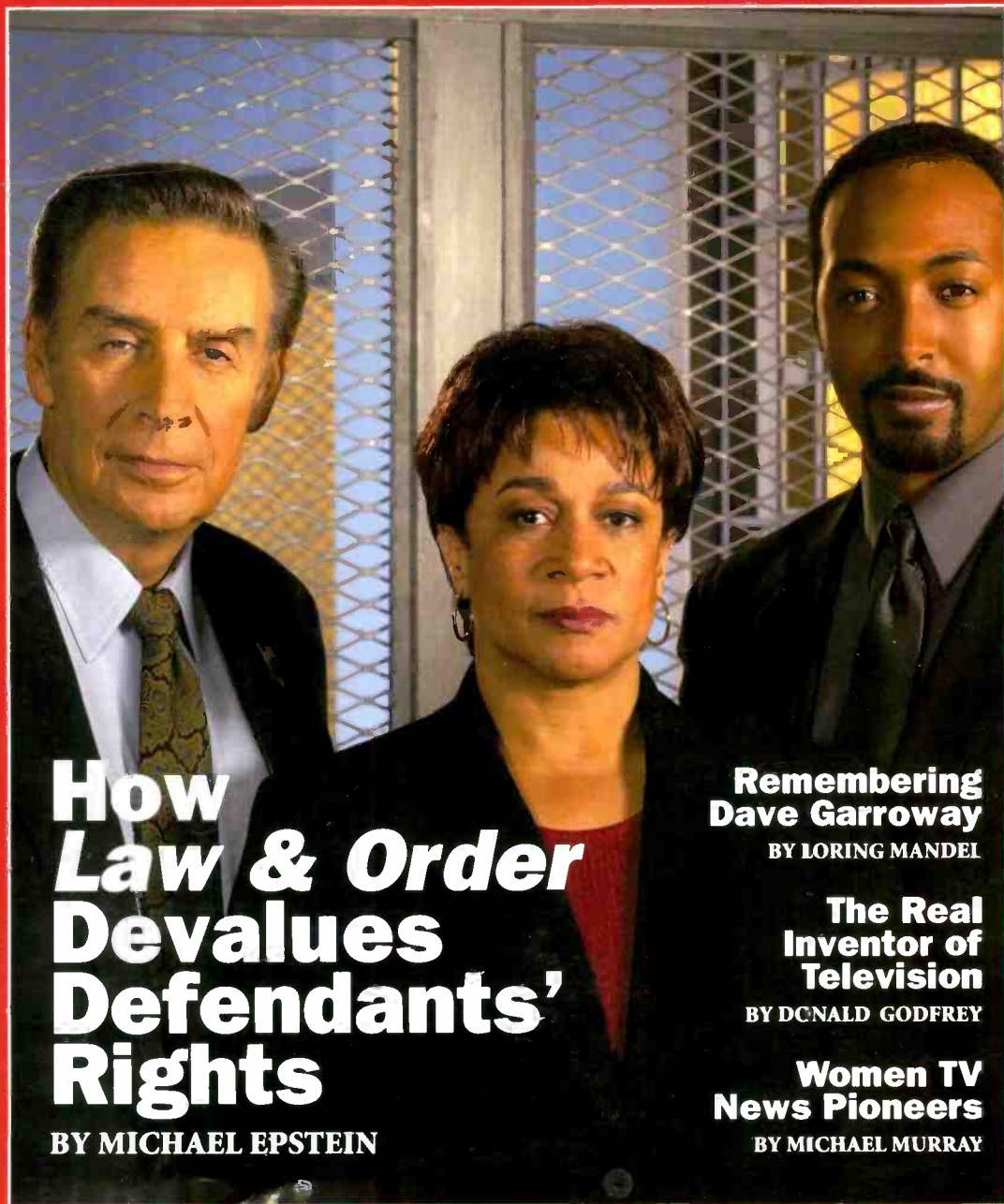


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How *Law & Order* Devalues Defendants' Rights

BY MICHAEL EPSTEIN

Remembering Dave Garroway

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The Real Inventor of Television

BY DONALD GODFREY

Women TV News Pioneers

BY MICHAEL MURRAY

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“Separate” But Not “Equally Important”

How *Law & Order* devalues detective work
and defendants’ Fifth Amendment rights

By Michael M. Epstein

L*aw & Order*, from Dick Wolf Productions, is the longest-running courtroom drama in the history of television. Even more popular today than when it first aired in 1990, *Law & Order* has achieved icon status in American culture. Reruns continue to do very well in syndication, and the original show has expanded into a franchise with hit spin-offs. As was the case with the immensely popular *Perry Mason* before it, *Law & Order* offers viewers a narrative formula with little variation. In series that represent the legal process as a search for universal truth and justice, the lawyer-statesman is the lawyer for the people, regardless of whether the

lawyer is a prosecutor or a defender. Perry Mason, for example, was a truth-seeker who, by eliciting confessions from the real culprit, functioned more like a prosecutor than the defense attorney he was supposed to be. On *Law & Order*, the lawyer who is most crucial to the dramatic narrative may not, in fact, be the statesman-like district attorney or an assistant prosecutor; instead, it may be that the defense lawyer, through action or inaction, advances the cause of justice—and the drama. The result is a complex narrative formula that exploits tensions between detectives and prosecutors, and advances the story by presenting defendants willing to forgo their Fifth Amendment rights against



self-incrimination.

Consider the narrator of *Law & Order*. Each week, a disembodied voice (played without credit by Steven Zirnkilton), intones solemnly that “In the criminal justice system, the people are represented by two separate yet equally important groups: the police, who investigate crime; and the district attorneys, who prosecute the offenders. These are their stories.” The lines are simple and unchanging. But there is no control, no investment in the story. It is as if the narrator sets the stage before fleeing it altogether. The effect is to make it appear that there is no ubiquitous force behind our criminal justice system. While the narrator tells viewers that the stories are

Cast of *Law & Order*

(L-R) Elisabeth Röhm, Fred Dalton Thompson, Jerry Orbach, Sam Waterston, S. Epatha Merkerson, Jesse L. Martin

told from the prosecutors’ perspective, there is no sense of outcome since the formula of *Law & Order* is to have an unpredictable outcome. The narrator has no sense of who the characters are—he speaks only of the system and the branches that function within it. And unlike many narrators on television, he does not return to help viewers understand characters or plot. Indeed, it is integral to the show’s formula that no narrator be present since each episode contains punctuated silences that enhance a

feeling of ambiguity and tension on both the prosecutors and viewers.

