PANORAMA

TELEVISION TODAY AND TOMORROW

JUNE 1980
$2.00

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF THE NEW TV TECHNOLOGY

THE SHAH, THE AYATOLLAH AND TELEVISION

CABLE'S ANSWER TO A SPORTS FAN'S PRAYER

WHY WE LOVE TRASHY MOVIES

WALTER CRONKITE ON HOW TV HAS CHANGED PRESIDENTIAL POLITICS

$1.92
GEN. MDSE.

www.americanradiohistory.com

© Polaroid Corp 1980 Polaroid® OneStep® and SX-70®

Polaroid took OneStep further.

We took OneStep, the world's simplest camera, and added the amazing Q-Light strobe. Introducing OneStep Plus.

The convenience of electronic flash.

As you can see, the OneStep comes with a new look. But its biggest plus is the amazing, detachable Q-Light strobe. It eliminates the need for buying flashbars.

Its electric eye automatically judges the precise amount of light you need for indoor shots (between 4 and 9 feet).

And since it automatically gives you the right amount of light, it automatically gives you better flash exposures, a giant step toward better pictures.

The simplicity of a OneStep.

But don't forget, OneStep Plus is still a OneStep at heart, with all the features that made it the best selling camera in America.

So, there's nothing to focus, nothing to set. Press one button and the motor hands you a sharp, clear SX-70 instant picture.

Compact, lightweight and sturdy, it travels anywhere.

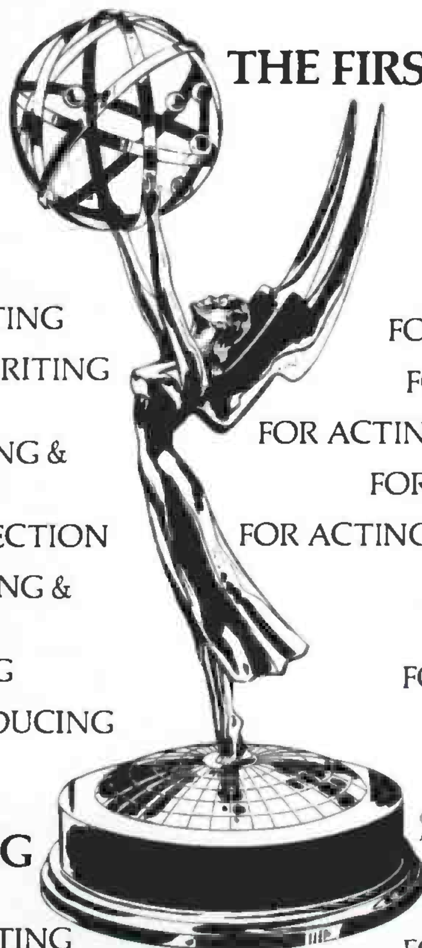
Polaroid's new OneStep Plus. For the simplicity of a OneStep. Plus the convenience of a strobe.

Introducing Polaroid's OneStep Plus.

www.americanradiohistory.com

THE MARY TYLER MOORE SHOW ○ THE BOB NEWHART SHOW ○ RHODA ○ TEXAS WHEELERS ○ FRIENDS AND LOVERS ○ SECOND START ○ PHYLLIS ○ THREE FOR THE ROAD ○ DOC ○ MARY'S INCREDIBLE DREAM ○ THE LORENZO AND HENRIETTA MUSIC SHOW ○ TONY RANDALL SHOW ○ WE'VE GOT EACH OTHER ○ JUST AN OLD SWEET SONG ○ LOU GRANT ○ BETTY WHITE SHOW ○ SOMETHING FOR JOEY ○ NOWHERE TO RUN ○ MARY TYLER MOORE'S HOW TO SURVIVE THE SEVENTIES AND MAYBE EVEN BUMP INTO HAPPINESS ○ THE CRITICAL LIST ○ GOING HOME AGAIN ○ WKRP IN CINCINNATI ○ THE WHITE SHADOW ○ MARY ○ THE MARY TYLER MOORE HOUR ○ FIRST YOU CRY ○ THE LAST RESORT ○ PARIS ○ VAMPIRE ○ THE BOY WHO DRANK TOO MUCH

1970-1980 **THE FIRST DECADE**



EDWARD ASNER FOR ACTING
JAMES L. BROOKS FOR WRITING & EXECUTIVE PRODUCING
ALLAN BURNS FOR WRITING & EXECUTIVE PRODUCING
JACKIE COOPER FOR DIRECTION
STAN DANIELS FOR WRITING & PRODUCING
BOB ELLISON FOR WRITING
SETH FREEMAN FOR PRODUCING
MICHELE GALLERY FOR WRITING
GARY DAVID GOLDBERG FOR PRODUCING
VALERIE HARPER FOR ACTING
DOUGLAS HINES FOR EDITING
BARNARD HUGHES FOR ACTING

FOR ACTING JULIE KAVNER
FOR ACTING TED KNIGHT
FOR ACTING CLORIS LEACHMAN
FOR WRITING DAVID LLOYD
FOR ACTING NANCY MARCHAND
FOR ACTING MARY TYLER MOORE
FOR EXECUTIVE PRODUCING GENE REYNOLDS
FOR DIRECTION JAY SANDRICH
FOR WRITING TREVA SILVERMAN
FOR WRITING & PRODUCING ED. WEINBERGER
FOR ACTING BETTY WHITE

www.americanradiohistory.com

Introducing Cambridge Box:

The lowest tar ever.

Discover Cambridge contentment. The very special satisfaction of knowing that with Cambridge Box you're getting the lowest tar cigarette ever made, yet still enjoying the unique pleasures of smoking.

Cambridge

Box: Less than 0.1 mg tar.

© Philip Morris Inc. 1980

Box: Less than 0.5 mg "tar," 0.01 mg nicotine—Soft Pack: 1 mg "tar," 0.1 mg nicotine—100's: 4 mg "tar," 0.4 mg nicotine av. per cigarette by FTC Method.

Also available in ultra low 1 mg Soft Pack, 4 mg 100's.

Warning: The Surgeon General Has Determined That Cigarette Smoking Is Dangerous to Your Health.

www.americanradiohistory.com

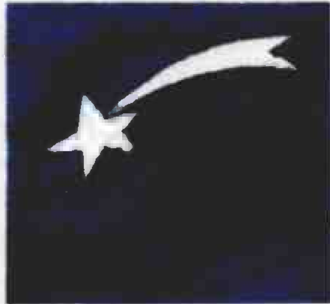
PANORAMA TELEVISION TODAY AND TOMORROW

CONTENTS JUNE 1980 VOLUME 1, NUMBER 5

ARTICLES

32 **The Shah, the Ayatollah and the TV Set**
Television has been intimately intertwined with the Iranian revolution
By David R. Boldt

38 **Test Your Knowledge of TV Technology**



This quiz is a toughie, but you'll enjoy taking it
By David Lachenbruch

41 **Why We Love Trashy Movies**
A critic explains their fascination
By Molly Haskell

44 **"The American Dream Is the Blonde Bombshell"**

This year's edition is Loni Anderson
By Kenneth Turan

50 **He Was an Actor Playing on the Political Stage**
One British Prime Minister views another
By Edward Heath

52 **Media Birds in Full Flight**

Artist Franklin McMahon's vivid impressions of the Presidential campaign trail

60 **How *You* Can Get Elected by Using Television**
An insider's guide
By Jeff Greenfield

66 **Planet Wars**

Todd Rundgren's video plans hit a snag in space
By Howard Polskin

70 **Cable's Answer to a Sports Fan's Prayer**
ESPN, the soon-to-be-round-the-clock sports service
By Tony Chiu

74 **This Man Knows What America Wants to Watch**
Aaron Spelling has found his own "Fantasy Island"
By Carolyn See

78 **How They Chose Next Season's Public-TV Programs**

The result left nobody satisfied
By Edwin Kiester Jr.

84 **Remember when the Dog Went Cross-eyed Watching "Sheep-Ranching in Australia"?**
Memories of the old DuMont that we put in the fireplace
By Ivan Berger

DEPARTMENTS

5 **This Month**

10 **Letters**

12 **Perspective**
By Richard Reeves

15 **Cable and Pay-TV**
By Seth Goldstein

16 **Q&A: Walter Cronkite**

23 **Surveys and Studies**
By Dick Friedman

24 **Videocassettes and Discs**
By David Lachenbruch

26 **Panoramic View**

88 **Sports**
By John Schulian

94 **Yesterdays**

96 **Rear View**
By Harry Stein

Cover: Walter Cronkite, Frank Reynolds and John Chancellor survey the political scene. Painting by John Rush. Other picture credits are on page 95.

PANORAMA MAGAZINE (ISSN 0191-8591) IS PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY TRIANGLE COMMUNICATIONS INC. 850 THIRD AVENUE, NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10022. PLEASE ADDRESS ALL EDITORIAL MAIL TO PANORAMA MAGAZINE, P.O. BOX 950, WAYNE, PENNSYLVANIA 19087. ADDRESS ADVERTISING MAIL TO PANORAMA MAGAZINE, 850 THIRD AVENUE, NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10022. SUBSCRIPTIONS: UNITED STATES, ONE YEAR $15.00. CANADA AND MEXICO, ONE YEAR U.S. $21.00. ALL OTHER COUNTRIES, U.S. $30.00. REMIT BY CHECK OR POSTAL MONEY ORDER. CURRENCY SENT AT SUBSCRIBER'S RISK. SEND NO STAMPS. SUBSCRIPTIONS WILL START WITHIN SIXTY DAYS AFTER RECEIPT OF ORDER. SEND SUBSCRIPTION CORRESPONDENCE TO PANORAMA, SUBSCRIPTION DEPARTMENT, RADNOR, PENNSYLVANIA 19088. NOTIFY SUBSCRIPTION DEPARTMENT OF CHANGE OF ADDRESS AT LEAST SIX WEEKS IN ADVANCE. PLEASE INCLUDE NAME, NEW ADDRESS AND MAILING LABEL FROM MOST RECENT ISSUE. SINGLE COPY IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA $2.00. VOLUME 1 NUMBER 5. ISSUED MONTHLY. SECOND CLASS PERMIT PENDING AT NEW YORK, NEW YORK AND AT ADDITIONAL MAILING OFFICES. COPYRIGHT © 1980 BY TRIANGLE COMMUNICATIONS INC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. NOTHING APPEARING IN PANORAMA MAY BE REPRINTED OR COPIED EITHER WHOLLY OR IN PART WITHOUT PERMISSION. PRINTED IN THE U.S.A. POSTMASTER SEND FORM 3579 TO PANORAMA MAGAZINE, RADNOR, PENNSYLVANIA 19088.

www.americanradiohistory.com

KAHLÚA® Black Russian mmmmm.

A classic: one ounce of Kahlúa, two ounces of vodka on the rocks. And do send for the Kahlúa recipe book. Our compliments.

Kahlúa Coffee Liqueur from Sunny Mexico. 53 Proof. Maidstone Wine & Spirits Inc. 116 N. Robertson Blvd. Los Angeles, CA 90048.

www.americanradiohistory.com

THIS MONTH

JUNE 1980

Nader Raids Hollywood...Ten Years of *Masterpiece Theatre*... Energy and Your TV Set...Coming: 10-Hour Videocassettes... Up Everest with TV Cameras

WHAT'S HAPPENING

HOLLYWOOD

Don Shirley reporting

We're no angels. Ralph Nader is going Hollywood. He's talking about co-producing a pilot for a commercial TV series based on the adventures of Nader's Raiders—the consumer crusaders who have investigated some of commercial television's biggest sponsors. The series would be fictional and "similar to *Lou Grant*," says attorney Mark Litwak, Nader's deputy in charge of Hollywood.

One way or another, Nader seems determined to break into show business. Other ideas for screen projects that he and Litwak are shepherding around town include TV-movies about environmental disasters, a miniseries set in the populist era, a public-affairs series with Nader as host, and feature films. Inspired by "The China Syndrome," Nader wants to reach the masses who don't read his books and articles, says Litwak. However, he adds, "We will maintain a certain tone. We're not interested in making 'Consumer Angels'."

Nader turned down an earlier offer for a Nader's Raiders pilot—which came with a firm commitment from a network, says Litwak—because "we weren't satisfied the tone would be right and the financial terms weren't right for us." Litwak says the money made by Nader's Hollywood Raiders will be returned to their consumer causes.

Ducal dues. ABC has sued the executors of the John Wayne estate, including the Duke's son Michael—at the same time that Michael is producing a biographical film about his father for ABC. ABC's lawsuit attempts to recover $516,667 that the network contends was paid to the late movie star shortly before he became too ill to fulfill the remaining terms of a two-year, $2-million contract he had signed with ABC. The star's son contends that not nearly that much is owed and that the contract could even be interpreted to read that ABC owes money to the Wayne estate rather than vice versa. "We're not going to sit back and get ripped off," declares Michael with true Wayne grit. At the same time, he says the suit has nothing to do with the movie he's making for ABC. He already won a major battle on the movie front when CBS dropped plans to produce a competing film about his father's life.

How to Sell a Script 101. The Hollywood representatives of British mogul Lord Grade weren't having much luck persuading CBS to make a movie about chimpanzees. CBS movies chief William Self was uncertain whether he should invest in a movie that depended on the talents of unknown simians.

During a meeting between Self and Grade's Hollywood staff, a secretary interrupted with the message that the formidable Lord Grade himself was in the building and would like to join them. Self agreed, the door to the office opened, and in walked a tuxedo-clad chimpanzee, puffing a cigar.

The chimp was introduced as "Lord Grade"; actually the creature was a prospective star of the film.

Self auditioned his visitor by requesting the chimp to fetch him an ashtray. "Lord Grade" threw the ashtray at Self, who was impressed enough to sign the deal.

"Chimps" is now scheduled for broadcast on CBS next season. "I can hardly believe I approved it," recalls a slightly dazed Self, "but I did."

Getting at truth. The thirst for fact-based drama has led the powers-that-be in Hollywood to hire the people who know the facts.

ABC is paying 10 journalists at least $1000 each to come up with ideas for movies. And at CBS a *60 Minutes* producer, Harry Moses, has taken a leave of absence from his job at CBS News to produce and direct a two-hour dramatiza-

WHAT'S ON

Some of the noteworthy programs and events that are scheduled for television this month. (Check local listings for dates and times in your area.)

Olivia Newton-John

Fred Gwynne

DRAMA AND MOVIES

Disraeli. A four-part *Masterpiece Theatre* starring Ian McShane as the great British Prime Minister (see page 50). PBS.

King Crab. Family strife and rough-and-tumble practices in the seafood business are the concern of this two-hour television drama starring Barry Newman, Harold Gould and Gail Strickland. The playwright, Preston Ransone, received the "ABC Theatre Award" for his effort. ABC.

Grease. The 1978 film version based on the long-running Broadway musical, with John Travolta, Olivia Newton-John, Jeff Conaway and Stockard Channing. Home Box Office (cable).

A Day with Conrad Green. A dramatization of the Ring Lardner short story, with Fred Gwynne in the title role. PBS. *continued*

www.americanradiohistory.com

tion of one of his *60 Minutes* stories: an account of the ordeal of a black GI who was accused of espionage and given LSD as a "truth serum."

Moses says he was flooded with inquiries from producers who wanted to transform his story into a movie immediately after it appeared on *60 Minutes*, but he insisted on producing and directing the film himself. MTM Enterprises and CBS agreed to do it his way.

Moses speculates that the ratings success of *60 Minutes* has a lot to do with Hollywood's increasing reliance on journalists. But he doesn't expect the gold rush to last—"In three years, they'll probably go back to musicals."

NEW YORK

Doug Hill reporting

Letterman's days. This month NBC plans to break away from the daytime formula of game shows, soaps and situation-comedy reruns with what could be a wild 90-minute comedy/talk/variety show starring David Letterman. Scheduled to originate live each weekday from New York at 10 A.M., beginning June 23, the program is described by Letterman (facetiously, one assumes) as a combination of *Donahue* and *Little House on the Prairie*, *The Dating Game* and the evening news, professional wrestling and *Make Room for Daddy*.

"The people involved are all in agreement that this is a pretty good opportunity to do something different," Letterman says. "So, the first day I think we're going to have a rodeo in the studio. We'll have elderly women riding Brahma bulls and stuff." Elderly women riding Brahma bulls? "Trust me on this," he says. "I think it will be new-wave TV."

Is the daytime audience ready for this sort of thing? "Well, we'll find out, won't we?" replies Letterman. "I think NBC's philosophy is that the game shows may have, for this particular cycle, fulfilled their usefulness, and that it's time to look elsewhere. It's truly a gamble."

NBC has signed Letterman on for 26 weeks, but Letterman, knowing that some observers don't expect the show to stay on the air that long, plans a Cancellation Sweepstakes as one of his first events. "We'll put at least a dollar in the jackpot every day, and the person who guesses the accurate date of our cancellation wins the Prize Wonderland," he says. "So, send in your cards, folks."

Ten years on. Big plans are brewing at WGBH-TV, the PBS station in Boston, to celebrate the upcoming 10th-anniversary season of its most popular offering, *Masterpiece Theatre*. Backing is being sought for a record album of theme music from some of the program's series, and for a lavishly illustrated coffee-table book that would take a retrospective look at their portrayal of "the manners and morals of the ages."

But the major event will probably be a "gala" celebration featuring many of the stars who have appeared on the show, clips of old favorites and, of course, Alistair Cooke. Not coincidentally, it would be televised during PBS fund-raising time next March.

For the record, *MT* went on the air here in January of 1971 with *The First Churchills*, and through last season had presented a total of 58 series. Among adaptations being considered for next season are Feodor Dostoevski's "Crime and Punishment," James Plunkett's "Strumpet City," Jane Austen's "Pride and Prejudice" and Vera Brittain's "Testament of Youth."

Eccentrics. Are you an inner-directed consumer? If you are, the advertising community is worried about you, because you don't buy things the way people used to. Edward N. Ney, chairman of the world's largest advertising agency, Young & Rubicam, describes the new breed thusly: "They buy to satisfy their own needs and pleasures. They don't much care what other people think about them and disdain middle-class status symbols. They often form small, clique buying groups, a sort of specialized, class, mass market. They represent about 14 percent of the population right now, and their numbers are growing and will continue to grow."

A singular quality of this group's members is their resistance to traditional advertising—they aren't going to be shamed by ring around the

WHAT'S ON

continued

Roy Scheider

Mary Tyler Moore

Death on the Nile. An all-star cast—including Maggie Smith and Peter Ustinov—floats through Egypt in the 1978 film version of Agatha Christie's whodunit. Showtime (cable).

Cuba. Sean Connery and Brooke Adams star in last year's adventure film set in prerevolutionary Havana. Home Box Office (cable).

The In-Laws. Wacky 1979 comedy about a dentist (Alan Arkin) and a mysterious schemer (Peter Falk) thrown together in an unusual caper. Showtime (cable).

Dr. No. The very first (1962) James Bond film, with Sean Connery, as Agent 007, battling the evil title character (Joseph Wiseman). Home Box Office (cable).

Jaws 2. The sequel to the monster hit about a people-chomping shark, with Roy Scheider and Lorraine Gary. Showtime (cable).

NEWS AND DOCUMENTARIES

Choosing Suicide. Last year, an artist named Jo Roman decided to take her own life—and invited a film crew headed by Dick Ellison to record her actions in the months leading up to her suicide. The result is this documentary (see page 29). PBS.

ABC News Closeup. The continuing strife in Northern Ireland is the subject of a documentary by the award-winning husband-and-wife filmmaking team of Alan and Susan Raymond. ABC.

Search for Solutions. A kaleidoscopic three-part series on scientific discovery that doesn't limit itself to scientists. Included, for instance, is an examination of the way the Dallas Cowboys use computers to predict player performance. PBS.

Picasso—A Painter's Diary. Filmmaker Perry Miller Adato's 90-minute documentary about the life, the works, the intimates and the legend of the great artist. PBS.

SPECIALS

The Tony Awards. On June 8, Broadway presents its annual honors to the past season's best plays and performers. The hosts are Mary Tyler Moore and Jason Robards. CBS.

www.americanradiohistory.com

collar, for example. Says Ney, "The era of intrusive, blaring clamoring for attention is over. Shouting pitchmen and unlifelike slices of life no longer will be acceptable. A commercial crammed with all the selling points in the world but that is too déclassé for the highly educated, inner-directed consumer will be about as valuable as an ounce of dross in a $700-an-ounce gold market."

WASHINGTON

Steve Weinberg reporting

The big bulb. The amount of energy consumed by a television set is comparable to that consumed by a light bulb, say TV manufacturers, who have been outraged by the Department of Energy's recent proposal to curb television's energy use. They want their products exempted from new energy-efficiency standards for home appliances, and they have briefed lawyer J. Edward Day to argue their case with the Government.

Day, acting for the Electronic Industries Association, says that if the new standards are imposed, prices of sets could rise by up to $25, stimulating still further sales of imported models. "This is a financially troubled industry," Day told the DOE. "Any requirement that increases manufacturers' costs, even by what may seem like a small amount, could hurt."

The industry hopes that the Energy Department will follow the lead of the Federal Trade Commission, which has already exempted TV sets from energy labeling rules. The FTC was disdainful of the idea that consumers would be influenced to buy one set rather than another because it offered a savings of a few dollars a year in energy bills.

Through the looking glass. Linda Lavin, star of CBS's popular series *Alice*, is lending her support to a campaign aimed at improving the image of low-paid working women on television.

Lavin's portrayal of Alice, the Phoenix, Ariz., waitress, earned her a 1979 Women at Work Broadcast Award from the National Commission on Working Women. When she was told about the Commission's work—of which she admits she knew nothing before—she traveled from Hollywood to Washington at her own expense to attend the presentation ceremony, where she met the secretaries, factory workers and, yes, waitresses who form the organization's grass roots. She decided then to become an active member of the

Linda Lavin

NCWW, which is attempting to break down the negative stereotypes of women who work in blue- and pink-collar jobs.

"In *Alice*," said Lavin, "I'm trying to bring a dignity to the job of being a waitress. I became more aware of the needs of working women as I developed the role.... I want to speak out for these people."

Election watch. Does TV news coverage of Presidential campaigns have its own particular biases? Do viewers get a different picture of a campaign from television and print journalists?

A research professor at George Washington University, Michael J. Robinson (on leave from Catholic University's Department of Politics), is studying this year's campaign reporting in an attempt to answer such questions. Every weeknight election story on *CBS Evening News* and on the tapes of a major newspaper wire service is being subjected by Robinson to careful analysis.

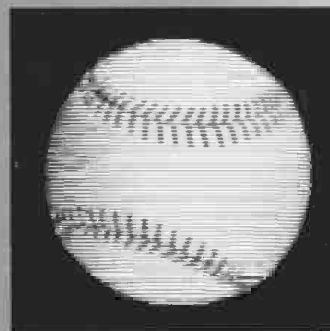
He has some hunches about what he'll find. TV news, he thinks, will be more concerned with the horse race than with issues. And TV will treat front-running candidates more negatively than their major competitors.

Media reality is taken by most Americans to be objective reality, says Robinson, but the two are very different. For example, the Arkansas delegate-selection process, although first in the country, was virtually ignored, he says. CBS didn't even mention the

WHAT'S ON

continued

David Letterman



Monday Night Baseball

The Daytime Emmy Awards. Soaps, game shows and the like get their kudos June 4. NBC.

MUSIC

Showstoppers. Ethel Merman ("There's No Business like Show Business" from "Annie Get Your Gun"), Sandy Duncan ("Never-Never Land" from "Peter Pan"), Richard Kiley ("The Impossible Dream" from "Man of La Mancha") and others sing the big numbers from their hit shows. Home Box Office (cable).

Jazz at the Maintenance Shop. A summer-long Monday-night series featuring jazz artists taped at the Maintenance Shop on the campus of Iowa State University. Saxophonist Phil Woods and his quartet lead off. PBS.

Nashville Country Pop Festival. Top country stars, including hosts Barbara Mandrell and Larry Gatlin, perform in concert at The Grand Ole Opry. Home Box Office (cable).

SPORTS

Wimbledon Tennis. Coverage of the world's most prestigious tournament begins on June 28; the women's finals will be presented via taped delay on July 4 and the men's finals will be shown live on July 5. NBC.

The Belmont Stakes. The final jewel of horse racing's Triple Crown, run at New York's Belmont Park, is covered live on June 7. CBS.

Monday Night Baseball. This year, ABC plans to televise baseball on Monday nights in June only, switching to Sunday afternoons later in the season. ABC.

Ladies Professional Golf Association Championship. Live coverage of the final two rounds from the Jack Nicklaus Golf Center in Mason, Ohio, on June 7 and 8. NBC.

COMEDY AND VARIETY

The David Letterman Show. The young comedian, a contender to replace Johnny Carson as *Tonight Show* host, gets his own program but at a very different time—10 A.M. Fred Silverman will be watching. NBC.

www.americanradiohistory.com

results until two days after they were available. But coverage of Iowa, New Hampshire and Florida was heavy long before delegates were chosen. As a result, George Bush was seen as the Republican front-runner for a time, even though his victory in Iowa over Ronald Reagan was electorally insignificant: the vote was nonbinding.

"Reagan had the misfortune to win where the electronic media weren't," says Robinson. "Bush was smart enough to win where the media were."

LONDON

Richard Gilbert reporting

Inflating the pundits. Television lectures by eminent economists have become high-risk enterprises at the BBC. Early this year, the Corporation drew the wrath of the opposition Labour Party by giving Nobel prize-winner Milton Friedman six half-hour slots in which to expound his monetarist doctrines—the very same doctrines that underlie Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's anti-inflation strategy.

Labour Party critics called Friedman's series, *Free to Choose*, "unpaid propaganda" for the Thatcher government, despite the fact that each lecture was followed by a studio debate in which the professor was confronted with economists of dissenting views.

Three years ago, when the Thatcherites were in opposition, they were the ones complaining. They berated the BBC for devoting a 13-part series, *The Age of Uncertainty*, to Friedman's academic antagonist, John Kenneth Galbraith, an economist of more liberal hue. One of their spokesmen, Sir Keith Jo-

continued on page 89

THE RATINGS RACE

MOVIES: BOX-OFFICE SUCCESS DOESN'T GUARANTEE HIGH RATINGS

By MICHAEL DANN

The most expensive items on network shopping lists these days are the television rights to movies that were originally made for theaters. And the risks of buying those theatrical films are enormous.

The way the marketplace works today, many movies are purchased by networks before they are even cast, let alone filmed. Networks need theatrical features so badly—to boost their ratings and to fill gaps in their prime-time schedules—they will commit themselves to buying as many as a dozen unproduced features on one shopping spree, as long as a studio allows them to do some picking and choosing.

In the early days of network television, the length of a film did not influence the price. Today, as with sausages, the longer the film, the higher the price, generally speaking. I remember Joe Levine, the distinguished motion-picture producer, telling me he had shot extra footage for his film "A Bridge Too Far" so that he could sell the networks a version that was longer than the one shown in theaters, to be run in two parts on TV. And the gifted Francis Ford Coppola personally edited a nine-hour television version of his two "Godfather" films, to increase the number of millions he received from NBC for the TV rights.

If a movie that has not been presold to a network becomes a box-office smash in its theatrical release, it can command more than $10 million for just three runs on a commercial network. In the old days, $10 million could buy a network a whole package of assorted films.

The most perplexing problem for TV's film buyers is the fact that audiences that flock to movie theaters for big hits do not necessarily flock to their TV screens to watch blockbuster movies. Remember, a big theatrical movie plays to only about 15 percent of the American population. Television is watched by more than 80 percent of Americans during any given week. Putting it another way: almost three quarters of the American people seldom go to the movies. But these same people are almost all television viewers. And so, you can never be absolutely sure whether theatrical success can be translated into high TV ratings.

"One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest," a great box-office success and an Oscar-winner, did not repeat that success when it was shown on television. Many inexpensive movies, made just for television, have had higher ratings than big motion-picture hits.

Look at the table, listing the 20 highest rated theatrical films shown on TV during the last three seasons, and you will see how difficult it is to predict how a movie will perform in the ratings if you are basing your judgment solely on the rental fees theater owners paid the production company during a film's run at the movie houses.

TOP-RATED THEATRICAL FILMS (BASED ON THE PAST THREE NETWORK SEASONS)

	RATING	THEATER RENTALS
1. "Jaws"	39.0	$133,429,000
2. "Rocky"	37.1	54,000,000
3. "The Longest Yard"	33.1	23,017,000
4. "The Sting"	31.9	78,889,000
5. "Smokey and the Bandit"	31.8	61,017,000
6. "Oh, God!"	31.7	31,000,000
7. "Three Days of the Condor"	30.5	20,014,000
8. "Harper Valley PTA"	29.1	8,550,000
9. "The Godfather" (Part 4)	28.5	30,673,000
10. "The Godfather" (Part 3)	28.0	30,673,000
11. "The End"	27.8	20,000,000
12. "Gator"	26.9	5,500,000
13. "Coming Home"	25.9	13,389,000
14. "The Outlaw Josey Wales"	25.7	13,500,000
14. "Live and Let Die"	25.7	15,850,000
16. "Carrie"	25.4	15,000,000
17. "Midway" (Part 2)	25.2	22,329,000
18. "Silver Streak"	25.1	29,900,000
19. "Magnum Force"	24.9	20,100,000
20. "Car Wash"	24.8	9,000,000

www.americanradiohistory.com

NEWS NOW!

STARTING JUNE 1: SEE WHAT'S NEVER BEEN SHOWN ON NETWORK TELEVISION BEFORE.

World news live, 24 hours a day. A world of information, analysis and opinion conventional networks simply haven't time to explore.

All News
To bring you all this news we've built a new news network. The Cable News Network. Anchored in Atlanta, New York and Washington. With foreign bureaus in London, Peking, and Rome.

With national bureaus in seven key cities. With 300 distinguished news professionals. Among them: Emmy Award-winner Daniel Schorr. Former Treasury Secretary, William E. Simon. Bella Abzug. Columnists, Dan Dorfman, Richard Reeves, Evans & Novak, Dr. Joyce Brothers.

All covering news they know best. Foreign news, national news, financial news, sports news. Special reports never covered regularly before. On health, science, consumer affairs, the arts. News about women. News with different views.

All the Time
Day and night. Covered in a way television has never covered news before. Regularly scheduled. Immediate. Involving. And news as it happens. When it happens. In process. Unpackaged. News, in fact, 24 hours a day.

Television news like never before. Presented by Turner Broadcasting. Delivered only on cable.

CNN
CABLE NEWS NETWORK

Contact your local cable system. Ask if you can get all the news in the world where you live.

www.americanradiohistory.com

He-e-e-r-e's Kermit!

In your discussion of "Who Will Succeed Johnny Carson?" (March), you overlooked one very interesting horse of another color—Kermit the Frog. While he has hosted the show only once, he has been a guest many times. After all, Kermit has the down-home charm of middle America and the wit and worldliness of an international star. And he does know one of the BIGGEST stars of show business today—Miss Piggy. My vote goes to Jim Henson's little green friend.

Diane Cala
Salem, N.H.

Fine Points

Regarding "The Whirlybird Gets The News" ("Panoramic View," April), KPNX-TV is not the first station to use live microwave from a helicopter. We are the first to use the Tayburn Electronics automatic tracking antenna. Helicopters are a fad, but they will become standard for those broadcast news operations who know how to use them and are willing to stand the ongoing expense.

Al Buch
News Director
KPNX-TV
Phoenix, Ariz.

A Not-So-Special "Special"

Large bold letters on the screen announced "A Special CBS Presentation," so I sat up from my Type B flu supine position. Oh, oh, something new on the Iran crisis, perhaps Kennedy dropped out of the race, the Shah's plane crashed en route to Cairo, another nuclear disaster, or none of the above. None of the above. This March 24 special was dear old Peanuts and Charlie Brown, whose baseball field was appropriated by Arbor Day enthusiasts.

After checking TV Guide, I learned this particular Peanuts show was first aired in 1976. Now I dearly love Peanuts and the rest of the gang but what is so special about a 1976 rerun? In March yet. Could it be that in the spring the thoughts of CBS brass turn to the money they owe Charles Schulz? They could at least have had Snoopy napping on the CBS letters so we wouldn't think we were about to hear some juicy or earth-shattering news.

That was almost as disappointing as a news break telling us about one tenth of the returns in after the Presidential primary in Little Town, Anywhere. Well, not quite.

Florence Shakalum
Philadelphia

No Blank Checks

How can cable TV expect the majority of viewers to subscribe to its services not knowing what exactly it is they're getting into? We're supposed to dish out $10, $20 or $30 a month for a package of programming we know nothing about beforehand. Personally I feel that most of what the TV and motion-picture industry is putting out now is cheap, gaudy refuse, with maybe a few good shows. The chances cable is any better are slim.

What I, and a lot of other people, would like to see is cable become a sort of free-market exchange for creativity, ideas and information. When fiber optics comes around, we could have thousands of channels with a diversity of artists selling their wares directly to the public at large. This could be just the right atmosphere for some unique experiments or maybe some truly great works of art.

I would be willing to spend real money for what I consider to be good stuff, but not sign over a blank check for everything the cable industry produces.

David Roha
Oakland, Cal.

Drama Department

I find it particularly unfortunate that, despite the flood of miniseries (or serial dramas) produced for the American home screen, not one of them (and I include *Roots* and the PBS series on the Adams family) has achieved the dramatic or production values that the British series have brought off time and time again.

Baird Searles
New York

I enjoyed reading the article on docudramas in your March issue. It was shocking to learn that many of the truths were distorted. However, the most shocking thing for me was learning that the producers of racial shows know the impact that these shows will have on the general public. Everyone agrees that violence in the streets is increased by violence on TV yet they continue to ignore the role of racially biased movies and shows in our racial problems. If the people that make these shows really cared about the welfare of our people, they would show more truth in the way it is today, rather than exaggerate wrongdoings in the past. There are a lot of good people doing all they can to end racial strife and bring true equality to America. Of course it boils down to one thing—do the makers of these shows really care about our people and country or are they only worried about making that "almighty dollar"?

John Harrison
Hummelstown, Pa.

Major Deficiency

People in the fields of television and education need to take a good look at how few universities and colleges have good departments in television. I'm majoring in radio-television-film at the University of Missouri-Columbia, and for a university known so widely for its journalism school, it is surprising that the radio-television-film department is just mediocre.

With the advent of cable television, pay-TV, increased local-television production and the networks gobbling up more and more ideas, there is going to be a sharply increasing need for radio-television-film graduates. More students than ever will probably be choosing this major. And if people want higher quality television, then graduates going into television will have to have higher quality educations.

Charles Lloyd Mallory
Columbia, Mo.

Access or Excess?

Re the reference to access channels in New York City in your story, "How Blue is Cable TV? " (March): Lo and behold, years after the cable companies objected to access programming, we have a new form of access that they are jumping at the chance to use. Pay-TV, HBO, Showtime, ESPN and the like would not be anywhere without their "access" to the individual systems. Many systems used to call cable movies "local origination," but with the majority of the programming coming by way of Satcom or Westar, the word hardly fits. I think if an unbiased poll was taken, most cable subscribers would like to see local news and how things of a local nature affect them

www.americanradiohistory.com

rather than "Captain Lust" and "Naughty Coeds."

Robert E. Smart
Manager
K8 Cable Access TV Div.
Kane, Pa.

Salting the Wounds

During my time in Vietnam, I was in the field with the 1st Air Cavalry Division and later with the Armed Forces Network in Saigon ('69-70). With that broad perspective, you can imagine my interest when I read that Norman Steinberg was going to do a comedy series set in Saigon, in '67, at an Armed Forces Vietnam Network TV Station ("This Month," February).

Then I read on; the title, *Six O'Clock Follies*, is a play on the derogatory title given to the daily military press briefings by the Saigon Press Corps. Mr. Steinberg said it was going to be "'The Deer Hunter' with laughs...." Did we see the same movie?

And finally, this time, television is not going to portray the Vietnam soldier as a junkie, an indiscriminate killer of women and children. No, Mr. Steinberg has decided what the Vietnam soldier really was—black; i.e., "Vietnam was a black man's war." Well, you can imagine how surprised all the Caucasians and Asians who answered the call will be to find that out.

The humor from the Vietnam experience was the same humor that came from all our wars—survival humor, the laughter to mask the tears, frustration, fear, loneliness, pain.

The U.S. fighting man in Vietnam wasn't a different color, more or less courageous or dedicated than those that came before him. The thing that made the Vietnam soldier's experience different was not what happened on the battlefield, but what happened when he returned home.

Mr. Steinberg's project seems little more than another dose of salt for the open wounds sustained, in this country, by the returning Vietnam vet.

Bill Corsair
East Hartford, Conn.

Correspondence for this column should be addressed to: Letters Department, PANORAMA, Box 950, Wayne, Pa. 19087. No anonymous correspondence will be published. Letters may be abridged because of space limitations. We regret that it will not be possible for us to reply individually to letter writers.

"I never knew gold rum tasted like this."

If you're still drinking a blended whiskey on the rocks...

It's because you haven't tasted gold rum on the rocks.

That's the reaction that's made Puerto Rican Gold Rum one of the fastest growing liquors in America today. It's the smooth alternative to bourbons, blends, Canadians—even Scotch.

Try our Gold Rum with soda, ginger ale, or on the rocks. The first sip will amaze you. The second will convert you.

Make sure the rum is Puerto Rican. The people of Puerto Rico have been making rum for almost five centuries. Their specialized skills and dedication result in a rum of exceptional taste and purity.

No wonder over 85% of the rum sold in this country comes from Puerto Rico.

PUERTO RICAN RUMS
Aged for smoothness and taste.

For free "Light Rums of Puerto Rico" recipes, write: Puerto Rican Rums, Dept. PN-3, 1290 Avenue of the Americas, N.Y., N.Y. 10019 ©1979 Commonwealth of Puerto Rico

www.americanradiohistory.com

Television and Politics—Part 1

PERSPECTIVE

By RICHARD REEVES

As the Presidential primary season winds down and the political parties gear up for their nominating conventions, it is an appropriate time to pause and take a look at the 1980 campaign and at the role television plays in American politics. In this issue, PANORAMA will take that look from four different perspectives, starting on these pages and adding to the picture on pages 16-22 and 52-65.

Four Pivotal TV Events—and Two That Are Yet to Come

Ted Kennedy was angry on the morning after the Wisconsin Democratic primary election. He had lost again to President Carter—this time by 26 percentage points—but this was the one that hurt his campaign most. The week before, impressive wins in New York and Connecticut had appeared to revitalize the Kennedy campaign, and the Senator thought he had a chance to wrestle the nomination away from Carter. Now it was over.

Whom was Kennedy mad at? In a way, television. The Senator was convinced that Carter had used the medium—and the office of the President—to turn the election around before it began. Precisely 42 minutes before it began.

At 7:18 ET that morning, April 1, just before the polls opened in Wisconsin, Carter had called a news conference in the Oval Office—instantly ensuring himself coverage on America's three morning shows—*Today*, *Good Morning America* and CBS News' *Morning* show. "New hopes were being raised," Kennedy said, talking about the White House's efforts to free the hostages held in Iran for five months. "The return of the hostages was uppermost in the minds of the people of Wisconsin."

The President's press secretary, Jody Powell, didn't even bother to deny that the dramatic morning appearance of his boss was political. Of course that's why he did it, Powell told reporters several hours later.

However successful Carter's ploy, it was just another example of how the 1980 political campaign has become a series of television events. Out of curiosity, I asked a half-dozen high-ranking members of the campaign staffs of Carter and the Republican front-runner, Ronald Reagan, to list the major events of the 1980 campaign to date. This was the consensus list, chronologically:

1. The CBS special on Edward Kennedy, in which Roger Mudd questioned the Senator closely and effectively on Chappaquiddick, his relationship with his wife and the goals of a possible Kennedy Presidency. "Teddy never recovered from that show," said a Carter manager. "It's possible that we won the nomination that night."

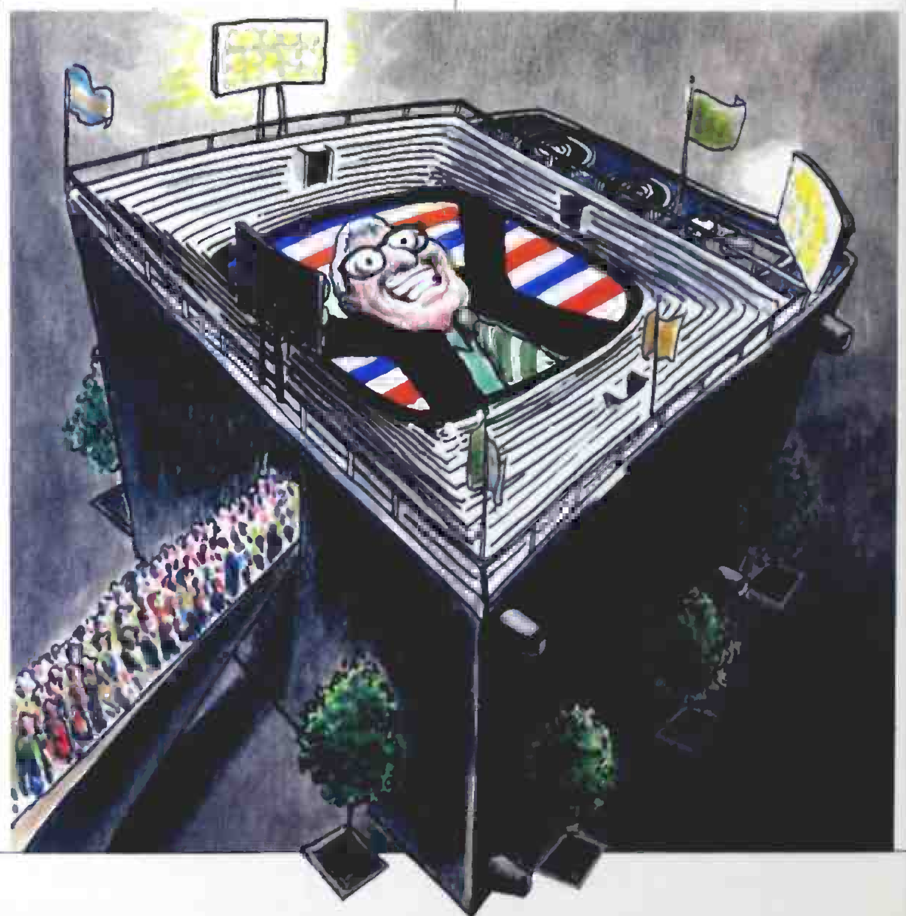
2. John Anderson's impressive performance on the first televised joint appearance of the Republican candidates in Des Moines, Iowa. "That program made John Anderson a national figure, something he never could accomplish in 19 years in Congress," said another Carter man. "If he runs as an independent candidate in the general election, it will be because that appearance was televised."

3. Ronald Reagan's dramatic moment—"I paid for that microphone ..."—at a forum in Nashua, N.H. The forum was not televised live outside the state, but clips of Reagan's angry moment and George Bush's tense reaction were broadcast nationally on network news shows for four consecutive days. "Reagan won the nomination in that minute," said one of his assistants. "He showed the energy to deal with the age issue, and Bush, his most dangerous opponent, was eliminated by the image of him sitting there frozen in a tight situation."

4. Carter's surprise news conference the morning of the Wisconsin primary.

Some of that may be arguable, but those are the campaign moments that reporters, print and electronic, on the campaign trail retell and reanalyze over the last drink in the last bar open in Milwaukee or Philadelphia—or wherever the political action happens to be on a given Tuesday.

Actually, the message is that the action is where the medium is. Television is the arena of modern politics. Where the cameras set up is where it happens. If television doesn't go to Arkansas to cover that state's Republican delegate



www.americanradiohistory.com

selecting committees—which it didn't—and a Howard Baker does well—which he did—it's as if that event never happened. Can a Baker campaign then survive? It didn't.

If Minnesotans are foolish enough to hold their caucuses on Feb. 26, the same day as the New Hampshire primary, they should know that CBS, NBC and ABC will have more than 500 people in New Hampshire and three part-timers in Minnesota. The important thing is not that Minnesota selects nearly three times as many convention delegates as New Hampshire—which it does. The important thing is that America will get the message sent from Manchester, where Reagan did well, rather than from Minneapolis, where Bush did well.

Bush's Minnesota manager, Thomas Tripp, knew what was coming a couple of days before the two states began their selection processes. He predicted that Minnesota's turnout would be lower than expected—it was—because people would stay home from evening caucuses to watch Walter Cronkite talking about New Hampshire.

That's the way it is. And, although we take it for granted, it is a new kind of politics. The great eye of the Nation—the networks—can magnify any event and make it nationally significant. Patrick Caddell, who is President Carter's pollster and did the same work for an earlier Democratic candidate, George McGovern, talked about that during one of those long campaign nights when the people who plot and analyze politics close local inns. How much has television coverage changed and how would it have changed the campaigns and elections we remember if the scene were being covered then as it is today?

We started with the 1972 election, with the first Democratic caucuses of that year. They were in Iowa and Arizona, and one of the media winners was a longshot who had worked hard to organize Arizona: John Lindsay, the mayor of New York, upset McGovern, coming in second to Edmund Muskie, the front-runner in the early days of 1972.

The Arizona caucuses were essentially ignored by television, which, in those days, waited for the first primary, New Hampshire. What if the networks had covered them and propelled Lindsay the way Bush was anointed with "momentum" out of Iowa?

"I don't think Lindsay could have gone all the way for the nomination," Caddell said. "But he probably would have knocked McGovern out of the race. They were both competing for antiwar activists and money. What happened was that nobody paid attention to Arizona and we, the McGovern campaign, were able to rally back in New Hampshire. That would not happen in 1980."

We also agreed that, if television had reached some sort of maturity in 1952, Estes Kefauver could not have been denied the Democratic nomination—which went, of course, to Adlai Stevenson—after Kefauver won a series of primary victories. Why? Because television coverage would have involved the whole country in Kefauver's triumphs.

On the 1960 election, Caddell thought: "If the country had seen every night that Kennedy was saying one thing in the North and his running mate, Lyndon Johnson, was saying different things in the South, I don't think Kennedy could have won that election."

And so, during that long night on the road, we "nominated" Kefauver, defeated John Kennedy and eliminated George McGovern. Or, rather, our perception of television's impact did.

Completing the list of what television might do as the 1980 race continues, I add two items:

5. Liberals, including frustrated Kennedy backers, will try to make a mess of the television show called the Democratic National Convention. That—televised squabbling over rules and the party's platform—could change the direction and prospects of the Carter campaign.

