



Radio and Television Program Reviews



Designates Radio Review



Designates Television Review

Alan Young Show

Reviewed Thursday (28), 9-9:30 p.m. EST. Sponsored by Esso Standard Oil Company and the Kroger Company, thru Marschalk & Pratt Company and Ralph H. Jones Company, via CBS-TV, Hollywood. Producer-director, Dick Linkroum; writers, Leo Solomon, David R. Schwartz and Alan Young. Star: Alan Young. Guest: Eileen Barton. Announcer: John Heistand. Musical conductor, Lud Gluskin. Scenic design, Ken MacClelland.

Thursday's (28) Alan Young Show again proved that the young comedian is one of the most original performers in video. Relying chiefly on pantomime, his comedy style combines the wistful naivete of a Harry Langdon with the fey charm of Chaplin. Unfortunately, tho, he doesn't have the staying power of either artist. His comedy characterizations in skits have immediate impact, but bog down in the middle and flounder thru to a decidedly rough finish.

In view of this flaw in Young's otherwise commendable technique, it's difficult to understand why the producer deliberately slowed the pace by spotting him in two drawn-out skits, rather than giving viewers more skits like his brief but socko opener. The latter was a good-natured dig at the mass-merchandising tie-ups of Godfrey and Crosby, with Young pitching a slyly straight plug for "Mother Young's homemade, all-purpose soup."

Both of the lengthy sketches showed the nucleus of a hilarious idea, watered down by too many pages in the script. The first one, a take-off on *Treasure of Sierra Madre*, was funniest, altho Young was inclined to overdo the swish routine. The second number, a full-scale musical production, was something of a bore. Young drew a terrific audience reaction when he first appeared, dressed in a motley rose leaf costume a la Nijinsky, but the longer he cavorted around making like Narcissus with the ballet gals, the weaker the laughs.

Bureau Commercial

The boy was most likeable in a clever Esso commercial, during which he held a convincing conversation with a little oil salesman in a bureau drawer, via astute characterization and a trick camera shot. This imaginative plug was far superior to the firm's second commercial, a run-of-the-mill chat with video's ever-smiling stock service station man.

Pert, petite guest canary Eileen Barton oversold a coy version of *Baby Me* in her best *Baked a Cake* style. The gal's eager-beaver mannerisms are great for vaude, but she'll have to restrain some of that exuberance to click in TV. *June Bundy.*

Charlie Wild, Private Eye

Reviewed Sunday (24), 5:30-6 p.m. EST. Presented by Wildroot, thru Batten, Barton, Durstine & Osborn via NBC. Producer, Larry White; director, Carlo D'Angelo; writer, Peter Barry; announcer, Bill Rogers; musical director, Charles Sherrill. Cast: George Petrie, Peter Hobbs and others.

Cut from the *Sam Spade* pattern with all the familiar ingredients, this detective series should also establish itself with the aid of some sharper scripting. The formula is there—tough talk, vivid similes, a hard-guy hero and fantastic descriptions of females. One of the dames on the show was described as having "green eyes and flame-colored hair." (Probably was used as a traffic signal in her spare time.)

The debut program had gumshoe Charlie Wild hunting for the killer of a mobster to clear a pal under suspicion for the job. With the heat being put on Charlie by the cops, things looked bad for the ersatz Spade until he got wise and discovered his friend was responsible for the gunning.

The fairly well concealed, this surprise twist didn't leave the jaws of the listeners hanging with amazement, which meant a fairly vital element of the formula was lost.

George Petrie's acting of the private eye was slick and smooth and production was professional.

The Wildroot commercials for its shampoo were palatable and not too persistent. *Leon Morse.*

CBS To Roll Soon on Color Television Drive

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the Association of National Advertisers (ANA) meet, had discussions with several TV receiver manufacturers, in which he explored the possibilities of these manufacturers rushing into production of color receivers as soon as FCC approval is finalized. Stanton maintains that at least one major set manufacturer has indicated not only a willingness, but an eagerness to add color TV receivers to his line.

It also is known that CBS has been feeling out various manufacturers on the idea of producing at least 1,000 color TV sets, which the network would purchase for installation in such outlets as department stores for demonstration purposes.

Stanton also points out that the problem of securing sponsorship, obviously at a "reasonable" charge, for initial color telecasts, is not nearly as difficult as most observers have indicated it would be. The publicity and promotion value to many advertisers, completely apart from actual commercial value, of the colorcasts, is worth a great deal to many advertisers, Stanton maintains. One advertiser, says the CBS prexy, has indicated an interest in buying all the available time on the early CBS colorcasts.

Also well-planned is a staggering and aggressive promotion and merchandising program, which the web is ready to put into operation, as quickly as it starts its first colorcasts. Stanton still insists that these will begin within 30 days after the FCC decision in favor of the CBS system becomes final, and would be broadcast 20 hours weekly.