In the body of an episode, each scene begins with a caption indicating only date and location of that scene. To underscore the silence and lack of narration in the story, the program usually includes the two percussive musical beats that have become familiar as the series' signature leitmotif to viewers over the last 12 years. The semiotic connection to the introductory narration is evident; the percussive beats are the only music in the program other than at the titles. As a leitmotif, it functions as the semiotic equivalent of a Bate stamp on a file that we the viewers are reviewing. The result is a sense of greater distance from the story.

Still, viewers sense that the machinery of our justice system proceeds in an orderly, methodical way. This sense is a function more of the discursive elements of the program than the story. While the outcome of the story remains uncertain by design—viewers do not know how a case will be resolved or whether the prosecutors will be satisfied with a verdict—the way in which the story is told, that is, the discourse, is identical in each episode. Each “Bate stamped” scene is presented in sequence and each story relies on ellipsis. On television, sequence

The stories reflect the reality of our criminal-justice system: police are important, but only to the extent that they help prosecutors convict offenders.

and ellipsis are common discursive strategies. The ellipsis is evident in that hours, days, and even months can pass within the story without representation. Ellipsis, I would argue, is an essential aspect of courtroom narrative discourse. Imagine what would happen to the dramatic elements of a story if there were no lapse in time. Although Court TV

came close to a non-elliptic presentation in its gavel-to-gavel coverage of the Simpson trials in the mid-1990s, I would argue that, even those broadcasts were elliptic. From a story standpoint, broadcasters' decisions to cut away from coverage for updates or summary narration leaves gaps in actual story-time that viewers routinely fill in.

Law & Order, from a narrative standpoint, is one of the few law programs that are truly episodic on television. Indeed, only *Perry Mason* exceeds the extent to which each episode offers a fully contained story. *The Practice* and *Ally McBeal*, like most prime-time legal dramas recently on television, are serial. According to narrative theory, an episodic program is one in which series can be viewed in roughly any order. Each episode is independent of every other episode. In general, *Law & Order* and *Perry Mason* accomplish this because the characters are seen exclusively in their public role as a lawyer or detective. With *Perry Mason*, it is because the title character is depicted as the classic circumspect lawyer-statesman ideal. The prosecutors on *Law & Order*, while falling short of the emotional distance and scientific inquiry of the lawyer-statesman ideal, nonetheless benefit from some of the same narrative strategies of lawyer-statesmanship. Indeed, as in *Perry Mason*, we learn virtually nothing about the personal lives of the lawyers. In fact, it is an acknowledged feature of the show's formula that, with one exception, the camera never followed McCoy, Stone or any of their colleagues back to their homes in 13 seasons. We know little if anything about their families, their dreams and even their political views, unless the personal information is specifically relevant to a case that is before them.

Although some critics argue that “process is king” on *Law & Order*, I

would argue that the program's two-part narrative structure, proclaimed by the narrator but not framed by him, leads often to a sense of tension and ambivalence between the prosecutors and the detectives who appear each week. At times, this tension can boil to the surface of the plot; in "Bait," for example, prosecutor McCoy (Sam Waterston) attempts to coerce detective Briscoe (Jerry Orbach) into testifying against a vice detective who acknowledged wrongdoing in confidence. Seething in anger, Briscoe refuses to help McCoy, and suggests that he would lie if the prosecutor forces him to appear before a grand jury. Instead of pushing Briscoe into a confrontation that would undermine the show's stated premise that prosecutors and detectives work together to convict offenders, McCoy tricks the offender into thinking that Briscoe implicated him before the grand jury. Reminded by McCoy that he must be silent as he leaves the jury room, Briscoe complies with the order and stoically walks away amidst the recriminations of the accused detective. Briscoe is still seething, but he is apparently willing to accept that McCoy has done the best he could do to arrive at a just result. The rogue detective, who had been arrogantly stonewalling the prosecution, instead begins to plea bargain.

While most episodes do not explore conflict between the prosecutors and detectives expressly, the potential for such conflict and the tensions associated with that conflict, are present fundamentally in the program's two-part narrative. As the introductory narration explains, the two branches of our criminal justice system are of equal importance. While this may be true from a narrative standpoint—that is, in the way the story is told—that

equality and independence are not present in the stories themselves. Indeed, the stories reflect the reality of our criminal-justice system: police are important, but only to the extent that they help prosecutors convict offenders. American literature scholar Dawn Keetley, writing about *Law & Order* in a 1998 anthology

Law & Order uses a narrative strategy outside of the courtroom that undermines the proper role of the defense attorney.

on legal narrative, points out that the investigation half and the courtroom half of each episode have distinct functions: the detectives try to determine who committed the crime; the prosecutors seek to determine legal responsibility. While Keetley describes these functions as "slightly different," I would argue that it is this difference that drives the drama of the story in the second half of the episode. Notwithstanding the opening narration, the prosecutors are much more important to the story since, if they fail, viewers may be left with the sense that a guilty person has gone unpunished. The alternative, of course, is that the prosecutors can determine that the detectives have apprehended the wrong suspect. Either way, the prosecutors determine whether the detectives' efforts contributed to justice or not.

The subordination of detective work to legal process is key to understanding the importance of the defense attorney to the program's narrative structure. As a character, the defense attorney is frequently present in both halves of the episodes as a protector of the accused. As it is in reality, the presence of a defense lawyer at a police interrogation is enough to thwart detectives' efforts to implicate a suspect. Similarly, it is the defense lawyer who does battle with the district attorneys in court and at plea-bargaining. Thus, the defense attorney

can be the foil to both the detectives and then, later in an episode, to the prosecutors. The implications of the defense attorney's dual function are significant on both the narrative structure of the program and the stories themselves. If they do their jobs well, they can often stop the detective story from progressing toward the trial. They function similarly within the "law" story since they work to keep incriminating evidence from being admitted in court and can hold a defendant's confession hostage to a plea deal. The result is that the defense lawyers in *Law & Order* occupy a privileged position in the way the story is told.

As Keetley posits, most defense lawyers on *Law & Order* make use of legal technicality and justify their defense of the guilty as necessary to our criminal justice system. The consequence of this reality is that, if the defense lawyer does her job well, she can prevent the prosecutor from securing a just resolution to a case. *Law & Order*, I would argue, addresses this obstacle to the storytelling through two narrative strategies that make it difficult for the defense lawyer to do her job well. The first strategy is the liberal use of ellipsis during the courtroom sequences. While the use of ellipsis is essential to permit a courtroom trial to run its course over a span of minutes on television, the frequent lapses in story time in a trial favors the prosecutor, since the focus is on substantive story elements and not the technicalities of legal process that is the domain of the defense. Imagine if the scarce minutes of an episode's trial scenes were devoted exclusively to motion practice, jury selection, evidence objections and other trial practice maneuvers. The story would suffer if the defense lawyer were given a more realistic opportunity to use trial procedure to protect her client. Ellipsis allows the prosecutor to advance the story elements for the viewer. On television, it is very difficult for a defense

attorney to obfuscate truth unless she does so deliberately by lying on a substantive issue.

