

PANORAMA

Television
today and
tomorrow

MAY 1980
\$1.50

BEHIND THE
SCENES WITH
PAUL
NEWMAN,
TV DIRECTOR

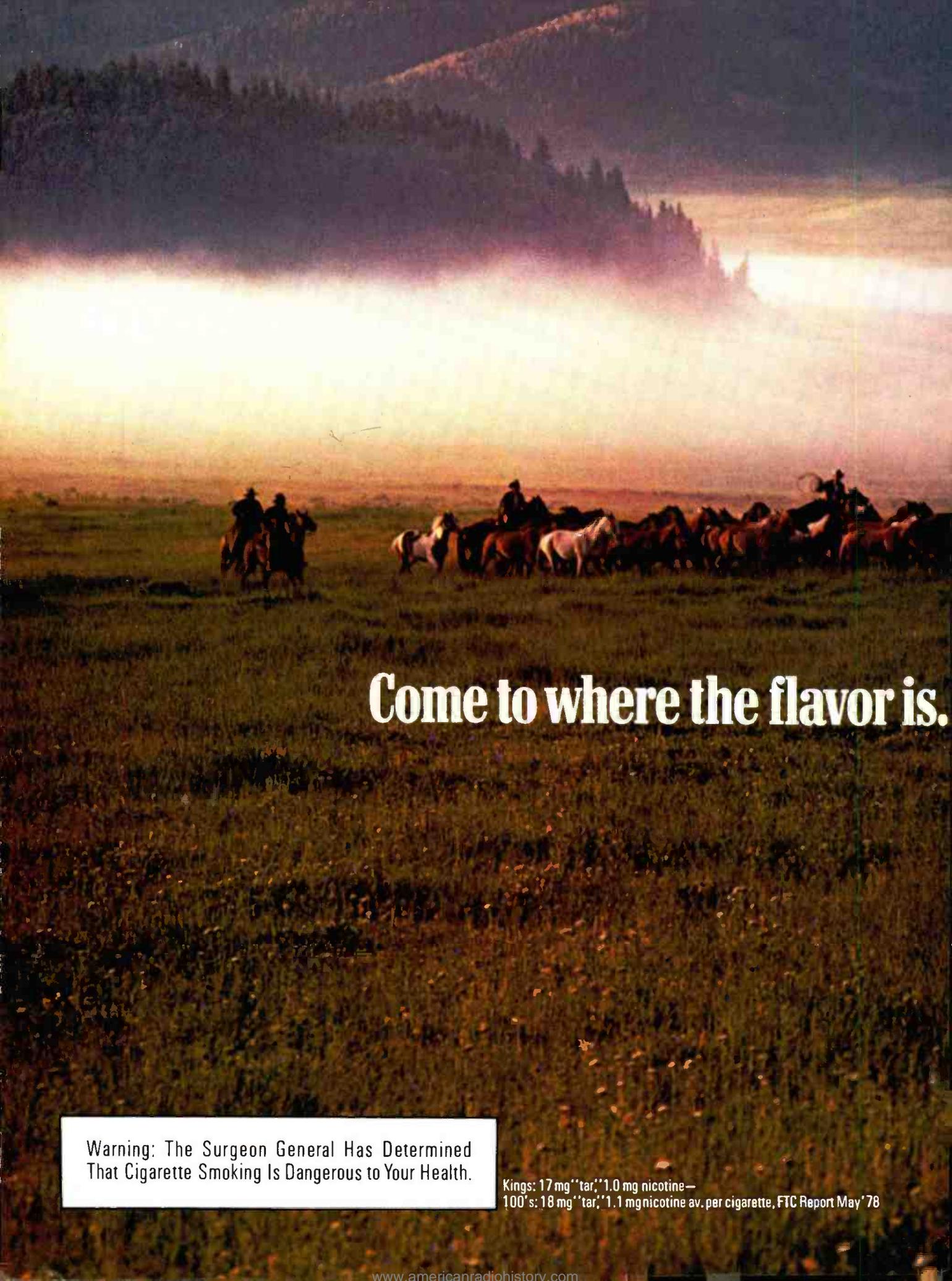
SHOULD YOU
BUY A
VIDEO CAMERA?

PARENTS:
YOU CAN TAKE
CONTROL OF
YOUR TV SET

GAME SHOWS—
GAMIER THAN EVER

RED SMITH
ON THE
OLYMPICS





Come to where the flavor is.

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

Kings: 17 mg "tar," 1.0 mg nicotine—
100's: 18 mg "tar," 1.1 mg nicotine av. per cigarette, FTC Report May '78

Come to Marlboro Country.



**Marlboro Red or Longhorn 100's—
you get a lot to like.**

In a world entertained by the
great and the famous, we've
starred for almost 100 years.

How rare.



PANORAMA

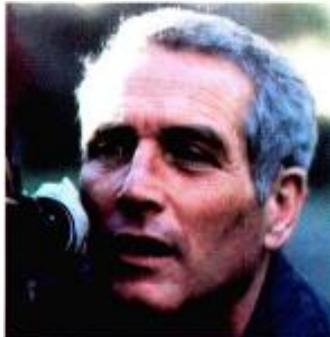
Television
today and
tomorrow

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LETTERS



Docudrama by Any Other Name

I hope I'm not the only reader to enjoy the counterpoint in your March issue between Richard Reeves' article on TV docudrama and the pictorial on Shakespeare's "Henry IV" and "Henry V" docudramas. The political point aside, is it fair to ask if Hollywood's docudrama scripts will still be alive 400 years in the future?

*Richard Tracey
Redondo Beach, Cal.*

One Vote for Elitism

Once again, Richard Reeves has hit the nail squarely and firmly right on its fat head ["Perspective," March]. In this case, the nails and fat heads belong to those who bring us local television news. These days it is just as common for anchorpersons to be chosen as a result of tests performed on viewers' skin (which measure involuntary responses through sensors connected to the skin) as it is for them to be chosen for any proven journalistic ability.

If television news is just a business, and the bottom line is to maximize profits, not quality, then the losers are the public. If the television audience doesn't give a damn about Afghanistan, maybe it is "elitist" to believe they should, and to force-feed them the subject. But the sad facts of life are that if they don't get this information through television, they may not get it at all, since such a large percentage of the American public relies exclusively on television for news. If television news exists to give people what they want to see and hear rather than what they ought to know, then the conclusion is inescapable that such news will turn into an electronic version of a super-market tabloid. I, for one, would prefer a little elitism.

*David C. Byers
Los Angeles*

Alda Revisited

We really enjoyed your interview with Alan Alda ["Q & A," February]. You asked questions that the public might ask. Your magazine really brought out a broad image of a genius.

*Matt and Kathe Liffreing
Huntington Beach, Cal.*

I grew to like *M*A*S*H* several years back and still enjoy it in spite of Alan Alda rather than because of him. The overuse of one-liners and loud-mouthed, multidecibel harangues that have often resulted in overkill in the last few seasons of *M*A*S*H* serve only to dim the effect of those more wistful touches in the story when the honest, down-to-earth, unforced humor shines through. It certainly does seem that Alda has been captivated by his own image and, in television, just a little bit of "cute" and "adorable" goes a long, long way.

*William L. Bennett
Muskegon, Mich.*

Canny Shoppers

As a "selective television viewer," I find your new magazine is proving to be an invaluable asset around my home. With the aid of the article in your first issue concerning VCRs ["Your Complete Guide to VCRs," February], I have made what I consider an intelligent choice in the purchase of one of the units and am now enjoying my viewing even more.

*Steve White
Station KKNG
Oklahoma City*

The article "Your Complete Guide to VCRs" gave my husband and me quality information with which to shop for a VCR. We had been shopping around, but before reading your article, we felt overwhelmed, and now realize many of the salespersons selling VCRs know very little about the machines, except the price. Keep up the beautiful job of creating a much-needed magazine for television viewers who have a mind, and who are still interested in reading. In this day of throwaways, you have created a magazine worth keeping and rereading.

*Rosemary A. Stanley
Seymour, Ind.*

Taking Exception

As president of the National Captioning Institute, I wish for the following reasons to take exception to your recent article on closed captioning ["Panoramic View," February]:

1. The allegation of Government "arm-twisting" of the networks is false. ABC has been instrumental in the development of the closed-captioning system from its inception, and NBC joined us when convinced through its own research that captioning was a feasible operation.

2. Teletext has not yet proved to be a commercially feasible operation. Even assuming it will be, actual implementation of the teletext system is likely to be some years in the future, while the closed-captioning system is ready for immediate implementation.

Third, and most important: Since motion pictures became "talkies," the hearing-impaired community has been deprived of full access to the world of audio-visual presentations. Indeed, despite numerous technological advances since TV's birth over 30 years ago, hearing-impaired Americans have continued to be shortchanged in their access to this most important entertainment and information medium. Fortunately, this will change significantly with the introduction of the closed-captioning service on ABC, NBC and PBS.

*John E. D. Ball
Falls Church, Va.*

Readers' Roundup

The magazine looks great, beautifully designed and exciting. Unfortunately, its contents proved most disappointing. PANORAMA, while high-class and selective, looks like something the industry would publish, advertising its programs, praising them highly, and standing in awe and admiration of every so-called technical wonder that the industry produces. Where are the objective evaluations, the critical judgments, the suggestions as to how the industry might better fulfill its responsibilities to the viewing public, and the suggestions as to what viewers might do to improve programming?

*The Rev. Russell C. Block
Chairman, Radio and Television
Commission
New Jersey Council of Churches
Berkeley Heights, N.J.*

THIS MONTH

MAY 1980

Sophia Loren Plays Herself... PBS's Split Personality... No Limit on Commercials?... Lord Snowdon's Miniseries... Twilight Baseball for Japanese

WHAT'S HAPPENING

HOLLYWOOD

Don Shirley reporting

Typecast. Sophia Loren will star as herself, and as her mother, in a three-hour NBC film about her life. Will there be problems in the objectivity department? Well, executive producer Roger Gimbel says La Loren does not have script-approval rights. However, her stepson Alex Ponti is co-producing, and it was Ponti and his father Carlo, Loren's husband, who brought the project to Gimbel. "It's not a documentary," says Gimbel, "but it is an extraordinary success story that will have great appeal, particularly to women." Gimbel says shooting will occur as close as possible to the Italian locations where Loren grew up.

Kings in check. Shortly before the new Alex Haley/Norman Lear series went on the air, the title was changed from *Kings of the Hill* to *Palmerstown, U.S.A.* The reason: author A. E. Hotchner pointed out that he had written a somewhat similar book, published as "King of the Hill," in 1972.

Hotchner's novel—like the Haley/Lear story—was a fictionalized memoir of a Depression boyhood. As in the Haley/Lear story, two close chums are the major characters. Hotchner's boys lived in St. Louis, just up the river from Haley's characters in west Tennessee.

Hotchner did not accuse Haley of copying his book or stealing his title, but he feared that the CBS series could dampen the prospects for a

movie that Paul Newman and Joanne Woodward hope to make out of it. After Hotchner and Lear spoke, Lear agreed to change his title.

"He was very sporting about it," says Hotchner, who maintains that not only could *Kings of the Hill* confuse filmgoers, but it could also "ruin the game for all the kids in the world. The whole point of the game is that only one guy gets to the top of the hill, so how could there be two kings of the hill?"

Games of love. Erich ("Love Story") Segal asked that his name be removed from the

credits for "The Golden Moment," a four-hour movie that NBC expects to broadcast this month. The movie is a romance between a male American decathlete and a female Soviet gymnast. In Segal's original script, the American was an urban black, but later the character was changed to a rural white.

The movie was conceived and produced by Don Ohlmeyer, executive producer of sports at NBC and the network's Olympics chief, and approximately a third of the story is set in Moscow during the Olympics. The film went

into production around the time that it became unclear whether America would participate in the Olympics, but no further changes were ordered in the script. "It's a love story," says Ohlmeyer. "There's nothing political in it."

Heads win. Talk shows rule the world of syndicated television. Joining Phil Donahue, Merv Griffin, Mike Douglas, Dinah Shore and David Susskind as general-interest talk-show hosts this year are John Davidson, Toni Tennille, Vidal Sassoon and—if enough stations are rounded up—Bert Convy, Jerry Van Dyke, Steve Edwards and Don Lane. Chances are slim that all of the talkies will survive, but the chances are being taken because it's felt that some of the veterans—particularly Shore and Douglas—are losing steam. Some of the shows may wait until winter to show up, hoping that in the meantime the weaker competition will be weeded out.

In an attempt to outdo the single-host shows, the new *Morning Affair* will offer three talk shows in one, starting this fall. Keep-fit salesman Richard Simmons, radio psychologist Toni Grant and attorney F. Lee Bailey will each preside over 30 minutes of the 90-minute package.

NEW YORK

Doug Hill reporting

More encounters. If you were intrigued by Richard Dreyfuss's "close encounters of the third kind" in the 1977 movie hit, you may be rushing to the theaters again this August to see a new "special edition" of the film that will show what happens to Dreyfuss

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.)



Robert De Niro



Michael Hordern

DRAMA AND MOVIES

The Sting. A repeat showing of 1973's Oscar-winning film about a con job in Depression-era Chicago, starring Paul Newman and Robert Redford. ABC.

Death of a Princess. The dramatized account by a British filmmaker of the execution of an Arab princess and her lover (see page 77). PBS.

Beulah Land. Lesley Ann Warren stars in a three-part miniseries that claims to be TV's answer to "Gone with the Wind" (see page 50). NBC.

A Rumor of War. A TV-movie based on Philip Caputo's best seller about his tour of duty in Vietnam, with Brad Davis and Keith Carradine. CBS.

The Shakespeare Plays. This season's final offering is "The Tempest," with Michael Hordern as Prospero. PBS.

The Deer Hunter. Robert De Niro, Meryl Streep, John Savage and Christopher Walken in Michael Cimino's Oscar-winning 1978 Vietnam epic. Showtime (cable). *continued*

THIS MONTH

after he enters the alien spaceship.

Or you could wait until September 1981, which is when ABC will be able to give Dreyfuss and friends their network-TV premiere. ABC bought rights to show the newer version (about 20 minutes' worth of additional footage was recently shot by director Steven Spielberg), and will probably spread its premiere over two or three nights for maximum ratings mileage. ABC may even include footage left out of both theatrical versions.

Like most films, "Close Encounters" will be shown on pay-TV before it gets to ABC, but Columbia Pictures will wait to gauge the public's reaction to the second edition before deciding which version to release on pay.

Split screen. PBS plans to have staff in place next month to begin its transition from a single national program service to three separate services—one for prime-time programming, one for independently produced and regional programming, and one for educational programs.

M. Peter Downey, the PBS senior vice president coordinating the shift, says "One of our operating principles is that the audience will be unaware of the change," but nonetheless the behind-the-scenes differences are likely to have a profound impact on the types of shows that are produced for and shown on public television.

Personnel of the three services will be independently seeking funds for their types of programs. It will surprise no one if staffers of the prime-time service pitching popular entertainment programs find corporate underwriters more receptive than will representatives of the less visible second service pitching, say, an independent documentary on a controversial topic. This has always been a problem for PBS, but many believe the new setup will tend to institutionalize the imbalance. "It's fair to observe there's a kind

of Darwinian element to it," says Downey.

Spice of life. America's best-known second banana is coming to pay-TV. *Tonight Show* announcer Ed McMahon will be taping a 75-minute variety special for pay-cable this month in Dallas.

If the results satisfy McMahon and his co-producers, the Showtime pay-cable network and Wescom Productions, the special will be expanded to a

monthly series, probably by next fall.

The special will include Phyllis Diller and the Texas Cowgirls (among them three former Dallas Cowboy Cheerleaders who gained notoriety by posing in *Playboy*) as its guests. McMahon says the series would be loosely based on a specific theme each month and, being on pay-cable, could take liberties not possible on network shows.

WHAT'S ON continued



Vanessa Redgrave



John Ritter

Moviola. Can little-known actresses re-create Marilyn Monroe, Greta Garbo and Vivien Leigh? The success of this three-part miniseries based on Garson Kanin's Hollywood novel might depend on the answer. NBC.

Yanks. Richard Gere and Vanessa Redgrave star in this movie about American soldier boys and the British girls they fell in love with during World War II. Home Box Office (cable).

Angel on My Shoulder. Peter Strauss in a TV version of Paul Muni's 1946 film about the selling of a candidate. ABC.

FDR's Last Year. Jason Robards and Eileen Heckart play Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt, and Kim Hunter is Lucy Rutherford, in a TV-movie based on Jim Bishop's 1974 book. NBC.

Norma Rae. Sally Field brought recognition to the union movement and herself in this 1979 film about Southern mill life. Showtime (cable).

Murder Can Kill You. A TV-movie satire of television detectives, with Gavin MacLeod and Tony Danza. ABC.

Haywire. Brooke Hayward's searing best seller becomes a TV-movie, with Deborah Raffin as Brooke, and Jason Robards and Lee Remick as Leland Hayward and Margaret Sullavan (postponed from last month). CBS.

SPECIALS

Return of the King . . . A Story of the Hobbits. Animated version of the final book of Tolkien's epic trilogy, "The Lord of the Rings," with the voices of Orson Bean, Theodore Bikel, William Conrad, John Huston and Roddy McDowell (see page 43). ABC.

The Me Nobody Knows. A restaging for television of the off-Broadway musical based on the observations of minority children about New York ghetto life. Showtime (cable).

The 15th Annual Academy of Country Music Awards. The best of the Country and Western industry are honored in a live telecast from the Good Time Theatre at Knott's Berry Farm in Los Angeles. NBC.

NEWS AND DOCUMENTARIES

The National Health Quiz. Cheryl Tiegs and Peter Graves are the hosts. PBS.

"We can editorialize here; we can be kind of spicy, more alive and *au courant* than on restricted television," he said.

It's no secret that any pay company would dearly love to sign up McMahon's friend, Mr. Carson, so McMahon was asked if Carson had shown any inclination to enlist.

"He's never indicated it to me," McMahon said. "I think that would be down the line when he's exhausted all his regular broadcasting possibilities, and they don't seem to be exhausting fast. So I don't think so, unless he'd buy a cable system of his own and appear on that."

WASHINGTON

Steve Weinberg reporting

Flood warning. Who makes the rules on the number of television commercials that can be shown in every hour of air time? Currently the TV industry sets its own limits through the code of the National Association of Broadcasters, but that code is now under attack from the U.S. Justice Department.

To the astonishment and horror of consumer groups, the Department is claiming that any restrictions on the number of ads is illegal, and it has brought a lawsuit against the NAB to get the quotas abolished.

The Department's case is that by limiting the number of ads, NAB member stations (the majority of TV stations) are keeping the cost of commercial air time at an artificially high level in the face of rising demand, and that this constitutes restraint of trade. The purpose of the lawsuit is to "allow the supply, format and price of TV advertising to be set by market forces and not by private arrangement."

In an attempt to outflank the Justice Department and prevent a deluge of commercials, the National Citizens Committee for Broadcasting, a consumer pressure group, has filed a petition with the Federal Communications Com-

mission, requesting that the FCC impose new limits of its own. The NCCB wants to see no more than 10 minutes of advertising per hour—and only five minutes per hour during children's shows.

The auguries are not good for the consumer group's petition. The TV stations and the networks are opposing it because they don't want further Government regulation, and the viewing public has been less than lukewarm in supporting it—six months after the NCCB filed the petition, the FCC had logged in only three letters of support from individuals.

Better late. Night owls have never been well served by television. Between 2 A.M. and 6 A.M. they have usually had nothing more than a blank screen or a test pattern to stare at. But there are increasing signs of life in the wee hours.

In addition to a few stations in the larger cities that operate around the clock with regular programming, there are now a handful of stations that offer news, weather, sports and financial information in alphanumeric form with a background of music. Since the start of 1979, six stations have been given permission by the FCC to operate after hours in this way, and more are likely to follow suit in the near future, when the need to obtain special FCC approval may be dispensed with.

The Commission wants to relax its rules so that the nighttime desert, where "program fare is thinnest or nonexistent," will begin to bloom.

All-night digital programming is still experimental, and some stations have decided that the experiment has failed. KSAT-TV in San Antonio, for example, reverted to normal hours after a six-month trial. General manager James Schiavone says, "We concluded, after the initial splash and the excitement in the media about a 24-hour service, that not many people gave a damn."

LONDON

Richard Gilbert reporting

Views of Snowdon. Following in the footsteps of Dame Margot Fonteyn, and her successful miniseries *The Magic of Dance*, comes Lord Snowdon (former husband of Princess Margaret) and *Snowdon on Photography*. He is writing and presenting six BBC programs, which will be made this year and telecast in 1981.

Though he has produced several outstanding documentaries for commercial

television in recent years, Snowdon has never before had an on-camera role.

In the new miniseries, he will look at the history of photography from the days of the camera obscura to the present; he will interview fellow photographers; and he will talk about his own distinctive *oeuvre*, which producer Iain Johnstone says is "characterized by the use of minimum equipment and a preference for natural light."

Snowdon also will have something to say about the market for top photographic

work and the spiraling auction-room prices for classic prints, such as those of Ansel Adams.

Think small. EMI, the show-biz to body-scanner conglomerate, has discovered a new way of squeezing even more audiences into its movie houses. Not content with subdividing its large theaters into three or four separate auditoria, the company has now found that the odd spaces left over in the conversion make a perfect home for "video cinemas."

Using videocassette recorders in conjunction with projection-TV systems, the video cinemas are showing taped versions of movies like "The Life of Brian" and "The Amityville Horror" in rooms that seat between 80 and 100 people—a fraction of the capacity of the smallest conventional theaters.

So far, four video cinemas are in operation around Britain, and six more are due to open soon.

EMI claims that the video quality is almost as good as that of a first-run film print, but the British film technicians' union, the ACTT, disputes this. The union has been highly critical of video projection, asserting that its quality is closer to that found on super-8 film than on 35 mm. The union pinpoints the main defects as inadequate screen brightness and lack of contrast. EMI promises that the projection system will be improved.

Playing away. New York's public-television station, WNET, scored a notable success earlier this year when the prestigious National Film Theatre in London devoted four days to screenings of WNET's TV Lab productions.

The TV Lab has been responsible for funding many imaginative projects, ranging from documentaries such as the Emmy-winning "The Police Tapes" to experimental work by video artists. Capacity audiences at the National Film Theatre gave these works the kind of critical appreciation they normally reserve for

WHAT'S ON *continued*



Barry Manilow



Kentucky Derby/Preakness

Consumer Reports Presents: The Medicine Show. Everything you always wanted to know about pharmaceuticals. Home Box Office (cable).

Ben Wattenberg's 1980. The neoconservative writer returns in a roving, 10-part series. Among the subjects tackled: the military, George Orwell and the upcoming election. PBS.

COMEDY AND VARIETY

John Ritter: Being of Sound Mind and Body. *Three's Company* confreres Suzanne Somers and Joyce DeWitt and *WKRP's* Howard Hesseman join Ritter in his first special. ABC.

Barry Manilow—One Voice. Two voices, really—Manilow's and Dionne Warwick's—combine in this musical special. ABC.

Righteous Apples. The pilot for public television's first situation-comedy series chronicles the adventures of a racially mixed teen-age rock group. PBS.

The First Annual Woman Comics Show. Phyllis Diller is the host of a show spotlighting young comedienne taped live in Los Angeles. Showtime (cable).

Hal Linden's New York. Linden forsakes his *Barney Miller* station house for a musical look at the Big Apple. ABC.

SPORTS

The Kentucky Derby and The Preakness. The first two legs of horse racing's Triple Crown are covered live on May 3 and May 17. ABC.

The Indianapolis 500. Same-day coverage on May 25 of America's most famous auto race. ABC.

NASL Soccer. The season kicks off with a clash between last year's title-game participants, the champion Vancouver Whitecaps and the Tampa Bay Rowdies. ABC.

Children in Sports. The final segment of James Michener's *Sports in America* series looks at the pressures on young athletes. PBS. [■]

the international art movies that form the backbone of the NFT schedule.

TV Lab director David Loxton led a platform discussion about the Lab's work, explaining that its purpose was "to produce programs that challenge the way people think about television." He found a sympathetic response among independent British TV producers who are hoping that the nation's fourth channel, due to be opened in 1982, will provide an outlet for innovative and radical program-

ming. Inspired by the WNET season, they have begun lobbying for a British TV foundation modeled on the TV Lab.

TOKYO

John Fujii reporting

Extra innings. The energy crunch has produced an unexpected bonus for TV baseball fans in Tokyo. Until recently, live baseball telecasts beginning at 7 P.M., after the start of the game, and ending at 8:50, would sign off before the final

innings of play, leaving audiences in a state of suspended hysteria that could be relieved only by turning on the radio. Now, however, Tokyo's popular Yomiuri Giants team has decided to begin its games 20 minutes earlier—at 6—to save on lighting costs, and this means that the fans at home are less apt to be cheated of their climactic moments.

Actually, the trend toward earlier games has been under way ever since 1974, when the oil crisis first made itself felt. At that time, baseball games

began at 7 P.M. But 6 P.M. must be the final concession to OPEC; any further advance would empty Tokyo's offices and factories in midafternoon.

Next best thing? With its massive investment in VCR production, Japan is not exactly gung-ho for the videodisc concept, but if the disc does pose a real threat to tape, the Japanese will be ready.

Matsushita and its subsidiary, the Japan Victor Corporation, are developing the VHD

continued on page 89

THE RATINGS RACE

THE KEY TO DAYTIME RATINGS: VIEWER LOYALTY

By **MICHAEL DANN**

When it comes to the network ratings race, the American press and public always think in terms of the prime-time schedule, the evening hours. But there is another numbers race that takes place in the daytime, between the hours of 10 in the morning and 4:30 in the afternoon, that is also vital to advertisers and network stockholders.

With well over a billion dollars in advertising revenues at stake, a half-point difference between networks in the average daily ratings can mean more in terms of profits in the daytime than it does in the nighttime—since there are fewer daytime viewers, the ratings base is smaller, thus magnifying ratings variances. There are five-and-a-half to six hours of daytime programming on each of the three networks every weekday, while prime time lasts only three hours (except Sunday, when there are four hours).

Daytime prices for the advertiser are about one third of the nighttime prices. Sponsors consider daytime ads extremely effective because they reach an audience consisting mostly of women, who are the predominant buyers of supermarket items.

The most extraordinary

thing about daytime audiences is their intense loyalty to their favorite shows. In my two decades as a program director with the networks, the most irate letters I ever received were from viewers who objected to the preemption of daytime shows for any reason.

I can remember some years ago when the commercial networks canceled all regularly scheduled programming from the time John F. Kennedy was assassinated until he was

buried: four days in all. The networks received more letters of complaint from viewers who were concerned about what was happening during that time to their favorite soap-opera personalities than from those concerned about the tragedy that had befallen our country. That certainly wasn't true of most viewers, but it was interesting that we got very few complaints about cancellation of our nighttime programs during that same period.

It takes at least two years to develop a large, loyal audience for a soap opera, compared with as little as two weeks to build a large audience for a nighttime drama. Game-show audiences in the daytime take approximately six months to build, which is shorter than the soap-opera gestation period, but still a long time when you consider that *The \$64,000 Question* became the number-one nighttime show in a matter of weeks in 1955.

In short, ratings in the daytime change as slowly as train schedules. Any tampering with the daytime schedule by network executives becomes a terrifying gamble. The accompanying table demonstrates the astonishing longevity of successful daytime series. The most interesting daytime trend is that over the past decade, the soap operas have expanded from 15 minutes to a half hour to one hour to 90 minutes in length.

ABC has won the daytime ratings race in recent years, replacing CBS as the perennial daytime leader. Here's how the three networks have performed since Sept. 1, 1979 (average audience per program): ABC, 8.0 (6 million homes); CBS, 7.0 (5.3 million homes); NBC, 5.7 (4.3 million homes).

LONGEST-RUNNING CURRENT DAYTIME SHOWS

	PROGRAM	YEARS ON AIR
1	SEARCH FOR TOMORROW (CBS)	28
2	THE GUIDING LIGHT (CBS)	27
3	AS THE WORLD TURNS (CBS)	23
4	THE DOCTORS (NBC)	17
4	GENERAL HOSPITAL (ABC)	17
6	ANOTHER WORLD (NBC)	16
7	DAYS OF OUR LIVES (NBC)	14
8	HOLLYWOOD SQUARES (NBC)	13
9	ONE LIFE TO LIVE (ABC)	11
10	ALL MY CHILDREN (ABC)	10

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.

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PERSPECTIVE

By RICHARD REEVES

Which Is More Real— Walter Cronkite or Alan Alda?

There were 41 television cameras in the high-school auditorium in Nashua, N.H., where Ronald Reagan and George Bush debated three days before the state's Presidential primary election. The crews were from all over New England, all over the United States, all over the world, including cameramen and correspondents from China.

It was a media event of the first rank, made more dramatic when the initial sponsor of the Reagan-Bush confrontation, a local newspaper, barred four other Republican candidates—Howard Baker, John Anderson, Philip Crane and Robert Dole—from the stage. Reagan, who had picked up the tab for the debate, seized the microphone—and worldwide attention—and argued that the other opponents should be allowed to speak.

Three days later, Reagan clobbered Bush in the New Hampshire voting. That was a hell of a surprise to the press—print and electronic—which had been quoting polls predicting a Bush victory. What had happened? The easy explanation was that Reagan's video heroics had turned the election around. Possible—at least as possible as the chance that the press and polls had just been wrong all along.

Blame television. The tube, after all, is now the arena of politics. The weight of a political event is obviously different if it is televised—only a few hundred people were actually there to see Reagan play the hero. Everyone else saw it on television—and the little scene was played and replayed for three days on network and local news. Far away in Minneapolis, the Bush Minnesota campaign manager was complaining that network emphasis on the New Hampshire primary would cause potential voters at Minnesota precinct caucuses the same day to stay away from their own delegate-selection meetings to watch the New Hampshire results on television. Boy, he said, things would be different if Walter Cronkite came out here.

The Bush campaign manager—his

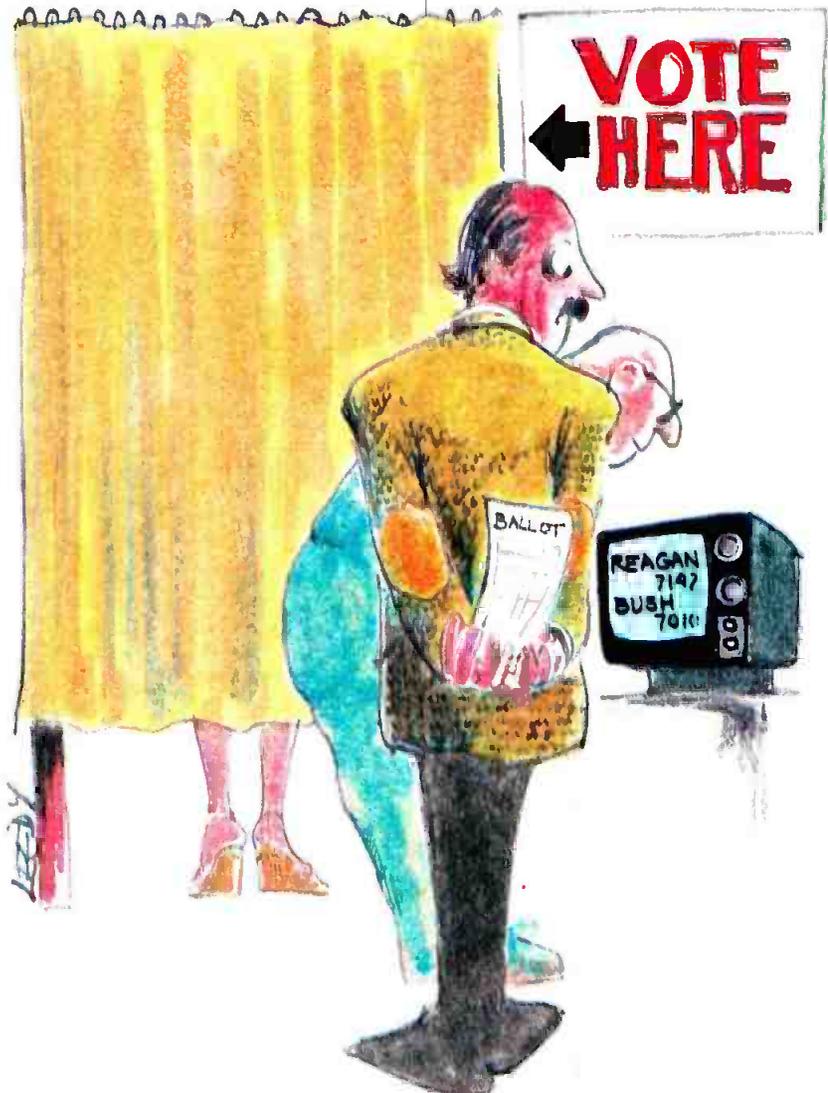
name is Thomas Tripp—was probably right. His candidate and Reagan finished practically even in the Minnesota caucuses—whose representatives will eventually send 34 delegates to the Republican National Convention (compared with New Hampshire's 22)—but Reagan was far and away the day's winner, because primaries are more dramatic than caucuses and television was broadcasting the primary to the Nation.

Television obviously affects elections—or the perception of elections. Edward Kennedy's press secretary had complained two weeks before that CBS's projection of President Carter as an almost 2-to-1 winner in the Maine Democratic caucuses had cost Kennedy a victory. The CBS estimate

was made at 4:37 P.M. on the day of the caucuses—in a brief announcement during a tennis match between Bjorn Borg and Vitas Gerulaitis.

The projection, based on vote samplings in key precincts, was broadcast—if anyone noticed it—before one third of the Maine caucuses had even begun. Kennedy eventually lost by only four percentage points in the vote count, and his people claimed that the projection caused some of their supporters to stay home rather than brave the wintry night to vote for their candidate. Maybe. But it's also possible that if the projection did have an effect, it was to convince Carter supporters they should stay indoors rather than freeze their feet to get to an election their man had already won easily.

Who knows? Television is still too



new in our lives for anyone to figure out what it is doing to us—to our politics and to our lives. And is television news—the programming most political studies concentrate on—really the most important part of the day's broadcasting?

That last question struck me when I came home from New Hampshire. I had written a newspaper column about the draft—President Carter had announced that he wanted to reinstitute registration of young Americans—and I received a letter from a woman named Ann Norman in California. This was how her letter began:

"We have three draft-age sons, so your column was read with keen interest by all of us.

"I don't think it is so much 'do what I please' or a lack of patriotism as it is the suspicion—nay, the certainty—that they will be poorly used. After all, this generation has been watching Hawkeye on *M*A*S*H* every week of their lives, railing against the stupidity of the generals and politicians. . . ."

Maybe we should be thinking about Alan Alda rather than Walter Cronkite. I only know one person who has been doing that consistently: Michael J. Robinson, a political scientist at Catholic University in Washington, D.C. For years, Robinson has been arguing that entertainment television has had at least as much impact on American public opinion as has the rise of television news coverage. His basic thesis, which I am paraphrasing, has been: News on television tends to make the Nation more conservative because its emphasis on disorder, disruption and governmental inadequacy influences viewers (and voters) to think about protecting what they have; prime-time entertainment, however, tends to make the Nation more liberal by celebrating, sometimes subtly, sometimes directly, liberal social attitudes, including alternate life styles and sexual freedom.

Robinson obviously is on to something. Certainly prime-time television has blurred the lines between reality (if news is reality) and entertainment with forms like docudrama. And anyone who watches local news in any city knows that news has become a form of entertainment—or, at least, that a lot of people in television are trying to make it one.

Of course, entertainment and politics have always been closely related. "Uncle Tom's Cabin" was meant to be more than just a story. In a new book, "How To Play Politics for Keeps," to be published this June by Simon and Schuster, Jeff Greenfield, the television critic of CBS News' *Sunday Morning* and a former media consultant to politicians, discusses one link.

"The point is that 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...on television, for the same reason that candidates used to—and still do—speak at barbecues, church picnics, political dinners and school graduations; because that is where the people are.

"Chicago's mayor William 'Big Bill' Thompson would draw crowds to his rallies by staging circus parades—a device very similar to the tactic of buying advertising time in the middle of highly rated television shows, using them to 'draw the crowds.'"

Well, ideas are still more important than the men and women—the candidates—in politics. The ideas behind opposition to the war in Vietnam were infinitely more significant than the persons of Eugene McCarthy and George McGovern. And, if ideas are presented as part of entertainment—Robinson's thesis—that is a giant leap forward from candidates sandwiched between segments of entertainment, the game played by "Big Bill" Thompson and discussed by Greenfield.

So, as Mrs. Norman suggested in her letter, maybe Alan Alda is the man to watch. She never even bothered to mention Walter Cronkite or Ronald Reagan.

Whatever effect television is having on our lives and politics, it's here to stay. I have very little patience with people who talk about things like changing television to serve the needs of education. Television is now our environment—it is education that has to change to deal with that reality. Just as politics has been changed to live with the reality that 41 cameras now show up in high-school auditoriums in New Hampshire. ■

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Your quote from Jeff Greenfield, the CBS-TV critic, was inspired ["Panoramic View," February]. It demonstrated your editorial independence from the industry you rely on for your livelihood.

*Wm. G. Birmingham
Chicago Heights, Ill.*

I must say I'm thrilled someone has finally filled the void left by the many "industry" magazines I have access to. PANORAMA is a thoroughly enjoyable reading experience. I would also like to

comment on those, like Jeff Greenfield, who view television as "occasional flashes of humor and brilliance, an occasional exercise into dramatic excellence, set like occasional jewels on a huge bed of cold oatmeal." Do these same people read every article in a newspaper or magazine? Do they attend every movie that comes to town? Do they finish every book they start? Probably not, which is why we should expect no more from television. There will always be some shows done interestingly, professionally, surrounded by filler. There will always be too many

*Love Boats to every M*A*S*H. As in everything in life, there's got to be some bad so that we may appreciate the good.*

*Chris Warren
Program Director, WGNA-FM
Albany, N.Y.*

I couldn't be happier than I am with PANORAMA magazine. The article in your March issue about the "information revolution" was especially interesting, since I've been fantasizing about a "videotext"-type concept since I was 12 years of age.

*Fred Miller
New York City*

At last! An intelligent, comprehensive and interesting publication. Makes me glad I'm a charter subscriber. To borrow a phrase from the *United States* article ["Is America Ready for 'United States'?" February], you've got it O.T.P. (on the page).

*Gino N. Di Biasi
Lancaster, S.C.*

PANORAMA is informative, entertaining and an excellent reference source. Your work fills the void that has existed since the medium got its start 50 years ago. Keep up the good work.

*Ken Burrows
TV Editor, The Idaho Statesman
Boise, Idaho*

Thanks to all readers who sent us comments on our first few issues. We have room to print only a small selection, but we were gratified to see that those comments were overwhelmingly favorable. We hope to continue to satisfy those readers who have discovered PANORAMA already, to attract new ones and to stir up all of them so that this letters column will be a perpetually lively forum for ideas and opinions about our magazine and about television. —Ed.

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.

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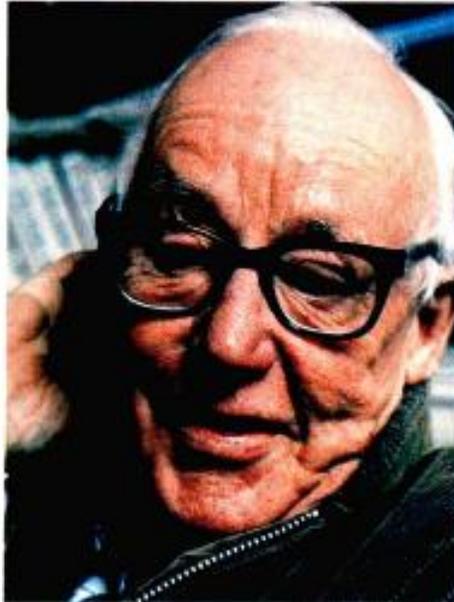
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Q&A

RED SMITH



"In 1927," Walter "Red" Smith once said, "I was on the copy desk of the Milwaukee Sentinel when everyone in the sports department was fired. All I knew about sports was what the average fan knew, but I was the most dispensable copyreader."

Since that fortuitous happenstance, the byline "Red Smith" on a sports story or column has been synonymous with insight, gentle wit and elegance of style. Now 74, Smith has written out of New York for most of his 45 years as a columnist—first for the now-defunct Herald Tribune, in recent years for The Times, whose service syndicates his column to papers throughout the country. But it was not until 1976, when he was awarded the prestigious Pulitzer Prize, that his status as the preeminent sports journalist of his time became a matter of record.

Still, Smith has never been known as a battler. That is why it was rather startling to find him in the forefront of a controversy after the appearance of his column on Jan. 4. That column placed him among the first to suggest an American boycott of the Moscow Summer Olympics as an appropriate response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. The following week, Smith again aroused press attention when The Times elected to kill a second column encouraging the burgeoning boycott movement.

In the wake of all of this, PANORAMA sent contributing editor Harry Stein to speak with Smith about the boycott, the Olympics and a subject he often has dealt with in his column—the influence of television on sports. The interview took place light-years from any suggestion of turmoil, in Smith's quiet study adjacent to the garage of his New Canaan, Conn., home, beneath the stern, black-and-white gaze of Ty Cobb. Their edited conversation:

PANORAMA: In that first column where you called for a U.S. boycott of the Summer Olympics, didn't you say that it was unlikely that anyone would listen to such a proposal? That, in spite of the invasion of Afghanistan, it would surely just be business as usual?

"How Can You Play Games with People when They're Committing a Naked Act of Aggression?"

The dean of American sports columnists talks about the Olympic boycott, and the roles politics and television have played in sports through the years

SMITH: Not quite as strongly as that. I said an Olympic boycott hadn't gained much momentum yet. But I suspected that it would as the Russian tanks and troops pressed on with their bloody work.

PANORAMA: At the time you wrote the column, according to public-opinion polls, most people did favor American participation in the Games.

SMITH: They swung over very fast, within a very few days. By the time I got out to the Super Bowl, close to two weeks later, I guess, the San Francisco Chronicle had had a poll that showed a

75- or 80-percent majority in favor of withdrawal.

PANORAMA: What prompted the thought that a boycott might be proper retaliation?

SMITH: Well, I wasn't thinking in terms of retaliation; I was thinking in terms of common decency. How can you go over and play games with these people when they're committing a naked act of aggression against a neighboring country? It's just inconceivable to me that the world can say, "Aren't they mischievous?"—and go and play games with them. It wasn't a matter of retaliation; it's simply a matter of withdrawing entirely from Ivan's playground.

Talk about business as usual—well, this isn't even business. This is games that little boys and little girls play. Of course there are athletes who have devoted years to preparing for this great moment, and they'll be deeply disappointed. Well, if this is the first disappointment they've ever had in their lives, then they've been very fortunate, and I'm pretty sure it won't be the last.

I'm not callous about it, but I think their problems are minuscule compared with those of the Afghans.

PANORAMA: So when you suggested it, you did believe the boycott was a viable possibility?

SMITH: It didn't take very long to find that out. I wrote the column on January 3, and the next evening President Carter picked up the suggestion. Not that it was an entirely original thought. NBC had been terrified by the possibility since the day of the invasion. They had been much in touch with the State Department, asking, "Is Carter going to say anything?" They'd been assured that he was not going to—until, as it turned out, our ambassador to Russia, Thomas Watson, told the President that a boycott would be the severest action that the United States could take against the Soviets—the severest action short of military force—so at the last moment Carter added the proposal to his speech.

PANORAMA: Did you hear from NBC about your column and your stance?

