

Movietown, R.S.V.P.

Reviewed Sunday (24), 8-8:30 p.m. Sustaining over KTLA (Paramount), Hollywood. Style—Charades, studio and remote. Directed by Klaus Landsberg (remote) and Gordon Minter (studio).

Here's an inviting slice of video fare that's suited for networking. Using charades as its basis, *Movietown* takes the viewer each week into a different film personality's drawing room for a close-up of the stars playing the old parlor game. Participants are divided into two groups—Adams and Eves—while the board of experts judges the battle between the sexes from the studio. This keeps the show switching from studio to home.

Permanent judges are radio director Charley Vanda, publicist Helen Ferguson and writer Carroll Carroll, with Keith Hetherington capably handling studio emcee chores. Vanda's spontaneous wit injects an Oscar Levant flavor into the judges' panel and adds greatly to the show's appeal. Teams based in the Beverly Hills home consisted of Joy Lansing, Jeanne Cagney and Trudy Marshall vs. George Byam, Kim Spalding and Phil Raffin, with Dick Lane as emcee. Lane, a screen thesp, is well suited for this slot. He is acquainted with the film crowd, discusses current screen activities with each guest and, whenever the occasion permits, injects items of interest concerning each participant.

Show should ring the network bell since it projects the viewer into the celebs' homes. It should build a strong fem following. If *Movietown's* fem guests continue along present telegenic lines, males enthusiasm for this show is assured.

Seg moves at a rapid pace, keeping interest high. Technical feat of switching from studio to remote every few minutes is carried out smoothly. *Movietown* replaces *Pantomime Quiz*, the charade seg which started on this station and has moved to KTTV.

Lee Zhitto.

The Morey Amsterdam Show

Reviewed Thursday (April 21), 9-9:30 p.m. Style—Variety. Sponsored by the DuMont dealers of America in conjunction with the television receiver division, Allen B. DuMont Laboratories, thru Buchanan & Company, via WABD. Producer, Morey Amsterdam; director, David T. Lewis; writers, Morey Amsterdam and Lou Metzger; setting, Russell Patterson; production supervisor, Frank Vennetta; music, Johnny Guarnieri. Cast: Morey Amsterdam, Art Carney, Jacqueline Susann, Don Russell. Guests: Mary Raye and Naldi, Vic Damone.

Indefatigable Morey Amsterdam has brought his video show back to the air on DuMont after a run on Columbia Broadcasting System failed to snare a bankroller for the rowdy comic. Now sponsored by the receiver division of DuMont, Morey rollicks along with much the same cast as before, again entertaining the guests at a mythical cafe. Apart from changing the club to the Silver Swan from the Golden Goose, making Art Carney into Newton the waiter instead of Charlie the doorman, and switching Jacqueline Susann from Lola the cigarette girl to Jackie the cigarette girl, things are virtually as they were. A guest policy added a touch of class to the

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The Tremaynes

Reviewed April 16

Sustaining Via WOR

Saturdays, 12-12:30 p.m.

Producer, Mende Brown. Cast: Les Tremayne, Alice Reinheart.

This Mr. and Mrs. show as presented by the Tremaynes (Les and his actress wife Alice Reinheart) needs a hearty dose of vitamins if it is to have any AM longevity. The formula for a Mr. and Mrs. show generally uses ample amounts of small talk, a name guest and perhaps a special feature. The pattern wasn't broken.

Stimulating conversation on topics of interest to an audience has a place in radio, but the conversation must be of interest to rate the time spent. Their talk was not too competing. They had the usual guest—this time musician Gordon Jenkins. However, while taking the easy way out with a minimum of scripting makes the job easy, it is not productive of a secure place on the programming schedule.

Imaginative Gim

The only feature of the show that revealed some imagination was the couple's *Tagline Theater*. The idea is to have the guest give them a sentence which becomes the last line of a playlet that they then ad lib. "Ooh, la, la, those French women," was Jenkins' sentence, and it was intriguing to hear the Tremaynes build up the situation so they could deliver the tag.

The Tremaynes are experienced and capable radio personalities with the ability to sell this kind of show. WOR should give them the material to do the job, otherwise what results can only be called indifferent programming. Worth noting is the fact that this type of show started on WOR years ago, with Ed and Peg Fitzgerald.

Leon Morse.

proceedings, with warbler Vic Damone and dancers Mary Raye and Naldi showing up for the preem.

The guests proved the high spot of the show. Damone, now a handsome lad with a refurbished schnozz, did a soulful, torchy job on *So in Love*, his main defect being a tendency to pause between phrases with an expression which made him seem to be trying to remember what comes next. The terp team was topflight, showing again that they are prime video timber for smooth and classy dancing.

The rest of the show hardly needs comment. Amsterdam dragged out all his usual stock, including *Yuk-a-Puk*, his cello routine, and such trade-marked phrases as "So what else is new?" and "Tell us about it, I will, and he did," and the ever-present "What'd he say?" which was used no fewer than five times in the 30 minutes.

Material needs strengthening if Amsterdam's show is to build into anything first class. The exchange between him and Carney, usually good for a bucket full of laughs, was especially weak on the debut show. A baseball routine with Miss Susann was funny enough, but a slapstick take-off on a melodrama featuring Amsterdam, Carney and Damone did not come off.

Camera work was fair, but the boys were caught napping when Amsterdam began introducing some of the people in the audience and the cameras didn't get to some of them. Commercials featuring DuMont receivers were unimaginative, simply showing the receivers and having the patter read as accompaniment.

Sam Chase.

What's Next?