Law & Order also uses a narrative strategy outside of the courtroom that undermines the proper role of the defense attorney. This second strategy, which exists within the story itself, exploits another reality of the criminal justice system: the client is always right. This is frequently evident in episodes in which a strong suspect disregards the defense attorney's advice and talks with detectives or prosecutors. Sometimes the defendant's statement can be the product of the defender's incompetence; more often, it is the consequence of the defendant's own arrogance or remorse. Either way, the defendant is able to communicate information that is vital to the episode. The story advances, but again it is at the expense of the defense attorney.

An episode from the series' ninth season, entitled "Agony," offers a good example of how "runaway clients" ignore the better advice of their defenders and advance the episode's story. The story is ostensibly about a man who brutally assaulted a woman named Katherine and then committed a murder while fleeing the scene. In the course of their investigation, the detectives interrogate Matt Bergstrom, a young professional with a history of sexual sadism. Instead of being intimidated by the detectives, Matt cooperates with confidence—and without counsel present. Matt defiantly talks about his violent sexual practices as consensual. He appears in control of the interrogation, which concludes only after he declares, "I'm done. Arrest me, or let me go."

At this point, Lieutenant Anita Van Buren (S. Epatha Merkerson) advises him to "get a lawyer." At a pretrial negotiation with McCoy and colleague Abby

Carmichael (Angie Harmon), Matt continues to profess innocence to the assault charge. Though his attorney is present, Matt is again in charge. When the prosecutors announce that they do not believe his protestations of innocence, Matt decides that he is going to one-up the prosecutors by offering confessions to murders previously not linked to him. When the defense attorney learns of this, he instructs Matt to remain silent until a plea bargain can be struck. Matt will plead guilty to the assault and subsequent murder but only if he is granted full immunity from prosecution for the other murders he committed. The prosecutors accept the defense attorney's deal, and Matt then confesses to a string of unsolved sex murders around the country.

The story becomes more complicated when the detectives subsequently elicit a confession from Michael, the brother of Katherine's ex-husband's jealous girlfriend. Acting on a lead, Briscoe brings Michael and his sister into the police station and interrogates the two siblings with only one defense attorney present. Although it is not clear whom the attorney represents, the siblings implicate each other as they bicker over their respective roles in the crime. The scene ends as the exasperated defense attorney tries to undo the damage and get the two conspirators silent.

With the assault and murder case solved, the real story of the episode is revealed. The prosecutors realize that they must release Matt, and that they cannot rearrest him for the several murders he did confess to because he confessed under an agreement of immunity. The story resolves itself when Carmichael decides to trick Matt into confessing to an out-of-state murder by claiming that Texas, a death penalty state, was seeking to have him extradited. He agrees to plead guilty in New York to the murder in return for a promise that the prosecutors will not extradite him. All of this

occurs over the vehement protests of his attorney. Had the attorney been able to do his job, he could have easily investigated and determined that his client was not wanted by the Texas authorities, and that Carmichael had made the story up.

The importance of defense lawyers is also evident in "The Wages of Love," a second season episode in which the police investigate the bedroom killing of Edward and Alexandra, his new girlfriend. Melanie, Edward's ex-wife and a natural suspect, freely talks about her activities and the remorse she feels for the man she had hoped to reconcile with. Although she does not need to talk to the police at length, she unwittingly provides the detectives with the leads that will ultimately make her a suspect. Despite evident economic means and education (or perhaps because of it), Melanie sees no need for counsel. When, later in the episode, the detectives suggest that she hire an attorney, she dismisses the advice. "Why do I need a lawyer?" she protests before again talking about the case with the police. The reality is that she did need a lawyer, because the information she provides allows the detective to use other evidence to determine that she is lying. After she is arrested, the pattern of discounting the importance of counsel continues. During her pretrial negotiation with assistant D.A. Ben Stone (Michael Moriarty), she disregards her attorney's advice to stay silent and offers additional self-serving comments that only heighten the prosecutor's suspicion of her guilt.

As with "Agony," the power of defense counsel in relation to story development is evident with other characters in "The Wages of Love." Initially, the detectives suspect that Alexandra's ex-boyfriend, Doug, committed the murders. Doug, like Melanie, cooperates with the police, and the police grow increasingly suspi-

cious. But, unlike Melanie, Doug realizes that he is making a mistake and quickly asks for a lawyer. The scene abruptly cuts to Doug being interrogated by Stone, with his defense lawyer present. As soon as the lawyer realizes that Stone has suspicion but no evidence, the defender stops the session abruptly. "That's it. Interview is over. Either charge him or let him go." The defender's indignation that his client is being pursued on mere suspicion seems to resonate with Stone. As a result of Doug's willingness to submit to the advice of counsel, the ex-boyfriend leaves the station—and the episode—a free man.

As it turns out, it is only after Melanie's son Jamie disregards his attorney's device that the case against Melanie is ready for trial. This scene takes place in the police interrogation room, where prosecutors are attempting to intimidate Jamie into acknowledging that his mother was lying about a key piece of evidence. Jamie's defender becomes increasingly angry at the intimidating tactics, which include suggesting that Jamie might be charged as an accessory to the murders. At one point, the defender attempts to end the interrogation with language strikingly similar to Doug's attorney: "That's it. This interview is ended." Stone, however, continues to prod Jamie for more information, convinced that Jamie is covering for his mother, and, despite the presence of counsel, Jamie begins to crack under the pressure. The lengths to which the defender goes to keep his client silent is remarkable in the exchange:

Defender: That's it. This interview is ended

Stone: She didn't tell you did she?

Defender: Come on, you don't have to answer that.

Stone: She had it made because she planned to kill your father.

Jamie: No, no that's not what she said.

Defender: No. Come on. That is not admissible. Shut up.

Stone: No. You shut up. You take your hands off him or I'll have you up for hindering prosecution.

Defender: I'm this boy's lawyer.

Stone: You're his mother's lawyer, and he and his mother have different interests. Isn't that right, Jamie?