SMITH: Only in the sense that immediately after I wrote that column, I began to get phone calls. All the networks wanted me to come on the air and talk about it, and I did go on NBC, with Tom Snyder, on a thing called *Saturday Prime Time*, something like that.

PANORAMA: *Prime Time Saturday.*

SMITH: I only went on because my good old friend [one of the show's producers] Hy Goldberg asked me. I had declined to go on the *Today* show and *Good Morning America*, because I don't get up that early. And I also went on PBS, the *MacNeil/Lehrer* show, because I respect the job they do.

PANORAMA: Is it the first time in your career that you've gotten such overwhelming response from the media?

SMITH: I'm quite confident that it is the largest response I've ever gotten. Letters have poured in—I don't know how many—and then all the calls from the networks and individual radio and TV stations. The amazing thing to me is that almost invariably you get a pro and con reaction on some issue of controversy. But in this case, with a single exception, everyone applauded my position in favor of withdrawal. The single exception was an anonymous and rancorously abusive letter about American hypocrites who made no complaint when we were in Vietnam.

PANORAMA: Do you think that argument has any validity at all?

SMITH: Well, it bothers me some. It bothers me that it's possible to compare the Russians' presence in Afghanistan with our own presence in Vietnam. It can be argued that both superpowers have intervened in a civil war. But if that's true, then the old, old story of two wrongs not making a right applies. It certainly does not justify the Russians if we did something similar.

PANORAMA: Why did you decide to write a second column on the subject?

SMITH: Because the response was so fast and because within a few days other people—[Vice President Walter] Mondale, officials in the Netherlands—were picking up the theme. It was a matter of such lively interest that it seemed to me not only to justify, but to demand the second column.

PANORAMA: What was the rationale of

The Times for killing that column?

SMITH: I can't tell you that because, insofar as I've been able to understand, there wasn't any.

The whole thing was ridiculous. It would have been nothing more than a little intramural quarrel (and anybody who doesn't have quarrels in his office has got to be numb or dead) except that the column went out on the news-service wires and then, an hour or two later, The Times killed it. This titillated the curiosity of papers all over the country. I never told anybody that they killed that column, and I wasn't going to tell anybody about it.

PANORAMA: Had you had previous columns killed?

SMITH: No, never. Not in 45 years. Not at The Times or the Herald Tribune. I never had one killed in Philadelphia or St. Louis either.

PANORAMA: At the very least, weren't you annoyed?

“With a single exception, everyone applauded my position in favor of withdrawal.”

SMITH: The sports editor [Le Anne Schreiber] asked, “Are you mad?” And I said, “I'm disgusted.” Which was true. I thought her reasons, as far as I was able to understand them, were altogether invalid.

PANORAMA: Those reasons being that you were writing politics, not sports?

SMITH: No. She muttered something about the tone of the column. Personally, I didn't think it was either strident or shrill or whatever other unpleasant adjectives you can think of to describe tone. I thought it was a reasoned and quiet column.

It was a bit of editorial judgment with which I strongly disagreed. But, I really mean this, never in my life—and I'm in my 53rd year without interruption on newspapers—have I questioned the right of an editor to decide what shall be in his paper.

PANORAMA: Are you sure it was entirely her decision?

SMITH (smiling): She said so.

PANORAMA: OK, we'll both have to ac-

cept that. How many Olympics have you been involved with as a reporter?

SMITH: Well, let's see, I've covered all the Summer Games, beginning in 1948—that's '48 in London, '52 in Helsinki, '56 in Melbourne, '60 in Rome, '64 in Tokyo, '68 in Mexico City, '72 in Munich, '76 in Montreal. That comes to eight Summer Games. And this year is my third Winter Games.

PANORAMA: What are your strongest memories of those earlier Games?

SMITH: Well, the '48 Games were in London and one of the sensations of those Olympics was Emil Zatopek, the Czech distance runner. I remember describing at the time his gyrations and gesticulations, his anguished appearance on the track. I wrote that he ran like a man with a knife in his heart.

My God, he was a spectacular thing. Four years later, in Helsinki, he won, if I'm not mistaken, the 5000, the 10,000 and the marathon. I remember following his marathon on the press bus, out of sight of the rest of the field, with his countrymen in the bus leaning out the windows and chatting with him in Czech. He was inhaling our gas fumes and saying it was a very dull race. The *marathon!*

And, oh, I remember Harrison Dillard—known as Bones—who'd had an unbelievable streak of consecutive victories in the hurdles, was absolutely unbeatable, but who'd somehow failed to qualify for the '48 Olympics. In the U.S. trials he'd gotten off stride, knocked over hurdles and finally had to quit. But he had already qualified in the 100-meter dash. So, missing out on his specialty, he ran in that. It was an extraordinarily close finish. I'll never forget a little guy, an alumnus of Penn State, certain he'd won, being midway into his victory dance, when somebody said, “You didn't win it, Bones did.” It was thrilling.

And there was the 400-meter relay, where an honest but myopic judge mistook one of the white stripes on the red track for the boundary of the legal passing zone. He ruled that the Americans had passed the baton outside the legal zone and were therefore disqualified. The British, who hadn't won a gold medal of any kind in track and field at their own big picnic, had finished second and so they were declared the winners. A great roar went up when this was announced. I was waiting for the elevator to go down from the press box and the little guy who ran the elevator was missing. He came charging back to his post and announced, “We did that on cold mutton!” In fact, they did it on the bad eyesight of a judge who was

subsequently reversed. And they had to unplay "God Save the King" and give back the gold medals.

PANORAMA: It sounds like you had enormous fun at those Games.

SMITH: I've had fun at all of them. Less and less fun as the Games got bigger and more cumbersome, but that's be-

PANORAMA: But with the enormous growth in size and the influx of money, and especially with the impact of television, hasn't there been a loss of innocence? Isn't that the genesis of the politicization of the Games?

SMITH: Well, I don't go back to 1896 when Baron Pierre de Coubertin conceived of the modern Olympics, but he

Mark Spitz and the others who became instant media stars?

SMITH: Well, Johnny Weismuller was a swimmer who made it in the movies, as was his successor, Buster Crabbe. They both became Tarzans. As a matter of fact, the Olympic stars don't seem to make it as movie actors these days. They go into television and endorsements. In cases like runners Marty Liquori, Bill Rodgers and Frank Shorter, one [Shorter] represents a hotel chain, and the others operate chains of running-gear stores. Though I never saw anyone's bankbook but my own, I've been told again and again that those three are legitimate millionaires.

PANORAMA: Rodgers and Liquori did it without an Olympic medal.

SMITH: That's right. And they're still amateurs. They could still get one.

PANORAMA: So, the impact of TV has mainly been to expand the Games' popularity. It hasn't changed what the Olympics mean in this country or elsewhere?

SMITH: Realists are aware today, as surely realists must have been many years ago, that there are very, very few simon-pure amateurs in sports on the world level—just as there has always been a strong political element to the Games. The fact is, it just isn't logistically possible for a fellow to make a living and devote all his time to training and preparing for a world-level competition. Once there may have been a leisure class that didn't have to work, but unless your name is Kennedy, you're probably not in that class today.

PANORAMA: The question of amateur versus professional status is not a new one either. I'm thinking of the Jim Thorpe case.

SMITH: In ancient Greece, there were any number of cheats. The money was the big thing in ancient Greece. Corruption was rampant. You know, when a man was caught cheating in the ancient Games, he was fined and his fine was used to build a statue. These statues were called *zanes*. They were set up outside the stadium. Well, soon there was a double row of *zanes* leading the way into the stadium of the Olympiad. You just walked between these evidences of cheaters.

PANORAMA: You have written often about the influence of TV on other



“This is a curious organization, the International Olympic Committee. Nobody elects them. It's composed largely of decrepit counts and princes.”

cause they've become so much more difficult to cover as the security measures have grown tighter. But if you were in Munich, you can't quarrel about security measures.

Still, to get to talk to an Olympic athlete these days is, oh gosh, an all-day job. But I've had my share of fun at all the Games.

PANORAMA: Has the mentality governing the Games changed since Lord Killanin succeeded Avery Brundage as president of the International Olympic Committee?

SMITH: Not that I can see. Lord Killanin—who was always described to me as a jocular, whiskey-drinking Irishman—makes sounds in the papers that you could easily mistake for Avery Brundage making sounds. Maybe when you become chief playground director, it does something to you.

You know, this is a curious organization, the International Olympic Committee. Nobody elects them. It's composed largely of decrepit counts and princes and they elect their own membership. They don't even concede that there are American representatives. There are members of the IOC who are delegates to the United States, representing the IOC in America. Once you become a member of the IOC, you see, you belong to a higher order of mortals.

saw the Games as a method of getting young France fit for war. He felt that the youth of France was growing too slack and that these Games might stimulate better physical condition and make them better soldiers. That sounds like politics to me.

And I was certainly not aware of any innocence in 1948 when I first covered the Olympics. Nor was there anything like high sportsmanship when Avery Brundage, in his dignity and infinite wisdom, tossed Eleanor Holm off the 1936 swimming team for drinking champagne in first class on the ship going over. Speaking of politics, those '36 Games were, of course, the ones held in Hitler's Germany, with all the attendant propaganda of that regime—and they were stoutly defended by the IOC leadership. Brundage set a standard that's been pretty strictly adhered to ever since. I really don't think there's been any great change.

PANORAMA: What then has the influence of television been on the Games, if any at all?

SMITH: Certainly it has made the Olympics a much more popular spectacle. We used to read about the Games, and perhaps see some newsreels 10 days after the event.

PANORAMA: How about the impact on the athletes, such as Bruce Jenner and



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sports, such as in the baseball column you did a few years ago during the play-offs, when Philadelphia and Los Angeles were forced to play in a torrential rain.

SMITH: That was the last game of the play-offs and to postpone it would have made a mess of the schedule. [National League president] Chub Feeney said he didn't want to call the game and deprive either team of the opportunity to win, and so on.

But I've blamed TV, or, if you prefer, the promoters of sports events who are subservient to the demands of television, for any number of things. For example, for playing the World Series games at night in the arctic climes of October. There ought to be two prime considerations on the part of the commissioner [Bowie Kuhn], who is the custodian of baseball, in governing that event. First, the quality of play. He should be untiring in his efforts to see that the games are played under the best possible weather conditions. It's simply a matter of fact that in October your prospects of good weather are much better under the sun than they are at night.

The other thing is the comfort and convenience of the people who pay up to 15 and 20 dollars a seat. They're the ones who support the game. A nighttime World Series is justified with talk about giving the fans in Ogden, Utah, a chance to see their sport. Well, Bowie is simply enchanted with Nielsen ratings. He's a child of the TV era, and he thinks high TV ratings demonstrate what a splendid job of stewardship he is doing with the game. His first consideration should be the cash customer, not the freeloader out in Ogden, Utah.

I've got nothing against Ogden, Utah, by the way. I've been there and it's a perfectly nice town.

PANORAMA: But Kuhn isn't operating in a vacuum. He's presumably under pressure from network executives, from owners, from advertisers and all the rest, who themselves are after higher ratings.

SMITH: So, he's under pressure. [Chicago White Sox owner] Bill Veeck—who ought to be the commissioner; not that I know he'd ever want the job—for a while, when he was out of baseball, ran Suffolk Downs race track. Well, one time he put on a big, expensive race, and TV was going to buy it. Veeck was operating on something of a shoestring and he could really have used the

TV money. But TV told him, "We'll run the race at 5:20," or whatever suited TV, and Bill replied, "Look, when I took this job, one promise I made to the customers was that the horses would go to the post at the advertised times. I'd like to have that money, but, sorry, you'll take it at regular post time or not at all." So he passed up the money. He had the guts to resist the pressure.

I use him as an example of one who does have the guts. There are many examples of promoters who have no guts whatsoever.



●● The moment the fans' interest flagged, why, of course, TV discarded boxing for something else—cheerleaders, or swimming contests, or something. ●●

PANORAMA: You write often on boxing. What's been the impact of TV in that sphere?

SMITH: Well, I'll tell you one of the changes I've noticed. Years ago, at the old Madison Square Garden, every Friday night used to be fight night, and Friday night after Friday night you would see at ringside the same jowly, prosperous-looking citizens, each with a varnished blonde on his arm. They were all around ringside. And then TV came in and they set the cameras up on the 50th Street side so they looked into and across the ring to the 49th Street side. Very soon, in a matter of a very few weeks, there weren't any of the guys with the varnished blondes on the 49th Street side. Now that was one noticeable effect of television (*laughs*).

PANORAMA: Do you miss those days with the varnished blondes?

SMITH: Oh, they're still around; they're just on the other side of the ring (*laughs*). But really, the impact of TV on the fight game has been very dramatic. It long ago became standard practice for the promoter to black out the local area to protect his box office. Since TV was reluctant to black out the biggest market of all, New York, the result was that many championship fights moved to Detroit, Chicago, St. Louis. That way TV still could have the New York market for selling razor blades and shaving cream.

In those cases, TV dictated where major fights would be held and where they would not be held. But, of course, it had an even more profound effect than that. TV is an insatiable medium, and when there were three and sometimes four network boxing shows each week, it simply devoured the talent. First, the competition killed the small clubs where the talent grows, and then TV devoured the talent itself. Eventually you began to see the same fellows every week on the tube and it became very dull.

PANORAMA: Was that what was meant when some said that the Friday-night fights killed boxing?

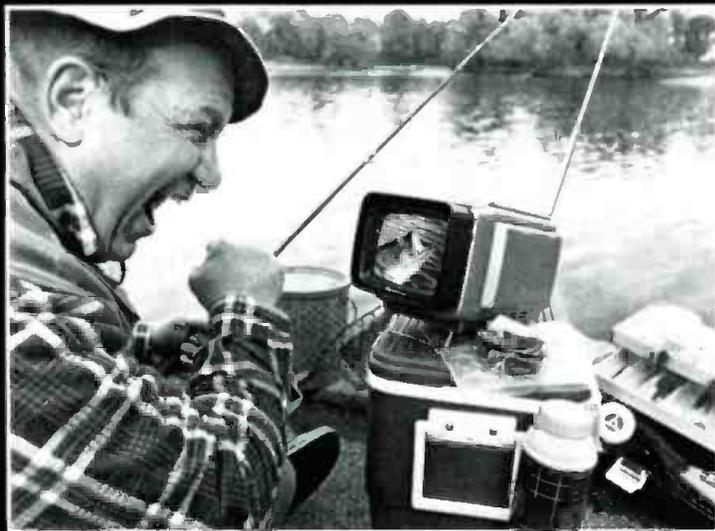
SMITH: That's right. Not the Friday nights by themselves. There were also Monday nights and Wednesday nights and sometimes Saturday nights. The moment the fans' interest flagged, why, of course, TV discarded boxing for something else—cheerleaders, or swimming contests, or something.

PANORAMA: Isn't Muhammad Ali credited with bringing back TV interest?

SMITH: Well, he certainly stimulated and spread the public interest in boxing where it had been moribund in many areas. But he didn't bring back home television, no. Ali began to make it on those multimillion-dollar closed-circuit deals. Then, at some point, the networks found out that they could still get very good ratings and sell a lot of advertising on boxing shows.

But not *ordinary* boxing shows. They wanted championships. So now we have two champions in every weight division except one [the middle-weight], and we have many, many phony divisions. So now all the networks can have as many champions on any card as often as they like. We've got

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nothing but generals; there are very few soldiers.

PANORAMA: Do you discount the claim of some television people, notably Howard Cosell, that the medium actually creates the stars? He has actually taken some credit for creating Ali as a public figure.

SMITH: It doesn't surprise me to see Howard pre-empt God. But I still believe God does the creating and not ABC.

PANORAMA: I was just reading a profile of Cosell in which he maintains that the success of *Monday Night Football* was due primarily to the personality of Howard Cosell.

SMITH: I've heard people say that. I've heard Howard applauded for helping to make *Monday Night Football* a success. I question that. I think prime-time football was what attracted the audience, not Cosell, not even Dandy Don or Giff [announcers Don Meredith and Frank Gifford]. ABC happened to catch pro football at the very peak of its rocket to popularity, at a time when all across the country the status symbol was a pair of tickets on the 50-yard line on Sunday, and you couldn't get them because they were all held by season-ticket owners. Here was a chance to sit at home and see this exciting event in prime time in comfort. It was an entirely understandable success.

As a matter of fact, when [the late] Bert Bell, who was the National Football League commissioner, went to court and won the right to televise away games back home and black out the city for the home games, that was probably the greatest single merchandising step that professional football ever took. Because seeing eight games—it used to be six—on the tube worked up local interest in the local team. Then, if you had to pay to go out and see them, you would.

PANORAMA: Has TV had any impact on the way football is played?

SMITH: Not that I know of, except for those damned timeouts expressly for commercials. As if there weren't enough commercials without taking time out to insert a few more. But it's been done for so long now that we don't even notice it. We just ride it out.

PANORAMA: Do the players themselves notice any more?

SMITH: Do you remember the famous 1967 Green Bay-Dallas championship game in Green Bay, the one where Bart Starr sneaked one yard for the winning touchdown? That was the most punishing day of cold I've ever seen for a major event. With the wind factor, it was something like 40 below. It was torture that day. Well, after the game, when my work was done, I went over to the home of Henry Jordan, a tackle on the Green Bay team. Henry had been home for a couple of hours, sitting in front of the fire, having a couple of belts, so he was beginning to feel fairly human by the time I came shivering in. And he told me that the only times during the day when he was keenly aware of the cold were during the TV timeouts. During other timeouts, they had something to keep them occupied, and, of course, when they were playing they were far too busy to worry about the cold. But during those TV timeouts, they suffered terribly.

He said the officials' mouths were all bleeding and he didn't hear a whistle all day, just looked for hand signals. The whistles stuck to the officials' mouths.

PANORAMA: You, of course, were in the heated press box.

SMITH: We were in an *unheated* press box. They had a blower at each end that didn't send any heat at all, and the windows kept steaming up.

PANORAMA: Do the TV announcers have it any better? They have separate compartments at most stadiums.

SMITH: I don't know whether they have it better or not. I was wondering if they can dictate what comforts they want in that little booth. Perhaps they can, or arrange for it themselves.

PANORAMA: They might make the case that as live performers they would need to be more comfortable to do their jobs.

SMITH: Listen, I need to be more comfortable than I sometimes am in the press box to do *my* job.

PANORAMA: Have you yourself ever been tempted to try your hand at broadcasting?

SMITH: Uh-uh, I never wanted to be anything in my life but a newspaper stiff. I never wanted to be an actor, never wanted to sell insurance, never wanted to drive a truck. All I wanted to

do is what I'm doing.

PANORAMA: In other words, you don't regard sports broadcasting as even being part of the same profession?

SMITH: It's a different profession entirely. In spite of people like Cosell saying "speaking as a journalist" and "reportorial honesty compels me to say," and so on, I don't consider him either a journalist or a reporter. He's show biz.

PANORAMA: And, in fact, he's often knocking the print guys.

SMITH: *Always* knocking the print guys. Howard is very, very envious of people who can read and write. He's very insecure in their presence.

PANORAMA: Is that why he makes such a point of his own "erudition"?

SMITH: It's pure insecurity.

PANORAMA: Is there any envy on the part of print people over the money made by those in the broadcast end of the sports business?

SMITH: Anybody with a consuming interest in money doesn't go into the newspaper business. I don't suppose that we're all saints who are willing to renounce the world and all its fleshpots, but I'll tell you, if anybody's first objective in this life is money, he doesn't choose the newspaper business, because it isn't there. He goes into business, or advertising, or broadcasting, or something else. And best of luck to him. ■

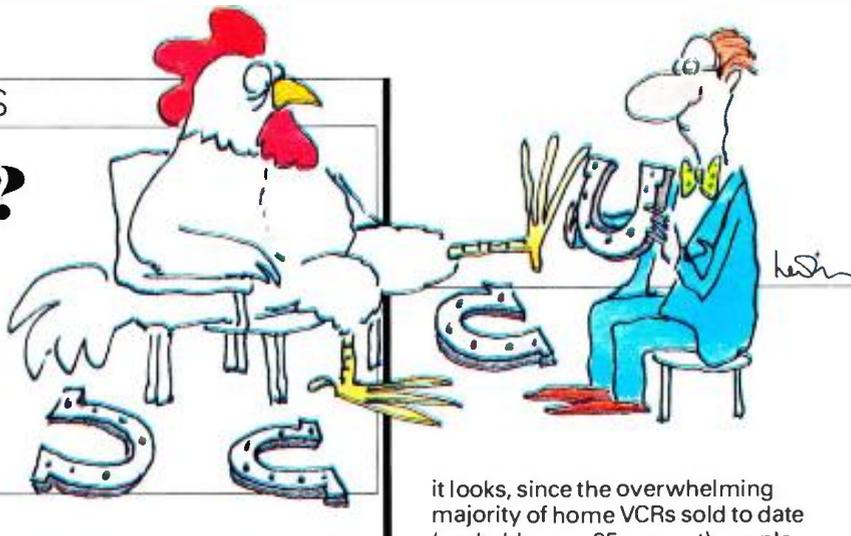


●●Howard [Cosell] is very, very envious of people who can read and write. He's very insecure in their presence.●●

Compatibility? Don't Hold Your Breath



By DAVID LACHENBRUCH



If you own a home videocassette recorder, or VCR, the overwhelming odds are that it's a machine tailored to either the Beta or VHS standard. If you happen not to be so fortunate, you have a V-Cord II, a VX-2000 (also known as VR-1000 and "Great Time Machine"), or perhaps, if you were really premature, a Cartrivision. The first two are the current "standard" home VCR formats. The other three fell by the wayside during the standardization process—a process largely accomplished by the anarchy of the marketplace.

Now, a Beta cassette simply won't fit in a VHS machine (and vice versa). Even if it did, it wouldn't work. Nor can any other cassette be used outside its own family of machines, any more than an Edison cylinder can be played on a 33-rpm turntable. Prerecorded program cassettes are equally abundant in Beta and VHS formats, but none are offered for the other three families. Blank tapes are available for V-Cord and VX-2000, but hard to find; and looking for a Cartrivision cassette is something like trying to find a horseshoe to fit a chicken. So much for compatibility among families.

There's also the matter of internal compatibility—or rather, the lack thereof—within the two dominant families themselves, both of which have changed during the course of competing to provide longer and longer recording time. The first Beta recorders, introduced in 1975, could record or play for one hour on an L-500 cassette. By 1977, new machines running at half speed had doubled the recording time; the same cassette could be used in either the old or the new machine, but what was recorded on one couldn't be played back on the other. The latest Beta machines have a new, even slower speed, bringing recording time on the L-500 cassette to three-and-a-half hours, and new cassettes containing more (and thinner)

tape have extended that time to four-and-a-half and five hours per reel.

All Beta-3 machines (those with the slowest speed) also are designed to record and play back cassettes in the faster Beta-2 mode, and some can even play back tapes made in the original Beta-1 mode (one hour per L-500 cassette)—although they cannot record at this speed. But other Beta machines are completely incompatible—that is, a tape recorded on one can't be played back on the other. Some are only incompatible in one direction: they can play back tapes recorded on older machines, but tapes recorded on them can't be played back on the older models.

Compatibility-wise, the VHS format is almost as messy. It also has progressed through three speeds, which provide two, four or six hours from the same T-120 cassette. Because some machines have one speed, some two (but not necessarily the same two) and others all three, there is, again, only one-way compatibility between some VHS recorders.

As a result of the numerous metamorphoses of the current videotape "standards," these different types of Beta and VHS machines are now in use:

Beta	VHS
Beta-1 only	VHS-1 only
Beta-2 only	VHS-1 and -2
Beta-2 and -3	VHS-1, -2 and -3
Beta-2 and -3 record; -1, -2 and -3 play	VHS-1 and -3

Thus, there are actually eight different types of "standard" machines, all of them at least partly incompatible with the others in the same family. And, of course, all Betas are completely incompatible with all VHS's, not to mention V-Cords, VX-2000s and Cartrivisions.

It's confusing, but not quite so bad as

it looks, since the overwhelming majority of home VCRs sold to date (probably over 95 percent) can play either the Beta-2 or the VHS-1 speeds, the ones used for prerecorded movie cassettes.

Actually, we can live pretty well with multiple standards for home VCRs, just as we have learned to live with them for home-movie and still-photography equipment. Except for playback of prerecorded movie cassettes, the VCR is basically a closed circuit: tapes usually are recorded and played back on the same machine.

The videodisc is a completely different animal. A disc system is designed for playback only—its usefulness is dependent on the availability of prerecorded programming in the proper format, just as a radio is useful only if there's broadcasting on the frequencies it can tune in. Three major (and mutually incompatible) videodisc systems already are in contention for the American market—the Philips/MCA grooveless optical system, now on sale in eight United States metropolitan areas and scheduled to go nationwide by the end of this year; the RCA grooved capacitance system, due for national sale early next year; and the Matsushita/JVC grooveless capacitance system, with a target date paralleling RCA's.

In the quest for standardization, RCA has struck quickly, signing up its two arch rivals: CBS, to make and sell discs for its system; and Zenith, to manufacture and market compatible players. Philips and MCA have a formidable ally in computer giant IBM. Matsushita and JVC currently stand alone, but together they make up the world's second biggest (after Philips) manufacturer of consumer-electronics products.

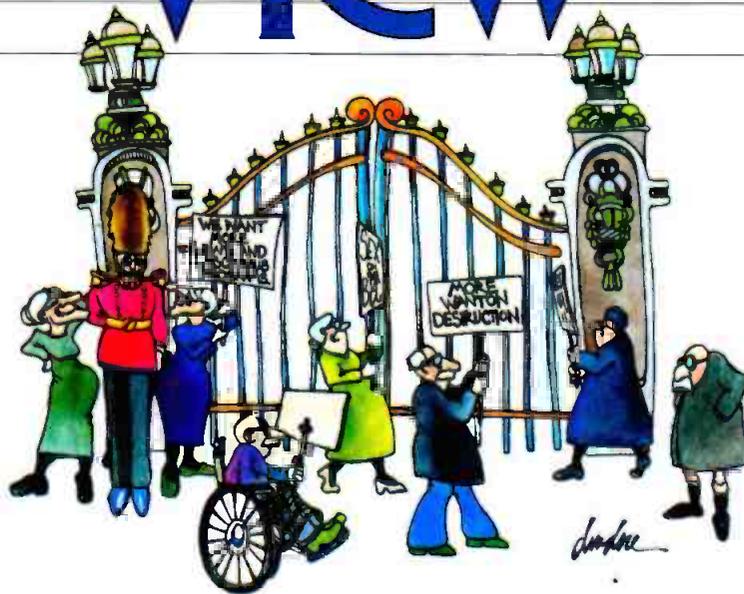
While the VCR can survive a multiplicity of formats because of its ability to make its own recordings, most videodisc proponents believe just one play-only system ultimately will survive. *This* is the compatibility battle to watch. ■

PANORAMIC VIEW

LUST IN THE AFTERNOON

However much Americans may delight in the reserved manners they associate with British TV programs, it seems that some segments of the viewing audience in Britain have had their fill of decorum. Senior citizens, for example, are demanding more sex and violence in the afternoon.

The organization that oversees Britain's commercial-television system, the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA), has been soliciting opinions on the performance of its 15 regional programming companies, whose franchises will come up for renewal at the end of this year.



Viewers were invited to write in their critiques of current programs, and over 2000 people responded—some of them with unexpectedly ro-

bust views.

Shift workers agreed with the spritely pensioners that daytime programs on Independent Television—an inno-

cent mix of soap operas, educational programs and magazine shows—are too “thin-blooded,” and asked for a chance to see in the afternoon the more adult programs normally transmitted after 9 P.M. Early-to-bed viewers in the older male category are annoyed at missing the more daring shows broadcast late at night.

It is unlikely that any of the companies now bidding for one of the lucrative franchises is actually going to offer lust-in-the-afternoon fare for elderly citizens. But the IBA official in charge of the opinion survey, John Harriott, promises, “The views of all those people who wrote to us will be considered very seriously.”

—Richard Gilbert

LIVING TESTIMONY

Not even death will keep 33-year-old Charlie Hartz from testifying against the companies he feels were responsible for his fatal illness. His testimony and cross-examination have already been recorded on videotape. “I may die before I take the stand in a courtroom with a jury,” says Hartz matter-of-factly. “But at least the world will hear my words and see my agony...even if I’m dead.”

Hartz claims to be a victim of Agent Orange, code name for a powerful chemical defoliant used in Vietnam, where he served from the summer of 1966 through the spring of 1968. Nine years after his tour of duty, doctors discovered a brain tumor that needed immediate surgery. He also suf-

fered from other physical problems and three of his four children had birth defects. Talking with other Vietnam veterans, he soon found many who were plagued with tumors and cancers. Besides their illnesses, they found they had another thing in common: exposure to Agent Orange. “Lots of us got sprayed directly or drank water in which it was sprayed,” recalls Hartz.

On Sept. 24, 1979, Hartz filed a lawsuit against Dow Chemical and four other companies responsible for the manufacture of Agent Orange, asking that those firms set up a \$44 billion trust fund to care for the victims and families of Agent Orange. Since then, two other veterans, whose suits were joined with Hartz’s, have died.

Hartz’s lawyers, fearing that he might not live long enough for a court appearance, motioned U.S. District Judge George Pratt to have the deposition videotaped. The defense, worried that it might turn the trial into a television circus, asked for a ruling on the tape’s use.

“We didn’t object to the actual videotaping,” says Leonard Rivkin of Rivkin, Leff & Sherman, the law firm that spearheads the defense. “We just wanted some guidelines. We agree that any poor soul who might not survive a trial wait should be videotaped.” Rivkin says he had asked that the tape be used only for the Hartz trial and that it not be exploited to drum up more litigation for other Agent Orange cases. The court agreed.

Hartz testified and was

cross-examined for five hours on Feb. 6, in a special videotape deposition room in the Federal Courthouse in Philadelphia. Declares Hy Mayer-son, one of Hartz’s lawyers, who has videotaped testimony five other times (four of these involving cases with witnesses who were not expected to live through a trial): “His testimony, which we now have a permanent record of, was a courageous act that serves every soldier who was exposed to Agent Orange.”

No one can predict when the case will come to trial—and whether the key witness, Charlie Hartz, will be alive to testify. When asked that question, he replies, “No... No... I won’t... be there. But it felt good to already have my day in court. I’m glad there’s a record of this.”

TALKING IT UP

John Davidson says that his whole career has been aimed at one goal. "Having my own talk show," he says, "is a dream come true."

On June 30, Davidson—who once took his horse Poly Royal on *The Tonight Show* so he'd have something to talk to Johnny Carson about—is scheduled to begin realizing his dream, when he replaces Mike Douglas as the centerpiece of the daily talk-show syndicated by Group W. So, what will the show be like, John?

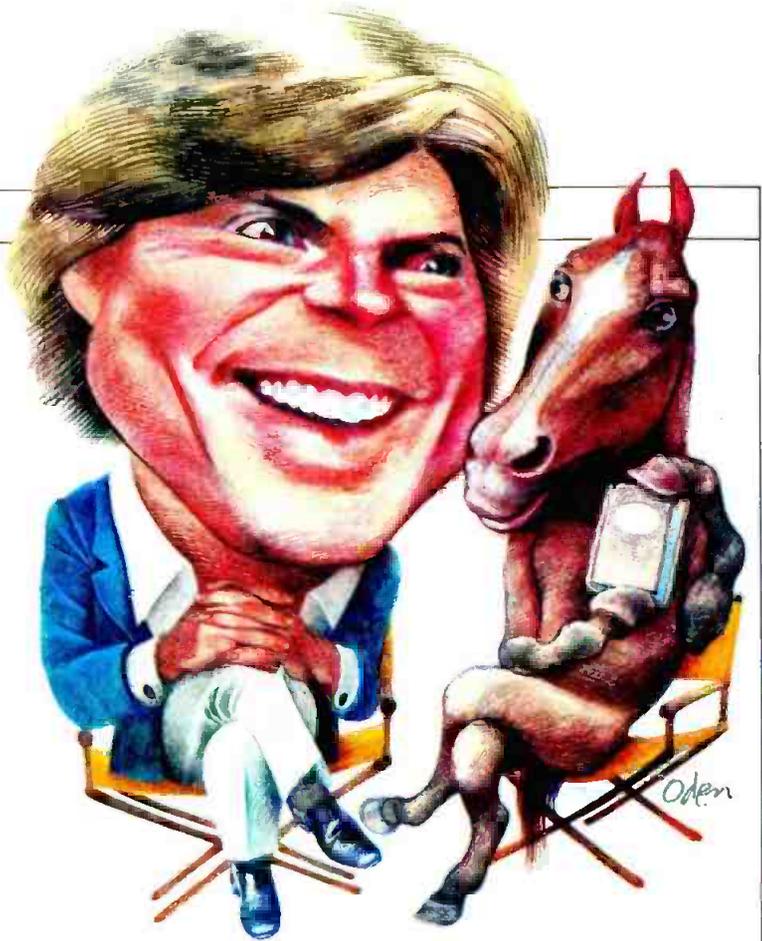
"I want to synthesize all the great masters of the talk-show format," he replies. "It's a great American institution. I want to bring the investigative approach of Donahue, Merv's love of people, the wit of Carson, the charm of Douglas and the warmth of Dinah Shore. But it'll be my personality that'll make the show different. I'm going to change the set, use the audience more and the band is going to be more electronic."

If all this leads you to con-

clude that Davidson doesn't yet have a definite idea of what the 90-minute show is going to be like, you're right. "I don't want to give the idea that I'm just going to be copying the other shows, but it will take me a while before I find my own style. . . . Look, I wasn't all that loose in Vegas when I first started, either. But above all, I'm an entertainer and this show is going to be *entertaining*."

Fine, but what's it going to be like? We finally got some help from Davidson's executive producer, Frank Miller, vice president and general manager of Group W. "This isn't going to be the Phil Donahue show," Miller explained. "But, say if 'Kramer vs. Kramer' came out, one day we'd have the stars of the movie on, and the next we'd have a discussion of divorce. We're going to have serious talks on loneliness, medical problems, topics that our viewers can identify with and relate to."

Relating to the largely female audience is something that Miller is counting on Davidson to excel at. "Because



of his age," said Miller, "he's more sensitive to the issues facing women aged 25 to 45. Douglas had an older image in the eyes of the viewers"—a sin that may or may not have been responsible for the 54-year-old Douglas's being replaced by the 38-year-old singer. (Some observers say it was; others say Douglas's

money demands were the primary reason.)

Miller added: "We're also going to have celebrity interviews, but we want to show the other side of these stars, like having Johnny Mathis cook for us in his home, or Helen Reddy crochet, or Cher skate." That's talk-show biz.

—Laura Stevenson Maslon

●● The next quarter-century in mass communications is going to be marked by a radical upheaval. There will be many more messages competing for attention. In the Eighties, the message is going to overcome the importance of the medium. There will be so many highways, so many paths into the viewer's home, that each message will have to satisfy the individual viewer's capacity and desire to select and choose. This emerging new reality is going to turn McLuhan on his head. The slogan for the next quarter-century, in my judgment, will be the exact reverse of McLuhan's: the *message* is the medium. The message is what will count. The message will be more important than the messenger. ●●

—Newton N. Minow, PBS chairman, addressing the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, Los Angeles



ONE IF BY LAND, TWO IF BY SATELLITE

"And now for something completely different," starts a promotional tape for BBC in America, a new cable-TV network that, beginning in mid-year, will offer the colonies 21 hours of prime-time programming each week from the British Broadcasting Corporation. "From the people who brought you *Monty Python's Flying Circus*, *The Ascent of Man*, *The Six Wives of Henry VIII*, *America*, *Search for the Nile*, *Civilisation*, *Elizabeth R* and many other top-quality programs . . . from over 5000 hours of programming each year, we have selected the highest-rated prime-time shows!" Next, a woman screams, a gun fires, and a body slumps to the floor. A car careens, crashes and explodes in flames. Bare breasts flash on the screen and a woman writhes in ecstasy.

Something completely different, indeed.

It turns out that British viewers don't spend *all* their time watching proper Edwardian drama of the kind we're used to seeing on *Master-*

piece Theatre. In fact, according to Thayer Bigelow, who heads up BBC in America for the Time-Life Satellite Network, the shows he's choosing typically draw three to five times the audience in England that the shows carried by PBS draw there.

There are sitcoms like *Some Mothers Do 'Ave 'Em*, featuring "run-amuck witticisms and some of the zaniest slapstick since Laurel and Hardy"; and *My Wife Next Door*, which explores "what happens when a couple waiting for their divorce to be finalized unwittingly move into abutting country cottages." And action dramas like *Shoe-string*, featuring an offbeat private eye who pulls in clients through his job as a radio "Dear Abby"; and *Target*, following the exploits of a hard-hitting police squad that "risks death as dauntlessly as a S.W.A.T. team."

This is not to say that BBC in America will be filled solely with Anglo equivalents of *Starsky & Hutch* or *Laverne & Shirley*. There also will be documentary series like *The World About Us*, popular-music shows like *The Old*

Grey Whistle Test, and, yes, even some of those splendid costume dramas we've grown to know and love—including the lusty *Casanova* (source of the racy footage on the promo tape).

BBC in America will be distributed to cable systems around the country by satellite from New York. Most systems will offer it free to customers as part of their basic subscription, while some will include it in extra-cost packages. In addition, Time-Life plans to sell about six minutes of commercial time per hour of programming, though the ads will be grouped between programs and not in the middle of them. There will be fresh programming four nights a week from 8 to 11 P.M., with repeats the other

three days. Night owls will get a second chance at the shows, since each day's prime-time offerings will be run again from 11 P.M. to 2 A.M.

All things considered, what is most remarkable about BBC in America probably is that Time-Life has managed to assemble an entire network's worth of programming. Joan Wilson, who buys BBC programs for PBS's *Masterpiece Theatre* and *Mystery!*, says, "I buy very selectively for specific umbrella series, and I can only take so many hours. The BBC produces *so much* stuff—they just go on and on. A lot of it's good and some isn't. [BBC in America] will be varied, and that will be the fun of it. You'll want to pick and choose, which is what smart viewers do anyway."

OUTLOOK

●● We can no longer blame the shallowness of our programming on the people who watch. We must put the responsibility where it belongs—on those responsible for producing those programs. ●●

—Arch L. Madsen, president of Bonneville International Corporation, owner of KSL-TV, Salt Lake City, in an interview for the broadcasting-trade quarterly *r.f.*

Picture this: You're in the kitchen, happily soufflé-ing along with Julia Child, when suddenly the doorbell rings. Instantly, Julia disappears from the TV screen, leaving you with a picture of your caller—and a rapidly deflating soufflé.

If this scenario doesn't make you blanch, you may be interested in a new television security system dubbed the Look-Out, manufactured and marketed by GBC Close Circuit TV Corp. At the heart of the Look-Out is a specially modified, 12-inch, black-and-

white television monitor, into which is hooked a TV camera focused on your front door. The sound of the doorbell activates the system, automatically letting you see whomever—or whatever—the camera sees. The system's \$450 price tag also includes a two-way sound module, which allows you and your doorbell-ringer to converse ("Go away, I'm soufflé-ing." "OK.")

Actually, up to three cameras can be hooked into the monitor, which means that a viewer can, at the push of any one of three buttons on top of the set, immediately check out several locations—such as the

swimming pool or infant's room. "My last three grandchildren were reared on closed-circuit TV," boasts Harry Lefkowitz, chairman of the board of the 21-year-old company that specializes in CCTV. "My daughter could watch her children in their cribs while she was downstairs cooking dinner."

But Lefkowitz believes that most of the 25,000 to 50,000 people he expects to buy the Look-Out this year will want a single-camera system for front-door use only. Says Lefkowitz: "If it's a bill collector ringing your doorbell while you're watching TV, you don't have to answer it."

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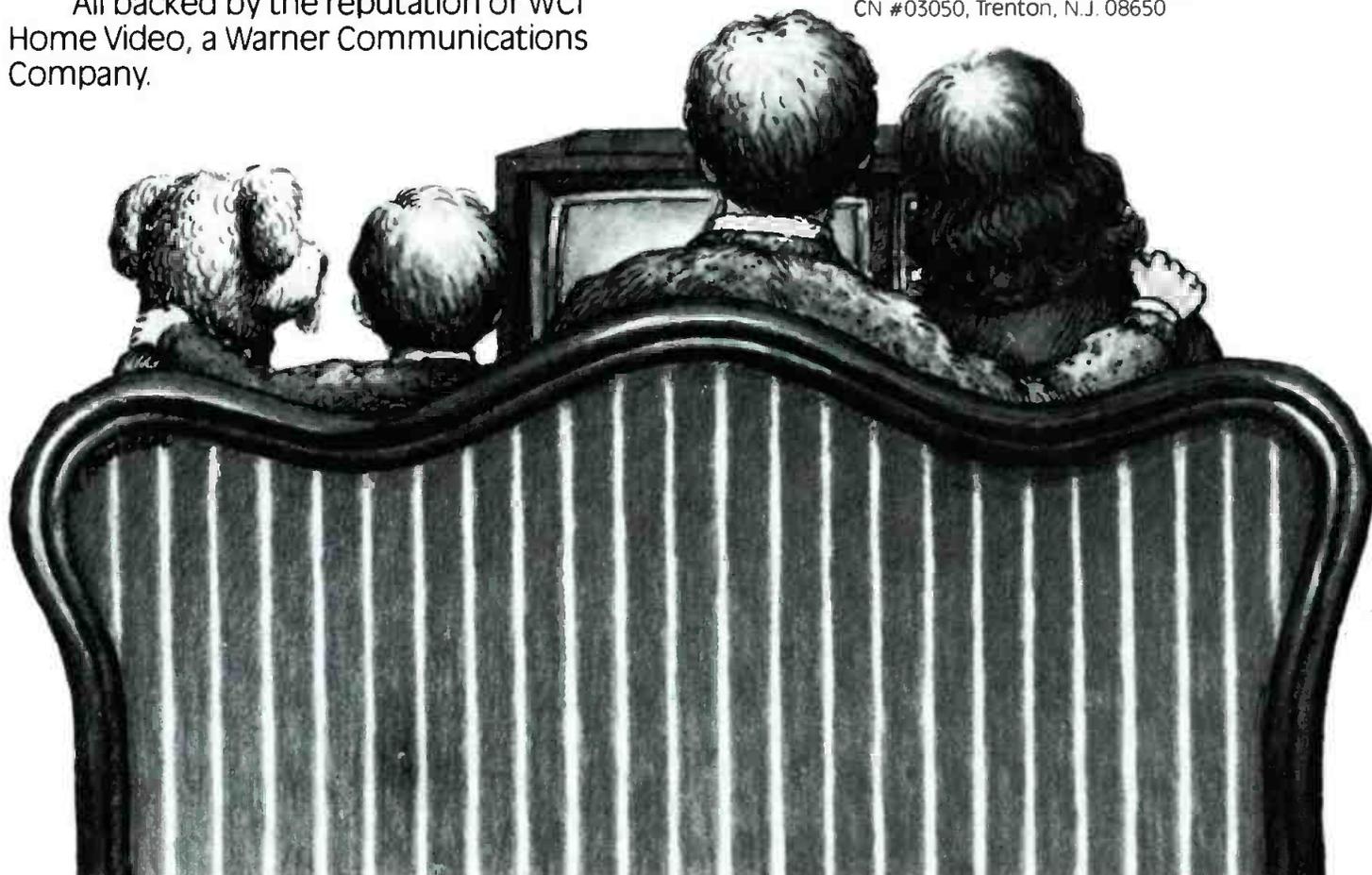
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ABC film called "Fun and Games." It's a story of the on-the-job sexual harassment of a woman on an assembly line, and Harper is excited by the

“The real goal of regulation is a [simple] thing—all the Government has to do is start everyone in the race from the same gate, with no head starts and no added weights or handicaps. Then it should get out of the way and let the public choose.”

