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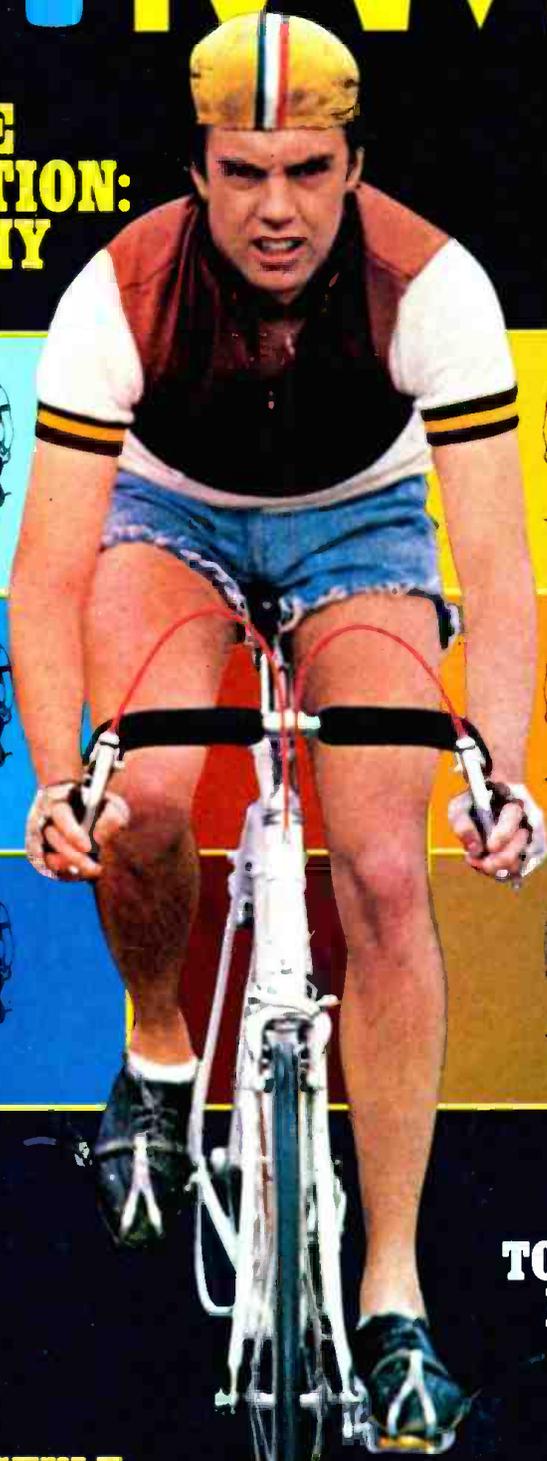
# PANORAMA

TELEVISION  
TODAY AND  
TOMORROW

JULY 1980  
\$2.00

**Special Report**

## THANKS TO THE VIDEO REVOLUTION: A PORNOGRAPHY BOOM



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WILL THE RACE  
FOR RATINGS  
SPOIL ITS CHARM?**

**PREVIEWING THE  
SETS THAT WILL  
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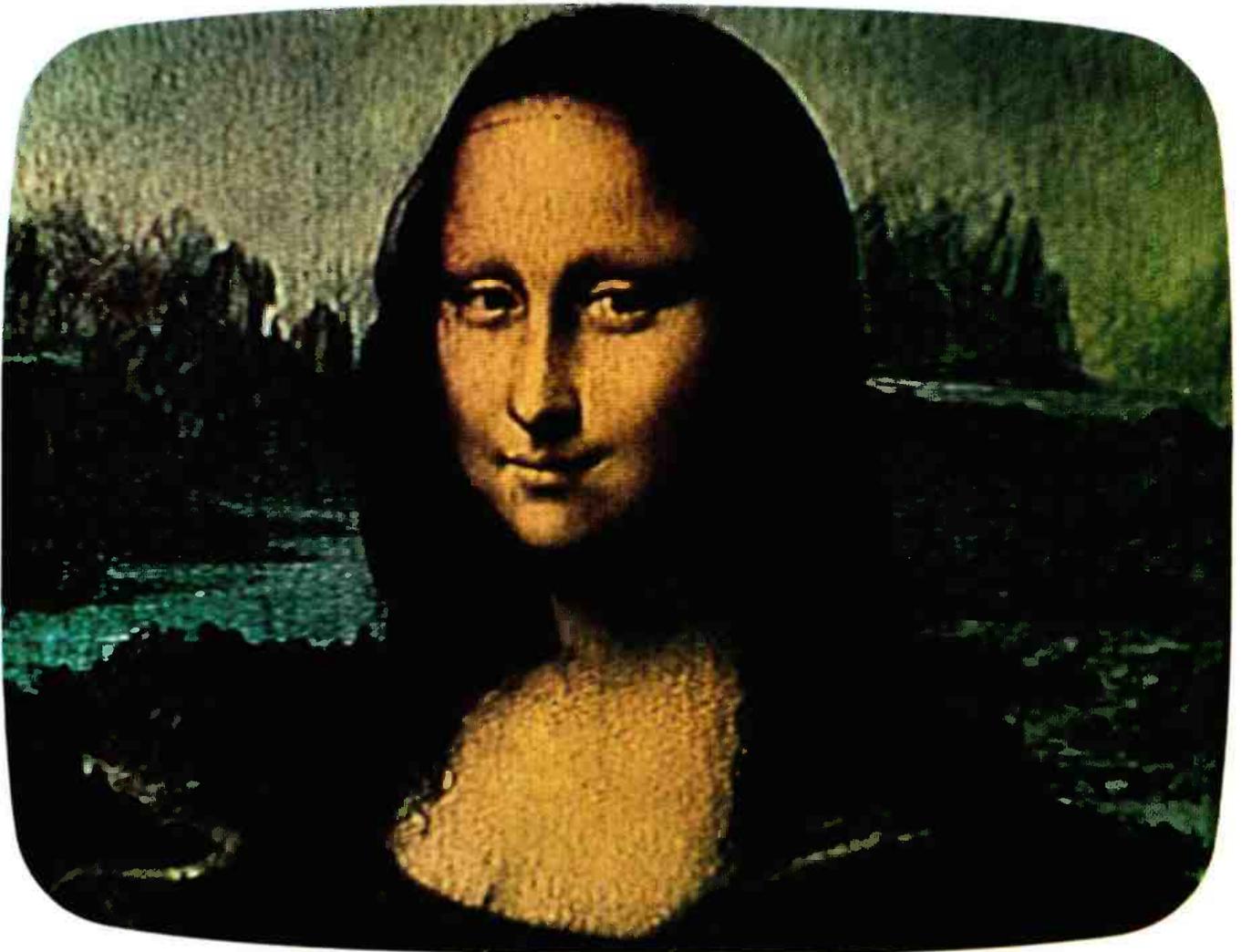
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TELEVISION  
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## LETTERS



### Pander or Genius?

In your article on game shows ("Television's Thriving Theater of Humiliation," May), Dr. James V. Bonura says that contestants "need the participation—national exposure can be a primary need." I'm not sure I agree with Bonura—I'd have to see some statistics on the suicide rate among frustrated, would-be contestants—but if there's any truth to this statement, it is, indeed, a sad commentary on the state of our national psyche. Still, does this excuse Chuck Barris's pandering to the public's neurotic needs? I think not. He could better spend some of those millions he's made off us by putting on educational programs that seriously explore how and why we have come to the point where otherwise sane citizens will "do anything" to get on the air.

*H.R. Cohen*  
*Harrisburg, Pa.*

I have never watched a game show before, but curiosity compelled me to tune in *The Newlywed Game* after reading your article about Chuck Barris. Forget *Nova*, forget the National Geographic specials—this is the most educational thing I have ever seen on TV. Where else can you watch the human animal in its natural state, unencumbered by the slightest inhibition regarding good taste, compassion or pride? Barris is a genius and deserves every penny he's made—and we deserve Barris.

*Stu Sullivan*  
*New York City*

### Trumpet Call

Thank you for inspiring me to watch "Gideon's Trumpet" last night; your article on Mr. John Houseman and Mr. Henry Fonda ("A Courtly Conversation," April) was the reason I decided to watch this excellent show in the first place. Having read beforehand what the two lead actors in it thought about their roles, it was most interesting to

see them perform, especially Mr. Fonda as Clarence Earl Gideon. Usually, the main character in a TV drama is made out to be either all good or all bad; Mr. Gideon was neither, so it must have been more difficult to play him.

I appreciate articles like this, that give you a closer look at what goes into a program and the people responsible for it—and not just what Mr. Fonda eats for breakfast or who he was "seen with," which is what other magazines seem to be concerned with these days.

*Mrs. Herbert Palfrey*  
*Tampa, Fla.*

### Edge of Night Alive and Well

I enjoyed Michael Dann's article on "The Ratings Race" in your May issue, but I'd like to correct what I consider a terrible flaw in it. Under the heading "Longest-Running Daytime Shows," Mr. Dann failed to mention *The Edge of Night*.

*Edge* is alive and well and currently airing on 154 ABC stations. This daytime drama went on the air April 2, 1956 (the same day *As The World Turns* began), which would make both serials 24 years old.

*Erwin "Nick" Nicholson*  
*Producer/The Edge of Night*  
*New York City*

### 99 Commercials?

Easter Sunday I sat down to watch the classic "The Ten Commandments" on ABC. Realizing this was a very long movie, I decided to count the interruptions, just for fun. Well, in four-and-a-half hours, my count was: seven station breaks, four local-news breaks, three public announcements, one national news break and (would you believe?) 99 commercials. That includes ABC's ads for their own shows. Unbelievable!

Is it any wonder people are turning their TV sets off more and more? I think I'll continue to pay for my cable TV and be most grateful for it.

*Jerry V. Weatherford*  
*Santa Clara, Cal.*

### Guyana Revisited

If the producers of "Guyana Tragedy" had twisted and misrepresented that story as much as Bill Davidson misrepresented the movie to force his point about docudramas ("Restaging the Guyana Massacre," May), they would have deserved the criticism they received in PANORAMA. But as a newspaper columnist who critically watched, thought about and wrote about "Guyana Tragedy," and found it

*continued on page 6*



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6 JULY 1980

## LETTERS *continued*

one of the best television movies of the year, I think it is Davidson and your magazine who should do some head-hanging.

If all docudramas were as compelling and useful as "Guyana Tragedy," and all producers were as careful with their ideas, television viewers would be well-served and there would be no docudrama argument to write about.

And what's this about a "fine Broadway actor" being "pressed into service" to play Jim Jones? Davidson makes Powers Boothe sound like a virgin kidnaped from a church choir and sold into slavery. I doubt if Boothe looks at it that way.

*Peter Farrell  
The Oregonian  
Portland, Ore.*

After reading Bill Davidson's article on madness and massacres from media sources, the words "current events" catch my eye and I shudder. What if a "talented" writer/director/producer decides to cash in on the disgusting doings of the Iranians? The day that writer/director/producer succeeds is the day I cash in, too—by selling my television.

Docudramas, in most cases, touch almost as many viewers as they reach, for they are an exciting breed of powerfully educational tools. But—please! Let us write/direct/produce them with discretion and view them with discrimination.

*Audrey L. Pitonzo  
Brentwood, N. Y.*

### A Hand for Handler

This is just to say that I think the original story idea in David Handler's saga, "From Heroes to Sandwiches" (May), would make a super TV program—much better than two thirds of the junk we see now. After reading what happens to a good idea once the "creative" people get their hands on it, it's a wonder to me that there's anything worthwhile on TV. Keep trying, Handler—I'll look for your name in the credits the next time something really funny comes on the tube.

*John Torres  
Madison, Wis.*

### Readers' Roundup

I have read your first three issues from cover to cover and have increased my knowledge and understanding of "things associated with television" threefold. After studying your articles on videotape recorders and videodiscs, I decided in favor of an RCA VHS unit, which I purchased only five days ago—and have already bought over \$300 in accompanying accessories and feature-film tapes. Who says your maga-

zine doesn't stimulate buying!

*James A. Matuszak  
Wickliffe, Ohio*

You requested comments on PANORAMA—I am pleased to oblige. Overall, there is too much, yet not enough, common, ordinary TV comment and review of programming that we watch. The average viewer (with the so-called 9-year-old mentality) wants to know what's on tonight and how good it may be. Some of your articles may make good conversation for the Westchester commuter or the cocktail crowd, but please consider us—the rocking chair brigade. TV is a big part of our everyday living.

In spite of all the above, I like your magazine and I can see a glimmer for future greatness.

*Tom Raedy  
North Eastham, Mass.*

I have just finished reading the fourth issue of your new magazine, and I have to tell you, it's outstanding. The articles are carefully conceived, intelligent, readable. The magazine even has a sense of humor.

Some of the articles represent the best work I have seen anywhere on the topic. The piece on Ted Turner's new venture ("The Cable News Network Sets Sail," April) was superb, as were Desmond Smith's and Doug Hill's on the information revolution. I loved this month's Kluge piece on the signal pirates ("Stealing the Show," May).

Please accept the congratulations of a fellow journalist.

*Stella Zadeh  
Los Angeles*

### Harry O Reprise

I would like to thank Howard Rodman for his sensitive and moving goodbye to David Janssen ("So Long, Harry Orwell," May). I grew up with that wonderful actor, starting with *Richard Diamond, The Fugitive, O'Hara and Harry O*. I watched all his movies and adored him. I am sure there will be others who will miss David Janssen as much as I. I never met him but he always came across as friendly. Thank you, Mr. Rodman; you brought tears to my eyes.

*Lynn Walker  
Orwell, Ohio*

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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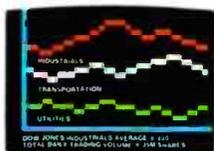
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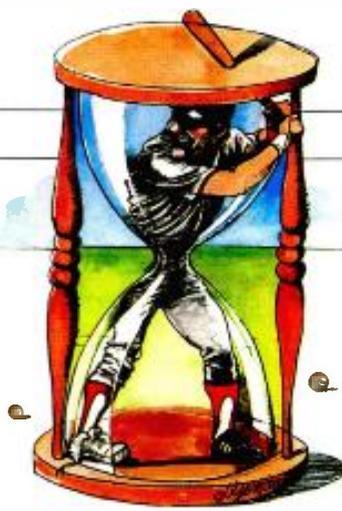
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# End of an Era

By JOHN SCHULIAN



**T**he body is starting to go now. If it isn't the back that hurts, it is the wrist, and if it isn't the wrist, it is the Achilles' tendon. The pain didn't even have the courtesy to cease and desist when Carl Yastrzemski was carving his name a little deeper in the granite of baseball history.

As the 3000th hit of his noble career skipped into right field last September, he had to hobble down to first base with his right heel on fire. The adoring home folks in Boston sang a hallelujah chorus and tried not to notice that old Yaz was wearing an embarrassingly white sneaker on his traitorous foot instead of a spiked shoe. The sneaker was supposed to make him feel better but, alas, it also made him look like some half-baked country-clubber instead of what he really is—a national treasure.

Funny how protective we become of such men whether we have seen them in the flesh or only framed on a television screen. But to watch Yastrzemski march to the plate—hitching up his pants, tugging at his sleeves, dusting his hands with dirt, clamping his batting helmet on his head—to watch him do all that is to know there is still order in the universe.

Perhaps Yastrzemski's presence is so reassuring simply because he has been with us for so long. He has given the Red Sox 20 summers of his life, from the days when he was nothing grander than a Notre Dame expatriate until now, when his sideburns are heavy with gray and we wonder how much more he can endure. He will, after all, be 41 years old come August—41 and still playing a game that is the province of athletes half his age.

It is an achievement that smacks of foolish indulgence, for too many of our captains and our kings have hung around until their glow was irreparably tarnished. One thinks immediately of Willie Mays suffering a midlife crisis in

center field—in a World Series, no less. And yet Yastrzemski, even though he seemed to tempt fate last winter by signing a two-year contract extension, manages to free his admirers from the grim specter of potential failure.

**T**he obvious pacifier is his sweet lefthanded swing, a testament to properly applied physics that remains unaltered by infirmity. Beyond that, however, is a strength that the TV cameras only suggest when they close in on his hawk-beaked countenance. That strength is born of the fact that Carl Michael Yastrzemski is not given to fooling people, least of all himself.

Oh, he may have gotten a charge out of helping Ed King, a reformed football player, become governor of Massachusetts; indeed, he got King the only favorable publicity of his campaign. But Yastrzemski walked away from his coup with the unadorned values and life style he took into it.

In restaurants, it is still steak and beer, hold the truffles. On the road, it is still the same sports coat, the same slacks, the same well-worn Spaulding suitcase. At home in Fenway Park, it is still the same policy of going as hard and as long as possible, devil take the hindmost. "Once you pass 35," Yaz says, "there's really not much else you can do."

No wonder New Englanders cleave to him. They can forget that he came from a Long Island potato farm because he is blessed with the same tight-lipped pragmatism as the lobstermen of Gloucester.

The rest of the country might find that a trifle annoying had not Yastrzemski overcome his lack of a glib tongue by sheer presence. He doesn't just play for the Boston Red Sox, you see; he *is* the Boston Red Sox.

"I was watching Yaz when I was in the eighth grade," says Carlton Fisk, Boston's thoroughbred catcher. "If he

wasn't around, it wouldn't seem like the Red Sox. We'd continue to play and we'd do our jobs, but there would be a huge void. I guess it's because we assume Carl Yastrzemski will always be there."

Whom else can that be said of in an age when journeymen and shining stars alike trek from city to city in search of the biggest buck possible? What baseball's gold rush boils down to for the fan is a cutting of old ties. Where once Mickey Mantle was the Yankees and Stan Musial was the Cardinals and Brooks Robinson was the Orioles, there is no one but Yastrzemski, who inherited the Red Sox from Ted Williams.

"Everything is changing," Fisk says. "Pete Rose owned Cincinnati—I mean owned it—and he took a hike for Philadelphia. You've got to think Yaz might be the end of an era."

And Yaz himself? What does he think?

"I don't worry about things like that," he says.

**O**f course not. There has always been enough on his mind as is. Just the weight of succeeding Williams nearly did him in. For years afterward, there were side effects from the experience. Yastrzemski was condemned as a pouter, a loafer, a backstabber. And maybe he was. But he was a great ballplayer, too, winning three American League batting championships, hitting as many as 44 home runs, driving in as many as 121 runs.

And out of the bubbling cauldron of pros and cons came Yaz, the good soldier—praying to play in a third World Series, refusing to surrender to pain and insisting he has no secret for longevity other than the ability to laugh when the Red Sox's mischievous youngsters fill his shoes with green dime-store goo.

"I come to the park every day, put my uniform on and try to do something to help the team," he says. "When the game's over and my uniform is off, that's it."

"Is it that simple?" someone asks.

The question hangs unanswered for a full minute.

"No," Carl Yastrzemski says at last. "Not really." ■

# THIS MONTH

JULY 1980

The Right Side of Errol? ... Rather's Replacement ... The Nuke Syndrome ... U.K. Loves J.R. ... Pink Lady Blues

## WHAT'S HAPPENING

### HOLLYWOOD

Don Shirley reporting

**Both sides now.** Was Errol Flynn a Nazi spy and a bisexual? CBS is developing a four-hour film about Flynn that will challenge these allegations about the dashing movie star—which were made in Charles Higham's recent biography—at the same time that it cashes in on their publicity.

Based largely on Flynn's autobiography, "My Wicked, Wicked Ways," the CBS project may even imply that Flynn was working for the English during World War II, says executive producer Doris Keating. And she adds that it probably will portray Flynn not as a bisexual but as "a swinger" who attracted some homosexual associates.

Keating, the daughter of Flynn's manager, Barry Mahon, regards Higham's book as "a bunch of baloney." But she says CBS "is just ecstatic about the publicity" stirred up by Higham's charges. Dr. Hermann Erben—Flynn's Nazi connection in the Higham account—will be a character in the CBS film.

A more sexually explicit version of "My Wicked, Wicked Ways" will be prepared for foreign theatrical release. However, any contention that Flynn preferred the Nazis to the Allies—or that he preferred men to women as sexual partners—will be missing from the movie.

In the casting of Flynn, Keating hopes "to create another

star in the genre of Flynn and then to create a market for Flynn-type vehicles."

**Sex, frankly.** ABC is planning a six-hour miniseries, *The Looking Glass*, about "areas of the sexual frontier that are extremely sensitive," says Stirling Silliphant, the writer and executive producer of the project. The story is set in the Midwest, and the characters include two couples, a sex therapist and a lawyer.

Among the topics to be treated, according to consulting sex therapist Dr. Philip Sarrel, are open marriage, laws that proscribe oral sex, and "more about male sexuality than has ever been said on television." Sarrel hopes that "artificial barriers against nudity on the screen" can be relaxed for *The Looking Glass*.

The ABC censorship department has been consulted all along, but Silliphant doesn't expect the censors "to break any rules on my personal behalf." However, he maintains, "you can do anything on TV if you approach it positively."

For competitive reasons, Silliphant is hush-hush on details of his script. NBC also is developing a film about current sexual mores, though it's planned only as a two-hour movie. An executive who has been working on the NBC film won't divulge story details of his project, either. "It's all very rip-off-able," he explains.

**Chinese birthday.** The first live-by-satellite TV special from China is in the works at public-TV station KCET in Los

Angeles. Plans call for the broadcast to originate from two Chinese locations (with taped inserts from four other locations) on Oct. 2, which will be the midpoint of a three-day 31st birthday party for the Chinese revolution. (The live program will cross the international date line and be seen in America on Oct. 1.)

The show will attempt to cover the celebration in the spirit of television's coverage of the American Bicentennial. There will be visits to archeological sites and museums, and some taped documentary material, but "no propaganda," says a KCET official.

The program will be seen in China, too. And Chinese broadcasters will pay half the bills. To pay the American share, KCET hopes to find "underwriters who presumably are anxious to get a foot in the Chinese door."

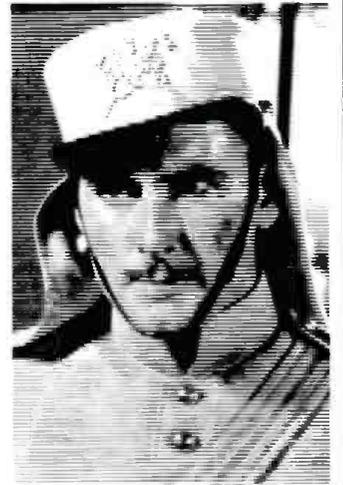
### NEW YORK

Doug Hill reporting

**After Rather.** Who's going to take over from Dan Rather on *60 Minutes* when he moves into Walter Cronkite's news-anchor chair next year?

Don Hewitt, executive producer of *60 Minutes*, said recently he would "have a hard time coming up with a name that would be better than Ed Bradley" as Rather's replacement.

Bradley, currently a *CBS Reports* correspondent and anchor of the network's Sunday-night newscast, says he knew he was the front-running can-



Errol Flynn: Exploring his wicked, wicked ways.



Dan Rather: Après him, who?



Francesca Annis: Lillie returns.



Sean Connery: Russia sends its love.

didate from informal conversations with CBS executives, including Hewitt and William Leonard, president of the News division, but he isn't counting his chickens. "My feeling is that it's a year away, and I'd just as soon not think about it," he said. "I'm not sitting here panting for the job, and anything can happen in this business."

Incidentally, Hewitt denies reports he said there are no women qualified to fill the job. He mentioned one in particular he thought could handle it: his wife, Marilyn Berger, who anchors a local public-affairs program on WNET, the PBS station in New York.

**Measure for measure.** It has long been speculated that the wired society would make the TV-ratings meter obsolete: with everybody's TV hooked up to computers via two-way cable, there'd be no need to use a meter to find out which programs are being watched. Now more and more cable companies are installing systems with interactive capabilities—meaning the system is able to receive signals from homes as well as send them—and, sure enough, the pay-TV giant, Home Box Office, has already begun to capitalize on the opportunity. HBO's director of research, Bob Maxwell, says that, as an experiment, the company has arranged with three such systems to provide viewing information to HBO. Subscribers involved in the test have agreed to cooperate, he says. As the cable companies' computers "sweep" subscribers' homes, they automatically record how many homes are tuned to each channel—instant ratings.

## WASHINGTON

**Steve Weinberg reporting**

**A major minority?** The Federal Communications Com-

mission has spent several years debating an unlikely topic: homosexuality. Recently, it brought the debate to a close with a decision that pleased none of the dozens of citizens' groups and broadcasters involved.

The agency had been asked by 142 gay organizations to require that broadcasters seek out the views of homosexuals in their market as one of their obligations as license-holders.

Broadcasters are already required to "ascertain" the "problems, needs and interests" of significant elements in their communities—business, labor, the elderly and 16 other groupings specified by the FCC. The question was: should gays be added to that list?

The gay lobby claimed that it had a strong case: statistics show 10 percent of all Americans to be gay, yet broadcasters have persistently ignored them. Charles Brydon, co-executive director of the National Gay Task Force, maintains: "There has been a historic invisibility of gay people on TV. And when there is a portrayal, the people are almost always male and stereotyped."

Many broadcasters opposed the extra category as unnecessary. And some opposition was on moral grounds. The National Religious Broadcasters, for example, claimed that homosexual acts are illegal in 27 states; to consult with what they called "openly immoral groups" would undermine the values of the community.

The FCC finally decided that it would not expand its list of "ascertainment" groups to include gays. But the agency did approve a change in its procedures that would open the door to increased consultation with groups not on the list.

If gays or any other segment of the community now make representations to a TV station, the broadcaster has

an obligation to determine whether the element is "significant." If it is, it has to be included in future surveys of opinion.

FCC chairman Charles Ferris hailed this new ruling. "Our action acknowledges that groups constituting significant elements in the community—handicapped, gays, new immigrant arrivals, such as the Vietnamese in some areas—are part of our diverse American people," he said. "Whether wealthy or impoverished, politically powerful or weak, they deserve to be heard. That is the essence of the American system."

**Beware energy!** Network news coverage of nuclear energy has created a new mental illness: "nuclear phobia." The diagnosis comes from a Washington, D.C., psychiatrist, Robert DuPont, an expert on phobias who has often been seen on ABC's *Good Morning America*.

He reached his conclusion after viewing 13 hours of videotapes covering 10 years' worth of nuclear news. The tapes were compiled by the Media Institute, a business-oriented group that works to improve coverage of economic affairs.

A recent Institute report on the decade's network coverage said it was so superficial that a viewer "could not have gained sufficient knowledge to make a rational assessment of the risks and benefits of nuclear-power generation." And the Institute also discerned a "probably unintentional" anti-nuclear bias.

Leonard Theberge, the Institute's executive director, said even anti-nuclear researchers working on the report agreed that "if you watched those 13 hours of tapes, you'd have a heightened fear of nuclear energy." Theberge sought out DuPont to see if an expert would confirm that impression. He did.

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.)

DRAMA AND MOVIES

**The Seduction of Joe Tynan.** Last year's box-office smash, written by and starring Alan Alda, who plays a senator torn between his career, his wife (Barbara Harris) and his mistress (Meryl Streep). Showtime (cable).

**Flambards.** A 12-part drama, based on three novels by Kathleen Peyton, about an orphan (played by Christine McKenna) growing up at the turn of the century in England. PBS.

**Uncommon Women and Others.** A repeat showing of Wendy Wasserman's portrait of a group of women seven years after their college graduation. PBS.

**Lillie.** This 1979 *Masterpiece Theatre* offering, which began a repeat run last month, continues through Sept. 21. Francesca Annis stars as the flamboyant 19th-century actress Lillie Langtry. PBS.

**Mourning Becomes Electra.** Eugene O'Neill's drama, first shown in December 1978, is repeated. The cast includes Joan Hackett, Roberta Maxwell and Bruce Davison. PBS.

**From Russia with Love.** A 1963 James Bond film in which Sean Connery, as Agent 007, tries to escape the clutches of enemy agent Red Grant, played by Robert Shaw. Home Box Office (cable).

SPORTS

**The All-Star Game.** On July 8, the American League tries to break an eight-year losing streak in the 51st midsummer classic from Dodger Stadium in Los Angeles. ABC.

**Wimbledon Tennis.** The women's finals will be shown via taped delay on July 4 and the men's finals will be telecast live on July 5. NBC.

**British Open Golf.** Muirfield in Scotland is the setting for this year's tournament. The final two rounds will be shown on July 19 and 20. ABC.

**U.S. Women's Open.** Defending champ Jerilyn

Britz and the rest of the pack tee up at the Richland Country Club in Nashville, Tenn. The final two rounds of this \$140,000 tournament are scheduled for July 12 and 13. ABC.

NEWS AND DOCUMENTARIES

**ABC News Closeup.** Appropriately enough during convention season, the subject is television and the political process. ABC.

**The Human Face of China.** A five-part documentary on daily life in the People's Republic. PBS.

**Dive to the Edge of Creation.** A repeat of a National Geographic special that plumbs the depths off the Galapagos Islands in search of exotic undersea life. PBS.

MUSIC AND DANCE

**Live from Studio 8H.** On July 2, the second performance of NBC's series of occasional cultural events spotlights choreographer Jerome Robbins, whose works are performed by the New York City Ballet. NBC.

**Evening at Pops.** The summertime series returns for an eleventh season on July 6—but with a big change. The late Arthur Fiedler's place as conductor of the Boston Pops has been taken over by a new "force," John Williams, composer of the sound track for "Star Wars." PBS.

**Rod Stewart: Live at the Forum.** The gravel-voiced rocker in a concert taped in Toronto. Showtime (cable).

**Oh Coward!** Roderick Cook, Jamie Ross and Pat Galloway celebrate the words and music of Noel Coward. Showtime (cable).

SPECIAL EVENTS

**The 1980 Republican National Convention.** Coverage from the Joe Louis Sports Arena in Detroit begins on the three commercial networks and PBS on July 14. ■

"Fear," said DuPont, "was the motif in the nuclear stories. There's no question in looking at the tapes that the public debate is going to hinge not on the technology, not on the economics, not on the alternate energy sources, but on the fear."

The visual symbols used by the networks underline the message, he said. One fre-

quently used symbol is the sign for radioactive hazard—"a clearly negative logo," said DuPont.

LONDON

Richard Gilbert reporting

**Big, big D.** The summer of 1980 will be remembered by

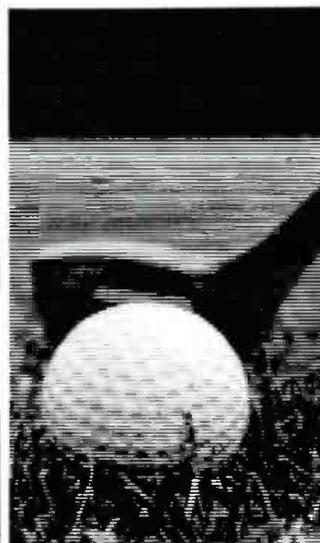
Britons as the time when they had to face an aching void: for six long months, they will have had to live without *Dallas*.

The Texas supersoap, now in recess, drew audiences of 17 million last season, and is even more of a cult here than it is back home. When someone discovered, weeks before

*continued on page 85*



Joan Hackett: Once again, mourning becomes *Electra*.



*British Open Golf:* Scotland is the setting.

*U.S. Women's Open:* The fairways of Nashville.

THE RATINGS RACE

THE PLIGHT OF THE UNDER-30s

By MICHAEL DANN

Every fall, American viewers bemoan the fact that the season's crop of new programming doesn't match up to the roster of established series. This year was no exception.

Of the 50 new programs that went on the air during the 1979-80 season (an all-time high), no more than 11, or about one out of every five, would be considered a success in network terms. "Success" means at least a 30-percent share of the viewing audience during a show's time period. A 35 or 40 share denotes an absolute hit, and as the accompanying chart demonstrates, such hits are rare.

But very often networks keep a series that has less than a 30 share on the air and continue to make additional episodes, because they feel the show is doing the best job possible in a difficult time period.

At 7 P.M. on Sunday, for example, ABC would be very happy to have a program that earned a 28 share in competition with *60 Minutes*, the extraordinarily successful CBS news-magazine program. And both NBC and CBS would settle for less than a 30 share against ABC's *Three's Company*.

Compared with other branches of the entertainment industry, such as movies or the legitimate theater, television's batting average in pleasing the public is pretty good. The reason why you hear so much more about TV's failures is that most Americans see the new programs at least once before rejecting them. In contrast, bad movies and bad Broadway shows are seen by a relative

handful of people because reviews and rumor kill them off quickly; they take the shortcut to oblivion.

In television, networks sometimes have to run absolute failures for 13 or 18 weeks simply because they have nothing to put in as an immediate replacement. More important, with each hour episode costing perhaps half a million dollars, it would be extravagant to shelve unused episodes simply because audiences are small. It's cheaper to run unpopular episodes than replace them with a new show whose chances of succeeding are statistically the same.

There have been a few cases recently, like CBS's *Young Dan'l Boone* and NBC's

*Supertrain*, in which unused programs were put on the shelf after a short run, but you can be sure they will be shown some place at a later date.

When new shows get into trouble, like ABC's *The Associates*, network program executives usually try to give them a second chance by moving them to other time periods. This seldom works. However, there are a few notable exceptions.

About 12 years ago, when I was in charge of programming at CBS, I moved *Hawaii Five-O* from its Thursday-night slot opposite *Ironside*, where it was failing miserably, to Wednesday night, where it was pitted against a show called *The Outsider*. Within

one week, *Hawaii Five-O's* ratings dramatically increased and the show was successful for the next decade. But for every success story like *Hawaii Five-O*, there are probably 25 shows that continue to fail even after they are moved.

As is evident from the chart, NBC's new shows this season were a major factor in preventing the network from improving its position vis-à-vis its two competitors: none of the NBC shows got a 30 share. But it should also be noted that CBS and ABC frequently placed their new shows behind proven hits, and, as this columnist has pointed out before, a show's position on the schedule is far more important than its content. ■

NEW SHOWS AND AUDIENCE SHARES, 1979-80 SEASON

TITLE	NETWORK	SHARE	TITLE	NETWORK	SHARE
Flo (R)	CBS	42	When the Whistle Blows (?)	ABC	24
That's Incredible! (R)	ABC	37	The Lazarus Syndrome (C)	ABC	24
Archie Bunker's Place (R)	CBS	35	Detective School (C)	ABC	24
Trapper John, M.D. (R)	CBS	35	Young Maverick (C)	CBS	24
House Calls (R)	CBS	34	The Stockard Channing Show (C)	CBS	23
Hart to Hart (R)	ABC	34	240-Robert (C)	ABC	23
Benson (R)	ABC	32	The Best of Saturday Night Live (C)	NBC	23
The Tim Conway Show (R)	CBS	32	Shirley (C)	NBC	23
Knots Landing (R)	CBS	32	One in a Million (?)	ABC	23
Goodtime Girls (C)	ABC	31	Eischied (C)	NBC	23
Palmerstown, U.S.A. (?)	CBS	31	Me & Maxx (C)	NBC	23
Tenspeed and Brown Shoe (?)	ABC	29	Paris (C)	CBS	23
Sanford (R)	NBC	29	The Chisholms (C)	CBS	22
Hagen (C)	CBS	29	From Here to Eternity (C)	NBC	22
The Misadventures of Sheriff Lobo (R)	NBC	28	Galactica 1980 (C)	ABC	22
A Man Called Sloane (C)	NBC	28	Stone (C)	ABC	22
The Associates (?)	ABC	26	California Fever (C)	CBS	20
Buck Rogers in the 25th Century (R)	NBC	26	A New Kind of Family (C)	ABC	20
The Contender (C)	CBS	26	United States (C)	NBC	18
Here's Boomer (R)	NBC	26	Pink Lady (C)	NBC	18
The Big Show (C)	NBC	26	Out of the Blue (C)	ABC	18
B.A.D. Cats (C)	ABC	25	Beyond Westworld (C)	CBS	17
Skag (?)	NBC	25	Struck by Lightning (C)	CBS	17
The Last Resort (C)	CBS	24	Working Stiffs (C)	CBS	16
The Facts of Life (R)	NBC	24	Big Shamus, Little Shamus (C)	CBS	14

Key: (R)—Returning in 1980-81 (C)—Canceled (?)—Uncertain status

# GUNS AND LOVERS.

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**"10"** Bo Derek, of course, in Blake Edwards' spicy adult comedy of manners and morals. Don't miss it.

**SUPERMAN** An all-star cast, unforgettable special effects, and good fun for the entire family.

**A STAR IS BORN** Barbra Streisand and Kris Kristofferson as two rock superstars playing out a stormy romance.

**MONTY PYTHON'S LIFE OF BRIAN** A hilarious new satire from the funniest crew since the Marx Brothers.

**DOG DAY AFTERNOON** The true story of a bizarre bank robbery, superbly acted by Al Pacino.

**BULLITT** Steve McQueen, San Francisco — and the most famous car chase ever filmed.

**THE CANDIDATE** Robert Redford stars in this biting look at big-time politics in the age of media hype.

**DELIVERANCE** Four men ride a wild river on a canoe trip that turns into a nightmare.

**BLAZING SADDLES** Saddle up for Mel Brooks' laugh-packed saga of cowboys and imbeciles.

**REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE** James Dean's journey through an exploding teenage universe of violence and delinquency.

**THE MAIN EVENT** Barbra



Streisand battles it out with Ryan O'Neal in this screwball romantic comedy.

**ALL THE PRESIDENT'S MEN** The incredible story of Watergate, with Robert Redford and Dustin Hoffman.

**THE EXORCIST** An eerie tale of demonic possession that shocked millions

**EXORCIST II: THE HERETIC** You've seen the original —

don't miss the stunning sequel.

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

**THE IN-LAWS** Peter Falk and Alan Arkin team up for the wildest comedy in years.

**EXECUTIVE ACTION** Was there a conspiracy to kill JFK? Don't answer until you've

seen this film!

**GOING IN STYLE** George Burns, Art Carney, and Lee Strasberg as three senior citizens who decide to pull a stickup.

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

**A LITTLE ROMANCE** A critically acclaimed story of two children in love.

**THE BUGS BUNNY/ROAD RUNNER MOVIE** A four-star collectors' anthology of classic Warner Bros. cartoons.

**DIRTY HARRY** Clint Eastwood stars as Harry Callahan, the killer with a badge.

**EAST OF EDEN** James Dean's first film, and a cinema classic.

**HOOPER** Burt Reynolds in a look behind the scenes at the bruising world of stuntmen.

**MISTER ROBERTS** A wise and touching war story, with Henry Fonda and James Cagney.

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

**THE WILD BUNCH** The Sam Peckinpah epic of killers who'd outlived their times.

**THE SEARCHERS** Another John Wayne classic, one of John Ford's finest films.

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Inside your videodeck there's a harsh reality. Video heads spin at 1800 rpm. At that speed, poor quality tape sheds a shower of oxide particles into the works. An insidious process that may produce good pictures while damaging your deck. During six hours things get tougher. Tape barely moves at .43 inches per second. More information is

squeezed onto less space. Imperfections get magnified. But Super Avilyn stays super. Its high density particles are polished micron-smooth to cut down friction. Colors stay separate. Brightness and crispness is superb. Pictures are rock steady through hundreds of hours of play.

This much is clear. Now that you know the inside story, you won't judge videotape by its picture. You'll judge it by its future.

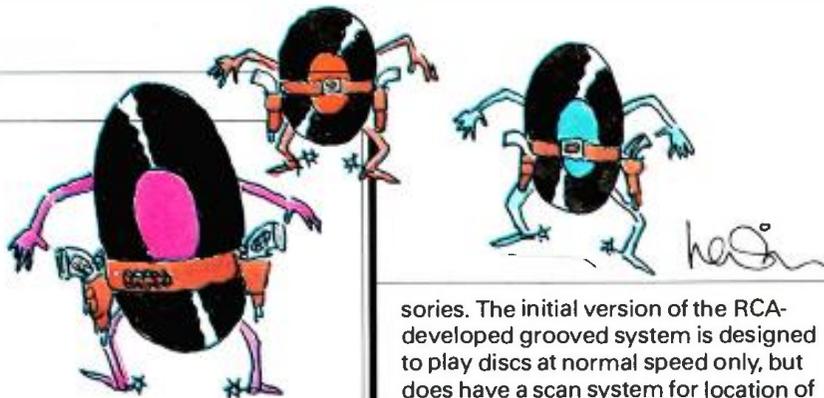
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# Now There Are Three

By DAVID LACHENBRUCH



It's something nobody really wants, but it now seems certain to happen: three different videodisc systems on the market, each one backed by a consortium of giant corporations—all mutually exclusive. There are few who believe that more than one will ultimately survive.

