

pressure; you can get kind of uptight. You always have to be at your best, always have to be on time. I think my job has tremendous demands that . . . not everyone out there can handle." Garland Robinette, who with Miss Hill forms perhaps the only prime time husband-wife anchor team in the country, notes that "when the ratings fall, the anchor gets fired, not the reporters."

Those anchors drawing the largest salaries (more than \$150,000) may be worth it most of all, says Dave Patterson of WEWS-TV Cleveland. Most of them, he says, are in their 40's and 50's and "now find themselves reaping financial benefits of that time and place. . . . They are earning money because their stations are earning so much money and . . . can't afford to let them go."

Ron Stone of KPRC-TV Houston says he learned to report under Dan Rather at KHOU-TV Houston, where the latter was news director in 1961. Mr. Stone says he has "always considered myself a writer who could talk," and for years has read criticism of anchormen. "I'll trade jobs with anybody in the print media any time," he says. "I don't know how well I will do his job, but I think I know how well he'll do mine." The suggestion is, not very.

Echoes WEWS's Dave Patterson: "It's not that hard to be a good newscaster, but it takes technique. Everything you have that holds a person's attention is not only an asset, but a necessary asset. To be good, you have to be *good*."

That's still intangible, and Bill Beutel, WABC-TV New York, can't add much substance to the concept. "It is communicating," he said, "telling the story in a simple, understandable, honest, journalistic fashion." And the way that is done is what makes people watch. "If you are lucky," he says, "they like the way you do it." There are certain cosmetic requirements, he admits, but putting it "simply, maybe crassly, you have to be able to sell the product, and from the station's point of view, the product is *airtime*."

Like Mr. Beutel, Jack Cafferty of WNBC-TV New York works in the biggest TV market in the country, where settling in is rougher than in smaller markets, where shows are rated nightly—and where many anchors have passed through on their way to obscurity. He says a newscaster must be believable—a quality audiences detect and one that is developed over time. Mr. Cafferty went to the University of Nevada as a pre-med student, but decided to go with radio instead. His first television station was KOLO-TV Reno, where he did a children's show in 1961. He went on to KCRL-TV Reno and WDAF-TV Kansas City, Mo.—in charge of production and programming at one and reporting and broadcasting at the other. He did weather at WDAF-TV for two years. (How was it? "Boring. What can you say, right? It's either going to rain, or it's not.") He went to WHO-TV Des Moines, Iowa ("I felt like I had been exiled"), as 6 and 11 p.m. anchor in 1974, and was running the news department nine months later. Then he

got a call from New York; Tom Snyder was leaving WNBC-TV and would Mr. Cafferty be interested in auditioning? He was, and started anchoring weekends June 1 last year. On March 20 this year he began the 6 p.m. news.

A good anchor, says Jack Williams of WBZ-TV, makes hard things look easy. "A person would be lying if he said he didn't work on his voice," Mr. Williams says. "You wouldn't give the same modulation to a tragedy as to a woman who won a baking contest." He remarks that the newscast requires total concentration, and that he often comes off camera dripping wet—"You have to concentrate on one or two people sitting in front of a TV set depending on you to tell them what is going on." And, adds WQVM-TV's Maureen Bunyan, you have to do it remaining poised, "even if the world is falling apart."

After anchoring 16 years in New York, Jim Jensen of WCBS-TV figures he must be successful, but besides his experience and

#### *KPRC-TV's Stone*

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skills, he can't define the things that make viewers take to him or to any anchor. "It is a whole bunch of intangibles, not out of any book and not from experience—magnetism, style, tilt of the head, animalism, a whole bunch of things that can't be bottled," he says.

If the intangibles are there and the anchor clicks, then, as one put it, the "roller coaster ride" begins. Miss Bunyan, a journalism graduate of the University of Wisconsin who attended the Columbia Graduate School of Journalism summer program for minorities, quotes a colleague most anchors mention—CBS News's Walter Cronkite—as saying anchors are influential because people think they are. "We are the result of other people's imaginations," she says. Miss Bunyan walks a fine line between remaining accessible to her public and spending too much of her time with phone calls and correspondence. What all anchors know and will tell you, she puts this way: "If they do not want you, you are not successful. The measure of success of a product is the number of people who consume it. If they don't call, write, say hello on the street, you have not succeeded."

All the attention can be bothersome, but as Mary Ruth Carleton, of KXAS-TV Dallas-Fort Worth, says, "it is part of the job; it comes with the territory." She gets calls from people who are just lonely, and reports that there is pressure to be nice to

all of them. "A lot of time you talk and are real nice on the phone, then slam down the phone to get a release," she says. Anchor people are bigger than life, she says, because television is so much a part of people's lives. "I wish I could tell people to read books, to get out with their families. I wish I could say, 'Turn off your TV's, don't let TV run your lives.'"

KXAS-TV anchor Russ Bloxom is among those who illustrate how recognition helps. He should know about recognition, having covered the courthouse beat for 15 years. Mr. Bloxom has been in Texas all his life—he was born in Houston, went to school at Texas Christian University, and worked on a 24-hour news station, KXOL(AM) Fort Worth, before joining WBAP-TV (now KXAS-TV). Since his radio days, he has covered the courthouse. He has grown up with many of the city's newsmakers and they with him. Many times, he says, he has gotten a story because someone knew and trusted him.

Because he is out every day, his viewers often see him working and frequently "are amazed when they see me lugging equipment. They still have the misconception that anchors are 'pretty boys,' that somebody just hands them a script." That idea is promoted frequently—*Time* magazine recently called them "pearly-toothed, cleft-chinned basso profundos."

WEWS's Dave Patterson doesn't agree, but says there is emphasis on appearance "because news has become profitable. They have weeded out the less glamorous people and left a lot of people on the air who shouldn't be there."

"Most people," says, WCPO-TV's John Esther, "treat an anchor as another pretty face who hasn't got the brains to write his way out of a paper bag." He has support when he calls that a "myth."

Jack Williams, for one. He was a long way from WBZ-TV Boston when he built his own radio station at 13, and went on the air at 15. It's all I ever wanted to do," he says, and he carefully planned his career. Now 34, he was a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of the University of Oregon (broadcast journalism and political science) in 1966; he was the first Harold E. Fellows (National Association of Broadcasters) memorial fellowship winner from west of the Mississippi. He took his first job at KIRO-TV Seattle as an anchor, then went to KORK-TV Las Vegas doing a bit of everything, including editing and processing. From there, he moved to his present post in Boston. "I have tried not to stumble anywhere," he says, "I always tried to plan carefully." Being an anchor, he says, "is the essence of what I have studied for; I am able to utilize the skills that took me so long to develop." Mr. Williams says, "I get very perturbed [at the notion] that anyone who has a pleasant look, is trim and dresses well, has an empty head. It really upsets me. I . . . am stereotyped, but I have worked very hard."

Then there's WCBS-TV's Mr. Jensen—his face is pleasing, but not pretty. In the days before World War II he would listen to radio reports "from faraway places," and