—Elton H. Rule, president of ABC, Inc., at a Maryland/D.C./Delaware Broadcasters Association convention, Ocean City, Md.

COUCHLESS CASTING

“I’m a television baby,” says Valerie Harper.

“I had this whole thing set out where I finished *Rhoda* and I was going to do nothing but features.” She did a couple—“Chapter Two” and “The Last Married Couple in America”—but, somewhat to her chagrin, she found that the best scripts offered to her have been television movies.

So this month she is tentatively scheduled to star in her first dramatic television project since *Rhoda*, a two-hour

script. “I’d do it if it were in stock in Akron,” she says.

Sexual harassment on the job is “the best-kept secret women have except rape,” says Harper. However, her film “doesn’t make men the bad guys. It’s not just the big bad men; women are there with their tight sweaters, too.”

Has she ever encountered such a problem in her own career? “Actresses are asked to trade on their looks,” she replies. “But I’ve never experienced the casting couch. Maybe it’s because I came up in the theater, and most of the casting directors are gay.”

FAST PITCH

An advertising fixture on New York television—and most cities have their equivalents—is the shouting salesman for Crazy Eddie’s stereo store, who always races pell-mell through his pitch before taking a deep breath and concluding, “Crazy Eddie—his prices are *in-sane!*”

You might think the ads themselves could drive you “in-sane,” but somehow the pitchman’s verbal velocity is mesmerizing and, despite yourself, you watch the damn things.

Some students of consumer psychology believe, in fact, that fast talkers demand our attention—so it should not be surprising that audio specialists are busily at work on devices that will speed up

commercial sound without turning normal voices into those of Alvin and the Chipmunks. One such firm of specialists is Integrated Sound Systems Inc. in Long Island City, N.Y., which got its start designing monstrous stereo systems for discos.

“The human mind is capable of absorbing material at least two or three times faster than we speak, but we’re limited by the mechanics of the mouth,” says ISS president Stuart Rock. “The typical speaking rate for a trained announcer is 150 words a minute, while normal conversation lopes along at about 110. But the mind can easily take in 300 words a minute, and with training can handle up to 500 words. So the mind is idling a lot of the time.”

And an idle mind, maintains Rock’s partner Mike Klasco, is a bored mind—thus faster speech improves not only comprehension, but retention as well. Both improvements hold obvious appeal to advertisers paying hundreds of thousands of dollars for 30 precious seconds of air time.

The ISS “audio compression” technique works by electronically removing from the recorded audio track some of the sound waves that make words. “Speech is a very repetitive wave form,” says Klasco. “With, say, the Southern drawl, the words aren’t changed, they’re simply extended—to maybe 600 to 900 milliseconds as compared with 500 for the fast-talking New Yorker. If you discard some of those redundant sound waves, the ear doesn’t notice, and you don’t need to take out the pauses and phrasing that make speech.”

ISS can compress any commercial by as much as 25 percent (the video is accelerated accordingly, a relatively simple step), but the process works better for some ads than for others. The string quartet playing background music for a Volvo commercial sounded noticeably tinny when compressed, for example; while the *macho* an-

nouncer in a Spalding tennis ball ad came across even more sickeningly sure of himself than he had at normal speed.

The two entrepreneurs, who started selling their audio-compression service last summer at rates from \$500 per minute, clearly expect the technique to make them rich. They are reluctant to reveal their clients and claim not to know whether speeded-up spots have actually been telecast, but they do say they have done at least demonstration work for CBS and Ford as well as Volvo and Spalding. Beyond commercials, Rock and Klasco dream of accelerated network promotion spots, movies that are compressed instead of cut to fit commercial breaks and even newscasts with more stories from faster-talking correspondents. “The potential,” they believe, “is limitless.”

Considering that the speed of Klasco’s own voice often approaches the outer limits of comprehension—a “side effect,” he thinks, of listening to compressed commercials—we have to wonder if widespread use of his device might lead to an entire nation peopled with Crazy Eddies—all spewing verbiage at ever faster rates.

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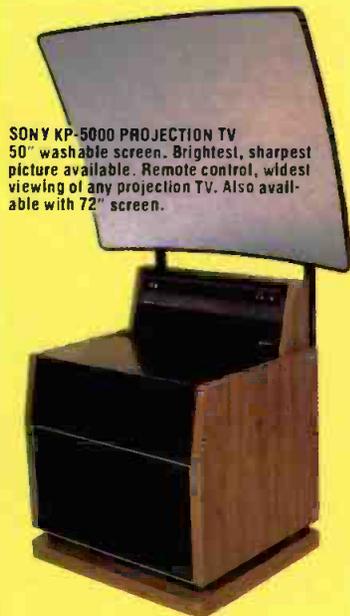
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GOING AT 60

Sue or write a nasty letter.

That's what most companies do when they feel they've been victimized by a *60 Minutes* investigative report. Not the Illinois Power Company, which chose to fight television with television.

Last November, *60 Minutes* broadcast an exposé about alleged multimillion-dollar cost overruns in a nuclear power plant under construction by the Illinois Power Company. Harry Reasoner charged that, due to mismanagement, the plant will cost three times the original estimate. "The effect of that broadcast was devastating," moans Harold Deakins, IP manager of public affairs. "My own wife was watching the show with me and asked in astonishment, 'What's going on at that plant? Harold, are you leveling with me?'"

His wife wasn't the only stunned viewer. Deakins says he received dozens of calls from friends and employees asking him the same question: Was the *60 Minutes* report accurate?

He told them, as he'll tell anyone, that the *60 Minutes* investigation contained several inaccuracies, such as the charge that the IP plant has experienced cost overruns well beyond those of similar nuclear power plants. On the contrary, says Deakins, his plant has the *lowest* cost overruns. The day after the broadcast, he and his staff immediately set out to counteract such allegations by producing an elaborate 42-minute videotape called "*60 Minutes*/Our Reply."

"It's the most sophisticated reply to TV journalism that I've come across," observes Paul Loewenwarter, producer of the *60 Minutes* segment. And Robert Chandler, CBS vice president and director of pub-

lic-affairs broadcasts, terms the Illinois Power videotape "a most unusual method of response to a *60 Minutes* segment." He also describes it as "distorted and misleading"—though he admits to two minor errors, which were later corrected on the air by *60 Minutes*.

The IP tape features the original *60 Minutes* program, broken up with narration by Howard Rowe of the company's public-affairs department, who expands on "those areas that *60 Minutes*...edited out, presented incorrectly or chose to ignore," according to the introduction of the tape. While the IP program was initially produced for in-house television viewing by IP employees and for special presentation to communities served by the power company, more than 500 copies of the tape are now being shown to civic groups, schools, college journalism classes, trade organizations, other power companies and anyone who wants to see it.

"One of our affiliates in Massachusetts was urged to attend a screening at Boston Edison," says Chandler. "It appears they want to persuade the affiliates that CBS is not getting its stories straight. It may also be a way to put the television stations on the defensive about any future nuclear plant stories."

While the widespread popularity of the IP videotape has surprised Harold Deakins, he wishes the requests for the tape would stop (he says IP receives eight to 15 such requests per day). "We've still got to run the railroad," he jokes, adding, "There ain't no way we could turn around the *60 Minutes* story in the eyes of the more than 24 million people who saw it. But we're sure taking a cut at it."

WATCH THIS SPACE

At press time, nonplussed space experts still hadn't figured out what *really* happened to Satcom III, that RCA satellite mysteriously missing since last December. Sent up to beam signals from various cable- and pay-TV program sources, the spacecraft suddenly eluded RCA's earth tracking stations seconds after it was fired into the final stages of its climb. Then, two months later, a Japanese satellite, Ayama 2, disappeared in uncannily similar fashion.

Despite the lack of any conclusive explanations for these vanishings, hypotheses abound. Speculations reminiscent of Buck Rogers suggest that Satcom III either blew up and disintegrated into specks or soared off into deep space. But some experts argue that the launch that propelled the spacecraft was not powerful enough to send the vehicle out so far, and a spokesman for RCA Americom has been quoted as saying the possibility of an explosion was distinctly not his company's conjecture. A theory easier to fathom claims the antenna that should be picking up signals from the earth may have been damaged, rendering the bird unresponsive to all attempts at relocating it.

The last time anyone heard from Satcom III, it was thousands of miles beyond the range of even the most so-

phisticated radar. But persevering bird-watchers, using space-surveillance cameras capable of sighting objects more than 20,000 miles from earth and as small as basketballs, still haven't given up the search. They are the North American Air Defense Command (NORAD), the joint U.S./Canadian military force instrumental in locating another missing Japanese satellite about a year ago. Like Satcom III and Ayama 2, Japan's Ayama 1 had stopped responding to ground stations moments after its engine fired it into what should have been its final orbit. After the craft had been virtually given up for lost, it was discovered, off course, in a photograph taken by NORAD's telescopic Baker-Nunn cameras.

Ironically, these supersensitive instruments can't actually photograph a satellite. They only pick up light as it is reflected from the surface of the satellites. To do this, they must work during the hours between dusk and dawn, when light from a satellite can be located against a familiar background of well-known stars. And the cameras require clear weather, too. So a sighting could take months.

Still, since 1959 this type of equipment has found close to 12,000 man-made objects floating in space. Satcom III or Ayama 2 could be next.

—Carol F. Brown

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Paul Newman Calls the

The subject was death, but gallows humor kept everybody loose when the actor directed his first TV-movie

By DON SHIRLEY

What kind of crazy summer camp was this?

All the usual trappings were there: country roads, mountain slopes, giant old trees, a babbling brook, cabins that looked rustic but institutional, a mess hall with a moose head mounted over the dining area.

But the moose did not look down on tots carrying trays full of summer-camp slop. Instead, there was a cooler full of beer and a counter spread with catered hors d'oeuvres. The campers were adults, and they wore T-shirts bearing the slogan "Death Before Dishonour." The tables had been removed to make room for a camera and cables and lights and sets. Behind the camera, or sometimes pacing nearby, was Paul Newman, superstar, directing his first film for television.

Newman and his cast—including wife Joanne Woodward, Christopher Plummer, Valerie Harper, James Broderick, Sylvia Sidney and Melinda Dillon—were shooting "The Shadow Box," tentatively scheduled to appear this year on ABC. The production is an adaptation of Michael Cristofer's award-winning play about a home for the terminally ill.

That the play even made it to television is testimony to the persistence of the Newman clan. At one point, all three networks had turned down proposals to do the show. But Newman and Woodward both had seen the play on Broadway and Paul had directed an experimental production of another Cristofer work, "C.C. Pyle and the Bunion Derby," in 1978 at Newman's alma mater, Ohio's Kenyon College. So, when Joanne formally revived the idea of putting "The Shadow Box" on TV, her husband's directorial services became part of the package—and his services helped clinch the deal with ABC. To produce the program, Joanne enlisted Paul's daughter Susan Newman,



In "The Shadow Box," as in theatrical films, Newman directed wife Joanne Woodward. Above, in a scene from the show, Woodward plays the ex-wife of a dying cancer patient portrayed by Christopher Plummer.

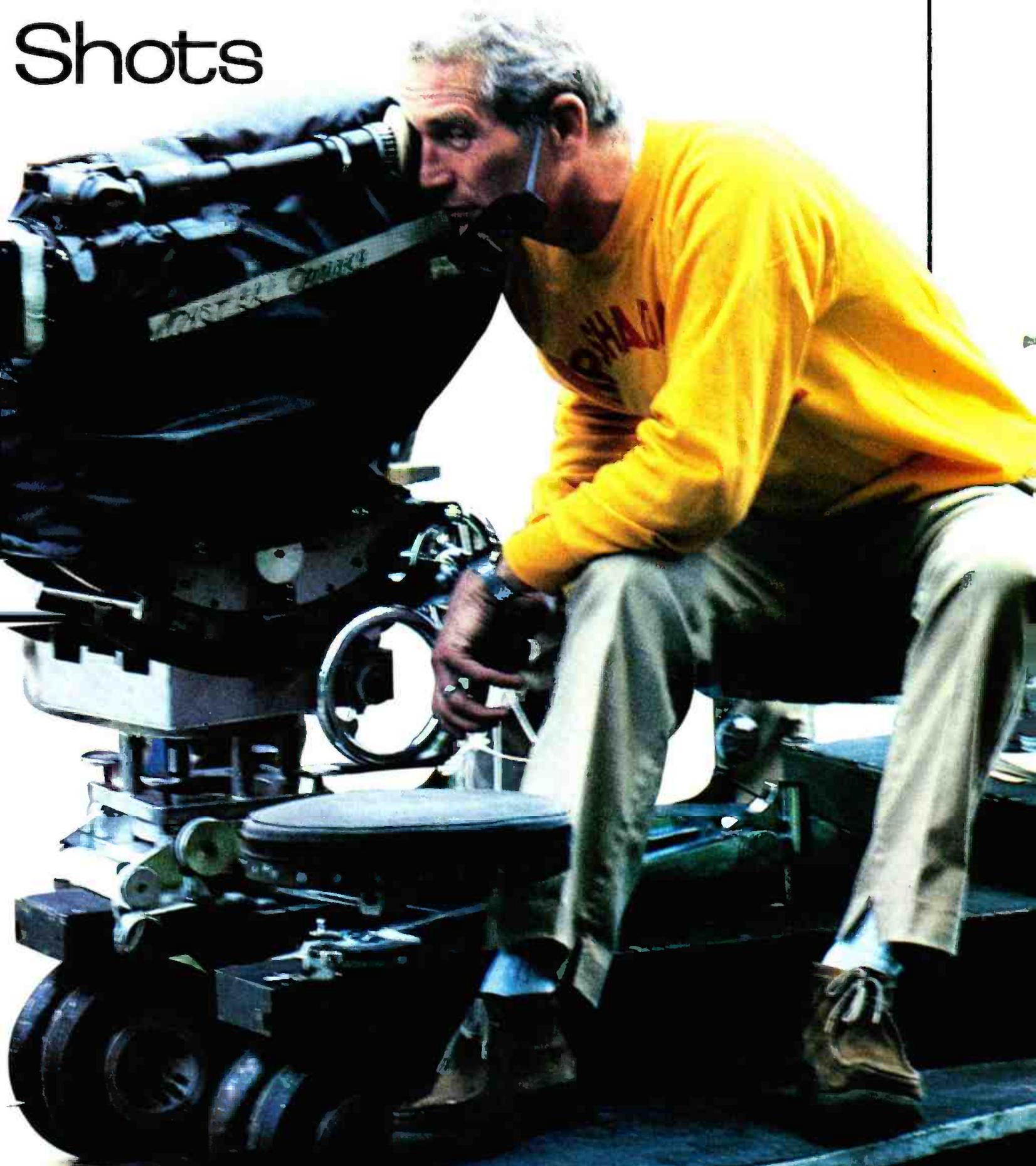
26, a sometime actress (she appeared in the theatrical film "I Wanna Hold Your Hand") and Susan's partner, Jill Marti. The two had been working together for some time, trying to put together an ecology special for TV called "Earth Trek."

For the filming of "The Shadow Box," the Newmans and the rest of the cast and crew appropriated a Salvation Army camp in Malibu Canyon—40 miles from Hollywood—and turned it into a studio masquerading as a hospice. They also managed to retain much of the have-fun-or-else atmosphere of a summer camp. Perhaps it had something to do with their attitude toward the play. Yes, "The Shadow Box" traffics in regrets and recriminations and death, but, hey—it's really an affirmation of life. This was the motif expressed repeatedly in conversations with Newman and other members of the company. And it was expressed in myriad ways around the set, too.

Newman set the tone. The "Death Before Dishonour" T-shirts were his idea. Susan said they reflected her father's "warped sense of humor." But her father was not wearing one of the T-shirts he had inflicted on everyone else. When he took off his sweater, he was discovered to be in a T-shirt with a Budweiser racing insignia on one side and an elaborate depiction of an orgy on the other.

To wear such a shirt while directing such a film is characteristic of Newman. "This is somber subject matter," said director of photography Adam Holender, "but after seven or eight hours of working on it, Paul relaxes the atmosphere extremely well. He tells a joke in the middle of a scene that requires tension, and everyone gains some perspective." Or between takes he would grab a kiss from his wife, who was being made up in the mess-hall kitchen. Or he zipped around camp on

Shots





Valerie Harper's assessment: "He directs as good as he looks."

his black one-speed bicycle, which carried a sign with the imperious message: "Director Only!"

Of course, it wasn't all carefree high jinks. Though rehearsals are often considered superfluous in the slam-bang world of television production, Newman drilled his cast for two weeks before actually shooting the TV-film. "It was fabulous," said Valerie Harper, recalling the rehearsals. "Paul directs as good as he looks. His energy level is fuel for us, even when he hasn't decided what he wants. And he leaves so much of it up to us. He's not a dictator; he's a guide. After those two weeks, we felt we were ready for New Haven."

Once shooting began, Newman still took his time. "Sometimes he got so deeply involved in his thoughts," said Holender, "he simply stopped talking in the middle of a sentence and wandered off a few steps and zeroed in on his inner thoughts. Then he came back 15 seconds or a minute later and picked up where he left off." But Newman wasn't an absent-minded director. "He's wonderfully controlled," said Holender. "He handled crises very, very well."

And crises did arise. Shortly after shooting started, the rains came—in

torrents. The brook turned into a river, washing out the bridge that connected the camp with the main road. The shooting schedule was turned around. Exterior scenes were postponed—not only because the moisture would be in the way, but because the clouds would make the play look too gloomy.

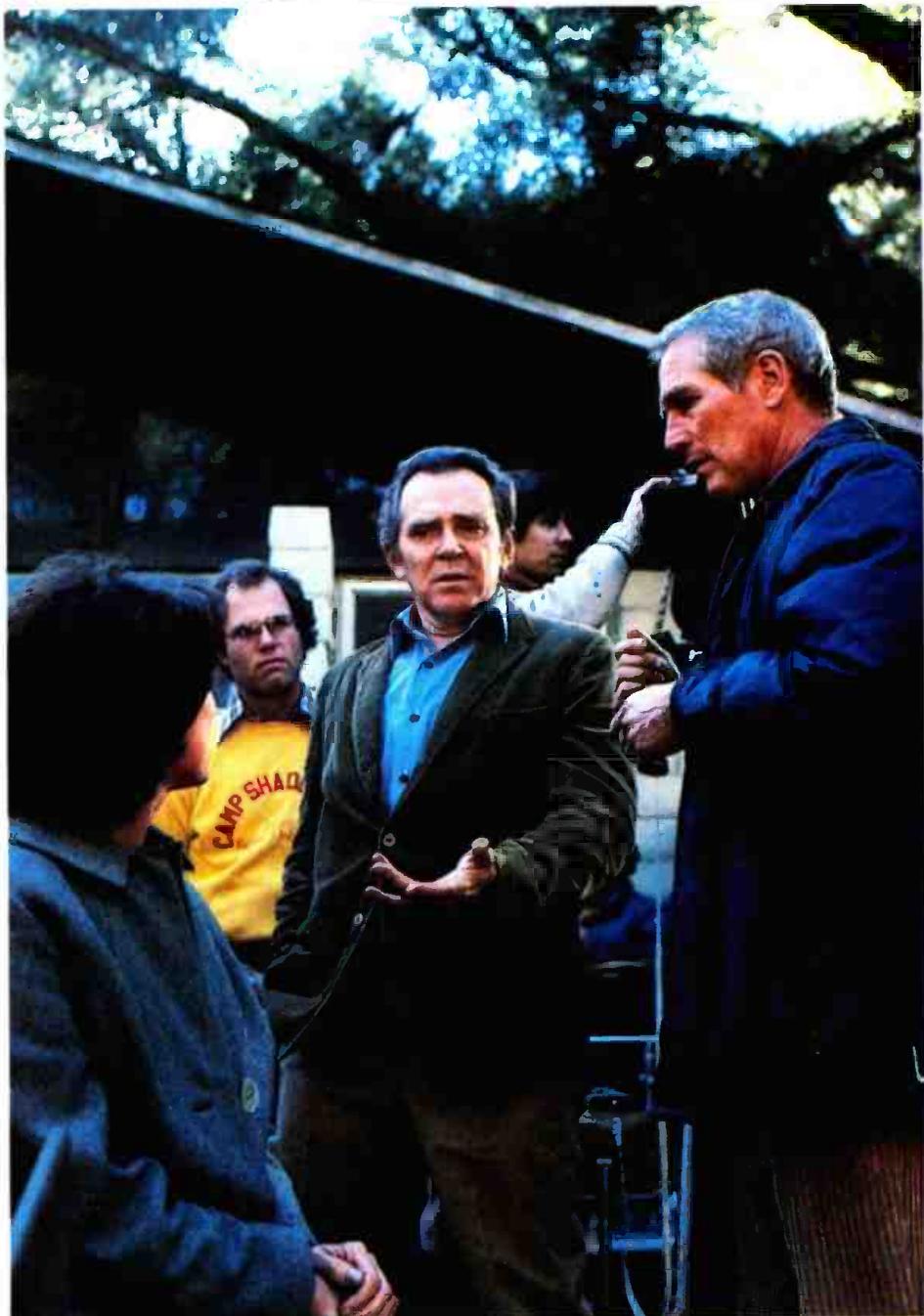
Finally the sun broke through, and suddenly everything clicked. Production was completed three days ahead of schedule. “We were terribly unlucky at the beginning,” said Newman, “but frighteningly lucky at the end.”

The only casualty was co-producer Susan Newman. Shortly before shooting ended, she stumbled into a hole, “and my foot decided to rip in two to accommodate it,” she explained. She suffered a sprain and tore three blood vessels, and on the final day of production she sat in a wheelchair as she discussed what it was like to be in a supervisory position over her famous father.

“It’s had its testy moments,” she said with a smile. “But once he found out who held the purse strings, he lightened up.” She and Marti turned down the director’s request for some helicopter shots. “They wouldn’t read on a small screen,” said Susan. (Her father was used to directing theatrical films—“Rachel, Rachel,” “The Effect of Gamma Rays on Man-in-the-Moon Marigolds,” “Sometimes a Great Notion.”) “There was a lot entailed in bringing him into the TV reality. But he has adapted incredibly quickly.” After going up in a helicopter to see if panoramic shots were feasible, the director agreed with his producers.

Paul Newman once held a prominent position in “the TV reality.” Before he became a movie star, he was a fixture in live television dramas of the Fifties. He remembered those days while chatting in his office at the Burbank Studios, several days after shooting was completed on “The Shadow Box.”

His first speaking role on television, he recalled, was in an ABC science fiction series, *Tales of Tomorrow*. His episode was “about some substance that had come from outer space. It looked like a big plastic cube of ice, but what-



James Broderick, who plays a cancer patient, makes a point to Valerie Harper (playing his wife) and Newman.

ever it was, it was now freezing the entire Northwest. I was playing a sergeant or something. It was all live. They had the countdown for the second act, which started on a close-up of this block of ice, with a pulsating thing inside of it. They pulled back to reveal all of us with earmuffs and gloves. Just as they went ‘Four, three, two,’ the biggest fly that I have ever seen landed on this thing and started walking around on it. Everybody started laughing, because it was supposed to be freezing all of Oregon and Montana and northern California. But the fly paid no attention to us.”

As an educational experience, those days in live television were “the best,”

said Newman. And the busiest. “Sometimes I would come out here [to California] to do a show and finish it on Sunday night, take the red-eye back to New York and start another show on Monday morning.”

He doesn’t claim the shows were all golden. “But it doesn’t matter whether they would hold up now,” he said. “The fact is they aspired to something. Television doesn’t aspire to very much now. It’s one of the greatest inspirations for senility among older people. It doesn’t make them exercise anything.” Newman said he doesn’t plan to return to television acting, citing

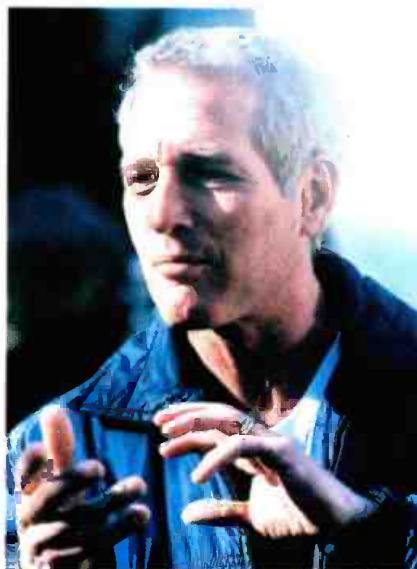
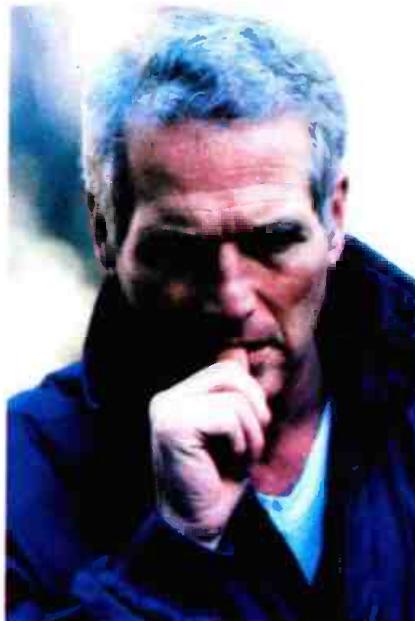


Newman has a special relationship with one of the show's producers—she's his daughter Susan.

the time restrictions of most TV production.

So why is he doing "The Shadow Box" for the little shadow box rather than the big screen? Well, he said, it was his wife's idea, and he likes to direct his wife in roles that don't require her to look frumpy. Here, playing the ex-wife of a terminally ill character portrayed by Plummer, "She looks absolutely smashing." And, he believes, there's no longer any place in feature films for intimate movies like "The Shadow Box" or "Rachel, Rachel." In the future, he predicted, "Television will reign over both ends of the spectrum: the best stuff that really tries to examine the human condition and human experience, and the worst, which is simply... baby food."

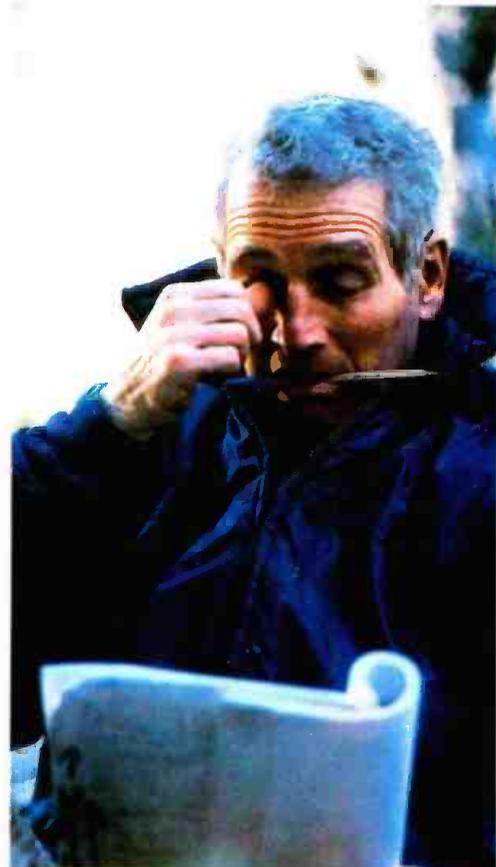
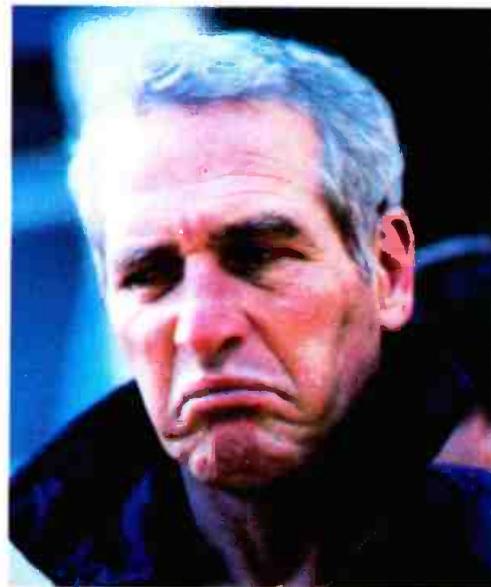
Newman obviously believes "The Shadow Box" falls into the former category, that it "tries to examine human experience," but he is loath to connect it to his own life. He acknowledged that he felt he had been near death "a couple of times—in airplanes, helicopters, race cars." His son Scott died from a mixture of drugs and alcohol in November 1978, and in 1950 his father



died of cancer—the same disease that is ending the lives of the patients in "The Shadow Box."

Yet he said these situations were not like those in the play; the characters in the play know they are terminally ill long before they die, while his personal scrapes with death were relatively unexpected. "If it just comes upon you, it's a lot easier," he said.

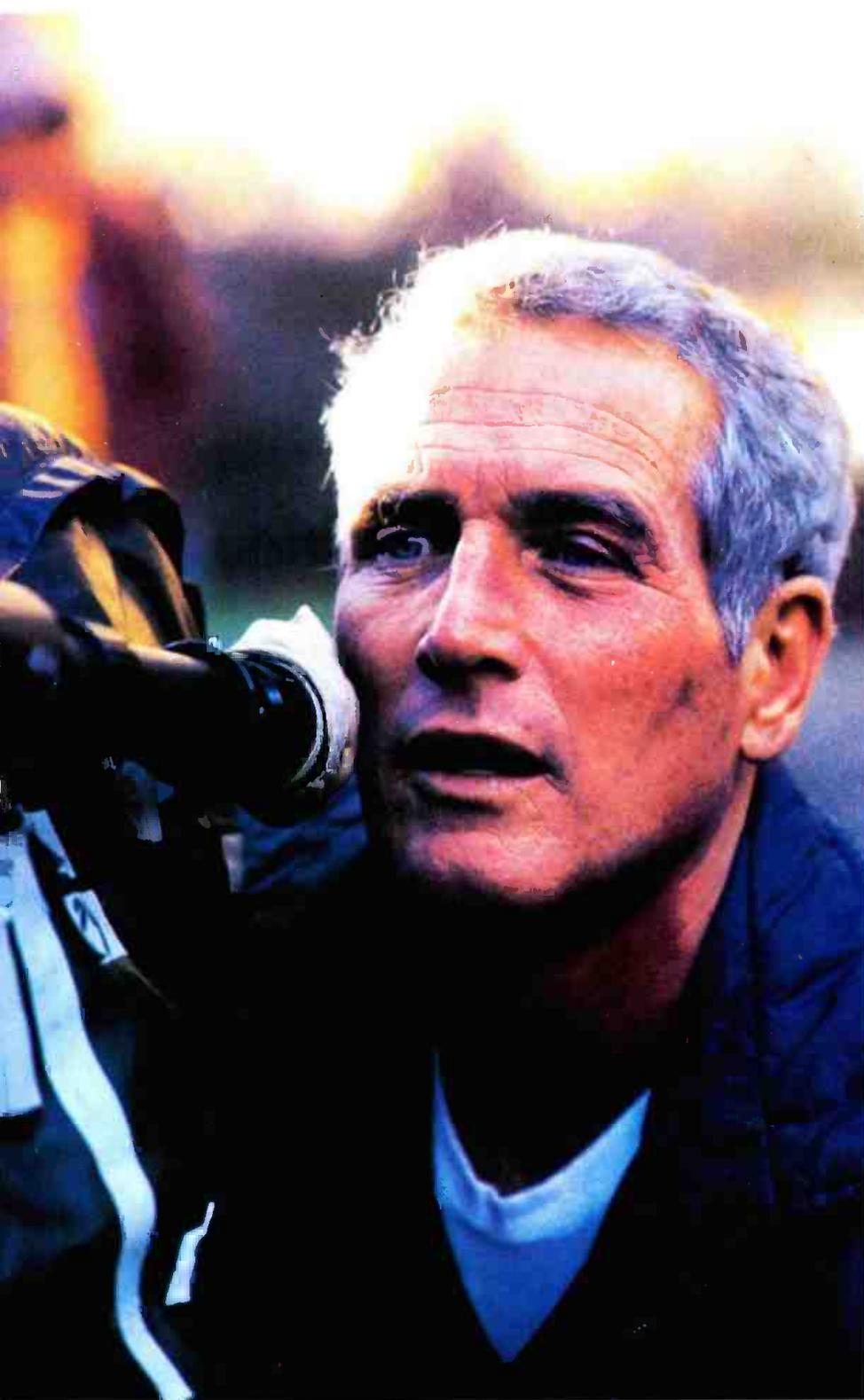
Besides, lest we forget, "The Shadow Box" is "not about death," repeated



Newman. "It's about living, what you do with your time. It's just an envelope into which a lot of interesting experiences have been placed." There is no doubt that Newman believes this, yet he admitted that he wants to stress this theme "because I want people to watch the show. I don't want to scare them away. The second you say 'cancer,' they draw away. I basically treated this as an entertainment."

And so the fun continued at Camp

Though "The Shadow Box" deals with dying cancer patients, "It's not about death," says Newman. "It's about living, what you do with your time."



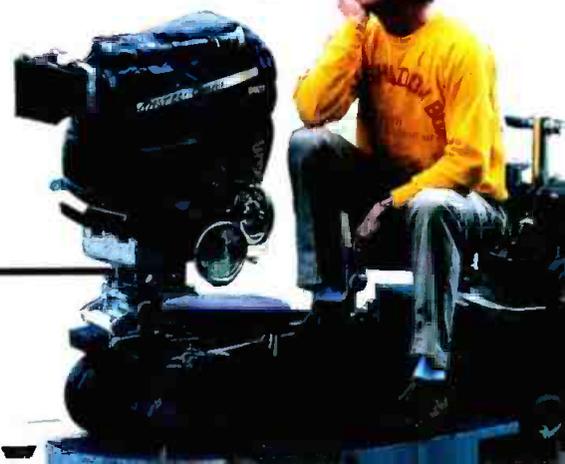
Shadow Box through the final day of shooting and the cast photo session. The players began to gather on the stairs of the camp amphitheater, and Newman whistled for his wife and Sylvia Sidney to hurry up. When everyone was present, the actors persuaded their director to sit at the front of the group. He was reluctant. "God, now everybody's going to see I wear white socks," he protested. "It's very bourgeois to wear white socks."

Later in the afternoon the producers were talking about how they wanted one sponsor to take on all the advertising for the show (and perhaps eliminate some of the commercial interruptions). The end of shooting appeared to make Susan Newman slightly giddy. She suggested that perhaps they could recruit an insurance company to sponsor the show. The commercials would go like this, she said: "After you've seen 'The Shadow Box,' you might want to know more about our life insurance." Everyone laughed.

A camera operator sidled up to Susan with a lecherous look on his face and some bad news: "Did you hear? They had to let some water out of the dam and the river is flooded and we've got to stay here all night. Just you and me and the sycamore." Everyone laughed again.

Then it was time for more pictures, this time a Newman family shot. But Susan wasn't sure she wanted a picture taken of herself in her wheelchair. "I don't want them to think I'm going to be dead next week," she complained. "I want to work."

She didn't have to worry. She looked fine. And death seemed very far away from Malibu Canyon. ■



In the deep and rustic canyons of Topanga, Cal., just outside Los Angeles, Bernie Evans, operator of Tesco, a small cable-television service, casts a suspicious eye at a cluster of secluded houses. Thanks to the surrounding Santa Monica mountains, all the houses require cable service to receive TV. Yet these houses are unaccountably absent from his list of customers. Except for the one in the middle. There the owner faithfully pays his monthly bill. Bernie Evans has his doubts about these houses—the one in the middle, the ones on the sides. But it will take a sheriff to confirm them.

A Beverly Hills businessman who refuses to pay for Theta Cable's service has been repeatedly disconnected. He persists, however, in reconnecting himself. At 4 A.M., police, FBI and cable-firm personnel converge on his mansion. "It was like a damn Treasury raid," one of the night visitors recalls. "We nailed him to a cross."

In a Long Island suburb, a cable company attempts to disconnect a nonpaying customer. "He'd been continually stealing," recalls the company supervisor. "As soon as our man approached the telephone pole, he came out the door with a rifle. He said if my man put a foot on the pole, he'd put a load of buckshot through his head."

STEALING THE SHOW

For the unscrupulous, cable and pay-TV present an irresistible opportunity to raid the electronic orchard

By P.F. KLUGE



With 15.5 million homes served and \$1.5 billion in annual revenues, the American cable-television industry is doing very well indeed. Clear reception, a multitude of channels, small orgies of movies and sports are the foundation of a depression-resistant, gasoline-free leisure-time industry whose customers increase 20 percent each year. But perhaps the best testimony to cable's success, illustrated by the three examples above, is the tenacity of its thieves.

"Pirates," "bootleggers," "illegals": no one knows exactly how much of a dent they make in the industry's earnings. "It's impossible to know how many illegals there are," says one technician. "And anybody who says he *knows* is negligent because he hasn't disconnected them."

Some companies pooh-pooh the pirates, claiming—boasting—that they amount to no more than one or two percent of total audience. Other estimates range up to 10 percent. And one industry source speculates that five percent of the homes located in areas served by cable systems illicitly tap the cable. By any measure, there are thousands, probably hundreds of thousands, of Americans involved in an escalating conflict with cable TV.

What turns otherwise law-abiding citizens into pirates?

Despite companies' comparisons with shoplifting, bad debt, and other forms of thievery, money alone can't explain the determination with which pirates attempt to siphon off cable TV.

"These are people who can afford to pay for cable service," says one Arizona operator. "You don't see lower-income people out there stealing."

Penetrating protective technology, breaking codes, outwitting the pros are at least as appealing as watching movies for nothing. Then, too, piracy is a form of home improvement: upgrading your set, beefing up your home entertainment. After all, pay service is such a recent wrinkle. Didn't TV use to

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be free? Wasn't radio always free—the better the set, the better the reception? So why not fiddle a little? TV piracy is the do-it-yourselfer's caper movie, his back-yard heist.

"Piracy is everywhere," comments a pirate who likes to be called Max Kanobi, after a "Star Wars" character. "Boredom has a lot to do with it. From what I can see, the more people get bored, the more they get into piracy. That's why it's so big in the suburbs, places like the San Fernando Valley. Lots of ham-radio operators. Lots of people with nothing to do, just tinkering, looking for something to occupy them, and TV has occupied a lot of people, God knows. This is just taking it one step further."

There are nearly 300,000 miles of cable, crisscrossing America like some manic spider web, and every mile is under attack. College towns are especially dangerous, because cables, like soft-drink machines and pay phones, are fair game for students. Military bases are rough too: lots of technically trained folks with limited income. And resorts are troublesome because there's always a good chance the season will be over and the pirate gone before anybody's the wiser.

But the center of the battle between cable guardians and renegade tinkerers is surely Southern California, which has resorts, colleges, military bases and the Nation's largest concentration of electrical and aerospace workers. Here, bootlegged schematic diagrams are routinely posted on company bulletin boards. Required parts can be readily purchased in stores and at swap meets. Parts lists and circuit boards change hands like chili recipes. And more than one patriotic defense contractor has unearthed nests of employees building pay-TV equipment with company tools, on company time.

It's tempting to be a pirate in Southern California.

There are varieties of pirates. Some are closet tinkerers who, having beaten the system, keep their triumph private for the same reason a magician stays quiet about his tricks. Others are entre-

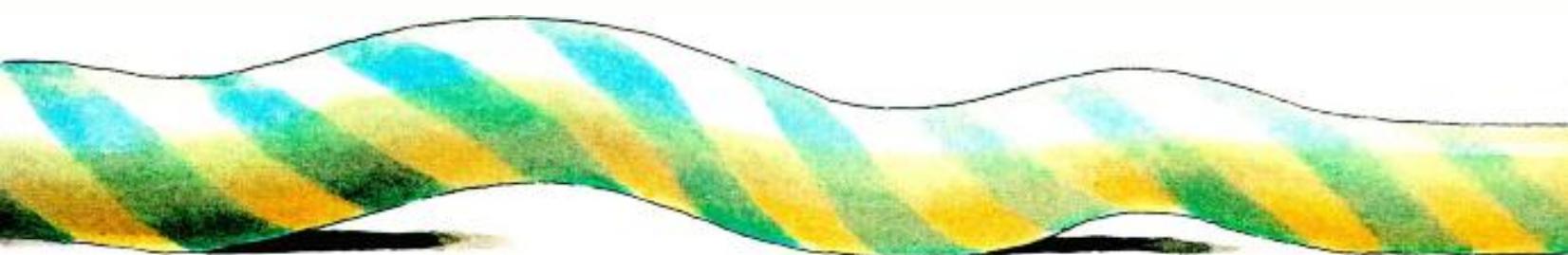
preneurs who peddle schematics, assemble kits, and offer to estimate, install and guarantee their products. Some pirates reach for the stars, spending thousands to wrench Ted Turner's superstation frolics and Madison Square Garden's sports off the satellites. But most pirates are much more mundane operators.

A man who pays for cable service on one TV set goes to an electronics store, purchases an inexpensive signal "splitter," installs it on the back of his set, then runs a cable to other sets around his house, or across the lawn to his neighbor, who antes up half the monthly service fee. Or the new owner of a home moves in and, finding cable service disconnected, shinnies up the nearest telephone pole and plugs his cable into an empty socket.

An apartment dweller, browsing in the utility room while his laundry is drying, finds the box where individual apartment wires feed off the central cable running down from the roof. He plugs himself in. An alert homeowner notices that the jacket on the cable feeding off a nearby telephone pole has worn away. Or maybe it hasn't. Maybe he attacks the cable with a knife, stripping it bare. Then he returns home and points his television aerial at the bare spot. It may not be a perfect picture, but it's something for nothing.

At this level, piracy is easy. Says Jonathan Kramer, system engineer at Warner Cable of Malibu: "It takes someone with a knife, \$1.35 and 10 minutes to add an outlet in a home. If he lives in an apartment building, it takes all of one hand, and 30 seconds, to screw back in a connection that was disconnected."

Cable companies have developed an arsenal of strategies and weapons to stay ahead of these garden-variety pirates. They pay close attention to certain kinds of service calls. Cable transmission depends on amplifiers, and too many illicit taps dilute the strength of the signal. The picture deteriorates, complaints multiply—many of them often come from the pirates them-



selves. Sometimes the pirates even have the effrontery to complain that they aren't receiving the monthly viewing guide in the mail!

To protect telephone poles, companies affix color-coded tags to outlets: orange, say, for live accounts, blue for disconnects, so that they can audit their systems from the ground. Then there are terminator locks: metal cylinders that shield the ends of cables. And, for vulnerable apartment buildings, some companies have invested in "smart" taps, which can be turned on and off by a central computer and thus are immune to on-location meddling.

All this hardware is useless, though, unless cable companies regularly patrol their systems. This has turned previously happy-go-lucky servicemen into something like police, cruising their territories night and day, armed with computer readouts of paying customers and with radio gear that can ferret out clandestine users. Servicemen watch the system. And supervisors watch the servicemen, prowling for renegades and moonlighters.

"We try to audit at least a section of our system every 90 days," says Phil Franklin, system manager of Warner Cable, Malibu. "You have to audit. Otherwise the piracy would just build up and eat you alive."

Audits cost money, and some companies question whether the cost of security is worth it. But with more and more companies unpleasantly surprised by the results of audits, the war against piracy heightens.