The latest system to be scheduled for production is the VHD (for Video High Density), developed by the Victor Company of Japan, known in the United States as JVC. This system, technically a "grooveless capacitance" system, is backed by the giant Matsushita Electric Industrial Corporation, which owns 51 percent of JVC and all of Panasonic and Quasar in the United States. In a significant move, JVC has licensed Thorn-EMI of England to produce players and discs—significant because Thorn-EMI, in turn, owns Capitol Records in America. Matsushita and JVC both say they will produce players for the U.S. market by late 1981, with the latter aiming for a \$500 price tag.

The other two systems are also bankrolled by huge corporations. The VLP/DiscoVision system, using the "grooveless optical" technique, was developed by Philips of the Netherlands (the only consumer-electronics manufacturer bigger than Matsushita) and MCA Inc., the show-business colossus that owns Universal Pictures as well as several record labels. Magnavision players for the system, assembled by Magnavox (a Philips subsidiary), have been on sale in the United States in relatively small quantities since the end of 1978. A different player, which can play the same discs, goes on the market here under the Pioneer brand name this summer; it's being made by a Japanese company owned jointly by Pioneer, IBM and MCA. Then there's Sony, which will also make VLP players, primarily for the

industrial and educational markets. Discs are made by a joint IBM-MCA corporation and sold primarily by MCA, although Philips, Sony and 3M plan to press discs for this system, too. The Magnavision player sells for \$775, the Pioneer for \$749.

Scheduled for nationwide marketing early in 1981 is a "grooved capacitance" system developed by RCA, which will use the SelectaVision Videodisc trade name. RCA will make the first players and discs, with Zenith tooling up to make players and CBS to make discs further down the line. Note that RCA and Zenith are America's two largest television-set manufacturers, with more than 40 percent of the color-TV market; their disc players will retail for under \$500.

Each of these blue-chip corporations is investing millions in the videodisc, which is said to have a potential at least as large as television itself. And they're catapulting themselves headlong toward a three-way collision. Not only can players for any one system not accommodate discs made for either of the others, but the systems are so completely different in principle and mechanical specifications that it would be impossible to design a player to accommodate any two types—let alone all three. In other words, it's not your everyday 33-vs.-45-vs.-78-rpm battle.

Not surprisingly, the players vary in features. The optical system (Philips-MCA-Pioneer) is the most versatile, and also the most expensive, providing such special effects as freeze frame, slow- and fast-motion, backward play and random access (or rapid location of any part of the program) on some records. The grooveless capacitance system of JVC and Matsushita has several of these features, and the rest can be added as special acces-

sories. The initial version of the RCA-developed grooved system is designed to play discs at normal speed only, but does have a scan system for location of any desired program segment. This model will lack stereo sound, a feature available on the other players (which must be plugged into a stereo amplifier for stereo listening, of course).

In the final analysis, it won't be the features of any specific system that determine its success, but the amount and quality of recorded programming available for it, since a videodisc player cannot record, but is designed only to play back prerecorded programs (in the same way a phonograph plays audio records). So proponents of all three are furiously signing up programs. Most independent program producers are being careful not to make any exclusive deals, so they can go with all three if necessary to be certain of picking a winner. Therefore, much of the same programming probably will be available for all three systems, at least at the start. But it certainly would be foolish to expect to buy a Universal feature movie on a VHD disc or a Columbia Records artist's video album on DiscoVision.

Those members of the consumer-electronics and record-manufacturing industries who are still uncommitted are rather somberly contemplating the splintering of this potentially huge market—and wondering whether it can even survive such an embarrassment of riches.

Record dealers, who are being counted on to sell the discs, are becoming somewhat less enchanted with the idea of see-hear records as they learn they're going to be required to stock everything in triplicate—an extremely costly proposition. And when the barrage of advertising for all three systems hits the fan, the buying public could become so confused that it decides to hold off entirely until the dust settles.

So you can look forward to a period of systems anarchy in the exciting new world of videodiscs. One of three (assuming there are no late entries) eventually is expected to win the support of the marketplace. The public will be asked to vote. With green ballots. ■

# Q&A

## SYLVESTER "PAT" WEAVER



The *Today* show and *The Tonight Show* are such television fixtures that it's hard to believe they once didn't exist. One man was responsible for both, and for the concept of TV specials ("spectaculars" they were called in the '50s), multiple-sponsor advertising, and rotating hosts on variety shows. That man is Sylvester "Pat" Weaver Jr.—known in his heyday as "Mr. Network." Weaver joined NBC as vice president in charge of television in 1949, became president of the network in 1953, and quit in 1956 when he was chairman of the board.

Before he signed on with NBC, Weaver had worked in broadcasting and advertising for 17 years as a radio announcer, scriptwriter, actor and producer. "In those days, radio was run by advertising companies for their clients," he says. As vice president of Young & Rubicam, he supervised the radio programs of such talents as Fred Allen and Jack Benny.

Weaver has always been as much a philosopher as a businessman. To raise the taste level of the audience, he introduced the "enlightenment through exposure" policy at NBC, which sugar-coated culture for the masses by slipping a little serious music, ballet, or dramatic reading into a comedy show. "The people will watch because they know the comedians will be back," he theorized.

He initiated a multimillion-dollar talent search that sought top-notch writers and comedians for the NBC stable. But Weaver was practical, too, and his shows were enormously successful. A partial list: *Your Show of Shows*, with Sid Caesar and Imogene Coca; *The Colgate Comedy Hour*, with Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis; the *Home* show, with Arlene Francis and Hugh Downs; and Red Skelton's and George Gobel's hit shows. In 1955, "Peter Pan," starring Mary Martin, drew 67 million viewers, the largest TV audience for a single network program up until then.

Since leaving NBC, Weaver has been involved in a number of ventures. In the mid-1960s he was part of a subscription-television service in California that

### "When I Left, the Quality Deteriorated"

Former NBC head Sylvester "Pat" Weaver thinks that today's network executives should study the programming philosophies he put into practice during TV's early years

offered viewers Chekhov's "Uncle Vanya" with Laurence Olivier and Michael Redgrave for \$2 and Dodgers games for \$1.50. The response was enormous, but the service was voted out of existence by a statewide referendum approving a law that prohibited charging for a program not shown in a theater. For a while, Weaver tried to set up his own fourth network, then he returned to advertising and later became a consultant. Currently he is meeting with Comsat about programming for a proposed pay-TV service.

Weaver was working as a creative consultant on a Roy Clark "spectacular" being taped in Freeport in the Bahamas

when free-lancer Cheryl Lavin talked with him for PANORAMA about television's past, present and future. Their edited conversation:

**PANORAMA:** *You are one of the few people in television who started out in advertising. Do you feel that gave you an edge?*

**WEAVER:** Absolutely. I had been involved with NBC for 15 years as a major advertiser in radio before I began working there. And when I went over, I brought the heads of nine other advertising agencies with me. The difference between my group and today's is incredible: we all had written and produced shows, we knew clients—which ones drank at lunch, which ones didn't, how to handle them, how to sell them. There's no one I know of in television today who could get a job in advertising—and that's where every dollar in television comes from.

**PANORAMA:** *How was TV advertising different in the early days?*

**WEAVER:** Back then, 40 percent of my revenue came from companies that had nothing to sell directly to the audience. U.S. Steel sponsored *The U.S. Steel Hour* for years—a marvelous 60-minute live show. What are they going to sell? Ingots? But they had complex goals, as did Alcoa and Kaiser. They would do one message for the stockholders, another for the unions, another for recruiting on college campuses, another for Government buyers. Give them 30 seconds on *Laverne & Shirley* for free today and they wouldn't take it.

The networks could have kept all that money from those big corporate advertisers if they would have used their brains and understood advertising. But they didn't care—because they knew they could sell out to Anacin. Now all that corporate P.R. revenue will come back to cable television and it will be one of the spikes that is driven through the networks' palms.

**PANORAMA:** *In retrospect, was it a mistake leaving Young & Rubicam to go over to NBC?*

**WEAVER:** It was a terrible mistake. But I knew what I was getting into. I had a kind of grand design that I knew would be easier to do from the network side than the agency side. I went there purposefully to take television and make it responsive to the turbulence of our times.

1950 was the biggest year we had at NBC. We did *Your Show of Shows* with Sid Caesar, Carl Reiner, Imogene Coca, writers like Doc [Neil] Simon, Mel Brooks, Woody Allen. It was a great runaway hit. We also had *Broadway Open House* and *All Star Revue* with Jimmy Durante, Danny Thomas, Jack Carson and Ed Wynn on alternate weeks. They did big, one-hour, opulent shows, better than you could see on Broadway.

The next season we had *Dragnet*, which was the forerunner of all the other police-drama shows, and lots of live drama. By the time I left NBC, we had 11 hours of live drama a week, including five in a concept of mine called *Matinee Theatre*. Two thirds of the homes had TV by then. And we were trying to sell them color sets through spectaculars. We put on operas and ballet, Mary Martin in "Peter Pan," Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall in "The Petrified Forest," Frank Sinatra in a musical version of "Our Town," with Paul Newman and Eva Marie Saint playing the young couple. And it was all live.

**PANORAMA:** *How did you get sponsors for all those shows?*

**WEAVER:** I opened up the magazine concept of sponsorship because I knew we could never get the money to do the kinds of shows I wanted to do from one sponsor. It really was like a magazine: you do the editorial and sell ads, the advertisers have nothing to say about it. They have the option of either buying the time or not buying it, but no influ-

ence. In the old radio and TV days, the sponsors actually owned the time and determined the context of the shows. I started the *Today* show, *The Tonight Show* and the *Home* show as actual magazines of the air, with no single sponsorship, just drop-in ads.

**PANORAMA:** *What was the original concept of the Today show?*

**WEAVER:** I started it with the concept of telling people what's new, what hap-

●● I get tired of Jane Pauley giggling at Tom Brokaw's rotten jokes. I said to Freddie Silverman, 'Why don't you get a comedy writer and let him write 10 really funny lines for Brokaw?' You can't make up one-liners on the spot unless you're Adlai Stevenson. ●●

pened since they went to bed last night, what they should know before they go to the office—both news and general coverage on a wide range of subjects. The feeling of the original show was to show the hardware, to put people in the studio with everything coming in to them, and have them select the most interesting and absorbing information. Dave Garroway was suggested for the job of host. I didn't want him at first because he was so relaxed, but after I talked to him, I changed my mind. With the pace of the show, you needed a relaxed guy.

**PANORAMA:** *What do you think of the Today show today?*

**WEAVER:** I'm not happy with it, even though I like Tom Brokaw. I recommended him for the job. The show has

lost audiences because the viewers are smart enough to know that the show is getting worse. Tom shouldn't be allowed to do the news no matter what he wants, and if he insists, he should be fired. And Jane Pauley, too. In the structure of a long show like that, with so many different elements, you need one master presenter and a separate newsmen.

Tom is like all newsmen who do interviews. He's not interested in bringing out the person and listening to what he has to say. He just wants to find out something awful about the guest—something that will make news. It's not news if you sit there and talk about the guy's book, but it is if you break the word that he's queer. Tom sets up an adversary relationship and that's wrong. It's not the way to get people to open up. Dave Garroway and Hugh Downs, whom I put on the *Home* show, came out of radio, where dead air was so scary they had to learn to really listen.

I get a little tired of Jane giggling at Tom's rotten jokes. I said to Freddie [NBC president Fred Silverman], "Today makes all this money; why don't you get one comedy writer, give him the news, and let him write 10 really funny lines? Then if Brokaw wants to be funny he doesn't have to make up lines. People would sit on the train and say, 'Did you hear what Brokaw said this morning?'" You can't make up one-liners on the spot like that unless you're Adlai Stevenson.

**PANORAMA:** *What do you think of Good Morning America?*

**WEAVER:** I like it. I was the creative consultant to Fred Silverman when he was developing that show and I recommended David Hartman for it. It has always had a less intelligent approach to the day's news. It's like the New York Daily News.

**PANORAMA:** *Is there anything on during the day that you like? How about Phil Donahue? He's usually considered*

the *Great White Hope* of daytime television.

**WEAVER:** I don't particularly like him on the *Today* show or his own show. As a manager, I can see that it's a valuable show, but it's not my kind of thing. I

"Allen's Alley."

*The Tonight Show* should run forever. Johnny [Carson] is marvelous. He's the only guy who's left who operates like a radio comedian. In the old days everybody used to write jokes off the news. Now, in most shows, you



●● Nelson Rockefeller had dyslexia and he couldn't read. He couldn't read the teleprompter. But he was marvelous at talking to people. So we presented him as a charming man who would listen to people and who had the best advisers money could buy. ●●

it could be a popular time if the right stuff was on, as the football games have shown.

**PANORAMA:** *If you were running a network-news department today, what would you do?*

**WEAVER:** First I'd go to the best universities and get guys who have an interest in the world and what's going to happen to us. I don't think anybody should be allowed into a school of journalism unless he majored in history. Otherwise his perspective is way off.

Then there's so much you can do—like *Comment*—if you don't fight print, but work with it. There's all kinds of background material you can give people. Any time any place is in the news, you have the opportunity to give people 90 seconds of information. If you've been doing this on a regular basis, like we started to do 25 years ago, by now people would know a lot more, even kids. But when you try to do this, you run up against news people who say they can't give up 90 seconds for a spot on Somalia, because they'll have to give up the story about the guy who ran his truck off the bridge in Missouri.

I just struck out trying to sell Tom Snyder and Fred Silverman on a show they should be doing—which is not *Prime Time Saturday*. It's a weekly show that says, "Here's what's new in the world of leisure time: new books, new movies; here's what's happening in the performing arts, what's going on at the galleries—the *real* world." And it would keep track of the ongoing stories, like the energy crisis, and give monthly reports on things that hold great promise, like desalination. It would be a weekly show called *The Way Things Are*.

It really isn't all that complicated to do a show that tells people what happened last week and what's up for the next week. Every week for the past 25 years I've read the Manchester Guardian's overseas edition without fail. On a rolling basis every area of the world gets covered. That's the kind of thing I'm talking about, not *60 Minutes*. *60 Minutes* is a group of feature stories that are very interesting, but if you had seen none of them, it would make no difference to you as a person as you go into the next week. I want TV to make an impact.

*continued*

wouldn't watch it. But I've always been that way. I never watched or listened to many of our most popular shows. I don't think I ever listened to a soap opera all the way through, not even ones I produced. But that's as an individual. As a professional you have a range of needs and services to fulfill.

**PANORAMA:** *Is there anything on TV today that you do watch?*

**WEAVER:** The Muppets.

**PANORAMA:** *What was the concept behind *The Tonight Show*?*

**WEAVER:** We had a late-night show on called *Broadway Open House*, with Jerry Lester and Morey Amsterdam, that was a runaway hit. I knew from radio that there was a big late-night audience. I wanted *The Tonight Show* to be a comedy-cum-coverage show that would entertain but also cover the whole field of entertainment: what's opening, what's closing, who's playing at the Martinique.

We did the *The Tonight Show* live from the Hudson Theatre in Times Square. Steve Allen had an orchestra and special guests and his own people, like Don Knotts. Fred Allen had his "Allen's Alley" and this was a little

take a joke and if there's any hint of reality or timeliness in it you take it out because the show has to run in syndication for 18 years.

**PANORAMA:** *News seems to be the hottest area of television right now. What do you think of today's trends?*

**WEAVER:** Local news is just standard police-blotter stuff, like rapes and fires and murders. And then they put on these things like "Coping" that are a waste of time. Network news is all right, but when I look at it, I think of our own plans at NBC to go right around the world and talk about the major news stories in England and France and wherever they were happening, so that people would have the feeling they were part of a planetary society that has problems but that somehow they were on top of them and that we'd all muddle through somehow.

I had a show called *Comment* that I made my people put on the air. It was three or four minutes of what different people thought was the major news story of the week. Everybody went on that show: Scotty [James] Reston, the Alsop brothers, Marquis Childs. It was on Sunday during ghetto time, in the afternoon when the networks would put on do-good stuff for the FCC. I knew

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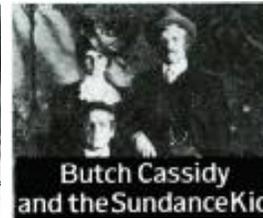
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**PANORAMA:** *One way TV makes an impact is in the hands of politicians who know how to use it.*

**WEAVER:** You're talking to the man who elected Nelson Rockefeller. Nelson was the first to use TV to win an election. His campaign [for governor of New York] was 100-percent television. He was trailing Averell Harriman in 1958, and Nelson couldn't make a speech to influence one single vote if he had lived to be a thousand years old. The poor guy had dyslexia and he couldn't read. He couldn't read the teleprompter. But he was marvelous at talking to people. So we presented him on the air as a most agreeable, charming man who would listen to people and who had the best advisers that money could buy. It not only got Nelson elected, it got him elected four times.

I just applied what I had learned from advertising: take something or someone and find out what the good points are and the bad points. Then forget the bad ones and present the good ones as well as you can.

**PANORAMA:** *When you were president of NBC you inaugurated a policy dubbed "enlightenment through exposure." What was the thinking behind that?*

**WEAVER:** I believe you can con people into watching things that are good for them—if you're motivated to do it—which I am and always have been. The way you do it is to get the best produc-

ers and directors you can and you beat them if they don't experiment, if they don't put in things that are worthy and valuable. If they have a variety show they have to put in some great, legitimate artists in the flow of the show. If you know how to do it you can introduce people to things they've never seen before and that maybe they won't even like at first. We wanted people to hear Robert Merrill, we wanted them to see a ballet sequence, we wanted them to hear operas in English, and to hear Leontyne Price sing "Tosca." This was in the early '50s and the Southern stations didn't want a black woman on, but I said, "Forget the Southern stations. They don't have to carry it, but we'll do it anyway." That was "enlightenment through exposure."

It's totally absent today. I turned on *The Gong Show* and watched about four minutes of it and *The \$1.98 Beauty Show*. They were disgusting. It means the people who produce them are totally cynical and have despicable taste. That's the nadir—we can't get any lower than that.

I worked with [CBS chairman William S.] Paley and Silverman on a plan where they would give up one night a week to do strictly experimental things and then say to the Nielsen people that they didn't want to be rated that night. Neither of them was interested. They both had other problems. Fred was worried that he couldn't get the attractions.

**PANORAMA:** *Finding top-notch talent*

*is a problem, isn't it? How did you find new stars?*

**WEAVER:** We had a thing called the comedy development plan that produced people like George Gobel and Jonathan Winters. We said, "Instead of letting someone who shows promise fumble along, if he's learned his craft, let's get the very best writers and say, 'Here's George Gobel. He's got this funny, charming kind of wit. Do something with him.'" Within six months his show was in the top 10. George hasn't been highly successful since then. I'm not sure you could do it twice with him. But Sid Caesar, I know you could have done it again with him. He's so talented.

But the people who are in charge today say, "What's the show?" instead of saying, "Sid Caesar is a great talent; get five of the best writers and put \$100,000 in a project to develop four different alternatives for him." That's the way you handle great talent. But that can only come from management. Writers never think up anything new—they know there's no market for it.

**PANORAMA:** *What do you think of today's comedians?*

**WEAVER:** Steve Martin really is a wild and crazy guy. The things he does are silly. Alan King can be very funny, also very gross. I find *Saturday Night Live*, which is supposed to be a great comedy show, very amateurish compared with what we were doing on Fred Allen's radio show.

**PANORAMA:** *With so much that you still wanted to accomplish, why did you leave NBC?*

**WEAVER:** I just didn't want to put up with a man like Gen. David Sarnoff [NBC's founder and chairman from 1947 to 1970]. Life is too short for that. I knew I would either have to accommodate myself to acts that I considered despicable or get out. I was out of town one day and when I came back two of my people had been fired. I decided to get out.

**PANORAMA:** *Do you think NBC, and television in general, changed much when you left?*

**WEAVER:** I believe that when I left, the



●● I find *Saturday Night Live*, which is supposed to be a great comedy show, very amateurish compared with what we were doing on Fred Allen's radio show. ●●



# Olivetti Break- through

*The world's smallest electronic printer will never run out of paper, ink or batteries thanks to Olivetti, JS&A and some incredible new technology.*



*The new pocket-sized Olivetti calculator slides open to unveil one of the most advanced printing heads ever developed.*

It's a major breakthrough. That calculator shown above is the most advanced printing calculator in the world.

## SLIP TOP PRINTER

The new Olivetti Logos 9 is only 1" x 2½" x 4⅝" – smaller than many cigarette packages. It has a full 12-digit liquid crystal display with add mode and full-floating or fixed position decimal.

To turn the unit into a printer, you simply slide up the top of the unit to expose the world's smallest and one of the most precise printing heads. The printing head prints letters and numbers, identifies each entry and even clearly separates groups of three whole numbers for easy readability.

## PLENTY MORE

If its size and printing head are breakthroughs, so is its paper system. The paper is loaded in special cartridges with enough paper per cartridge for 1300 entries. All you do is simply pop a cartridge into the bottom of the unit each time you change rolls. It's the most convenient way ever designed to change a roll of paper for a printing calculator.

But if you're like most Americans, you'd be concerned about paper supply. Where do you get those special cartridges, and how do you know if you can get them years from now?

That's where JS&A comes in. A 32-roll supply – all you'll ever need for three full years – is only \$16. That's enough paper for 41,000 entries or approximately 52 line entries each working day for three full years.

But even more important, within one year stationery stores will stock the cartridges, and we predict that the Olivetti cartridge will become a standard in the industry.

## NO INK CARTRIDGES

The paper is a new type that looks exactly like conventional paper. But the paper, when struck, leaves a clear sharp image without the use of ink. So there's no messy cartridge required and no space needed to store one. You'll never need ink again.

The rechargeable batteries last for 8,000 lines when you use just the printer and 80 hours using just the liquid crystal display. The batteries can be recharged 500 times, so theoretically the batteries should last for 300 rolls of paper, or more than nine times the life of your paper supply. The batteries can also be easily replaced.

## POWERFUL COMPUTER

The features looked great. The world's smallest size, the paper roll convenience, the no-ink system, the battery life and the large 12-digit liquid crystal display were enough to convince us, but would the new Olivetti be considered a toy? Then we learned about its computational power and features which we feel are better than many of the most professional full-featured printing calculators.

**Speed** It's the world's fastest small printer with a speed of 2.1 lines per second. The unit also has a buffer so if you enter data faster than the unit, it will still print out each entry.

**Memories** The Logos 9 has two separate memories. One is an accumulating memory, and the other is a fully independent memory. And the display and printer indicate which memory is on the paper tape.

**Printing Head** The totally new printing head is a semi-alpha numeric system which labels all entries with letters to indicate the entry. For example LP is list price and CNT means item count.

**Clock** The unit is so complete. Olivetti even threw in a digital clock function. Your unit will display accurate time when the 12-digit display is not in use.

**Gross Margin** It automatically computes everything from gross margins to discounts and retail pricing. You just enter your percentage mark-ups in its memory, and it will automatically compute the results while retaining the formula and percentage in memory.

**Plus More** It has automatic round off, letting you select which figure to round off to. You can add a column of figures and then average your calculations automatically. The full-information liquid crystal display will tell you everything from when you're in the printer mode to whether you have something in memory and in which memory.

The technological breakthroughs in the Logos 9 were possible because Olivetti was able to eliminate the many interface components between the integrated circuit and the printing head. This was all made possible because Olivetti designed the entire system, not just a few of the components as is the case with most calculators.

So there it was. Great features, great convenience and great value for only \$89.95 complete with batteries, charger and 90-day limited warranty. For \$16 more, you can get 32

cartridges – all the paper you'll ever need for three years or for \$10 more you can get 16 cartridges. So impressed are we with the Olivetti Logos 9 that we are making the following offer:

## FREE TRIAL OFFER

We urge you to test the Olivetti Logos 9 now. Order one for our 30-day no obligation trial. See the clear and easy-to-read paper tape and display. Use it as a pocket calculator, and carry it in your briefcase wherever you go. Experience the convenience of always having a printing calculator there whenever you need a permanent record of your transactions.

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Olivetti selected JS&A to exclusively introduce this exciting new product. With its solid-state design and high quality printing mechanism, the Olivetti should not require service. But if service is ever required, Olivetti maintains a convenient service-by-mail center as close as your mailbox.

To order your unit for our trial, simply send your money order or personal check for \$89.95 plus \$2.50 for postage and handling (personal check orders, allow 20 days to clear our bank) to the address below, or credit card buyers may call our toll-free number below. Add \$16 for 32 paper cartridges or \$10 for 16 cartridges. (Illinois residents please add 6% sales tax.)

Who would have imagined a printing calculator this small and this convenient with this much computational power just a few months ago? The Olivetti Logos 9 deserves your test. Order one at no obligation, today.

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quality deteriorated. I was the one who was able to sell my associates and even my competition at the other networks on how important it was to do it right and not to screw it up the way we had with radio. We had never really made radio work for the people because we were too busy making it work for General Foods and Bristol-Myers.

After I left nobody really had that feeling of responsibility. The three owner-managers, Paley, Sarnoff and [ABC's Leonard] Goldenson, were basically using television as facilities to sell products. They had very little to do with programming. General Sarnoff had no concept of what was going on. Leonard Goldenson was a lawyer for the theaters. They weren't program people. Their concept of television was: don't get in trouble with the FCC and give the client what he wants. That's all they had learned from the radio experience.

**PANORAMA:** *Are you really that different from the people that replaced you?*

**WEAVER:** There's an easy way to show the difference between my approach and Freddie Silverman's. One of our best dramas, *Philco TV Playhouse*, was in trouble with the ratings. I put *The Colgate Comedy Hour* on before it and *Red Skelton* on after it. I didn't want to have two shows in the top five. I wanted *Philco TV Playhouse* in the top 20 to make people look at something that was a little harder to accept initially, but far more rewarding. That is what I call "scheduling with a purpose." I knew as far back as 1936 about sequencing programs to hold an audience. Today all they care about is ratings. I'm not knocking ratings, but there's more.

**PANORAMA:** *You were involved in subscription television in California in the '60s. What happened?*

**WEAVER:** I believed then and I believe now that subscriber television is a bigger advance over television than television is over radio. But I got involved with an underfunded group and we faced enormous, organized opposition from the broadcasters and the [movie] theater owners. They were afraid of us. The theaters owners have always been reactionary. They fought color television, big screens, drive-ins, even daylight-saving time. But the broadcasters surprised us.

We were very successful—half of

those offered our service took it—but we were put out of business by a California referendum that said you could only pay money to see something in theaters. We took it to court and finally won in the [California] Supreme Court, but I couldn't persuade the other people involved in it to stick with it.

**PANORAMA:** *What is your feeling about subscription television today?*

**WEAVER:** I have a different concept of television. Television is coverage and the best television is to go out and cover the best things—the best comedy shows, the best operas, the best plays. The next big step in television is when we really go there. Instead of doing a one-hour drama, we'll go to the theaters. I'd like to see seven nights a week of prime time without commercials, without interruptions, that would cover the whole range of what people go out to be entertained by, to be enriched by. People love television, but they want it to do what they want, not what the advertisers want.

**PANORAMA:** *How is that different from what the other subscriber systems are already doing?*

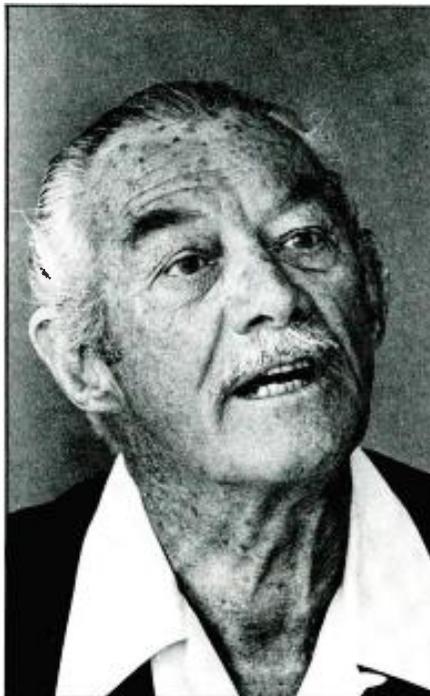
**WEAVER:** Look at Home Box Office, which is the most successful outfit in California. They've got old movies—or

some relatively new movies—and coverage of stuff that we had in the early days, only now they go into the nightclubs with dirty language. They throw a few bones to the performing arts, but that's it.

What I want is to give the people much more for much less money. That's the American way. Depending on where you live, Home Box Office is around \$9 a month and a \$25 installation charge. I would offer the whole service for \$7 or \$8 a month and no installation charge. You can do that if you go into it knowing you will eventually sign up 25 million homes. With that kind of flow of cash you can set up a new movie production company just to produce for the service.

**PANORAMA:** *What if you got a call, even at this late date, from one of the networks to come back. What would you do?*

**WEAVER:** I've never been offered a job at one of the networks since I left. Or by one of their suppliers—the movies. I doubt if I'd go, because my real interest isn't in saving the networks—it's too late. We've got the recorder, we've got the disc, we've got the cable services, and we've finally got an FCC that's not just beholden to the three networks. The change that will come about will be marvelous. The networks are on their way to the iceberg. ■



●● I'd like to see seven nights a week of prime time without commercials, without interruptions, that would cover the whole range of what people go out to be entertained by. ●●

# Heart Computer

*Your heart can tell you three things that can help you live longer and stay healthier. The rest is up to you.*

JS&A has never offered a pulse meter. And for good reason.

If you've ever used one, you'll quickly discover that your heart does not beat like a clock. It's irregular. It might beat at 40 beats per minute for one instant and at 120 the next. Since most pulse meters measure each beat as it occurs, you never feel confident that you're getting a very good reading.

We also considered size. Each pulse meter we examined was large or cumbersome and awkward to carry or store.

## WE WAITED

We waited a few years. In the meantime, we discovered three ways your heart (through your pulse) helps you monitor your health.

**Pulse Rate** Your pulse rate can tell you if you are getting enough oxygen throughout your body. A high pulse rate indicates that your heart must pump faster to supply that oxygen and may indicate poor physical condition.

**Target Zone** Your pulse can tell you if your heart is beating fast enough during exercise. There's an area called the "Target Zone." Below this level, you're not exercising hard enough to do your heart or respiratory system any good. Above this level, you can be dangerously over-exerting yourself.

**Cardiac Recovery Time** The time it takes for your pulse rate to return to normal after you've exercised is the real measure of whether or not your exercise program is doing you any good. This time can be as healthy as one minute or as poor as several minutes.

The three things we learned convinced us that the ideal pulse meter must have the following features:

1. It must measure a series of heart beats and simultaneously compute the average to avoid the strange readings from irregular heart beats.

2. It must be small enough to use while exercising.

3. It should have a timing capability to determine the Cardiac Recovery Time.

It wasn't until a small Utah medical electronic instrument company created what we feel not only provides the capabilities listed above, but excels in other areas too.

## FITS ON FINGER

The unit is called the Pulsetach, and it fits right over your finger. It weighs less than an ounce and can be worn easily during most exercise programs.

The large liquid crystal display can easily be seen in normal room lighting or in bright sunlight, and because liquid crystal displays consume very little power, the readily-available watch batteries will last for years. The Pulsetach automatically turns itself off in five minutes if you forget.

The heart of the system is a powerful micro-

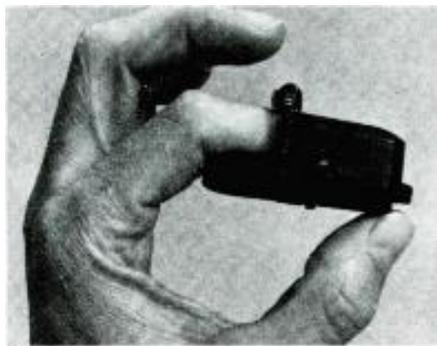
computer CMOS semi-conductor integrated circuit that will take up to 4 pulse beats, compute an average pulse rate, and then flash that rate on the liquid crystal display.

## FINGERTIP SCANNER

The sensor consists of a Gallium Arsenide infrared light-emitting diode which scans your fingertip hundreds of times a second to determine your pulse rate. This new system is one of the most accurate and is also used in sophisticated hospital systems.

The unit also contains a quartz-controlled timing circuit which will accurately time either your exercise period or your Cardiac Recovery Time. And you can switch back and forth between the pulse and chronograph mode while you are exercising.

We realize that the Pulsetach sounds like a very sophisticated unit. And it is. But as sophisticated as it is internally, it's an extremely easy unit to operate. There are just two buttons to press which operate the pulse reading and the chronograph timing circuit. A third button engages the audio circuit.



*The Pulsetach system fits comfortably on your finger while it monitors your heart and determines your Cardiac Recovery Time.*

## HEAR YOUR PULSE

The audio circuit simply beeps every time your pulse beeps. This feature lets you monitor your pulse by hearing it as you run or exercise and it can be shut off by pressing the button a second time. The timing circuit is quartz-controlled and extremely accurate.

The Pulsetach not only has combined all of the most advanced technology in an extremely small size, but it costs less than many other systems lacking its advanced features.

The Pulsetach can be used for joggers, athletes, all forms of exercise and even cardiac recovery patients, as it operates quite effectively with pacemakers.

## REAL WORKOUT

We suggest you order a Pulsetach for our 30-day no-obligation trial. When you receive your unit, give it a real workout. Notice how simple it is to operate and how easily you



*The Pulsetach will shortly become the number one selling system of its type in the nation.*



can read your pulse rate. Use it to stay in your Target Zone and to determine and then improve your Cardiac Recovery Time.

Monitor your Cardiac Recovery Time. Determine your Target Zone and see if you're really exercising in that area. Then use the Pulsetach to watch those important signs slowly improve thanks to the accuracy and information you get from the unit.

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# PANORAMIC VIEW

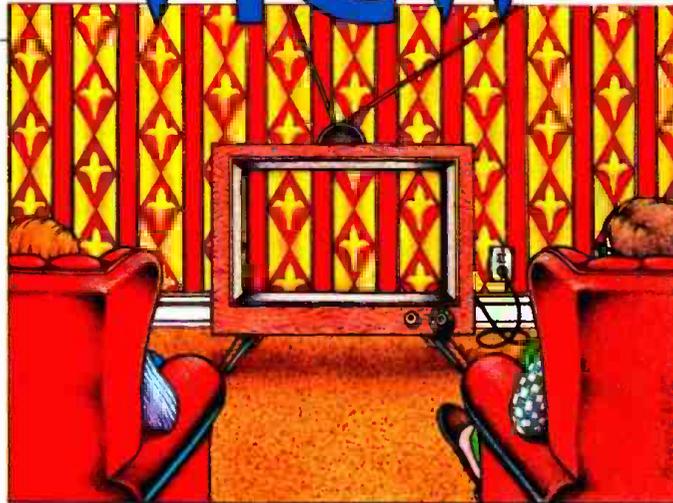
## VIDEO VALIUM

Will television, an alleged opiate of the masses, be prescribed as an aid to mental health? Can the accused perpetrator of so many of society's ills help cure stress?

Well...that depends on whether you believe in Video Wallpaper, the 1980s' answer to Muzak. Developed by Nebulae Productions, Video Wallpaper is tranquility packaged on videotape—a choice of 14 half-hour cassettes meant to bring the soothing effects of nature into the living room.

If, after a hard day, you don't happen to be near the relaxing sights and sounds of "peaceful waves rolling onto shore" or a "lush cove fed by a majestic waterfall," Nebulae recommends getting there vicariously through television. Right now, the Video Wallpaper cassettes work with either a standard television monitor or a large-screen projection system. Given time, Nebulae's Roy Kamen envisions "full walls of imagery."

While Kamen and a friend,



Ed Jaffess, handle business from Flushing, N.Y., brother Terry Kamen does the taping in Hawaii. His job is to find the right nature scene, start the camera and keep it rolling.

TV executives, not wanting to lull their viewers to sleep, aren't much interested in Video Wallpaper. But the product that Roy Kamen once had wanted to call Video Valium is being used at a Massachusetts mental-health center, a New York biofeedback clinic

and a hospital in Hawaii. Of course, says Kamen, Video Wallpaper isn't a cure but only a tool.

Among the tool's applications is the V.I.B.E.S. (Video Interface for Biofeedback Equipment Systems) technique. Simply put, a patient, hooked up to a biofeedback machine, watches Video Wallpaper on television; the changing nature scene is supposed to aid relaxation and also gauge progress. The biofeedback

equipment, which is connected to the set's brightness adjustment, keeps track of pulse rate, fingertip temperature or other responses—and the calmer a patient becomes, the brighter the Video Wallpaper comes in on the screen.

Clearly, the implications of "video background music" go well beyond stress control. As Nebulae's brochure points out, the cassettes (\$60 each) can be used in the home to enhance "both intimate and social situations"—romance, parties, housework, reading, meals, meditation, etc. But for now, Nebulae is concentrating on the health field.

Back in the home, believers in Video Wallpaper can try managing everyday tension, sans V.I.B.E.S., with "a pond shimmering in the afternoon hours" or with "slow-moving clouds against a deep-blue sky." For nonbelievers, there are always the more traditional methods: a good stiff drink or a couple of aspirins.

—Frank Jacobs

●● There are a lot of proxy parents around telling television how children should be entertained—and Washington has jumped in with both left feet. ●●

—Fred Silverman, NBC president, at an International Radio & Television Society luncheon, New York

## TESTING, TESTING

In the battle for the hearts and minds of the television audience, cable TV is usually considered the archenemy of ABC, CBS and NBC. But pragmatism can create some unlikely alliances, and so it is that, for NBC, cable has become an invaluable resource in helping determine just what is going on in those viewers' hearts and minds.

Cable is NBC's "principal tool" for testing audience reaction to new series, according to the network's head of research, William Reubins. Time is leased on 15 to 20 cable systems scattered

around the United States, which are selected to represent a cross section of the Nation's viewing audience. Groups of subscribers in each of four of these areas are recruited to watch a show—often in its pilot form before it goes on the air or even in an earlier, "rough cut" stage—sometimes during its actual network premiere. They then tell a telephone interviewer what they thought about it, giving NBC a raft of data on what types of viewers—if any—find the show appealing and why.

NBC is the only network to

use the cable method. Reubins believes that participants are less "self-selected" than they are with traditional testing techniques, in which subjects are often solicited off the street. And he thinks that watching a show in the comfort of one's own home prompts a more typical response than watching in a theater, where much of the traditional testing is conducted.

Sounds good. Still, judging from NBC's track record with new programs in the last few years, it is clear the network has not found a magic key to series success.

“When we try to squeeze all the national and international news into 24 minutes, we’re committing a fraud.” —Richard S. Salant, NBC board vice chairman, at a National Association of Broadcasters conference, Washington, D.C.

## FOR YOUR EARS ONLY

There seems to be no limit to the public’s appetite for television, but still, one could be forgiven for asking, what good is a *radio* that picks up the sound from TV stations?

A lot of good for quite a few people, as it turns out. Portable “TV band” radios that receive the audio portion of television signals have been sold to between one and two million Americans in the last several years, according to one manufacturer who sells them.

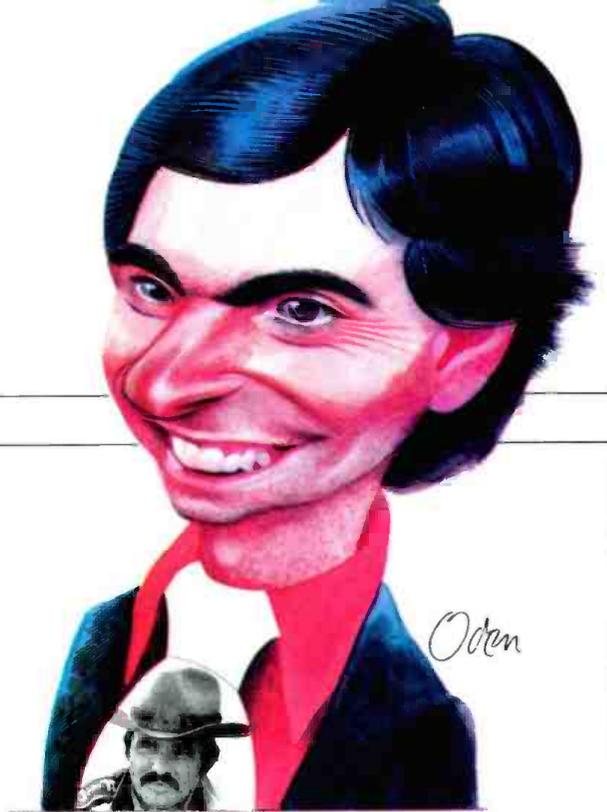
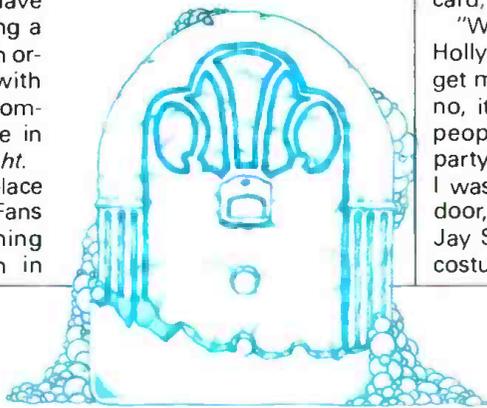
The first to try the TV-band market was RCA, which in the early ‘70s offered one as a “television for the blind,” complete with channel markings in Braille. That didn’t go over too well, but General Electric later put one out for the average consumer, and its success prompted most other radio manufacturers to follow suit.