Jamie: When you arrested her, she told me my dad let her in. Okay? She was just going over there to talk about getting back together again. She didn't know that Alexander was going to be there. She didn't want to hurt anybody. She didn't mean to do it. That's what she said. That's—what she said.

Had Jamie listened to the defense lawyer, it would likely have meant the end of the prosecution's case against his mother—and the end of the story. Instead, the story continues to the trial stage and a very attractive plea bargain that Melanie's defender, with some effort, convinces her to take.

Whether an iconic courtroom drama privileges the role of prosecutor or defense attorney, the reality is that the lawyer for the people—the lawyer whom audiences are most vested in and who, as a protagonist, carries the show—usually ends up being a man. Even on an ostensibly egalitarian ensemble show like *Law & Order*, the leading assistant district attorney has always been male and, except for the irregular appearance of Dianne Wiest in seasons 11 and 12, so has the D.A. himself. Indeed, since the fall of 2002, *Law & Order's* newest D.A. has been retired U.S. senator and former prosecutor Fred Thompson, a celebrity politician who enjoys a lawyer-statesman reputation in real life.

While the lawyer-statesman ideal is a myth, it is a very powerful myth that privileges male power in the law and male lawyers. The reality of the legal profession today, and of American cul-

ture in general, is that male privilege that was so fundamental to the Enlightenment has begun to erode, just as the distinctions between public and private spheres are eliding. Women outnumber men in law schools, are no longer barred from law firms, and have accreted to the highest levels of the judiciary, including a Supreme Court that until the eighties referred to its members as "brethren." Still, on television, it is the myth that seems to hold sway with American audiences. There is, after all, no "lawyer-stateswoman ideal" in television's narrative tradition. At least, not yet.

As television entertainment, *Law & Order* regularly offers first-rate dramatizations of investigations and prosecu-

tions "ripped from the headlines." As a narrative, however, the show's drama relies little on the heroic detectives or even the statesman-like prosecutor traditionally privileged in courtroom drama. In reality, *Law & Order's* drama depends on the incompetence or arrogance of defendants—and their lawyers—to advance the story, often by dramatically foregoing constitutional rights against self-incrimination. The criminal-justice system, after all, is not only about detectives and prosecutors, as *Law & Order's* narration would have us believe; it is also about streetwise defendants and careful defense lawyers who generally don't give up protections or make ego-driven mistakes.

Michael M. Epstein is Associate Professor of Law at Southwestern University School of Law in Los Angeles. Dr. Epstein is a media-law scholar who also writes about images of lawyers in media. He is associated with the Donald E. Biederman Entertainment and Media Law Institute at Southwestern University and is a past chair of the Section on Law and Humanities at the Association of American Law Schools.

Remembering Dave Garroway

A close associate theorizes that he was trapped by a public persona which was stronger than his real self. | **By Loring Mandel**

Pease. That was the wish Dave Garroway extended as he signed off, eyes unblinking, holding his palm up and toward the camera. He never found peace for himself in either of the two lives he lived. Memories, of course, are fallible. Here are mine.

In 1946, I was a university sophomore living in an attic room on Lake Street in Madison, Wisconsin. My roommate and I had a bedtime ritual: Bach's *Air for the G String* and an hour or so of a radio broadcast from WMAQ, Chicago, the *1160 Club*. It was a weeknight midnight program of talk and jazz, conducted by a remarkably low-key and idiosyncratic host named Garroway. His program featured exquisitely selected 78 rpm recordings, introduced and discussed by Dave's rhetorical riffs. Almost as good as the music. There were occasional comic

dialogues with the night-shift announcer, Hugh Downs. Garroway's language, while English, was used in a strikingly unfamiliar way, a kind of hip intimacy difficult to describe on the page. He spoke to his listeners as if they were one person, a friend, heady after a little wine and sunken comfortably into a chair at his side. You were his audience, and he called you "Old Tiger."

Garroway offered certain other perks to his listeners. There were memberships in the *1160 Club*: little blue-and-white cards that showed the name of the program alongside a small inset image of the host, the thin face of a man in his early 30s, short-cut hair and glasses thickly framed in black. Another feature of the program was Dave's receptivity to suggestions from listeners. Anyone could write in the title of a personally-owned jazz record and, if Garroway was willing



"Peace"

to play it on the air, the correspondent was invited to bring it to the studio to appear on the show with him. But the supreme perk was the opportunity to hear the very best contemporary jazz. I remember hearing Sarah Vaughn at the beginning of her career, a performance

of *It Might As Well Be Spring* which featured a prolonged embellishment of death-defying intervals over her coloratura range. Garroway offered a prize to the listener who could sing it accurately. None ever did.

My roommate was Paul Pavalon, a

young man both wide and muscular. Paul had a round head and a face like one of the Campbell Kids, or like what you might expect Mr. North Wind to look like in a children's book. He was prolifically witty, musical and gregarious, and he played the saxophone. I hated the saxophone, but it was in no way his fault. He was very patient with my grotesque attempts to sing the Sarah Vaughn coda to *It Might As Well Be Spring*.

We both wrote comic material. Once we had sent for and received our 1160 Club cards, we began to send parodies of record titles to Garroway. For Boyd Raeburn's *Boyd Meets Freud*, we sent *Boyd Meets Anthropoid*. I took little pride in that one. My favorite, for which I won't tell you the genuine title, was *It Must Be Shelley 'cause Sam Don't Shake Like That*.

I sent a note to Garroway suggesting that he let me bring my recording of *Jada*, played by one of Eddie Condon's Commodore groups featuring Bobby Hackett. A letter came back saying to come on down. Paul and I and the record took the train to Chicago and the El to the Merchandise Mart. The radio

Television as Television instead of televised vaudeville was the Chicago Style, a level of candor in the writing and production which elevated the medium as high as it has ever reached since.

studios and offices of both NBC and ABC occupied the 19th and 20th floors, and this was territory I knew very well. Even while in grammar school in Chicago, I had skipped school to watch radio programs in that building. *Club Matinee*, with Ransom Sherman and, subsequently, Garry Moore, came from there. *The Breakfast Club*, with Don McNeil, too. I saw *The Red Skelton Show* there. Durward Kirby was a staff announcer. I'd taken the tour more than

once to see the *Amos 'n' Andy* studio, outfitted like a living room. A few years in the future, I would work there. Now, Paul and I, fresh-faced and adrenaline-high, met the man.

Dave Garroway graduated from Washington University in St. Louis. His major subject was astronomy. He served in Hawaii as a radioman during World War II and his life's plan, according to the interview, was to earn what radio had to offer until 1955, at which time he would return to Hawaii and his first love, astronomy. The picture accompanying the article showed him as a willowy ectomorph with a short Navy haircut. How he came to WMAQ, Chicago, I can't recall.