6. Reagan will do better, much better, than expected in televised debates with the President, if, as it appears as this is written, they become the two nominees. He has been almost brilliant in joint appearances with his opponents during the primary campaign. If he can do that against Carter with half the country watching, the last television event of the television campaign of 1980 could change American history. ■

PANORAMA TELEVISION TODAY AND TOMORROW

Editor:
Roger Youman
Managing Editor:
Ellie Kossack
Associate Editors:
Dick Friedman,
Stanley Marcus, Brandy Rommel
Art Director:
Norman S. Hotz
Picture Editor:
Laddie Marshack
Assistant Art Director:
Patricia Ryan
Production Manager:
Louis Terracciano
Editorial Coordinator:
Christine Patterson
Copy Editors:
Gail Harlow *(Chief)*
Nyoka Hawkins, Deborah Lyons
Editorial Assistant:
Debra Sheer
Art Assistants:
Fran Strauss, Monica Garb
New York Bureau:
Doug Hill, Howard Polskin
Los Angeles Bureau:
Don Shirley
Correspondents:
Steve Weinberg *(Washington)*,
Richard Gilbert *(London)*,
John Fujii *(Tokyo)*
Contributing Editors:
Douglas Bauer, Bill Davidson,
Edwin Diamond, David Lachenbruch,
Sam Merrill, Ted Nelson,
Richard Reeves, Harry Stein

Advertising Director:
Robert G. Baumler
Eastern Advertising Manager:
Malcolm B. Niedner
Western Advertising Manager:
James L. Lee
Advertising Production Manager:
William Gesele
Advertising Representatives:
Atlanta:
Advertising Sales/South Inc.
Chicago:
Warden, Kelley, Allen and Opfer, Inc.
Los Angeles:
Lowell Fox & Associates

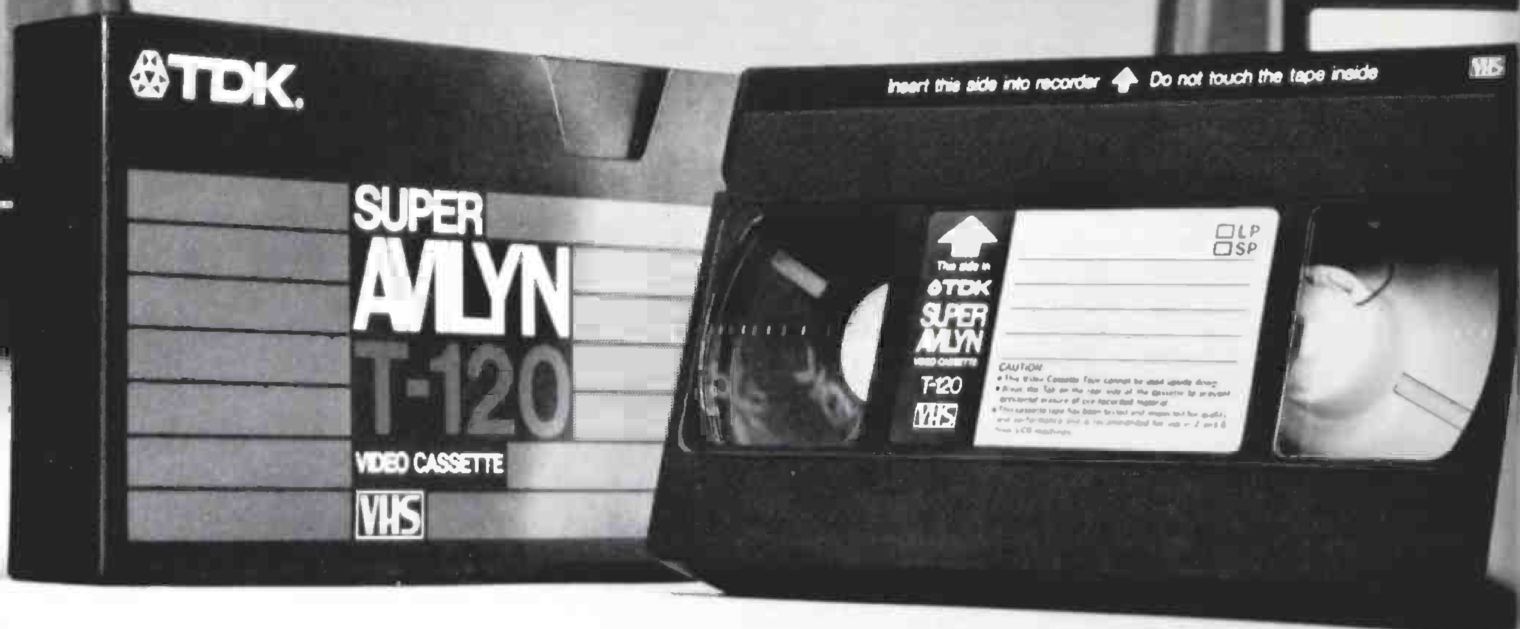
Circulation Director:
Hugh Crocker
Research Director:
Bruce Gershfield
Public Relations Manager:
Brian Levitt
Business Manager:
John T. Larkin

Publisher:
Frank G. Wolf
Editorial Director:
Merrill Panitt

Walter H. Annenberg: Founder

www.americanradiohistory.com

Until this year there was no way to appreciate TDK's six-hour picture.



TDK Super Avilyn videotape revolutionized the home video cassette market by being the first to deliver high quality four-hour pictures. The performance was so outstanding, deck manufacturers knew they could proceed with the development of six-hour play.

When the decks were ready, TDK videotape, always improving, was there waiting. Six hours are the critical test. The tape moves at one third the original VHS speed. So slow, the slightest inconsistency will be magnified. TDK passes the test brilliantly. At six-hour speed it delivers color pictures of startling resolution and quality. And the beauty of it is: the degree of consistency. Because of its ultra-high particle density, Super Avilyn provides an excellent signal-to-noise ratio and virtually no drop outs. A difference you can appreciate.

TDK Super Avilyn offers another benefit. It acts against oxide shedding and videodeck head wear. If videotape is not reliable, repeated use at the longer playing speed can cause damage to the delicate parts of your videodeck. Super Avilyn has a strong binder which holds onto its cobalt-adsorbed gamma ferric oxide crystals. You get thousands of trouble-free playing hours.

You may not be able to see the difference between six-hour videotapes right away. But you'll see it eventually.

TDK.

High fidelity for the eyes

Supplier to the U.S. Olympic Team

© 1980 TDK Electronics Corp. Garden City, New York 11530

www.americanradiohistory.com

CABLE AND PAY-TV

Lathering Up with the Soaps

By SETH GOLDSTEIN

Old soap operas don't die; they're rerun on cable. That at least is the happy fate of two popular network series of the '60s and early '70s, *Return to Peyton Place* and the gothic thriller *Dark Shadows*; and of a syndicated cliffhanger, *Strange Paradise.* A month ago, all three began reappearing on screens of cable subscribers who get Satellite Program Network as part of their basic cable service.

The return of *Return* and other serials is part of an attempt by a New York advertising agency and several of its clients to recapture a lost audience: women who were fans of afternoon soap operas until they went to work full time. The agency, Case & McGrath, thinks they'll be back at the new hours of 10 P.M. to midnight, ET (earlier elsewhere). And by way of encouragement it has added the original nighttime soap, *Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman,* to the schedule.

Of course, C&M has more to offer than just soaps. The tales of passion and intrigue are interrupted by commercials for cosmetics, health-care products, soft drinks and hosiery. This is one of the most extensive uses of advertising on cable TV to date, amounting to 10 to 12 commercial minutes an hour.

Currently, an estimated 130,000 people are tuning in to the soaps every night—about four percent of the Satellite Programming Network's subscribers. By 1984, when SPN might be in more than 10 million homes, Case & McGrath expects the audience to have grown to around half a million.

The four soaps will keep audiences and advertisers happy for some time before anyone will need to think of rerunning the reruns: taken together, they comprise more than 2300 episodes.

Invasion from Europe

The British and the French are advancing steadily into American cable territory. For the past four years, Manhattan has had a weekly offering of French programs called Telefrance-U.S.A. on two of its cable systems, and since May 1979 systems throughout the country have been able to obtain videotapes of British programming packaged—along with some stray Canadian and U.S. shows—under the rubric "The English Channel." In both cases, subscribers receive the service as part of their basic cable menu.

Now The English Channel has taken to the satellite, making it considerably more accessible to cablecasters, and Telefrance has followed suit, thus extending its parish west of the Hudson.

Programs on the The English Channel have included "The Rise and Fall of the CIA"; "Nuclear Nightmare," a documentary about Three Mile Island; the "Far Eastern 7-man Rugby Championships"; and a series on Beethoven by pianist-conductor Daniel Barenboim.

Granada Television, a major British producer, has supplied many of the programs—but not as many as it would like. Granada's library of dramatic series can't be shown on cable until restrictions imposed by British unions are overcome. The BBC has been luckier in this respect. Successful negotiations enabled it to collaborate with Time-Life Films on BBC in America, a proposed satellite/cable channel that will carry 12 original hours a week of entertainment programming.

Telefrance, of course, has a different kind of problem—the fact that the French speak French. Although Telefrance host-producer Jean-Claude Baker uses English for interviews and introductions, the programs themselves have subtitles. In Manhattan, subtitles haven't deterred a sizable audience of non-French speakers, and Baker believes the rest of the country will be equally adaptable.

Among the programs currently being seen on Telefrance are a popular series about a gentleman bandit, *Arsene Lupin,* set in Paris in 1907; and episodes of *Madame le Juge,* starring Simone Signoret.

The Satellite Crisis

A working satellite means never having to say you're sorry. When RCA lost Satcom III late last year, there were a lot of abject apologies to be made—principally to program distributors who expected to reach the cable market via the new bird.

The most irate customer was Ted Turner, whose Cable News Network (CNN) is scheduled to begin broadcasting this month. Turner was not appeased by the offer of alternative transmitting facilities (transponders) on AT&T's Comstar satellite, and he wasn't just being stubborn: he knew that only a handful of the country's cable systems have earth stations pointed in the direction of Comstar. What CNN needed—and demanded—was a transponder on Satcom I, the satellite that currently carries the bulk of cable and pay-TV programming, and is received by nearly 2500 cable operators.

RCA refused, saying that the two available Satcom I transponders were reserved for voice and data traffic. This reply earned them a lawsuit from Turner, complete with a $34.5-million damage claim. The impasse was broken with a temporary compromise when RCA agreed to give CNN six months on Satcom I, after which time the courts would decide whether the news network has a right to remain there.

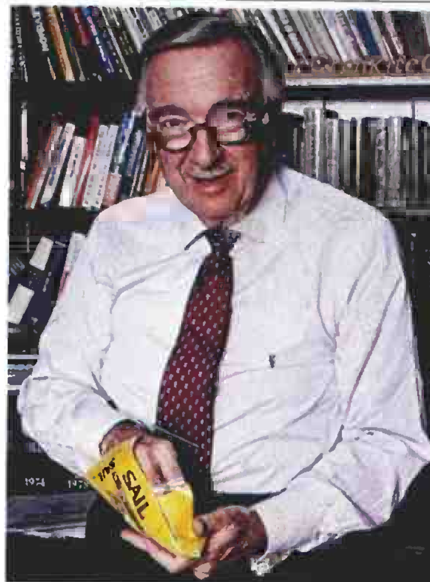
If Turner loses the legal battle, Cable News Network could vanish in a twinkling, unless Turner can lease a Satcom I channel from someone else by then or swallows his pride and agrees to jump aboard Comstar.

And what of a replacement for Satcom III? RCA promises liftoff in June 1981—a long time between newscasts. ■

www.americanradiohistory.com

Q&A

WALTER CRONKITE



"You Can Hardly Beat It for a Long-Running Story"

Walter Cronkite looks forward to his last hurrah as a convention anchorman—and looks back on earlier Presidential campaigns

The biggest news in television this year was not sitcom ratings, a new miniseries or corporate profits. It was an event that in ordinary circumstances would be noted merely with the awarding of a gold watch. It was the announced retirement of a 63-year-old man to take up lighter duties within his company.

But the departure from the *CBS Evening News* of Walter Cronkite, anchorman *extraordinaire* and national uncle, was no ordinary retirement. Among the affairs of state, it ranks closer to the abdication of a reigning but aging monarch in favor of the crown prince than to the election of a President, which, after all, occurs every four years. Cronkite first joined CBS in 1950, after nearly a decade of reporting from Europe for the United Press, and he has occupied the *CBS Evening News* anchor chair for 18 years. Since 1970, when CBS began outdrawing the other evening-news shows, Walter Cronkite has sat unchallenged on the throne of American newscasting. His retirement was not a matter of corporate change, but of national succession.

Yet before he passes the swivel anchor chair to Dan Rather, Cronkite still has a lot of news to cover, including the Republican and Democratic National Conventions scheduled in July and August. If Walter Cronkite's special place in the history of American television is rooted in remembered moments—Presidential inaugurals, a Presidential assassination, the space program, the war in Vietnam—none stands out more than his coverage of the national political conventions for the last 28 years.

When the conventions open this summer in Detroit and New York, Cronkite for the last time will put in long hours at the anchor desk of our national political circuses (his endurance has earned him the nickname "Old Iron Pants" among his network colleagues). It will be Cronkite's eighth summer as convention anchorman—more than anyone else in the business. And, except for election night in November and, possibly, the inaugural in January, the conventions will be Cronkite's final marathon appearance before he goes into a semiretirement combination of news analysis, science reporting and a schedule that will leave a lot more time for his favorite pastime, sailing.

In his windowless, book-filled, cozy office in a corner of the *Evening News* studio at the CBS Broadcast Center in New York, Cronkite looks and sounds exactly like the man who shows up on the television screen every weeknight—except that his eyebrows have an unusually thick, bushy flare. His office is pleasantly professorial: reference materials on the shelves, yachting memorabilia on the walls and some mild disorder on his desk. Yet beneath his unflappable appearance, Uncle Walter is obviously a hard-driving man who knows his role in American life.

To obtain his assessment of the impact of television on Presidential politics during the past three decades, PANORAMA sent free-lance writer Peter Ross Range to interview Cronkite. Their edited conversation:

PANORAMA: *Well, we're there again—1980, another quadrennial political circus lies ahead. Are you excited or does it seem kind of old hat?*

CRONKITE: No, I can't say it's old hat. Each campaign and election has its own dynamics. I enjoy it more than almost anything else I have done in my journalism career. The political campaign is so basic to the vitality of the Nation that it is the most enjoyable thing I do. Nothing is more important to whether we survive and how we survive. It also has the human drama of winning and losing. You can hardly beat it for a long-running story.

PANORAMA: *What changes have you seen over the years?*

CRONKITE: Between 1952 and 1960, there was a great deal of change. 1952 was really the last convention that was *not* organized for television. It was an old-fashioned convention. The first convention covered by television was in 1948 [in Philadelphia], but only in three markets, as I remember, and a very primitive kind of coverage. So it didn't make much impact.

But 1952 made an impact. The political parties realized how much of their workings they exposed to the camera. They realized that the lack of decorum of the convention was upsetting to many people who believed that these were serious delegates doing serious business. And while there were some serious delegates, there were a lot of people just along for the free ride and as a lark. This was perfectly clear when you saw them on the floor of the [Chica-

www.americanradiohistory.com

go] convention hall.

A lot of people weren't there during important speeches—you could see all the empty seats. Others virtually never went home. People were in their shirt sleeves or with their shirts off in that rather hot hall. The floor of the convention hall was filthy dirty, littered with papers. In fact, a fire was set in those papers.

It couldn't happen today because they don't stay in session that long. They try to pace the proceedings so they hit prime time at their best moments—they hope. And they have swept a lot of the functioning of the convention off the floor and into closed rooms. The conventions today are not really anything like they were in 1952.

PANORAMA: *It sounds like the difference between blood and guts and antiseptic politics.*

CRONKITE: Yeah, but it's coming back a little bit. Participatory democracy has returned to the primary process with more primaries and caucuses this year. And I would expect to see an increase in the number of people pursuing special causes, who are not beholden in any way to the political organization, who are going to have their say on the convention floor. We saw this in the Democratic convention in 1976 [in New York]—and to a certain extent in their conventions in 1968 and 1972 [in Chicago and Miami].

What we have not seen since 1952 is a real wide-open convention in the sense of the candidate choice emerging from the convention itself. By the time of the first ballot, we're pretty sure who is going to win.

PANORAMA: *Some people say that television has replaced the political parties as a kind of preselector of candidates, that by convention time there is no selection role left.*

CRONKITE: I don't accept that. What television has done is increase the number of primaries. This means there is less opportunity to manipulate the delegates once they're in the convention city. They're committed by law and by vote before they get there, so there isn't much chance for horse-trading.

PANORAMA: *If television's impact has been to increase the impact of the primaries, it has in turn made the conventions less dramatic and gripping. In that case, what's the need for gavel-to-gavel coverage?*

“What we have not seen since 1952 is a real wide-open convention in the sense of the candidate choice emerging from the convention itself.”

CRONKITE: I would agree that some of the drama is gone. You don't have that human confrontation—a winner and a loser determined right there in front of your eyes. But the importance of having gavel-to-gavel coverage is that this is commercial television's one great opportunity—and once every four years is surely not too often—to present the public with one great civics lesson. This is the root, the core of our democratic process. Why not show it to the people? The mere exposure of it forces it into the public consciousness.

PANORAMA: *How does having so much coverage affect the role of the anchorman who has to sit there the whole time and make it go?*

CRONKITE: Since the parties began sweeping as much as they could under the rug and behind closed doors, our role has changed. It used to be that you could pretty well tell the story with floor coverage.

PANORAMA: *You mean be the voice-over of an ongoing drama?*

CRONKITE: Yeah. The main role was interpretive. What is meant by this motion just put to the floor? That was a matter of good reporters finding out what happened behind closed doors and being ready to reveal it when the moment broke.

Now our role is to get out where those meetings are taking place. We can be outside the closed door. We've been able to do that partly because of better equipment—we've got minicams. We don't have to depend simply on the reporters' eyes. And people appreciate the importance of television, so they are ready to talk, to get their side told.

And the more they have put behind closed doors, the more the parties have tried to dress up the open part of the convention. We have had to try to avoid being sucked into that. So when we get to this dull series of speeches on the American way, we just cut away to where the real action is—behind those closed doors.

PANORAMA: *To what extent, then, has a reporter's convention coverage become, like war to a military man, a starmaker or a star-breaker in the television business?*

CRONKITE: Well, I suppose it certainly is a testing ground of a reporter's ability to work under fire and to be bright and attentive. And since there is a high viewing audience over the entire course of the event, it exposes people who can capture the public's imagination. But I don't think that anybody is going to be *made* a star who doesn't have the capability in the first place.

PANORAMA: *What about the time when you announced the promotion, on the air, of Michele Clark to full correspondent during the 1972 convention? Wasn't that choice of timing an example of star-making?*

continued

www.americanradiohistory.com

CRONKITE: She was a marvelous black reporter out of Chicago who was later killed in an airplane crash. Certainly if she hadn't made it on the convention floor, we would not have made a point of doing that.

"I don't like the comparison of a serious news-gathering effort to a show-business or sports event."

PANORAMA: *It seemed a bit like making an MVP award at the World Series.*

CRONKITE: I guess so, but I hate this line of reasoning and questioning. I don't like the comparison of a serious news-gathering effort to a show-business or sports event. It just really shouldn't be that way. We're trying to cover the darn story. We're trying to get the news out of it. I admit that in television we've got this problem of stars. I guess there's no way to beat that.

PANORAMA: *Speaking of your distaste for show-business comparisons, to what extent do you fulfill an entertainment function as a convention anchorman, especially during the dead time?*

CRONKITE: I don't think we ever think of it as entertainment. Now, of course, we must throughout the convention—or any news broadcast—do what we can to make it interesting. But there's a difference between being interesting and being entertaining, as far as I am concerned.

PANORAMA: *Technically speaking, what are some of the special burdens on the anchorman, especially when he comes up against dead time? And how do you get through them?*

CRONKITE: Well, it hasn't been nearly as much of a problem in the last several conventions as it certainly was in 1952 and 1956. By 1960, we were getting our organization together and understanding what it really took to do the convention properly. Before then, the burden was really on the anchorperson.

Now, you have all this support machinery. You have hundreds of people out there gathering news and information. We're loaded with reports from around town, from our correspondents in the field, with background reports, old film and so forth. We have more than we can ever get on the air. The anchorperson isn't stuck with long fill periods.

I still want to be ready in case they don't have something—and there are occasions when we suddenly don't have anything that is appropriate or won't fit the time, sometimes just a minute and a half or two minutes.

So I study—and have ever since I got into this business—the history of American politics. And because it is such a habit, I rewrite a book-length thing for myself each year because that's the way I remember things best.

PANORAMA: *What is it called?*

CRONKITE: My desk book. It is thick with loose-leaf pages, some of them are yellow with age now. I scarcely ever turn to it, except maybe for some past dates, but that's very rare. What happens is, in doing the homework, the information is planted in my mind and items come to me without needing to go to the book.

PANORAMA: *In the matter of pacing and flow, of inserting items and staying with the floor, how much of this is decided by you and how much by the producers and directors?*

CRONKITE: I think I probably participate a great deal more in that than my colleagues at the other networks do. I always have. I've got a kind of managing-editor mentality. I think I see things and detect trends about as fast as anybody in our shop. I suspect that the anchorperson knows more about what's going on throughout the operation, and particularly on the floor of the convention, than anybody else in all of CBS. Everybody else is concerned with other things and they're not listening at all times to the program, even in the control room. They're discussing things taking place in the control room, where they're going next, setting up another camera.

PANORAMA: *You concentrate on the incoming reports?*

CRONKITE: I'm hearing every word, because I may want to refer to it. Simultaneously I'm listening to the floor, to the podium. Now, of course, I don't listen very carefully to a speech about how we ought to observe Mother's Day next year. But I'm following the thread throughout. Frequently I'm the one who alerts them in the control room: "Did you just hear that? We ought to get something on such-and-such."

PANORAMA: *Do they try to keep the chatter in your earplugs down?*

CRONKITE: They don't chatter to me. I got rid of that a few years ago. In the early days I wore double earphones with the on-the-air program coming in one and the podium speaker—whether he was on the air or not—coming in the other. I also had an interrupt line so the producer could tell me what to do next.

But that's not the way it ought to be done. So instead, I've got a guy whose hand sometimes appears on television putting something on my desk. He is usually buried in a little hole down at my right knee. He passes me notes from the producer as to where they'd like to go next. Rather than get it in the ear, I get a little note so I can concentrate on what's coming in and don't have to hear chatter and interruptions.

PANORAMA: *Speaking historically for*

www.americanradiohistory.com

a moment, do you regret commenting during the tumultuous 1968 Democratic convention in Chicago that perhaps CBS ought to pack up its gear and go home?

CRONKITE: No, I don't regret it. I don't regret my visceral reaction when they punched Dan Rather and I said, "We've got a bunch of thugs down there." I think there are times when you're permitted to drop your cool.

PANORAMA: *Do you feel that 1968 convention was a turning point for political conventions as well as TV?*

CRONKITE: No, not really. Chicago in 1968 was a rather perfect reflection of the mood of the people and the times. The violent reaction of Mayor Richard Daley's police wasn't because of the politicians. It was Daley's operation of a convention. That became a marvelous demonstration of what political machines can't get by with in the days of television. That brought an end, I would think, forever to that kind of operation. Even the galleries had been trucked in there a couple hours before the convention session with signs saying "We Love Daley." They were rather obvious when you put them on television.

PANORAMA: *Another point of history: in 1964, you suffered the humiliation of being removed from the anchor seat after the Republican convention in favor of Roger Mudd and Robert Trout for the Democratic convention. They were supposed to challenge Chet Huntley and David Brinkley over at NBC for the ratings. How do you look back on that experience?*

CRONKITE: Well, it wasn't all that humiliating, to tell you the truth. I said then and I say now, "It's their candy store." I think they ought to be entitled to fire somebody if they want to.

PANORAMA: *But what does it tell us about television news and the ratings game?*

CRONKITE: Well, undoubtedly, it was all due to ratings. But, again, if you can't appeal to the public with your reporting, I suppose you ought to make a change. That's the most instantaneous vote I know—acceptance. In the case of that 1964 Democratic convention, however, I always felt that I was something of a scapegoat for a disaster. It was the result of Fred Friendly coming in at the last minute and overturning all of our previous procedures in the belief that he alone knew how it should be run. But that was his prerogative—he was head of the news department. It just turned out that none of those things worked.

I do not doubt for one minute that my performance in '64 was the worst I've ever given in that kind of role, because I was totally handicapped. Nothing was working the way it should. The camera setup was impossible. The information flow to me was poor. They separated me from the person I had giving me the information as to where we should go next.

PANORAMA: *Returning to this year's election, how has television changed the Presidential candidates and the way a campaign is covered?*

CRONKITE: Now we demand, of course, that a person make a good appearance on television. I don't think that's bad. Television is the most powerful force we've ever known to reach the people, to rally the people, to move the people. We ought to select a President partially on the grounds that he is able to use this medium to do that. That's being a leader today. It's being able to reach out to every home in America through this magnificent box.

PANORAMA: *The box has replaced the campaign stumps of, say, Lincoln and Douglas in 1858 and 1860?*

CRONKITE: Yes, it has. The number of persons, the percentage of the electorate that heard the Lincoln-Douglas debates or saw any candidate before radio and television was really infinitesimal. People were mostly there for the historical reason of saying, "I was there that day." They couldn't really see or hear them.

I saw that myself with whistle stops when I was a press reporter. You'd run to the back of the train, but you were so far away, even as a reporter, you couldn't see the guy, let alone hear him. Even with a P.A. system.

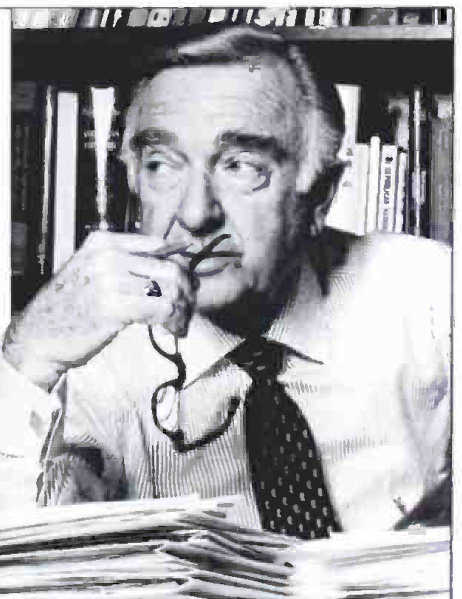
I think one of the advantages of this terrible burden of so many primaries is that the candidate does learn an awful lot about the country. Not just the people, but the issues within each state. I would think that rather than less use of television, more use of television would be a good way to conduct our campaigns in the future. Maybe with cable TV and the increased number of channels available, candidates can spend more time on television and less time in buses and automobile motorcades and airplanes.

I think a better mix might be productive. If television could cover an open-forum question-and-answer period in a school auditorium, a candidate could do two or three of those a day instead of going to the factory gate to shake hands or to a tea party to talk nothings. I would think there would be an improvement in his ability to talk issues.

PANORAMA: *As it is, by going to the factory gate or the farmer's corncrib, the candidate is doing symbolic acts for the television audience. Did the print medium ever quite function this way?*

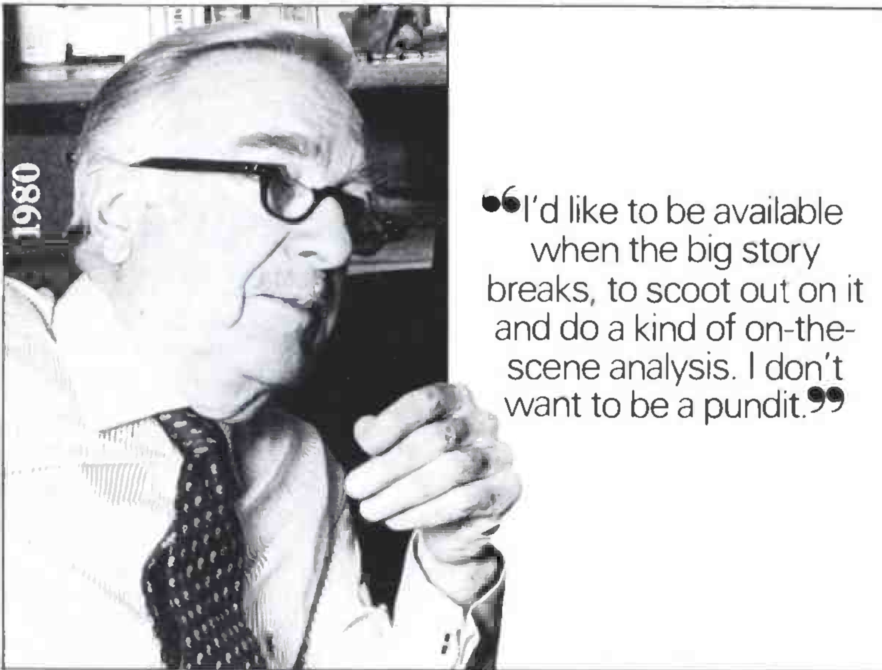
continued

> "Television is the most powerful force we've ever known to reach the people, to rally the people. We ought to select a President partially on the grounds that he is able to use this medium."



www.americanradiohistory.com

CRONKITE: Oh, sure it did! Remember the front-page picture of the guy at the corncrib or the guy wearing the funny hat? Television has not done a damned thing that has not been done by print. It's just a higher impact medium, that's all. National television replaces the local newspaper, local news decisions. Where before you had 1700 editors and that picture might make it onto 20 or 30 front pages, today you try to get on the network newscast of that local station.



"I'd like to be available when the big story breaks, to scoot out on it and do a kind of on-the-scene analysis. I don't want to be a pundit."

PANORAMA: *Thereby reducing the 1700 editors to three networks?*

CRONKITE: That's Spiro Agnew's "handful of willful men."

PANORAMA: *Is it true?*

CRONKITE: Certainly it's a handful. Less than a handful. But I don't know any other way to do it. You can't have a plebiscite as to what ought to be on the newscast each night. Of course, it goes to a vote of the people in a sense. If they don't approve, they'll turn you off.

PANORAMA: *What are the implications for the politician who then has a much smaller number of editorial judgments to satisfy?*

CRONKITE: But, remember, he's seeking delegates state by state. During the primaries, he's still got to appeal to the local station. Maybe that's one reason the primary system has become so popular over the last few years.

PANORAMA: *It has been argued that television has transformed all our politicians into media creatures. One visitor to Congress recently characterized them as "a roomful of local anchormen." Does this suggestion offend you?*

CRONKITE: I don't know if that's bad. To pick a person who is able to reach the people better seems to me a rather good test of who ought eventually to be in the job. It's unfortunate if it means that you lose some real thinkers who just do not have the ability to communicate. But then they shouldn't be in positions where communication is important. Let them be back-room boys.

PANORAMA: *Or maybe they just don't have the ability to communicate in 45 seconds, which is as long as most news clips go.*

CRONKITE: Well, that's probably a fair criticism. It's worrisome, too. That's why I'd like to see an expanded use of television rather than cutting it back.

PANORAMA: *Returning to the conventions, can you recall any special triumphs or botch-ups over the years?*

CRONKITE: Oh, gosh, there are some every hour, some little thing that you don't anticipate.

I remember one during the 1972 McGovern convention in Miami. The South Carolina delegation had begun a very complicated political maneuver regarding women's representation. It had become a major vote because the outcome looked like it might influence whether McGovern got nominated or not. And we were really a little behind on it. Our reporter at the hotel had never gotten through to me—a blockage that was unfortunate.

PANORAMA: *What was the problem?*

CRONKITE: Well, Mike Wallace got Gloria Steinem on the floor of the convention to try to explain what was going on. And we were using these hip-flask mikes that were cutting in and out, [their transmissions] breaking up in some parts of the hall. Mike and Gloria were surrounded by a lot of people making a lot of noise and Gloria was declaiming in great detail. It was just a ridiculous scene. And I wasn't able to understand it.

When they cut back to me, I was kind of laughing and said, "Mike, did you understand that?" And Mike said, "Boy, I don't think I did. Well, thank you, Gloria."

Then some male reporter for The Washington Post who was trying to make points as a feminist wrote a piece about the chauvinism of Walter Cronkite and Mike Wallace. And none of the hothead feminists had complained until they read his piece. Then the mail just besieged us. Gloria wasn't speaking to me. I had to take her to lunch in New York to try to convince her that I wasn't a male chauvinist pig.

PANORAMA: *Finally, can you give us a more detailed idea of your plans after you retire from the* CBS Evening News *anchor desk next spring?*

CRONKITE: Listen, I'm a guy who is opposed to these "media events." I don't believe in that phrase. And this story of my retirement is a media event.

PANORAMA: *It's more than that, isn't it? With 12 million households watching you every night, you know why they're interested.*

CRONKITE: Oh, sure, I understand the interest. In any case, I'm going to stay with CBS. And I'll definitely do the science series, *Universe*.

And I hope to appear on the *Evening*

www.americanradiohistory.com

News quite a lot. I'd like to be available either at my suggestion or theirs, when the big story breaks, to scoot out on it and do a kind of on-the-scene analysis. Not an in-office thing. I don't want to be a pundit. But I'm pretty good at doing first-person impressions of stories. Three Mile Island, for instance. What's it really like to be there? Let somebody else handle the news conference, the hard stuff. I'll do the old sidebar bit, you know.

PANORAMA: *And the idea of joining the U.S. Senate is on ice?*

CRONKITE: Yes. I'll go if appointed... and nobody's going to appoint me. ■

This Is the Way It Is

35 minutes in the life of *CBS Evening News*

"FIVE MINUTES!"

Walter Cronkite sits in his shirt sleeves at the horseshoe-shaped anchor desk in a studio whose door plaque reads simply, "Cronkite News Show" (not "CBS Evening News"). There are two-dozen people in the room: secretaries in jeans and sweaters grabbing phones, copy writers with noisy electric typewriters banging out updates, cameramen slouched behind their cameras in a row of chairs opposite Walter. Producer Sandy Socolow, a bear of a man, moves in and out, occasionally leaning on the front of Walter's desk to get his attention. Throughout the pandemonium, Cronkite pores over his copy, occasionally timing himself with a black-rimmed stopwatch, seemingly oblivious to the madness around him.

On three walls, large synchronized clocks tick in half-second jerks toward 6:30, when the biggest news show on weekday television begins its half-hour feed to more than 200 stations around the country. A large black man with an angular face and a booming voice keeps an eye on the clock.

"THREE MINUTES!"

At this signal, Walter lays down his copy and turns his face upward and to the right, where the makeup lady has appeared at that instant. Without a word from her or a glance from him, she dusts down his face with antiglare powder. Cronkite then looks down into the desk mirror she has brought and combs his silver hair into that confident Midwestern sweep that makes him look so believable. Uncle Walter is ready.

"TWO MINUTES!"

All the lights in the newsroom except the set lights go out. Only the soft glow from a ship's-lantern lamp in Cronkite's glass-walled office penetrates the darkened perimeter of the set.

"ONE MINUTE!"

People still move around the room as if they had all night. The writers are arrayed around the horseshoe—designed to look like the "slot," or news desk, in an old newspaper office. They wear the bedraggled attire of their calling, and it all looks real enough not to be set props. Cronkite, still amazingly concentrated on his news copy, stands up, takes his suit jacket off the back of his swivel chair and puts it on. He does this without removing the pair of tiny microphones clipped to his tie. Cronkite's suit is brown; his shirt is eggshell yellow with a fine brown stripe and French cuffs cut away at the corners so they do not drag across his desk.

"THIRTY SECONDS!"

A script girl in a flowing gray smock is still rushing in and out, passing papers to Cronkite and to the teleprompter operator squeezed up against the wall between two cameras. The studio is much smaller than it looks on television. The front cameras stand only four feet from Cronkite's face.

"TEN SECONDS!"

Cronkite finally gathers his copy into a neat pile. Gray Smock retreats into a corner.

"STAND BY!"

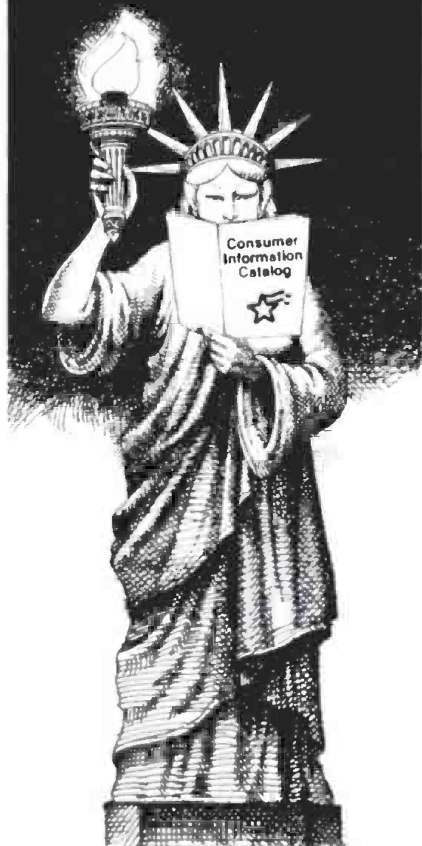
Booming Voice has taken a seat beside Camera One; he uses a rolled-up sheaf of papers to cue Cronkite.

"Good evening," says Walter Cronkite, his voice a warm, liquid stream pebbled with small gravel.

As Cronkite marches through the day's litany of disasters—demonstrations in Tehran, possible Olympic boy-

www.americanradiohistory.com

READ AMERICA'S NUMBER 1 NON-SELLER.



Not for sale in any bookstore! Not available at any price! The new Consumer Information Catalog!

It's the free booklet that lists over 200 helpful Federal publications; more than half, free.

On topics like home repairs. Money management. Nutrition.

Information that could help you to a better way of life.

To get your free copy, just write:

CONSUMER INFORMATION CENTER, DEPT. E PUEBLO, COLORADO 81009

cott of Moscow, resurrection of the draft—only the pedestal camera on the side of the set moves around, giving a slightly different cover shot before each commercial break. Six feet to the left and up; six feet to the right and down. The cameraman, who has a styrofoam cup of coffee confidently balanced on his zoom-lens power pack, is a young black man in sneakers. This is in stark contrast to the rest of the camera crew—all white (except for Booming Voice, the floor manager) and middle-aged, with the mark of union seniority all over them—who stay seated in folding chairs behind their stationary cameras, set at eye level with Cronkite. One of them lights up a pipe halfway through the show.

During each cut-away to a taped correspondent's report, the newsroom erupts into low-grade chatter, except for Cronkite: he concentrates intently on the monitor in front of him, as though he is hearing this news for the first time. Sometimes he has to lean forward and strain to hear the correspondent's report over the noise around him.

"HOW MUCH TIME?" One of the writers has received a late change from a correspondent over one of the phones on his desk.

"ONE TWENTY!" answers Booming Voice, who always knows how long until Walter's next cue.

The writer pounces on his rickety old electric typewriter. He hands four lines to Cronkite, who only glances at them before he is back on-camera. During his next taped break, Cronkite reads the item, likes it, says, "We ought to use this."

Cronkite bends over his stopwatch and begins reading the item to himself, making inflection marks on the copy where he wants to put emphasis.

"OK," he finally says, "that's six seconds over, so something has to come out."

During the next break, producer Sandy Socolow comes out and confers with Cronkite. Everyone agrees with the change. Gray Smock races 40 feet down a hallway to the control room with the revised script. In the world's most advanced communications center, the only way to get the most fundamental element—the script—from control room to talking head and back is by runner.

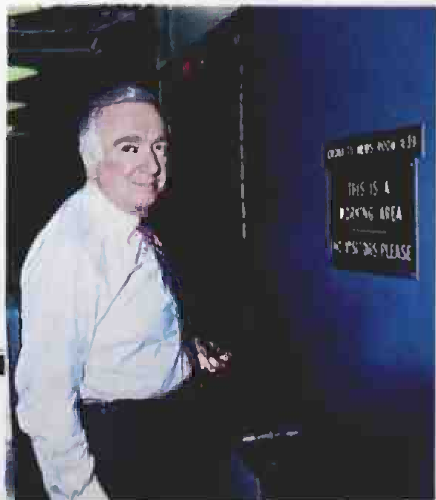
In the control room, director Richard Mutschler is slowly tearing his hair out. "Why didn't somebody tell *me*!" he screams to one of the 13 people who help him put out the show. The technical types at the chromakey and switching desk remain totally stoic, the assistant directors behind Mutschler, all women, pick up phones to Washington. It seems there is some sort of timing botch-up with Marvin Kalb's report from the State Department that will have to be corrected in the 7 o'clock feed to the West Coast. A lot of high-level math is going on between Mutschler and the associate director at his side as they try to figure how in hell to make it work.

Meanwhile, the show goes on. From inside the control room, with 30 monitors showing 20 different things at once (including the incoming shows from ABC and NBC), it looks about as smooth as organizing a class of young fighting bulls for a roll call. Everybody is outfitted with an assortment of fancy microphones, headsets and phone banks. Everybody except Mutschler, who for some reason shares an open line to Washington on a regular telephone with his associate. They take turns grabbing the phone and speaking into it—"You still there?"—and then slamming it down on the counter top in front of them. Pity the ear on the other end.

Somehow, the Cronkite news continues without a hint of any of this near-calamitous atmosphere reaching the 12 million homes that are watching. Mutschler, at the last minute, has come up with a workable solution to the timing problem for the West Coast. In celebration, he throws his lighted cigarette over the bank of mikes and buttons in front of him and into the well of the monitor wall below, where engineers toil for perfect pictures. A fourth assistant director is squatting on the floor explaining the new feed to someone over a phone. ABC calls to tell CBS they got something wrong on the newscast. Nobody pays any attention.

Walter Cronkite is saying, "And that's the way it is...." Cover shot, logo up, titles running, fade to black.

—Peter Ross Range



www.americanradiohistory.com

SURVEYS AND STUDIES

Bad News About Happy News

By DICK FRIEDMAN

Every town, it seems, has at least one happy-news station. It's the local newscast in which smiling anchorpeople don't stop joshing with each other, even between the item about the ax murder and the film clip of the big pileup on I-95. The goal is to create a better mood for the viewer—and, hence, better ratings.

But happy news may be making some viewers unhappy, according to a study called "Television News: Effect of Content and Presentation on Viewer Stress Response." The project was the doctoral dissertation of Fran Miller at the United States International University in San Diego. Hoping to find out how different newscast formats affected viewer anxiety levels, Miller created five variations of a 15-minute local-news show.

For these hypothetical shows, she devised two methods of presentation: "lighthearted," modeled on the happy newscasts, and "serious." For her content, too, she developed two themes: "problem news," which emphasizes the negative aspects of current affairs; and "resolution news," which differs from problem news in that it features some hopeful solution—for instance, instead of merely reporting on crime, there is a mention of what is being done about it. The five formats Miller developed were: a lighthearted presentation of problem news; a serious presentation of problem news; a lighthearted presentation of resolution news; a serious presentation of resolution news; and, as a control, a "neutral news" format with soft features about people, travel and entertainment.

To test the effect of each format, Miller selected 160 students at Pasadena (Cal.) City College and broke them into five groups, each viewing one sample newscast on a monitor. Both before and after the newscasts, each viewer was given a written test called Spielberger's State Trait Anxiety Inventory. In this test, anxiety is measured through the subject's agreement or disagreement with a series of statements describing emotional states. The results showed that the anxiety level in the group that had watched the lighthearted presentation of problem news—the format resembling happy news—increased more than in any other group. Somewhat less surprisingly, problem news seemed to cause more anxiety than resolution news.

But shouldn't an anchorman's smile while reporting the day's downbeat news make the viewer feel better? No, says Miller, who claims that the somewhat schizophrenic "double message" unsettles the audience instead. And since resolution news might be less stress-inducing than problem news, Miller thinks the anxiety-conscious viewer should opt for newscasts that offer helpful information. Does Miller have any other solution to newscast-caused anxiety? Well, when her own stress level is high, she says, among her remedies is not watching TV news.

Pregnancy Test

Is television a cause of teen-age pregnancy? The notion may not be far-fetched, according to the results of a small pilot study on the influence of television on adolescent girls' sexual attitudes and behavior. The study was conducted by Cathy Radek and Charles Corder-Bolz at the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory in Austin, Texas. Because of the small and unrepresentative sample and method of inquiry, the study can hardly be considered the last word on the subject. The research involved 90 teen-age girls in Austin chosen from two groups: girls enrolled in programs for unwed mothers; and girls from youth programs and church groups who had never been pregnant. The girls were asked about their sexual attitudes, their television-viewing habits and their impressions of their favorite TV characters—i.e., "Would your favorite character have premarital sex?"

The results indicated that the television habits and attitudes of the two groups were very different. The pregnant girls watched an average of 20 hours a week, while those who had never been pregnant watched only 13. Seventy percent of the pregnant girls said the adult heterosexual relationships shown on TV were realistic; only a third of the girls who had never been pregnant agreed. And those who surmised that their favorite TV character wouldn't use birth control in a premarital sexual relationship were more than twice as likely to be in the group of pregnant girls as those who thought the character would take precautions.

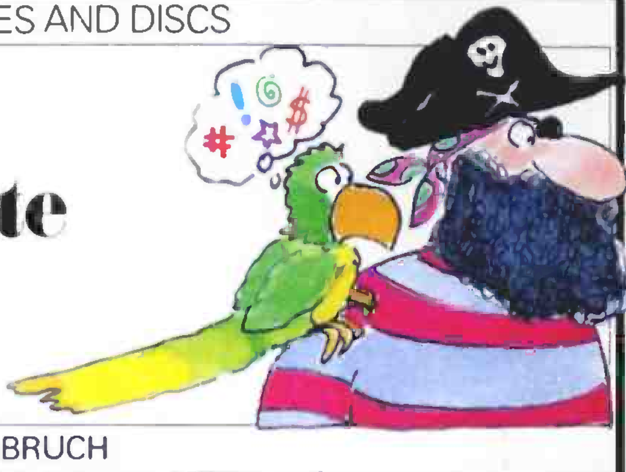
The people at Southwest Educational Development Laboratories concede that the small sample makes these findings "tentative." But they add, "Adolescent pregnancy prevention programs may need to develop countermeasures to romanticized portrayals of sexual relationships, especially in television."

Short Subjects

College students' TV viewing is about one-third below the national average, says a report from Ampersand magazine. Men students watch 2.18 hours a day, women 2.22. . . . A study by the Connecticut State Board of Education of 9-, 13- and 17-year-olds during 1978-79 showed that students who watched television more than four hours a day scored lowest in reading achievement. . . . Fifty-nine percent of working women and 51 percent of nonworking women polled by the Newspaper Advertising Bureau Project felt that TV ads "present women as they should not be." . . . A 15,000-person study for Gannett Newspapers revealed that a majority spend a half hour or more reading their home-town newspaper at least five times a week—and many also watch local and national news on TV for about 45 minutes daily. Says Judee Burgoon of Michigan State University, one of the survey's authors, "The consumption of one tends to help the consumption of the other." ■

www.americanradiohistory.com

Coded Cassette Blues



By DAVID LACHENBRUCH

If you've ever innocently—or not so innocently—tried to make a copy of a prerecorded movie cassette by feeding the output of one videocassette recorder (VCR) into the input of another, you probably discovered that it didn't work. You may also have discovered that you *can* copy other kinds of tapes, such as those you yourself make off the air or from a camera. If you came to the conclusion that those prerecorded tapes were treated or encoded in some way to keep you from copying them—you're right.