What are they used for? “We did some research,” says GE’s manager of radio products, William G. Smith, “and found that a significant portion of the market uses TV as background noise. A woman can listen to a soap opera while she does her housework—she knows the characters already; she doesn’t have to see them.” So by adding a few bucks to the price of an ordinary AM/FM radio (with which the TV bands are combined) she can always be in earshot of *The Edge of Night*.

But that’s not the only place TV bands come in handy. Fans of the networks’ morning news shows can listen in

while they brush their teeth, or as they drive to work—with clock-radio models, true fanatics can go to sleep with Carson and wake up with Pauley. We know of at least one TV nut who thought the sound from his TV set was too heavy on the bass, so he uses a TV band alongside it as a tweeter to boost the high tones a bit. And if one member of the household is hard of hearing, the family can keep the set at normal volume while Grandma listens to her TV band through an earphone, cranking it up as loud as she wants.

There are limits. The radios only pick up the VHF (very high frequency) stations, on channels 2 to 13, the ones close to FM radio on the signal spectrum. The UHF (ultra high frequency) stations, on channels 14 to 83, are too difficult to pull in with a moderately priced radio. And although it’s said to be surprising how much television can be enjoyed without actually watching it, some programs remain wedded to the visual. “Take my word for it,” says GE’s Smith, “a golf match or a bowling tournament on radio is a little marginal.”



## ODD COUPLE

Tell us, David Steinberg, do you and your new partner, Burt Reynolds, ever disagree?

“Certainly. Have you noticed the way he dresses?”

So how is it that a big Florida jock turned movie star and a little Canadian comic turned TV personality have joined forces to produce TV-movies and pilots and late-night shows, not to mention a prime-time Burt Reynolds special for ABC?

“They made us an offer we couldn’t refuse.”

Seriously, though...

“We’ve been real close friends for 10 years. The connection is through humor. Period. We do the best work we can, but we’re both imbued with the sense that what we do isn’t brain surgery. If it doesn’t work, the patient doesn’t die.”

This Burt Reynolds is a real card, huh?

“When I first came out to Hollywood, he kept trying to get me to go to parties. I said no, it’s always the same old people. Finally he gave a party. I said I’d go just because I was his friend. I got to the door, and Burt met me with Jay Silverheels—in full Tonto costume.”

Does this mean we can expect a laff riot out of you guys?

“The late-night shows will be satirical things in the Second City style. We’ll appear on them. Then we’ll be producing but not appearing in some pilots, and one of them will be patterned after the old Laurel and Hardy two-reelers, with updated jokes. But the others will be more serious.”

What about the Reynolds special?

“We’re thinking of doing a show called ‘Heroes,’ where we take some of Burt’s heroes—like Holden, Astaire, Cary Grant, Sinatra—and put them in a living-room situation where they discuss their own heroes. And then we’re talking with Dwight Hemion and Gary Smith about doing a more elaborate special.”

And the TV-movies?

“We want to do one about high-school athletic recruiting.”

So you’ll be tackling burning social issues?

“Well, more like flickering. We definitely will not do any movies about battered wives. Or battered children, or battered pancakes. Nothing battered will come out of our company.”

## BUTTERED POPCORN AND A CASSETTE, PLEASE

If you can't beat 'em, join 'em.

The stay-at-home mentality fostered by the booming home-video industry could cause a dilemma for movie-theater owners. They can sit back and hope that the stunning advances in TV-related technology will not anchor potential customers to their living-room couches. Or they can go ahead and get their slice of home-video profits by selling movies on videocassettes in their lobbies. Which is exactly what two large chains are doing right now.

"I think home video is great," gushes Gaston Hakim, who acts as a middleman between the video divisions of the major film companies and the 773-screen United Artists Theaters chain. "People who own VCRs or subscribe to pay-TV love the movies. This is a natural environment to sell the tapes." A test of Hakim's happy thesis is underway in over a dozen UA cinemas, where more than 200 different movies are for sale.



A less ambitious experiment is being conducted by Plitt Theaters, a 500-screen chain, which has only one theater peddling the software, mostly Fox features. If the test does well—the company plans to tabulate the results at the end of the summer—most of the other Plitt theaters will join in selling prerecorded movies along with popcorn in their lobbies. And after that? Says Plitt's West Coast ad director, Bob Artz: "Who knows? Maybe 20 years from now cinemas will be videotape supermarkets."

## THE VAN THAT CAME IN FROM THE COLD

A car pulls up in front of a fashionable Washington town house late at night. Its driver, a U.S. congressman, glances up and down the deserted street. Seeing nothing but a seemingly empty camper van across the way, he enters the house, where he will discuss a bribe with representatives of a wealthy Arab businessman.

The Arab's representatives, as the world knows by now, were not businessmen at all, but undercover agents in the FBI's famed ABSCAM investigation. And the van outside was neither empty nor occupied by the FBI, but by an investigative reporting team from NBC News. Their mission: "Winnebago journalism."

That's how NBC's producer on the story, Ira Silverman, jokingly refers to the caper that earned him and correspondent Brian Ross a major scoop on ABSCAM: exclusive coverage of a covert operation in progress. Silverman and Ross had used the Winnebago technique before, for stories on heroin trafficking, extortion on loading docks,

the Hell's Angels motorcycle gang and various organized crime activities.

The vans themselves are rented; one of the two assigned to the ABSCAM investigation had previously been used by the production team for *Kojak*. To hide the news team inside, the windows are either replaced with two-way mirrors, covered with reflective stripping, or simply hung with curtains that a camera can peek through. The camera has a special "night vision" lens, a telescopic variety developed by the Army that can magnify available light up to 30,000 times. It is connected to a picture monitor, the only source of interior light other than pen flashlights.

Silverman declined to describe any of the van's other special equipment—besides the chicken soup and coffee that keep the crew warm on long stakeouts. Is it, he was asked, anything like the super-sophisticated surveillance equipment used by actor Gene Hackman in the Francis Ford Coppola film of a few years ago, "The Conversation"? "Yeah," said Silverman, "something very much like that."

## GET THE PICTURE?

"Hi, Frank. I'm calling about that west-wing extension again.... The plan you brought over yesterday won't work. So let's see if we can come up with something else. Turn on your Scribophone and I'll show you what I have in mind."

Now what have the electronics wizards wrought? Scribophone is the latest in a series of communication devices that make in-the-flesh palaver less and less necessary. Teleconferencing added faces to phone conversations. Now the Philips company of the Netherlands has developed a machine that literally takes you back to the drawing board: if you need to commu-

nicate a visual idea or a complex piece of mathematics while talking on the telephone, you simply draw it or write it on a special plate, using an electronic "pen," and the image appears on your interlocutor's TV screen (as well as on yours).

The system, which emerged out of research into communication aids for the deaf, uses a small section of the telephone frequency band to transmit the visual information. But there's no effect on the audio signal: voices remain as clear (or as unclear) as they are normally.

Architects, designers and engineers are the obvious prospective customers for

Scribophone. Another widespread use anticipated by Philips is in education. Lectures on technical subjects to scattered classes linked by telephone would be greatly facilitated by the machine, which functions as a video blackboard.

There is also a mobile version of Scribophone that's likely to acquire importance in police and fire-brigade work, since it permits the transmission of sketches, maps or layouts from the site of an urgent operation.

At the moment, the cost of a Scribophone is over \$4000. On second thought, it might be cheaper just to fire Frank.

—Richard Gilbert

“They don't like fresh women in Thailand, so they have something before [Laverne & Shirley] goes on the air that says these two women are from an insane asylum. That way they can run it in Thailand. Honest.”

—Garry Marshall, TV producer, addressing a Television Critics Association forum in Los Angeles

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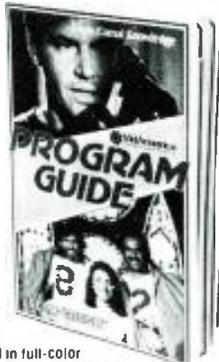
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## A TOUGH ACT TO FOLLOW

CBS has found that even in this era of fast-breaking news, a three-hour-old dose of Walter Cronkite is better than an update by someone else.

The *CBS Evening News with Walter Cronkite* is first fed to America at 6:30 P.M. New York time—which is 3:30 P.M. West Coast time. It doesn't appear on Pacific time zone screens until from two-and-a-half to three-and-a-half hours later. Sometimes the news goes stale in the meantime.

In order to combat this electronic jet lag, the Western edition of the *CBS Evening News* was launched last Aug. 27. Most of Cronkite's show remained intact, but each night Terry Drinkwater—in Los Angeles—anchored at least one segment of news that had been updated and/or Westernized for the Pacific states. Snippets of the Cronkite show were cut.

On an evening in early February, for example, two brief Cronkite stories were dropped from the Western edition. One was an item on a proposal to deregulate travel-agent commissions; the other told of an avalanche in the Alps. The extra time was filled with an expanded, updated report on the New Mexico prison riot, with a new introduction by Drinkwater replacing Cronkite's. "We try to keep our participation as minimal as possible," said Western-edition producer David Browning. "But at the very least, there are always a few nuances to add or change."

As the months went by,

however, the presence of the Western edition became more and more minimal. The goal of doing distinctively Western stories was dropped. "So many Western stories are hashed over by the local newscasts that they're old by the time we come along," said Browning. Furthermore, regionalization is a "bad trend. It presumes a community of interest that isn't necessarily there."

Finally, in mid-February, the Western edition stopped making a nightly appearance. The Western-edition unit remains in place—at a cost of \$1-million-plus a year—but its work appears on the air only when breaking news warrants an update (usually two or three times a week).

CBS admits that groupies who hang on every word Uncle Walter utters protested the Western edition's failure to deliver the Compleat Cronkite. "If I were in show business, I would say Walter is a hard act to follow," says Drinkwater. "But we're not here to do an act. We convey information—and sometimes Walter has only a fragment of the information."

The other networks occasionally cut into their nightly newscasts with brief updates for the Pacific states, but these are not as technically sophisticated as CBS's Western-edition reports. ABC has considered launching a Western edition of its own, but the idea is not a top priority. NBC has rejected the idea. Stay tuned for further bulletins.

## SONS OF BIG D

While America awaits word on the fate of J.R. Ewing, who was gunned down in the final episode of *Dallas* last season, the networks are moving ahead to create more J.R.s and Sue Ellens and Jocks and Miss Ellies.

The parade begins Aug. 11 with the debut of *Texas*, an NBC afternoon soap opera candidly described as "the *Dallas* of daytime" by NBC programming chief Brandon Tartikoff. Most of the action will take place in Houston, but there will be forays into other parts of the state—maybe into Big D itself. "As far as I know, nobody has copyrighted *Dallas*," says *Texas* head writer John William Corrington, who adds that the *Texas* folks will be so rich, "they could buy and sell the *Ewings* on any given afternoon."

Then there's an ABC pilot for a prime-time series tentatively titled *Oil* (likely to be a midseason replacement), which features a czar of the

Denver oil business, and Bo Hopkins, as his star geologist.

Meanwhile, the company that makes *Dallas* and its spin-off, *Knots Landing*, is not resting on its ratings. Lorimar Productions has prepared two more prime-time serials featuring wealthy families for next fall's schedule. In CBS's *Secrets of Midland Heights*, Martha Scott presides over the society of a Midwestern college town, and the teenage townies are restless. In the pilot for NBC's *Flamingo Road*, Kevin McCarthy and Barbara Rush play old-money paper-mill owners in southern Florida. The cast also includes Stella Stevens as a madam.

The makers of such shows are of two minds about *Dallas* itself. They say they enjoy watching the *Ewings*, but each hastens to add that his own program isn't all that much like *Dallas*. "Ours is an extended novel about families and power," says *Oil* executive producer Esther Shapiro. Get the difference? Neither do we.

## PRAYERS BEFORE SWINE

The competition was stiff. The judges mulled over "Poultry—Laying It on the Line," "Know Your Dope" and "The Last Art Student Has Been Eaten." But in the end there was one clear winner: "Hush Hoggies Hush; Tom Johnson's Praying Pigs."

The four-minute documentary garnered the first annual Most Unusual Video Program of the Year Award last March, a jocular decoration handed out by the publishers of "The Video Source Book," a reference guide listing more than

15,000 educational and entertainment video program titles.

But praying pigs?

"Oh sure, it's a real program," says Sharon Hesse of the Memphis-based Center for Southern Folklore, distributor of the \$70 program. "We shot it in the early Seventies. Tom Johnson calls the pigs up to the trough. They stop. He makes a brief prayer. When he says 'Amen,' they dig in."

But does "Hush Hoggies Hush" bring in the bacon?

Replies Hesse: "So far we've sold 18. That's not bad, is it?" Well, not in a pig's eye.



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## IN PRAISE OF RUBBER CHICKENS

The big TV question in New York these days has nothing to do with the traditional concerns of that media-saturated city. It has nothing to do with Fred Silverman or William Paley or Rooney Arledge. It has nothing to do with videodiscs or censorship or new magazines. No, the big TV question in New York these days is, "Have you seen *The Uncle Floyd Show*?" It refers to a low-budget, UHF kiddie show that originates in West Orange, N.J. And, like so many questions in New York, what it really means is, "Do you know what's *hot*? Do you know what's going on?"

What's going on is a daily half hour of slapstick, chaos and inspired improvisational insanity. It's commedia dell'arte 1980, with rubber chickens and New Wave rock'n'roll. It's wide open, go-for-broke, shoestring television, presided over by "Uncle" Floyd Vivino, a benign-looking young man who wears a bow tie, a garish porkpie hat and a sports coat of many colors that apparently was designed to be visible from passing jetliners.

Now in its seventh year on the air, *The Uncle Floyd Show* looks as if it's made behind a gas station somewhere on the New Jersey Turnpike, and it achieves, by way of its cheap



props, bizarre skits and a cast and crew that can't stop laughing at the whole mess, a kind of suburban dada glory all its own. It isn't always funny, but it's always trying to be.

The format of the show is the same every day. Uncle Floyd opens it from behind a beat-up desk, trading jokes with his sidekick Oogie, a wisecracking wooden puppet who gets a lot of close-ups because of Floyd's limited talent for ventriloquism. Then, after a brief section devoted to strange artwork sent in by fans, there is usually enough time for two bits, a few announcements and a couple of minutes of Floyd at the piano. (Vivino is a first-rate musician and musical historian. He seldom plays anything written more recently than the 1940s.) The bits form the heart of the show and feature the dozens of original characters Uncle Floyd and his cast have devel-

oped over the years. Some of the more popular are: Joe Frankfurter, a deadly sendup of New York radio interviewer Joe Franklin; Brother Billy Bobby Booper, the bogus faith healer; Flojo the Clown, Uncle Floyd's whining version of a TV kiddie-show host; and Jerry Jersino, the man who wants New Jersey to secede from the Union.

The show, which is telecast weekdays at 6 P.M. on UHF channels 60 and 68, WWHT-TV, is a blatant, garish paean to the early days of television. Vivino, the 28-year-old creator and star of the show, prides himself on its thrown-together production quality. "We do 260 half-hour shows a year," he says. "People don't watch us for slickness. They get enough of that on the networks. We bring television back to the basics—two cameras, one set. We shoot five shows in one day and we leave all the mistakes in. Our

viewers love it." They must—WWHT recently decided to expand the show to an hour.

Viewers reportedly number 100,000 and, despite the kiddie-show format and Uncle Floyd's constant on-air references to the "boys and girls" watching at home, it's a safe bet that many of the "kids" tuning in can remember their 30th birthdays. A 6-year-old, a 12-year-old, even a sharp 15-year-old, would be hard put to keep pace with Uncle Floyd's steady stream of double entendres and worldly asides.

Although Uncle Floyd doesn't like the word "cult" ("It scares parents"), his knack for orchestrating the madness around him has made him the center of one, complete with fan clubs, T-shirts, buttons and sold-out nightclub dates all around the metropolitan area. Paul Simon became such a fan that he gave Floyd a role in his upcoming film. Tom Snyder recently interviewed Floyd, complete with clips of his show, on the *Tomorrow* show. And Floyd says there are some "powerful rock'n-roll people" who want to see him syndicated. Can stardom be far off?

"I'd be happy just to keep doing what I'm doing for the next 40 years," says Vivino. "People don't believe me, but I'm really not interested in the big time." He may not be, but the fact is that the big time is getting interested in him.

—David Noonan

“James Lyons, president of the Media Research Services Group of A.C. Nielsen, described the ratings process. . . . He compared the TV universe to a large bag of red, white and black jellybeans, from which Nielsen repeatedly extracts a handful. 'If I do that 15 or 20 times,' he said, 'recording the black and red and white count each time, I'll get a pretty good estimate of the number in the entire bag.' The analogy makes sense if we understand that the jellybeans do not represent people or even programs, but the viewers' choice among the three networks. The trouble is that too many network executives . . . believe the sampling shows that people prefer jellybeans that are red, white or black to those of any other conceivable color; that people like jellybeans in general; and that they prefer jellybeans to any other type of nourishment.”

—A. Frank Reel, in his book "The Networks: How They Stole the Show"

# Innovations

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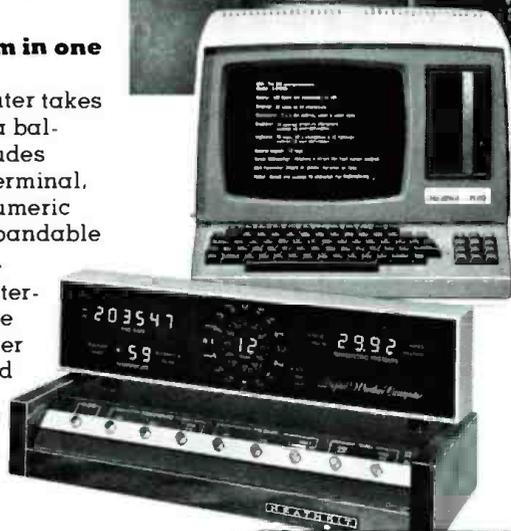
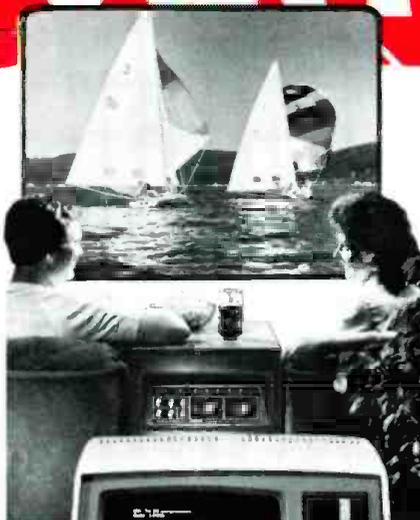
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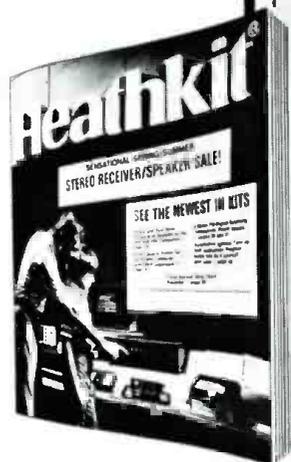
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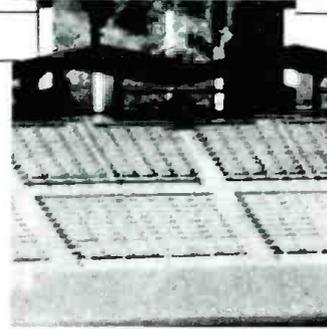
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## COLOR COMMENTARY

Why stay at home to watch the Dodgers on TV when you can go to Dodger Stadium to watch them on TV?

An interesting question, in light of the fact that a full-color video-display system—in fact, the *first* full-color system in an American stadium—is being installed in Los Angeles. Its key component is a screen atop the left-field pavilion, which will be fed pictures from three portable cameras and will feature instant replays, close-ups of plays and

players, and cutaways to other sports and news events.

The screen will be 20 feet high and 28 feet wide during its debut at the All-Star Game July 8 and throughout this season. Next season it will be expanded to 25 feet by 33

feet—still not the biggest by a long shot; Cleveland boasts of a board 136 feet by 51 feet, but its display relies on incandescent bulbs.

Mitsubishi, the Japanese firm that's making the L.A. system, promises a high-resolution color image that is visible in complete daylight and uses only a fraction of the energy consumed by conventional light-bulb message boards.

A Dodgers official was asked if the new doodad was an attempt to lure fans away from the proliferating variety of baseball games available

on the home screen. Not at all, he replied: "It's just that our old board was 20 years old and worn out. It's like buying a new model car." This particular model, however, will set the Dodgers back \$3 million.

Not all of the 56,000 fans who fill Dodger Stadium will be able to appreciate the video splendors that await them. The 3000 who are exiled to seats in the left-field pavilion, under the screen, will have to watch plain old baseball on the field instead of TV. There will be no special discount for those forced to make such a sacrifice.

## WORDS OF WARNING

*Warning: the following program may be harmful to your (and your family's) morality and peace of mind.* While television disclaimers haven't gone that far yet, they have become increasingly explicit about what viewers can expect. ABC preceded the film "An Unmarried Woman" this year with this warning: "The following material may not be suitable for younger family members. It is a sexually frank portrayal of the personal relationships of a contemporary woman." And NBC cautioned viewers about to see "Coming Home" that the film was "frank, gripping and realistic."

At the same time—and perhaps for the same reasons—the use of disclaimers is declining substantially (see box). The fact is that viewer attitudes have changed over the years. In 1976, when CBS first broadcast "Death Wish," a film filled with violence, the network received several hundred heated complaints. But when it was shown again in 1979, there were few objections.

All the networks follow the National Association of Broadcasters' code that re-

quires "advisories" preceding "material that might be disturbing to a significant segment of the audience." Sex, violence and profanity remain

In 1976, the three networks slapped some three dozen disclaimers on films they felt called for parental discretion because of strong language, sex and/or violence. Three years later, in 1979, the number had dropped to the 12 in the following list.

### ABC

"Taxi Driver"  
"Shampoo"  
"Annie Hall"  
"Cracker Factory"  
"Thunderball"  
"The Man with the Golden Gun"

### CBS

"Flesh and Blood"  
"Rollerball"  
"The Getaway"  
"Death Wish"

### NBC

"Coming Home"  
"One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest"

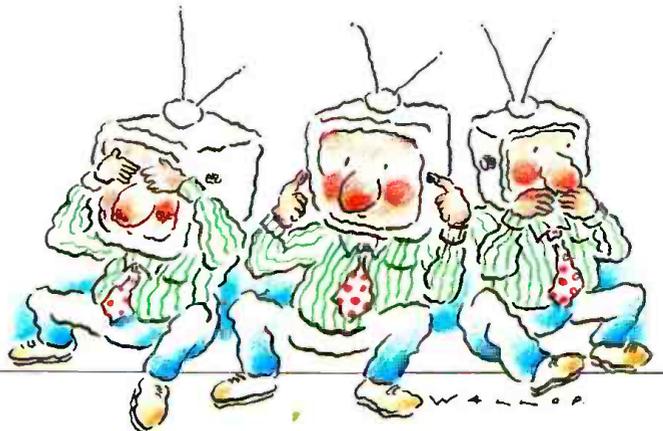
the chief offenders, but network censors must decide for themselves how much is too much. Because movies are

specially edited for network television, the box-office ratings (PG, R, etc.) don't necessarily apply to the TV versions. So, according to ABC vice president Alfred Schneider, censors try to judge "the total subjective emotional content of a program" when they decide whether a disclaimer is needed, even after editing. In recent years, childbirth, incest, rape, drug abuse and emotional disturbances have replaced scanty swimsuits and steamy embraces as objectionable in the eyes of the censors.

But do admonitions serve to protect viewers—or are the disclaimers actually a come-on for the strong stuff to follow? Some advertisers who

take the latter view won't sponsor programming with a disclaimer. Ralph Daniels, vice president for broadcast standards at NBC, rejects this stance. "We can't present everything at a Disneyland level," he says. The networks say advisories alert concerned parents and squeamish viewers; after that, they wash their hands of the matter.

Still, protest and attraction are often related. CBS received a barrage of complaints from viewers nationwide before it showed "Helter Skelter" in 1976. Yet the movie wound up as the highest-rated telecast of the season. It seems "a significant segment of the audience" is a tough animal to offend. —Cherie Burns



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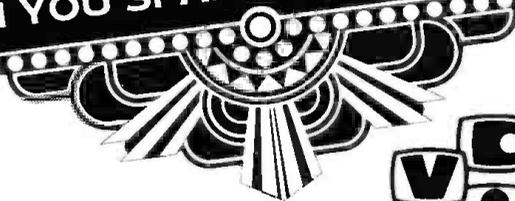
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- "Death Rage"
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# Pornography Unleashed

Today's video revolution is giving the X-rated film business a big boost—and organized crime has been quick to cash in

By HOWARD POLSKIN

## I. A DAY WITH THE KING OF X

If you want to pick up all the latest gossip in the West Coast porno biz, go spend an afternoon drinking bourbons and beers at Steve Boardner's Bar, a dark, dumpy little hole in the wall located about 200 feet off Hollywood Boulevard. Don't come after 8 P.M. because owner/bartender Boardner's 65-year-old feet are sore and swollen and that's when he shuts down for the day. And don't order a Coke or a Perrier with lime because this is a drinking man's bar and Boardner will get mean and nasty and probably boot you out. They don't take kindly to strangers just passing through, either. The men at the bar might mistake you for an undercover cop or an FBI agent. And for good reason.

Most of the time the man sitting in the corner booth, puffing a foot-long cigar, sipping a gin-and-tonic, taking phone calls, throwing verbal jabs at the customers around the bar, will be Dave Friedman, a card-carrying Republican who happens to be the world's most knowledgeable man about pornographic movies and the men and women who produce them. As five-time chairman of the board of the Adult Film Association of America, Friedman is the reigning king of porno movies and Boardner's is where he holds court. He's got three offices in the Los Angeles area: one at his video distribution company, TVX, one of the country's three largest distributors of X-rated videocassettes; one at his production company, Entertainment Ventures, which churns out exploitation features and pornographic movies; and one office upstairs at Boardner's, just above the men's room. But, if you're a gambling man, the odds are you'll find Friedman at Boardner's Bar.

On Feb. 28, 1980, as Friedman sits in his booth at Boardner's with a wide boozey grin plastered across his cherubic face, he smiles confidently because

he knows something that the sociologists don't know, that the fancy Park Avenue shrinks don't know, and that the anti-pornography groups don't know: the video revolution is the biggest boost to pornography since the invention of sin.

He knows it. Organized crime knows it. The FBI knows it.

Nobody's sure how many X-rated videocassettes have been sold since they first hit the market in December 1976. Everyone speaks in percentages. Friedman estimates that 70 percent of all videocassettes sold to the home market are X-rated. And, he notes, of the some 600 full-length pornographic movies made in the last five years, almost all of them have been made available on cassettes. The International Tape Association, a respected trade organization, has estimated the figure to be around 30 percent. Last year Time magazine, in one of its surveys of the market, found that 53 percent of all prerecorded programs purchased were X-rated. The FBI—which doesn't keep tabs on the number of videocassettes sold—says pornography is a \$4-billion-a-year industry.

But none of these disparate figures augurs how our society will be affected when explicit pornographic movies on videocassette or videodisc are as common in American households as a Playboy magazine. "In 15 years porno theaters will be dead," predicts Al Goldstein, the outspoken publisher of the sex tabloid Screw magazine. "If I owned a porno theater, I'd be investing in parking lots."

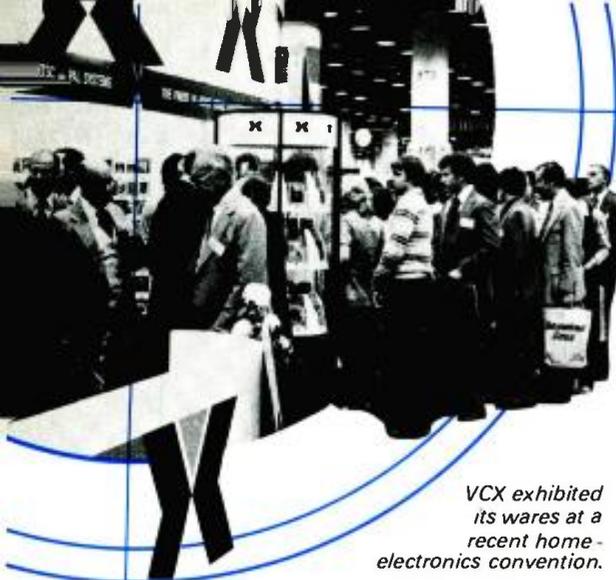
**D**ave Friedman will be late for dinner tonight. Like a dutiful husband, he phones his wife of 29 years from Boardner's and lets her know that he's got an important meeting. The West Coast Producers Association, a loosely knit organization of California-based producers of adult films, is holding its monthly session. A main purpose of the meeting will be to

discuss the FBI's recent nationwide Valentine's Day raids on distributors of allegedly obscene videocassettes, films and magazines. Although Friedman was not named in the Federal indictments, many of his colleagues in the adult-film industry have been charged with interstate transportation of obscene material as well as racketeering.

Friedman, police sources say, is as clean as a person can be in the field of hard-core pornography and has no known connections with organized crime. His companies will not produce or distribute films depicting male homosexuality, bestiality or child pornography. He once testified as a witness before a Congressional hearing on child pornography in the mid-Seventies and said he would personally turn in anyone he knew that was involved in the production and distribution of kiddie porn. He's equally tough on snuff films, movies that supposedly show the actual murder of a human being. Although Friedman claims that no one has ever made a real snuff movie, he once tossed out a member of his association for distributing the movie "Snuff," which allegedly showed a woman being murdered. The so-called murder was just a publicity stunt, but Friedman thinks movies like that give the porno industry a bad name.

**C**adillacs, Ferraris and Porsches line the parking lot in back of Friedman's screening room. Most of the big West Coast porno producers are here tonight to talk about the FBI's recent crackdowns as well as to elect a new president of their association. The raids have made them edgy and a lawyer will be speaking to them about what the anti-pornography drive means and how to protect their business interests.

Most of the producers know that, depending on local standards and social attitudes, the production, distribution and exhibition of pornographic films can sometimes break the law. Occasionally during production, performers



*VCX exhibited its wares at a recent home-electronics convention.*

## II. THE GOVERNMENT'S WAR ON PORNOGRAPHY

The short, stocky man with an unlit cigar perpetually wedged in the corner of his mouth looks like the tailor he once was. But Jack Rabinowitz is now anything but a tailor. In the first two months of 1980, Rabinowitz visited most of the major distributors of pornographic videocassettes in an effort to get his small business, Unique Video Specialities, off the ground. And his company was very unique.

Rabinowitz's real business is the law. He is an undercover detective for the Los Angeles Police Department's Administrative Vice Division, reportedly the finest porno squad in the world. In the last few months of 1979, the Vice Division was busysurveying Los Angeles-based distributors of pornography.

What made LAPD's investigation so startling was that it was targeted solely at videocassette distributors. "The whole video explosion is a source of great concern for us," explains Capt. James Docherty of LAPD's Administrative Vice Division. "We at LAPD try to stop the distribution of videocassettes with deviant sexual activity because porno has a degrading effect on humans."

Last January, Rabinowitz and other undercover policemen began purchasing pornographic videocassettes from wholesalers, telling them that they were establishing a mail-order operation. In the middle of the month, they went to a large trade convention, the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas, where manufacturers of consumer-electronics hardware, such as TV sets, videocassette recorders and stereos, display their wares to retailers. In recent years, such shows have provided an opportunity for distributors of prerecorded videocassettes—both X-rated and general titles—to establish a network of dealers around the country. Docherty's agents posed as buyers, handed out business cards with their fake identities and occupations, and let the word out that they were shopping for pornographic videocassettes.

Within two months they had purchased something from all major Los Angeles distributors of pornographic videocassettes, who were selling, police estimate, \$12-million worth of X-rated videocassettes a month. In mid-March LAPD raided nine companies trafficking in pornographic videocassettes. The porn distributors claim that LAPD doesn't have a strong case

against them. In fact, at press time, nearly two months after the raid, no arrests had been made, and the case is still pending. LAPD says it really needed another month of undercover work, but that it had to cut short its own investigation because of the aftereffects of a top-secret FBI sting operation investigating the pornography industry. On Valentine's Day, 1980, LAPD and the whole country found out what that investigation was called. Its name was MIPORN, short for Miami pornography.

**I**t started as a small Dade County, Fla., sting and ended up four years later as the most sophisticated, extensive and well-financed undercover investigation of the pornography industry.

Scarcely a few weeks after Sony introduced the first videocassette recorder to the home market in November 1975, the vice section of the Dade County Public Safety Department began a small undercover operation investigating organized crime's involvement in the south Florida pornography industry. A streetwise detective, Al Bonanni, went from adult bookstore to adult bookstore, buying magazines and films, always telling store managers that his parents owned an import/export business that could smuggle the material into porn-thirsty South American countries. He would hand out his card with the name of his fictitious company, Amore Products. Within months, he was engaged in business deals with organized-crime figures from outside the Miami area. His department discovered evidence that there was a nationwide conspiracy that distributed pornographic films and literature, and that it was larger than the department had expected. To investigate further would tax its limited resources. It was time to call for help.

Enter the FBI.

**T**he two men were athletic, good-looking, personable—and tough. They met in the Coast Guard in the mid-Sixties, serving in the Coastal Forces, an elite infantry branch that trained with the Marines at Camp Lejeune. When their service ended, William J. Brown enrolled in Chase Law School in Cincinnati. His friend, Pat Livingston, joined the FBI as a clerk in Miami. After Brown graduated from law school, he opened his own law firm in Miami and moved into an apartment with Livingston near the airport, so they could be close to the enclave of single stewardesses. For the next three

are arrested on prostitution charges because they are being paid to perform sexual acts. When a pornographic film is exhibited, theater owners run the risk of violating the constantly changing community standards and political climate toward pornography. What's OK in 1980 could have been taboo in 1970. (For instance, when "Midnight Cowboy" was released in 1969, it was rated X.) Similarly, a simulated rape scene in a picture shown in Los Angeles may be fine, but a jury in Atlanta might find it offensive. When the Federal government steps in, often at the prodding of local officials who warn of nationwide pornography conspiracies, the Feds go after the major distributors on the grounds of interstate transportation of obscene material. Of course, then a court must determine if the material is obscene, which is a tricky task.

When lawyer Robert Smith is introduced by the newly elected Producers Association president, Joe Steinman of Essex Films, Smith promptly addresses some of these murky legal problems. He ends his informal speech with a sober warning: "This is not the time for you people to think everything is peaches and cream. For those of you named in the FBI Miami indictments, you will be connected with companies and individuals who distribute heavy S&M films, animal sex films and child porn. I would suggest that you don't put your real names on the copyrights of films you are producing. Be careful."

On March 13 and 14, two weeks after Smith's talk, the Los Angeles Police Department raids nine major distributors of pornographic videocassettes. The raids are aimed solely at companies that distribute cassettes featuring what LAPD considers deviant sexual activity, such as bondage and simulated rape. Among the nine companies: David Friedman's TVX.

years, the men lived together as free-wheeling bachelors. At the end of the decade Brown married, and Livingston was eventually transferred to Detroit, but they remained in close contact for seven years.

Livingston was rising quickly in the FBI and became involved in a major undercover investigation in which he helped smash a Detroit burglary ring. Because of his success in Detroit, Livingston was chosen for an elaborate sting that would take him into the bowels of the pornography industry.

In the spring of 1977, Livingston returned to Miami to work on the pornography investigation. He went to his trusted friend, Bill Brown, and told him that the FBI was going to infiltrate the pornography industry and that he and Bruce Ellavsky, an athletic FBI financial specialist with counterespionage experience, were going undercover. They were establishing Golde Coaste Specialities, Inc., a purported buyer/distributor of pornography masquerading as a blue-jeans distributor. Livingston's cover name was Pat Salamone. Ellavsky's was Bruce Wakerly.

But they needed to establish Golde Coaste legally in case they were investigated by the cautious figures who control the pornography industry. Brown was enlisted for three reasons: he could maintain Pat Salamone's cover as a porn distributor if anyone checked up on Golde Coaste; as a real lawyer, he could legally establish Golde Coaste; and Livingston trusted him. Brown agreed to help. His daring association with MIPORN was based on his friendship with Livingston and his sense of adventure. As a client, Golde Coaste was small potatoes. In the next 30 months, the company (with FBI funds) paid Brown about \$4000.

After Golde Coaste was established, Livingston and Ellavsky began their lives as Pat Salamone and Bruce Wakerly, two fast-talking men interested in fast money, fast women and pornographic movies. They rented an apartment in Miami Springs, wore open-necked shirts with medallions dangling on their tanned chests, sported rented diamond rings and drove rented Cadillacs, all in a complicated effort to come across as bona fide porno businessmen. It seemed to be working.

On Sept. 7, 1977, in Los Angeles, the undercover agents made their first buy, purchasing several films, such as "Tennis Balls" and "Backside Fever," as well as pornographic magazines. Within a year, they began to receive the first shipments of pornographic videocassettes at their Florida warehouse.

Although they were slowly building solid reputations as porn peddlers, they still made the industry's "watch list," a roster of people trafficking in obscene merchandise who didn't have a previous track record in the business.

A typical day for the agents, says Brown, would be for them to get up at 5 A.M. in Miami, fly to New York, buy some pornographic films, videocassettes and magazines, pick up one of the major distributors and go with him to a New York race track to bet on the horses, go to bed about 3 A.M., and then get up at 6 A.M. to catch a plane to Hawaii to buy more pornography. All of this was financed by the Government to the tune of more than \$400,000.

To wrap the whole MIPORN investigation into one neat bundle, they needed a scheme that would result in the indictments of some 54 porn king-

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To wrap the whole MIPORN investigation into one neat bundle, they needed a scheme that would result in the indictment of some 54 porn kingpins

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pins who had sold their products to Wakerly and Salamone.

In the final weeks of 1979, the FBI plotted to snag about 50 of the major porn distributors in one clean sweep. The bizarre plan, which the FBI is reluctant to discuss, entailed a fake wedding between Pat Salamone and a fictitious woman, Gloria Cohen. Invitations were printed and mailed to most of the major porn distributors. The wedding was set for Feb. 12 at the Doral Country Club in Miami. At the last moment, the plan was scrapped. The porn distributors claim they smelled a double cross coming and decided not to attend. The FBI declines to comment on precisely why the wedding was canceled, but Bill Brown thinks that the FBI couldn't figure out how to carry out such a massive arrest at the swank country club.

Two days past the near-marrriage of Pat Salamone to Gloria Cohen, 400 FBI agents in 10 states staged raids on 30 businesses involved in pornography and alleged video-piracy operations. Of the 54 persons indicted, 41 were charged solely with interstate transportation of obscene material, nine more

were charged only with violation of the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations statute, and four were charged on both counts.

The FBI claims that the investigation and raids will have a debilitating effect on the organized-crime-controlled distribution of pornographic movies, videocassettes and magazines. But some lawyers for the porno distributors say that only when the trials are held in early 1981 will anyone be able to measure the effects of MIPORN. Both sides do agree on one thing: it was the second-most-famous Valentine's Day in the history of organized crime.

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### III. IN THE BEGINNING...

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He saw the future one day in 1976 and he became a pioneer. For nine years, Joel Jacobsen had operated Cinema Concepts, a small, nontheatrical, film-distribution company selling 8 mm. and 16 mm. movies to schools, libraries and collectors. When Sony introduced its home videocassette recorder, Jacobsen was quick to grasp the potential of selling prerecorded videocassettes. In his vision, adult videocassettes would play a major role.

In July 1976, Jacobsen acquired the videocassette rights to a batch of soft-core pornographic films from Russ Meyer and Radley Metzger, two of the best directors of blue movies. He formed another company, Home Cinema Service, to distribute videocassettes featuring titles like "Vixen" and "The Lickerish Quartet." Because of the scarcity of any type of prerecorded video programming, the tapes were priced at \$300 each, which made his films the most expensive movies ever released to the home-video market. The December 1976 Playboy carried a paragraph about the availability of the videocassettes. That write-up brought in 35 orders, and Home Cinema Service and the adult home-video business were off and running.

