PANORAMA

THE TELEVISION MAGAZINE

MAY 1981 $2.00

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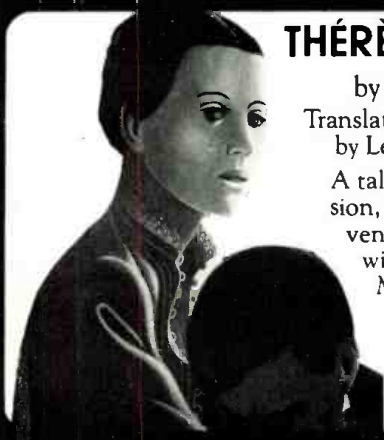

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PANORAMA
THE TELEVISION MAGAZINE

MAY 1981 **VOLUME 2, NUMBER 5**

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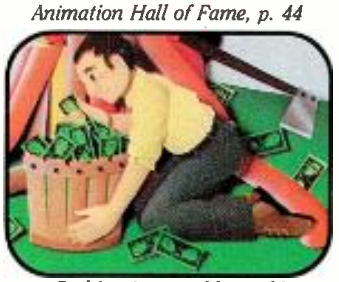

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Cover (clockwise from top left): photography by Aerographics; illustration by David Noyes; Jean Stapleton, courtesy of Tandem Productions. Other picture credits are on page 79.

OWN THE ROAD

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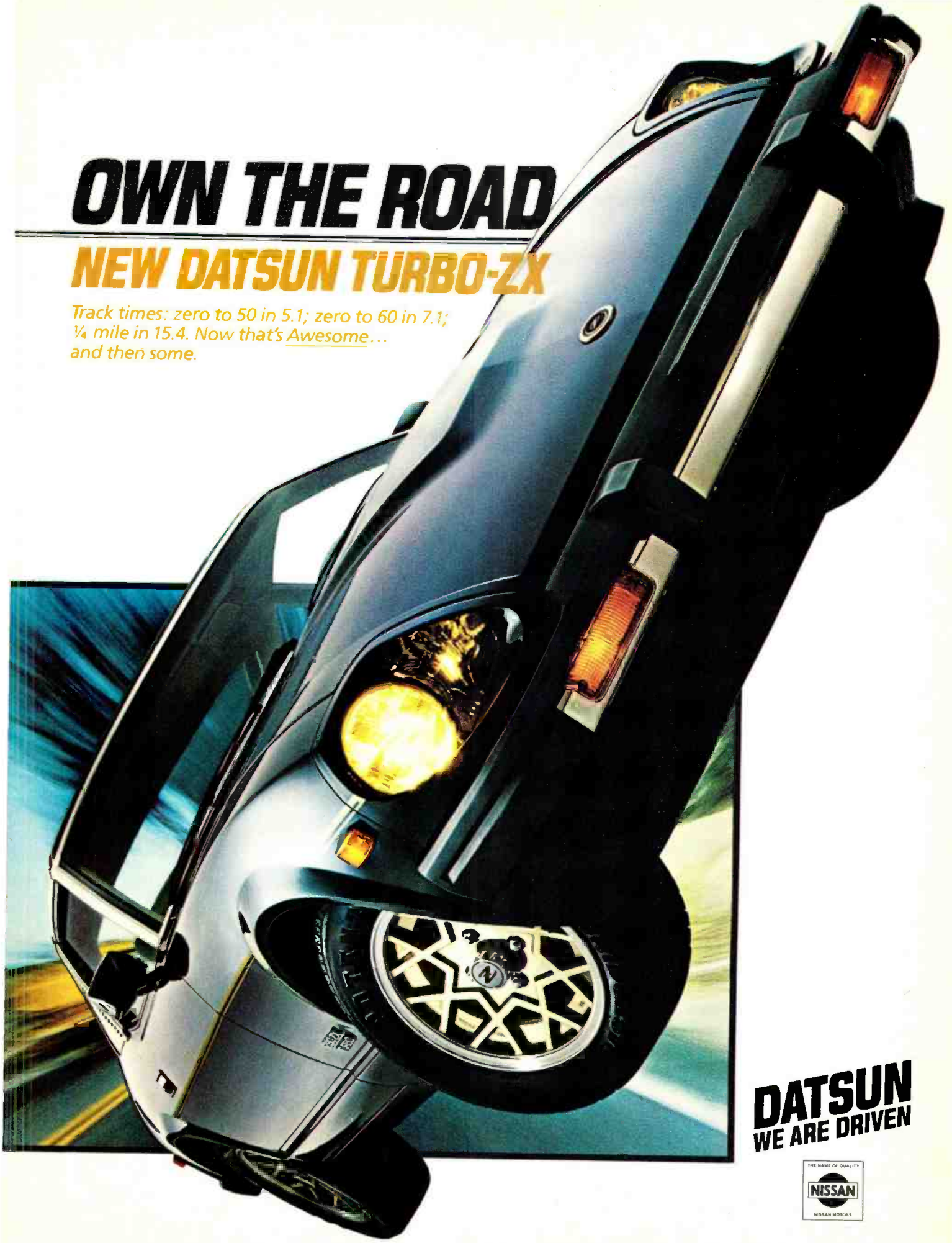

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How is that different from TV?
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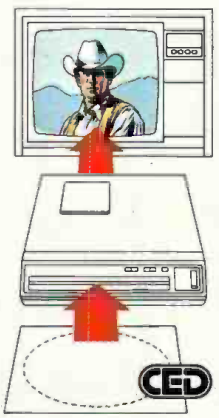

How does it work?
RCA VideoDisc uses an extraordinary technology called the "Capacitance Electronic Disc" System. It combines a uniquely engineered diamond micro-stylus with a remarkable conductive disc. The stylus glides over the disc and electronically reads the information encoded in the grooves. This electronic information is then played through your TV. With normal use, the stylus is designed to provide years of service. And

excitement on TV than

RCA VideoDisc System.

because the discs contain 38 times the grooves of an ordinary audio record, you get *up to an hour per side* playing time.

What kind of picture quality can I expect?
Excellent. It is a picture that's clean, sharp, colorful. Here's why: The RCA VideoDisc plays directly into your TV. So there are no ghosts. And no weak pictures because of weak signals. You've just got to see it.

Is it hard to operate?
No. The player hooks up easily to your TV. The discs are easy to play, too. Just insert the protective disc sleeve into the slot on the player. The disc is automatically removed from the sleeve, and plays when you flip the "play" switch. Your hands never touch the disc.

How about special features?
RCA VideoDisc has the features you want and need. A Rapid Access button that lets you skip to any place in a program in seconds. A Visual Search button that lets you visually find the part of the program you want at 16 times normal speed. And a Pause button that lets you stop a program to answer the phone or the doorbell.

What will the RCA VideoDisc Player cost me?
Less than $500* Which is surprisingly low for what you're getting. That's because RCA has put in the features people want and need while keeping it at a price they can afford. The discs are surprisingly inexpensive as well. About half the cost of a prerecorded video cassette tape.

What will the RCA VideoDisc System do for me?
RCA VideoDisc is an extraordinary new form of home entertainment. It may well change the way you see movies and change the way you watch television.

With RCA VideoDisc, you can gather a collection of fine entertainment to watch whenever you want to watch it. With RCA VideoDisc, you can watch the best in family entertainment, at home, with your family. With RCA VideoDisc, you can see those movies you used to miss.

With RCA VideoDisc, you can see outstanding stars in concert, watch sporting highlights, take cooking lessons, and so on. In short, when you find there's nothing on television you want to see, RCA VideoDisc will give you access to many things you want to see very much.

So visit your RCA VideoDisc dealer. Have him demonstrate the remarkable RCA VideoDisc System. And bring the magic home.

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Escape from Alcatraz	Fiddler on the Roof
Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid	The Graduate
M•A•S•H	Elton John In Russia
Saturday Night Fever	Singin' in the Rain
Rocky	North By Northwest
Casablanca	Foul Play
The Muppet Movie	Boys From Brazil
Starting Over	and many more

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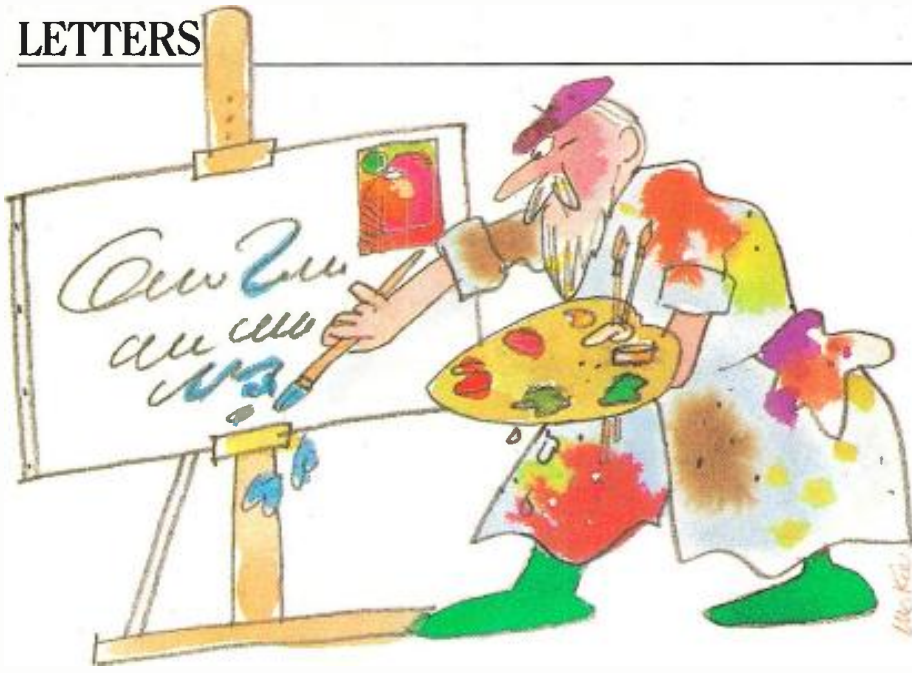
*Price optional with dealer; actual price may vary.

LETTERS



THE STRONG, HUMMING TYPE

I enjoyed David Handler's "Where the Odd Man's *In*" (February) about Manhattan public-access cable. I am delighted that I'm included in the "odd man" category because I like to be different from other show-biz frustrates!

I've been on cable TV for seven years and rarely have merely "hummed to records" for 30 minutes. Perhaps that's what I should have been doing. I could be the strong, silent type like Clint Eastwood, only I'd be the strong,"humming" type.

David Handler must be a glutton for punishment. Imagine waiting 30 minutes for ol' Tex Fenster, Superstar to utter a word! Unbelievable! Your magazine is tops. Keep up the good work.

Tex Fenster, Superstar
Jamaica, N.Y.

TOO MUCH, TOO SOON

Your recent observation in the February Washington column ("TV and the Campaign: When Is Early Too Early?") regarding the networks' refusal to sell time to former President Carter for his half-hour reelection announcement in Dec. 1979 should strike a discordant note with most readers. Yes, Heidi Sanchez has a point: the public needs information to help it vote wisely. However, the ever-expanding campaign seasons have correlated with embarrassingly low voter turnouts in our most recent Presidential contests. Information overkill seems as much a reason for this trend as anything else, and a full year's coverage would be welcomed by only the hardest-core news fanatic.

The most frightening aspect of this situation is the District of Columbia Court of Appeals' opinion giving the FCC the right to decide when the Presidential campaign begins. While equal access to broadcast stations by the candidates involved is a meritorious goal, the FCC has broached the fine line of program control in this ruling. Section 312(a)(7) of the Communications Act cites "willful or repeated failure to allow reasonable access" as the criterion for candidate sales, not the discriminatory one-shot approach taken by the Commission in the 1979 Carter situation.

J. Robert Craig
Central Michigan University
Mt. Pleasant, Mich.

BAD FORM, BWANA

I'm white, middle-class, upwardly mobile—and somewhere between embarrassed and outraged at your choice of art to accompany the Panoramic View "Rising Sunset" (March). The people of Africa certainly do not need the characterization as loincloth-clad savages with rings through their noses, and I'm sorry to see a magazine that has carried some fine and intelligent articles perpetuating such a stereotype. PLEASE don't do it again!

Joan Carey
Princeton, N.J.

THE REAL PICTURE

Sometimes it seems that persons writing about the effects of TV have formed a new secular order, The Fellowship of Perpetual Error. In an otherwise informative, if speculative, article ("It Was Two Jimmy Carters vs. One Ronald Reagan," February), James Wooten quotes Theodore H. White's comment that "visual cameras" (presumably those with film) take pictures by "optical projection" while TV cameras "project electronically" with their "cousin of the x-ray tube" that "seems to go beneath the skin."

Could this McLuhanistic fallacy be cleared up for readers of PANORAMA? TV does not project some form of mysterious radiation from its cameras onto a person; like film cameras, and the human optical system, TV cameras receive focused light through their lenses—light reflected from whatever object the lens is pointed at. Whatever Nixon's problems with TV, they weren't caused by a camera projecting anything at him.

Prof. Frank W. Oglesbee
Southern Illinois University
Carbondale, Ill.

THAT'S HIS LINE

In Panoramic View (January), a portion of Mike Weinblatt's speech before the Cincinnati Ad Club on Wednesday, Oct. 15, 1980, is taken out of context. In fact, your quote is from John Naisbitt, senior vice president of Yankelovich, Skelly & White, and publisher of the Trend Report, in a speech before the Association of National Advertisers.

Julie Osler
Director, Public Relations
Showtime
New York City

CORRECTION: *The chart in "VCR Update" (February) contained two errors. The Hitachi model VT-8500A can be programmed to record up to five events over seven days, and RCA's portable model VEP-150 is manufactured by Hitachi.*

Correspondence for this column should be addressed to: Letters Department, PANORAMA, P.O. 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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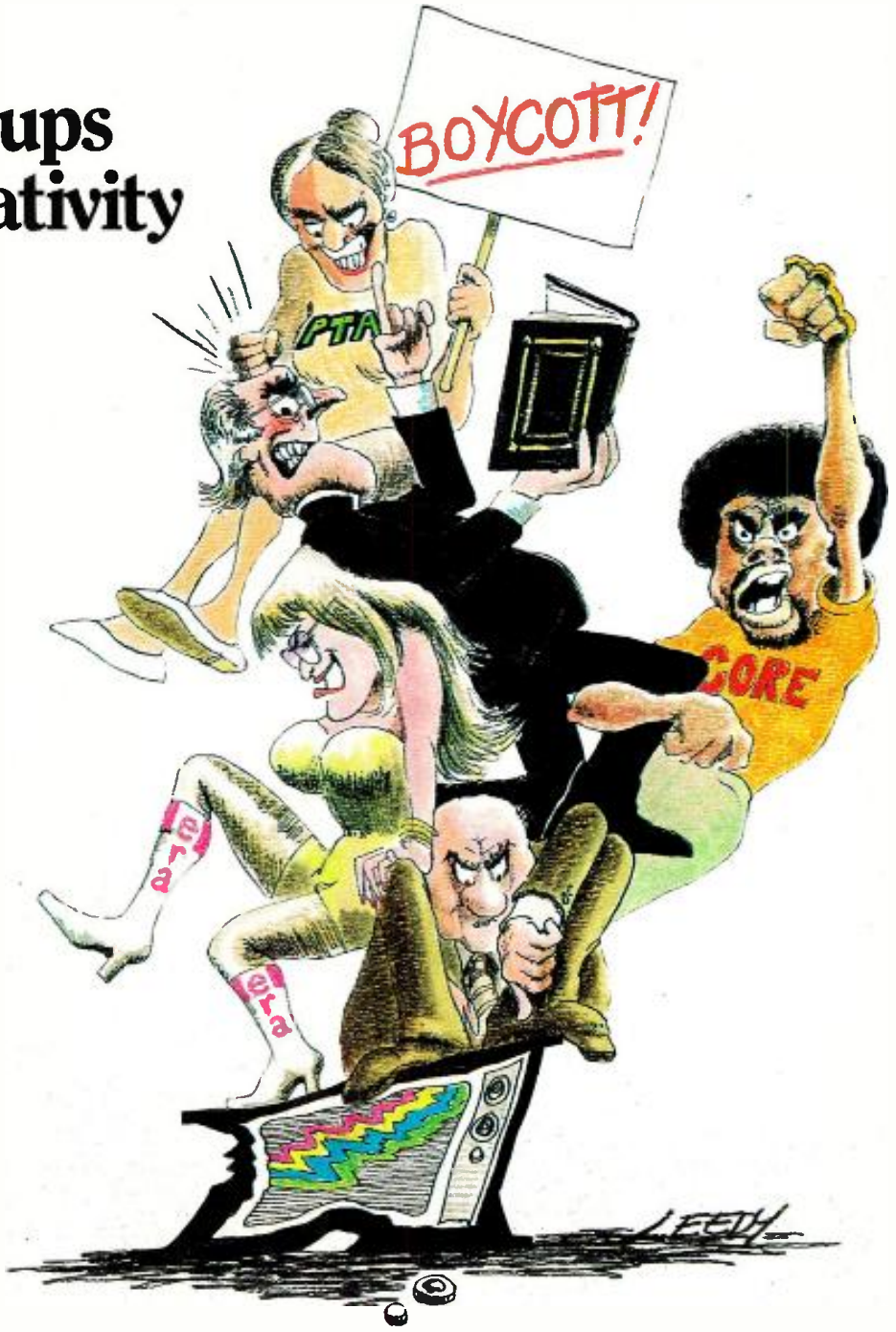
Don't Let Pressure Groups Strangle Creativity

By RICHARD REEVES



Did you ever wonder why you never see a Charlie Chan movie on television in New York? Or Los Angeles? Or San Francisco? I never did, either, but I was interested to see a claim by a group calling itself the Association of Asian/Pacific American Artists that it was responsible for keeping the old man and his "number-one son" off local stations in those cities. According to one AAPAA member, Dori Quan, "Charlie Chan is a stereotypical image wrought from the imagination of white men. . . . This image robs Asian Americans of simple dignity."

I was shocked, and embarrassed, to realize that I had grown up thinking that Chan—like most Chinese—was one smart cookie. Better make that "one smart Asian Pacific American." Imagine how I felt when I realized how mad AAPAA was now because a new Charlie Chan movie came out starring Peter Ustinov, who is not an APA, although he is an Artist.

AAPAA is one of about 250 pressure groups identified by the CBS Program Practices department—groups, that is, that want television and films to accurately reflect their view of the world and protect our children from stereotypes, sex, violence, nasty Puerto Ricans, black Congressmen, nonunion robots, horny Arabian princesses, and white anchor*men* in Boston.

"For years concerned citizens have urged, pleaded and even begged the networks to halt the trend toward increasing amounts of sex, violence and profanity," said a man called Donald Wildmon at a press conference that attracted several television cameras in Washington recently. "Instead of reason, restraint and responsibility, the networks have rather displayed an arrogance and indifference rarely matched in the history of corporate America."

There is, of course, a lot of truth in those words. I would like to be among the first to affirm my belief in freedom of speech and to defend to the death Wildmon's right to holler at the networks. His group is called the National Federation for Decency and claims a newsletter circulation of 60,000 decent Americans, of which I am not one. On March 1, those upright folks began watching network shows, looking for sex, violence and profanity, so they can organize a boycott against the advertisers on indecent shows. If they do a half-decent job, not only should their lists become underground best sellers, but shopping centers from coast to coast will be filled with stacks of unsold beer, aspirin and lipstick.

Wildmon's federation is loosely—make that "informally"—linked to national institutions like the Moral Majority and Phyllis Schlafly. So we know where they're coming from—from God! We also know where they're going, because

last year one of their targets was identified when NFD's newsletter headlined: "Procter & Gamble Top Sponsor of Both Sex and Profanity."

I immediately resolved to stop buying Crest toothpaste, but then I came across the National Parent-Teacher Association's list of advertisers. Listed as "good" was none other than Procter & Gamble. It's tough being decent: Sometimes you have to choose between God and motherhood just to keep your teeth clean.

It's also going to be tough finding another room in the house to store the ratings, manifestoes, protests and comments of the scores of helpful and vigilant groups nice enough to want to protect me from bad images and ideas and all those dangerous things.

Without my files, I wouldn't know that Charlie Chan is dangerous to my health. I wouldn't know that *Buck Rogers in the 25th Century* has been judged antiunion by the television monitors of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, who uncovered the fact that, with all those robots, the show has "no regular character as . . . labor."

I wouldn't know that the Congressional Black Caucus and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People protected me from a show called *Mister Dugan* because they didn't like the way Norman Lear was thinking about portraying a black member of Congress.

I wouldn't know that I wasn't supposed to watch the news on WNAC-TV in Boston, a channel recently boycotted by the National Organization for Women because all its anchorpersons are white males.

I wouldn't have known that both the Government of Saudi Arabia and its friends at Mobil Oil were trying to help me understand that the price of my next tank of gasoline might be higher if I watched a show they didn't like called *Death of a Princess*. And I wouldn't know that the New York City Council Committee on General Welfare had voted 5 to 2 to urge a boycott of the film *Fort Apache, the Bronx*, which they said made Puerto Ricans and the South Bronx look bad—although no member of the committee had actually seen the film.

David Wolper, the executive producer of a television miniseries called *Hanta Yo*, which, before a script was written, drew protests from a few folks calling themselves the Sioux Alliance, said, "These people want to burn the book before it's written." And they are doing it: "I don't know that we'll win this one," said U.S. Rep. Robert Garcia, a Bronx congressman who tried to stop the filming of *Fort Apache*, "but we'll make it a hell of a lot harder for the next one to come in here."

They will indeed. In film, in television entertainment and, eventually, in news, the advertiser boycotts will work, not so much because they stop programs and shows already in production, but because they stop the production of the next round of controversial work. Producers and writers—unless they quickly find a way to fight the God-fearing, the Asian Americans, the Sioux and everybody else with a tomahawk to grind—will soon be censoring themselves to meet the real and imagined demands of the networks, who will be bending to the real and imagined demands of advertisers. Television may be bad now—God and the National Federation for Decency know there is something there to offend everyone—but it can be much worse. And it will be, if control is turned back over to the advertisers, the people who gave us garbage like *Texaco Star Theater* and *The Colgate Comedy Hour*.

Beyond the mind-numbing prospect of a return to the worst of 1950s television, the new censorship scares me most because of what I believe it is going to do to my business, the news business. We're next—and NOW's boycott of WNAC-TV in Boston is only a hint of what's to come. Television—easing along from Walter Cronkite to *Eyewitness News* to *60 Minutes* to *Real People*—has done its best to blur the lines between news and entertainment. The weaker those lines become, the sooner they will be breached by the Sioux and the Black Caucus and the Moral Majority.

Freedom of speech, the defense of the artist, is a two-edged sword, as the pressure groups, with their monitors and newsletters and boycotts, are now demonstrating to the people who schedule old movies and make new ones. Today, no Charlie Chan movies. Tomorrow, no movies or series that mention abortion or ghetto criminals. And the next day, no news, no truth that anyone finds unpleasant. ■

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Good News for Night Owls

By CYRA McFADDEN

With *Nightline*, its highly successful late-night news program, ABC found a need and filled it. Who would have believed there were so many non-Johnny-Carson watchers out there, awake and hungry for news at 11:30 P.M.? Not this early riser, who could sleep through a police raid at that hour.

While much of the credit for the show's success belongs to anchorman Ted Koppel, *Nightline* flourishes in part because of what it isn't. It isn't shallow, trivial, or, God help us, human-interest oriented; unlike the ABC local news that preceded it one recent evening, it took no note of Pinocchio's birthday. Like PBS's *MacNeil-Lehrer Report*, to which *Nightline* owes its basic format, it isn't scattershot, focusing instead on one story each night, and it has no overtones of show biz. As a consequence, it is solid, informative and sometimes dull.

Recently, the show devoted half an hour to heart transplants and the possibility of building an artificial heart. Despite the inherent interest of the subject, in a nation where heart disease kills so many, this was a tiresome program—too many near-monologues by too many talking heads, and the discussion of transplants was familiar ground, covered by countless other TV news shows.

Similarly, when *Nightline* did an episode on arson, prompted by the Las Vegas Hilton fire, it accompanied its correspondents' reports with too much familiar-looking, ordinary film of firemen sliding down poles and turning hoses on burning buildings. No disrespect to the profession intended, but when most of us have seen one fireman slide down one pole, we have seen them all.

A week later, focusing on Pope John Paul II's visit to the Philippines, *Nightline* was about as good as television gets—compelling from start to finish. It opened with dramatic footage of the Pope confronting President Ferdinand Marcos over human-rights violations,

Ted Koppel: No blow-dryer brain damage.

traced the Pontiff's advocacy of peaceful reform in Latin America and discussed the political implications of his visit. Then Koppel interviewed Marcos, who had recently lifted martial law.

Unfailingly courteous, Koppel nonetheless nailed the Philippine president with the sharp questions that characterize his style as an interviewer. "It's certainly very gracious of you to join us, and I thank you very much," he led off. "What about the tension between you and some religious leaders over human-rights violations?"

Koppel could not crack Marcos's perfect composure, but neither could Marcos deflect Koppel's hardballs. He defensively overrode questions, dismissed the charges of widespread torture under his regime as "a mountain out of a molehill created by the Western press" and finally explained, "When I proclaimed martial law, it was to protect human rights." With the skill that only a good pro of a reporter can bring to an interview, Koppel had let his subject reveal himself.

On numerous other nights, too, *Nightline* has been memorable, with a spontaneity rare these days when so much TV programming is edited, sanitized and packaged into blandness. The night after the Presidential election, it did a two-hour special in which defeated liberal senators Birch Bayh, George McGovern and Frank Church confronted Jerry Falwell of the Moral Majority and another conservative leader—a nervy idea that made for a riveting broadcast.

And even when the show is merely workmanlike, it is worth watching for Koppel, an 18-year veteran who has served as ABC's chief diplomatic correspondent and who comes across as a working journalist instead of a dumb bunny. Not just another pretty face, he is a nice change from that breed of local newsreader suffering from blow-dryer brain damage.

Like Walter Cronkite, whom ABC executives love to hear mentioned in the same breath, he has credibility, and like Cronkite, he is attracting a loyal following. *Nightline* often updates late-breaking news stories for the West Coast. On such nights, it has surpassed Carson in the ratings.

On April 3, the show expanded to five nights a week, pushing the comedy revue *Fridays* back to midnight. At that time, producer Bill Lord said the new night would either be "different or a continuation of what we're doing successfully now." (Remember, you read it here first.) Possibly, though, the show will make increased use of guest contributors, whose function, according to Lord, is "to take off our 'TV only' blinders and give us some new perspectives." These have included Art Petacacque, Chicago Sun-Times columnist who did a word-and-picture essay on organized crime in Chicago, and Carl T. Rowan discussing current concerns of American blacks.

Lord sounds almost evangelical about the program that grew out of ABC's late-night coverage of the hostage crisis. "We're answering the need to be informed. There's a whole host of problems facing us in the '80s. The show can help us understand where we are and where we're going."

A little overblown, but *Nightline* is still a good excuse if you have not yet popped for a $1000 videocassette recorder: Buy one, tape the show and go to bed early. That way, like me, you can watch Koppel and Co. in your sleep. ▣

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Reggie Jackson

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May 1981

Producers Strike Back at Pressure Groups . . . Theater Owners in Snit over Cassette Ads . . . The New Congress and Its Impact on TV . . .* The Joy of Sex *on Videodisc?

What's Happening

HOLLYWOOD
DON SHIRLEY REPORTING

The Gathering Storm

Thus far, in the war of words between organized pressure groups and television, it's the pressure groups who seem to be responsible for most of the sound and fury. But the tide of battle may soon turn. Some of the top TV people in Hollywood appear to be on the verge of a counterattack.

The planning for their offensive occurs on the 8th through 10th of this month, when approximately 50 industry bigwigs gather at a country retreat in Ojai, Cal., for three days of intensive discussions on "The Proliferation of Pressure Groups and What to Do About Them." The session is sponsored by the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences and the Caucus of Writers, Producers and Directors. (See page 8 for another perspective on the issue of pressure groups.)

The one pressure group that is most on the minds of the Hollywood powers these days is the Coalition for Better Television—they're the folks who will conclude three months of monitoring TV shows for sex, violence and other no-nos at the end of May. Endorsed by the same conservative forces that helped elect President Reagan and a Republican Senate last fall, the Coalition has more muscle than any previous organizations—or so Hollywood fears. It has threatened to use its clout by boycotting advertisers of shows that are seen as offensive.

"I deplore their kind of potential group censorship," says Caucus president Grant Tinker, whose MTM company produces the sort of shows that are seldom found on pressure-group hit lists. "Don't they know what the on-off button is for?"

Tinker says he's not sure he wants to meet with pressure-group leaders: "My instinct is not to validate them." The protesters have not been invited to Ojai. However, they will be invited to take their gripes to a committee from the Ojai group in a second and separate session following the Ojai conference.

Coalition for Better Television spark plug Donald Wildmon says he hasn't much interest in meeting with the producers, either: "It's hard to change a lifetime of moral values. Instead, we're going to the American people and to the people who control the money." He adds that Hollywood folks "don't come to us unless they need us"—such as the time he received a letter from a Lorimar Productions (*Dallas*, *The Waltons*) publicist asking his group to help save *The Waltons* from cancellation. The letter arrived two weeks after a Lorimar executive blasted Wildmon's organization in the press. "I get a tickle whenever I think about it," laughs Wildmon.

Despite the battle lines that are being drawn, some Hollywoodites enter the fray with mixed feelings. "Their institutionalized pressure is not a lot different from blacklisting," says writer-producer David Rintels. "I hate it, but at the same time I'm sympathetic to their point of view. The networks are sinking lower and lower in order to rise higher and higher in the ratings. The moral responsibility of the networks demands examination."

Wildmon would certainly agree with that. Yet he hopes Hollywood doesn't take him too seriously, he claims, "because then we'll have a bigger impact when we win. It's like Notre Dame playing [and losing to] Podunk."

A Candid View of Honest Abe

Gore Vidal's potentially controversial miniseries about Abraham Lincoln's Presidency has run aground at NBC because of its cost, according to sources at the network and at Norman Lear's company, which hopes to produce the program.

Sources declined to give any dollar estimate, but it would be "very expensive," said an NBC official. "My

Lincoln and Vidal: Rail-splitter gets whacked by typewriter.

feeling is that it will not see the light of day for at least a year. Fred Silverman is more concerned with series than he is with miniseries, which can be terrific at Emmy time but practically irrelevant to the overall Nielsen average."

The Vidal miniseries could raise eyebrows, if a Vidal article on Lincoln that appeared recently in The Los Angeles Times is any indication. In it, Vidal mentioned illegitimacy, syphilis, unconventional religious beliefs and other details not normally talked about at the Lincoln Memorial, as well as the qualities that made Lincoln "a superb politician" and a brilliant thinker. One letter to The Times said Vidal "once again assassinated Abraham Lincoln"; another claimed "the media is [sic] stooping to new lows of sensation-mongering."

The miniseries script does have Lincoln expressing "candid opinions, privately, on issues that aren't associated with him," said an NBC official. "It doesn't show him as a saint," and it does mention the possibility of venereal disease. But, "It's not a sensational syphilis piece. It shows a real feel for him from a personal standpoint."

NEW YORK
DOUG HILL REPORTING

A Conflict of Interests

Movie theater owners aren't very happy these days about the steadily growing competition they face from home video. In fact, they're now bringing their considerable economic muscle to bear in an effort to keep advertising for videocassettes and videodiscs off the entertainment pages of your local newspaper.

The fight surfaced a couple of months ago when the New York Post ran a videocassette ad illustrated with a movie marquee on the movie listings page, and at least one major theater chain reportedly threatened to boycott the paper. Len Sendroff, amusement advertisement manager for the Post, denies that such a threat was made. "It was merely a discussion," he said, but he also says that, in the future, video ads "are not going on the same page as the movie ads."

According to Joseph Alterman, executive director of the National Association of Theater Owners (NATO), the campaign to keep the movie page clean of video's presence will be carried forward by NATO's advertising committee. "We just feel it's unfair advertising to give a competitor the same shop," Alterman said. "If it's a movie page, and we're paying a premium for it, we feel it should stay a movie page."

The theater owners have a persuasive argument, since, according to the Newspaper Advertising Bureau, they and the studios spent more than $486 million on newspaper ads in 1980. Says NATO's Alterman, "It's just a matter of sitting down with the newspapers and talking it over."

Question of Ethics?

Should a company that makes health-care products produce a cable-television show about health? That's the type of question we're bound to be hearing a lot more of in the coming years, because advertising agencies and their clients are working overtime to develop their own programs for cable—risking, in the process, a blurring of the line between selling and informing.

One of the first companies to take a big jump into cable is also one of the biggest: Bristol-Myers. In October, B-M plans to launch a magazine series about health, in which the company plans to invest $40 million over the next 10 years. That may sound like a lot until you consider that B-M already spends about $125 million *annually* on TV advertising for such health-related products as Excedrin, Bufferin, Comtrex, Congespirin, children's vitamins, baby formula and hair dye. The company is also one of the largest manufacturers of anti-cancer, antibiotic and antidepression drugs. Several consumer advocates at Consumer's Union, the independent, nonprofit product-testing organization that also produces a cable-TV show in cooperation with Home Box Office, expressed reservations about the new B-M program. "Information about health should not be provided by a company that sells health products," said one spokesperson.

David Bell, who was hired by Bristol-Myers to produce the series, insists he will have total editorial control over its contents. He said the show will not take an advocacy stance of its own on health issues, but that guests will be free to criticize any health-care products they choose, including those of Bristol-Myers.

Says Bell of his bosses; "Their job is selling products, not producing television programs. They have told me they are not going to censor programs." Nonetheless, Bell acknowledges that Bristol-Myers will be able to review the programs before they are cablecast, and he admits, "I'm not going to stick it to Bristol-Myers. I'd be a damn fool to do that."

WASHINGTON
STEVE WEINBERG REPORTING

Van Deerlin Looks Back—And to Future

For years, Rep. Lionel Van Deerlin (D-Cal.) was one of the most powerful men on Capitol Hill. As chairman of the House Communications Subcommittee, his job was to oversee all legislative efforts aimed at improving the quality of TV news and entertainment.

Van Deerlin: *Lost his view from the Hill but still sides with viewers.*

In last November's Republican landslide, Van Deerlin was swept from office. But still this former broadcast and print journalist retains his interest in television. In an exclusive interview with PANORAMA, he discussed the future of TV-related legislation—a future made hazy by a new Congress and a House subcommittee no longer called "Communications" but "Telecommunications, Consumer Protection and Finance."

"Trying to change broadcast policy is hard," he admits, "because how do you get people's attention [focused on TV] when gas prices are tripling and inflation is rampant? You turn on your TV set, get a picture and four or five channels—there's just no perception of a crisis."

But there actually *is* a crisis, according to Van Deerlin. It's that "you could lose 10 years of progress while Congress does nothing."

Still, there's a chance that

continued on page 85

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

Why Didn't They Ask Evans? Francesca Annis stars in this adaptation of the Agatha Christie mystery. Mobil Showcase Network (syndicated).

The Search for Alexander the Great. A four-part dramatic series starring Jane Lapotaire, Robert Stephens, and Nicholas Clay as Alexander. PBS.

Mare Winningham: Carny chanteuse.

Freedom. Mare Winningham sings original tunes by Janis Ian in this TV movie about a girl who joins a carnival. ABC.

One Trick Pony. Paul Simon is a rock star on a downer in this 1980 film, for which Simon wrote the screenplay and the songs. The Movie Channel (cable).

The Shakespeare Plays. This month, it's *All's Well that Ends Well*, with Celia Johnson and Angela Down. PBS.

Escape from Alcatraz. Clint Eastwood tries it in this 1979 theatrical release. Showtime, The Movie Channel (cable).

The Best Little Girl in the World. A TV movie about anorexia nervosa, starring Jennifer Jason Leigh, Eva Marie Saint and Lisa Pelikan. Rescheduled from last month. ABC.

Charles Durning: Throws Stengelese.

Casey Stengel. A *Hall of Fame* one-man show with Charles Durning playing the baseball manager known as the Ol' Perfessor. PBS.

Used Cars. Kurt Russell and Jack Warden star in this 1980 film comedy about shenanigans in the used-car business. Showtime (cable).

Julie Hagerty: Pratfalls take wing.

Airplane! This spoof of airport disaster films was 1980's surprise theatrical-film hit. With Robert Hays, Julie Hagerty and Lloyd Bridges. The Movie Channel (cable).

SPORTS

The Kentucky Derby and the Preakness. The first two jewels in racing's Triple Crown are broadcast on May 2 and 16. ABC.

Indianapolis 500. Same-day coverage of America's premiere auto-racing event. ABC.

North American Soccer League. Selected game coverage. Entertainment and Sports Programming Network (cable).

The Italian and French Opens. Taped coverage of two of the world's major tennis tournaments. USA Network (cable).

NBA Play-offs. Selected game coverage. CBS.

The Picture of Health. A new half-hour daily series featuring exercise and health tips. Satellite Program Network (cable).

COMEDY AND VARIETY

Bob Hope Special. The comic celebrates his 78th birthday with a two-hour show. NBC.

Madame in Manhattan. Ventriloquist Wayland Flowers and his partner in a one-hour special. Showtime (cable).

MUSIC AND CULTURAL PROGRAMS

Dance in America. The New York City Ballet dances *L'Enfant et Les Sortilèges*, a performance conceived and choreographed for TV by George Balanchine in association with *Sesame Street*'s Kermit Love. PBS.

Milwaukee Symphony. Lukas Foss conducts the works of Mozart, Ravel, Berlioz and de Falla in a concert taped last autumn. Bravo (cable).

A Week Around Vienna. As its early May theme, ARTS tours the Austrian city and features the works of, among others, Beethoven, Lorin Maazel and Frederica von Stade. Pierre Salinger is the host (cable).

A Tribute to Duke. A *Kennedy Center Tonight* installment honors the late Duke Ellington with performances by Sarah Vaughan, Joe Williams and Ellington band alumni led by Billy Taylor. PBS.

Rhapsody and Song. Sarah Vaughan again, this time in a tribute to George Gershwin that also features Russian émigré pianists Bella Davidovich and Oxana Yablonskaya. PBS.

Bravo Magazine. Some of the subjects profiled this month include flutist James Galway, dancers Valery Panov and Galina Panova and the singing group the Weavers (cable).

Peter, Paul and Mary in Concert. The famed folk trio, taped in performance in Ontario. Showtime (cable).

Utopia Live. Rock star Todd Rundgren and friends in a performance filmed in Cleveland. Nickelodeon (cable).

Country Music U.S.A. Roy Clark is the host and Merle Haggard, Ronnie Milsap, Lacy J. Dalton, Charlie Rich and Johnny Lee among the featured performers in a concert taped at the Neewollatt Festival in Independence, Kan. Home Box Office (cable).

CHILDREN'S SHOWS

Mandy's Grandmother. Maureen O'Sullivan stars in this drama about an Englishwoman and her American granddaughter. Nickelodeon (cable).

Beauty and the Beast. Puppets perform a musical adaptation of the fairy tale. Calliope (cable).

Circus Town. A film about teens preparing for a big-top show. Nickelodeon (cable).

The Immigrant Experience: The Long, Long Journey. Portrayal of a turn-of-the-century Polish immigrant family as seen through the eyes of one of its children. Calliope (cable).

NEWS AND DOCUMENTARIES

Inside Story. Former Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs Hodding Carter III is the host of a new weekly half-hour program that will examine the performance of the American press. PBS.

Remember When? A sequel to last year's *Time Was*, this new eight-part historical series will also put Dick Cavett in the middle of past moments, starting in the Old West. Home Box Office (cable).

The Artist Was a Woman. Jane Alexander narrates this hour-long documentary reviewing the achievements of female artists from the 16th century to 1950. PBS.

The Ratings Race

New Strategies of 1980-81

BY PHILIP BURRELL

Having passed the point on the calendar that marks the climax of the first-run network season (this year the date was April 19), it's timely to highlight the programming strategies—some quite innovative—the networks employed in their quest for ratings in 1980-81.

First off, the strike last fall made this a most uncommon year. Despite the walkout, program inventory and clever scheduling helped the three networks attain near-normal share levels. During the autumn doldrums, when viewers were largely denied new series episodes in favor of repeats, movies and specials, combined network shares experienced a surprisingly small decrease of four to five percent.