Of course, nobody can really object to a movie company using every possible means to protect its copyright. But the sad fact is that the coding applied to movie tapes can be a headache for VCR owners, television-set manufacturers and prerecorded-tape makers alike, because sometimes it doesn't do what it's supposed to do and sometimes it does more than it's supposed to do.

Antipiracy encoding usually is accomplished by slightly modifying the video signal on the cassette to fool any VCR that might be used to copy the tape, theoretically without fooling the TV set that's used to play it. The usual modification consists of minor changes in the vertical synchronization pulses accompanying the picture recorded on the tape. When an attempt is made to copy such a tape using a second VCR, the image on the copy either rolls uncontrollably or is completely invisible, depending on the type of recorder used in the copying attempt.

The irony of antipiracy encoding is that it doesn't bother professional tape pirates or big-time bootleggers, who can afford to use sophisticated equipment to cancel the effects of encoding. So the antipiracy modification only stops amateurs from knocking off copies, which most of them can't do anyway because they don't have two VCRs.

But about two years ago, complaints started to come in from ordinary, (presumably) law-abiding citizens whose TV sets just couldn't get a viewable picture out of the encoded tapes. And these weren't old worn-out sets or cheapies, but new top-of-the-line models by major manufacturers. They all had one thing in common: deluxe automatic vertical sync circuits, which eliminate the manual "vertical hold" control. The picture would start to roll uncontrollably and nothing could be done to steady it.

So the TV-set manufacturers' trade organization, the Electronic Industries Association, established an engineering committee to look into the problem. After a couple of meetings, the committee broke up with a statement that it would make no official recommendation to manufacturers about the problem. Television-set makers, the committee said, have an obligation to make sets that will receive *standard broadcast signals*. Period. The encoded signals emanating from movie cassettes are nonstandard. The problem is in the tapes, not the sets, the committee insisted.

When the problem first appeared, some dealers were reporting that at least five percent of their prerecorded-cassette customers returned tapes as nonplayable. Since then, the complaint rate has dropped. One cassette duplicator explained: "Some people who have had problems with prerecorded cassettes just dropped out of the market—we don't like it, but that's what happened."

Suppose you have this problem and you don't want to be a dropout. What can you do? You won't get much help from the set manufacturers. Some of them will provide modifications for sets that have tape-compatibility problems—but don't expect to get anything for nothing. *If* a modification is available, you'll be charged for it.

Your best hope for relief is the dealer who sold you the tape. After all, when you bought it, there was an implied warranty that it was playable by your VCR on your television set. At the very least, you should get an exchange of tape or a refund. Strangely, some encoded tapes will work with "problem" TV sets, while others won't, so an exchange may solve the problem. If it doesn't help, and you're still in the mood for a prerecorded movie, you have every right to demand a nonencoded copy of the tape. The dealer probably will tell you it's not available. He may even call me a liar. He may not even know it, but in many cases (not all), you can get an uncoded tape if you insist. It's a lot of trouble for the dealer—he'll have to holler for it, too—but he often can get a playable tape for you from his supplier.

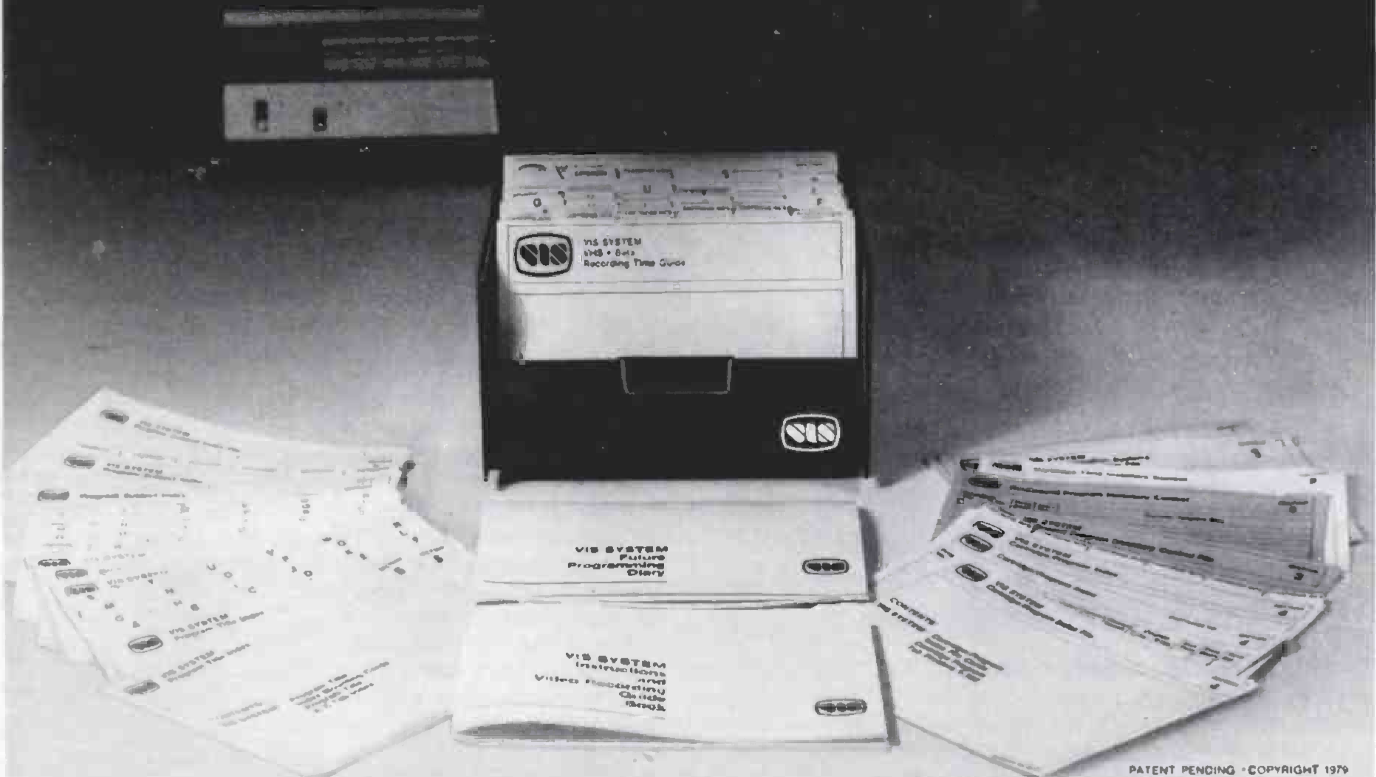
If you're buying a new television set, you may want to make sure it can play any kind of prerecorded tape. If it has a manual "vertical hold" control on the back, there's usually no problem, because you can compensate for any roll-over by adjusting the control. If, on the other hand, the vertical sync is automatic (no manual "hold" adjustment), you shouldn't rule out the set—but get a clear understanding from the dealer that he will modify it or exchange it for another make if the set doesn't work properly with your VCR. Happily, you're much less likely to run into the problem than you would have been a year or so ago. Many of the most recent sets don't seem to have this trouble, as a result of manufacturers' efforts to eliminate it.

Now, here comes the payoff: many of the newest model VCRs, the VHS type with three speeds, are too smart to be fooled by encoding—they can copy tapes regardless. Which means that now the system doesn't even accomplish the very limited function for which it was intended.

So are the tape makers going to stop encoding? Well, not exactly. They've discovered a new coding method that can outsmart even the new supersmart VCRs. And who knows how many TV sets. Here we go again. ■

www.americanradiohistory.com

GET UP TO 30% MORE RECORDING TIME



PATENT PENDING · COPYRIGHT 1979

WITH VIS . . . THE VIDEO LIBRARY ORGANIZER

Cataloging cassettes and programs can be a real problem when building a video library.

Now . . . the VIS SYSTEM gets it all in order for you and saves you money too! The VIS SYSTEM exclusive multi-part form creates a complete cross-referencing of programs by title, artist and subject category.

Also, by following simple procedures you'll know how much tape time you've used and how much is left. You can utilize every inch of space on your tapes. And that can save you a bundle!

Whether you're just starting out or you already have an extensive library, VIS has a system to fit your needs. VIS comes fully self-contained in an attractively styled file box and is designed for VHS, BETA, LVR, U·MATIC and DISC formats.

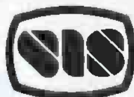
But that's not all. Your VIS SYSTEM also includes a Video Recording Guide, Programming Diary and more!

Phone toll free 800-223-2100, N.Y. State residents 212-541-7722 or mail the coupon with your check. Please allow 4-6 weeks for delivery.

Each system contains:

- Cassette Inventory & Status
- Program Re-Record Inventory
- Recording Time Guide
- Future Programming Diary
- VIS SYSTEM Instruction and Recording Guide Book
- Title/Artist/Subject Indexes
- Cassette Program Index
- Multi-Part Cross Reference Forms
- Attractive Storage File Box

Order today and start getting more out of your video tape investment. With VIS . . . the Video Library Organizer.



Yes! I want "THE VIS SYSTEM."

Quan.
____ Model 1000 (10 cartridges /40 programs) $39.95 plus $4.00*
____ Model 2500 (25 cartridges/100 programs) $69.95 plus $7.50*
____ Model 5000 (50 cartridges/200 programs) $89.95 plus $9.50*
*Postage and handling.

NAME ____ SIGNATURE ____
ADDRESS ____ PHONE NO. ____
CITY ____ STATE ____ ZIP ____
CREDIT CARD NO. ____ EXP.DATE ____

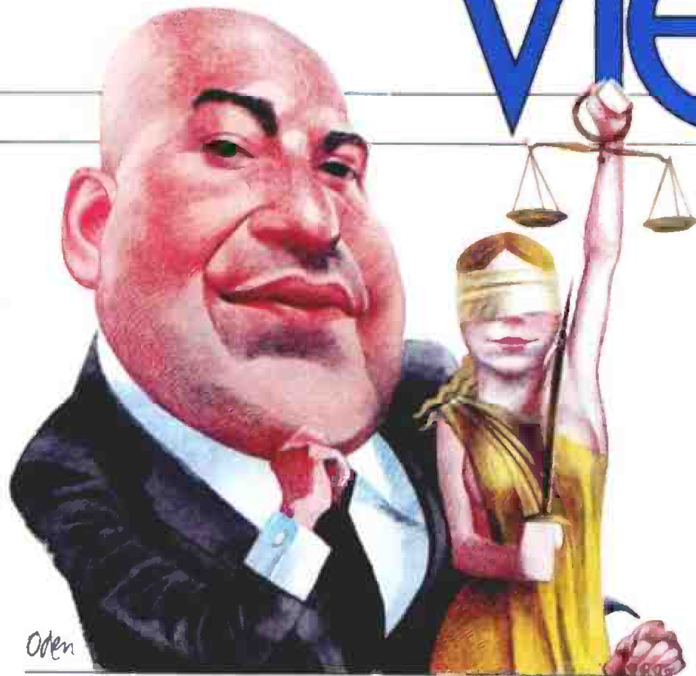
☐ VISA ☐ MASTER CHARGE ☐ DINERS ☐ CARTE BLANCHE ☐ AMERICAN EXPRESS

Please make check payable and mail to:
VIDEO INFORMATION SYSTEMS, INC., P.O. Box 185/Dept. P2, Deep River, Conn. 06417

Box design differs slightly between models. DEALER INQUIRIES WELCOME

www.americanradiohistory.com

PANORAMIC VIEW



WHO SUES YA, BABY?

Telly Savalas has left *macho* behind.

Television's number-one role model for the extremely bald swears that his latest incarnation, attorney Nick Hellinger in CBS's *Hellinger's Law*, will not be another Kojak.

"If he's going to be some *macho* guy fighting criminals with a gun," says Savalas, "I'm not interested."

On the other hand, Hellinger won't be a courthouse hack, either. Says Savalas: "I'm not quite certain TV is ready for another lawyer. For the most part, lawyers are dull people. There's no way even F. Lee Bailey can be sustained on TV. To succeed in that court called television, a lawyer has to be flamboyant, bombastic, bigger than life and the legal system."

Hellinger will be all of the above, and then some, pledges Savalas: "It's important that we top the classics of the past—shows like *The Defenders* and *Perry Mason*. If we can do that, then I'm gung-ho. But if we're going to be imitative in any way, I don't want to be part of it."

The show will especially eschew the *Perry Mason* school of elaborate puzzles, explains co-executive producer James McAdams: "We won't unravel cases as much as we unravel human beings." Hellinger's chief weapon will be his words. From time to time he will reach into his own grab bag of aphorisms and come up with—what else?—Hellinger's Laws. Oh, and he will be somewhat of a jet-setter, according to McAdams, tackling cases in courtrooms throughout America.

In the two-hour pilot that Savalas made this spring, in which he defends a mafioso accused of murder, Hellinger was based in Philadelphia. But if the show becomes a series, Savalas wants the character to live in New York. "It's the conceit of a New Yorker," he explains, referring to himself. "Philadelphia is a foreign country to a guy like me. It's as far away as China."

BOTTLED CHARISMA

Ever wonder what became of Marshall McLuhan? It turns out that the media guru of the 1960s who figured out that the medium is the message has been hard at work on a new media theory for the 1980s—"The Charisma Factor."

If the concept works as well as McLuhan and his partner, Dr. Gerald Goldhaber, think it can, charisma may soon be bought and sold almost as easily as bottled water. "The myth of charisma," says Goldhaber, chairman of the Department of Communication at SUNY-Buffalo, "is that it is God-given: you either have it or you don't, and if you've got it, you never lose it. All wrong. Charisma can be created, enhanced, identified and measured."

According to the McLuhan-Goldhaber theory, there are three basic personality types that can be perceived as charismatic: the hero, who represents what we'd like to be; the antihero, who represents pretty much what we are; and the mystic, who represents qualities foreign and uncertain. In TV terms, then, the Six Million Dollar Man is heroic, "Uncle" Walter Cronkite is antiheroic and Robin Williams' Mork is decidedly mystic. Any of these types can be more or less charismatic depending on circumstances (Mork is fine as an entertainer but might be a little disconcerting as a newscaster) and on the success with which those qualities are communicated through the mass media, mainly TV. "Without television, there is no charisma," says Goldhaber.

McLuhan and Goldhaber have a series of graphs on which they believe they can plot anybody's charisma quotient, and as charisma consultants they intend to do just that—for a fee—for political candidates, television networks, performers and others in pursuit of public notice.

"Marshall means business," says Goldhaber. "You're dealing with a person who wants to have a major, major impact before he dies."

> “This show is a slaughterhouse of comedy. We save everything; we don't throw anything away; we use it all—the bones, everything.”
>
> —*Johnny Carson, on* The Tonight Show

www.americanradiohistory.com

“I think it was the networks who shot the satellite down. We'll just have to keep building them as fast as they can shoot them down.”

—Ted Turner, owner of the Cable News Network, talking about the loss of Satcom III, at a meeting of the Cable Television Administration and Marketing Society, Anaheim, Cal.

FUELING UP FOR SUMMER

July 7 is the kickoff date for *Summershow*, the Mobil Showcase Network series that is dedicated to the proposition that not all summertime viewers are at the beach or on the patio. Mobil is betting that some of them will want to come inside and watch an eight-week mixture of British and American comedy, drama, documentaries and musicals. *Summershow* will be offered in four major viewing markets (New York, Los Angeles, Washington, D.C., and Chicago, with Boston a fifth possibility).

The American offerings include two Broadway mini-musicals. In "A Party with Betty Comden and Adolph Green," the songwriting team sing their favorites from 40 years in show business. Then, Green's wife, Phyllis Newman (left), stars in her one-woman show, "The Madwoman of Central Park West."

On a different note, "The American Game," a documentary about two high-school basketball players (one from Indiana, the other from Brooklyn) explores the differences between growing up in America's heartland and in a big city.

The first three of the series' five British programs are docudramas: "Philby, Burgess and Maclean," about the three Cambridge graduates who became Soviet spies, with Derek Jacobi (*I, Claudius*) as Burgess; "Collision Course," re-creating the 1976 midair crash over Zagreb, Yugoslavia; and "Gossip from the Forest," dramatizing the men who signed the World War I armistice agreement.

In a lighter vein are a comedy-drama, "The Knowledge," in which would-be London cabbies cram to pass the excruciatingly thorough entrance exam covering every London street and landmark; and "The Kenny Everett Video Show," showcasing a zany comedian.

Says Mobil's Herbert Schmertz, who picked the programs: "The networks abandon viewers over the summer, so we decided to provide quality first-run material in an otherwise dismal period." —*Cherie Burns*

TAKEOUT SERVICE

Perhaps one of the most avid audiences on earth for video entertainment is on water—namely, on offshore oil rigs. The crews that man the rigs (and they are almost exclusively male) are not likely to be going out at night, situated as they are in the middle of the North Sea or the Gulf of Mexico; thus, watching cassettes from a well-stocked video library has become as familiar a day-ender for many of them as a can of beer.

There are more than 400 mobile rigs, with crews of between 20 and 70 men each, moving around the oceans of the world in search of oil or natural gas, according to Bob Burke, editor of the trade magazine Offshore. One video supplier estimates that about half-a-dozen major companies now service that market with legally licensed movies, specials and syndicated series (in languages to match the primary nationality of the crews). Then there are a vast number of pirates peddling illegally duplicated programs—including X-rated material, which most legitimate dealers won't supply.

Videocassettes have been edging out 16 mm. films as the medium of choice aboard both ships and oil rigs for about two years. Now a company called Video Communications, Inc., in landlocked Tulsa, Okla., hopes to take offshore video a step further by putting satellite receiving dishes on rigs to bring the crews 12 hours of fresh programming a day.

What are the viewing habits of roustabouts? In a word, *"macho,"* according to a survey taken by one of the largest companies in the business, Ship's Entertainment, Inc. Westerns are the favorite, followed by action/adventure, war pictures, detective dramas, comedies and mysteries. The top five favorite personalities, in order, are John Wayne, Clint Eastwood, Raquel Welch, Charles Bronson and Burt Reynolds.

But don't think just *any* action flick is fare for the riggers. "These guys work hard, long hours, so they like escapism—they're not into 'The Turning Point'," said William P. Thompson Jr., president of the company. "But if it's lousy escapism, you'll hear about it."

“We must not be lulled into assuming that efforts at controlling the content of television—however successful—are all that is necessary to cope with the phenomenon. Television's impact on our society is both far-reaching and subtle. It renders old assumptions—like the primacy of school in a child's life—invalid and gives no warning of the change.”

—Shirley M. Hufstedler, U.S. Secretary of Education, at an Action for Children's Television symposium, Washington, D.C.

www.americanradiohistory.com

'ATSA SOME COMMERCIAL!

The best commercial of the last 20 years depicted the making of one of the worst commercials of the last 20 years.

"Magadini's Meatballs" was selected as the grand champion TV spiel of the past two decades in the International Broadcasting Awards sponsored by the Hollywood Radio and Television Society. In it, an actor was seen suffering through take after take of a meatball commercial, repeating the ritual incantation of "Mamma mia, 'atsa spicy meatball" each time, and finally turning to Alka-Seltzer to soothe his agitated stomach after consuming so many meatballs. "Magadini's Meatballs" won the annual TV sweepstakes award 10 years ago, and it added its latest triumph by defeating all of the other annual sweepstakes winners in the history of the competition, which dates back to 1960.

This year's winner was a series of three commercials for Eastman Kodak's Colorburst camera, one of which—"First Day"—also won the award for best 30-second, live-action, English-language commercial. Mean Joe Greene's trip to the locker room for Coca-Cola, titled "Early Showers," was named best 60-second, live-action, English-language pitch.

EQUAL SPACE

Is *Star Trek* a powerful political forum?

California assemblyman Mike Roos thinks so. When challenged in the Democratic primary campaign by George Takei, who played Mr. Sulu on *Star Trek*, Roos promptly demanded as much time on local TV station KTLA as it devotes to Mr. Sulu's appearances on *Star Trek* reruns. KTLA had to admit that Roos was entitled to the time under the FCC "equal time" rule. The only way the station could avoid granting Roos' request was by taking *Star Trek* off the air—a "very expensive" alternative, said a KTLA attorney.

Takei spared KTLA the expense and the inevitable wrath of Los Angeles Trekkies by withdrawing from the race before the station could take any action, citing the potential cost to KTLA as one of his reasons. However, he was not happy about it.

"It's ludicrous," he griped. "They should measure the quality of the time as well as the quantity. It would be fair [to give Roos equal time] only if he had to mouth my lines and wear my *Star Trek* costumes."

But Roos insists that Takei and other screen actors who run for office have an unfair advantage in their extra air time—even if they use it to portray fictional characters in a space drama. "Seeking a public office is dependent on getting an image across," says Roos, "and the image they all have on the starship Enterprise is a heroic one."

This is not the first time in TV annals that a former actor's role-playing caused a ruckus when he turned politician; the "equal time" rule also has been applied to keep old Ronald Reagan movies off the air in states where he campaigns. But removing "Bedtime for Bonzo" doesn't cost a station nearly as much as taking off the wildly popular *Star Trek*. Besides, suggests a Reagan press aide, Reagan wouldn't be too upset if some of his movies were never seen again.

MUSCLING IN ON VIDEO

Off the back roads of little Lake Helen, Fla., stands a huge 170,000-square-foot gray building that houses, according to Arthur Jones, the world's largest television complex. Jones, the founder of Nautilus Sports/Medical Industries (he is the inventor of the widely distributed Nautilus exercise machines, not to mention a filmmaker, pilot, and former mercenary and wild-animal exporter in Africa), has become one of RCA's largest purchasers of broadcast equipment. He intends to use this hardware to "disseminate accurate information about sports medicine to athletes, coaches, physicians and trainers," according to NS/MI general manager Ed Farnham.

The Florida fitness firm has been considering going on satellite to beam exercise-instruction and conditioning videotapes to some 1500 health clubs across the country that carry a full line of Nautilus machines. But, in the meantime, Nautilus is cranking out tapes on its 24 VHS duplicators and mailing them to club owners for a fee; thus far it has sold several hundred tapes demonstrating the Nautilus way to strength and flexibility, not to mention reduced flab.

But with 23 studio color cameras, one of the Nation's two NEC Digital Strobe Action systems and a Digital Video Effects system (together worth a quarter of a million dollars), two portable video cameras, 35 studio video recorders, 32 Betamax dubbers and two working television studios, a man can hardly be expected to stop at exercise tapes. Jones plans to recoup his projected $70-million investment by marketing a series of sports-training videocassettes aimed at weekend and professional athletes, as well as a comprehensive series of educational videotapes for elementary and high schools, universities and hospitals. Subjects will include "how to fix your car, cook a pot roast, grow petunias and do back surgery," says Farnham. Jones has vowed to make how-to tapes cheaper than anyone else's—he's aiming for a $2, two-hour cassette.

Then there's the Nautilus Network, which soon will begin distributing tapes to cable systems and hopes to have three shows in syndication (and to be producing more than 200 hours of weekly programming) by 1981. In two years, after shelling out another $30 million to build seven more studios, it will log 1000 program hours, according to the corporate timetable.

Jones himself plans to be the host of a talk show, with an enclosed "underwater" set placed in the middle of a half-million-gallon fish tank filled with hundreds of crocodiles and hundreds of thousands of fish. There, he will interview experts in science, medicine, education and probably snake-breeding, too (that's another of his passions)—and anyone else willing to go *mano a mano* with the self-proclaimed male chauvinist. The title of the talk show was chosen by Jones to reflect the three things he values most: *Younger Women, Faster Airplanes and Bigger Crocodiles.*

—Mark L. Fuerst

www.americanradiohistory.com

FINAL STATEMENT

It's as extraordinary a self-introduction as the subject of a television documentary is ever likely to give: "As of this moment, I plan to take 3500 milligrams of Seconal, in 100-milligram capsules. So that's 35 capsules. I have more than that, and will take more if I can comfortably do so."

And, in fact, 32 days after calmly making that prediction, in June of 1979, New York City artist Jo Roman, 62, did exactly as she'd planned. Why she killed herself, and the determined but by no means despairing manner in which she prepared herself, are portrayed in a one-hour documentary scheduled this month on PBS, "Choosing Suicide." (Many stations will follow the documentary with a half-hour panel discussion of its topic.)

"Choosing Suicide" consists mainly of two videotaped farewell gatherings Roman held at her home to discuss her decision, one with her closest friends, the other with members of her family. Through all the emotional exchanges, Jo Roman emerges as a woman with a mission. "I think we can begin to decide how long we want to live," she says at one point, "instead of letting fate decide or allowing scientists to attach us to machines."

She was writing a book about that belief when she learned she had cancer. It was then, because she feared she would be unable to finish the writing, that Roman called in a producer friend, Richard Ellison. (She did, however, finish the book, which will be published later this year.) Says Ellison, "She was looking for some way to get her views on the record, and the taping was seen as an emergency measure to make sure this material existed when she no longer would."

Legal opinions were sought to ensure that the video team would not be committing a crime by participating, but Ellison says he personally had no hesitation. "I had to deal with my own emotions," he says, "but I had a lot of respect for Jo and for her ideas, and I wanted to help."

> ❝Believe me, a group of people don't sit down around a big conference table and say, 'Now what piece of junk are we going to foist on the public next?' The objective, believe it or not, is to try to put some product on the air that is good, that does represent quality, that does enrich the human condition. I know that may sound very hard to understand or believe, but it is really the truth.❞
>
> *–Fred Silverman, president of NBC, on* Donahue

> ❝I'm a character actor. The older I get, the less makeup I use.❞
>
> *—Karl Malden, on* The Tonight Show

NAUGHTY NUMBER

At the touch of a button, British subscribers to the world's most ambitious videotext service can summon onto their TV screens some 250,000 pages of computer-stored information, with sections on gardening tips, sports results, train schedules...and dirty bookstores. Good gracious, surely not in England?

In England.

The timing of this discovery could not have been worse. Just as Prestel, the British Post Office's viewdata information service, was launching a $1,500,000 publicity campaign to boost the number of subscribers in the U.K.; just as it was experimenting with an international service that will spread a limited version of Prestel to businesses in Europe and America—an inquisitive subscriber found that, by pressing 64 on his Prestel keypad (which links TV set and computer), he got a page headed "Buyer's Guide to Dirty Books, by Rupert Street-Walker."

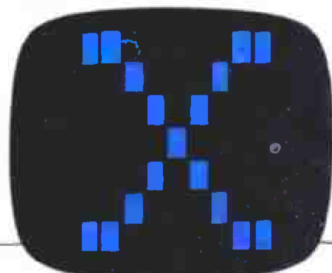
There followed a guide to girlie magazines, erotic novels and "specialist" material. Five bookshops in Soho were recommended as offering "a good selection of books and mags at fair market price with decent service and reasonably decorous surroundings." In shop number one, "You don't need a dirty mac—indeed, you would feel out of place in one." Shop number five is "a connoisseur's—it has a fair selection of girlie mags, but the speciality is spanking."

The problem pages came from an electronic publishing house called Mills & Allen Communications, which clearly caters to all tastes: it also provides the Bible Society's Prestel section, which allows subscribers to punch up Psalm 23 and Ephesians 4. Unimpressed, Conservative M.P.s and Mrs. Mary Whitehouse, inveterate crusader for decency on TV, demanded an inquiry.

At first the Post Office was unmoved. "We made it clear at the outset of Prestel that we would not take on the mantle of censor. Our customers wish to provide information as a public service, and what they put out is their responsibility." But after one of the five Soho bookshops was raided by the police, the notorious guide was suspended. Cheekily, Mills & Allen provided a new set of Prestel pages called "How to Complain About a Prestel Page," in which it reminded sensitive subscribers that there is an Association of Viewdata Information Providers (AVIP) to deal with complaints.

Dr. Alex Reid, Prestel director, said that the Post Office "has not had any second thoughts about its policy of complete neutrality on the content of Prestel pages—rather the reverse. The information provider should be able to put up whatever he wishes, subject to the constraints of the law."

Sorry about that, Mrs. Whitehouse. *–Richard Gilbert*



www.americanradiohistory.com

PARKS PRESERVED

To hear Bert Parks talk, getting fired from the Miss America Pageant last winter was the best thing that ever happened to his career.

Since he was canned, his job offers have increased by at least 50 percent, according to his agent. An episode of *WKRP in Cincinnati* that Parks had taped prior to his dismissal was rushed onto the air. He then appeared in rapid succession on *The Love Boat*, "The People's Choice Awards," *Pink Lady and Jeff* and *The Big Show*. Suddenly he was a hot property for commercials and personal appearances.

"I've never worked harder in my life," says Parks. And the financial rewards have been considerable. "Now I can pay the rent, eat three meals a day, maybe take a vacation. I certainly couldn't do that on my Miss America salary," he jokes. "I just did Miss America out of friendship."

It may not look as though that friendship was repaid very well, but Parks isn't bitter. In fact, he says that pageant chairman Albert A. Marks Jr. "should get the Distinguished Flying Cross" for the boost that all the publicity from the heave-ho gave to Parks' career.

That publicity should help the pageant, too, thinks Marks. He expects the TV ratings for the extravaganza to shoot "sharply upward because of the curiosity" viewers have about how well Parks' shoes will be filled by ex-Tarzan Ron Ely. In the meantime, Marks wishes his ex-host well: "Nobody could be happier than I am" about the recent surge of job offers to Parks, he says.

Well, maybe one man is happier...Parks positively bubbles as he anticipates the future: "There's no limit to what I'm going to do now."

> "Television made print a better medium by threatening its future. It is quite possible that the new wave of communications media will do the same for conventional television. Innovation breeds invention. Insecurity breeds inspiration."
>
> *—Edward N. Ney, chairman of Young & Rubicam, Inc., at a conference of the Association of National Advertisers, New York*

> "The most important, the most dramatic thing that happened to television in the 30 years of its history happened really in the last few years, and that was that the public finally, spontaneously decided to take part by raising its voice. And it was not television critics who wrote for newspapers that did this. It was the public out there. It was the PTA and church groups and all kinds of people who complained."
>
> *—Les Brown, television journalist, on* Donahue

CLASS ACTION

The instant replay, long familiar to sports fans, has found its way into yet another facet of American life: the courtroom—specifically, an experimental courtroom at the University of the Pacific's McGeorge School of Law in Sacramento, Cal.

There, televised mock trials are taking place at the "Courtroom of the Future," a $468,000 law laboratory, where future Perry Masons practice their trade. Since its construction in 1973, a number of real courtrooms around the country have been built or will be built on the McGeorge model, which integrates television cameras and monitors into standard court procedure and security.

Some 700 mock trials have been staged in the unconventional circular-shaped arena—all under the unblinking scrutiny of seven television cameras. Fourteen video monitors are scattered throughout the room in front of the jurors, judge, attorneys, witnesses and clerks. Despite the abundance of television hardware, the "Courtroom of the Future" does not have the appearance of a local TV repair shop. Most of the monitors, as well as the cameras, are built into the walls and ceiling, and are meant to be as unobtrusive as possible. In a bombproof control room, a court technician acts as the television director, picking all the camera shots and controlling the videotaping, as well as monitoring the electronically operated security devices. At a moment's notice, he can provide an instant replay of a critical or confusing moment in a trial, if the judge requests it.

The main function of the "Courtroom of the Future" is to provide law students with real-life courtroom situations, based on actual trial transcripts. Videotaping the proceedings clues these students in on how they look in action and also creates teaching aids for future classes. Casting requires some imaginative talent-scouting: Drama majors from the University of the Pacific are often recruited as witnesses or defendants, and juries are drafted from the ranks of first-year law students or local citizens. But to play key participants, real-life judges, policemen or doctors are sometimes asked to donate their services.

A scarcity of scripts occasionally causes the same trial to be enacted as many as three times a year with different participants. And the three endings? Confesses Dean Gary Schaber: "We sometimes come out with three different verdicts."

www.americanradiohistory.com

20 HITS. PLUS "10."

WCI Home Video brings you the best.

Movies you want, the way you want them. Without commercial interruption. Professionally duplicated on top-quality Beta or VHS videocassettes.

Hits like:

"10." Bo Derek, of course. But that's not the only perfect thing about Blake Edwards' spicy adult comedy of manners and morals. Don't miss it.

SUPERMAN. An all-star cast in one of the most spectacular movies ever filmed. Unforgettable special effects and good fun for the whole family.

ALL THE PRESIDENT'S MEN. Incredible, but it really happened—the true story of Watergate, with Robert Redford and Dustin Hoffman.

EAST OF EDEN. James Dean's first film, and a romantic classic that belongs in every home video library.

DELIVERANCE. Four men ride a wild river on a canoe trip that turns into a nightmare. Taut, nerve-tingling action.

A LITTLE ROMANCE. A critically acclaimed drama of two lonely, sensitive children in love at an age when anything is possible.

THE EXORCIST. The film that shocked millions—an eerie tale of demonic possession you'll never forget.

BLAZING SADDLES. Saddle up for Mel Brooks' laugh-packed saga of how the West was definitely not won.

REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE. James Dean's famous journey through an exploding teenage universe of violence and delinquency. The film and the actor that spoke for a whole generation.

ENTER THE DRAGON. The legendary Bruce Lee in the greatest martial arts movie of them all.

DIRTY HARRY. You remember Harry Callahan. In this tale of two killers, Harry is the one with the badge. Starring Clint Eastwood.

THE BUGS BUNNY/ROAD RUNNER MOVIE. A four-star collectors' anthology of classic Warner Bros. cartoons—including all-new animation never before seen.

THE IN-LAWS. A CIA agent meets a dentist in the wildest comedy in years. Starring Peter Falk and Alan Arkin.

THE GREEN BERETS. John Wayne's action-packed portrayal of Special Forces heroism in Vietnam.

MISTER ROBERTS. A wise and touching comedy of men fighting to survive the indignities of war, with Henry Fonda and James Cagney.

"OH, GOD!" That's right, God—with George Burns in the title role. Who else did you expect?

HOOPER. Burt Reynolds stars in this look behind the scenes at the bruising world of stuntmen.

THE SEARCHERS. Another John Wayne classic, this Western drama is one of John Ford's finest.

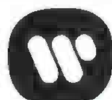
FLAVORS OF CHINA. A WCI Home Video exclusive—study under a master Chinese chef without even leaving your home.

THE WILD BUNCH. Sam Peckinpah's bloody Western about a gang of killers who've outlived their times.

WOODSTOCK. Two cassettes loaded with the sights, the sounds, and the spectacle of the greatest rock concert in history.

20 hits. Plus "10." With more great programs on the way.

NOW, THE MOVIES COME HOME TO YOU.



WCI HOME VIDEO

A Warner Communications Company

Write for our catalog and a list of dealers in your area.

WCI Home Video, C.N. #03050 Trenton, NJ 08650

© 1980 WCI Home Video Inc.
• Trademark of Warner Communications Inc. Reg. US Pat. & TM Off.

www.americanradiohistory.com

www.americanradiohistory.com

The Shah, the Ayatollah and the TV Set

Television has been intimately intertwined with the Iranian revolution

By DAVID R. BOLDT

The discussion around the dinner table in the schoolteacher's home in Tabriz last December had portrayed the intriguing complexity of the situation in Iran, even before the bizarre call for help had come over the television set.

Though the teacher's wife, a small, gray woman wearing a floral-patterned *chador*, said little as she merely passed the steaming plates of rice, chicken and vegetable stew, her passivity was made up for by her husband, in jacket and tie at the opposite end of the table. He taught students at the local high school about science and brought his proud pedagogical assurance home with him when he sparred with his son, son-in-law, three dark-eyed daughters and two visiting journalists.

The conversation drowned out the newscaster, nattily attired in the latest London fashion, who was giving the revolutionary government's account of the day's events on the Grundig color-television console on the other side of the large room. The big TV set had been on all evening, though no one paid it more than passing notice. It was just there, like an extra guest no one had to be particularly polite to.

In fact, only the youngest girl, a high-school senior wearing sneakers, Levi's and blue sweat shirt, heard it the first time it happened. And if she hadn't quickly run over toward the set and called for everyone to be quiet, we might have missed it the second time too. But now we all heard another announcer's voice come in *over* the newsman's drone. "Come help us," said the voice. "We are being attacked. All members of the army, air force and navy should come to our aid. Help us!"

David Boldt, editor of The Philadelphia Inquirer's Today magazine, spent two months in Iran on special assignment for the Inquirer.

Within moments, everyone had left the table and run up onto the roof, where we could hear the shouts of large crowds of people surging through the streets toward the television and radio facilities located on a promontory a short distance from the house. Soon the popping of small-arms fire could be heard.

"Let's go!" shouted the youngest girl. "Let's help them." But her father restrained her, noting a couple of interesting things. The announcement had failed to make clear who was holding the television station—or who was attacking them. Control of the station and other government buildings in Tabriz had been switching back and forth on almost a daily basis between followers of Ayatollah Seyyed Kazem Shariat-Madari and Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, who were seen (at least by the people of Tabriz) as representing different forms of Islamic revolution. There was no telling who had the station now. (We learned the next day that people loyal to Khomeini were inside and Shariat-Madari's supporters were trying to oust them.) By the time we were all back downstairs, the tone of the interruptions had changed. The Tabriz announcer was continuing to cut in, but he was no longer asking for help. Things were under control, he said. It would be sufficient for the people in the street simply to begin chanting *"Allahu Akbar"* ("God is Great"), the motto of the revolution and a gesture both factions could identify with. Soon the streets were echoing with the salute to God's omnipotence—and to the pervasive power of television.

The episode is illustrative in several ways. For starters, it captures in microcosm the confusion that surrounds attempts to interpret current events in Iran through television—or

www.americanradiohistory.com

any other medium. As important, though, it illustrates the intimate way in which television is intertwined with the revolution.

Much has been said about the way in which the Iranian revolutionaries have manipulated foreign television's news coverage of the revolution, and about the fortuitousness of Khomeini's move, four months before the revolution, from an electronically obscure town in Iraq to a town in France close by Paris, a principal ganglion of the international communications system. But not enough has been said about the way in which television in Iran reflected, and in many cases refracted, the events of the revolution for *Iranians*.

It can be argued that in many ways television was a key to interpreting the revolution. Virtually all of the factors triggering the revolutionary spasm that shook that country last year were exemplified in the way television had, in a little over two decades, insinuated itself into a culture that prides itself on its continuous existence for more than two millennia, but many of whose major cities were connected only by dirt roads when the first TV station began operating there in 1958.

Television, during the time of former shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi, was a paradigm for the Shah's efforts to westernize—and, in particular, to *Americanize*—his country. And television mirrored the successes and failures involved in that effort. Perhaps no other aspect of Iranian culture was altered as dramatically and clearly by the revolution as television programming. Before the revolution, three separate government-controlled stations in Tehran telecast a large assortment of American comedies, police dramas and Westerns. After the revolution, the only American show that continued on the air was *Little House on the Prairie*.

Television, to be sure, was but one of several electronic devices and media that were important in the unfolding revolutionary drama. The Islamic revolution in Iran was probably the first uprising in history in which audio-cassette recordings were used to spread the revolutionary message. This Western engineering marvel was the principal means used by Khomeini to spread his messianic message of political revolt from his exile abroad. The cassettes would be smuggled into the country, duplicated by the hundreds, then circulated through the mosques and bazaars of the country. In addition, the crucial link-up between the mullahs and the educated middle-class college students was accomplished by distributing the tapes of lectures given by a chain-smoking, soft-spoken, professorial religious theorist named Ali Shariati, who died in London under suspicious circumstances in 1977.

Shortwave radio, rather than television, was the medium most widely relied upon for news of the revolution on a day-to-day basis. Even the smallest village in Iran had a shortwave radio receiver, often several, and every night the villagers would listen to the government's broadcast; to the National Voice of Iran, which emanated from the Soviet Union; and to the BBC. (The United States did not begin making Farsi-language broadcasts to Iran until after the revolution.) Early on in the revolution the BBC won a reputation for accuracy in its accounts, and it was also the first of the shortwave stations to give serious consideration to Khomeini.

> No other aspect of Iranian culture was altered as dramatically and clearly by the revolution as television programming

Television did occasionally play a direct, unambiguous role in shaping events. The fighting that finally brought Khomeini to power in February 1979, for example, was actually triggered by the telecast—a week late—of the Ayatollah's triumphal return to Tehran.

The arrival had not been covered live because anti-Khomeini technicians at the television facilities pulled the plug, literally, almost immediately after Khomeini disembarked.

When the videotape of the arrival was finally shown a week later, it was an amateurish hodgepodge, resembling a home movie more than a newscast. (Most of the cameramen and editors had walked off their jobs as part of the general strike called by Khomeini against the government of Shahpur Bakhtiar, the constitutional democrat whom the Shah had appointed prime minister just before leaving the country.) But even the jiggling, hand-held footage, shown without narration and with little apparent attempt at editing, caught, communicated and rekindled the ecstasy of the millions who had lined the arrival route.

Immediately after the telecast, young air-force technicians who favored Khomeini poured out of their barracks at Dushan Tappeh Air Force Base in southeastern Tehran and began to shout revolutionary slogans. Troops loyal to the Shah fired on them, the airmen returned the fire, and thus began the daylong outburst of revolutionary violence during which all remaining support for Bakhtiar's government crumbled.

The Iranian revolution also underlined the way in which broadcast facilities have become pivotal control points within even a semimodern society like Iran's. This was true not only during the revolution against the Shah, but also, as the episode in Tabriz demonstrated, in the postrevolutionary jockeying for position between the various revolutionary elements.

In shaping the Iranians' view of their own culture and of the world outside, television has had more subtle effects.

First of all, in a nation that was increasingly divided between a growing middle class of haves and a still huge mass of have-nots, possession of a television set was one of the demarcation points. Having television in one's home was an important indicator that one had arrived in the growing Iranian middle class of government bureaucrats, military officers, academics and professional people that, by 1979, accounted for about a quarter of the country's population.

The television sets also exemplified one of the principal complaints made against the Shah's government. While there may be an innate tendency among Iranians toward conspicuous spending, the main reason for the popularity of the big Grundigs with the remote-control devices (which even flash the time and date on the screen at the flick of a switch) was that they were the most easily available in Iran. In recent years they were assembled in Iran under an Iranian brand name, but even so they still cost more than $1200.

Why a model that sold for $1200 would be the one selected for manufacture in a country where most of the population still lived in bare-subsistence poverty is a question to which most Iranians have only one answer: the big ticket enhanced the opportunities to generate revenues for bribes and kickbacks. It was this feeling of pervasive, all-suffusing corruption that, many analysts feel, alienated even those segments of the population that

www.americanradiohistory.com

had done well under the Shah.

There's reason to believe that things were the way they were because *someone* wanted them that way. A Harvard- and Johns Hopkins-trained Iranian doctor says he was so amazed by the fact that "you couldn't buy a cheap little black-and-white television set" that he tried to go into the business himself. His idea was to import components for small, cheap, black-and-white televisions from Japan, then install them in cabinets in Iran. But the needed government permissions to import and manufacture simply couldn't be obtained. "Everything was set up to protect those people who were already in the business," he says. "They didn't want anyone else getting in on it."

But it's also possible that the Shah's government wanted to keep TV sets out of the hands of low-income people, fearing perhaps that the displays of Western opulence in the programs could have a radicalizing effect.

Still and all, poor Iranians did get to watch television, though they usually had to go to a teahouse, restaurant or hotel to do so. Vincent Pigott, a University of Pennsylvania anthropologist working at a site in northwestern Iran that only recently became accessible by paved road, remembers coming into the small town where the anthropologists usually bought supplies. There he would watch the people who were watching the television set in the town's small hotel. He says he found the puzzle of trying to figure out what the effect of television was on them to be as intriguing as the ancient mysteries he was seeking to solve at the dig. "I'm sure that when they looked at it, they didn't see it just as drama or comedy. They saw it as portraying a separate reality," he says. And that observation, to some extent, could apply as well to middle- and upper-class viewers. Undoubtedly the shows from America created a desire for the kind of material goods that surrounded the characters in the programs—the cars, the clothes, the appliances. To the extent that these amenities weren't easily available, the depiction of them on television increased frustration.

More difficult to gauge was the effect of the sexual presence, even as a televised image, of, say, a Farrah Fawcett, in a conservative, religion-dominated village where women of their own volition still wore *chadors*. A high-ranking American diplomat who was in Tehran during the revolution says he isn't sure what the effect of television was, but he believes that the American and European violent and pornographic movies that were widely shown in the theaters of Tehran and other Iranian cities during the Shah's regime "disgusted and horrified" the workers who had come to the cities from small villages to work in the new factories. That revulsion against imported hedonism was a significant factor, he believes, in bringing these workers to the mosques—where the mullahs were playing Khomeini's tapes. The jiggling blouses of Farrah, Kate and Jaclyn may have contributed to this effect as well. (Vintage *Charlie's Angels* episodes, it should be noted, were a major hit among middle-class Iranians just before the revolution.)

But the cross-cultural effects of television were not one-dimensional. It's easy to suggest, for instance, that the steady diet of American cops-and-robbers shows made America seem like a land of smart cops and depraved criminals. But what about the generally high degree of integrity of TV's lawmen? Did Iranians compare the secret arrests and torture carried out by SAVAK unfavorably with the fearsome and unbending integrity of the Lone Ranger? Or did they transfer the strength and probity of the heroes of the American shows to the power figures in their own society? Probably a little of both.

Undoubtedly the shows from America created a desire for the kind of material goods that surrounded the characters in the programs

What can be said is that those middle-class Iranians who owned TV sets liked a lot of what was offered to them on television. During *Peyton Place*'s period of maximum popularity in Iran a few years ago, Iranian hostesses scheduled parties so that their guests would be able to catch the latest episode. Other shows also had dedicated followings. One woman said her cook insisted on being allowed to stop work and watch *Days of Our Lives* when it was screened in the afternoon, and cried copiously throughout nearly every episode.

In addition to *Charlie's Angels*, other American action-adventure shows were popular. They were what schoolchildren talked about with one another. The children in one family referred to their favorite uncle, a military aviator who did in fact resemble the protagonist of *The Six Million Dollar Man*, as "Steve Austin." Beyond the imported shows, locally produced versions of *Let's Make a Deal* and *Name That Tune* were also widely watched.

The government-operated National Iranian Radio and Television (NIRT) system, consisting of stations in nearly every major city linked together by satellite and microwave transmission equipment, also succeeded in plugging Iran into the "global village." Iranians watched right along with the rest of the world when astronaut Neil Armstrong took man's first step on the moon; they saw live broadcasts of their teams competing in World Cup soccer matches and videotapes of the Olympics.

Under the Shah, Iranian television did not openly try to indoctrinate, though respectful reportage of the Shah's comings and goings, doings and sayings was a staple of the TV news reports. And his interviews for Western television were frequently shown on Iranian stations as well.