Very quickly, other small-time entrepreneurs began offering adult movies to owners of videocassette recorders. A former fashion photographer named Mark Slade formed Entertainment Video Releasing, a company that sold little-known general-release movies plus pornographic movies on videocassettes with names like "1001 Danish Delights" and "Naughty Coeds." Another company, Magnetic Communications, in March 1977, sent out a flyer to 3000 dealers of industrial video equipment offering 20 hard-core pornographic videocassettes. *continued*

As more hard-core pornographic films entered the video market, fewer people wanted soft-core features such as those Joel Jacobsen offered. Within a year, his prices dropped to \$229, then to \$129, and finally to \$89.95, in the current price range of most soft- or hard-core films on cassette. Pornographic cassettes were rapidly dominating the prerecorded video market. By mid-1977, only one major film studio had entered the video industry. By contrast, the porno industry was making all its films available on videocassette almost as soon as the blue films opened theatrically. But the porno producers and distributors had a good reason for releasing the movies simultaneously to theaters and the video market. Piracy.

On Sept. 2, 1976, a district court in Dallas had ruled that obscene material was not protected by copyright laws. That decision (overruled last October) panicked pornographers. To reap any profit from videocassettes of their product, they virtually had no choice but to offer movies on videocassette through their own companies. If they didn't, someone else could make and market cassettes of their films with legal impunity—and not pay a dime for the privilege. Of course, the boys in the back room might have strong feelings about people legally pirating their films. But the rewards were so great that many hustlers were willing to take the chance.

**Y**ou probably wouldn't want to get caught pirating any of Norm Arno's videotapes. According to a 1978 report on organized crime filed by the California Department of Justice, "From 1970 to 1974, Arno was involved in many organized-crime-connected pornography operations in Southern California....Arno was the business partner of New York Mafia member Michael Zaffarano." (Zaffarano was alleged to run the country's largest pornography network. He died on Valentine's Day of a heart attack as FBI agents sought to arrest him after he was named in the MIPORN indictments.)

Arno and his associate, Thomas Sinopoli, now run VCX, America's largest distributor of X-rated videocassettes. The two men refute any ties between Zaffarano and VCX. Both were indicted in MIPORN and are scheduled to come to trial next January in Miami.

When LAPD raided VCX last March, it found 90 videotape recorders that, police estimate, could duplicate about 1000 pornographic videocassettes in a 24-hour period. Such a large duplicat-

ing capacity indicates the vast dealer network and mail-order operation that VCX has shrewdly established.

Simply put, VCX has marketing know-how. Each cassette is wrapped in a four-color, laminated-cardboard package that makes the product seemingly sizzle on the shelf. VCX places full-page ads in magazines like Penthouse and some home-video publications, and expands its retail outlets by advertising in trade magazines and exhibiting at consumer-electronics conventions. VCX's slick promotional material guarantees every tape that leaves its plant and touts a 24-hour, toll-free number for dealer orders. VCX also

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When LATD rated the CX last March, it found 90 videotape recorders that could duplicate about 1000 pornographic videocassettes in a 24-hour period.

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offers tapes in the European color-TV standard, as well as tapes dubbed in Spanish.

As VCX tries to expand its business, it's still plagued by legal problems that threaten to land Arno and Sinopoli in jail. Both of them will be tried on charges of interstate shipment of obscene material, punishable by up to five years in prison and a \$5000 fine. Their lawyer, Elliot Abelson, a former deputy district attorney for Los Angeles County, believes their guilt or innocence will hinge on whether the jury determines that VCX's product is obscene. Gushes the confident Abelson, "We'd be thrilled to defend VCX material on obscenity charges."

**T**he world's best-known pornographic movie took six days to shoot and cost \$24,000. After several months of editing, "Deep Throat" opened at Bob Sumner's New World Theater on 49th Street in Manhattan in June 1972. Following a rave review by Al Goldstein in Screw magazine, major New York film critics reviewed the film and the "Deep Throat" media event took off. Eight years after its theatrical release, "Deep Throat" is still enormously popular. There's strong evidence that it is probably the best-selling pornographic videocassette in the

young video industry because of its continued presence on several video Top Twenty lists. Not surprisingly, the owners of the film, Louis and Joseph Peraino, have entered the video market, through their company, Arrow Film & Video, to distribute on cassette films like "Deep Throat" and "The Devil in Miss Jones."

Soon after "Deep Throat" had its premiere at his theater, Bob Sumner sold the New World and concentrated on producing his own pornographic films. But Sumner saw the video revolution coming and also saw a growing acceptance of films like "Deep Throat." In late 1977, he formed Quality X Video Cassette, which quickly became one of the three top distributors of pornographic videocassettes.

Currently Quality X offers 60 titles and about half of those films have been produced by Sumner's production company, Mature Pictures. Sumner is typical of many businessmen in the pornographic-film industry. They've often owned and operated porn theaters. They've often produced and/or directed porn movies. And now they're distributing porn movies on cassettes.

Quality X is similar to VCX in that it duplicates its own films and is gearing up to enter the mushrooming international market. Unlike VCX, Quality X was not a MIPORN target, because, police sources say, Quality X has no ties to organized crime. "MIPORN helped my business," says Bob Sumner. "Most of the retailers around the country who sell X-rated videocassettes became nervous buying from companies named in the indictments. They thought they were dealing with companies controlled by organized crime. When they saw I was clean, they started buying from me."

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## IV. THE FUTURE IS ALMOST NOW

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The largest collection of sex films in the world is owned by an organization run by a Methodist minister. Dr. Ted McIlvenna, president of the Institute for the Advanced Study of Human Sexuality, says that more than 22,000 sex films are in the school's research library. Since 1976, graduate students, mostly from the fields of sex therapy, counseling and education, have viewed the films in the school's classrooms to learn more about human sexual behavior. McIlvenna has been designing sex-education films for professionals since the mid-Sixties and is now—through video—ready to start educating the

masses in the comfort of their own homes.

This fall, the Institute's umbrella organization, the Exodus Trust, will release a 14-part series called "Creative Sex," aimed at owners of videocassette recorders who wish to improve their sex lives. The 14 programs were produced by the National Sex Forum, another branch of the Exodus Trust. Each tape will sell for \$40 and feature non-professional talent performing sexual acts.

While the Institute's home-video plans give some indication of the bizarre future of sexually oriented video programming, there are more conventional schemes that promise to change the blue horizons of prerecorded entertainment. The two leading men's magazines, Playboy and Penthouse, are already formulating strategies to capitalize on the consumer demand for erotic entertainment on the home screen. Playboy has produced two specials for Showtime, a pay-TV network. The two programs, "Playboy's Playmate Reunion" and "Playboy's History of the Playmates," both carry the Playboy stamp of tasteful nudity and both will be made available on videocassettes.

Penthouse is gearing up to enter the home-video market through the formation of the Penthouse Home Video Club. Although no specific date to launch the venture has been set, Don Myrus, director of Penthouse Press, discloses that the club initially will offer its members about six pornographic movies. "I've seen a lot of pornographic movies," says Myrus. "They're raunchy and lack production value. And a lot of times the girls aren't pretty enough. One of the services of our Club will be to preselect the films to meet certain criteria. We've got a reputation to maintain."

Originally Penthouse considered offering general-release titles as well as pornographic cassettes, but executives thought that the competition would be too fierce. So Penthouse decided to do what it does best—offer erotica.

**T**here are about one million videocassette recorders in homes throughout the country now. Most industry analysts don't expect sales of VCRs will ever total more than one million a year. In short, the videocassette recorder—and prerecorded videocassettes—are never expected to become mass-market items.

But that's certainly not the case for the videodisc player, which, according to some industry figures, is predicted

to be in 40 million American homes by the end of the decade. The big question facing the pornography industry is whether the few blue-chip companies—like RCA, IBM, MCA and CBS—that control the production of videodiscs will replicate pornographic movies on videodiscs.

According to the report "The Emerging Video Disc Market," filed last January by the Argus Research Corporation, "X-rated titles are believed to account for about half the prerecorded videotape market and we would expect them to account for a comparable percentage of the videodisc market. Adult-oriented discs are likely to be pressed by both RCA and MCA and marketed under independent labels. Judging by the popularity of X-rated videocassettes, this area should be a major growth market for the videodisc."

Already MCA DiscoVision has licensed between six and 12 titles, including some of Russ Meyer's films, from Joel Jacobsen of Home Cinema Service. Altogether, MCA DiscoVision will offer about 250 disc titles by the end of this year. The policy of the company is not to license hard-core pornographic films for the optical disc. It will license some "adult" films that have appeared on pay-TV or in high-class theatrical distribution.

DiscoVision Associates, the company formed by IBM and MCA to manufacture and replicate videodiscs, has two criteria for replicating videodiscs for other companies: the movie must have a rating, and the owners of the program must prove that they're licensed to distribute it. Former IBM marketing executive John J. Reilly, who is now DiscoVision Associates president, foresees his company pressing X-rated films for outside companies but adds, "If it's an underground pornographic movie, we won't do it. I'm not exactly sure what I mean by that, but if someone shoots a porno movie in their garage, we won't press it."

RCA, DiscoVision's rival in the videodisc field, has a corporate dictum that contradicts the Argus prediction that RCA is likely to press porno discs. Herb Schlosser, RCA executive vice president, says, "We won't license it. We won't distribute it. We won't press it. Period." And CBS Video Enterprises, RCA's ally in the pending videodisc-format war, shares RCA's stance.

But the legal system could possibly work against the corporate titans who refuse to press pornographic videodiscs. Says Joseph Rhine, First Amendment specialist and chief legal counsel to the Adult Film Association of

America: "If some agreement were reached by disc pressers to exclude adult films from the disc market, it would violate antitrust laws. The courts would force them to replicate pornographic movies on videodiscs." Additionally, add Rhine and other legal experts, defending an antitrust suit is enormously expensive and time-consuming. Even if RCA thought it had an open-and-shut case, says Rhine, it might decide to give in just to save the company a lot of time and money. Adds Al Goldstein of Screw magazine: "The big companies will replicate pornographic movies on discs if it will give them an edge on the competition. Capitalists would sell rope to their own lynching."

Despite FBI crackdowns on the distribution of pornographic movies and videocassettes, the trend in the home-video industry points to an increasing number and variety of sexually oriented programs available to the consumer on cassettes, discs or whatever program-delivery system engineers dream up in the future. And the trend seems clear: pornographic movies, when viewed in the home, are becoming a socially acceptable form of entertainment.

Surprisingly, Dave Friedman, chairman of the board of the Adult Film Association of America, laments the public's growing tolerance of pornography. "Thank God the police make busts," he says over a gin-and-tonic at Steve Boardner's Bar. "We who are in the forbidden-fruit business make money because the people who buy our products think they're forbidden. The day a videocassette or videodisc of 'Deep Throat' is sold without an eyebrow being raised, is the day our businesses will wither on the vine." ■



# Listening May Be Hazardous to Your Brain

A noted admirer of the English language cringes over TV's abuse of the mother tongue

By EDWIN NEWMAN



**T**elevision is not doing much for English. It rarely acquaints its viewers with exalted or imaginative or poetic or subtle language, because it rarely deals in ideas. Nor, in spite of all the talk on television, does it offer a great deal in the way of succinct or enlightening conversation. Instead, on the chat shows, it presents exchanges of anecdotes and laugh lines. Rather than wit and humor, it puts forward catch phrases and (on happy-talk news, for example) automatic bonhomie—and, from the happy talkers, what sounds like a live laugh track. Moreover, television is usually in such a hurry that viewers don't have time to savor what is said. Appreciation of language is not likely to flourish in these circumstances.

All of this has its effect on the way Americans speak and—equally impor-

*NBC News correspondent Edwin Newman is the author of two books on language ("A Civil Tongue" and "Strictly Speaking"), as well as the novel "Sunday Punch."*

tant—what they expect to hear. I recently attended a banquet in a Midwestern city, where the chairman sounded like a talk-show host. Introducing others, including me, taking part, he would say, "Will you please welcome..." I half expected to find myself stepping out from behind a curtain.

Television takes expressions like "Will you please welcome..." and, if they can be adapted to our own lives, makes them national catch phrases. It was this adaptability that accounted for the popularity of: "Would you believe...?" "If you've got it, flaunt it." "It's what's up front that counts" and "Thanks. I needed that." Likewise: "The blahs." "I ate the whole thing," which for a while looked as though it would be immortal. And the current "overdoer's backache."

**S**ome words and phrases I would like to see fade away unfortunately do not, one such being "visit with," which has replaced visit, no doubt because it sounds "friendlier." There is, however, a promising beginning of a decline in the use of "viable" and "parameter." I hesitate to say more, for fear that they will come back to clog the airwaves. The "y'know" blight has not lessened, partly because "y'know" is endorsed by many advertisers, who like it at the beginning of their commercials to show how warm and unpretentious they are. Phillips' Milk of Magnesia goes beyond this in its quest for friendliness. It has a woman saying, "Frank, me and the kids want a reliable laxative." Us all do, Phillips, us all do.

Television also adds to the language, and changes it. A "prompter" used to be (still is) someone hidden from the audience who fed lines to opera singers. On television, it's a machine feeding lines to the broadcasters, thereby all but eliminating the superbly named "idiot cards." A feed used to be (still is) given to infants and livestock. On television (and radio) it is a transmission sent in from somewhere else.

But then, television has a peculiar ability to define itself and its products. A star—not the celestial kind—used to be someone the public would pay to see, no matter what the star was appearing in. The box office supplied an unmistakable and sometimes brutal test. Today, a television star is someone so designated by a network. The ratings may seem to fill in for the box office, but they can't. Nothing is quite so convincing as cash forked over by people using their own money.

**I**n the same ill-defined manner, we hear of "quality programming," a term apparently descended from that meaningless favorite of yesteryear, "a quality education," and equally unexamined. "Quality programs" must, of course, have producers. This word has lost much of its meaning, thanks to television and, before that, to Hollywood. A producer used to supervise a play or film from scratch and finance it, the latter function in some ways the more important. If you couldn't find the money, you couldn't produce. Once staff producers came into being, that



wholesome discipline was no more.

Moreover, the money the producers now use (but do not raise) is not called money. It goes about disguised as funding. Funding began as philanthropic and social-science jargon—"Can this funding be incremented?" meaning "Can we get more money?"—but television, especially public television, has taken it over with gusto, of which you reach for all you can get because you go around only once in life. So we have programs made possible by funding, by major funding, and by additional funding, though never by minor funding. The funding, sometimes called a grant and, more splendidly, an underwriting grant, is usually provided by corporations. Thus do the noble intentions of noncommercial television become Mobil intentions.

Then there is "journalist"—"television journalist." Once upon a time a journalist wrote. If he didn't, he was no journalist. Now there are television journalists who do not write and some, I have no doubt, who cannot. In the fashion of the day, many are young, and may be journalists without journalistic experience; they haven't had time to get any. They learn to say, "How did you feel when...?" or the more elaborate "How did you personally feel when...?" (the building fell, your child was found, you heard you'd won a million dollars) and they are well started.

Still, there is an impressive economy in many television terms: anchor; weekend anchor—dropped, I presume, into a sea of Michelob, for which weekends were made; TV junkie; stand-upper, a report during which the broadcaster stands, usually at the scene of a story, suggesting that he or she can't take enough time away from the pursuit of the story to sit down; sit-downer, a report delivered from a seated position, suggesting that the reporter has had time to ponder the story, so that the viewer should be ready for something thoughtful; the sweeps; the tease; prime time; the soaps (borrowed from radio); jiggle television; kiddy porn; and finally, for TV itself, two names that cannot be improved—the tube and the box.

In a way, it is wrong to blame the tube/box for the language it conveys. In the last analysis, words are put on television by people. If a learned professor warns us that "we should not leap into a mentality" in which we might do something foolish, it's his advice, not television's. If a sports broadcaster says that "a team runs well on



natural grass," it is he, not television, who added the "natural." And surely television did not force a network correspondent, in Iowa for the party caucuses, to say, after considerable thought, "The campaign is off and running." It was the correspondent who created the picture of a campaign galloping around 34 primary states and 16 others, as well as Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia, with the candidates in pursuit and occasionally stopping to ask, "Did anyone see a campaign go by?"

Then there are all the local news people whose dearest wish is that we have a good evening. I usually try to comply, but there is one anchorwoman I habitually disappoint, because she makes her recommendation at 11:30 P.M. Maybe she has the next day's evening in mind.

While having a good evening, morning, day, afternoon, night, weekend, or holiday, as appropriate, I also heard these: "The farmers feel they are a whipping post." This conviction, we were told, overcame farmers after President Carter embargoed grain sales to the Soviet Union. It seemed an odd point of view, because there is no record of a whipping post making a formal complaint or even muttering crossly about the kind of work it was doing. A whipping post takes no punishment, but merely stands there, permitting people to be tied to it.

"It's not intangible enough." Jimmy the Greek said this during a discussion of whether certain factors, in this case

crowd reaction, might affect the outcome of the Super Bowl. I think he meant there was no way of knowing.

"The People's Choice Awards ... the American public awards its favorite stars, movies, TV shows and music." To whom the American public was awarding its favorite stars, movies, etc., CBS did not say.

"Because the wine remembers." From a commercial. Here is a wine that can perform the remarkable feat of remembering, and what are we asked to do? Drink it. That's horrible.

"President Carter took a lighter attitude toward the shifting sands of success." CBS News gave us this, through Walter Cronkite.

I do not intend to deplore Jimmy the Greek's language, which is his own, not machine-made, and goes with his personality. Nor is taking a lighter attitude toward the shifting sands of success necessarily a bad idea. It is well to be as light as possible around shifting sands. Otherwise, one might sink from sight, even from the sight of people described on television as bespeckled, evidently because they wear speckles.

What I am saying is that those of us who work in television have a responsibility to respect the language, to use it well, and to keep it vigorous and growing. Leave the responsibility aside. We should want to do that. Our lives will be more satisfying for it. So will the lives of those who watch us. ■





In the costliest movie ever made for television, a bitter struggle between imperial power and a subject people is played out again under a merciless desert sun

# Masada:

## A Tragic Tale of Resistance

*The story of Masada—site of a heroic confrontation between Jewish rebels and Roman imperial power in the first century A.D.—isn't one of history's best sellers. Compared with all-time hits like the Boston Tea Party and the storming of the Bastille, it's been something of a flop. This being the case, would you choose it as a subject for the costliest, most ambitious movie ever made for television? Well, you would if you were Universal Television. The people who produced Rich Man, Poor Man have gotten together with ABC to mount an eight-hour, four-part blockbuster that may well do for Masada what Cecil B. DeMille did for Mount Sinai. The production, directed by Boris Sagal, is scheduled for the 1981 season.*



*This 14-ton battering ram was specially built for use in the production. The besieging Romans employed the weapon, bearing the traditional ram's head carving, to breach Masada's ramparts.*

**M**asada is an anvil-shaped rock on the western shore of the Dead Sea. It has evolved through geological eons as an almost perfectly defensible stronghold: a strategist's dream of "commanding heights." King Herod, in the first century B.C., saw its military potential and, fearful of Roman intentions, he turned it into a fortress that could hold off a besieging army for many months. Storage rooms were built that could hold six months' provisions, and giant water cisterns were installed that would collect and retain the sporadic rainfall of the desert. *continued*



**Above, the Essenes, a monastic Jewish sect, reluctantly retreat to Masada in order to protect their scrolls from desecration by Romans.**

Herod's elaborate precautions proved unnecessary; Rome didn't move against him. But a century later, his fortress fulfilled its promise. At the end of a bloody civil war in which the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed and thousands of Jews taken into slavery, a band of Zealots retreated to Masada in a final, defiant stand against their Roman overlords. For two years they used the fortress as a base for guerrilla operations until, in 72 A.D., the Roman Tenth Legion encamped at the foot of the rock and laid siege to it. The next six months were to see two implacable wills locked in a bitter test of endurance.

It was an unequal struggle. Nine hundred and sixty Jewish men, women and children

faced an army of 5000 seasoned soldiers. But the Zealots were not without allies. The greatest was the sun, which kept the Roman camp in a frenzy of thirst and exhaustion while, up on the rock, the rebels ostentatiously drank from Herod's ample water cisterns and swam in pools.

And strength also came from their iron resolve never to surrender. They would prefer any fate—even martyrdom—to continued subjugation.

In Eleazar ben Yair (played in this movie by Peter Strauss), they had a leader who could translate their aspirations into the *Realpolitik* of siege diplomacy. It was he who met face to face with Cornelius Flavius Silva



(played by Peter O'Toole), commander of the Roman forces, to bargain for peace and a measure of autonomy.

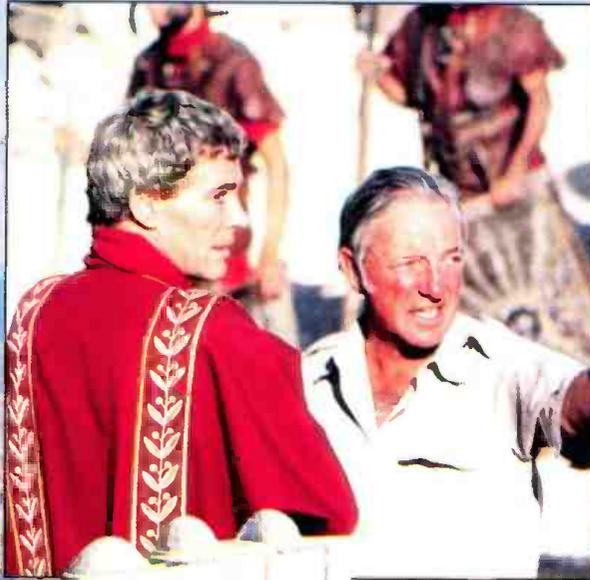
Flavius Silva's conscience and reason told him that the Jews' demands were just, but his instructions from Rome were uncompromising: to use any means at his disposal to pry the insurgents from their rock.

That Masada would eventually be taken could never be in doubt. But the manner of its fall was less predictable. The Romans labored for six months to construct a ramp on which huge battering rams could be heaved up to the Masada ramparts. In the final assault, the outer walls were swiftly breached and the inner walls set ablaze with torches. But when the conquerors entered the citadel,

they came upon a deathly scene: 958 rebels had committed suicide rather than give themselves up as prisoners to new masters. Only two women remained alive.

**J**osephus, the contemporary Jewish historian who recorded the events of Masada, wrote: "And so met [the Romans] with the multitude of the slain, but could take no pleasure in the fact, though it were done to their enemies. Nor could they do other than wonder at the courage of their resolution, and at the immovable contempt of death which so great a number of them had shown, when they went through with such an action as that was." *continued*

*Top, an exterior view of the replica of Masada built for Masada. Vegetable gardens helped keep the fortress self-sustaining. Below, Roman commander Cornelius Flavius Silva, played by Peter O'Toole (center), and his soldiers inspect Masada after breaching its walls.*



*In the panoramic view on these pages, the real Masada stands imposingly at far right, while the re-created fortress can be seen below. Above: Filming of a Roman camp scene is conducted in desert heat that sometimes hit 130 degrees. Left: Director Boris Sagal marshals star Peter O'Toole.*



The producers of *Masada* knew from the start that Joel Oliansky's epic script—based on Ernest Gann's novel "The Antagonists"—could not be brought to life on a Hollywood sound stage. *Masada* had to be made at Masada. And that meant money. The original budget was for \$18 million. By the time the project was finished, Universal and ABC had spent \$20 million. The extra \$2 million is regarded by Richard Irving, the executive in charge of production, as a sign of pretty good fiscal management, particularly in view of Israel's 100 percent inflation rate.

What did Irving buy for his \$20 million? One thing he bought was a new Masada: a reconstruction of Herod's fortifications on a mountain three quarters of a mile north of the original site. What remains of the real Masada has become a hallowed ruin, thronged by tourists; the events of 70 to 73 A.D.

could not have been reenacted there. But the producers did get permission to rebuild the outer walls for the sake of crucial shots taken from the point of view of the besieging army below. Irving says: "I had to sign my life away promising that every single stone would be returned in place."

The rebuilding of the giant Roman ramp was carried out by the Israeli Army's corps of engineers using a Bailey Bridge technique that built up the ramp in steel sections—one of many ways in which the Israeli authorities participated in the project.

The logistics of the production were daunting. On most days of filming, there were 300 people behind the cameras and up to 500 in front. Extras were recruited from among Bedouins (to play Jewish slaves!), tourists, university students, and anyone who happened to be passing through the desert. All these people had to be fed, and

all had to be continuously watered as temperatures during the shoot ranged between 95 and 130 degrees.

The physical conditions that oppressed the Romans in the first century were no less of a problem in 1979. As well as the merciless sun, there were also violent windstorms to contend with, which on three occasions swept away the entire Roman camp. "We just had to rebuild it each time," says Irving.

But despite their adversities, everyone remained in remarkably good spirits. Something in the magnitude of the project, in the quality of the script, filled actors and crews alike with an unquenchable enthusiasm. Peter O'Toole, who had never before acted for television, took on Flavius Silva with the relish of a first Hamlet. And with good reason. The script is described by producer George Eckstein as "one of the most brilliant I have ever had anything to do with."  
—Stanley Marcus



# Is the Mind of the Modern Student Fundamentally Monophonic, Multiphonic or Quasi-Catatonic?



A perplexed parent confronts the mystery of how children do their homework with the set on

By RALPH SCHOENSTEIN

**W**hen I was a boy, I always did my homework in a strange environment: a room where there was not a sound, for my simple, medieval mind was able to focus on just one thing at a time. If the radio had been playing, I would have ended up writing a paper about Lamont Cranston's contribution to the Bill of Rights.

My own children, however, not only like to do their homework with the television on, but they seem unable to do it with the television off. Functioning in a twilight zone of logic, they and their peers are distracted by silence.

Like many other parents, I often have wondered if my children would be performing better at school if they actually

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*Free-lancer Ralph Schoenstein's latest book, "Citizen Paul: A Story of Father and Son," was published by Farrar, Straus & Giroux.*

looked at their homework from time to time while writing it. A few nights ago, for the ninety-third time, I asked my 15-year-old daughter, "How can you possibly concentrate on homework while you're watching TV?"

"Fix the tuning," she replied, "and tell me the capital of Greece."

My incessant nagging about this academic mystery has finally triggered in me a dream. Last night, a few hours after my daughter had conjugated some verbs in counterpoint to *Barnaby Jones*, I found myself observing the most dramatic experiment in education since the 1977 Oklahoma University study to see how many 250-pound tackles could be finessed through geology. I was at the Rodney Waterhouse School of Media at Eastern Montana University to witness the definitive study of the effect of American television on homework, a study designed to determine once and for all whether the mind of the modern student is fundamentally monophonic, multiphonic or quasi-catatonic.

**T**he experiment, which took three weeks longer than it should have because the professors in charge kept taking breaks to watch *Ryan's Hope*, used five children selected at random and ranging in age from 11 to 12. Their average IQ was 110, their average attention span was six minutes, and all of them had a better command of the Burger King jingle than of "The Star-Spangled Banner." From time to time, a couple of them were heard to say softly, "Nano-Nano."

The testing began with an attempt to establish a control. One of the students, a 12-year-old pre-animal-husbandry major named Sherman DuBoff, was put in a room containing only a photograph of Dinah Shore and told to do geography homework for as long as he could. The previous record for unaccompanied geography homework by an American child had been 19 minutes, set during a transmission failure in Lima, Ohio—a record that DuBoff might have beaten had he not tried to stab himself with a compass at the seven-minute mark. He was given two tickets to *The Price Is Right* and excused from further testing.

Because of this incident, the Montana media men decided to try a different method of control and also to see if any one television show could

produce a piece of homework that did not contain the word "hopefully." Boy number one was to write an essay on democracy while watching *Laverne & Shirley*, and girl number one was to write an essay on *Laverne & Shirley* while watching the House of Representatives. Boy number two was to draw a dolphin and label all its parts while watching *The \$1.98 Beauty Show*, and girl number two was to draw a woman and label all her parts while watching *Tom and Jerry*.

In the first half hour of the experiment, the boy who was using *Laverne & Shirley* as an audio-visual aid to an essay on democracy performed quite well, laughing his way through references to Jefferson and losing his concentration only during the commercials. However, the girl who was writing about *Laverne & Shirley* while watching the House debate natural gas, was both lethargic and disoriented, twice drifting into writing about how she had

spent her summer vacation.

The poor performance of this girl seemed to indicate that the ideal multimedia input for the American student is one in which the program is more interesting than the homework. As both Freud and Fred Silverman have observed, the video-textbook mix is indeed a delicate one; and when it fails to stir the mind of the student from its naturally dormant state, another element must be introduced. For example, at the 16-minute mark, this girl was given earphones that were transmitting the music of The Grateful Dead. At once she was moved to write several sentences, some of which even made sense.

The attempt of boy number two to draw a dolphin while watching *The \$1.98 Beauty Show* did not go well, possibly proving that when both the program and the homework involve the same subject—in this case, anatomy—there can be confusion in



the student's mind. Some of the professors felt that the dolphin might have been able to draw the boy, having a slightly bigger brain; but others felt that such an experiment would have been impossible to do because no dolphin could have been induced to watch that show.

Interestingly enough, girl number two had no trouble drawing a woman while watching *Tom and Jerry*. She had to look at herself only twice, allowing the professors to conclude that the intellectual content of the video input is inversely proportional to the quality of the homework it inspires. Further testing would have to be done to determine whether *The Flintstones* or Mike Douglas is better for getting into Yale.

When I awoke from this scientific dream, I realized that other questions are still to be answered about the almost mystical connection between homework and TV, especially in this age of electronic marvels like cable, cassette, satellite and disc. For example, does a student do better homework with a current show or with one that he or she taped? And would it ever be possible for the student to tape the homework instead of the show? Such ideas are, of course, beyond our simple conception of time and space, but American students have been operating in this dreary dimension for many years. How my daughter made it through grade school is beyond my comprehension when I walk into her room and see her writing in a notebook to the flicker of a cathode tube and the thumping of an eight-track tape. I'm sure she will do much better on her SATs if she is allowed to take them in CBS master control. ■



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# Don't Look Back, Barbara Walters

Here come the new-breed network newswomen...  
attractive, bright and driving  
all-out to be the superstars of the '80s

By GERRI HIRSHEY



It's been a long, wet day for Republican candidate George Bush. He has climbed in and out of the Pacific, from a rubber life raft to a submarine deck and back again, at least three dozen times on the twin Sony screens in the NBC editing room. And the way things stand, he could be at it another hour.

"Lucky George," sighs correspondent Linda Ellerbee, lighting yet another Merit. "Got shot down during World War II, got rescued and had somebody there to film it so he could use it in his campaign trailers 30 years later."

Now the screens show a suited, silk-shirted Ellerbee interviewing the candidate in the gentle chiaroscuro of an airplane window. Poised but relaxed, intense but pleasant, she baits, cajoles, questions until the candidate breaks into a wide grin.

"I was never as boring as you thought, frankly," he says.

"God bless you, George," whispers Ellerbee as she watches the screens. She will lead her segment with his statement. To edit this George Bush profile for the *NBC Nightly News* will ultimately take four days, two technicians, 36 separate tape cassettes, three meticulously kept notebooks, countless cigarettes and a small ocean of coffee. Running time: three minutes, 24 seconds.

"An epic by normal standards," huffs Ellerbee as she drags a table closer to the screens. Wearing jeans and scuffed Frye boots, she lugs an ancient Olympia to the table to tap out a final script; typing, talking, mentally timing her words, stopping only to answer a phone call from her housekeeper. There is a garbage crisis, a new baby sitter, the question of dinner....

"Glamour," she says, laughing. "Don't I just reek of it?"

Ah, glamour. Back when Huntley and Brinkley were still an item, movies and modeling were the glamour careers for women; today it is television. Now that the men's-clubby atmosphere of newsrooms has been invaded by the rustle of silk, and now that Barbara Walters' cozy chats with the likes of the Shah and Sadat have made her the highest-paid woman in TV news history, network executives are getting serious about the influx and impact of women in the industry.

But grit and experience, more than glamour, are the watchwords. Women are rising, as their male counterparts

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*Gerri Hirshey is a free-lance writer based in New York.*

have always done, from the smaller local stations to the larger, more visible markets like Atlanta, Houston, Chicago, Los Angeles, New York, Washington, D.C., and Boston, and then ascending to the networks. Besides possessing television experience, many have journalism degrees and backgrounds in radio, in wire-service writing and reporting and on newspapers—an average of five to 10 years of work history before most land the sought-after national-TV plums.

**T**hose women who find themselves in national correspondents' roles know from exhausting, gut-twisting experience that—with the occasional exception—they are now more than corporate window dressing. And as purveyors of the news, they have had to handle a currency previously traded only by men: power. In a nation where more than half the citizenry gets most of its news from television, it can be an awesome and frightening power. Are women using it as well as men? And how much more power will women obtain as they fill correspondents' slots, producers' chairs and anchor spots?

"If you think about those larger questions too much, it can drive you crazy," says Ellerbee, who once lobbed her own television out a second-story window when she felt it was interfering with family life. "Imagine—and it's true—that all several million people will know about George Bush is what I've chosen to tell them. If I let it, the responsibility could terrify and depress me. It would make the job unbearable, since there's no security in this business any-

way. The big salaries, the perks, the prestige are all a trade-off against that lack of security. If you want security, you have to go work in a bank. If you want to stay in television, you can't look too far ahead. You'll miss that next stop and fall flat on your face."

**N**ow that CBS has announced the end of the Cronkite era in 1981, in a climate where all three networks are filling the air with more and more news specials, documentaries and expanded evening coverage, professional and amateur speculators are looking very far ahead at the opportunities women may have as correspondents, on *60 Minutes* magazine-type shows, and as anchors. David Burke, an ABC News vice president, says that 13 of his 58 national correspondents are women, roughly the same ratio as at other networks. At local stations, the percentages are much higher, and rising. "With the agents who come around here to show us cassettes it's become much heavier female," says Burke. "Sure, affirmative action is still a factor, but that's not why we hire them. And once they're here, they can't be complacent."

As for anchoring, now that Barbara Walters has moved back to reporting at ABC, no woman has regular anchor duties on a weeknight network news show. NBC's weekend news has two women anchors: Jane Pauley on Saturday and Jessica Savitch on Sunday. But while anchoring is widely thought of as the pinnacle of the profession, many women correspondents and network executives feel that the overall status of women in the industry is more

important than the number of anchor positions they occupy.

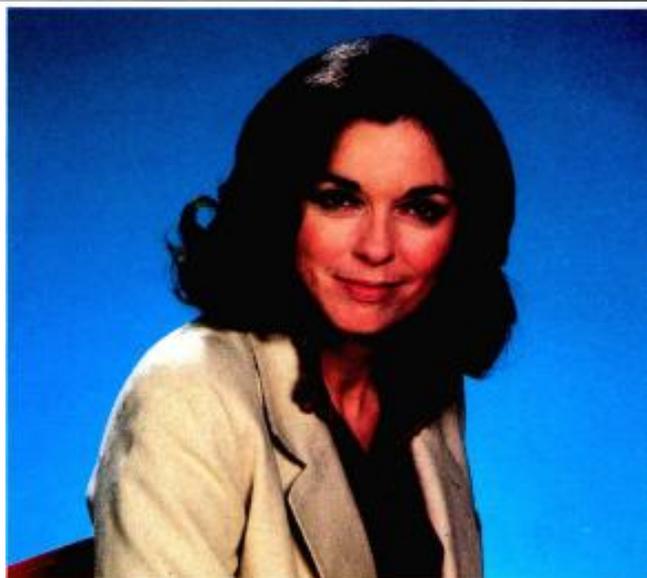
"Anchoring will come," says CBS's Betsy Aaron, who, at 41, is considered a top contender for such a post. "A woman in a high-visibility anchor spot, though, is much less important than having women cover serious stories that get on the evening news." (Aaron knows the value of reporting experience, having begun her career in radio in 1959 as a researcher for the Edward P. Morgan show. Her subsequent TV reports from the Middle East, Cyprus and Vietnam won Aaron her present network job.)

**A**BC's Catherine Mackin, too, is ambivalent about anchoring. She began her career on Washington television in 1969, achieved national notice with NBC in the early '70s, and began this year following Sen. Edward Kennedy's campaign. "At one time in my life, anchoring was the ultimate goal," she says. "I still consider it a possibility and a goal, but goals shift as you go along. Certainly I don't think people who become anchors should get permanent possession of the seats." She believes that "it would be terribly damaging to women if one woman is pushed ahead and she is not thoroughly professional."

"If I were offered an anchor spot, I would not say no," ventures CBS White House correspondent Lesley Stahl. She's been voted by many, including Washington Post TV critic Tom Shales, as *The Woman Most Likely*. "But certainly I don't have it on my mind. I don't know what you do after covering the White House. But before I think about

●● If I let it, the responsibility could terrify and depress me. ●●

—Linda Ellerbee, NBC





“Now, there are new myths about women to replace old stereotypes.”

—Jessica Savitch, NBC

moving on, I like to feel I've conquered something. I don't feel that way about this assignment yet.”

Ellerbee has turned down an offer to be an anchor at a New York station at twice her current salary. She is a confessed hard-core news junkie; a tall, outspoken Texan who enjoys jumping on a good story and rassing it—with dignity—to the ground. Oddly, it was a false step that helped advance her career.

Having begun in radio in 1965 and then worked for the AP wire service in Juneau, Alaska, she found herself frustrated in AP's Houston operation—and disgusted enough to tap out a scathing letter to a friend on the wire machine lambasting her bureau chief and lamenting the recent loss of the bureau's only other woman correspondent. Due either to electronic gremlins or her own error (“I thought I'd hit all the right keys”), the letter was read instead by her boss, who fired her, and by the director of a Houston television station, who hired her. Eight months later, she moved to CBS's local station in New York; three years after that she went to work for NBC.

“I don't want to sit up there and say, ‘Here's so-and-so with her story,’” she says. “I'd rather have 14 anchors up there saying, ‘Here's Linda Ellerbee with the work she did on blah-blah.’ Everybody gets a different kick out of this business. I like making little movies.”

And little they are: a minute and a half is standard, more than three minutes an eternity. When they're over, Ellerbee says, “You can't even wrap fish in them.” Clearly, in an industry where you work a week for a minute of air time, there are other satisfactions that drive correspondents, male and female, to put in the staggering hours they do.

“Among the very best, I find no sex difference in motivation,” says Burke. “Correspondents are very active, driven people possessed of an inborn curiosity. They're in a highly competitive business and it calls for a certain kind of character. We're very high, for example, on Bettina Gregory. We know her from her work on the regulatory agencies. She broke more damn stories on that kind of a beat than any man I've ever seen.”

The White House guard grins and says, “You after Bettina? Better get you a pair of track shoes to catch that woman. Look for the fidgety one in the green hat.”

“The White House is an elaborate playpen,” sighs the woman in the green hat, who has since been released from that controlled news atmosphere to snoop once again amid Government agencies on a wide-sweeping Washington, D.C., assignment. This is at the behest of ABC's new Washington bureau chief, Carl Bernstein, who hopes to boost ratings and credibility for

*World News Tonight* with more investigative scoops. “We wanted to augment our coverage of Washington in non-beat areas,” says deputy bureau chief Bob Murphy. “We wanted someone who could generate stories and go after them. That's why we put Bettina on it.”

“I love to go live,” Bettina Gregory is saying on a very dead, gray winter's day in D.C., before her change in assignment. “It's an existential pressure, unique unto itself, and it produces very extreme highs and lows. It's almost like being in a fever—you operate in another zone.”

This morning, however, the fever Gregory has is cabin fever. It is a malaise common to most White House correspondents, a creeping frustration that comes from being cooped up in a maze of airless cubicles and force-fed the Nation's news through measured briefings and a tinny, omnipresent P.A. system that incessantly yawps things like: “Mrs. Carter will be entering the Blue Room in five minutes with Mr. Dith Pran of Cambodia and The New York Times.”

And so on. There are women assigned to each of the subcompact network booths: Judy Woodruff in NBC's, Lee Thornton and Lesley Stahl in CBS's, and Gregory in ABC's. The latter booth is by far the messiest and the most dangerous, occupied by the morning's snowbank of releases; his-and-her cans of Final Net and Dry Look hair sprays; a crusty but cheerful soundman; Gregory; correspondent George Strait (since assigned to cover Rosalynn Carter and Walter Mondale); and head correspondent Sam Donaldson.