"You should spend the money to catch them," observes Marc Nathanson, president of Falcon Communications, a Los Angeles-based firm that operates cable systems in 35 communities from Puerto Rico to California. "Because if they think you're soft, the word will spread through the area. I've seen it happen. If they think we're playing tough, the word gets out."

Armed with theft-of-service laws in more than 40 states, more and more cable companies are playing tough. The no-fault approach works with nine pirates out of 10. The connection was inadvertent, an oversight, somebody goofed. But every now and then, there's nothing like a slam-bang prosecution to keep people honest.

Bakersfield, Cal., used to pose a problem for Cypress Communications Corp., the cable system Nathanson

worked for before joining Falcon. Early surveys showed an alarming 12-percent piracy rate in this highly transient area. The cable company tried monitoring the system, cutting off service, but the problem wasn't really solved until, with cops and reporters in tow, they staked out an area and caught someone up a pole. After that, the rate of piracy dropped by more than half.

"We're not kidding ourselves," says Charles Collins, the retired police detective who heads security for Santa Monica-based Theta Cable, one of the Nation's largest systems. "We can beat the amateurs. But the real pro, the sharp electronics guy, conceivably can beat us."

"We have Pasadena's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in our midst," notes Falcon's Nathanson. "I'm convinced if they can photograph Mars as if they were looking out their back window, they'll break any security system we or our manufacturers can devise. We may just have to take our lumps with them."

People who are bright enough or rich enough can beat the system. So, occasionally, can people who are nasty enough.

"There are people we don't say no to," concedes one technician. "It's scary. People have threatened our men. I won't send a guy back there. I'd rather let them have free cable. If we can't safely disconnect a cable, I'd rather say, 'Well, enjoy it!'"

Cables can be protected, monitored, blocked or cut. But what do you do if your product is as free as the breeze, if its theft is virtually untraceable, and its thieves enjoy their booty in the privacy of their own homes?

That's the dilemma faced by over-the-air pay-television operations, represented in Los Angeles by On TV, a division of National Subscription Television, and SelecTV, a unit of American Subscription Television. Both firms, using UHF stations, broadcast their programs (movies on SelecTV, movies and sports on On TV) in a scrambled, out-of-sync form. The signals are unscrambled by decoder boxes that the company provides for its subscribers. Decoders are the heart of the problem.

"Once a box is in somebody's home," says Nathanson, whose company scrambles its pay-cable signals, "it's very hard for us to monitor it, secure it, or anything...even get it back.

They'll sic their dogs on us."

How vulnerable to piracy is a decoder box? Says one technician: "It's a pussycat."

By far the simplest of the decoder boxes is used by On TV to reach its more than 200,000 legitimate customers. "Hopeless," says pirate Max Kanobi. "Very primitive. It's by far the easiest to pirate. It's easier and cheaper to build than a transistor radio. All parts are accessible for about \$50. Any fool can build one."

There's a brisk trade in bootlegged or stolen On TV boxes—so brisk that the company is seeking damages in excess of \$1 million from firms and individuals allegedly supplying pirates with decoders. But On TV's much smaller competitor, SelecTV, is another matter. Having learned from On TV's problems, SelecTV uses a sophisticated decoder that George Stein, a company executive, calls "almost overengineered—the most complicated in the industry."

Max Kanobi agrees. When he speaks of the SelecTV box, his voice fills with respect. "I don't know of anyone who's bettered it. It truly scrambles. It knows people are trying to tap it, so it has five different types of scramble. Weird things are continuously happening, scrambling one way, then another, totally at random. It calls in to the mother computer, never uses the same code twice. And the safety precautions! Real tricky. Take the cover off and it automatically shuts down. Pull the plug out of the wall, it shuts down too. You can't restart it without contacting the company."

The decoder box described above costs SelecTV \$250, nearly twice the cost of On TV's model (though a newer version now being introduced will be considerably cheaper). "It's the price we pay for security," a company official reflects.

Except, of course, he isn't paying. All the security devices, the monitors and audits and prosecutions that the industry uses to stay ahead of pirates are paid for, eventually, by customers.

"It's like shoplifting; it's priced into the scheme of things," says Tesco's Bernie Evans. "The good people pay for the bad ones."

"Hello."

"Hi. I'm calling about my... TV..."

"Yes..."

"I've got a problem with my... recep-

back window, they'll break any security system we can devise. ●●

tion...getting some of the channels, you know..."

"Yes..."

"I hear you've got this way of kind of...uh...tweaking the TV..."

"You want me to help you out on your tuner a little. That it?"

"Yes..."

"How about if I come out and take a look?"

There will always be pirates. The man being called above will install a microwave dish, a receiver, tuner, de-

scramblers. He will guarantee his work. He will protect you against future security measures, safeguard you against obsolescence. He will enable you to snare everything that's in the local air—free programming, pay, scrambled or unscrambled, even on-location television-news reporting (unedited). He will charge you \$2000 and his only requirement, apart from payment, is no questions asked, no answers given. "You don't know where this came from."

Still, with time, piracy turns out to be

not a laughing matter, and not free. As pay technology spawns its second- and third-generation equipment, as pirates and engineers leapfrog from point to counterpoint, the cellar tinkerer, the only mildly larcenous handyman, is left behind. Amateur pirates give way to professionals—men with vans and tools and reputations. And the average thief becomes a customer, either a pro pirate's customer or a company's. Either way, he pays. Sooner or later, almost everybody pays. ■



Television Is a Member of the Family

Recently, a father took his children's bicycle, made a stand for it in the TV room and equipped it with a car generator and a 12-volt battery. If his family wants to watch television, they have to use pedal power; they get time out during commercials. Another father, in the St. Louis area, invented the Plug-Lok, a plastic device that fits over the plug end of the TV set's cord and locks on with a key. Thanks to the Plug-Lok, says the father, his son's television viewing has been curtailed and reading time has increased. One of my colleagues has hidden his TV set in a basement closet and vowed not to let it reappear in the living room until both his toddlers become avid readers. And parents in several Connecticut towns have supported "turn off TV" weeks, with many claiming that as a result their children became more creative and sociable.

Despite the valiant efforts of these and other determined fathers and mothers, however, the battle to control children's TV viewing in this country is being won—by television.

The number of hours children spend in front of the set is steadily increasing. The average viewing time per week for elementary-schoolers ranges from 25 to 30 hours; preschoolers in studies I have made watch about 23 hours per week. The amount of television children watch has been linked to the lowering of Scholastic Aptitude Test verbal scores in the last decade from the nationwide average of 493 to 427, and people have blamed TV viewing for the difficulty many children have with reading, for the rise of crime and violence, and for the breakdown of the family.

At the Yale University Family Television Research and Consultation Center, we have been studying how television affects the family. We have also been attempting to devise ways for parents—through example and instruction—to make a positive difference in how television affects their children's lives. To

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An educator tells parents
how to take control
of the set
before it takes control
of their children

By DOROTHY G. SINGER

get parents thinking about the problem, we ask them how they use television, for both their children and themselves. Does it take the place of family activities? Do they spend time in front of the set instead of playing games, reading, walking, or even talking with other family members? Has TV interfered with hobbies or sports? If the answers are yes, then parents should begin considering how to prevent the television set from taking over their children.

Most parents who limit their children's television viewing don't go to the extremes described earlier. But, no matter what their methods, they are probably in the minority, according to a survey carried out by Temple University's Institute for Survey Research in 1976. More than half of the 2279 children surveyed, ranging in age from 7 to 11, reported that they were allowed to watch *whenever* they wanted; more than one third reported they could watch *whatever* they wanted.

The fact that many parents neither restrict their children's television viewing nor monitor what they view suggests that they do not regard television as a serious threat to their children's development. A parent in one of our instructional workshops actively welcomed the Saturday-morning cartoon hours. She believed that TV was the answer to the hyperactive behavior of her child. "TV keeps Joey quiet and I can do my housework," she said. But our studies lead us to believe that TV may actually be stimulating Joey to act wildly when he's away from the set; and fast-paced programming may be reinforcing his inability to concentrate on his tasks.

What, in fact, are some of the effects

television has on family patterns and child development? For six years, we at the Center have been studying lower- and middle-income families, seeking answers to this question. In our early studies, we deliberately chose to work with preschoolers because we thought these 2½-to-4-year-olds would be *beginning* television viewers, if they viewed at all. Instead, we found we were starting relatively late; even at that age, it was already difficult to change the children's viewing habits. Not only were they watching television an average of three to four hours a day, but they knew the names of most prime-time shows and the exact days and hours of the week they were on.

One of our most important discoveries concerning the families we have studied is what might be termed "like parent, like child." Among third-, fourth- and fifth-grade children, heavy television viewers tended to be male, to have parents who watch a lot of television and to have no parentally imposed limits on television viewing. The amount of time that the children spent watching action/violent television programs—such as *The Rockford Files*, *Quincy*, *Charlie's Angels*, *Wonder Woman*, *The Incredible Hulk*, *Starsky & Hutch*, *Baretta* and *Vega\$*—was predicted by male sex, older age, and *fathers watching more action/violent programs*. The parents were influential role models for their children's television viewing and also helped determine their children's perception of the *importance* of television. When we asked these children how they would feel "if television would disappear from this planet tomorrow," most of them expressed considerable distress. The children whose responses reflected less "anger" or "sadness" were those whose fathers were relatively light television viewers.

Such viewing patterns and attitudes, it seems, have something of a ripple effect on a child's traits and learning skills. We have found that preschoolers who are heavy viewers of action shows are more aggressive than other children. (Our definition of aggression is *physical aggression*—that is, a direct

blow to another child or destruction of property—and does not include aggressiveness during play, such as make-believe fights in which children are pretending to be characters and do not actually mean to hurt each other.)

In lengthy interviews with parents of our most aggressive children, we found that the fathers and mothers were more lax about the TV set, permitting their children to control their own viewing time. Indeed, one parent told us at one of our meetings, "I feel safer with my child sitting in front of the television set than with him out there in the wilds of the street." These families, as compared with those in which children are light viewers, have a more limited range of outside interests and activities such as reading, music and hobbies. The television set seems to be the major focus of their family life and recreational activities.

A pattern established by some of the families in our studies is one where the child wakes up, immediately turns on the set, goes to school, comes back, turns TV on again, is joined by his or her parents, who eat dinner with the set on, and then all watch television together until relatively late at night. The parents tell us that there is little verbal interchange between family members during the evening. When the child is finally put to bed, there is no quiet period between television viewing and bed-

time. In contrast to these families of high-television, high-aggression children, other families tend to control their children's viewing and, more important, have a fuller family life.

Besides the sheer amount of television a child watches, our research has shown that the *types* of programs a parent lets the child watch have an enormous effect on development. We have found that children who are regular viewers of shows like *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* are less aggressive than children who are heavy viewers of action, cartoon and game shows. Our lightest television viewers and those who watch slow-paced children's programs like *Mister Rogers* are our most imaginative, cooperative and seemingly happy children. They are also more likely to have imaginary playmates and to manifest richer, more advanced language structures.

Research further indicates that television's effect is likely to be greatest when TV is a child's sole source of information. Depending on the choice of programs, a child may begin to develop prejudicial attitudes concerning women and minorities. In one study, the children most prejudiced against black children were those who watched more violent programs in which blacks were portrayed negatively and fewer programs in which major black characters were depicted more favorably.

And yet some parents resist accepting these negative findings. Many parents in our studies believed that television could harm only "someone else's child." But for those who want to change family viewing habits—and don't want to buy a Plug-Lok—we at the Center have devised a few methods to teach parents how to *limit* viewing time, to *select* programs the family can view together and to *discuss* the program content with their children.

First, let's examine how the parent can begin to limit television. We propose that each family member keep a record of one week's TV viewing by making a chart recording viewing hours. Once you have a record of each family member's viewing time, you can decide whether or not anyone is spending too much time sitting in front of the set rather than participating in other ac-



tivities. You might elect to impose some reasonable limits on your child. Can you suggest a hobby, game or sport that can be substituted for TV viewing? If your child is reading less as a result of TV, suggest some books that are related to television, such as "Little House on the Prairie," "The Hardy Boys" or books about sports.

Next, when selecting programs, involve your child in the process, rather than dictating orders. Suggest, for instance, that it might be fun to keep a "rating chart." Each night write down the names of the programs watched; then let your child rate them on a 1-to-5-point scale from "disliked very much" to "liked very much." After rating each program, suggest that the child ask himself or herself two questions—"What did I learn from watching?" and "Was there something more interesting or more worthwhile that I could have been doing?" We have found that this simple device raises a child's consciousness about program quality.

You also should show your children how to use a television guide and to make some judgments *before* they switch on the TV set. Too many children, and adults as well, randomly choose their evening's entertainment *after* the set is on.

Finally, select some programs that the whole family can view together. This togetherness could lead to a fruitful discussion if the program is provocative and touches on issues related to your own concerns. A show called "Papa and Me," about the death of a grandparent, helped one family deal with a similar real-life loss. The children and parents were able to share feelings and use the material from this excellent special to come to grips with their own fears and confusions.

We cannot overestimate the value of discussion. One mother thought that just sitting with her child as they watched a monster movie was enough. She could not understand why her daughter had nightmares, despite the fact that they "were cuddled together on the couch watching 'Creature Features.'" We tried to explain that parents must actively help children learn to distinguish between reality and fantasy and to understand the special effects and camera techniques used to make a dramatic show more exciting.

It was for this reason that the Center developed a course to teach children how television works, and how to become critical consumers of the medium. Through an eight-lesson curriculum designed to fit into a language-arts

program in elementary schools, we were able to demonstrate that children can learn to distinguish between reality and fantasy on TV. For the reality and fantasy lesson, we have a videotape that explains special effects and camera techniques. We found that children in elementary school are eager to learn about how people "disappear" on TV, how a bionic man can jump so high, how slow motion or fast motion is made, and how the camera can make objects appear large or small.

Children participating in our program also learn how television presents violence, how it influences their ideas and feelings, and how they can control their own viewing. Parent workshops are part of this program, and we have developed a "parent book," tentatively titled "Teaching Television: Turn Children's Television Programming to Your Child's Advantage," to be pub-

You should show your children how to make judgments about programs *before* they switch on the set

lished next year by Dial Press.

Some of our specific goals are to help the children understand the process of animation, to learn to differentiate between animation and live action, and to recognize the importance of music and sound effects in fantasy programs. We suggest that parents discuss such programs as *The Incredible Hulk* and *The Six Million Dollar Man* and ask: Is the Hulk a real person? Do people on the program really exist? How do you know? How can you tell when something on TV is real? Name some programs that have actors who play parts that could be real-life characters; then name some programs with actors who play fantasy roles. How can you tell the difference? How are makeup, costumes and props used to create fantasy? How is music used to create a feeling of mystery or suspense? Turn off the sound. Is the scene less dramatic without the sound?

And for older children, if they have watched a program about real people (*Backstairs at the White House*,

"Eleanor and Franklin," "Brian's Song"), suggest they read a book about the historical characters and then ask them, "How was the TV story different from the book?"

We also have invented games and exercises based on television programs so that nursery-school teachers and parents can encourage a child to use ideas from television during play-time. We have developed a television manual, a newsletter and a "TV Toy Kit," and have helped participating parents form guidelines for discriminating television viewing. Children whose parents and teachers use the materials have shown gains in imagination and cooperation with peers, and have reduced their classroom aggression.

In one of our studies, television even served as a means of improving parent-child interactions. We worked with three groups of fifth graders. One group viewed episodes of *Swiss Family Robinson*. After each episode, a teacher led a discussion based on some situation in the program featuring pro-social content. Another group saw each episode, but no discussion followed. A third group viewed neutral films, such as nature programs. Later tests suggested that the children who were in the "teacher lesson" group had a less sex-stereotyped view of parent-child relationships, and were more positive about the family in general.

In our workshops we have tried to explore ways in which parents and teenagers could use television as a catalyst to discuss issues like friendship, trust, sex, drugs, stealing, death and prejudice. Over a six-month period, we met with small groups of teenagers, viewed afternoon TV specials together and initiated discussions about the programs. At the end of the experiment, the students were significantly more willing to discuss issues with their parents. They also increased their time spent on homework and improved their concentration, reduced the amount of time spent viewing television, and at the same time selected their programs more carefully.

The techniques for using television for positive social, emotional and cognitive development in children are still in the pioneering stage. With television so pervasive a part of the child's environment, we have a responsibility to meet the challenge of using the medium constructively. And a good place to start, we think, is right at home—where the set is. ■

The One Ring Is What We Make It

A noted author takes issue with J.R.R. Tolkien's assault on modern technology

By ISAAC ASIMOV

This month, ABC has scheduled in prime time "The Return of the King ... A Story of the Hobbits," a two-hour film based on the final part of J.R.R. Tolkien's classic trilogy "The Lord of the Rings." For the program, the animators at Rankin/Bass Productions have depicted the characters and scenes from the narrative, some of which are displayed on this page and the following four pages. Viewers of "The Return of the King" may find themselves pondering the issue that Tolkien readers have been debating since the books first appeared—"What does it all mean?" To answer that question, PANORAMA went to Isaac Asimov, the prolific writer of science fiction and other books. What follows is his interpretation of what may—or may not—lie beneath the surface events of the story.

A good work of literature should have meaning on several different levels. The surface meaning is easy to get to—action, adventure, suspense—and may be satisfying all by itself. The deeper one goes, however, the harder it is to grasp meaning and the more satisfying it is to achieve that grasp.

"The Lord of the Rings," by J.R.R. Tolkien, is such a multilevel work. On the surface it is filled with action that is endlessly suspenseful and exciting. There is an almost all-powerful villain, and a small hero with very little power. The

hero has a ring, which he must keep out of the grasp of the villain and which he can destroy in only one way—a very dangerous way.

If we read the book at this surface level, the only question that can agitate us is: Will the hero succeed in destroying the ring? Look deeper, though, and you find an almost cosmic tale of the struggle between Good and Evil.

The villain is not just a "bad guy"; he is the incarnation of the forces of destruction. He is Sauron, the Lord of the Rings, the embodiment of Evil. And the

Isaac Asimov is the author of, at latest count, 215 books. The 215th is "In Joy Still Felt," the second volume of his autobiography.

Characters in the film "The Return of the King" include (clockwise from upper right) the Lord of the Nazgul, Sauron's commander (on horseback); an orc; Frodo; Gollum; a troll soldier; and the winged mount of the Lord of the Nazgul.



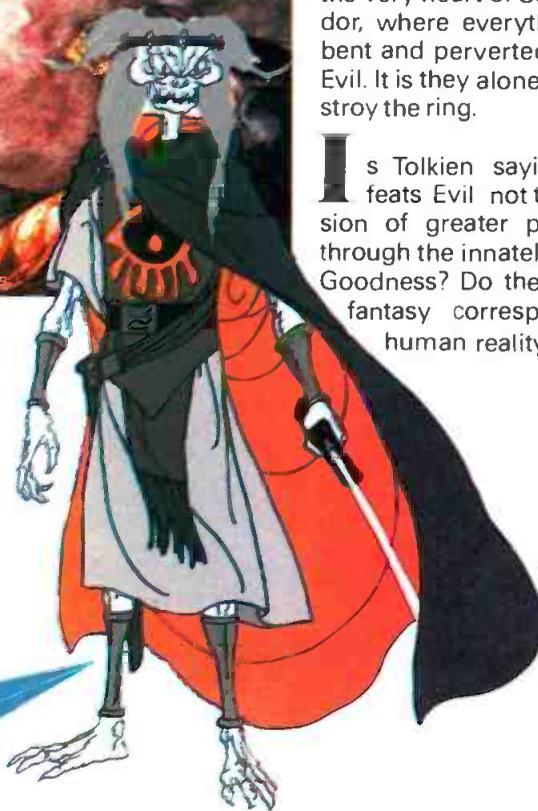


Above: The ultimate destination of the ring-bearer—Mount Doom, where the Cracks of Doom are located. Right: The Lord of the Nazgul. Below: The Armies of Darkness—orcs and trolls in battle on the Field of Pelennor.

ring isn't just a ring; it is the One Ring through which Evil can exert its power. The question is not: Will the ring be destroyed? It is: Can Evil be defeated?

It is no accident that the entire focus of the struggle centers on Frodo, the Hobbit. The Hobbits, after all, are the smallest and weakest of the inhabitants of Tolkien's fantasy world. They are as unsophisticated and as simple as children; yet it is Frodo and his servant, Samwise, who must find their way into the very heart of Sauron's land of Mordor, where everything is twisted and bent and perverted into the service of Evil. It is they alone who must there destroy the ring.

Is Tolkien saying that Good defeats Evil not through the possession of greater physical power, but through the innately superior quality of Goodness? Do the events in Tolkien's fantasy correspond to events in human reality?



Tolkien was a student of the ancient Nordic legends, and the One Ring may be an echo of the Ring of the Nibelung (although Tolkien himself denied it). Behind Sauron may be the evil face of Loki, the traitorous Norse god of fire.

Then, too, "The Hobbit" was written in the 1930s and "The Lord of the Rings" in the 1940s. In between was World War II, and Tolkien lived through the climactic year of 1940, when Great Britain stood alone before the forces of Hitler. After all, the Hobbits are inhabitants of "the Shire," which is a transparent representation of Great Britain at its most idyllic, and behind Sauron there might be the demonic Adolf Hitler.

But then, too, there are wider symbolisms. Tom Bombadil is a mysterious character who seems to represent Nature as a whole. The treelike Ents characterize the green forests; and the Dwarfs, the mountains and the mineral world. There are the Elves, too, powerful but passé, representatives of a time passing into limbo.

Always, though, we come back to the One Ring. What does it represent?

In the epic, it controls unlimited power and inspires infinite desire even though it is infinitely corrupting. Those who wear it are weighed down by it and tortured, but they can't let it go. Gandalf, who is the best and strongest of the characters in the book who fight for the Good, won't touch it, for he fears it will corrupt even him.

In the end, it falls upon Frodo, small and weak, to handle it. It corrupts and damages him too, for when he stands on Mount Doom at last, where it will take but the flick of a finger to cast the One Ring to destruction and ensure the end of Evil, he finds he cannot do it. He has become the One Ring's slave. (And in the end, it is Evil that destroys Evil, where Frodo, the Good, fails.)

What is the One Ring, then? What does it represent? What is it that is so desirable and so corrupting? What is it that can't be let go even though it is destroying us?

Well—

My wife Janet and I on occasion drive down the New Jersey Turnpike



Frodo (right) encounters some foreboding scenery (above) en route to Mount Doom.

through a section of oil refineries where the tortured geometry of the structures stands against the sky, where waste gases burn off in eternal flames and where a stench forces us to close the car windows. And once, as we approached it, Janet sighed and said, "Here comes Mordor."

She was right. The Mordor of "The Lord of the Rings" is the industrial world that is slowly developing and taking over the whole planet, consuming it, poisoning it. The Elves represent the preindustrial technology that is passing from the scene. The Dwarfs, the Ents and Tom Bombadil represent the various facets of Nature that are being destroyed. And the Hobbits of the Shire represent the simple, bucolic past.

And the One Ring?

It is the lure of technology; the seduction of things done more easily; of products in greater quantity; of gadgets in tempting variety. It is gunpowder, and the automobile, and television; all the things that people snatch for if they don't have them; all the things that people can't let go once they do have them.

Can we let go? The automobile kills 50,000 Americans every year. Can we abandon it because of that? Does anyone seriously suggest we try?

Our American way of life demands the burning of vast quantities of coal and oil that foul our air, sicken our lungs, pollute our soil and water, but



can we abandon that burning? To feed the needs of our society, we need more oil than we can supply ourselves, so that we must obtain nearly half from abroad. We obtain it from lands that hold us in chains in consequence and that we dare not offend. Can we diminish our needs in order to break those chains?

We hold the One Ring and it is destroying us and the world, and there is no Frodo to take the load of it upon himself, and there is no Mount Doom to take it to, and there are no events to ensure the One Ring's destruction.

Is all this inevitable? Has Sauron won? Have the Shadows of the Land of Mordor fallen over all the world?

We might think so, if we wish to look at only the worst of the industrial world and visualize an impossible best of the preindustrial world. But then, the happy pastoral world of the Shire never existed except in the mind of Nostalgia. There might have





Above: Eowyn does battle with the Lord of the Nazgul on his dragonlike mount. Below: Samwise, on his way back to the Shire with Merry and Pippin, looks back after bidding farewell to Bilbo, Frodo and the others who sailed west to the Grey Havens.

been a thin leaven of landowners and aristocrats who lived pleasant lives, but those lives were made pleasant only through the unremitting labors of servants, peasants, serfs and slaves whose lives were one long brutality. Those who inherit the traditions of a ruling class (as Tolkien did) are too aware of the past pleasantness of life, and too unaware of the nightmare that filled it just beyond the borders of the manor house.

With all the miseries and terrors that industrialization has brought, it has nevertheless, *for the first time*, brought literacy and leisure to hundreds of millions; given them some share of the material goods of the world, however shoddy and five-and-ten they might be; given them a chance at appreciating the arts, even if only at the level of comic books and hard rock; given them a chance at a life that has more than doubled in average length since preindustrial days.

It is easy to talk of the 50,000 Americans who are killed by automobiles each year. We forget the much larger fractions of the population who were killed each year by infectious epidemics, deficiency diseases and hormone disorders that are today thoroughly preventable or curable.

If we cannot give up the One Ring, there's a good reason. If the One Ring is

drawing us to our destruction, it is because we are misusing it in our greed and folly. Surely, there are ways of using it wisely. Are we so willing to despair so entirely of humanity as to deny that we can be sane and wise if we must be?

No, the One Ring is not wholly Evil. It is what we make it, and we must rescue and extend those aspects of it that are Good.

But never mind. One can read "The Lord of the Rings" without getting lost in the symbolism. I have myself read it four times and I like it better each time. I think it is about time for my fifth reading.

And in doing so, I will take care to look upon the One Ring as—a ring. ■



Bilbo Baggins (in the chair with its back to us), the original ring-finder, celebrates his 129th birthday at Rivendell. His guests (clockwise from center front): The Minister of Gondor; Merry and Pippin (on bench); Elrond, Lord of the Elves; Gandalf the White; Frodo and Sam.



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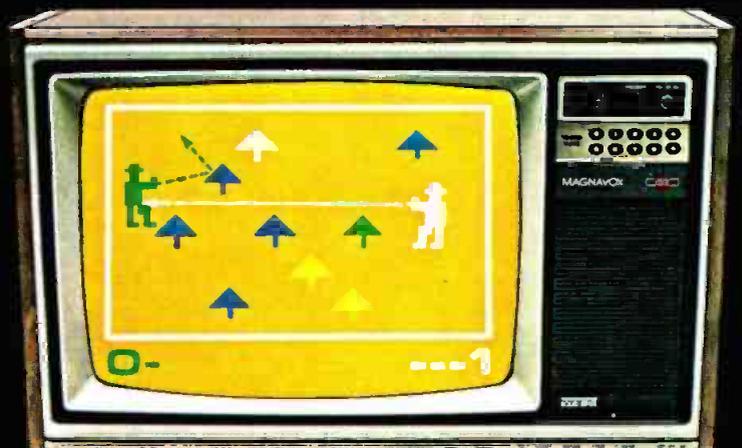
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Far from the ingenue roles that launched her career, Lesley Ann Warren finds herself in the middle of a controversy-plagued miniseries

She Outgrew Cinderella's Shoes

By DOUGLAS BAUER



Lesley Ann Warren was 18 in 1965 when she starred with Stuart Damon in "Cinderella." Opposite: In her *Beulah Land* role.

At nearly half past nine on this January morning, Virgil Vogel, a rumpled man with a loose forelock of silver hair dangling to his eyebrows, steps off the mansion's columned rear porch and walks out across the lawns. Behind him, on the porch, perhaps two dozen people sit in huddles of conversation. Some are in costume: men dressed in the stiff, high collars and women in the low, revealing necklines of the Old South. The rest are clad in a less coherent mixture of the uniforms of contemporary Hollywood: urgent athlete, fraudulent farmer and Ralph Lauren cowboy.

Vogel smiles as he walks across the grass, dulled to a flat pea green by the Mississippi winter.

"Where does Eddie Albert live?" he calls to no one in particular.

"In the slave quarters," answers a man named Christopher Morgan, seated in front of a small brick building beyond the mansion's porch. Vogel nods and walks on toward the slave quarters. Neither he nor Morgan seems to hear in their dialogue anything more than a dry inquiry, something as plain and mercantile as: "What's the market doing?" "Opened six points lower."

And, in context, it *is* a business conversation. Vogel, the director, and Morgan, the producer, are supervising a terribly complex, \$12 million piece of merchandise: a six-hour, three-part television film called *Beulah Land*, a Civil War melodrama taken from Lonnie Coleman's novel of the same name and its sequel, "Look Away, Beulah Land." Vogel, Morgan, a very large cast and crew, 30 tons of furniture and enough costumes to fill an entire department store in downtown Natchez have come to Mississippi to make the film for Columbia Pictures and David Gerber Productions. It is planned for a May air date on NBC, but unanticipated production problems have the crew worrying whether they will be

Douglas Bauer is a contributing editor of PANORAMA and author of a recently published nonfiction book, "Prairie City, Iowa."





In this scene from the show, *Beulah Land*, its denizens and its guests await the wedding of "Marsa" Leon to Miss Sarah.

finished in time to meet that commitment.

They have rented, among other things, this spectacular antebellum home with original furniture and painted-cloth floors. Its real name is Melrose and it plays the title role. It is in some ways the star of the film, with its lush, brocaded interiors; its perfectly kept brick facades; its flat, sweeping grounds, dotted with the gnarled, alien beauty of pecan and elm trees holding clumps of Spanish moss that look, in the dead Delta January, like old beards. In the film, Melrose, as *Beulah Land*, must subtly age over 40 years and endure a Yankee pillaging and burning. In other words, it must give a performance. If there's any justice in the world, it will win an Emmy for Best Supporting Mansion in a Limited Dramatic Series.

Besides Melrose, the film features Paul Rudd, Meredith Baxter Birney, Robert Walker Jr., Michael Sarrazin, Hope Lange, Eddie Albert and many more. And, as the plot's pivotal character—Sarah Kendrick, mistress of *Beulah Land*—Lesley Ann Warren. For her, it is the latest in an intriguing series of parts that, considered together, form a kind of compressed history of television's last 15 years. In the mid-Sixties, Warren came abruptly to the world's attention as a teen-ager, in "Cinderella," a

revival of Rodgers and Hammerstein's musical version of the fable, shown as a TV special. Later, for a brief time she was a member of the *Mission: Impossible* cast. Then, after an extended absence punctuated by occasional spots as a guest star, she returned to TV in a cluster of roles in recent television films. In "Betrayal," she played a woman who is predatorily seduced by her analyst. In *79 Park Avenue*, she portrayed a society call girl who becomes the East Side's preeminent madam. And in "Portrait of a Stripper," she was cast as an unskilled woman who, forced to raise her child alone, chooses the dubious labor identified in the title. She has brought to all these parts a kind of stylish, measured sensuality, a quality far from the reflexive innocence of Cinderella.

In Mississippi in January, she is also far from her home in Southern California and its climate. Today the weather is warm and wet, an improvement over the previous several weeks when it was cold and wet. This is no fault of Natchez, given the season, but the script insists that it is summer. (Nobody ever thinks of the South having any other season. It is a region permanently fixed in the national psyche as forever in full heat and bloom.) So Warren and other women in the film wore light cotton dresses for last week's outdoor wedding sequences and chewed ice before

each scene so that their breath wouldn't be seen as smoky plumes when they spoke their lines. The foliage would not cooperate either, looking inconsiderately like the time of year it was, rather than what it was supposed to be. So flowers were painstakingly tied to bushes and stems, creating a splendid winter blossoming. In short, it seems that the filmmakers elected to shoot *Beulah Land* authentically on location, but then were forced to construct new sets to disguise the reality.

"I wasn't prepared for it," says Warren of the weather as she walks from the mansion to her motor home, which is parked among several other motor homes and vans and semi trucks in a gravel lot on the grounds. "So I came down with bronchitis. And the little girl who plays Sarah as a child got so sick, they had to fly her home."

The rains have turned the gravel to mud. Warren lifts her skirts as she walks, picking her way around puddles, looking for her motor home. The motor home has become an elemental clause in a star's contract and represents an evolution from the classic folding chair with one's name on the back. There are *still* folding chairs with names on their backs, but the motor home is really the ultimately outfitted extension of the idea: private, portable, a guaranteed seat in a strange locale.

Warren finds the door to her vehicle and plops down inside, relaxing on a couch. She is a slender woman with enormous brown eyes that nearly jump from their sockets. She wears a salmon-colored dress, fringed everywhere with white lace, one of 64 costumes, covering three periods of fashion, that she'll wear in the film.

She says that the character of Sarah—who becomes an increasingly strong and self-confident woman, devoted above all else to the preservation of *Beulah Land*—appeals to her because, "She's a heroine. And we don't have many heroines these days, in films or in life." Sarah's strength, however, leaves her "alone, isolated really. But she's not a victim. She wills the life she leads. She's really the antithesis of Scarlett O'Hara. Responsible, sensible, not at all flighty."

Warren says that she doesn't yet know Sarah completely. "I'll continue to figure her out as she grows. I play her from the age of 18 to 55, and we're only a little way into the film."

A similar maturing process has taken place in Warren's career. At the age of 16, still a student in Manhattan, she won a part in a Broadway musical, "110 in the Shade," and among those who saw her was Charles Dubin, the producer planning "Cinderella." After that success, she played in a couple of Disney films, and her ingenue image appeared indelible. Then, through most of the Seventies, she disappeared from public view. She had married Hollywood hairdresser (later producer) Jon Peters, had had a son, Christopher, now 11, and eventually the couple were divorced. (Peters later become famous through his romantic and business involvements with Barbra Streisand.) These events took their toll on Warren's acting career. "After Jon and I were divorced, I was just so unhappy, I couldn't work. I never thought about giving it up altogether. I knew I'd come back. But I had to do it slowly. I had to get myself back together first."

It took about four years, during which she traveled a great deal, doing plays out of town, including "Vanities" with Elizabeth Ashley in Chicago. While there, she tested for the call-girl role in *79 Park Avenue*, giving a performance that surprised almost everyone, including the film's director, Paul Wendkos.

"She tested twice," Wendkos recalls. "And she just burned up the screen. She'd never been pushed before, never done anything that was emotionally complicated. But she works very, very deep. She's not afraid to go to strange places in her psyche. I pushed her to the edge and she was always there, giv-

ing it right back to me. She has a vulnerability that just leaps out of her eyes."

Another director, Mark Rydell, who has watched Warren's work with the Actors Studio in Los Angeles, agrees and adds that she has "a kind of tasteful sexuality, something that comes up out of a very deep emotional reservoir."

So much for the ingenue. Warren says that shedding that image was not particularly difficult. "It was really a function of getting older, actually. I'm *not* 16 any more, so those kinds of parts just don't fit now."

She gets up to return to the set, and her petticoats billow out, filling the space of the motor home. She adjusts and straightens her costume, opens the door and carefully negotiates the steps. She says that, interestingly, each of her roles has in a way mirrored feelings and events in her own life. "*79 Park Avenue* made me realize that for most of my life I've felt like an emotional victim. I found myself in situations I didn't feel able to get out of, situations that were sexually threatening. Like the woman in 'Betrayal,' there was a period in my life when I felt just pretty crazy. I had a complete physical breakdown soon after I went out to Hollywood, but it was as much nerves and stress. I don't mean to compare my problem to hers, which was much more severe. But I sure could identify with her." And, "In 'Stripper,' there was a celebration of a mother's relationship with her son, which was exactly like mine with Christopher—open, close, very rare. That part was as easy as falling off a duck's back for me."

She passes an arrangement of stovepipes through which smoke pours. It looks like a hobo's stove and it is, in fact, a miniature laboratory for the testing of chemical powder that will be used later to make it look as if *Beulah Land* is burning.

"So far as this part is concerned," Warren says, "I couldn't have played it four or five years ago. I couldn't have understood it. Sarah is a woman bearing great responsibility, someone people lean on. And in my own small life now, there are a lot of people who lean on me. That's nice," she adds, "but, like Sarah, it leaves me alone, with no one to lean on." For the past two years she has had what she describes as a "healthy, grown-up" relationship with Jeffrey Holland, a choreographer and musician. "The first adult relationship I've ever had. We are very close. But we work hard to stay independent, too. That's what I mean when I say I'm more alone."

She reaches the back steps of the

mansion, walks past several members of the crew and heads into the dining room to sit at the head of this day's melodrama.

The melodrama about to be enacted is one everyone has seen again and again in the movies: the money men vs. the creative folks. Throughout the day of shooting, at lunch, between setups, people talked of the imminent arrival of David Gerber, the film's executive producer. According to the conversations, he was bringing with him from Los Angeles the luggage of dissatisfaction. The filming has fallen somewhat behind schedule, though not drastically. And many reasons are obvious—the weather, the inconvenience of shooting on location, the extraordinarily brief preproduction schedule, the rush to meet a May air date.

Still, there seems to be a mood of concern that *Beulah Land* will be, or already is, one of those projects cursed with problems. Someone spoke, as a kind of comic omen, of one of the first scenes filmed—an atmospheric panorama of slaves picking cotton (Columbia had bought a five-acre crop expressly for the film). After the scene had been shot, it was noticed that a local extra, working as one of the slaves seen on the distant horizon, was wearing stylish dark glasses.

T rue to rumors, Gerber arrives, smiling, talking at amazing speed. He is a short, dark man, dressed in denim, wearing impatience. He pauses on the back porch to explain that what began all this was the feeling he had a couple of years ago that "it was time to do the Civil War," and that his search for a property led him to the Coleman novels. He says that nothing happened for a year and a half until, late last fall, he suddenly had a commitment from NBC. The network wanted the film to run in May. Gerber says that it would have been more reasonable to deliver it in November, six months later, but that, true to the terms he accepted, *Beulah Land* will be ready in May.

He enters the mansion, and for the rest of the morning Gerber, his director and his producer confer in a dark first-floor room. Outside, the crew waits and talks, sipping coffee. Many of them wear something emblematic of previous films and series they've worked on—a "Freedom Road" T-shirt, a "Portrait of a Stripper" gold charm, a *Rockford Files* windbreaker. They reminisce about easy, happy shows, and about other kinds, about sets heavy with tension. There is, in the conversation and the souvenirs, a sense of old campaigns endured, of VFW men visiting

the Legion to trade stories.

Near noon, Gerber emerges from the mansion and stops to talk to Warren's acting coach. Phrases such as "interpretation all wrong," "has to play it stronger" and "glad to discuss it" are exchanged.

An hour later, at a rehearsal of a scene between Warren and her ailing mother-in-law, played by Hope Lange, the climactic confrontation the past two days have been building toward takes place. Gerber criticizes the rehearsal and Warren's interpretation of her role. Warren defends herself, and Gerber expands the argument to include the entire Sarah he has been seeing in the daily rushes sent from Natchez to Hollywood. Words rise in temperature and Warren flees the set in tears.

The argument finished, Gerber chats on the back porch with other actors and crew and finally leaves for his motel.

Everyone waits, contracts and union cards tucked securely in pockets. Two hours pass. Three.

"They're holding 50 hostages in Iran," says Don Johnson, who plays Bonard Davis, a Kendrick cousin, "and 90 in Natchez, Mississippi."

Finally, late in the afternoon, Virgil Vogel emerges from the mansion. Looking just as ruffled and—amazingly—just as calm and happy as he had the day before, he begins to walk toward the slave quarters where the motor homes are parked. He looks for his assistant director, waves his arm and says, "Come on, Harry. Let's take a walk." They head off.

On the porch, the film's costume designer, Grady Hunt, recently arrived, tells a small, cherubic man named Charlie that everyone on the *Fantasy Island* set said to give him a big kiss. Charlie smiles, displaying octaves of

piano-board teeth, and says, "Wow." Someone else says that he's heard that everyone is sick on the set of *Quincy*, although Klugman is present and eager to get back to work.

At last, in the distance, walking up the narrow lawn toward the house, Lesley Warren and Virgil Vogel appear, holding hands, strolling casually, looking like newlyweds. As Warren nears the porch, one can see that she is somehow able to smile. They mount the steps and Vogel says, "All right. Here we are." Warren smiles fleetingly and ducks her head, looking open and vulnerable and very much alone. And also highly determined to get on with the business of this film. She steps past the clutter and aimlessness and walks quickly into the mansion's hallway. The crew put down cigarettes and coffee and head for positions on the set. Sarah's here. Work resumes.

While this minidrama within a miniseries was reaching an apparently happy ending in Natchez, another off-camera *Beulah Land* storm was brewing.

A few days later, it broke, and the film became the subject of a bitter controversy, as reported by Don Shirley of PANORAMA's Los Angeles bureau.

Storm over Beulah Land

"It's distasteful in concept and despicable in execution."

—Actor James McEachin

"I'm not going to let hysteria warp history."

—Producer David Gerber

Does *Beulah Land* paint a distorted and insensitive picture of slavery?

Yes, said the NAACP and several organizations of blacks who work in show business. Their complaints touched off a controversy while the miniseries was still on location in Mississippi in February and March. Perhaps no one expressed this opinion more vehemently than James McEachin, the actor (*Tenafly*) who has one of the largest black roles in *Beulah Land*.

"*Beulah Land* is denigrating to blacks," said McEachin. "One of the greater mistakes of my life was to do it. It's terribly distasteful in concept, and it's despicable in execution."

McEachin was cast as Ezra, the slave who drives the white folks' coaches and operates the plantation blacksmith shop. Ezra is married to Lovey, a "mammy" figure played by Clarice Taylor, and they are the parents of Floyd, played as a teen-ager by Joey Green and as an adult by Dorian Harewood. Ezra, Lovey and Floyd are the major black roles.

In the script, Ezra and Lovey are content with their lot. When they inherit their freedom after their mistress dies, they refuse to leave Beulah Land. Lovey goes so far as to say she'll never forgive her dead mistress for freeing her. Floyd finally leaves the plantation—but only because he has fallen in love with white Miss Sarah (Lesley Ann Warren). Later he willingly returns to Beulah Land—an act which demonstrates that Floyd "should be committed," said NAACP spokesman Paul Brock.

When the scene was shot in which Ezra rejects his freedom, recalled McEachin, "It hurt me so badly, I was crying on the inside. I wanted to renounce my citizenship. It was a putrid scene, an insult to the decency of a marvelous race of people." He said he suggested adding lines in which Ezra would express a desire for the challenges of freedom but would finally conclude that he was too old and tired to leave the plantation. The producers vetoed this idea, said McEachin.

McEachin conducted a series of ne-

gotiations over his role during the shooting. In one scene, Ezra assumes responsibility for punishing young Floyd, while simultaneously defending the boy against a whip-toting overseer who wants to do the job. On the way out the door, the overseer suddenly flicks the whip at Floyd and manages to draw blood. Ezra does nothing. McEachin demanded that the whip hit Ezra instead of Floyd, so the father could be seen continuing his defense of his son. He purposely played the part without conviction until he was able to persuade the director to do the scene his way. But later McEachin learned that the scene had been reshot in his absence, with the whip hitting the boy.

In another confrontation, McEachin struck a compromise. The slaves attend the wedding of Miss Sarah and "Marsa" Leon, and the actors were told to smile and look happy, McEachin claimed. He was given a song to sing. "At first, I refused to smile," he said. "I figured that with all these slaves, at least one or two of them had to be

thinking about escaping." He refused to sing, too, claiming he was not contractually obligated to sing. Finally, another actor was assigned the song. But, "I ended up smiling to beat the band," he admitted.