The Shah was acutely conscious of his own televised image, and was known to ask Western diplomats he trusted for advice on this sensitive issue. William H. Sullivan, former U.S. ambassador to Iran, says that he told the Shah that he ought to try to relax, smile and seem more casual. A few weeks after he proffered this advice, Sullivan was called up by one of the Shah's personal aides and asked how he thought the Shah had come off in a recent interview with Barbara Walters. Sullivan confessed that he had missed the show. Moments later the aide called back, told the diplomat that the interview would be rebroadcast in two hours, and asked if Sullivan would please try to catch it this time.

But despite the no-doubt intentional westernizing influence of the imported programming, Elihu Katz and George Wedell, in their study "Broadcasting in the Third World," credit Iran with doing more than any of the other developing countries they studied in terms of presenting over television the classic stories and plays of its own (Persian) literature, as well as performances of ethnic Iranian music and dramatic series that incorporated birth-control information and other social messages. There were, however, controls placed on the cultural-heritage shows that tended to inhibit the enthusiasm and creativity of those involved in produc-

www.americanradiohistory.com

ing them. One expert on Iranian folklore said he had been somewhat discomfited when government censors prevented him from reading an ancient Persian poem that dealt, in part, with the evil that may befall a monarch who uses torture and cruelty to control his subjects.

When the government began operating its first television system in the mid-1960s, its programming contained a high percentage of such material, but surveys showed that viewers favored by far the more action-packed imported programs shown on the commercial station, so the government station began showing more of them. (Eventually the commercial station was nationalized.)

The Shah's government had made efforts to initiate the use of educational television in schools, but, like many other laudable enterprises under the Shah, the program failed to reach fruition. An Iranian who had worked extensively for American educational stations said that when he arrived at the University of Isfahan to take charge of program production in 1978, he found a multimillion-dollar facility—but no one qualified to operate it.

To be sure, there was a staff of a dozen or more people, but they had gotten their jobs through political connections and knew little, or nothing, about their work. "They spent most of the day sitting and drinking tea," the would-be program director recalls. "One was a taxi driver. Another ran a chicken farm. They were almost never there." In the previous several years, as nearly as he could tell, the facility had produced only one program, a tape of a professor's favorite lecture, and no one had ever asked to see it—except the professor himself.

Many Iranians doubt that there was ever a sincere intention on the part of the Shah's government to make effective use of television for educational purposes. Things like the equipment for the videotape center at Isfahan University were purchased, they charge, mainly so that members of the royal family and their business associates could extract large bribes from the foreign makers of the equipment.

As foreign-made programs increased their dominance, they contributed to the tendency among Iranians to overestimate the power of America and other Western countries.

Iranians tend to see everything that happens in their country as the result of foreign intervention. This personality pattern is rooted in history. For nearly 200 years Iran has, for all practical purposes, been manipulated by the British, Russians and, more recently, the Americans. Television programs that made everything in America seem glamorous, exciting, seductive and powerful fed this image.

Many Iranians interviewed last year said that the reason the Shah had never faced a large-scale uprising was that Iranians felt that he had the all-powerful United States behind him. And yet a police captain was one of several who said that it was television, in a sort of ultimate irony, that first communicated the possibility that American support was not so strong or sure as had been widely thought in Iran.

The realization did not come at once, but it began with the live telecast via satellite of the Shah's arrival in Washington for a visit with President Jimmy Carter in 1977. The Iranian television system used the same picture as was shown in the United States by NBC, but certain details of the arrival ceremony were not explained by the Iranian commentator. He did not, for instance, explain why President and Mrs. Carter, the Shah and the Empress were all crying. One Iranian woman said, with some chagrin, that she just asssumed they were overcome by the emotion of the moment. Only gradually did it become widely known in Iran that the tears were caused by the tear gas that Washington policemen were hurling at anti-Shah demonstrators.

The captain says that he, and many of the people he knows, felt that the United States was purposely sending a signal to Iranians, by allowing demonstrators to get so close, that the Shah could not necessarily count on full American support. These events, plus human-rights statements made by Carter at the time, were, in the captain's opinion, "like matches dropped on gasoline that had already been spread."

In the final months before the revolution, most of the television personnel were on strike, and television programming consisted of such videotapes as the remaining staffers could easily get their hands on, plus news programs that were notorious for their omissions. On one of the last nights before the Islamic revolution took power, viewers were treated to the rerun of a year-old American college basketball game.

Immediately after the revolution, television in Iran reflected the general euphoria of the country. The strikers went back to work and, in Tehran, they formed an ad hoc chorale that gave a creditable on-the-air rendition of a revolutionary song. (The moment was slightly misplayed when the announcer almost switched to another segment without giving the singers their chance. A stage whisper hissed from the background, "No, first *this*.") The government network's logo, which had shown two lions holding swords, was revised to show lions holding carnations—the flower that came to symbolize the revolution because of its association with the bouquets of carnations placed on martyrs' graves.

More important, the programming was changed to reverse the westernizing effect it had had in the past. The first several days featured mainly reports on secret-police facilities that had been captured, tours of the homes of the immensely rich who had fled Iran, and public interrogations of military and political leaders who had been arrested by the revolutionaries.

But reporters who came to the Tehran broadcast facilities heard rumblings of discontent. Some of the station's personnel said they were upset that the news was now dominated by Khomeini in much the same way as it had been by the Shah.

A debate raged between some members of the news staff and Sadegh Ghotbzadeh, who had been placed in charge of the national radio and television facilities by Khomeini (and later became foreign minister). They fought over whether the victorious movement should be called "The Islamic Revolution" or simply "The Revolution." There was also a fight about what theme song should be used, in place of "Hail to the Shahanshah," to begin and end the broadcast day. One night shortly after the revolution the picture suddenly disappeared from the screen while a turbaned Islamic clergyman was in the midst of what, to many viewers, seemed an overlong, tedious harangue. It was widely suspected that a technician who shared this opinion had cut him off.

Other changes were also apparent. Women newscasters, who had appeared regularly before the revolution, were seen less frequently, and instead of wearing Western dress as they had immediately after the revolution, many of them wore coiffure-covering scarves, or even *chadors*, particularly on days of religious observances. (The one exception was an attractive young woman who was widely believed to be a close associate of Ghotbzadeh's.)

By the end of last year television had become a mechanism attuned to serving the needs of the Islamic revolution.

www.americanradiohistory.com

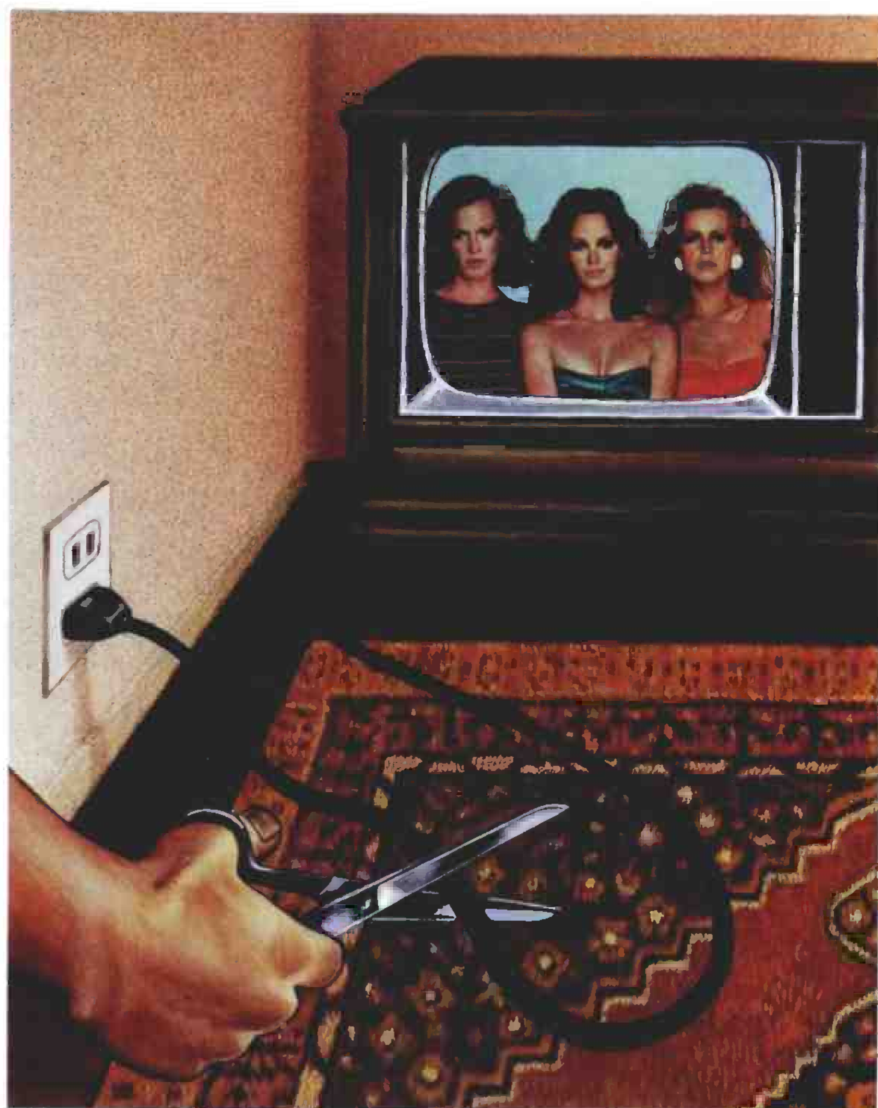
It began six hours of programming with what might best be described as a vastly enlarged version of *Sermonette*, in which a verse of the Koran was read in Arabic, then interpreted at length in Farsi. All evening the interludes between programs were filled with pictures of victorious moments from the revolution (particularly of Khomeini's triumphant return).

The programs included weapons instruction carried out by Iranian Special Forces sergeants. On the evenings this reporter took in these basic-training lectures, the topics included the assembly and disassembly of the Israeli-made Uzi submachine gun, the operation of a Soviet-made antitank weapon and techniques for killing in hand-to-hand combat.

Another staple was the anti-American "documentary," in which the propaganda had almost the naive charm of folk art. Aspects of American life that could be depicted to show Americans as congenitally insensitive and brutal were singled out for these filmed features. One showed American rodeos, while a narrator discussed the ways in which the rodeo animals are mistreated. The impression was embellished by showing close-ups of the audience presumably delighting in the barbarisms of the broncobusters and calf-ropers. The only problem was that the spectators were clearly not a rodeo audience. The men wore tall silk hats and tuxedos; the women wore broad-brimmed hats and chic dresses. They were sitting around tables sipping champagne.

Frequent excuse was found by commentators to show pictures of Americans torturing Vietnamese, or to talk about the way white Americans treated American Indians. And each evening's newscast in the early days of the hostage crisis featured an interview with a student recently returned from the United States who told of mistreatment and harassment. Court decisions in the United States halting or restricting deportation of Iranian students were not reported, and as a result of the "news" reports, many Iranians thought that Iranian students in the United States were in constant danger and did not dare venture outside except in groups.

The evenings usually featured an interview with a leader of the revolution. Later, newly elected Iranian president Bani-Sadr complained bitterly about the way he was portrayed on television during the campaign, but surely he owed much of his popularity, or at least his recognition, to his appearances on



television when he was minister of economics and foreign minister.

Just what it is that Iranians saw in Bani-Sadr will have to await the ministrations of an Iranian Gallup. The former foreign minister and economic minister did not seem prepossessing in his television appearances. His discursive—some might say rambling—style of answering the puffball questions lobbed by interviewers won him the sobriquet *"Bani-Harf"* from many Iranians, which translates roughly as "Benny the Mouth."

But he also came across as sincere and reasonable. And almost alone among the revolutionary officials who were interviewed on the nightly news program, he at least claimed to have an overall plan for the restructuring of Iran, though he was rarely specific about the details.

For that matter, it might be noted that Khomeini himself was no whiz at off-the-cuff repartee with electronic journalists, whether Iranian or American. On his return to Iran, as he walked down the ramp from the Air France 747 that had brought him, an Iranian reporter thrust a microphone in front of him and asked what he felt now that he was setting foot once again on the soil of his native land. *"Heech,"* the Ayatollah replied succinctly. "Nothing."

Middle-class Iranians complain nowadays about what they are getting now on their big Grundigs. "I don't worry so much about myself. I read and listen to music," said one doctor, "but I wish there were something for the children."

An Iranian writer said he regarded television as one of the major missed opportunities of the revolution. "They could have had the best films in the world," he said, "the best public-affairs programs. They could have really taught people what was at stake, informed them about the choices we will have to make. Instead, we have..." His voice trailed off as he shrugged, palms held upward in a gesture of disgust. ■

www.americanradiohistory.com

VHS? Beta? NTSC? Antiope? ENG? Early Bird?...

Test Your Knowledge of TV Technology

This quiz is a toughie, but you'll enjoy taking it

By DAVID LACHENBRUCH

Are you prepared to cope with all the television wonders that abound in the new video age? You'll never know until you take this quiz. You'll find all the correct answers on page 40, along with explanations of why you were wrong and a quick grading guide. And no—there's no time limit.

1. Which of the following is *not* a videotape format?

A. VHS. B. EVR. C. Cartrivision. D. V-Cord. E. Beta. F. U-Matic. G. Video 2000.

2. What do the letters "VHS" stand for?

A. Video Home System. B. Very High Speed. C. Very High Spectrum. D. Vision, Hue, Sound. E. Nothing—they're arbitrary letters.

3. What is the origin of the name "Beta" in its video application? (Two correct answers.)

A. Beta particle, used in magnetic recording. B. From the Greek letter, which represents feedback in electronic circuits. C. The Japanese pronunciation of "better." D. In memory of Max Beta, the first president of Telefunken, under whom magnetic recording was invented. E. A Japanese word that translates loosely as "striped paint." F. Acronym for "*B*i-*E*lectronic *T*ape *A*mplification." G. Path of the tape around the head drum, resembling the Greek letter beta.

4. Identify each of the companies on the left with its home video system or trade name on the right.

A. Avco	1. Betacord
B. CBS	2. Betamax
C. Magnavox	3. Cartrivision
D. Matsushita	4. DiscoVision
E. MCA	5. EVR
F. Philips	6. Magnavision
G. RCA	7. SelectaVision
H. Sanyo	8. VHD
I. Sony	9. Video Director
J. Zenith	10. VLP

5. Video makes strange bedfellows. Which of these groups of companies is *not* tied together through the adoption of a common videotape or videodisc format?

A. CBS-RCA-Zenith. B. RCA-Magnavox-Panasonic. C. Sony-Toshiba-Zenith. D. IBM-Magnavox-MCA. E. IBM-RCA-Sony.

6. What is the longest recording time on a single commercially available cassette offered by any home videocassette recording system now on the American market?

A. 1 13/16 hours on Beta cassette. B. 4 hours on VHS cassette. C. 4½ hours on Beta cassette. D. 6 hours on VHS cassette. E. 7 hours on Beta cassette (with time-stretch adapter). F. 9 hours on VHS cassette. G. 42 hours on ultraslow-speed (USS) VHS cassette.

7. All videodisc players introduced or planned for introduction so far have one thing in common. What is it?

A. The discs spin at 1800 rpm. B. They use a laser. C. They have stereophonic sound. D. They can't record programs. E. They play regular phonograph records. F. They also can play tape cassettes.

8. Which of the following companies is *not* releasing feature films on videocassettes?

A. Walt Disney Productions. B. Warner Bros. C. 20th Century-Fox. D. Universal Pictures. E. Paramount Pictures. F. NBC. G. Avco-Embassy. H. J. Arthur Rank. I. Allied Artists. J. United Artists.

9. With the approval of the FCC, three networks—ABC, NBC and PBS—last March started a new service called closed captioning. What is it?

A. A subscription-TV service with adult movies. B. Subtitles for the hard of hearing. C. Programs designed to be viewed on other planets. D. Subliminal commercials. E. Programs that can't be taped at home. F. A scrambling system to foil cable-TV pirates.

10. The UHF channels are those num-

www.americanradiohistory.com

bered 14 and above. What does UHF stand for?

A. Ultra High Frequency. B. Usually Hard to Find. C. Ultimate High Fidelity. D. Nothing at all.

11. Which of the following companies never made TV sets?

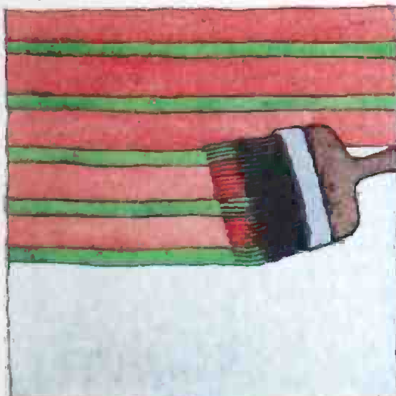
A. Stromberg-Carlson. B. Bendix. C. Crosley. D. Hallicrafters. E. Westinghouse. F. Ford Motor Company. G. Capehart-Farnsworth. H. Mary Carter Paint Company. I. ITT. J. CBS.

12. If you wanted to be sure of getting an imported color-TV set, which one of the following brands would you buy?

A. Sony. B. Electrohome. C. Sanyo. D. Hitachi. E. Toshiba. F. Quasar. G. Panasonic. H. MGA. I. Sharp.

13. If a set is advertised as having a 19-inch picture tube, what does the measurement refer to?

A. The width of the picture tube. B. The width of the picture on the tube. C. The diagonal measurement of the picture tube. D. The diagonal measurement of the picture. E. The perimeter of the picture.

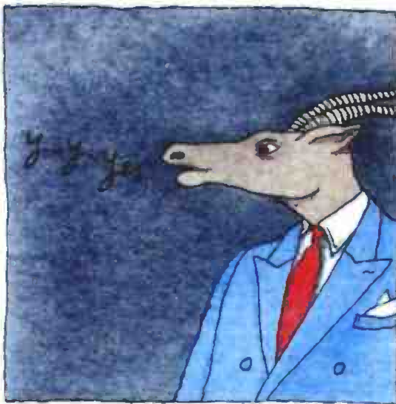


14. What are the three primary colors in a color picture tube?

A. Red, yellow and blue. B. Red, green and blue. C. Red, yellow and green. D. Yellow, blue and green. E. Ocher, puce and magenta. F. White, black and gray.

15. The American system of color TV is known as NTSC. What do the letters stand for?

A. Never Twice the Same Color. B. National Television Standards Conference. C. National Television System Committee. D. New Television Standard for Color.



16. What is Antiope?

A. A gazelle with a speech impediment. B. A slang expression for closed-circuit television, derived from a contraction of "anti-open." C. A voice-activated television set. D. Something similar to Telidon or *Bildschirmzeitung*. E. There is no such thing as Antiope.

17. Which was the first commercial communications satellite?

A. Echo I. B. Early Bird. C. Telstar. D. Molniya I. E. Frisbee II. F. Sputnik.

18. Match each of the following TV-carrying satellites with its owner, leaseholder or home country:

A. Anik	1. AT&T
B. BSE	2. Canada
C. Comstar	3. France
D. Insat	4. Western Union
E. Palapa	5. Indonesia
F. Symphonie	6. India
G. Satcom	7. USSR
H. Westar	8. Japan
I. Raduga	9. RCA

19. If you hooked an Apple to your TV set, what could you get?

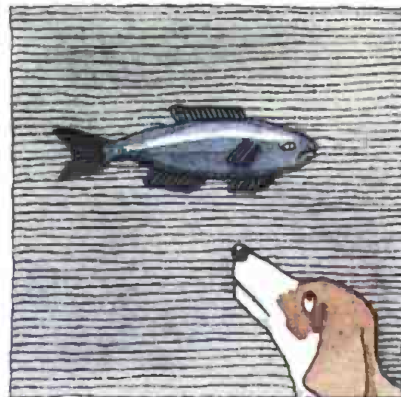
A. Electronic sauce. B. A balanced checkbook. C. The "William Tell" overture. D. A short circuit. E. A program from New York. F. A polished performance.

20. Which of the following is *not* a pay-cable service?

A. Madison Square Garden Sports. B. Home Box Office. C. Prism. D. Home Theater Network. E. The Movie Channel.

21. The following television stations have something very special in common: WTBS, Atlanta; WGN-TV, Chicago; WOR-TV, New York; KTVU, San Francisco. What is it?

A. They all begin with "W." B. They're all broadcasting reruns of *I Love Lucy*. C. They're all on Channel 9. D. They're all superstations. E. They're all operated by solar power. F. Put them all together, they spell "mother."

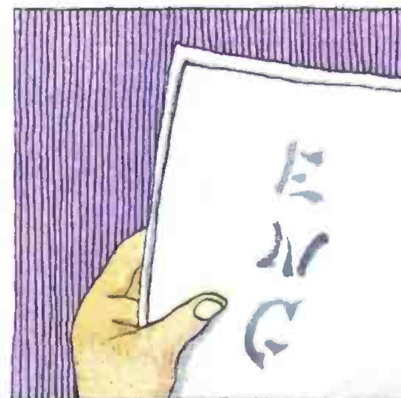


22. What are PAL and SECAM?

A. Characters in a British TV series about a dog and a fish. B. Cable-TV shows—"Program for Art Lovers" and "See the Camera." C. European color-TV systems. D. Videodisc systems. E. Space satellites.

23. Which word doesn't belong with the others below?

A. Captains. B. Vidifont. C. Telidon. D. Prestel. E. Ceefax. F. Oracle.



24. What is ENG and how is it used on television?

A. The Chinese word for "right," used in scripts on Taiwanese TV to tell actors which way to turn. B. "Electronic Nerve Gas"; it paralyzes viewers with commercials. C. "Electronic News Gathering": use of videotape and electronic cameras in place of film. D. Identifies English channel on TV sets in Tokyo hotel rooms.

www.americanradiohistory.com

Answers

1. B. EVR, CBS's early entry into the home video market in 1968, stood for Electronic Video Recording. It used film, not tape.

2. A.

3. C and E. You're not going to believe this, but the developers thought the path of the recording track was reminiscent of striped paint. And it *was* better.

4. A-3: The first home videotape system.
B-5: The earliest home video player.
C-6: The first videodisc player to go on sale in this country.
D-8: "Video High Density" videodisc system.
E-4: Discs for optical video system.
F-10: Same disc standards as Magnavision.
G-7: Trade name for RCA's videocassette and disc systems.
H-1: Compatible with Betamax.
I-2: The first hit in home VCRs.
J-9: Also compatible with Betamax.

5. E. The last three companies have little in common, videowise, but the others do. To wit: A. They embrace the grooved capacitance videodisc system. B. They all sell VHS video recorders. C. They sell Beta recorders. D. Proprietors of the optical videodisc system.

6. D. If you checked F, you've been misled—nine-hour cassettes aren't commercially available. And that stuff about "time-stretch adapters" and "USS" was just made up—there are no such things.

7. D. That should be perfectly obvious.

8. F. All movie majors are now on cassette, as are ABC and CBS. NBC may be waiting for videodiscs.

9. B. Decoding attachments for TV sets are available at $250 from Sears Roebuck.

10. A.

11. H. And don't forget Tele-tone, Tele-King, Setchell Carlson, Packard Bell and Hoffman.

12. B. Electrohome is a Canadian company. All the others have factories in the U.S.A.

13. D. By order of the Federal Trade Commission, method C was abandoned in 1966 and manufacturers were required to measure the corner-to-corner dimension of the viewable picture, rather than the entire faceplate of the tube—usually a difference of an inch or so.

14. B. Sorry, but that's the way it is, and don't go writing me nasty letters.

15. C. Named after an industrywide committee that established standards for color television.(A, though it started life as a jest, has actually found its way into some reference books.)

16. D. Antiope is the French system of videotext, which provides words and numbers on the screen upon demand. Telidon is the Canadian system, *Bildschirmzeitung* one of the German systems.

17. B. Also called Intelsat I. Echo and Telstar were experimental, not commercial. Molniya was a later Russian communications satellite. Sputnik wasn't a communicator. Frisbee just whizzes by.

18. A-2. B-8. C-1. D-6. E-5. F-3. G-9. H-4. I-7.

19. B. Apple is a personal computer.

20. A. MSG is a basic cable-TV service, supported by commercials.

21. D. Superstations are independent TV stations whose signals are carried far beyond their normal viewing areas by satellite and distributed to cable-TV systems.

22. C. PAL, used in most of Western Europe, stands for "Phase Alternation Line"; SECAM, employed primarily in France and Eastern Europe, stands for *Système Électronique Couleur Avec Mémoire*—in case you're interested.

23. B. Vidifont is an *instrument* for putting words and numbers on the TV screen. The others are videotext *systems*, which display such graphics on demand.

24. C. If you eliminate all the silly answers, this is what's left. ■

Scoring:

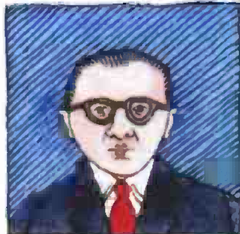
Allowing one point for every correct answer (including 10 points for question 4 and nine for question 18), grade yourself as follows:

40-41 points—**You peeked.**

35-39 points—**A TV pro.**

30-34 points—**Video nut.**

25-29 points—
VHS (Very High Scorer).



20-24 points—
Advanced amateur.

15-19 points—
Amateur.

14 and under—
Vidiot.

www.americanradiohistory.com

Why We Love Trashy Movies

By MOLLY HASKELL

The "good bad movie," a coinage indebted to George Orwell's "good bad book," was once a bit of critical esoterica to be discovered by the specialist in the crevices of legitimate art and enjoyed in shameful secrecy. No more. Times have changed; bad's good today, and we are all aficionados of junk. The purveyors of kitsch, once artless craftsmen who toiled away in relative seriousness only to produce giant marshmallows, now work with malice aforethought.

But as the various media compete to see who can produce the biggest, baddest, lustiest, purplest and most outrageous blockbuster—the kind of family saga of greedambitionandrevenge that spans several continents and as many decades—our critical vocabulary lags behind. To label a film (or book) "kitsch," "dreck," "schlock," "pulp," "trash" or "junk" and leave it at that is not to face up to the subtleties of classification called for. When you are confronted with three such outstanding examples of trashy movies as "The Betsy," "The Other Side of Midnight" and "The Greek Tycoon"—all of which received their first prime-time network exposure this past season (although in censored form)—certain critical distinctions need to be made.

For instance, why is the badness of "The Betsy" so much more delicious than the badness of "The Other Side of Midnight"? Why are they, and "The Greek Tycoon," so much more fun than their made-for-TV counterparts? What is it that separates a good bad film from a bad bad film—trash that's fun to watch from trash that's unwatchable?

Television and movies have developed their own distinct forms of trash—horizontally and vertically, you might say, with the TV miniseries well suited to the sideways-sprawling multiple-character format evidenced in *Wheels, Rich Man, Poor Man; The Immigrants,* etc. The idea was lifted, of course, from the British, from the classy *Masterpiece Theatre* series shown on PBS, whose programs were inspired by the 19th-century serializations of novels. In the Americanization process, literary credentials disappeared as the series moved toward red-blooded sensationalism on the one hand and history and social messages on the other. Unfortunately, sensationalism had to be filtered through prime-time ellipsis and innuendo (see Pete Hamill's boxer-cum-incest story, "Flesh and Blood"), while the sober "docudrama" approach offered ersatz sociology at the expense of creative bad taste, leaving a vacuum that Hollywood was happy to fill.

As part of its continuing effort to lure viewers out of the living room and into the theater by giving them something more than could be had on the tube, the movie industry began to package its trash vertically, scaling heights and/or plummeting to depths of decadence that were beyond the scope of the small screen. *Wheels,* for example, was an exceptionally fine series and, as an automotive epic, far superior to "The Betsy"; but it could not match its movie equivalent for the monumental, the memorably garish.

In fact, "The Betsy," as an epic of trash nonpareil, provides a yardstick by which all other schlock films must measure themselves. If I may adapt Aristotelian principles to American dirt, the movie contains personages of size (industrialists, movie stars, politicians) who represent the troika of virtues (money, sex, power) and whose rise is based on a swindle or dirty little secret. The exposure of said secret will propel the plot through enough tawdry sexual encounters to separate the movie from its tamer TV counterpart and earn the obligatory R rating. The story does not confine itself to the Aristotelian unities but, on the contrary, splinters into as many character types, locations and languages—for purposes of international financing and distribution—as can be accommodated by budget, dramatic structure and plausibility.

The first law of trash is that quantity equals quality. I maintain that there simply cannot be too much plot or too many characters. Ideally, as in "The Betsy," the family tree will have more branches than the New York subway system and be just as indecipherable. The First Family of Detroit in "The Betsy" also manages to reach out—if not as ecumenically as the "Airport" films—to as many markets and interest groups as possible. Laurence Olivier, as the patriarch, covers two bases: senior citizens and legitimate-theater patrons. His incongruity as a Midwestern auto magnate merely strains boundaries of credibility already stretched by his portrayal of Big Daddy in Tennessee Williams' "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof," and is a definite plus by the warped criteria of schlock. Among the archetypes revolving around the aging tycoon and hoping to supplant him in the driver's seat are: the gay son (Paul Rudd), the ruthless grandson (Robert Duvall), the ruthless grandson's neglected wife (Jane Alexander), the ruthless grandson's luscious mistress (Lesley-Anne Down), the handsome interloper (Tommy Lee Jones) who sleeps with the ruthless grandson's mistress, the luscious daughter-in-law (Katharine Ross), and so on. With the exception of Olivier, who hams outrageously, they all play with exemplary good bad form; i.e., with enough conviction to keep the barge afloat, but without the heavyweight concern with method motivation that would sink it.

The final all-important element is the R-rated scenes, which should be lewd, prurient and, if at all possible, shocking—a real test of the screenwriter's ingenuity in these jaded times. Here "The Betsy," satyrical to the point of self-parody,

Film critic ***Molly Haskell*** *is currently at work on a novel.*

www.americanradiohistory.com

proves its mettle. Realizing that true titillation lies not in what happens but in who does it, the makers of "The Betsy" have built their offending passages (which, televiewers beware, are cut heavily in the TV print) around a randy Olivier: Olivier bedding down with a chambermaid; Olivier as perpetrator of the crime of incest (by marriage) with his daughter-in-law. But even without these explicit shockers, there remains something indestructibly obscene in the mere presence of Olivier—Lord Olivier, Hamlet, Heathcliff, Henry, prince of the theater—on this throne of *merde*.

"The Other Side of Midnight," this season's runner-up for the title, has its grotesque side but is more bad than good bad. I should acknowledge here an opposition school of criticism that holds "Midnight" above "The Betsy" on the theory that if bad is good, the *summum bonum* of trash is unmitigated awfulness. The problem that confronts us is semantical: when is bad good and when is it merely bad? In this sea of relativity wherein badness is constantly shifting into goodness, my own choice for the one bedrock, unequivocally negative value would be: the boring. If we cease to be entertained, there is a danger we may conclude that the director is using "distanciation" techniques to force us to question bourgeois values: the rags-to-riches philosophy; America as the land of opportunity; sincerity; equality; and the primacy of first love—the very values we have come to see triumph over their opposites: insincerity, laziness, blackguardism and Marxism.

So "Midnight," with its slack plot, its *longueurs*, and its morose, alienated heroine, runs the risk of being interpreted as a feminist structuralist work, in which a revenge-seeking woman is trying to subvert the patriarchal language of Western civilization. Certainly Marie-France Pisier, as the long-smoldering Noëlle, does enough damage to those few words of English she is able to get her tongue around to support this theory. Like so many French actresses before her, Pisier runs afoul of both the English language and a film in which there is no room for her subtle and sultry intelligence. ("You will pweeze," she commands as she stamps her foot, turns to face the man she is torturing, and, in a crescendo of shrillness, finishes, "stup fowwowing me!")The way her high-register voice slides heedlessly over accents and syllable breaks has a certain camp appeal, but she lacks the high-gloss narcissism of the star. What is required is not an actress but an icon—a Joan Crawford or a Lana Turner—who would impose her own egotistical bravura on this absurd tale of a Midi schoolgirl turned Mediterranean Lady Macbeth.

Pisier's inadequacies might be passed over, or converted into virtues, with a suitable leading man, but, as the love-'em-and-leave-'em heartbreaker, John Beck is resistibly wooden even by the Fifties standard set by John Lund. Lund was at least serviceable as a coat rack with a pretty face—something on which to hang fantasies of unrequited love. But the more opulent dimensions of today's trash require stars who can hold their own against its godlike perspectives. Real stars are not available: they are off performing million-dollar solo turns in films that make up the difference with bargain-basement supporting casts. What we have come to expect in the junk movie is a more evenhanded lineup of has-beens, not-yets, and never-will-be's, and one endless source of fascination is trying to decide into which of the last two categories a new face will fall. (Nick Nolte turned out, to everyone's surprise, to be a number two, while Beck was certified as a number three from the start.)

But where's your imagination? you may ask. Why not project onto the Fearless Fosdick features of John Beck the profile of Robert Redford? Or even Robert Taylor? Because it is the duty of trash to leave *absolutely nothing to the imagination*. After all, in real life we are required to use our imaginations daily: to evaluate political events, make heavy decisions and forecast the fate of our loved ones, to fantasize romances with those who are indifferent to us, plan dinner menus and choose supermarket items. We come to the good bad film asking only that we be lulled into voluptuous passivity, handed everything on a silver platter: the moral, the immoral and the amoral divided into appropriate bins, like courses in a TV dinner. Dreck that is not absolutely literal-minded is no longer dreck but a failed good film.

Those who see "The Other Side of Midnight" on television mercifully are spared much of one of the most gruesome and "unnecessary" scenes ever filmed: Noëlle's do-it-yourself coat-hanger abortion. But in leaving this sordid bit of business mostly to the audience's imagination, the editors, thinking they have not violated the spirit of the film, have betrayed its vulgar letter. Such are the paradoxes of trash.

There are occasional surprises in the junk heap. What headier mix of money, prestige and power than the marriage of Jacqueline Kennedy and Aristotle Onassis? So when plans for "The Greek Tycoon" were announced, junk enthusiasts broke into a cold sweat at the prospect of so many barriers of bad taste crumbling at once. But the idea of the film seemed to have exhausted the supply of outrage. Class won over sleaze in the casting of Jacqueline Bisset as the widow Cassidy and Anthony Quinn as Theo (Zorba II) Tomasis, and from there on it was kid gloves and Dignity all the way.

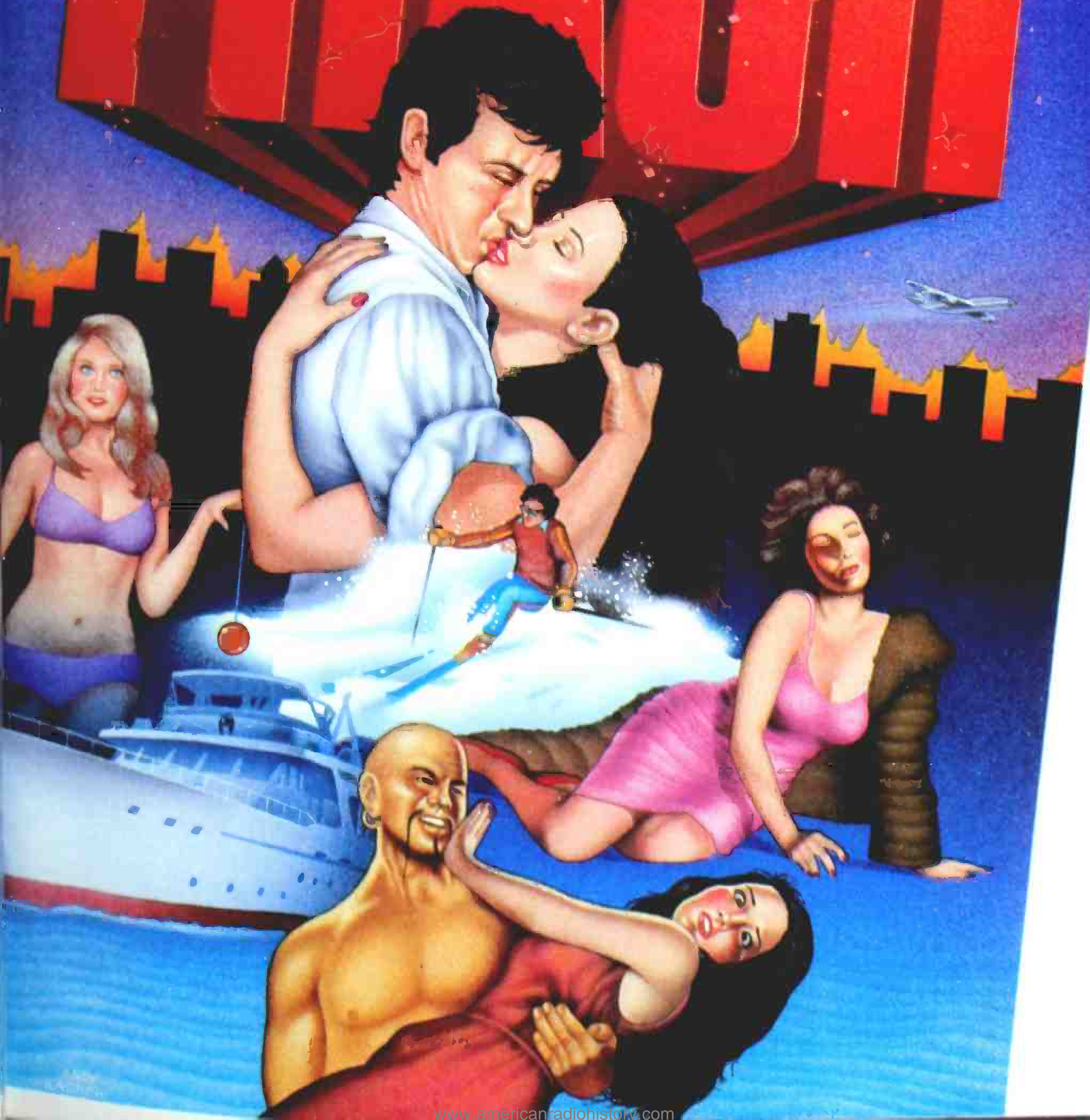
At moments, the film actually threatens to become good. Quinn, in particular, is unusually restrained, and imbues the dying Tomasis with a poignancy that he rarely conveys in his prime-of-life roles. We are moved by the powerful vision of a man standing naked at the end—an actor denuded of his mannerisms, a rich man bereft of the life-support amenities money can provide. Life and art intersect, and in the process the precincts of trash are sabotaged from within: a flower grows in the rubble.

Such extrusions of beauty shouldn't happen too often, for they tend to confuse the issue. Movies are difficult enough to classify without slipping back and forth over the borderline between trash and art, making the critic's turf more of a bed of hot coals than it already is.

But, critics and audiences alike, we are drawn to trash because it adheres to narrative conventions abandoned by modern art: a story with a beginning, a middle and an end; psychological motivation; primal notions of cause and effect. There is, by definition, a sense of personal accountability that has been skirted and compromised in the pass-the-buck rationalizations of an endlessly (and debilitatingly) tolerant, proudly nonjudgmental society. On the crudest level, this simply means that the offender "gets his" in a comic-book fantasy of poetic justice. On another level—which Quinn's performance reaches in "The Greek Tycoon"—this involves a sense of personal destiny and responsibility lived in the shadow of the final accountant, from whom none of us can escape. ■

www.americanradiohistory.com

TRASH



www.americanradiohistory.com

www.americanradiohistory.com

"The American Dream Is the Blonde Bombshell"

This year's edition, Loni Anderson, believes she can avoid the pitfalls that destroyed some of her predecessors

By KENNETH TURAN

The body is straight out of Boccaccio, but the mind is as sharp as Occam's razor. Glacially competent, untouchable, a model of seductive sanity in a situation-comedy maelstrom, Jennifer Marlowe of CBS's *WKRP in Cincinnati* is very definitely the blonde to have when you're having only one. And Loni Anderson, the woman who plays that part, would seem to be cut from an identical mold. But appearances, even when they are as prepossessing as hers, can be extraordinarily deceptive.

For one thing, Loni Anderson was a brunette until three years ago and she says she's still surprised, "especially if I'm sleepy," to find a blonde looking back at her in the mirror. Though evil minds might look her over and mutter about silicone injections, Anderson is in fact the only sex symbol in memory to have had breast-reduction surgery and to be willing to talk about it.

She is the pinup sensation who gets photographed in drop-dead gowns and whose minibikinied posters have sold nearly a million copies. But she is also the woman who was recently on the cover of McCall's, modeling a lace-collared, exceedingly demure spring frock, with her daughter at her side. It's all rather confusing, so much so that Photoplay was reduced to headlining her as "The sex symbol who's all wife and mother. . .*Really!*"

Everyone who knows Loni Anderson talks of her in terms of these opposites. "She's incredibly provocative and Minnesota-pure. I really think of her as wearing gingham underwear," says Howard Hesseman, *WKRP*'s Dr. Johnny Fever. "She looks like the classic beautiful dumb blonde, but she's really a very intelligent woman who happens to be saddled with this vivacious—I mean salacious—appearance."

And though Gordon Jump, who plays station manager Arthur Carlson,

Kenneth Turan is the book editor for New West magazine and media columnist for Inside Sports.

www.americanradiohistory.com

❝ After I'd try out for a little-theater group, people would tell me, 'That was a wonderful reading, but you're totally wrong for Anne Frank'.❞

will start off with the obligatory "How well can you fantasize" joke when asked about what it's like working with Anderson, he too ends up saying, "You just look at her and she oozes sensuality, but she opens her mouth and there's no misunderstanding that she's very much a lady. You seldom see that much mentality packaged like that."

Loni Anderson has lived in that package for all her 33 years, so she's more used to it than most. She is very much aware, however, that "people sometimes go into shock" when they see her. Hugh Wilson, *WKRP*'s creator, says, "I had a hard time talking to her in the beginning. It took a couple of weeks before I could pull myself together and talk without stuttering."

Anderson laughs and calls this "the Being-with-Loni-for-the-First-Time Syndrome. At one TV station I visited, a young page saw me in the hall and started shaking, turning red—he was a mess. It's nice that people like you, but you don't want to be responsible for nervous collapse."

Despite all this, Anderson, a very professional, very much in control woman, considers her current image to be merely a creature of the moment. "I certainly don't feel threatened by it, and I don't feel there's anything wrong with being sexy," she says, "but in my whole life it'll be just a small section."

Not that there aren't very strong forces pushing her to disregard her own best intentions. "I have to be very careful I do not become the poster," she admits. "The pressures are there; people will call and ask for that image. I just turned down a lot of money to have my picture appear on bed sheets. I really couldn't get into that. And then there was a three-dimensional poster, with things sticking out. I think perhaps not. If I let it happen, it could happen; I could be making a fortune. But I was an actress before and I'll be an actress forever. The sex symbol thing is just for now."

Anderson quite consciously emphasizes the homebody aspects of her personality. "There I am on the cover of McCall's. I'm a mom," she says with some pride. "There's something sacred about being a mom. If you let it be known, people have a different idea about you."

Equally important when it comes to keeping things in the correct perspective is the very nature of the Jennifer Marlowe role. Jennifer is easily the most clearheaded member of the WKRP staff, and probably the most respected as well, more than able to hold her own in any kind of verbal combat. A fan letter once described her as a cross between Mae West and Gloria Steinem, and it is that kind of image that Anderson wants to maintain.

"Jennifer started out to be window dressing, but she mushroomed into a well-rounded, whole person," Anderson says. "I would imagine a lot of people do tune in just to look at me, and that wouldn't make me unhappy. But I don't think Jennifer would be as popular as she is if she were just another person to look at."

It is precisely that combination of sex and style—the finding of a person who looks like Anderson and the ability to place her in a character-oriented show—that has made both her and the show a sizable success. And while MTM, *WKRP*'s production company, is known for character comedy, it is definitely not known for spicing up its efforts with million-selling-poster queens. The combination may sound like a brilliant piece of TV gamesmanship; but it in fact owes as much to happenstance as to deep thinking.

Hugh Wilson, the man who thought up *WKRP* ("It was kind of an 'idea in the shower' thing"), is a soft-spoken, 36-year-old Southerner who had hung out with radio types as president of an Atlanta advertising agency. "I wanted to do some kind of gang comedy," he says. "If anything, I was trying to copy *Barney Miller*, a show where everything takes place in the office. I wanted to create a family."

As to Jennifer Marlowe's initial place in that family, Wilson has no compunctions about admitting that "to be completely honest, the name of the game in TV is ratings. I'd seen the success of beautiful blondes—I'd seen shows like *Three's Company* go right through the roof for reasons I wasn't really clear on—and yeah, I wanted a character like that, just a knock-out snow queen, for my show." Yet Wilson also insists, despite some publicity to the contrary, that he at no point had the stereotypical dumb blonde in mind. "It never even crossed my mind to have it that way," he says. "I wanted a different kind of incredible blonde. I wanted to make her salt-of-the-earth and smart."

Loni Anderson knew none of this. All she knew was what her husband, actor Ross Bickell, had told her after he'd gone in to read for the role of program director Andy Travis. "Ross told me there was a character named Jennifer who must be really ditzy because every girl who read for the part read like a total ding-dong. He showed me the script and the words could have gone either way, but I said to myself, 'If that's what they're going for, I don't want to be involved'."

Having done a couple of MTM guest shots, Anderson was called in one Saturday morning to read for Jennifer. "I stated my case the moment I came in the door. I said, 'I don't want to do a dumb blonde.' They said they really didn't know how they wanted to play it and what did I have in mind. I said, 'Sly and dry and witty and atypical.' I read it that way and when I finished I thought, 'Well, OK, bomb.' But by Monday morning we were making deals."

Hugh Wilson, who remembers saying "Oh my Lord" when Anderson walked in to read, feels that the idea of lacing a character show with someone who looked like that was much more his idea than MTM's. "I think we took them in that direction reluctantly," he says, and Grant Tinker, MTM's *éminence grise*, admits that "Loni is somewhat more striking that I had imagined we would play it by looks."

But Tinker insists, "We never sat around abstractly thinking we should or shouldn't have a character like that. It was a question of how appropriate and how credible the part is. If Hugh was looking for the greatest-looking lady for Jennifer, he never said that to me. It was just a question of someone who looked OK and who could play the part well. You normally don't expect someone who looks like that to be able to do things, but Loni can do a lot of things. So we ended up having it both ways—we appeal to two kinds of viewers, those who are tuned in for comedy and those who like to look at her. I think we just got lucky."

Anderson's casting as Jennifer Marlowe came not long after she had been turned down for the *Three's Company* role that went to her friend Suzanne Somers. "I saw Suzanne signing posters one day and I said, 'How can you put up with this?'" Anderson says now. "I told everyone, 'I'll just be a working actress till I'm 65, not known to the public but known by my peers.' And everyone said, 'Oh, sure'."

Being that kind of working actress, "someone like Helen Hayes," has been Anderson's ambition ever since she was a toddler in Roseville, Minn., a suburb of Minneapolis-St. Paul. And for almost as long she has found that people have had difficulty separating her abil-

www.americanradiohistory.com

“When I became a blonde, people started talking to me in baby talk, saying, 'Oh, you're so cute; you're so adorable'.”

ity from her appearance. "I was rather provocative looking, even as a teenager," she remembers, "and after I'd try out for a little-theater group, people would tell me, 'That was a wonderful reading, but you're totally wrong for Anne Frank'."