When the strike-delayed "regular" season finally did arrive in late October, the networks opted to ride out the marginal shows with a tolerance not exercised in recent memory. Cancellations of new, faltering series were announced at an abnormally deliberate pace. The year before, more than a half-dozen fall programs had been axed from the network lineups by Nov. 1. In 1980-81, first cancellations didn't come until Dec. 25 (see chart), with the bulk of terminations delayed until early February.

Then there was the renewed strength of the miniseries. One of the main reasons for NBC's buoyant September was the scheduling of *Shōgun*, the miniseries that earned both high ratings and critical accolades. The season before, CBS had proven the viability of the miniseries with the strong showing registered by the TV adaptation of Judith Krantz's best seller *Scruples*. This past February, the miniseries showed itself again to be a reliable ratings-getter with the resounding success of ABC's *East of Eden*.

While the networks have tended to schedule fewer such presentations, high ratings for long-formers demonstrate that, carefully scheduled and heavily promoted, the miniseries remains one of TV's most potent formats. Don't be surprised to see more producers cashing in on the multipart format in the future.

The past season also brought some novel scheduling techniques. One network tried a new method of dealing with the ever-challenging task of introducing a new series at midseason. Instead of the usual one-shot premiere accompanied by promotional overkill, NBC chose the "horizontal scatter" technique: scheduling a new series over several nights during the same week.

The goal, of course, is to elicit the broadest possible audience sampling, and for the Peacock network the ploy worked once in two attempts. A new "controversial" series, *Number 96*, despite its promise of frankness and titillation, failed its test, and the ratings diminished on successive nights. After just six telecasts the series was canceled. A month later NBC applied a similar scheduling technique to *Hill Street Blues* and got a sampling—and loyalty base—that no single premiere telecast could have achieved.

The theory that there might be a relationship between the length of a program and viewer sampling gave birth to still another scheduling wrinkle this season. Since audiences had come to accept the two-hour movie pilot, ABC surmised that viewers just might stay tuned for a three-hour marathon premiere of a new serial drama . . . and they did. The high ratings for ABC's *Dynasty* established what may become an annual precedent for nightlong introductions of selected new shows. Shortly thereafter, NBC gave this "wall-to-wall" treatment to a full-evening premiere of *The Gangster Chronicles*. Although this scheduling device has its share of ratings risks, you can expect more experimentation along these lines in 1981-82. ■

***Toshiro Mifune** and **Richard Chamberlain:** Shōgun—a formidable warrior.*

HITS AND MISSES, 1980-81

EARLY CANCELLATIONS (WITH FINAL AIR DATES)	Rating
Games People Play (NBC) (12/25)	13.7*
Breaking Away (ABC) (1/10)	13.1*
Freebie and the Bean (CBS) (1/24)	11.1*
Secrets of Midland Heights (CBS) (1/24)	11.2*
MINISERIES RENAISSANCE	**Rating**
Shōgun (NBC) 9/15-19	33.0**
East of Eden (ABC) 2/8, 9, 11	25.5**
"SCATTER" SERIES INTRODUCTIONS	**Rating**
Number 96 (NBC) 12/10, 11, 12	18.0/14.6/12.1
Hill Street Blues (NBC) 1/15, 17, 22, 24	15.2/16.4/11.5/14.5
NIGHTLONG PREMIERES	**Rating**
Dynasty (ABC) 1/12	22.2
The Gangster Chronicles (NBC) 2/12	17.0

*Series Average
**Three-Program Average
***Five-Program Average

FILM CLASSICS

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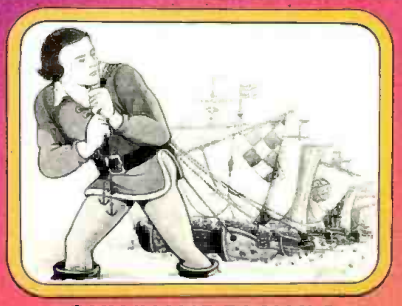
and Fredric March



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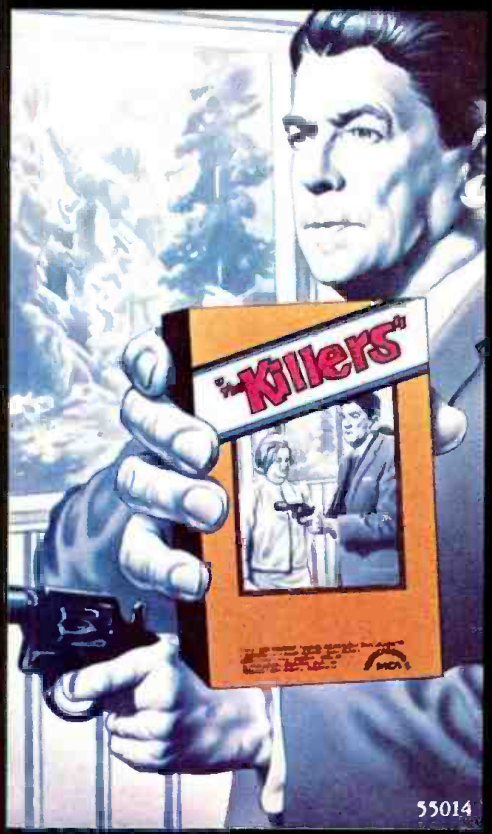

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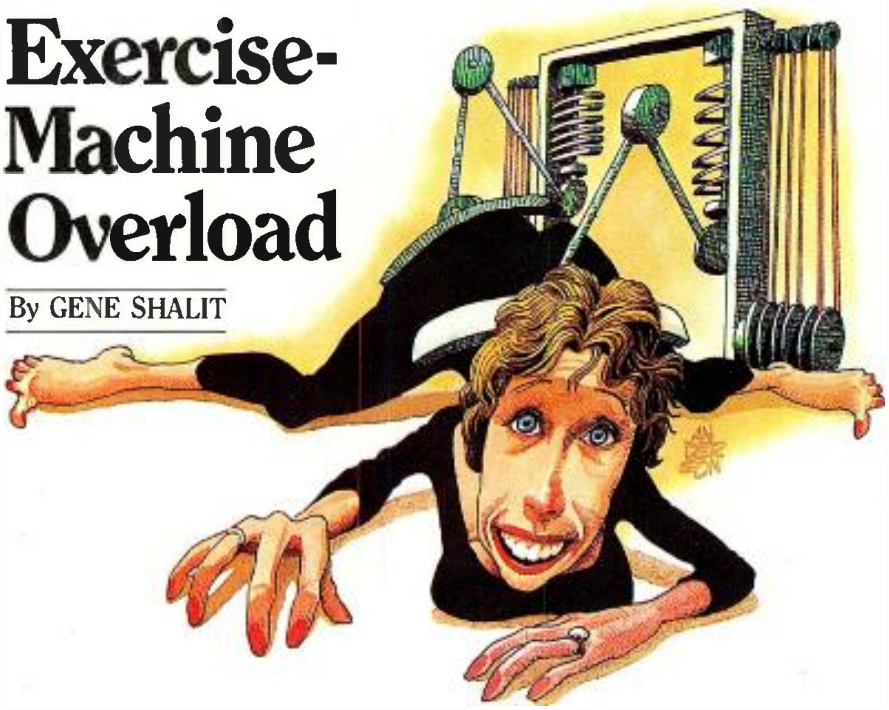

Improving the Bustline: color; 10 minutes; Nautilus Television Network*; $65.

In round numbers, 40 million adult Americans are overweight. (That's why the numbers are round.) Preying on these millions are diet-and-exercise tycoons who live off the fatheads of the land. They sell carrot-on-the-stick fad diets and exercise programs that give you the bends.

Muscling in on body-building, tummy-tightening and chin-lifting is an organization called the Nautilus Network, a name with alliterative euphony. It has released scores of health cassettes, and I have wasted scores of hours glazing at them.

To begin, I picked one at random. It's called *Improving the Bustline*. (Random my eye!) We see a voluptuous young thing named Terry Brantner in a barely one-piece swimsuit. She certainly piqued my interest, and I found others in my household occasionally piquing at her. Ms. Brantner fits herself into a contraption that would have been concocted by Rube Goldberg if he had designed medieval torture equipment. The beautiful Ms. Brantner, speaking in the familiar model monotone, tells us how to shape up as she moves sinuously through her exercises.

One exercise she demonstrated (I was paying rapt attention—I almost said unwrapped) had her hanging by her hands as she brought her knees s-l-o-w-l-y up to her chest. Ms. Brantner explained that this makes the belly flat. It seemed to me that it would also stretch her wrists to such an extent that when she walked they would drag along the ground like an orangutan's. Ms. Brantner is a woman of such stunning proportion that I cannot understand her need for exercise. In my opinion, her most urgent need is to exercise caution when eager Lotharios are around.

Another Nautilus cassette reminds us that useful exercise should drive the pulse rate to unusual rapidity (it had *better* be unusual), and to keep it there for 10 to 20 minutes. If I've got this straight, you take the number 220 and subtract your age. That's the rate you're after. Therefore, if you are 100 years old, you want your pulse racing at 120 beats a minute. I assume that such a person could accomplish this rate by looking at a dish of prunes.

All of the exercises shown on these cassettes require the use of these bizarre-looking mechanical mazes that give you a leg up toward your fantasized bellyhood. But of what use is watching all of this since you cannot duplicate any of it at home? Virtually no one I know has any of these devices around the house. I assume the cassettes' purpose is to stimulate you into going to a place where these machines are available, and there paying to use them.

Exercise is supposed to make you tired (the various narrators frequently mention that you should exercise "until you experience muscle failure"—in other words, until you are hopelessly tired). I will confess that I was soon hopelessly tired of watching this stuff and my eyes had achieved muscle failure. In desperation (and in an effort to get into shape without submitting to any of these forbidding machines), I reached for a copy of one of my favorite weekly newspapers, The Courier in Chatham, N.Y., owned by the irrepressible Albert Callan. I remembered that he had his own exercise plan for weight loss, and I can't wait to share it with you.

His plan is the best I've seen, because these are exercises that anyone can do. (The numbers in parentheses refer to the calories that each exercise burns up.) Jogging your memory (125). . . . Jumping to conclusions (100). . . . Beating around the bush (75). . . . Climbing the wall (110). . . . Swallowing your pride (130). . . . Passing the buck (50—formerly 100, but you know what inflation has done to the buck). . . . Grasping at straws (74). . . . Throwing your weight around (10 to 500, depending on your position). . . . Pushing your luck (200). . . . Spinning your wheels (125). . . . Dragging your heels (90). . . . Bending over backwards (60). . . . Turning the other cheek (15). . . . Jumping on the bandwagon (165). . . . Beating your head against the wall (140). . . . Patting yourself on the back (20). . . . Sticking your neck out (135). . . . Racing against time (220 or 440). . . . Running around in circles (1000). . . . Fishing for compliments (45). . . . Climbing the ladder of success (60). . . . Wrapping it all up at the end of the day (30).

And *that's* "30" for this column. I'm going in to see the editor to exercise my option. ■

Nautilus Television Network. Nautilus Sports/Medical Industries, P.O. Box 1783, Deland, Fla. 32720.

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Q&A with Victoria Principal

"I Lived from Day to Day in Fear"

Before her success on "Dallas," Victoria Principal had actually quit acting because of personal reasons

The boundaries of Victoria Principal's world extend far beyond the fences of *Dallas*'s Southfork ranch. The actress who plays Pamela Ewing on TV's most popular prime-time soap opera since *Peyton Place* has seen the world and sown more than a few wild oats.

For Victoria, born 31 years ago in Japan to an American Air Force sergeant major and his wife, Ree Veal Principal, traveling soon became the *modus operandi*. After a succession of stops at military bases in the States and abroad, her family settled in Miami, where she enrolled at Miami-Dade Community College, and began studying acting with the best coaches the city had to offer. Ever practical, in the event she "wouldn't make it as an actress," she also took up the study of chiropractic medicine. At 19, unable to suppress any longer the urge to be on the road again, and eager to test her talents, she headed for New York.

There she found modeling jobs and TV commercials, but the acting jobs she had dreamed of eluded her. At about this time, Principal also met and became very close with multimillionaire Bernard Cornfeld. During a tour of Europe in which she saw more of the continent than she had with her parents, she stopped in London to study acting with Jean Scott of the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts. She emerged from this cultural whirlwind ready to try Hollywood.

In 1971, four months after she arrived on the West Coast, she landed her first role in a movie, *The Life and Times of Judge Roy Bean*. At the time she described this incredible piece of fortune as "an opportunity that could change my whole life." Four films and a Playboy photo spread later, she had turned in her actor's card and become an agent.

Principal was almost immediately successful in this new profession—Dick Martin reportedly became her client two days after she was granted her agent's license. Yet, two years later when Aaron Spelling called to lure her back into acting for a one-shot on *Fantasy Island*, she accepted after only minimal soul-searching. Shortly thereafter, the script of a life-time—*Dallas*—came her way. Thanks to her role in that series, she was recently voted England's most popular female star.

A confessed workaholic, Principal owns her own production company, writes poetry and songs, has completed two TV projects (the special *60 Years of Seduction* and the movie *The Pleasure Palace*) and is actively considering film roles, all while doing *Dallas*. *And* she studies film editing in her spare time. In 1979, she married actor Christopher Skinner. A year and a half later, she filed for divorce. Principal has dated many fascinating, powerful men in her time, but for the moment she remains free—intent on developing a wide-ranging career.

When free-lance writer Anne Gilbar met with Principal at her home in the hills above Los Angeles, the conversation naturally began with a question about the number-one-rated show—and the publicity coup—of the season.

PANORAMA: *What was it like waiting to find out who shot J.R.? Did you think Pam did it?*

PRINCIPAL: I knew Pam didn't do it, because I never filmed the scene. I knew it was Mary Crosby because Victoria the agent knew how the contracts worked and that Mary had a short one. Everywhere I went, everyone I knew asked me who did it. After a while I developed some pat answers. Someone would ask for the 50th time, "Victoria, who shot J.R.?" and I'd say, "Lou Grant." Sometimes I'd say, "My mother."

PANORAMA: *How do you feel about Larry Hagman's power play for a raise in salary? [He eventually got a contract guaranteeing him more than $1 million for his work on the series and on other CBS projects, plus a percent of the profits from the merchandising of J.R.]*

PRINCIPAL: I think it's wonderful about Larry. He deserves all that money. Without Larry there would be no show. And I think the producers knew that.

PANORAMA: *What's happening to the characters of Pam and Bobby?*

PRINCIPAL: What they are doing is developing separate lives for Pam and Bobby. We used to have the most wonderful horizontal relationship on television. And I loved it because it is healthy for people to see two nice people who just adore each other so physically. We have a tendency to think that love changes as you get married, and only occasionally are there those resurgences of passion in the bedroom. But there we were doing it—and enjoying it! I loved that! Then they decided to throw in a few problems. What happened is that they threw in so many problems it became a pattern. Either Bobby was out developing problems or Pam was frigid.

PANORAMA: *Do you enjoy the conflict?*

PRINCIPAL: To tell you the truth, I really don't. Not with Bobby. Ideally I would have preferred that they went on being this wonderful, gregarious, horizontal couple. I miss their relationship and I know people do—they tell me that every chance they get!

PANORAMA: *How much do you have to say about your role?*

PRINCIPAL: I had more to say in the beginning. I was the one who wanted Pam to work, to have a life outside the Ewing ranch.

PANORAMA: *Has the incredible success of* Dallas *changed your life?*

PRINCIPAL: Not in any major way. I still live in one room of my house, because I've been redecorating. I rarely take vacations. The basic change that comes with success is a feeling: It feels so good that I don't really want to let myself feel it, because it will be gone one day. The important thing is to remain in touch with what is important to me and not to believe in my own publicity.

PANORAMA: *Do you deliberately avoid the whole Hollywood publicity mill?*

PRINCIPAL: Yes, I do. I keep interviews to a minimum. I wouldn't do a poster, or a Pam doll. I would make a lot of money by doing a poster right now, but I have a feeling I'm still going to be around in 10 years and I really don't want that picture haunting me.

I know what it's like to be haunted by pictures—like the Playboy layout. I did those Playboy pictures [in 1973] because I felt I had to—to keep the part in *The Naked Ape* [a movie produced by Playboy Productions]. There are only two things in my life I would undo if I could, and one of them is that Playboy thing.

PANORAMA: *Is there such a thing as good publicity?*

PRINCIPAL: Good publicity? Well, my mother picked up this wonderful line. She says, "Any publicity is good publicity." But seriously, folks . . . good publicity is when it is about something associated with my work, or about me, that opens up something in others. When people read it they enjoy, they laugh, they feel good. Then it may make them want to go see my work.

PANORAMA: *Laughter is important to you. Do many people realize how funny you are?*

PRINCIPAL: I love being funny. Pam never gets to be funny. If she acts funny they think she's sick! When I studied acting in England I studied comedy. I'd love to have someone write something funny for me.

PANORAMA: *You've led an interesting life. At various times you have raced cars, hunted wild boar. . . .*

PRINCIPAL: I *did* a lot of things, but the key word is *did*. In my 20s I tried it all. I used to make an annual trip to Hawaii to hunt, but I've given it up—although I still like target practice. When I was in high school and college I had a car that I raced. I was good at it, too. But I won't do it now. At that time, speed was another way of accelerating my own life so that I got an adrenalin rush. Now I get it from my work.

PANORAMA: *Are you a workaholic?*

PRINCIPAL: I sure am. Work is my passion. That's when I feel the most alive.

PANORAMA: *What do you think of the spinoffs of* Dallas?

PRINCIPAL: I think that a clone is a reproduction of something and can only be second best.

continued

Q&A

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PANORAMA: *What would you do if you and Bobby were offered a spinoff?*

PRINCIPAL: I like life on the ranch. Bobby and Pam probably will be offered their own show. I think it's like "Jack and Jill went up the hill": We'll have to be very careful not to fall down.

PANORAMA: *What was the first job you ever got, and how did you get it?*

PRINCIPAL: I had never worked on a film in my life, but my agent somehow got me a reading with the director of *The Life and Times of Judge Roy Bean*. The director was John Huston, and I was so scared! I didn't know how you were supposed to go for a reading—whether or not you have to dress, for example—so everything I did was spontaneous. The part called for a Spanish woman, so I dyed my hair black that night, and put it up in pincurls so it would be curly. I wore gold hoop earrings, a dress that was very Mexican, and I went barefoot.

Later Huston told me that when I walked in they felt I was the one. I did the scene with Huston, and then he asked me to read another one. I had memorized them all and did it easily. I even threw in a couple of lines in Spanish, hoping I would convince Huston that I could speak Spanish.

PANORAMA: *You really were nervy!*

PRINCIPAL: You want to hear nerve? Here I am a newcomer and they ask me to test—a reasonable request. I knew that I was not up for a test, that I would freeze and lose it all. Besides, I had no time for a test even if I had wanted to do one. My agent had just gotten me what would be my first job—a part in a horror movie called *Manila*, for Roger Corman. I already had signed a contract and was due to leave for Manila in three days. So my agent simply said, "She can't test." And the day before I was to leave, Huston offered me the part. The star was Paul Newman. I was in heaven, and in trouble—two commitments at one time!

"I knew that emotionally I was running on an empty tank, that I had compromised my emotions to a point where I was going to become another Hollywood tragedy."

I went to Roger Corman and told him the truth, and that if he held me to our contract there would be no problem. And you know, he tore up the contract right in front of me. To this day I owe him one.

PANORAMA: *Why did you leave acting?*

PRINCIPAL: There came a point when I realized that I had lost so much of myself that I was frightened. I lived from day to day in fear: fear that someone would find out that I wasn't the image that had been created; fear that there wouldn't be another movie; fear that I wasn't as good as I should be; fear that I would not say the right thing the right way; fear that I was an altogether incompetent person. The fear extended into every part of my life.

At the time—this was around 1975—I was working on [the movie] *I Will, I Will . . . For Now* and it was harder and harder to get up and go to work every day. When I finished it I went directly to *Vigilante Force*, with Kris Kristofferson. These two films came after about a year and a half when I worked very little, so I should have been ecstatic. But I knew that emotionally I was running on an empty tank, that I had compromised my emotions to a point where I was going to become another Hollywood tragedy.

PANORAMA: *Do you remember the moment you decided that you couldn't do it any more?*

PRINCIPAL: I remember exactly. I was still working on *Vigilante Force* and I had been trying to tell myself that when I finished this film I would quit. But it was too frightening. It made me nauseous to think of cutting away all that I had worked so hard for. One day I got up to go to the set and I started crying. I sat on my bathroom floor crying; I couldn't stop. Finally, I looked in the mirror and said to myself, "There is nobody to throw you a lifeline except yourself. Either you end your life, because this is no way to live, or you make a new one." And that left me only one choice, because I wanted to live. The day after I finished the film I withdrew from the Screen Actors Guild and walked out on a three-picture deal to an unknown future.

PANORAMA: *How did you become an agent?*

PRINCIPAL: I let the word out that I had quit acting and was looking for something else to do. An agent I knew who had his own company offered me a job with him. I began as a trainee agent and in three months was a full-fledged franchised agent.

I became very good at what I did, and began to study contract law at night so I would understand the contracts better. I worked around the clock at the agency

and soon people began calling up and asking me to represent them. By that time I was getting a sense of self that I had not had in years. This time everything I did was based on my output and had nothing to do with the way I looked. Did that feel good!

PANORAMA: *If being an agent gave you so much satisfaction, why did you return to acting?*

PRINCIPAL: A good question. I loved what I was doing, but I was also aware that it was not what I wanted to do for the rest of my life. I decided I wanted to produce. I figured that if I went to law school it would give me a background that, joined with what I had learned as an agent, would help me become a producer. Believe me, I had no intention of going back to acting. None!

One day producer Aaron Spelling called and asked me to do a *Fantasy Island*. I told him that I hadn't been an actress for a long time and had no intention of going back to it. But he pointed out that one show would pay for a year of school. I thought, "My God! He's right!" So I did it. And then another part came—a Movie of the Week called *The Night They Stole Miss Beautiful*, and I figured that would pay for the second year. But a funny thing happened. I had the most wonderful time doing those two projects! It had been three years since I had stopped having a love affair with acting. And all of a sudden I had a different attitude. It was not life or death any more. I was in control. Three months later I had *Dallas*.

PANORAMA: *Did you act as your own agent when you returned to acting?*

PRINCIPAL: Well, let's put it this way: I knew that I was not in a position to get the agent I wanted—Sylvia Gold at ICM. So I had to be my own agent.

PANORAMA: *How did you sell yourself?*

PRINCIPAL: Simple—when I called the casting people I made appointments for Victoria Principal. Then a friend of mine read a script called *Dallas*. They weren't casting for it; but after I read it, I knew it was the one. I called and made an appointment for myself with Leonard Katzman, the producer. We had a wonderful time and then I went home, elated, and waited. Months went by. Then the script got an OK for a five-part miniseries, and I began to get the feeling that I might get the part. So I called Sylvia Gold, told her about the meeting with Leonard, and for some reason she decided to take a big chance and represent me.

PANORAMA: *Even though you now have an agent, does Victoria, the former agent, still counsel Victoria, the actress?*

PRINCIPAL: Sure she does. It would be foolish of me not to use that training. It helps guide me in decisions and allows me to read scripts in a totally different way.

PANORAMA: *But Sylvia Gold got you the* Dallas *part?*

PRINCIPAL: Right. Sylvia began to make calls, and while we were waiting for *Dallas* she got me a part in *Centennial*.

continued

Q&A

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The problem was that I wanted the *Dallas* part with all my heart. I told Sylvia I wanted to hold out for it, miss the chance to do *Centennial* and wait.

When Leonard finally called to ask me to test for *Dallas*, I panicked. I hate testing. In my mind it has always been an insult. So I convinced them I could do a live performance. It worked, and they decided to go with me.

PANORAMA: *Did you think that* Dallas *would become such a phenomenon?*

PRINCIPAL: I fully believed it would be a series. I think it was my training as an agent that helped me know that it would be a success.

PANORAMA: *Are you worried about being typecast?*

PRINCIPAL: No, I'm not. The parts I am offered have nothing to do with Pam. I have just been offered a tremendous part (it hasn't been cast yet so I can't say anything about it) where the character is *so* evil—and gets away with it. It is a phenomenal role. But I don't want to do it, especially when it has an ending where this woman gets away with everything. People would see it and figure that I believed in it. I don't want to have that kind of influence on people.

PANORAMA: *You have your own production company, called—*

PRINCIPAL: Pryce Hill Principal.

PANORAMA: *What's that?*

> *"When Leonard [Katzman] finally called to ask me to test for Dallas, I panicked. I hate testing. In my mind it has always been an insult."*

PRINCIPAL: Pryce Hill is my imaginary alter ego; she has been since I was a child. She's tall, WASPish, blonde and blue-eyed. She went to Vassar, and graduated. She was born and raised in the East, and her father was a banker. I saw her name in the financial pages of the paper when I was younger.

She was what I always wanted to be. I'm dark, she's fair. I'm moody, she's not. I felt so unsophisticated so much of the time and she is terribly sophisticated. As I have grown more secure I don't feel that I am unsophisticated, and I don't feel intimidated by her. There came a day when I came to terms with wanting to be what I'm not and became happy with myself. It seemed only natural that when I'd finally gotten the company I'd always wanted that Pryce Hill should be a part of it.

PANORAMA: *Is Pryce Hill now in operation?*

PRINCIPAL: Yes. It's not a tax write-off. It is a working company, which owns and will produce, among other things, the two scripts that I have written, one of which I plan to star in. I really am a frustrated writer, you know. I don't write that well, so it's a good thing I act. Acting supports my writing habit.

PANORAMA: *Do you ever get nervous in front of the camera?*

PRINCIPAL: No! I love that camera! I get nervous in front of people. But give me a camera, and that is my truest lover. I can trust him—I always refer to the camera as "him," sexist as that might be. He gives me everything I give him, nothing less, nothing more. I feel totally uninhibited with him.

PANORAMA: *You are independent, obviously in control of your career—*

PRINCIPAL: My mother paid you to say that.

PANORAMA: *Your mother comes up often in conversation. Are you two close?*

PRINCIPAL: Ree Veal has had a very big influence on me, and as I have grown older that influence has become even greater. Little idiosyncrasies that drove me crazy when I was growing up have now become me. But Ree Veal comes up in conversation because she loves to give advice and she gives very sound, logical advice, which I am forever quoting. There were times when I was foolish enough not to take her advice and I was almost always sorry.

Our one bone of contention for many years was predictable: She wanted me to get married. One day she called me and as usual asked if I was planning to get married, and as usual I said no—this was before I got married. Ree Veal proceeded to reply, "You know, honey, you're still young; you are bright; you are healthy; you are successful and wealthy; you are everything I ever wanted you to marry!" And I just loved it! From then on, we have been the best of friends.

PANORAMA: *What's ahead for Victoria Principal?*

PRINCIPAL: My whole life. ■

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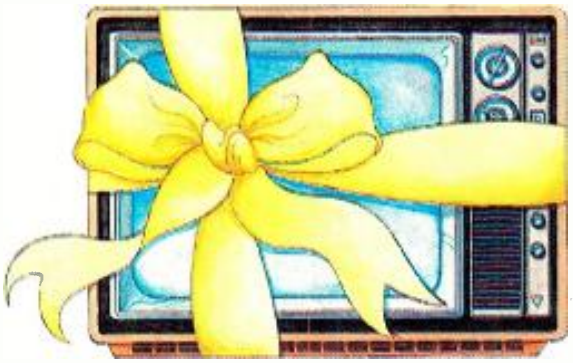


A Matter of Graves' Necessity

In the heyday of magazine publishing, he might have received a free lifetime subscription to Collier's. But for former hostage John Graves, one of his welcome-home gifts fit the times perfectly: free cable-TV service.

On Feb. 16, Graves' home town of Reston, Va., showered him with an array of presents from various companies and stores in the business community. Warner Amex Cable Communications of Reston was one of the firms approached by the homecoming committee to become a corporate sponsor. "Our gratitude was so great that we wanted to show John our appreciation for the way he served our country," said a Warner spokesman. Hence the gift: free cable-TV for life.

Graves initially subscribed to Warner Cable of Reston in 1976. When he received State Department orders transferring him to Iran, his wife called for a disconnect.

When Graves returned to the U.S. last January, the subscription service found out that the ex-hostage was anxious to be rehooked. So rehooked he was.

Since Warner charges $29.95 per month, Graves is grateful for the free service. Now, if only he would hear from that Mercedes-Benz dealer down the street. . . .

—Howard Polskin

A Women's Station

And finally there is one.

The FCC recently issued a broadcast license to 10 Connecticut women for Channel 43 in Bridgeport, making them the first group of women ever to be awarded a TV license.

Although the women who formed Bridgeways Communications say they did not seek the license as a "feminist" undertaking, Hi Ho Communications—their sole competitor for the station—has murmured accusations of reverse discrimination.

"It wasn't a competitive situation," says Hi Ho president David Antoniak.

FCC sources called the accusations "utter garbage" and said no affirmative-action policies are employed in FCC licensing procedures.

"Certainly if you look at the upper echelons [of broadcasting] you don't see a lot of women," said Bridgeways' vice president M. Jean Cherry. "[But] we weren't looking to be a feminist mechanism. We just felt we had an opportunity for a good business venture."

—Karen Grigsby

Bottom-Line Chorus

The show opens on a beautiful vista of oil-slicked industrial gears. Soon we are transported to another factory, where millions of perfect, gleaming rivets dance before our eyes. Cut to orange globs of molten polyester being poured like honey into injection moldings, and then to an automatic bottle-making machine, which magically transforms white-hot liquid glass into no-deposit containers. At another location, a machine is assembling stereo components 20 times faster than a human being can. Then we zoom into a grid of wires, pistons and sockets, and a beaming factory worker says, "This is not *a close-up of a high-powered racing automobile. It is part of the most modern shoe-lasting machine in the world today. Now let me tell you what lasting is. . . ."*

If you happened to miss this TV show, which was cablecast to about 100 American communities last August, don't worry—there will probably be reruns. The scenes are from *The Emhart Annual Report*, the first video annual report to stockholders ever broadcast, courtesy of the Emhart Corporation, a diversified, billion-dollar conglomerate headquartered in Farmington, Conn. The slick, full-color, 22-minute production won't actually replace the firm's printed annual report mailed to stockholders (that's an SEC requirement), but now, thanks to video, even the man on the street will know that Emhart is fiscally sound—and that it makes over half the rivets used in the entire world. "What will they think of next?" chortles T. Mitchell Ford, Emhart's president and chairman of the board. Ford is the show's emcee.

"In a printed report, the executives have no personality, and the workers have no personality," says the report's producer/director, Bruce Pennington, enthusiastically. "But with the Emhart show, I wanted to make financial reporting interesting enough so that people would *want* to watch it."

Unfortunately, Pennington couldn't make it *too* exciting, because if the Emhart show sounded too "commercial," no public-access cable station would touch it. So he went with "perfectly flat, dead, down-to-earth factual kinda stuff" and tapped Chairman Ford himself to deliver an introductory lecture to the viewers. "The guy is a wooden performer," Pennington admits. "He's dull. He has no 'Q' at all. But he is 100-percent credible."

After Ford explains in the show why Emhart has gone video ("Every year corporations print 59 million annual reports. . . . That's an awful lot of reports to read!"), it's on to a series of financial charts about assets and liabilities and revenues, all explained over an original musical score reminiscent of *Mission: Impossible*. Then, much like ABC's *World News Tonight*, the show whips around from factory to factory with one-minute film clips to display Emhart products in action. The closer is Ford predicting, in a monotone, that the next 10 years will be just great, too.

"We're talking to 170 companies now about producing their own video reports." Pennington notes. "And by the end of 1982, at least 50 of them should be telecast."

—Len Albin

Dishing the Dirt on Video

Diana Ross Tells of Weird Life with Cher's Ex-Lover . . . Shy Eight Is Enough *Star Leading a Bizarre Lifestyle in Cult Commune . . .*

Those of you who spend your time in the supermarket checkout line reading up on these and other so-called news stories in the pages of trashy tabloids have a real treat in store come September. The advent of the 1981-82 TV season will bring a syndicated program inspired by Star, since 1974 one of America's best-selling tabloids.

The TV Star, says executive producer Kobi Jaeger, will be "an electronic magazine; a rapid-fire show designed to be informative, teasing and always entertaining. Just think of Star magazine on TV—and let your imagination run riot!" Oh, dear.

Currently being peddled by Viacom Enterprises to TV stations across the country, *The TV Star* will feature a daily (Monday through Friday) half hour of the kind of content that has led its print counterpart to the third-largest single-copy sales in the U.S.: TV, movie and show-biz gossip; health, medicine and popular science; human interest, consumerism and astrology.

A plan to launch a video version of another famous tabloid, the National Enquirer, was scuttled last year. Enquirer executives aren't saying why, but at least one industry source claims the idea was scrapped because of the Enquirer's constant trouble with libel suits. Apparently that's not a worry to executives at Star, who are predicting that *The TV Star* will be "one of the most sensational TV successes of 1981." Now, if they could only figure out a way to let you buy a week's worth of groceries while you're watching it. . . .

—Alison Nelson

Knick Shows Knack for Gab

Whoever thought that when ex-New York Knickerbocker forward Dave DeBusschere hung up his basketball sneakers for good he'd pick up a spatula and needle and thread?

On March 2, DeBusschere became the co-host of a new cable-TV series called *It's a Great Idea*, based on Family Circle *Great Idea* books. More than 250 cable systems nationwide carry the 30-minute program that features the 6-foot-6 former bone-bruising forward shooting the breeze about such unmanly topics as interior decorating, current fashions, and staying pretty and thin.

At 40, DeBusschere is grateful that, so far at least, the show's producers have not asked him to cook up a fast break.

PANORAMIC VIEW

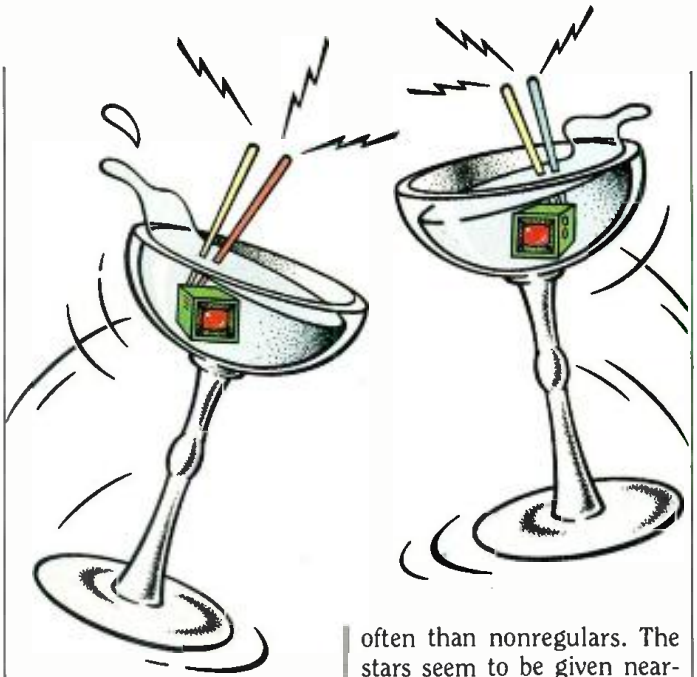
Alcohol Beats H_2O

What's television's most popular drink? According to a study in the Winter 1981 Journal of Communication, it's the alcoholic beverage. The authors, Warren Breed and James R. De Foe of San Francisco's Scientific Analysis Corporation, monitored prime-time shows from the 1976-77 season and recorded characters taking liquid refreshment. When all thirsts had been slaked, alcoholic beverages had been consumed more frequently than (in descending order): coffee and tea, carbonated soft drinks, and water. In real life, by contrast, alcoholic drinks are consumed less often than all the other categories.

If you're worried about your favorite weekly hero or heroine's liver, though, here's a cheering thought: Breed and De Foe claim that "regular players suffer the consequences of heavy drinking less often than nonregulars. The stars seem to be given near-immunity."

So *that* explains Dean Martin's hollow leg.

—Dick Friedman



New Wave Waxes Lyrical over TV

The medium is not only the message—you can dance to it, too.

As *American Bandstand* proved, television and rock-'n'-roll were made for each other. But today, 24 years later, the relationship is different. Without much fanfare, but with plenty of decibels, the phenomenon of video (nee TV) has become one of the most popular subjects in rock-'n'-roll music. The topic is especially hot among the new-wave rockers—otherwise known for their skinny ties, sunglasses and short blue hair—and they're writing up-tempo songs that describe, with McLuhanesque flair, TV's impact on our lives.

The first dim outline of a trend was noted about six years ago in New York City, where a punk group emerged bearing a peculiar name: Television. They didn't sing about TV, but it had obviously made a deep impression on them. Then, in 1976, David Bowie—a British rock star much admired by the punk crowd—released "TVC-15," a song about a state-of-the-art TV set (model TVC-15) featuring quadraphonic sound and holographic images. Its picture seems *so* lifelike, in fact, that his girlfriend crawls into it, and is swept away into the orthicon beyond.

The next young couple to have their lives disrupted by television were Bob and Judy, who were characters in a 1978 song called "Found a Job" by the video-inspired band Talking Heads. As the tune begins, we find our lovebirds arguing:

" 'Damn that television! What a bad picture!'

'Don't get upset—it's not a major disaster.'

'There's nothing on tonight,' he said. 'I don't know what's the matter.'

'Nothing's ever on,' she said. 'So I don't know why you bother'."*

But since 1979, rock-'n'-roll has not been so kind to television; the tube is now regarded as a menace. A typical rockers' bad rap against TV comes from The Tubes (*sic*). The cover of their album *Remote Control* depicts an infant staring into a nine-inch portable TV set that has a baby-bottle nipple protruding from the screen.

Even more disturbing are the lyrics of "TV OD" by the Normal, which are sung in a zombiesque monotone above a melody of electronic bleeps:

"TV OD . . . TV OD
I don't need a TV screen
I just stick the aerial under my skin
And let the signal run through my veins
TV OD . . . TV OD"**

And last year, TV was finally blamed, in a rock song, for the erosion of American family life. It's a sobering thought, because for years the erosion of American family life had been thought to be rock-'n'-roll's responsibility. Nevertheless, the Silicon Teens, in "TV Playtime," tell us that television's the culprit.

In this charming number, "Daddy" watches TV constantly and never bothers to talk to his wife or children. The home environment is dismal. But, happily, one night the television breaks down. Daddy blames Mommy, and the kids have a great time watching their folks throw tantrums. The screaming and yelling is better than the arguments on *Lou Grant*. A normal family life has been restored. Meanwhile, the kids sneak back to the TV set and hook it up so that they can play video games.—*L. A.*

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PANORAMIC VIEW

Are Kiddies Missing the Pitch?

Do TV ads aimed at children disrupt domestic tranquility? Do they goad kids into plaguing their parents for every goody that parades across the Saturday-morning commercial breaks? Groups ranging from the FTC to the NAB to the local PTA worry and wonder.

To find out, the Marketing Science Institute of Cambridge, Mass., had mothers of 250 Boston-area children keep month-long diaries. Each time the child asked her to buy something, the mother noted what was asked for, where, what she thought caused the child to want it, how she responded, and what happened if she said no.

The verdict? Television ads apparently don't have that much influence. Mothers said seeing the product in the store prompted requests most often; next they ranked the pressures of keeping up with the Jones kids. TV came in third, sparking only about a sixth of the requests.

As for conflict caused by children's demands—there wasn't much. Mothers admitted they "said yes right away" to nearly two thirds of the requests, especially for things like cereals, snack foods and candy. And if the answer was no, kids usually dropped the subject: Just a little more than five percent of the turndowns led to pestering by the child.

Thus, the one-eyed monster looks fairly blameless. But the authors note that their study could not measure the secondary influence of TV—like a Sugar Grommet Puffs display at the store triggering a mental replay of an ad. And they also mention a "small but statistically significant correlation between amount of TV viewing and number of requests"—especially for the heavily advertised products: cereals, candy and toys.