Therein lies the danger. Donaldson is a fast-moving, wolf-eyed sort who clearly enjoys his current reputation as the *enfant terrible* of the White House press corps. He gleefully nettles the President, baits Jody Powell daily, has bitten Gregory in a more frenzied moment and just now is holding an open pair of scissors to a visitor's throat.

“You could say it's a cutthroat business,” Gregory says, laughing, when he has dropped his weapon. “Here you have to rely very heavily on outside sources for the story behind the story. Working the White House is like trying to fit together an incredibly complex Chinese puzzle. The news is so carefully controlled, you have to piece the releases together, then fit them to the correct political and/or national-interest motives. I call it ‘Zen and the Art of Cov-



●● I get letters from viewers asking, 'Why do you wear the same coat every night?' 'Can't you afford a new scarf?' ●●

—Lesley Stahl, CBS

ering the White House."

In fact, Gregory has spent the morning in a series of exhausting activities inscrutable to the outsider, developing background for a number of stories: scurrying between gray Government offices, "staking out" Averell Harriman, scrounging up sources, briefing them, showing them how to work hidden tape recorders ("Casually, please"). It is, by normal standards, a slow news day at the Big House.

Oh, there was this little matter of six Americans escaping Iran through the Canadian embassy this morning. But a series of slammed-door meetings in Jody Powell's office determined that the news of that event should be delivered by the Administration's newest TV star, State Department spokesman Hodding Carter. (Hodding, who has just signed with William Morris, loves to go live.)

"No air," gasps Donaldson, clutching at his throat. "In this business, you have to have air. Women, I must say, have to work twice as hard to get it. No woman can come in here and rest on her affirmative-action duff. They have to go one on one with some men who might not be too happy they're around. Most of

us see the women as sex objects or shrews." He is grinning wickedly now. "I mean you can never forget the fact that they're women. Some are incredibly pushy and aggressive. But those are the ones I'd marry. The ones who knocked me down to get a story."

"You know what I want?" says Gregory when Donaldson leaves. "That chair. His job. He knows it, and we're friends. I've learned a lot from him, and I only hope to be that good after 20 years in the business. Look, there's no doubt in my mind that ABC hired me because I'm a woman. But they keep me because I'm good."

**A**t 33, she is, by her account, a "professional workaholic." "I was one of those people who had three or four jobs going at once to get started in the business," she says. "I've been in radio broadcasting since 1965—that was at a station in Ithaca, N.Y. Then, at a Long Island station, I had to do everything—from writing and reporting to broadcasting and production. I was an AP radio writer and a New York Times free-lancer in my spare moments before ABC hired me in 1974."

Now she begins her day at 6 in the morning with working breakfasts and often finishes at 8 or 9 at night. At this writing, she is owed 51 days of overtime and three weeks' vacation and admits, "I'll never get around to taking

spondent for Cable News Network.

"The old scout motto prevails here," she says. "Be prepared. Any time, anywhere. I flew to Cambodia with Mrs. Carter on two hours' notice, with no time even to get to the bank. My closet is always set with clean clothes for all climates, suitcase ready. It's never a question of turning down an assignment; it's how to get there fastest."

Just about the time newswoman Jane Fonda was *acting* terrified in the quaking nuclear reactor of "The China Syndrome," Bettina Gregory was making her way into the contaminated confines of the nuclear plant at Three Mile Island. "Sure I was nervous," she says. "All the reporters were. And the thought crossed my mind that if they were evacuating pregnant women, it might have an effect on my own capacity for childbearing someday. But I never once questioned going in there. I couldn't. It's my job."

Spokesmen for all three networks insist there is no story they would not send a woman out on—quite a switch from the days when most women in journalism dealt solely with circus parades and First Ladies' teas. They are virtually on every major beat now—the Pentagon, the State Department, the White House, Federal agencies, Congress. Yet, as Jessica Savitch notes, "There are new myths about women to replace old stereotypes.

●● The thing that interests me is seeing more women in management. ●●

—Lynn Sherr, ABC



it." She does, however, hope to take a few days off this summer. "I'm getting married and it would be nice to have a honeymoon," she says, acknowledging that the possibility rests on a happy marriage of schedules. Her fiancé, David Browde, is military affairs corre-

There is the woman who sprays her hair with hair spray and then falls asleep on the news set." And many women in the television business sense a tendency for management to compare them among themselves, rather than with all correspondents.

*continued*

PANORAMA 53



●● It would be terribly damaging to women if one woman is pushed ahead and she is not thoroughly professional. ●●

—Catherine Mackin, ABC

"Yes, that's very much true," says NBC's Mike Keating, who produces *Nightly News* segments out of Chicago. "There are very few female correspondents considered to be just good correspondents. It's a mistaken perspective, but generally they're considered to be good *women* correspondents." Keating does think there's a difference between the sexes. "Women seem to have a perspective that is different from how a male might approach a story," he says. "For example, in the area of stories involving the underprivileged and the poor, they seem to be able to see those victims as persons rather than story subjects."

ABC's David Burke is convinced that viewers willingly trust women with their news because of their reaction to Barbara Walters. "We don't have to do any research," he says. "Every January you pick up the paper and there's a poll of who the most important or respected women are. She's always number three or number four, which means that people put a great deal of faith, reliance and trust in her."

Nevertheless, the likes of Suzanne Somers and Cher have been known to make such lists. This is not to discount

the notion of trust. But visibility is a key factor in recognition as well. Walters' star has ascended far beyond the news to encompass dinner parties with Castro and specials with Dolly Parton and Donny and Marie. For those left sitting through Pentagon briefings, achieving visual distinction is still a crucial factor.

In such a highly cosmetic industry, it's no surprise that looks are a touchy issue. Though networks deny any conscious image-making, there is a clubby, sorority-sister look among some top national correspondents, as opposed to their plainer, more visibly ethnic, down-home counterparts on local stations. Put Judy Woodruff, Catherine Mackin, Lesley Stahl and Jessica Savitch side by side and you might expect them to break into the Chi Omega song—in harmony. The look is crisp, almost frosty: chin-length light hair, tailored suits, direct blue eyes.

"Oh, we're often accused of going out there and looking for just pretty faces," says Bill Slatter, who travels six months a year scouting talent for NBC affiliates. "But really, it goes beyond looks to something I can only call presence . . . the same kind of quality an actress or actor has on a stage."

Women correspondents say they are given no special guidelines by management as to appearance, but rely on their own judgment. Viewers, however, are most vocal in their opinions.

"I get letters about wearing my glasses," says Lesley Stahl. "People ask, 'Why do you wear the same coat every night?' 'Can't you afford a new scarf?' They're much tougher on you than any network would be."

Voice and demeanor—the elements that constitute what Slatter calls presence—are, of course, much more important than designer labels, and not as easily pulled off the rack at some made-for-TV broadcast school. Comparatively few women at high levels admit to any special training or to consulting so-called media experts to tailor an image. Too many, according to NBC's Keating, have simply studied what has gone on before.

"One of the problems that women have had on the air is that some have felt they've had to sound like female versions of the men," he says. "You know, that throaty voice, the real stern thing. And that constipated look. The brow will become furrowed and they'll look like they're reporting on the end of the earth. It's that old authoritarian approach to the news—which some guys still have, too—and I think at this stage it turns people off."

"I see a lot more of that than I like," concurs Slatter, who screens some 3000 hopefuls a year. "Some feel they've got to be like men in order to succeed. But that's not what I'm looking for. I like to see women who are women. And comfortable about it."

Whether or not women will be allowed to grow as old and jowly as Uncle Walter remains to be seen. Though Barbara Walters is frankly in her late 40s, the estimated median age for national women correspondents is only about 35; management expects it to decrease as more and more women rise in the ranks from local levels.

If being a correspondent is a high-casualty business in terms of security, it is far tougher on personal lives. "The sheer loneliness is incredibly taxing," notes Burke. "The travel, the uncertainties. The divorce rate is pretty stiff for both sexes in this field."

And for women, there are the special



●● A woman in a high-visibility anchor spot is much less important than having women cover serious stories that get on the evening news. ●●

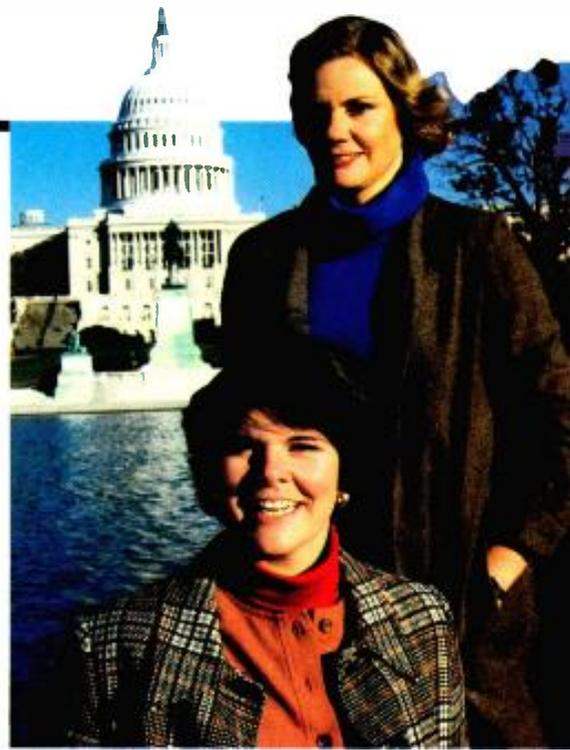
—Betsy Aaron, CBS

●● There's no doubt in my mind ABC hired me because I'm a woman. But they keep me because I'm good. ●●

—Bettina Gregory, ABC

●● I'm 32. I've got more primaries before me than I've got childbearing years. ●●

—Ann Compton, ABC



Top: Bettina Gregory. Bottom: Ann Compton.

complications of childbirth and care. ABC's Ann Compton, who has done election coverage in the past, had to forgo the possibilities of primary-night anchoring this year, having just given birth. "I'm 32," she explains, "and I've got more primaries before me than I've got childbearing years."

"Ann's tough, though," says Bettina Gregory. "She had the baby at 1 A.M. and called in to ABC to report the event at precisely 1:45."

**T**he baby or the beat? The decision is difficult, but having both is feasible. Linda Ellerbee's two children are quite blasé about their mom's TV appearances by now, preferring to keep track of her wanderings with a closet full of T-shirts that say things like "I Saw the Pope in the Heartland." Lesley Stahl rises at 6:30 each weekday to have time with her 2½-year-old daughter. She remembers her working pregnancy as pleasant and uneventful, save for the occasional comic scene:

"Imagine me, eight months pregnant, waddling around, screaming at legislators in the Senate corridor," she says. "I was covering Koreagate at the time and in a way, I wouldn't mind being pregnant again. It's awfully hard for a politician to ignore a very pregnant, yelling lady."

Looking at her own future, and that of other newswomen, Stahl says that this election year will probably provide some signposts. During the last election, she anchored CBS's West Coast desk on election eve.

The right story can make a big dif-

ference, admits Stahl, who after working in Boston, rose to prominence at CBS in Washington while reporting on what seemed at first a minor assignment: Watergate. "It was one of those stories that percolated for months," she remembers. "At first, all you covered were bail hearings. But then I began doing a morning-news spot on Watergate every day, and then the Senate hearings. I remember seeing it as a major jump in my career when I joined round-table discussions with Dan Rather and Daniel Schorr during Watergate.

"This year," she says, "it will be interesting to see how the networks use women in reporting and analysis. They're already out there on the campaign trail."

"Watch the convention coverage closely, too," advises Linda Ellerbee. "There will be a lot more women on the floor. After all, there will be a lot more women delegates. And dentists and lawyers. And Indian chiefs."

In short, television, save for its visibility factor, is no different from the other American industries in adjusting corporate structure and personnel to fit the times. It can take years for qualified women to reach the top; more time still for complete acceptance.

"The thing that interests me is seeing more women in management," says ABC correspondent Lynn Sherr. "I don't think women will automatically give more favors to women, but I think women might be more sensitive to the appeal of women."

Among themselves, women corre-

spondents are as competitive as the nature of the business requires. Sliding doors slam shut in the White House cubicles as each network hunkers down to prepare the day's dispatches. There are, of course, a number of worn, too-oft-told anecdotes about the lengths certain women have gone to for a scoop, but there is no inherent bitchiness or savagery in such stories—just the same raw motivation that has prompted male correspondents to lock their colleagues in a toilet to get to a phone first: competition on a beat.

**R**are moments when the pressure is off find Stahl and Gregory chatting amiably about Chinese silk, or the Administration's defense policy, which they happen to be discussing when the call comes over the loudspeaker announcing a Presidential appearance.

Haloed by the radiance of megawatt klieg lights, the President smiles through the White House "photo opportunity" with visiting feminist and European leader Simone Veil. Side by side, Lesley Stahl, Bettina Gregory, Lee Thornton and UPI's Helen Thomas stand straining to catch the conversation. Just as the call "Lights!" signals the press's dismissal, the familiar drawl penetrates the din: "Ahm verrah excited about wimmins' rahts."

Shooting a wry smile to Helen Thomas, Bettina Gregory scribbles the remark on her pad and heads out into the corridor.

"Aren't we all, Mr. President?" she says softly to herself. "Aren't we all?" 🗨️



# What Can Print Your Plane Tickets, Find the Kids and Beat You at Chess?

It's your TV set of tomorrow and the technology is ready right now

By DAVID LACHENBRUCH

**H**as everybody got a digital remote-control panel handy? (Never mind *what* digital remote-control panel; it's just a game.) OK, touch the keys 0-0-1. Now watch, the mirror that covers a large part of one wall turns a restful green. White letters take shape: "Viewing Menu—Aug. 20, 2000."

The letters fade to reveal an imposing bill of fare ... 101 Drama ... 106 News ... 114 Chronolog. ...

Right. You choose the "drama" category. You touch 1-0-1 on your control panel, and the screen refocuses on a listing of the dramatic shows scheduled for this evening, each preceded by another number. You can, of course, dial the code for any of these shows to get a more detailed description (usually accompanied by preview clips).

But maybe you just want to know what's on—dial "Chronolog" and the entire program schedule crawls up the screen. Pushing the "freeze" button on the remote control stops the motion of the scroll to give you time to choose.

Still using your remote control, you arrange your evening's viewing, touching the keys for each program's code number (you don't have to think about channel numbers). If there are two good shows on at the same time, you direct one to "storage"—when it comes on, it's automatically recorded for you to view whenever you wish. You don't have to touch the video recorder, which is kept out of sight in the component cabinet; everything is controlled from the wireless touch-pad panel. Your entire evening's viewing is now automatically set and will appear in sequence on the giant screen (or be stored in the recorder). If you wish, you can program your whole week's or month's viewing in advance, and, of course, change your schedule at any time—or turn the damn thing off. End of game.

Only it's not a game. Nobody can say that's exactly the way it will be, but that's certainly how your television

viewing *could* be in 20 years, based on technological developments now well under way. (See box on page 58.)

Outwardly, the most remarkable change in your Year 2000 television set—or video terminal—will be the screen itself. Finally, after decades of trial and error, the picture will be freed from the tube. The wall screen probably will measure 30 by 40 inches—or, in deluxe versions, 5 by 6.5 feet—and will be 3 to 5 inches thick. All of the associated electronics will be contained in the frame, all functions controlled from the simple wireless unit. And the picture will be brighter and sharper than today's TV images—easily viewed in a sunbathed room.

**B**y 2000, the television set will have completed its evolution from a self-contained box to a modular system, just as hi-fi grew from the phonograph to an interrelated set of components. Wall-screen monitors, tuning systems, video recorders and players, keyboards and other attachments will be sold separately as add-ons to create a complete video terminal.

But the biggest difference between the 1980 TV set and the 2000 video terminal will be in the many new functions the latter will perform. The display screen and its circuits are far too versatile to be used only for showing programs. This set will be much more than a passive, one-way window. It will, in fact, be the nerve center of the home and the terminal for two-way communication with the community and the world.

Literally thousands of hours of programming will be available every day. Oh, there will still be conventional over-the-air broadcasting, much of it aimed at a large out-of-home audience equipped with briefcase-sized, flat-screen portables and pocket TVs. But far fewer homes will have conventional rooftop or indoor antennas. The vast majority of city and town video termi-

nals will be connected to what probably will still be called "the cable"—an anachronism, because it will consist of bundles of high-capacity glass fibers in place of electrical cable, capable of carrying hundreds of channels on modulated laser-light beams. Many rural homes, and some city ones, will have small, dishlike, rooftop or windowsill antennas to pick up programs directly from space satellites.

Take a closer look at the viewer of the year 2000—you, 20 years from now.

First of all, you have a choice of program inputs—you can use a conventional TV tuner, a cable tuner, a satellite receiver, or all three. Other inputs include video recorders and players and text decoders. Instead of watching a television program, you may choose to play a video record—you can check the titles in your collection by calling up your video-record index with your remote-control unit. The proper 6-inch disc (which will play for two hours per side) is automatically loaded. The same automatic-playing mechanism is used for playback of digital, ultra-high-fidelity audio discs. If you want to listen to music instead of watch a program, you have the option of relaxing before the blank mirror-screen or watching abstract images, electronically generated to match the mood of the music.

**S**ome video records are classic movies, but there are few recent ones—after all, you can tune in any of the current movie releases (for a fee, of course) directly from cable or satellite. Instead of being adapted from other media, most video records now are special "video magazines" or "video books" created especially for the medium—weeklies, monthlies or specials devoted to particular subjects or specialized entertainment. Many records, such as the video encyclopedias, combine text and motion.

The little flexible discs have become so small and convenient that they can

be bound into newspapers or magazines or sent by mail in regular envelopes. But the principal method of delivery is electronic. Both video and audio records can be programmed directly onto blank discs in your home terminal's recorder via cable or satellite "disc services."

At your desk, either in the viewing room or in a study with its own "satellite" screen, is a typewriter-like key-

board. Any member of the family can use this to address a central community or national computer, calling up all kinds of material from the information bank. When was Ulysses S. Grant born? How does an atomic engine work? What's my bank balance? Who was Mork? In addition to displaying textual material, it also provides color pictures, diagrams and animation on request. Being a two-way system, it

can, for example, display on request a timetable of all flights to Phoenix and make a reservation for you. Your desk may also contain a printout device to make typed copies of any text material that appears on the screen.

You may remember that one of the first major reference works to be converted to video was the telephone directory—at a large saving in printing and distribution costs to the phone

## FROM IDIOT BOX TO SMART TV

"Smart TV," as engineers call it, is already here, and its IQ is growing all the time. Although the television set of today still strongly resembles the idiot box of yesteryear, its character is changing rapidly, and within the next five years it should begin to show definite signs of evolving into the video terminal of 2000.

In the 1950s and '60s, only nuts talked to their TV sets. Today, an increasing number of people can communicate with their sets via video games, computers, recorders, videodisc players and two-way cable. The technologies that will make tomorrow's video terminal a reality—principally large-scale integration (or LSI), which economically crams the functions of thousands of components onto a tiny chip; and microprocessors (or minicomputers)—already are in many of today's television sets and their accessories.

Here, then, is a quick look at the evolution of the home video terminal.

**Two-Way Capability:** A silly little toy called *Odyssey*, introduced by Magnavox in 1972, ended the passivity of the television set forever. This \$99.95 gadget was the first home video game—and the first mass-market device to let the viewer engage his TV set in two-way communication. When he put those silly little squares on the screen, he was actively programming his TV. Pre-*Odyssey*, the TV receiver was designed to do one thing: receive and reproduce images and sound from broadcast transmitters. When not in use, that marvelously complex electronic system just sat there and stared balefully through its glassy eye.

The display screen and the electronics were there, just aching to be put to more useful work. And the 1970s saw them begin to realize some of their potential: Cable and pay-TV mushroomed. Video-game systems and, later, home computers, the

home video recorder and the videodisc appeared on the scene. Also in the '70s, two-way cable systems, such as Warner's *Qube*, let the viewer interact directly with an outside computer and express his opinion on various subjects, even order merchandise, through his TV set.

In England, two types of videotext systems made their debut—teletext, which piggybacks text material on the television signal; and viewdata, which provides access to computers via phone lines. Back home, a simplified form of teletext went into service this year—"closed captioning," which permits the hearing-impaired to view captions on selected regular television programs by means of a special converter.

**Modularization:** The proliferation of TV attachments—recorders, disc players, cable-TV converters, caption decoders, games and computers—is putting a severe strain on the form of the television set, still a throwback to 1946. These attachments, and more to come, are designed for connection to the antenna terminals at the back of the set—a neat trick when you have three or four add-ons.

The television receiver is poised for a major change, similar to the metamorphosis of the phonograph console into the high-fidelity component system. In a modern stereo system, the key component is the amplifier, which has input jacks for a variety of program sources—tuner, turntable, tape deck—and output jacks for speakers. The most significant component in the television system of the future will be the "monitor," the box with the picture tube and its circuits. It will be designed to accommodate many different program sources, of which the broadcast tuner will be only one. Audio outputs will be fed to a separate amplifier, which, in turn, will connect to speakers. This approach permits the viewer to add as many

video and audio devices as he wishes at his own pace, upgrading any part of the system without scrapping the whole thing.

We should see the beginnings of creeping modularization in the next year or two. Home video monitors and tuners are already available in Japan. By 1981, most quality TV sets will have taken a tiny step toward modularization with audio jacks that will funnel sound through the home hi-fi or external speakers (although they'll continue to have their own built-in amplifiers and speakers as well). About the same time, you can expect to see sets with input jacks for plugging such devices as videodisc players and cassette recorders directly into the video circuits, bypassing the antenna terminals and improving picture quality in the process. This eventually will make possible lower-cost players and recorders, by eliminating redundant circuits in both the attachment and the receiver. The first fully modular TV-component system should be available around 1985 or shortly thereafter.

Freed of the necessity to put everything in the same box, manufacturers can offer the latest devices and improvements as they come up, without making the whole system obsolete. For instance, the FCC is currently conducting an inquiry into stereophonic sound for television. If we had modular TV now, you'd merely replace your audio amplifier with the stereo version and add another speaker or pair of speakers. (Of course, manufacturers will offer add-on stereo converters for TV sets—more attachments for the box.)

**The Picture Screen:** For the last 30 years, all efforts to free the television picture from the bulky glass bottle have failed. But today, there's a glimmer of light. The most practical course seems to be to leave the picture in the bottle—but squash the bot-

company, and with greater convenience to customers. The TV remote-control panel or the typewriter keyboard can be used to find the phone number of any subscriber in the country, or perhaps the world (assuming we're all still on speaking terms with one another).

Even without the printer accessory, anything that appears on the screen can be stored for later reference in your

tile flat. Current work in the field of electroluminescence may result in what basically is a large, thin picture tube, the first examples of which are likely to measure 35 to 50 inches diagonally and 3 to 5 inches thick.

When? Let's guess some time between 1986 and 1990. We already have giant-screen projection-TV systems, but as exciting as they are, there doesn't seem to be too much hope of reducing their bulk and improving their performance and economics to compete with direct-view television systems.

**Signal Processing:** This is one of the neatest tricks of "smart TV." It involves the set itself in actively *improving* the picture to compensate for deficiencies in the received image. One example of signal processing now incorporated in many sets is "color averaging," as exemplified by RCA's ColorTrak (and many other systems under various names), which smooths out errors in color intensity. Another is VIR, introduced by General Electric and adopted by other brands; this uses an invisible signal, which most stations transmit along with the picture, to assure accuracy of color rendition. The latest signal-processing technique to appear in color sets uses a principle known as "comb filtering" (first introduced in Magnavox Color 330) to eliminate crawling color dots and increase picture resolution.

The next "smart-TV" innovation quite likely will be the electronic ghost-eliminator, employing computer techniques to exorcise television's most haunting reception problem. Electronic interference, too, may be eliminated by built-in minicomputers, which will detect any irregularities in individual lines of the television picture and substitute the image from the preceding line.

The only problem with all this is that we might end up with a TV set smarter than we are.

video recorder. Pictures also can be held on the screen as long as you wish by means of a "frame-grabber," which can capture and hold any single frame of the TV image. Home movies, made with a video camera the size of 1980's 35-mm. cameras, can be displayed on the screen as well. Then, too, film photography has been replaced by electronic photography (videography). Disposable still cameras can be preloaded with up to 10,000 exposures of electronic-memory material and electronic slides from them displayed on the wall screen. A special accessory can make instant color prints of any of these slides—or, in fact, anything that comes on the screen.

Electronic games, contests and tournaments are part of the family's at-home fun these days. Using the giant screen as a game board, members compete against one another in everything from Monopoly to chess or test their skills against the central computer at any preset level of difficulty. Probably the most fun, though, is the interhome tournament, in which your family plays against another in the neighborhood—or across the country.

The video terminal's two-way capability makes it a valuable security device. Low-cost sensors installed throughout the home automatically summon the police or fire department in case of emergency. Button-sized video cameras monitor your front door and permit you to see a caller's image in a corner of the video screen.

Another video terminal add-on helps keep track of the children. Each of your offspring has a tiny electronic "locator" button sewn into his or her clothing; when you press the locate key on your home terminal, a map of the neighborhood appears on the screen with a different colored dot indicating the location of each child. ("Aw, Mom, I'm too old to wear a locator—Charlie's parents don't make him wear one!")

**O**n those occasions when the main video terminal isn't in use, that big screen is no longer an eyesore; it doesn't even have to be a mirror. Instead, it displays a still picture of something—anything—"grabbed" from a video record or program. Or it shows family pictures. Some cable channels provide "electronic wallpaper"—cityscapes, sea scenes with crashing waves, swaying palm trees. And museums have begun making art masterpieces available by subscription for display on the wall screen.

Though your TV set in 2000 is a cornucopia of technical advances over that box you watched in 1980, there's more

to come. At the start of the 21st century, television will be on the brink of even more changes. Transmission standards finally will be changed to provide crisper, finer-grained pictures—probably with double the 525 lines of today—and to assume CinemaScope proportions, and the stereophonic audio track of 2000 will yield to a more subtle "surround sound."

Although there will be microcomputers throughout home equipment, the "home computer" as such will already have faded by 2000, eliminating much unnecessary hardware around the house. It will be much simpler to rely on the more sophisticated central computers via cable and satellite than to have your own around the house. In fact, the start of the 21st century will most likely usher in a "get-the-junk-out-of-the-house" trend, threatening the existence of the home-video recorder and player, as powerful new transmission pipes are installed to give viewers a choice of thousands of movies, plays, concerts, video books and magazines virtually instantaneously.

Some time after 2000, you'll be able to order whatever you want whenever you want it. No longer will there be any program schedules, except for spot news, live sports and special events—just easy-to-use, on-screen catalogues of what's available, updated daily. You will arrange your own time schedule, and the program will be delivered by information pipe. The video recorder, if it continues to exist in the home, will shrink to a tiny module with a permanent, semiconductor memory, which can store thousands and thousands of programs, books, pictures and games without the necessity of ever changing a record or tape.

**M**ost miraculous of all—thanks to the central computer and the wide-band, two-way information pipe—America will finally solve its mail problem; the Postal Service can actually look forward to making a profit from instantaneous electronic mail. A simple attachment will allow letters to be sent between any two video terminals directly, for display on the video screen or for reproduction on paper.

The basic technology for the television set of the year 2000 and beyond already exists. Exactly how it will be applied depends as much on economics, politics and the question of war or peace as it does on science. Whatever the precise timetable, it's certain that what we now know as the television set is evolving into the single most important device in the home. ■

*As in the film that spawned the series, the Breaking Away pilot features a climactic bike race (below), but it takes place a year before the movie's contest. Some other changes wrought for the small-screen production: Shaun Cassidy (right) is cast as the moonstruck cyclist, thus competing with memories of Dennis Christopher's striking portrayal in the film; the town of Athens, Ga., makes believe it is Bloomington, Ind.; and the University of Georgia pinch-hits for Indiana University.*

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T A R T



# “Breaking Away” Tries Out a Faster Track

Making a TV winner out of that beloved movie requires some fancy steering indeed

By FRAZIER MOORE

This is a lovely spring day,” a voice coaxes through a bullhorn. “Let’s see who can stand it the longest.” Filmmaking is T-shirts on a nippy winter morning in February, and today 300 spectators are party to the masquerade. Already primed to cheer on cue for a phony bike race, they won’t balk at shivering while they

shout. Off come jackets and sweaters. Anything for show biz.

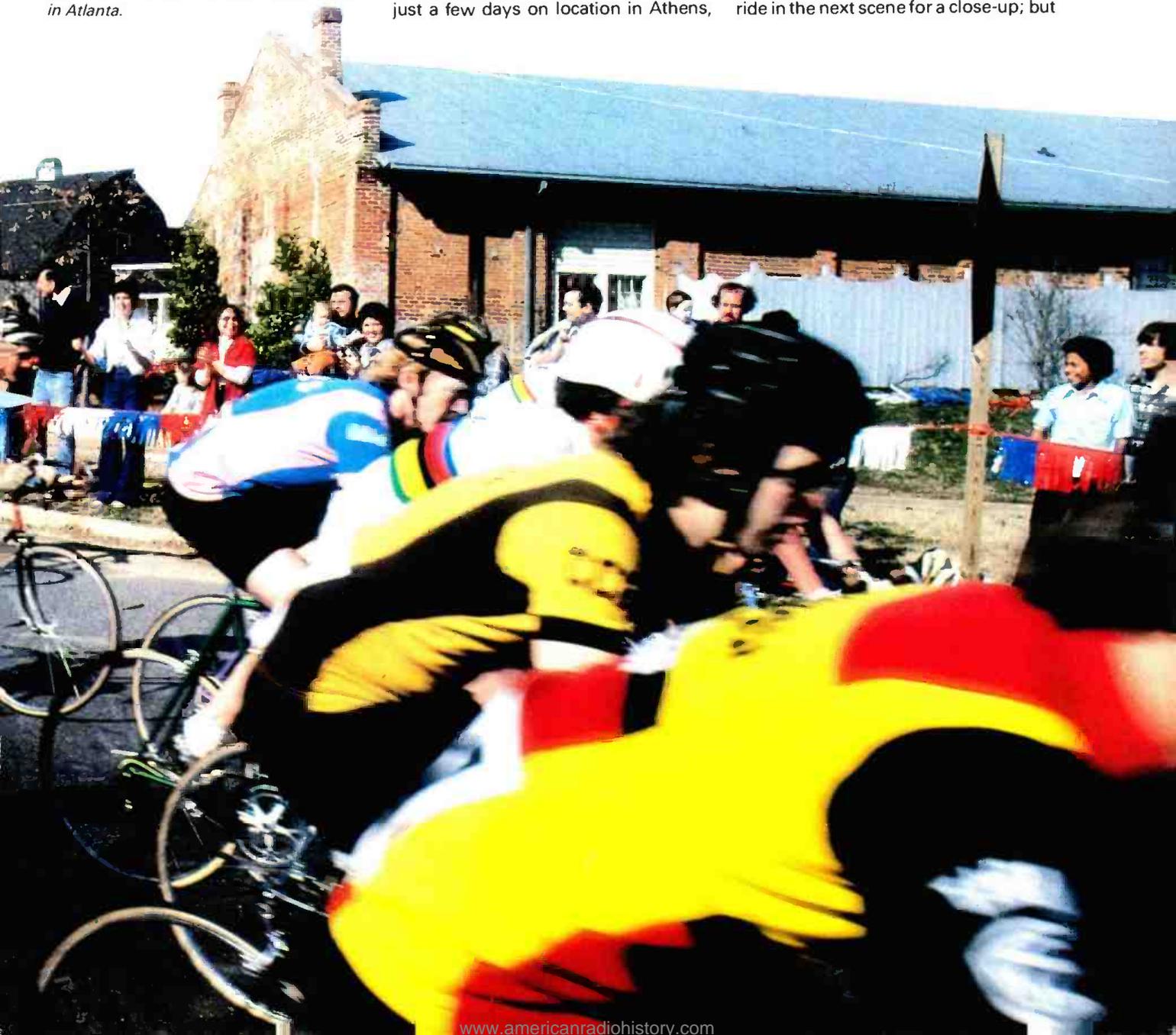
The time-and-temperature sign at the First National Bank calls the day early, the weather chilly. Few things other than Hollywood’s siren call could lure college students from their beds before first period, or summon workers into truancy just to populate a sidewalk, or seduce passers-by into fits of watching ... very ... little ... happen. But after just a few days on location in Athens,

Ga., the moviemakers have been embraced as a diversion not unlike a troupe of carnies staging street shows.

Today the observers are part of the act. Lots of noisy extras are needed for this, the big race scene in a television follow-up to last year’s hit movie “Breaking Away.”

Unseen at the moment is Shaun Cassidy, who stars as young Dave Stohler, the race’s winner-to-be. Cassidy will ride in the next scene for a close-up; but

*Frazier Moore is a free-lance writer located in Atlanta.*



in the distant scene now being shot, a double is furnishing Dave's stamina and skill. Waiting astride Dave's bike, Garry Rybar, who has been racing for eight years, dubs novice bike-racer Cassidy "a natural. And, as time goes by, he'll get better."

As time goes by? The filming will last only two weeks, hardly time for much bloom in Cassidy's budding biking prowess. But Rybar has his eyes on the more distant future. This hour-long production is actually a pilot, the first lap of what everyone involved sees as a sure-fire weekly *Breaking Away* series. So it follows that in a few months Cassidy will be back in the saddle. As will the rest of the cast and crew. In short, the series is a shoo-in—that's the official unofficial line. (For once, the unofficial line was right on target. The pilot won the series a spot on ABC's fall 1980 program schedule.)

From his camera's-eye vantage point on the bridge down the street, director Joe Ruben surveys the starting-line spectacle a few hundred yards away and gives the order to roll. Bikers rip from the starting line, skimming down the road and up the hill. The crowd cheers madly. Ruben beams. "It looked great, didn't it? It looked great."

Reclaiming Dave's bike, Shaun goes in for Garry.

Last summer, "Breaking Away" slipped into theaters unannounced by even a whisper of hype. It had a belt-tightened budget and no stars. It was shot, and set, in nothing-special Bloomington, Ind., and busied itself with quiet matters like friendship, bike racing, growing up, and living in a university town where the locals take a back seat to the college crowd. It had nothing going for it... except that it was wonderful. And it was cherished.

Wouldn't "Breaking Away" make a swell series? certain network executives began asking themselves. Sure, it's worth a shot, at least a pilot, they decided. So last fall, a deal was struck between Twentieth Century-Fox and ABC.

Among the movie's fans, news of TV's imposition was met with suspicion and dismay. TV shouldn't tamper with a miracle, they grumbled. TV will debase, then abandon, this treasure.

Not that the producers' formula didn't sound honorable: a one-hour weekly comedy-drama filmed on location, with potent scripts and no laugh track, gunplay or jiggle. But how would they exempt themselves from TV's Faustian pact with the ratings? Besides,

how would a *Breaking Away* series wear? How many bike races could any viewer sit through before switching to *Buck Rogers*?

Clearly a lot was at stake, but the potential rewards were just as great—and growing. On the pilot's second shooting day, the Academy Award nominations were announced and the film picked up five, further promoting its prestige, and paving the way for an even healthier reception for the series.

"But when we bought the rights, it was not yet a successful film," said Jonathan Axelrod, ABC's vice president for dramatic series development. "It was a

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TV shouldn't tamper with a miracle, the movie's fans grumbled. It will debase, then abandon, this treasure

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movie that we fell in love with. Fox and ABC," he vowed, "have a joint commitment to preserve the quality."

Herbert Leonard, who is producing the pilot for Fox, voiced a less exuberant version of the alliance. "We have come to very workable terms with the network, which is unusual," Leonard said tartly. "I think they have dealt with us in a way that has not been destructive. This is a very simple, wholesome story about kids growing up and breaking away from their home surroundings, and getting on with their lives," he explained. "I think, by its very nature, it is defensible against any [network] onslaught. There are a lot of strong-minded people involved in this. We have a united front."

This "united front" seemed to embrace all of the principals hard at work on the pilot, some of whom had been part of the movie two years earlier, and now were back to make lightning strike again. Barbara Barrie, nominated for Best Supporting Actress, was resuming her role as Dave's wispy mother. Jackie Earle Haley was continuing as the plucky, pint-size Moocher, one of the four "cutter" pals (so named because their fathers once worked cutting stone at the local limestone quarries). And the movie's two master-

minds were back—director Peter Yates (returning as executive producer) and writer Steve Tesich, both Oscar nominees and Tesich a winner for Best Original Screenplay.

But the TV version of "Breaking Away" won't be a carbon copy of the movie. The most drastic technical change is the Southern filming location. The series needed a Bloomington look-alike with a climate better suited to year-round shooting. Athens, a classic college town of about 50,000, filled the bill; the University of Georgia would pinch-hit for Indiana University.

Another crop of alterations brought new faces to familiar roles. Vincent Gardenia, seen on *All in the Family* and in films such as "Bang the Drum Slowly," became Dave's grumpy, used-car-salesman father, a part created by Paul Dooley. The other two cutter youths, besides Dave and Moocher, would be played by unknowns: Thom Bray is now the wry-witted Cyril, and Tom Wiggin plays Mike, the dead-end football star.

The most ticklish bit of casting was Shaun Cassidy as Dave, the moon-struck cyclist. Dennis Christopher, letter-perfect in the movie, said he scotched early overtures to repeat the role. "I already said what I have to say with that character," Christopher explained from Los Angeles, where he was making a film. "But I'm real pleased that Cassidy's doing it. He was a real brave choice."

Brave choice indeed. At 21, Cassidy is best known as an ex-Hardy Boy (after his now-defunct TV series), a deposed cover king of teen pulps, and a pop star whose music one writer diagnosed as "Pube (for pubescent) Rock." Cassidy wasn't unmindful of the accusations that he was signed purely as Nielsen insurance.

"They may have brought me in because they think I'm a name," Cassidy said. "But, hopefully, it's also because they think I can act." Serious about his craft, he accepted the role to prove himself to audiences beyond his original sweet-16 constituency. "This show doesn't need a name actor," he said. "The movie is big enough to sell it."

By all accounts, the only truly indispensable name in putting *Breaking Away* on TV belongs to the man who put it on paper. Now in Athens, his presence so low-key as to suggest loitering, Steve Tesich was watching his new script come to life.

The pilot reintroduces the town, the characters, and the feud between the

cutters and the snooty I.U. students. But it encounters these elements a year *before* the movie takes place, broaching themes the movie confronts further down the line.

Although Tesich plans to write few, if any, of the subsequent episodes, he will remain involved with *Breaking Away* as a creative consultant. "We only scratched the surface of the town, the campus and what it's like to be an outsider in a place where the university is the focal point," he said, moseying through the jungle of cameras and technicians. "And then there are the cutter kids, a group that's held together by mutual affection, but pulled apart because they're approaching the age when they can't be with the guys the rest of their lives. If the series works, after a year or two they'd go their own ways, and new characters would come in. If people liked the movie, the series can give them more to love."

**T**he cameras were rolling in late February, but the pilot's script had been written and many of the roles filled just since the first of the year. And only after that did a search start for a suitable town. Producer Leonard scoured California, then considered several Southwestern and Southern states. Finally he was collared by the Georgia Film Commission, which suggested Athens. There Leonard found a look he felt could readily translate into a video version of Bloomington. Nearby stone quarries (which are central to the story) clinched the decision. Not long afterward, a cast and crew of nearly 100 swept into Athens.

*continued*

*Though Cassidy is called a "natural" bike racer, he is still a neophyte, so a double rides in the distant shots while Shaun pedals for the close-ups.*



Life in Athens, to no one's surprise, went on. "The city is flexible in its thinking and has a fairly cosmopolitan outlook," explained Mayor Lauren Coile. "The filmmaking won't disrupt our routine." And it didn't. Besides, Athens already claimed the world's only double-barrel cannon (perfected a bit too late to aid the Confederate Army, it now defends City Hall) and the so-called Tree That Owns Itself (an oak that inherited its tiny plot of land when its owner died). *Breaking Away* was just the town's latest distinction.

A few years earlier, the city had muffed similar stardom at the preproduction stage of a film featuring John Belushi. University administrators took one look at the bawdy script and turned thumbs down, so the producers went elsewhere: "Animal House" was made at the University of Oregon.

**B**ut Athens adapted comfortably to *Breaking Away's* demands. Barnett's Newsstand downtown made a dandy drugstore. Physician Robert Gomez vacated his office long enough for a doctor's-visit scene, and C. L. Ford's car lot briefly took the name "Campus Clean Used Cars," the firm Dave's father runs. Then there was the memorable Monday when the colonnaded Theta Chi fraternity house became Sigma Chi Epsilon, which the cutters storm to settle a score.