Those looks come from her mother, a former model, and Anderson started modeling herself when she was 13. She also began collecting titles. "I was Miss Thermo-Jac Clothing, Miss Country-Style Ford, Miss Good Grooming, Miss Hole-in-One [for a golf tournament], Miss all-kinds-of-ridiculous-things."

In 1963 all those titles culminated in Anderson's selection as runner-up in the Miss Minnesota pageant. A couple of weeks later she ran off and married the winner's brother. "He was awfully cute and I was awfully insane," she says. "It sounded like a neat thing to do at the time, like 'If we eloped, what would everybody say?' We didn't realize we'd have to be married the next day, set up housekeeping and everything." After three months, even though she was already pregnant with her daughter Deidra, now 15, Anderson "decided, without any animosity, that this was ridiculous, that we might as well admit our mistake right now and just get divorced. It made everybody cry at the time; it was too calm, too rational, too logical a decision. But I don't like to take the easy way out and I don't like to linger over mistakes."

Anderson enrolled in the University of Minnesota after the divorce, but acting was always on her mind and when, shortly after graduation, with the help of a blonde wig, she got the Billie Dawn role in a local production of "Born Yesterday," she never turned back. What followed was five years of working in regional and dinner theaters across the country, including 53 weeks as Tzeitel in "Fiddler on the Roof." It was the kind of hard-core acting experience Anderson is very proud of, and she pointedly noted in a recent TV interview, "They didn't hire me to play a peasant because I looked good in a sweater."

It was while doing a production of "Play It Again, Sam" that Anderson met Ross Bickell. They were married six years ago and moved to Los Angeles in 1975. Anderson, who had generally played Indians, Mexicans and other dark-haired roles, says she began getting static from the genuine ethnics she was competing against. So, three years ago, she decided, "I might as well look like what I really am, Swedish. With the advent of Farrah, blondes were getting more popular and it seemed like a good move."

It also proved to be a troublesome move. The change seemed to make it more difficult for outsiders to take her seriously as an actress. "As a brunette, everyone took me seriously. No one acted as if I didn't have a brain in my head," she says. "When I became a blonde, people started talking to me in baby talk, saying, 'Oh, you're so cute; you're so adorable.' The American dream is the blonde bombshell and it's like, along with the bleach, your brain dissolves as well. It's an awful thing for blondes to have to put up with."

Even the people who today are the most rhapsodic in their praise of Anderson's ability admit that "great actress" was not the phrase that popped into their heads on first meeting her. "We didn't know until the second show what a fine actress she was. It was like striking gold," says Hugh Wilson. And Grant Tinker adds, "Your first reaction is, 'Boy, what a stunning-looking lady,' and then you realize she's really damn good. She does everything we ask of her better than we might expect."

What is asked of Anderson in the context of *WKRP* is to be—along with Gary Sandy, who plays program director Andy Travis—one of the two stable poles the rest of the station's wild men rotate around. "It's the toughest, most thankless job on the show, with a profile so low most people don't understand it," says Gordon Jump. "Playing the fine line between comedy and straight, between laid-back and boring, is very difficult."

It is because she has made the role of Jennifer Marlowe so wholly her own that Loni Anderson has had to get used to being thought of by much of the public not as an actress with years of experience, but as a blonde playing herself. "People think I'm going to be difficult to work with, that I just come into a room, chop people off at the knees like Jennifer and leave," she says. "Ross and I had dinner with an attorney and he said, 'You just amaze me. Your vocabulary just amazes me.' He really expected I'd be just something to look at."

Along the same lines, and harder to get used to, are jokes about her anatomy, like being introduced on *Hollywood Squares* as "one of the hottest couples in America." Anderson, who had breast-reduction surgery after her daughter was born, "to look normal and have somebody talk to my eyes for a change," says she's upset by the jokes and feels they come from an inability to perceive her as a real person.

At last year's Emmy show, for instance, she was paired off with Tim Conway—they went to the podium together to present awards. Until he met her before the telecast, Conway had been planning to poke some fun at her physique. "He didn't say a word—I mean, not a word—about it on the air," recalls Anderson, "even though he told me he had prepared material on the subject. It's hard to do those jokes after meeting me."

What is hardest of all for Anderson to get used to is the strains her career has put on her marriage. "I have no time to myself. When people ask me, 'What do you do for relaxation?' I say, 'I sit down.' The result is that Ross and I feel like strangers a lot of the time, just passing each other in the hall. He's not as busy as I am and he gets very lonely, so I feel guilty. If you don't sit down and talk about those things, they multiply. If you don't really give it your best shot, you end up leading totally separate lives."

Putting Anderson's mind/body problems into an intriguing perspective is her current major project, a TV-movie called "Jayne Mansfield—A Symbol of the '50s," in which she plays the publicity-mad blonde bombshell of another era. Anderson talks about the role in terms of "the unfortunate plight of someone who creates a wonderful gimmick that destroyed her. The tease, the wiggle, the giggle, everything everyone expects from a blonde bombshell. She took it all to extremes. She said, 'Here it is. It's more amazing than anything you ever saw.' But in the 1960s, when nobody wanted that image, she couldn't get rid of it and it totally smashed her career."

There are, as Anderson is well aware, more than a few similarities between her and Mansfield, similarities extending to their both being bright, family-oriented women with contradictory images. But she feels that the differences are more to the point. "We live in different generations," is how she puts it. "I often wonder what would have happened to Jayne if she'd had the opportunities I did. She wouldn't have been boxed in. She would have been able to be an actress." So if anyone is in a position to draw a lesson from Mansfield's life, Anderson knows it is she.

"It's a cautionary tale for me," Loni Anderson says. "It tells me not to be 'it,' not to be 'that.' You can play at it, but don't ever *live* it." ■

www.americanradiohistory.com

TOTAL TE

ONLY FROM

VIEW IT.

...with new Magnavox Touch-Tune Television. Tune in the future. Tune in a 25% sharper color picture than ever before possible. Instantly. Automatically. By micro-computer. At the set. Or even by remote control. Leap electronically to any of 82 channels. UHF or VHF. And Magnavox Touch-Tune Television is cable-ready for 20 cable channels without a converter.

Incredible!

PLAY IT.

...with Odyssey 2. The ultimate computer video game. From the originator of them all... Magnavox. Now your TV can be a Las Vegas casino, a big-league ball park, even a classroom. The magical world of Odyssey 2 is all that and more.

Mind-boggling!

WE MAKE STAYING

© 1980 MAGNAVOX CONSUMER ELECTRONICS CO.
† DISCOVISION is a trademark of MCA DiscoVision, Inc.
All rights reserved.

www.americanradiohistory.com

EVISION

MAGNAVOX

STAR ON IT.

...with Magnavox portable video cassette recorders and cameras. Now you can bring home the good times wherever the good times happen. That family picnic. That little league game. And you can play them back as soon as you get home. Right on your own TV. Just think. Magnavox can make you a TV star.

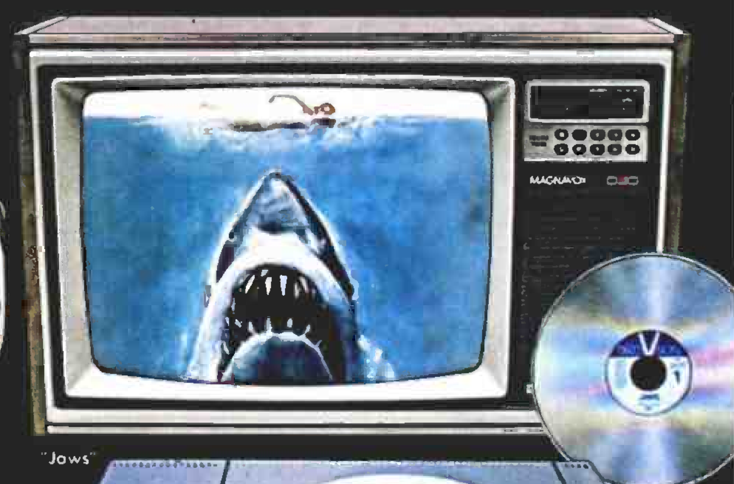
Ingenious!

EVEN WATCH RECORDS ON IT.

...with Magnavision.* The most remarkable record player in the world. Because it actually plays pictures on your TV. Choose from a vast library of MCA DiscoVision† silver videodiscs: feature movies, concerts, sports spectaculars. Magnavision...the world on a silver platter.

Miraculous!

*Available in selected markets only.



"Jaws"

HOME FUN.

MAGNAVOX
MAGNAVOX
MAGNAVOX
MAGNAVOX
MAGNAVOX
MAGNAVOX

www.americanradiohistory.com

He Was an Actor Playing on the Political Stage

"Disraeli," a four-part historical drama produced in England by the Independent Television Corporation, is scheduled for broadcasting on PBS's Masterpiece Theatre *this month. It tells the story of Benjamin Disraeli, one of the creators of the modern British Conservative party and twice Prime Minister of his country between 1868 and 1880. In this article, another former Conservative Prime Minister (1970-74), Edward Heath, looks back at Disraeli's extraordinary career as a novelist, dandy and statesman.*

"The Queen's advice had to be heeded." Disraeli (Ian McShane) and Queen Victoria (Rosemary Leach) in private audience.

One British Prime Minister views another

By EDWARD HEATH

Benjamin Disraeli, First Earl of Beaconsfield, has become for the British the most romantic of all their Prime Ministers. This is not so much because of his amours. Many others have been far more active in that respect than he was. It is much more because of his romantic approach to life, to national politics in particular and to world affairs in general.

Disraeli's is a story that would make the blood of any young man tingle as he dreams of the possibilities the future holds for him. Given the same qualities of daring and determination, tactical skill and persuasion, mixed perhaps with a dash of brash buccaneering, could he, too, not rise to the highest office in the land?

It means a struggle, of course, and when you get there, it is, as every politician knows, "the top of the greasy pole"—to use Disraeli's own words. You may quickly slide down only to begin the struggle to reach the summit all over again.

It was indeed a remarkable feat for a young man born in the first decade of the 19th century of Jewish descent, though baptized a Christian, to make his own way in a world of Victorian politics, from which those of the Jewish faith were excluded until 1858. As if his natural disadvantages were not enough, Disraeli compounded them by the flamboyance of his manner and his dress, causing grievous offense to those whom he most needed to woo, and by the rashness of his financial speculation, which landed him with a massive burden of debt round his neck for the greater part of his life.

Failing lamentably in his early ventures, Disraeli channeled his romanticism into one novel after another. Lacking the power or the influence to bring about the radical changes he foresaw were so necessary in England after the Industrial Revolution, he projected his visions in literary form, where he could indulge in fantasies to his heart's content. These caught the imagination of his own generation; they have inspired the political activities of succeeding generations in Britain ever since.

For Disraeli, politics was dominated by the romantic theme of bridging the gap between the two "nations" that comprised Victorian society and creating one nation where all could live together in a respectful harmony. This vision was backed by practical measures to improve the conditions of the people, and by proposals for electoral reform to secure the popular support necessary for him to carry them through. Alas, a hundred years after Disraeli ceased to be Prime Minister following his defeat in the general election of 1880, the "them and us syndrome," as it is termed, is still with us in Britain today.

What Disraeli did in the course of his political evolution was to create the philosophy of progressive conservatism which has been such a powerful force in British domestic politics for more than a century and a quarter.

Starting as a radical, he contested and was defeated in four successive elections before becoming a Member of Parliament in the Conservative cause. That demanded willpower of a high order. In the course of his campaigning, he recognized that it would be necessary to mobilize the landed interests together with the working classes in order to be able to bring about better social conditions and living standards in his country. Hence his decision to join the party which he was later to split when he opposed the repeal of the protectionist corn laws in 1846, but whose leader he was ultimately to become.

With this romantic vision of domestic politics, Disraeli combined a glamorous imperial policy. Maybe it is this which most marks him out as a popular figure. How splendid it is for a country to find itself led by a man to whom the rest of the world defers as it did at the

www.americanradiohistory.com

Congress of Berlin in 1878—when the nations of Europe gathered to challenge Russia's sway over the Ottoman Empire. How satisfying it must have been to know that he had sufficient power, both military and economic, to achieve his aims without needing to put that power to the test, as Bismarck realized at the Congress.

How magnificent it was for both government and people to know that not only were their national interests being protected, they were being extended across the globe. "Wider still and wider shall thy bounds be set," the British were to sing later. Disraeli satisfied both their practical and their emotional needs in his imperial policy.

Disraeli's method of forcing the decision he wanted at the Congress of Berlin has all the panache that appeals to the public. According to legend, he let it be known that a special train had been summoned for his instant departure. This, says the legend, brought the Russians to their knees. The strategy wouldn't succeed today. The train would be an aircraft, and an aircraft can return just as quickly as it goes away. It is the politician who loses face when his coup doesn't succeed.

Again, how romantic it was that, in 1875, Disraeli should have been able to buy for the nation the shares in the Suez Canal of the spendthrift ruler of Egypt, thus ensuring safe passage for British ships of all kinds to the mysterious but fascinating East—a situation which lasted for the next 80 years, until President Nasser nationalized the Canal. It reads like a thriller: Secret information about the possible deal is passed to London...Disraeli has to act quickly...four million pounds has to be found at once...the money is put up by the Rothschilds, one of whose members he had earlier befriended as the first Jew to enter the House of Commons...it is done before Parliament can approve it. The young man encumbered with personal debts has become the statesman who can raise the vast sum—as it was in those days—to grab an international financial bargain.

Most romantic of all was Disraeli's decision to endow Queen Victoria with the title "Empress of India," the finest jewel in the British crown. That publicly set the seal on British imperialism. It was in character with all Disraeli's ideas of the majesty and the grandeur of monarchy, and also with his conception of the crown as the main pillar of the political and social system. The Queen was delighted. The politician whose approach and methods she had disliked and distrusted until she met him became her most trusted adviser.

The widowed Queen, lonely, living for so much of the time outside of London and seldom appearing in public, was charmed and flattered by this Prime Minister. He not only kept her fully informed of all matters affecting state business; he told her everything that was on his mind and did so in the most intelligent and often amusing way. He listened patiently and attentively to all she had to say. He was fortunate in that his main rival, Mr. Gladstone, did not appeal in the least to the Queen; indeed, she grew to dislike him. He could not emulate Disraeli's personal style, nor play the part of suitor to Her Majesty.

During the time of Gladstone and Disraeli, the crown still exercised considerable power, strengthened in the case of Queen Victoria by the knowledge and experience gained during her long reign, the network of information provided by her relatives spread throughout the royal houses of Europe and by her own indomitable willpower. The Queen's advice had to be heeded, or at any rate it was ignored at the peril of her displeasure, speedily made very plain.

Today, the relationship between queen and premier is different. The powers of Elizabeth II, reigning as a constitutional monarch, are even more circumscribed than those of her great-great-grandmother. But it would be a foolish Prime Minister who did not seek on occasion to benefit from her unrivaled knowledge and political experience. As head of the Commonwealth, she is in direct contact with more than 30 heads of state or Prime Ministers, and has personally visited most of their countries on numerous world tours during her 27-year reign.

Victoria, in contrast, was a queen who needed to be mollified, guided and comforted on the matters which concerned her most. The warm, personal relationship which Disraeli established with her enabled him to do this with great political effect.

Much as one is attracted by Disraeli's romanticism, sympathizes with him in his battle against the odds and admires his ultimate victories, would one have liked him as a person if one had been engaged in 19th-century politics? I sometimes wonder. He was an actor playing on the political stage. Does not the dramatic performance jar, at times, against the seriousness of the issue when so much is at stake? Does not his opportunism make one question the genuineness of all his political beliefs?

Does it matter so long as his objectives coincide with our own, and he is successful in achieving them? It is failure in politics which condemns the actor and the opportunist more rapidly than anything else. It was a debacle in Afghanistan (now topical) and the failure of the Zulu War of 1879 which cost Disraeli his popularity and his position when he and his party were defeated in the 1880 general election. But the old Queen remembered him when she personally visited his grave the day after he was buried and placed primroses, his favorite flower, upon it.

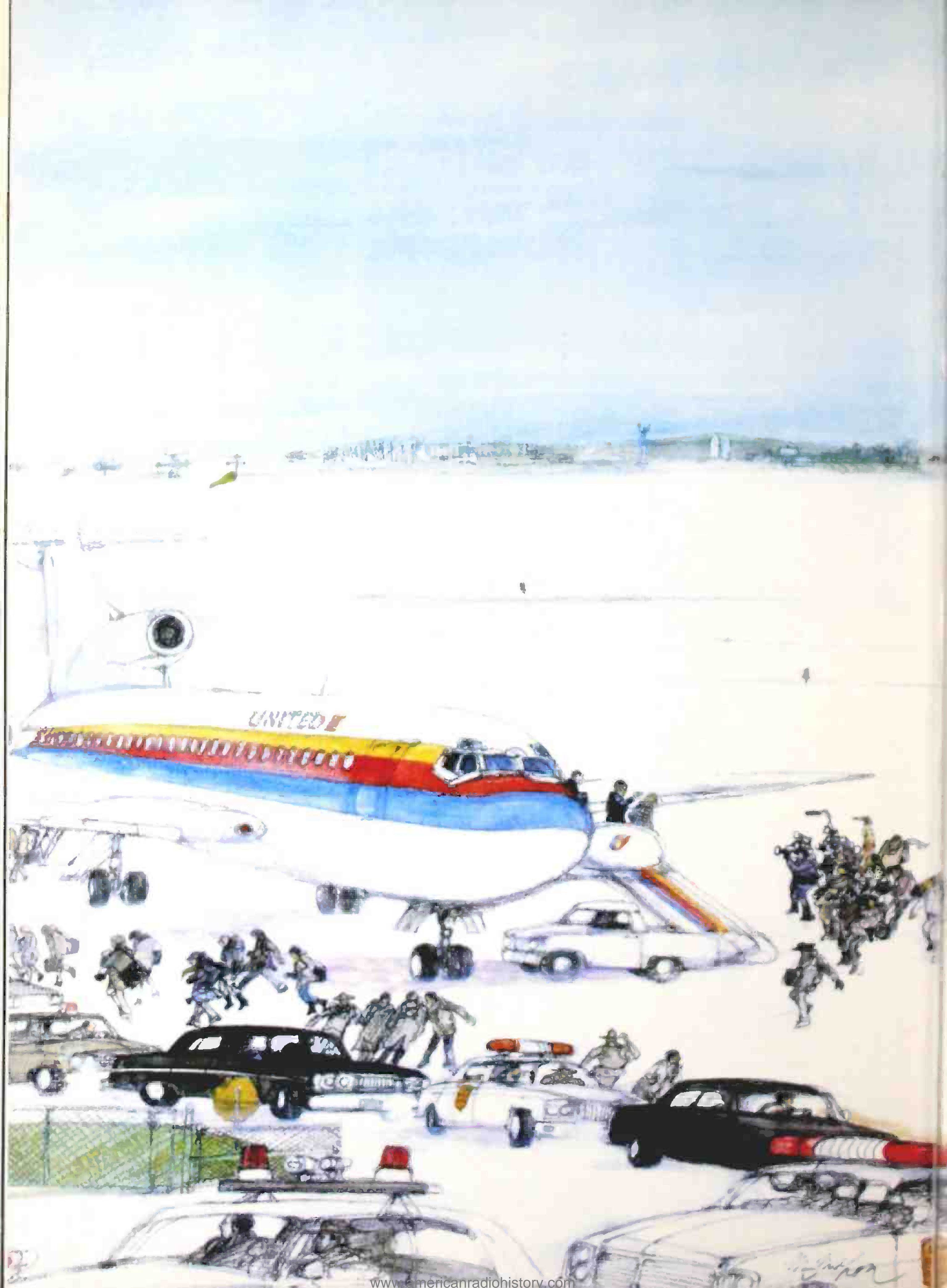
It says a great deal for Ian McShane's performance in this television series that he brings out both the likable and the questionable qualities in Disraeli's character. Mary Peach plays Mary Anne, Mrs. Disraeli, with all the love and devotion which sustained Disraeli through all his troubles. How moving it is when she says just before her death, "Dizzy married me for my money, but if he had his chance again he would marry me for love."

Gladstone, portrayed by John Carlisle, could claim with some justification that he gets rather less than his fair share of the limelight, nor does he appear to have that dominating and outwardly puritanical stance which most of us always associate with him. On the other hand, Brewster Mason brings Bismarck to life in a way that is unforgettable. As for Queen Victoria, Rosemary Leach presents a happy blend of formality, strength, kindness and understanding.

The Parliamentary scenes have a dramatic quality not always present in the House of Commons itself, but it is difficult to fault their authenticity.

The series flows smoothly, but it is necessary to watch all the episodes. If one is missed, it may be difficult to pick up the thread of this fast-moving political and personal drama covering more than 50 years of British history. ■

www.americanradiohistory.com



www.americanradiohistory.com

MEDIA BIRDS IN FULL FLIGHT

An artist's vivid impressions of the Presidential campaign trail

Drawings and paintings by FRANKLIN McMAHON

Left: The arrival of Sen. Edward Kennedy and his wife in Iowa. The media birds gather for the obligatory airport picture, then dive toward their cars to get to the first stop on the tour. Each network has assigned two crews to cover Kennedy: one equipped with tripod-based minicameras to cover the speeches, the other with hand-held cameras to record the handshakes and ad-libs. Above, the flock on the Senator's trail.

Eugene McCarthy once likened the press to a flock of small black birds on a telephone wire: one takes off and all the others follow. He was speaking of the pundits and analyzers, the columnists who try to make sense of the tosses and turns of a political campaign, and whose cherished preconceptions often shape victory or defeat for a candidate.

McCarthy didn't complain, though, when these same birds chorused his "triumph" over President Johnson in the 1968 New Hampshire Democratic primary, in which McCarthy came in second with 42 percent of the vote.

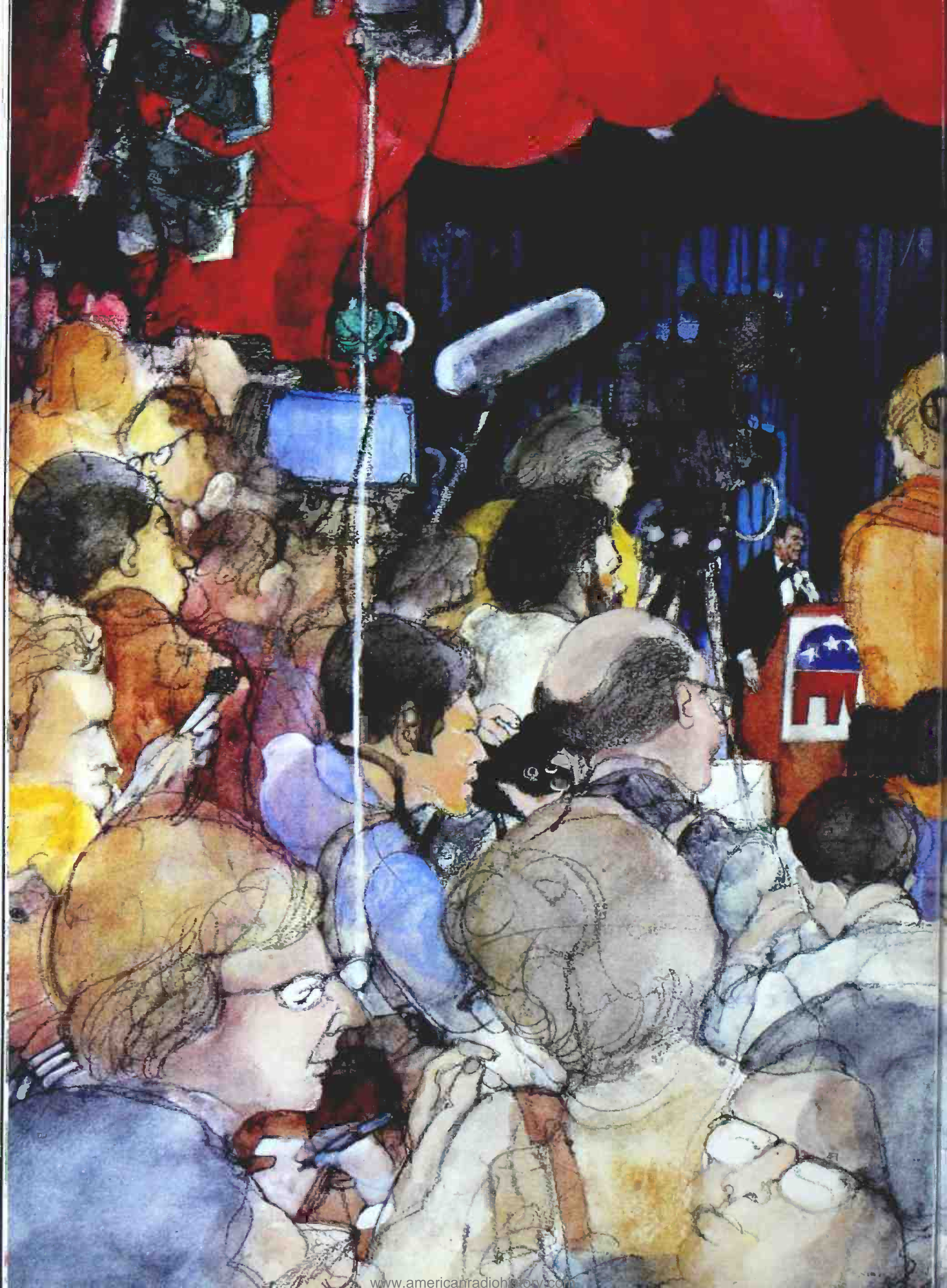
The flocking instinct has never been more evident than in recent years, during which the press has become The Media. Often the first sign of a Presidential candidate's rise to prominence today is the mass migration of camera operators, sound technicians, TV network producers and correspondents toward his caravan.

John Anderson, the Republican congressman from Rockford, Ill., started out this political campaigning season in New Hampshire in a single sedan, with a retinue of one rented microbus carrying five reporters. Success in Massachusetts brought him home in a motorcade with a Greyhound busload of media folks forming a rear guard.

As competition for advertising dollars has heightened, and as video cameras have become more portable, most local TV stations have become willing to commit resources to this enterprise along with the networks. The performer himself, once having been stamped "viable," becomes the hostage of three, perhaps four, news teams from local channels, three network crews, reporters from a dozen newspapers and magazines, still photographers, assorted free-lance journalists, and, of course, a small cadre of

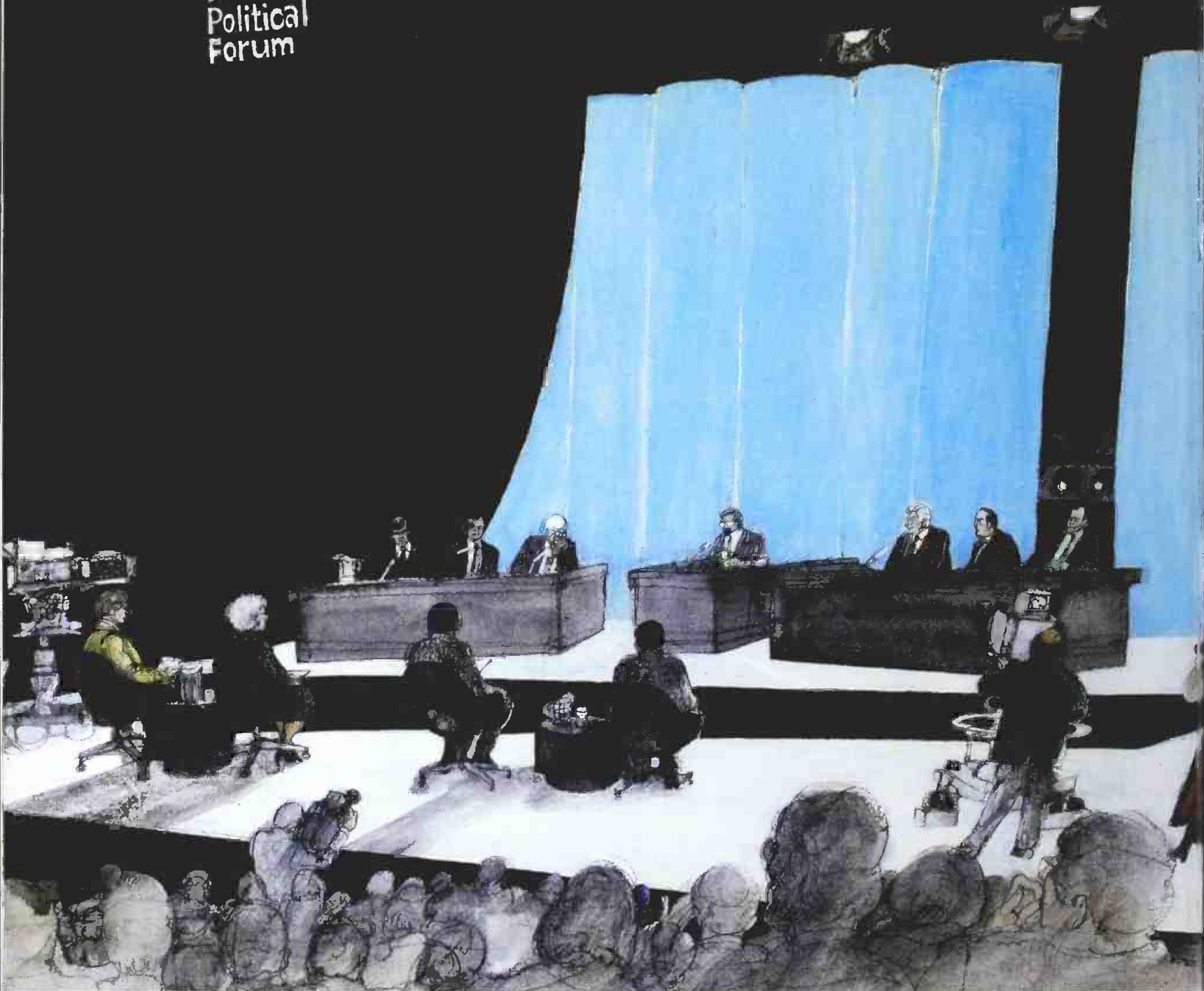
Overleaf: Ronald Reagan, glimpsed through a phalanx of reporters, camera operators and technicians, addresses Republicans at a Lincoln Day dinner in Miami Beach.

www.americanradiohistory.com



www.americanradiohistory.com

www.americanradiohistory.com



Above: The Iowa Republican Political Forum in Des Moines, January 1980. On the podium, left to right: Rep. Philip Crane; Sen. Howard Baker; Rep. John Anderson; forum moderator James P. Gannon, editor of the Des Moines Register and Tribune (sponsor of the event); John Connally; Sen. Robert Dole; George Bush. Though all the questioners were newspapermen, there was little doubt that the forum was designed for television.

Secret Service protectors. If he achieves contact with real voters, it is fortuitous.

President Carter, closeted for months in the White House by the Iran situation, commented that he missed all this campaigning. He is said to have remarked that he, too, wished he could get out among the people "in three or four media centers a day."

Among the free-lancers who have been accompanying the 1980 candidates has been artist-reporter Franklin McMa-

Top, right: A truckload of camera operators pursues George Bush as he is swept along 8th Street in Little Havana, Miami, during the Calle Ocho street festival. Ronald Reagan made an appearance on 8th Street, too, and subsequently picked up a majority of the coveted Cuban vote.

www.americanradiohistory.com

Bottom, right: Vice President Walter Mondale stands in for the President at a Democratic meeting in Chicago. In the foreground is the audio system that has replaced the traditional battery of microphones: a "mult" box picks up the speech from a single live mike, and sound engineers from TV and radio plug into the box for their individual feeds.

www.americanradiohistory.com

By Election Day, McMahon expects to have completed the 400 drawings and paintings that will become the basis of a new television documentary

hon. Every four years over the past 20, McMahon has turned his attention toward the Presidential race. His works have been published by magazines in this country and overseas, and he has produced six award-winning TV art documentaries exploring his experiences. He received the George Foster Peabody Award for his program reporting on the 1976 Presidential primaries, which he produced in association with the CBS station in Chicago, WBBM-TV.

This year he started out in Massachusetts, Missouri, Iowa, New Hampshire, New York, Florida and Illinois, climbing aboard the press buses, following the candidates into restaurants, laundromats and hotel ballrooms, producing drawings and paintings that run heavily to red, white and blue.

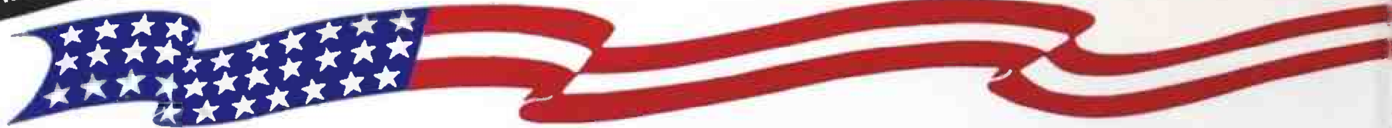
By Election Day, McMahon expects to have completed over 400 drawings and paintings which will become the basis of a new documentary he will produce for WBBM-TV. A retrospective exhibition of his campaign art, "Campaigning: Twenty Years of American Presidential Politics," is scheduled for October 1980, at the Chicago Public Library Cultural Center. ■

www.americanradiohistory.com

Above: The CBS Evening News *is broadcast from Chicago on the night of the Illinois primary. Producers, crew members and network advisers look on as Walter Cronkite presents the results of a* CBS/*New York Times poll of voters. The entire set has been shipped from New York for the occasion.*

Japan is watching, too. Right: A Tokyo television crew speeds toward its next assignment in New Hampshire, its van festooned with bumper stickers of the candidates that have already been covered.

www.americanradiohistory.com

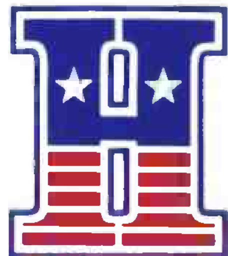


HOW YOU CAN GET ELECTED BY USING TELEVISION

An insider's guide

By JEFF GREENFIELD

In no area of political life has mythology more thoroughly displaced reality than in the discussion of what television has done to political life. Of course it has changed it dramatically; so did every other invention of communication; so, for that matter, did every other major shift in the way we work, play, travel, learn and live. What you must do, to succeed in politics, is to understand how to face television without fear. You must respect its power, but you must never lose sight of one fundamental fact: **television has changed our political life far less radically than you have been told**. You cannot appreciate the way to use television in your political career unless you first sweep away the myths, and recognize the difference between the *real* impact of television and the ways in which our political life has remained remarkably constant.



as television produced a politics of symbolism?

The famous "log cabin" in which American Presidents are supposed to be born was an image created in the 1840 campaign of William Henry Harrison—actually the product of an affluent family. The whole tradition of military heroes as especially fit for the job of President—a tradition extending from George Washington through Andrew Jackson through Zachary Taylor through Ulysses S. Grant through Theodore Roosevelt through Dwight Eisenhower—is itself an expression of a symbolic link between battlefield command and political prowess. And if you think that television commercials uniquely exploit personal traits for political gain, consider this extract from a piece by Artemus Ward in 1860, poking fun at Abraham Lincoln's rail-splitter image by "reporting" on what happened when a delegation from the Republican National Convention went to inform Lincoln that he'd been nominated for President:

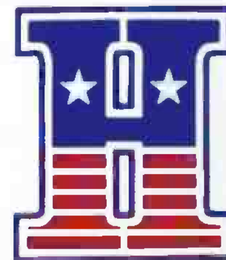
"The Official Committee arrived in Springfield at dewy eve, and went to Honest Old Abe's house. Honest Old Abe was not in. Mrs. Honest Old Abe said Honest Old Abe was out in the woods splitting rails. So the Official Committee went out into the woods, where sure enough they found Honest Old Abe splitting rails with his two boys. It was a grand, a magnificent spectacle. There stood Honest Old Abe in his shirt sleeves, a pair of leather homemade suspenders holding up a pair of homemade pantaloons, the seat of which was neatly patched with substantial cloth of a different color.

"'Mr. Lincoln, Sir, you've been nominated, Sir, for the highest office, Sir—'

"'Oh, don't bother me,' said Honest Old Abe. 'I took a *stent* this mornin' to split three million rails afore night. I don't want to be pestered with no stuff about no Conventions till I get my *stent* done.' And the great man went right on splitting rails, paying no attention to the Committee whatever...."

Obviously, the Lincoln Presidential campaign did not neglect the symbolic value of Lincoln's hard-working, log-cabin background. And neither has any major political campaign. We have had plumed knights, and happy warriors, and giant-killers, as long as we have had campaigns.

__Jeff Greenfield__ has served as a media adviser in several political campaigns. He is a writer and critic who frequently offers commentary about television for CBS News.



as television placed a premium on good looks?

We hear often that in the television age candidates must look smooth, telegenic, or, in the words of one observer, "look like a heroic marble bust." When Arizona Republican congressman John Rhodes praised Gerald Ford in 1976, he declared that Ford "looks like a President." And it is a staple of political satire, good for one free column every four years, that a candidate who looked like Abraham Lincoln, with his gaunt features, mole, deep-set eyes and beard, would never make it in today's media age.

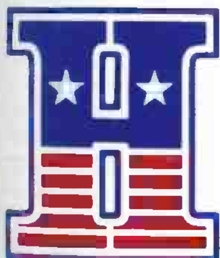
To begin with, a handsome face has always been a political advantage. The same praise heaped on Gerald Ford was also heaped on Warren Harding in 1920—with his white hair and firm jaw,

Copyright ©1980 by Jeff Greenfield. From his book "Playing to Win: An Insider's Guide to Politics," soon to be published by Simon & Schus

www.americanradiohistory.com

he, too, "looked like a President." Teddy Roosevelt's muscularity was an important aspect of his political appeal, as was William Jennings Bryan's youthful vitality.

But more important, the Age of Television has by no means brought about the Age of Charm School Candidates. Granted, Birch Bayh and Ted Kennedy, Mark Hatfield and Chuck Percy are immaculately groomed, good-looking candidates. But then how explain the victory of S. I. Hayakawa over John Tunney in California, of all places—the ultimate media state? How explain the triumph of Frank Perdue look-alike Ed Koch as mayor of New York, or the political durability of Senators Ed Muskie and Jacob Javits—neither of whom is likely to be drafted by Bloomingdale's for a Fall Fashion Preview.



Has television altered the basis on which political campaigns are built?

Without question, television—specifically, television advertising—has made it easier than it ever was for a political unknown with a lot of money to enter the political world without spending years building a political base *in the sense in which we used to use that term.* A look at the kinds of people successfully running for the United States Senate in this decade shows a break with the tradition of going from school board to state legislature to Congress to the Senate. Candidates such as New Hampshire's Gordon Humphreys (airline pilot), John Glenn and Harrison Schmitt (astronauts), Bill Bradley (basketball player), S. I. Hayakawa (academician and college president), all could be used to prove that television has shortened the road to political achievement.

But look again: Schmitt and Glenn were contemporary versions of military commanders, proving *their* ability to lead by having the courage to fly into space. Moreover, both men had spent long years building political bases in their respective states; Glenn, in fact, had run for the Senate in 1964 and again in 1970 before finally winning his seat in 1974. Hayakawa, too, had been a kind of military commander, beating back the dreaded student radicals as president of San Francisco State in 1969, and had been speaking at political gatherings ever since before ousting Tunney in 1976. Bradley had put in years as well on the rubber-chicken circuit in New Jersey, surely enough to qualify him for a gastronomic medal of honor.

These politicians were made famous by television. But that tells us no more than does the fact that General Grant was made famous by telegraphic dispatches back to newspapers during the Civil War. Whatever TV did for these figures, it did *not* relieve them of the responsibility of slowly building up their political bases with very traditional activity—in part to prove to the voters of their states that they were *more* than media personalities.

The vitality of traditional politics is even clearer if we look at who has been nominated for President in the Age of Television—and how. If we begin in 1964—the year after network news had expanded to a half hour, and the year after the Kennedy assassination had demonstrated television's full news potential—the facts add up to something less than a demonstration of TV's dominant influence.

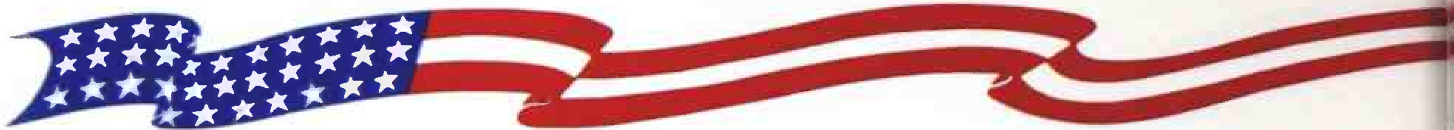
In 1964, Lyndon Johnson was renominated automatically by virtue of his incumbency. He had initially risen to political prominence as Senate majority leader, and was defeated in 1960 less because of television than because he did not understand the growing importance of Presidential primaries.

The ultimate Republican nominee, Barry Goldwater, had been a national spokesman for the conservative ideology since his entrance into the Senate years before. In fact, his name had been placed in nomination at the *1960* convention, and in his speech withdrawing his name, he exhorted conservatives to take the Republican Party back by getting to work. They did. Goldwater's candidacy was, in effect, begun by his supporters the moment Richard Nixon lost the 1960 election. In 1964, even though Goldwater did not by any means dominate the primaries, his devoted followers outworked every other campaign in winning huge blocs of delegates in the party caucuses. One primary—California's—made Goldwater's nomination inevitable.

In 1968, Richard Nixon won the Republican nomination by cashing in on 20 years' worth of political prominence—or notoriety. Far from being a "media creation," Richard Nixon had by 1968 already been involved in three national campaigns. In 1966, he had crisscrossed America, campaigning for Republican candidates at every level; a large measure of his broad-based support that year came from the network of political alliances he had built up. This was, by any measurement, a traditional "nonmedia" method of gaining political support.

In the Democratic Party, Eugene McCarthy's insurgency in New Hampshire was written off by almost every national political journalist and reporter. It was only after four months of work canvassing cities and small towns alike, by an army of volunteers going door to door, that McCarthy "won" the primary with 42 percent of the vote to Johnson's "loss" with 49 percent. Robert Kennedy, who then entered the Presidential campaign, was a national political figure by virtue of a family legacy, and by a deliberate decision on his part to turn his Senate work into a kind of campaign for the dispossessed. And the ultimate nominee, Hubert Humphrey, had for 20 years been one of the most familiar, outspoken figures in the Democratic Party, a figure who evoked in 1968 support from big-city Democrats, big labor, and a faction of traditional liberals—now called neo-conservatives—who saw in the McCarthy and Kennedy campaigns a threat to their values. In no sense could Hurbert Humphrey's support be traced

www.americanradiohistory.com



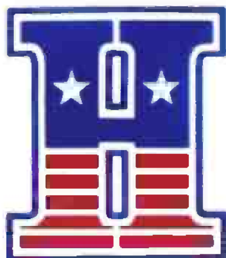
to anything other than a long history of political combat in Washington and around the country.

In 1972, Richard Nixon was renominated without serious difficulty. Sen. George McGovern won the Democratic nomination by virtually duplicating Goldwater's victory (and ultimate defeat). He had been a last-minute candidate four years earlier, inheriting much of the late Robert Kennedy's support at the Chicago convention. He was the choice of a committed faction within the Democratic Party which was in dissent against the Vietnam war, and which had become convinced in 1968 that they had been denied their victory at Chicago; from this faction, McGovern built a cadre of tens of thousands of dedicated workers. As late as January 1972, McGovern was the choice of barely three percent of registered Democrats, and most commentators had all but conceded the nomination to Sen. Ed Muskie. Only with McGovern's second-place "victory" and Muskie's first-place "defeat" in New Hampshire did the networks begin to regard McGovern as a serious contender for the nomination. He had announced his candidacy some 20 months before the 1972 election.

In 1976, both nominations were seriously contested. Ronald Reagan, who almost took the Republican designation from President Gerald Ford, has been described as the ultimate media candidate; and certainly the one-time sportscaster-actor-television host is fully comfortable in front of the cameras. But by 1976, Reagan was also a former two-term governor of the most populous state in the Union. It is probable that as many votes were cast for Reagan in his two campaigns in California as had been cast for Ford in all of his Congressional races in Michigan. He had, as had Goldwater and McGovern, surfaced as a last-minute Presidential contender in an earlier convention—1968—and had followers who believed his strong conservative policies to be the salvation of the Republican Party.

And Democrat Jimmy Carter was the consummate outsider: former governor of a Southern state whose chances for the nomination were ridiculed by his home-state newspapers ("Jimmy Carter's Running for *What* ?" was the Atlanta Constitution headline when he announced). Carter, too, declared for the nomination very early—two years before the 1976 election—and spent all of 1975 talking to people in shopping centers, supermarkets and small-town Democratic dinners, far from the reach of a television camera. Only when New York Times reporter R.W. Apple Jr. reported that Carter had won a straw ballot at an Iowa Democratic dinner in late 1975—a dinner Carter supporters had packed—did the media begin to treat Carter with minimal seriousness.

To say that TV "created" these candidacies is to say that when cameras record a flood that has been cresting for days, it is somehow responsible for that flood.



How, then, should you think about television in planning your journey into politics?

You must understand that it is the latest in a continually changing mode of communicating with one another. And you must understand that **politics has always moved into these new modes of communication, for the most obvious of reasons—that is where they are going to find the people.**

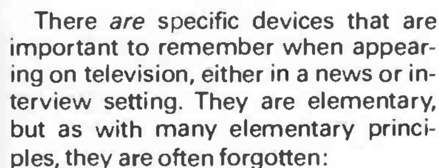
Politicians have, throughout American history, adopted the techniques of entertainment to reach an audience, because that's where the audience was. Today the audience is at home, in front of the television set. And that is where the politician wants to be. And candidates advertise on television for the same reason candidates used to—and still do—speak at barbecues, church picnics, political dinners and school graduations: because that is where the people are.

What, then, do you do to use television effectively?

Do not turn over your campaign to a television expert. Unless you are dealing with a rare breed who is fundamentally a political animal who happens to be in television, you are likely to sign on with someone whose résumé boasts of spectacular success in gaining television exposure for the Marina '77 Extravaganza, or for the NowChow Organic Puppy Meal campaign. These people really *do* believe that politics is all marketing. They do not understand the difference between a toothpaste that politely sits in its box on the supermarket shelf and a candidate who can by turns act courageously, cowardly, brilliantly, stupidly, and who is facing an opponent and an outside world, both of which can completely alter the nature of a campaign.