Garroway was tall, slow-moving, bow-tied, offering his large hand with a smile. His voice was not what we'd heard on air; it was higher, brighter, faster. He took us to the small studio, and with very little preparation we were live on radio. In response to a few soft questions, Paul and I raced through our contributions with what we hoped was wit and intelligence. Then Dave played the first record, and while it played he gave us his well-polished formula for success.

He told us that he had carefully studied the audience he wanted to reach.

He had concluded that he should slow his speech (he named a specific number of words per minute), lower his voice perhaps a half-octave and alter his vocabulary. His language and vocal delivery were intimate in quality, almost formal in civility, laced with coinage carrying somehow the cachet of pet names lovers use. The experience of listening to him was oddly private for what was, in truth, a broadcast to an audience of probably 50,000 people in the middle of the night.

The subject matter was esoteric, the humor was off-beat and wry; it was a thoroughly calculated personality which Dave Garroway presented to the public.

Though my attempt to a cappella sing the Sarah Vaughn embellishment of *It Might As Well Be Spring* was a total failure, Garroway seemed to enjoy Paul and me and, as records were playing, spoke engagingly in his authentic St. Louis voice and vocabulary while simultaneously doodling his one-and-only doodle, a series of disks that looked more than anything else like blood corpuscles—his few pages of scripted material were ultimately brocaded by those doodles. Paul and I remained as guests for the entire program, and when we left the Mart a couple of hours later, we felt we had met two Garroways, the real and the constructed.

Back in Madison, Paul and I continued sending comic material to Garroway. And on trips home to Chicago, I would pilgrimage to the Mart to see him. Once I asked him if he would consider paying us to write for him. He moved his head from side to side in a definite *No*, and said in his on-air voice, "If it pleases you to write it, it pleases me to use it." A dream up in smoke.

Our discovery of this unusual and charismatic man was, within a year or two, validated by the entire eastern half of the country. Television finally linked Chicago and New York, and Garroway became a superb television personality, presenting the same fabricated personality he'd developed on the *1160 Club*. His new show, *Garroway at Large*, was an instant success. And Garroway was not the only reason. A combination of innovative technique, fresh writing, imaginative concepts and a supportive NBC executive created what became known as the Chicago School, a style of live television that, even today, is a high

point in the medium's history for those who remember it.

The writer was Charlie Andrews. According to what passes for legend in Chicago, Andrews befriended Garroway and taught him both an understanding and an appreciation of jazz. Andrews was said to have a unexcelled collection of 78-rpm records, an apartment containing a phonograph, the records and little else. Andrews, it was said, created the Garroway style. The visual concept of *Garroway at Large* complemented Dave's quiet, almost school-

But something was happening to Dave Garroway. In our brief, casual meetings I saw the gradual erosion of his authentic personality.

teacher-like appearance, and was stunningly simple; instead of a proscenium or stage seen primarily from the front (Ed Sullivan's show *Toast of the Town* or Jerry Lester's *Broadway Open House*), *Garroway at Large* came from a studio that did not pretend to be anything else. There were cables on the floor, cameras moving in plain sight, small fragments of sets, and the program flowed from one place to another in graceful moves, with Garroway as the guide, commentator, narrator interlocutor, appreciator. Television as *Television* instead of televised vaudeville was the Chicago Style, a level of candor in the writing and production which elevated the medium as high, in my judgment, as it has ever reached since.

The NBC floor of the Merchandise Mart was rich with talent and eagerness to explore what was a medium without a creative history, an unexplored land of possibilities. The NBC executive who cast his lot with his young and iconoclastic talent was Jules Herbeveau. Dave's producer was a stocky, blustery Ted Mills,

whose haircut and manner suggested ex-Marine. Bill Hobin was the preeminent director, Dan Petrie (later to achieve great success as a television and film director) was a floor manager. Paul Rhymer (the writer/creator of *Vic & Sade*) and Studs Terkel were active there, and Burr Tillstrom was just down the hall. New formats were tried for other network shows, most notably *Saturday Night in Hawkins Falls*, created by Ben Park (a VP of Development); this was a show made up of three or four segments, one of which was always an almost totally improvised *Studs' Place*, in which Studs played the proprietor of a cheap restaurant (Dan Petrie's first real directorial assignment). Another segment was a musical. Another was a kind of prime-time soap. I tell you, there was ferment in the halls on 19 and 20. Television was being invented, just as in the 1960s it was demolished.

After graduation from college, I had managed to be taken on as a junior member of the arranging staff for the ABC studio orchestra in Chicago. The conductor, Rex Maupin, looked at my sample chart of *Highland Fling* and gave me an assignment. And there I was, working in the Mart and passing my heroes in the hallways, standing next to them in the men's room. As they got to know me, they learned, too, that I wrote prolifically, compulsively, not too badly. And Garroway, of course, knew it. Through him, I started writing what is called "special material" for Cliff Norton, the comic cast member of *Garroway at Large*. Cliff did occasional night-club gigs, along with a young blonde comedienne named Christine Nelson. I wrote a song or two for her, too.

But something was happening to Dave Garroway. In our brief, casual meetings in and around the studios, I saw the gradual erosion of his authentic personality. Our conversa-

tions were always personal, but his manner was more and more the on-air Garroway; his original self, as he had shown it to Paul and me the night we tumbled into the *1160 Club* studio, seemed less and less accessible. Where did the true Garroway disappear to? Tamped down, erased, deconstructed and reinvented? Who was, now, the true Garroway?

NBC moved *Garroway at Large* to New York. The network was extended to the West Coast. But *Garroway at Large* was Chicago style, and the New York people didn't know how to do it. Or they didn't want to. Pat Weaver had other ideas, no less brilliant. He invented the magazine format for television, and created the *Today* show for Garroway to star in. As Dave did for years.

I stayed in Chicago, moving from music to a kind of variety-show writing. Eventually, after service in Korea, I followed to New York, where most of the Chicagoans had migrated. I was now a television writer. Garroway was then living what was reputed to be a somewhat troubled life. I saw him once in the next few years; no trace of the original Garroway was in evidence. As some scientist once postulated, absence of evidence is not evidence of absence. One couldn't be sure.