"It was wild as hell," a beefy Theta Chi brother said later. When dark came and the unit packed up, the house treasury was \$100 richer. "But we'd have done it for free," said the Theta. "It's good publicity. Be great for Rush. I don't know what we'll do with the money. I guess we'll buy a couple of kegs."

But among the Athenians recruited

for the pilot, the most enduring should be Wendi Wimmer, a 21-year-old theater major at the University of Georgia. Hearing of the project late in January, she headed for the casting office, which had just set up shop at the Holiday Inn. She auditioned for the part of Laura, Mike's unrequited admirer. A few days later, she read again for the part. Then again. And again. She did a screen test. Weeks passed. Then, the day before shooting was to start, she read one last time. And, months before graduation, Wimmer was signed for seven episodes of a major TV series, to be filmed within walking distance of her apartment.

Another series regular was signed in Athens—a comfortable old home, which was bursting with strange guests this rainy afternoon. In its role as Dave's home, its living room was aswarm with technicians and equipment, and cameras peered into its dining room. In the bike-postered bedroom, Leonard huddled with assistants to plan the next day's shots. And in the kitchen, Cassidy, Barrie and Gardenia submitted to the ministrations of a makeup man.

"It's very strange coming back," said Barrie. "I know my character, but I have a different husband and child. I have to be careful, because I don't want to impose one experience on the other."

Her new screen spouse expressed contentment with his part. "But I'm not gonna try to be better than Paul Dooley," Gardenia said, referring to his role's predecessor. "I *couldn't* be better; I'm just gonna do my job. I don't feel that actors should always be in competition with each other."

"You can use that quote for me, too," offered "son" Cassidy, awaiting his turn

for makeup.

From the back porch to the front yard, gale-force activity blew through the whole house. Or nearly the whole house. A door whose crayoned sign cautioned CAST AND CREW, PLEASE DO NOT DISTURB concealed a cove of serenity containing Belle Saye. Settled in an easy chair beside her bed, Mrs. Saye, a puckish great-grandmother, was at that moment pasting Top Value stamps in a stack of savings books. She had leased her house for five years' duty as the set for the Stohler home.

At first, Mrs. Saye had been reluctant to cooperate. "You know how much devilment's going on," she explained. But her mind was changed when she heard the terms: painting, repair work and cash.

The producers had offered Mrs. Saye a motel room for the two or three days' shooting, but she preferred to stay put, even if in quarantine, and rarely ventured out for a glimpse of the filmmakers at work. "It's bo-o-o-ring," she confided in a polite whisper.

Mrs. Saye's indifference aside, Wendi Wimmer, Belle Saye's house, and the rest of Athens are ready for *Breaking Away* to become a winning series. Just as ready are the *Breaking Away* bunch, who are making plans to return to Georgia perhaps as early as this month. And when shooting for the pilot wrapped during the second week in March, "See you this summer" was the standard farewell.

**B**ut regardless of the clear-cut sense of destiny infusing the project, several questions await answers. For instance, the effect of such attention on Athens and its citizenry: the pilot was a private affair between the city and the filmmakers, but how about a marriage, to which millions coast to coast would be privy each week? Once the series commences, will Athens replace Plains as the *de rigueur* side trip for the Miami-bound? Will Mrs. Saye's placid little street become a must for rubberneckers who want to see where Dave "lives"? Stay tuned.

And stay tuned for other developments. The biggest question remains: will the promises be kept?...Can the series break away from the field on commercial TV, and keep pace with the film? Dennis Christopher was one of many watching from the sidelines as the spin-off raced toward an answer. If he hedged on a prediction, he endorsed the attempt. "It's worth a try; you *have* to try," he said. "The movie was perfect, but you don't have to embalm it." ■

In the series, the four "cutter" pals are played by (from left) Tom Wiggin, Thom Bray, Cassidy and Jackie Earle Haley, who, of the four, is the only returnee from the film.



# No Grazing on the Satellite Dish

What happens when a New Mexico ranch family gets TV for the first time in five years

By JOHN NEARY

New Mexico rancher Jeffrey Lane and his wife, Janet, are just the sort of affluent, active viewers any sponsor would be delighted to know are out there watching. But the Lanes had to go five years cold turkey without television because a mesa near their home blocked video signals from ground transmitters. Then, *presto*, thanks to the mini-miracle of microwave technology and their own earth-station dish antenna, the Lanes plugged back into the world of TV they had left behind when they moved to the ranch in 1974.

Has linking up again with the global community changed their outlook upon the world? Do Jeff, 29, and Janet, 30, find that sitting around the cathode-ray tube evokes any epiphanies, lays bare any fresh insights, opens any new vistas of the inscape?

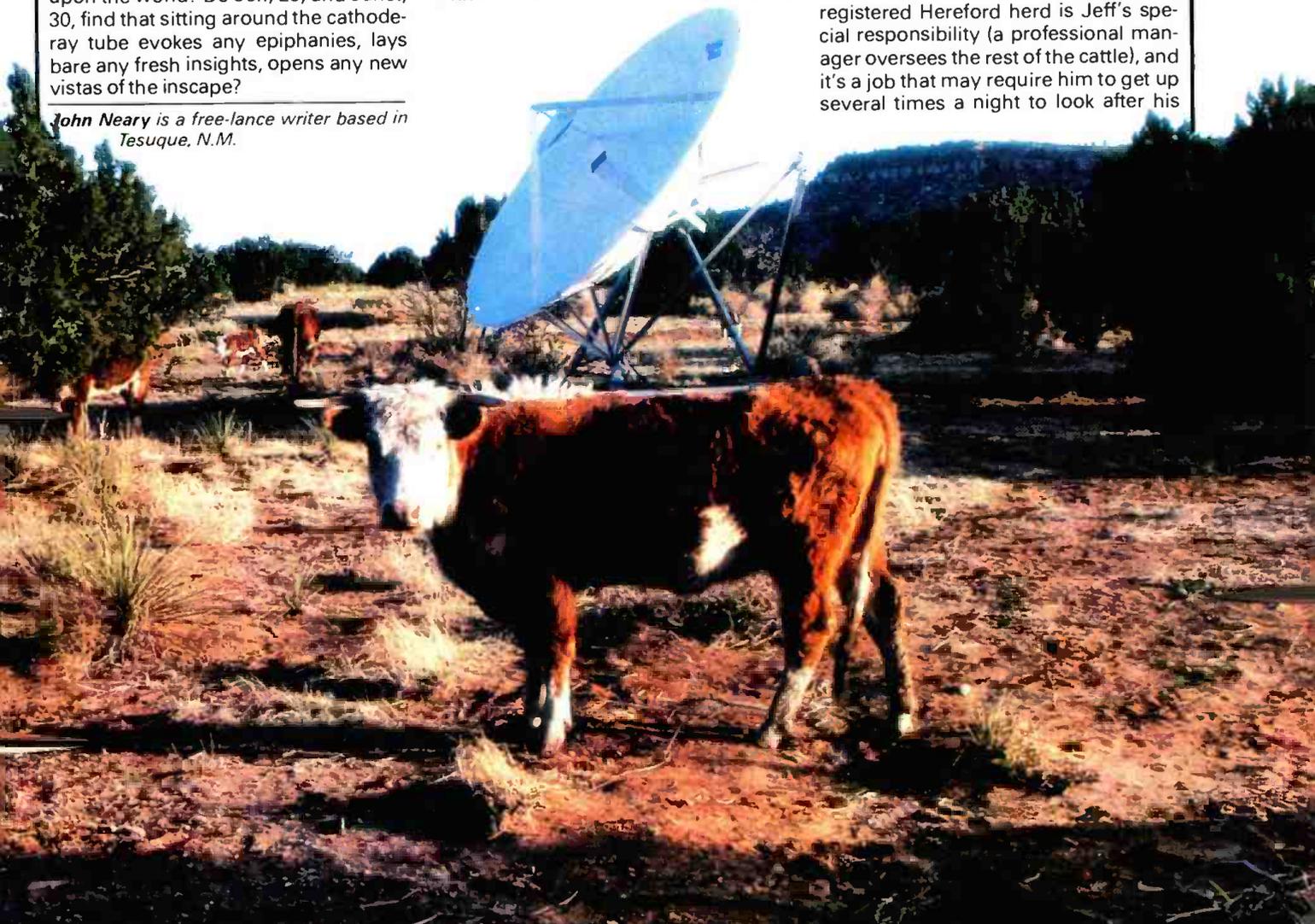
*John Neary is a free-lance writer based in Tesuque, N.M.*

The Lanes, alas, have been too busy ranching to notice. In the Lane family, the coming of television to their home in the wide-open spaces has meant more to their children, Travis, 4, and Sarah, 2. Says Janet, "I wish we could say it's changed our lives....*Travis* could say that."

For the Lanes, doing without the telly had seemed a small price to pay for the joy of living on the historic Bell Ranch, when they moved there after Jeff got his degree in ag-biz from Colorado State, where Janet had majored in English and history. If anything, says Jeff, as he jockeys his pickup truck through a maternity ward of a pasture, spiked with cholla cactus and crowded with

fidgety heifers about to give birth, "having no TV was no great loss. There was nothing I wanted to do more than get away from the overdramatization of television."

The Lanes find plenty of rough-and-ready real-life adventure in ranching. The Bell, a fascinating mix of Old West and modern agrifactory, with its clanking windmills and bawling cattle—and a shiny airplane in the hangar and two-way radios in the trucks—sprawls across 292,000 acres. Started in 1820, it is one of the largest privately held hunks of real estate in America and a family trust, of which Jeff is a member, owns it all. Taking care of the registered Hereford herd is Jeff's special responsibility (a professional manager oversees the rest of the cattle), and it's a job that may require him to get up several times a night to look after his



cows and still be on call for an emergency run to town in the plane if someone gets hurt or a vital machinery part is needed.

Even without a crisis, he hurries through meals, jams his lanky 6-foot-1, 175-pound frame into his truck and bounces back to his herd. "I've got a lot of pride in these old gals," he brags, easing the truck around a cactus mean enough to pop a tire.

**I**n their first few years on the Bell, taking care of the ranch chores was absorbing enough for Jeff and Janet but eventually an undeniable yen for some raw video began to gnaw at them. It was odd. They still loved what Jeff likes to call "the big openness" of the place, and Janet insists, "One reason we live out here where it's quiet is that we like it like that." Nonetheless, she admits, "In the winter, you can have some pretty long evenings." The ranch house is three-and-a-half hours from Santa Fe, 300 miles round trip. Albuquerque is a four-hour car trip each way—so far that Jeff uses his plane when he needs something there. The nearest movie theater, in Tucumcari ("They just got 'Jaws,' I think," Janet groans), is a 140-mile round trip. "By the time you drive in and all the way back," Janet says, "you've spent 15 bucks on gas." Radio reception on the ranch is uncertain; mail comes to the ranch headquarters, so distant from their home that the Lanes only bother to pick it up once a week or so.

Thus it was that Jeff Lane one day found himself clambering to the top of a windmill with an antenna in one hand, hoping that, way up there, he might pick up a fugitive TV signal.

No such luck. "Just a lot of wind," says Janet.

The Lanes, however, were determined: they *would*, somehow, have TV. "Not just to have a TV set," Janet explains, "but to have some kind of exposure for Travis and Sarah to something besides what's out here." Jeff justified the effort on the grounds that having TV would make it easier to attract cowboys and their families to come live and work on the Bell.

"It came down," Jeff recalls deciding, "to putting in our own unit." That was easier said than done. Bringing in a signal via cable would have been astronomically expensive. Merely extending their electric-power line four miles to their house had already cost them \$12,000. Jeff asked TV stations in Albuquerque, and as far away as Amarillo, if they would be interested in installing a repeater antenna that might somehow

reach around that intrusive plateau. They were not.

The answer to the Lanes' video blackout turned up at a New Mexico cattle breeders' convention in the spring of 1979, where Jeff learned that the shortest distance between his house and TV stations was not a straight line after all. Instead, it was *two* straight lines—an electronic layup shot banked off an orbiting backboard called Satcom I, which is a geostationary satellite parked 22,300 miles over the equator and owned by RCA. A television signal can be shunted through an "uplink" transmitter and beamed via microwave to the satellite, which translates the signal to another frequency and flashes it earthward, to be picked up anywhere in the satellite's "footprint"—provided you have the necessary antenna and backup hardware.

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### Installation of the Lanes' antenna turned into a news event when NBC flew in correspondent Jack Perkins to document the family's reentry into the video society

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This was all spelled out early one morning after Jeff sat down in an Albuquerque coffee shop while at the cattlemen's convention and introduced himself to a gent he'd noticed behind a booth promoting satellite antennas.

The man was Richard J. Campbell, then general manager of the video-products division of Scientific-Atlanta, a Georgia antenna-manufacturing firm. Campbell and Lane found, to their considerable delight, that they had problems that were made for each other. Campbell (who is no longer with Scientific-Atlanta) had come to Albuquerque along with John Bacon, who has since succeeded to Campbell's position. They were in search of just the right place to install the very first privately owned, FCC-licensed earth station.

The electronics merchants and the cowboy struck a deal. Jeff agreed to allow Scientific-Atlanta to use the Bell Ranch as an outdoor portrait studio in which to pose their gleaming-white, anodized-aluminum, 15-foot dish, to use as an illustration for their annual report and, among other publications, the Neiman-Marcus catalogue, where the dish would be advertised for a crisp \$36,500. In return, Jeff got to keep the

antenna, along with the hardware that links it to his Zenith System 3 TV set—all for the sum of \$1000. In addition, the firm helped Jeff secure his license, the first granted by the FCC for a back-yard earth station. (The FCC has since dropped the license requirement for private antenna owners.)

Scientific-Atlanta also continues to pay the Lanes' monthly fees to programmers, ranging from token charges to upwards of \$10 a month. The firm, the largest manufacturer of earth stations in the world, estimates there are now only about 200 private units in the U.S.

Installation of the Lanes' antenna turned the family into a news event of a sort. NBC correspondent Jack Perkins and crew flew into the Lanes' strip to document their reentry into video society. That event, ironically enough, revealed to Jeff and Janet what now seems to them to be one of the most irksome features of their rig. Friends—and strangers—all over the country could watch them watching TV, or, rather, *talking* about watching it—their dish had not yet been precisely aimed at Satcom I and thus was not yet receiving properly. But even if the aim had been true, the Lanes could not have seen themselves. Reason: their antenna, for all its fancy gear, cannot pick up network signals, which are carried via land lines to area broadcasters' transmitters. The Lanes can receive only satellite-carried stations, which, superstations though they may be, are so far not network affiliated and thus mainly local in content.

This lack of big-league network news on their screen leaves the Lanes grievously dissatisfied. They are less than captivated, too, by the quality of what newscasting they have so far gotten to see, essentially local shows intended for local audiences but beamed to them from thousands of miles away, bringing only a smattering of national and foreign news. "New York," the Lanes say, "is at the very bottom. Chicago is pretty good, and San Francisco is the best."

**T**he rest of the viewing material ricocheting down from space leaves the Lanes utterly cold, too, so unimpressed they can scarcely think of the name of a favorite show, with the notable exception of kiddy programming. "One of the problems with the thing," says Janet, "is that, with regular TV, you can buy a TV Guide. It's a little harder for us to figure out what we want to watch."

The Lanes can choose from among

WOR in New York, WGN in Chicago, KTVU in San Francisco and, in addition, Warner Amex's The Movie Channel, Entertainment and Sports Programming Network, C-SPAN (Congressional Satellite Public Affairs Network), Madison Square Garden Sports, Satellite Program Network, Take 2 (family movies), and Nickelodeon, a kids' channel.

Satellite TV, says Jeff, "is very much in its infancy," and he is inclined to take the long view, noting how varied and improved the fare on conventional video has become in his lifetime. With his antenna in place, bringing him sparkling, crisp, color images unaffected by terrestrial interference, he figures he now has entree, a front-row seat, for the unfolding future of the satellite industry. Already, several dozen satellites are up there worldwide, beeping and queeping, some of them able to pass along as many as 48 programs at a time.

And this is only the beginning: PBS and Western Union have reached an agreement allowing Western Union to use PBS earth station facilities to beam commercial network telecasts into areas now unreachable by land lines. Technology is being developed that will pack more signals into existing microwave links, and yet more satellites are scheduled for launch—including some from the USSR—that will beam into our hemisphere. Some, like ones in the works in Canada and Japan, will

emit signals so powerful they will not require big antennas like Jeff's, but will feed into dishes a little more than a yard across. While the Lanes' earth station is presently aimed at Satcom I, there are other channels that, with additional receiver units plugged into their existing hardware, they could be getting—and Jeff is considering getting them.

But it is unlikely, living as he does in a real-life version of the setting of so many TV Westerns, that Jeff will become much of a videophile. He is certainly not turned on by the notion of hooking up a couple of games to his set, or a video recorder, or a disc player. "Sixty dollars!" he exclaims. "For a movie you watch once!" He says this while showing off his prize Hereford bull, PWL-1 Domino 9114, who is the size of a laundry truck and worth \$52,000.

Meanwhile, inside the Lane home, the real television fan in the family, Travis, awakens from his nap and creeps sleepily but eagerly down the spiral staircase into the rec room to resume his vigil. Janet picks up a handful of little Chiclet-sized crystals that, when inserted into the tuner, change channels. The Lanes' rig is not,

as they say in the trade, "frequency-agile," so the tuner has no selector knob on the front as does a TV set. "The trick," Janet says, "is not to lose these things. I painted this one red for the kids so they would know it's theirs."

The red crystal, when inserted into the slot, brings in Travis's, and Sarah's favorite channel, Nickelodeon, a feast of slick juvenile programming that delights Janet as much as it does her children. While Travis, fascinated, watches a baker somewhere decorate an endless parade of napoleons, Janet says, "This is excellent. If they could put something like this on network TV, they'd *really* have something!"

Their earth station has thus delivered a major part of what they had hoped it would: for their kids, a window onto the big world beyond the ranch. As Jeff puts it, the antenna "adds a little creative horizon."

"Some new ideas," Janet interjects.

"That we couldn't necessarily have provided," Jeff concludes.

Thus, if neither Jeff nor Janet finds life exactly transmogrified by virtue of having acquired an antenna and regained TV, both are glad they have it. TV has brought their children a depth of experience that now and then startles the Lanes—and pleases them. "For instance," says Janet, "Travis was talking the other day about giraffes and

I wondered, 'Where did he get *that*?' and then I remembered.

"Oh, yeah: the TV!" ■

Scientific  
Atlanta

The 15-foot earth-station dish antenna dwarfs 6-foot-1 Jeff Lane.



One cold, windy day just before Christmas 1963, Bob Precht got a call from Ed Sullivan asking him to come over to meet a Mr. Brian Epstein, the manager of a British singing group called the Beatles. Precht, who was the producer of *The Ed Sullivan Show* (and Sullivan's son-in-law), had never heard of Epstein, or the Beatles either, for that matter, but he dutifully dropped what he was doing and headed for the Delmonico Hotel suite where Sullivan lived and worked. Ed and Epstein were sitting in the living room.

"This is Brian Epstein," Sullivan said. "He's got a great group of youngsters. They're going to be real big."

Precht nodded politely. He had met dozens of managers of rock-'n'-roll groups that were going to be big.

The producer could tell from the way Epstein and Sullivan were talking that a deal had already been made. This annoyed him. He had asked Ed a number of times not to book acts without telling him.

He almost winced when he realized that the booking was for three shows for a total of \$10,000, but he said nothing. A few minutes later, he excused himself, returned to his office and immediately phoned Sullivan.

"Ed, Jesus," he said, "*ten thousand bucks* for some unknown rock-'n'-roll group. And *three* shows?"

It amuses Precht to tell this story nowadays. The Beatles did, indeed, become big and they were to give the Sullivan show the two highest-rated programs in its history.

Sullivan had accidentally stumbled into the world of Beatlemania several weeks earlier when passing through the London airport. The Prime Minister was attempting to fly out to Scotland and the Queen Mother was arriving from Ireland, but both were finding travel difficult because of the huge crowd—about 15,000 kids—that had turned out to greet the Beatles, returning from a tour of Sweden. Sullivan didn't care much for rock 'n' roll, but he knew crowds. He was impressed.

Actually, the Beatles were already international stars by the time Sullivan "found" them, with record sales in the millions. "She Loves You" had become the first-ever million-selling record in England.

The United States, though, had

*This article is excerpted from Jerry Bowles' book "A Thousand Sundays: The Story of The Ed Sullivan Show," which is being published by G. P. Putnam's Sons next month. (Copyright © 1980 by Jerry Bowles.)*

# The Day America Beatle Fever

When Ed Sullivan introduced the Fab Four, his live audience went wild and the Niensens shot to a record high

By JERRY BOWLES



# Caught



seemed strangely indifferent to them. "Please Please Me" was released here in February 1963 and "She Loves You" in the fall. Neither had caused much of a stir.

That's why Brian Epstein had been most pleased to hear of Sullivan's interest and it is also the most likely reason Sullivan was able to get the group so cheaply. The Beatles needed the United States exposure.

Epstein and Sullivan agreed on dates—Feb. 9 and 16, with a taped appearance to be played later. Epstein figured that would give him enough time to persuade Capitol Records, the Beatles' United States representative, to mount a massive publicity campaign and to release "I Want to Hold Your Hand," the single that would determine whether his group was going to make it in America or not.

Everything went exactly as planned. "I Want to Hold Your Hand" was released in early January and by the end of the month had reached the number-one spot on the record charts. A carefully primed Nation waited breathlessly for the arrival of the Beatles.

B-Day—the day the Beatles discovered America—was Feb. 7, 1964. By dawn, half of the teen-agers from Morristown, N.J., to Stamford, Conn., were gathered at the international terminal at Kennedy Airport. They all had transistors plugged into their craniums. It was like a scene from "Invasion of the Body Snatchers." The radio stations relentlessly fed them Beatles bulletins: "They left London an hour ago... They're on their way."

By one o'clock, there were about 5000 kids at the airport, watched over by 110 policemen. At 1:20 P.M., the chartered plane arrived. A huge roar went up from the crowd.

It grew into an ear-shattering salute as John, Paul, George and Ringo descended from the plane and headed for a prearranged news conference inside. Actually, the Beatles hardly looked like rebels. Epstein had gotten them up in four-button coats, stovepipe pants, ankle-high boots with Cuban heels, and white shirts with ties.

The scene inside at the press conference was no less a madhouse. The New York press corps, never known for its good manners, was outdoing itself with even more than the usual shoving, shouting and occasional punching.

Brian Sommerville, the Beatles' press agent, took to the microphone and said, "Ladies and gentlemen, this is

ridiculous. Hold up your hands, and I'll recognize you one at a time. If you won't be quiet, we'll just stand here until you are." His stern, schoolteacher manner worked and order, more or less, prevailed.

"What do you think of Beethoven?" someone asked John.

"Lovely writer," Lennon said, "especially the poems."

"What are you going to do about the car bumper stickers in Detroit that say 'Stamp Out the Beatles'?"

"We're printing some that say 'Stamp Out Detroit,'" George replied.

"Are you part of a social rebellion against the older generation?"

"It's a dirty lie," said Paul.

All in all, it was a tour de force for the working-class heroes from Liverpool. After the press conference, they all piled into limousines—one Beatle to each—and headed for the Plaza Hotel.

The Plaza, one of the oldest and most staid of New York hotels, was not exactly thrilled at what was happening. The Beatles had booked rooms a couple of months in advance under their individual names. Management had no idea they had agreed to lodge a social phenomenon. Now there were all these kids, mainly girls, gathered outside, yelling and screaming and threatening to burst through the police barriers at any moment.

Some clever girls tried having taxicabs deposit them at the doorstep of the hotel and telling the security men that they had rooms there. It didn't work. Others tried, unsuccessfully, to get onto the rooftops of adjoining buildings. Periodic chants of "We want Ringo" rose up throughout the night.

At 2:30 on Sunday, the Beatles gathered at the studio for the rehearsal and to tape a couple of numbers for a future appearance. The 728-seat-capacity theater was filled with teen-age girls, many of them daughters of CBS or Capitol executives. In all, the show had over 50,000 requests for tickets to the rehearsal and the show itself.

As Sullivan sat backstage writing out some notes for the show, he was approached by Brian Epstein, who said, "I would like to know the exact wording of your introduction." Sullivan, his nerves a little on edge from the strain, didn't even look up from his note pad. "I would like for you to get lost," he said.

As Ringo's drums were wheeled onstage, a great roar went up from the crowd. A few minutes later, Sullivan appeared. He made a nice speech about



*Ed Sullivan introduces the biggest singing sensation of the '60s to the biggest TV audience ever recorded up to that time.*

how he hoped the kids would give their respectful attention to the other performers on the show because if they didn't, he would call in a barber. The kids laughed in that nervous way that meant they thought he just might.

After a little more clowning around, Sullivan said, "Our city—indeed, the country—has never seen anything like these four young men from Liverpool. Ladies and gentlemen, the Beatles."

Amid a tornado of hysteria, the Beatles sang five songs including "She Loves You" and "I Want to Hold Your Hand."

In the control room, Bob Precht watched the monitors and mumbled to nobody in particular, "Jesus Christ." It was, he had to admit, the damndest thing he had ever seen.

**T**he show that night went exactly the same way, except that the hysteria was even more pronounced. Sullivan was delighted, although he figured he would be in for some grief for leading the youth of America astray.

Whatever misgivings he might have had disappeared the next morning when the preliminary ratings indicated that the show might have been of record proportions. The papers were filled with analyses of the Fab Four. Said John Hughes in *The Christian Science Monitor*: "Britons and Americans may have had their differences over Suez and Skybolt. There was even quite a to-do over the Boston Tea Party. But for sheer British ruthlessness, nothing can compare with the dispatch to the United States of four screaming, strumming Liverpoolians, with golliwog haircuts, known as the Beatles."

For sheer humor, though, nothing could match Theodore Strongin's comments in *The Times*: "The Beatles are

directly in the mainstream of Western tradition; that much may be immediately ascertained. Their harmony is unmistakably diatonic. A learned British colleague, writing on his home ground, has described it as a pandiatonic, but I disagree.

"The Beatles have a tendency to build phrases around unresolved leading tones. This precipitates the ear into a false modal frame that temporarily turns the fifth of the scale into the tonic, momentarily suggesting the Mixolydian mode. But everything always ends as plain diatonic all the same.

"Meanwhile, the result is the addition of a very, very slight touch of British countryside nostalgia, with a trace of Vaughan Williams, to the familiar elements of the rock-'n'-roll prototype."

On Wednesday, the Beatles did two sold-out concerts at Carnegie Hall and then on Thursday headed for Miami, where the Sullivan show was set to originate from the Deauville Hotel on Sunday.

The most anxious moment came about 30 seconds before air time, when it became apparent that the Beatles themselves couldn't get into the huge Napoleon room because of the crush of people congested around the door. Since they were scheduled to open the show, a wave of panic shot through the Sullivan production people. About 15 seconds before they were scheduled to appear, a group of Miami policemen formed a flying wedge around the group and stormed the door, sending bodies scattering in all directions. Two seconds after he got to his drums, Ringo found himself being cued to start playing.

**I**t was about this time that the huge crowd outside the hotel noticed the CBS control truck parked outside. Since

they couldn't get in, they apparently figured the next best thing would be to watch the show on the truck's monitors.

Set designer Bill Bohnert was standing behind the console when he glanced up and saw a great wave of humanity rushing toward the truck. He dived over the console, reached the door and bolted it just before the first wave hit. Throughout the show, the men inside feared for their lives as the kids outside rocked the truck up and down. By some miracle, the equipment remained intact and the program stayed on the air.

On Monday, Sullivan got the good news. The Niensens indicated a score of 44.6 for the first show. That translated to 73,700,000 viewers—the largest audience in television history up to that time. Sullivan was beside himself with joy. It was the first time in seven years that he had topped the ratings.

The Miami telecast was only slightly less successful, with a 43.2. Today, the two shows rank 12th and 19th on the all-time list of most-watched programs.

In a sense, the Beatles programs were a last hurrah for Sullivan. Never again would his show attain the prominence that the Beatles had given him, nor would so much attention from an entire nation be focused on his doings.

**T**he Beatles returned to the United States in August 1964, but this time Epstein wanted a lot of money for a television appearance. Sullivan bowed out of the negotiations early and said he wished them the best. No doubt he was sincere, because when no hotel wanted to put them up, he interceded with the management of his own, the Delmonico, to get them lodging.

ABC and CBS both negotiated for taped appearances, which they showed during the November "ratings week." Both were ratings disasters. ABC scheduled its Beatles show, taped in London, opposite Sullivan and Walt Disney on a Sunday night. Sullivan and Disney won handily. One of the first people to telephone the news around town was Ed Sullivan.

It was nothing personal, of course...just show business. ■

#### POSTSCRIPT

*Sixteen years after the Beatles invaded American TV, rock music is about to invade another frontier: the home-video market. For the story of one of the first original music productions for videocassette, see facing page.*

A rock opera by the Jefferson Starship's former lead singer travels from a San Francisco nightclub to home videocassettes



## Video Rock on Trial

**B**ack then, in the late '60s, it was called Airplane Mansion: a four-story, turn-of-the-century pad in San Francisco, inhabited by various members and friends of the rock group Jefferson Airplane. They used to throw wild parties with guest lists that read like a "Who's Who" of rock 'n' roll. Everybody would run around crazily to the cadence of the blaring acid-rock music. Folks like Steve Stills, Frank Zappa and, of course, Grace Slick. And, just for the hell of it, Jefferson Airplane singer-songwriter Marty Balin would

be recording it all with a small, primitive video camera.

Times have changed. The Jefferson Airplane is now the Jefferson Starship. Airplane Mansion is now called Starship Mansion. Instead of acid rock, there's new wave. And Marty Balin is no longer with the Starship—but he's still into video.

Sometime this summer, EMI Videograms, Inc., will release "Rock Justice," a 75-minute videocassette of the rock opera that Balin coauthored and one of the first original music productions re-

*One of the "witnesses" in the show's trial of a rock singer is the deejay, played by Frank Daniels. Here, in a disco number called "Lovebeat," he asks the audience to testify with him.*

*"Hey, man," said Marty Balin to Bob Heyman during a court case, "this thing is turning into a real rock opera." "You know, Marty," said Heyman, "you might have something there."*

leased to the home-video market.

The satirical plot involves a rock singer, played by Jesse Bradman, who falls asleep and has a nightmare: he is put on trial and charged with rock's worst crime—not having a hit record. Testimony both for and against him is given in some of the show's 15 musical numbers, scenes from which are shown on these pages and the previous page. Throughout, "Rock Justice" presents caricatures of familiar music-industry figures: besides the musician, there are the critic, the disc jockey, the executive, the journalist, the manager and the promoter.

"Rock Justice" was conceived as a project for videodisc, says coauthor

Bob Heyman. The idea was to present a live stage show, which would be taped. Balin wanted to videotape the performance to add to his own offbeat collection of videocassettes. "I wish I had videotapes of me and Janis [Joplin] hanging out in the '60s," he moans. "Luckily, now I have a record of all these far-out and talented musicians doing a live show together. Now it's more than a visual record of what I conceived. It's gone further... much, much further."

Indeed it has. It's gone so far that Balin has leaped to the forefront of a handful of creative artists who produce for the new art form labeled video rock—rock-'n'-roll music with visual images, available on videocassettes and (in the near future) videodiscs.

Balin gained the video-rock spotlight not because he fervently believes in the future of home video or in the electronic marriage of the new dazzling



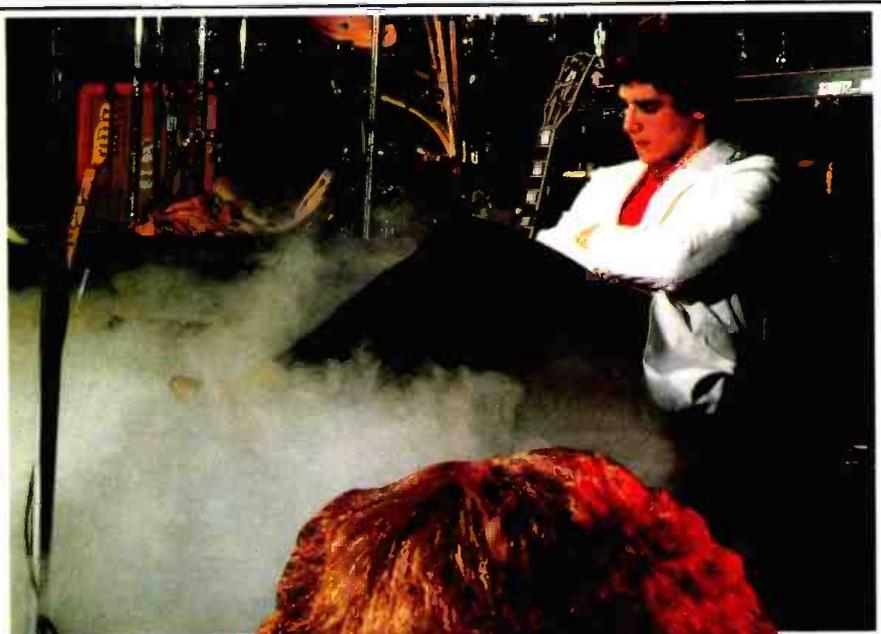
television technologies with the record industry, but because of a 14-year-old lawsuit with the Jefferson Airplane's first manager, a suit that is still in litigation. One of the law clerks assigned to the case was Bob Heyman, a Boston filmmaker whose varied credentials include a Master's degree in cinema from Harvard. Very quickly, the two men became friends. About two years ago, they were sitting in the courtroom during a recess of the trial and Balin turned his head in disgust to Heyman over the frustrating and lengthy legal battle. "Hey, man," he said, "this thing is turning into a real rock opera."

"You know, Marty," said Heyman, "you might have something there." Which they did. So the two of them got together with another writer, Mike Varney, wrote 14 original songs, and put together a band of local rock and new wave musicians as performers.

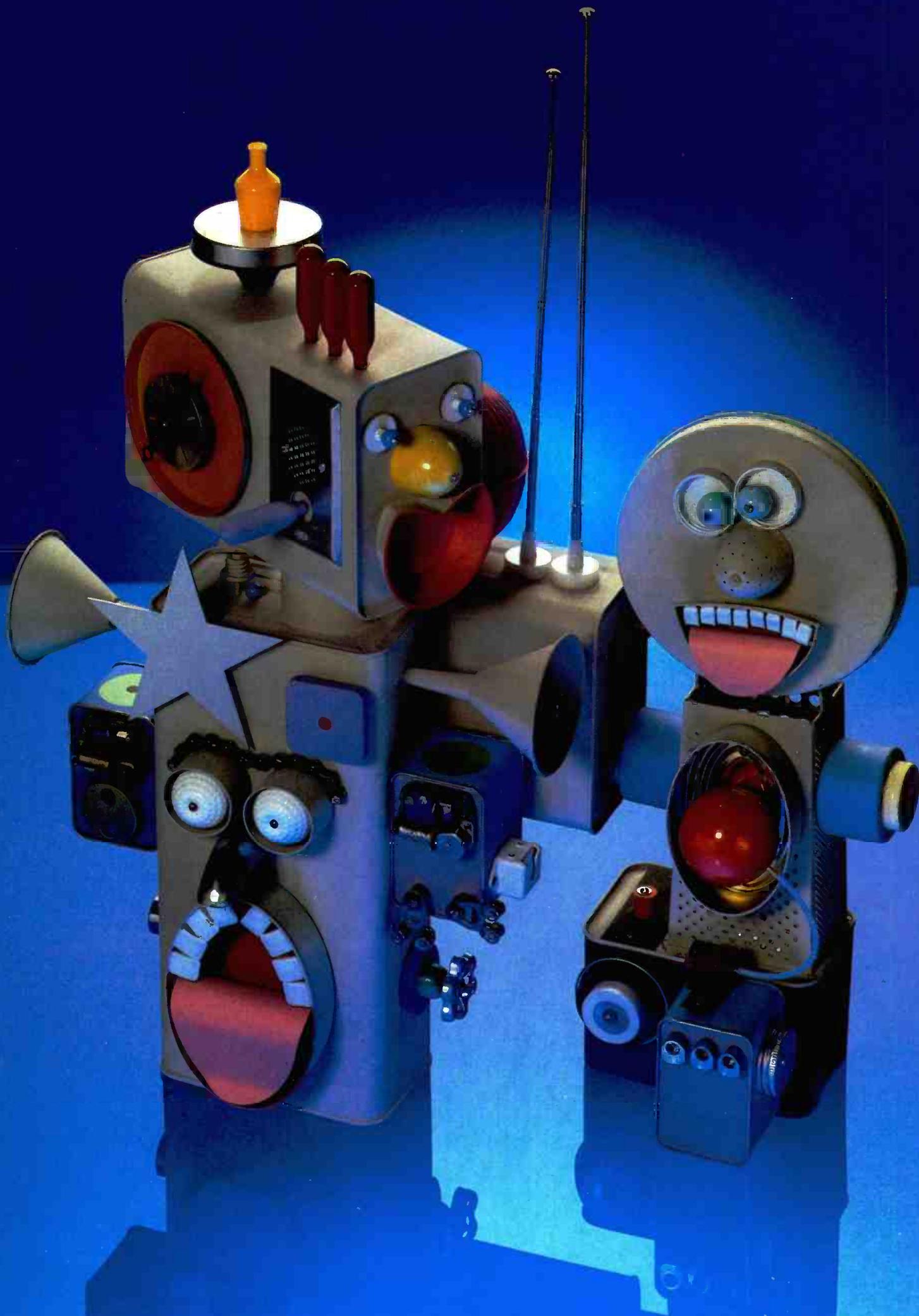
Last November, the play was finally staged at the Old Waldorf, a San Francisco nightclub. When Joe Buchwald, Balin's father and personal manager, invited executives from EMI records and films to the premiere, he asked if they had a video division. Luckily, EMI Videograms was one of the company's newest divisions and its president, Gary Dartnall, was on the prowl for product. Says Buchwald, "Dartnall liked it so much he wanted to make a deal right then."

"Rock Justice" ran for 16 performances and didn't net producers Buchwald and Heyman a profit. They're hoping for financial justice when "Rock Justice" videocassettes and cast albums (and eventually videodiscs) start ringing up retail sales and pumping economic life into the new art form of video rock. Meanwhile, Balin, Heyman and Varney are now working on another rock-'n'-roll satire called "Planet of the Enchained Guitarists," in which robot musicians lock up all the live guitarists and use them as slaves.

Balin has only one regret from his superstar past: he has misplaced the videotapes from those '60s parties. "I just wish I had saved them," he sighs. He also has a very real fear. Balin refused to play the role of victimized rock singer in "Rock Justice." "He was very superstitious about playing the part of the singer without a hit," recalls Heyman. And who can blame him? Balin has a solo album in the works and is very concerned that life might imitate art. ■



On these two pages are scenes from "Rock Justice": Top, the defendant, played by Jesse Bradman, drifts into a dream in which he's on trial for not having a hit record. Above, Dyan Buckelew, as "Ms. Justice," sings on the defendant's behalf, as does Nancy Wenstrom, far left, who portrays his girl friend. Left, "the critic," played by Bill Spooner, testifies for the prosecution with a song called "This Punk Makes Me Puke."



# Those Devilish Machines Get the Last Laugh

Elaborate sound sweeteners can bring the miracle of laughter to the worst of jokes

By MERRILL SHINDLER

*"Laugh, and the world laughs with you / Weep, and you weep alone."  
— "Solitude," by Ella Wheeler Wilcox.*

**T**here is a fever dream that, at one time or another, attacks nearly every producer, associate producer, scriptwriter and flack in the television industry. The dream goes like this: In the interest of truth, aesthetic and otherwise, in television productions, the Federal Communications Commission decides to ban the use of "sweetened" audio tracks on situation comedies. As a result, the industry is gripped by a panic as persistent as the Veg-O-Matic ads after midnight. Suddenly, one-liners, sight gags, pratfalls, double takes, slow burns, the dreadful anticipation—all the tricks of the sitcom trade—must really work.

Shows like *Hello, Larry* and *Pink Lady* have to stand on their own frail laugh lines! Donny and Marie have to try to make a *real* audience laugh! When Gary Coleman runs one up the old flagpole and nobody salutes, there's no artificially enhanced laugh track to help him out!

When this dream attacks, television executives have been known to wake up with a cold sweat drenching their brows, the sour taste of sure Nielsen death in their mouths. Laugh, and the world laughs with you... lose your Nielsen share and you weep alone.

