered a pathway to a more informed Election Day decision.

Howard Stern: From terrestrial to satellite radio, he has been the most extreme advocate for pushing the First Amendment envelope. Lesbian dating was the tip of the iceberg.

Jon Stewart: With him at the helm, *The Daily Show* has done that rarest of things: make the darkest news days palatable, even hilarious for the current generation of news viewers.

Ed Sullivan: His really big *shew*

sent the Beatles and Elvis into our living rooms: he was the oft-imitated—but never surpassed—ringleader of the variety genre.

Anne Sweeney: One of the most powerful figures in entertainment as president of Disney-ABC; her landmark deal with Apple iPod places her at the forefront of programming's future tech.

Brandon Tartikoff: Made his presence felt all through television: As youngest president of NBC, he brought *Hill Street Blues*, *Miami Vice*, *The Cosby Show* and *Cheers* to the dial.

Grant Tinker: The "man who saved NBC" during his CEO tenure in the 1980s will always be most beloved for the seminal sitcoms his MTM produced in the 1970s, starting with *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*.

Ted Turner: A man for whom the word *maverick* was invented, he created the first "superstation" and the all-news genre with CNN. And he's among the world's most generous and powerful philanthropists.

Barbara Walters: There are few barriers she hasn't broken in this business: first full-time female news anchor, first woman morning-show host, and still very much the *View* master.

Pat Weaver: By creating *Today*, *The Tonight Show* and *Your Show of Shows*, he helped America wake up, stay up and crack up.

Dick Wiley: The former FCC chairman who dragged an uncertain industry into the age of high-def TV; one of the most omnipresent telecommunications figures in Washington.

Oprah Winfrey: Syndicated TV host, inspired book reader and face of a magazine. She rules a media empire with the savvy of a mogul, but, blessed with the freedom to do what her heart desires, she does just that.

Dick Wolf: Created *Law & Order*, TV's most successful franchise; the flagship show is set to become the longest-running drama in history.

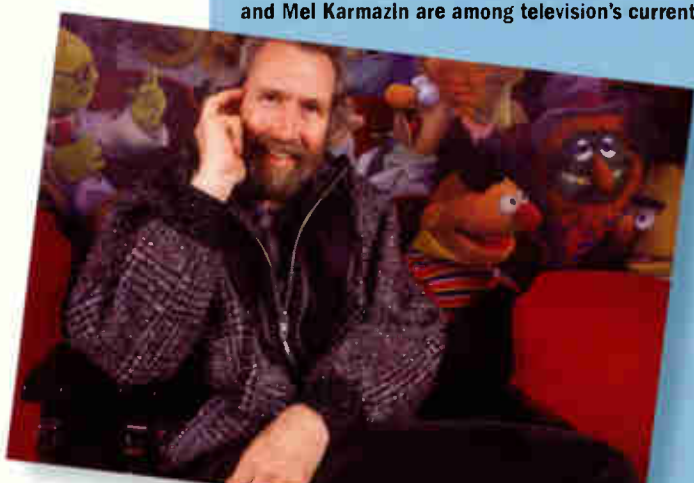
Bob Wright: Under his leadership—one of the longest tenures among media execs—NBC rose from broadcast network to global conglomerate.

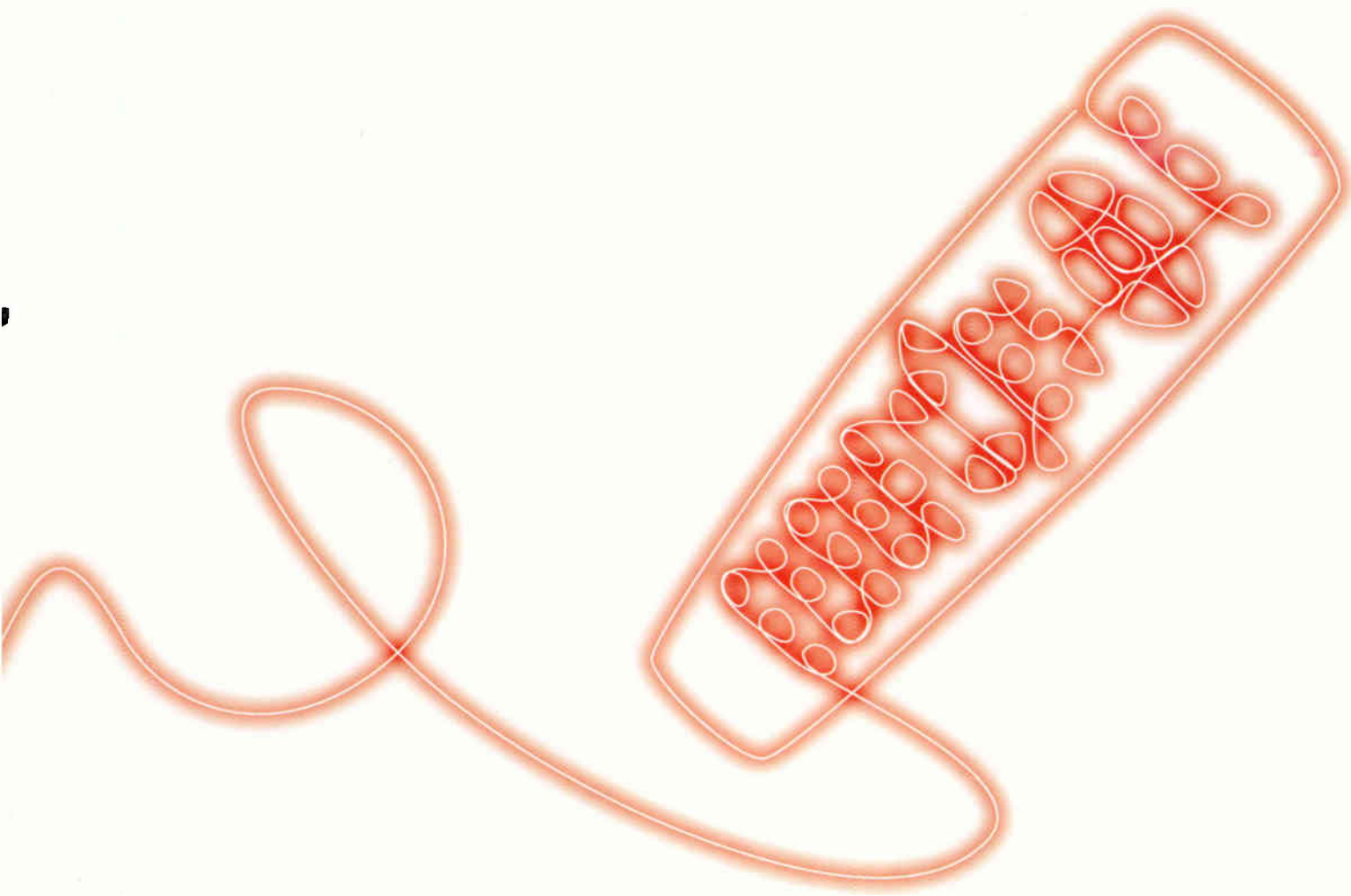
Frederic Ziv: By selling original programming to a long list of individual stations, Ziv founded the lucrative business of television syndication in the 1950s.

Vladimir Zworykin: Along with Philo Farnsworth, he's the technical father of television and instrumental in development of both the transmitter and receiver. ■



(Clockwise from below) Jim Henson brought a wild and wondrous imagination to kids TV with *Sesame Street*. Pals again, Oprah Winfrey and David Letterman are the Queen and King of talk TV. Leslie Moonves (left), Sumner Redstone (center) and Mel Karmazin are among television's current formal elite.





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