One might wonder: How far back do the effects of that correlation go? Many of the mothers participating were themselves in the first crop of television babies—back before the NAB Television Code regulated children's advertising as closely as it does today. Perhaps subliminal memories—of watching Captain Midnight drinking his Ovaltine, or of needing a *Winky Dink* press-on screen film to trace the way out of a jam—prompt this generation of mothers to say yes so often.

—Deborah Lyons

Come Back, *Cell Block H*

When the syndicated serial *Prisoner: Cell Block H* made its debut in New York City on independent station WPIX (Channel 11) last year, TV critics called this imported Australian soap opera about a women's prison "coarse," "degenerate" and "sleazy." Nevertheless, the show won the hearts of 100,000 loyal viewers in its 11:30 P.M. Monday-through-Friday time slot, and it earned a respectable rating. Unfortunately, sponsors did *not* find this saga of sex and brutality that respectable, and in late January 1981, WPIX replaced it at 11:30 with reruns of *The Rockford Files*. *Cell Block H* was banished to the 2:30 A.M. time slot, where it languished like a prisoner on death row. It finally expired a month later.

But Ted Reich, a 37-year-old sales rep for Metropolitan Life Insurance Co., has organized a Committee to Save *Prisoner: Cell Block H*. At his home in Brentwood, N.Y., Reich has more than 450 letters, with about 1500 signatures, with which to fight his battle. His first strategy was cajoling his members to write to *The Rockford Files*' sponsors, asking them to drop their ad support. Now, in phase two of the campaign, Reich's followers are writing to the FCC. "We will request that the license of WPIX be reviewed," he says solemnly, "to determine whether or not that station is programming in the public interest."

Of course, the FCC has never judged Australian prison melodramas to be "in the public interest," but Reich defends *Cell Block H* on the grounds of "quality." "It's better written than any American TV show," he says, "and better acted. In any given show, there may be six different plots going on, *with* subplots, and it's great—I can't figure out what's going to happen next."

The* Cell Block H *protest: 450 letters, 1500 signatures.

Cell Block H's "quality," to be sure, is not the same quality as, say, PBS's *Cosmos*, but at least it is an original show, still in production in Australia. And to have it replaced by reruns on rerun-happy WPIX (which has been known to run three *Odd Couple* repeats in a single day) was especially rankling to Reich and his supporters.

"As much as I'm in favor of a company making a profit," says Reich, "I think that TV stations have an obligation to do a certain amount of programming, even if they don't make money, for the sake of quality. If they wanted to show *Carmen* on TV, I would applaud it. I'm not that much into opera, but it's *quality*."

And what if WPIX had replaced *Cell Block H* with Shakespeare?

"I wouldn't like it," Reich admits. "I *hate* Shakespeare!"

—L. A.

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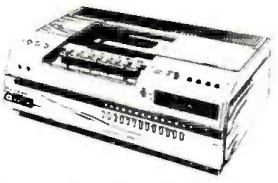

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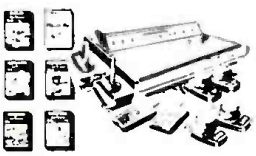

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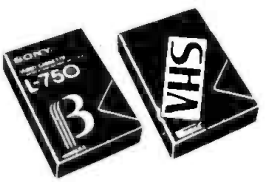

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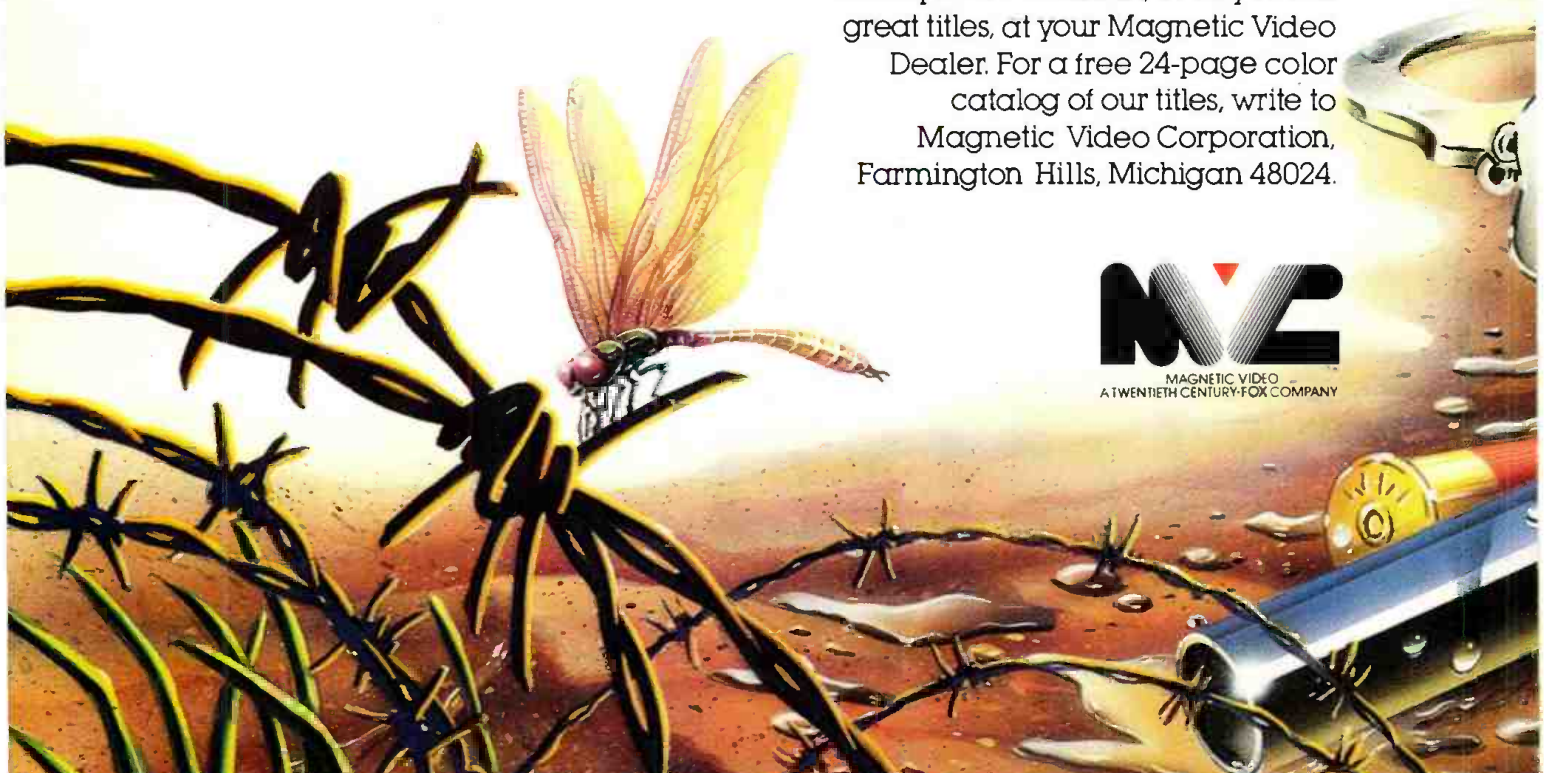

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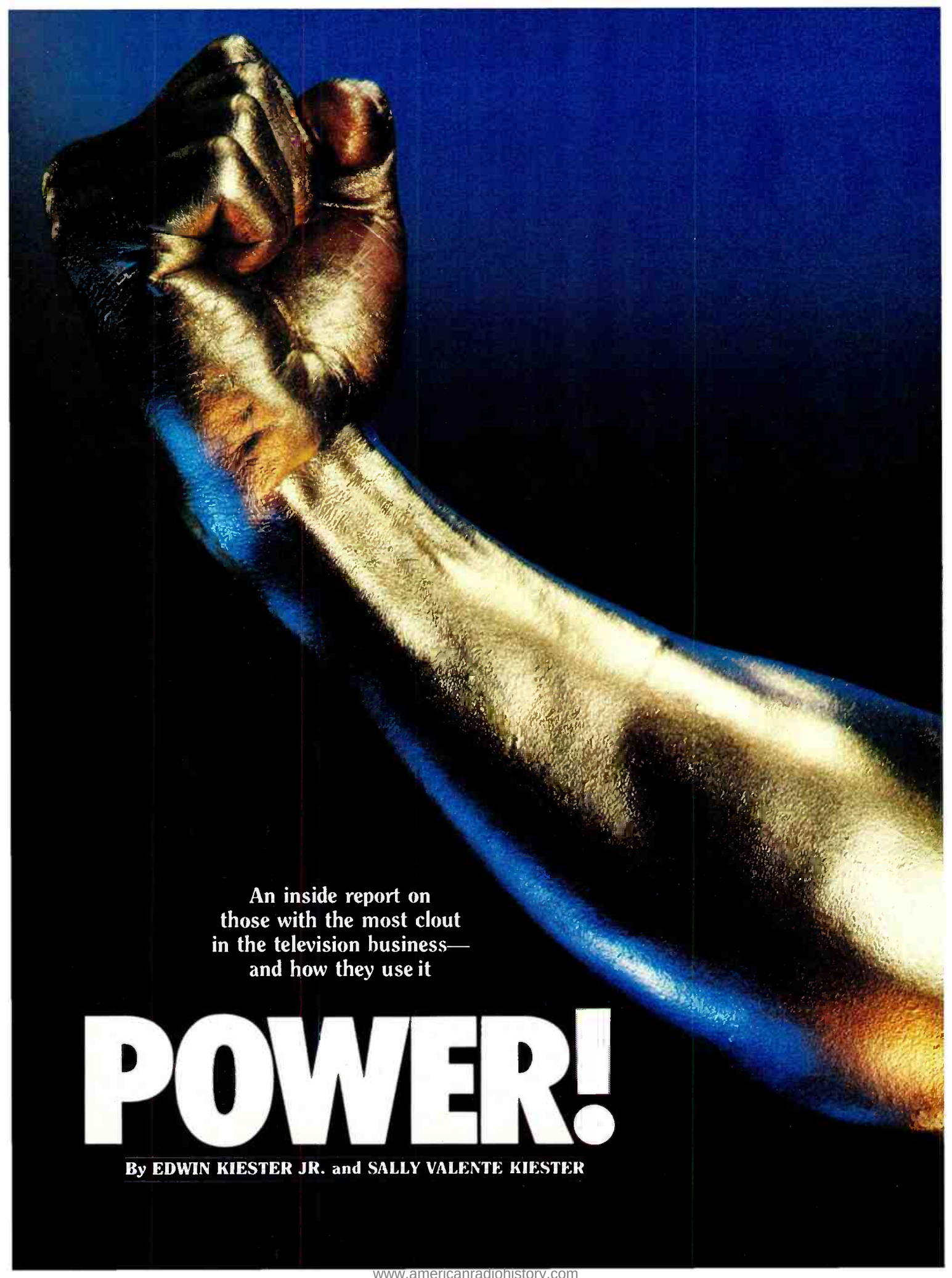

An inside report on those with the most clout in the television business— and how they use it

POWER!

By EDWIN KIESTER JR. and SALLY VALENTE KIESTER

The occasion was a press conference to introduce Brandon Tartikoff, president of NBC Entertainment. Standing at the podium, Tartikoff delivered a short talk, then asked for questions.

"Is it true," came the very first question, "that at NBC every decision must be personally approved by Fred Silverman?"

Tartikoff hesitated, then smiled faintly. "Uh, can I get back to you on that?"

No one has power in television. At least no one admits it. Even Fred Silverman, who can pump as much television iron as anyone in this power-obsessed industry, protests piously that the power rests not with him, but with the audience out there. And William Paley, no small iron-pumper himself, has maintained that it's the *system*, not the individual, that holds the power.

On one point there is unanimity: Everyone agrees that *someone* has it. In seeking out the sources of power in television, PANORAMA was offered dozens of nominees. The networks volunteered the audiences, producers nominated the networks, and several sources mentioned the studios.

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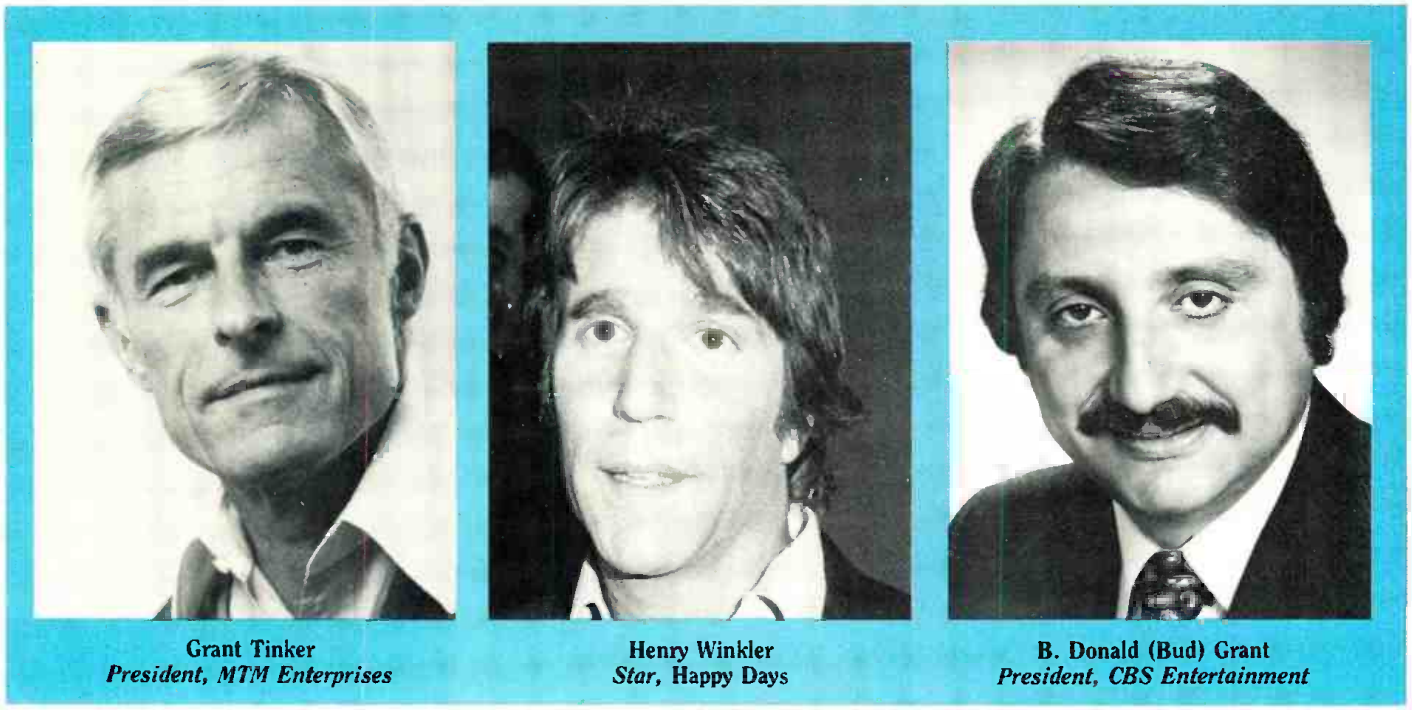


Grant Tinker
President, MTM Enterprises

Henry Winkler
***Star*, Happy Days**

B. Donald (Bud) Grant
President, CBS Entertainment

Oft-mentioned nominees also included actors, agents and business-affairs people. *Cue-card holders, anyone?*

The search for power can begin anywhere. "Why are you looking for power in Hollywood," protested one insider, "when all the important decisions are made in New York?" (Conversely, Ben Stein, in *The View from Sunset Boulevard*, says television is shaped by a few hundred men living in the western portions of Los Angeles.) And still another television scalawag suggested looking for power at "the meetings of the four A's"—the American Association of Advertising Agencies. Indeed, a popular view is that the true power in television lies in Wall Street, Washington and Madison Avenue. And another voice says that the real powers are currently anonymous—the handful of innovators who will take the medium in new directions. Read: *future Silvermans*.

Future *Wunderkinder* aside, the single greatest source of power in television is—and always will be—the *Almighty Buck*. Television spokespeople may stiffly maintain that it is the audience that makes the final choices, but power-structure insiders know better.

Money talks. CBS officials are hardly shy in admitting they used the *Almighty Buck* to win back the ratings lead from ABC. Harvey Shephard, CBS vice president for programming, says the network developed a "strong bench" of high-priced programs that could be rushed into the schedule at the first indication of trouble.

In television, as in the rest of corporate America, decisions are ultimately dictated by the bottom line. A producer may stand out front and claim the award bestowed on his production, but the real power may be the man who raised the money, kept him within his budget and streamlined his artistic vision to a commercial market. If you want to watch television really tremble, see it react to a financial analysis that downgrades a network's earnings.

To compile a roster of television's most powerful people would challenge the *Book of Lists* folks. But here, by seven important categories, are powerful individuals whose decisions help determine what you may watch tonight. Typically, all of them protest they are powerless—but don't tell that to their colleagues.

THE INDEPENDENT PRODUCER

His company, MTM Enterprises, produces *Lou Grant*, *The White Shadow*, *Hill Street Blues* and *WKRP in Cincinnati*; his past triumphs include *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*, *The Bob Newhart Show* and *Rhoda*. Does that make Grant Tinker a power, a decision-maker, in television? "You've come halfway to the right person," he says. "I'm *very* decisive. And absolutely powerless."

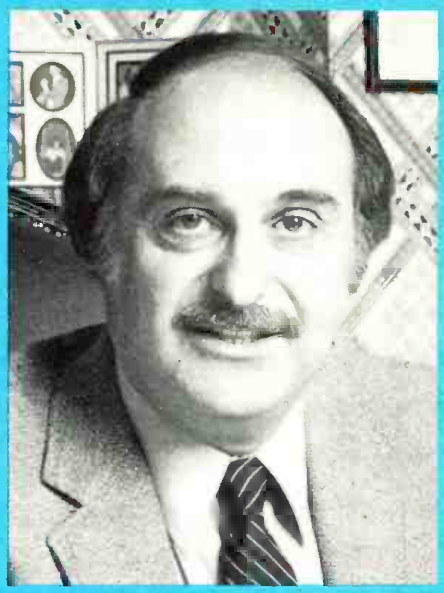
All power, Tinker says, rests with the networks. "Television is a buyer's market, with three buyers and lots of sellers. They buy what they want, and we make what they want. They have absolute power to buy, develop, schedule and unilaterally cancel any program. All authority is on their side."

Some portray the former husband and current business partner of Mary Tyler Moore as modest but hardly powerless. Tinker's power lies in his ability to "choreograph creative talent," says a former associate. Harvey Shephard of CBS says, "Grant has a great eye for talent, for bringing together creative writers and producers. I think that gives him a form of power." Says another network source: "When there are 22 hours of prime time to fill, a man who can get you a 40 share in any of them is definitely powerful."

Tinker's power, in part, may spring from his legendary "interior" anger. He admits he lost his cool when CBS canceled *The Betty White Show* after 18 weeks. "I guess I might have hollered a little bit then," he understates. "I told them there was an incompatible show ahead of it, and that if they'd stayed with it, they would have had a long-running show on their hands. But these guys don't want to go down with the ship. If they conclude it should be moved or canceled, then it's moved or canceled. All you can do is go home and kick animals."

The production company's only weapon, Tinker says, is its ability to take a proposal "across the street"—to another network. "It's a power of sorts, but a

Alan Shayne
President, Warner Bros. Television



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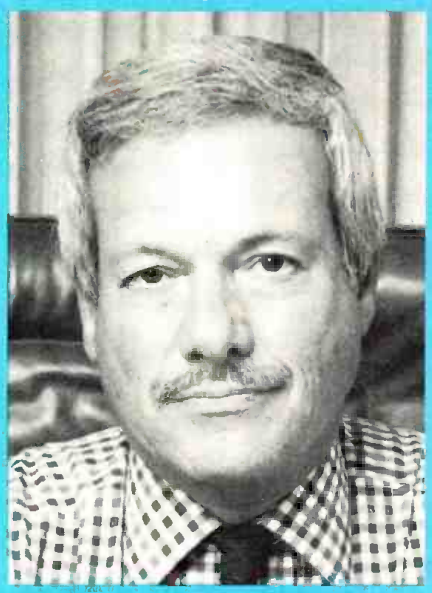


Wally Hiller
Agent, Arcara, Bauman and Hiller

limited one," he says. "There are only two other places to take it." Still, he is not afraid to use what muscle he has. Although CBS Entertainment president Bud Grant proudly proclaims that the network bought *Lou Grant* without a script or a foot of film (and kept it on the air despite poor early ratings), Tinker notes that was CBS's only option. "We had some strength," he says. "We had Ed Asner as a star and [Jim] Brooks and [Allan] Burns as creative consultants and Gene Reynolds as executive producer. We had put together a pretty good team. We wanted a series commitment and they agreed. If they canceled after a few weeks, they were still committed to pay for the whole series, so they were more inclined to stay with it.

"If MTM is known for anything," Tinker says, "it's for asking the question, 'Who's going to do it? Who are the creative people?' That's more important than the idea. An idea about a girl in a television newsroom in Minneapolis wasn't such a terrific idea until Brooks and Burns and Mary made it into what it was. Taking a character from that show and moving him to Los Angeles isn't so original, but Jim and Allan turned it into a good program. Creativity is our trademark, but I don't know if that gives us particular clout."

THE STAR

When Henry Winkler was an aspiring young actor in New York, his noonday meal consisted of a tuna sandwich and a carton of yogurt at a crowded lunch counter. Recently, he dined elegantly in the board room of the Bank of America, flanked by bankers and school superintendents planning an arts program in the schools. "I told them it was the first time I'd ever been in a bank without standing in line," Winkler says.

As the highly visible star of a long-running hit series, Winkler has plenty of clout in and out of television. And he is fully (and mischievously) aware of it. "I didn't get this company because I was a cutie-pie," he says, referring to a small production empire that makes feature films, TV movies, children's specials and records. "My attorneys took what was happening to me and the show and built from there."

When Winkler joined *Happy Days* in 1973, at the age of 27, he was little known. And his paycheck reflected it. The terms have been revised upward four times since. Unlike other stars, he has never been given the right of script approval, director approval or similar perks, but his status in the company has unquestionably grown. "In the beginning I had to argue for an hour, hopefully without arrogance, over a single line change. It was so frustrating I would punch out my script. Ronny Howard would take me aside and say, 'I don't think you want to do that,' and calm me down. Now I no longer have to argue. I have free-flow input into the show. My voice is louder . . . without having to speak up."

On the other hand, Winkler is cautious about "going to the well too often." In more than 180 episodes, he has exerted a star's prerogative "only a few times." One came in 1975. The producers wanted to change the show's taping day from Friday to Tuesday. "We'd always worked Monday to Friday," Winkler says. "I liked that because I'd blow out all my energy by midnight Friday, then have the weekend to get ready for Monday. If we taped Tuesday, I'd worry all day Saturday and Sunday. I went to them and said, 'I don't think I'd like to change'." He pauses. "We're still working Monday to Friday."

On another occasion, the producers wanted to introduce the new *Laverne & Shirley* by previewing it for a *Happy Days* studio audience. "I calmly explained that I thought our audience's spontaneity and sense of anticipation would be spoiled by seeing another show first." Another pause. "They agreed to do it after our show."

As a star, Winkler is shrewd enough not to waste his power; he is perfectly content with a relatively modest combined office/dressing room on the Paramount lot. But he does know when to use it. Once, he fell into conversation at a star dinner with ABC-TV president Fred Pierce about *Who Are the DeBolts?*, Winkler's prize-winning special about a couple with 19 adopted children. Pierce said it would be scheduled for Thanksgiv-

continued on page 89

"The Top Story in the News Tonight: I've Been Murdered"

In this fictional thriller, the authors project what could lie ahead in the dog-eat-dog world of TV news

By CHUCK SCARBOROUGH and WILLIAM MURRAY

The Myrmidon Project, *by Emmy-winning newsman Chuck Scarborough, of WNBC-TV in New York, and author William Murray, has been called "a shocking tale of science and ambition in a technological age gone mad." The key player in their story is 60-year-old Harvey Grunwald, America's number-one network anchorman and chief financial asset of the American Communications Network, the fourth and most powerful TV network. When Grunwald's final five-year contract comes up for renewal, he decides to play his hand and demands that ACN pay him half the profits his presence on the newscast generates, some $10 million a year. Stunned by what he considers Grunwald's impossible request and equally aware of the devastating consequences of losing his star newsman, ACN chairman Lawrence Hoenig calls on Sarah Anderson, president of ACN News, to find a solution to the Grunwald problem.*

Ruthlessly ambitious, Sarah Anderson is rarely caught unprepared; when she learns of Grunwald's demand, she immediately activates the Myrmidon Project. Suddenly, in a series of tragic accidents, Grunwald's wife, children and closest friends are killed. Grief-stricken, the anchorman drops out of sight for a few weeks. But then, although still refusing visitors and surrounded by an impenetrable wall of network security, he resumes his nightly newscast from an undisclosed location outside New York. He looks rested, like the old Harvey—but, as the weeks go by, young ACN cameraman Jeff Campbell, who had worked with Grunwald in Vietnam, senses something subtly different about him. Frustrated by his inability to see Grunwald and unconvinced by Sarah Anderson's reassurances that Grunwald is under the psychiatric care of Dr. Jerome Lillienthal and simply wants his privacy, Campbell, with the help of professional killer Wade Nolan and reporter Tracy Phillips, sets out to find his old friend.

As this excerpt from The Myrmidon Project *begins, Campbell, with his camera in hand, and Nolan have at last broken through network security and entered the building where they suspect Grunwald is being held. They are about to discover the horrifying truth about the Myrmidon Project:*

The man lying on the bed in the darkened room had only just begun to feel more human when he heard the sharp knocks at the door. The hypodermic syringe still lay on his bedside table, and the drug itself had not yet been fully assimilated into his system. Without moving, he called out, "Go away! It's not yet time!"

"Clarkson, sir, security. Please—please let me in."

"Not now. Go away." Still sweating but feeling more in control of himself, the man sank back on the sheets. "Come back in 20—" But before he could finish the sentence, the door burst open. "What—" The man struggled to sit up.

"That Grunwald?" Nolan asked.

"No," Jeff said.

The man on the bed stared at them and

shakily swung his legs to the floor.

"You're Lillienthal, aren't you?" Jeff asked. "Jerome Lillienthal?"

The man laughed, but there was little mirth in the sound. "Oh, yes," he gasped. "Oh, yes, of course. Who else would I be?"

"And Harvey? Where's Harvey? He's here, isn't he?"

"Oh, yes, yes indeed," Lillienthal said. "Yes, certainly, he's here."

Nolan picked up the syringe and sniffed. "Morphine," he announced. "That do the trick for you, old buddy?"

The little party trailing Lillienthal proceeded through empty, whitewashed, clinical-looking corridors, then ascended to the third floor where he unlocked a soundproof door and admitted them into a large room dominated by a huge computer bank that filled three of the walls from floor to ceiling. At regularly spaced intervals, some three feet apart, a dozen TV screens stared blankly into a void. "This is the lab," the scientist announced in a firmer, more authoritative voice, as if drawing strength from the presence of the technological marvel itself. "And that's Myrmidon. Would you like to see how it works?"

Swiftly, confidently, he began to punch buttons and adjust dials. The computer bank began to hum and the monitor screens came to life with an interesting variety of images. One sequence showed President Franklin D. Roosevelt competing in the pole vault at the 1936 Berlin Olympic Games. A second displayed Hitler, with hunted, defeated, fearful eyes, shuffling along in a long line of inmates at Auschwitz. All the scenes were in full color, with sound, and as startlingly realistic as life itself.

"What the hell—" Jeff exclaimed.

Lillienthal smiled. "Myrmidon has its lighter side. Watch. This is what we call our multiplex system."

Several of the more popular current television series now appeared on the screens. As they watched, Lillienthal began to maneuver the dials and switches so that the actors and actresses began to change color and racial characteristics before their eyes. "By this method, you see, our viewers' prejudices can be easily catered to," Lillienthal explained. "Each program can be coordinated to an ethnic-selector switch on the home television set, enabling viewers to change the race of the person or persons on-screen."

Then Lillienthal shrugged and turned the sound down, leaving the images to succeed each other on the screens in silence. Idly, almost absent-mindedly, Lillienthal traced the needle marks on his arms. "These network people will stop at nothing. They . . . reduced me to this." He held out his arms again. "I'm a prisoner here, too, you see."

"Like old Harvey," Nolan said.

The scientist stared at him. "Yes, I suppose you could say that," he observed. "Almost like Harvey, in a way."

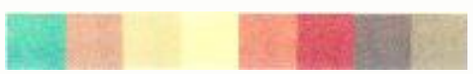
Tracy's telephone rang just before four o'clock.

"Tracy, it's me, Jeff. Listen, this is very important. I haven't time to explain very much, but do exactly what I tell you."

"Jeff, where are you?"

"In Princeton, at the lab."

Lillienthal traced the needle marks on his arms. "These network people will stop at nothing. They . . . reduced me to this."



"And Harvey?"

"I can't tell you over the phone. Sarah Anderson is supposed to be at the chairman's tonight for dinner, a small party to celebrate his 60th year in broadcasting. They'll be watching the evening news. The timing here is terribly important. You understand? Wade is on his way back to the city. He's going straight to the network. Here's what I want you to do. At exactly five o'clock, call Detective Steinman. . . ."

Sarah had never looked better—more radiant, more beautiful—in her life. She was wearing a short, off-the-shoulder, ivory silk Halston dress slit up the side to display her fine, strong legs, and all day she had looked forward to this evening. Sarah felt confident that by nightfall she'd be calling herself the president of the American Communications Network, just one short rung below the chairman himself. And when he stepped down, as someday soon now he would have to, it would all be hers, the culmination of her entire career.

She looked around the room and found herself gazing at Clark Hadley, head of ACN's sports division, who would be the first to go under her regime and who knew it. With that radiant smile she'd been reserving especially for him, she raised her champagne glass and silently toasted him. He smiled back, but it was the smile of a condemned man saluting his executioner.

"Ladies and gentlemen," the chairman suddenly called out, then waited for them to stop talking so he could make his first announcement. "Tonight," he continued, "tonight is a very special occasion. After the evening news, I will have something very important to say about myself, those of you in this room and the future of this network. Now, I'd like you all to get settled and to remain quiet during the broadcast. It's the evening news, of course, with our top anchorman Harvey Grunwald, the biggest star in television news today. Sarah, would you sit near me, please."

In the chairman's living room, nothing could be heard now but the occasional clink of ice cubes in a glass or the rustling of fabric as the guests settled themselves to watch the 7 P.M. broadcast in comfort. *This,* Sarah thought, *this is the night I've waited for all my life. . . .*

The familiar wide shot of Harvey Grunwald's set appeared on the screen with the words "The Grunwald Report" superimposed. A recorded announcer's voice intoned, "From ACN News, this is *The Grunwald Report*. Here now is Harvey Grunwald."

A tight close-up now of Harvey. He looked wonderful: sleek, avuncular, reassuringly wise, authoritative, the quintessence of the dedicated commentator. For a long moment he stared straight ahead, saying nothing, his dazzling blue eyes locked onto those millions of viewers across the nation. When at last he spoke, he did so with the utmost care.

"Good evening," he said. "The top story in the news tonight: I've been murdered."

A collective gasp burst from the gathering in the chairman's living room. Sarah felt paralyzed, unable to move, barely able even to breathe. Like the rest of the viewers across the nation, she was

riveted to the television screen. She glanced helplessly at the chairman, who sat braced against the back of his seat, his mouth agape. All of the oxygen seemed to have been drained from the room. If she could just get outside and breathe, she thought, maybe her mind would clear and this dreadful hallucination would vanish. She lurched out of her seat and ran from the room.

Harvey Grunwald continued to address the nation. "I, my family, hundreds of other innocent people and, in a sense, all of you watching right now are the victims of a monstrous plot. . . ."

Dissolve. A rigid body lying on its back on the floor. Harvey's voice: "This is my corpse." The camera zoomed in for a close-up of its face. Behind a thin layer of frost could be recognized the familiar features of Harvey Grunwald. "Until two hours ago it was floating in a vat of liquid nitrogen in the basement of the building from which this program originates. It was being preserved so that my murderers could produce an actual corpse when it came time one day soon for me to be replaced on this news broadcast. The world would be told that I had been killed or died by accident or disease, after which my anchor chair would be inherited by my carefully programmed successor, the first of the images to be created by a process known to its founders as Cerberus."

Another dissolve. The image of the living, talking Harvey reappeared on the screen. "The *person* known as Harvey Grunwald is dead. The image of Harvey Grunwald that you've been watching ever since I returned to the news last summer is just that—an image. I don't exist, really, except in the mind of a very sophisticated computer called Myrmidon. It is located in a secret ACN laboratory a few miles from Princeton, New Jersey."

A long shot of the old mansion, with its tower, its sheltering trees, its protective fence, followed by a succession of shots of the computer facilities being explained by the image and the voice of the anchorman. "In a few moments, I will reveal the identities of the actual people who created this facility," the image continued. "First, let me introduce the man who created *me*, Professor Jerome Lillienthal."

Lillienthal appeared on the screen. He was dressed in a dark business suit but seemed a little nervous. "Unlike the image of Harvey Grunwald, I am an actual person," he explained. "Creating Harvey—ah, creating the *image* of Harvey that you've been watching on the screen was quite a—uh—quite a challenge. And so is—ah—explaining it. But I'll try."

The chairman groaned and struggled to rise to his feet, but was ignored. Everyone in the room was mesmerized, staring at the screen. The chairman's breathing became raspy, labored. No one moved.

"You see," Lillienthal continued, "when a television camera takes a picture of someone—my picture, for instance—it converts my image into a series of electrical impulses. At first, years ago, the only way to store these impulses so that the same picture could be used again was on videotape. But in the mid-1970s we developed a process of so-called *digitalizing* both picture and sound." Lillienthal became increasingly assured as he warmed to his subject. His long, elegant hands punctuated his lecture as he spoke. "That is, we discovered we could break down video and audio signals into a series of numbers and that the numbers could be stored in computers. Not just *stored* in computers, but *altered* by them. We discovered that we could change television pictures, improve them, all with computer technology.

"What you are looking at is the future . . . the elimination from television of real flesh-and-blood human beings, with their costly and bothersome needs and demands."

"Once we had digitalized Harvey's image and analyzed him in all his moods, expressions and what not, it became relatively simple to *create* a moving, breathing, speaking Harvey without having to have his actual physical presence in front of a camera. And we could *improve* him," Lillienthal added proudly.

Dissolve to the image of Harvey again. "So that explains the new Harvey Grunwald you've been seeing, improved to fit the shifting public taste as determined by the network's exhaustive analysis and testing. That was the original idea when this project was first dreamed up and then put into operation by ACN News president Sarah Anderson, with the approval of her employer, chairman of the board Lawrence Hoenig. The code name for this scheme is the Myrmidon Project. At first, according to Professor Lillienthal, Sarah Anderson saw the new computer technology as a way of making the real Harvey Grunwald more salable, of boosting the ratings and the corporate profits by tinkering with Harvey's image while still having to put up with Harvey's cantankerousness, his flaws and occasionally outrageous demands."

"My God," Clark Hadley said. "I can't believe this!"

Nobody answered him. Nobody even noticed Detective Steinman, now standing quietly at the back of the room. The chairman sat immobile, his head slumped forward on his chest.

"But gradually her own ambitions and the corporate lust for ever fatter profits drove Sarah Anderson and Lawrence Hoenig and their agents to murder," the image of Harvey went on. "They are responsible for the boating 'accident' that killed my wife and our closest friends. They are responsible for the plane crash that killed my children along with hundreds of other innocent travelers, all to provide a pretext for my reclusiveness, my withdrawal from the world and society, all so I could be murdered secretly, without loved ones or close friends to look for me or raise awkward questions.

"By not having to pay my very considerable salary, ACN's profits rose sharply." Harvey's image gestured at the news set around him. "This room, you see, doesn't exist, either. It is being generated by the computer. The technique is useful, because it eliminates an entire crew—cameramen, floor directors, lighting people, stagehands, all unnecessary. More savings and so more profits for the network.

"What you are looking at is the future as seen by the Sarah Andersons and Lawrence Hoenigs of this world. What they dreamed of is the elimination from television of real flesh-and-blood human beings, with their costly and bothersome needs and demands. They envisioned a

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And the Winners Are... Gertie the Dinosaur, Mickey Mouse and Betty Boop (Among Others)

A film historian cites those he would include in a Hall of Fame for animated cartoons

By LEONARD MALTIN

Quick: Name a movie star who is just as popular today as he was 40 years ago.

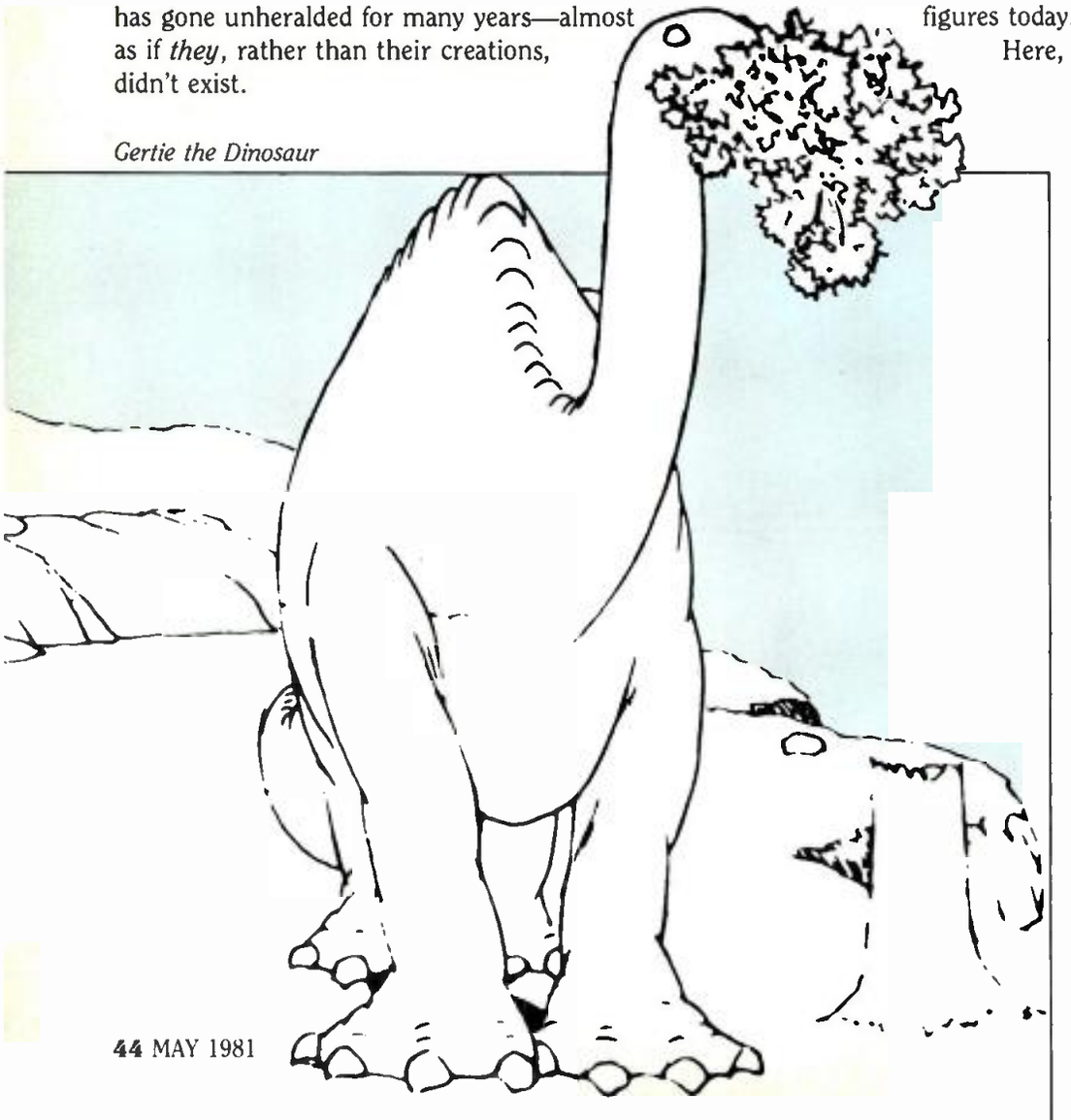
Give up? The star we had in mind was Bugs Bunny—but the answer could as easily be Mickey Mouse, Woody Woodpecker or the comedy team of Tom and Jerry. Unlike their live-action counterparts, these animated stars cannot grow old and die; they are forever young, thanks to film, and forever popular, thanks to television reruns.