These people are terrific at reading numbers and drawing the obvious conclusions, but they have no notion at all of how essentially political skills can alter those numbers by the force of logic or emotion. You can, with a clear conscience, follow their advice on the size of your lapels, the pattern of your tie, the timbre of your voice. Unless they are politicians first, and media experts incidentally, *do not listen to them at all* when they advise you on the content of your ideas.

www.americanradiohistory.com



There *are* specific devices that are important to remember when appearing on television, either in a news or interview setting. They are elementary, but as with many elementary principles, they are often forgotten:

Do not orate. Talk. When radio was still young, President Franklin D. Roosevelt made a few radio talks that people still remember or study. These "fireside chats" were so called because F.D.R. understood that people do not listen to political talk on radio the way they do in huge halls. They are usually alone, or with two or three other people at most. They are at home, in their living rooms. They are in a state of repose. They are not like a crowd at a rally, which wants to be fed red meat. Roosevelt was, in the great cliché of old-fashioned broadcasting, "coming into their homes," at their invitation. So he "chatted."

Oddly, a lot of politicians never learned this lesson. They still speak into a microphone the way older people talk on the telephone when the call is long-distance—by assuming that if the people you're talking to are far away, you have to talk loudly. Some politicians get away with this stentorian approach, most notably New York senator Jacob Javits, who cannot say hello without bellowing about his firm hope and deep determination that the sun will keep shining. But if you are starting out, you should learn to respect the medium's intimacy. Television stations and networks spend a lot of money on sophisticated equipment. It will pick up your voice.

Never turn down an invitation to appear on television, no matter how unimpressive the hour. Most television stations slot a few hours of interview shows on Sunday morning, to prove to the Federal Communications Commission their deep commitment to serving the public, and their indisputable right to get a three-year license renewal. If you so much as appear on the program of a political dinner, you will sooner or later be invited to appear on one of these programs. Do it. Do not be insulted by the fact that the program is on at 9:30 in the morning, when most civilized people are either asleep or reading the Sunday papers. Just do it.

Why? Three reasons. The first is that it is good practice. You do not have to be at your best, and you can learn from your mistakes. Second, remember that television is a *mass* medium. If you live in New York, the station you are on has a potential reach of approximately seven million television households. If *one half of one percent* of those households are tuned in to your program, you will be seen in 35,000 households. Ask yourself if you would turn down an invitation to speak to a local audience of 35,000 people. Third, local television stations usually have weekend news programs that will run pictures of almost anything that has moved in their community that weekend. An appearance on a local public-affairs show is almost certain to buy you a place on the local news, which will be seen by a few hundred thousand households. ("Appearing on Channel 1's *NewsDepth*, civic leader Smithers declared today...")

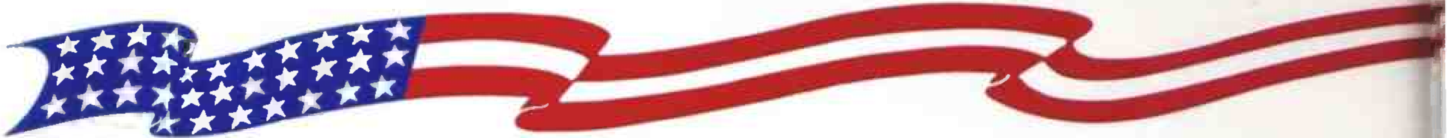
Do not look at the camera. In the first place, the camera operators know full well what shots the producers want. They will *find* you. If you talk straight ahead at the camera, averting your glance from the interviewer, you are asking for trouble. It is, for example, a lot easier to remember the question you have been asked if you are paying visual attention to the questioner. In addition, if you are asked a particularly compelling question—highly unlikely, given the political acumen of the average local TV reporter, but one never knows—you will look like a fool if you suddenly swivel your head away from the camera to look at the interviewer for the first time. Third, you may find yourself in the hands of a malicious director, who will call up a wide shot of you and the interviewer. Nothing looks quite so ridiculous on television as the sudden shattering of the illusion of intimacy—as when the camera angle reveals an earnest politician staring straight ahead at a mechanical device, while ignoring the human beings 10 feet away from him.

Television treasures brevity—but make sure the answers you give can only be used on your terms. Network news broadcasts are 30 minutes; some 22 minutes of news once you discount the commercials and other announcements. Every one of those minutes is golden. Local-news programs, which run as long as two and a half hours, also treasure brevity, because they have in general paid a great deal of money to consultants who have carefully determined that what keeps an audience tuned in is a sense of urgency—rapidly edited news footage, with nothing lasting more than a minute and a half or so.

What this means is that your deeply thought out, carefully substantiated arguments about policy issues will not find a place on television unless you pay for it yourself. And even then, you are likely to be refused even the opportunity to spend your own money on a lengthy expression of your views. If you understand this, you will be able to treat television for what it is: a shorthand method of getting your ideas across to the people. **This does not mean that you should abandon ideas as the centerpiece of your campaign,** any more than newspapers should abandon details because the stories they print will have headlines on top of them. What it means is that you must express your ideas in a form that will be usable on television. And it also means, given the hard fact of life that broadcasters in effect control how ideas are heard on their Government-licensed outlets, that you must have no compunctions about manipulating this process to get every second you can out of it.

Jimmy Carter, in his 1976 campaign, showed either a superb instinctive sense of this process, or a shrewdly designed tactical approach to this question. When Carter was asked a question, he would pause for a deep breath. This immediately made a viewer at home, so used to the complete absence of quiet on television, prick up his ears. It also gave Carter the impression of being immersed in deep thought. When he finally offered his answer, it was delivered in a cadence that suggested Carter was running for the pres-

www.americanradiohistory.com

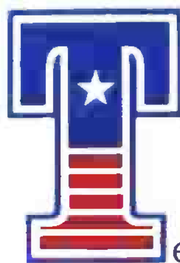


idency of Bob and Ray's "Slow Talkers of America." Most important, Carter would often pause in the middle of a sentence ... and pause ... and pause.... But because there was no way to edit the sentence without losing the train of thought completely, the same answer that would have taken another politician 15 seconds to deliver could take Carter 45 seconds to a minute. This also ensured that there would be no time for follow-up questions; a single generalization, delivered in that meandering style of negative upon negative, was all that television had room for ("I would not favor a constitutional amendment on abortion unless I was convinced that no other method ...")

I do not suggest that Carter's desperate attempt to avoid stating a flat substantive position should become your model of how to use television. (For one thing, as soon as Carter became President and actually had to make decisions, he found whole categories of voters who, having read their own hopes into his ambiguous remarks, felt themselves betrayed. Do not rely on cognitive dissonance to provide a loyal base of support.) What I *do* suggest you take to heart is the way Carter structured his replies to gain maximum time on the air.

For example: You are asked why you believe you're better qualified for the job than your rivals. You reply: "Three reasons. First, I'm closer to the mood of the people than my rivals ..." An editor *cannot* take just that reply, because you already have told the interviewer that there are three reasons. Similarly, you are asked what the most important issue in the campaign is. You answer, "I don't disagree with those who believe that crime, or energy, or the outrageous levels of taxation are important issues. They are, but they are not the most critical dilemmas we face...." You are again *requiring* the packagers of the news to take you on your own terms.

In case you are concerned about the prospect of a television news program not using any of your answers at all, do not be. Every news director in the history of broadcast journalism has been petrified by the prospect of being accused of inefficiency. When a news crew and a reporter are sent out, that footage has to be used in order to amortize costs and pay for the sportscaster's blazers. Once you find yourself in the presence of a local news crew, you are all but assured of getting on the air.



Television cannot resist a visual angle.

Some years ago, politicians began to realize a curious fact about television news. Coverage of a statement was always better if a politician *went* somewhere, if an issue could be directly tied to something at which a camera could be pointed. If you had a position paper on housing, you held your press conference outside an abandoned building. If you wanted to attack crime, you visited a dangerous neighborhood—in the daytime, of course—and appeared in the role of Kojak on his day off. For years, I waited for this ludicrous trend to abate. Instead, it has intensified.

Today, politicians find themselves in the role of investigative reporters on television. Local news programs have a taste for "exposés," but they mean by this something quite alien to the honorable tradition of exposing wrongdoing by poring over records and documents, unearthing complex conspiracies.

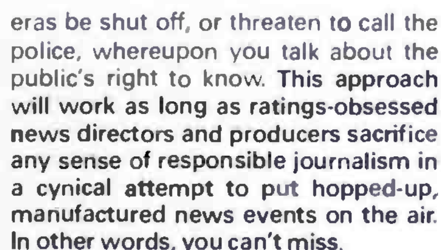
The average TV investigative reporter prefers to find a case of horrible wrongdoing on a news wire or police report. The reporter, with a crew, then rushes to the scene of this horrible event, and has himself photographed by the news crew racing into some building. (No one asks, by the way, how the reporter, so anxious to find the blackguard responsible for this outrage, managed to run slowly enough to get himself photographed by his camera crew.) The reporter then pounds on doors and thrusts himself into offices, confronting some civil servant or private underling, who, finding himself blinded by lights, demands that the reporter leave the premises, or else flees with the avenging reporter and camera crew in full pursuit. (This footage always makes the news broadcast, because it is visually exciting and is the closest thing to a car chase that can get on the evening news. It also makes the reporter look good, since flight implies guilt.)

This taste for the hunt offers you a tempting, if repellent, opportunity to put yourself into the local limelight. All you need do is wait for an official or semiofficial report on some kind of official or semiofficial wrongdoing. (This is as easy to find in our time as a disaffected taxpayer.) It may be a controller's report alleging waste in the schools, or a citizens' group alleging inadequate garbage collection, or a legislative staff investigation on water pollution. Armed with this report, you advise the media of a press conference, to be held at the site of the wrong. This gives your indignation a visible focal point.

"Behind those walls, the bureaucrats shuffle their papers while people suffer," you say, assuming you hold your press conference outside City Hall. If you want to actually visit the site of the injustice—an uncomfortable prospect, since this is usually far from midtown, in a neighborhood with many poor people and abandoned automobiles—you say, "Behind these walls, people suffer while the bureaucrats downtown shuffle their papers." If one of these bureaucrats or administrators happens to show up, you can engage him in a heated debate as the cameras roll.

There is no way for this adversary to win, no matter how reasonable he is, because (a) he will have no idea what is happening until it is too late, (b) you are armed with official—or semiofficial—proof, (c) the reporters will be thrusting microphones into your adversary's face, demanding an answer. If you are really lucky, he will demand the cam-

www.americanradiohistory.com



eras be shut off, or threaten to call the police, whereupon you talk about the public's right to know. This approach will work as long as ratings-obsessed news directors and producers sacrifice any sense of responsible journalism in a cynical attempt to put hopped-up, manufactured news events on the air. In other words, you can't miss.

The link between the television hunger for the visual and your own specific political goals is not, in any sense, confined to the early stages of a political campaign. In fact, the higher you stand on the political ladder, the more you can use television to serve your interests. When a Presidential primary campaign reaches its climax, an army of reporters, cameramen, sound technicians, columnists and engineers jams into press planes and buses to follow a candidate's movements. They are there to take pictures of that candidate—to record what *he* does—to match the story of the campaign against pictures. No matter how determined the broadcast-news organizations are to cover issues *this* year, that candidate's movements—your movements, if you have reached this lofty plane—will help shape the story.

Jimmy Carter's 1976 primary campaign scored its last, perhaps its most important triumph by understanding this rule. By June 8, the upstart candidacy of California governor Jerry Brown had begun to sting Carter's drive toward the nomination. Along with Sen. Frank Church, Brown—both because of his own appeal and because he represented the hopes of Hubert Humphrey supporters for a brokered convention—had stopped Carter in Maryland, Rhode Island, Nevada, and Oregon. Now it was Super Tuesday, when three big state primaries would be held on the same day: New Jersey, Ohio and California, representing a total of more than 23 percent of Democratic convention votes—540 delegates. With Gov. Jerry Brown a clear favorite in California, Carter originally placed substantial hopes for a good showing in New Jersey—until it became clear that an uncommitted slate, divided between supporters of Brown and Hubert Humphrey, was going to defeat Carter soundly.

In effect, Carter *conceded* these states, and spent almost all of his time campaigning in Ohio, against the fading candidacy of Rep. Mo Udall. Objectively speaking, Carter was acknowledging that in two critical states, New Jersey and California, he had so little support that campaigning would be futile. But by campaigning all over Ohio, Carter was, in effect, forcing the television cameras to make Ohio the major state of the three. They could not show a picture of Carter collapsing in California—because he wasn't there. They couldn't show Carter being greeted by massive indifference in New Jersey—because he wasn't there. Instead, Ohio became the important primary because Carter threw down the gauntlet there, and because Chicago mayor Richard Daley decreed that *he* would make Ohio the test.

What happened? Carter was resoundingly defeated in New Jersey and California but won Ohio with 52 percent of the vote. As Jerry Brown prepared to go on television to claim victory, he was told by correspondent Richard Wagner that Eric Sevareid was already saying that Carter could not be stopped.

"Jesus, he lost two out of three tonight!" Brown exclaimed. But Daley, Wallace, Church and Udall were all conceding to Carter, and the demonstration of Carter's electoral weakness—a weakness demonstrated later by his November losses in both New Jersey and California—went all but ignored. The only way that television could have accurately reported the primary story would have been by technique—by showing the *absence* of Carter activity in New Jersey and California, and by *instructing* the audience as to the implications of Carter's absence. That is simply too much like "editorializing" for television news.

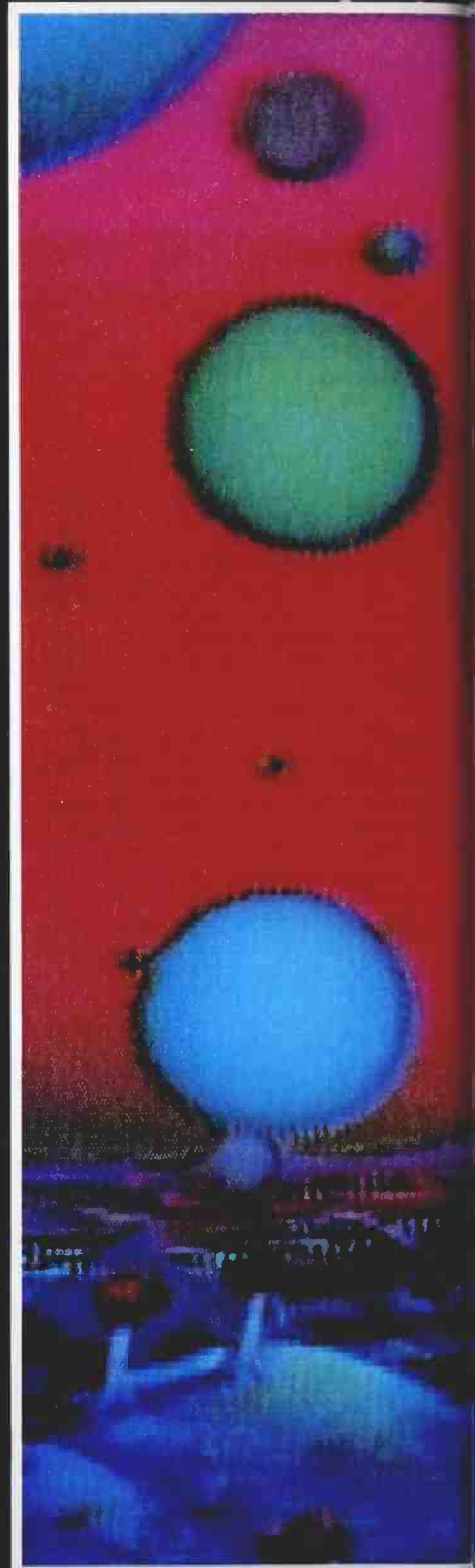
Most correspondents know full well that when reporter Catherine Mackin, on an NBC newscast in 1972, contrasted McGovern's positions with the *description* of those positions by the Nixon campaign, she was severely criticized for "biased" reporting. No TV reporter will stand in a hall and say, "Jimmy Carter was not here in New Jersey because he knows he's going to lose." That is the great advantage you have in bending the visual hunger of television to your own ends.

There is, of course, another way to use this hunger. You *could* use the magnetism of a campaign to drag television to those parts of our national life that generally do not make the evening newscasts. You need not share my affection for Robert Kennedy to recognize the impact of his travels during his Senate years on our political landscape. Indeed, you are entitled to believe that his journeys into Appalachia, into the ghettos of New York and Chicago, into the migrant work camps of Delano, were nothing more than an effort to win political support for himself. The point is that as a national figure, as a political celebrity, Robert Kennedy's travels made news. Since he was treated as a potential President from the moment his brother was elected in 1960, television followed him wherever he went. And in addition to attending Democratic Party dinners, Kennedy went everywhere, from Indian reservations to Bedford-Stuyvesant, *knowing* that television would follow him.

If you really want to make your campaign one of substance, you can force television to help you by your choice of where you go. Once you have achieved sufficient political stature, you no longer have to stand outside empty public buildings on a weekend haranguing absent civil servants. TV is your hostage. If your campaign really means to talk about those Americans left behind, you can intensify your travels through poor neighborhoods and communities. The cameras will be there. You can visit working-class areas where chemical plant employees have been made ill by conditions in the workplace. The TV cameras will be there. And if you choose not to wage such a campaign, you can, of course, blame the media for "not concentrating on the issues." No one will realize that their agenda is your agenda; and that their failure is really yours. ■

www.americanradiohistory.com

Above: Todd Rundgren, sans guitar, in his TV studio. Right: Rundgren's conception of the surface of Venus for "The Planets."



Planet Wars

Rock star Todd Rundgren's big video plans hit a snag in space

By HOWARD POLSKIN

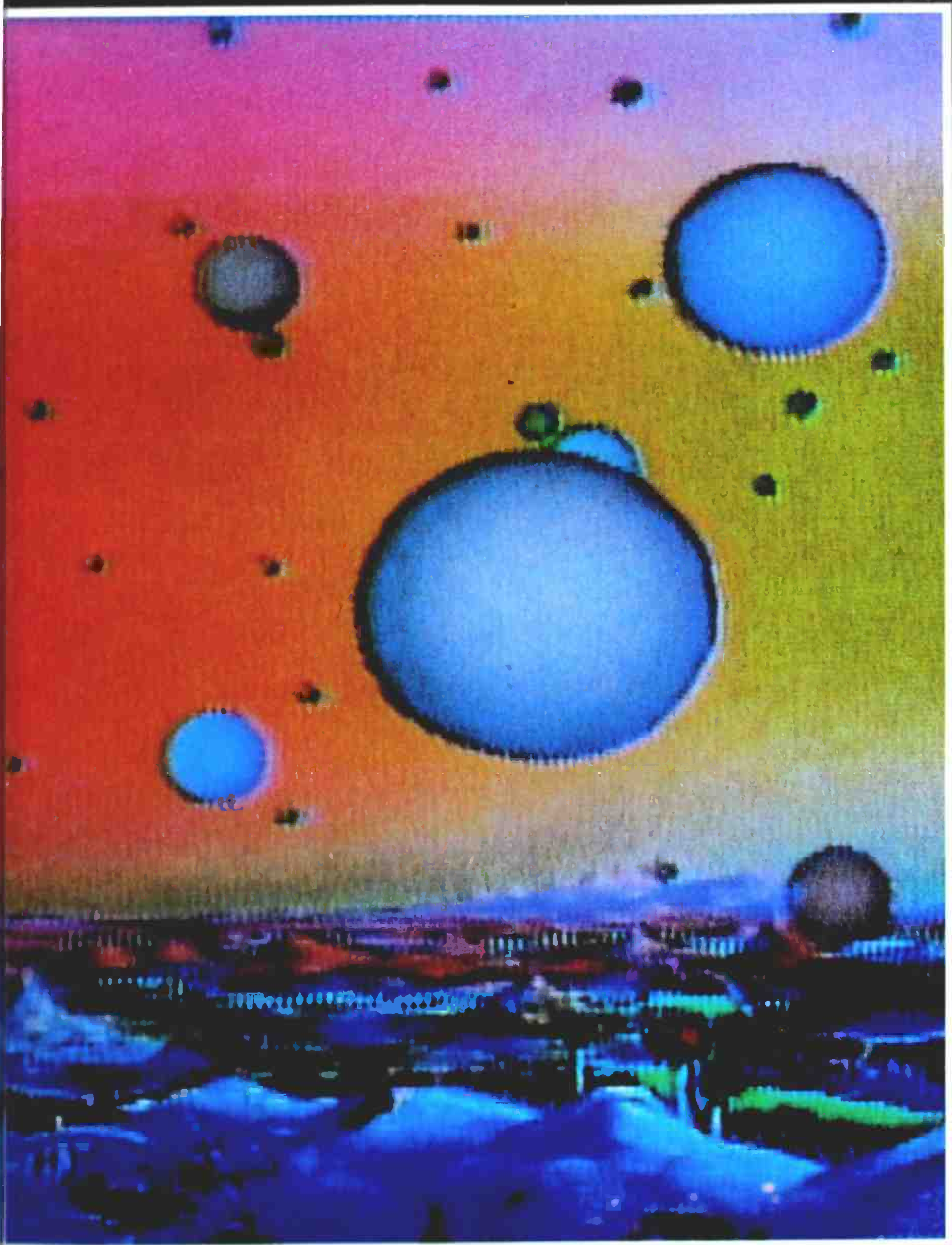
Rock star Todd Rundgren really wants this guy's legs broken. He's sitting in the offices of his brand-new, fully equipped television studio in Bearsville, N.Y., just around the bend from Woodstock. As he screams into the telephone, his face becomes so red with anger that the crimson patches on his cheeks almost match the purple highlights in his shoulder-length hair. Peace, love and happiness were the buzzwords here a decade earlier, but on this raw, overcast day last January Rundgren is threatening to break the bones of Albert Grossman, Bob Dylan's former manager and the man who owns the building that Rundgren leases for his studio. The threat is just a small business matter. It seems that Rundgren has some money coming from Grossman, the Mr. Big of Bearsville (who also owns Bearsville Records, Rundgren's record label) and Rundgren wants it in order to pay his video technicians.

Later that night, Rundgren nonviolently settles his financial problems with Grossman, but nagging troubles still plague his well-publicized video ventures. Rundgren has his slender neck out a long way on a $2 million gamble to make the unusual jump from a successful and popular rock star/record producer to video artist/television producer.

Rundgren is one of the music world's first performers to sink his own money into video hardware to produce original works for the new television media such as discs, cassettes and cable TV. To that end, he has formed Utopia Video Corporation, a production company based in Bearsville. It seems an ideal creative environment: a hip rural area inhabited by veterans of the Woodstock nation and just a two-hour drive from New York City. Unfortunately, however, there's trouble in Utopia.

Last fall, Rundgren completed the first half of an ambitious video program that accompanied Japanese synthesist To-

www.americanradiohistory.com



www.americanradiohistory.com

Cable's Answer to a Sports Fan's Prayer

Now operating 133 hours a week, ESPN looks forward to a round-the-clock sports schedule and, just possibly, a piece of the NFL action

By TONY CHIU

More Americans tuned in to the 1980 Super Bowl than have ever voted in a Presidential election, so it should come as no surprise that we've finally gotten our just deserts: the Entertainment and Sports Programming Network. This national cable-television service's entire schedule—currently some 133 hours per week, including from 6 P.M. (ET) on Friday straight through to 5 A.M. on Monday—is devoted to sports and only sports.

In theory, and sometimes on the air, ESPN seems about as necessary as "Rocky III" or a clone of Howard Cosell.

Ten months after beginning regular operations, ESPN still reaches only four million cable-TV subscribers in a country of 76 million television households. And though those four million subscribers receive ESPN at no extra cost, they see few brand-name athletes or glamorous teams. That's because ABC, CBS and NBC, which jointly telecast approximately 1400 hours of sports each year, hold contracts on virtually every national and international event with a glimmer of Nielsen appeal. What's left over? A smattering of secondary tennis, golf and bowling tournaments; an exhaustive and sometimes exhausting slate of NCAA football and basketball that includes some above-average games, with nationally ranked teams, that the networks have passed up; frequent and exemplary sports newscasts; and a roster deep with college baseball, hockey, soccer, water polo and cross-country track, women's pro basketball, midget-car races, Slo-Pitch softball, Gaelic hurling and even the National Professional Putting Championship.

The technical quality of ESPN's coverage varies as well. For major events—such as its in-depth presentation last March of the opening rounds of the NCAA Division I Basketball Tournament—ESPN's camera work and use of replays match those of the commercial networks. But for lesser events, such as the Division III (small-college) Basketball Tournament, the production values drop noticeably.

In short, ESPN hardly qualifies as the sports fan's answer to Bo Derek.

And yet...

Item: Last year, 85 percent of ESPN's stock was snapped up by Getty Oil, a company with 1979 after-tax income of $604 million.

Item: When ESPN announced it would accept advertisements at an average price of $750 per half-minute, Anheuser-Busch clambered aboard, followed by Mazda and Pontiac, Hertz, Getty and Mobil, the Hilton and Marriott hotel chains, and such upscale-demographic publications as The Wall Street Journal and Sports Illustrated.

Item: Chet Simmons, a superstar network sports programmer, resigned the presidency of NBC Sports to head ESPN, eventually bringing with him such colleagues as producer Scotty Connal and sportscaster Jim Simpson.

Item: The Los Angeles Olympic Organizing Committee termed ESPN's bid to cover the 1984 Games "competitive" before awarding the rights to ABC for $225 million.

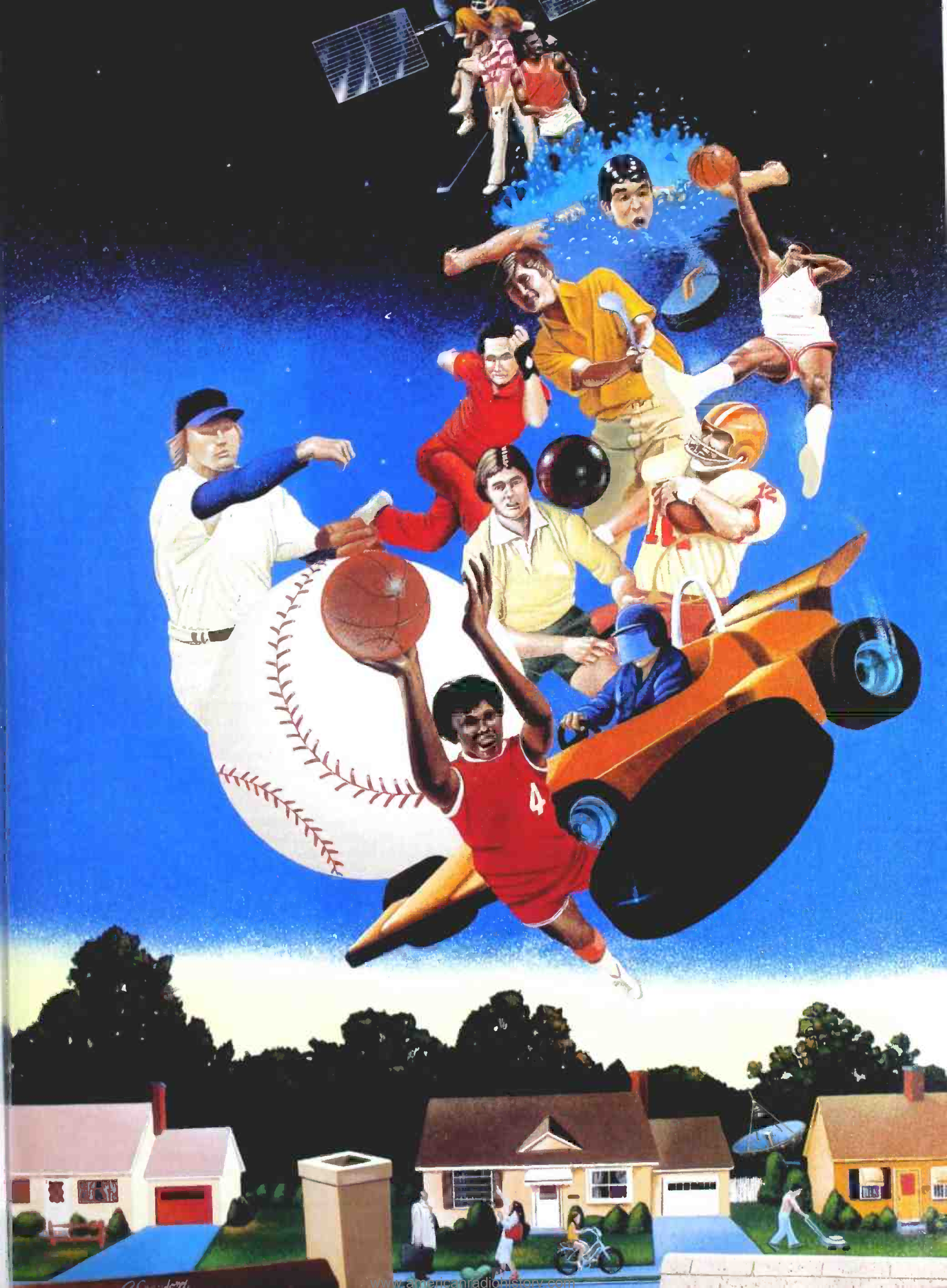
To be sure, the Pete Rozelles and the Bowie Kuhns of the sports world have yet to sell their games to the new service, but the three commercial networks are listening for footsteps; the commissioners probably have ESPN's phone number on their Rolodexes.

Why has a still-obscure cable company with headquarters and studios in the unlikely city of Bristol, Conn., caused such a stir? Because of its very existence. The product of a technological breakthrough, ESPN finds itself on the cutting edge of forces that will presently alter the complex relationships between the broadcast, advertising and sports industries.

In December 1975, RCA parked a geosynchronous, or fixed-position, communications satellite called Satcom I over the Pacific, between the Hawaiian and Galapagos isles and at an altitude of 22,300 miles. Its major function was to provide the television industry with a means of transmission cheaper than renting long-distance telephone lines. Satcom's technological weapon was 24 gadgets the size of portable tape recorders and known as transponders. Each transponder can receive a transmission, amplify it and then return it earthward to be picked up by earth stations across the continent.

To RCA's chagrin, leases on Satcom I's transponders went like sandboxes in Kuwait. The three commercial networks even now make only limited use of satellite transmission, maintaining that a precipitous change from their current use of AT&T's Long Lines equipment would be both expensive and risky. And though Time Inc. quickly placed its first-run movie service, Home Box Office, on a transponder, other cablecasters held back for two reasons. First, in 1975 only some nine million homes were wired for cable. Second, only a fraction of these were

www.americanradiohistory.com

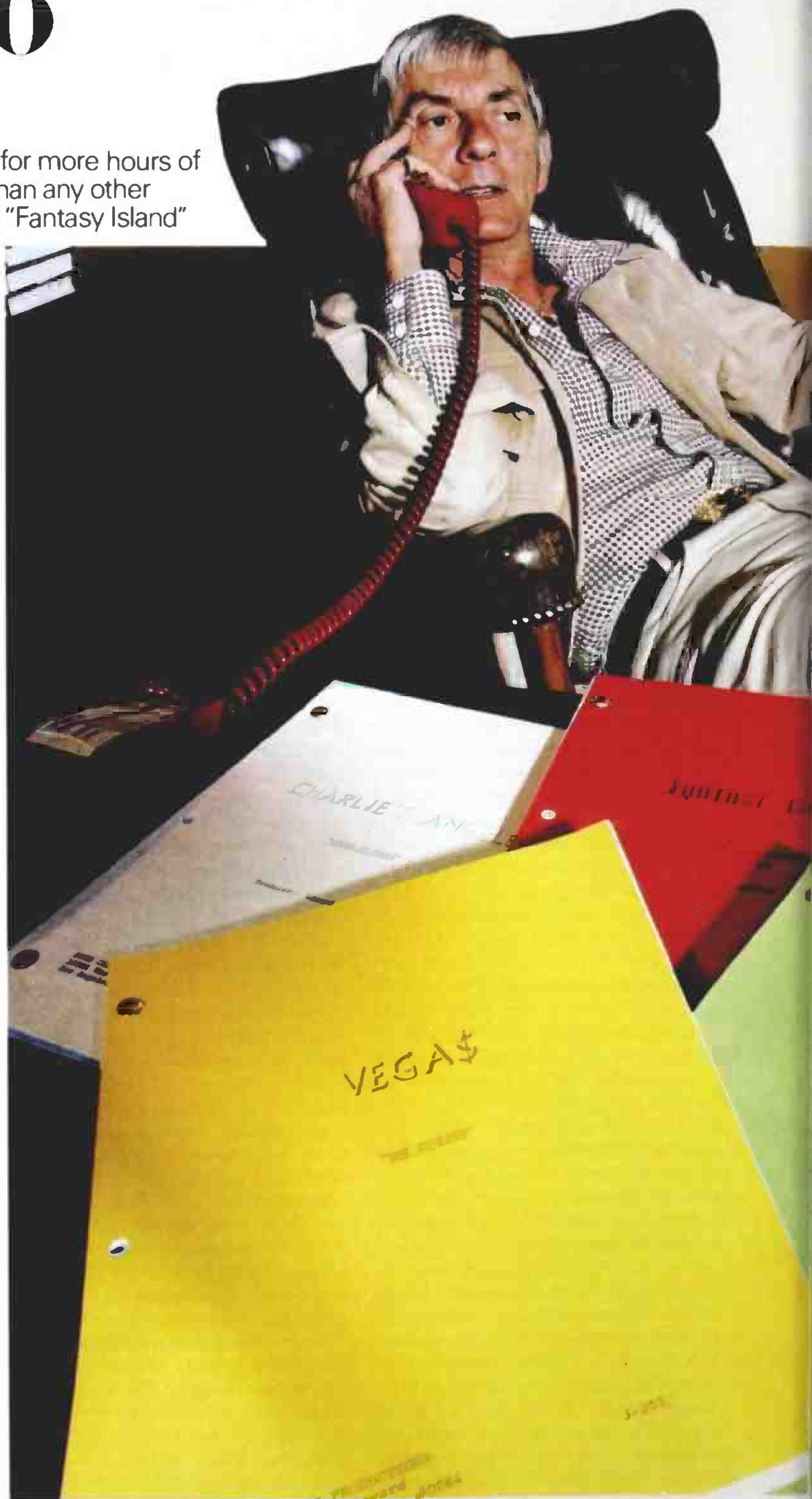


www.americanradiohistory.com

THIS MAN KNOWS WHAT [AMERICA] WANTS TO WATCH

Aaron Spelling, who is responsible for more hours of current prime-time programming than any other single producer, has found his own "Fantasy Island"

By CAROLYN SEE



He wears his hair in bangs like Julius Caesar. He's smart. He's funny. He's been called a schlockmeister. His name is odious to the PTA, which accuses him of purveying sex and violence. This season he has filled more hours of prime-time television than any other producer. His series, past and present, range from *Starsky & Hutch* to *The Love Boat* to *Fantasy Island* to *Charlie's Angels* to *Vega$* to *Family* to *Hart to Hart*. They constitute nearly a quarter of ABC's current prime-time schedule. He has an exclusive contract with ABC, usually number 1 in the ratings. Aaron Spelling is a powerful man.

The man who has the power is wiry and thin. He used to be poor, very very poor; now he's rich, very very very rich.

He has his own Spanish-style bungalow on the 20th Century-Fox lot. It's a big place, with a waiting room, and another waiting room, and a long, well-lit hall covered with plaques and citations and laminated magazine covers. Then a big, tasteful room with a big desk and several chairs and a soft couch and coffee table and more awards all over everything—and this is only his secretary's office.

It takes another hall and alcove to get to Spelling's own office, which is, even in Hollywood, a bit much. A fireplace with built-in 17th-century seats on each side. A breakfront bursting with pre-Columbian art. A deep, delicious, shaded gloom. A clean desk. Aaron Spelling buried here; smiling, heavy-lidded, dressed in beige wide-wale corduroy slacks, a tasteful sport jacket, a small gold medallion at his throat.

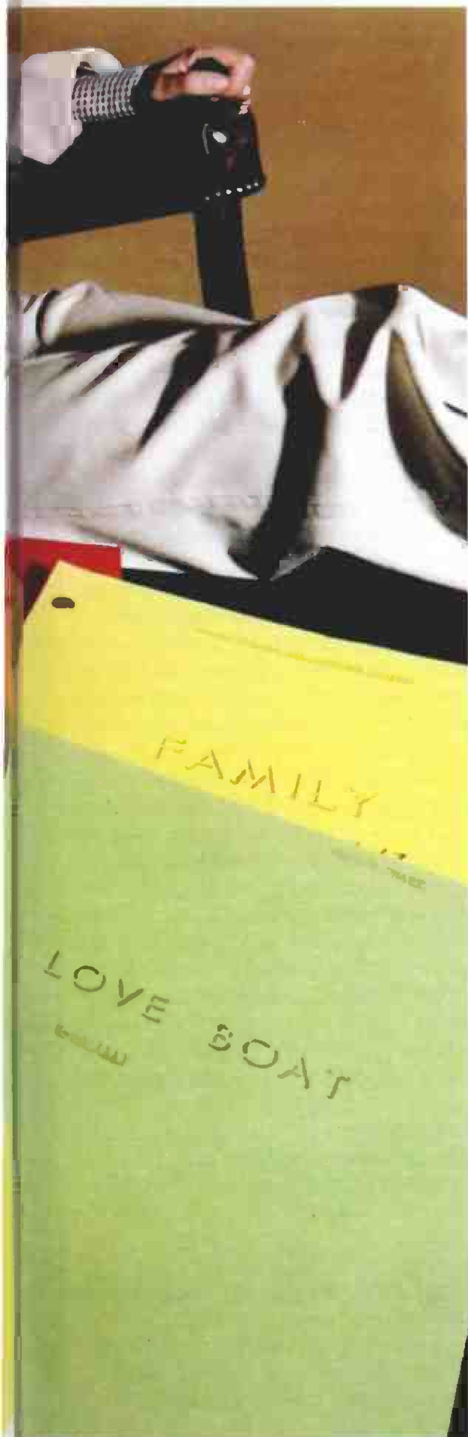
It is 10 in the morning; he has been up since 6 and on the phone, talking to New York. "It used to be worse, when

*In addition to writing magazine articles and novels, **Carolyn See** is an associate professor of English at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles.*

www.americanradiohistory.com

AMERICA

A good part of Aaron Spelling's mornings in the office is spent on the phone, making deals and overseeing his shows.



Freddie Silverman was at the network," he says. Spelling's tone, his way of speaking, is laid-back, laconic, off-the-wall. He seems always on the edge of telling a joke. A melancholy joke. "Freddie used to call me up at 5 in the morning. I'd say, 'Freddie, it's 5 in the morning!'" He pauses, lets it hang, then gives Silverman's answer: "'So?'"

Now he gets his phone messages. He is producing a two-hour television movie with a new partner, who called earlier to say he's "very upset." Spelling murmurs ironically, repeating his secretary's message. "So Mr. ——— is very upset. Tell him—tell him I'll call him later."

Most of Spelling's mornings in the office are spent taking or returning phone calls like this; or looking at last night's ratings, which lie before him in a big three-hole loose-leaf notebook; or conferring with his producers, partners and other associates. Then, over lunch, more conferring. Then perhaps four hours a day watching dailies (five hours of weekly television, plus movies, yield a lot of dailies), then more phone calls, then home by 6, and most nights (he says) in bed by 10, where he reads scripts until he drops.

In 1960 Aaron Spelling wrote the script for his first feature film. "One Foot in Hell" shows an Alan Ladd slightly past his prime, exacting a long, terrible revenge on a small Western town. The reason for his grudge: when he needed medicine for his wife, he couldn't come up with $1.87 to pay for it. The townsfolk let his wife die.

Spelling was 32 in 1960; he had been in Hollywood for seven years. He already knew about making money, but in 1960 his memories were still drenched in what it had meant to be stone broke.

He was born in Dallas. His father, a Jew who had escaped from Russia, supported the family by working as a tailor at Sears Roebuck. The Spellings did a good part of their grocery shopping on Tuesday mornings at the White Rock Bakery, where sacks of day-old bread and cakes were put on sale. The family chose Aaron, puny kid, to stand in line; the man behind the counter, seeing this pitiable sight, would stuff in a few more pastries. "No butter, no meat when I was growing up," Spelling says now. "But *cake*! That was another story. To this day I can't eat dessert."

Spelling served in the Army in World War II; he acted in theatrical productions and, coming home after the war, took advantage of the GI Bill to go to Southern Methodist University. As a freshman he went to read for a production of "The Hasty Heart"—not knowing that freshmen weren't supposed to—and came up with the lead. He got his first rave review.

After graduation, Spelling worked in local little theater. He took a bus to New York, where the production he was supposed to work on was so awful he "came home in a panic." He directed, in Dallas, a high-school production of Richard Wright's "Native Son" that enraged the citizenry.

When New York didn't pan out and Dallas didn't love him, Aaron Spelling, at the age of 25 in the year 1953, decided to go to Hollywood. His family staked him with what amounted, at the time, to the family fortune: $100.

He went west, expecting God knows what, but finding Pit City. His hundred dollars evaporated. He stole newspapers off front lawns. He lived in a crummy motel. He found a restaurant that offered "all you can eat" for something under two dollars. He made a special lining for his overcoat, so that while eating dinner he could stock up on a week's worth of fried chicken. He was miserable; he was alone.

But he was persistent. He finally got a job behind an airline reservation counter. There he met a man who gave him a job as band boy (and talent scout) for one of the weirdest acts in early television, Ada Leonard's All Girl Orchestra. In the following months he was to meet a lot of strange ladies who played the accordion or the viola, or who sang "Malagueña."

He moved from there to the mail room of Los Angeles's KTTV. He decided to put on a show featuring all his mail-room compadres, and he found a ratty little theater by the freeway and went to work. On the afternoon of opening night, the female lead informed Spelling that she wouldn't be appearing. She "had a date with a movie star." But she had a girl friend who could fill in for her. The girl friend was Carolyn Jones, who would become the first Mrs. Spelling.

Events speed up. By a fluke this crummy little theater attracts a critic from The Los Angeles Times, who gives the show a swell review. Hollywood impresario Preston Sturges moves the whole production to an affluent Hollywood dinner theater. Aaron and Carolyn fall in love. Big-timers come to the dinner theater, people like Lana Turner and Cary Grant. The day after this second opening night, Carolyn is signed by an agent. Three days later she has a part in a movie, the 3-D

www.americanradiohistory.com

Trappings of success: with wife Candy, Spelling poses in the living room of their Beverly Hills home.

thriller "House of Wax." Aaron Spelling gets acting jobs in such shows as Jack Webb's *Dragnet*. "To this day," Spelling says, "if we see Jack in a restaurant, he comes over to see me, to say hello, to say how proud he is of me."

Webb would be the first of several surrogate fathers. But before he would meet the other ones, Spelling pursued another ambition, which was to write. Perhaps only a writer can appreciate what it means to say he wrote 27 scripts before he sold the 28th. Then Spelling found himself working for Dick Powell and Alan Ladd. Soon Spelling decreed himself producer.

He and Carolyn Jones had vowed to stake each other to success. They both made it, but the marriage deteriorated.

"In the '60s," Spelling says now, "I was feeling low. Dick Powell had died, Alan Ladd had died, the marriage with Carolyn had broken up. I didn't wear success that well. I went through a period of ... a self-degrading man who thinks he's *macho*? I found a penthouse and filled it with comely ladies. The columnist Harrison Carrol would write about Aaron Spelling's 'girl of the week.' I went everywhere. I would have gone to the opening of a hamburger stand. There were about two years of that. Then one night I met this gorgeous girl. She came from a very good family in Beverly Hills. I asked her for a date; her mother said, 'There's *no way* you're going out with him!' But I used insane persistence. And...that was Candy. I went from this crazy swinging *nut*, to realizing that life wasn't anything without someone you love, without a family and a home." He has been married for 10 years now; he has a 7-year-old daughter and a 1-year-old son.

And this marriage, like his first, signaled an opening up, a change in fortune. He had been in partnership with Danny Thomas (for *The Mod Squad*); now he took the step and launched his own company (with Douglas S. Cramer as executive vice president), while establishing a new sometime partnership with Leonard Goldberg. Spelling also signed, with some trepidation, that contract with ABC, which was then in last place.

ABC moved to first place, and one of the reasons—no matter what the PTA says—is that Spelling knows what America wants. He proves it every day. "I'm not ashamed to say that we're providing glamour for the masses," he says. "God knows, they need it. These pundits, these moguls, these *know-it-alls*, they get together and decide what America *needs* to see. What's *good* for them! Nobody ever thinks about what they *want* to see. My God, they're wondering how to balance their checkbook, or why they're a hundred dollars overdrawn this week. They don't want to be preached to."

When I ask him to describe some of his television shows as if they were his children, he enters into this game with such fervent intensity that I fear for his own adulthood.

"*Family*," he says, "is our oldest child. A child who sees that there's good and evil in this life. A child who would recognize the new move we're seeing toward religion. [Spelling's "oldest child" reached retirement age this May, when ABC dropped the show from its schedule.]

"*Starsky & Hutch*—God, I hate the people who watched it *once*, years ago, and say it's violent. *Starsky* is a tough kid who'd like to write poetry, but he's afraid the guys might think he's gay! [Though no longer on the ABC schedule, the duo still patrol their beat in syndication.]

"*Charlie's Angels* is our glamour girl. People accuse her of wearing wet T-shirts, except she never *has*. She has women doing a man's job. She's like Lana Turner in those old movies.

"*Fantasy Island* is our prankster." And he saves his story about that until later, contenting himself with saying that it's his hardest show to put together, because there are only so many fantasies in this world.

"*Love Boat* is 16-going-on-60. Very much into Donny and Marie. She loves old movie stars. She's not afraid of being sentimental. She loves seeing Cesar Romero at the Academy Awards. She almost fainted when she saw Cary Grant.

"*Vega$* is very gaudy. He shops at Eric Ross and loves to ride his bike...."

Then he tells me the story of how *Fantasy Island* was born, which illustrates, better than anything he has said, the character of the medium in which he works.

"We'd had this meeting with the network, to kick around new ideas. I mean, we'd been in there for hours. This idea didn't have enough *sex*, this idea didn't have enough *concept*, this idea was too *soft*, this idea was too *hard*. Finally, I kind of went crazy. I said, 'You guys don't want a show! You don't want something with characters or a plot or a story! You just want to have some sort of an island! Where you can go and act out all your dumb fantasies!' And that," concludes Spelling, "was when they started jumping up and down and shouting, 'Do it, do it, do it!'"

Pause. "Is that a true story?" I ask.

Spelling thinks about it. "Yes," he says.

Spelling's spring offering, the highly touted *B.A.D. Cats*, was advertised as a show that wrecked perhaps half a dozen cars in the pilot alone. But the series itself went up in flames after the first few episodes. In an age of

www.americanradiohistory.com

energy crunch, maybe conspicuous consumption didn't set well with the public.