Some Hollywood professionals turned down jobs in *Beulah Land* because they found it offensive. Reuben Cannon, a casting director whose credits include *Roots II* and *Palmerstown, U.S.A.*, was one. "When I got to page 9, I knew I couldn't be a part of it," he said. "It's the most racist piece of material I've ever read. It makes 'Mandingo' look like a classic." Actor Georg Stanford Brown also rejected a *Beulah Land* offer because he found the script "vile."

McEachin had read the script, albeit quickly, before leaving Los Angeles to shoot *Beulah Land*, so he knew what awaited him. But on the basis of past associations with the producers, he expected more latitude in changing scenes on the set. Dorian Harewood, on the other hand, didn't read the script until he was on an airplane on his way to portray Floyd. He was "shocked and depressed" when he finally read it, he said, but he also claims to have been more successful in changing the script than McEachin was. He believes he successfully steered Floyd's motivations for leaving and then returning to the plantation away from "having the hots for Miss Sarah."

Floyd returns to Beulah Land, according to Harewood's interpretation, because it's his home and he misses his family. Harewood said the producers acceded to all his proposals to change his scenes, and they also changed a scene in which young Floyd munched a stereotypical watermelon with young "Marsa" Leon. But Harewood hastened to add, "I am not endorsing this [show] by any means."

NBC and the *Beulah Land* producers generally responded to the criticism leveled at the miniseries by citing historical authenticity. "You can't do a story about the South without showing the slaves," said Ethel Winant, NBC's miniseries vice president, "and not all of the slaves—particularly the older folks—wanted their freedom."

"I'm not going to let hysteria warp history," declared executive producer David Gerber. "You can't take a 1980 philosophy and apply it to 1840." Asked why the freed slaves are depicted as unwilling to leave Beulah Land, Gerber responded with questions of his own: "Where else would they go? What else could they do? They weren't trained to go anywhere, unless it was to be a



At the beginning of *Beulah Land*, the coachman Ezra (played by James McEachin) drives young Sarah (Kyle Richards, partially obscured), her sister Loretta (Tina Payne, right) and their Aunt Penelope (Martha Scott, with back to the camera) around the plantation.

hooker in Charleston."

Gerber said some plantations treated their slaves relatively well. "Sometimes a generation or two went by without a slave getting whipped. This particular family [in *Beulah Land*] didn't believe in whipping except for discipline." There are references to disciplinary whipping in the *Beulah Land* script, and Gerber speculated, "If I had concentrated on the whippings, I'd have 10 more share points."

Responding to McEachin's complaints concerning his whipping scene, Gerber declared, "He wanted to play it *macho*. He wanted to go after the overseer. So would John Wayne, but this isn't John Wayne."

Gerber sees the miniseries as a "romantic melodrama about a white family." Hence, he believes it would have been inappropriate to dwell on the woes of the blacks. He believes the blacks are portrayed "with dignity within the limits of the slave system."

The *Beulah Land* brouhaha makes Gerber "goddamn mad," he said. "I have an NAACP Image Award [presented for an episode of Gerber's *Police Story*]. I have done plenty of stories with nonstereotyped black roles." His response to the NAACP criticism of *Beulah Land*: "I may send back the Image Award."

He likened the criticism of *Beulah Land* to the prebroadcast condemnation of "Helter Skelter" and "Jesus of Nazareth"—"though obviously they had more elevated themes," he added. On the other hand, he noted that perhaps the publicity caused by the flap could increase the size of the *Beulah Land* audience.

Two historians were used as consult-

ants to check the accuracy of the script. One of them, Marius Carriere of the University of Southern Mississippi in Natchez, where *Beulah Land* was shot, was described by a spokesman for the producers as an expert on race relations of the antebellum period. However, Carriere—who is white—said his specialty is antebellum politics rather than black-white relations. Furthermore, he provided some support for the black protest. He agreed that the return of Floyd after a period of freedom is "incredible" and "farfetched."

Carriere said that blacks in *Beulah Land* are not so much slandered as ignored: "They just don't have much of a role. I was disappointed it wasn't bigger, but that wasn't the intent of the movie."

Several anachronistic details were detected by Carriere, and not all of them were changed when he brought them to the attention of the *Beulah Land* bosses. For example, the most dastardly character is a Cajun overseer; Carriere doubts that such a character would have been in Georgia in 1827.

The racial combat zone was not the only problem plaguing the *Beulah Land* set. Shooting was already 11 days behind schedule when director Virgil Vogel suffered a heart attack on the 48th day of what was supposed to be a 66-day shoot. Production stopped for 10 days until Harry Falk took over directing chores.

McEachin, surveying the many woes of *Beulah Land*, suggested that Somebody Up There didn't want it to get on the air: "As the old people in the Baptist church used to say, 'The Lord functions in mysterious ways.'" ■

How I Flunked My Finkelstein and Found De Quervain with a Portable Videocassette Recorder

By DAVID LACHENBRUCH

Watch the action wherever you go with a portable VCR system." "A portable videocassette recording system that goes wherever your super 8 can go."

These alluring ads were indirectly responsible for my taking the dreaded Finkelstein test. And flunking. And for introducing me to the disagreeable De Quervain. Also for having a lot of fun and coming home from vacation with some videotaped memories so beautiful that I almost cry when I see them—with pleasure and pain.

The battery-operated portable videocassette recorder opens up a whole new world of possibilities. Potentially, it's the ultimate movie camera. Silent super-8 film costs about five to 10 dollars for a three-minute roll, including processing. A videocassette, at less than \$20, can provide two, four or even six hours of recording with sound. There's no wait for processing, and you can view it conveniently on your color TV. What's more, if you don't like what you've shot, you can erase it and use the tape again.

The typical portable VCR ad shows a lithe young woman gracefully wielding a portable camera with the recorder lightly suspended from her shoulder. Is the portable really that easy to use? Is it truly an adequate substitute for a super-8 camera? I wanted to be really sure that it would make a practical vacation companion before I put my super 8 in mothballs. So I set up my own exhaustive test (not to be confused with the Finkelstein test, which comes later). My wife Gladys and I

were planning a three-week trip to Europe, going by air to West Berlin for a week, spending another week in Italy, followed by a five-day voyage home on the Queen Elizabeth 2. Why not just slip a portable video outfit into our luggage and tape a television record of our dream vacation?

I made a list of what I would need: a portable VCR and camera, of course; a couple of cassettes. Anything else? After a little research, I found I'd need a few more items. A battery will operate the camera and recorder for about an hour before it needs recharging—so I'd have to recharge the battery in my hotel room. Since that takes about eight hours, I'd need a spare to use in the meantime. Of course, the charger would have to work on European current—a quick check revealed that portable VCR battery chargers are designed to work on 120 volts only. I was able to locate a transformer that could be used with a VCR's battery charger, but it wasn't offered as an accessory with any of them. Then I was going to need something to carry this equipment in. Nothing was available with the VCR, but I was able to borrow a large aluminum suitcase, which I padded with foam to protect the electronic gear.

I obtained two good-quality portable VCR outfits, one selected because it was typical of the best units, the other because it was the lightest-weight system then available (lighter ones have been introduced since, but the difference is in ounces, not pounds). I weighed all the components

on the bathroom scale, with these results:

	SYSTEM A	SYSTEM B
Camera	9 lbs.	6.5 lbs.
Camera case (with connecting cables)	4.5 lbs.	5.75 lbs.
Recorder (with battery)	23 lbs.	14.5 lbs.
Battery Charger	12 lbs.	6 lbs.
Transformer	4 lbs.	4 lbs.
Spare Battery	3 lbs.	2 lbs.
Table-top Tripod	1 lb.	1 lb.
Two Cassettes	1.5 lbs.	1.5 lbs.
Aluminum Carrying Case	9 lbs.	9 lbs.
TOTAL WEIGHT	67 lbs.	50.25 lbs.

Part of the weight disparity was a result of differences in the equipment. The System A recorder came in a leatherette carrying case with shoulder strap, while System B's recorder had no case, but a shoulder strap attached directly to it. No single-function battery charger was available for System A (although one was advertised), so the weight given is for a combination tuner-timer-charger, which I would have had to carry along (see box on page 58).

My deliberation was less weighty than the equipment—I quickly chose System B. Since my wife insisted that we also carry personal luggage filled with such frivolities as clothing



I panned the camera slowly around the room. "This is our hotel

and toilet articles, I added a heavy-duty luggage cart to the above items.

The recorder, charger and accessories were well enough cradled in the padded aluminum suitcase to trust to the plane's luggage compartment, but I had been warned to hand-carry the camera—its precision optics could be whacked out of adjustment by airline baggage handlers. Since all of the

equipment was imported from Japan, I took the precaution of registering it with U.S. Customs, just to make certain I wouldn't be required to pay duty on it when I returned. (This is a wise move when taking any equipment abroad, including super-8 cameras.)

I am naturally round-shouldered, so I had to walk as if one leg were longer than the other to keep the bulky rectan-

gular camera case on my shoulder. As I walked to my seat in the crowded British Airways plane, the camera case systematically thwacked right-hand-aisle-seat passengers smartly across the arms and knuckles. Some passengers held this against me for the entire crossing.

After takeoff, as I was trying to figure out how to cram the camera case under

If you're shopping for a video camera...

Portable videocassette recorders are available under 11 different brand names, carrying suggested list prices from about \$1150 to \$1500, but often discounted to \$1000 or below. To make electronic home movies (more aptly, "home tapes") with any VCR, you also need a video camera. (Such a camera can be used with a nonportable VCR as well, but it will be tied to your viewing room by the connecting cable.) You can buy a black-and-white camera for under \$300—but that's hardly worth consideration, because one of the real pleasures of video photography (or videography) is the dimension of color.

Three types of color cameras currently are offered, generally varying in price according to the kind of viewfinder they use. The simplest type has an "optical" viewfinder—an eyepiece, or sight, which you look through to see approximately what your camera is seeing—similar to that used in a low-priced film camera. This type is being phased out by most manufacturers in favor of the through-the-lens (TTL) viewfinder on basic color cameras. A TTL viewfinder is still "optical," but it's like the viewer on a reflex film camera: as you take a picture, you view the scene through the camera lens, so you see exactly what you are photographing—and you can use the viewfinder to check focus.

The best type of viewfinder is the electronic kind used in broadcast cameras. This has a tiny black-and-white monitor (usually 1.5 inches in diagonal measurement), which is viewed through an eyepiece and which displays the exact electronic picture that the camera is taking (except for colors). An electronic viewfinder also shows focus, illumination and contrast. An added advantage is that you can play back the tape imme-

diately (viewing it through the viewfinder) to see exactly how your shot "came out," even when there's no TV set handy to display the picture. If you don't like what you see, you can rewind the tape and shoot it over while you still have the chance. As long as you're going to put big bucks into a video camera (\$695 to \$1000 and up), the electronic-viewfinder type is highly recommended, particularly for out-of-home shooting where you can't watch your TV screen while aiming the camera.

Most video cameras accept standard lenses of the type used in 16 mm. movie cameras. The electronic-viewfinder models (and many TTL types) come equipped with zoom lenses, which let you move gradually and smoothly from a wide scenic shot to a close-up without losing focus or having to move nearer your subject. A 6:1 zoom is better than a 4:1 or 3:1 because it gives you greater choice of scenes from the widest angle to the tightest close-up; some lenses have a "macro" position, for close-ups as near as a few inches.

Good video cameras, like sophisticated film cameras, have "automatic iris control," which electronically adjusts the lens opening for the amount of light available, as well as some sort of warning indicator—a red light, for example, in the viewfinder—to tell you when there's not enough light to make a good picture.

There's another control on many color video cameras that isn't present on film cameras: "color balance" or "white balance." Because video colors are reproduced electronically instead of by dyes in the film, they must be preset for proper color values under particular lighting conditions. In cameras with this feature, color setup

often is accomplished quickly by aiming the lens at any large white object and adjusting a control until a visual indicator in the viewfinder tells you that the "white level" is correct. (This might be a white line across the image in the electronic viewfinder; the color-balance knob is turned until the line reaches its lowest point in the picture.) All video cameras have built-in microphones, and some have jacks for attaching external mikes.

If your portable VCR is going to do double duty as a regular home video recorder, taping pictures off the air or from cable TV, you're going to need another accessory. This is a tuner-timer, to which the recorder is attached for regular viewing—but which is left at home when you're roaming the fields with your videographic outfit. It contains the circuits and controls needed to pick up television broadcasts for taping, as well as a timer to turn the machine off and on when you're not around; it also automatically recharges the battery in the portable. Tuner-time accessories cost from \$245 to just under \$500, depending on whether they have mechanical or electronic tuning and on the extent to which they can be programmed to switch channels and turn the set on and off while unattended.

Of course, if you already have a home VCR, you won't need the tuner-timer accessory, because you'll be using the portable only for out-of-home recording. But then you'll need a separate battery charger (\$100 or less) to keep the portable energized to face the outside world.

So you end up with an outfit costing perhaps \$2500, if you decide to shoot the works. It helps to keep in mind that what you've got for your money is really two complete instruments—a portable photography machine to make your personal videotapes, and a home recorder to tape and play back broadcasts and to play prerecorded videocassettes.

room in Berlin," I narrated in my best Edward R. Murrow voice

the seat in front of me, Gladys suggested it would be a good idea to make a tape record of the plane trip, shooting some pictures in the cabin and out the window. I had actually started to unlatch the case before I realized that the recorder was in the baggage compartment—and without it the camera and case were just 12.25 pounds of dead weight.

As soon as camera and recorder were reunited in our Berlin hotel room, I opened the aluminum suitcase, carefully lifted out the recorder, plugged in the cable, mounted the camera on my shoulder and peered through the electronic viewfinder. Black. No picture. "Maybe you should take the lens cap off," Gladys suggested. Clever woman, my wife. The picture slowly materialized in the viewfinder. I aimed the camera at the white woodwork and carefully adjusted the white level, an operation that is recommended before each shooting session.

I panned the camera slowly around the room. "This is our hotel room in Berlin," I narrated in my best Edward R. Murrow voice. Then I panned to Gladys, who was seated in the room's one easy chair, and interviewed her about her journey, the state of her health, her opinion of the accommodations and her initial impressions of Berlin. It was only when the camera was aimed at the darkest corner of the room that the red light appeared to warn me of inadequate illumination.

Eagerly I played back the tape, watching it in the camera's 1.5-inch black-and-white picture-tube viewfinder and listening to the interview through an earphone plugged into the recorder. It looked and sounded great.

Next I pointed the camera out the window of our second-story room, zooming, panning and tilting on buildings, cars, clouds, people—whatever was in the way. I discovered that people-watching with a zoom lens was fascinating. A woman standing at the bus stop attracted my attention, and I zoomed in for a tight shot as she tugged at her girdle. (Viewing this memorable segment on my home color-TV set, I've often marveled that this unknown *Fräulein* has absolutely no idea that someone 4000 miles away in his living room is watching her adjust her *Strumpfhalter*.)

So far, so good. It was time to go on location. I slung the 14.5-pound recorder over my shoulder, took the camera by its pistol-grip handle, and we were off on our video walking

tour of Berlin. I already had found that the camera and recorder, each slung around my neck and over an opposite shoulder, combined to give me a choking sensation—so on most forays I carried the camera by hand. Since it wasn't designed for this kind of carrying, it tends to twist the wrist and put undue pressure on the thumb. But I hadn't really noticed this yet as I stood on the Kurfürstendamm and taped the lively crossroads of Berlin. Even as I was taking pictures of people, I found them taking pictures of me. It was difficult to recite my on-the-spot commentary, not only because the microphone was aimed away from me, but because those infernal tourists kept asking me which TV network I represented.

Fatigue and jet lag cut our walking tour to about three blocks. I literally tripped into our hotel room (over the camera cable, that is) and plugged the recorder into the battery charger—where it remained for most of our stay in Berlin. Somehow, we felt much lighter without it. After all, it was really Rome we wanted to tape.

Because of the recent wave of terrorist hijackings, security at German airports is extremely tight. Before I was permitted to board the plane to Rome, our second stop, I was beckoned into an entry room with two security officers in full uniform, one of whom politely requested that I remove the camera from the case. "This is a video camera," I explained.

"Open it up, please, and remove the film," the guard again intoned.

"I can't. It doesn't open. Besides, it doesn't use film. It uses tape."

The first security officer took the camera, carefully examined it and handed it to his associate. "Then remove the tape," he ordered.

"The tape's in the recorder, and the recorder is checked in with my luggage."

"Take a picture with it."

"I can't. It won't take a picture without the recorder."

A third security officer was summoned, this one carrying some kind of submachine gun. The camera was lifted, examined from all angles and shaken. After an animated conversation in German, which I understood to be a debate on whether or not to douse the camera in a bucket of water, they permitted me to pass with all kinds of apologies and wishes for a safe trip.

In Rome, after photographing the interior of our hotel room, conducting the obligatory interview with Gladys and

taping the scene from our window (somebody's back yard; not a bus stop in sight), I loaded up for the walking tour. There's no shortage of videotaping material in Rome: plenty of color, old buildings, animated conversations, and almost everyone is willing to be interviewed in front of a television camera. The Trevi Fountain, mobbed with Romans and tourists, was spectacular material for my tape collection. But I hadn't reckoned with the Spanish Steps—our hotel was at the top; my arm hurt and my shoulder smarted from the weight of the equipment as I trudged up the last few steps.

A typical tourist goes on a sight-seeing bus tour and carries his camera. So the next day saw me struggling down the aisle to my seat, swinging and banging the recorder into fellow passengers, the camera gripped tightly in my right hand. The Pantheon, the Colosseum, the Trevi Fountain (again), the Vatican, the Spanish Steps (again), were immortalized on tape that sunny Roman day, along with such sparkling vignettes seen from the bus window as a Roman garbage can, a Roman dog, two Romans arguing and my reflection in the bus window. So was our attractive young guide, whom I subjected to a video interview about her experiences on the job, her training, her knowledge of languages and her marital status. Toward the end of the interview, she admonished me that the use of tape recorders wasn't permitted on the bus.

"But this is a camera," I insisted.

"You can use the camera, but use of a tape recorder is against regulations." She had me there.

Each time the bus stopped for a get-out-and-walk-around tour, I collected my electronic gear, secured the shoulder strap, waited until the other passengers had disembarked (so as to cause the least disturbance) and sidled down the aisle, protecting the camera from bumps and trying to keep the recorder from swinging into the seat backs. One of the most worrisome problems was the cable from the camera to the recorder: it's quite long and tends to get caught on seat arms or under the feet, where it can cause a rather nasty trip, with potential damage to electronic equipment and human tissue. I learned to truss it around my neck, arms and shoulders while walking. If this was somewhat confining, at least it kept me from stepping on it or looping it around stationary objects.

Our bus returned from sightseeing

Strapped in, camera at the ready, I roamed the deck shooting lifeboats, shuffleboards and — endlessly — dat ol' devil sea

behind schedule, and I'm afraid I was at least partly responsible. At every stop, I needed time to nestle the camera properly on my shoulder, remove the lens cap, turn the recorder on, adjust the white level, focus, figure out which way to turn the zoom lens—and answer silly questions about what I was doing. Although my Trevi Fountain shots remain great classics of the videographer's art, I'm sorry to admit that a considerable segment of our Roman tour was lost to posterity through inadvertent erasure. With the camera on the right shoulder and the recorder slung over the left, it's just about impossible to view the recorder's push buttons, which become hidden by articles of clothing around the waist. Unfortunately—for me—the rewind button is located next to the on-off button, a juxtaposition that apparently resulted in my pushing "rewind" instead of "off" after shooting a potential Emmy-winning scene at the Vatican, thereby losing some immortal footage when I recorded the next event.

To climax our Italian tour, we drove south to Naples, Pompeii and the Amalfi coast in a rented car. Unfortunately, our little Fiat had no lid to prevent the curious from staring into the trunk compartment. At one point

we returned to the car from a short rest stop to catch two men in the act of removing the vent window with a hacksaw blade to gain access to the electronic marvels so temptingly displayed. When they saw us coming, they explained that they had just saved us from being robbed—and asked for a *tip!* This incident so unnerved us that we insisted on a hotel with a locked garage and left the video equipment in the car rather than schlep it up to our room where it might be further endangered. (At a filling station on the trip back to Rome, I stood such careful guard over the video equipment in the trunk that someone lifted my 35-mm. still camera from the front seat.)

Finally checked into the good ship QE2 for our journey home, I dutifully photographed our stateroom, interviewed Gladys on her impressions and shot endless seascapes from the port-hole. Eventually I decided the time had arrived to come to grips once again with the recorder's portability. Strapped in, camera at the ready, I roamed the deck shooting lifeboats, shuffleboards, deck chairs and—endlessly—dat ol' devil sea. I interviewed several passengers, none of them very interesting, with the exception of the handsome Argentine yachtsman who refused to let me photograph his mysterious female companion. One of the delights of video photography is that you can shoot away to your heart's content without worrying about wasting film—you can erase and reuse *on purpose*.

For the rest of the voyage, until our arrival in New York harbor under the first pink rays of dawn, the recorder rested on the floor in our cabin, its battery soaking up juices from the QE2's dynamos. Then, during the preparations for docking, I toted the equipment up on deck again to record sunrise over the skyscrapers, the tugboats, the filthy water and the cheers of passengers on deck. This time I tried carrying the camera in my left hand and slinging the recorder over my right shoulder. This made picture-taking somewhat difficult, as I am right-eyed.

Five months later, after four tries, I finally found a doctor who didn't insist on surgery. "Move your thumb," he said. I couldn't. He explained I had just failed the Finkelstein test, a sure

sign that I was afflicted with De Quervain's tenosynovitis, a painful swelling of the tendon running from the thumb up the wrist (which probably will come to be known as "video wrist"). Thanks to the miracle of cortisone and anti-inflammatory drugs, I am progressing nicely, and I'm told the splint may be removed any week now.

Was it worth it? When I try to hold a pen or a pair of chopsticks or offer my wrist splint for a handshake, I'm not sure. But when I view my tapes, I know it was—at least, just this once. The pictures are sharp, the colors are gorgeous, the sound fair to good. Via the magic of my 19-inch color-TV set, I'm transported back to beautiful Rome, vibrant Berlin and the unforgettable experience of Miss Liberty warmed by the sunrise.

There is a negative side—principally the inability to edit home tapes satisfactorily. After all, three hours is a little much at a sitting, and endless scrutiny of the details of statues, cornices and hotel-room wallpaper does become a bit tiring after the fifth viewing. (What *did* I find so attractive about those Roman garbage cans?) So do those long gaps of nothingness I purposely inserted between shots after my accidental erasure at the Vatican.

For strictly family recording near home, where not too much carrying is required and where the recorder can be put down on the floor or ground, the portable VCR-camera outfit is a fascinating and highly rewarding device. For all but the most adventurous (and husky), it may still be too heavy and bulky to lug on an active moving-around vacation—except, possibly, if you go all the way in your own car.

Each succeeding generation of portable VCRs and cameras is lighter and easier to use and handle than its parent. Now under development by many companies are all-in-one camera-recorder combinations, aimed at the super 8's size and weight—but they're probably five to 10 years in the future.

I still love my portable and use it—around the house and near the car. Would I take it to Europe again? Not on your vidicon. However, this summer we're sort of thinking of a trip to the Far East, and if I pass my Finkelstein test by then, maybe—just maybe... 🍷





Television's Thriving Theater of Humiliation

Hurry, hurry, hurry—step right up and watch the contestants make fools of themselves

By PETER H. BROWN

"It's not unlike a video Roman circus: the audience wants psychological blood. Every time a contestant bows down in abject humiliation, the viewers, in their comfy armchairs, lean back and grow six inches taller."—Dr. Ronald Baxter, consultant for the BBC

Bob Eubanks is hard at work. He smooths his hair, flashes a toothpaste smile at the camera and leans out toward his three contestants.

"Now, tell me, girls: In one word, how would your husband describe the condition of his armpits?"

None of the contestants, all brides of less than a month, blush. "Dry," says Kathi. "Definitely dry," says Bridget. "Dry, oh yes...very dry," coos Mary Ann.

The setting is the pink-and-blue sound stage of *The Newlywed Game*, one of the most successful daytime shows in the history of television. And Eubanks, who is the very model of a modern major game-show host, is in his element. He winks and struts and the secrets come spilling out. In fact, he meets very little resistance from "the girls," who seem positively avid to publicize the most intimate details of their courtships and marriages, up to and beyond the hygienic habits of their husbands—all for the price of an avocado-colored washer-and-dryer set.

A bell rings, and the husbands shuffle onto the stage.

"Gentlemen, please describe—in one word—the condition of your armpits." And now Eubanks, not the contestants, blushes, shrugging his shoulders

Peter H. Brown is a Los Angeles-based freelancer.

toward the camera, and says: "Well, I won't get an Emmy, but it's a living."

Nothing daunted, the new husbands confess the state of their armpits: "Dry."

The audience roars its approval.

As the winning couple, Ricky and Kathi, drive out the back lot of the Chuck Barris Productions sound stages in Hollywood, film editors are already at work piecing together a half-hour segment of *The Newlywed Game*, which will play in 119 American cities and earn back its cost at least 10 times.

It will send its not-so-veiled message of sex to afternoon viewers in Miami, Phoenix, New York, Sioux Falls, S.D., and 115 other cities. And then it will be rerun—mornings, late nights, middays. When the show has had its last video gasp, 75 million people will have seen Ricky and Kathi talk about his armpits.

The single episode will eventually return some \$75,000 on an original production investment of about \$12,000. In the luxurious offices of Chuck Barris Productions, that sum will be added to the Midas pile of profits based exclusively on bizarre and lunatic game shows—profits that totaled \$5,244,000 last year (projected profit for this year is \$7 million).

And in those offices—at the receiving end of the cash flow and public ballyhoo—sits the man who created an empire on the premise that, in his words, "People will do anything, anything, to get on television."

"*The Dating Game* and *The Newlywed Game* are stupid shows—mawkish but never harmful," says this modern-day Midas, Chuck Barris. "We purposely stay away from big prizes on

those shows. If we introduced yachts, people would kill each other."

From his glass-framed perch in Hollywood's poshest building, Barris, who was first hired by ABC to check on game-show producers in the wake of the payola scandals in the Fifties, rules a game-show fiefdom that includes the *Dating* and *Newlywed* games, *The Gong Show*, *The \$1.98 Beauty Show* and *3's a Crowd*.

He calls his creations "popcorn for the mind" and sneers at his critics: "You know, one of the executive bigwigs came to me a while ago and asked me why I wasted my talent on the shows I produce. The guy said, 'You're so good; why don't you come over to the network and do something with substance to it?'"

Barris laughs and repeats his reply: "Whaddaya want me to do, buddy—create something like *Charlie's Angels* or *Laverne & Shirley*?"

The game-show king has just come from the location of his new film, "The Gong Show Movie," and is about to attend a conference on "Game Shows of the Eighties." Around his desk sit videocassettes of the latest episodes of *The Gong Show*, *The \$1.98 Beauty Show*, and a hot and controversial new entry, *3's a Crowd*.

"I think we're peddling honesty," says Barris. "There are strange people out there. They show up for *The Gong Show* or *3's a Crowd*—some of them are even borderline nuts. But at least they're not phony. They go out there and put it on the line. I admire their guts because I could never do that myself."

Barris, who started *The Dating Game* in 1965 by putting the courtship dance

on the small screen, has been testing the video limits of taste and tolerance ever since—hauling in profits estimated at \$10 million since 1975.

"The new attitude on the part of the networks is one of 'Look, we're not getting our hem dirty,'" says Budd Granoff, Barris's second-in-command and the executive producer of "The Gong Show Movie." "But I'll tell you one thing: they'd like to see the ratio of profit to investment that we get.

"And if imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, then we're really on top," adds Granoff. "Just look at those who have tried to copy our format. *The Cheap Show*, *Bedtime Stories*, all those picked up on our idea of showing real people in very funny situations. But they didn't quite have the Barris touch. So they are gone."

"Contestants needed for new game show. You will be humiliated, embarrassed before your friends and a million people. And your prize will be an inexpensive item, plus the chance to appear on TV."—Ad in the Santa Monica Evening Outlook

When we opened the doors for the first day of auditions, the line was eight blocks long," says Robert O'Connor, a producer for the slapstick *The Cheap Show*, created by a former Chuck Barris partner, Chris Bearde. "It was amazing. We told people far in advance that they would become the object of absolute ridicule. Still they did it."

O'Connor and Bearde (who had co-developed *The Gong Show* with Barris) were as good as their word: For a short season in 1978, teams of couples were put through a theater of humiliation to win such lightweight prizes as a 79-cent plastic shark, a deck of cards with holes in them and a water glass with a dribble side. If a *Cheap Show* contestant gave a wrong answer, his or her hapless partner was bombarded with mud, raw eggs, chicken feathers or buckets of goopy slime.

"But still it wasn't weird enough," says O'Connor. "We thought we could outdo Barris. But we didn't humiliate enough. It wasn't tacky enough."

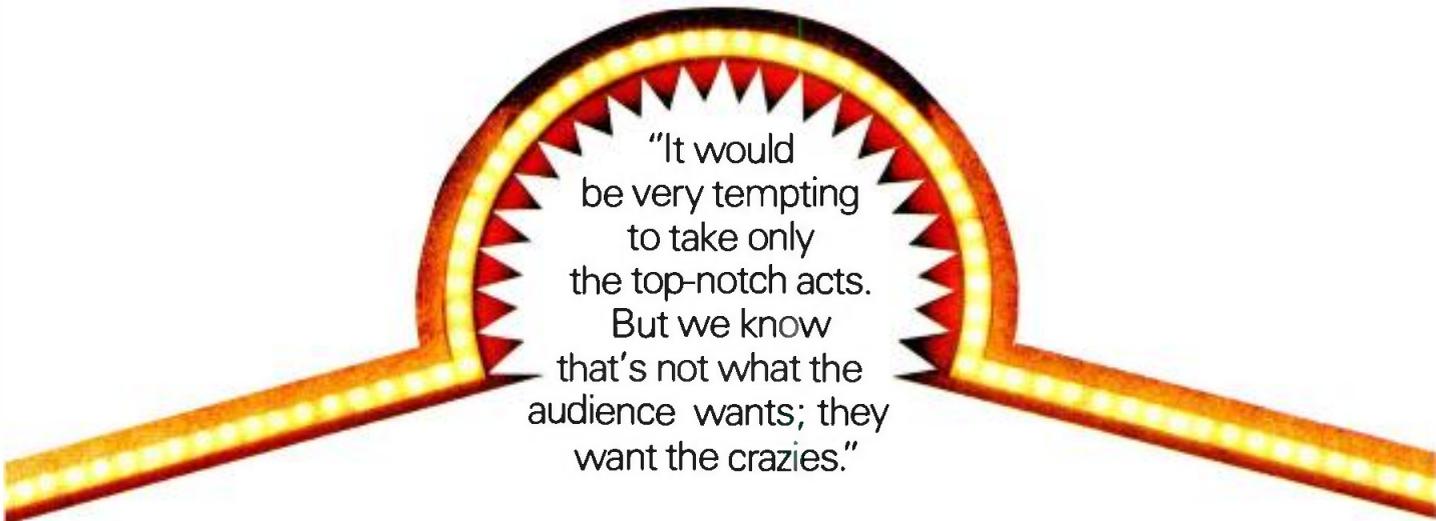
Across town, however, Barris and company had tack aplenty in a new show they assembled that season called *The \$1.98 Beauty Show*.

We take you now to the Barris stages, where six girls of highly divergent shapes, sizes and talents are competing, before a live audience, for a dented styrofoam crown worth 19 cents and \$1.98 in change.

continued







"It would be very tempting to take only the top-notch acts. But we know that's not what the audience wants; they want the crazies."

As comedian Rip Taylor, the show's host, slips into a red-velvet jacket and winks at contestants, a 250-pound lady named Alma struggles with the straps of her bathing suit, while a far-from-junior miss named Allison practices her talent entry. This apparently is composed of sexual lunges toward the stage and the ceiling.

Before the night is over, the fat lady named Alma will carry off the broken crown, a bouquet of wilted vegetables and the \$1.98 in change. "Believe me, it's the happiest day of my life," says Alma, crushing Rip Taylor in her arms.

"Doesn't this prove to you that the criticism of us is unfounded?" asks Granoff. "We don't go out and rope these contestants in. What we actually do is make fun of the Miss America thing. The kind of girls who come on this show are the girls who have always wanted to be in the limelight."

The show's two-year run has drawn an avalanche of criticism from the National Organization for Women, but not a single blink from a video censor. "I don't know that what we do is insulting or humiliating to women," said the late Gene Banks, the first producer of the show. "Not that we're above humiliating women. It's just that people want to be on television, and they'll go to any extent to get on. So I guess what I'm trying to say is that we don't actually humiliate them—we just give them an arena in which they can humiliate themselves."

Why precisely people are willing to do anything to "get on" is an interesting question. And Dr. James V. Bonura, a leading industry psychologist and a major consultant to Tandem Productions, has an interesting answer: Contestants, he says, are "undoubtedly motivated by a wish or fantasy that, somehow, this will lead to stardom."

Rather than feeling themselves exploited, contestants feel "more positive about themselves," according to Bonura. In fact, he says, "Television is able to fulfill our desires to such an extent that contestants not only want to go on such shows, they may need the partici-

pation—national exposure can be a primary need."

Whatever the theory, the fact is the programs turn into solid gold out in the syndication market. *The Dating Game*, *The Newlywed Game*, *The \$1.98 Beauty Show* and *The Gong Show*, on which an array of questionable talent gets 90 seconds to show off, are (according to Arbitron) all in the top 20 daytime programs.

"People can laugh at us if they want to," says Granoff. "But our audience surveys over the past two years have shown that these game shows are at the very top of the viewing list for women aged 18-39. That means the women who have the dough to spend."

"Like it or not, when people in 2020 ask what the Eighties were like, thousands will answer The Gong Show, among other things."—Dr. Joyce Brothers

Backstage at Chuck Barris Productions, a 65-year-old grandmother named Dora Romani bounces into the room in a silver-trimmed dress: "Mr. Barris, I'm a-gonna sing 'Butcher Boy.' I don't know one note of music, but I been singing all my life by ear."

Barris looks up at the sweet old woman as she starts to sing—in a voice as raucous as Sophie Tucker's. The room freezes: a ballet dancer in a worm costume, a boy playing wine bottles, a man with a sack on his head—they all stop and stare.

"Bravo! Fortissimo!" yells Barris, running to put his arm around the lady. "You'll be on, honey, you'll be on."

Across Hollywood—in the skyscraper where Barris rents an entire floor—production assistant Diane Fell is watching an endless reel of videotapes. Minute after minute, day after day, she watches a parade of acts, ranging from a man who sings "Danny Boy" through his nose to a housewife playing "That's Entertainment" on crushed aluminum cans.

"We used to get enough crazies to put on a top-notch show," says Fell.

"But the word has gotten out that you can be discovered on *The Gong Show*. Now we're in really big trouble. It would be very tempting to take only the top-notch acts. But we know that's not what the audience wants; they want the crazies."

Granoff says, "*The Gong Show* contestants are really nothing more than the guy who gets drunk at a party and dances around with a lampshade on his head. That's why people identify so strongly with this show."

Psychologist Bonura agrees. "Barris provides a sense of affiliation, a sense of excitement, by bringing regular people on TV. It's easy to understand why the shows are popular; *Gong* contestants are in a no-fail situation."

And so, apparently, is *The Gong Show* itself. Says Granoff, "I can see *The Gong Show* going on until 1985—it has become a part of our culture."

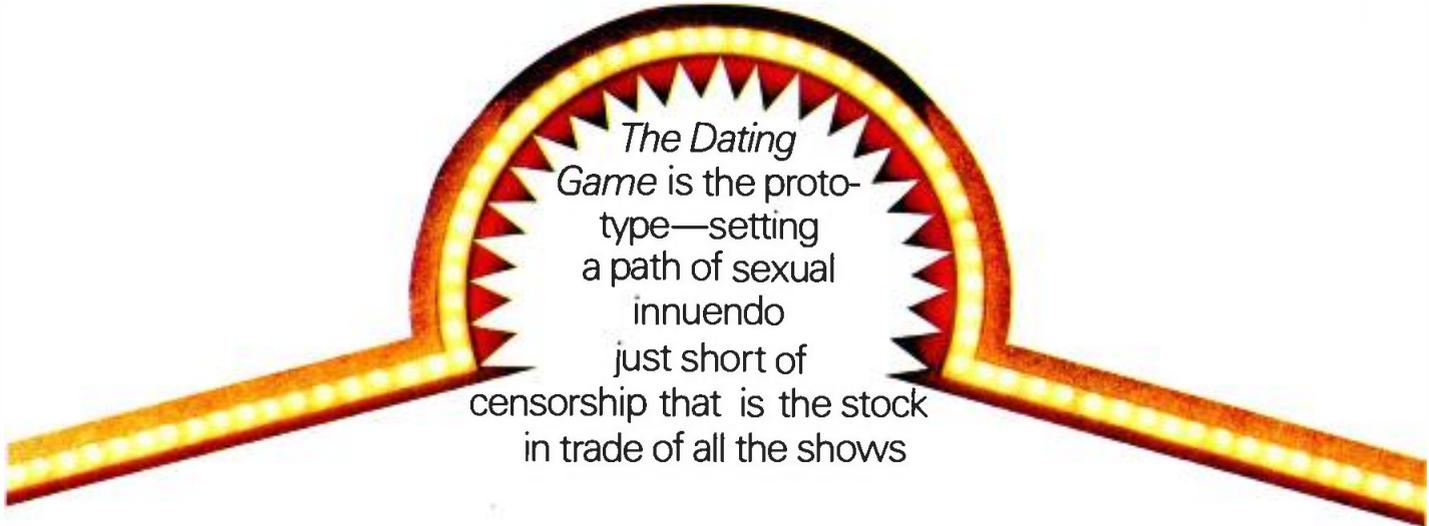
"Shows like The Dating Game and Bedtime Stories let us continue to use baby talk when it comes to sex and rejection and the mating dance—it's almost primeval."—Dr. Harrison Singh, communications professor, Edinburgh University

It is noon on the Santa Monica beach near Los Angeles, and Rick is pumping up his muscles with a barbell.

"You can't just walk onto the set of *The Dating Game*," says Rick, who is going back for his third time as a bachelor on the 15-year-old show. "They gave me some tips on my hair, my suntan; one of the directors told me where I could find a tailor to cut my pants tighter. When I came out in those Angel's Flight pants, the audience cheered me twice as much as the other bachelors."

By 4:30, wearing his skintight pants and a fresh tan, Rick is on-stage at *The Dating Game* in downtown Hollywood. The audience has been pouring in for more than an hour: retired couples from Nebraska, a tour bus of English students on holiday, 15 families from Oregon.

On-stage, a rotating platform has al-



The Dating Game is the prototype—setting a path of sexual innuendo just short of censorship that is the stock in trade of all the shows

ready brought the three bachelors, including Rick, into view. All of them—uniformly tanned, well-muscled and 6 feet tall—are getting directions on speech, laughter and camera mugging from assistant directors. There's a beep. *The Dating Game* host, Jim Lange, dashes on-stage in a burgundy tuxedo, and the curtain opens.

At 15, *The Dating Game* is not only the oldest of the Chuck Barris shows, it is the prototype—setting a path of sexual innuendo just short of censorship that is the stock in trade of all the shows.

On this show, for instance, Rick is asked to describe “how you like your ice cream—I can tell a lot from that.” Rick licks his lips. “Babe,” he says, “I like mine double-dipped.”

The audience catches the innuendo, rises up in a body and gives the muscle man a standing ovation. He wins the date.

“We work hard writing those questions—for *The Newlywed Game*, *The Dating Game* and *3's a Crowd*,” says Mike Metzger, a Barris executive producer who has written more than 40,000 questions. “We try for questions that will not only be funny but that will titillate the participants and inch them over into a sexual arena.

“I think both *The Dating Game* and *The Newlywed Game* have questions that approach being artistic masterpieces. It's getting real smooth now.”

The Dating Game's contestants are at least as polished. A survey of 40 shows indicates that at least 58 percent of the contestants are actors by profession, appearing again and again.

“There's no doubt about it,” says an agent at the big William Morris Agency in Beverly Hills. “I tell clients to go on over and audition. After all, Burt Reynolds and hundreds of others were discovered on that stage.”

Granoff defends the practice: “We use actors and actresses because they apply as waitresses or other professionals. They don't put down ‘actress’ on their forms. There are 15,000 out-of-work actors out here. They *are* working as waitresses and parking-lot atten-

dants. They make incredibly fine contestants.”

“Chuck Barris has finally done it this time with *3's a Crowd*; this show insults every wife, secretary and husband in America. It's an outrage.”—Shelly Mandell, president of the Los Angeles chapter of the National Organization for Women

The newest game show, *3's a Crowd*, sneaked onto the fall programming of several dozen stations with hardly a whisper of publicity. It was soon creating an uproar across America. Again, the source was Chuck Barris Productions. Again, the show was based on the conflict between woman and man: this time, two women and one man—a boss, his secretary and his wife.

“We just wanted to have some fun with the idea that the secretary is actually a ‘surrogate wife,’ perhaps spending more time with the husband than his spouse,” says Granoff. “Of course the background is sexual—it's a sexual battleground out there.”

The show pits three boss-secretary-wife teams against each other, answering questions. One recent show asked “which item of clothing the husband feels should be in the garbage heap.” Two couples carried on lengthy discussions about the dirty condition of the panties of the two wives, with one couple getting bleeped five times.

“We are only showing the truth about people,” says Budd Granoff in defense. “Remember, these people are discussing their unmentionables before an audience of millions—for a top prize of about \$333 apiece. The real lure is TV. We are only a mirror of society.”

It is this show—not *Bedtime Stories* (in which couples were in bed when they answered similarly leading questions) or *The Cheap Show*—that finally has brought out the pressure groups in full cry. Opposition at the local-station and sponsor level has been advocated by NOW, the National Secretaries Association, the Homemakers' Equal Rights Association, the Archdiocese of New York, and numerous grass-roots

parent and church groups. And this opposition would seem to be having an effect: while Granoff claimed 30 million viewers when the show began, he admits it is now reaching only a sixth of that original number.

Dr. Gaye Tuchman, a sociologist at Queens College in New York, says, “It might be high time for action. These shows all have a common theme—raunchiness. When you deal with such subjects as armpits on the air, it is a bit like children testing their limits.

“I feel the newer game shows are simply the outgrowth of prime-time television,” continues Tuchman. “As the networks veered toward jiggling breasts and fanny shots in *Charlie's Angels* and other shows, the daytime game shows went the same way—carrying the same theme as far as they safely could.”

Dr. Tuchman says she doesn't know whether the shows are healthy or unhealthy. “They are dealing with an issue that is quite important to us right now: the difference between public and private. Is it right for a husband and wife to go on television and talk about the dirtiness of the wife's panties? I couldn't answer that because there seems to be no clear-cut definition of public and private. We are in a new era.”

The National Organization for Women is less tolerant. “*3's a Crowd* is poisonously anti-woman and anti-marriage,” says Judith Mueli, who has spent three months watching the show for a NOW study. “The implication is that the secretary fools around with her boss and that the wives are fools.”

Shortly after NOW launched a campaign to remove *3's a Crowd* from the air, it found an unexpected ally: the chaotic syndicated-TV marketplace. In March, Chuck Barris Productions announced that it was suspending production on *all* its shows, citing “a glut of product on the market.” Some series, however, will continue in reruns on various stations.