This persuasive illusion, that pen-and-ink characters somehow have a life of their own, is the supreme triumph of those magicians known as animators. It seems these artists mastered their skills a bit too well, actually, because their artistry has gone unheralded for many years—almost as if *they*, rather than their creations, didn't exist.

Happily, this oversight is being rectified as film lovers and cartoon buffs around the world rediscover the genius of Max and Dave Fleischer, the wild Warner Bros. crew and, of course, Walt Disney, to name just a few. With this discovery comes the full realization of just how much work—and money—went into the production of the vintage cartoons we know and love. Truly a collaborative medium, animation drew on the talent of producers, directors, animators, writers, inkers, painters, musicians, voice performers, film editors and countless technicians to make each seven-minute short, at a cost of anywhere from $25,000 to $50,000, during the 1940s. The same short, done the same way, would cost well into six figures today.

Here, then, a celebration of the American cartoon in capsule-history form.

Gertie the Dinosaur



AN IMP IS BORN

When Winsor McCay, the dean of American newspaper cartoonists, presented his first animated cartoons in 1909, "The theater patrons suspected some trick with wires," he later recalled. "Not until I drew *Gertie the Dinosaur* did the audience understand that I was making the drawings move." *Gertie* was revealed to audiences as part of a vaudeville act—in truth, a multimedia presentation—in which McCay stood at the side of a stage and beckoned his "trained animal" onto a giant-sized movie screen. From behind a cluster of rocks, an impish face poked out, and after a hesitation Gertie lumbered on-screen, obeying McCay's instruction to "make a pretty bow." Billed as "the greatest animal act in the world," McCay's feat was more important than that, of course. He turned on a generation of newspaper cartoonists to the challenge of animation, and created a movie milestone that, 72 years later, retains all its charm and humor.

Mickey Mouse © Walt Disney Productions

NOTHING WAS SACRED

Cartoon-makers Max Fleischer and his brother Dave were a perfect match. Max loved technical innovations; some of his patented devices, like the rotoscope used to trace live-action figures, are still in use today. Dave had an irrepressible sense of the absurd. Who else, in bringing to life the comic-strip hero Popeye, would have clothed the Sailor Man in a corset in his very first film? Nothing was sacred in Fleischer cartoons—not sex (see Betty Boop, right), not heroism, not even the cartoon medium itself, as evidenced by the pioneering *Out of the Inkwell* series, in which Koko the Clown came to life to wreak havoc on his master Max in a dazzling combination of live action and animation.

MICKEY, DOPEY, ET AL.

Walt Disney was never satisfied unless he was moving ahead, from the time of his first cartoons in Kansas City to his last achievements at Walt Disney World. When Mickey Mouse became an overnight, international success and theater owners wanted nothing other than more Mickey Mouse cartoons, Walt introduced his ingenious *Silly Symphonies*. When things were humming on these two series, he stuck his neck out to try a new process called Technicolor that no one else believed in. And when Hollywood said that no one would pay to see a feature-length animated film, he made *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*. Then, when they begged for another *Snow White*, Walt gave them *Fantasia*, one of the greatest flops of his career: a film that only turned a profit as a "head film" in its 1970s reissue. Young people were convinced that Disney and his artists must have been stoned to make *Fantasia*, to which animator Art Babbitt responded, "Sure, we were on drugs—Ex-Lax and Pepto-Bismol!" Walt drove his artists as he drove himself: to always move ahead in a medium bound only by imagination. The animation world has not seen his like since.

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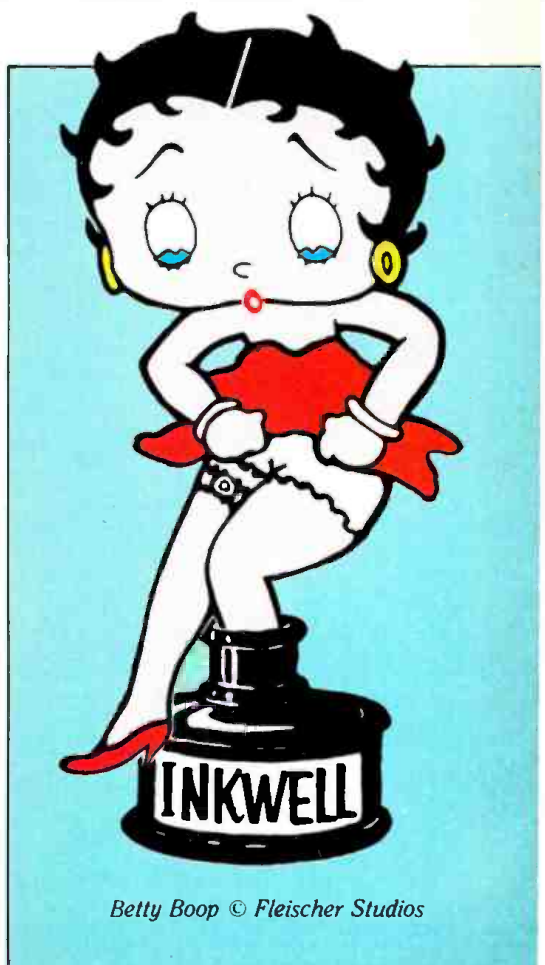
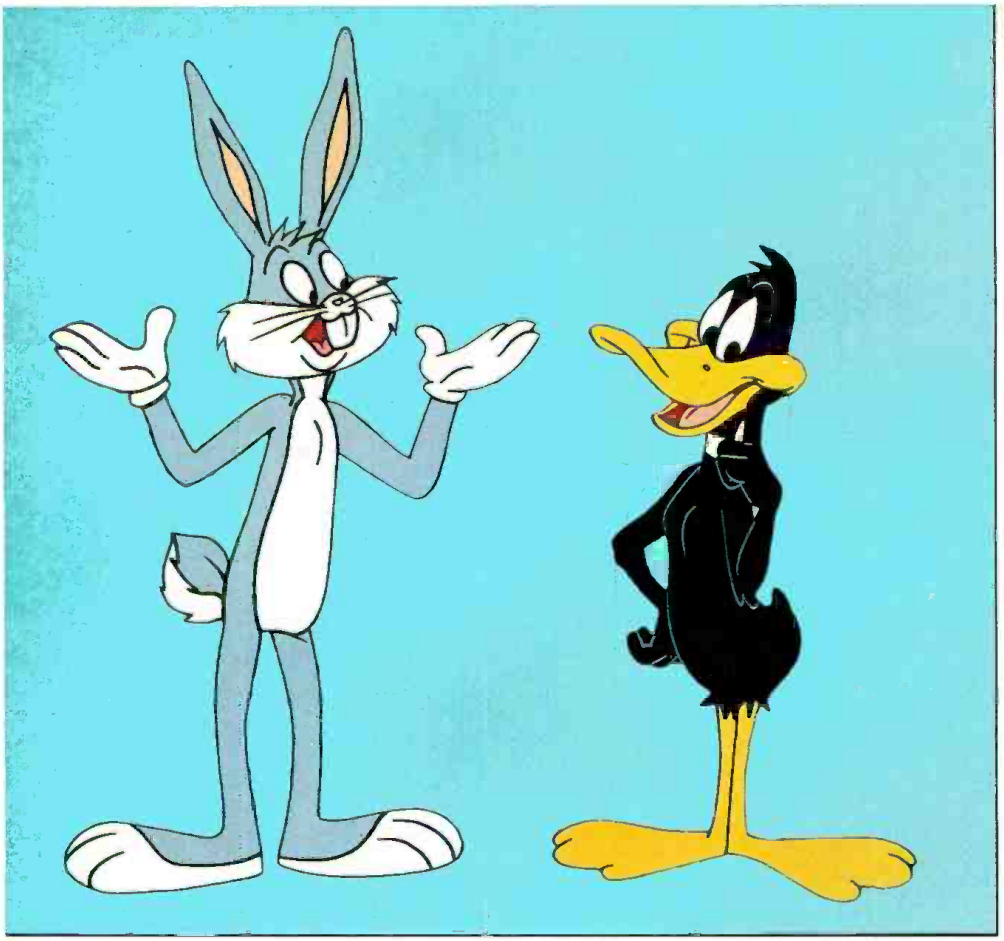


Betty Boop © Fleischer Studios



Bugs Bunny, Daffy Duck © Warner Bros. Inc.

LOONEY TUNES' WACKY WORLD

Alert parents have noticed that the durable Warner Bros. cartoons don't seem to be aimed at kids. Warner cartoon director/producer Chuck Jones explains that, indeed, "These films were not made for children. They were not made for adults. They were made for *me*." That sense of fun and spirit and competitiveness is what makes the Warner cartoons so great. The free-wheeling, try-anything-once *Looney Tunes* team perfected the art of cartoon comedy by constantly trying to top one another with wacky new ideas. Men like Jones, Robert McKimson, Tex Avery, Bob Clampett, Friz Freleng and Frank Tashlin created a universe populated by the likes of Porky Pig, Daffy Duck, and the indefatigable Bugs Bunny. These characters flouted cartoon convention by talking to the audience, wisecracking about their off-screen boss, Jack L. Warner ("J.L. will hear of this!"), and defying all laws of gravity, space and time—and audiences loved them for it. Their brash sense of humor has kept them fresh and funny today.

Mister Magoo © Columbia Pictures

ENTER NO-FRILLS CARTOONS

The last hurrah for the theatrical cartoon short came from a company of forward-thinking artists (mostly Disney graduates) called UPA. Discarding the literalism of the past, they forged a new approach to cartoon entertainment with such charming and highly stylized shorts as *Gerald McBoing Boing* and the original *Mister Magoo* series. As the 1950s wore on, however, the theatrical short was killed off by rising costs, falling movie-theater attendance and other economic woes.

No one thought it would be feasible to make cartoons especially for TV until Bill Hanna and Joe Barbera (creators of MGM's wonderful *Tom and Jerry* series) found a way: cut all the "frills" and reduce animation to its barest essentials. Soon they were producing several hours of animation a week, compared with less than one hour a *year* at MGM. Animators and cartoon buffs howled, but kids didn't seem to mind, especially since the first shows like *Huckleberry Hound* and *Yogi Bear* were so appealing, and the TV industry became the major customer for the new animation. Today the

term "Saturday-morning cartoon" conjures up a negative image of talky shows with one-dimensional characters and stilted movement, and even kids seem to prefer the older cartoons, such as *Bugs Bunny*, that many stations still broadcast. But creative people have managed to keep their wits sharpened on commercials and prime-time TV specials, where budgets and schedules are fatter—and Jay Ward and Bill Scott proved, with their classic *Bullwinkle Show*, that "reduced" animation was tolerable if the comedy writing was up to snuff.

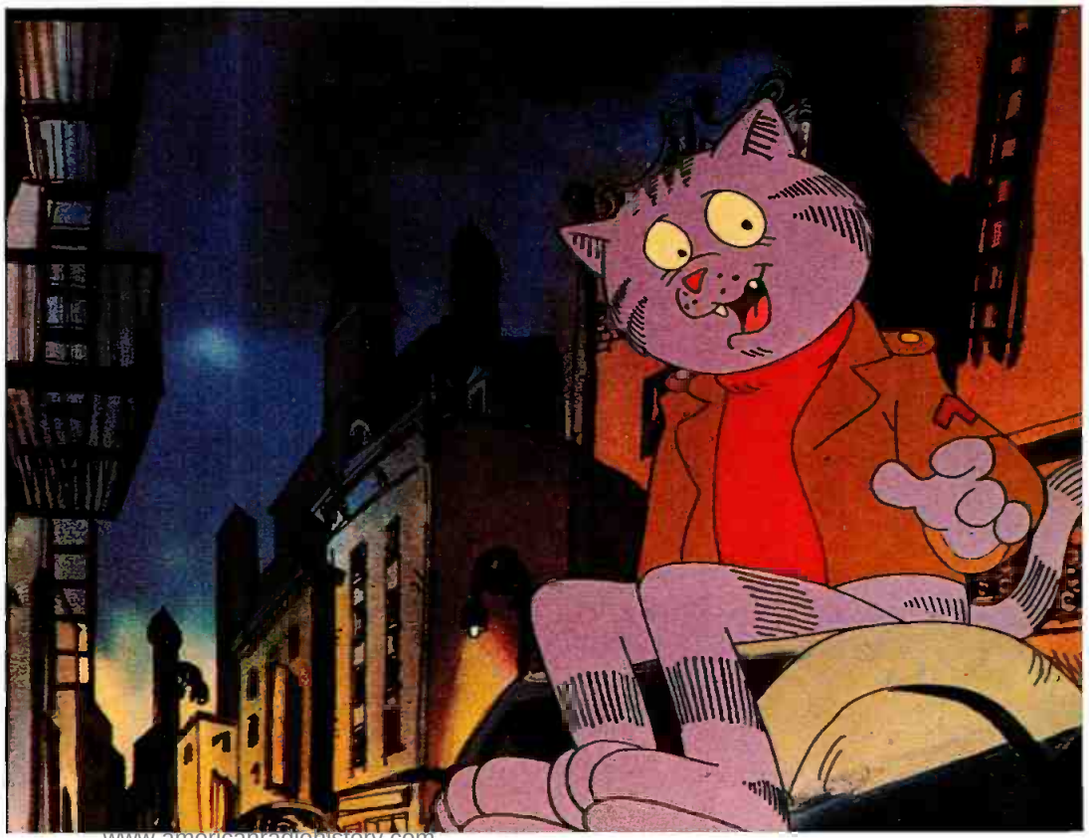
AN ANIMATION RENAISSANCE

The first ray of hope for commercial animation broke through in the late 1960s, as the first "television generation" came of age and expressed a continuing interest in the cartoons they'd enjoyed since infancy. Some canny producers realized that this might mean a new acceptance of animation in theaters; since the short subject was no longer profitable, feature films seemed the likely option. *Yellow Submarine* was the first to prove that an animated film could have appeal for all ages; a reissue of Disney's *Fantasia* attracted the college-age crowd for the first time; and then Ralph Bakshi burst on the scene with his X-rated adaptation of R. Crumb's *Fritz the Cat*, and its striking follow-up, *Heavy Traffic*. While most audiences were attracted by the adults-only rating, they got more than mere titillation: They saw the power and potential of animated film to shock, to provoke, to stimulate. They saw how one artist's vision could be expressed through this versatile medium. And they learned, if they didn't know already, that the animated cartoon was not simply "kid stuff." Bakshi opened the door for a number of other filmmakers, ushering in an animation renaissance that holds great promise for the future. The "Golden Age" of Hollywood cartoons may be gone, but there's real hope for a new golden age to come. ■

Leonard Maltin *is a film historian and author of 10 books, including* The Paperback Reference Guide: TV Movies. *His latest book is* Of Mice and Magic: A History of American Animated Cartoons.

Yogi Bear © Hanna-Barbera Productions Inc.

Fritz the Cat © Steve Krantz Productions



What You Should Know About TV Antennas

By DAVID LACHENBRUCH

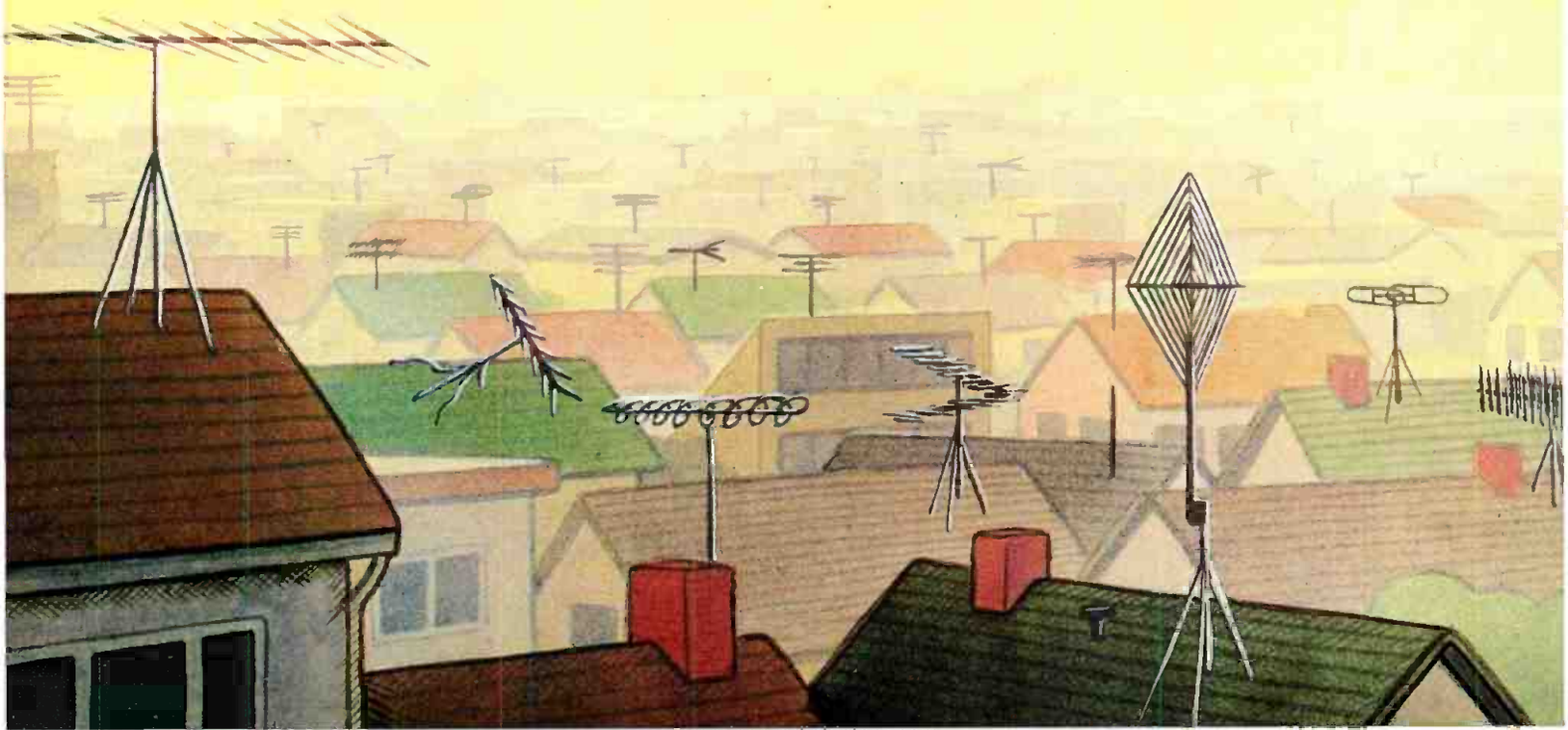
If you have cable TV, please turn the page. But if you're among the 77 percent of the population that scoops its television programs out of the air—as God and Marconi and General Sarnoff intended us to do—this is for you. It's all about that most cursed part of the home television system: that appendage on the rooftop that Better Homes and Gardens airbrushes out of its model-home photos, that contraption that damn near pokes your eye out in the middle of the night when you get up for a drink of water, that thing that blows over in windstorms, that resting perch for pintail widgeons and other feathered nuisances, that eyesore, that lightning magnet, that pair of sticks and loops that instantly transforms an 18th-century colonial living room into a high-tech aluminum jungle. Yes, folks, it's the (you should pardon the expression) antenna.

We have a hate relationship with antennas. We neglect them. We don't *think* about our antennas, unless they happen to fall over. Television-set manufacturers and dealers don't do anything to help, either. When did you last see a TV-set ad that even implied that you couldn't just bring a set home, plug it in and live happily ever after? The wonderful world of advertising would have us believe that every set comes equipped with a beautiful, sharp picture engraved on the screen, with nary a hint of ghost, smear or snow. The photos of happy, picnicking families enjoying their portable sets alfresco don't even hint that there's a Super Log Periodic installed in the spreading chestnut tree above.

But the fact is, no TV set can produce a picture; it can only *reproduce* one from the material at hand—and the basic material is the signal that is fed into it from the antenna terminals on the back. Many a TV set gets the blame for problems that really rest with the antenna, most commonly ghosts and snow. Among other troubles that can be caused by a poor antenna installation, or remedied by a good one, are interference, loss of color and fading pictures.

Fortunately, you don't have to have the slightest idea how an antenna works to get a good installation. But perhaps it's a good idea to know what it does. If you think of an antenna as a giant fishing rod that fishes radio waves out of the air, you won't be far from wrong—in fact, you'll be very *close* to wrong.

An antenna consists of several rods or elements (anywhere from one to 40 or so), which are cut to size corresponding to the wavelengths of the television channels. There actually are three separate television bands: Channels 2 through 6, which require very long rods; Channels 7 through 13, with somewhat shorter ones; and the UHF Channels 14 through 83, which use little mini-elements. The higher the frequency (or channel number), the shorter the antenna element required. These rods induce very slight currents from the charged electrons in the atmosphere and direct them to the lead-in wire, which carries them to the TV set where they are amplified and



reconstituted into a picture. There. That's enough antenna theory.

About the simplest form of TV antenna is the rabbit-ear, generally a telescoping bipole (two ears) or monopole (one). The ears retract not only to get them out of sight when not needed, but to change the resonant frequency for best reception of different channels. Theoretically, you should get a better picture on the lower VHF channels (2 through 6) with the poles fully extended, and on Channels 7 through 13 with them almost fully telescoped. (All television sets equipped with built-in rabbit ears also have UHF antennas, generally a loop or bow-tie-shaped wire gizmo. This should be connected to the UHF antenna-terminal screws on the back of the TV set, with the rabbit ears themselves connected to the VHF terminals.)

Rabbit ears and other set-top antennas are the least efficient members of the species. They usually will work satisfactorily in areas with strong TV signals (within 15 or 20 miles of relatively powerful stations) where there aren't specific reception problems, such as high hills, mountains or tall buildings. But they can't be used effectively in weak-signal areas because they have no "gain"—that's the property of multi-element antennas that actually increases the strength of the signal before it gets any amplification in the set. Set-top units also pose difficulties in mountainous areas and cavernous cities because they aren't very "directional," which means it's often difficult or impossible to eliminate ghosts. If you do get ghosts or snow with rabbit ears, that's a certain indication you need a more elaborate installation.

Obviously, when you buy a new TV set, you want the best possible picture. So what should you do about an antenna? If you've already got an outdoor antenna, try doing nothing at all except connecting it to the new set. Carefully adjust the fine tuning and inspect the picture on each channel, looking particularly for snow or haze. Check for ghosts and objectionable interference on each channel. If a near-perfect, clear, sharp picture snaps in every time, you're home free and you can forget about antennas for a while. If you have problems, you're probably a candidate for a new installation or, at the very least, replacement of the lead-in wire from the antenna to the set. (Of course, if a visual check shows the antenna is broken, or lying down, you obviously should replace it.)

If you've moved to a new area, bought your first color set, or are graduating from rabbit ears, there are a couple of easy ways to get an idea of just what you'll need in an antenna. In an area of private homes, just walk around with your head up. Look at rooftops. See what the neighbors are using. If most of them have small, simple antennas, that's probably what you can get away with. If you see tall masts, complicated antennas and rotators, you can bet you're in for a pretty healthy antenna bill. Your installer can tell you all this, of course, but knowing something about what's being

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Polaroid's SX-70 Autc

With New Time-Zero Supercolor Film.

Each of the extraordinary photographs on this page is a testament to the sophistication and flexibility of one of the world's finest cameras. The Polaroid SX-70 AutoFocus.

1 This photograph of a Chinese elder owes its incredibly clear, sharp focus to our exclusive, sonar AutoFocus system. Sound waves measure the distance to your subject and a computer rotates the lens into precise focus. Automatically. So all you have to focus on is the moment.

2 This shot of a splendid hand-cut paper opera mask attests to the stunning color resolution of Polaroid's new Time-Zero Supercolor film. And as if accuracy and brilliance of color were not enough, you get the world's fastest developing color pictures.

3 The moment you lift the SX-70 AutoFocus to your eye, you become part of a unique sharing experience —as this picture of Hing Ho happily illustrates. Both you and your subject can begin to react to the emerging image in just ten seconds. And as the picture emerges, so do the smiles.

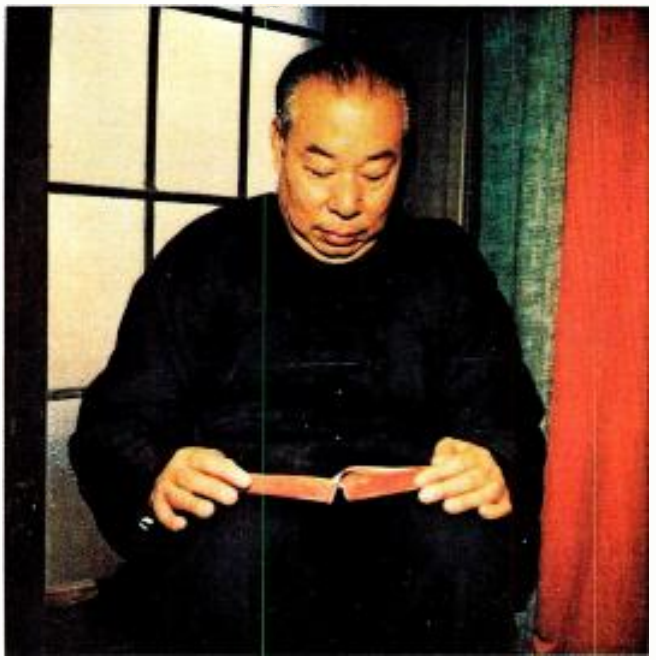
4 The SX-70 AutoFocus is the only instant camera that is a single lens reflex. Which means that the framing you see through the lens is the picture you get. Notice the lovely composition of this landscape of the Li River Valley.

5 This graphic close-up would have been impossible with any other camera in the world—without changing lenses. But the SX-70 AutoFocus lets you move in as close as 10.4 inches. Giving you a wide range of picture flexibility. Without expensive extra lenses.

6 You can almost feel the intricate detail of the Nine Dragon Screen, a centuries-old wall mosaic. While other instant cameras have plastic lenses, the SX-70 AutoFocus has a four-element glass lens. So you get sharp, crisp pictures you can be proud of.

Perhaps now you can see why, no matter where your imagination takes you, no other camera in the world lets you leave with remarkable photographs like these, right in your hand. The Polaroid SX-70 AutoFocus.

No other instant camera comes close.



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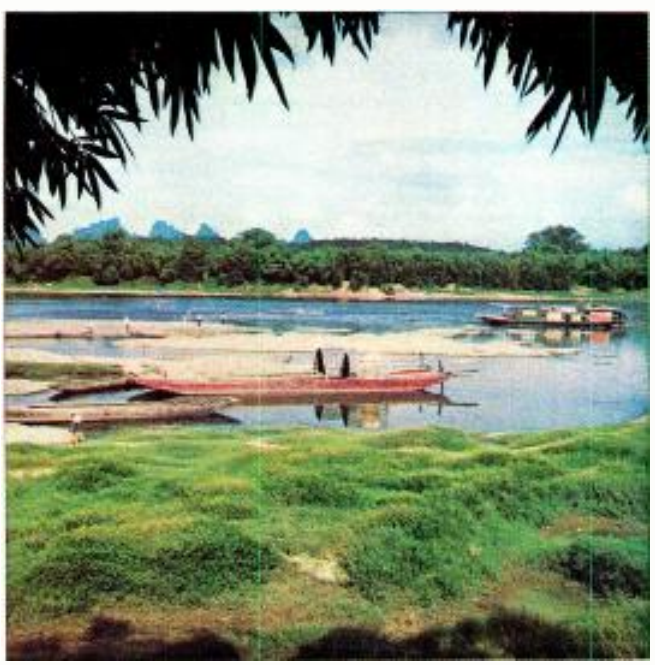

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Focus goes to China.

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Reproduced from original unretouched Time-Zero photographs.

EDITH BUNKER'S LEGACY

Finally, She Would Not Be Stifled

How social change helped us realize that Archie's dingbat had all along been a remarkable human being

By JANE O'REILLY

Archie Bunker has just completed his first season without Edith on Archie Bunker's Place. *Edith's off-camera death was the subject of this season's first episode; the cause was unspecified. But one thing is certain: Edith did not die a dingbat. In her nine years of service, first with* All in the Family, *then in occasional appearances on the revamped version,* Archie Bunker's Place, *she changed; she grew. How have the show—and Archie—fared without her? The show's popularity was not affected by Edith's demise;* Archie Bunker's Place *is still in the top 20. Archie? Well, Archie is still Archie—a little mellower, a trifle lost, perhaps. He has a housekeeper (ironically, she is black) to put the food on the table and keep the refrigerator stocked with beer. But, without Edith, there is no one to serve as counterpoint to the legions of Liberated Lady Bosses and Working Mothers who now populate TV sitcoms; to act as a reminder that liberation does not come easily and that not all women are liberated. To give the dingbat her due, PANORAMA asked Jane O'Reilly, author of the book* The Girl I Left Behind, *to reflect on Edith's emancipation.*

Ten seasons ago, in January 1971, Edith Bunker first scuttled across our television screens pursued by the bark of her ever-irascible husband Archie. He chose, in that first episode of *All in the Family*, to shout all the phrases that defined his notion of marital conversation: "You're a pip, a real pip." (Nastily.) "Stifle!" (Loudly.) "Case closed." (Firmly.) And, "You silly dingbat." (Constantly.)

Edith, more defensively remote than she would become later, without the nervous tremor of the head, kept making an effort to produce family peace by suggesting: "I think we should eat." Finally, she unwrapped the anniversary present, ostensibly from Archie, that her daughter Gloria had chosen for her. Delighted, Edith shook out the lace handkerchiefs, held them up, and immediately worried: "How do I look? Some people don't look natural with fancy things."

Dear Edith. She was a living example of the proposition that clothes *can* make, or unmake, the woman. Week after week Jean Stapleton transformed her own handsome face and body into Edith Bunker, a woman whose clothes, from the underwear on out, never fit; whose hair, eyebrows, pocketbook and nervous little gesture of the hand across the mouth proclaimed her of a particular class—struggling. It would have been so much fun to have seen her wrapped up in an enormous mink coat. Instead, she is memorialized by the $500,000 Edith Bunker Memorial Fund, donated to the National Organization for Women Legal Defense and Education Fund by *All in the Family*'s creator, Norman Lear, on behalf of his company, Tandem Productions.

Edith would have liked to see the money go for such a good cause. That's the way she was: never thinking of herself, always looking on the bright side. She would not have expected a mink. In fact, she hardly expected anything. As she once said to Gloria: "I married him for better or worse. I'm just lucky, the worse got a little better."

She chose to hear "dingbat" as a term of endearment. "When we were courting, Archie was too shy to call me sweetheart," she told Gloria, "and so he called me dingbat. And now, no matter how mad he is, I always hear a little bit of sweetheart whenever he says dingbat." Jean Stapleton once said: "I got my first real clue to Edith from Norman Lear. 'Edith is able not to listen to Archie,' he said. 'She puts her head in the sand, mentally blocking out his worst traits. She's been doing it for years. How else would she survive?' Right away I knew who that woman was."

Though the show was slow to catch on, once it did it seemed that almost anyone with access to print had some kind of opinion on Archie Bunker. His exaggerated bigotry and ignorance provided ample opportunity for comment on the state of our civilization. Everyone, of every possible minority group, even WASPs, found reason to take offense—though they all ended up admitting that the show was brilliantly done.

Most "isms"—racism, anti-Semitism—were, in 1971, finally considered bad social behavior (which is why it was possible to joke about them). But sexism was hardly ever recognized, even in its most flagrant form: Archie Bunker. John Leonard, writing superb TV criticism for the old Life magazine, was the rare critic who found the show insulting to women. Everyone else attacked Archie as a bigot, and then joined him in ridiculing Edith as a . . . dingbat. Being bigoted against your wife was apparently OK.

It seems remarkable now, in 1981, that a man's treating his wife as though she were his property should have gone so unremarked. But it was, in fact, that situation that caused Edith Bunker's nervous little gestures, that gave her the confusing sensation of feeling she didn't belong—no matter how hard she tried. She was intellectually and emotionally bewildered by her life. And so, in 1971,

were a lot of other American women. We are still pretty bewildered, but at least now we have a better understanding of the problem. Ten years ago, Congress was still debating the wisdom of the Equal Rights Amendment before passing it out to the country for ratification. The Supreme Court had not yet declared the choice of abortion a woman's constitutional right. Dr. Spock had not yet discovered sexism in his own books. The New Jersey Little League teams were still closed to girls. Women were still routinely denied credit. In 1971, a feminist was still an anomaly. American women were busy apologizing for working, even as we streamed into the labor force and were grateful for the chance to take home about 40 percent less pay for the same work as men. We thought our situation was our own fault, and so did Edith.

She began her TV life as a direct descendant of Lucy—the dingbat's dingbat, a female cultural norm hard to believe today. But Edith changed, and we changed. Still, like most women today, she didn't change completely. The last time we saw Edith, in the final episode of last season's show, renamed *Archie Bunker's Place* when "the family" dispersed, she nearly killed herself cooking enough cabbage for Archie's bar to feed Queens. "Why didn't you tell me you was sick?" shouted Archie. "I didn't want to sperl your party," she said. And then Archie finally admitted: "If the whole damn world was to go to the dogs, as long as I had you by my side everything would be just OK. . . . I ain't nothin' without you." The last image we have of Edith Bunker, person in her own right, is of her leaning over, saying tenderly to Archie, "You're a pip, a real pip."

Poor Archie. He was right. He isn't complete without Edith, even though niece Stephanie (Danielle Brisebois), in her role of too-wise child (as opposed to Edith's role of too-childish woman), gives him a chance to be both worrier and worried-over. He is nicer now, which says something interesting and sad about how much men and women give up of themselves in traditional roles. His partner Murray seems too soft. He makes us realize how tough Edith was.

Edith's was a long, slow transformation. She was always honest, guileless and stubborn, and she usually won Archie over by the end of the show. But the end came after a half hour of such jokes as: "Shut up and get me a beer!" and, "Edith, if I didn't interrupt youse, you wouldn't know youse was finished." Such was the brilliance of the series that Carroll O'Connor and Jean Stapleton could turn those lines into jokes, and even Gloria's outraged objections—"Do you have to talk to Ma like that?"—seemed only cues to yet more outrageous jokes.

One night in 1973, Edith was shown planning a surprise anniversary trip to Atlantic City for a second honeymoon. She wanted to make reservations on the phone without Archie overhearing. He was furious, and stomped around the house shouting: "This is MY house, MY living room, MY telephone. You are MY wife." It was a minor moment, a small

To Archie's surprise, Edith had a full-scale tantrum, shouting, "It turns out all I did for 30 years was worth nothing!"

tantrum within the larger one provoked by his having to give up a basketball game. The only slightly poignant moment of the show came at the end, when Archie responded with affection and even excitement to the sight of Edith in her new nightgown.

Poignancy, an effect that slips somewhere between sentimentality and truth, crept in more certainly as the show went on, as Edith changed. In 1973 it had been mildly amusing, if irritating, to see Edith merely included as part of her husband's household inventory. By 1978, it was, somehow, deeply moving and enlightening to hear Edith list, for the benefit of a banker, her own possessions: her clothes, the dishes her mother gave her when she was married, the pots and pans she had gotten as presents from Archie, and the Water Pik Gloria gave her.

Back in 1971, that scene would not have had any point. Too few people would have expected Edith to have anything of her own, or would have realized how odd it was that she had so little. By 1978, we, and she, had changed enough to know that her tiny list was tragic. I remember crying as I laughed during that show, watching Edith go to the bank for a loan so that she could buy Archie a new television set. The man behind the desk assures her of the bank's warm feelings for women: "One of our chief tellers is a woman, and she makes the best damn coffee in town." He beams. Edith beams. She explains she has five accounts in his bank, with a total of $78 in three savings accounts. The banker frowns and asks what she owns. It is, obviously, not enough to secure a loan. He says it is too bad she doesn't work full time. She says she does—at home.

He: "I mean *real* work."

Edith: "But I shop, and cook, and clean. Have you ever tried it?"

He: "That's just housework."

Edith: "What's wrong with housework. Ain't that important?"

Insulted, Edith closes her accounts. And then, carefully, she asks Archie to lend her the money.

Archie: "A man can trust his wife up to 25 dollars. Then he needs to know what's goin' on."

Edith: "Do you think the work I do is worth one dollar a week? The cooking, the cleaning, the washing and shopping?"

Archie: "About."

Edith: "After 30 years, I figure you owe me 1560 dollars."

Archie: "I've gotta pay you for doing the work God gave you to do?"

Edith: "I guess you do."

Archie: "That's communist talk."

And to Archie's and the watching world s surprise, Edith then had a full-scale tantrum, jumping up and down and shouting, "It turns out all I did for 30 years was worth nothing!" Hearing it put that way, Archie was finally persuaded to pay her $260 a year. The beatific expression on Edith Bunker's poor, underpaid face as she planned the presents she would buy with HER money spoke for all the housewives of the '70s who began to see that their "unpaid household contributions" should count for something.

There was another segment, in 1975, that I think should be run continuously above the Bunker living-room chairs in the Smithsonian Institution, where they sit on display, symbols of the series'—and TV's—tremendous influence. The segment was, in its way, a perfect delineation of the decade's changing domestic attitudes. Archie

No matter how mad Archie got, Edith always heard a little bit of sweetheart whenever he said dingbat.

comes home to an empty house. He looks in the refrigerator. "No beer." (Slam.) "Fifteen minutes after 6 and she ain't home." He sits down in his chair, disgusted. Edith, moving at a racing scuttle, comes through the door, darts across the living room with a grocery cart, and has two TV dinners in the oven before she sees Archie.

She has been volunteering at a home for the aged, and Archie doesn't like it. "Your job is me," he says. Edith argues that her work gives her a sense of purpose, makes her feel useful. "Wait a minute," says Archie. "Being married to Archie Bunker is wasting your life?" After much complaining about the uselessness of volunteer work ("If it was worth something you would get something"), and invoking the way it used to be ("She is supposed to enjoy *here*, *this house* and *me*"), Archie orders Edith not to go back.

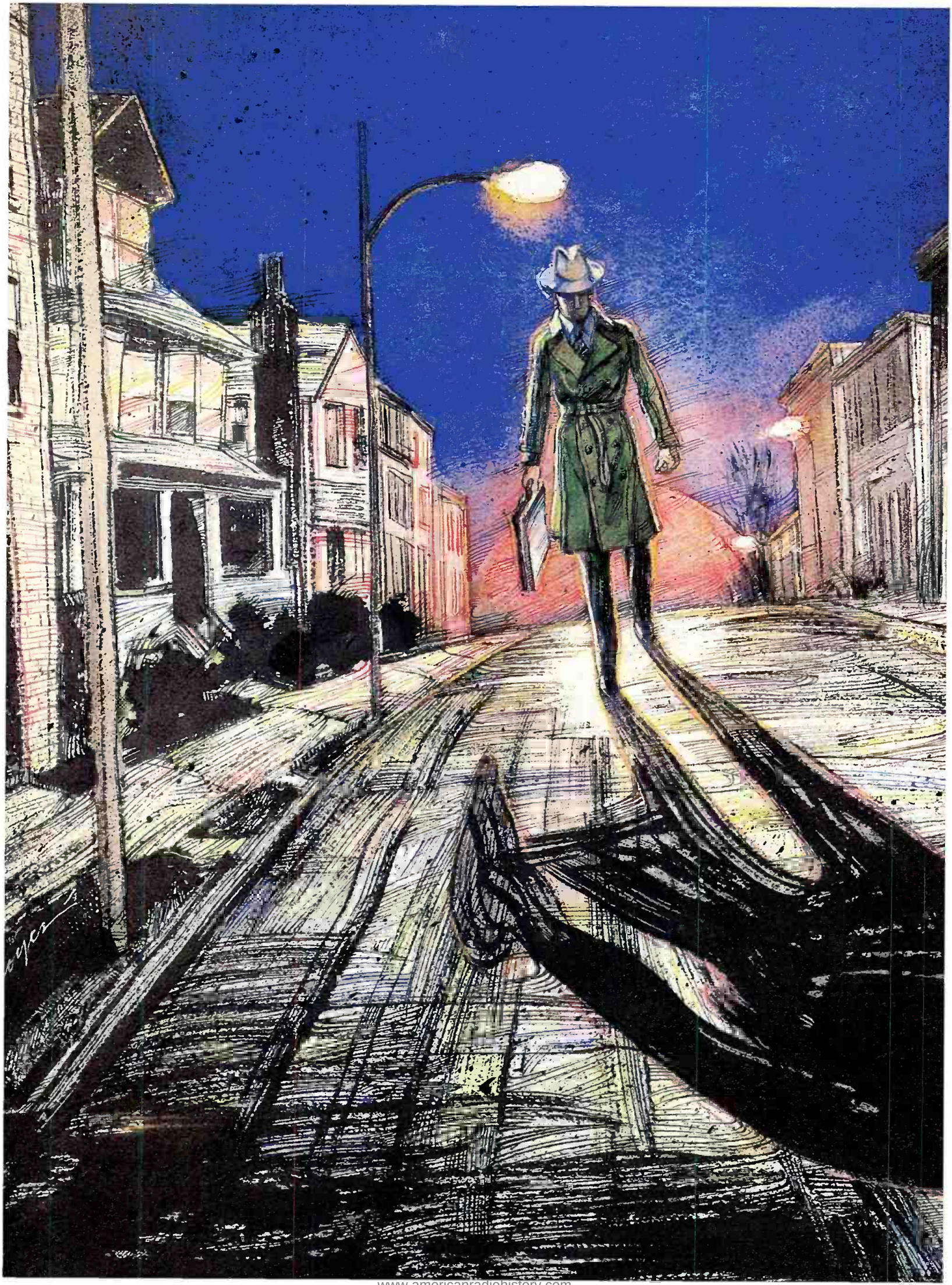
Edith: "I ain't taking no orders. I can be a Sunshine Lady if I want to. And I want to." And she leaves! And SLAMS THE DOOR!