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*Merrill Shindler is the film critic for Los Angeles magazine and a free-lance writer.*

*"Even while the dust moves / There rises the hidden laughter..."*

*— "Four Quartets," by T.S. Eliot*

A journey into the soft underbelly of network yock machinery is like a visit with the euphemism that devoured Cleveland. These days, all that fiddling about with the laugh track is called "audio postproduction." Officially, that is. Less officially, the commonly accepted parlance is "sweetening." Nobody, but nobody, worth their Emmy hopes would ever be caught calling those amplified tee-hee's, ha-ha's and har-dee-har-har's anything as crass as "canned laughter." And there's a good reason for this simple distinction. Though canned laughter once lived, it's long since chortled its way into a well-deserved grave. The laughter you hear on sitcoms these days isn't so much "canned" as "freeze-dried." And the road laughter has taken to its present state is no laughing matter.

**I**n the beginning—the beginning, in this case, being radio—there were no laugh tracks at all. Just *Amos 'n' Andy* or *Stoopnagle & Budd* or *Easy Aces*, broadcast in a pristine, laughless condition. If you wanted to laugh, you did so in the presence of your own family, in the privacy of your own home, without any prompting except for the jokes themselves, which were so good you couldn't help but laugh.

Then, somebody or other came up with the bright idea of doing radio

shows in front of a studio audience. What a truly great idea that was! The studio audience would give the shows something akin to presence, and the folks crowded around their Stromberg-Carlson at home would get the feeling that they themselves were actually in the studio audience. It would be like participatory radio. It was a true stroke of brilliance. It was also, according to the late Fred Allen, "The worst thing that ever happened to radio. Somebody like Eddie Cantor brought these hordes of cackling geese in because he couldn't work without imbeciles laughing at his jokes."

**I**t was an obvious and quick leap of faith from using live radio audiences to using live television audiences. And it all began so innocently. As Harry Ackerman, developer of the original *I Love Lucy* show, said some years ago, "I learned that *Lucy* was 'dead' on a bare sound stage, so I insisted that we film in front of an audience. It was for the performers' benefit at first, though, of course, we recorded the audience reaction and learned to 'sweeten' it when necessary."

In time, that innocently added laugh track—dropped in, really, just as an afterthought—began to become more and more important. You could say that the tail began to wag the dog, or the horse was put before the cart, or some such cliché, but what it really came down to was that people really began to *need*

"We're not just adding laughter. Mostly, what we're

those laughs to know what was funny and what was just filler between the guffaws. The laugh tracks were cranked up to incredible levels on shows like *The Phil Silvers Show* and *Our Miss Brooks*. Engineers began to dial the live audience out completely and insert canned audiences. Live audiences really didn't sound...live enough. We were finally hooked—the only cachinnation we could accept was the type that was filtered through a virtual Rube Goldberg device of tubes, dials, widgets, gadgets and gadgets. We had created a monster called canned laughter, and it loved us and we loved it. Until the times, they began a-changing.

Not unlike those classic radio shows that used a studio audience, the early television sitcoms could get away with canned laughter because television was young and innocent and most everything seemed pretty funny. But as home audiences matured, those great cackling cacophonies became less and less believable. So the technology of laughter began to catch up with our, by now, well-nurtured need for laugh cues. The MacKenzie Multiple Channel Program Repeater, which could reproduce sounds ranging from thunder and rain to gunfire and car crashes, along with laughter, fed that need, as did the more subtle Laff (sic) Box, developed by Charley Douglass and his son Bob.

Charley Douglass came up with the idea for his Laff Box when he was working in the Electronic Laughter Department at CBS back in the mid-Fifties. Neither Charley nor Bob is partial to interviews. Responding to a request for an interview some years ago, Charley remarked, "I won't even talk about why I won't talk." More recently, Bob said, "We've found that articles hurt us. People say it's that bad canned laughter that's ruining television. We find it's better if people don't know about us, if we stay in the background and are only known in the industry. There are producers out there that don't want the public to know that they have their shows sweetened and would cancel our service if their names were used."

Sweetening is such a standard routine in the television industry that it's doubtful anyone would be more than mildly miffed to be singled out as a user. And, frankly, there are very good arguments for sweetening. What professional sweeteners like the Douglasses do is a far cry from those ungodly screeching cackles of nearly 30

years ago. Inside the Douglass Laff Box is a series of tape loops, each containing several laughs; by one estimate, the machine contains 32 tapes with 10 laughs per tape. By mixing them together in their various permutations, the Douglasses are able to produce literally hundreds of thousands of different laughs to augment audience laugh tracks, and to cover up edits in scenes. Though the visuals in a scene can be cut at any point, the audio track has to be smoothed out so laughs don't end abruptly, and that's one of sweetening's main technical functions.

"Canned laughter is primitive," says Bob Douglass. "It's too loud; it lasts too long; it doesn't begin and end realistically, with a few individual laughs. It's always a big audience, already in full laughter, faded up and down. It's the same sound over and over again. It's not what we do."

*"Laughter appears to stand in need of an echo."*

—Philosopher Henri Bergson

I'm sitting in the sweetening room at Metromedia Square in Los Angeles watching *Diff'rent Strokes* associate producer John Maxwell Anderson and MetroTape West engineers Roger Vonier and Tamara Johnson "tickle" the laughs behind chipmunk-cheeked Gary Coleman. The three are talking a very strange language. "That's nice walla," says Tamara, as she fiddles with the sweetening machine in front of her. The machine consists of a rack of cartridge players run through a miniature mixing board. Tamara's left hand dances over a small keyboard, activating a variety of the cartridges in the machine, while her right hand adjusts (in her terms, "tickles") the volume.

The cartridges in the machines have labels on them reading things like "Small Walla Walla," "Large Walla Walla," "Casa de Lungs," "Mucosa Manor," "Garbage-Disposal Dirty" and, simply, "Edna." The labels represent Tamara's own private code for the stacked-up sounds on the tape cartridge. "Walla Walla," small and large, are ambient audience sounds in varying degrees of intensity; "Casa de Lungs" and "Mucosa Manor" are both tapes of coughs used to disguise problems on the audio track. "Garbage-Disposal Dirty" is just that, the sound of a garbage disposal being turned on; it can cover any mistake. And "Edna"? Well, Tamara will only say that that's "a private joke, a tape that's tossed in occasionally when the job gets crazy. It

always breaks us up." ("Edna" is used for mixing-room purposes only and is never heard on the air.)

According to Marty Cohan, a producer of *Diff'rent Strokes*: "We sweeten only to smooth; we use the actual laughs from the audience. We do two audience-reaction tracks—from the dress show and the air show. That way we're able to rebuild a scene from the ground up, if necessary, with the best reading coupled with the best audience reaction."

"Sweetening has a lot of functions," says John Anderson, a veteran of *Fernwood 2-Night* and *Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman*. "For us, its main purpose is to enhance the quality of laughter. Sometimes the laughter from the studio audience will sound phony because it doesn't have the presence we need. So we add the walla—sounds that give the laughter more presence, more resonance; you know, things like the sound of the audience rustling, the air conditioner, people chewing gum."

Tamara lets her fingers dance across the keyboard, and all of a sudden the room is filled with the walla of tiny, nearly imperceptible sounds—people fidgeting in their seats, a few muffled coughs, air moving and, who knows, maybe even the sounds of eyelids blinking, food being digested and blood pumping. Walla can be very subtle.

Tamara hits a few more buttons, and the audience walla is replaced by restaurant walla: glasses clink; a waiter can be heard saying something about champagne; forks, knives, spoons, dishware, all meld into the white noise of restaurants. "That's pretty nice restaurant walla, don't you think?" asks Tamara. I can't help but agree.

In his copy of the script for this particular episode of *Diff'rent Strokes*, John Anderson has made marks ranging from 1 to 3. The numbers represent the level of laugh appropriate to the joke: 1 is a small chuckle, 3 a big guffaw. Tamara inserts a variety of cartridges with laughs from the taping of that episode of *Diff'rent Strokes*. "It's very important to use the tracks from the show you're sweetening," she says. "Different audiences have very different laughs. *Diff'rent Strokes* attracts a young black audience. Their laughs don't have much in common with a game-show audience's. If you use the right audience, the sweetening won't take away from the show."

At one point during the sweetening session, a scene is played in which

doing is cleaning up after other people's mistakes."

Gary Coleman quips to Conrad Bain, "England... isn't that where they talk funny?" To which Bain replies, "No, that's the Bronx!" The laughs are meager. The script calls for a 2. Tamara, Roger and John go over the tape perhaps a dozen times, boosting the laughter each time. By the end, the audience is whooping, and I find myself laughing along, too. The laughter is insidiously infectious: it's like hitting your knee with a small rubber mallet—there's really no alternative but to laugh with the laughter.

"People are so defensive about sweetening," says John, "because they want to believe the shows should stand on their own merits and shouldn't need sweetening. But we're not just adding indiscriminate laughter. We act with a great deal of integrity. Mostly, what we're doing is cleaning up after other people's mistakes."

"What he's trying to say," says Tamara, "is a lot of horses walk in front of us."

*"He laughs best who laughs last."  
—"The Country House," by Sir John Vanbrugh*

Obviously, the laugh track is with us to stay. No quantity of self-flagellation or moral indignation is going to chase those boffo guffaws away from the lead balloons and failed gags of sitcomland. Even television's few iconoclasts accept the inevitability of the repackaged chortle. In a recent

PANORAMA interview, *M\*A\*S\*H's* Alan Alda noted, "I get a number of letters every year from people who complain about the laugh track—but, interestingly, a number of them have enjoyed the show for years and think that we just started a laugh track this season. They suddenly become aware that there's a laugh track on one episode and think that we started something new. I think the reason for that is that we have always kept the laugh track very low, and very, very quiet, very, very low-key, as unobtrusive as we can make it. It's only there because the network, as all three networks do, considers it to be essential to a program that's mainly funny."

*M\*A\*S\*H*, of course, is also an exception to most sitcom rules. First, in many ways, it isn't a situation comedy at all, but rather a dramatic series that happens to be funny. Second, the show is not filmed in front of a live audience because of its many location shots, so its laughs really do come out of a can. Third, no matter how funny the operating-room scenes are, no laugh track is used there. The O.R. has been literally sterilized of laughter. Which brings up the curious question of why it seems to be only sweetening with laughter that's viewed critically?

"When a car crashes in a scene," says producer David Fein, "and the noise of the crash is sweetened, that's not a problem. But when laughter is sweetened, that is a problem. I don't understand why that is. After all, who is it

who really objects to sweetened laughter? It seems as if every three months there's an article by some journalist on the sweetening malaise, and everyone says, 'Oh, there must be a problem.' There is no problem! To me, it's a dead issue."

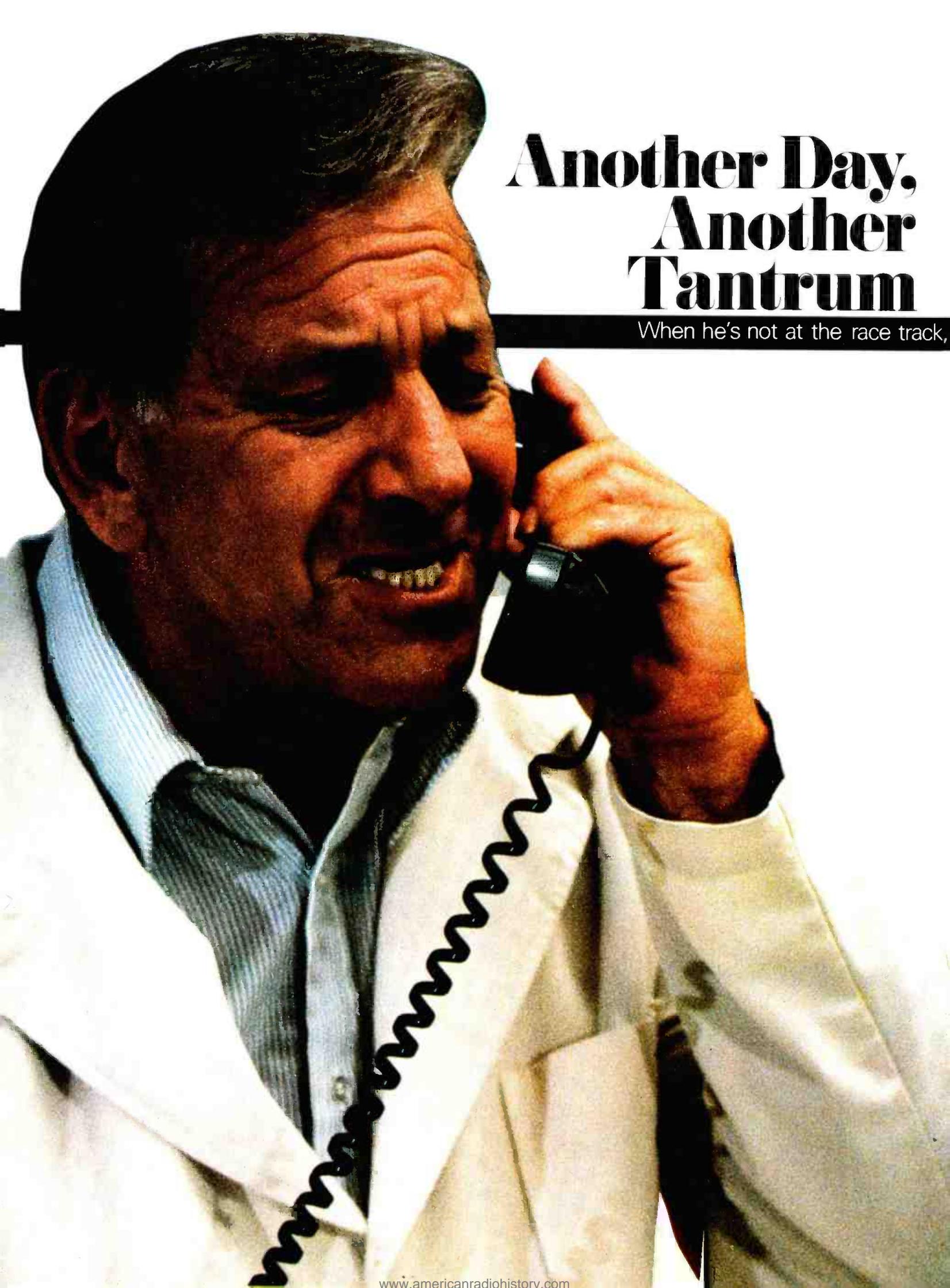
Dead as it may be to those within the industry, there's still a vein of independence within the selective television-viewing community that objects to being led. But why is it that laughter seems to be the only emotion we have to be led to? "When you have a very tender scene," says David Fein, "like the scene where Brian is dying of cancer in 'Brian's Song,' you should hear whimpering in the background. That's supposed to be audience response, right? If the purpose of canned laughter is to duplicate audience response to help them enjoy the show more, why doesn't that apply to crying? If the purpose of canned laughter is to make you feel safe in laughing, why doesn't the same rule apply to other emotions?"

It's a question that goes back to Ella Wheeler Wilcox for an answer. Truly, if you laugh, the world laughs with you; if you weep, you weep alone. Laugh tracks help us feel comfortable in laughter; they make the act socially acceptable rather than slightly distasteful and mildly maniacal. Laugh tracks are our friends. The only real problem with them is that, sometimes, it's hard to tell whether it's the audience or the show that needs them the most. ☐



Just for a laugh: engineers for MetroTape West work with sophisticated dubbing equipment at Metromedia Square to create a laugh track for a commercial.





# Another Day, Another Tantrum

When he's not at the race track,

A promising young gymnast in peak condition has collapsed and died of an apparent heart attack during a routine training exercise. It's a run-of-the-mill case for the Los Angeles County Coroner's Office. Yet one of the medical examiners, a man named Quincy, suspects foul play. Perhaps, he theorizes, the coach has been feeding amphetamines to her athletes. On his own initiative, Quincy begins investigating the case. Local bureaucrats ensnare him in red tape. The parents of the dead girl oppose an autopsy. Yet Quincy battles on.

Now a second teen-age gymnast grows dizzy and disoriented while working out on the balance beam. Her vision blurs. She teeters precariously. Dr. Quincy, played by Jack Klugman, happens to be in the gym at that moment. He rushes up to the girl, begins talking her down from the beam. But Klugman stops in mid-speech, squints into the camera with an expression of withering contempt.

"Cut. What's the problem, Ja—" But before the director can complete his question, Klugman launches into a new speech, this one totally ad lib. "I can't play this scene. It's an embarrassment. It doesn't make sense."

"But the script says—"

"I don't give a goddamn about the script." Klugman thrusts his hands deep in his pockets, plants his feet squarely on the matted gym floor. "It's not gonna work. There's no logic, no motivation."

"Jack, please—"

"You tell me." One of the hands is out of its pocket now, gesturing excitedly. "Why is this happening? What am I doing here?"

A row of faces stares back at Klugman from the other side of the camera. No one speaks.

"I thought so. I'm walking out. I'm calling the producer. Where's a phone?"

"OK, we'll talk about it. We'll redo the scene. Let's just calm down now. OK, Jack? OK? Maybe we should break for lunch first."

"Another day, another tantrum," mumbles a soundman as he closes an aluminum case full of electronic gear.

"Ah, come on," says the technician next to him. "Jack's mellowed a lot since his last walkout. Maybe it's his horse."

"Mellow?" the soundman says sarcastically. Then he smiles. "Yeah, maybe you're right. Maybe now Jack's only a little less mellow than the Ayatollah Khomeini."

The two men head for the lunch wagon, laughing easily. But for Jack Klugman, a highly respected actor who for 30 years enjoyed an enviable reputation as one of the best-liked and easiest-to-get-along-with people in the industry, starring in NBC's hit series *Quincy* has been no laughing matter. This scene, which took place a few months ago, has become commonplace on the show's set. People who have known Klugman only on a professional basis claim that he has become "demanding" and "egomaniacal," a "tyrant" whose reign of terror during the first three seasons of *Quincy* has, according to one of the show's numerous ex-producers, "left a trail of broken bodies that stretches from Beverly Hills to Burbank."

But close friends insist Klugman hasn't changed at all. "In the past, Jack's TV work has been almost exclusively with class people on class projects," explains an actor whose friendship with Klugman dates back to live-TV days in New York in the mid-Fifties. "*Quincy* was Jack's first taste of regular, bread-and-butter schlock television, and he couldn't stand it. The man went absolutely banana-brain."

"From the first day the *Quincy* pilot went into production in 1977, this job

has been an almost unrelenting nightmare," Klugman says simply. "And I won't wake up until my contract expires in 1982." *Quincy* may be Jack Klugman's personal nightmare, but he has made sure to spread the suffering around. "That show has gone through more producers than any series in TV history," claims one former network executive.

"The man has become a monster," says a writer-producer at Universal who was in on the creation of *Quincy*. "On *The Odd Couple*, and before that, on *Harris Against the World*, which he also did for us, he was such a sweetheart. Everybody loved him. But the minute we began this show, he changed from Dr. Jekyll to Mr. Hyde. Thank God he's futzing around with that horse now. They say it's calmed him down a little. But I don't know for sure. I haven't been to the set in months. My analyst told me to stay away from him."

Probably a wise piece of advice. Klugman has characterized *Quincy's* writers as "incompetents" and "gutless hacks," and, in retaliation, some of the most influential members of the Writers Guild have boycotted him. During *Quincy's* first season, Klugman was so dissatisfied with the scripts that he announced plans to scour the colleges of America for new writing talent. But his campus crusade fizzled, and for months afterward scripts of any kind were difficult to come by.

Midway through *Quincy's* second season, the animosity between Klugman and his employers reached a tasteless height of black-comic absurdity. On Dec. 14, 1979, Klugman walked off the show and demanded to be released from his contract on the grounds that his throat cancer had returned, rendering him incapable of daily work (a malignant tumor had been successfully removed from his

larynx in 1974). Universal TV president Don Sipes called Klugman's bluff, refusing to release him without written confirmation of renewed malignancy by a studio physician. Klugman declined to be examined and, after two weeks of legal maneuvering, returned to the set. "I was letting my ego get in the way," he told the press on Dec. 27. "From now on, I'll honor my contract to the end—but only as an actor."

And there, in that final phrase, lies the key to the problem. "He keeps trying to be the star, the producer and the story editor all at once—which he has neither the time nor the ability to do," says one writer, a self-described "veteran of the Klugman Wars."

One of the most accomplished producers *Quincy* has had is Bob O'Neill, whose credits include *Wheels*, *The Last Convertible* and several episodes of *Columbo*. He took over the show in 1977, and although he fared no better than the many producers who were to follow him, O'Neill requires no analyst to explain what happened. "Jack was demanding a certain excellence that in the real world was not possible to deliver. He was absolutely correct in wanting this excellence. But the time wasn't there to construct stories with the social significance he wanted."

Scott Siegler, formerly the NBC program executive in charge of *Quincy* and now vice president of dramatic development at CBS, takes a broader view of the situation. "People like Jack, Alan Alda and Michael Landon are among a small group of actors with a personal vision of what this medium ought to be. The problem is that visionaries are notoriously poor bureaucrats. I mean, most guys, when they reach Jack's position of power, aren't interested in social issues any more. Jack could be doing conventional mysteries and working nice, short hours. In fact, that's what everyone *wants* him to do. But he won't. Instead, he wants to do shows about lead poisoning in ghetto apartments and he's working 18 hours a day. You can't knock him," Siegler concludes. "But you can't work with him, either."

Another Klugman booster, perhaps the most important one he has at the moment, is Brandon Tartikoff, the newly appointed president of NBC Entertainment. "I think Klugman is terrific," Tartikoff says. "I mean, the guy is screaming and working all hours and walking off the set—for what? Not more money, like everybody else. Jack never even mentions money. All he

wants is a quality show."

Through all the hysterics and pyrotechnics, the firings, resignations, shattered egos and wildcat strikes, *Quincy* has never really been ranked among television's most important programs. "That's because a good show begins with good people at the helm," Klugman explains over lunch served on a folding bridge table in the parking lot of the gymnastics club in which the current *Quincy* episode is shooting. "And when this show began, those positions were occupied by incompetents."

Specifically, Klugman is referring to Glen Larson, a Universal producer with one of the most successful records in Hollywood. His credits include *McCloud*, *Switch*, *Battlestar Galactica*, *Buck Rogers in the 25th Century* and *Hart to Hart*. *Quincy's* central conceit, an L.A. medical examiner who uses forensic medicine to solve crimes, was a solid premise for a mystery series. NBC gave a quick go-ahead to develop the concept. And at the time, Klugman was equally enthusiastic. "When Larson first told me about the show, I thought it was great," Klugman admits. So he signed a five-year series commitment for *Quincy*. That was the high point. After that things went downhill.

"Glen Larson never gave a damn about the quality of the show," Klugman charges. "But I guess his attitude is typical of TV people today. Nobody's really *against* quality. If you can do it, fine. If not, just make your air date and who cares?"

Universal and NBC quickly discovered that Klugman *does* care, and he *is* willing to miss air dates rather than perform in an episode that he considers "crap." Klugman and Larson had their first confrontation early—during production of the *Quincy* pilot. Even now, three years and many walkouts later, Klugman still becomes visibly agitated while recalling that incident. "It was a story about a psychopathic killer, a giant of a man who, the script said, murdered his first victim by 'breaking the girl's back like a twig.' And do you know how they wanted it to end? I was supposed to punch the guy in the jaw and knock him out. Can you imagine that?" Klugman saws angrily at his lunch, something small and gray that has been deep-fried beyond recognition. "A 55-year-old Jewish doctor is supposed to knock out this 7-foot homicidal giant with one punch. Does that make sense to you? Tell me."

Klugman is eating quickly now, swallowing heavily, talking between bites. "And when I told Larson I didn't think

that ending was consistent with the characters, do you know what he said?" Klugman pauses, peers down at his plate. "Jesus, this stuff is awful. What the hell am I eating here?"

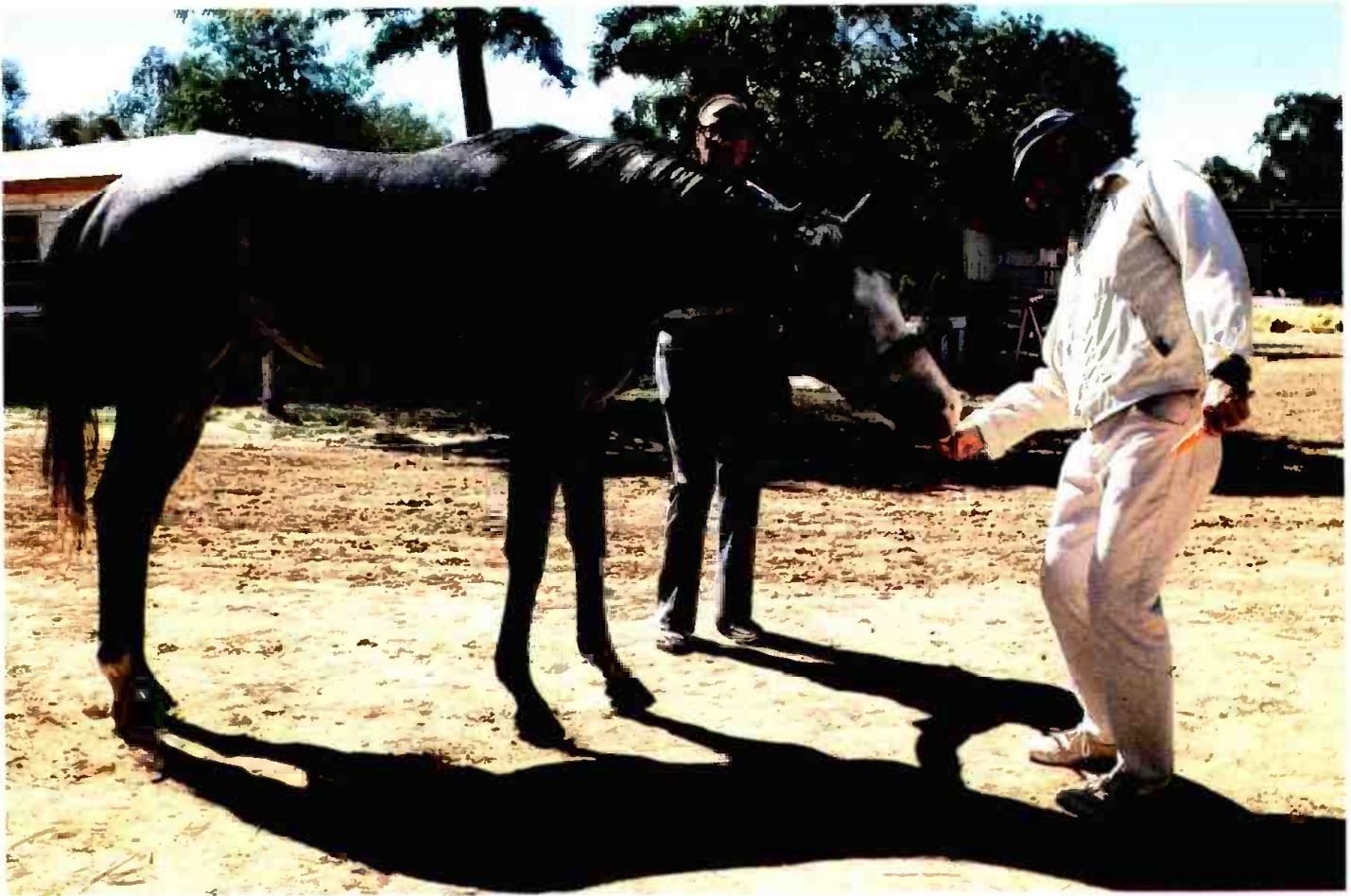
Klugman pushes the offending portion aside with his plastic knife, returns to the story. "So anyway, what does Glen Larson, this genius, this great dramatic producer, say to me? He says, 'Don't worry, Jack. People don't even notice those little details.' Little details? We were talking about the entire climax of the show. And later, when I wanted to do an episode on this new technique for treating rape victims that was just developed in a Dallas hospital, Larson looked me right in the eye and said, 'I'm not interested in that relevance crap.'"

Glen Larson staunchly maintains that conversation never took place. "It's totally untrue. We never had any conversations even vaguely resembling that. I'm appalled to hear that Jack would make such a statement, and I'd like to hear him make it face to face. But then, Jack has always said things that come back to haunt him."

As for the show's early script problems, the way Larson remembers it, he never envisioned the show as anything more than a bi- or triweekly mystery special. "I pleaded with Jack not to accept the network's midseason order to go weekly, but I guess money got in the way." Larson also claims Klugman never realized how difficult it would be to turn out a good *Quincy* script week after week. "Jack's motives were always honorable. He'd been associated with some very fine drama in the past and that's all he wanted to do here. But I don't think 'Death of a Salesman' can be written on a weekend."

Yet Klugman insists Larson did use the term "relevance crap," and adds, "That's when I knew I had to become the boss on this show or I'd never be able to live with myself. And you're only the boss if you're willing to blow the job. I've always been that way, even when I was just starting out."

The way Jack Klugman started out goes a long way toward explaining his current attitudes. Born in South Philadelphia in 1922, Klugman was introduced to theater by his older sister, Yetta, who used to take him to see the WPA productions that traveled the country during the Depression. After serving in World War II, he studied acting at Carnegie Tech on the GI Bill. But he was so anxious to turn professional, he dropped out after only two years and moved to New York, where, for \$7 a



Klugman feeds his colt Jaklin Klugman. "What I get from this horse," says Jack, "is tranquility."

week, he shared a room with another aspiring young actor, Charles Bronson. "Charlie was very neat," Klugman remembers. "He taught me to iron."

Slowly, Klugman learned his craft by acting off-Broadway, in summer stock, studying hard when he wasn't performing, working part time at the post office and as a house painter to pay the bills. When no work was available, he sold his blood.

**K**lugman's breakthrough came when he was hired to understudy the part of Doc in the Broadway production of "Mr. Roberts," a role he later assumed when Henry Fonda took the show on the road. When he returned to New York, live TV was beginning to happen and Jack Klugman happened with it. He began his career during TV's "Golden Age," made his reputation, went on to play more than 400 character roles and eventually won three Emmys (one for a part on the *The Defenders* and two for *The Odd Couple*). "The Golden Age of television really was golden," Klugman maintains. "We had great writers, great directors—the variety of a repertory company, full rehearsals and the big audiences you can only get on national TV."

But most of all, Klugman remembers

the producers—Fred Coe, Marty Manulis, Susskind, Herb Brodtkin—"People who knew directing, acting, writing. People who cared." That profound affection for producers who care about their work, and a corresponding distaste for those who don't, are enduring mementos of Klugman's passage through the Golden Age of television. During a movie career that included performances in "Twelve Angry Men," "Days of Wine and Roses" and "Goodbye, Columbus," and a varied Broadway career that once even required him to sing—opposite Ethel Merman in "Gypsy"—Klugman always tried to sign on only with those production people he felt he could trust and respect.

Even when he came to Hollywood to do series television, he did it only because he liked the people involved. "On *The Odd Couple*, everybody was great," Klugman says, the warm glow of nostalgia spreading across his face.

**T**he producer, Garry Marshall, was our daddy. When something was wrong, he'd fix it. The writers, Jerry Belson and Harvey Miller, were wonderful people, and very talented. And Tony Randall was the most unselfish costar I've ever worked with.

The show ran for five years and every day was a creative day.

"One time, Tony worked out this very clever and beautiful piece of pantomime, and he gave it to me, because that's the kind of guy he is. I happened to mention it to my agent, and he said, 'Better he should have given you a check.' That's the attitude people have out here. Pure schlock. But I was lucky to be working with people I really loved."

**T**hen, in 1977, Jack Klugman's luck ran out. "It was bound to happen, I suppose," he muses, carrying his lunch tray to the trash can, then pausing. "Those éclairs really look good, don't they? ...Naw, I'm not gonna do it." He dumps his tray and laughs. "During hiatus, I'm shooting a film where I have this nude scene with a young Italian actress, so now I'm dieting. For my health, I can never lose a pound. But for a part, no problem. It was the same way with cigarettes. I smoked for 40 years. Even when I got cancer I couldn't quit. But when the doctors said that whether or not they cured me, I'd never act again if I kept smoking because the irritated tissues would leave me permanently hoarse, I threw my cigarettes away and haven't

picked up another one in seven years. Crazy, huh?"

Perhaps, but consistent with Klugman's attitude about his career. Which is why being locked into a five-year contract on a show that has never really lived up to his expectations has eaten him alive. But now Klugman has a release for his anxieties that seems to be working. He bought a horse—a low-priced, nothing-special mare—and mated her, just for fun, with a horse of similarly modest racing heritage. The result was one little gray colt, named Jaklin Klugman because at birth Klugman mistook it for a filly. "You never heard of a man committing suicide who owns a yearling," Klugman says.

**J**aklin Klugman won four of his first five races. (Ultimately, as the world now knows, the colt made it to Churchill Downs in Louisville, where he ran third in the 1980 Kentucky Derby.) "Until now, my vocation and avocation were the same," Klugman continues. "I never had any real diversions. But... this is going to sound crazy, but yesterday I went to see the horse work out. Then they washed him. I just stood there, staring, like a kid. And I was happy. I mean, can you imagine a grown man gaining deep personal tranquillity from watching a horse take a bath? But I did, and when I drove home, I turned on the radio and sang along with Frank Sinatra."

The crew is just starting to set up the next shot. Klugman strides off toward his trailer. A group of friends and some of the younger actors tag along. Klugman is outgoing and warm with everyone, but his relationship with the younger actors is conspicuously lacking in intimacy.

Alone in his trailer, Klugman explains. "I don't talk much to the young people in this business because they're from a different world. Ask a young actor what he did on a certain show and he'll say, 'I did four days' or 'I did seven pages.' So I'll say, 'But what did you do? What was the role?' And he'll say, 'I told you. I did seven pages.' It's hopeless."

Then Klugman is called. When he leaves the trailer, the crowd gathers again. "Hey, want to see my impression of a TV director?" he asks. Of course, everyone does. Klugman begins this improvisation with an exaggerated cranking-the-camera twirl of his right hand. "Rolling... OK, action!" Then the rubber face scrunches up to the expression of a man who has just bitten into what he thought was a fresh cucumber but turned out to be a very sour pickle. "Oh, terrible, terrible...Where'd that



*"Jack's a perfectionist," says a friend, "and he can't deal with people who slide through things."*

girl learn to act?... My God, the boom is showing. Pan out....Awful....I can't look....Cut." He peers down at his watch, then up again. "OK, print it." The gathered throng laughs appreciatively, but all Klugman can muster is a watery half-smile. Turning to a friend, he murmurs resignedly, "To them it's a joke. To me it's a memoir."

**S**hooting resumes peacefully, but around two o'clock the activity between takes changes abruptly. That's when John Dominguez, the co-owner of Jaklin Klugman, arrives on the set. Dominguez, a tall, distinguished-looking gentleman from Reno, carries the Daily Racing Form containing the day's card at Santa Anita, and the off-camera Klugman becomes even more animated than the tireless Dr. Quincy. Dominguez and Klugman huddle privately. Notes are scribbled. Stubby pencils are tapped nervously against the Racing Form. Heads nod and shake. Then Klugman disappears into a private office to place a long-distance call. "That Jack is a good boy," quips a technician in a Mickey Mouse T-shirt. "No matter how busy he is, he always finds time to call his sick aunt in Las Vegas."

During a later break, Klugman collapses into a director's chair. He looks at his watch. "Only two more shooting days until the San Vicente," he mumbles. "I don't know if I can make it." Klugman is referring to the San Vicente Stakes, a \$60,000-added handicap race for 3-year-olds at Santa Anita in which his horse is entered. It's a major February race, against top competition, and if Jaklin Klugman can win it, he will be well on his way toward the Kentucky Derby in May. "So far, I've been sleeping OK," Klugman says. "But over the next few nights....I once went to the track with Fred Astaire. It was toward

the end of his racing days and he had only one horse left, a cheap one that he'd entered in a \$9000 claimer. The horse won and Fred danced all the way down the aisle and right into the winner's circle. I said, 'What are you getting so excited about?' and he told me, 'Jack, if you ever own a horse, you'll understand that even the cheapest race in the world feels better to win than an Oscar!'"

At Santa Anita on the Big Day, the San Vicente is eighth on the card and will not go off until after 4 P.M. But Klugman, accompanied by an assortment of siblings and in-laws, arrives at noon. "Why miss seven perfectly good opportunities to lose money?" he asks, entering his customary box on the clubhouse tier.

**A**s soon as his family is seated, Klugman is up again, striding away toward the ticket windows in search of his buddies and the first action of the day. The friends Klugman meets in the open space between betting windows and the snack bar are not exactly your archetypal Hollywood high rollers. One, "Degenerate Al," a studio chauffeur who hangs onto Klugman for an extra moment, wheedles, "Hey, what do you say, Jack? I really feel good about that nine horse in the first." Klugman slips him a 10.

"Jack is the sweetest, most generous man in the world," says Bob Bean, a longtime Klugman gambling buddy who breeds racing dogs in Las Vegas but came down to L.A. to be with his friend for the San Vicente. When Klugman is in Vegas, he and Bean are famous for sequestering themselves in the Rosebowl Horse Room and betting on everything that moves within a 24-hour period. "Jack is the kind of man who will do anything, absolutely anything for people. Sometimes, if you really care about him, you have to stop him from giving."

Which is probably true. Although he has never affixed his name to any specific charity, as others in show business have been accused of doing for selfish purposes, Klugman has quietly accumulated an impressive résumé of humanitarian work for such organizations as the Myasthenia Gravis Foundation, the Sunair Home for Asthmatic Children and the National Easter Seal Campaign. But perhaps the best example of Klugman's generous and trusting nature is the curious fact that as late as 1977, three years after he and actress Brett Somers separated, the two were still sharing a joint checking account.

So how does one reconcile these two seemingly disparate Jack Klugmans:

the devoted friend and humanitarian, and the temperamental actor? Bob Bean says the answer is simple. "Jack's a perfectionist, and there's no way he can deal with people who just kind of slide through things. I don't know these producers Jack is supposedly feuding with, but I guarantee I know exactly what they're like. People who don't care about anything. People who are just sliding through."

The eighth race has the big crowd buzzing from the moment the horses emerge from the paddock. Jaklin Klugman is the overwhelming favorite. Everyone in the house is betting on this dappled-gray colt with a famous name and four victories in his five races. At post time the odds are 2 to 5. Klugman, too nervous to sit with his family—or to sit at all—moves off and stands alone under the grandstand.

The horses are in the gate. Then a delay. Number four, Jaklin Klugman, is acting up. Three times the gray colt is guided into his stall and three times he rebels. Under the grandstand, a close friend murmurs, "They should pull him. Scratch him now. He's not ready to run." Klugman says nothing.

Then they're off. Moving through the backstretch, the horse Klugman privately calls Crazy Eyes holds tight to the rail, only a length and a half behind the leader. The big crowd is pleased, but Klugman isn't. "We were supposed to go to the front," he says. The gray horse holds his position through the turn, then makes his move. The fans rise, clap, stomp and howl as Jaklin Klugman pulls even with the leaders. But then, with one furlong to go, he falters, and drops back. Four horses cross the finish line ahead of him.

**J**ack Klugman stands silent and alone. No one dares approach him. Then he leaves for the barn.

The next morning, Klugman is back on the set. Everyone treats him like a brittle object, but he seems entirely recovered from the day before. He jokes with the crew, complains about some dialogue, passes on the éclairs and, after lunch, makes a private call to his sick aunt in Las Vegas. Finally, somebody mentions how sorry he is, you know, about yesterday.

Klugman looks up from his script. "What the hell?" he begins. "The thing I get from that horse isn't winning or money. It's tranquillity. What I get is away from here. Yesterday was ...Ahhh...." That backhand wave again. Then a smile. Then a question. "They're giving him a bath after his workout on Saturday. I'm going to watch. Want to come?"