“The women's groups can relax now,” says Budd Granoff. “But don't write the obituaries yet. We'll be offering some new shows in 1981.”



In "Guyana Tragedy," Powers Boothe (seated) portrays Jim Jones; Ned Beatty (striped tie) is Rep. Leo Ryan; and Veronica Cartwright plays Jones' wife, Marcy.

Restaging the Guyana Massacre...

raises some basic questions about what is—and what is not—proper subject matter for docudramas

By BILL DAVIDSON

One Hollywood producer characterized 1979 television as "The Year of the Disease-of-the-Week." He said, "You could hardly turn on the tube to watch a television movie without seeing someone dying of cancer, a brain tumor, or worse. You almost needed a Blue Cross card to watch."

By the same standard, 1980 might well become known as "The Year of the Massacre." In March we saw 39 prison inmates and hostages mowed down in ABC's "Attica." On the program schedule for April was CBS's "Guyana Tragedy: The Story of Jim Jones." Upcoming we have NBC's *Kent State* (13 antiwar students killed or wounded by the Ohio National Guard), ABC's *Masada* (960 ancient Jews committing mass suicide by slitting their own

throats), and NBC's "Mountain Meadows Massacre" (137 pioneers slaughtered by Indians and fanatical white settlers in Utah in 1857).

All three networks vehemently deny that a massacre cycle has begun. For example, Robert Daly, president of CBS's Entertainment Division, says, "In movies, miniseries and docudramas, we are trying to give our audiences a mix of *all* kinds of subject matter."

Yet, one of Daly's own underlings points out, "We're in the most desperate ratings race in the history of television, and we naturally turn to the exploitation of current events to pull big audiences—as we did with the Manson murders in 'Helter Skelter'."

And other informants with the net-

works confirm that this indeed is the fact. At least 11 projects dealing with the American hostages in Iran have been submitted to NBC, ABC and CBS, and have been given serious consideration as docudramas.

But there have been even more proposals for multiple-murder subjects: 14 about California's confessed Hillside Strangler, Kenneth Bianchi; 16 about convicted Illinois homosexual mass murderer John Gacy; 12 about Florida's convicted sorority-house slayer, Theodore Bundy.

The trend disturbs some of television's creative people. Says Writers Guild representative Melville Shavelson (producer of *Ike*, among other miniseries successes), "The networks are catering to the basest instincts of a potentially vast audience. Many people have a morbid sense of curiosity, which causes them to rush to the scene of auto and airplane crashes. The same morbid curiosity hooks them when they simply see the word 'Guyana' in the TV program listings. It conjures up visions of all those dead bodies lying around in Jonestown and that's what they tune in to see—whether the rest of the show has any valid purpose or not."

Stan Margulies (*Roots*, *Moviola*, "Collision Course") is even more vehe-

ment. "Purely and simply," he says, "it's a way of circumventing the restrictions against violence in dramatic shows. In the guise of portraying the true story, you can go to the network censors [Broadcast Standards] and show them the photos of *real* bodies—plus scenes of carnage already seen on the network's news shows—and the Broadcast Standards people can't object. I deplore this use of the docudrama form—which I helped pioneer—as a way of getting around the rules."

On the other hand, there are those in the industry who discern a legitimate informational purpose in the massacre docudramas. Among such experts is Jerry Adler, formerly of Universal Studios, now head of production for Melvin Simon Television Productions, Inc.

Says Adler, "I wouldn't hesitate to do the New Mexico prison riot, for example—if the main burden of the story focused on the horrible conditions that led to the riot, and *if* the gory prison murders were not graphic but implied, the way I used to watch Alfred Hitchcock do it at Universal. I would also do the Hillside Strangler if someone came to me and said, 'What I really want to show in this film is not sensationalized violence but the seeds in Kenneth Bianchi's character and background that made him act as monstrously as he did.'

"Most people still get their news in shorthand on TV and radio, and such docudrama could amplify and explain the news—just as CBS's 'Helter Skelter,' quite tastefully I think, explained the monstrosity of Charles Manson and his followers."

Network executives tend to echo this view. One such is Bernard Sofronski, CBS vice president in charge of special programs. Sofronski says, "This project ['Guyana Tragedy'] grabbed me because I felt challenged to answer the questions that are plaguing the public's mind: 'How and why could Jonestown happen?'

"I was intrigued with the parallel between Jim Jones and Hitler: people knew how horrible they both were, but blindly followed the dream that they would be given a better world than the one they had. I like to feel that we put the Guyana pieces together—starting with Jones' childhood and exploring the factors that changed him from a liberal antiracist hero to the megalomaniacal madman who commanded the deaths of nearly a thousand people.

"Of the four hours of our film, three hours and 40 minutes are devoted to looking for the reasons. Our answers,

hopefully, might help prevent it from happening again with some other demagogue. This is the point we wanted to make. So only the last 20 minutes are concerned with the massacre itself."

One problem with Sofronski's reasoning is that "Guyana Tragedy" actually portrays more violence than its real-life original. Nine people are fatally stitched by automatic-weapons fire in the TV version of the attack at the Jonestown jungle airstrip, whereas only five were killed in real-life Rep. Leo Ryan's investigating party. Asked about this, producer Frank Konigsberg shrugged and said, "We made up a lot of extra characters and had more to get rid of."

"Guyana Tragedy" is the most current of this year's batch of current-events docudramas. The Jonestown bodies had barely been removed to mortuaries when CBS signed its deal with Konigsberg's company. In this era of "instant books," such haste is not unusual.

One of the instant books about Jonestown was Berkley's "The Guyana Massacre: An Eyewitness Account," written by Charles Krause. The massacre and the mass suicides occurred on Nov. 19, 1978, and by Dec. 5 Krause's book already was printed in galley-proof form. Krause's agent was International Creative Management. The vast ICM agency also represents film writer Ernest Tidyman and producer Frank Konigsberg. Tidyman and Konigsberg had collaborated on last year's "Dummy," an Emmy-winning docudrama. The ICM agents got Krause's galley proofs into the hands of fellow clients Tidyman and Konigsberg, and the deal with the network was concluded by Dec. 15.

In the meantime, the other two networks were flooded with similar proposals for Guyana docudramas. At ABC, Leonard Hill, the network's movies-for-TV vice president, said at the time, "We have received a couple of dozen submissions on the subject. There well may be an excellent movie there, but to find it will take time. To treat it in a slapdash manner would be exploitative and irresponsible. So I have asked for no more Guyana submissions." Deanne Barkley, then NBC's TV-movie boss, said simply, "I wouldn't touch it with a 10-foot pole."

It took three months for the script to clear CBS's censors, but, says producer Konigsberg, "The Broadcast Standards people raised practically no objections—mostly because we avoided libel by portraying only six real people

in the script, including Jones and Congressman Ryan, with the rest of the characters either composites or wholly fictitious."

Production began in December 1979, in and around Atlanta and in Dorado, Puerto Rico. Powers Boothe, a fine Broadway stage actor, was found by CBS and pressed into service to play Jones. For name value, other top-flight actors were signed for supporting or cameo roles. Among them were Ned Beatty, Colleen Dewhurst, Brenda Vaccaro, Randy Quaid, Diane Ladd and James Earl Jones.

Many of the actors originally expressed disquietude over the subject matter, but being actors, they were mostly concerned with the nuances of their own roles. To those who were queasy about the massacre scenes, Konigsberg said, "In a way, you're doing a morality play—about the dangers of drugs, about the folly of giving up all self-will and individuality to another magnetic human being, about the dangers of a social system that could allow a man like Jones to become so powerful politically and virtually invulnerable to the law."

Shortly after completing his film, Konigsberg said, "I'm sure we'll be charged with being exploitative, but we'll have to let the public judge the film on its own merits. I think we will have succeeded if we help to prevent one kid, one senior citizen, from joining some other deviant religious cult."

Others in the industry are not so certain. Stan Margulies, who has been through the mill with *Roots*, perceives inherent dangers for the entire field of docudrama. He says, "You see maybe 15 dead bodies in every 30-minute newscast, but you are not touched. Docudrama *does* touch you, because you get to know the people involved and you mourn them. However, when there is more slaughter than in the real story, when there are too many fictitious characters involved, it no longer is docudrama."

Concludes Margulies, "So I hope all this thrashing around the bushes doesn't kill off the golden goose and the golden egg. I'd hate to see *all* worthwhile docudramas thrown out because of exploitative successes in one morbid area."

This is possible, but unlikely. A sampling of network sentiment indicates that in the long form, we will continue to get "a good mix" of drama, docudrama, melodrama, sex and juvenilia, along with the massacres. And, of course, that old reliable ratings-grabber, the Disease-of-the-Week. ●



“What Do They Want of Me?”

Tom Snyder, a man with “a very bright future,”
wonders why it is taking so long to arrive

By JOAN BARTHEL

Tom Snyder has a brand-new dream. Once upon an optimistic time, he dreamed of covering a convention, of anchoring the network news, of joining the *Today* show. But those are yesterday's visions—wispy, remote, a little threadbare. Now he dreams of breaking the glass on the fire hose set into the wall in the NBC hallway and running around with the hose gushing full force.

It is not such an impossible dream. He is close enough: his office, chocolate brown and deceptively subdued, is just down the narrow passage from the hose box. He is forceful enough: 6-foot-4, crammed to his leaping eyebrows with energy. He is rambunctious enough: his television career is punctuated with accounts of his pranks, from spraying a producer's wall with naughty graffiti—which Snyder denies—to setting off the automatic alarm system in a Los Angeles newsroom—which Snyder not only confirms, but defends: “Where is it written down that you're not supposed to have any fun?” And, most important, he is defiant enough, even desperate enough: maybe if he turned a hose on certain people, they would pay attention.

Certain people are the network executives—the management, the brass, or, as Snyder calls them collectively, “the men who run my life.”

“What do they want of me?” he wonders, almost plaintively. “What are they paying me for? When I try to talk about it, people just say to me, ‘Relax, everything's fine.’”

He certainly looks relaxed, his hands folded behind his head, tilting back in his desk chair, gazing at the ceiling; casual and informal in a dark-brown V-neck pullover and burnt-orange corduroy slacks, a good-looking, likable-looking college kid of 44, going moderately gray at the sideburns.

Joan Barthel is a free-lance writer whose book “A Death in Canaan” was made into a TV-film that earned an Emmy nomination.

But the relaxed look isn't typical; most of the time, telling Tom Snyder to relax is about as effective as telling the earth to stop circling the sun. He travels his own relentless orbit—from midday to midnight, more or less, at NBC in New York, where he tapes the *Tomorrow* show four nights a week and anchors *Prime Time Saturday*. Every few weeks he flies to Los Angeles, where he may have people to meet, specials to tape, assorted deals to make. And, on a long-term basis, he travels the twisting path of his own uncertain destiny.

“Where do I fit in here at NBC?” he continues. “On *Prime Time* I am supposed to be a quote journalist-correspondent-anchorman unquote for an intelligent news program that has meaning and purpose. I'm also a light entertainer on a late-night show, talking to all kinds of people, some of them very crazy. And this season I'm doing three ‘celebrity-interview specials’—whatever they are. I'll tell you something”—he leans forward—“sometimes I wonder, ‘Who the hell am I?’”

“Who is Tom Snyder?” is not a recent question, although it's only recently that Tom Snyder has been asking it himself. Probably it was first asked in Milwaukee, where he was born and raised and where he abandoned college, with only 10 credits needed for graduation—“I just got bored,” he says—in order to chase fire trucks for a radio station. A decade ago, after TV jobs in Savannah and in Philadelphia, he came on as anchorman for NBC's Los Angeles affiliate.

He came on strong. He revised the image of a newscaster from serious to spontaneous, from horn-rimmed to heretical and, in revising that image, he revised the station's ratings straight up. Then he did the same thing at NBC's New York station. He already had started the *Tomorrow* show in 1973 while still anchoring the Los Angeles news desk, blending his brand of

brashness and zest in both the news and entertainment programs. “What is a Tom Snyder?” asked the TV critic of The New York Times in a not-unfriendly column.

That was in 1976 and, whoever or whatever Snyder was, he was surely going far. In an election year—the Bicentennial year—he expected a piece of all that action.

“They said no,” he recalls. “I would have liked, especially, to cover the conventions, and at the time it seemed perfectly logical. I had done a good job in L.A., then in New York; I'd been told I was going far, then down the chimney comes—NOTHING!”

“Why didn't it happen?” He shrugs his wide shoulders. “I really don't know.”

One explanation is that he was too abrasive, too unpredictable, too likely to say or do something on the air that would discomfit the network. That explanation doesn't bother Snyder. “When they call me obnoxious and arrogant, I couldn't care less,” he claims. “All I can say is that if the network is that edgy about me, they should never have put me on the air in the first place.” He pauses thoughtfully. “Am I too abrasive? Maybe so. In 1974, when they picked Jim Hartz for the *Today* spot, somebody told me, ‘You were too strong for the wake-up crowd.’”

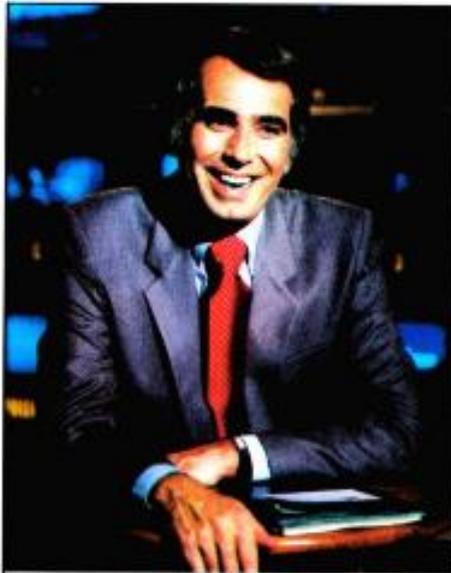
Another explanation is harsher: a lack of credentials. “He is not, in my estimation, a newsman,” says a writer who came to Snyder's TV staff in Los Angeles from an impressive news background in the East. “He read the news; he was a pretty face; he got good overnights. I was just an ink-stained wretch toiling in a basement room at NBC. Snyder didn't like me, but every once in a while he'd come by and want to talk about journalism and to make me acknowledge that he and I were both in the same business. I never did. How could I? His idea of serious

journalism was to dress up in an oilskin and go out behind the studio and stand beside a cement causeway that, when it rains, becomes the Los Angeles River—and then he'd report on 'the deluge.' He considered *that* serious journalism, a 'live report from the field.' I was chagrined to discover how dimensionless he was."

The writer (who asks to be nameless because the last time he talked about Snyder he was quoted by name and, three weeks later, was out of his NBC job) cites another case: "Remember when Madame Nhu came to the United States? She holed up at the Beverly Wilshire Hotel with what seemed like the entire world press corps waiting for her to emerge. Finally one day she appeared and Tom Snyder pushed forward and went down on his knees, in front of all his peers, begging her—literally *begging* her—to talk to him. It's that kind of thing, not the money he makes, that makes serious journalists resent him. He's an embarrassment."

And it's that kind of explanation that does bother Snyder, and rouses him from his unaccustomed cool. "To all those people who say I haven't paid my dues," he says loudly, half rising from his chair, "I say, send me a self-addressed, stamped envelope and I'll send you an account of my years in the news business. Twenty-five years! The guys who resent me are just envious. They talk about serious journalism. Ha! Let me tell you about *them*. When *Prime Time* started last June, we had a press conference. Do you want to know what the first question was from those quote serious journalists unquote? The first question was, 'Where's the teddy bear?' We have a teddy bear on the *Tomorrow* show, our mascot; we don't have it on *Prime Time*, and they wanted to know, 'Where's the teddy bear?' " His voice gets louder and he seems to loom larger over his desk. "And you want to know what the second question was? I'll *tell* you what the second question was! It was, 'Why don't you smoke on the air?'"

Does Walter Cronkite smoke on the air? Does John Chancellor? So neither does Tom Snyder, looking very serious indeed on *Prime Time*, toned down and buttoned down, in his dark-blue suit, leaning earnestly into the camera, pinning the viewer with his brown-eyed gaze. Rows of TV monitors create a newsroom look as Snyder launches the program with a news report or two—the energy crisis, an update on the situation in Iran.



•• Send me a self-addressed, stamped envelope and I'll send you an account of my years in the news business. ••

Usually he disappears during the taped segments, which can range from Oklahoma (a profile of a cleaning woman) to Calcutta (a profile of Mother Teresa) and lots of cities in between (a look at Jane Fonda and Tom Hayden on tour). But he always turns up after each segment, either in concise cross-talk with the reporter: "Have we in the media created Tom and Jane, or do people really take them seriously?"—or, at his blunt best, in direct discussion with the people being interviewed: he asks two baldish U.S. Government officials, who have conversationally wriggled around the status of the Tehran hostages, "Does there come a point in time when those people in the embassy become expendable?" And he gets them both to admit, well, as a matter of fact, probably, yes.

But for all its seriousness and style, ratings for *Prime Time* have been dismal. In his office last winter Snyder frowned at the sheet with the most recent numbers, showing *60 Minutes* to be the top-rated show on television, 31.9, and *Prime Time*, then on Sunday, down at 13.6.

"Hey, it's dying!" Snyder declared, letting the paper drift down to the desk. "And I don't know how to fix it. The easy way is very, very tempting: lots of rock stars, sexy stuff. But we want to do it the way *60 Minutes* did it, with integrity and honesty and fun, too. And that takes time. Meanwhile, I'm going crazy over this damn show. It's all I talk about,

all I think about. Mike Wallace ran the Ayatollah, got a 48 share. We ran the Ayatollah, got a 23 share. Yet *our* Ayatollah is the same as *their* Ayatollah. So what's wrong?"

"I think it's a bad time period. Sunday night at 10 o'clock is wind-down time, not a time when people want to think. I have faith in the program, but I say to NBC: Help us! Promote us! Maybe reschedule us." He grinned suddenly. "I wouldn't mind Sunday nights at 7." That's *60 Minutes* turf, but why not? Fun for the viewer, fun for Tom Snyder, who would have welcomed a Sunday-night shoot-out at 7. "If we're going to do this, let's *do* it. Why play games?"

As it turned out, *Prime Time* was rescheduled—to Saturday nights at 10. The ratings have stayed low, but Snyder's mood has improved since the shift. "I feel positive about it," he later announced.

He's entitled. His early success, remember, stemmed from his ability to attract viewers, not to a talk show or a variety special—Miss Piggy could do that—but to the news: so often sordid, so often scary, an often-bitter pill, with Snyder as the sugar coating. And since news programs are rated as regularly and as relentlessly as sitcoms and movies, with the life span of newsmen and women rigorously linked to those measurements, someone who can bring a dash of spice and, yes, sex appeal to those news programs is a very significant someone.

His ratings may not dazzle today, but there's always tomorrow—and in a way Snyder is the perpetual man of tomorrow, remaining visible and viable through the realities of the ratings system, even though he sometimes questions that system. "Is it really more important whether people watch the news on NBC or on CBS or on ABC?" he muses. "Or is it more important how many people are watching the news combined?"

To the advertisers who take body counts network by network, the answer is obvious, and the resulting tensions rumble throughout TV newsrooms.

"There's definitely a tension in TV news," says Jane Pauley of *Today*. "It's become very competitive, so that minute fluctuations in the evening news ratings are pored over. There's always been competition to get the news first; now you also have to keep ahead in the ratings. But overall I think that's healthy. For instance, ABC's first position in prime time gave it millions of dollars to spend on news that it never had before, so NBC is spending more

money on news, too."

"It doesn't matter if you only get a 10 share," explains another NBC correspondent, "as long as ABC only gets a 5. It's OK if CBS is a little bit ahead, but John Chancellor has to stay in second place. In this business, last is dead." Both this newsman and Jane Pauley would expect Tom Snyder to be a highly visible survivor. "I wouldn't be surprised if Tom Snyder got the *Nightly News*," says Pauley. "His personality is distinctive enough that he will be singled out. He has flash and flair. I like him." (Even though he was once quoted as saying that if he ran NBC, he'd "get rid of Jane Pauley"? "He called me one night at midnight, woke me up, and told me he didn't say that," she laughs cheerfully. "And even if he said it, he didn't mean it.")

"Hell, yes, Snyder might get John Chancellor's job," says Pauley's colleague, the NBC correspondent. "It doesn't matter if John Chancellor doesn't like Snyder, because John Chancellor isn't going to make that decision. The people upstairs—Dick Salant, Bill Small—are going to make that decision."

Upstairs in their new offices, Richard Salant, NBC's vice chairman of the board, and William Small, president of NBC News, typify the corporate competition in TV news. Both have come to NBC from CBS, the consistent leader in the dinnertime news race, with NBC sometimes changing positions from week to week, sometimes running second, sometimes third. Can their CBS know-how help NBC News in general, and Tom Snyder in particular? "I don't comment on individuals," Salant replies. "Talk to Bill Small." Bill Small chooses his words very carefully. "I happen to be a Tom Snyder admirer. What Tom is doing for NBC News is a news magazine. Right now the evening-news anchorman is John Chancellor, and I hope he will be the anchorman for a long time to come."

Downstairs, Snyder considers the question and also speaks carefully. "I wouldn't want to be anchorman of the evening news now, even if they offered it to me—which they're not going to do, so it's a moot point. There was a time when I desperately wanted it, along with other things, but I wouldn't want it now. I'd find it too confining."

He says this absolutely deadpan, with the same half-cynical, half-innocent look he uses for most questions about himself. Please believe me, *I dare* you, that look says, as he explains that he does the "celebrity-interview spe-

cial" because he needs the money, because he's in debt, because he hasn't had a pay raise in five years. "I had to borrow money to buy my brownstone in New York, and my taxes on that house are \$8000 a year. Is this the well-heeled life? Once when I came to NBC during a strike, I had to borrow three dollars from a picket to pay the cab. But I'm not poor-mouthing," he adds quickly. "I make a lot of money."

How much is a lot? The deadpan look again until his annoyance at a personal question erupts: "You want to know how much money I got? I'll show you exactly how much money I got!" He takes out his wallet, pulls out the bills. "Twenty! Forty! Sixty! Eighty! Ninety!" He slaps the bills onto the desk, counting loudly. "A hundred and forty! A hundred and fifty!" He won't stop. "Two hundred forty-five, two hundred forty-six, two hundred forty-seven! And that's it, lady! I get \$100 per diem when I'm traveling, and I get just what I need to live on, and the rest goes out to Incorporated—except for my income from my discos in Tehran and my cigarette-vending machines at cancer hospitals."

"Incorporated" is his company, Stay Cool Productions, named in honor of the advice that a former NBC vice president once gave to Snyder. But right now Snyder may have forgotten that dictum as he jabs at the money on the desk. "So help me God, on my daughter's life, that's what I live on!"

His annual salary at NBC is estimated at half-a-million dollars, which helps support his Manhattan house, his California house, complete with eight phones and one pool, and what he declares is a simple life style—a lot of work, a lot of laughs, a lot of coffee and cigarettes; after hours, a little golf, a little tennis, a little drinking, books and movies. He had a little family once, a wife and a daughter, 15, but he denies that his around-the-clock, coast-to-coast career broke up his marriage. "One has absolutely nothing to do with the other," he says firmly, declining just as firmly to talk about himself. "Self-analysis is impossible. I can't do that." Pressed, he elaborates only slightly. "My values are that I don't take anything that doesn't belong to me, and I try not to hurt anybody, and that's about it."

He'll analyze his work, though. "Have you ever bought anything that doesn't work and then wonder, why did I ever buy it? I don't know why I took *Prime Time*, except that I'm selfish and I thought: It's going to be live! It's going

to be great! I'm disappointed in myself and in the show. *Prime Time* is a continual exercise in picking yourself up off the floor. We have to do better—make it more hard-hitting, with a more definite point of view.

"That's all I want to do right now. For all the complaining I do about NBC, I want it to work. I want it to be the biggest hit in the world! I don't want anything else—not the news, not the *Today* show or *The Tonight Show*. I never wanted *Tonight*, by the way. I never considered it and it was never offered.

"Meantime, the *Tomorrow* show is the most positive thing in my life. It's a successful show, a show that makes money, a show that's fully sponsored, a show that people like to watch. Granted, it's an oddball time period—but it's *mine*. I didn't take anybody else's place. Nobody paved my way—no Jack Paar, no Huntley-Brinkley. It went on the air cold turkey from day one, and it's lasted"—he pauses, calculates—"six years last October, so we're in our seventh year."

It's not nearly so easy to calculate how long Tom Snyder will last at NBC. When his contract expired last November, he didn't sign a new long-term contract, only a one-year extension. Maybe that's Snyder's way of warning NBC: use me or lose me, probably to ABC. Maybe that's NBC's way of warning Snyder: mellow down and shape up with a news magazine and when the year ends, along with your contract, we'll see. Maybe it's both.

In any case, it's a very good year for Snyder-watchers. "He's on the down elevator," says the Los Angeles news writer quoted earlier. "He's tried to have it both ways, and you can't have it both ways."

Snyder insists he can. "TV news has to admit that it's in show business," he says, slapping his desk with the palm of his hand. "It uses makeup and lights, all the tools of the trade; it has to be interested in style, in presentation. If Richard Nixon had believed the makeup man, he'd have been President in 1960."

In 1976, the president of NBC News was Dick Wald. "Tom has a big future with this network," Wald told TV Guide. "Tom is a young man with many possibilities."

Times change. Bosses change.

"Tom has a very bright future," says Dick Salant. "He has remarkable skills and talents."

"Tom has a very bright future," says Bill Small. "He has all kinds of potential." ■

From Heroes to Sandwiches

When this TV-pilot idea went through the creative meat grinder, the only thing that didn't change was its title

By DAVID HANDLER



TEASE

Give me something small," said the New York television producer. "Something doable." My partner and I had just rewritten a TV-movie for him. He liked it. He liked it so much, he invited us to bring in some ideas of our own. But first he warned us that he didn't want to do a picture about surfers. "I don't want Malibu. Give me New York."

Now we are back in the producer's office, ready to dazzle him with a small, nonsurfering idea.

The producer, a ferretlike fellow in his late 30s, is dressed casually. He wears an inferiority complex in place of a necktie. The first time I met him, he asked me if I had any idea how it felt being second banana to a rich, powerful executive producer. I said I didn't. Today he leans back in his swivel chair, his feet dangling about a foot from the floor. He plays with an ornate cigarette lighter, which leaves nothing on his desk. No papers. No pens. Producing, a producer once told me, is "basically writing without a typewriter."

We pitch our small idea. Three young college graduates make a pact to kiss the 9-to-5 world goodbye and pursue a dream instead—to open a New York City detective agency. The hook is that each guy's dream is drawn from fiction, not real life. Jonathan Soames, a gangly math wizard, patterns his life after Sherlock Holmes. Mitch Gerard is an overweight bumbler from the suburbs who wishes he'd been born a

David Handler is a syndicated TV critic, a contributor to national magazines and a screenwriter.

Dead End Kid and grown up to be Sam Spade. Terry Rimer is a tough, handsome amateur boxer who draws his personal habits from the Steve McQueen characterization in "Bullitt." They rent an office in a seedy downtown building, next door to a pair of poverty-row talent agents, enlist an old rummy cop to front for the license, and they're in business. They stumble onto a case. Complications, danger and, ultimately, justice ensue. The film will be a comedy held together with a straight detective plot.

It is New York. It may even have pilot possibilities. It is nothing if not doable.

The producer loves it. He can't talk now. Lunch next week, definitely. "We only have one problem," he says as he ushers us out. "The networks aren't buying New York movies."

ROLL TITLE, CREDITS, THEME MUSIC

My scriptwriting partner, Peter Gethers, and I spend most of our time working for the print media. Many in the print media consider TV a shameless sellout. We are not among them. We write scripts for fun and profit. Even for relative unknowns like ourselves, a script for a TV-movie or a series pilot can be worth \$30,000 to \$40,000—with perhaps 25 percent up front, another 35 percent when you've finished a draft and the rest usually dribbling in during the stages of revision. If the pilot becomes a series, you might see at least \$2000 every week the show is on the air—even if you don't write another word. And for an extraordinary hit, you'll reap a royalty harvest

from syndication and overseas sales.

So my partner and I were mildly ecstatic when our small TV-movie idea made it to the next rung on the TV-production ladder—a pilot idea, one of 150 the network bought that season. Of those, only 30 were shot. Ours was not one of them. What happened? Television's lunatic creative process is what happened. Briefly put, what we started with was a two-hour movie. What the network bought was a pilot for a one-hour action comedy about three young guys who open a detective agency. What they ended up with before the project was mercifully scrapped was a half-hour situation comedy about two guys who run a diner. The project was called "Heroes." That was the only thing that didn't change, except in the beginning the title referred to courage and in the end it meant sandwiches.

You think I'm kidding? Then let's go back to our story.

ACT ONE

We take a lunch. The producer is still gushing. He has one suggestion: instead of making the three leads college buddies, what if they're strangers who bump into each other? That way their backgrounds could be more diverse. It seems a reasonable concession, so we make them three guys who work in the same building. Jonathan, the Holmes character, is a computer expert. Mitch, the bumbler, writes ad slogans. Rimer, the man of action, is a maintenance man. Fate brings them together in a stuck elevator.

The producer has a particular network he thinks he can sell the idea to.

He'll set up a meeting; we'll do up a treatment. A treatment is like a prospectus for a housing tract. It lists the salient features in glowing terms and promises plenty. You hope someone nibbles.

A week later we sit in a corner office with the producer and six network people. There are three energetic men in three-piece suits and a woman wearing a plaid wool skirt held together by a large safety pin. These are programming associates. There is also a young, mustachioed intern. And last but decidedly not least is the network's head programming executive, whose desk we are fanned around. He is on the phone to the Coast. He is ashen, being devoured by stomach acid. The Nielsen overnight ratings are very bad. He is talking about canning last night's sitcom for a new sitcom. It's not an easy decision—neither he nor the guy on the other end has seen the new show.

He hangs up, then he slumps in his chair and sighs. He can't figure out why the sitcom had such a bad night. His 14-year-old daughter loved the show. She thought it was cute.

"What else does she like?" the producer asks.

"I don't let her watch much," the executive replies. "I was thinking about getting cable and Home Box Office—those guys have all the good stuff—but I'm afraid she'll spend all her time watching television."

The producer nods sympathetically and tells the executive that we're two writers who have just done some fantastic work for another network and that we have an idea for a two-hour movie with great pilot possibilities.

The executive has already heard good things about our previous movie, which won't be on for another month. Good word travels fast. (The only thing that travels faster is bad word.) So we pitch our idea. It's a smooth sales job by now. The network people nod on cue; they laugh on cue. We dangle bait; they gobble it. They want to like it.

Someone worries it might be too much like the late NBC detective series *Richie Brockelman, Private Eye*. We say it won't be. Someone else is bothered by the nostalgia business, and the seediness. We say the movie doesn't depend on nostalgia or seediness, that they're just Tabasco.

The executive asks if we have anything on paper. We hand him the treatment. He puts it on the desk without looking at it, turns to the producer and says, "I think it's cute as hell." The associates nod in agreement. "I think we can go with this one.

"The only problem is we're not doing two-hour pilots any more. I'd be more comfortable with a one-hour." He turns to us. "Would there be any serious problem with that?"

We shake our heads. It's a deal. Then we're in an elevator going down 32 floors to the street below. We were in the building about 15 minutes.

ACT TWO

We have to get our pilot story approved before we can actually start writing. The producer is in Rome, but we can meet with his boss, the executive producer. Once he approves the story, we go back to the network for an OK. Then we go to work.

The executive producer comes out to the reception desk to greet us. He wears a sports shirt open to the navel, slacks, Gucci loafers, no socks.

"How are you, you lucky SOB's?" he exclaims as we go into his office and sit down. On the credenza behind his desk are framed photographs of him shaking hands with three former Presidents of the United States.

We go over the setup. We wrap up by saying it's a detective show with the

humor is Jewish. You know what I mean? What you have to do for television," he says, "is Gentile it out." He sits down. "They clean-cut guys? I don't want them Woodstocky, with the hair down to here."

"They're just regular guys," we reply. "Guys you'd like. Guys who have a crazy ambition. For once, they're going to realize that ambition. That's what this show is all about."

It is one of our best lines. It always leaves them speechless.

"OK," he continues, "what didn't the network like?"

"The setting. We want a seedy part of town; they want a nicer atmosphere."

He suggests a compromise—an office in a slightly dogeared brownstone that's on a nice block in midtown.

"There wouldn't be a serious problem with that," we agree. This is a key response in the TV writer's repertoire. It means you can incorporate the suggestion without damaging the whole. If it would do damage, then you fight it. Or you trade. We give up Gold & Gould, the talent agents next door, for a 24-hour answering service staffed by struggling, bosomy actresses. In exchange we get to keep Bert, the old security guard who fronts for the neo-



emphasis on comedy.

"What kind of comedy?" he asks.

"Character comedy."

"Any of the guys Jewish?"

"Not exactly. The chubby one is from the suburbs—"

"If you write him funny, you're writing him Jewish." He stands and begins to pace around the room. "Listen, all

phyte sleuths. The executive producer isn't crazy about him.

"So where do they go when they're not working?" he asks.

"A bar with a dart board, no women and Billie Holiday on the jukebox."

"You can't have three young guys hang around in a bar."

"Quincy goes to a bar." *continued*

"He's a doctor, and it's a nice bar. No, the bar's out. Make it young, make it hip, make it... a health-food bar. Yeah, with the broads in sweat pants drinking carrot juice—"

"What about a greasy-spoon diner? It might be more natural."

He stands up, starts pacing again. "OK. What about an owner? Maybe an old Jewish guy?"

"You mean something like Feinberg's Eats? Then we may as well go back to Gold & Gould."

"You're right. Stale. How about a Puerto Rican?"

"Maybe he bought the place from Feinberg but hasn't changed the name yet. So people call him Feinberg—"

"Even though his name is Rojas. Which is hysterical because you'll write him Jewish anyway. A Jewish Puerto Rican. That's funny. Has anybody done that lately?"

It's settled. Next comes the story.

"Don't worry about a plot," he advises. "Steal one. From an old mystery

story idea. He doesn't like it. He doesn't like it at all. He can't believe the boss approved it.

"You can't use kidnaping on television any more. He knows that. The network will never go for it."

"Should we cancel the meeting?"

That would mean overruling the executive producer.

"No, let's go in with it and hope for the best. I don't know what he was thinking."

The network executive is now in a different office. Two of the programming associates have gone to the Coast in exchange for one new associate, a first-round draft pick, and cash. We tell them the story and they like it. They wonder if maybe the invention could be something a bit more ordinary, what with so many kooky people. The producer offers a tennis ball that never loses its bounce. We settle on a razor blade that doesn't get dull. They say nothing against the kidnaping. They say nothing about the kidnaping at all.



or something. We've all been ripping off Shakespeare for years anyway."

We give him our story. A mad scientist invents a domestic robot and then disappears with the plans and prototype. The boys learn he's been kidnaped. They mount a black-tie dinner party at Feinberg's to smoke out the culprit.

The executive producer is tired. He says the story sounds fine. We win that one on endurance.

We make an appointment to pitch it to the network people. The producer, back from Rome, meets us 30 minutes before the meeting. We tell him the

ACT THREE

The producer loves our first draft. "This is really something special," he tells us over the phone. "It's funny. No, it's more than funny."

He submits it to the network without asking us to make any revisions. We are, of course, pleased.

The network is not.

"It's not what they were expecting," reports the producer. "They think it's weird. It's a comedy."

"An action comedy."

"They don't think the action works. Too complicated."

"So we'll simplify it."

"They think it's funny. They loved the bit with the diner. But they can't relate to an hour comedy."

"It's not an hour comedy. It's a detective show—with comedy. That's what we told them we would write."

"We have a meeting with them next week."

We aren't invited. By "we" he means the executive producer and himself. They clue us in a week later, in the producer's office.

"They don't want an hour comedy," says the executive producer.

"But—"

"Look, I'm not going to defend them. I'm just going to tell you what the deal is. I salvaged it as a half-hour."

"Salvaged? Half-hour? What kind of detective show can we write in 30 minutes?"

"It's not a detective show any more. It's a sitcom. The network can't deal with it any other way."

We're stunned.

"Keep the locations down," cautions the producer. "A little detective stuff. But funny."

"Simple plots," adds the executive producer. "Neighborhood crimes."

"So most of it takes place in the office?"

"They didn't like the office. They thought the diner was cute. The boys are basically amateurs. Give them regular jobs and have them hang around in the diner on their off hours. A booth in the back is their office—that's all they need."

"What about the old guy?"

"Out."

"The answering service?"

"Out."

"Feinberg?"

"Leave him in. But give him a cute daughter to wait on the tables. Get a broad in there."

"Take out the old detective-movie stuff," urges the producer. "Make it real. It wasn't real."

We put on our coats. "Is the network still interested?"

"Absolutely. They think it's funny."

Back to work. We eliminate the hook that based our heroes' personalities on fictional sleuths. Instead, we give them jobs to fit their natural tendencies. Jonathan becomes a violin teacher, Mitch writes jokes for greeting cards and cocktail napkins, and Rimer is a locksmith.

We give Feinberg/Rojas a daughter and come up with a couple of simple plots involving the diner. The producer loves the job changes and thinks our first story idea sounds perfect. The ex-

ective producer likes the job ideas. He doesn't like the story. "You're all over the place. Stay in your arena. Forget the detecting."

"But they're amateur detectives."

"That's a real problem," he admits. "It

detective plot out of the diner. It's true—there is no real reason for them to be in the diner. Unless, as the executive producer suggested, one of the guys is related to the owner. Unless, of course, they own the place themselves.

After two weeks of rejection we call our agent. He calls the producer just to say we haven't lost any enthusiasm for the project and hope that he, the producer, hasn't either. Tell them to call me, says the producer. We do. He's not in, but his secretary will be glad to set up a story conference.

He's 45 minutes late for the meeting.

We pitch the new format: our heroes grew up together reading comic books in Feinberg's. Feinberg/Rojas wants to retire, so they buy him out. They want to preserve the old neighborhood, provide a wholesome hangout for kids and prevent mean Moe Sharkey from getting 100 percent of the street's food trade. Sharkey runs the slick, jumbo coffee shop across the street, and has been trying to put Feinberg out of business for 15 years.

Our lead characters plug neatly into the new format. Jonathan is now a temperamental chef, Mitch a clumsy waiter, Rimer the counterman to whom the customers tell their troubles. The diner will be the ultimate teen hangout, with pinball machines, jukebox, etc. A lot of old people eat there, too, because there's no minimum like at Sharkey's. A hangout for the have-nots. It seems like a natural.

"This is tight and good," agrees the producer. "We can do this. How about a story?"

We've got a dandy. Rimer befriends a homely 13-year-old girl who is new to the neighborhood. He asks her why she isn't friends with the rest of the kids. She says nobody ever likes her, that she'd much rather run away to the woods and live there. Rimer says it sounds great. She falls in love with him. As the boys are closing up that night, she shows up. She's running away from home and is fetching Rimer for



ACT FOUR

would be much easier if they weren't."

"That's what we've got going for us."

The boss gets up and starts pacing again. "Why do they hang around in the diner?"

"Because we eliminated the office."

"I know that. But why do they hang out there?"

"It's their hangout. They like it there."

"But why? Do you see what I'm getting at? Just because they like the burgers isn't enough. Why don't we make Feinberg the fat kid's father? That way he has to work there part time."

"But Feinberg is a Puerto Rican."

"So make the kid a Puerto Rican."

"That's kind of getting away from what we—"

"Look, I know I sold the network a half-hour detective comedy, but I don't think it's going to work with this setup."

"All we need is a story."

"If you have trouble with the story, it's because the format doesn't work."

The producer nods.

"If you've got a good format," continues the boss, "you should have five, six, seven ideas right off the top of your head. I don't have any ideas for this." He turns to the producer. "Do you?"

The producer shakes his head.

We promise them that if they give us a week we'll come up with five, six, seven good stories. It's a promise we can't keep. We can't develop a natural

It's the only way the pilot will work. So what if the boys run a beanery? They'll still be three good guys who help out folks in the neighborhood. It wasn't our original idea, but who can remember the original idea?

We come up with a diner-comedy format and call the producer. He's out and won't return our calls. His secretary is no longer authorized to set up appointments on his behalf.

We're not hot any more.



their journey together—

The producer's phone rings. It's a very big film star. He needs her for a feature he's trying to get off the ground. We offer to step outside. He jovially says not to bother.

"Hi, sweetheart," he says to the big star. "Can we count on you? You've had us on hold for six months and if you don't want the part there are several other actresses in town we can go with."

A loud shriek comes out of the phone. He has made a serious error. "No...no...I'm not trying to pressure you," he protests. "No...I'm so sorry...I didn't mean it." He says he's sorry 10 more times and hangs up. She has reduced him to an apologetic errand boy. It's not the best medicine for his inferiority complex, especially because we've witnessed the entire thing.

We suggest we can resume on another day. He insists we finish the story.

So we finish. Rimer persuades the girl to confront the folks she wants to be friends with. She's a nice person, a good person, and once they get to know her they'll appreciate that.

"Who's going to believe that stuff?" the producer suddenly snarls. "You think you can just earn respect by being nice to people? By being honest? It's like with me and that bitch. You think honesty pays? You have to lie! That's the only way people will like you."

The phone interrupts him. It's the big star's agent. This time we step outside for coffee. The story conference resumes 15 minutes later. The producer is calmer, but his outburst has left its mark on the story. "What I mean," he explains, "is that she has to *prove* herself. You need a contest or something. What about the pinball machines? Make her a wizard. She's better than all the guys. You know, like the girls with the boys' Little League teams."

We agree to toy with the idea.

ACT FIVE

Our third trip to the network. It's the same programming executive but he's in yet another office. One of the associates who had been traded to the Coast is now back.

"We're going to throw a curve ball at you," announces the producer. "We realize that this is a big transish [that's show-biz lingo for transition]. But these guys came back with 10 different stories and we realized that the format we settled on just wouldn't work."

They say fine and sit back to listen. We pitch the diner comedy. They like it.

They aren't as enthusiastic as they were about the original idea, but they agree it has possibilities.

Next comes the pinball story. Our homely 13-year-old girl is now a pinball fanatic. So is Moe Sharkey, their arch rival. He often comes into the diner to hustle the kids for quarters.

"Your pilot plot can't come in through the door," interjects an associate. "It has to come from your principals."

"Why don't you make her Feinberg's daughter?" suggests the executive.

"Feinberg is no longer in the show," we reply.

"You could leave him in," he suggests, gently but firmly. "Make him the cook. He's funny."

"Jonathan's the cook."

"Write him as the little girl. She can be the stable one, keeps the books."

"Another thing," pipes up a different associate. "You can't have Sharkey, an adult, competing with little kids. Why don't you give him a son?"

"He can be the neighborhood bully," agrees the executive.

No serious problem. Back to the story. The girl is probably a better pinball player than Sharkey's son, but she's afraid to play him. Rimer persuades her to take him on. She does, betting him the amount of money our heroes owe the butcher for their last three months' worth of meat. They have a showdown—

"Wait," interrupts the executive. "You can't hang a comedy-pilot plot on a gambling proposition. I'm sorry. You'll have to come up with another story."

"But we just redesigned the show to accommodate this story," we protest.

"I like the changes," he replies. "Stay with them. Come back to us when you have another story. No rush. You've still got a good shot as a summer replacement." He turns to the producer. "Curve accepted."

Downstairs we agree to call the pro-

ducer the following week to set up a story conference. He tells us he has a really good feeling about us again.