Reviewed Friday (April 22), 6:15-6:45 p.m. (EST). Style—Variety, with spot commercials. Monday thru Friday via WRGB, Schenectady, N. Y. Directors: Duff Brown, Ted Baughn, Bob Stone. Cameramen: Gay Fiorentino, Leo Trumble, Ken Comstock. Sound, Bob Gutshall. Lights, Skip Rutkowski.

Thinking up gimmicks for this show five days a week, holding down an announcing job at radio station WGY, and studying for a master's degree is the lot of Howard Reig, the show's emcee. It's a definite tribute to Reig's talents that the programs roll along as evenly as they do, with occasional efforts hitting real peaks.

Reig's foil is Eileen Hanrahan, who has the right amount of fast pick-up and mugging ability to work with Reig.

The show was introduced by Reig and Miss Hanrahan, sitting behind a table. Patter led into a first musical number by the Steve Hall Trio (piano, clarinet, bass), then back to the emcee for a fur store commercial. Miss Hanrahan modeled a fur cape and gave the selling spiel. During part of the talk a slide of the store front was shown.

This format was followed thruout, with another commercial on film, and Reig reading the third spot as slides were projected.

The trio did four numbers, with vocalists Elsie Ann Marco handling two. The chirp does a nice job, comes thru fine on the screen, and has a natural, unaffected manner that is gratifying. Her voice qualities are clear, with traces of Sarah Vaughan.

The Reig-Hanrahan duo filled time by reading baseball scores and doing clever routine on "Mother and Father Time" (in regard to the impending daylight saving time confusion).

Camera angles were conventional and somewhat static. A hash resulted on some of the musical numbers, with vocalist Marco on the left side of the screen, one member of the trio on the right, and a big blank space in the middle. Viewing was muddy, a characteristic that seems to be common with local shows, as compared with with the sparkle of network programs.

Paul Jackson.

Happy Pappy

Reviewed Friday (22), 9:05-9:45 p.m. Presented sustaining by WENR-TV, Chicago. Produced by Fred Montiegel for Don McNeill Enterprises. Director, Greg Garrison; cameramen, S. H. Braun, S. D. Gabocy, J. Krejcir. Talent: Ray Grant, emcee; Four Vagabonds, the Randolphs, Tommy Thompson, Sonny Reed, Evelyn Doss; Modern Modes, instrumental quartet.

Just as radio has built a few good all-Negro programs, some day television will capitalize on the inherent showmanship of the race and build a good network package which will be able to compete with the best programs. This show could win such a spot, but it would have to be drastically revamped. The germ of a good idea is apparent in the program, but poor production planning and the lack of an unusual format has made it just fair television.

Ray (Pappy) Grant introduces variety acts in an easy manner and every once in a while hits the theme with "happiness" remarks about the cast and the audience.

The program is too long. As a once-a-weeker, it should be no longer than a half hour, and it might be best as a three-a-week 15-minute

City Desk

Reviewed Sunday (March 24) 7:30-8 p.m. Style—Drama-news. Sustaining via KLAC-TV, Hollywood. Producer-director, Joe Landis; writer, Don McGuire. Cast: Don McGuire, Craig Stevens, Lois Collier, Lenny Breman.

One of the most ingenious ideas yet devised for dramatic news presentation, *City Desk* has every chance of catching on. The gimmick, which combines city room atmosphere with current news, is fresh and absorbing. Cast is well suited, and the writing is bright and witty. On the show caught, there was a tendency to overact and punch too hard. Once this is overcome, the stanza should be a winner.

Action takes place in a "typical" city room. Hard-boiled editor Don McGuire is the spark plug, riding herd on his reportorial staff with the delicacy of an overweight wrestler. Staff consists of assistant Craig Stevens, scribbler Lois Collier and leg man Lenny Breman. All characters are typical of the public's conception of newspaper people. Miss Collier is the beautiful, witty gal demon. Stevens plays the down-to-earth assistant and Breman does fine comedy relief.

Into this atmosphere McGuire has woven a slick method of news dissemination. For example, the lead story concerning a Southern California murder, in which actress Irene Rich figured indirectly, was handled by discussion between McGuire and Stevens plus the gimmick of ordering a mythical New York correspondent to interview Miss Rich at a Broadway theater and report results via phone. Treatment of a reported fight between actor Mark Stevens and producer Irving Reis brought into play the comedy of Lenny Breman as he reported to his boss via the paper's mobile auto telephone. Also neatly woven into the stanza were the day's baseball scores, reports of the Chinese Communist offensive, and a human-interest story concerning two moppets in Los Angeles who were rescued from drowning.

While there is too much of *The Front Page* atmosphere in the present format, failings in the first script are easily corrected. Flip dialog (written by McGuire, an ex-newspaperman) tends to make the show fast and funny, but too much banter, no matter how clever, can be distracting. Also McGuire's characterization of the city ed is too much of a high-pressure job. Basically, the show is a news stanza, hence too close attention to atmosphere will weaken the news punch.

Direction was smooth and well planned. Camera work was flexible and effective.

Alan Fischer.

program featuring the Vagabonds and couple of outstanding supporting acts.

The Vagabonds did some of the best work on the program. Their singing, as demonstrated during many radio appearances, is tops. Since they also use animated routines, their work has a plus value in television.

Quite insipid was the principal bit of business in the program—the attempt of Sonny Reed, bebop singer, to get before the camera to do his number. After being turned down often, he finally got the spot on the bill and wasted an opportunity to utilize the advantages of his climax position.

Blue singer Evelyn Doss was far from good during her featured spot, and Tommy Thompson proved to be an average acrobatic dancer.

The Randolphs — piano-playing father, trumpet-playing son and two singing daughters—could have been a top act if handled properly. Facial expressions and unpretentious vocal mannerisms of the younger daughter were overlooked too often as the cameras were focused on other members of the group.

Cy Wagner.