To an ordinary person, a failure like this might have raised serious doubts. Had the Spelling sensibilities simply run out? Spelling, however, turned right around and joined forces with two distinguished television writers, Esther and Richard Shapiro, to create the pilot for a major series featuring the "voices of the Eighties"; a little something with the working title *Oil*. It will deal—not all at once—with such trendy topics as free enterprise, ecology, homosexuality and mental health. Well, *why not?*

Spelling's most recent project was more playful. Titled "Murder Can Hurt You," this two-hour TV-movie featured a passel of familiar detectives in its scheduled-for-May telecast: Chief Ironbottom, Lambretta, Detective Nojack, Policewoman Salty, and Mr. and Mrs. Palumbo. All this and, naturally, Stüdsky and Hatch. The man with the Midas touch has a sense of humor.

To create glamour out of chaos, and to acquire wealth—if Aaron Spelling does it at the office, the same good works go on at home. The Spelling house in Beverly Hills is an exercise in brown perfection. It is so tightly defined and defended that it could be in another country, another century, almost another dimension.

It's not a question of the iron gates. Or the intercom. Or the security guard escorting 7-year-old Tori to visit a friend. It's not the burly driver, sitting in the kitchen next to the nurse—baby Randy on one of those plastic jumpseats between them—whiling away a sunny weekday afternoon, watching daytime television.

It isn't simple riches—the walk-in closet where you bump up against something like a grizzly bear and all it is is some of Mrs. Spelling's fur coats. It isn't Mr. Spelling's personal sauna. It isn't the long, long gentle slope of lawn, the tulips, azaleas, weeping willows—or the 200 square feet of ranunculi grown out back, Japanese-nursery fashion, for use indoors (every room in this house—and this house has many rooms—boasts two, three, four, five bowls of perfect, fresh flowers). It's not the playroom with the *Charlie's Angels* pinball machine.

It's not even the fireplace in the master bedroom, or the bed as big as Ecuador, or Tori's playroom, which even Mrs. Spelling describes as "embarrassing." It's not the vegetable garden, with low walls of parsley, thick and green as bolts of shag rug. It *is*, for one thing, *abundance*. The Aaron Spelling house may be celestial proof that we live in an abundant universe. It could not be further away from the day-old bakery in Dallas.

Perfection, the operative word here, comes from one person, Candy Spelling. Candy, if she were a vegetable, would be a slim, white, newly picked Belgian endive. Standing next to his wife, Aaron Spelling, a wiry, small-boned man, begins to look as furry and large as the coats in Candy's closet. Candy wears silk, gold, diamonds, thick blonde hair, and a very sweet smile. She has good manners, and is a little nervous.

Very gently, speaking softly, she shows us the house, and it begins to be plain that the same kind of focused energy goes into this display as into those five hours of ABC prime time. The armchair in the shape of a bear that she ordered for Tori from a catalogue. The carpet in the baby's room—white leaves in a kelly-green rug—each white leaf separately inserted, so that as they get dirty they can be individually replaced. The silver. The crystal. The sculpture. The gewgaws, furbelows, more and more and more. "I'm a bit of a collector," Candy murmurs. "I don't know if you noticed, but there are bronze match holders all through this place." And there *are*, maybe to a total of 300 pounds.

The afternoon winds down. Mrs. Spelling and a maid go outside to cut us some ranunculi to take home. We loiter in the front hall with Mr. Spelling and talk about danger.

"It's a life with certain restrictions," Spelling says. "We've had our share of nuts. Not far from here is one of the places where they sell those maps of the movie stars' homes. They said they wouldn't put us on it. But, of course, they did. So now we get people, they come up in their cars, and park, and look... I think it's something to do with the kind of shows I do, too. *Starsky & Hutch*, that sort of thing. They get the idea I stand for law and order, and they want to get back at me."

This is the man who, when they found a nurse they liked for the new baby, signed that nurse to a 10-year contract. Who was willing to put up, some say, with Kate Jackson's notorious tantrums until she took a quantum jump from fretting about her "bad side" on television to objecting to being photographed *straight on*. Only then did Spelling come out with a carefully worded statement: "Both Leonard Goldberg and I feel that it's best for the show and Kate...." And Kate Jackson was no longer an Angel. This is a man who in long, solid hours and hours of interview time has managed to say only one slightly snotty thing, and it was not about an enemy.

When I mention this to Spelling, he shrugs. (He has just finished praising his chauffeur, and his limo, and his wife who gave him the limo, and a picture of Tori—in Fairy Queen costume, framed in heavy silver, mounted on the grand piano.) "What should I complain about? I'm living in a fairy tale." He shrugs again. We're all waiting for those ranunculi, and there's nothing left to say.

There is a still moment, a calm. The Japanese gardener, with ferocious intensity, has squirted every last leaf and mote of dust off hedges, azaleas, brick retaining walls, blacktopped driveway. The limo, a Lincoln Continental (diminutive TV in the heavily upholstered back), sits like three scoops of mocha ice cream, glittering smoothly in the driveway. Back in the interior of the house, Renate Kamer, Spelling's assistant, is taking care of things. Everything, everything is done.

Candy Spelling brings our ranunculi. They are spectacularly beautiful, and stay that way for days; bright blooms from a fairy tale, in our ordinary American rooms, which yield to everyday demands of clutter, human voices, dust. ■

Other people have back yards. The Spellings have 200 square feet of ranunculi, grown Japanese-nursery fashion and used to decorate every room of the house.

www.americanradiohistory.com

Choosing Next Season's Public

The selection process involved six months of preparation, four days of pilot-watching, six rounds of computerized balloting—and a result that left nobody satisfied

By EDWIN KIESTER JR.

The 300-odd delegates juggled coffee cups and note pads as they filed into various viewing rooms in the St. Francis Hotel and took their seats before batteries of TV monitors. Each delegate was prepared for a much more difficult juggling act over the days to come, involving money (limited) and proposed TV programs (new, old and seemingly unlimited in number and the sincerity of their producers). It was a gray January morning in San Francisco: some would say a gray day for public television.

Prior to the 1979-80 television season, the 161 Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) member stations organized as the Station Program Cooperative (SPC) pooled $23 million of their limited funds to finance production of 24 programs and specials for that season. Getting the greatest support were *Wall Street Week, Great Performances, Sesame Street, Evening at Pops, Nova, The MacNeil/Lehrer Report, Evening at Symphony, Over Easy, Bill Moyers' Journal* and *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood.*

This year the stations got together again to decide where to invest their money; the pool was now up to $29 million. The top 10 chosen: *Wall Street Week, The Electric Company, Sesame Street, Nova, The MacNeil/Lehrer Report, Mister Rogers' Neighborhood, Over Easy, Mark Russell Comedy Specials, Great Performances* and *Sneak Previews.*

Edwin Kiester Jr. is a San Francisco-based free-lancer who frequently writes about communications.

At first glance, it might appear that the SPC had made some refreshing changes in this year's schedule, but here the lists are misleading. It's true that *Evening at Pops* didn't appear in the top 10 this year—but it was number 13. *Bill Moyers' Journal* was number 17 this year, *Mark Russell Comedy Specials* number 11 last year. *Evening at Symphony* was dropped this time around, but both *Sneak Previews* and *The Electric Company* had been funded by the SPC in years past.

This is not to say that reendorsing the network's old workhorses was done lightly. Before the money was finally allocated, there were six months of preparation, four continuous days of pilot-watching, six rounds of balloting by a computerized formula so complex it makes $E=mc^2$ look like first-grade arithmetic, and some of the most aggressive lobbying since the repeal of Prohibition. In the end, almost no one was satisfied with the results. "We need some way to introduce new material to the stations," sighed John Lorenz of the PBS programming department, who coordinated the operation.

At the heart of the selection process

www.americanradiohistory.com

TV Programs—the Hard Way

this year was a new event called the SPC Program Fair, designed to spice up PBS's schedule. Instead of individually viewing cassettes of candidates in their spare time, as in years past, representatives of all the PBS stations gathered for a week in San Francisco to view and hear sales pitches for 30 continuing programs, 30 proposed new shows and 17 programs dealing with minority interests (a special category under the rules).

Of course, the SPC is not the only source of public-television programming; it represents only about one third of the shows you see. Another third consists of wholly financed programs, such as the Mobil-underwritten *Masterpiece Theatre*, and the balance are shows financed by other sources, such as the Corporation for Public Broadcasting or individual stations. The SPC was set up during the Nixon Administration to decentralize program production: local stations and independent producers would develop shows and the Cooperative would buy them at a prearranged, per station price to cover the costs of full production.

An example is *Over Easy*, the daily half hour about growing older. Developed and produced by San Francisco's KQED, the show has had SPC support for two years. Thirteen weeks of *Over Easy* cost roughly $3 million, according to executive producer Dick Rector. Sun Company, Inc. has pledged $1 million of that amount, Colonial Penn Group, Inc. another $400,000. Thus Rector asked SPC for the balance—$1.6 million.

Deciding how much each station will toss into the pot is where the brain-twisting mathematics comes in. Theoretically, the amount is based on the size of a station's budget and the market it serves. WHYY-TV, Philadelphia, to use the simplest example, represents almost exactly one percent of the total revenue base. If all the stations pledged to support *Over Easy*, WHYY would pay one percent of the $1.6 million request, or $16,000 for 65 shows.

Unfortunately for simple arithmetic, 100 percent of the stations seldom agree on anything. WHYY's contribution to *Over Easy* is then calculated according to the buying power of the stations who want the show. As the programs are voted upon one by one through several rounds of balloting, WHYY's share may go up or down as stations add or subtract their support. On the first bidding round this year, stations equaling 62 percent of SPC buying power agreed to fund the show, and WHYY's slice at that point was estimated at $22,000. In the end, *Over Easy* obtained 80 percent support and WHYY contributed roughly $20,500.

Complicating matters even further is a bargain-basement gimmick called the universal buy, which comes into play only after the voting is completed. This is a package deal, made up of all the programs with the support of at least half the voting stations, that is offered at a discount rate of, say, 80 to 85 percent of the total cost of the indi-

www.americanradiohistory.com

vidual programs it contains. The purpose of the universal buy is to bring down the cost of shows that have highly selective appeal to a level where small stations can afford their share, by spreading that cost around—as with parimutuel betting, the more "bets" on a program, the lower the price to all.

Getting ready for the Program Fair was not quite as difficult as preparing the national budget, but it was close. Last fall, PBS collected descriptions of each new or continuing program, including the SPC contribution requested, and circulated them to the stations, which then were asked to rate each proposal on a scale of 1 to 5. Those that averaged less than 2.75 were dropped from consideration. That narrowed the field from 224 proposals to 77.

But viewing just the survivors still required 19 and a half hours. Upon arriving at the St. Francis for this marathon, the delegates were assigned to four sections to view the shows in rotation. The 75 or so members of Group C were herded into Elizabethan Room C, where moderators Don Burgess of WMVS, Milwaukee, and Mike LaBonia of WYES-TV, New Orleans, explained the ground rules: each producer of a new show would have 20 minutes to describe it, show a clip or pilot and answer questions.

Already the lobbying was underway as producers jockeyed for their share of the pie. Twenty-nine million dollars sounds like a lot of money; but with some programs requesting up to $4.5 million, it obviously would not go far. The rows of chairs were strewn with lavish promotional brochures, free records, T-shirts and printed appeals. In the corridors, producers diligently courted delegates who just as diligently guarded the limited dollars their stations had to spend.

The first program screened for Group C was *The Music of Man*, which required around $268,000. (All figures are approximate, since prices varied through the different stages of the selection process. Also, in addition to the asking price, each show would carry a three and three-quarter percent PBS surcharge, used for such things as advertising.) Consisting of eight one-hour shows about the development of music, the series was narrated by the violinist Yehudi Menuhin. Its spokesman, Ed Van Cleef, showed snippets from the series, in which Menuhin ranged the musical world from the steel bands of calypso to the choral groups of Senegal, talking about the role of music in the lives of men.

Afterward, the audience had some pointed questions. "Are all the shows going to be so academic?" asked Dick Brown of WJCT, Jacksonville, Fla. "I found this material stilted and disappointing." Heads nodded in agreement. Taken aback, Van Cleef replied, "Menuhin is at his best visiting and talking with performers. We have a segment with Glenn Gould, discussing electronic music, that is magnificent, and another fine segment with Ravi Shankar."

Someone then asked the $268,000 question: What were the prospects of a donor picking up part of the tab? "We are actively pursuing underwriting and hope to announce a grant soon," Van Cleef said.

In the corridors, producers diligently courted delegates who just as diligently guarded the limited dollars their stations had to spend

The second screening was a show called *Bubba*. A series about a 16-year-old black boy in South Chicago during the early days of the civil-rights movement, *Bubba* was actually outside the conventional SPC financing structure. The Corporation for Public Broadcasting had pledged $1 million, to be augmented on a 1-for-4 basis by the stations, to produce programs about minority life in the U.S. Besides *Bubba*—whose producers at WGBH-TV, Boston, were asking $864,000 for three one-hour episodes—16 other minority programs were competing for the earmarked funds.

There were plenty of questions about *Bubba*, too. "Is the language rough?" one delegate asked. He was told that the show was geared to a family audience. "This has the look, tone and feel of a made-for-TV film," another man said. "Could it be recut as a two- or two-and-a-half-hour movie?" Perhaps, he was told—if the stations wanted it.

Austin City Limits, with a request of $355,000, came next. This holdover pop-country program, strategically scheduled during fundraising drives by several stations last year, had proved highly successful in pulling in pledges from nontraditional PBS viewers—the sort who might not tune in for *Evening at Symphony* but who are willing to pay cash on the barrel head for some down-home entertainment. Bill Arhos of KLRN-TV, Austin/San Antonio, was not modest about the show's virtues. After exhorting delegates "who haven't picked up your T-shirts to come to Room 1120 this evening," he continued: "This year *Austin City Limits* will be super....We have a lineup of performers that is really gangbusters—Don Williams, Willie Nelson. But we won't lose the unique atmosphere or sound of Austin."

Anders Yocom of WTTW, Chicago, made the pitch for *The Paper Chase*, the series about the first year of law school, which had been dropped from commercial television after one season despite critical acclaim. WTTW had an option on 22 completed episodes of *The Paper Chase* and proposed to produce six or eight new ones, Yocom said; the total price would be $1.8 million. Yocom then switched on a filmed appeal by series star John Houseman.

"You know me as Professor Charles W. Kingsfield Jr.," Houseman intoned, "a man who makes monumental demands on his students. They accept his challenge. And in the process they learn not only the workings of the law, but that it is all right to be serious about education. I urge you in public television to help bring these students back. Ladies and gentlemen, don't let them drop out of school!"

The first follow-up question was more down to earth. "The 22 episodes made for commercials will leave us 10 unfilled minutes an hour. What do you propose to do with that?" Yocom gulped. "We'd like your guidance," he said.

In rapid succession, Group C then heard pitches for *The Advocates* ($900,000); for *Soccer Made in Germany* ($493,000); and for Fred Rogers, saint of the nursery-school set ($832,000). Independent filmmaker William Miles asked support for *I Remember Harlem*, a documentary depicting the neighborhood's history from 1658 to the present. Ron Devillier of PBS appealed for a "Specials Fund," earmarked for outstanding productions whose availability could not now be predicted.

In midafternoon, Sonny Fox, a Hollywood producer whose career had started in public television, presented his appeal for *The Golden Age of Tele-*

www.americanradiohistory.com

vision. At a cost of $500,000, Fox proposed to rerun live TV dramas of the 1950s, including the original "Requiem for a Heavyweight" and "Visit to a Small Planet," and featuring such "beginners" as Paul Newman, Joanne Woodward, Jack Klugman and Eva Marie Saint. Fox capped his request by showing a scene from "Requiem for a Heavyweight," with Jack Palance and Keenan Wynn. When it ended, the audience broke into spontaneous applause.

By 7 P.M., however, after they had watched 30 programs, the delegates were bleary-eyed and considerably less responsive. When the final program, *Cross Country*, a country-and-western show, was screened, its spokesman asked for questions and not a single hand went up. "I must say, you're a lively bunch," he declared.

But as the films faded, the social pace picked up. Throughout the St. Francis, "hospitality suites," set up in the hope that conviviality could influence votes, beckoned to delegates. Some of the gatherings were small and subdued. Marvin Kitman, TV critic for Newsday, had a few people in for cold cuts and wine to discuss his proposed series, *Watching TV*. The proposal had barely survived the fall cut.

By contrast, New York's station WNET threw a bash that would have turned Elsa Maxwell green with envy. The station was seeking nearly half the anticipated $29 million SPC outlay to continue producing *The Dick Cavett Show* ($2,250,000), *The MacNeil/Lehrer Report* ($4,500,000), *Great Performances* ($4,150,000), and *Bill Moyers' Journal* ($2,000,000)—and had hired the hotel ballroom to advance its cause. Cavett, looking dazed, was on hand to greet the hundreds of guests. His few words for each could scarcely be heard over the clinking and babbling as the guests swamped four bars and raided a canapé table the length of a hockey rink.

By now, certain favorites among the new programs were beginning to emerge, as indicated by the conversations among little knots of delegates. *The Paper Chase* was popular, but so were *The Golden Age of Television*; *Tale-Spinners*, called a *Masterpiece Theatre* for children; Jack Haley Jr.'s *Hollywood: The Way It Was*; and *The Music of Man*. But some tough decisions were also taking shape.

"I guess I'll have to wait for the universal buy," ruefully said Art Knoles of tiny KSYS, Medford, Ore. Knoles had only $65,000 for his entire programming schedule. In the retirement area of Medford, *Over Easy* was an important choice, as were *MacNeil/Lehrer* and the public-affairs programs. The minority shows were less important. "I don't see the money for new shows," he said.

Natan Katzman of KQED, San Francisco, outlined the difficult decision-making process that his station had to go through. "Like everyone here, I can't buy everything I want or find attractive," the KQED program manager said. "Last fiscal year, we spent $360,000 for SPC programming. This year we built in a 20-percent increase for inflation, so we are up to about $430,000.

"These economics mean that the really hard decisions are already made for me. I look down the list of what's offered here and say, 'Which programs have I had in the past that I absolutely must have again?' *Wall Street Week*, *MacNeil/Lehrer*, *Sesame*, *Nova*—there are perhaps 15 that are absolute musts for our audience. After I add up their cost, how much am I likely to have left? Very little.

"You cannot expect a station to give up *Bill Moyers' Journal* or *Great Performances* for another untested program simply because that program is new."

"I would love to have *The Paper Chase*, but it's too expensive for me. If I take it, that means I can't have *In Performance at Wolf Trap*—we got it free last year; it was underwritten by another funding source. It's questionable for us this year at the projected level of support. *American Short Story* is doubtful.

"In the opening ballots, we will probably support some of these shows to see how much support coalesces around them. With any stroke of fortune, some other shows may drop out and release money that will make these affordable. In the end we simply have to go for the programs that get the highest percentage of support, because that lowers the cost to us."

As Katzman explained, "The costs of public television are arranged in a kind of continuum. The least expensive programming is by acquisition or syndication of programs already produced. Next is sharing the costs of production, as the SPC does—that's about three times as expensive as acquisition. The most expensive is local production, about 20 times as high as shared production, 60 times as high as acquisition. In these times, the incentive obviously is to go for acquisition or syndication."

In the succeeding weeks of balloting, it was obvious that Katzman spoke for most of the stations. The first vote following the Fair quickly reduced the field from 77 shows to 53, including the 17 minority offerings. The casualties included *Cross Country*, *Tale-Spinners*, *Watching TV*, *Hollywood: The Way It Was*, *The Advocates*. Some programs, like *This Old House*, a WGBH series about home repair, received funding from outside sources and withdrew. Still others, like the holdover *World*, whose funding request had jumped 470 percent over last year, saw the handwriting on the wall and quit.

As the programs reached 80-percent support in the balloting, they were declared purchased. The 10 front-runners quickly reached that goal and were soon joined by *Austin City Limits*, *Evening at Pops*, *Meeting of Minds*, *Bill Moyers' Journal*, *Soundstage*, *Dick Cavett*, *Crockett's Victory Garden*, *Firing Line* and *Here's to Your Health*. Four minority programs, *The Next Page*, *I Remember Harlem*, *American Perspective: Another View* and *The World of My America* were chosen. Later balloting added the "Specials Fund," "Daily Exchange Feed" (a pool of news segments gleaned from local stations and abroad), "The 1980 Drum Corps International Championships," and *Soccer Made in Germany*. In the entire list, there was only one new nonminority program: *Matinee at the Bijou*, a montage of serials and cartoons from the Thirties and Forties. One reason may have been that its cost was only $83,000—"probably the most programming for the dollar in the SPC," according to John Lorenz of PBS's programming department.

The voting also seemed to signal the demise of SPC funding for some staples of public television. *Evening at Symphony* could not muster adequate support. *In Performance at Wolf Trap* and *American Short Story*, as Katzman foresaw, lost out. So did *Music of Man*, *The Paper Chase* and *The Golden Age of Television*.

Reviewing his own votes, Katzman pointed out that he had committed

www.americanradiohistory.com

Video from the film folks? You betcha!

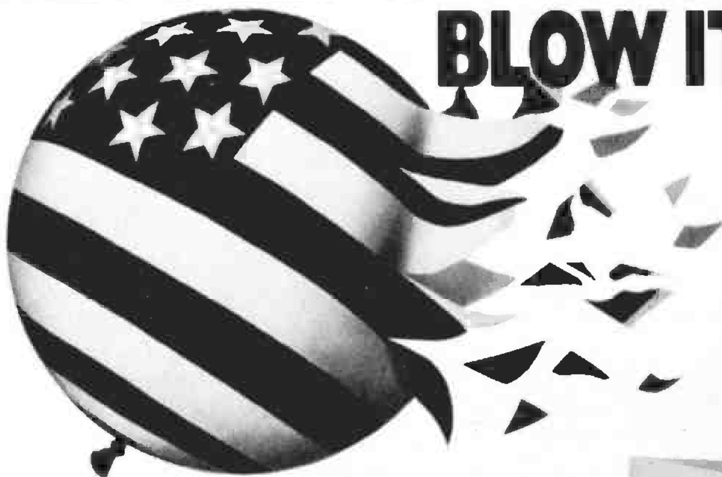
If you thought Blackhawk Films was just films, then you should get to know us better. Especially if you own a video-cassette player.

That's right, Blackhawk offers a wide selection of classic and contemporary home entertainment programs for your videocassette player, in addition to our well-known film offering. (No "X", of course.)

To find out about the whole selection, write for our video catalog; Just send a dollar to the address below. If you're equipped for films, write for our film catalog. Also a dollar.

Blackhawk
Dept. 5145 • 1235 W. 5th St.
Davenport, Iowa 52808

DON'T LET INFLATION BLOW IT!



Use your "Dollars and Sense."
Write for this free booklet,
Pueblo, Colorado
81009.

A public service message of The Advertising Council and The U.S. Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Labor and Treasury. Presented by this magazine.

$508,000 without even purchasing some of the front-runners, and could only count on the universal buy to bring his purchases closer to KQED's $430,000 budget. He had voted for *Wolf Trap* and *The Paper Chase* on the early rounds, and stayed with *World* until it died after the fourth ballot. He had overcommitted his minority-program budget by voting for *I Remember Harlem, Next Page* and *American Perspective*. "This is not a comfortable position," he said.

In the end, all but four of the 28 purchased programs—*Soccer Made in Germany, The World of My America, American Perspective: Another View* and the "Daily Exchange Feed"—were included in the universal buy. Roughly 130 stations, including Katzman's KQED, opted for the package. "Not very different," says John Lorenz, "from last year."

Was the whole effort worthwhile? Or was it just an exercise in futility? It depends on whom you ask.

"I have to say, I think it was a bit of a fraud," says *Golden Age* producer Sonny Fox, without real rancor. "They invite us up here to spend five days making presentations when there is very little chance they can purchase the shows, however good they may be."

Katzman says that some new mechanisms for developing PBS material must be devised. "The question is not 'How can you get new programs for PBS?' but, 'How can you encourage the replacement of existing staples?' You cannot expect a station to give up *Bill Moyers' Journal* or *Great Performances* for another untested program simply because that program is new."

Lorenz also was disappointed by the outcome but sees it in a different perspective. "Some programs that didn't get bought at least aroused interest," he says. "The SPC is not their only opportunity. They may be picked up next year, or they may obtain underwriting. Regional networks or groups of stations within PBS may pick them up. The Fair isn't just a commercial mechanism, it's a festival of ideas. It gives the stations exposure to creative programming, and vice versa.

"You can be sure," Lorenz adds, "that we'll be looking at this mechanism and others closely over the summer. We might use another mechanism next year, or modify this one. But I hope the results won't be so predictable."

So do the delegates who came shopping for new programming and settled for staples. ■

www.americanradiohistory.com

America's Biggest Discount Warehouse

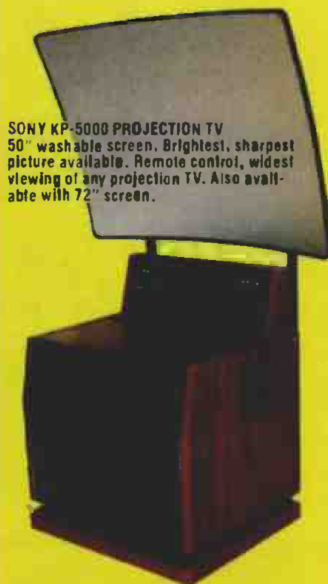
VIDEO WHOLESALERS INC.

GUARANTEED LOWEST PRICES ON ALL MAJOR BRANDS!

Full Manufacturers Warranty!

SAVE UP TO 40%

JVC HR-6700 U VIDSTAR VIDEO RECORDER
2 hr/6 hr, 7 day/6 program, electronic tuning, slo-mo/still frame, speed play.



SONY KP-5000 PROJECTION TV
50" washable screen. Brightest, sharpest picture available. Remote control, widest viewing of any projection TV. Also available with 72" screen.

- Sony • JVC • Panasonic
- RCA • Quasar • Atari • Bally
- Mitsubishi • Warner Bros
- Fuji • Paramount • Maxell
- TDK • Toshiba • Sanyo
- Hitachi • Zenith • Sharp
- Magnetic Video • Akai

QUASAR VH-5200
RQ PORTABLE VIDEO RECORDER
AND VA-515 RQ TUNER-TIMER *(OPTIONAL)*.
Battery or AC, switching. Records up to 6 hours. Tuner-timer has electronic tuning, remote pause and channel changer.

PANASONIC PK-600 Deluxe Color Camera New, Lightweight with 6-1 Power Zoom Lens, Auto-electric iris, Telescopic Mike

MAGNAVOX VIDEODISC PLAYER
Plays TV shows and movies from records with a laser beam. Choose from hundreds of titles. Slow or fast motion, frame-by-frame, reverse, fast forward.

RCA VDT-625 Video Recorder.
7-day program. Records up to 6 hrs. Slo-mo, freeze-frame, speed play.

- Orders shipped in Factory-Sealed cartons within 24 hours
- Multi-Million dollar inventory

FREE PRICE QUOTATIONS AND INFORMATION

Phone Toll-Free
800-327-0337
In Florida (305) 754-2131

Dealer Inquiries Welcome

VIDEO WHOLESALERS, INC. 39 N. E. 71st Street, Miami, Florida 33138
VISA, MASTER CHARGE, AMERICAN EXPRESS and DINERS CLUB cards honored via Phone or Mail

NAME ______
ADDRESS ______
CITY ______ STATE ______ ZIP ______
VISA/MASTER CHARGE/AMERICAN EXPRESS/DINERS CLUB NUMBER ______ Exp. Date ______

CALL OR WRITE FOR THE LOWEST PRICES ANYWHERE!

☐ I would like to become a dealer. ☐ Send information on opening a Video store.
☐ Send latest price list. ☐ Enclosed is $1 for latest Video catalog.

www.americanradiohistory.com

Remember when the Dog Went Cross-eyed Watching "Sheep-Ranching in Australia" on the Old DuMont That We Put in the Fireplace?

By IVAN BERGER

"A *16-inch* TV set in that little room? You'll go blind!" our friends warned us, back in 1950. But we ignored them. A 16-inch set in our living room would be big enough to view from the far reaches of our adjacent dining room. That way, we wouldn't have to miss any of our one local station's offerings while we wasted time on meals. And besides, 16-inch sets had only just come down to a price we could afford: 250 good 1950 dollars.

It may not sound like it, but we were already TV sophisticates by the standards of that less sophisticated time. This, after all, was our second set—and most of our neighbors didn't have their first one yet.

It's probably hard for people born and bred with TV truly to appreciate the myths, the magic—the madness—that surrounded early developments in home video. For every advance, there was "advice"—from unimpeachable sources—on how to get the best out of or, alternately, how to avoid the worst of whatever was being hailed. There were also outrageous prices and programs, heavy snowdrifts on the screen, remote-control devices bigger than many of today's sets. In short, it was a dizzy, delightful time to be watching TV—and as easy to recapture in the mind's eye as if it were all on videocassette....

Our first TV had been a 1948 Zenith—only a 12-inch set, but more nearly deserving of the description "big-screen model" than other 12-inchers. That's because Zenith had its whole round tube exposed, like an enormous porthole on the magical, black-and-white world of broadcasting. If you wanted the same picture as on other 12-inch sets, you flipped a switch, and *voilà*! The top and bottom segments of the tube went dark, leaving the middle layer of the screen aglow with the picture whose shape spelled "TV" to us in those days: a nominal rectangle with its corners cut off by the tube's round sides, like the outline of a squat barrel.

But flick that switch the other way, and the picture would stretch up and down to fill the entire surface. That cropped away still more of the picture's corners, of course. And the vertical stretch, while it made Dagmar look svelte, turned the already slender Ronald Reagan into an animated pipe cleaner. But you were seeing *every inch* of picture tube you'd paid for—no other set could make that statement.

Ivan Berger *writes about electronics and photography for numerous publications.*

www.americanradiohistory.com

No matter how you stretched it, that 12-inch porthole wasn't enough to arouse our friends' fears for our eyesight. But 16 inches! Those four extra inches somehow set off a whole series of stories about "television eyes" in magazines ranging from Today's Health to Time. ("A story has been going the rounds about a dog that went cross-eyed from looking at television," reported Science Illustrated, skeptically.)

Some eye doctors felt that steady gazing at a tiny, flickering image would cause eye fatigue, if not actual damage. But most came to the conclusion expressed by Dr. Franklin M. Foote, executive director of the National Society for the Prevention of Blindness, in the June 1949 issue of Science Digest: "People are complaining that watching television makes their eyes hurt, or gives them headaches," Foote wrote. "Some people ask whether harmful radiations come to their eyes from the screen. But from all the facts we can learn, there's nothing to either idea."

Later that same year, psychologist James F. Bender made 12 viewing suggestions to Science Digest readers. Among them: *"Palm.* This means covering each eye with a palm of a hand for a few seconds. Keep the eyes open. Between programs is a good time." (This exercise had the added dividend of helping you avoid commercials.) He also advised viewers to yawn so as to redistribute the blood supply and relax important muscles. ("The room is dark and the viewers interested enough in the program so that your yawns won't be obtrusive, particularly if they're silent.") On the other hand, Bender also cautioned readers, "Don't look at dull programs...boredom actually brings on fatigue"—which seemed to conflict with his advice about yawning.

Magazine after magazine ran recommendations on how far from your set you should sit, with the best and simplest given in Today's Health for April '51 (the smoke was beginning to clear by then): if you could see the individual picture lines, you were too close.

And Science Illustrated, devoting five pages to "How to Look at Television," earnestly suggested maximum screen sizes: "Don't buy a set that is too large for your living room. A set with a 16-inch tube is fine for a normal room, but a projection set with a newspaper-size screen needs a really long living room."

Now, projection sets in 1950 were nothing like today's models, with their 5-foot color screens. The original projection sets were smaller, for one thing: 300 square inches seemed to be the maximum—barely larger than today's largest, 26-inch, direct-view tubes. They were also, of course, black-and-white. And they were mostly *rear*-projection units, with translucent screens that folded down when not in use.

The big pictures were exciting but did produce certain problems, as was explained in Saturday Review: "Theoretically, 'projected television' is desirable, because there is less glare in the picture, and the image is larger. However, there is also a loss of definition and the contrast is diminished to the extent that viewing in the daylight is impracticable. This calls for dimming of lights or drawing of shades, both unnecessary with direct-view television under ordinary conditions."

So much for size and viewing conditions. Now the real problem came into focus: where precisely to place the new member of the family so you could watch it easily, without making the set so prominent that, when it was off, you felt it was watching you.

Set-makers helped by designing most consoles (and even a few tabletop models) with screens that could be concealed when not in use; projection screens, as noted, folded down, while direct-view sets had paneled doors to cover their tubes discreetly. Cabinets were carefully veneered in styles and finishes to match any period decor. (Mahogany outsold the trendy new "blonde" or "limed oak" finishes.)

Decorating magazines delved into the subject with relish, one with a breathless suggestion for placing the set in the fireplace—already a furniture focal point, it noted. (Though the magazines didn't say so, new set-owners—which included all set-owners, those days—would have little time to chop wood, anyway, till the fascination wore off.) Other magazines recommended that the set be placed in the dining room, where the chairs were movable and the table handy "for refreshments and ashtrays." Designer William Pahlmann got plentiful publicity for his movable living-room furniture; on rubber wheels, the furniture could be reoriented for televiewing or for normal life.

But there was more to set placement than the mere utilitarian business of placing it where it could be seen. Decorating magazines discussed at length how to make your new TV dominate the room (set it against a simple, contrasting background) or how to make it inconspicuous (put it on a bookshelf wall with a matching finish). On the whole, the emphasis was on the inconspicuous: Popular Science proposed sinking the set flush into a wall where its back could project into a closet (was the closet shortage less acute in those days?). House Beautiful took the idea a step further, suggesting that the set be covered with a mirror through which the TV picture could be seen—a suggestion recently revived by one New York designer.

Remote controls helped with such concealed or built-in installations, but again, the state of the art was a large chassis, connected by thick cables to the TV set. The Museum of Modern Art showed off one such system, a Philco designed by the noted Marcel Breuer. Its remote control, built into a coffee table, was about the size and style of today's small hi-fi receivers.

The fact is that hiding your set took real self-restraint—after all, you'd paid a bundle for it. Direct or projected, a TV set cost dearly, especially since the large-screen sets all came in fancy cabinets, complete with AM/FM radios and phonographs. In 1948, for example, you could buy a DuMont 20-inch console ("the largest direct-view size") with phonograph, AM/FM and shortwave, for $2495. That's about what you'd spend today for a color projection set with a 5- or 6-foot screen; back in 1948, though, it was about "as much as a Cadillac," according to Science Illustrated. If that wasn't rich enough for your blood, you could get an RCA projection set with a 15-by-20-inch screen in a more or less Chippendale breakfront cabinet by Baker Furniture, for $4100.

More modestly priced sets were available, of course, all the way down to a $99.50 3-inch Pilot. But the Pilot was basically a one-man set; the more people who watched, the bigger the screen needed, and the higher the cost. Popular Science suggested this rule of thumb for TV pricing: "To decide how big a screen you want, count your money (in $100 bills) on one hand, and your heads on the other. A good rule of thumb is $100 a head. That's the price of a pass to your private theater."

Small as the screen was on those 3-inch sets, the cabinet was still as large as the largest table radio—which it very much resembled, with big speaker grilles flanking the tiny tube. Other small-screen sets were styled similarly, but the one I remember best was my grandmother's Philco—it was the first TV set I ever watched. *continued*

www.americanradiohistory.com

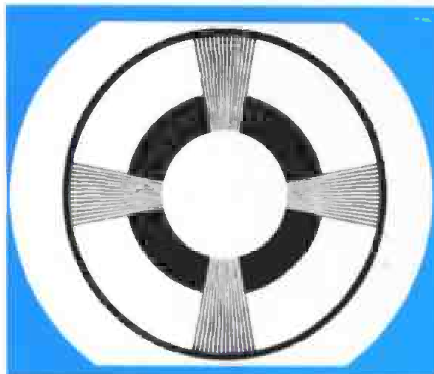
In the earliest days, the medium was very much the message

Those big speaker grilles weren't just for show, either. Sound was more important to early set-makers than it is today. And well it should have been: TV engineers, then all veterans of radio, still took pride in the sound they broadcast (an attitude that's finally beginning to come back). Most shows were still live and local, with no intercity cables or videotape to limit their sound quality. And good music—even classical music—would soon be almost as common on the commercial networks as it is on PBS today.

Remember, early consoles were almost all TV/radio/phonograph combinations, so their sound sections were designed for musical reproduction. And even some noncombination sets had musical facilities. DuMont spurned the usual channel selector and separate fine-tuning control for a single knob that tuned continuously, like a radio dial, through all 12 channels *and* through the FM broadcast band (between channels 6 and 7). And RCA's TV-only consoles all had rear-panel jacks for plug-in turntables, a very low-cost route to decent sound.

But the day of the combination set was fading. As programs became plentiful, the demand for lower cost sets increased. Understandably, few people wanted to link their entire home-entertainment system with their TV set if that set was about to become obsolete—an ever present possibility. The FCC was on the verge of authorizing new, higher frequency (UHF) channels (they stayed on the verge for about three years), which would give "practically every town of over 5000 population...its own local...channel," according to Allen B. DuMont.

Color was in the works too. FCC hearings on the subject had begun in 1949, nine years after the first color experiments, and in 1950 the FCC approved Columbia's color system, to which black-and-white sets could be adapted, *had* to be adapted, really—otherwise, they'd be unable to pick up color transmissions properly, even in black-and-white. Since color-picture tubes didn't exist yet, rotating color-filter wheels were needed to tint the black-and-white images. The results could be far truer and more vivid than anything color-picture tubes would match for years. But the wheels were big—a 21-inch color



tube would have required a 6.5-foot color disk—and noisy; that 6.5-foot wheel would require a 15-horsepower motor, said DuMont (probably exaggerating), and even smaller wheels made faint but audible shushes, whirs and hums.

Then, in 1953, the color wheels stopped rolling. The FCC had withdrawn its approval of the color-wheel system, and experimental transmissions of today's NTSC color system had begun in Philadelphia, New York, Syracuse and Chicago. You couldn't readily adapt black-and-white sets to show true color but any set could show the color broadcasts in black-and-white, with no adapter needed.

So, there we were, watching color broadcasts in black-and-white; watching—by the mid-Fifties—sets that finally could resist ignition interference from passing cars(!); watching sets that finally were sensitive enough to pick up weaker signals with less "snow" (but that still drifted from time to time, requiring at least occasional fine tuning); watching, watching—what?

Well, not much—at first. In the early Forties, the medium was very much the message. "At that time," wrote critic Irving Kolodin in a Saturday Review of the late Forties, "an *important* program was one in which an expert in finger-shadows showed how to make a donkey's head on a wall. Nobody can contradict [this]...for the evidence has vanished"—and because not too many folks would be in a position to do so, anyway: the 975,000 sets made during 1948 were more than four fifths of the country's existing total.

Then something happened that caused sales to really boom. TV receivers and broadcast equipment had finally become "geared to a nationwide standard so that you can use the same set in New York as you do in Los Angeles, without local complications," cheered House and Garden.

Still, between New York and Los Angeles, there were many places where you couldn't use a set at all. There were only 50 or 60 stations in the U.S. at the start of 1949 (some states had none at all)—up from a mere 17 the year before. "This month," reported Science Illustrated in January 1949, "a coaxial cable is scheduled to open, linking Philadelphia to Cleveland, and connecting the West Coast Network with the Middle West: Now people as far west as St. Louis will be able to see programs telecast in New York."

Even in 1953 there was only one microwave circuit to the West Coast, so Californians could only see one network show at a time. (Most shows originated in New York, though a few came from Chicago.) Small as the networks were in the late Forties, there were more of them, at least in theory—not just ABC, CBS and NBC, but the DuMont and Mutual networks as well. Mutual was the theoretical one, its TV "network" consisting of one TV station in upstate New York. Stations that monopolized the local markets (as most stations did) sometimes carried programs of several networks, giving viewers the best of everything.

The "best," according to Kolodin, wasn't anything to write home about even by 1948, despite such highlights as the Davis Cup, the Louis-Walcott fight and several political conventions (starting in 1940). "In the absence of 'live' entertainment from the Acropolis, it has been the custom of television stations," the critic noted, "to dispense either amateur talent—which is worse, even, to look at than to hear—or antiquated films ('Sheep-Ranching in Australia' is a favorite of mine) or hopeful importations from radio.

"An opinion seems to prevail that all televiewers are sporting characters in checked suits, checked vests and checked ties, who have also checked their brains before sitting down...not often has an infant industry won so much respect for prowess on the basis of so little accomplishment....I have

continued on page 95

www.americanradiohistory.com

Introducing... **PLATINUM** MAGAZINE

a Sophisticated step above Playboy and Penthouse

PLATINUM MAGAZINE. *A sophisticated magazine not sold on any newsstand, but published* **EXCLUSIVELY** *for Platinum Club Members. The first edition, a collector's copy, includes the finest fiction, editorials, satire, profiles, opinions, plus complete and accurate coverage of travel, fashion and reviews on cinema and literature. The first edition of* PLATINUM*, in its full color "book bound" issue, will be mailed* FREE *to Platinum Club Members. Reserve your copy now, a collector's item of intrinsic value.*

When you become a Platinum Club Charter Member, you will receive the following international discount package: (1) Greatly reduced rates with major hotels, (2) Discounts with major car rental agencies, (3) Discounts on new American and European automobiles (many cars as low as $75.00 over invoice) which, in many cases represents thousands of dollars in savings, (4) Discounts on a variety of selected merchandise that cannot be purchased in any retail store, but manufactured exclusively for Platinum Club Members.

And by joining now, you will receive free: (1) Your annual membership card, (2) Three additional "Foxy Lady" cards for your female friends, (3) A full color 24 X 36 inch portrait of Platinum's "Fox Of The Year", (4) Admittance to affiliated Platinum Clubs, (5) A copy of the connoisseur magazine, THE ROBB REPORT, for people who enjoy the finer things in life, (6) An invitation to Platinum's annual Fort Lauderdale, Florida convention, where you will enjoy 5 days of fun, entertainment and yachting activities, (7) The first edition of PLATINUM MAGAZINE, *a true collector's item (retail price - $15.00).*

TO ORDER YOUR ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP: *Fill out this form and mail with $25.00, check or charge (any major credit card), to Platinum, P. O. Box 720317, Atlanta, Georgia 30328. Your card is your passport. The activities, discounts, and admittance into affiliated Platinum Clubs is included in this membership fee.*

GUARANTEE: By becoming a charter member now, you will have no increase in annual membership dues next year.

PLATINUM INTERNATIONAL
P.O. BOX 720317 KC
ATLANTA, GA. 30328
(404) 256-9470

Order your Platinum "Key Card" today, by mailing $25.00 to the address below or charge your membership to VISA, Master Charge, Diners Club or American Express, by giving both your credit card number and expiration date. Your membership card, "Foxy Lady" cards (3), discounts and "Fox Of The Year" portrait will be mailed upon receipt.

*The magazine will be mailed on the anniversary date of your membership.

Name: ______ (First) (Middle) (Last)

Address: ______ (Street) Apt. #1

(City) ______ (State) ______ (Zip) ______

Telephone # ______ (Home) (Office)

Cash ☐ Check ☐ Credit Card ☐

*If credit card. Name of card ______

Account # ______

Exp. date ______

Signature ______

Demographic Information

Age ______ Male ☐ Female ☐

Occupation ______

Salary Range $20-30,000 ☐ $30,000 up ☐

Platinum, P.O. Box 720317, Atlanta, GA 30328 Dept. KC

www.americanradiohistory.com

Faces

By JOHN SCHULIAN

In the sweet used-to-be of baseball, the New York Mets employed a catcher named Choo-Choo Coleman, who had as much trouble flagging down names as he did fast balls and cabs. So it was that infielder Charlie Neal strolled into training camp one spring and asked if Choo-Choo remembered him. The year before, you see, they had been roommates.

Choo-Choo studied Neal's face the way an archaeologist might study a Mayan ruin, then lit up with a smile. "Sure, you're number four."

In Choo-Choo's earnest naiveté is a message, and it has nothing to do with what was stitched on the back of Neal's uniform. Rather, it deals with that part of the anatomy most frequently taken for granted in sports—the face. Just as it helped Choo-Choo decode the mysteries of everyday life, the face can help the crowd around the TV set understand that there is more to the games our heroes play than mere scores.

There are stories written in scars and worry lines, and punctuated by warts and creases, steely gazes and pursed lips: stories that Rembrandt would paint, were he around to choose between them and the double play.

How many times in a 162-game baseball season, for instance, will the Boston Red Sox, muscular as they are, match the aesthetics of their leader, Don Zimmer? Oh, he is anything but a pretty boy; indeed, left-hander Bill Lee, once an improper Bostonian, was moved to call him "The Gerbil." But Zimmer is hardly that, nor should he be compared to a chipmunk preparing for winter, no matter how much tobacco he stuffs in his puffy cheeks. Let the TV cameras close in on him and display a chin that never stops daring the world to hit it and eyes that have seen too much already.

When he was a kid shortstop dreaming of deposing the Brooklyn Dodgers' Pee Wee Reese, a runaway fast ball crushed Zimmer's left cheekbone and made every trip to the plate thereafter a test of heart. In Boston, as a manager, he has borne burdens of another sort. The heaviest, of course, was the pop-fly home run by the Yankees' Bucky Dent that stole the 1978 American League East championship from the Red Sox. Zimmer struggled to keep the tears from his eyes afterward, and, in the process, the truth came tumbling out: a face like his is not created overnight.

It may be difficult to accept that premise when locker rooms everywhere overflow with youth. Consider what Seven-Up did once it decided to bank a recent advertising campaign on the sweat-socks brigade. It didn't seek out a battered old prizefighter; it embraced Earvin (Magic) Johnson, the Los Angeles Laker rookie with the 10,000-watt smile. Fine. But marketable isn't a synonym for interesting.

If it were, Wes Unseld's countenance would be filling our television screens at commercial time. A glance at Unseld, the Washington Bullets' mountainous center, can tell you pro basketball is cursed by a season that is too long and hotel beds that are too short. His stoic mien joins with his vaguely Oriental eyes to suggest a cross between a Buddha and a Zulu warrior. It is an image he does not try to dispel.

"Daddy," his children asked one day as he hefted his gym bag and headed for the door, "are you going to play?"

"No," he replied, "I'm going to work."

The record book suggests that Red Auerbach, the general manager and brains behind the Boston Celtics, hasn't had much time for play, either. With one National Basketball Association dynasty already to his credit, Auerbach is working on another with the guile and passion reflected in his broad mug. There is always a cigar planted in the corner of his mouth, always a frown fighting a smile for control of his face. The frown usually wins. He doesn't want the competition thinking he's getting soft, you know.

One hundred and eighty degrees away is Bill Veeck, the owner of the White Sox and resident Barnum of Chicago, a man committed to the proposition that the game is only part of the show. Nobody ever had a face that fit him so well. It is a woodcarver's delight—a splendid confusion of wrinkles, folds and fuzz, framed by great floppy ears and brought to life by dancing eyes.