Colgate Comedy Hour (Fred Allen)

Reviewed Sunday (24), 8-9 p.m. EST. Sponsored by Colgate - Palmolive - Peet over NBC-TV thru Sherman & Marquette and Ted Bates. Producer, Charles Friedman; production supervisor, Sam Fuller; associated producer, Robert Masson; director, Kingman T. Moore; music, Al Goodman. Cast: Fred Allen, Monty Wooley, Rise Stevens, Sono Osato, Hugh Laing, Zachary Solov, David Burns, Kenny Delmar, Peter Donald, Parker Fennelly, Minerva Pious, Helen Wood, Grace Drysdale.

Fred Allen's plunge into television must be regarded as only partially successful. Some of Allen's personalized brand of humor was present, but once it got past the idea stage something must have happened. Scripting and production wore off the usually razor-sharp edges and some portions of the premiere were very dull indeed. Allen's bow fell considerably short of that by Eddie Cantor and was about on a par with the tee-off Martin and Lewis show, these being the stanzas rotating with Allen for Colgate.

Some Ideas Fail

Many of Fred's old radio devices were utilized, but failed to get a resounding ring from the bell. The Allen's Alley crew turned up vocally only, with some poorly manipulated puppets furnishing the visual aspect. While this seemed a fresh idea, it's not one that would bear repeating, particularly since it fell short first time out.

A typical Allen take-off, this one on *Carmen* (but not the classic radio version which had Shirley Booth as the "Queen of Nicotine") made for the liveliest fun of the hour, with Allen playing a "TV version" of a traveling salesman, showing how a time-honored story is bowdlerized by the censorship of the new medium. It had numerous yock lines in the lyrics, but it also had some which were inept. Miss Stevens, however, showed a real flair for comedy besides her expected great set of pipes.

A rehash of an ancient skit, which Allen played with Monty Wooley, was less successful. Virtually the whole Allen crew was used in this one, which had Wooley, as the trouble-maker, preventing Allen from exchanging a deficient cuckoo clock the simple way. The weak pay-off was particularly unlike Allen.

Something Short

A running gag had Dave Burns, as TV consultant Bruno Prindle, trailing Allen thruout the show, pretesting to assure video success. This idea, too, was typically Allenesque, but came off somewhat short of success. Nor was the camera work on a Sono Osato-sparked dance routine of the caliber usually expected from NBC. Too many tight shots prevented a good over-all view of proceedings.

Perhaps too much was expected of Allen, which made for some of the disappointment inherent in the stanza. But little fault must be found with the conceptions, except for the department store skit which is merely an old wheeze. Rather, it was that the show did not live up to the promise of Allen's ideas. Final judgment must be reserved pending a glimpse of how Allen's show shapes up in future editions. *Sam Chase.*

Pugs Fight Grim Video Future

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that at the same time these are a necessity to retain the color, noise and excitement associated with important events. A limited-admission promotion certainly would have an added inducement to those able to afford the top-price pews, and there never seems to be a dearth of these at a good attraction.

At the same time, business firms, which constitute the other major purchaser of ringside seats, as client-bait and for its top execs, would find such purchases even more important if no hoi polloi could get in. So promoters would seem safe in counting on continued income from this major source of box office revenue.

The other side of the coin is that video rights will take on increased value to the sponsor who has to put out for those rights, when TV becomes the only means for the average fan to attend.

Theater TV Ahead

The remaining factor is the potential inherent in theater television. Already million-dollar theater box-office gates for 1951 football games are deemed likely, with the schools getting a share of the theater take. As the number of equipped houses runs into the hundreds next year, with potentialities of interconnection, this may be the other future source of major income for the sports promoter, either in conjunction with home TV or without home viewing, but in any case retaining the ringside-only live admission policy.

In any event, another Louis-Charles fiasco is extremely unlikely. Fans have shown they prefer a TV view to a second-tier seat at the stadium.

The urgent need for a sweeping new approach to sports promotions is borne out by the funereal financial figures of the fight, which may have marked not only the death-knell of Joe Louis's reign but of big-time boxing promotion as it has been known:

Net gate after taxes: \$164,296 (or considerably under the non-televised Saddler-Pep featherweight fight held recently); net income from radio and TV: \$133,000. Attendance: 22,357, as compared with 38,781 for Pep-Saddler and with 67,000,000 televiewers in 19 cities, according to a Trendex survey for CBS-TV, which aired the event. The bout was seen by 73 per cent of TV set owners, and by 14 per cent of the entire U. S. population, according to the survey. It scored a national 68.4 rating, according to C. E. Hooper, Inc.



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