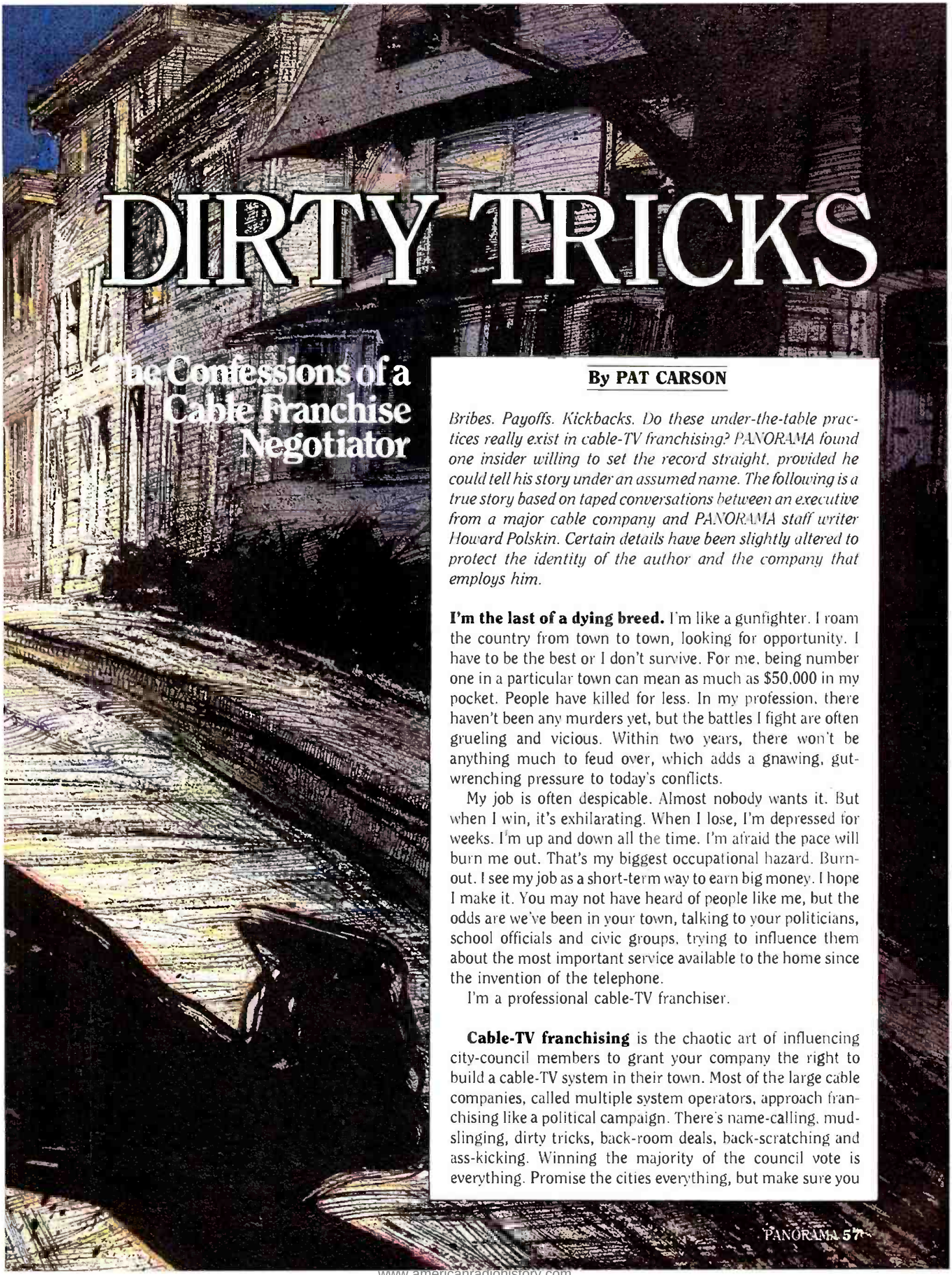
Today's schoolchildren should watch that scene, while their parents explain that once upon a time, only six years ago, there were many men in America who sincerely believed that being married to them was enough to fill up a woman's whole life (and some of those men were corporate lawyers and doctors and gamblers and burglars and professors; it wasn't a blue-collar idea alone). I hope they cheer when Edith slams that door, and realize they are watching a woman who has figured out what is wrong with her situation and is doing something about it.

Norman Lear said recently: "Like a lot of women, Edith's growth was directly a result of the women's movement. In her case subliminally, because she didn't read much and her husband couldn't help her. But from television, from mingling with people in the supermarket, everywhere she went, she had to—by osmosis almost—become a part of the women's movement."

It is true that Edith would never have slammed that door without the women's movement. But I don't think she, herself, changed. I think the actors changed, and the scriptwriters, and the directors. I think the network, and the audience and the critics changed, until finally they saw her as Edith Bunker, Person instead of Edith Bunker, Dingbat. But she was what she had always been: guileless, honest, stubborn, loving, compassionate, hopeful, generous. The change was, finally, that her value was recognized.

Edith Bunker. Everywoman. R.I.P. ■





DIRTY TRICKS

The Confessions of a Cable Franchise Negotiator

By PAT CARSON

Bribes. Payoffs. Kickbacks. Do these under-the-table practices really exist in cable-TV franchising? PANORAMA found one insider willing to set the record straight, provided he could tell his story under an assumed name. The following is a true story based on taped conversations between an executive from a major cable company and PANORAMA staff writer Howard Polskin. Certain details have been slightly altered to protect the identity of the author and the company that employs him.

I'm the last of a dying breed. I'm like a gunfighter. I roam the country from town to town, looking for opportunity. I have to be the best or I don't survive. For me, being number one in a particular town can mean as much as $50,000 in my pocket. People have killed for less. In my profession, there haven't been any murders yet, but the battles I fight are often grueling and vicious. Within two years, there won't be anything much to feud over, which adds a gnawing, gut-wrenching pressure to today's conflicts.

My job is often despicable. Almost nobody wants it. But when I win, it's exhilarating. When I lose, I'm depressed for weeks. I'm up and down all the time. I'm afraid the pace will burn me out. That's my biggest occupational hazard. Burnout. I see my job as a short-term way to earn big money. I hope I make it. You may not have heard of people like me, but the odds are we've been in your town, talking to your politicians, school officials and civic groups, trying to influence them about the most important service available to the home since the invention of the telephone.

I'm a professional cable-TV franchiser.

Cable-TV franchising is the chaotic art of influencing city-council members to grant your company the right to build a cable-TV system in their town. Most of the large cable companies, called multiple system operators, approach franchising like a political campaign. There's name-calling, mud-slinging, dirty tricks, back-room deals, back-scratching and ass-kicking. Winning the majority of the council vote is everything. Promise the cities everything, but make sure you

win. There are usually seven to 10 council members who choose which company will get the cable franchise. A cable franchiser's job is to convince most of the council that his company can build the best cable system for that city.

In the last few years the continuing struggle for the right to wire American cities has reached warlike proportions among the dozens of companies that compete. Why? Because suddenly the payoffs in owning a cable-TV franchise are extremely rewarding. A system like the one now being constructed in New Orleans for $54 million could conceivably sell the day after it is completed for twice that amount. With all the new cable services on the market today, some subscribers could be paying as much as $50 a month. That's a far cry from a few years ago, when they were only shelling out about $72 a year. The big entertainment and communications conglomerates see the handwriting on the wall, and it spells money. They want to own all the cable systems they can get their hands on. In the next two years, 90 percent of this country's cable franchises will be awarded. The scramble is on now to gobble up what's left of the unwired nation.

I've been involved in franchising on and off for the past 10 years, and I've learned a few things they don't teach at business school. When my talents are called upon to win a franchise in a city, the first thing I do is put together what I call a dirt book on all my competitors. I emphasize their strengths and weaknesses so that all of my staff can understand and exploit our opponents.

Once, in a Midwestern city, the company I work for was up against ATC, the country's second-largest MSO (multiple system operator). At the time, ATC was being hassled by the city council of Shreveport, La., for not building their franchise according to schedule. It was good dirt. We cut out all the newspaper clippings detailing the complaint against ATC. We discreetly showed the clips to various members of the town council and said, "Why do you want ATC in your city? They can't even build a system on time." Of course, we never mentioned that ATC had built dozens of excellent systems according to schedule.

Sexually oriented public-access programs are a real nuisance. I always promise that my company will never show a pornographic program. On Manhattan Cable TV, a system owned by ATC, two programs, *The Ugly George Hour of Truth, Sex and Violence* and *Midnight Blue*, are notorious for their steamy content. When we were competing against ATC in another Midwestern suburb, I leaked to the press a whole file of clips about those two shows. When the town council learned about these programs, I asked them, "Do you want that kind of program here? That's what might happen if you vote for ATC." I neglected to tell them that I thought ATC had very high standards and that they were required by law to carry those programs. When ATC bids for franchises in cities around the country, Ugly George really hurts them. ATC would love to see his show disappear.

Sometimes you have to dig deeper to get the goods on your competition. In Alaska not too long ago, I was bat-

Sometimes when companies look for dirt and don't find it, they may come close to fabricating it

tling a major MSO for a franchise. I was convinced that they built lousy systems. I hired an investigative reporter from a local newspaper to call the newspapers in every town in which this company had built a cable system and ask the city editors what they thought of those systems. I told this reporter that we needed hard facts, not just innuendo. The reporter dug up information about what was wrong with the company's systems and I used it against them. To top it off, I then visited their supposed flagship system in California and I was amazed to find that it only had a 12-channel capacity! I also discovered that they were having technical problems and I submitted this evidence to the local public-utilities commission. The company denied the problems and called me a liar. One of the commissioners finally investigated the problem, and he agreed with me. That company didn't get the franchise in Alaska.

In Alaska, I looked for dirt and found it. Sometimes when companies look for dirt and don't find it, they may come close to fabricating it. Consider what happened in Florissant, Mo. Last November, this suburb of St. Louis awarded its highly coveted franchise to a subsidiary of Storer Broadcasting. A month later, Continental Cablevision, one of their competitors for the franchise, filed an $80-million lawsuit against Storer, charging the company with libel. Supposedly, Storer showed city-council members a letter, signed by a Storer executive, alleging that Continental lacked the financial resources to build the franchise properly and was also considering selling the company. Continental categorically denied these charges. Storer got the franchise and, at press time, the case is still in court. If Continental's right, that's one of the dirtiest tricks I've ever heard of.

It really doesn't help the cable industry when we cable companies fight among ourselves. But the stakes are high and emotions are stretched to the breaking point. Hired guns like myself usually get paid on a generous bonus system if we win a franchise, so we'll occasionally promise a lot of things that our companies can't deliver. Also, we have to stroke the local politicians—the guys who eventually decide which company gets the franchise.

Once when I was competing for a franchise in Illinois, one of my competitors flew the town council across several states to show them how great their flagship system was. So I had to take these councilmen to see *our* flagship system, several hundred miles away. They chartered a Lear jet. I had to charter one, too. Cost my company $4500. They bought them a couple of cases of Coors beer. I bought them a couple of cases of Coors beer. They wanted to stop at a cowboy-hat store; I wound up spending $450 on cowboy hats. Unfortunately, despite all the stroking, the other company got the franchise because they gave 20 percent of the equity of the franchise to a city-designated charity. We couldn't match the offer.

There's a difference between stroking and bribing, and, as far as I can tell, there haven't been any payoffs in recent years. The Denver Post recently quoted an un-

named source who said, ". . . up to one million dollars has changed hands in one Eastern community simply to buy the vote of one city-council member." That's hogwash. The richest cable companies can't afford those figures. There's a lot of talk and innuendo about payoffs, but let's look at the record: Only one cable-TV official has ever been convicted of bribery. On Jan. 24, 1966, Irving Kahn, founder of Teleprompter, offered officials of the town of Johnstown, Pa., a $15,000 bribe from his company. Kahn eventually served 20 months in jail, and to this day he claims he was a victim of an extortion scheme. That's the only on-the-record case of bribery in the industry.

I don't think payoffs come from the large MSOs. There's too much at stake. A lot of MSOs own television stations and could lose their broadcast licenses if they're nailed with a bribery rap. But that may not exclude their local partners from some questionable dealings.

In a suburb of Chicago, for example, I heard not too long ago that one councilman was offered $20,000 from Cox Cable in exchange for his vote. I called up Cox, which happens to own several broadcast properties, and told the franchise director that I was mad as hell about it and wouldn't stand for any funny business. He denied the charge. Two months went by, and then I heard that the bribe was $40,000. Several competitors lobbying for that franchise picked up the same rumor. Finally Cox was forced to hire a law firm to investigate the charges. From my business associates in the town, I learned that one unscrupulous councilman was allegedly soliciting bribes from a local partner of Cox and that was why Cox didn't know about it. (A source close to Cox's suburban-Chicago franchising efforts said that the company-run investigation never proved bribery, but admitted that patrolling the ethics of local partners was an almost impossible task. "Besides," he added, "this type of soliciting in the Chicago suburbs is not unusual.") Another competitor offered the councilman's son a $40,000-a-year job. The kid worked at a fast-food joint and had absolutely no experience in communications, but they were going to make him a $40,000 executive.

Most councilmen now are so afraid of any hint of improper action that they're scared to talk to a franchiser to learn about his company. They won't take an all-expense-paid trip to visit one of your systems. Hell, some won't even have dinner with you.

My company once had a picnic for the town council of a Midwestern city and only one councilman showed up. Nine others stayed home because they thought they would be accused of accepting bribes. The guy who showed up giggled to me as he munched on his coleslaw, "You know, you can't buy me with a lousy hamburger. I want to learn as much as I can about cable TV before making this decision." I really respected that guy. He had integrity. He was genuinely curious about cable TV. He was looking out for the good of his community.

Up until a few years ago, very few cable companies had professional franchise staffs. Then, as now, it was most important to be politically connected to win a franchise. To be politically connected in a strange town, you have to hire the best local lawyers you can find. My approach was to call up some of the local banks and ask, "What's the best politically connected law firm in town?" Naturally, there's always one. I'd find out which firm it was and retain it. The lawyers would say to me, "It's going to cost you X number of dollars to get the franchise. Of course, we have friends in office and they always need political contributions." They would make campaign contributions and send us the bill. Sometimes they couldn't produce, and sometimes they put you over the top. The thing is, you didn't know until it was announced which company got the franchise or what it was going to cost you. If you won, you got a tremendous bill. If you lost, you just got a large bill and a lot of excuses.

A competitor offered the councilman's son a $40,000-a-year job. The kid had absolutely no experience in communications

Almost as important as political connections are proposals. Simply put, a proposal is a written statement explaining what your cable company will offer the city that you're trying to wire. When I first got involved in cable TV, a proposal was just a letter saying, "This is what we offer. What do you think?" We stated what channels we were bringing in and what we would charge. We explained who owned the company, who the president was, and projected how the system would pay for itself.

Now the art of proposal-writing is a lot more sophisticated. Some companies write great proposals but build bad systems. They'll hire professional proposal-writers and spend upward of $400,000, all in a razzle-dazzle attempt to snow the town council into voting for them. Sometimes it works.

My gut feeling is that half the franchises awarded in the past two years are never going to be built in the manner in which they were proposed to town councils. If they are constructed that way, the cable companies that build them could go bankrupt. They just can't afford to build them the way they promised.

At first, the cable company will probably hook up 1000 new subscribers, and the cable service will provide all those marvelous bells and whistles like two-way TV and a dozen local-origination channels. Then, suddenly, the operations guy in charge of the project will come to his senses and think, "Hey, I've got a budget and I've got to stick to the bottom line. I'm never going to get there if we continue to build this system the way it was proposed."

So he'll go back to the city council and say, "Nobody is using that public-access studio. Why do I have to build 20? Why not start off with five and if they're used, we'll build five more."

The politicians won't want to be embarrassed by showing that they made a bad decision picking a company that couldn't get the job done, so they'll say, "OK, but let's keep it quiet and build the system as fast as you can. Just let's not make any noise about it."

It's just like politics. Everybody makes extravagant promises, but as soon as they're elected they start making excuses for why the promises can't be fulfilled.

There are some cities, like Erie, Pa., Boston and Milwaukee, that are not worth the effort to get involved with. These towns make unreasonable requests

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BALL FIVE

Now He's Throwing Spitballs at TV Sportscasting

The author, who ruffled baseball's feathers in "Ball Four," has his innings against TV in this update of his best seller

By JIM BOUTON

When Jim Bouton joined the New York Yankees in 1962, he was the possessor of a blazing fast ball. Eight years, two teams and one sore arm later, he was out of the game.

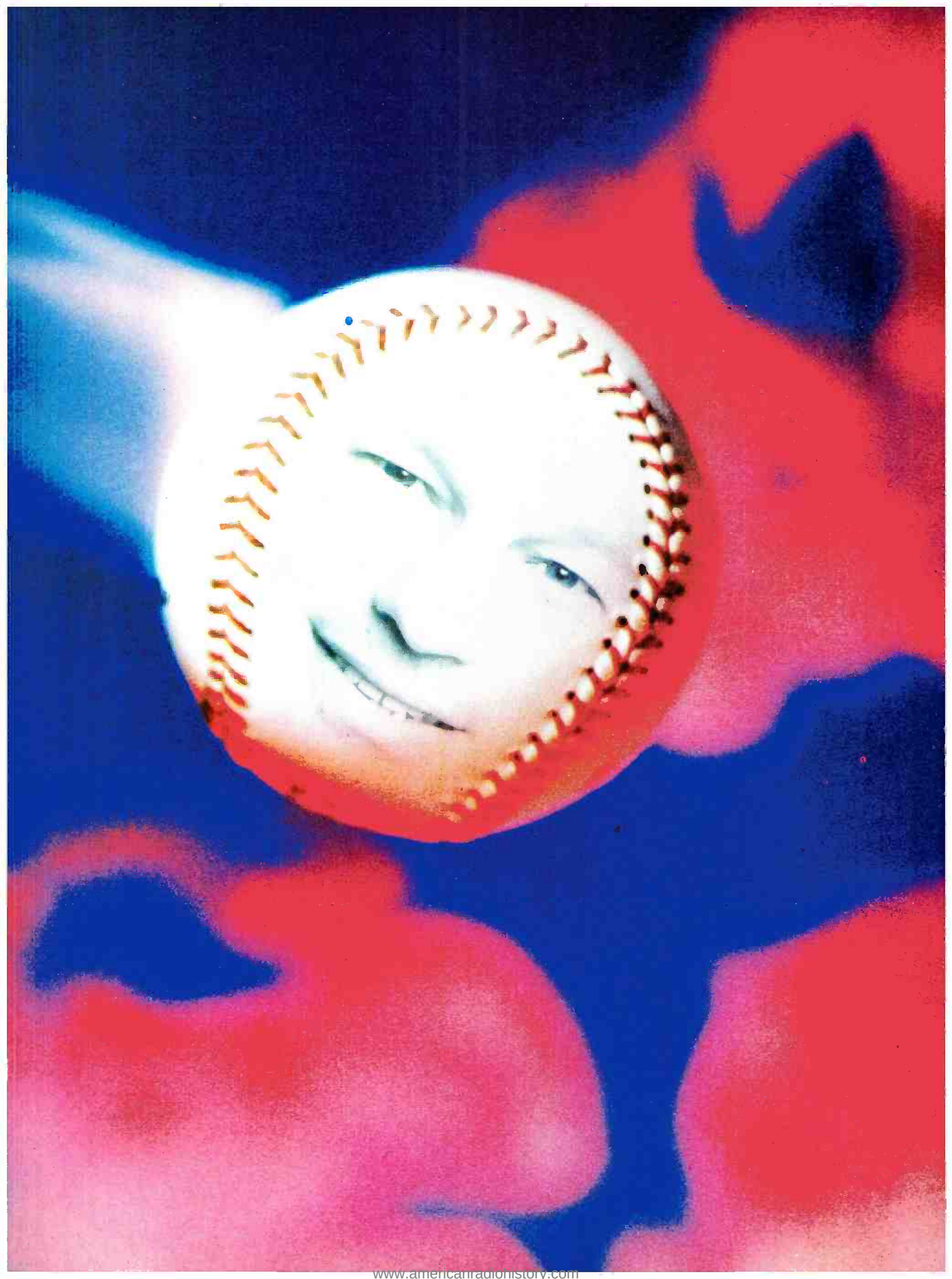
But not forgotten. In 1970 Bouton published Ball Four, *a book that rocked the baseball establishment to its very foundations. Though mild by today's sports journalism standards, it was America's first warts-and-all look at the Boys of Summer. Mickey Mantle with a hangover? Whitey Ford doctoring the ball? Simultaneously, Bouton became the darling of the media and the scourge of every major-league locker room.*

When he was hired as a local sportscaster by WABC-TV and later by WCBS-TV in New York, he continued to play the role of professional gadfly to professional sports. The following is an excerpt from Bouton's new book, Ball Four, plus Ball Five: An Update, 1970-1980.

Bowie Kuhn still hasn't forgiven me for not apologizing when *Ball Four* first came out. I remember he called me into his office and said he was going to do me a big favor. He said he knew that I realized I had made a terrible mistake and all I had to do was sign a statement he had prepared. The statement said, in effect, that the book was a bunch of lies and it blamed everything on my editor, Lennie Shecter.

When I politely told the commissioner what he could do with his statement, he turned a color which went very nicely with the wood paneling in his office. He then spent the next three hours extracting a promise that I would never reveal what went on at our meeting. The sanctity of the clubhouse is exceeded only by the sanctity of the commissioner's office. I'm sure I would have been forgiven for writing *Ball Four* if I had signed the statement, stood in the corner for a while and kept my mouth shut.

Instead, I went on television—as a sportscaster, which is what I was in New York for six years after I left baseball in 1970. I wouldn't call what I did "telling it like it is." That's because nobody knows how it is, including Howard Cosell. It's "telling it like you see it," and for some reason I seem to see things differently. One of my ideas about sports is that it's something you play yourself, not just watch others do on television. So I did stories about girls' basketball teams or old men lifting weights in their basements. One year I followed a high-school football team that hadn't won a game in five seasons. I'd cover the hopeful pep rallys on Fridays and the losing games on Saturdays. (When the team finally won, they couldn't understand why I stopped following them since they were just getting hot.) The best part was when the coach let me into the locker room for his half-time speeches where he tried to get the players to believe in themselves. Television viewers saw muddy, tired



I thought 10 seconds of Alex Webster talking backwards would make a good commentary on coaches explaining a lousy season. . . . Webster sued for $1.5 million

faces of teen-age kids trying to believe. This was an inside view of sports that professional teams would never allow. What's more, surveys showed that viewers liked these kinds of stories.

The Jets and Giants, however, did not. They wanted me to come out and interview right tackle Joe Doaks about his sore left toe and whether or not he'd be ready for the big game on Sunday. Professional teams have come to expect this form of free advertising, which is even more effective than a commercial because it's presented as news.

Once our weekend reporter Sal Marchiano did an interview with Giants' coach Alex Webster who explained why the Giants won four and lost nine. Alex gave all the reasons coaches always give: 1. injuries, 2. bad breaks, 3. more injuries, 4. all of the above. (Just once I'd like to hear a coach say maybe he's not such a good coach, or the team isn't so hot.) My producer suggested I use a piece of the interview in my broadcast, since I hadn't done much on the Giants lately. I reluctantly agreed. In the process of screening the interview to select the portion I would use, the editor ran the film backwards in order to show it a second time. Suddenly I heard Alex saying, "seirujni rof neeb t'ndah. . . ." *That's it*, I told the editor. Ten seconds of Alex Webster talking backwards would make a good commentary on coaches explaining a lousy season.

When I played it on the air, however, there was a technical difficulty and no sound came out of Alex's mouth. This did not prevent the Giants from becoming irate. How they even knew I played the film backwards, since there was no sound, I'm not sure. But Alex, with the help of the Giants' legal staff, used this 10 seconds of silence as an excuse to sue me and WABC-TV for a million and a half dollars. Of course, the case was eventually thrown out of court, but not before my employers were forced to conduct an inquiry, give depositions and pay for expensive lawyers. You can be sure it became part of my file. I relate this story to show the lengths to which professional sports will go to intimidate a reporter who fails to show the proper reverence.

In television the greatest pressures come from within. Station executives don't like it when their sports guy isn't chummy with the local teams. It makes the news director uncomfortable when he calls up and asks for tickets to a ball game. In the sports-reporting business, more phone calls are made to team press offices to arrange tickets than to arrange stories.

Then there is the thunder from above. At the network they already have contracts to televise games: multimillion-dollar contracts with entire leagues, which make the networks, in effect, partners with professional sports. There are big bucks riding on these games and they need to be hyped, not ignored, and certainly not criticized. This could explain why my comment that, instead of watching three hours of Super Bowl hype, viewers should play touch football in their back yards, was not wildly hailed in the newsroom.

Or take the case of Frank DeFord, a marvelous writer at Sports Illustrated, who was recently commissioned by ABC television to do a movie script. It was about a college football coach who gave pep talks with his fists, à la Woody Hayes. The head of programming loved it and pushed it upstairs to Roone Arledge. Since the script conflicted with ABC's college football contract, Roone Arledge pushed it out the window.

In 1973 ABC's *Wide World of Sports* bought the rights to televise a "Battle of the Sexes" tennis match between Billie Jean King and Bobby Riggs. Then they began hyping the event as only a network can. Part of that hype, they figured, should come from me as the local sportscaster for *Eyewitness News* on ABC's flagship station in New York.

Except that I saw myself as a reporter for an autonomous (albeit affiliated) station, not as a salesman for the network. My producer and news director agreed with me. So when the network sent me a very dull three-minute interview between King and Riggs the Friday before the match, I didn't use it. Instead, during my three minutes, I gave the match a 30-second plug—which was more than it deserved. Before you could say "network apoplexy," our producer received a nasty telephone call. In the control room. While the news was still on the air. It was Roone Arledge calling from home, screaming into the phone that *Eyewitness News* would never get any coopera-

The network sent me a very dull three-minute interview between Billie Jean King and Bobby Riggs. Instead, I gave the match a 30-second plug—which was more than it deserved

Arledge was screaming that *Eyewitness News* would never get any cooperation from *Wide World of Sports* as long as Jim Bouton was doing the sports. . . . My contract was not renewed

tion from *Wide World of Sports* as long as Jim Bouton was doing the sports. A short while later, my contract was not renewed. It came as no surprise to this reporter.

After WABC let me go, I worked for New York's WCBS-TV from 1973 to 1975 and again briefly in 1979. In my six years as a sportscaster I discovered a few things about television news. For instance, the news tends to be whatever happens that's visual in the vicinity of the station when a camera crew is available. Controversy is also a big seller, although when it involves a local team it can put the station management in a bind. How can you have controversy yet maintain good relations with the teams? Usually, they try to do both. Take an incident with the late Thurman Munson a few years ago. I was covering spring training for WCBS in New York and an interview with Munson, who was the Yankee catcher and captain, seemed logical. When Munson brushed me off, I couldn't tell if it was me, my book (which was then nine years old) or the fact that he didn't like reporters. Players and teams will often resort to this form of censorship: "You will say or write what we like or we won't cooperate with you."

On the grounds that a professional athlete has some obligation to cooperate with reporters who speak for the fans who pay the salaries, I thought Munson should have to explain himself. When I approached him a second time with the cameras rolling, he grabbed the microphone and suggested I perform a physical impossibility. If Munson's response had been out of character I would not have allowed it to go on the air. In fact, it was rare television: A ballplayer had been caught in the act of being himself.

The station's response to all this was very interesting. The first thing they did was privately apologize to Munson and the Yankees. The second thing they did was to put the piece on the network feed. This confirms Newton's (or somebody's) Law that every action has an equal and opposite reaction.

Several months later, however, the station had no ambivalence about how to handle Munson's untimely death. They embraced it with a fervor reserved for heads of state. When I heard of Munson's death, I got a sick feeling in my stomach. I was particularly uncomfortable because our only meeting had been unpleasant and I wished it had been otherwise. I said this on the air and talked about what a great hustling ballplayer Munson had been. Although I said nothing negative, I couldn't bring myself to say things about Thurman Munson, the man, that I didn't believe were true.

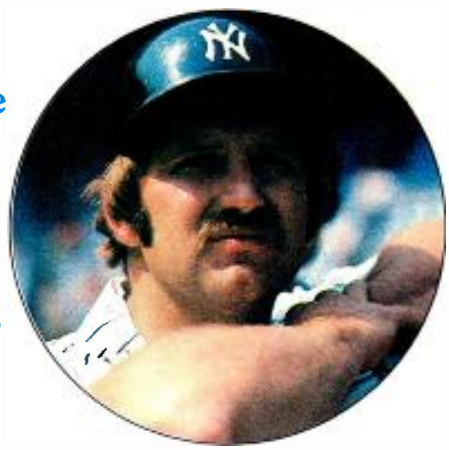
Because I didn't weep openly for Munson as some of my colleagues in the media were doing, I was considered disrespectful by the station management. I told the news director that, aside from my differences with Munson, I objected to indiscriminate hero-making. To which he replied, "So what's wrong with doing that?" All I could think of to say at the time was that it was dishonest.

But beyond that, there is an even greater danger in the deification of athletes who are ordinary men aside from their ability to star on a ball field. And it is this: It diminishes that which is truly valuable. Contrast the media's handling of the Munson death with the way they cover the death of someone like Margaret Mead, say, or a Nobel Prize-winner, and you get an idea of how the media tells us what's important.

That spring and summer of '79 I wasn't happy with WCBS and they weren't happy with me. I was in the middle of the aftershock of the breakup of my marriage and the pain of dealing with the kids. My disorientation showed on the air. The light touch I used to have was missing too much of the time. Things I used to laugh about in the past now frustrated me, like when I'd give the ball scores and they'd flash up a picture of Golda Meir.

Now that I no longer read the scores to an eagerly awaiting public, one of my favorite things to do these days is to videotape corporate conventions. I tape everything from the business meeting and the president's speech to the golf tournament and the cocktail party. Then I edit a 10-minute cassette that they can use as an image builder, a performance incentive or a recruiting tool. Ever since my years as a TV reporter I've enjoyed the challenge of putting a story together creatively. The great thing is that these guys never refuse to be interviewed and if you play something backwards, they love it. ■

Munson grabbed the microphone and suggested I perform a physical impossibility. . . . It was rare television: a ballplayer caught in the act of being himself



Once the bitter enemies of the cable industry, the commercial networks are now . . .

Burying Their Hatchets— And Joining the Revolution

By DOUG HILL

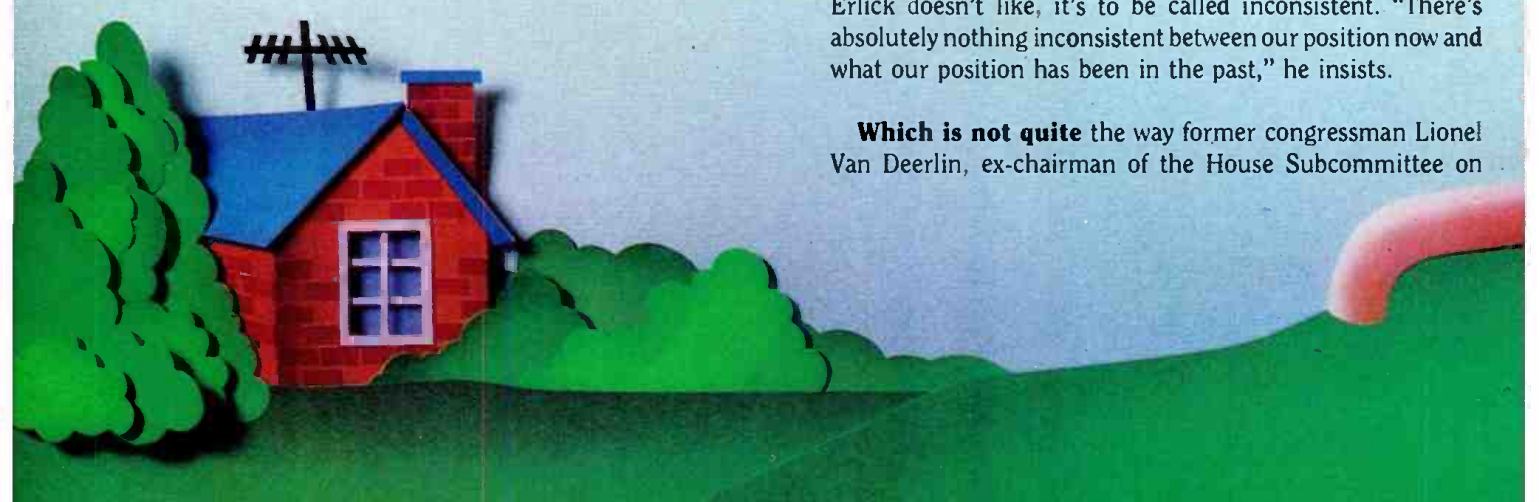
A lot of people in the cable-television industry think of Everett H. Erlick as The Hatchet Man. His official title is senior vice president and general counsel, ABC, Inc., a position that earns him more than $300,000 a year and a commodious office on the 39th floor of ABC headquarters in New York, down the hall from the president and chairman of the company. But Erlick has spent much of the past 10 years in the trenches of Washington—in its hearing rooms, its watering holes and its hallways of power—spearheading the broadcast industry's long and bloody battle against cable TV.

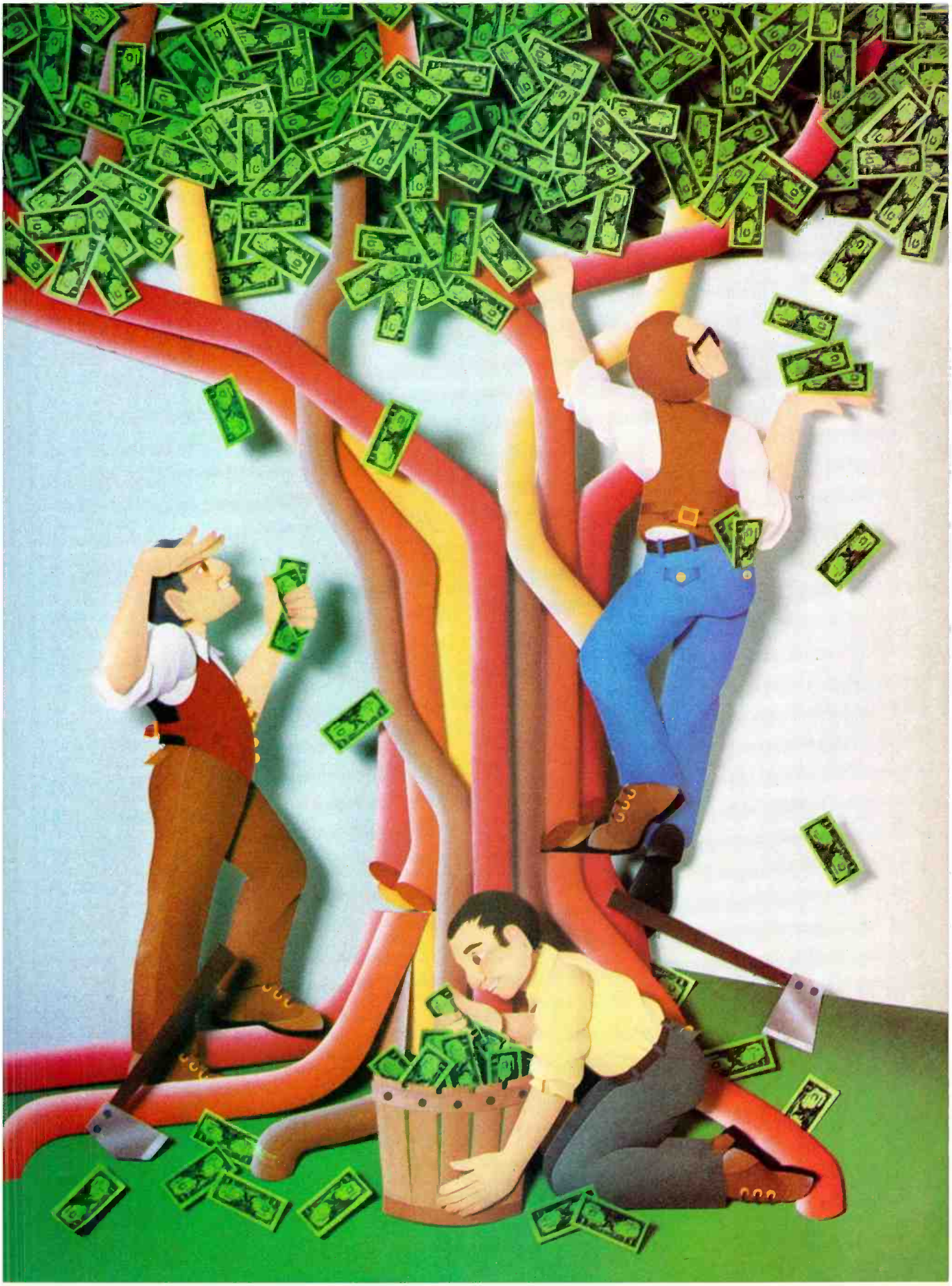
"ABC treated it as a religious war—a vendetta really," says one network veteran of the conflict. "Pure venom" is how Thomas Wheeler, president of the National Cable Television Association, described the tone of the campaign. Another network veteran adds, "I have often felt that ABC was off the deep end on some things and, for better or for worse, ABC's Washington policies are the children of one guy—Ev Erlick."

In 1974, during one of his dozens of warnings about cable, Erlick told an audience of managers from ABC's local affiliate stations, "We are in a nine-inning game. We are ahead now, but it's only the third inning. We look for five or six more years of controversy before the ball game is over, and the game is for table stakes which could drastically change this business as we know it today." The metaphors, mixed though they may be, were apt, for Erlick combines the weight of the heavy hitter with the impassive but confident style of the career poker player. He smiled once during a recent interview, grimly, when told he's not the most popular of personalities with cable folks. "I thought they'd name me Man of the Year," he said.

So it's not surprising that Erlick stiffens a bit when it is suggested that his 1974 prediction was correct. That the ball game is all but over, and that the broadcasters have lost. That the best evidence of their loss is ABC's launch last month of its own cable program channel, to be followed by several more channels in the future. And that perhaps some of ABC's anti-cable positions might be viewed as inconsistent in light of the company's new cable enterprises. If there's one thing Ev Erlick doesn't like, it's to be called inconsistent. "There's absolutely nothing inconsistent between our position now and what our position has been in the past," he insists.