To see those eyes when Veeck is happy is to understand why he used a midget as a pinch hitter and gave out live squid as a door prize. To see his eyes in times of duress is to understand how he came back after losing a leg as a World War II Marine and how he has endured the indignities heaped upon mavericks, no matter how lovable. That's the only way anyone will ever know just how tough Veeck is.

Funny, tough isn't a baseball kind of word even though Billy Martin, field marshal of the Oakland A's, has made a second career of punching pitchers and marshmallow salesmen. One look at his pinched face and you know he is merely a 52-year-old Mickey Mouse passing himself off as a Dead End Kid.

If it is any consolation to him, the National Football League is populated by mastodons who have much the same problem, and they're the ones who really are supposed to be tough. But ever since Dick Butkus and Ray Nitschke checked out, there hasn't been anybody who could melt his face mask with a snarl.

Still, it is not by default that Vito Antuofermo, the once and future middleweight champ, wears the one classically tough face in sports. He earned it. He bears the residue of 300 hasty stitches as a badge of honor, shrugs off his steamrollered nose as the price of a ticket out of poverty. And yet Antuofermo can't escape the cracks about what a good-looking kid he used to be. "Well," he says, "at least my wife loves me." The lady's taste is impeccable. ■

www.americanradiohistory.com

WHAT'S HAPPENING

continued from page 8

seph, wrote to The Times charging that "the BBC's choice of lecturer and intellectual guide through the corridors of economic history is totally unsuitable... it has given Galbraith perhaps the largest audience known to any economist in history."

But Sir Keith's fears of epidemic conversions to liberalism must have been groundless. The government in which he is now Secretary of State for Industry was elected last year on a platform that was pure Friedman.

Twist again. Associated Television (ATV), one of Britain's commercial programming companies, has given Oliver Twist much more than Charles Dickens ever asked for him. *The Further Adventures of Oliver Twist* is an ingenious 13-part miniseries tracing Oliver's adventures from the point where Dickens left off.

Author David Butler, a Dickens fanatic (who also wrote *Edward the King*), assumes that Oliver meets up again with the Artful Dodger and that Fagin escapes the gallows and prison.

"People were either outraged or highly amused when they heard what I was up to," says Butler. In fact, these further adventures are not the literary sacrilege they seem, as Dickens himself wrote five pages at the end of "Oliver Twist" speculating on the fate of his characters.

The success of this sequel will no doubt lead to other Dickens follow-ups on TV. What about Sydney Carton escaping the guillotine in *A Tale of Four Cities*?

Ten-hour tape? Later this year, Philips will launch a VCR system that will be the first in the world to offer a flip-over cassette, permitting eight hours of continuous recording—and eventually 10 hours when further improvements are made to the cassette.

The Philips 2000 system has been developed by the Dutch company and its German subsidiary, Grundig.

The cassette has two half-inch tracks and, like its audio counterpart pioneered by Philips, it is reversible. Picture quality, say the makers, is not adversely affected by the narrow bandwidth, and the risk of interference between one track and another—"cross talk"—has been eliminated by the use of self-correcting recording and playback heads.

The system can be preprogrammed to make up to five different recordings in 16 days—a longer preprogramming period than is offered by any other current model.

Philips says that the next step for the 2000 will be an autochanger that will reverse the cassette automatically, replacing the manual operation. This is expected in 1982.

For American video enthusiasts, "2000" may be a hint of a delivery date, as Philips has announced no immediate plans to market the machine in the U.S.A.

TOKYO

John Fujii reporting

Evident guilt? Can lawyers submit television news reports as evidence in criminal trials? Yes, says one Japanese judge. Presiding over the trial of two radicals charged with the destruction of the control tower at Tokyo's new international airport in March 1978, he was asked by defense counsel to disallow videotapes from five television networks that reported on the airport takeover.

News on tape, argued the defense, was not objective as it represented the selective views of the cameraman, further edited by the network news staff. This made it "hearsay" evidence.

Television stations also objected. Use of their material in the courtroom was a violation of press freedom, they said; if the practice were tolerated, it would inhibit news gathering.

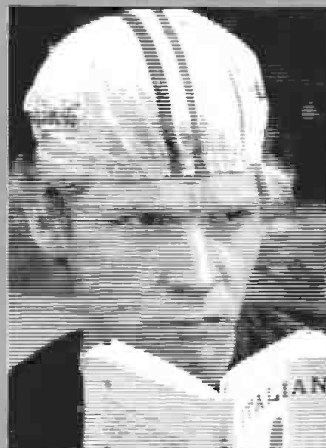
The prosecution took a different line: anything that had already been broadcast was in the public domain, and it was no more sacrosanct than reports in the print medium. The judge agreed.

Summitry. An eight-man crew from Nippon TV accompanied the team of Japanese mountaineers who headed for the summit of Everest earlier this year. It was the first foreign climb of Everest from the Chinese side since 1938. The videotaped record of the ascent will be shown here next month.

VIDEOCASSETTES

NEW RELEASES

MOVIES



Dennis Christopher

Breaking Away (1979)—Heartwarming story of friendship and bicycle racing in a small college town. Dennis Christopher, Barbara Barrie. (Magnetic Video; $54.95) (PG)

The Changeling (1980)—George C. Scott and Trish Van Devere rent a house with an attic full of psychic apparitions. (Time Life Video Club; $44.95) (R)

Go Tell the Spartans (1978)—Realistic war story about the early U.S. involvement in Vietnam. Burt Lancaster, Marc Singer, Craig Wasson. (Time Life Video Club; $39.95) (R)

The Harder They Fall (1956)—Humphrey Bogart stars in this hard-boiled drama about a man who revolts against the corruption of big-time boxing; based on Budd Schulberg's novel. With Rod Steiger, Jan Sterling, Max Baer. (Time Life Video Club; $44.95)

Malicious (1973)—Sexy Italian comedy with Laura Antonelli, Turi Ferro and Alessandro Momo. (Paramount Pictures; $59.95, $9.95 rental) (R)

Miss Piggy

The Muppet Movie (1979)—Kermit the Frog and Miss Piggy sing and dance their way to Hollywood fame, aided by other Muppets and some real people, including Mel Brooks, Steve Martin, Elliott Gould, Madeline Kahn and Orson Welles. (Magnetic Video Corp.; $54.95) (G)

continued

www.americanradiohistory.com

Sally Field

Norma Rae (1979)—Sally Field stars as a Southern textile-mill worker who's persuaded by union organizer Ron Leibman to lead the struggle against management. (Magnetic Video Corp.; $54.95) (PG)

Players (1979)—A young tennis hustler (Dean Paul Martin) falls for an older woman (Ali MacGraw) kept by a wealthy man (Maximilian Schell). (Paramount Pictures; $59.95, $9.95 rental) (PG)

Prophecy (1979)—Sci-fi yarn about a horrible creature stalking the wilds of Maine. Talia Shire, Robert Foxworth, (Paramount Pictures; $59.95, $9.95 rental) (PG)

Sophia Loren

A Special Day (1977)—Sophia Loren and Marcello Mastroianni star in this study of two lonely strangers who share a brief encounter during a Fascist celebration in 1938. With John Vernon, Françoise Berd. (Time Life Video Club; $39.95) (PG)

John Wayne

Stagecoach (1939)—John Ford's classic Western stars John Wayne as a man on a dangerous journey through Indian country. With Claire Trevor, Thomas Mitchell. (Time Life Video Club; $39.95)

Stolen Kisses (1968)—François Truffaut's comic tale about an inept but likable youth, uncertain in his romantic and vocational skills. With Jean-Pierre Leaud, Delphine Seyrig, Claude Jade. (Time Life Video Club; $39.95)

To Be or Not to Be (1942)—Comedy about a troupe of Polish actors who plot against the Nazis when their country is invaded. Jack Benny, Carole Lombard, Robert Stack, Lionel Atwill. (Time Life Video Club; $39.95)

SPECIALS

Einstein—One-hour biography of the scientist, produced by WGBH-TV, for the PBS series *Nova*. (Time Life Video Club; $29.95)

Here It Is, Burlesque—Stars Ann Corio. (Time Life Video Club; $34.95)

Each of the following cassettes, released by Paramount Pictures at $54.95 apiece, contains two episodes of the TV series *Star Trek*, starring William Shatner, Leonard Nimoy, James Doohan, Walter Koenig, George Takei, Nichelle Nichols and DeForest Kelley.

Amok Time and Journey to Babel—In the first episode, Spock, obeying an ancient Vulcan marriage rite, engages in mortal combat with his fiancée's chosen champion: Captain Kirk. In "Journey," Jane Wyatt stars as Spock's human mother, who is among the dignitaries traveling to an interplanetary conference on a voyage plagued by medical emergencies and murder.

Balance of Terror and City on the Edge of Forever—In "Balance," the Enterprise faces an alien spaceship that is testing earth's defenses. In "City," a time portal leads Kirk, Spock and Dr. McCoy to the New York City of the 1930s, where their actions could affect the course of history.

Menagerie—A two-parter in which Spock defends himself against a charge of mutiny after he locks the Enterprise on a course toward a forbidden planet.

Mirror, Mirror and The Tholian Web—In "Mirror," Kirk and crew members try to reverse the effects of a storm that has swept them into a savage universe. In "Web," Spock takes command when Kirk vanishes into a hostile region of space where matter disintegrates and men are seized by madness.

The Trouble with Tribbles and Let That Be Your Last Battlefield—The first episode features the troublesome tribbles: balls of purring fluff that feed on grain and are incredibly prolific. "Battlefield" blends psychology with sci-fi in a drama about two aliens who bring their millennium-long battle aboard the Enterprise.

Readers wishing to obtain more information from the distributors of the above-listed movies and specials may do so at these addresses: Magnetic Video Corp., 23434 Industrial Park Court, Farmington Hills, Mich. 48024; Paramount Home Video, 5451 Marathon St., Hollywood, Cal. 90038; Time Life Video Club, Time Life Building, New York, N.Y. 10020.

Some movie descriptions courtesy of TV Guide magazine. Ratings (G, PG, R and X) are those assigned by the Motion Picture Association of America for theatrical showings.

BOOKS

A listing of some of the recently published books dealing with television

Fantastic Television: A Pictorial History of Sci-Fi, the Unusual, and the Fantastic, by Gary Gerani, with Paul H. Schulman. (Harmony; $14.95 hard-cover, $6.95 paper) —A pictorial history of the science fiction/fantasy genre of TV shows, accompanied by descriptions of each episode.

The Pulse of Politics: Electing Presidents in the Media Age, by James David Barber. (Norton; $14.95) —A Duke University political scientist shows how the media have shaped, and sometimes distorted, the public's view of Presidential campaigns in the 20th century.

Television in America, by George Comstock. (Sage Publications, Inc.; $12.50 hard-cover, $5.95 paper) —An examination of television's effects on the values, socialization, awareness of public events, and leisure time of Americans by a Syracuse University professor.

Videotext: The Coming Revolution in Home/Office Infor-

www.americanradiohistory.com

mation Retrieval, edited by Efrem Sigel. (Knowledge Industry Publications, Inc.; $24.95) —An up-to-date report on the development of video display systems for textual information throughout the world.

NEW IN PAPERBACK—TV TIE-INS

Beulah Land and **Look Away, Beulah Land,** by Lonnie Coleman. (Dell; $2.50 each) —This two-part saga of a Southern plantation (the first volume of which is a reissue) is the basis of an upcoming NBC miniseries, *Beulah Land.*

Disraeli: Portrait of a Romantic, by David Butler. (Warner Books; $2.75) —A biography of the former British Prime Minister, by the writer of the PBS *Masterpiece Theatre* series "Disraeli."

The Dream Merchants, by Harold Robbins. (Pocket Books; $2.95) —Robbins' story about the birth of the motion-picture industry was issued when it was turned into a recent Operation Prime Time TV special.

Moviola, by Garson Kanin. (Pocket Books; $2.95) —A reprint of the novel filled with tales of Hollywood legends, which was the basis for the NBC miniseries of the same name.

A Rumor of War, by Philip Caputo. (Ballantine Books; $2.50) —This nonfiction book about Americans fighting in Vietnam was recently reissued to coincide with the CBS TV-movie.

Self-Portrait, by Gene Tierney, with Mickey Herskowitz. (Berkley Books; $2.75) —This autobiography of the movie actress is scheduled to be an ABC TV-movie starring Jaclyn Smith.

Star Trek—The Motion Picture: The Photostory, edited by Richard J. Anobile. (Pocket Books; $2.95) —A tie-in with the movie.

Walks Far Woman, by Colin Stuart. (Fawcett Books; $2.50) —A reissue of the saga of an Indian woman that is the basis for the coming NBC TV-movie, with Raquel Welch in the title role.

BEST SELLERS

This list of the Top 20 prerecorded videocassettes is based on sales figures from a survey of retail outlets around the country.

1. **Superman** (1978)—A superbudget film starring the special effects. (WCI Home Video; $65)

Bo Derek

2. **"10"** (1979)—Featuring the Eighties' first sex symbol, Bo Derek. (WCI Home Video; $65)
3. **Grease** (1978)—John Travolta and Olivia Newton-John in the film version of the hit musical. (Paramount Pictures; $59.95)
4. **Enter the Dragon** (1973)—Bruce Lee's last film. (WCI Home Video; $50)
5. **Halloween** (1978)—Violent thriller about a knife-wielding killer. (Media Home Entertainment; $59.95)
6. **Blazing Saddles** (1974)—Mel Brooks' parody of Hollywood Westerns. (WCI Home Video; $55)
7. **The Godfather** (1972)—Francis Ford Coppola's gangster epic about the rise and near-fall of the Corleones. (Paramount Pictures; $79.95)
8. **Saturday Night Fever** (1977)—John Travolta stars as a hip-wiggling dancing champ in a Brooklyn disco. (Paramount Pictures; $59.95)
9. **M*A*S*H** (1970)—Robert Altman's antiwar farce that was turned into a TV series. (Magnetic Video Corp.; $54.95)
10. **The Godfather, Part II** (1974)—More tales of the Corleone family. (Paramount Pictures; $79.95)
11. **Debbie Does Dallas** (1978) —Rated X. (VCX; $99.50)
12. **Heaven Can Wait** (1978)—Warren Beatty as a professional quarterback accidentally summoned to Heaven before his time. (Paramount Pictures; $59.95)
13. **The Exorcist** (1973)—From the best-selling novel about a child possessed by demons. (WCI Home Video; $60)
14. **The Wild Bunch** (1969)—Sam Peckinpah's violent tale of aging gunmen in 1913 Texas. (WCI Home Video; $60)
15. **Deep Throat** (1972)—Rated X. (Arrow Film & Video; $99.50)
16. **Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid** (1969)—Newman-Redford Western about two bank robbers on the run. (Magnetic Video Corp.; $54.95)
17. **Patton** (1970)—George C. Scott's Oscar-winning performance as Gen. George Patton. (Magnetic Video Corp.; $74.95)
18. **The In-Laws** (1979)—The wacky adventures of a staid dentist and his daughter's future father-in-law. (WCI Home Video; $60)
19. **Von Ryan's Express** (1965)—World War II escape story. (Magnetic Video Corp.; $54.95)
20. **The Deep** (1977)—Peter Benchley's tale of underwater treasure and adventure. (Columbia Pictures Home Entertainment; $59.95)

Retail outlets participating in our survey include:

Associated Video, Houston; Audio Center, Honolulu; Audio Video Craft, Inc., Los Angeles; Beta Home Entertainment Club, Las Vegas; Brenda's Movie House, Philadelphia; Cinema Concepts, Inc., Wethersfield, Conn.; Columbia Video Systems, Highland Park, Ill.; Concord Video Center, Stamford, Conn.; Conlon Service, Litchfield, Ill.; Cyclops Video, Sherman Oaks, Cal., Discotronics, Inc., Cranbury, N.J.; Future World Video, Scottsdale, Ariz.; Giffen Video, Staten Island, N.Y.; Godwin Radio Inc./Godwin Video Centers, Birmingham, Ala.; Henry's Camera, Los Angeles, Home Entertainment Emporium, Manhattan Beach, Cal., Jantzen Beach Magnavox Home Entertainment Center, Portland, Ore.; Kaleidoscope Video Shops, Oklahoma City; Media Associates, Mountain View, Cal.; Media Concepts, Inc., St. Petersburg, Fla.; Barney Miller's, Inc., Lexington, Ky., Modern Communications, St. Louis; Newbury TV and Appliances, New Bedford, Mass., Nichols Electronics, Wichita, Kan., Northern Lights Video, Pacific Grove, Cal.; Precision TV and Video, Bellwood, Ill.; Record Rendezvous, Cleveland; Recycle Light and Sound, Ann Arbor, Mich., Red Fox, Elizabethville, Pa., Select Film Library, New York, Self's Electronic Entertainment Center, Clovis, N.M., The Sheik Video Corp., Metairie, La.; Stansbury Stereo, Baltimore; Televideo Systems, Richmond, Va., Thomas Film Video, Royal Oak, Mich., Valas TV, Denver, Video Audio Electronics, Williamsport, Pa.; Video Cassette, Phoenix, Ariz.; Video Cassettes, Etc., Lubbock, Texas, The Video Connection, Toledo, Ohio, Video Corp of America, Edison, N.J., Video Dimensions, New York, Video Industries of America, Council Bluffs, Iowa. Video Library, Torrance, Cal.; The Video Library Company, Bala Cynwyd, Pa., Video Mart, San Bernardino, Cal., Video Services, Towson, Md., Videospace, Bellevue, Wash., Video Specialties, Houston, The Video Store, Gretna, La.; Videostop, Beverly Hills; Video 2000, San Diego; Visual Adventures, Cleveland.

www.americanradiohistory.com

PASSAGES

SENTENCED
Edith Bunker, to die next fall in the first new episode of *Archie Bunker's Place.*

WED

Saturday Night Live's ***Gilda Radner*** and rock musician G.E. Smith.

CHiPs costar ***Larry Wilcox*** to Hannie Strasser. The couple met on the set of *CHiPs,* where she was working as a sound technician.

APPOINTED
Kay Koplovitz, former executive director of UA-Columbia Satellite Services, Inc., as president of the USA Network, a new cable-TV network jointly owned by UA-Columbia Cablevision Inc. and Madison Square Garden.

DIVORCED
TV game-show producer ***Mark Goodson*** *(What's My Line?, Password, Family Feud)* and his wife, Suzanne, after seven years of marriage.

RESIGNED
Harry M. "Chip" Shooshan III, from his post as chief counsel and staff director of the House Subcommittee on Communications. Shooshan, for five years the principal adviser to the Subcommittee on communications issues, will stay in Washington to practice and teach law.

SIGNED
Sports reporter and author ***Dick Schaap,*** as a sports correspondent for ABC News. Schaap had been covering sports for NBC's *Today* show and the *NBC Nightly News.*

Bert Parks, by Chock Full o'Nuts, for a series of singing commercials.

Nadine Stewart, former anchor and reporter for WJXT in Jacksonville, Fla., as an NBC news correspondent, based in New York.

Emery King, former reporter for WBBM-TV, Chicago, as an NBC News correspondent, based in Washington, D.C.

Marie Osmond, with NBC, for a number of solo shows.

LINKED
Burt Reynolds and comedian ***David Steinberg,*** to form Burt Reynolds/David Steinberg Productions, which has entered into an exclusive two-year agreement with ABC. The company will develop a number of series pilots and a movie for the network, as well as late-night specials, including one starring Reynolds to be seen later this year.

DROPPED
TV critic ***Ron Hendren,*** from NBC's *Today* show.

HONORED
Fred Silverman, president of NBC, with the Syracuse University Chancellor's Medal for Outstanding Achievement, as a "pioneer in this country's most popular frontier."

Walter Cronkite, with the Servant of Justice Award of the Legal Aid Society for 1980, for "his honorable handling of [the public] trust."

Frank Sinatra, with the Variety Clubs International Humanitarian Award, for his achievements in behalf of disadvantaged children.

Leonard H. Goldenson, chairman of the board and chief executive officer of ABC Inc., with the 1979-80 Trustees' Award of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, given for extraordinary contributions to the advancement of TV.

Tom Snyder, anchorman of NBC News' *Prime Time Saturday* and host of *Tomorrow,* with the Milwaukee Press Club's Sacred Cat award for "professional career achievements and activities."

British comic actor ***John Cleese,*** by the British Academy of Film and Television Arts, for best light entertainment performance of 1979, in *Fawlty Towers,* which was itself honored as best situation-comedy series.

Everett H. Erlick, senior vice president and general counsel of ABC Inc., with the 1980 Grover C. Cobb Award of the National Association of Broadcasters; the award is given to those credited with improving relations between broadcasters and the Federal Government.

Don Hewitt, executive producer of *60 Minutes,* with the "Broadcaster of the Year" award of the International Radio & Television Society.

CBS chairman ***William S. Paley,*** with the 1980 Robert Eunson Award of the Associated Press Broadcasters, Inc., given in recognition of significant contributions to broadcasting and broadcast journalism.

By the Directors Guild of America, with awards for best direction of: a comedy series — ***Charles S. Dubin,*** for the *M*A*S*H* episode "Period of Adjustment"; a dramatic series—***Roger Young,*** for the episode "Cop" on *Lou Grant;* a musical-variety show—***Tony Charmoli,*** for "John Denver and the Muppets"; a special—***Michael Mann,*** for "The Jericho Mile"; a documentary—***Alfred R. Kelman,*** for "The Magic Sense" from *The Body Human;* actuality coverage — ***Don Mischer,*** for "The Kennedy Center Honors"; a commercial—***Robert Lieberman,*** for McDonald's.

DIED
Glenn Wheaton, 71, TV writer on such series as *My Three Sons, The Bob Cummings Show, Bachelor Father* and *National Velvet,* as well as for the 1966 special "Frank Sinatra: A Man and His Music." Wheaton also wrote for Bob Hope for many years.

Character actress ***Kay Medford,*** 59, who costarred on *To Rome with Love* and made frequent appearances on the musical series *That's Life* and *The Dean Martin Show.*

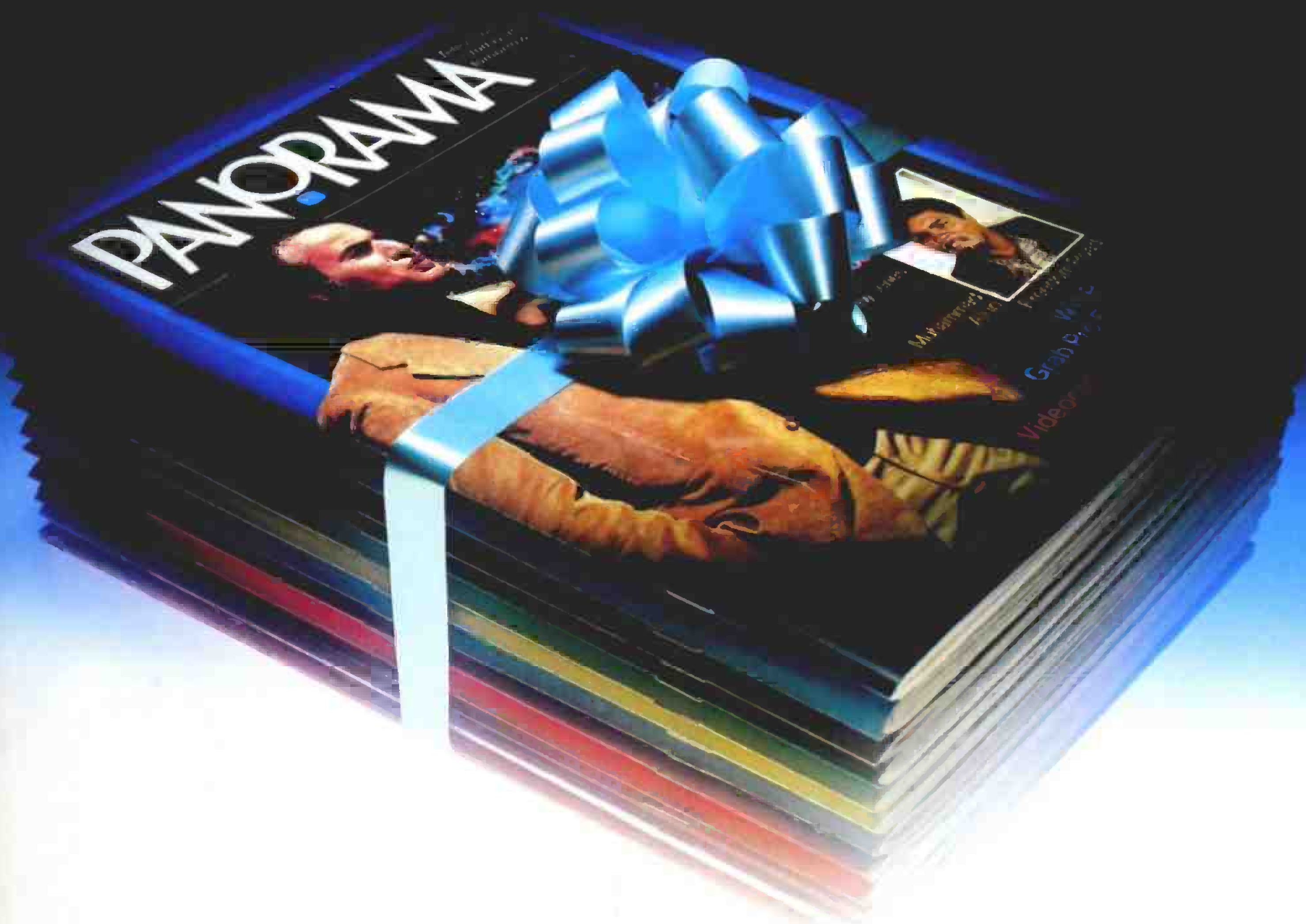
Actor ***William Robertson,*** 71, former regular on *Search for Tomorrow,* after an acting stint on the ABC pilot *Breaking Away.* Robertson appeared in such films as "Boardwalk" and "Hero at Large."

Former child star ***Mary McCarty,*** 56, who played Nurse "Starch" Willoughby on *Trapper John, M.D.* McCarty, who began her career at age 5 in musical revues, won a Tony award for her Broadway role in "Anna Christie" and more recently acted in the films "Somebody Killed Her Husband" and "All That Jazz."

Charlton G. Shaw, 74, former vice president of the A.C. Nielsen Company. Shaw was instrumental in the company's expansion from product comparison to media ratings in the 1930s and '40s.

Julian Funt, 73, writer of daytime dramatic serials for radio and TV, including *Young Doctor Malone* on both media. Funt wrote and produced the TV series *City Hospital,* and later worked as head writer for *Search for Tomorrow.*

www.americanradiohistory.com



Television's future makes a great present.

At this very moment you are holding the future of television in your hands. "Panorama-Television Today and Tomorrow."

Why not share it with some of your friends and relatives? Give them a gift subscription.

12 monthly issues will bring them closer to hundreds of issues that touch their lives. They'll learn more about television and how it affects everything from the news to the arts. From the sports arena to the political arena.

They'll get a behind-the-scenes look at the people and the shows. And what's in store for their TV screens.

If someone you love loves television, give Panorama as a present.

They'll thank you. And thank you. And thank you. And thank you....

PANORAMA Television today and tomorrow

The magazine to watch.

www.americanradiohistory.com

© Triangle Communications Inc. 1980

YESTERDAYS

Hal March

25 Years Ago: June 1955
There are 35 million television homes in the United States now, and American families are watching more than three and a half hours a day, on the average. A few of those families are buying a second set—3.7 percent of homes with television now have more than one receiver.... A new Tuesday-night quiz show called *The $64,000 Question* makes its debut and becomes an immediate hit.... On *See It Now,* Edward R. Murrow concludes his two-part "Report on Cigarettes and Lung Cancer."... The star of a *Studio One* play, "For the Defense," is Mike Wallace, portraying a criminal lawyer.... Eddie Fisher, the 26-year-old singer who is seen every Wednesday and Friday night from 7:30 to 7:45 P.M. (ET) on *Coke Time,* has announced his engagement to Debbie Reynolds.... Another young entertainer, Johnny Carson, is starting a new half-hour variety series on Thursday nights, replacing *Public Defender*.... President Eisenhower delivers a televised welcoming address at the 10th-anniversary session of the United Nations.... Championship prizefights this month match welterweight champ Tony DeMarco against Carmen Basilio, lightweight champ Jimmy Carter against Wallace "Bud" Smith, and 38-year-old light-heavyweight champ Archie Moore against middleweight king Carl "Bobo" Olson.... In the cast of a *Dragnet* episode is an actor named Aaron Spelling, playing a crook called "Bigs" Donaldson.... Ed Sullivan's *Toast of the Town* celebrates its seventh anniversary, with Bob Hope, Pearl Bailey, Smith & Dale and impressionist Will Jordan on the bill.... Vyacheslav M. Molotov, Soviet foreign minister, becomes the first USSR government official to appear on a U.S. panel-interview show when he answers newsmen's questions on *Face the Nation*.... With cameras positioned all over the North American continent, NBC presents a preview of a new series scheduled for fall, *Wide Wide World*.

10 Years Ago: June 1970
Rowan and Martin's Laugh-In reruns the episode in which Gladys Ormphby (Ruth Buzzi) marries Tyrone F. Horneigh (Arte Johnson), with Tiny Tim in attendance.... *My World and Welcome to It*, which has already been canceled, wins the Emmy for Best Comedy Series. The Best Actor and Actress in Dramatic Series are Robert Young (*Marcus Welby, M.D.*) and Susan Hampshire (*The Forsyte Saga*).... The month's news specials include "The Draft: Who Serves?" and an assessment of the use of U.S. troops in Cambodia, as well as a Charles Collingwood interview with Nazi war criminal Albert Speer.... Liza Minnelli does her first TV special.... Aaron Spelling is now a successful producer—his *The Mod Squad* is a hit.... Michael H. Dann, CBS's longtime programming chief, leaves the network to become a vice president of the Children's Television Workshop and consultant for its *Sesame Street*. His daytime-programming aide, Fred Silverman, is appointed to replace him.

5 Years Ago: June 1975
Fred Silverman says he is facing a big challenge, now that he has quit top-rated CBS to become the chief programmer at ABC, the perennial also-ran.... Burt Lancaster stars as Moses in the six-part miniseries *Moses the Lawgiver*; Cloris Leachman as a rural eccentric in "A Girl Named Sooner"; and Katharine Hepburn as Amanda Wingfield in a repeat of "The Glass Menagerie," first telecast in 1973. ... Aaron Spelling's *The Rookies* and *S.W.A.T.* are both garnering high ratings, and his *Starsky & Hutch* is scheduled to begin next fall.... ABC News denies reports that it is looking for a woman co-anchor to pair with Harry Reasoner on its evening newscasts. ■

COMING UP IN PANORAMA

A Critical Look at TV Critics

What It's Like to Have a Back-Yard Satellite Dish

Jack Klugman: TV's Angriest Actor

Pop Music Moves into Videodiscs and Videocassettes

Who Will Be the Next Barbara Walters?

"Breaking Away": Can the Movie Be Recycled for TV?

Advance Look at the TV Set of the Future

What Children See When They Watch TV

Peter O'Toole Films "Masada" in Israel

The Day the Beatles Rocked Ed Sullivan

Inside Reports on All the New Pay-TV Services and Video Equipment

www.americanradiohistory.com

Remember when the Dog Went Cross-eyed Watching "Sheep-Ranching in Australia" on the Old DuMont That We Put in the Fireplace?

continued from page 86

yet to see any evidence that serious, direct thought has been applied to such a fundamental premise as 'What can television do best?'"

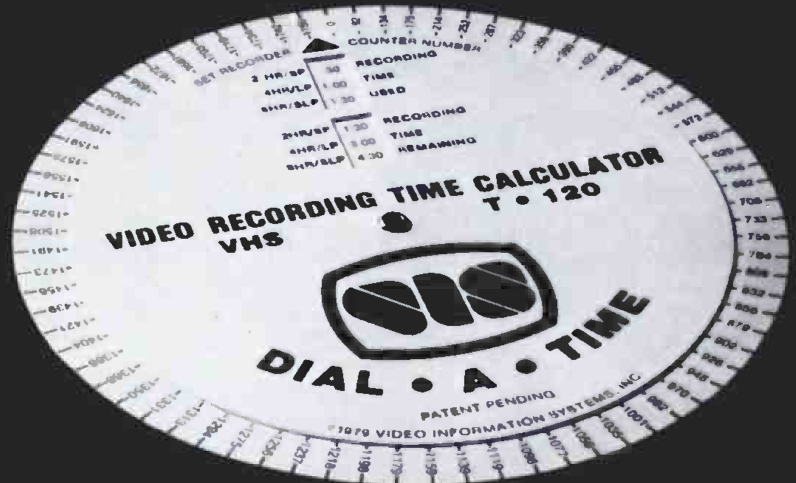
Still, Kolodin found at least some hopeful signs. Television, he said, "shames the radio announcer into truth (a majestic feat in itself), nullifies hyperbole, and frowns in pitiless disdain on exaggerations. It makes [the viewer] an impassive, objective, independent witness to history as it happens, or art as it is created."

Me, I didn't know from art. I gobbled it up wholesale, watching everything that poured from the cornucopia of that one New Haven channel (only on the hill above us could you pick up New York). I even watched *Industry on Parade*, the National Association of Manufacturers' free propaganda films that followed the test patterns on Saturday mornings.

Not that I worshipped uncritically at the flickering blue light. Raised on radio, I realized that TV wasn't everything. One of our favorite family pastimes, in fact, was to watch the Friday-night fights—with the TV sound turned off and the radio fight broadcast on. Forced to fill time with verbal flourishes during lulls in the action, the radio announcers made the fights sound far more exciting than they looked.

What I remember best, though, from TV's very early days isn't programming at all. It's the little white star of light that bloomed and died at the center of those early screens when you finally broke loose from the fascination, and turned the set off for the night. ■

GET UP TO 30% MORE RECORDING TIME!



Are you wasting valuable video tape because you're not sure how much time is left on your cassettes? VIS Video DIAL-A-TIME shows you how much time you've got—in 5 minute intervals. So you get more entertainment for your money!

Simply set your recorders' counter number on the VIS Video DIAL-A-TIME sturdy plastic disc. The amount of recording time used and remaining for all standard recording speeds POPS UP LIKE MAGIC in the disc's windows.

Two calculators in one . . . Each VIS Video DIAL-A-TIME disc contains two separate calculators (one on each side) for the popular cassette sizes. Models are available for VHS and BETA formats. So get more out of your video cassette investment. Start saving money NOW!

Phone toll free 800-223-2100, N.Y. State residents 212-541-7722 or mail the coupon with your check. Please allow 4-6 weeks for delivery.

VIDEO INFORMATION SYSTEMS, INC.

Order today and receive FREE the 32 page VIS System Instruction and Video Recording Guide Book. You'll find valuable tips and suggestions on programming techniques, library development and maintenance, multi-set hook-ups, cable connections, editing and much more! A $4.95 value yours FREE.

Visa, Master Charge, Diners, Carte-Blanche and American Express honored by phone or mail.

Please send me the VIS Dial-A-Time Calculator and free Video Recording Guide Book.

Quan ____ VHS T-180/T-90 $14.95 plus $2.00*
Quan ____ VHS T-120/T-60 $14.95 plus $2.00*
Quan ____ BETA L-250/L-500 $14.95 plus $2.00*
Quan ____ BETA L-750/L-830 $14.95 plus $2.00*

Please provide the following required information.
VCR Mfr. ____ Model No. ____
Enclosed is my check for $____ * including postage and handling
Connecticut residents add 6% sales tax

NAME ____ SIGNATURE ____
ADDRESS ____ PHONE NO. ____
CITY ____ STATE ____ ZIP ____
CREDIT CARD NO. ____ EXP. DATE ____

☐ VISA ☐ MASTER CHARGE ☐ DINERS ☐ CARTE BLANCHE ☐ AMERICAN EXPRESS

Please make check payable and mail to: DEALER INQUIRIES WELCOME.
VIDEO INFORMATION SYSTEMS, INC., P.O. Box 185/Dept. P2, Deep River, Conn. 06417

CREDITS

Cover: Painting by John Rush. 5: Photo courtesy PBS; photo, Movie Still Archives. 6: Photos, Movie Still Archives; photo, Focus on Sports. 7: Photos, Movie Still Archives. 10: Illustration by Roy McKie. 12: Illustration by Jeff Leedy. 15: Illustration by Peter Lippman. 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22: Photos by Steve Strauss. 23: Illustration by Lou Myers. 24: Illustration by Arnie Levin. 26: Illustrations by Dick Oden, Steve Shub. 27: Photo courtesy of Frank Goodman Associates; illustration by Kris Boyd. 28: Illustration by Charles DiComo and Associates; photo by James Kittle. 29: Photo courtesy of PBS. 30: Illustrations by David FeBland and Steve Shub. 32, 33, 37: Illustrations by Robert Alcorn. 38, 39, 40: Illustrations by Pierre Le Tan. 41, 43: Illustrations by Andy Lackow. 44, 45: Photo by Peter Terpanjian. 50: Photo courtesy of Frank Goodman Associates. 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59: Illustrations by Franklin McMahon. 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65: Graphics by John Keithley Associates. 66, 67, 68, 69: Photos by Elliot Landy. 71, 73: Illustration by Robert Crawford. 74, 75, 76, 77: Photos by Gene Trindl. 78, 79, 80, 81: Photograph by Geoff Jukes. 84: Graphics by Dennis Di Vincenzo. 88: Illustration by Gerry Gersten. 89, 90, 91: Photos, Movie Still Archives. 92: Photo courtesy NBC News; photos, Movie Still Archives. 94: Illustration by William Bramhall Jr. 96: Illustration by Ed Koren.

www.americanradiohistory.com

REAR VIEW

By HARRY STEIN

Presenting Mrs. Oxenberg

Fifteen or so years ago, Mel Brooks was asked what he most disliked about television. "Gloria Okon," he replied without hesitation.

"Gloria Okon?"

"The Arnold Bread lady. Every time you turn on the TV in New York, there she is, saying 'Hello, I'm Gloria Okon'." He paused, bristling. "Who is she that she should say 'Hello, I'm Gloria Okon'? Did we meet her on a bus? Do we know her from a party? Did we have an affair with her? What presumption!"

Gloria was, of course, but one in a long string of television pitch people who have sashayed uninvited into our lives. Lately we've seen a lot of Rula Lenska, the lady who spends her life showing friends around London.

But few of us get as worked up over them as Brooks. If one can stomach commercials at all, why squawk about the souls populating them?

In recent days, however, an entirely new phenomenon has revealed itself: utter unknowns, with no discernible claim to talent, have begun showing up as stars of network shows. I noticed this trend last year with the arrival of *Presenting Susan Anton* on NBC.

Susan Anton, a long-legged person of saucy demeanor, strutted around with enormous self-confidence, and everyone treated her like a star; it was as if it were *our* problem that we had never heard of her. She sang, danced and told jokes in a manner eerily reminiscent of my friend Maureen Kearney, who was once the Junior Miss of the East San Gabriel Valley.

But we had seen nothing yet—for in early March there arrived something called *Pink Lady and Jeff*—starring Mie and Kei—billed as two of the biggest stars in Japan—and costarring an unknown comic named Jeff. Not only could Mie and Kei not sing, dance or tell jokes, they could not speak English, communicating instead in half smiles and little squeals.

Before that premiere of *Pink Lady* was halfway through, I got a call from my friend Amy Green.

"All right," she said, "I need your help. I'm starting a television variety show starring my mother and her friend Mrs. Oxenberg."

"Mrs. Oxenberg?"

"Five-feet-one, with a hearing aid and an accent. She does this terrific thing with spoons."

"Wonderful," I said. "Count me in."

Three days later Amy, her mother, Mrs. Oxenberg and I were sitting in the office of an NBC vice president. As Amy pitched the idea, the vice president's face lit up like a pinball machine.

"Hey, that's our kind of show," he said. "It's different, yet the same. It could work."

"We were thinking," I said, "of calling it *Gray Lady*."

"Beautiful, beautiful."

I withdrew a sheet of paper from my briefcase. "We've got a proposed lineup for the first show." I studied the sheet. "OK, we open with Mrs. Green doing her monologue on why you should never go out of the house without a sweater."

"Uh-huh. Terrific."

"And then Mrs. Oxenberg will sing."

He stared at Mrs. Oxenberg, scrunched down in a chair, knitting a scarf. "*Her?*"

Mrs. Oxenberg looked up, offended. "And why not? With my own lyrics, too!" And without missing a stitch, she began singing:

I feel tired,
Oh so tired,
It's inspired how tired I feel,
So perspired,
That my husband had to cook the veal.

The NBC guy beamed at me: "Where'd you find these gals?"

"They're the biggest stars in Thailand." I looked back down at my sheet. "Next we bring on the guest stars."

"That's right," announced Mrs. Green, snapping into character, "I want to introduce a very dear friend of mine, Sam Arnold."

"Who's that?" asked the executive.

Mrs. Green shrugged. "He's a very dear friend of mine. For a living he sells shoes."

"And I would like to introduce a very dear friend of *mine*," chimed in Mrs. Oxenberg, "Marlene Golden."

"Under no circumstances," said her partner sharply. "You know we can't put Sam and Marlene in the same room. Remember the last time, at the canasta game?"

"Who says you get yours and I don't get mine?" demanded Mrs. Oxenberg.

I grinned at the NBC guy. "Creative differences. Don't worry. We'll iron them out."

He shook his head. "I'm afraid neither of the suggested guest artists will be acceptable. We prefer celebrities."

"How about my doctor?" said Mrs. Oxenberg.

"No, no. It has to be someone special."

"Fine," said Mrs. Green, "then what about my daughter Amy here?"

Amy rolled her eyes. "Oh, Mom, stop it."

"Listen to her, always selling herself short." She grabbed Amy's cheek. "Tell me the truth, does this look to you like a guest star or not?"

"Anyway," said Amy, "I'd had my heart set on guest-hosting the Carson show instead."

Mrs. Green shook her head. "Listen to how she talks to her mother. She won't even come on my show."

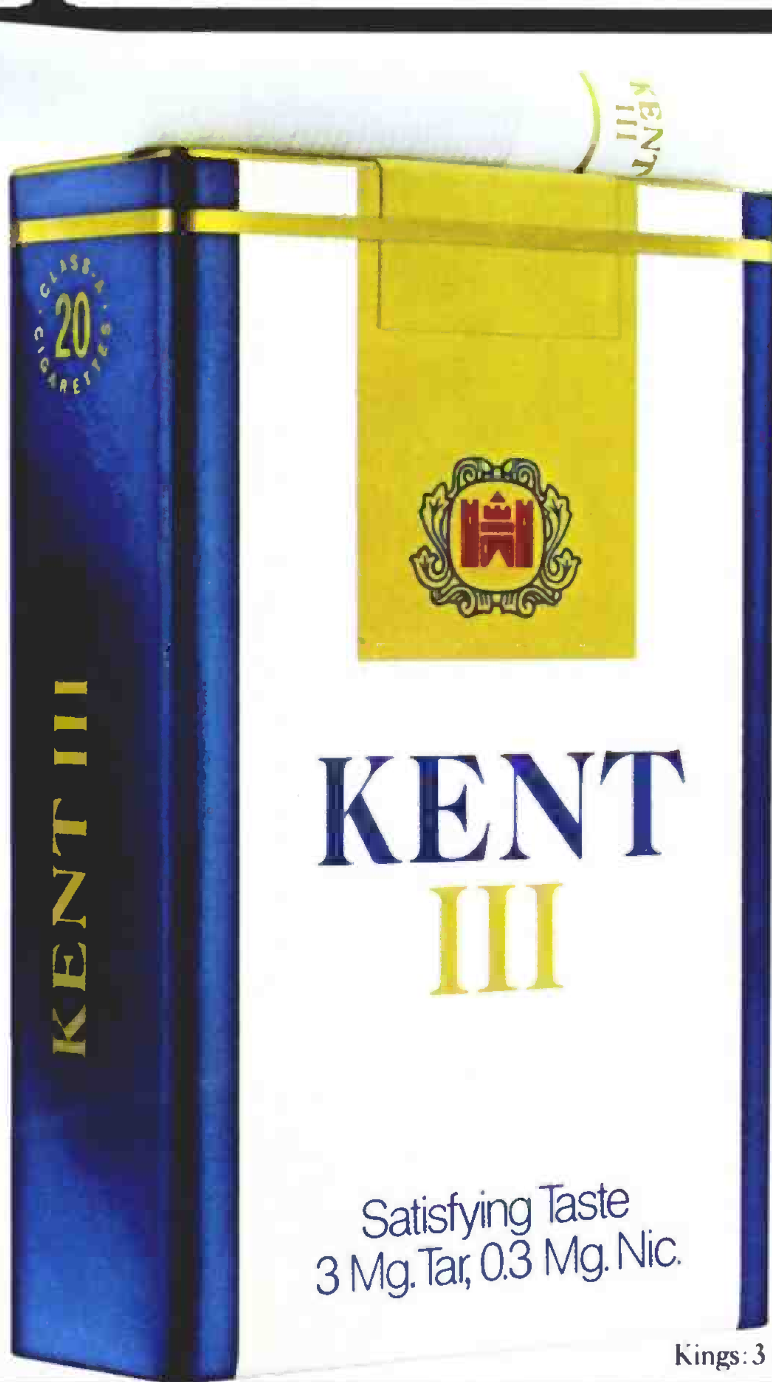
We fell silent again. Then, abruptly, the NBC guy snapped his fingers. "Hey, I think I got it. What about Gloria Okon?" ■

www.americanradiohistory.com

© Lorillard, U.S.A. 1980

Kent III taste. Experience it!

Astonishing taste.
Low, low tar.
Come experience it!



Kings: 3 mg tar. 100s: 5 mg tar.

3 mg. "tar," 0.3 mg. nicotine av. per cigarette, FTC Report Jan. 1980.

Warning: The Surgeon General Has Determined That Cigarette Smoking Is Dangerous to Your Health.

www.americanradiohistory.com

The J&B Serving Bar

It will serve Dad long past Father's Day.

Think of it as an appreciation of Dad. The J&B Serving Bar is made of hand-rubbed walnut, satin finished and protected with an alcohol resistant coating. The clear lucite holder with brass cradle will house your 1.75 liter J&B bottle. Antique brass handles make serving simple and, you can put handy bar implements in the utility drawer. Each Bar also comes with four fine Belgium crystal double old-fashioned glasses.

To order your Bar, enclose $39.95, plus state and local taxes (price does not include bottle of J&B Rare Scotch). Please add $3.00 for handling and mailing. Indicate the initials (maximum of 3 letters) to be engraved on the brass plate. Send to: J&B Serving Bar, P.O. Box 1379, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55440.

J&B RARE SCOTCH

Allow 6-8 weeks for delivery. Offer subject to discontinuation without notice. Offer good in the U.S.A. Void where prohibited by law.

86 Proof Blended Scotch Whisky. © 1980 The Paddington Corp. N.Y.

www.americanradiohistory.com