We come up with two new stories incorporating the changes that arose out of the defunct pinball story. We call the producer to set up a meeting, but he is in Mexico scouting locations for a feature. He has left word that we should meet with the executive producer instead. We are transferred to the boss's secretary. The next couple of weeks look really bad for him, she tells us. She suggests we call back in two weeks. When we do, he's now on location at the Astoria Studios in Queens. But the producer is back in town. We're transferred to the producer's secretary. Yes, she says, he's back. But he's in preproduction for the feature he was scouting in Mexico. He won't be able to see us until he's finished with that.

"When should we call back?"

"Why don't you try in about two months?" she replies.

TAG

A few weeks later we sell an idea for a film script to one of the studios. Our agent calls the producer's agent to tell him that we'd like to get out of the pilot. The producer has the option to continue it with different writers. The producer's agent says he will pass the word along. He thinks the producer will just let it die.

It occurs to us that we could salvage our "Heroes" experience by turning it into a TV-movie itself. It's got pilot possibilities, but we abandon the idea. It's doable, all right, but we can't figure out whether it's a comedy, a disaster film, a comedy film with disaster or a disaster film with comedy.

ROLL CLOSING CREDITS, COMING ATTRACTIONS



"I Entered a Maze of Secrecy"

A journalist's two-year obsession with the death of a princess drew him into the labyrinth of Arab society

By ANTONY THOMAS

British filmmaker Antony Thomas describes his search for the facts behind a sensational news story of 1977—the public execution of a Saudi Arabian princess and her lover. Thomas's investigation became the basis for a television film he co-wrote and directed, "Death of a Princess," which is scheduled to be shown this month on PBS. The two-hour movie uses actors and real locations—but fictitious names—to tell the dramatic story of Thomas's search in four countries for people who had known the princess—or understood the background to her life and death.

"Death of a Princess" is an episode of the WGBH-TV World series. David Fanning, executive producer of World, is coauthor of the screenplay.

On July 15, 1977, a royal princess and her lover were publicly executed in a Saudi Arabian city.

Nearly six months were to pass before a brief article appeared in a British newspaper identifying the victims and the nature of their "crime": adultery, a capital offense under Islamic law. The story quickly gathered momentum. A British carpenter, who had been working in the country as a contract laborer, claimed that he had photographed this double execution. A grainy black-and-white blowup showing a kneeling figure at the center of a large crowd of soldiers and bystanders was soon splashed across the front and center pages of magazines and newspapers throughout the world, accompanied by suitably graphic captions: "Death by the Sword"; "Princess Executed for Love"; "La Princesse, L'Amant...et le Bourreau."

The kneeling figure in the photograph was clearly a man, but the carpenter claimed that he had seen two people led to the place of execution—a veiled woman and a young man in his early 20s. The girl had been shot while the carpenter was running to find a better vantage point above the heads of

the crowd. He had no pictures of her, but he claimed to have seen and photographed the execution of her lover.

On the day after the carpenter gave his pictures and his story to the press, another "witness" entered the fray—a German nanny who had previously been employed to look after the dead princess's baby nephew. The nanny had not seen the execution, but claimed to have been a close family friend. She produced the only photograph of the princess ever to be published: a blurred snapshot of a slender girl in a shirt and checked skirt dancing at a party in a women's palace. The headlines now took a more sentimental turn—"My Tragic Princess," "Her Days of Stolen Love," "The World's Most Tragic Love Story."

New—and often contradictory—versions of the story began to appear daily in the press. The nanny contradicted the carpenter's version of the execution, claiming that the girl had been stoned to death, not shot. Some reports appeared suggesting that she had not been guilty of adultery in the first place, but had incensed the royal family by secretly marrying below her station. Others clung to the original version—the princess was, in fact, married to a royal cousin. Nobody was able to name him or give any hint of his whereabouts.

By now, the press coverage had prompted a major debate in the British Parliament, a series of heated discussions on French television, and might have caused a major diplomatic crisis if the British foreign secretary, David Owen, had not offered a groveling apology for his earlier condemnation of the executions.

I remember walking into my office at the peak of the press campaign. The morning's papers are always displayed in the reception room, and a group of colleagues had gathered to read the day's headlines. Knowing my deep commitment to the



Disguised as a man, the princess (Suzanne Abu Taleb) attempts to flee her country by air before her accusers bring her to judgment.



A modern, sophisticated woman? Or a 19-year-old girl trapped in a suffocating feudal society?

Arab world, it was not surprising that they asked for my reaction. I could only reply, rather lamely, that this was a side of the Arab world that I preferred not to think about. Little did I know that the story of the princess would soon become an obsession that was to consume the next two years of my life.

It was a casual after-dinner conversation four months later which opened the trail that led me through four capitals, a civil war and the private lives of dozens of friends and strangers. My host that evening was, and still is, a powerful figure in the government of the young woman's country. I knew him by reputation, but this was my first opportunity to meet him personally.

At the end of the dinner, when brandies and liqueurs were flowing freely, one of the guests launched an attack on the Western media—on the misconceptions, prejudices and inaccuracies that surround any reporting of Arab affairs. Our host warmed to the subject

and chose to use the story of the princess to illustrate his point. This was my first opportunity to hear the "inside" story, and although I could sense the discomfort of some of the guests, I was determined to press the advantage.

According to our host, the princess was a privileged member of the royal family—the favorite granddaughter of the king's elder brother. From childhood she had traveled to Europe and to the more liberal Arab countries, Egypt and Lebanon. After this early taste of freedom, her family forced her to marry a suitor of their choice, a royal cousin. She rebelled and refused to fulfill the marriage contract. Instead, she insisted on going to a university in Beirut, where she met a boy from her own country. "She forgot who she was," said my host. "A royal princess. The king's grandniece. A married woman." When their studies were over, the couple decided to return home and challenge their society by living openly in an adulterous relationship. They even booked into hotels together, taking the same room.

Although adultery is one of the most serious crimes in Islam, it is virtually impossible to secure conviction if the law is strictly applied. There have to be four independent and honorable male witnesses (or eight independent and honorable female witnesses) to the actual penetration. The only other way the accused can be condemned is out of her own mouth, by saying three times in front of the court, "I have committed adultery."

According to our host, the princess stood up before the judges and admitted her adultery openly. Immediately, the king stopped the proceeding and summoned the girl to his private room. He pleaded with her to reconsider, but she refused. She returned to court on the following day and admitted her adultery for a second and a third time. "In five seconds, she had condemned herself and the boy."

Our host had depicted an Arab Saint Joan, who would rather die than compromise her principles. He also had made her a powerful symbol of the Arab predicament—a young woman torn three ways: by the influences of the West, the radicalism of a Beirut university, and the strict fundamentalism of the desert society into which she had been born.

After hearing the story, I had to test

the reactions of some of my close Arab friends in London. The first was an eminent scholar whom I'll call Marwan. The case of the princess (as I was to discover again and again in the next few months) seemed to touch a personal nerve. Marwan immediately identified with her. For the first time in our seven-year friendship, I was told about Marwan's painful relationship with his own parents. About his father "who has never traveled more than 10 kilometers on a donkey, and still believes that the world is flat." To an Arab like Marwan, the family is everything, and respect—the automatic respect for the judgments and decisions of the older generations—is the cement that binds the family together. But how do you maintain that respect when you are separated from your own father by a gap of centuries?

"To survive as an Arab," said Marwan, "one has to become a schizophrenic. One has to learn to live in two different worlds at once. For some, it's impossible. My own brother never sees our parents any more. He cannot cope. And that princess... if you can tell that story, you'll be able to say more about the Arab world..."

There is a letter beside me written by another Arab friend shortly after the tragic suicide of his wife (whom I shall call Mona). "Mona's death," he wrote, "seems to personify her inability to reconcile the Arab traditions with Western emancipation... You, Antony, of all people, have been exposed to her searching mind..."

Perhaps the only reason why I was privileged to share Mona's inner thoughts and feelings was that we spent a day together talking about the dead princess. Like Marwan, she identified closely with the girl. Mona had graduated from an American university and returned home to Jordan at the age of 21 to a conservative Arab family.

"It was claustrophobic," she said. "Uncles, aunts, the whole damn extended family. Although I'd been to Vassar, I wasn't allowed to eat in the dining room—that was man's territory."

So she moved out, into a hotel. But the family followed her. "They walked in and said, 'We are the family,' and checked me out."

Eventually she couldn't stand it, so she ran away, to Beirut, where she met

a man of her choice, and married him. Unlike the princess, Mona hadn't confronted the family with her lover, but it was still an act of considerable courage. And the family actually sent a cousin to find her—and kill her. "The poor boy got cold feet, thank God," she said wryly.

To help me understand the real meaning of the princess's actions, Mona opened up her own personal world, talked about the pressures, the obsessions, the insecurities of Arab women. But in spite of all the pain, there was also a pride in being Arab.

When I told her that I still couldn't understand how the princess literally could have condemned herself to death, Mona went on the attack: "Then you don't understand the Arab character. The intense dedication to a cause. Something uncompromising. Something that you Europeans don't have. We follow it to the death if necessary.... She must have loved that boy."

By the end of that day with the unfortunate Mona, I was committed to the story of the princess.

My search took me from London to the north of England (to meet the carpenter who had witnessed the execution), and then to Paris, Beirut and finally to Saudi Arabia and Jidda, the city where she died. Basically, I was meeting three groups of people: close friends whose judgments I trusted, journalists who'd been on the spot, and a few people who actually knew the princess and were willing to talk about her.

Many people warned me about the dangers of the investigation. In the Arab world, all reporting of the case had been suppressed, but the story had traveled far and wide on the grapevine. In Palestinian camps, in desert palaces, in offices, in hotels and secret meeting places, literally dozens of new and contradictory versions of the story emerged. Everyone spoke passionately about the girl but—as I soon understood—they were not speaking about her, but about themselves, inviting me into their own private world because of the princess. Yet everything I heard—each concrete fact, each remembered conversation—brought me a step closer to the real princess and to an understanding of her motives, the reasons for her death.

I entered a maze of secrecy. Those who were privy to the most valuable in-

formation were a part of that very palace society in which the princess lived and died. They would talk to me only if they could be sure that their disclosures would never be traced back to them. One informant resisted my inquiries for many months before finally agreeing to speak with me; and when we did meet, a startling new perspective opened up on the life of the princess. My Arab Saint Joan, it seemed, had come from a world of profound boredom and sexual desperation.

"I have a friend, a princess," the informant said. "She is divorced, like so many of them. Her greatest pleasure in the evening is to be driven to the Hotel Intercontinental. The car is parked outside. The chauffeur buys her a hamburger. She sits in the dark, and watches the people going in and out.

"To relieve their boredom, these princesses lead the most busy and intricate sex lives. Ironically, in a society so strict, the women are the predators. Because of the veil, the men are not free to choose.

"There is a road outside the capital. In the evening, the women—veiled—cruise in their limousines. The men are there too, and if a woman sees a man she likes, the chauffeur notes down the license plate and contact is made later. Possibly they will meet in one of the boutiques in the city; the chauffeur and the personal maid will be heavily bribed. It will be a quick liaison, sometimes cruel, always dangerous."

This was the world from which the princess came. It was a world whose strict rules she dared to challenge. If she'd been prepared to conduct her relationship clandestinely, nothing would have happened. But she broke the rules.

"You have to understand," said another woman, one of the lone voices for women's rights in the Arab world, "a woman is property. She has to be intact; she has to be a virgin; she has to be marketable. It says in Islam, 'A woman is the field sown by the seed of man.' She is not free. If she takes on freedom for herself she is upsetting the order of things; she is asserting that she is equal. Freedom means freedom of your body. But your body belongs to your husband, your father, your brother.

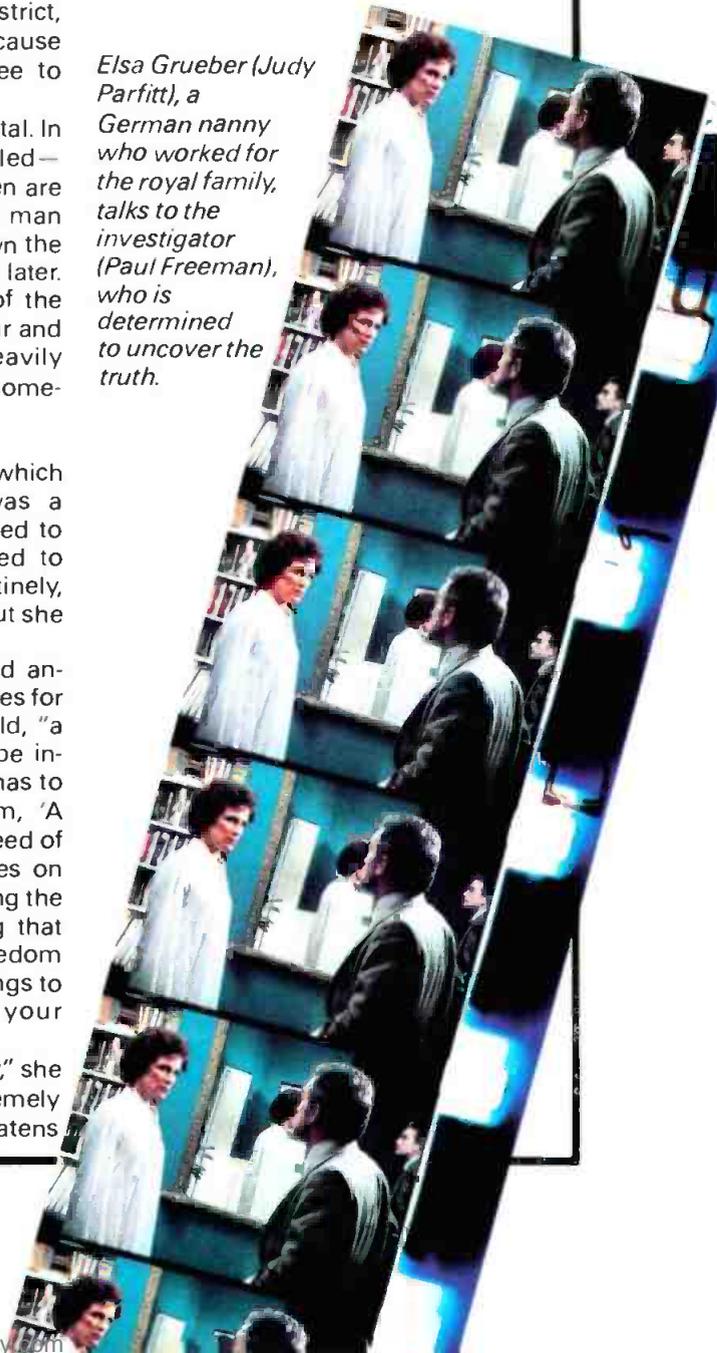
"Because we are a tribal society," she continued, "the family unit is extremely important and anything that threatens

that must be eradicated. A woman who doesn't fit into the family unit has no place in this society. That's why when the princess committed adultery, she defied the family *machismo*, the law of the tribe."

It was an echo from the first conversation, around the dinner table. My host had said, "The girl offended her family's honor. The royal family had no choice...." But, in fact, they had several choices. The king, the girl's grandfather, her husband—any one of them could have interceded on her behalf. But they chose not to. As one person said of the princess, "We wash our honor in her blood."

An Arab woman friend put it differently. When she first heard the story of the princess, she sat silently for a few moments and then murmured, "All of Arab womanhood was made to kneel in that square and suffer." ■

Elsa Grueber (Judy Parfitt), a German nanny who worked for the royal family, talks to the investigator (Paul Freeman), who is determined to uncover the truth.



Heavenly Hardware

The marriage of celestial and earthly technologies will affect everybody who owns a TV set

By FRANK DONEGAN and GARY ARLEN

The year is 1990. Or maybe 1994 or 1997.

It's the future, but not a future so distant that most of us won't be around to see it.

You've just finished dinner and have shuffled into the TV room to check out what's on television. (Isn't it nice that America still holds on to *some* traditions?) These days "TV room" doesn't mean what it meant back in 1980. It is no longer a rumpled corner of the house where the television has to fight for space with winter boots and busted tennis rackets. The TV and the room have merged. The screen is as big as a wall. In fact, it *is* the wall, and the picture is projected from behind by unseen components. You control everything with a little gadget that looks like a pocket calculator.

You check the night's program listings to see what choices you have among the 400 available channels. Let's see what's on....

Channel 3: The New York Yankees playing a regular-season game against the Yokohama Angels.... Channel 27: A live opening-night performance of a Tom Stoppard play from London's West End (the cast includes Farrah Fawcett, who's trying for a comeback).... Channel 142: *The Tonight Show* with a guest host.... Channel 264: The Shakespeare Network; this evening, it's "Macbeth," with Dustin

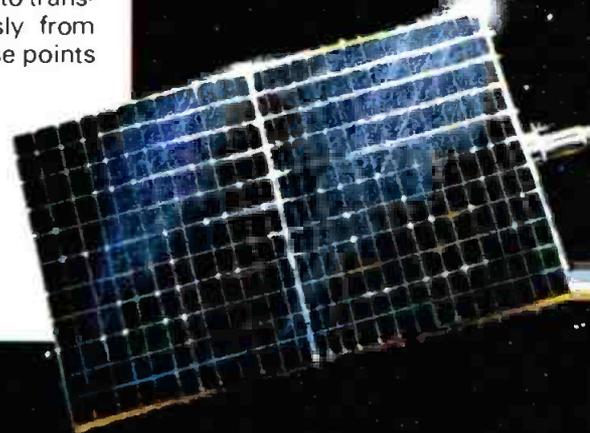
Hoffman and Al Pacino.... Channel 400: Reruns of *Love Lucy*....

This vision of our televised future may charm you or depress you. In either case, it—or something closely resembling it—is on the way. Now. And the prime agent of change, the technological sun whose electronic warmth will let a thousand TV programs bloom, is the satellite.

Communications satellites in themselves are hardly hot news. After all, we've been bouncing signals off heavenly hardware at least since 1960. That was the year Echo I went up, prompting the whole country to spend its time watching a little silver balloon slide across the sky. The real news is that we've finally developed the earth-bound systems necessary to cash in on the opportunities presented by satellites. And it all can be done so cheaply that the changes are likely to affect anybody who can afford a TV set.

This marriage of celestial and earthly technologies brings to television two qualities it has either lacked entirely or had in limited supply: immediacy and diversity. A satellite allows you to transmit a program instantaneously from one point to another. And those points

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EZRA N. TUCKER

can be continents apart. The TV networks began using satellite transmissions years ago, but now other programmers—competitors of the major networks—are in the act. (You may have noticed that you don't see the caption "Live via satellite" as much as you used to. This isn't because satellites are being used less; it's because their use is no longer a novelty. This year, for instance, roughly 60 percent of all televised baseball games will come to us courtesy of one satellite or another.)

But it's in the area of diversity that satellites promise to make the most revolutionary impact. A single satellite today can carry as many as 24 channels. If you point a properly equipped antenna at a satellite, or if a cable system you subscribe to does so, you can receive everything being carried on it. If all 24 channels are carrying television signals and are operating simultaneously, you'll have your choice of 24 programs. As satellites become bigger, better and more numerous, it's entirely possible that there will be hundreds of open channels available. And for every channel, you can be pretty sure that there will be someone eager to send you something to watch—as long as he can slip in a complement of commercials (or, in the case of pay-TV, charge you for the privilege of not having to sit through commercials). Already some U.S. cable systems offer their subscribers up to 36 channels at a time.

It will be a TV junkie's dream: a program for every click of the dial. Actually, when it gets to that stage, there won't be dials any more. "Digital tuning exists to some degree now, but it will *all* be digital tuning then," says Dr. Joseph Martino, a communications forecaster at the University of Dayton Research Institute. "You'll just have a little row of buttons in front of you. When you want Channel 305, you'll punch the 3 button, the 0 button and the 5 button."

While the nuts and bolts of satellite TV may seem exotic in the extreme, the actual broadcasting process isn't too hard to follow. Satellites aren't really much more than ordinary broadcasting antennas—they just happen to be 22,300 miles higher than their earthbound cousins. A broadcast antenna that high offers extraordinary reach.

If you broadcast a program from an earthbound transmitting antenna, the signal can be received directly only within a radius of a few dozen miles under normal conditions. But if you send your program signal up to a satel-

lite, it can be received by anyone in the right place who points the right receiving antenna at the right spot in the sky. These receiving antennas—"earth receiving stations," in the argot of the trade—are concave dishes measuring anywhere from 3 to 10 meters across. They serve a purpose similar to that of the TV antenna you have on your roof: you point them in the direction the signal is coming from—in this case, the celestial point where the satellite is suspended—and they gather in the signal.

The signal emanating from a satellite falls over a huge area, called the satellite's footprint. It's like a giant electronic shadow, shaped rather like a cone, with the satellite at the cone's apex, and the earth's surface at its base. If you're within that shadow or footprint and have the antenna, you'll pick up the signal. In the case of our domestic broadcast satellites, the footprint covers a substantial chunk of North America. That's why cable networks all over the country can deliver the same programming at the same time. At last count, for example, more than 1700 cable systems were offering Home Box Office. Nearly all of them point it off a satellite (RCA's Satcom I).

More than a dozen communications satellites now are serving North America or are in advanced planning stages. Not all of these cater exclusively to television interests; they also handle radio signals, telephone calls and computer data transmissions.

RCA Americom and Western Union dominate the domestic TV-satellite market. The former operates the Satcom satellites—Satcom I carries most of the programming used by cable systems. (It was Satcom III, you may remember, that disappeared into the heavens without a trace on Dec. 10, 1979, causing more than a little anxiety among cable programmers who had lined up to use it.) Television time on Western Union's Westar birds is rented by a variety of broadcasters, including the Public Broadcasting Service, which recently installed earth receiving stations at its affiliates, thereby becoming the first all-satellite network in the U.S.

PBS's use of satellites gives a hint of the diversity to come. At any given time, PBS can send out not only its prime offering, but also a variety of alternative choices—Congressional hearings, children's shows, programs for older folks, foreign-language feeds. Affiliate stations around the country can ignore the major network program (or tape it for use in a later time slot) and

choose what they think will best suit their audiences. Under traditional network broadcasting procedures, only one program is fed at a time; if an affiliate doesn't care for the choice, it must go out and beat the bushes for something else to show.

The potential for diversity that PBS now possesses is possible because satellites can generally distribute programs more cheaply than other forms of transmission. Once the admittedly expensive hardware is in place, costs drop dramatically. Consider: a year's lease for a satellite TV channel averages about \$1 million. In contrast, ABC, CBS and NBC each pay the Bell System about \$15 million a year to distribute their programs nationwide via land lines. Of course, each network would want more than one satellite channel—PBS started off with four—but the cost spread still is substantial.

Bob Wormington, head of the Kansas City station KBMA, which operates an earth station, has noted that a two-and-a-half-hour broadcast sent from Atlanta to Kansas City would cost \$3158.50 if it arrived in the traditional way over AT&T land lines. Cost by satellite would be \$1486.50.

The commercial networks have not shown the same eagerness as PBS for satellites—for good reason. In addition to the technical uncertainties involved in any new technology—not to mention the substantial start-up costs for outfitting the affiliate stations with earth terminals—there is the danger that those earth stations could contribute to the networks' own demise. After all, if affiliates start picking and choosing not only from current programming alternatives, but from a multitude of satellite programs as well, the networks may find themselves going to advertisers with fewer and fewer guaranteed viewers. And the size of that guarantee has been the basis of the networks' enormous prosperity.

Indeed, some video prophets predict that the revolution wrought by satellites will kill the networks—at least as we have known them. One network executive admitted, "We could get blown out of the water if we don't watch it. With its new diversity, TV could become like radio. There would be programs all over the dial and the audience would be fragmented to hell. The networks aren't going to roll over and die but—as on radio—they could end up playing a proportionally smaller role."

Still, all the networks say they are

studying the possibilities being opened up by satellites. NBC has specifically said it plans to be using satellites predominantly by the end of the decade. And, of course, the networks use satellites now for special purposes. ABC, for example, uses them to connect its various anchor desks on the evening news. As of last year, NBC has a five-hour-a-day contract with RCA Americom and uses the time to distribute some sports and news, the *Today* show and *The Tonight Show*.

But the real beneficiaries of satellite technology so far have been cable-TV systems. For them it is truly a marriage made in heaven. Cable—or Community Antenna Television (CATV)—began innocently enough about 30 years ago as a way to improve the television reception of folks living in the boonies. The franchiser would build a big, powerful antenna to pull in TV sig-

nals from the nearest large city and then pipe them over coaxial cables to people whose home antennas couldn't turn the trick.

By its nature, cable was limited to remote areas. It couldn't crack the lucrative urban and suburban markets because it had nothing to offer people whose TV sets had no trouble picking up signals from nearby stations.

Cable's big break came in September 1975. That was when Time Inc.'s Home Box Office decided to go on satellite. At the time, HBO was a sickly stepchild within the Time Inc. organization. It distributed movies to a few cable systems in the Northeastern states via standard, land-based microwave. Going on the satellite did not look like a particularly bright move—at the time, there were only two TV earth stations in the country capable of pulling in the satellite's signal. With the cost of new earth stations then running at about \$100,000 apiece, it seemed unlikely that the languishing cable industry would be able to muster money to build many more.

But Time's move turned out to be one of the smartest in the history of broadcasting. Suddenly cable companies across the country could offer viewers something they couldn't get from their normal commercial broadcast stations: recent, uncut movies. At the same time, technological progress was driving down the cost of installing an earth station. It became a circular thing: popular acceptance of HBO encouraged more cable systems to install satellite receiving antennas. And as the number of earth receiving stations increased, so did the number of programmers who followed HBO's lead and put shows up on the satellite. The growing diversity in programming made it easier for cable to sell its services to more households. Suddenly, cable could deliver a prosperous and numerically significant audience. Programmers—along with their advertisers—panted to get at it. (HBO doesn't run commercials, but it, too, relies for its prosperity on the increasing size of cable audiences. In addition to the basic monthly cable charge, HBO subscribers pay a surcharge generally in the \$8 to \$10 range, of which the cable operator keeps roughly half.)

In the bad old pre-satellite days, an estimated two of every three people said no when cable operators came knocking at their doors. Now cable salespeople often find that 50 to 70 percent of their prospects say yes. At the moment, 20 percent (15.5 million) of all

A Short Course in TV Satellites, Part I: The Jargon



COMMUNICATIONS SATELLITES:

Satellites that are used to transmit voice, data, radio- and TV-program signals. Depending upon how fancy the electronics are, each satellite can carry 12 or 24 color-TV programs at one time. The satellites are launched into geostationary orbit 22,300 miles above the earth's equator.

CROSS-POLARIZATION: The electronic gimmick that allows a satellite to double its capacity. Normally, a satellite sends out its signals in waves that are oriented either horizontally or vertically. Under these circumstances, 12 TV programs will fill all the available frequencies on the satellite. However, if the satellite is set up so that it can send *both* horizontal and vertical waves, it is said to be *cross-polarized*: the frequency spectrum can be reused and the carrying capacity of the satellite is doubled.

EARTH STATION: Terrestrial equipment used to send and/or receive satellite communications. The primary part of an earth station is the parabolic (dish-shaped) antenna, which ranges in size from 3 to 10 meters across. In the trade, "earth station" tends to refer to the *receiving* equipment. Receive-only earth stations are technologically much simpler and therefore cheaper than receive-and-transmit stations. Prices for receiving stations start at under \$10,000 while a transmitting station runs from \$30,000 to \$700,000 or more.

FOOTPRINT: That part of the earth's surface within which a particular satellite's signal can be picked up. The footprint can cover a third of the globe.

GEOSTATIONARY ORBIT:

To be useful, a communications satellite must—when viewed from earth—occupy a static point in the sky, so that an antenna can be pointed at it continuously without the use of expensive tracking and steering equipment. This effect is achieved by positioning satellites at various points 22,300 miles above the equator. In this particular orbit, a satellite will travel at a speed that matches that of the revolving earth; thus, when seen from earth, the bird will appear to be stationary. In any other orbit, the satellite would appear to move across the sky from one horizon to the other and would regularly disappear below the horizon—where it would lose contact with the earth stations it was meant to serve.

SUPERSTATION: A local TV station whose signal is beamed up to a satellite, thus making it available to any receiving station within the satellite's footprint.

TRANSPONDER: This is the equipment on a satellite that takes the signal sent from earth and—after amplifying it and changing its frequency—sends it back to earth for reception. A single transponder, which can handle the electronic information that makes up a single color-TV broadcast, can—if used for alternate communications purposes—carry 12 simultaneous radio broadcasts or 1000 to 1200 voice communications (such as telephone calls).

UPLINKS AND DOWNLINKS: Industry slang; the former refers to transmitting earth stations, the latter to receiving stations.

American TV homes take cable service. In the next 10 years, that number is expected to grow to between 36 and 50 percent.

Sensing the public eagerness, programmers are falling all over each other to devise new schemes. Satellite cable programming now available (or planned for the near future) includes such things as Nickelodeon, a children's program channel; Cinemera Satellite Network, a service for the elderly; ESPN (Entertainment and Sports Programming Network); Time-Life Films' BBC in America; an entirely Spanish service; live sports from Madison Square Garden; all-news channels from AP, UPI, Reuters and CNN (the Cable News Network owned by Ted Turner, *enfant terrible* of the TV industry, whom we will meet shortly); C-SPAN, the Cable Satellite Public Affairs Network, which broadcasts the floor sessions of the House of Representatives; and at least three religious networks.

The union of satellite and cable has spawned a robust phenomenon known as the superstation, a local television station whose signal—besides being broadcast in its immediate area—gets boosted up to a satellite and is thus made available to cable systems all over the country. Superstations have generated excitement, anger, discord, confusion, trepidation and gen-

eral consternation in the industry. At the moment, they're kind of like rambunctious teen-agers not yet sure of their place in the world—they can be fun to have around, but they're rough on the furniture.

At last count, stations already on satellite or scheduled to be there soon included WTBS, Atlanta; WGN-TV, Chicago; KTVU, Oakland; KTTV, Los Angeles; and WOR, New York.

R.E. Turner III, better known as Ted, launched the superstation concept three years ago when he put his station, WTCG in Atlanta, on Satcom II. (The station's call letters have since been changed to WTBS, for Turner Broadcasting System.) Ted Turner, self-proclaimed video prophet and *bête noire* of the industry's more conservative forces, is no shrinking violet. He has an almost mystical belief in the future of satellites and superstations. Whenever he can get himself in front of an audience—which, given his flamboyance, he does regularly—he's likely to be found proclaiming, "Future shock is now."

It's not surprising that the more established segments of the industry are uneasy about superstations—and about cable in general. The National Association of Broadcasters was furious last year when the Federal Communications Commission approved superstation applications.

Broadcasters say that the inroads made by superstations will come at the expense of local programming aimed at single communities; that if a station's signal is going all over the country, that station is not likely to focus heavily on the affairs of its home town.

While cable TV's use of satellites is edging toward maturity, another segment of the satellite broadcasting industry is just in the gestation stage. That is direct satellite-to-home broadcasts. Theoretically, anyone can go buy an earth receiving station (or "dish"), set it up on his or her roof or in the back yard and pick programs directly off satellites. In its last Christmas catalogue, Neiman-Marcus offered an earth station for \$36,500. (Neiman-Marcus has always catered to the carriage trade. You could go directly to one of the manufacturers and pick up an earth antenna for a mere \$10,000 to \$12,000.)

If a home antenna isn't in your price range right now, wait. Early this year it became known that the Communications Satellite Corporation (Comsat) was negotiating with Sears, Roebuck and Co. to develop jointly a direct satellite-to-home television system. Now, Sears is not Neiman-Marcus. If the



A Short Course in TV Satellites, Part II: The History

1960: Echo I is launched. It is a big, shiny balloon, 100 feet in diameter, off of which radio waves are bounced. The same year, the U.S. Army launches its Courier satellite. Unlike the passive Echo, it can receive and relay messages, making it the first active repeater satellite.

1962: Bell Laboratories' Telstar demonstrates the possibility of long-distance television and telephone communication via satellite. It carries live TV pictures between Europe and the United States.

1963: NASA launches Syncom II, the first geostationary satellite.

1965: Intelsat I, "Early Bird," inaugurates regular, live, transatlantic, commercial-TV service. Top government officials, including British Prime Minister Harold Wilson and President Lyndon Johnson, exchange greetings via satellite. The bird weighs 85 pounds (in orbit) and carries one TV channel.

1972: The FCC announces its "open skies" policy, which means that just about anybody can launch a communications satellite. This decision paves the way for commercial use of satellites.

1972: A Canadian satellite, Anik A1, is launched—the world's first domestic, commercial, geostationary satellite.

1973: RCA Americom leases transponders on the Anik satellite and becomes the first company to offer domestic satellite communications service in the U.S.

1974: Western Union launches satellites in April and October.

1975: Home Box Office is put on satellite and proves that commercial programming via satellite is an idea whose time has come. RCA launches Satcom I.

1976 to present: More Satcom, Westar and Anik satellites are launched. They are joined by three Comstars (operated jointly by AT&T and GTE Satellite Corp.). The way is paved for ever-expanding use of satellite TV.

giant retailer is interested, you can bet it's not planning to market antennas costing thousands of dollars. In fact, Comsat figures that mass-producing home dishes would drive their price down to \$200 or \$300. In addition to selling the dishes, Comsat would put programs up on a satellite and charge the antenna owners \$15 to \$20 a month for the service.

No matter what happens to the Comsat plan, you soon may see home dishes sprouting like inverted mushrooms in your neighborhood. Industry insiders speculate that one or two large electronic firms will soon enter the market with home dishes that sell for less than \$1000.

Even though earth receiving stations are still a bit beyond the average viewer's budget, they're selling like crazy, mainly to cable operators. Scientific-Atlanta, the giant of the industry and the firm that helped put HBO onto satellites, is building 200 of them a month and has sold over 1500 already; because it is "mass-producing" the units, Scientific-Atlanta can put out a bottom-of-the-line model for under \$10,000. Other companies have jumped into this lucrative field as well. Gardiner Communications Corp. sold 350 earth stations—at a cost of \$12,000 to \$20,000 each—during its two years of marketing them.

In all, it's estimated that 3000 earth stations are in use today, and not all by cable companies or eccentric millionaires. Corporations are beginning to show interest in using TV satellites to link their widespread operations. As far back as 1977, Lanier Business Products Inc. used the Westar satellite to beam a national sales meeting to 11 cities around the U.S. where 2000 people watched on giant-screen TVs. If all those people had gone to the company's Atlanta headquarters, costs for food, hotels and travel would have run to at least \$600,000, the company figures. Using the satellite cut its costs in half.

Given these cost differentials, it's entirely possible we'll soon see corporations buying both receiving and transmitting antennas (the latter can cost up to \$750,000, as Lanier found, but savings mount up fast). And if that happens, it may be the beginning of the end of business travel.

While the future of satellites and TV looks bright, it is not entirely unclouded. The field is a legal and regulatory wilderness that is just beginning to be explored. One technical expert at

the FCC told us, "All the old definitions are falling apart. TV as we've known it for the past 25 years is blowing up and the old regulations don't always fit the new facts."

Dr. Martino in Dayton thinks that the FCC itself could be a problem. "We'll see terrific changes if the Government doesn't goof up again, as it has had a habit of doing in the past." An FCC source admitted that his agency's bureaucratic instincts can hogtie the industry. "When domestic communications satellites first came on the scene, it took us forever to get the regulations set up. Everybody was waiting on us and we weren't moving. That was a seven-year bitch. And now with cable and direct satellite-to-home broadcasting we've got more regulatory uncertainty. But I'm a firm believer that regulatory chaos shouldn't inhibit technology and we're getting better about that."

Networks and TV-station owners are likely to fight loose regulation of satellite TV. To them, the cable industry and direct satellite-to-home broadcasters like Comsat look like Vandals who've come to pillage a carefully cultivated countryside. You can't blame them. Television is their business and they don't want it to get away from them.

Other peripheral interests will also be lobbying for the status quo. After all, if you're a member of the National Association of Theatre Owners, you're not going to cheer when HBO starts coming to every television set in your town, are you?

Satellite TV faces some technical problems as well. There is, for example, no ratings system at the moment that regularly measures the size of an audience watching a particular program on cable. Advertisers (and the media they use) live by ratings. Until a full-blown ratings system appears, it's unlikely that national advertisers will shift headlong from the networks to such alternatives as superstations or cable TV.

Also, satellites have a useful life of only eight or nine years. Given the enormous outlay involved in building and launching them, there could be severe economic strains when it comes time to replace the generation of birds now in the heavens. (Satellites currently in use cost about \$30 million apiece to build. More sophisticated birds on the drawing boards may run to \$80 million. In addition, NASA charges satellite owners \$20 to \$30 million to launch and track each bird.)

A satellite can malfunction. If a bird carried a full complement of TV programming, one malfunction could knock 24 channels off the air all over the country. As more satellites are launched, however, the possibilities for maneuvering in a crisis increase. After Satcom III disappeared, RCA was able to satisfy most customers by offering cable programmers accommodations on an AT&T bird. Still, some programming ventures are on hold, awaiting space on the next Satcom III.

Then, too, TV satellites must occupy specific spots in the sky if their footprints are to cover the most moneyed markets. A satellite whose footprint covered six million square miles of the South Pacific would not excite a whole lot of interest—TV and ad executives don't consider residents of the New Guinea uplands to be big spenders. So, while space is infinite, the number of desirable satellite slots is not. If satellites get crowded together, they begin to foul up each other's transmissions. In the long run, the technologists may solve this by building larger birds using higher frequencies. (At higher frequencies, satellites can be moved closer together without trampling on each other's signals.) But this could be at least a short-range impediment to growth in the industry.

Finally, there are a couple of social considerations that need pondering. Satellites may make more and more TV channels available to us, but will the programs be any better than what we get now? Will we end up with dozens of channels showing reruns of *The Love Boat*? The cable industry hasn't shown an awful lot of daring so far. Even though many more channels can now be delivered, around 70 percent of the Nation's cable companies still offer 12 or fewer channels to their subscribers—and the mix, so far, hasn't been much different from what the networks supply: movies, news, sports, specials.

In the end, you have to wonder what will happen to all of us if we really *do* end up with 400 channels to choose from each evening. When we can stay home and see a great live concert, or a great live play, or the best in live sports, will we ever go out? Will we become a nation of shut-ins? Will we lose the social instincts that are nurtured when we share experiences with other people?

We'll probably know the answers to these questions sooner than we think. As Ted Turner says, future shock does indeed seem to be here to stay. ■

So Long, Harry Orwell

A remembrance of David Janssen

By HOWARD RODMAN

In 1961 I was story editor of a television series called *Naked City*, and I shared credit for writing a script called "A Wednesday Night Story." When I heard that David Janssen was cast in the male lead, I was more than pleased. I would have liked to meet him and shake hands, but *Naked City* was produced in Los Angeles and filmed in New York. So we didn't meet in 1961.

In 1962 I wrote another *Naked City* script in which David had the lead role. I didn't meet him in 1962, either.

Every day I would go down to the projection room and see the dailies. There was a magic to David's performance. We would watch him on the screen and we all had the sense that he was there in the projection room with us. We all felt as if we were his friends.

I did meet David 10 years later, in 1972 when I wrote the first of two pilot scripts for a series called *Harry O*. Jerry Thorpe was the producer and director. We were looking for someone to play Harry O, and a lot of names came up and were put aside. One day Jerry said, "How would you like David Janssen in the part?"

I said, "David would be fine."

If you had asked me why I called him David, by his first name, when we had never met, I wouldn't have been able to tell you. I would have been embarrassed about it if anyone had brought it to my attention, because that's not my habit—to pretend to know people I've never met. Even so, I didn't feel as if David and I were strangers. I felt we'd known each other for a long time.

So then we met, and I shook hands with him as if we were old friends. He said, "Hi." I nodded, because that was the way David always said "Hi." I knew

Howard Rodman has been a television writer since 1946. He is now working on a script for the TV-movie "Sinking of the Submarine Squalus."

that; everybody knew that. I said "Hi" to him. He nodded. What our nods said was that everything was all right and that it was fine to see each other again.

That was the quality of warmth the man projected.

He was, of course, a star at the time. He had done a great many films; he'd been in several television series, including *The Fugitive*. But he didn't presume on stardom. Jerry Thorpe had questions about David as Harry O. He thought David's appearance was too elegant for the part. They talked about haircuts; Jerry thought David's hair should be cut shorter than the style of 1972. He thought David's hair should suggest the way men had their hair cut at the time of World War II. David nodded, agreeing. They talked about clothes, the kind of clothes a private detective named Harry Orwell would be likely to wear. And little by little I began to understand who Harry Orwell would be if David played him.

I'm glad I was there that afternoon, because afterward I was never able to separate Orwell and Janssen—the actor from the role he played; and if I hadn't been there at the very beginning, I wouldn't have understood that the life of Harry O came out of David. It was David's vitality, I guess, David's soul, that showed on the screen every week.

When new writers were assigned, it was never necessary to give them a description of Harry Orwell; they just watched David play the part and they knew who Orwell was.

And the other thing that happened was that just as you felt David was your friend so you felt that Harry Orwell was your friend too. Every time I turned on the set to watch one of the *Harry O*'s and David would come on the screen, I said "Hi" to him inside my head.

I would have liked to be closer to David than I was, but it didn't work that way; our lives were too different. So we never saw each other except at the studio. I would go down to the studio and watch them shoot and talk to David while the cameras and lights were set up for the next scene. Or sometimes we'd go sit in his trailer and talk.

He smoked a lot, but he would always ask me if the smoke bothered me. He knew I didn't mind and that I would say, "No—no problem." But he would ask me anyway. It was a kind of natural courtesy, because I didn't smoke. He was a polite man. Not formally polite, but courteous and well-mannered out of consideration for other people.

He was without question the star of *Harry O*, and he was aware of it; he understood that people deferred to him. But he didn't use it to be a bully. The only tension I saw come from him during the shooting of the series over the course of the two years it lasted came out of his drive for perfection. He wanted to do it right. Not necessarily the first time. If it took a couple of tries instead of coming out right the first time, "No sweat." He would do it again.

And he had very strong ideas what the right way was.

It was strange for me to watch him work, because Harry Orwell came out of my head to begin with; but after David took the part over, there was never any question any more about who knew Orwell better. David did. So when he said, "What I want to do is..." it never was a star insisting on having his own way, it was a statement of the way Harry Orwell saw it.

He didn't want to carry a gun. He didn't want to get into car chases with squealing brakes and tires. The network people felt that car chases would



He drank more when he didn't like what he was doing.

But if you asked him why he didn't quit, why he kept on working so hard, why he didn't just take a long vacation, he would just grin. He said, "Working in television is like making love to a gorilla. You don't stop when you want to stop; you stop when the gorilla wants to stop."

He liked making films, though; he liked acting. He once said, sitting in his dressing room, smoking, sipping his drink, grinning, "You know what I feel like? I keep expecting my mother to come down on the set and come over to me and say, 'All right, come home!'" He shook his head, laughing about it. "I feel like a little boy playing hooky from school. They'll come and get me. They'll send the truant officer."

I only knew David in a part of his life. I never went to his house and he never came to mine. We never sat down and had a meal together, or had a drink together, for that matter. I never met his wife, nor he mine. I never met his mother.

We just knew each other in a very narrow way.

But we liked each other. At least I felt he liked me. I felt he had warmth for me. And I suspect that many millions of people, who never knew him at all except from watching him on their television screens, got that same feeling from him.

I know how I felt about David, because when I heard that he had died I felt a great grief and a great loss.

I wish he hadn't died.

These few words are my way of paying my respects.