Which is not quite the way former congressman Lionel Van Deerlin, ex-chairman of the House Subcommittee on





You Be the News

Director

Here's a chance to match your judgment against that of the professionals at WNBC-TV in New York

The hopes news director Ron Kershaw (center) has for News 4*: "Can people expect to get the news, and is it a pleasant experience?"*

By LEN ALBIN

"Ella Grasso is dying! Ella Grasso is *still* dying!"

Arthur Bonner, a white-haired veteran news writer and editor for WNBC-TV's 6 P.M. local New York City newscast, *News 4 New York*, stormed across the newsroom and slammed down some fresh news copy on his desk, rattling the two quart jars of instant coffee next to his typewriter. "Hey, everybody, Ella Grasso is *still* dying!" he shouted again. And then twice more.

By this Tuesday afternoon, Feb. 3, 1981, ex-Connecticut governor Ella Grasso was slipping into a coma after having been terminally ill for months, and Arthur—there he goes again!—was livid at the prospect of editing yet another daily update on her tragic condition. "No doubt about it, Ella Grasso is still dying!" he snarled. "Haven't we got any other news to report?"

"Come on, Arthur, it's a story," snapped Carole Clancy, the newscast's executive producer. "We're going with it."

"The poor bastard is dying and you almost gloat about it!" Bonner lashed back. "Every single day! It's sick! It's detestable! It's vampirish! . . . It's *news*!"

This opinion delivered, Arthur stalked off. But Clancy, who'd been eating a lunch from the NBC commissary all through this flare-up, did not change her mind. The story was going in the newscast's lineup. She whipped around in her swivel chair, still munching canned peaches in heavy syrup, and shook her head. "That," she said coolly, "is an example of personal feelings getting in the way of news. Arthur's right, it's a sick story," she admitted. "I *hate* the story. But she's an important lady, and that's one of the things viewers want to know

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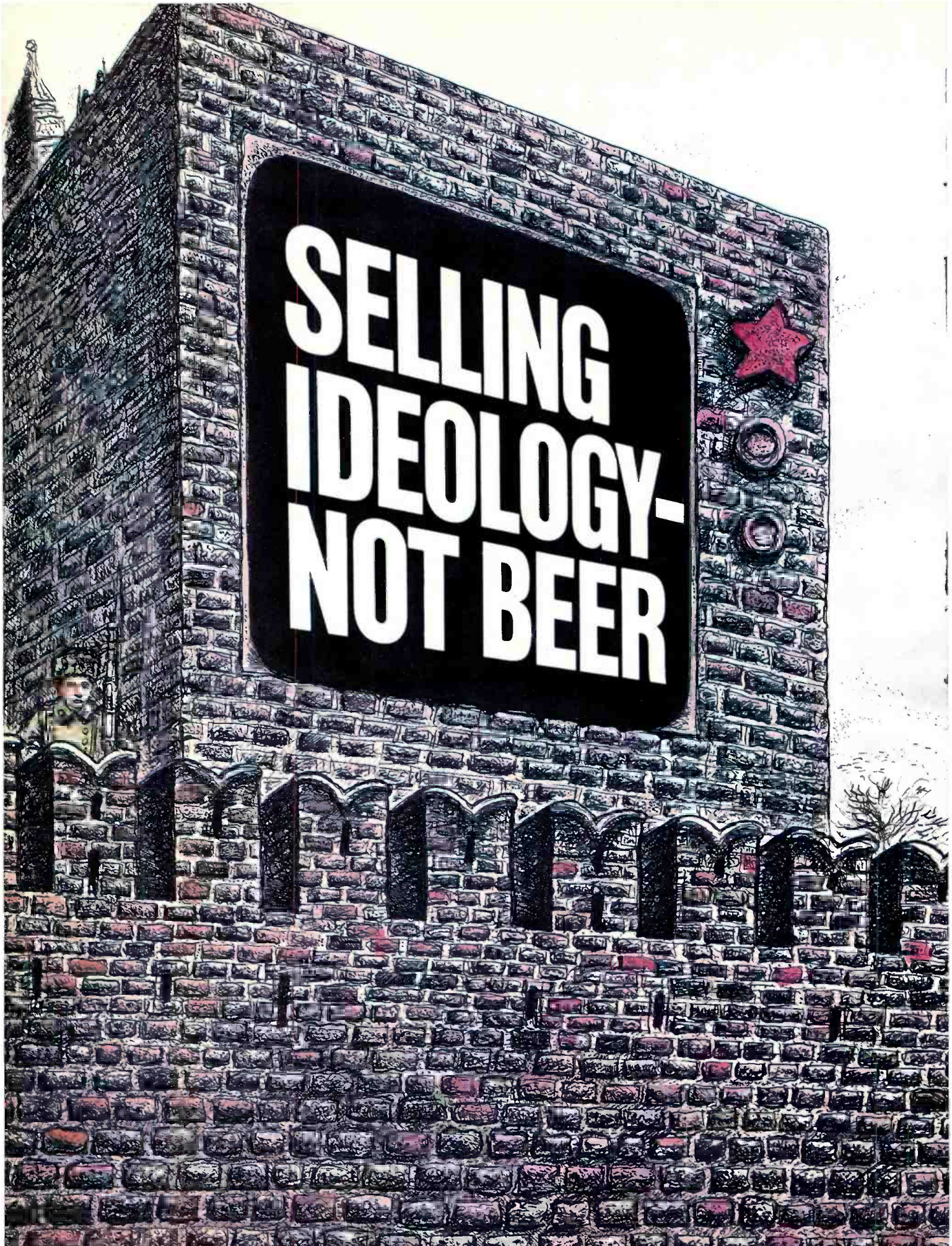


A Russian dissident remembers Soviet television for its relentless efforts to control public thinking

By VASSILY P. AKSYONOV

Vassily P. Aksyonov used to be one of the most prominent novelists in the Soviet Union. That this is no longer true is hardly a reflection on the man's talent; it is more a matter of politics: Last summer, Vassily Aksyonov was forced to emigrate to the United States.

His crime was going to the wall—going to the Kremlin wall, in fact—for freedom of expression. He and 22 other dissident writers had directly challenged the Soviet censorship laws by requesting that a collection of banned works called Metropol *be published.*

At the moment, Aksyonov is a writer in residence at the University of Southern California. The Burn, *his new novel detailing the lives of Communist Party officials, will be published in English next year by Houghton Mifflin. When PANORAMA asked him to write about the state of TV in the U.S.S.R., and its effect on Soviet society, he did so with the same trenchant wit that won him his literary reputation—and so rankled the authorities. (This article has been translated from the Russian by Carl Proffer.)*

"We beg your pardon for the quality of the picture—the technical defects originate outside the borders of the Soviet Union." Every television viewer in Russia is familiar with this announcement. It is made during broadcasts of soccer and hockey matches from abroad when something goes wrong. The deaf are probably the only ones who imagine that technical defects can ever arise *inside* the borders of the Soviet Union, but then they are a minority. In principle, the Soviet man is not supposed to know that anything unpleasant can happen in his country.

Two decades ago at the height of the Thaw, a well-known satirist posed the fundamental question about Soviet life: Is it ever possible—under any circumstances—for one of our ships to sink? After analyzing the problem in detail, he came to the conclusion that, no, it is not possible! Little has changed in two decades in this respect, but the word "almost" has been added. Soviet ships "almost" never sink, our houses *almost* never burn down, there are *almost* no earthquakes. In any case, you will never see such things on TV—except when they occur "outside the borders of the Soviet Union."

I think it is worthwhile to examine the Soviet version of "eyewitness news" in some detail. *Vremya* [*Time*] goes on at 9 every evening, and the idea of the program is to encompass all of the major events of the past day. The way the news is broadcast on television is based on the central principle of all Soviet mass media: The viewer gets not news, but an interpretation of the news. And this interpretation must *always* be to the good of the U.S.S.R.

There is a common saying, which is

attributed to Stalin: "If the facts are against us, so much the worse for the facts." The generalissimo has been gone for a long time, but his idea grows ever stronger. In addition to the actual text of the news, the television reader underlines our "class" attitude to the news through slight facial expressions and modulations of his voice. These are respectful and pious if he is talking about a meeting of the Central Committee, solemn and exalted if he is talking about a "new victory on the labor front," sarcastic if he is talking about activities of Western governments.

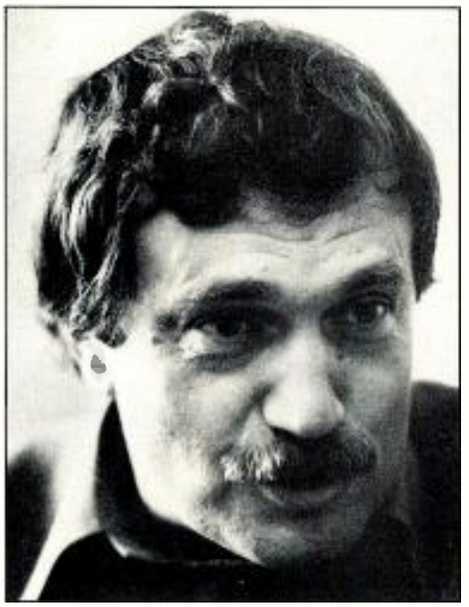
Vremya usually opens with Government announcements. It's good if this happens to be a meeting with some foreign president, because then they show the airport, and the honor guard with trumpets and sabers. It's not so good if it's a session of the Supreme Soviet or some official anniversary, because then they show you some high-placed, bespectacled speechmaker—and that is all for an hour or more, on all channels simultaneously.

If the Government is not on view that day, *Vremya* opens with "labor successes." Pages of text are read to the accompaniment of pictures of factories and fields, bulldozers and ditch diggers. It doesn't matter when the films of the "labor successes" were taken; the broadcasters are not talking about the labor successes of today, but of labor successes in general. The idea is simply that there are more and more labor successes in the U.S.S.R. all the time. In particular, *Vremya* loves to show diagrams and cite mysterious statistics. For example: 500,000 tons of steel were poured in the Urals up to April 1—but who knows whether that is a lot or a little for the Urals by April 1?

These naive raptures over the numbers connected with industrial achievement first arose during the first Five-Year Plan in the '20s, but then there was a certain activist Komsomol [Communist youth organization] enthusiasm about things. Nowadays the tone is pompous, solemn and bombastic. Comrade Kirillov of the *Vremya* staff pronounces these numbers with an extra-heavy dose of warm sincerity. Once he gave the distance between Moscow and Ryazan (about 250 kilometers) with such pride and fervor that we were almost ready to believe it was a remarkable distance to cover, a glorious statistic, and a great accomplishment for the U.S.S.R.

Then comes the news from abroad. Here the unchanging clichés are used: The crisis in the capitalistic countries is deepening (this is happening all the time, including when it really is deepening), aggressive military machines are hatching evil plans (for some reason they show the Israeli military machine most often). But at the same time the struggle of the workers for their rights (a strike in Detroit) is still going on, as are the liberation movements of various peoples (the marching militia of Democratic Ethiopia). These firmly established categories never vary in any way, no matter what happens.

I remember the days when Apollo 11



The author, Vassily P. Aksyonov, was not allowed to write for U.S.S.R. TV.

was headed toward the moon. In the morning we heard on the Voice of America that the astronauts were attempting to land. That evening we ran to the TV eagerly, and what did we get? *Vremya* was conducting business as usual: It showed some official meetings, the solemn laying of wreaths on some graves and monuments, a few gatherings of workers overjoyed at their latest stunning labor successes, then industry, then agriculture, then the crisis was deepening, then the plots of the military machines, then the struggle of the workers, then the liberation movement, then natural catastrophes "outside the borders of the Soviet Union," and finally, at the very end, came an embarrassed and quickly muttered mention that Apollo 11 had reached the moon.

Despite its lack of real news, I watched *Vremya* evening after evening, year after year. I learned not to get mad. I didn't even try to read between the lines or between the pictures. I finally realized that *they* were broadcasting *their* news. And this was interesting because it reflected a certain world—albeit not the normal human one—but another world, a neighboring one, a very large world, which moreover was growing from year to year.

For years I was blacklisted by Central Television. This started back in the anti-intellectual campaign of 1963, and lasted through the Czech spring of 1968 right up to the recent ideological battles around the unofficial *Metropol* anthology, of which I was one of the editors. From time to time I managed to get some of my prose published, and even to make films; but television always remained a forbidden zone to me. I probably should have gotten mad enough to forget it permanently. But every time I got an invitation from some poorly informed TV editor, I would start making trips out to the gigantic cube-shaped building, Moscow's main television center, in the Ostankino region of Moscow, and I would keep going there until my candidacy as a screen writer was again denied. Why did I keep at it? First because you could make money in Soviet TV; and second because there, in that vast bureaucracy, were quite a few interesting and talented people.

Even the chairman of the State Committee on Television and Radio himself, the old apparatchik [Party member] Sergei Lapin, a short man with an exaggeratedly determined face is, judging by rumors, not a simple person. Gossip circulates in Moscow to the effect that Comrade Lapin loves poetry and can pick up a volume of Mandelstam from the shelf with no embarrassment. They say it was on his initiative that Central Television started showing readings of well-known poets such as Voznesensky, Yevtushenko, David Samoilov and Bulat Okudzhava. They say there was a time when Lapin was enchanted by Bella Akhmadulina's poetry. It seems the mighty comrade set out to make a TV star out of Akhmadulina, and did much toward this end. However, it wasn't long before Akhmadulina started showing her disobedient character by interceding for Andrei

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RUSSIAN TV *continued from page 72*

Sakharov and other dissidents; and therefore, gritting his teeth, Lapin was forced to put Bella on the blacklist.

There are a few other programs that are good without any reservations. The *Film Travel Club* is an example. It is hosted by Dr. Yuri Senkevich, a calm and sympathetic fellow, the superdoctor on several of Thor Heyerdahl's expeditions. It is surprising how he manages to avoid the obligatory ideological harness. We simply see the islands of Oceania or some part of San Francisco or an African savanna. Senkevich invites oceanographers, archeologists and alpinists on and conducts a leisurely discussion about far-off lands. One can sense a definite behind-the-scenes note of sympathy for the television viewers who will never see such places in person—which is to say, 99.9 percent of them.

The equivalent of your *Wild Kingdom* is *In the World of Animals*, and the whole country adores the program, with its flamingo mating dances, monkeys flying across the screen, tigers hunting, mountain goats fighting. Dr. Drozdov is the host of the program—and he appears to be a unique figure. One day he dragged a raccoon into the studio. He carried it and looked at it in such a way that it was clear that he was enchanted by the creature. The look of an animal specialist, a look not clouded by any ideologies, a simple look of love and admiration, is a rather unique occurrence in our time.

Another regular program is *The Obvious and the Incredible*, hosted by Prof. Sergei Kapitsa, son of the celebrated Nobel Prize-winning physicist Pyotr Kapitsa, and himself an extremely learned and subtle man. Virtually anything can be the subject of this show: ancient Assyrian cuneiform, the theory of relativity, man learning to fly, the secrets of Leonardo. This kind of universal knowledge is supposed to be the Soviet intellectuals' substitute for what is usually thought of as a spiritual life. The only problem is when Kapitsa gets involved in philosophical discussions set in the framework of the so-called scientific-technical revolution. Something infuriating happens: The model of a highly developed Western civilization is automatically applied to *our* country, with its deformed economics, a country where space rockets can easily be launched and where it is impossible to get color film developed.

One of the most popular shows, *Film Panorama*, has as host the director Eldar Ryazanov, a 200-pound gentleman with an ironic look and a black leather jacket—the uniform of Moscow intellectuals. Here one meets with directors, script-writers, and the stars of Soviet movies.

Among the "serials" of the last few years, only a few of the better ones deserve mention—above all, Vassily Ordynsky's 12-part epic *The Road of Torments*, a film about the Russian Civil War. For the first time there is a serious and sometimes even sympathetic attitude in the portrayal of the enemy, i.e., the White Army. In early 1980 the whole country rushed home after work to avoid missing an entertaining detective series.

On holidays, sometimes the incredible occurs—concerts by ABBA or Liza Minnelli are telecast

The role of the police inspector was played by a universal favorite, the late singer and actor Volodya Vysotsky.

And sometimes, on holidays, the incredible occurs—they release bits of Western musical programs, concerts by performers such as ABBA, Bonny M, or Liza Minnelli. When this happens the popular joke runs through Moscow: "I hope the Reds don't come again."

And, of course, there's sports. Broadcasts of soccer and hockey matches garner the largest audiences of all. Whole cities die out! The men prefer to be "home sick" with groups of friends and supplies of beer. And not only men. My friend's old Jewish grandmother, close to 80, has been a hockey fan for years; she knew the names of the players and results of all the matches. One day she was asked to sit closer to the set than she usually did, and she shouted: "My God, they're wearing skates!"

Once a week the most hidebound old Soviet journalist appears on the screen: Yuri Zhukov, Lenin Prize-winner, Deputy of the Supreme Soviet. Before him on a table lies a thick packet of letters from TV viewers. They ask Comrade Zhukov to give his opinion on international questions, or, more simply put, "to nail the imperialists and inciters of a new war to the pillory of history." And Comrade Zhukov never denies these requests—he just gets out the nails and starts pounding away.

A few letters always begin this way: "When I turned on my radio yesterday, I just chanced upon the Voice of America [or BBC, or the Deutsche Welle] and I was profoundly indignant when I heard Western propagandists trying to pin the blame for the events in Afghanistan on the Soviet Union."

"Your indignation, dear Comrade Ivanov-Petrov-Sidorov [i.e., Johnson-Smith-Jones], is completely well-founded," Zhukov comments on the letter. "It is well-known to the whole world that the American imperialists and Chinese hegemonists have unleashed their aggression on Democratic Afghanistan. However, my advice to you, Comrade Ivanov-Petrov-Sidorov, is that in the future you not pay any attention to the speeches of radio slanderers; they aren't worth it."

That's all there is to it: One simple Soviet man has spoken to another simple Soviet man.

It used to be that when I was looking at Zhukov's face with the typical narrow forehead, thin lips, and chin running to fat, I thought that he was in fact one of *them*—as simple as pie. But later, chance brought us together and I found out that I was mistaken: Comrade Zhukov is no fool: he is well-informed, he reads French and English, and he understands perfectly well what he is doing—perhaps he even justifies his moss-grown propaganda out of the Stalin years as "an historical necessity."

For the most part Zhukov's correspondents are veterans of what the Soviet Union calls the "Great Patriotic War" and the rest of the world calls World War II. In general they are rather frequent visitors on TV. Of course, there is a touching side to all this. However, more often the nostalgic note is replaced by the crash of cymbals and the drum beats of slumbering conservatism, by people

who intone the ancient Soviet clichés like chants to idols:

"Serve the Great Motherland Faithfully!"

"Be Ready for Self-Sacrifice for the Good of the Great Soviet People!"

"Keep the Faith with the Cause of Our Great, Our Motherland Party!"

This is the way they instruct young soldiers on the daily television program for the Army. This program is called *I Serve the Soviet Union*, and is dedicated to "successes in battle preparation and political preparation." I usually tried not to miss this show. My wife asked in surprise: "What do you see in it? There's nothing there." But *there* they showed the faces of the soldiers and their weapons—bombardiers, rockets, tanks, tanks, tanks. . . . Militarism, or, as it is called in the U.S.S.R., "the struggle to maintain peace," occupies a very substantial place on our TV screens.

One must note that in this area the desired effect is rather easy to achieve. Among the people there is a strong atavistic pride in armed force. While waiting in line for butter and meat you will never hear complaints about the huge military expenditures.

Can one compare the American soap operas to anything on Soviet TV? Strange as it may seem, there is something very much like it—even though it has its own peculiar form: In Russian soaps everything occurs against the background of Socialist construction, and the domestic romantic problems are intertwined with efforts to increase production.

The main hero of such plays is usually a Party regional secretary, a handsome fellow with the latest production ideas. He fights with old-fashioned people (usually some sort of nonideological man, a director or administrator); he helps everyone (humanism above reproach); he resolves problems of a personal character (a bad wife, an "advanced" mistress, or less often, the other way around). Most often he is a great lover of art; he listens to the music of Beethoven, or he reads poetry, like Comrade Lapin himself. In sum, he is a Party knight without fear and above reproach and he works in the framework of the already mentioned scientific-technical revolution—and in real Russian life this character is as mythical as a centaur.

Who watches such drivel? In a word, everyone. You watch it yourself, and you explain it as some kind of mysterious masochism; others watch it out of curiosity, still others to analyze it. But most people watch because they're tired and bored—simply because it's a show; even if it's boring, at least it's a show.

There is no way to avoid comparing Soviet and American TV. And if I say that Soviet TV could be much worse, I might just as well say that American TV could be much better. One is struck by the rather senseless triviality of the programs on the main channels, with their plethora of commercial messages.

Primitively approached, one could conclude that the main task of American television is to make the viewer thirst for Michelob or hunger for a Whopper with cheese. On this level, what conclusion

The main task of TV in the U.S.S.R. is to help stabilize the huge conglomerate of people who live in a gigantic area

can one make about what Soviet television advertises?

We have shortages of everything, so there's no point in even talking about beer or hamburgers. There's only one item the U.S.S.R. has a surplus of—ideology. Can one say, therefore, that the basic task of Soviet TV is to make the viewer thirst for the "latest and highest in ideology" as passionately as the American is supposed to thirst for Michelob?

The problem here is that in the U.S.S.R. the slogans and propaganda have long ago stopped appealing to the passions. No one can be aroused by the millionth repetition of the cry "Forward, to the victory of Communism!" So I conclude that the real purpose of agitprop's turgid slogans is *to draw the limits of Soviet man's world for him.* They draw the limits on his sphere of life from birth to death. They give him to understand that he will never go beyond these limits.

I hope that future psychologists and sociologists will analyze this phenomenon in detail and determine that the unending torrent of Soviet propaganda has done far more to demoralize and destroy our society than it has to introduce the desired stability. I dare say that one three-hour broadcast of a figure-skating competition does more to stabilize Soviet society than all the tricks of agitprop. The tired and frustrated people relax in the evening, watching the wonderful circling pairs of young people, and involuntarily they think that somehow everything will work out, that even our society will manage to perform its awkward dance—maybe an unattractive dance, but all the same a dance with some vague promise.

I would say that the main task of TV in the U.S.S.R. is to help stabilize the huge conglomerate of people who live in a gigantic area. I would even say that this is a positive goal, if it were done properly, i.e., humanely. But the rigidity, the inertia, the disinformation, or absence of information, do not promote the desired stability; they just hasten collapse.

To a significant degree Soviet television reflects the thinking of our country: It fears abrupt movements or surprises. But life goes on and something does happen in life, and even if it is said quickly, even if the facts are jumbled, ultimately the Moscow screen is forced to mumble *something* about reality. The brave Armstrong did walk on the moon, after all.

The first religious program ever to appear on Soviet TV was shown last summer. The well-known dissident priest Father Dmitri Dudko confessed to his "criminal acts," which were, just imagine, contacts with foreigners! Everyone felt ashamed, not for Father Dmitri (he was blackmailed into it by threats against his parishioners), but for the producers of the show. And, nevertheless, it was the first use of God on the television screen; for poor Father Dudko renounced his courage, but not his faith. One can imagine the amazement of the average Soviet man suddenly discovering that amid the "conditions of huge political and labor advances," there was another world in which the struggle for faith was continuing. Thus, gently, and with a bit of irony, the hand of the Creator touched this strange child of His, Soviet television. ■

continued from page 69

when they turn on their sets."

Since Clancy has the final say in the selection of all stories broadcast on *News 4*, she makes hundreds of quick, crisp decisions like this one every month. (Later in this article, beginning on page 78, you'll get a chance to put yourself in Carole Clancy's shoes. We'll present a summary of news items that crossed her desk one day, and you can decide which you'd have chosen for broadcast. Then we'll tell you which stories actually made it on the air.)

Over the long run, the mad scramble to get an hour's worth of news—and no more—on the air every day makes such criteria as "importance" and "viewer interest" blur at the edges. How, I asked, does Clancy select what news gets on? "It's a gut feeling—about 90 percent visceral and 10 percent logical," she answered. How does she pick the order of the day's stories, and the emphasis to be placed on them? "There has to be some logical flow," she said. "The most important thing is having a feel for the viewer's feel of the news."

This was quite a revelation. Now, a news audience was not just there to be informed, or even to be entertained—but to be *fondled*, too! Somehow, all these feelings of Clancy's were not *personal* feelings like those of Arthur, which got in the way of news, but rather some species of *objective* feelings, which shaped the news in a positive way. It sounded very mystical. If this was journalism, then why didn't Edward R. Murrow call his program *Feel It Now*?

On the other hand, one could hardly expect *News 4 New York* to be a visual equivalent of the UPI wire. After all, *News 4* is in the business of local TV news—traditionally, a world of jackknifed tractor-trailer trucks, smoke inhalation, and, in a pinch, tips on household plant care. It's a whole different league, with its own daffy rules.

In New York City, the number-one TV market, a local 6 P.M. newscast does not *necessarily* do a good job if it reports as much important, hard news as possible. That's only incidental. Its *real* job—in the network's eyes—is to snare viewers as they arrive home from work, keep them watching, and then hand them over to network news, which in turn hands them over to prime-time programming. When ABC was by far the ratings leader a few years ago, *Eyewitness News*—the 6 P.M. happy-talk "news presentation" of its owned-and-operated New York station, WABC-TV—was by far the ratings leader in its time slot.

This was no coincidence. And this is why local news is not so much a job of reporting news as it is a game of seducing viewers into watching your news program for a whole hour, whether it contains much news or not. This is why handsome Storm Field, WABC's weatherman (and son of Frank Field, WNBC's weatherman and science reporter) earns something approaching a Cronkite-level salary. And this is why whatever news *does* get on the air tends to fit into a breezy, stylized format.

Here at WNBC, the job of keeping the format fine-tuned belongs to Ron Kershaw, the news director. At a station in a smaller market, a news director would be directly involved with the daily editorial decisions, but at *News 4 New York*, Kershaw leaves these gritty details to Clancy. This system works smoothly because the pair go back three years, to the days when Kershaw was an executive producer at ABC network news and Clancy was one of his staff producers. But today, Kershaw tries to stay out of the newsroom as much as possible. He looks after more important things.

The mad scramble to get an hour's worth of news makes such criteria as "importance" and "viewer interest" blur at the edges

"So, Ron," I asked, "what's news?"

"Here, look at this solid line here," he said, lifting his Alex Karras-sized torso out of his leather office chair. He tenderly placed his finger on WNBC's audience-share line on a recent Nielsen ratings chart for the 6-to-7-P.M. time slot. "We got this line to move [upward], where it hasn't moved in years. Now the ratings race is the tightest it's been in New York since 1974. We're so close it's *pathetic*! The station is ecstatic!"

WNBC is still mired in third place, behind WCBS and WABC, but Kershaw's influence *has* made a difference. One of the first things he revamped in 1979 was the program that "led in" to the 6 P.M. newscast—which happened to be *another* hour newscast. "We were repeating a lot of stories," he said, "and that diluted our total audience." So he limited the news from 5 to 6 P.M. to a few headlines, axed all the soft-news features (like Dr. Lee Salk's "Doctor's Office") and turned it into *Live at Five*—a popular *Today* show clone that now and then actually has something to do with the day's news. Mary (*Dallas*) Crosby was scheduled that day.

"And what decides what is news," Kershaw was saying, finally getting to his 6 P.M.-segment philosophy, "is not so much one person, or two people, it's the *process*. I look at the day's news as a mosaic we have to build, and each story fits together. The kind of program I'm shooting for has a lead story that's hard news—a grabber that involves the audience. Then, it's maintaining the pace as we march through the hour, until you've left the audience with some idea of what this day was like in New York.

"I want a fast pace, because that's the nature of the medium. It doesn't mean shortness; what it does mean, though, is quickness. Otherwise, you'll be boring, and that's anathema to television."

To help combat boredom, many stories that lack good film visuals are either killed or buried somewhere in the second half hour of the program. Kershaw also loves to exploit late-breaking stories in order to "score a beat" on his competition. And on a day when there is a story like the John Lennon murder, Kershaw takes this grabber and doesn't let his audience breathe for over a half hour. "You throw out the other news," he explained. "We'd do almost a theme program on that one subject, the same way Time or Newsweek approaches a cover story. We get an instant special. The day when you're in a subway or bar and the conversation is drawn to just one subject—that's the day we really *blitz* it.

"But I don't think you produce a news program based on importance," Kershaw added. "And it doesn't matter where you place the story in the hour; in a TV news broadcast, if the people are with you, they're going to be exposed to everything. The most important thing is: Can the people expect to get the news

What's news? Executive producer Carole Clancy (far left) consults her News 4 *staff.*

when they tune you in, and is it a pleasant experience? One of the problems I have is that in a city this large, by the time you cover all the hard news, there's little time left for the back-of-the-book features you really need to round out the day."

But there was no danger of that today—a news day so slow that out in the newsroom Clancy was planning to use lots of film of Chinese New Year fireworks in Chinatown, even though the Year of the Rooster wasn't due until Thursday. "It's all right," assignment editor Neal Rosen assured her. "It's already tomorrow in China." And metropolitan editor Bret Marcus, who runs the assignment desk, had managed to assemble a healthy number of stories by 1 P.M.—from wire copy, the overnight log, newspapers, press releases, phoned-in tips, and from WCBS all-news radio.

Among the items were: Jean Harris, on trial for the murder of "Scarsdale Diet Doctor" Herman Tarnower, rocked the courtroom by admitting she'd mailed him a letter, just before she shot him, describing her young rival for his affections as a "whore." In Rosedale, Queens, white parents of public-school children were still staging a sit-in to protest the closing of a neighborhood high-school annex—which would force them to send their kids farther away, to the main building that has a predominantly black student body. Down in Washington, Mayor Koch was meeting with the President to discuss impending budget cuts, and New Jersey's own Raymond J. Donovan was about to be confirmed as Secretary of Labor.

Closer to home, a Staten Island man was arraigned for killing three family members, the price of home heating oil was up again, a rumor had surfaced that Columbia University students were being mugged by attackers with underwater spear guns, a group of liberal Democrats announced its opposition to neoconservative Koch in the 1981 election, the area's drought had caused more water restrictions, and 85 illegal Dominican aliens had been rounded up.

In New Jersey, state senator Pat Dodd had announced for the governor's race; the late ex-mayor of Newark, Hugh Addonizio, was being buried; and a Toms River man was convicted of holding three teen-agers hostage in his basement until they confessed to burglarizing his home.

WNBC's consumer editor Betty Furness had a feature on property assessments, and Frank Field was ready with a tarantula piece. Elsewhere, a drunken cat had been discovered in New Jersey, Chinese New Year's Eve was tomorrow, and Ella Grasso was still dying.

"On any given day, we'll use about 75 percent," Marcus said, "but today we'll probably use just about all of it." So far, the only loser of the bunch was the spear-gun exclusive, which was still a rumor. "We'll keep on it," Marcus added. "I like to do neighborhood stories here." The Harris trial merited a live remote from reporter Jim Van Sickle. "That's because we have such a good story there," Marcus said. "We did it newspaper style, developing our sources long-term, and we've been on it longer than anybody else." Of course, the trial was also a perfect story for women aged 18 to 49, who happen to comprise the largest single audience segment of local evening news.

A few yards away, Carole Clancy was preparing the "draft routine"—the line-up of stories for tonight's broadcast. After carefully mixing her reporters' morning "film" stories with other "copy" stories (to be read by the anchors, with an accompanying graphic), she phoned Kershaw to clear the use of the word "whore," and then called Van Sickle. He wasn't planning to use it, but now he would.

"We're going to lead with the Harris story," Clancy finally said. "It's the most dramatic day of the trial. But if Ella Grasso dies, or if Koch calls Reagan a bad name, we'll lead with that."

After Harris, the next story was to be Donovan's Senate confirmation. Next came Koch's Washington trip (with film), the heating-oil cost increase, and then, after a commercial, Rosedale (with two film reports), Toms River, illegal aliens, and the Staten Island murder spree (with film). The stories were not in any particular order of importance, but that didn't bother Clancy.

"Once we're past the lead," she explained, "it doesn't make a whole lot of difference. There's a little *flow* after Harris—it's a controversial trial, and Donovan's controversial. I wouldn't go from Harris to the murder spree, but Rosedale would be all right—and if they riot, I *still* might." Koch, who was in Washington like Donovan, followed. "And then fuel oil is there to give the program some pacing," Clancy said. "It's also logical after hearing about Reagan's budget cuts.

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Now Rosedale—that's an important story, because there are dozens of neighborhoods in the city that are white and changing. It comes after the break because sometimes the story after the first commercial is more important than the one after the lead. It's like a *minilead*."

Leafing through the nine-page draft routine, I saw how the *News 4 New York* mosaic fell into place. The Addonizio story, about a dead New Jersey politico of Italian descent, came right after the Grasso story, about a dying Connecticut politico of Italian descent. The drunken cat item went in the preordained slot for a soft story—right before sports—so that the anchors could make a clever quip before handing the show over to sportscaster Marv Albert, who's also a "fun" kind of guy. Chinese fireworks, another lightweight story, served as the day's "closer"—an item that ends the program on a pleasant note and gives the anchor something witty to say besides "Good night!"

And reading and repartee, by the way, were just about all the work the anchors did here. After Kershaw, Clancy and Marcus were finished dissecting the day's news into little pieces, the anchors, in Kershaw's words, just served as "the final filters through which the editorial process passes."

Just before 6, Kershaw was in his office, ready to watch the three network affiliates' local newscasts on his three color televisions. As news director, he also gets a toggle switch so that he can turn on the sound of any set, in any order, without leaving his chair. Soon, the stern voice of Jim Van Sickle reached us live from White Plains: "She had a word and the word was whore. . . . 'A whore is a whore is a whore'." Kershaw looked delighted.

And five minutes later, he looked even happier. Reporter Bob Teague's story on the sixth day of the Rosedale sit-in was followed by a charming "sidebar" interview by David Diaz, who found a family who thought that the main Rosedale school wasn't that bad after all. "The sidebar gives you more of a perspective, more time to think," offered Kershaw. "And it helps the pace of the program."

As the three stations marched through the hour, *News 4 New York* really *did* seem like a pleasant experience. Comparatively. The only hard-news story *News 4* missed was one that had surfaced in a local newspaper: the mysterious Dec. 27 vandalization of the office of the Ocean County Citizen, a small Jersey paper that had been critical of local government. "Well, you can't cover everything," Kershaw said. "Our New Jersey reporter was out today."

But *News 4* was the *only* station of the three to run a feature about the lifestyle of tarantulas. "Dr. Frank Field loves to run crap that grosses people out," Kershaw said. Then we watched a giant spider creep up someone's arm, and Kershaw couldn't believe it. "Why . . . is . . . he . . . *showing* that?" But Frank looked happy enough and so did Ron. Dr. Frank Field is one reporter who can

Sometimes the story after the first commercial is more important than the one after the lead

successfully bring off this kind of story. His recognition factor in New York City may be higher than that of any other living human being.

"Well, today's program was nothing to write home about," Kershaw said as the hour ended. "But it was all right. We got on and off the air cleanly."

On Thursday morning, Feb. 5, New York City seemed to be in trouble. Overnight the temperature had dropped to eight degrees Fahrenheit, and there wasn't enough heat in many apartments. The cold had also affected the transit system, so there weren't enough subways or commuter trains. But, at the assignment desk, Bret Marcus had plenty of material. "Since you already have enough news," he told Clancy at 11 A.M., "I'm going home."

Now what if you had Carole Clancy's job? Look at this list of 25 news stories that she had to act—or not act—on. Remembering (or forgetting) your lessons from Kershaw about grabbers, pacing, soft news, visuals, beats and blitzes, pick the stories you want for your telecast and your leads, and then read on to find out what actually *did* make the 6 P.M. edition of *News 4* that day.

1. At 5:15 P.M., a tiny tanker carrying crude oil runs aground in the East River but does not leak.
2. Moral Majority's Jerry Falwell addresses the National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences in Manhattan.
3. Iran claims that Buffalo free-lance writer Cynthia Dwyer participated in a plot to free the 52 hostages.
4. At her trial, Jean Harris collapses on the witness stand in tears.
5. A report from Attica claims that "Son of Sam" inmate David Berkowitz has fallen in love with Louis Quirros, a fellow inmate who has taken female hormones to grow breasts and wants to become a transsexual.
6. President Reagan plans to ask Congress to deregulate natural-gas prices.
7. Mayor Koch blasts New York City's judges for being too lenient.
8. An examination of local outpatient mental-health care for the retarded, in commemoration of the Willowbrook scandal uncovered several years ago.
9. Mayor Koch threatens to remove Rosedale demonstrators.
10. Many New York City buildings did not have any heat last night.
11. A major study on cancer among blacks is released.
12. A hijacked plane lands safely in San Juan after the crew cons the hijacker into believing that it's really Havana.
13. The morning chill causes many Long Island Railroad breakdowns.
14. New York's Governor Carey, still visiting Japan, gets the city sample buses from a manufacturer there.
15. The Grumman buses, taken off city streets to be fixed, are still not back.
16. The aerial tramway between Manhattan and Roosevelt Island is still broken but will be fixed this month.
17. A Shelter Island, N.Y., man accepts a settlement after suing the state to retrieve property it took from him by eminent domain.
18. A look at how the buses on loan from Washington, D.C., to replace the Grumman buses are doing.
19. A preview of President Reagan's

budget cuts.
20. A five-and-a-half-minute special report on psychic phenomena that deals with ghosts.
21. The local drought has dried up some wells in Lakewood, N.J.
22. A rumor that the three surviving Beatles will reunite to make a "tribute" album for John Lennon.
23. Tanning parlors are becoming very popular in New York City.
24. More film from yesterday's Chinese New Year celebration.
25. Ella Grasso is still dying.

And here now the news program that actually made it up the Empire State Building transmitter and into the home: It took lots of screaming and yelling in the control room, but the show led with a live remote of the *Oil Tanker*, and WNBC scored a beat on its rivals. *Falwell*'s speech was not covered because the film crew didn't get there in time, so the reverend appeared on *Live at Five*. The time required for the live tanker feed (plus another live update, late in the hour) forced Clancy to bump *Cynthia Dwyer* from the lineup, but *Harris* (also live) ran second. *Son of Sam*, which had been added to the lineup without hesitation by Clancy when it came over the AP wire, also ran as scheduled.

But *Natural Gas* was another casualty of the oil tanker, and *Koch Blasts Judges* didn't run either because Judge E. Leo Milonas never returned reporter Heather Bernard's phone call. And *Retarded* also didn't make the lineup, after Clancy pronounced it "not too exciting." But *Rosedale*—an ongoing story and suddenly a harder news story—was on with film and so was *Heatless Buildings*, which featured film of both an irate New York state assemblyman and a shivering Harlem family. However, the item *Cancer Among Blacks* wasn't covered at all, even though it tied in nicely with the station's upcoming series on cancer by Dr. Frank Field. Clancy had merely said, "I'd rather go with the weather today."

After that, *Hijacking* made a nice "copy" story for pacing, and then *News 4* hit with *Long Island Railroad* (lots of film), *Governor Carey*, *Grumman*, and *Tramway*—four local transit stories that made a good "block," in Marcus's terminology. *Shelter Island* and *D.C. Buses* (with film) were also victims of the oil tanker, but *Reagan Budget* squeaked in as a filler. The special *Psychic* report took up its full allotted five-and-a-half minutes, even though there were no visuals of actual ghosts. "They're hard to film," conceded reporter Connie Collins. *Lakewood* also fell to the oil tanker, but *Beatles* served as the sports lead-in.

Tanning Parlors, a perfect weather tie-in, was supposed to be the light "closer" but it never even got filmed. Connie Collins discovered, when she got to the parlor, that patrons soaked up rays in the nude. And nudes can't be news. So Cliff Morrison did a "woman-on-the-street" report on *Down Coats* (another weather tie-in!) and wrapped it all up with, "Down coats—they'll never let you down."

Chinese Fireworks ran under the *News 4* credits. As for Ella Grasso, there happened to be no update on her precarious condition. But it was just as well, because she had already passed away at 5:49 P.M., 11 minutes before air time. *News 4* did not commit the gaffe of reporting that a person already dead was still dying. However, Grasso's death wasn't announced on the air, either, because word of it didn't come down to the control room until 7:10, after the program was over.