In 1959, when my theatrical adaptation of *Advise and Consent* was playing Washington, D.C. and *Life* magazine had just released a pictorial on the show, the stars of the play appeared on the *Today* show for an interview with Dave. He spoke amusingly and not unkindly about me then, speaking that slow, low and almost wistful speech so carefully crafted almost 15 years earlier. Perhaps more wistful than before. The rumored troubles in his life with drugs, eccentricities, a marriage ended by his wife's suicide, were accumulating.

I was told that he had to leave *Today* when he couldn't handle his fears that buildings were about to topple over and crush him.

I visited him in his apartment on 10th Street one day a few years after his *Today* career had ended. He was obsessive about his Questar telescope. He insisted that I look at a dollar bill tacked to his mantel from across the room, through the Questar. He described his evenings in Central Park with the Questar, prone on the ground and looking into the apartment windows above Fifth Avenue with the kind of magnification meant to view the planets. His personality seemed to have congealed into eccentricity. There was no animation in the man. I was there with the Canadian documentary producer-director Harry Rasky. Our purpose was to enlist Dave to be interviewed for a documentary about the State of Illinois. Many prominent people connected in some way with that state were to appear in the show, and I was asked—as a local boy—to write it.

The last time I saw Garroway was at the interview we filmed. The camera and sound equipment were hauled up to the top of the Merchandise Mart and Dave stood there, sad-faced and placid, while a microphone was taped to his chest. He told me of his “project”; he had purchased high-quality tape

recorders for every room in his apartment, and they were all recording, all the time. “Messages,” he confided. “From Space. I’m getting them on tape.” He talked of conspiracies on earth. His mind seemed blasted. The interview was brief; he paraded the remaining mannerisms we had all come to know as Dave Garroway, and that was all.

Dave would not have been the first to be trapped by a public persona which proved stronger than the inner self which created it. That’s my Dave Garroway story, or at least my theory; that he became his own fabrication and that the inauthentic quality of that life was destructive. I believe it happens repeatedly in the world of celebrity and performance, and we are entertained by it. He died by his own hand in 1982. He was 69.

I think, too, that if Dave had known the end at the beginning, he would have changed nothing. Even for performers, even for one’s own show, there is an admission price. And with all his Craig recorders listening for messages from the stars, he was after all an astronomer once again.

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Loring Mandel started writing for television in 1949. He has been president of the Writers Guild of America East, National Chairman of the WGA, a Governor of the National Television Academy and has received numerous awards, including two Emmys, the Sylvia and Peabody Awards and three Writers Guild awards. His most recent credit is the HBO film “Conspiracy.”

Mike Wallace Speaks Out: Part II

His splendidly firm opinions on subjects ranging from the Nixons and *60 Minutes* to that tobacco controversy and the current state of television.

The Fall 2003 issue of *Television Quarterly* featured the first part of an interview of Mike Wallace by Steve Scheuer for *Television in America: An Autobiography*. That excerpt covered Wallace's early days in Chicago as radio announcer, actor and news reporter. Also included were his recollections as the hard-nosed interviewer on *Nightbeat*, which spotlighted his relentless questioning of celebrity guests ranging from Mike Quill and Frank Lloyd Wright to Malcolm X. Part II of the interview picks up with Wallace's coverage of Richard Nixon's 1968 Presidential campaign.



Mike Wallace: [Nixon] was running in 1968 for the presidency. I had not known him. He would talk to anybody back then, because he needed the coverage. I began to like him, too. I had a certain amount of face time with him. There were four or five of us who were covering Nixon at that time—Herb Kaplow over at NBC and Bob Semple for the *New York Times*.

Steve Scheuer: What was it about Nixon that you found appealing?

MW: He had made the determination that he was going to try to make himself open to a certain degree with reporters. We hit it off. He offered me a job as his press secretary during the campaign—actually, in February of 1968. Happily, I turned it down, because I would not make a good press secretary. But he was smart as the dickens.

SS: How could he have made such dumb decisions, including the stuff about the tapes and the things that led to his downfall?

MW: I say, he was smart as the dickens. You're smart as the dickens and so am I. But think of all the errors that we've made along the way. You know something? Pat Nixon was labeled "plastic Pat" by Gloria Steinem. I knew Patricia Nixon. I had dealings with her during that campaign. Warm, vulnerable, smart as could be, bruised badly by what had happened prior to 1968 with her husband and the electorate. A much misunderstood individual. I wanted so badly to get her to talk about it.

SS: She never did.

MW: Never did. On the night that he won the New Hampshire primary, I remember very well, I was covering Richard Nixon in '68. He had his offices here in New York City at Park Avenue and 57th Street at that time. When it

was apparent that he had won the New Hampshire primary, I went over and interviewed him. She was standing with him. I began to interview her. You could feel her hand shaking. She was scared to death really of talking to the press. Cronkite was anchoring the coverage that night. I went back to the studio to tell Cronkite what had happened. I was a reporter then. This was prior to *60 Minutes*. Immediately following, I got a call from Dick Nixon to thank me for being so kind to Pat. He was a complicated fellow. He was a complicated man who did, in my estimation—Watergate was so stupid—some very good things for the economy.

SS: Opening a discourse with China.

MW: China, welfare. You say, what do you mean, welfare? I mean Head Start. He was all for that.

SS: Legislation initiated by my brother, Jim Scheuer, who was then in Congress. Tell me about your feelings when you were first asked by Don Hewitt to be on *60 Minutes*. Did you have any idea that it would turn out to be this epochal, on-going adventure?

MW: No, not at all. When I was asked by Don Hewitt, he came over to the house and began to talk about this new magazine show. It didn't have a name yet. He was not in ill repute, but he was out of a job effectively. He had a job with CBS, but he hadn't been doing very much, because he was considered, apparently by the powers-that-be—at the time, Fred Friendly, etc.—as not really a serious news fellow. In any case, he came over.

SS: In the first discussion of the *60 Minutes* notion from Don to the powers-that-be at CBS, they turned the show down, if I remember correctly.

MW: Of course! Dick Salant did not

Nixon was a complicated man who did, in my estimation—Watergate was so stupid—some very good things for the economy.

want to do it. Only later—and Hewitt tells the story—when Salant heard that Fred Friendly had turned it down, he said, “Under those circumstances...” because there was a certain tension between Friendly and Salant, that he decided to go ahead with it. But I couldn’t make up my mind whether I wanted conceivably to go to the White House as the correspondent in the White House, because I believed that Nixon was going to be the President, or go along with this as-yet-unnamed venture with this out-of-work producer by the name of Don Hewitt, who was a friend, but they didn’t understand the man’s genius—that’s what it amounted to—sufficiently at that time. Thank God, I zagged instead of zigging, and got the opportunity. Of course, I was not his first choice. Harry Reasoner was going to be the sole anchor of *60 Minutes* at the beginning. They decided that he was too nice a guy. He was going to wear the white hat and they needed somebody to wear the black hat. And I was chosen. We thought we’d last maybe 13 weeks, or 26 weeks, or what the dickens.