I guess I knew him mostly as Harry Orwell. So long, Harry Orwell. Good-bye, David. ■

build up ratings; David fought them on it. He gave way sometimes. The nature of the character *did* change out of the pressure put on the series by the network. I think part of the reason David acceded to pressure was that he had a sense of modesty: he didn't think he owned the world. And part of it, of course, was he just was tired.

Any television-series star works a long day.

No television series allows its star a great deal of private life. If you're a star working on a series, you don't go out a lot: You get up too early to go to work and you go to sleep too late. There's too much tension in the drive to get things right to let you just quit at the end of the day and leave the work behind.

David drank some to ease the tension.



SPORTS

From Peddler to Par

By JOHN SCHULIAN



The television cameras are waiting as the finished products roll off America's country-club assembly line and onto golf's glory road. Too bad the cameras' unrelenting eyes show the products for what they are: blond, blue-eyed automatons who have the right answers, the right addresses and no blood in their veins.

You will never see a guy named Kool Whip or Junkyard holding the winner's loot from the Kemper Open in one hand and a can of spray paint in the other. In the world according to the Professional Golf Association, it was bad enough that Arnold Palmer spent his youth looking like a plumber who couldn't keep his shirttail tucked in. But Arnie made his millions, so he was all right. The passage of time, alas, wore down the tour's other exotic figures: Lee Trevino used up all his wild tales of hustling suckers on public courses, Dave Hill was fined for bad-mouthing the playgrounds of the rich, and Rick Meissner got caught robbing banks.

Now there remains only one threat to the PGA's stupefying sameness. His name is Calvin Peete, and even though he won \$122,481 last year, even though he left Tom Weiskopf and Jack Nicklaus in the dust, he doesn't fit in. You see, he had the gall to come up the hard way, to discover what it means to eke out an existence. In the land of the alpaca sweater, that makes him the rarest of creatures—a real person.

Sixteen years ago, completely innocent of golf, Calvin Peete was a peddler on a lonely road outside Pahokee, Fla. The back of his dilapidated station wagon was jammed with his wares, and his only goal in life was to make it over the ruts and through the mosquitoes without losing too much oil.

The migrant workers were out there waiting for him, tied to stinking jobs that paid primarily in sweat and unable to get to stores where they could spend

what little money they had scraped together. It was up to Peete to bring them their overalls and maybe a cheap diamond or a rinky-dink watch, and even a fantasy.

"They kept telling each other everything I sold was stolen," he says. "I guess they thought they was getting a better deal that way."

Peete obliged them with a gold-crowned smile. He was not about to sour the best deal of his young life, the ticket that kept him off his father's farm and in the chips. "Shoot," he says, "I was making \$150, \$200 a week. That was a good buck." So what if it seemed like he was spending half his life tracing the borders of Lake Okeechobee, bouncing from Pahokee to Belle Glade to Clewiston. The migrants weren't going to get away from him.

He followed them on up to Virginia, Maryland, Delaware and, finally, Rochester, N.Y. No problem there. Peete had friends in town who knew where the eating was good and the music was sweet. The only thing that bothered him was their fascination with golf. "No way I could see myself out under a hot sun, chasing a silly ball," he says.

His friends were persistent, though. On his third visit to Rochester, they lured him out of his motel room with the promise of a clambake. Then they drove directly to the nearest golf course. "So there I am, ready to eat some clams and drink some beer," he says, "and they're telling me I can either play or wait in the car." He played.

"You know," he says, "I was 23 before I ever seen a golf club."

That is the appeal of 36-year-old Calvin Peete—not the fact that he parred the first hole he ever took a shot at, not even the color of his skin. "There must be seven or eight black players on the pro tour now," he says. "I don't think

we're such a novelty any more." But this odyssey of his, this unlikely trip to a world where country-club membership is virtually a birthright, will always stamp him as extraordinary.

And yet he had to be talked into doing what was good for him. First, a dentist Peete played with regularly in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., tried to explain that there weren't very many young men who hit the ball as solidly as he did. Then Peete had a heart-to-heart with his television set.

"Jack Nicklaus was always on it, making \$200,000, maybe \$300,000 a year," he says. "I figured I could be happy with one third of that."

But to get inside the kingdom, Peete had to have a key, and coming up with one wasn't easy. It took him three tries before he graduated from the PGA's qualifying school. "My best just wasn't as good as other people's," he says. So he worked to polish his game to a sufficient sheen. He played in tournaments only golf's dreamers have ever heard of, and he practiced at a place called Sunrise Park until the cops chased him home.

"I'd be there when the sun came up and when the sun went down," he says. "And sometimes I'd be lying in bed at 3 o'clock in the morning and something would come to me, something I needed to improve my game, and I'd have to go over there right away to work on it. If I was lucky, they wouldn't have turned the lights off from the softball games the night before."

The memories work like that for Calvin Peete, even when he is teeing up at the Masters. There is no forgetting how it hurt to worry that he wasn't doing right by his four children, how it felt to thank God that his schoolteacher wife was bringing home a steady paycheck. Once you understand that, you know why 70 can never be just a golf score to him, the way it is to his well-born competition. It is also a reminder of the peddler's life he left behind and the old station wagon that wouldn't go 70 with the wind at its back. ■

WHAT'S HAPPENING

continued from page 8

("video high density") video-disc as a rival to the RCA SelectaVision system and Philips-MCA's DiscoVision. Though most industry-watchers are confident that one of the latter systems is bound to win eventual acceptance as the world standard, JVC is optimistically presenting its own product as a third major contender.

VHD discs, like the DiscoVision variety, are grooveless; a diamond or sapphire stylus is guided along an invisible spiral track electronically, facilitating random access to any part of the disc.

The VHD system's chief virtue is its compact—and therefore more economical—size. The discs are only 10 inches in diameter, compared with their 12-inch competitors, and the players require 25 percent fewer materials in manufacturing.

Intimacies. The ultraprivate Japanese are discovering a new way to break through their native reticence: they go on television and tell millions of viewers about their sex lives. This is the ingenious formula that is pushing *Welcome Newlyweds* (no relation to *The Newlywed Game*) up the ratings charts.

Shown on Sundays at noon, for the delectation of the whole family, the program has newly married couples recounting their honeymoon-night adventures. But there are limits to what can be revealed, even on this show, and participants are carefully briefed beforehand on what is permissible. Husbands or wives who threaten to take indiscretion too far while in front of the cameras are gently steered away from the reefs of scandal by the program's hostess, Joan Shepherd.

Shepherd is an expatriate American married to a Tokyo singer. Details of their honeymoon are not available.

VIDEOCASSETTES

NEW RELEASES

MOVIES

All Screwed Up (1973)—Lina Wertmuller directed this tragic-comedy of rural immigrants trying for success in the big city. Luigi Diberti, Lina Polito. (Magnetic Video Corp.; \$44.95) (PG)

American Graffiti (1973)—George Lucas's acclaimed portrait of teen-age mores and attitudes in 1962 California. Richard Dreyfuss, Ron Howard, Cindy Williams, Candy Clark, Mackenzie Phillips, Suzanne Somers, Wolfman Jack. (MCA Videocassette Inc.; \$60) (PG)

Animal Crackers (1930)—The four Marx Brothers create chaos at a high-society party on Long Island (MCA Videocassette Inc.; \$50)

Battlestar Galactica (1979)—Elaborately produced TV-movie about interplanetary wars in outer space. Richard Hatch, Dirk Benedict, Lorne Greene, Ray Milland, Lew Ayres, Jane Seymour. (MCA Videocassette Inc.; \$60) (PG)

Boardwalk (1979)—An elderly couple is terrorized by youth gangs in the decaying beachfront area of Coney Island. Lee Strasberg, Ruth Gordon, Janet Leigh. (Time Life Video Club; \$39.95) (PG)

Born Yesterday (1950)—George Cukor directed this comedy, adapted from Garson Kanin's Broadway hit, about the education of a junk tycoon's girl friend (Oscar-winner Judy Holliday). With Broderick Crawford, William Holden. (Time Life Video Club; \$44.95)

The Deer Hunter (1978)—Powerful Oscar-winning war epic that tracks three Pennsylvania steelworkers through their violent experiences in Vietnam. Robert De Niro, Christopher Walken, John Savage, Meryl Streep. (MCA Videocassette Inc.; \$82) (R)

Dracula (1931)—Bela Lugosi re-creates the stage role that made him famous, as the vampire of Bram Stoker's horror classic. With Helen Chandler, David Manners. (MCA Videocassette Inc.; \$50)



Frank Langella

Dracula (1979)—Remake of the 1931 classic with Frank Langella starring as the blood-thirsty count who puts a young woman under his spell. With Laurence Olivier and Donald Pleasence. (MCA Videocassette Inc.; \$60) (R)

El Cid (1961)—Charlton Heston as Spain's national hero, whose armies defeated the Moors in the 11th century. With Sophia Loren, Raf Vallone. (Time Life Video Club; \$54.95)

The Electric Horseman (1979)—Jane Fonda as a TV newswoman and Robert Redford as a boozy ex-rodeo champ; he's on the run with a stolen horse and she goes along for the ride. With Valerie Perrine. (MCA Videocassette Inc.; \$60) (PG)

Frankenstein (1931)—Boris Karloff in the classic version of Mary Shelley's novel about a monster created from the dead. With Colin Clive, Mae Clarke, John Boles. (MCA Videocassette Inc.; \$50)

The Garden of the Finzi-Continis (1970)—Director Vittorio de Sica's Oscar-winning portrait of a Jewish family in Fascist 1938 Italy. Dominique



Dominique Sanda

Sanda, Lino Capolicchio, Helmut Berger. (Time Life Video Club; \$39.95)

The Great Escape (1962)—Steve McQueen and James Garner star in this true-life story of the biggest escape project of World War II, carried out by Allied officers in a German prisoner-of-war camp. With Richard Attenborough, James Coburn, Charles Bronson and David McCallum. (VidAmerica; \$13.95 rental)

Heavens Above! (1963)—Peter Sellers in a satire about a clerical error that transfers a prison chaplain to a post in a stuffy English community. With Cecil Parker, Isabel Jeans, Malcolm Muggeridge. (Time Life Video Club; \$39.95)

I'm All Right, Jack (1959)—Another Peter Sellers satire, this one about labor-management relations. With Terry-Thomas, Ian Carmichael, Margaret Rutherford and Malcolm Muggeridge. (Time Life Video Club; \$39.95)

Jaws (1975)—Steven Spielberg's smash hit about a New England beach community terrorized by a great white shark. Richard Dreyfuss, Roy Scheider, Robert Shaw. (MCA Videocassette Inc.; \$60) (PG)

Jaws 2 (1977)—Another summer, and another killer shark upsets the tranquility of a New England beach, with Roy Scheider again in hot pursuit. Lorraine Gary and Murray Hamilton also repeat. (MCA Videocassette Inc.; \$60) (PG)

The Jerk (1980)—Steve Mar-

THIS MONTH

tin stars in this zany comedy about a black sharecropper's adopted son (Martin) who leaves home and stumbles into adventure and fortune in the big city. Carl Reiner directed. With Bernadette Peters, Jackie Mason. (MCA Videocassette Inc.; \$60) (R)

Jesus Christ Superstar (1973)—The hit stage and recording rock opera about the last days of Christ, filmed in Israel by Norman Jewison. Ted Neeley, Yvonne Elliman, Carl Anderson. (MCA Videocassette Inc.; \$50) (G)

Leonor (1975)—A 14th-century nobleman makes a pact with the devil to resurrect from the grave his beloved first wife, to the dismay of his second wife and the townsfolk. Liv Ullmann, Michel Piccoli. (Magnetic Video Corp.; \$44.95) (R)



W.C. Fields

My Little Chickadee (1940)—W.C. Fields and Mae West wrote and starred in this Western parody about a gold digger who thinks she's found a rich husband. (MCA Videocassette Inc.; \$50)

National Lampoon's Animal House (1978)—John Belushi stars in this slapstick box-office smash about the uninhibited denizens of a frat house in the early Sixties. With Tim Matheson, John Vernon. (MCA Videocassette Inc.; \$60) (R)

1941 (1979)—Steven Spielberg's comedy about the panic that erupts from a rumored invasion of Los Angeles after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. John Belushi, Dan Aykroyd, Toshiro

Mifune. (MCA Videocassette Inc.; \$60) (PG)

The People Next Door (1970)—A grim look at teenage drug addiction in suburbia. Eli Wallach, Julie Harris, Hal Holbrook, Cloris Leachman. (Magnetic Video Corp.; \$44.95) (R)

Psycho (1960)—Alfred Hitchcock's terrifying study of murder and madness at an eerie, run-down motel. Anthony Perkins, Janet Leigh, Vera Miles, John Gavin, Martin Balsam. (MCA Videocassette Inc.; \$50)

Same Time, Next Year (1979)—Alan Alda and Ellen Burstyn in the film based on the Broadway hit about a couple who meet annually for extramarital trysts. (MCA Videocassette Inc.; \$60) (PG)

Scarface (1932)—Howard Hawks directed this classic gangster movie with Paul Muni as a Chicago hoodlum reminiscent of Al Capone. With Ann Dvorak, George Raft, Boris Karloff. (MCA Videocassette Inc.; \$50)

The Seduction of Joe Tynan (1979)—Alan Alda wrote this story about a senator (Alda) who struggles to keep his wife (Barbara Harris), family and mistress (Meryl Streep) as his career skyrockets. (MCA Videocassette Inc.; \$60) (R)

The Seduction of Mimi (1972)—Director Lina Wertmüller's first success; a social comedy about an ambitious factory worker who accidentally becomes a union hero and is "seduced" into the Mafia-controlled establishment. Giancarlo Giannini, Mariangela Melato. (Magnetic Video Corp.; \$44.95) (R)

Slapshot (1977)—Foul-mouthed coach of the world's worst hockey team turns to hooliganism to beef up a sagging box office. George Roy Hill directed Paul Newman, Michael Ontkean and Lindsay Crouse. (MCA Videocassette Inc.; \$60) (R)

Smokey and the Bandit (1977)—Car-chase action predominates in this breezy Burt Reynolds vehicle about a bootlegger pursued by the

law and his girl's ex-suitor. With Sally Field, Jackie Gleason. (MCA Videocassette Inc.; \$60) (PG)

The Sorrow and the Pity (1971)—Highly praised documentary about France's Nazi occupation during World War II, by writer/director Marcel Ophuls. (Time Life Video Club; \$79.95)



Katharine Hepburn

State of the Union (1948)—Spencer Tracy and Katharine Hepburn in the story of a reluctant magnate who runs for President. With Angela Lansbury, Van Johnson, Adolphe Menjou. (MCA Videocassette Inc.; \$50)

The Sting (1973)—Seven Oscars, including Best Picture, went to this tale of an elaborate con game in 1930s Chicago, directed by George Roy Hill. With Paul Newman, Robert Redford, Robert Shaw, Charles Durning, Eileen Brennan and an Oscar-winning score adapted by Marvin Hamlisch from Scott Joplin piano rags. (MCA Videocassette Inc.; \$60) (PG)

The Taming of the Shrew (1967)—Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton romp through this opulent Franco Zeffirelli production of Shakespeare's classic. With Michael York. (Time Life Video Club; \$44.95)

Which Way Is Up? (1977)—Richard Pryor assumes three different roles in an adaptation of the Italian film "The Seduction of Mimi," about a California orange picker with woman trouble. With Margaret Avery, Marilyn Coleman. (MCA Videocassette Inc.; \$60) (R)

Winter Kills (1979)—A star-studded cast populates this violent melodrama centering on a Presidential assassination. With Jeff Bridges, John Huston, Anthony Perkins, Sterling Hayden, Eli Wallach. (Magnetic Video Corp.; \$44.95) (R)

SPECIALS

Soccer for Everyone—Thirteen-part instructional series about soccer, with Kyle Rote Jr. and other NASL stars. (Sports World Cinema; estimated cost, \$180)

World Championship Tennis 1971-1979: An Anthology of Distinction—Four-and-a-half hours of tennis highlights featuring the greatest male players of the past decade. (Sports World Cinema; estimated cost, \$270)

Baseball Miracles—The 1969 and 1973 New York Mets are profiled in their championship seasons. (Sports World Cinema; \$60)

Home Video Production: How to Do It!—Tips on using a video camera, including how to tape a tennis match, and the mechanics of hooking up the VCR to a stereo and transferring slides and films to videotape. (Smith-Mattingly; \$49.95 purchase, \$25 rental)

Readers wishing to obtain more information from the distributors of the above-listed movies and specials may do so at these addresses: MCA Videocassette Inc., 100 Universal City Plaza, Universal City, Cal. 91608; Time Life Video Club, Time & Life Building, New York, NY 10020; VidAmerica, 231 E. 55th Street, New York, NY 10022; Magnetic Video Corp., 23434 Industrial Park Court, Farmington Hills, Mich. 48024; Sports World Cinema, P.O. Box 17022, Salt Lake City Utah 84117; Smith-Mattingly Productions, Ltd., 2560 Huntington Ave., Suite 303, Alexandria, Va. 22303.

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

Acting in Television Commercials for Fun and Profit, by Squire Fridell. (Crown Publishers, Inc.; \$12.95 hardcover, \$6.95 paper)—A successful television-commercial actor tells how to prosper in this field.

The Great TV Sitcom Book, by

Rick Mitz. (Richard Marek Publishers; \$19.95)—An admitted addict of situation comedies catalogues all the shows in the genre and their casts from 1949 to 1979; some detailed descriptions.

Television Awareness Training—The Viewer's Guide, by Ben Logan, Dr. Dorothy H. Cohen, Peggy Charren, Dr. Alberta Siegel, Claire Safran, Dr. Robert Liebert, Dr. Rita Wickes Poulos, Kate Moody and Dr. Eli Rubinstein. (Media Action Research Center, Inc.; \$14.95,

plus \$1.00 postage)—This collection of essays about television and its effects includes chapters on violence, advertising, news and sports. (The book is also intended to serve as a text in Television Awareness Training workshops. Work sheets and exercises accompany the various sections.)

The Voyage of Charles Darwin, His Autobiographical Writings, selected and arranged by Christopher Ralling. (Mayflower Books, Inc.;

\$9.95)—Many of the photographs and illustrations in this collection are drawn from the BBC miniseries seen recently on PBS.

The Whole World Is Watching: Mass Media in the Making and Unmaking of the New Left, by Todd Gitlin. (University of California Press; \$12.95)—A former president of Students for a Democratic Society critiques the media's role in political protests and movements.

continued

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)
2. **Grease (1978)**—John Travolta and Olivia Newton-John in the film version of the hit musical. (Paramount Pictures; \$59.95)
3. **Blazing Saddles (1974)**—Mel Brooks' parody of Hollywood Westerns. (WCI Home Video; \$55)
4. **Enter the Dragon (1973)**—Bruce Lee's last film. (WCI Home Video; \$50)
5. **The Godfather (1972)**—Francis Ford Coppola's gangster epic about the rise and near-fall of the Corleones. (Paramount Pictures; \$79.95)
6. **Saturday Night Fever (1977)**—John Travolta stars as a hip-wiggling dancing champ in a Brooklyn disco. (Paramount Pictures; \$59.95)

7. **M*A*S*H (1970)**—Robert Altman's antiwar farce that was turned into a TV series. (Magnetic Video Corp.; \$54.95)
8. **The In-Laws (1979)**—The wacky adventures of a staid dentist and his daughter's future father-in-law. (WCI Home Video; \$60)
9. **Heaven Can Wait (1978)**—A professional quarterback is accidentally summoned to Heaven before his time. (Paramount Pictures; \$59.95)
10. **Dirty Harry (1971)**—Clint Eastwood as a San Francisco cop after a sniper. (WCI Home Video; \$55)



George C. Scott

11. **Patton (1970)**—George C. Scott's Oscar-winning performance as Gen. George Patton. (Magnetic Video Corp.; \$74.95)
12. **The Exorcist (1973)**—From the best-selling novel about a child possessed by demons. (WCI Home Video; \$60)
13. **The Godfather, Part II (1974)**—More tales of the Corleone family. (Paramount Pictures; \$79.95)
14. **Debbie Does Dallas (1978)**—Rated X. (VCX; \$99.50)
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. **The Wild Bunch (1969)**—Sam Peckinpah's violent tale of aging gunmen in 1913 Texas. (WCI Home Video; \$60)
18. **Little Girl Blue (1979)**—Rated X. (VCX; \$99.50)
19. **All the President's Men (1976)**—The Washington Post versus the White House, from the book by Bernstein and Woodward. (WCI Home Video; \$60)
20. **Halloween (1978)**—Violent thriller about a knife-wielding killer. (Media Home Entertainment; \$59.95)

Retail outlets participating in our survey include:

AV Enterprises, Los Angeles; Associated Video, Houston; Audio Center, Honolulu; Beta Home Entertainment Club, Las Vegas; Brenda's Movie House, Philadelphia; 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; The Video Library Company, Bala Cynwyd, Pa.; Video Library, Torrance, Cal.; Video Mart, San Bernardino, Cal.; Video Services, Towson, Md.; Videospace, Bellevue, Wash.; Video Specialties, Houston; The Video Store, Gretna, La.; Video 2000, San Diego; Wizard of Vid, Beverly Hills.

New in Paperback

Edwin Newman on Language: Strictly Speaking and A Civil Tongue, by Edwin Newman. (Warner Books; \$6.95)—Two best sellers by the NBC newsman, now in one volume.

The Shakespeare Plays: The Tempest; Twelfth Night; Henry IV, Part I; Henry IV, Part II; Henry V, by William Shakespeare. (Mayflower Books, Inc.; \$2.95 each)—These editions include black-and-white photographs from the BBC productions of the plays recently shown on PBS.

The Video Source Book. (The National Video Clearinghouse, Inc.; \$24.95)—A complete listing, including descriptions, casts and distributors of prerecorded cassettes and discs.

The Worst TV Shows—Ever: Those TV Turkeys We Will Never Forget ... (No Matter How Hard We Try), by Bart Andrews. (Dutton; \$7.95)—A tongue-in-cheek look at TV's memorable failures.

Who Owns the Media?, edited by Benjamin M. Compaine. (Harmony Books; \$15.95 hard-cover, \$8.95 paper)—A breakdown of the big conglomerates reveals who owns what in the print, film and broadcast media.

PASSAGES

ENGAGED

Legendary dancer **Fred Astaire** and jockey Robyn Smith. Smith is 35 years old, Astaire 80.

Actor **Lou Ferrigno**, the Incredible Hulk in the series of that name, and Carla Greene.

WED

TV personality **Dave Garroway**, first host of NBC's *Today* show (1952-61), and Sara Lee Lippincott, professor of astronomy at Swarthmore (Pa.) College. Garroway, who

is an amateur astronomer, met Lippincott five years ago on an astronomy tour, which she led, to the Soviet Union.

BORN

To actress **Susan Richardson**, who plays Susan in *Eight Is Enough*, and photographer Michael Virden, a girl, Sarah Jeanette Richardson.

To actor **John Ritter** (*Three's Company*) and Nancy Morgan, a boy, Jason Morgan, the couple's first child.

SEPARATED

Actor **Bill Bixby** (*The Incredible Hulk*, *The Courtship of Eddie's Father*, *My Favorite Martian*) and Brenda Benet, an actress.

DIVORCING

Country singer **Glen Campbell** (*The Glen Campbell Goodtime Hour*) and his third wife, Sarah, who was formerly married to another country singer, Mac Davis.

HONORED

The late **John Wayne**, with a special Congressional Gold Medal, inscribed, simply, "John Wayne, American." Wayne is the 85th person to receive the medal. George Washington was the first.



CBS News correspondent **Ed Bradley**, as a winner of a George Polk Award in Journalism for Foreign Reporting, for his coverage of the plight of Cambodian refugees who escaped into Thailand.

Vladimir Zworykin, developer of the iconoscope tube that is at the heart of television, with a special Iris award for his con-

tributions to communications, by the National Association of Television Program Executives.



Actor **Ken Howard**, with an honorary varsity basketball letter (including sweater) from Boston College, the alma mater of Howard's character, high-school basketball coach Ken Reeves, on *The White Shadow*.

Reporter **Bill Moyers**, with an Alfred I. du Pont-Columbia University Award in Broadcast Journalism, for "outstanding reporting on CBS-TV and WNET" of New York.

SIGNED

Ron Ely, host of the TV game show *Face the Music* and former Tarzan on television in the 1960s, as emcee of the Miss America Pageant, replacing Bert Parks.

Country singer and songwriter **Tom T. Hall**, to replace Ralph Emery as host of the syndicated TV show *Pop Goes the Country*, which is shown on 146 stations.

ELECTED

Dallin H. Oaks, president of Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, as chairman of the board of the Public Broadcasting Service, succeeding Newton N. Minow.

DIED

Veteran actor **George Tobias**, 78, who played the role of Abner Kravitz on *Bewitched*. Tobias, who also appeared in *Starsky & Hutch*, among other

series, acted in numerous films, including "Mildred Pierce," "The Hunchback of Notre Dame" and "Sergeant York."

Composer **Jerry Fielding**, 57, who wrote the theme music for the TV series *Bridget Loves Bernie*, *The Governor and J.J.*, *Hogan's Heroes* and *The Tom Ewell Show*, among others.

Movie and TV writer **Frank W. Gabrielson**, 69, who adapted the Kathryn Forbes novel "Mama's Bank Account" into the TV series *Mama* (1949-56).



Jay Silverheels, 62, who portrayed Tonto in *The Lone Ranger*. Silverheels also appeared in numerous movies, including "True Grit" and "The Man Who Loved Cat Dancing," and was the founder of the Indian Actors Workshop in Hollywood in the 1960s.

APPOINTED

Robert J. Wussler, former president of CBS Sports and CBS-TV, as executive vice president of the Turner Broadcasting System, owner of Ted Turner's superstation WTBS and the Cable News Network.

HONORED

Frank Sinatra, with the National Academy of Popular Music's first Johnny Mercer Award, "for everything he has done" for popular music.

REASSIGNED

Sandy Hill, former co-host of ABC's *Good Morning America*, as a special correspondent for that program. Hill also will be seen on segments of ABC's *20/20*.



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Further Adventures of Superstation

By SETH GOLDSTEIN



For some time now, Ted Turner's superstation, WTBS in Atlanta—an independent TV station that is beamed to cable operators around the country by satellite—has been battling the forces of resistance among producers and distributors of broadcast programming. The battle continues to rage.

"Some companies still won't sell to us," says Sidney Pike, vice president and director of television operations for Turner Broadcasting System. "There's a lot of stonewalling going on."

Pike's pique is directed at those who remain uncomfortable about satellite transmission of programs to markets where there are still dollars to be made from over-the-air broadcasting.

To sweeten the pot, WTBS has increased the amount it is offering for program rights. But, at the same time, it is planning to increase the number of original shows emanating from Atlanta. Sports and movies, of course, remain the backbone of WTBS, which is expected to reach nearly nine million cable homes by December.

With viewership assured, the next step is to win over national advertisers. It's slow going because, like program distributors, ad agencies and their clients have been unsure of WTBS's impact. Pike thinks that attitude is about to change—and change it must if Ted Turner is going to reap the harvest he hopes for. Ad revenues alone can keep WTBS afloat; it gets nothing from the

cable operators who pluck it off the satellite. The latter pay their 10 cents per subscriber per month to a company called Southern Satellite Systems—which takes the station's signal and puts it on satellite.

Word on the Bird

Videotext, the technology that brings the printed word to the TV screen, will soon be delivered by satellite and cable to viewers' homes under the name CableText. Southern Satellite Systems plans to transmit the news from Reuters and United Press International via the Satcom I transponder it uses to beam WTBS. The news services will be slipped into WTBS's "vertical blanking interval" (a portion of the TV signal that normally carries no video information).

The development of CableText, first announced in May of last year, has been delayed by the absence of a suitable decoder that could unscramble the coded signal when it arrives at the cable system, but Southern Satellite now expects the first decoders to be available to cable operators this month.

CableText is seen as a step toward achieving the cable industry's dream of an affordable videotext decoder in every home, enabling cable subscribers to use their TV screens to scan airline schedules, classified advertising and other videotext information sources.

Guess Who's Coming to Market?

One of the great annual bazaars for television programming, the conference of the National Association of Television Program Executives (NATPE) was invaded this year in large numbers by cable and pay-TV representatives. They were among the prime bidders for the offerings of about 250 program producers and distributors who had gathered in San Francisco.

Why the upsurge in activity? The short answer is money. HBO and Showtime, the leading pay-TV services, have it to spend, and they need original programming to help distinguish themselves from broadcast TV and from each other. As well as producing shows on their own, HBO and Showtime have been looking in new directions for program material. For example, an Operation Prime Time (OPT) production, "Condominium," which was made for commercial broadcast stations as an alternative to network offerings, had its first run on HBO last month—six months before its scheduled showing on commercial stations.

Many producers see pay-TV as an outlet for more adventurous programming. If anything depressed the spirits of an exuberant conventioneer in San Francisco, it was to see the zest with which hand-me-down network series were being bought and sold at inflated prices, and to hear the descriptions of the latest talk and game shows. There was a pervasive feeling that it's time for a change and that pay-TV productions on a large scale were just around the corner. ■

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YESTERDAYS



Humphrey Bogart

25 Years Ago: May 1955

NBC has signed Perry Como to a 12-year contract estimated at \$15 million. The singer will get his own weekly hour-long show next fall, on Saturday nights, opposite CBS's Jackie Gleason.... Gore Vidal's "Visit to a Small Planet" (with Cyril Ritchard) and Paddy Chayefsky's "The Catered Affair" (Thelma Ritter) are on *Philco-Goodyear Playhouse* this month.... Humphrey Bogart makes his only live-drama TV appearance, as Duke Mantee in "The Petrified Forest," re-creating the role he played on stage (1935) and screen (1936). Also in the cast are Lauren Bacall, Henry Fonda and, in a minor role, Jack Klugman.... A *Schlitz Playhouse* drama, "The Unlighted Road," stars a moody young actor named James Dean.... Swaps upsets Nashua and Summer Tan in the Kentucky Derby.... On *American Forum*, the topic is "How Can We Stop the Arms Race?"

and the guest is Harold E. Stassen, President Eisenhower's "disarmament secretary."

10 Years Ago: May 1970

Two powerful historical dramas are on the educational-TV schedule this month: "The Andersonville Trial," with William Shatner and Richard Basehart; and "The Trail of Tears," starring Johnny Cash, which dramatizes the forced march of the Cherokees from Georgia to Oklahoma in 1838.... America's military involvement in Indochina has spread to Cambodia, and a CBS News correspondent, George Sylvester, is killed while covering the fighting there.... The titles of some of the month's documentaries indicate that network news departments are putting their emphasis on nature, the environment and Americana: "The Unseen World" (ABC), "California Impressions: Cartier-Bresson" (CBS), "With These Hands" (ABC), "Arthur Godfrey's America—The Ocean Frontier" (CBS), "The National Environment Test" (CBS), "The Great Barrier Reef" (NBC), "Mission Possible: They Care for a Nation" (ABC), "The Shining Mountains" (NBC).... In another news special, ex-President Lyndon Johnson talks with Walter Cronkite about the events surrounding John Kennedy's assassination.... In a segment of *60 Minutes*, Tricia Nixon conducts a tour of the White House.... On David Frost's talk show, he interviews Vice President

Spiro Agnew.... The Knicks beat the Lakers for the NBA championship; and a 15-to-1 shot, Dust Commander, wins the Kentucky Derby.... The FCC issues its prime-time-access rule, limiting the networks to three hours of air time per night.

5 Years Ago: May 1975

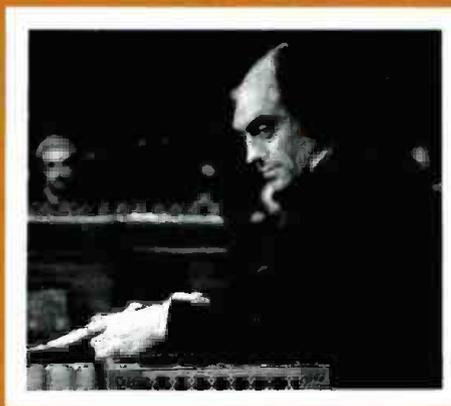
The final ratings figures for the 1974-75 season are in, and situation comedies dominate Nielsen's Top 10, with *All in the Family*, *Sanford and Son*, *Chico and the Man*, *The Jeffersons*, *M*A*S*H*, *Rhoda*, *Good Times* and *Maude* there, along with *The Waltons* and *Hawaii Five-0*.... ABC, in third place in the ratings, hires programmer Fred Silverman away from first-place CBS.... Lady Marjorie goes down with the Titanic again, as *Upstairs, Downstairs* reruns this season's episodes.... The Kentucky Derby winner is Foolish Pleasure.... Howard K. Smith plans to leave the ABC anchor desk he has occupied for the past six years (with Frank Reynolds, then Harry Reasoner) and will instead do commentary on the newscasts.... The month's dramatic presentations include O'Neill's "A Moon for the Misbegotten" (Jason Robards, Colleen Dewhurst) and a rerun of "The Execution of Private Slovik" (Martin Sheen).... Evel Knievel attempts to jump over 13 buses on *ABC's Wide World of Sports*.... *Gunsmoke* has received its cancellation notice after a 20-year run. ■

COMING UP IN PANORAMA

Presidential Politics: Walter Cronkite Looks Back on Past Campaigns; Richard Reeves Analyzes This One; Jeff Greenfield Tells You How to Get Elected by Using TV

A Quiz That Will Test Your Knowledge of TV Technology

Why We Love Trashy Movies, by Molly Haskell



Edward Heath on Disraeli: One Former Prime Minister Writes About Another

What Role Did TV Play in Iran's Revolution?

Public-TV Stations Pick Next Season's Programs

The Cable Network for Sports Junkies

Plus Articles About Loni Anderson, Edward Asner, Alec Guinness, David Hartman, Sophia Loren, Satchel Paige and Lynn Redgrave

REAR VIEW

By HARRY STEIN

Commercials Hit Bottom



Americans, as we know, are obsessed with rear ends. I do not smirk as I write this, or leer. This is by no means something to be ashamed of. It certainly beats being obsessed with the liver, as the French are, and is a good deal wiser than being obsessed with the spaces between the toes. Besides which, the backside is a most egalitarian body part, being something that practically no one is without. Unlike, for example, teeth.

In the long span of history, our national preoccupation with this part of human anatomy is, of course, of comparatively recent vintage. Just 80 or so years ago, during the last days of the McKinley Administration (if memory serves), we were still obsessed with ankles. The immense popularity of the ankle was attributable, above all, to its inaccessibility, which is also why its success was short-lived; as soon as hemlines were raised—*pffft!*—ankles had little more cachet than knuckles.

The backside, on the other hand, has proved as durable as Frank Sinatra, and for the same very simple reason: class. Mae West, sashaying out of a room, reeked of the stuff. So did Marilyn Monroe. And every ex-jock in a loincloth as Tarzan. Those were the public backsides we grew up on—suggestive but not raunchy. They were tasteful backsides, carefully selected for public view, backsides in the American mold, backsides to love, backsides to build a dream on.

Which is why I was so alarmed several months ago to return home after

six months abroad, sit down in an easy chair, light a cigar, flick on the TV and be confronted with 30 seconds of breathlessly excited dialogue to the visual accompaniment of kaleidoscopic backsides and a tiny sports car zooming through a pair of jeans-clad legs.

Voices: Bon Jour, Bon Jour. BON JOUR!

Female voice: She's into Bon Jour Action Jeans for the sleek, elegant body styling.

Male voice: He's into Bon Jour for high performance and rugged dependability.

She: She loves the way Bon Jour hugs the corners and handles the curves.

He: He wants Bon Jour's fit that lets him know there's a high-powered machine under that racy exterior.

She: Built to move...

He: And built to look like they're moving even when idle. Bon Jour Action Jeans.

She: Beautiful!

He: But dangerous!

He and She: BON JOUR!

This was, I soon learned, just the tip of the iceberg. Suddenly backsides were all over the tube, indiscriminately, pell-mell. I'd be watching Merv, or Barnaby—or Walter Cronkite, for Pete's sake—and suddenly there would be somebody's bottom on my screen. They came in all sizes, shapes and sexes. There were the ones attached to the Jordache girls, those dazzling creatures who love to ride horses and dance in bars with 12 guys at once; and

those owned by chunky hockey players singing "Ooh la la" out of tune; and the ones sticking way, way out into the brisk sea wind, belonging to the Zena girls; and, of course, the older one of which Gloria Vanderbilt appears so singularly proud. They were utterly inescapable, like some crude monster from a Japanese horror film, and they became boring just about as quickly.

It was infuriating. Without anyone lifting a finger to stop them, a bunch of advertising people were systematically turning behinds into ankles! I would sit in my easy chair for hours brooding on this, imagining the scoundrels going about their dirty work.

"Whad'ya think of this?" I pictured the account manager saying to the vice president for creative affairs. "We got this sports car, see, and it's driving real fast..."

"Uh huh, uh huh, sounds good..."

"And we have it drive through these gigantic legs, got it? I mean, *real* fast. And then—bang!—we get a tight shot!"

"I love it, I love it!"

One day my friends Lee and Paul, sensing I was working myself to a fever pitch of aggravation with this kind of thinking, decided to talk some sense into me. "What did you expect?" demanded Paul. "After 'Take it off, take it all off' and 'All my men wear English Leather or they wear nothing at all,' this was inevitable."

I shook my head. "None of the rest surprised me. But... backsides?"

"Look," said Lee, "how do you think I feel? My name used to mean something in the jeans business. Now all it means is cheap. But you can't let these things get to you."

I brightened a bit. "Well, I suppose things could be worse. I had a nightmare the other day. Someone had created a line of *anti*-designer jeans, jeans with the names of unchic famous people attached to them. I'd turn on the TV and there'd be Rocky Graziano in jeans, and Rip Taylor, and Ann Landers, and John Ehrlichman—all of them sticking *their* backsides at the camera."

It was just 12 hours later that Paul called in a state of high excitement. "I just spoke to an ad guy I know. We got a meeting set with Rocky Graziano for Monday. You in?"

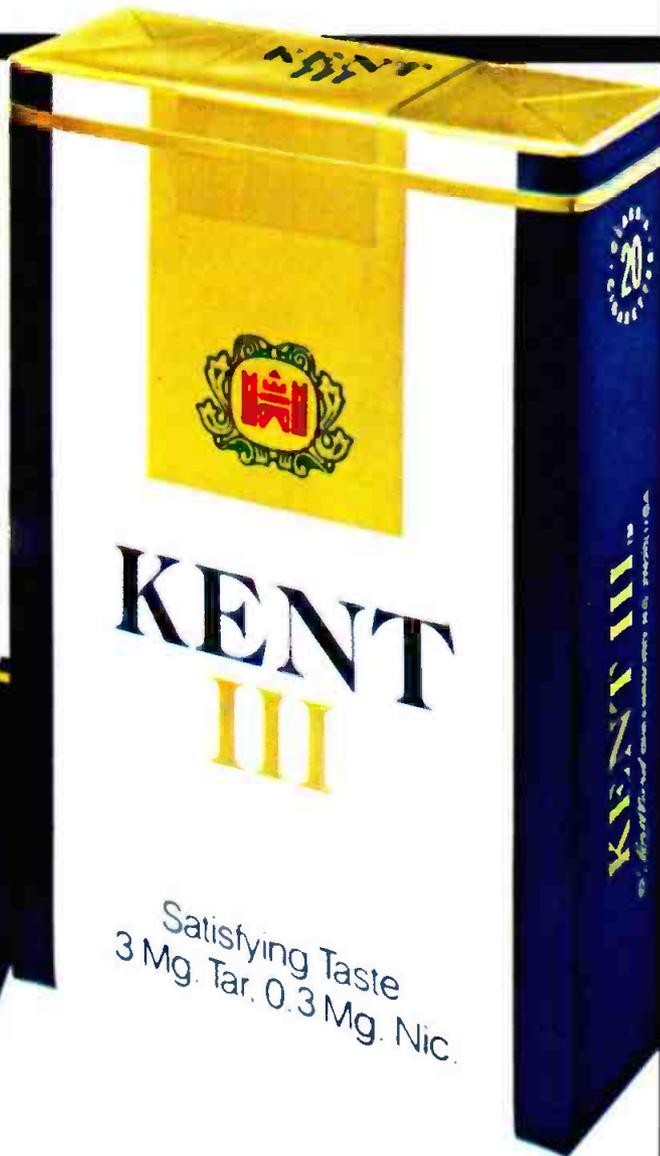
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Taste: Before now you couldn't get real taste in a low, low tar.

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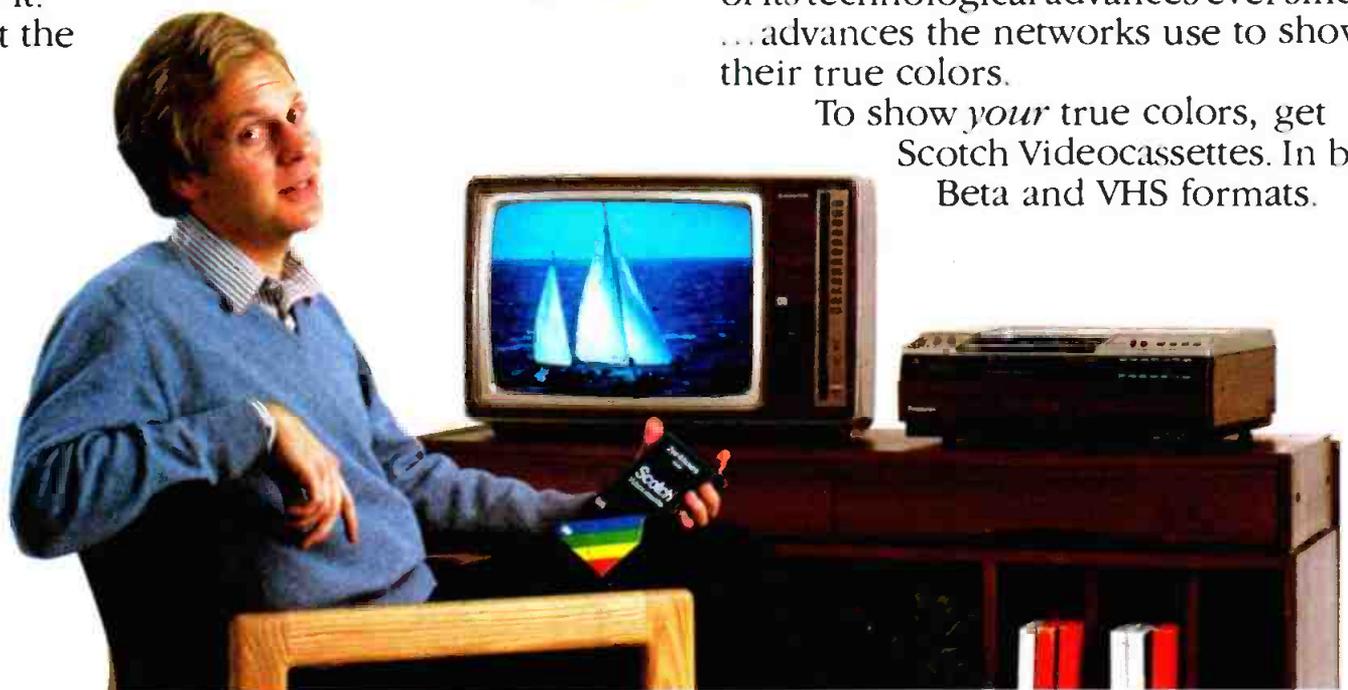


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