But there was, as they say in the news biz, film at 11. ■

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to the cable companies bidding on a franchise. For instance, at one time Milwaukee was asking for about 20 channels to be set aside just for use by its school system. Other towns, like Boston, want the cable company to wire everything within the city limits. There might be parts of town that have fewer than 20 homes per mile. Many companies won't build a system unless it has a minimum of 30 homes per mile. I tell councilmen that if they want remote parts of their town wired, they have to help us pay for it by increasing the installation fee in those areas.

The ideal franchise is a mountainous area with no TV signals and lots of upper-income families living in close proximity. There aren't too many of those places around any more. They went in the first wave of cable franchising 15 years ago. Places like Pottstown, Pa., and Cumberland, Md. Or San Diego, which was a great cable market. Everybody in San Diego wanted the Los Angeles stations, and the hills made local reception horrible. It's no surprise that it's the largest system in the country, with 200,000 subscribers.

The companies most skilled and sophisticated in cable franchising are battling one another to snare the remaining franchise plums. Of the dozens of MSOs fighting with one another, the best franchisers are Canadian Cablesystems, Warner Amex Cable Communications, Continental Cablevision, Cox Cable Communications and Telecable. Warner Amex is definitely the front-runner of all the MSOs in franchising, for one simple reason: Qube.

Qube is the name of Warner Amex's two-way interactive cable system in Columbus, Ohio. On paper, it's a money-loser, but it's the greatest franchising tool ever created. It's a PR man's dream, a great gimmick. The system gives viewers the opportunity to talk back to the TV set, which makes for great news. Warner Amex has a pile of newspaper and magazine clips extolling the wonders of Qube. Plus they roll out a videotape featuring the mayor of Columbus saying that Qube is the greatest thing since sliced bread. They've used Qube to win franchises in towns like Pittsburgh, Cincinnati and Dallas, and they'll use it in the future.

Besides Qube, Warner Amex has other aces in its hand. It has great political connections. Richard Aurelio, senior vice president for government affairs, heads all franchising efforts. He was formerly the deputy mayor of New York City, and has been professionally associated with the late governor Nelson Rockefeller and former senator Jacob Javits. He knows New York politics backward and forward, and I'll bet anything he was hired to make sure Warner Amex gets the lucrative Queens and Brooklyn franchises.

The Canadian MSOs are also quite sophisticated and successful cable franchisers. Canada is the most saturated cable-TV market in the world. There's no place for the Canadian MSOs to expand except down to the United States. The three or four largest Canadian MSOs each pick an American town, and then they'll spend more money than anyone else hiring the best law firms, producing the best proposals and finding the best American partners. They're very sensitive to community needs; their technical proposals are well thought out; and they have more experience in larger cities than American companies because they've already wired places like Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver. Their research is generally flawless and they just don't make mistakes. Additionally, only one Canadian company will bid in any one American market. They've done this in towns like Syracuse, Portland, Ore., and Minneapolis.

Working as a cable-TV franchiser is like working in a mental-health ward. You can only work there so long and then you start beating up the patients

I imagine they get together and say something like, "MacLean-Hunter, you do the suburbs of Detroit. Rogers, you go after Chicago." They're dividing up our country and it bothers the hell out of me. And it's not just because I'm wary of such tough competition.

The real issue is foreign ownership of broadcast-communications media. Foreign companies are not allowed to own over-the-air television stations, so why should they be permitted to own cable systems? If it were Mexican, Japanese or German companies establishing cable franchises, everybody would be very upset. But since Canadians are for the most part white and they speak almost like we do, it's fine for them to invest in U.S. cable systems.

The problem lies not so much in entertainment services but in the area of business communications, information transfer, computer banks and security systems. All of these services will eventually be using cable TV. How can we allow foreigners to tap into our information resources? We shouldn't, but we do.

There are a lot of issues in the cable-TV industry that trouble me, but I guess I'm bothered the most by the exhausting toil of franchising. Most people I know who are good at franchising work in one or two markets for about two years. Then they get out of that end of the business. It's like working in a mental-health ward. You can only work there so long and then you start beating up the patients.

What I'd really like to do after the franchising boom ends is go into the software end of the business—like creating my own basic-cable network. I know the ins and outs of this business, what the towns need, why people subscribe to cable and what the cable system has to do to remain profitable.

If I can't get into that, I could always become a cable-TV *re*franchiser. Refranchising is the chaotic art of influencing city-council members to once again grant your company the right to operate a cable-TV system in their town. Franchise contracts last about 15 years, and then the battles start all over again. Old systems have to be rebuilt. That means more bells and whistles, and more promises from cable companies eyeing the old franchise. Companies are going to battle one another all over again to get a bigger slice of the pie or just to hold on to their turf. Refranchisers can expect to engage in grueling fights, name-calling and dirty tricks.

On second thought, it sounds like just the type of work I want to avoid. ■

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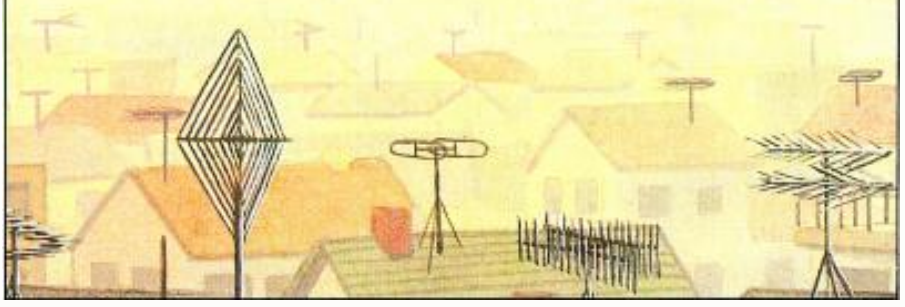
A single antenna can feed all the TV sets in your house. Up to four TV sets (plus an FM tuner) usually can be fed from the same antenna using nothing more than a low-cost "multiset coupler"



used in your area can help you check on him. It also can give you guidance if you're handy or crazy enough to try to do it yourself.

There's one simple, all-purpose rule for selecting an antenna: Buy the best one. Chances are it's going to last you a long time, and it's usually a relatively small investment compared with what you paid for your color set. In almost all areas where an outdoor antenna is needed, the largest one available, with the most elements, is the safest choice. In this case, biggest does mean best, because modern, large, multi-element antennas can capture the most signals and are the most directional—which means they can be aimed more precisely at the TV station's transmitting antenna, reducing the chance of ghosts.

If you're not in a fringe area, an unsightly aluminum roof garden often can be avoided by mounting the antenna in the attic. This is actually a preferred location, because it keeps the antenna and lead-in line out of the weather, and installation is usually simpler.

With any installation, you'll be faced with a choice between two basic types of lead-in wire from the antenna to the set: the round, coaxial kind (called 75-ohm) and the thin, flat, ribbon lead (300-ohm). Except in weak-signal fringe areas, the round "co-ax" usually is better. Although it tends to lose more of the signal on the way down, coaxial cable is shielded (and thus far less likely to pick up interference than ribbon lead), so it delivers the ingredients to your set for a cleaner picture. (It is also safer to work with in do-it-yourself installations.)Most modern color sets have coaxial-cable connectors on the back in addition to the regular screw-type antenna terminals; even if yours doesn't have one, a tiny matching transformer for a couple of dollars will let you use co-ax. The UHF channels are generally fed to the set through a separate set of screw-type terminals. The connection from an all-channel antenna to your set should end with two sets of connectors, one for VHF (either coaxial or ribbon lead) and one for UHF (ribbon lead).

Every outdoor or attic antenna should have a lightning arrester and static discharger connected to a sturdy stake in the ground. In addition to offering some protection against lightning, it helps keep the picture clear by grounding the static electricity that otherwise can build up in the antenna system. If your installer tells you this isn't necessary or will "do more harm than good," keep insisting—or fire him. Grounding of antennas is required under many state electrical codes and recommended by the National Fire Protection Association and all antenna manufacturers.

In deep fringe areas, far from television stations, the antenna should be mounted as high as possible. You may need a tall mast. Sometimes more height can be achieved by mounting the antenna on a hill or other place higher than the house. In this case, you'll probably need an amplifier mounted at the antenna and a companion amplifier down at the TV set. A pair of amplifiers may help even with rooftop installations. In other cases, you may need separate high-gain or highly directional VHF and UHF antennas.

The most difficult residential areas are those that rely on signals coming from two or more different directions—for example, if your house is midway between two cities with TV stations. In such a case, you're probably going to need a rotator, to turn the antenna toward the station you want to receive, or perhaps two or more antennas mounted on the same mast but facing different directions.

Fortunately, a single antenna can feed all the TV sets in your house. Up to four TV sets (plus an FM tuner) usually can be fed from the same antenna using nothing more than a low-cost "multiset coupler," which is a junction box with built-in protection to keep your sets from interfering with one another. If you want to feed more sets, live in a fringe area or have a particularly spread-out house (such as a large ranch-type), you may need a signal-splitter with built-in amplifier.

A good antenna installation should last a long time. Although some manufacturers recommend replacing antennas every five years or so, many experts disagree; there's really not too much that can go wrong with an antenna unless it blows down. The lead-in is something else again. It should be carefully inspected after three or four years (one year in seashore areas where salt air can cause corrosion). This means looking for frayed insulation, corrosion or exposed wires, particularly where the line rubs against the house or an insulator and where it's attached to the antenna. Under favorable conditions, good coaxial cable or foam-filled ribbon lead should last up to five years.

Deterioration of the picture on the TV set often is a sign of trouble in the antenna installation rather. than some problem with the set itself. A gradual increase in snow in the picture could mean your lead-in needs replacing. A sudden increase in snow or ghosts or loss

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ANTENNAS

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of color could indicate a damaged antenna. Usually, a visual check will reveal any problems. The antenna doesn't have to be clean and shiny to work, but it should be standing up with all its elements in place.

Antenna installation can be a do-it-yourself job if you have some skill, can follow instructions, can stand high places and have your insurance paid up. (Many people are electrocuted each year in the process of installing antennas; you must be extremely careful to avoid touching power lines with your ladder, the antenna or mast, the lead-in wire or your own body.) The most complicated part of the installation is orienting the antenna—aiming it for the best picture on all channels. This is done best by bringing a small battery-operated TV to the roof or attic with you, connecting it to the antenna and watching the picture as you gradually turn the antenna, repeating the procedure for all channels. Otherwise, it's a two-person job with lots of shouting between the roof and living room. A professional installation is usually the best way to go.

Well, I didn't promise you antennas would be fun. They're not. They're wretched little skinny things that almost seem to invite neglect. But it's one invitation you definitely should turn down. ■

Important Figures

The cost of antennas varies according to size: Outdoor, all-channel (VHF-UHF) models can be purchased for under $20 and run up to about $70, or even higher; VHF-only go from about $10 to $60 or more. The best UHF antennas, which are smaller, cost about $25. Coaxial cable ranges from 12 to 20 cents per foot, depending on brand and quality, while all-channel, foam-filled ribbon lead is six to 10 cents—more for a newer type with shielding, which provides some of the benefits of coaxials.

Major brands of antennas include Channel Master, Jerrold's, RCA and Winegard. The leading do-it-yourself brand is Archer, manufactured and sold by Radio Shack. Rabbit ears and other indoor units run from less than $6 up to about $30; more for special-purpose antennas and those with built-in amplifiers or boosters.—*D.L.*

"I'VE BEEN MURDERED"

continued from page 43

future locked inside an ultimate computer bank known as Cerberus, who in Greek mythology was the three-headed guardian of the gates of hell. This would be a viewing world in which the prime-time heroes and the places where they act out their nightly dramas would all be generated by computer, where each image would evolve according to the dictates of other computer programs measuring and analyzing your innermost thoughts and feelings and desires. A future, my fellow Americans, devoid of humanity, of life itself, but rich in profits; the television world populated by the modern-day Myrmidons, those perfect soldiers, also out of Greek mythology, who were the unquestioning, mute servants of their master's will.

"What has happened here at ACN is, in a sense, merely the logical consequence of the policy of automation that the television industry, like so many others, has been obsessed with for years now. Technology first eliminated the simple technical jobs, then more complex ones. Automated cameras, for example, replaced live cameramen, admittedly with only limited success at first back in the '60s, but the trend had been established. We did not then foresee to what extent it would go or how dedicated to the process its creators had become.

"We paid scant attention when we noticed that the announcers were the first human beings actually to be eliminated. By using tape machines, television stations everywhere could use one man to record several days' worth of announcements. Still, to some of those who ran television, that was one man too many. It had become necessary to eliminate *everyone*, every single live human being. Modern technology had now made it possible to abstract the image of an existing human being and to make that image perfect, by adjusting it to accord with the fluctuations in public taste. Sarah Anderson was our first image-maker, but she will surely not be the last."

Clark Hadley stood up and looked around. "Where's Sarah?" he asked grimly. No one answered. Hadley turned toward the door leading to the hall and for the first time noticed Steinman. "Who are you?" he asked.

Steinman introduced himself to the gathering. "I would like you all to stay right where you are," he said quietly. "We're already checking into these allegations and we will need statements from all of you."

"Where's Sarah Anderson?" Hadley insisted.

"She is under arrest. Which one of you is Lawrence Hoenig?"

The cry of dismay from the sofa made Hadley jump. Louise Hoenig stood up and began backing away in horror from the figure on the couch. Head slumped grotesquely to one side, mouth agape, eyes staring, her husband slid helplessly to the floor. The chairman was dead. He had not lived through his anchorman's greatest broadcast.

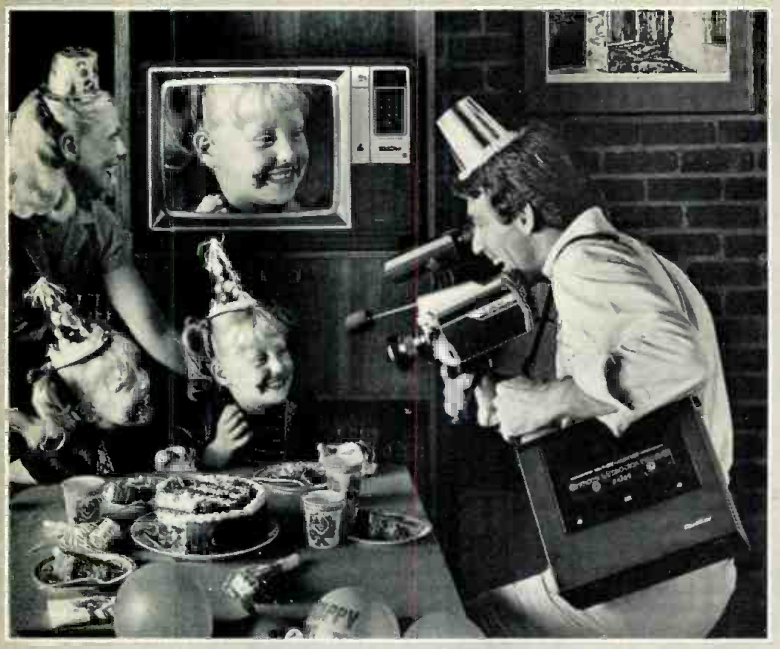
On the chairman's television screen, Harvey's posthumous triumph was concluding.

"Technology is a powerful tool that can be wielded for the good of mankind, as well as for baser purposes," said Harvey's image. "It is up to each and every one of us in this nation to resolve to gain control once more of our destinies so that we and our children will remain a free people, benefiting from a humane use of the awesome technological tools now at our command. We have no choice. There is no alternative. This is Harvey Grunwald. Good night . . . and goodbye."

At 28 minutes and 50 seconds past seven o'clock, the image of Harvey Grunwald began to fade and disintegrate. Bit by bit, as that image continued to look imploringly out of millions of television screens, it vanished. The screen went blank and remained silent.

I believe we'll be the first electronic movie studio in the world. . . . We'll use the full magic of technology; we won't shoot on film or even on tape; it'll be on some other memory—call it electronic memory. And then there's the possibility of synthesizing images on computers, of having an electronic facsimile of Napoleon playing the life of Napoleon. It's almost do-able right now; it just takes the wisdom and the guts to invest in the future.—Francis Ford Coppola, The New York Times, Aug. 12, 1979 ■

No film camera can do it: Videotape instant replay in color and sound.



Instant replay. Instant enjoyment. Instant check to be sure you got that once-in-a-lifetime shot. You just can't do it with ordinary 8mm film.

With this new portable Quasar Color/Sound Camera and Videotape Recorder you can do all that, and more. Including remote control slow motion, freeze frame, frame advance and program editing.

Shoot your own videotape "family album" in color and sound, show it easily anytime through your TV set. No hassle with projector and screen.

Easy-to-use video camera, turn it on, focus and shoot. Complete with power zoom lens and boom-type microphone. Compact, lightweight, 13-lb. recorder goes where you go, records up to six hours on a single cassette. Built-in battery operates up to 80 minutes before recharge.

And remember: six hours of tape costs about $20, six hours of film and processing more than $1000. Enough said. The picture of the future is videotape. Get in the picture with Quasar.

That's fantastic! That's Quasar!

Quasar®

ONE GREAT IDEA AFTER ANOTHER...

AFTER ANOTHER...AFTER ANOTHER...AFTER ANOTHER...AFTER ANOTHER...AFTER ANOTHER...

Component style, component features, integrated into one high-performance stereo system.

Programmable 14-day Video Cassette Recorder with remote control, special effects, high speed picture search.

Beautiful furniture, giant 45" diag. color TV, too. Remote control. 105 channels, stereo capability.

World's most compact 7" diag. TV and AM/FM radio goes where you go. Runs on AC, DC or ordinary D-cell batteries.

Microwave/Convection Oven that bakes and browns. With 3 separate functions, it's like 3 ovens in one.

TV Pictures Simulated.

Quasar, Franklin Park, Illinois 60131.
Division of Matsushita Electric Corporation of America

continued from page 14

Congress will act decisively on TV. Sen. Barry Goldwater (R-Ariz.), the Senate's new Communications Subcommittee chairman, and Sen. Robert Packwood (R-Ore.), the new chairman of the full committee with jurisdiction over TV, appear to have specific plans for change. These plans are said to include deregulation of the process by which TV stations get and retain their licenses, a reformulation of the Fairness Doctrine, and a study of whether the major networks should be allowed to operate their own cable systems. Their predecessors—Senators Ernest Hollings (D-S.C.) and Howard Cannon (D-Nev.)—"were in no hurry to do anything," Van Deerlin notes.

On the House side, Van Deerlin's successor is Rep. Tim Wirth (D-Colo.). Based on early statements, Wirth seems to be more interested in the whole range of telecommunications, including electronics, rather than just in broadcasting. Van Deerlin calls this expanded jurisdiction of the subcommittee to matters having nothing to do with broadcasting, "diversionary." But some battles almost surely will be fought over what Americans are able to receive on their TV sets—for instance, direct satellite-to-home broadcasting. One company already has proposed a direct-broadcast satellite (DBS) plan to the Federal Communications Commission. Not surprisingly, TV networks and broadcast lobbying groups dislike the idea intensely.

"Decisions have to be made about DBS in Congress," Van Deerlin says flatly. "That's where the people's elected representatives sit. I want several million consumers, rather than seven FCC commissioners sitting in Washington, making the decision on DBS." Van Deerlin himself is skeptical about arguments that DBS will destroy local broadcasting and deprive low-income viewers of free TV: "Let's let the determination about localism be made at the local level. That can be accomplished by seeing who buys DBS and who doesn't. As for the agonized cries about the poor and oppressed being deprived . . . in San Diego [Van Deerlin's home city], when pay-cable became available, the most hookups were in the middle-and lower-income parts of town."

On other topics, Van Deerlin noted:

- The FCC reversed itself to some extent during his years in Congress. "We nudged the FCC into facing up to reality—with help from the courts—in deregulation of cable TV. There's nothing shameful in the FCC deciding who gets what, but the early decisions about cable show what can happen when self-anointed guardians of the public interest decide which [TV] medium should be king."
- The National Association of Broadcasters and other defenders of traditional TV still have clout, despite the rise of cable TV and other technologies. "A congressman wants to be on TV news when he's home. I like to think that station management isn't influencing news judgments, but when you get a call from a TV executive in your district, you're going to listen to him."
- Multiplicity of TV stations could be around the corner, as evidenced by such omens as the FCC's proposal to create low-power channels. "If you don't unlock the door to more frequencies, there will never be much minority ownership or programming. Existing outlets cost so much money, and are often unavailable. It's a reasonable aspiration for minority groups to want their own programming."

Turner's PR Investment

Washington, D.C., is not wired for cable—and this makes Ted Turner *real* mad. So much so, he's gone and spent $13,000 to install a satellite earth station on the grounds of the Capitol.

Behind the madness there is method, of course. Turner is the man responsible for the 24-hour-a-day Cable News Network, and he's been upset at CNN's relative invisibility in Washington. Now, with their own satellite station, at least members of Congress can tune in to CNN on a round-the-clock basis.

To further heighten their awareness, Turner threw a lavish reception in a Congressional office building. Screens were set up throughout the reception room, showing that night's CNN programming. Meanwhile, the network's reporters and anchors mingled with senators, representatives and other Washington decision-makers. Peter Vesey, CNN Washington bureau chief, says Turner's PR blitz seems to have worked. "Being more visible on Capitol Hill has helped our reporters, because now our news sources understand better what we are doing. A lot of congressmen want to know how many cable operators in their district carry us."

Mike Michaelson, who runs the House Radio-Television Gallery for Washington correspondents, says CNN generally is not viewed nonstop on Capitol Hill. "We might have it on in the early morning or other odd hours when you can't get the news anywhere else because no one else is doing it."

Turner still doesn't have visibility at the White House—but he's working on it. Vesey says CNN has offered to pay for a satellite dish on the grounds of the executive mansion, "but I don't see a good chance of it being put there, partly for aesthetic reasons." Other ways are being explored of getting CNN to White House television sets—like linking the White House via microwave hookup to Arlington, Va., which is already wired for cable.

LONDON
RICHARD GILBERT REPORTING

Playing for Time Uproar

***Vanessa Redgrave:** Heroine off-key.*

Wherever *Playing for Time* is shown on TV, it is surrounded by controversy. In America there was the storm over Vanessa Redgrave—a PLO supporter—portraying a young Jewish musician, Fania Fenelon, struggling to survive in Auschwitz. But when the film, written by Arthur Miller, was shown on British TV, an entirely different row broke out.

Anita Lasker, now a cellist with the English Chamber Orchestra, is one of the six musicians still alive who were in that grotesque Auschwitz orchestra. She says that the film is a serious distortion of the truth—especially in its glorification of Fenelon at the expense of the orchestra conductor, Alma Rose, the niece of composer Gustav Mahler.

"It just wasn't like that," says Anita, who lives in Lon-

don. "Fania was pleasant and talented, but she was not as forceful as Alma, who helped us to survive. She was the key figure, a woman of immense strength and dignity who commanded the respect of everyone, including the SS. What she achieved with her iron discipline and absurd pursuit of musical perfection was that our attention was focused away from the death factory and on to an F which should have been an F sharp. She kept us sane."

Miss Lasker, with three other survivors from the orchestra who live in France and Belgium, has launched a campaign to oppose the picture that audiences will get from *Playing for Time*.

Today Anita Lasker refuses to visit Germany when the English Chamber Orchestra plays there. She is determined to rescue the reputation of Alma Rose (and has already managed to get some parts of the original Fenelon book, *The Musicians of Auschwitz*, removed). "We all feel that we must defend the name of Alma Rose because she saved our lives and did not survive the camp to defend herself."

A second controversy came with the decision by London Weekend Television to show commercials when it presented the film in Britain. Sales director of LWT Ron Miller was very careful about the ads shown in the breaks: "We decided that we couldn't show any food ads, holiday camps, anything to do with gas in any shape or form." To those who criticized the showing of any ads, Miller replied: "It is because of commercials that we were able to buy that program."

Disc Brings Comfort No Joy

Transform *The Joy of Sex* into a videodisc? That's the fondest desire of Mitchell Beazley, the British publishers who own rights to the best seller. Unfortunately for them, it's also about the worst idea that Dr. Alex Comfort—the book's author—has ever heard. And he hasn't been at all shy in expressing his feelings vis-à-vis the burgeoning print-into-videodisc market.

"The book," complains Comfort, "was designed to be viewed on the page, and both I and the publisher labored to make its illustrations tasteful. I am now threatened with a video version—presumably with live performers—over my energetic protests. This was a development which no author could have foreseen in assigning adaptation rights."

Mitchell Beazley, recently taken over by American Express, is a hard-charging company with ambitious plans to turn many of their books into video software—especially their modern encyclopedia, *The Joy of Knowledge*. Managing director Adrian Webster has been trying to soothe Dr. Comfort but their dispute is emblematic of a larger problem: It shows how the booming video market has quickly overtaken agreements made between publishers and authors only a few years ago.

"In 1972," says Dr. Comfort, "a work like mine could run little risk of appearing as a musical or an ice show to the intense embarrassment of the physician who wrote it." He hopes that if he makes enough fuss, the publishers might change their plans. "Obviously it could be done just with paintings and drawings, although I don't know who would want to catch it. As far as using actors goes, I don't care if they get Sadler's Wells Ballet to do it—it would still be tasteless."

If all else fails, Dr. Comfort has one last (and forlorn) hope: "that the forecasts of a mass video home market are greatly exaggerated." ■

Videocassettes
New Releases

MOVIES

And Now the Screaming Starts (1973)—Gothic terror greets the newlywed owners of an English manor house. Peter Cushing, Stephanie Beacham, Patrick Magee. (The Nostalgia Merchant; $54.95) (R)

Asylum (1972)—A young psychiatrist learns of the murderous pasts of incurable inmates. Richard Todd, Barbara Parkins, Peter Cushing, Britt Ekland. (The Nostalgia Merchant; $54.95) (PG)

Cybill Shepherd: 1930s revisited.

At Long Last Love (1975)—Burt Reynolds and Cybill Shepherd sing and dance their way through a dozen Cole Porter tunes in Peter Bogdanovich's nostalgic tribute to romantic comedies of the 1930s. With Madeline Kahn, Eileen Brennan. (Magnetic Video Corp.; $59.95) (PG)

The Big Sleep (1978)—Robert Mitchum as private eye Philip Marlowe in Raymond Chandler's murder mystery about sisters gunning for control of the family fortune. With Sarah Miles, Richard Boone, Candy Clark, Joan Collins. (Magnetic Video Corp.; $59.95) (R)

Sophia Loren: Goodbye to Rome.

The Fall of the Roman Empire (1964)—Sweeping spectacle of ancient Rome during the reign of Emperor Commodus. Sophia Loren, Stephen Boyd, James Mason, Alec Guinness. (Time Life Video Club; $69.95)

Harry and Tonto (1974)—Art Carney as an old man who rejuvenates himself on a cross-country road trip with his cat as companion. With Ellen Burstyn, Larry Hagman. (Magnetic Video Corp.; $59.95) (R)

The Invasion of the Body Snatchers (1956)—Extraterrestrial plant life descends upon a small California town. Kevin McCarthy, Dana Wynter, Caroline Jones. (The Nostalgia Merchant; $54.95)

Loving Couples (1980)—Shirley MacLaine and James Coburn as married doctors who swap partners with a younger couple. With Susan Sarandon, Stephen Collins. (Time Life Video Club; $54.95) (PG)

Madame Sin (1971)—Made-for-TV adventure drama with Bette Davis as an evil mastermind intent on capturing a Polaris submarine. With Robert Wagner, Roy Kinnear. (Magnetic Video Corp.; $59.95)

The Man Who Loved Women (1977)—François Truffaut's wry comedy in which a modern Don Juan remembers his past romances. Charles Denner, Brigitte Fossey, Leslie Caron. (Time Life Video Club; $59.95)

The Man with the Golden Arm (1955)—Otto Preminger's gripping drama of a drug addict's struggle to kick his habit. Frank Sinatra, Eleanor Parker, Kim Novak, Darren McGavin. (Magnetic Video Corp.; $59.95)

Best Sellers

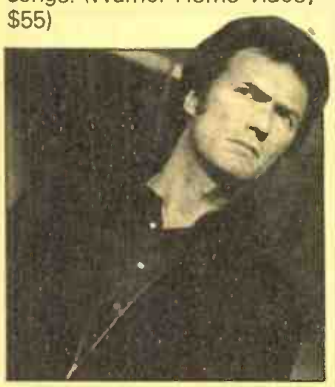
This list of the top 20 prerecorded videocassettes is based on sales figures from a survey of retail outlets around the country.

*(–) **1. Caddyshack** (1980)—Slapstick comedy starring Chevy Chase and Bill Murray. (Warner Home Video; $65)

(2) **2. Airplane!** (1980)—Zany spoof of airport disaster movies. (Paramount Home Video; $79.95)

(–) **3. Smokey and the Bandit II** (1980)—Bandit, Frog and Sheriff Justice are reunited. (MCA Videocassette, Inc.; $65)

(–) **4. Honeysuckle Rose** (1980)—Willie Nelson as a successful country singer who begins to live his love songs. (Warner Home Video; $55)



Clint Eastwood: Loves his gun.

(–) **5. Magnum Force** (1973)—Another in the *Dirty Harry* series, starring Clint Eastwood. (Warner Home Video; $65)

(9) **6. Urban Cowboy** (1980)—John Travolta in a glossy Texas melodrama. (Paramount Home Video; $79.95)

(–) **7. Fame** (1980)—Energetic musical set in a New York high school for performing artists. (CBS Video Enterprises; $69.95)

(6) **8. Xanadu** (1980)—Musical fantasy, starring Olivia Newton-John. (MCA Videocassette, Inc.; $65)

(–) **9. Prom Night** (1980)—A hooded ax-murderer stalks a high-school prom. (MCA Videocassette, Inc.; $65)

(–) **10. Humanoids from the Deep** (1980)—Horror film, featuring gruesome amphibians. (Warner Home Video; $45)

(–) **11. Tom Horn** (1980)—Steve McQueen plays the title role in this Western about a gunfighter framed for murder. (Warner Home Video; $65)

(4) **12. Star Trek—The Motion Picture** (1979)—Starring the original TV-series crew. (Paramount Home Video; $84.95)

(1) **13. Close Encounters of the Third Kind—Special Edition** (1980)—Steven Spielberg's expanded UFO spectacular. (Columbia Pictures Home Entertainment; $69.95)

(–) **14. Oh God!, Book II** (1980)—God (George Burns) reappears in a second attempt at reaching the people. (Warner Home Video; $65)

(11) **15. Alien** (1979)—Haunted-house drama in outer space. (Magnetic Video Corp.; $59.95)

(–) **16. Death Race 2000** (1975)—Violent, futuristic melodrama. (Warner Home Video; $50)

(–) **17. Nine to Five** (1980)—Jane Fonda, Dolly Parton and Lily Tomlin declare war on office sexism. (Magnetic Video Corp.; $69.95)

(19) **18. Coal Miner's Daughter** (1980)—Sissy Spacek in the rags-to-riches story of country singer Loretta Lynn. (MCA Videocassette, Inc.; $65)

(3) **19. 2001: A Space Odyssey** (1968)—Stanley Kubrick's milestone space epic. (CBS Video Enterprises; $69.95)

(–) **20. Being There** (1980)—Peter Sellers as a simple gardener whose knowledge comes solely from TV. (CBS Video Enterprises; $69.95)

***Position last month**

Sales figures are from the month of February. Retail outlets participating in our survey include: Associated Video, Houston; Audio Center, Honolulu; Audio Video Craft, Inc., Los Angeles; Barney Miller's Inc., Lexington, Ky.; Cinema Concepts, Inc., Wethersfield, Conn.; Communications Maintenance, Inc., Litchfield, Ill.; Concord Video Center, Stamford, Conn.; Cyclops Video, Sherman Oaks, Cal.; Discotronics, Inc., Cranbury, N.J.; Godwin Radio, Inc./Godwin Video Centers, Birmingham, Ala.; Jantzen Beach Magnavox Home Entertainment Center, Portland, Ore.; Kaleidoscope Video Shops, Oklahoma City; Media Associates, Mountain View, Cal.; Media Concepts, Inc., St. Petersburg, Fla.; Modern Communications, St. Louis; Movies Unlimited, Philadelphia; Newbury TV & Appliances, New Bedford, Mass.; Nichols Electronics, Wichita, Kan.; Select Film Library, New York; The Sheik Video Corp., Metairie, La.; Stansbury Stereo, Baltimore; Televideo Systems, Richmond; Thomas Film Video, Royal Oak, Mich.; Video Audio Electronics, Williamsport, Pa.; Video Cassette, Phoenix; Video Cassettes, Etc., Lubbock, Texas; Video Connection, Boston; The Video Connection, Toledo, Ohio; Video Corporation of America, Edison, N.J.; Video Dimensions, New York; Video Library, Torrance, Cal.; The Video Library Company, Narberth, Pa.; Video Services, Towson, Md.; Video Specialties, Houston; Video 2000, San Diego; Visual Adventures, Cleveland.

March or Die (1977)—Action drama of a French Foreign Legion major assigned to protect desert excavators from superstitious Arabs. Gene Hackman, Terence Hill, Max Von Sydow, Catherine Deneuve. (Magnetic Video Corp.; $59.95) (PG)

The Medusa Touch (1978)—A detective traces a series of mysterious deaths to a dying man with telekinetic powers. Richard Burton, Lino Ventura, Lee Remick, Marie-Christine Barrault. (Magnetic Video Corp.; $59.95) (PG)

The Moon Is Blue (1953)—A headstrong young woman bewilders sophisticated suitors who prefer sex without marriage. William Holden, David Niven, Maggie McNamara. (Magnetic Video Corp.; $59.95)

Providence (1977)—Director Alain Resnais's multilayered tale of an aging writer's real and imagined relations with his family. John Gielgud, Dirk Bogarde, Ellen Burstyn, David Warner. (Time Life Video Club; $59.95) (R)

Sex on the Run (1978)—Period farce with Tony Curtis in a dual role as the famous Casanova and his unsuspecting look-alike. With Marisa Berenson, Britt Ekland. (Time Life Video Club; $49.95) (R)

The Vault of Horror (1973)—Five horror tales adapted from the E.C. comic books of the 1950s; includes "Midnight Mess" and "A Bargain in Death." Terry-Thomas, Glynis Johns. (The Nostalgia Merchant; $54.95) (R)

The World's Greatest Lover (1977)—Gene Wilder wrote, directed and starred in this wacky period comedy about a film studio's search for a rival to Rudolph Valentino. With Carol Kane, Dom DeLuise. (Magnetic Video Corp.; $59.95) (PG)

continued

Zorba the Greek (1964)—Anthony Quinn stars as a Cretan peasant who teaches a scholarly Englishman to accept life's joys and pains. With Alan Bates, Irene Papas. (Magnetic Video Corp.; $79.95)

SPECIALS

John F. Kennedy—Kennedy's years as President and his assassination are explored in this 105-minute program produced by CBS News; features an interview with Rose Kennedy by Harry Reasoner. (MGM/CBS Home Video; $49.95)

Racquet Ball Lesson—Strategy, strokes and rules of the popular sport are covered in this 59-minute program. (Fotomat; $39.95)

Knitting with Dee—Two-part instructional cassette with teacher Dee Russo, who takes students from the basic stitches to the assembly of a sweater. (Fotomat; each segment $39.95)

Some movie descriptions courtesy of TV Guide magazine, others by Fred von Bernewitz. Ratings are those assigned by the Motion Picture Association of America for theatrical showings.

Readers wishing to obtain more information from the distributors of the above-listed movies and specials may do so at these addresses: Fotomat, 64 Danbury Rd., Wilton, Conn. 06897; Magnetic Video Corp., 23434 Industrial Park Court, Farmington Hills, Mich. 48024; MGM/CBS Home Video, 1700 Broadway, 35th floor, New York, N.Y. 10019; The Nostalgia Merchant, 6255 Sunset Blvd., Suite 1019, Hollywood, Cal. 90028; Time Life Video Club, Harrisburg, Pa. 17105.

Passages

BORN

Bryce Dallas Howard, to actor **Ron Howard** (*Happy Days, The Andy Griffith Show*) and his wife Cheryl.

WED

Monty Python member **John Cleese** (*Monty Python's Flying Circus, The Taming of the Shrew*) and TV producer-director Barbara Trentham (*Those Amazing Animals*).
Sha Na Na drummer **John Marcellino** (*Sha Na Na*) and Nicki Stern, director of Amazin' Music.

DIVORCING

Loni Anderson (*WKRP in Cincinnati, The Jayne Mansfield Story*) and actor Ross Bickell, her husband of seven years.

SIGNED

Former CBS correspondent and commentator **Eric Sevareid**, as host and commentator of *Chronicle*, a syndicated one-hour news magazine from PolyGram Television.
Actress **Anne Lockhart**, whose credits include *Battlestar Galactica, BJ and the Bear* and the Steve Martin comedy special *All Commercials*, to a one-year contract with NBC, exclusive in the area of series development.

HONORED

Charles Kuralt (for his reporting on *Morning with Charles Kuralt* and *CBS News Sunday Morning*) and **Bill Moyers** (for *Bill Moyers' Journal*; *Campaign Report*) with George Polk Awards in Journalism from Long Island University.
Jane Pauley and **Betty Furness** of NBC's *Today* show, with Women of Achievement awards from the Wings Club.
Walter Cronkite, by the organization committee of the 21st International Television Festival of Monte Carlo, for "his vast personal contribution to broadcast journalism."
Lou Grant star **Ed Asner**, by the Los Angeles chapter of the Myasthenia Gravis Foundation, for his humanitarian activities.
Yoko Shimada, *Shōgun*'s Lady Mariko, as Woman of the Year in Broadcasting by the Hollywood Radio and Television Society.

Laurence Olivier: Hip, hip, hurrah!

Laurence Olivier, whose TV credits include *Love Among the Ruins, The Merchant of Venice* and *Tribute to American Theatre*, by Queen Elizabeth II, with membership in the exclusive Order of Merit.
With 1979-80 Alfred I. duPont-Columbia University Awards in Broadcast Journalism: **Perry Miller Adato** and WNET (New York) for *Picasso: A Painter's Diary*; ABC-TV for *The Iran Crisis: America Held Hostage/Nightline*; **Ed Bradley** and CBS-TV for *CBS Reports:* "Blacks in America: With All Deliberate Speed"; **Roger Mudd** and CBS-TV for *CBS Reports:* "Teddy"; **Reuven Frank** and NBC-TV for *NBC White Paper:* "If Japan Can . . . Why Can't We?"; Red Cloud Productions and WGBY-TV (Springfield, Mass.) for *Joan Robinson: One Woman's Story*; and **Carol Mon Pere, Sandra Nichols** and KTEH (San Jose, Cal.) for *The Battle of Westlands*—the first duPont-Columbia Award ever given for independent production, and the first cash prize.

RESIGNED

Jean Doumanian, as producer of *Saturday Night Live*; **Dick Ebersol**, NBC executive who helped develop the original *Saturday Night*, replaces Doumanian.
Rock-'n'-roll announcer **Wolfman Jack**, from NBC's *Midnight Special*.
Jack Petry, as vice president, broadcast standards, for NBC.

DIED

Michael Maltese, 73, Academy-, Annie- and Emmy-award-winning writer who helped create such classic cartoon characters as The Road Runner, Wile E. Coyote, Bugs Bunny, Daffy Duck and Pepe Le Pew.
Tom Streithorst, 49, NBC News correspondent.
Benjamin B. Zavin, 61, author of *The Education of H*Y*M*A*N* K*A*P*L*A*N* and many television plays, one of which, *A Day in Town*, won him a Christopher Award.
Torin Thatcher, 76, British character actor who appeared in scores of movies (*Hawaii, The Sandpiper*), plays (*The Miracle Worker, Hidden Stranger*) and television productions (*Night Gallery, The Defenders, Gunsmoke*).
Emmy-winning comedy writer **Don Hinkley**, 59, who wrote for Steve Allen, Carol Burnett, Andy Williams and, most recently, the Muppets.
Harry Winkler, 65, television writer for *The George Gobel Show, The Addams Family* and many other shows.

POWER *continued from page 39*
ing night. "Opposite football?" Winkler said. "No, thank you." The show appeared on a less cluttered Sunday evening.

Winkler has never stalked off a set, but he understands why some stars give in to temperament. "You have to take care of yourself," he says. "Actors and actresses are still second-class citizens in this business. We're just regarded as so much meat."