What happened was, no one paid any attention to us for the first three, four, five years that we were on the air. We were on Tuesday nights, at ten o’clock, opposite the NBC Tuesday night movie. I think it was *Marcus Welby* or whatever big hit on ABC. So we’d finish regularly 85th out of a hundred shows in the ratings. Little by little, we had the chance to develop the character of the broadcast. Harry Reasoner decided to take off for ABC, because it looked as though Walter was going to survive forever.

Harry really wanted to be the anchor of the CBS evening news.

SS: Then there was a disastrous mismatch with Barbara Walters as co-anchors.

MW: Yes, he went over to ABC. Then Hewitt and I and Palmer Williams, who was the No. 2 guy. What are we going to do? We’re losing Harry. That is when we decided to start doing investigations, which eventually became the hallmark of *60 Minutes*.

SS: A pivotal event in the history of the show, was moving to Sunday at seven.

MW: A fellow by the name of Oscar Katz, who was head of research at CBS at that time, said, “Six o’clock, Sunday.” That’s where we went first. Then, of course, later on moved to seven o’clock, Sunday. He said, “Believe me, it will do very well there.” So there we are on Sundays. There was no gasoline, so people were stuck. They couldn’t go to Grandma’s in the car on Sunday afternoon and they began to look at their television set, turn the dial, and see what was on, and we were on. Suddenly, you could see the ratings went like that. By that time, we knew who we were and we were doing all manner of things that had not been done in television investigation before.

SS: What were one or two of your early pieces that helped you understand the extraordinary impact that *60 Minutes* was having?

MW: A couple of them. One was something called “False I.D.,” in which it became quite apparent that you could get yourself false I.D. and, under those circumstances, you could cash checks, you

We were doing all manner of things that had not been done in television investigation before.

could get passports. Truly, there was a big commercial gain to be had by people who got themselves some false I.D. cards and could use them. You'd get an airplane ticket and use your false I.D. to identify yourself and things of that nature. That was one. Another was the clinic on Morris Avenue in which we, for the first time, used cameras behind one-way mirrors. Suddenly, you would see people confessing—telling about criminal acts; not being persuaded to, but when we had the dope... There was a producer by the name of Barry Landau with whom I worked back then. When

“Mr. Wallace, you're the lunatic if you think I'm going to translate that.”

we had the dope on them and we had documents and things of that nature, and they didn't realize that they were on camera—they thought they were just talking to a reporter...

SS: One of the most extraordinary pieces you did was an interview with the Ayatollah Khomeini in Iran.

MW: He didn't call for the assassination [of Anwar Sadat]. He suggested that he would not be around for a long, long time. He said that Sadat himself was not a good Muslim. It was fascinating. Khomeini didn't look at me. I don't think he was looking at me there. It's the only time that I made eye contact. He would simply drone on about the fact that, unless the Shah went back to Iran and faced the music there, he was not going to let the hostages go. It was always either straight ahead or down. We were sitting on the carpet in his television studio in the holy city of Qom. When I asked that question, when I quoted Anwar Sadat as having publicly stated, that the Ayatollah was a “lunatic” and turned to the translator, the translator said, in effect, “Mr. Wallace, you're

the lunatic if you think I'm going to translate that.”

Is the Media Liberal or Conservative?

SS: There has been a significant increase in the ratings and the attention given to Fox News. It has a demonstrable conservative bias to it, reflecting the ownership by Rupert Murdoch and the head of Fox News, Roger Ailes. Does that give you pause at all?

MW: It's a free country. Forever. You know as well as I, we in the news establishment have been charged with being excessively liberal.

SS: The charge was always nonsense.

MW: Absolute nonsense. We didn't succeed in electing as many presidents. If we had that much influence, Richard Nixon would not have been President and Ronald Reagan would not have been President and George Bush and so forth. No, it was nonsense. So we'll see.

I've been there since '63 as a correspondent. The *only* time that we were prevented from putting a piece on the air was the tobacco story. Eventually, of course, we got the piece on the air after *The Wall Street Journal* had gone ahead of us, because they said they were afraid of a huge lawsuit that could really cost

The only time that we were prevented from putting a piece on the air was the tobacco story.

them millions of dollars. But Eric Ober, who was president of CBS News at the time and who is a good friend of mine and a man I admire, for whatever reason... He must have been told by Black Rock, “Don't let this go on the air.” A woman named Ellen Kaden was the general counsel. I can't believe that the gen-

eral counsel was operating on her own. That story—who kept that from going on the air—has still not been told, in my estimation. Peter Lund ran CBS at that time. He thought probably, if he didn't grant me this permission, that I was going to quit. It was not my intention to quit. I figured I could do better by staying and fighting inside. It turned out that we got the piece on the air eventually. But we had a piece without naming Jeffrey Weigand, without naming Brown & Williamson. All of the rest of the information was there, but we could not take on the tobacco company.

SS: Most people who criticized CBS about it said, "Wallace should be tougher, Safer should be tougher, Don Hewitt should be tougher." They didn't really understand the fact that the tobacco companies, I think, are so damned litigious that they could have sued for four or five billion dollars and literally put CBS out of business, if they won.

MW: If they won. That was one of the things. But Peter Lund had the courage. I said, "Peter, if we're going to do this sanitized piece, without naming Weigand and Brown & Williamson, I am going to have to say, at the end of this piece, how disappointed I am that CBS has seen fit to keep us from doing it; that it's the first time that that has happened, the only time that it has happened." For some reason, that got lost in the discussion. For the senior correspondent on *60 Minutes* to say, "Hey! They let us down! Our bosses let us down," and put it on the air, was quite extraordinary, I thought.

SS: If I gave you a magic wand to make

**I think television today
is pretty good.
I deplore the crap
that is on afternoons.**

any changes in the way American television operates now, what would you do?

MW: I think it's pretty good. I think that television, by and large, is pretty good. I deplore the fact, as I said—there's only one word for it—the crap that is on afternoons.

SS: The violent stuff in the evening bothers you less?

MW: It bothers me less than that, yes. I confess that it does. I wish that it was not as violent. We make all kinds of promises, all the time. I say "we"; management. Then the question of censorship gets involved and the question of money gets involved and Congress and so forth. But, by and large, it's a pretty good menu. You want news, you want serious news, you've got it.