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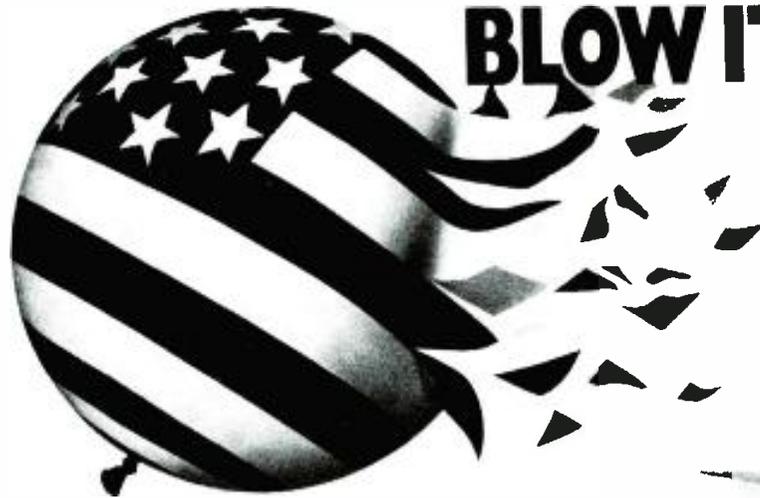
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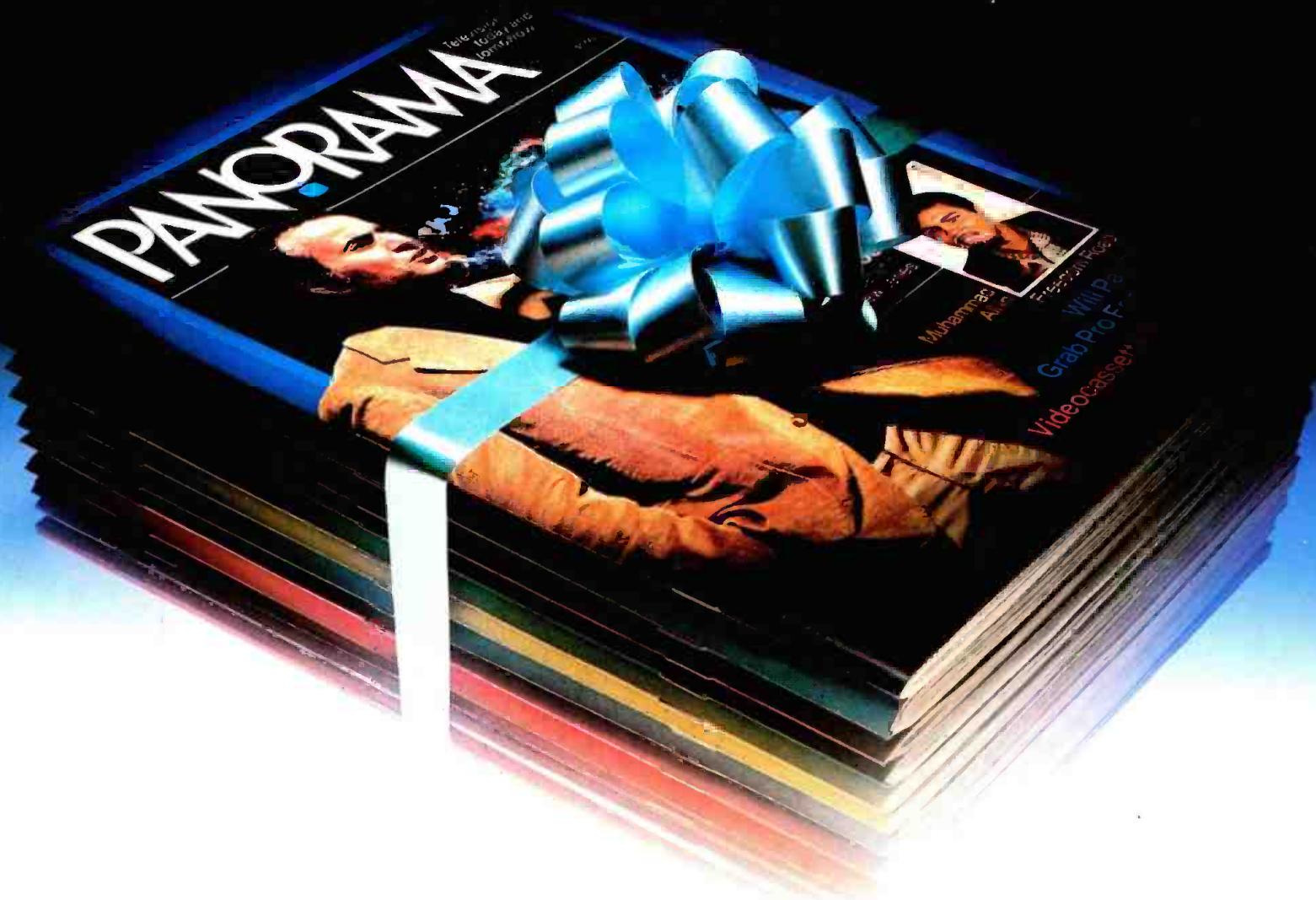


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## WHAT'S HAPPENING

continued from page 11

the final episode was telecast, that J.R. was going to be shot, the fact was announced on radio news bulletins along with updates from Afghanistan and Rhodesia. And a visit to London by Larry Hagman was splashed on the front pages of every newspaper. A rock group, the Wurzels, brought out a disc with "I Love J.R." on the A side and "I Hate J.R." on the B side; the disc was an instant hit.

Reviewers had a field day. Clive James, TV critic of the Observer, admitted that he was enslaved by the series; he had tried to go cold turkey, but had failed. "I went out to dinner and did my best not to think of the hundred different directions in which Sue Ellen can move her mouth. But everybody at the table had a videotape running at home... The grim fact is that we live in a Dallas culture. If you try to get off it, people will try to get you back on. They sneak up behind you and start seemingly harmless discussions about whether Lucy is the world's oldest schoolgirl. Before you know where you are, you're raving."

The incurably addicted have so far discovered only one way to mitigate the agonies of withdrawal: they tune in at prime time on Saturday to *Knots Landing*.

**Hang the expense.** Despite a massive belt-tightening operation at the BBC, aimed at saving \$300 million in the next two years, the production of one of the costliest drama series ever made is being allowed to proceed. *The Borgias* will be a 10-part history of the 15th-century Spanish-Italian family that spawned popes, temporal autocrats and the notorious Lucrezia. The series is being shot in

Italy, with a cast of 100. Mark Shivas, who was responsible for *Henry VIII* and *Casanova*, is producing.

**Art on camera.** BBC photographers have been traveling to art museums around the world to photograph the stars of *100 Great Paintings*, a series that will be seen here later this year.

Described as one of the longest series ever shown in Britain, it will consist of 100 10-minute programs, each of which will focus on a single masterpiece. Artists represented will range from Giotto to Francis Bacon. The works will be presented by contemporary painters such as David Hockney, or art critics such as Sir Hugh Casson.

So far, the greatest technical challenge to the photographers has been Picasso's giant "Guernica" canvas in New York's Museum of Modern Art. The work, 25 feet by 11, isn't a one-shot subject.

## TOKYO

John Fujii reporting

**Faded pink.** Two young Japanese women returned from the U.S.A. earlier this year with their vision of America badly tarnished. Pink Lady, one of Japan's most successful pop duos of recent years, had set off to Hollywood in the confident expectation of winning a whole new world of admirers from the prime-time NBC variety show that was to carry their name.

Behind them lay Japanese sales of 23 million records that had grossed \$100 million—a stunning achievement for a couple of 21-year-olds who had been in the business a

mere three years. However, there were ominous signs of a falling off in popularity at home, and everything pointed to an assault on a new market across the Pacific.

Alas, the mission aborted. Americans responded to Pink Lady as they do to Space Invaders, wiping them off the screen within seconds of the initial threat. Even guest stars like Lorne Greene and Donny Osmond failed to save the winsome Mie and Kei from ratings extinction.

When the duo returned home, rumors abounded that Pink Lady's next big media event would be professional divorce, Mie and Kei going their separate ways. But the two singers vehemently denied any such plan.

The latest gossip is that Pink Lady has been courted by China. Headline writers are already sharpening their pencils: "Japanese bombing in People's Republic."

**Heavy duty.** Is it possible to watch television and maintain law and order at the same time? According to a growing number of city police authorities here, the answer is no. The superintendent of police in Kyoto has proposed that TV sets be removed from police stations and from the street-corner observation boxes that are common in this country, on the grounds that television distracts police officers from their duty. And in the cities of Osaka and Kobe, severe restrictions on viewing have been imposed.

The lower ranks have so far accepted the deprivation without protest; the compelling counterargument that TV cop shows are part of their continuing professional education has apparently not occurred to them. ■



Larry Hagman: Britons go bonkers over J.R.



Mie: Is Red China ready for Pink Lady?



Talia Shire: "Old Boyfriends."



Michael Caine: "Sleuth."

## VIDEOCASSETTES

### NEW RELEASES

#### MOVIES

**55 Days at Peking** (1963)—Charlton Heston, Ava Gardner and David Niven in a story of the 1900 Boxer Rebellion. (Time Life Video Club; \$54.95)

**Foreign Correspondent** (1940)—Alfred Hitchcock adventure about an American newsman in Europe who witnesses the kidnaping of a diplomat. Joel McCrea, Laraine Day. (Time Life Video Club; \$39.95)

**The Happy Hooker** (1977)—A watered-down version of Xaviera Hollander's steamy memoirs, played for laughs. Lynn Redgrave, Jean-Pierre Aumont. (Time Life Video Club; \$34.95) (R)

**The Heartbreak Kid** (1972)—A bittersweet story about honeymooners (Charles Grodin, Jeannie Berlin) whose marriage is short-circuited by Cybill Shepherd. (Magnetic Video Corp.; \$54.95) (PG)

**Joe** (1970)—A chilling/comic study of a factory worker (Peter Boyle) who hates liberals and social workers. With Dennis Patrick, Susan Sarandon. (Time Life Video Club; \$34.95) (R)

**March of the Wooden Soldiers** (1934)—Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy try to help a widow threatened with eviction, in a musical based on Victor Herbert's operetta. (Video Tape Network; \$59.95)

**Old Boyfriends** (1979)—Talia Shire as a psychologist who sets out to seek affection from former lovers following the loss of her husband. With

Keith Carradine, John Belushi. (Magnetic Video Corp.; \$44.95) (R)

**Olly Olly Oxen Free** (1978)—An eccentric junkyard owner (Katharine Hepburn) helps two boys repair a hot-air balloon and joins their adventurous cross-country flight. With Kevin McKenzie. (Time Life Video Club; \$34.95) (G)

**Outrageous!** (1977)—A star is born when a transvestite hairdresser, encouraged by his schizophrenic roommate, enters show biz as a female impersonator. Craig Russell, Hollis McLaren. (Time Life Video Club; \$39.95) (R)

**Picnic at Hanging Rock** (1979)—Terror takes over a summer outing when three young women and their chaperone vanish. Rachel Roberts, Dominic Guard. (Time Life Video Club; \$39.95)

**Room at the Top** (1958)—Simone Signoret in an adult study of a ruthless social climber (Laurence Harvey) in a British industrial town. With Hermione Baddeley. (Magnetic Video Corp.; \$44.95)

**Seven Beauties** (1975)—Lina Wertmuller's offbeat look at war and survival through the eyes of a second-rate Italian gangster. Giancarlo Giannini, Shirley Stoler. (Time Life Video Club; \$44.95) (R)

**Sleuth** (1972)—Laurence Olivier and Michael Caine in the film based on Broadway's hit about deadly cat-and-mouse games between a writer and his wife's lover. (Magnetic Video Corp.; \$74.95) (PG)

**Till Marriage Do Us Part** (1975)—Comedy with Laura Antonelli as a sexually awakening, convent-bred young Sicilian woman who accidentally marries her own brother. With Alberto Lionello. (Time Life Video Club; \$44.95) (R)

**Two for the Road** (1967)—Audrey Hepburn and Albert Finney in a sweet/sour exploration of love, set against picturesque southern France. (Magnetic Video Corp.; \$44.95) (G)

*Some movie descriptions courtesy of TV Guide magazine. Ratings are those assigned by the Motion Picture Association of America for theatrical showings.*

#### SPECIALS

**Jack Nicklaus Sports Clinic**—Golfing tips from the legendary pro. (Magnetic Video Corp.; \$34.95)

**Tennis Everyone**—Billie Jean King demonstrates her winning techniques in five lessons. (Magnetic Video Corp.; \$54.95)

**Visions of Eight**—Eight portraits of the 1972 Summer Olympics through the eyes of eight film directors. (Time Life Video Club; \$39.95)

*Readers wishing to obtain more information from the distributors of the above-listed movies and specials may do so at these addresses: Magnetic Video Corp., 23434 Industrial Park Court, Farmington Hills, Mich. 48024; Time Life Video Club, Harrisburg, Pa. 17105; Video Tape Network, 115 E. 62nd St., New York, N.Y. 10021.*

#### BOOKS

A listing of some of the recently published books dealing with television.

**The Duping of the American Voter: Dishonesty and Deception in Presidential Television**

**Advertising**, by Robert Spero. (Lippincott & Crowell; \$12.95)—In a survey of 28 years of political commercials, an advertising executive details the deceptive techniques used in advertising for Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, Ford and Carter.

**Look Now, Pay Later: The Rise of Network Broadcasting**, by Laurence Bergreen. (Doubleday; \$12.95)—This critique of commercialism in TV traces the industry's growth from its beginnings in radio to the competition it now faces from cable and satellite TV.

**Moguls: Inside the Business of Show Business**, by Michael Pye. (Holt, Rinehart and Winston; \$12.95)—Through looks at the ascent of six entertainment giants—Jules Stein, William Paley, David Merrick, Peter Guber, Trevor Nunn and Robert Stigwood—Pye illustrates the changes the entertainment business has undergone.

**A Thousand Sundays: The Story of the Ed Sullivan Show**, by Jerry Bowles. (Putnam; \$9.95)—The story of how *The Ed Sullivan Show* got started and succeeded in

introducing new talent for 23 years (see excerpt, p. 68).

**NEW IN PAPERBACK**

**Agnes Nixon's All My Children, Book One: Tara and Philip**, by Rosemarie Santini. (Jove; \$2.25)—The first of a three-book series based on the ABC-TV soap opera.

**Nothing Could Be Finer Than a Crisis That Is Minor in the Morning**, by Charles Osgood. (Holt, Rinehart and Winston; \$3.95)—The 1979 best seller containing CBS radio and television personality Charles Osgood's finest witticisms.

**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. **"10"** (1979)—Featuring the Eighties' first sex symbol, Bo Derek. (WCI Home Video; \$65)
2. **Superman** (1978)—A superbudget film starring the special effects. (WCI Home Video; \$65)
3. **Enter the Dragon** (1973)—Bruce Lee's last film. (WCI Home Video; \$50)
4. **The Godfather** (1972)—Francis Ford Coppola's gangster epic about the rise and near-fall of the Corleones. (Paramount Pictures; \$79.95)
5. **Grease** (1978)—John Travolta and Olivia Newton-John in the film version of the hit musical. (Paramount Pictures; \$59.95)
6. **Halloween** (1978)—Violent thriller about a knife-wielding killer. (Media Home Entertainment; \$59.95)
7. **Blazing Saddles** (1974)—Mel Brooks' parody of Hollywood Westerns. (WCI Home Video; \$55)

8. **Dirty Harry** (1971)—Clint Eastwood as a San Francisco cop after a sniper. (WCI Home Video; \$55)
9. **Saturday Night Fever** (1977)—John Travolta stars as a hip-wiggling dancing champ in a Brooklyn disco. (Paramount Pictures; \$59.95)
10. **Debbie Does Dallas** (1978)—Rated X. (VCX; \$99.50)
11. **The Godfather, Part II** (1974)—More tales of the Corleone family. (Paramount Pictures; \$79.95)
12. **Emmanuelle** (1974)—Rated X. (Columbia Pictures Home Entertainment; \$69.95)
13. **M\*A\*S\*H** (1970)—Robert Altman's antiwar farce that was turned into a TV series. (Magnetic Video Corp.; \$54.95)
14. **Patton** (1970)—George C. Scott's Oscar-winning performance as Gen. George Patton. (Magnetic Video Corp.; \$74.95)

15. **Deep Throat** (1972)—Rated X. (Arrow Film & Video; \$99.50)
16. **Heaven Can Wait** (1978)—A professional quarterback (Warren Beatty) is accidentally summoned to Heaven before his time. (Paramount Pictures; \$59.95)
17. **The Deep** (1977)—Peter Benchley's tale of underwater treasure and adventure. (Columbia Pictures Home Entertainment; \$59.95)
18. **Flesh Gordon** (1974)—Rated X. (Media Home Entertainment; \$59.95)
19. **Midnight Express** (1978)—An American student's brutal ordeal in a Turkish prison. (Columbia Pictures Home Entertainment; \$59.95)
20. **The French Connection** (1971)—Gene Hackman and Roy Scheider tackle a French smuggling ring. (Magnetic Video Corp.; \$54.95)



Jacqueline Bisset: Stars in "The Deep."

Retail outlets participating in our survey include Associated Video, Houston; Audio Center, Honolulu; Audio Video Craft, Inc., Los Angeles; Beta Home Entertainment Club, Las Vegas; Brenda's Movie House, Philadelphia; Cinema Concepts, Inc., Wetherfield, Conn.; Columbia Video Systems, Highland Park, Ill.; Concord Video Center, Stamford, Conn.; Conlon Services, Litchfield, Ill.; Cyclops Video, Sherman Oaks, Cal.; Discotronics, Inc., Cranbury, N.J.; Future World Video, Scottsdale, Ariz.; Griffen 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, Elizabethtown, Pa.; Select Film Library, New York; Self's Electronic Entertainment Center, Clovis, N.M.; The Sheik Video Corp., Metairie, La.; Stansbury Stereo, Baltimore; Tele-video Systems, Richmond, Va.; Thomas Film Video, Royal Oak, Mich.; Valas TV, Denver; Video Audio Electronics, Williamsport, Pa.; Video Cassette, Phoenix, Ariz.; Video Cassettes, Etc., Lubbock, Texas; The Video Connection, Toledo, Ohio; Video Corp. of America, Edison, N.J.; Video Dimensions, New York; Video Industries of America, Council Bluffs, Iowa; Video Library, Torrance, Cal.; The Video Library Company, Bala Cynwyd, Pa.; Video Mart, San Bernardino, Cal.; Video Services, Towson, Md.; Videospace, Bellevue, Wash.; Video Specialties, Houston; Videostop, Beverly Hills; The Video Store, Gretna, La.; Video 2000, San Diego; Visual Adventures, Cleveland.

## PASSAGES



Lee Meriwether gets Genii Award.



Farewell to Sir Alfred Hitchcock.

## WED

NBC News correspondent **Richard Valeriani**, the network's State Department expert, and New York publicist Kathie Berlin.

## SIGNED

Senator **Barry Goldwater**, as a regularly scheduled political columnist for the Cable News Network.

**Rudy Maxa**, gossip columnist and reporter for The Washington Post, as a daily reporter on personalities for the Cable News Network.

**Roger Staubach**, former quarterback for the Dallas Cowboys and the all-time leading passer in National Football League history, as a football analyst for CBS Sports.

## ASSIGNED

NBC News correspondent **Dianne Wildman** to the London Bureau, from NBC News' Northeast Bureau, where she has been working out of New York covering the UN and other stories.

NBC News correspondent **George Lewis**, who had been working in Iran, will be covering the State Department.

## APPOINTED

Famed slugger **Henry Aaron**, vice president and director of player development for the Atlanta Braves, to the boards of directors of the Turner Broadcasting System, Inc., and the Atlanta National League Baseball Club.

CBS News reporters **Robin Wright** and **Barry Petersen**, to positions as network correspondents; Wright in the CBS News Bureau in Rome, Petersen in Los Angeles.

**Derrick Blakley**, to CBS News' Chicago Bureau, as a reporter. Blakley formerly worked as a reporter for WBNS-TV, the CBS affiliate in Columbus, Ohio.

## HONORED

ABC sportscaster **Jim McKay**, eight-time Emmy winner, with the annual Gold Liberty Bell Award of the Television and Radio Advertising Club of Philadelphia.

ABC's **Barbara Walters**, with the 1980 Hall of Fame Award of the Boston/New England chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, given for contributions to TV on a national scale.

NBC News correspondent **Philip Till**, by the Overseas Press Club of America Inc., with the Ben Grauer Award for journalistic excellence.

**Ralph H. Baer**, inventor of TV games, as the 1980 Inventor of the Year, by the New York Patent Law Association. Known as "Mr. Television Games," Baer holds most of the basic patents for electronic video games, which he pioneered in the late 1960s.

Actress **Lee Meriwether**, co-star of *Barnaby Jones*, with the American Women in Radio and Television's 26th annual Genii Award.

## DIED

**Jane Froman**, 72, former singer on radio, Broadway and TV (*Jane Froman's U.S.A. Canteen*, *The Jane Froman Show*, "Artists and Models"), whose recovery from injuries suffered in a 1943 plane crash was dramatized in the movie "With a Song in My Heart."

**Sir Alfred Hitchcock**, 80, British-born director of more than 50 suspense films, for which he won five Oscar nominations and the Irving G. Thalberg Memorial Award (1967), and was knighted earlier this year. Hitchcock had his own TV series from 1955-65.

## FUNDS ESTABLISHED

The **Bob Brown** Memorial Fund at San Francisco State

University, by NBC News and Constance Brown, widow of the cameraman who was killed, along with NBC News correspondent Don Harris and two others, in an ambush near the People's Temple in Guyana in November 1978. The Fund will provide annual scholarships of \$1000 to \$3000 to students interested in careers in broadcast journalism.

The **Edith Bunker** Memorial Fund for the E.R.A. and Women's Rights, by Norman Lear, who donated \$500,000 to the National Organization for Women's Legal Defense and Education Fund to honor the memory of that well-loved character, who is scheduled to die on *Archie's Place* at the start of the fall season.

## RE-SIGNED

**Johnny Carson**, with NBC, for three more years of *The Tonight Show*. Carson's new contract calls for him to host an hour-long edition of the show four nights a week, Tuesday through Friday.

## REASSIGNED

CBS News correspondent **Betty Ann Bowser**, to the position of co-editor of *30 Minutes*, CBS News' weekly children's magazine series. Bowser replaces CBS News correspondent **Betsy Aaron**, who will continue on general assignment.

**Cameron Swayze**, former anchorman for NBC Radio's News and Information Service, to the position of NBC News correspondent, assigned primarily to broadcasts on the NBC Radio Network, based in New York.

## RESIGNED

(Under pressure) **John Backe**, president of CBS, Inc., for three-and-a-half years.

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# Another Package from Home

By SETH GOLDSTEIN

For all you pay-television addicts wondering where your next film fix is coming from, Home Box Office may have the answer. The pioneering pay-TV service has just launched Cinemax, its second full-service or "maxi" package. Consisting entirely of feature films, the new service caters to—among others—foreign-film lovers and action/adventure aficionados.

It was officially unveiled at the National Cable Television Association convention in May, but HBO had already been publicizing the service for several weeks to catch the interest of subscribers hungry for more pay programs.

Demand is such that HBO thinks the new package will be accepted at roughly the same price as its primary service, so that viewers will be paying \$16 to \$20 a month to receive both. Add another \$10 to \$15 for basic cable, and the monthly bill hovers around \$30.

One of HBO's aims in launching its new maxi is to preempt its competitors in pay-cable, notably Showtime, the second-largest movie merchant in cableland. Viewers have shown their eagerness to subscribe to more than one pay-cable channel, and HBO wants the lion's share of the multitiered market. Describing the Cinemax offerings as complementary to its original package in both content and scheduling, HBO says its new combination of ser-

vices offers a better mix of children's and adult programming than subscribers could obtain by adding one of its rivals as a second tier.

## The (Movie) Empire Strikes Back

HBO's second maxi isn't the only new creature in the pay-TV zoo. Justice Department willing, HBO and Showtime may soon find their top-dog positions challenged by a five-headed dragon: Twentieth Century-Fox, Paramount, Columbia, MCA/Universal and Getty Oil. The studios and the oil giant have combined to create yet another all-movie service—with the initial advantage of having its own in-house inventory of films. And, say the new partners, those films would be withheld from general satellite distribution for the first nine months of their availability to the new service.

This proposed embargo drew quick protest from HBO, Showtime and rival Warner Amex, so possible antitrust litigation may delay the dragon's first puffs of programming.

As the prime pay-TV buyer, HBO has for years driven hard bargains with the producers. Occasionally the studios have rebelled, as when Fox sold "Breaking Away" to NBC before offering it to pay-TV, but for the most part they've accepted the going pay-TV price. Until now.

## Games on Cable

Want to try your hand at poker and blackjack without leaving your house—and without cash leaving your wallet? This no-lose opportunity has been granted to up to 1000 cable subscribers in four American cities.

With a minimum of fanfare, this spring, a new company called Play-Cable introduced the video-game system Intellivision in Rochester, Minn.; Moline, Ill.; Jackson, Miss.; and Boise, Idaho.

In return for a \$300 investment in a special component, or game player, that attaches to your TV set, you have your pick of 15 games, from Las Vegas-style card games to hockey, basketball and checkers. And instead of inserting a separate cartridge for each game, you call up the game using a keypad that connects your set to the cable system. All the games are stored in a computer, and any one of them can be played at any time without disturbing regular cable programming.

The four cities in which Intellivision is now available are part of a market test undertaken by Mattel, the manufacturer of the game, and the electronics firm General Instrument, which has joined up with Mattel to create Play-Cable. Only 1000 homes will be equipped with the game, and the response of these "charter" subscribers will determine the pattern of a national launch next year. The monthly fee ranges from \$6 to \$10, depending on the locality.

Intellivision is also available nationally in a noncable, cartridge form, but the retail price is steeper—\$29.95 per cartridge, in addition to the \$300 for the hardware. ■

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# America's Biggest Discount Warehouse



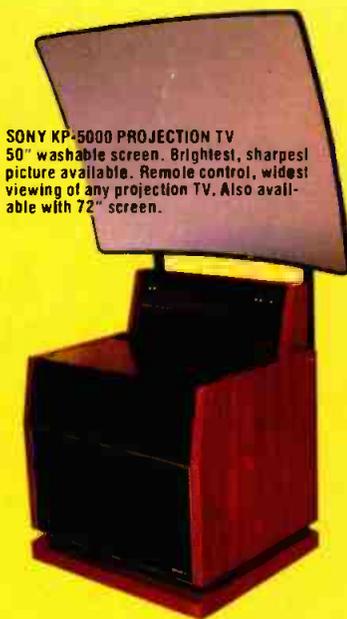
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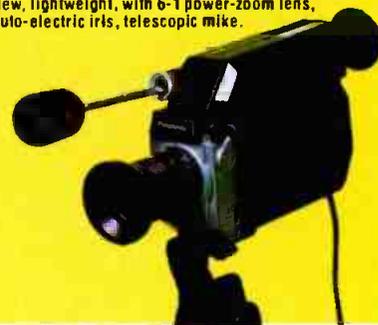
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# Cause of Death: Breaking Too Many Rules

By CYRA McFADDEN



Audiences do not necessarily crave "well-made" plots. We do crave a sense that the events we're watching add up to something, lead somewhere, happen for some comprehensible reason.

**T**he verdict is in. Larry Gelbart's series *United States* has been canceled—or as an L.A. friend put it, in the quaint patois of that part of the world, "It's going down the toilet."

For a while it looked as if Fred Silverman, both judge and jury, might keep Gelbart's innovative series on the air despite "the numbers," Nielsen ratings one might expect for a three-part documentary on "The Human Elbow." *United States* had received glowing critical acclaim, and NBC, like most of us, can use all the respectability it can get.

Although money doesn't mean much more in major network circles than it does to Bunky Hunt, the series' production budget also represented more than the usual outlay of spare change. Says the same Los Angeles informant, "These are crazy people. You know they built a real house with *real doors*?"

Post-mortems will probably insist *United States* was too good for us, too intelligent and sensitive, and that, accustomed to our prime-time pap, we weren't ready for it. The *real* reasons for its difficulties have to do with the strictures inherent in situation comedy, even "adult" sitcom, and they're at once more complicated and less flattering.

There are exceptions, but most half-hour sitcoms are visually claustrophobic. As in *United States*, the camera rarely moves outside a single set, because while using outside locations would allow more intricate plots, taping on a sound stage is easier and cheaper (even a sound stage with real doors). Thus whatever happens in an episode must happen in a few rooms.

To provide variety and increase dramatic possibilities, series bring in char-

acters other than their protagonists: the rogues' gallery of crooks on *Barney Miller*, for example, or the stream of visiting brass and medical personnel on *M\*A\*S\*H*. *United States* was focused so tightly on its two main characters, Libby and Richard, that it felt hermetically sealed. Quarreling dinner guests let in a whiff of air from the outside in one segment, but generally we spent the half hour with Libby, Richard, and their elegant furniture. Even the Chapins' two children, who appeared infrequently, seemed incidental both to the marriage and to the series.

Thus the claustrophobia was heightened and the usual limitations of the sitcom form exacerbated. Attractive as they are, Jeff Bridges and Helen Shaver early on began to feel like the house guests who move into your small apartment with lots of luggage, never go out, and plan to stay for months.

Another built-in restriction of the sitcom form is that each episode must be discrete, telling its own complete mini-story, and solving any problems that story raises, usually in a half hour. As Richard told Libby in a recent episode of *United States*, this is not realistic. In life, problems are not often solved in half an hour.

**S**itcoms (or "comedy/dramas," or detective shows) are not documentaries, however, and if this convention is not true to life, it's true to the rules of satisfying drama. Cloddish of us, I suppose, but most people prefer too-neatly-tied loose ends to the careful avoidance of conventional beginnings and endings in *United States*, which served up a loose tangle of narrative strands, week after week, like so much fettuccine.

**W**hich brings me to this series' most striking departure from less high-minded sitcom: There *were* no events, or rather none that were dramatized. What actually happened in the series, other than the shifting of emotional winds, happened off-camera. Richard's affair, the funeral of a loved uncle, a car breakdown—we saw none of these things, important or trivial, but instead were told about them, in that endless stream of witty talk talk talk talk talk.

I feel terrible about it, but after a numbingly static episode in which Libby and Richard alternated introspective monologues about their marriage (to a researcher predictably somewhere off-camera), I found myself wishing one of them would take a pratfall or sit on a whoopee cushion.

Obviously, strict adherence to the conventions of TV situation comedy only produces more indefensible drivel, while shows that are fresh and innovative break the rules. *Soap* and *Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman* are open-ended narratives; *M\*A\*S\*H* (which Larry Gelbart also helped create and shape) dramatizes insoluble problems.

None of these shows is visually claustrophobic, however; none focuses on talk instead of action; and none signals loud and clear, as did *United States*, that it takes itself very seriously indeed. Most important, all are funny—not necessarily witty, but plain funny. And "funny" is the baby that must not be thrown out with the bath water.

The moral: You can break some of the rules some of the time, but not all of them all of the time. *United States* offered too much situation and not enough comedy. ■

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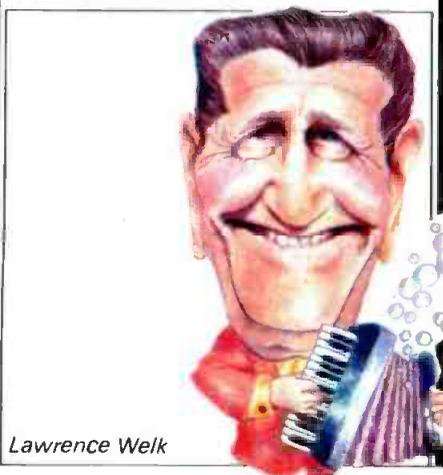
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## YESTERDAYS



### 25 Years Ago: July 1955

The three top-rated shows of the 1954-55 season, according to ARB, are Groucho Marx's *You Bet Your Life*, *The Jackie Gleason Show* and Ed Sullivan's *Toast of the Town*. . . . ARB also reports that *The \$64,000 Question* is an unprecedented success—its 47 million weekly viewers are the most ever recorded during the summer. Within four weeks of its debut, the show has risen to the number-one position in the Trendex lineup. And in its fifth week, 79.4 percent of the Nation's TV sets are tuned in to watch Catherine S. Kreitzer announce that she is quitting with the \$32,000 she has won. . . . News cameras are in Geneva for a Summit Conference of the Big Four leaders: Dwight Eisenhower of the U.S., Nikolai Bulganin and Nikita Khrushchev of the USSR, Anthony Eden of Great Britain and Edgar Faure of France. . . . A TV special cele-

brates the opening of the spectacular new Disneyland amusement park. . . . Participants in baseball's All-Star Game include Ted Williams, Stan Musial, Duke Snider, Mickey Mantle, Al Kaline, Hank Aaron, Yogi Berra, Roy Campanella and Ernie Banks. . . . Paul Newman stars in "The Death of Billy the Kid," by Gore Vidal, on *Philco-Goodyear Playhouse*. . . . Lawrence Welk and his Champagne Music Makers make their network-TV debut. . . . Hume Cronyn and Jessica Tandy re-create their Broadway roles in "The Fourposter" on *Producers' Showcase*. . . . Live television is on the wane. Network plans for fall indicate that at least 50 percent of the regular nighttime shows will be on film.

### 10 Years Ago: July 1970

President Richard Nixon holds a televised conversation with Eric Severeid of CBS, John Chancellor of NBC and Howard K. Smith of ABC. . . . *Evening at Pops* launches a series of programs on public television, with Arthur Fiedler conducting and Sen. Edward Kennedy reading excerpts from the writings of Abraham Lincoln. . . . On July 4, public TV presents three-and-a-half hours of coverage of Honor America Day ceremonies in Washington, D.C., with the Rev. Billy Graham, Bob Hope, Kate Smith, Jack Benny, Dinah Shore and Red Skelton. . . . On the All-Star rosters this year are Hank Aaron, Willie Mays, Frank Robinson, Carl Yastrzemski,

Johnny Bench and Harmon Killebrew. . . . Lawrence Welk celebrates his 15th TV anniversary on July 4, with Anita Bryant singing "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." . . . On July 12, a rerun of CBS's *Repertoire Workshop* showcases six talented newcomers. One of them is a singer named Bette Midler. . . . CBS announces the purchase of a new situation comedy based on the popular British comedy series, *Till Death Us Do Part*. The U.S. title is to be *Those Were the Days* (but, before it reaches the air, it will be renamed *All in the Family*).

### 5 Years Ago: July 1975

On the eve of July 4, Bob Hope leads a salute to the beginning of the Bicentennial year. He is joined by Anita Bryant, Charley Pride, John Davidson, Juliet Prowse and the Mike Curb Congregation. . . . TV cameras are aboard the Apollo and Soyuz space capsules as they join in a complicated docking maneuver for a historic "space summit." . . . Lily Tomlin gets another TV special. . . . 1975's All-Stars include Johnny Bench, Thurman Munson, Rod Carew, Steve Garvey, Joe Morgan, Pete Rose, Lou Brock and Reggie Jackson. . . . *The Odd Couple* leaves the network air after five years. . . . Wayne Rogers is finally free, legally, from *M\*A\*S\*H*. . . . *Happy Days* takes a light-hearted look at the TV quiz scandals of the '50s. 📺

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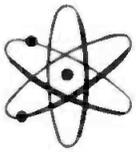
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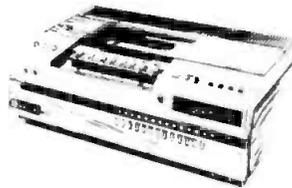
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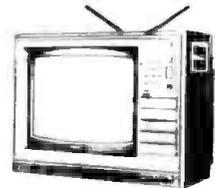
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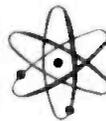
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# REAR VIEW

By HARRY STEIN

## The Games the U.S. Should Play

It is easy now, six months later, to think back on the Winter Olympics as a joyous experience. The Miracle on Ice! America triumphant! And Eric Heiden thrown in for good measure.

Uh-uh. Think very, very hard—'cause that isn't the way it was at all. The hockey victory came at the very end of the Games. Overall we were—and even now it is painful to acknowledge—*losers*.

Day after day, in competition after competition, we found ourselves humbled by Swedes, by Austrians, by Dutchmen, by Liechtensteinians, for God's sake—and they didn't even have their own national anthem!—not to mention the twin ogres of the East: the Russians and the East Germans.

Not that any of this was our fault. The obvious fact is that the Olympics were stacked against us Americans from the beginning. These just weren't our kind of games. How could we be expected to win a medal in something called the biathlon? I mean, does your cousin Ed strap on *his* rifle Saturday morning, grease up *his* cross-country skis and hit the road? Hell, no, only Russkies do that! And then there's the luge. A lot of people I know can't even remember how to pronounce the damn word until Jim McKay pops up every four years to remind them. The luge is such a dumb-looking thing, too, with all those grown-ups sliding downhill, splayed out on their backs and thinking their uniforms will make them look like serious athletes. No American with any dignity would want to win that event.

I'm not even going to comment on ice dancing.

I'm only glad that we got out of the Summer Games while the getting was good. Forget about the politics of it; there's no reason why a nation as great as this one should be humiliated by having to compete in dinky and sissified events like kayaking and fencing. Enough is enough! I say that, if they want us back, they can damn well start having events that Americans are good at. I'm not only talking about baseball or football (though both should obviously be added to the Games forthwith); I'm talking bowling and calf roping and eight ball. Yessir, I'm talking Red Rover.

I sense that this is an idea whose time has come, and have drafted the following letter to Lord Killanin, the head of the International Olympic Committee: Dear Lord,

I write on behalf of all 220 million of us. We've had it up to here! If you ever want to see us in the Summer or Winter Games again, the enclosed list of events must be added to the schedule. And none of your Irish shilly-shallying. Since we are forgoing this summer's Games, you now have until Dec. 31, 1983, to make up your mind. After that, forget it!

### The Events

• **Miniature Golf:** A contest of precision, daring and elegance, pitting man against both the elements and himself. Like downhill racing and the steeplechase, the condition and difficulty of the course will invariably add to the suspense. (If I might, Lord, I would like to suggest the arduous Kiddieland course in Yonkers, N.Y., as a model for the Olympic facility.)

• **Pong:** Not to be confused with Ping-Pong, at which we Americans wouldn't have a prayer. An indoor sport, like basketball, Pong calls for extraordinary eye-hand coordination. The United States can expect lively competition from the Japanese and the Western Europeans.

• **Name That Tune:** All songs featured in competition must have appeared on the *American* charts. All decisions of the judges are final. Tom Kennedy and Dennis James will be the judges.

• **Power Bingo:** This event shall be held in the basement of the Olympic arena. To attract world-level competitors, cash prizes of up to 15 dollars shall be awarded in lieu of medals.

• **The 1000-Meter Roller Disco:** A women's competition. Style points will be awarded on the basis of speed, dynamism, style and flimsiness of garments.

• **The 2500-Meter Roller Disco:** Men's competition. There will be mandatory point deductions for "carrying on." In the interest of fairness, medalists shall be required to take blood and urine tests; cocaine levels in the blood of 10 percent or lower will result in automatic astonishment on the part of the judges.

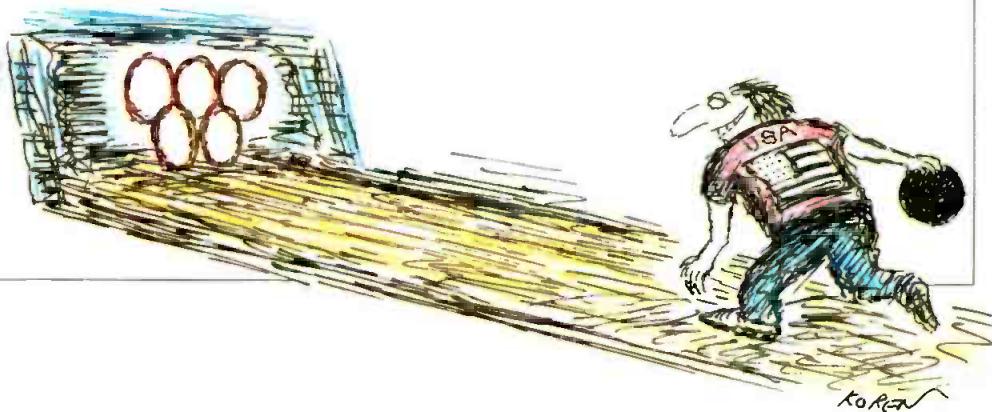
• **The 5000-Meter Roller Boogie:** Pairs. If ice dancing turns you on, Lord, you ain't seen nothin' yet.

• **Dog Frisbee:** If we must have animal events, this one will serve as a suitable replacement for those equestrian events we Americans are always losing. All dogs must respond enthusiastically to the exclamation "Far out!" Human competitors are required, as a preliminary event, to pronounce the expressions "Outta sight" and "No way" with a discernible Southern California accent.

• **Heavyweight Car-Stripping:** Pairs. Athletes shall be judged according to the quickness with which they remove the tape deck, radio, tires, fenders, doors, hood ornament, hood and trunk—in that order—from a late-model American vehicle.

• **The Telethon:** Athletes are required to fill 30 minutes of dead air time with impassioned appeals for donations from spectators. Points are awarded for style, sincerity and dollar totals raised.

In the interest of brevity and spectator comfort, Lord, the Winter Games shall be pared down to one event: men's speed skating. Ice hockey shall be played once every 20 years. ■





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