THE NETWORK PROGRAMMER

Nothing is so powerful as success, and that makes the president of CBS Entertainment, B. Donald (Bud) Grant, a powerful figure indeed. Grant and his predecessor, Robert Daly, now chairman of Warner Bros. Inc., are generally credited with developing the strategy that restored CBS to first place. Grant was then vice president for programming, and the prime-time schedule built around *Dallas*, *M*A*S*H* and *Lou Grant* is his handiwork. To do it, he applied personal and institutional power in unorthodox ways.

There was, for example, the way he pushed for *Lou Grant*, outside the normal channels of bureaucracy. "We had no script and no pilot," the barrel-chested, chain-smoking Grant says. "All we had to go on was a concept. But we had confidence in the property. We had Ed Asner playing the same role he had played for years; a good creative team in Brooks and Burns; and MTM, a respected producing company with a fine track record. The show didn't do well at first, but that didn't bother us. We thought it was in the wrong period. We moved it to Monday at 10, and it began to build."

Build it did: The award-winning show now holds its own against *Monday Night Football*, commanding a higher price per commercial than the more highly rated *Dukes of Hazzard* or *Dallas*. It also signaled that CBS, under Grant, would stand behind prestigious projects even if they weren't quick successes.

Grant, 46, started in television on the *Today* show, shifted to CBS in 1972 and then worked his way up the programming ranks. He has established a solid reputation with producers and studio chiefs: "He has the best intuitions of anyone at any of the three networks," says a producer who also has worked for NBC and ABC. Since CBS chairman William S. Paley's reputation is built on his own redoubtable instincts, Grant's is obviously not the sole voice on whether a program on that network lives or dies (or is born, for that matter), but it is an influential one.

THE STUDIO CHIEF

On the lot that once resounded to the screams of Jack L. Warner, Alan Shayne seems conspicuously out of place. In his camel's-hair jacket and foulard tie, the former actor and casting director who led the Warner Bros. studio back to a position of power in television would appear more at home in a university club. But his urbane, soft-spoken manner is deceptive. "Alan is very definitely in command," says an associate.

Another associate calls Shayne "a tiger. Anyone with an iffy project should come to Alan, because if he likes it he will never give up, no matter what the opposition." As an example, he notes that Shayne worked three years to nail down the rights to produce certain Agatha Christie mysteries. "It will probably be another two years before they are on the air," the associate says.

Bud Grant used personal and institutional power in unorthodox ways to build CBS's prime-time schedule

Shayne, like so many of his colleagues, assumes a "Who, me?" attitude when you ask him about power. But in his four years as president, Warner has placed two CBS shows in the top 20, *The Dukes of Hazzard* and *Alice*; has developed two spinoffs, *Enos* and *Flo*; and has presented a number of television movies, including the much-admired *The Women's Room*, *Haywire* and *The Corn Is Green*. Next year it will bring back *Maverick*, with James Garner. Only five years ago, the studio was considering folding up its television operations.

Has this track record given Shayne and Warner's more clout?

Shayne considers their power rather modest. Sitting in his stark white office, with its fireplace and paintings by Rauschenberg and Frankenthaler, he discusses the case of *The Women's Room*. CBS dropped its option to produce the best-selling feminist novel because the book was too controversial. So Shayne took it to ABC. "We developed a beautiful script, but the network still wouldn't go unless a name actress could be obtained. They suggested people like Barbra Streisand or Jill Clayburgh, who weren't available for television roles. The whole project would have gone down the drain if Lee Remick had not reconsidered." He shakes his head. "We can't take much credit. We fought for something we believed in, but the fact that it was shown was strictly fluky."

THE MONEY MAN

It wouldn't be wholly inaccurate to say that *The Mary Tyler Moore Show* came to you through the courtesy of Lewis P. Horwitz. That's right, Lewis P. Horwitz. A financial packager for entertainment ventures, Horwitz arranged a line of credit for MTM that kept the show operating for seven years. Later, he did the same for MTM's *Bob Newhart Show* and *Rhoda*.

And for whom else?

Horwitz, the cautious banker, won't say. He only acknowledges the MTM connections because Grant Tinker of MTM has openly mentioned them.

There are two classes of money men, according to Horwitz, a bank official for 23 years before founding his own firm last fall. *Investors* take shares in an entertainment venture, hoping for a hit; *lenders* don't take a piece of the action, but lend money for the producer to complete the job. To lenders, it is a straight business transaction, and they are likely to think in terms of collateral—not creativity.

That also means the lenders' money flows toward sure things. Horwitz gets dozens of applications for financial support weekly, but few cut his own particular brand of mustard. He begins by reviewing plans for a given project, the business arrangements with the studio or network, and the contracts and proposed budget. Artistic merits are not judged. As a frustrated actor who once appeared in *Maude*, Horwitz feels he can smell failure. "I could see they were making a mistake," he says about a recent pilot he was asked to support, "both in the concept and in the star. I talked myself blue in the face without

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POWER *continued from page 89*

result. So I was just extra careful to be well-covered in that case. Well, it was a tragedy. The project was completed, but nothing was ever shown. The network lost money; the producer lost his fee; there was no syndication sale." He pauses. "Of course, the bank got paid."

Producers say lenders often drive a hard bargain. Besides contracts and network commitments, bankers may insist on secondary collateral, often in the form of the producer's personal assets—"A house in Santa Monica doesn't hurt," Horwitz says.

Although it would seem that Horwitz looks at the television industry cold-heartedly, he doesn't see it that way at all. "When I see something on the screen that's my baby, I get tears in my eyes," the banker says. "I like to think that I contributed in some small way to its success."

THE AGENT

There are 650 licensed theatrical talent agencies in California alone, ranging from giants like the William Morris Agency (with hundreds of clients) to one-man operations (with a telephone, a typewriter and a single customer). Collectively, the agents' ability to promote an actor makes them an important power group. One of the most respected of these representatives is Wally Hiller, a slender man with a gray, pencil-thin mustache. His advice, for example, could decide the future of one of television's biggest hits—*Three's Company*.

The client list of his firm—Arcara, Bauman and Hiller—includes Jean Stapleton, Mike Farrell and Sada Thompson, but the name that gives the firm particular luster is John Ritter. The young male star of the *ménage-à-trois* sitcom has been called "the best thing to hit town since Jack Lemmon." And Hiller doesn't hesitate to let you know it. After the 1981-82 season, Ritter's *Three's Company* contract expires, and Hiller is like a poker player holding four aces: "I'd rather have them come to us if they want John for another year, because I would like him just to concentrate on feature films. I think he needs more scope for his talents."

Although generations of moviegoers know that agents earn their 10 percent by blustering and shouting on behalf of their clients, Hiller belies the stereotype. Though he is so soft-spoken that you often must lean forward to catch what he is saying, and though he eschews most of the typical Hollywood superlatives, both his voice and message come through loud and clear. "Wally is a good salesman," says Ted Bergmann, executive in charge of production for *Three's Company*.

Bergmann has sat across from Hiller in many negotiations and undoubtedly will do so again. "He is a very astute judge of talent and of what is good for his clients." Hiller negotiated Ritter's original *Three's Company* contract, shepherded it through three revisions with healthy raises and, in 1978, sealed an exclusive contract with ABC that also gives Ritter TV-movie roles and development funds. Ritter's per-episode income is said to reach a high five figures. Hiller doesn't deny it and is willing to say, "John is doing as well as anyone his age except perhaps Henry Winkler, whose *Happy Days* contract ran out so that the network had to make it worthwhile for him to stay."

The view from Hiller's office wasn't always so bright. When he opened shop 15 years ago, he had only 10 clients. "The first day I read a pile of scripts and realized there wasn't a part for any one of my clients. It was pretty frightening," he remembers.

Now his lesser-known clients are helped by having name stablemates like Ritter and Jean Stapleton. "When you represent a major star, no one keeps you waiting very long," Hiller says. "But in the long run, it's still individual talent that counts. Casting directors return our calls because they respect our judgment and reputation, not because of one or two names on the client list."

Smaller agencies like Hiller's are vulnerable to raids from the industry's giants, who often woo actors with talk of their bigness and clout. In response, Hiller likes to tell a story about Boris Karloff, whom Hiller represented while an agent at MCA. A young actress approached Karloff and asked the name of his agent. Karloff said he was represented by MCA. "Oh, that's wonderful," the

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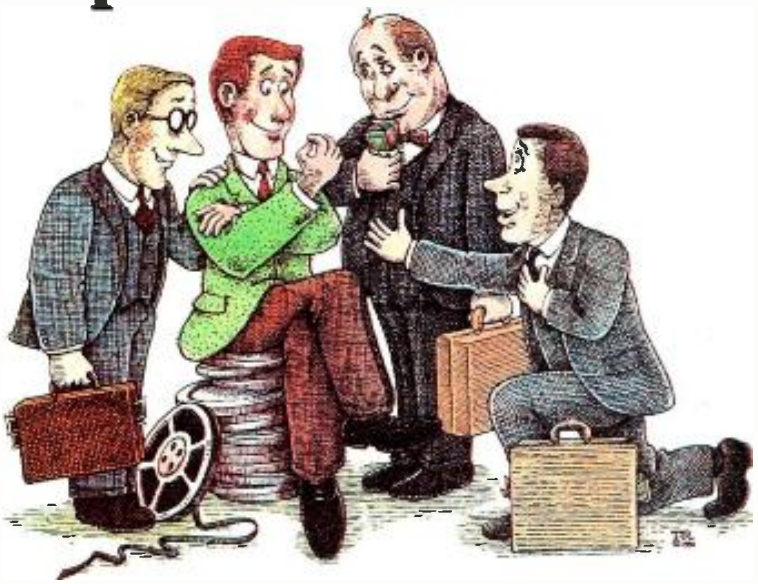
The Seduction of the Independent Producer



By STANLEY MARCUS

"The producer of the best shows never seen on television." That's the way Sports Illustrated described Bud Greenspan six years ago when his independent company, Cappy Productions Inc., was turning out a steady stream of sports documentaries that consistently failed to find their way onto network schedules. According to industry insiders, mere jealousy was keeping Greenspan—and other "indie" producers—off the air. Traditionally, network sports and documentary units simply haven't been willing to cede any of their precious turf to outsiders.

Things have loosened up a little since then. The PBS showing, in 1976, of Greenspan's *Olympiad* series brought him a national reputation as well as two Emmys, and the following year Greenspan had some rare network exposure when NBC telecast *Wilma*, his dramatized biography of runner Wilma Rudolph.

But the real change in Greenspan's life has occurred in the past six months, because in this very recent period he has discovered that he's a wanted man—wanted by pay-TV. "It's like the great white hope has arrived," he says. "Pay-TV operators are now calling me on almost a daily basis. It's similar to the golden days of commercial television."

Pay-TV systems—both cable and over-the-air—are hungry for quality programming, says Greenspan, because they have promised their subscribers something better than the networks offer. And if they don't deliver, they go out of business. "If someone's not getting what they're paying for on Home Box Office or ON-TV [a subscription television system in Los Angeles and Detroit], they just stop paying their 10 bucks a month," Greenspan notes. "This doesn't happen to be the case in commercial television."

One of the first deals that Greenspan wrapped up with pay-TV was for his 14-part series *Numero Uno*, which is now being shown by ON-TV. The series, to be telecast later in the year by PBS, examines the careers of 14 superheroes of sport, each from a different country. They include British miler Sir Roger Bannister, West German soccer star Franz Beckenbauer, and Japan's sumo star Taiho.

Now there's also an unofficial auction going on for the 1984 version of the *Olympiad* series, which has been expanded to 22 hour-long programs on various aspects of the Games. "The offers we are getting from pay-TV compare equally to those we are getting from network stations," says Greenspan. "This is the first time we don't have to say yes to anybody, because of the backup position—and the backup position is getting bigger and better every day." Further, Greenspan quotes an estimate that pay-TV revenues from *Wilma* will be well over a million dollars—twice as much as he could have earned from syndication.

Another Cappy production for pay-TV/network competition will be *For the Honor of Our Country*, also an Olympic series, this one focusing on 26 nations and the history of their participation in the Games. As yet, there's no way of telling where it will eventually pop up . . . HBO? ESPN? NBC? Greenspan finds this uncertainty bracing.

What does Greenspan see as the long-term effects of this sea change in the industry? "I think all the people who moved away from independent production for TV will be coming back when they realize that money is available for original, uninterrupted dramas and two-hour films without commercials," he says. "The other thing that will happen is that commercial television will try to elevate itself to the level of pay-TV. Three or four or five years down the line, their main selling point will be: 'Why pay for something you can get for free?' "

A HEALTHY TREND

Cable TV has made a discovery about its subscribers: They all have bodies. October sees the start of a daily (Monday through Friday) two-hour health program on the USA Network, sponsored by pharmaceutical giant Bristol-Myers. (See page 14.) And in the following month gynecologist Art Ulene, medical pundit of the *Today* show, launches The Health Channel, a brand-new basic-cable service that will offer six hours a day of psycho- and somatic wisdom.

Frank Field, the venerable health and science editor for WNBC-TV in New York, sees the new ventures as a sign of enlightenment. "When I began doing health on TV in 1961, you didn't dare mention halitosis or hemorrhoids," he says. Ah, but that was before TV discovered that viewers have bodies. ■

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POWER *continued from page 90*
young woman gushed. "They're so big! They have offices all over the world!"

"That's right, my dear," the gentlemanly Karloff said. "That means when I'm unemployed, I'm unemployed all over the world!"

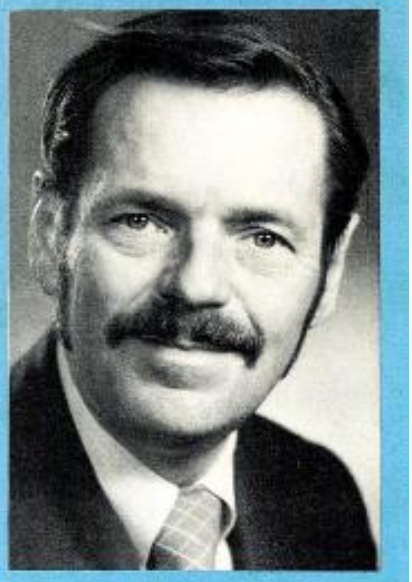
THE ADVERTISER

Advertiser power in television ain't what it used to be. Back in the radio era and the early days of television, advertising agencies prepared programs for "sponsors"; the sponsors, in turn, picked up the tab and controlled the entire production. Today, production costs are usually much too high for a single sponsor, so advertisers buy 30-second spots, which are mixed with other messages, like advertising pages in a magazine. But even though advertisers don't totally control programs, that doesn't mean they lack power.

"Toothless?" rhetorically asks one independent producer of a program that depicted some daring extramarital relationships. "Let me tell you about the two guys from a major food manufacturer who came to my office and said, 'Listen, we think that your program could be harmful to young people and we think you should tone it down.' I said, 'I don't think your complaint is with me, fellows; it's with the network. Their standards-and-practices people approved the program.' They went away, and I don't know if they ever went to the network, but I do know the corporation never advertised on the show. Fortunately, there were enough advertisers who liked our numbers and didn't mind the content."

A more organized attempt was made several years ago. Officials of Sears Roebuck, one of the nation's largest advertisers, and the national PTA called a meeting of the 15 largest television advertisers for what Sears officials termed "an informal session" and a PTA spokesman said was to discuss a boycott of programs with highly suggestive content. The move came after the retailing chain, under pressure from religious groups, had publicly withdrawn its advertising from *Charlie's Angels*, *Three's Company* and several programs it described as violent. Amid network cries of censorship, however, the attempt at an organized movement collapsed.

Nonetheless, advertisers still carry plenty of weight. As Les Brown points out in his book *Television: The Business Behind the Box*, advertisers "vote with their feet" by supporting programs that appeal to desired audiences. "When, by consensus, advertisers determine that Saturday morning is a cheaper and more efficient way to reach young children than investing money in prime time, the juvenile-slanted shows vanish from 7:30 P.M. [on]. When advertisers manifest an interest in sports, [sports] proliferate; an aversion to serious original plays, [plays] evaporate. And when the advertisers spurn the viewers who are past the age of 50 to assert a preference for young married couples, the networks obediently disenfranchise the older audience to go full tilt in pursuit of the young." Indeed, Brown says, the same unofficial balloting accounts for the inordinate amount of time TV devotes to golf, which appeals to brokers (and advertising executives), compared with coverage of professional basketball, with its less appealing demographics.



Willard G. Hadlock
Vice president, Leo Burnett U.S.A.

Advertising executives, on the other hand, maintain that this picture of advertiser pressure is overdrawn. Willard Hadlock, vice president and media manager of Leo Burnett U.S.A., the nation's third-largest buyer of network TV time, places commercials for 26 major corporations. These clients seldom agree on any aspect of policy, Hadlock says, but even if they spoke with one voice, they couldn't change TV's content very much. "Of course," he adds, "if every advertiser in the country decided to boycott a program, the networks would take it off the air."

Television people may be obsessed by who holds power, but advertisers have other matters on their minds. Some are concerned about the "proper environment" for their commercials, but many couldn't care less about a show so long as their potential customers watch it. "An advertiser's commitment to buy commercial time has very little relationship to network plans or programming," says Hadlock. "It's usually based on the client's own fiscal year. Our clients are selling products and services. They draw up a marketing plan based on their own needs. They choose from what television has to offer at the time they need it."

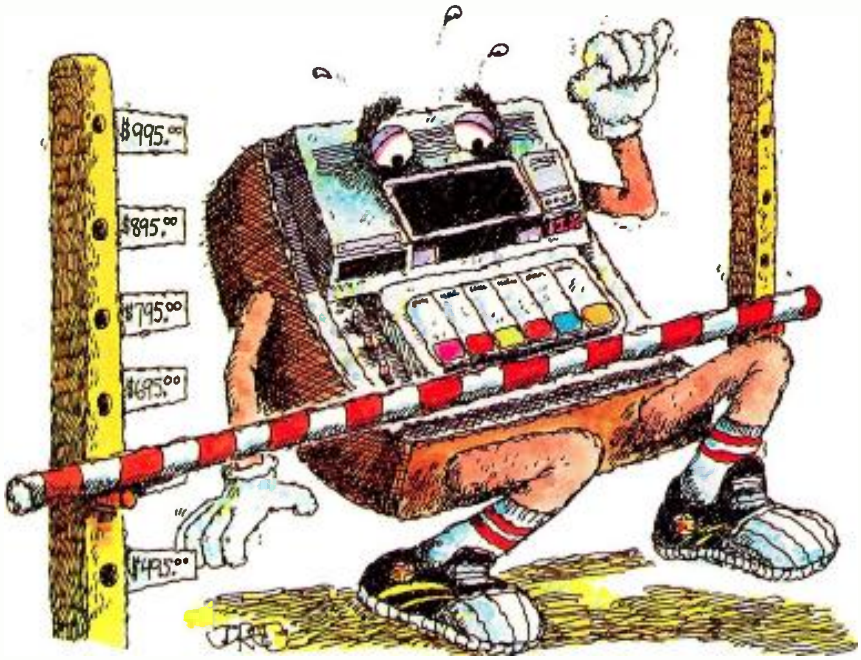
Several advertisers, led by Procter & Gamble, the nation's largest single TV advertiser, have recently begun developing their own programs, as advertisers did in the early days of television. P&G produced 11 network specials this season, plus soap operas on each network, and two seasons ago for the first time attempted to develop a series: the ill-fated *Shirley* on NBC. Grant Tinker, for one, looks on this as an important development because it could break the networks' hold over programming and restore "the good old days when there were 25 or 30 customers instead of three."

Hadlock, whose TV-commercial clients do not include P&G, does not see this as a trend. "We do some specials and we will continue to do specials," he says. "But the day has passed when advertisers could control their own programs on a regular basis. The networks aren't about to turn over their schedules to us, and they're not going to yield their power. Anyway, advertisers today aren't interested in being in the entertainment business. They're interested in their own businesses."

The pecking order in television, then, includes the financial community, the network executives, the local stations, the studios, the producers, the agents and, finally, that smiling face on your screen. Along the way this power elite is buffeted by government, unions, local pressure groups, and the network president's Aunt Maude in Dubuque. The fabric of power in television is a crazy quilt, not a seamless garment, and the more you try to identify each thread, the more elusive the pattern becomes.

Just try asking around. ■

How Low Can VCR Prices Go?



By DAVID LACHENBRUCH

You can put it down to coincidence, but the flood of lower-cost videocassette recorders corresponded almost day and date to the widely publicized launch of RCA's videodisc system.

A shibboleth in the American video industry has it that VCRs and disc players are noncompetitive. This view isn't shared by the Japanese, who make all the VCRs sold in America. Although they also make videodisc players, the Japanese are equipped to produce nearly seven million VCRs a year, and just in case the two products turn out to be a teensy bit competitive after all, they're determined to make prices competitive. too.

Last year, more than 800,000 home VCRs were sold in the United States, an increase of 69 percent over 1979 sales. The more deluxe models—programmables, those with special effects, lightweight portables—outsold "basic" units. Nevertheless, every major video brand is now slipping in new low-priced models. Here's the box score at press time:

The granddaddy of all low-priced VCRs has been around a couple of years. It's Sanyo's single-speed Beta recorder, which carries a suggested list price of $695 but often is discounted at $100 less. New this spring are stripped-down, three-speed VHS models made by Matsushita and sold under various brand names, including Magnavox, Panasonic, Quasar, J.C. Penney and RCA (yes, the same RCA that makes the videodisc), at various list prices, but often available around $650 or less.

Sears now features a single-speed Beta (by Sanyo) at $685 in its spring-summer catalogue, but it's generally advertised for less in sale books and at retail stores. Montgomery Ward substituted a $790 model in its new catalogue for one that sold at $970. And this month Sony is expected to introduce a lower-priced Betamax, which carries the popular Beta-scan feature, for somewhere between $700 and $900. Following general industry practice, these machines will often be available at considerable discounts.

The RCA videodisc player is list-priced at $499.95, and if demand outstrips supply the first year (as RCA anticipates), it probably won't go much below that. Discounted VCRs certainly will be available for only $100 more—they already are, if you look carefully. How long before a VCR matches the price of a disc player right down to the last 95 cents? Probably a matter of months, not years.

VIDEODISC DUPLICATES

RCA's first SelectaVision videodisc catalogue contains 100 titles, and the company has released the names of 135 more attractions to be added during 1981. The MCA DiscoVision catalogue for the LaserVision system (Magnavox and Pioneer players) has about 167 titles, not all of them yet available. How much duplication is there between the two? Surprisingly little, considering that most movie studios make their features available only on a nonexclusive basis.

The feature-film duplicates are *Love Story*, *Saturday Night Fever*, *Heaven Can Wait* and Walt Disney's *Kidnapped*. All four are three cents cheaper on DiscoVision than on SelectaVision: $24.95 vs. $24.98.

With selected short subjects, you're eight cents better off if you buy two Jacques Cousteau titles on two separate DiscoVision discs for $9.95 each than if you buy the same two titles on one SelectaVision disc for $19.98. DiscoVision will sell you two Disney cartoons at $9.95 each, while SelectaVision puts the two on the same disc for $19.98.

Julia Child will show you how to roast a chicken on DiscoVision for $5.95, but on a single SelectaVision disc she'll manhandle that same bird and throw in lasagna *à la française*, strawberry soufflé and *mousse au chocolat* for $19.98. That comes to $4.99½ a dish, giving RCA the edge in the culinary department.

THE TWAIN MEET

First there was Betamax, developed and introduced by Sony. Then came VHS (for Video Home System), first fielded by JVC as a competitor to Betamax. Now, for the first time, one American brand name, Sears, will appear on both systems—and one Japanese manufacturer, Sanyo Electric, will make both machines.

Until now, American marketers followed the strict lead of Japanese manufacturers in choosing up sides, each claiming the merits of its system. Sears and Sanyo were both Beta boosters. In embracing the incompatible VHS system, they've clearly decided to bet both horses in a two-horse race. ■

A Little Defense for the NBA

By JOHN SCHULIAN

They must wonder if anyone is watching. "They" are the best players in professional basketball, waging war for their sport's biggest prize in front of bug-eyed crowds. But on television, where images and fortunes are made, none of it seems to matter. When the cameras light up and the referees start calling those infamous TV timeouts, there is this terrible feeling that nobody is home.

The ratings second the emotion. When the Los Angeles Lakers and the Philadelphia 76ers turned last year's National Basketball Association finals into a profile in courage, the best they could register on television's Richter scale was an 8.9. You realize how shabby that is when you see that the national college championships annually do almost three times that much business. Of course, you'd better put an asterisk by those statistics, because the kids play in March, a blustery month made for indoor action, while the pros have gone at it in June in Phoenix with the temperature outside hitting 100 degrees.

Insanity? Most assuredly. But to expect anything else from the NBA is to risk getting yourself tossed in the booby hatch. Remember, this is the league where outlandish salaries are more common than sweat socks, and the Utah team is called the Jazz simply because it once played in New Orleans.

In short, there is a lot to dislike about the land of the giants, whether you focus on the aforementioned idiocy or the spirit-sapping 82-game regular-season schedule. The public seemed to do both this season as the NBA's ratings on CBS remained below sea level, attendance dropped and the league's pooh-bahs scrambled to put on their bravest faces. It is a messy scene, and yet it can still be salvaged, for this is the time of the championships, the time when the consummate artistry of professional basketball shines through.

No longer must the NBA's sky-scraping magicians battle the flu in Detroit or stare at another 5:30 A.M. wake-up call in San Antonio. In the play-offs and the finals, cohesion replaces confusion, empty seats are filled and competitive fires are rekindled.

Julius Erving, the Philadelphia forward who uses his body to write poetry in midair, leaps more like Nureyev than Nureyev himself. Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, the 7-foot-2 tower of Los Angeles, makes you realize that grace isn't just for people who can fit in his coat pocket. Even the ridiculous team mascots become vaguely acceptable as they waddle, prance, boogaloo, or whatever else happens to be their specialty.

It is a wonderful process to behold, but not nearly as wonderful as the way the myths about the NBA melt. They pile up like snow during the winter, with the ugliest—the race issue—on top. The bigots were calling the New York Knicks "the Niggerbockers" a year ago, and the fact that two thirds of the league's players are black is supposedly a major turnoff for a predominantly white public. But as Beano Cook, the social conscience of CBS Sports, points out, "Hockey's all white and it isn't on network television." What's more, the crowds that pack the arenas don't cheer for colors. They cheer for teams.

Teams that play more than the last two minutes. Teams that can do more with defense than spell it. Teams that aren't afraid to sacrifice the skin on their knees if it means coming up with a loose ball. Teams that are coached by men as clever and crafty as any who ever dared call themselves coaches. Teams that, when all is shot and done, are the NBA's own best advertisement.

The people who buy tickets understand that, but the vast majority of the television audience never will unless CBS gets on the stick. The network has done things to the NBA finals that it would never attempt with the World Series or the Super Bowl. It has started games at 10:30 on a Sunday morning in Phoenix and made basketball junkies on the East Coast stay up past 1 A.M. to watch games from Los Angeles. But last year was the worst.

When the Lakers beat Philadelphia to win the title, when rookie Magic Johnson did the impossible and replaced the injured Abdul-Jabbar as the team's juggernaut, nine tenths of the country had to watch the story unfold on late-night tape delay. At CBS affiliates everywhere, it had been deemed more important to show reruns of *Dallas* and *The Dukes of Hazzard*. And then you wonder about the game's ratings.

Light a candle for the NBA. ■

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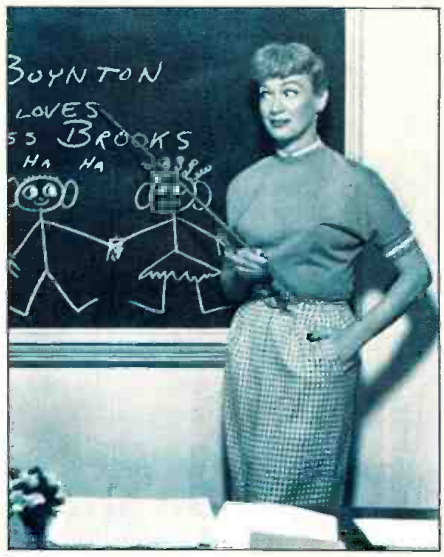
Dance fever comes to Our Miss Brooks . . . *Timothy Leary and David Susskind rap about LSD . . .* Eleanor and Franklin *sweeps the Emmys*

25 YEARS AGO: MAY 1956

James Whitmore stars in *Kraft Television Theatre*'s dramatization of a chapter from Sen. John F. Kennedy's current best-seller, *Profiles in Courage*. . . . CBS announces it will use a new walkie-talkie in the upcoming conventions, helping correspondents interview politicians from the floor. . . . Schoolwork is forgotten when the mambo craze hits Madison High on *Our Miss Brooks*. . . . Gisele MacKenzie sings on *Your Hit Parade*. . . . Pediatrician Benjamin Spock tells TV Guide that "there is no evidence, in general, that television is harmful to children" and notes it can be helpful in calming a child while mother does a few quick chores. . . . The 82nd Kentucky Derby is won by Needles, with Fabius placing second. In the Preakness Stakes, Fabius is first and Needles second. . . . Sugar Ray Robinson retains his middleweight title by defeating former champion Carl "Bobo" Olson.

15 YEARS AGO: 1966

After five years on the air, the final first-run episode of *The Dick Van Dyke Show* is broadcast. That same week the program wins four Emmys. . . . Richard Dreyfuss plays a warlock out of Samantha's past on *Bewitched*. . . . The Who perform on *Where the Action Is* and Herman's Hermits sing on *Hullabaloo*. . . . The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. is interviewed on *Face the Nation*. . . . On *Open End*, Timothy Leary discusses the uses of LSD with David Susskind. . . . An NET series on *Radical Americans* features Vice President Humphrey, Socialist party leader Norman Thomas, author Michael Harrington and journalist I.F. Stone. . . . Secretary of State Dean Rusk discusses the Administration's policies in Vietnam on *Issues and Answers*. The North Vietnamese viewpoint on the escalating war is given when Ho Chi Minh is interviewed in a documentary report, *Inside North Vietnam*. . . . Dr. Benjamin Spock now takes a harder line on the subject of television, telling TV Guide that "we are still glorifying our lawless frontier days [and] I don't think we can safely go on with this tolerance for violence." . . . All three networks provide live coverage of the Gemini IX takeoff. . . . Muhammad Ali, 24, defeats England's Henry Cooper to retain his world heavyweight title. . . . Kauai King wins both the Kentucky Derby and the Preakness.



Eve Arden as Miss Brooks

5 YEARS AGO: 1976

Mary Tyler Moore and John Denver emcee the Emmys. In the 28th annual ceremony, *Eleanor and Franklin* wins an unprecedented 11 awards. . . . ABC announces it has added Cicely Tyson to the cast of the upcoming miniseries *Roots*. . . . The effect of court-ordered busing in Boston and Charlotte, N.C., is the subject of a CBS documentary. . . . Neil Sedaka, the Captain & Tennille and Janis Ian perform on *Midnight Special*. . . . Roberto Duran defends his world lightweight championship for the eighth time, defeating Lou Bizzarro; Muhammad Ali KOs Richard Dunn to keep his world heavyweight title. . . . The 102nd Kentucky Derby is won by Bold Forbes; Elocutionist wins the Preakness.—*Karen Grigsby*

NETWORKS GO CABLE

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That decision helped set the tone for the period of communications deregulation that followed. More than a decade's worth of cable restrictions began to be stripped away, to the point where many broadcasters, notably those at ABC, began to picture themselves in the unaccustomed role of underdog. "Clearly what we have seen is a quiet but profound reversal in Government policy," ABC chairman Leonard Goldenson said in a speech last fall. "The Government is promoting those systems which require the viewer to pay a fee. . . . Washington has tilted the balance—against free television and in favor of pay television."

So, given that the "balance" has shifted toward cable, where does that leave the networks? Straddling the horns of not a few dilemmas.

Politically, they continue on the one hand to urge regulation of cable—demanding that the number of distant broadcast stations cable systems can bring into a local market be limited, for example, and that cable systems be *required* to carry the local broadcast stations whether they want to or not. On the other hand, the networks want restrictions on their own participation in cable *deregulated* so that they might both own cable systems and program for them.

The splits threaten to get even crazier in the programming arena. Publicly, executives of ABC, CBS and NBC insist that cable and pay-cable will have minimal effect on national network audiences over the next decade, but privately they admit that nobody knows what will happen. Already they're screaming that their ratings for theatrical feature films have declined significantly because pay-cable is showing them first.

Thus the networks find themselves more or less forced to enter the cable business as a defensive measure against whatever audience erosion might occur, while at the same time trying to preserve their dominance of the medium as broadcasters. "The networks are doing what every good general does in warfare," says Eugene Secunda, vice president of communications services for the advertising agency N. W. Ayer. "You don't commit all your troops on one front—you cover your flanks."

But it isn't quite that simple. By protecting their flanks with their own cable channels, the networks could end up *contributing* to the very erosion they fear. The key word here is "cannibalization": How do you keep cable entrepreneurs from nibbling away at your audience, and that of your affiliate stations, without eating into it yourself? This is a major reason why ABC and CBS chose to make their initial entries into cable programming with highbrow channels aimed at culture buffs who watch little or no network TV: Theoretically, they won't be losing anything by programming for people who don't watch their broadcast shows anyway. (It's believed that NBC has brought up the rear in network cable activity mainly because a move now would "cannibalize" the attention of its president, Fred Silverman, who has his hands full on the broadcast side.)

All three networks promise that any cable channels they introduce down the road will be aimed at similarly specialized audiences outside the TV mainstream—ABC plans one for daytime directed at "women who don't watch soap operas," for example. But the fact remains that the networks will be offering new program alternatives where they had offered only three, and few observers believe that the mainstream audience is so homogeneous that some viewers won't be tempted to try out those new TV tributaries once they appear. Laughed one cynic, "The networks used to call it 'fractionalization'—now they call it 'specialization'."

Theoretically, the networks won't be losing anything with highbrow cable channels aimed at culture buffs who watch little or no network TV

But there may be another reason for ABC's and CBS's decision to take the high road with culture channels first. They've followed what might be called the "Mom and apple pie" route into cable: Had any parties wanted to resist those channels on grounds the networks were out to monopolize cable, they would have found themselves in the unenviable position of trying to stop High Culture—a fight nobody, apparently, wanted to pick. But when the networks began to ask the FCC for permission to buy cable systems and to own cable programs, resistance immediately surfaced from program producers, minority groups and the Justice Department. The resolution of these arguments depends to a large degree on the regulatory policies of the new Reagan Administration, and so the stage is now set for a different cable war.

About the only common thread running through this jumble of possibilities is change. What we're seeing here is nothing less than a redefinition of the medium of television by the people who built it. More and more local broadcasters are investing heavily in cable themselves, and if the networks now want in on the action, that should erase any further doubt about the potential of the burgeoning cable industry. No one wants to become TV's version of the Edsel, and if there seem to be some contradictions in this transitional stage, well, institutions don't evolve overnight.

ABC's executives, always among the staunchest opponents of pay-TV, now say they have a cable channel in the works with a "pay element" to it, and they've applied for a number of new broadcast frequencies that would allow them to offer subscription-TV services as well. They acknowledge they will sell movies from their own theatrical film division to Home Box Office and other pay-cable companies. They rail in speeches for cable operators to "discharge the same code of responsibility expected of broadcasters" in censoring sexually explicit programs for the home screen, while the head of their own cable division says he will "conform to the standards of the [cable] industry" with that sort of material. They champion the public interest in fighting pay-per-view distribution of sports and other events, while acknowledging it's "conceivable" they may go that route themselves some day. Their public-relations department works with the ABC affiliates board on yet another publicity campaign extolling the virtues of free TV, while simultaneously working to promote pay-TV in the form of ABC's cable division.

As Ev Erlick puts it, "You have to look at the conditions that existed in 1970 and the conditions that exist today. Cable is an entirely different animal; it's emerged as an entirely new competitor." Times indeed have changed. ■

Tracking the Elusive Cable

By LEWIS GROSSBERGER

I've had to face a lot of tough questions in my job as roving media whiz for a counterculture shopping guide (a position I obtained by answering an ad in the back of the National Enquirer), but one of the strangest came from a housewife in Mahwah, N.J., who asked: "How come I am unable to read any article on the subject of cable TV? I'm invariably asleep before reaching the second sentence."

In a trice I realized that this modest woman had hit upon a universal truth overlooked even by top experts like myself. I quickly took a scientific survey, which revealed that many people have had the same experience. Those polled (a wide sample of opinion consisting of my mailman, a bartender and two relatives) were vaguely aware of noticing a growing number of newspaper and magazine articles on cable TV, but almost nobody had ever been able to read one.

Further research revealed that cable is not the only subject with this unusual quality. Anything written on SALT, for instance, or the Council of Economic Advisers or the amazing growth of racquet ball in America can send a full-grown adult into total paralysis within seconds. Why this is, no one is certain. But in the case of cable, at least, I think the problem lies not in the thing itself but in its name. As soon as the human eyeball strikes the word "cable," it skids right off the type and crashes into an underwear ad. There's just something about that innocent little word that screams Boring! Obscure! Go away!

I'll bet if cable had been called something else, let's say SockoVision or Goldie Hawn, it would have taken over the country by now and no one would be watching anything else. But although cable has done well in some areas, only 23 percent of this great nation has been wired and vast numbers of people still don't believe cable exists.

Take my friend Nilda, who insists that cable is just a superstition, a figment of the imagination. She says she's never seen cable TV or any proof of its existence.

"But my friend Nilda," I say, "a lot of people have seen it. I've seen it. And there are all those articles about it, unreadable though they are."

"Sure," she says. "A lot of people have seen UFOs, too. And there are articles on ghosts and movies about witches. It's nothing but primitive mumbo jumbo."

I tried to explain to her that cable is sort of like sex. "Remember when you were a kid and other kids would tell you about sex and it sounded so implausible you thought they were pulling your leg? Well, cable is the same way. Sure it's hard to believe that you could see a movie without commercials and with the dirty words left in. But if you wait long enough, it'll happen."

She said a dirty word.

Of course, not all the nonbelievers are so adamant. My cousin Benny is an agnostic on the cable question. "I know some people who swear by it," he says. "And if it makes 'em feel better, fine. But in my neighborhood, we don't have it. We're all decent, honest working people here and we don't need fancy TV. We take ours plain."

People like Benny and Nilda have serious problems and ought to be put away where they can't hurt anyone, but until they are, the rest of us must be tolerant of them as we struggle with our own doubts and fears about cable. What to do in these troubled times? Well, we should make every effort to read those dreary articles, because it stands to reason that anything that boring must be good for us. Why, look at my example. After forcing myself to peruse eight cable-TV articles this month, I can now salt my conversation with impressive phrases such as "interactive capability," "leased-access rate regulation," "bidding for geographic franchises" and my favorite: "The new 400 MHz system providing up to 58 channels." As a result, my social life has thinned out so nicely that I have much more time to stay home and watch television—non-cable television.

Yes, I still follow the old religion, but I do maintain my faith—however tenuous and ambiguous—in the Promised Land. I saw a vision of cable once in another part of town and it filled me with a shining revelation of hope and then jai alai and finally stock-market reports. That is why I believe in cable. What I can't believe in is this talk about videocassette recorders. Are you kidding me? Record a TV show and play it back? Come on, there's no such thing. ■

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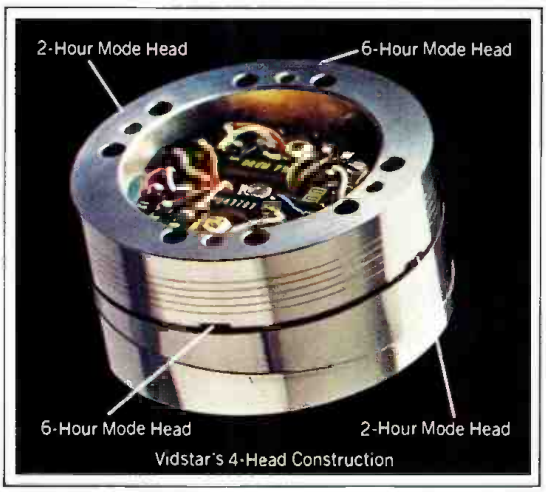

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