SS: The very day that we're talking, NBC named Andy Lack, [now CEO of Sony America's Music Entertainment Division], who was head of NBC News, to be maybe the designated heir to the entire NBC operation. Do you have any thoughts about that? Does it surprise you? Does it please you?

MW: It doesn't displease me. I think Andy's first-rate. At the time of the Westmoreland business, I think he dropped the ball. He was at CBS at that time and he could have been more helpful. But I admire what he has done with NBC News. I think that CNBC and MSNBC are... Under the circumstances that exist, you've got to make a living. As you go around the world, particularly in Europe, you see NBC all over the lot. I deplore the fact that Larry Tisch saw fit to kill any kind of cable operation. We've been trying to play catch-up ever since. As far as I'm concerned, Larry Tisch was a disaster for CBS altogether.

SS: For what reasons, other than the fact that he cut the overseas news bureaus a lot?

Larry Tisch was a disaster for CBS altogether. He set about disemboweling the news division.

MW: Money, money, money. There was some fat there. He impressed me immensely when I first met Larry Tisch. I figured, he had all the money in the world and now he was going to take what was the Tiffany network and the finest news division of all three and he's now going to luxuriate in the opportunity to continue the Paley-Stanton tradition. And he lied. To some degree anyway, he set about disemboweling the news division.

SS: For a great many years, the glory of television—surely in the Fifties and Sixties—was the extraordinary quality of the CBS News staff; not only the executives like Fred Friendly, but all your colleagues—Murrow, Eric Sevareid, Charlie [Collingwood]...

MW: Cronkite, Collingwood, Winston Burdette.

SS: I think that team is not anywhere to be found today. Are there young journalists that you admire now?

MW: I think one of the best White House correspondents I've seen is a fellow by the name of John King at CNN. I saw him just yesterday interviewing the Vice President, Dick Cheney. He knows his story. I've seen him with Clinton. I've seen him with Bush. I would imagine he's probably still in his thirties. We have fine people truly. I don't want to protest too much, but we have fine people at CBS still. It's not like the old days when "The CBS Evening News with Walter Cronkite and Charles Collingwood... Winston Burdette at the Vatican, Nelson Benton..." Face it...

SS: There were brief moments in television news where people were given the opportunity to do short Op-Ed pieces. Eric Sevareid did it, John Chancellor, Bill Moyers. Why do you think there's nothing like that on the air now?

MW: I don't know.

SS: Would you like to see it?

MW: Of course I would like to see it. But I think they believe that there is not the audience out there for that kind of things. The evening news don't have the clout at all that they used to have. When you think about the fact of a Cronkite and a Huntley-Brinkley and a Howard K. Smith, let's say, there are now all kinds of anchors and all kinds of believable—or, to some degree, unbelievable—individuals anchoring the news. There is not the willingness to spend the money that you have to spend in order to produce.

SS: I'm going to close this interview with a quote from Don Hewitt's book, *Tell Me a Story*. Hewitt says, "Mike Wallace is, quite frankly, the best thing that ever happened to a television set. Certainly the best thing that ever happened to my television set. He's a tiger, the kind of journalist who comes along once in a lifetime and he hasn't lost a step along the way. He also brings out the best of everyone who works with him, which is a rare quality, especially in the television business."

MW: Hyperbole.

Television in America: An Autobiography a co-production of the Independent Television Fund and CUNY-TV, will be seen on PBS stations this spring. Host: Steve Scheuer; Executive Producer: Alvin H. Perlmutter; Senior Writer/Producer: Morton Silverstein.

Chicago TV's Winter of Violence 1952-53

A view from the 21st Century.
Parents a half-century ago might have
behaved differently if they had known
what we know today | **By Bob Pondillo**

On the Monday after Christmas 1952, Jack Mabley's devastating report stretched eight columns across the front page of the *Chicago Daily News*. The popular columnist's story ran just beneath the masthead, under a banner headline that screamed "TV's Holiday Fare for Kids: It's Murder!" Four bloody photos of ersatz television mayhem also spread from margin to margin. One of the most disturbing pictures, poached from a television screen during broadcast of a violent Western, was a tableau of a man shot and bleeding, crawling on hands and

knees up the steps of a church. Mabley reported that during the final week of 1952, a group of 30 concerned parents monitored Chicago television stations for depictions of violence. By the end of the first four days of viewing, the group had counted 77 murders, over 50 shootings, nearly 60 fistfights and varying totals of kidnappings, robberies and knifings.

In another front-page story the next day, Mabley reported as fact some questionable conclusions he extrapolated from the still incomplete and technically flawed content analysis. He wrote that the survey revealed more than 2,500 vio-

lent crimes and nearly 1000 murders were broadcast each year to Chicago area viewers, many of them children. Youngsters from four to 10 years of age, watching as little as two hours of television a day, "see every conceivable method of killing by gunfire, strangulation, stabbing, poisoning, drowning, suffocating and beating," Mabley declared. Angry parents, church leaders and politicians demanded something be done, and accused the new commercial television medium of visiting a plague upon their houses. The angst-ridden adult audience instinctively feared dramatized brutality during television's seminal days. It just seemed to follow intuitively for postwar parents: Watching TV violence would instruct youngsters in aggressive play and prompt the commission of violence. It's no wonder that a palpable sense of danger gripped many anxious Chicago viewers in the winter of 1952-53—a time before the cascade of TV violence studies with which we now live.

One must as well consider that television was powerfully intriguing to Americans after World War II; the television set-buying boom confirmed it. By 1956, an American somewhere bought a new TV set about every five minutes. At decade's end a phenomenal 87 million televisions were plugged in to nearly 44 million TV households; 86 percent of Americans viewed over five hours of programming per day. No other electronic technology on earth had achieved such acceptance and diffusion in so short a time. It was television's very ubiquity that supplemented the already grave concerns of Chicago's moral guardians. Would violence on TV open a frightening new Pandora's box? During the Chicago winter of 1952-53, no one knew for sure. The following tale only approximates how intensely the public reacted to what it saw as harmful violence on postwar TV.

Jack Mabley, a concerned parent as

well as a first-rate television columnist and critic for the *Chicago Daily News*, had long been an advocate of toning down what he saw as violent and offensive TV fare. As early as 1951, he recommended Chicago broadcasters categorize and label their television offerings. "They could have three kinds of programs," Mabley advised, specifying shows "for children, for the family, and [for] adult entertainment." He also instructed parents to teach their kids that TV cowboy mayhem and fisticuffs were not acceptable ways to handle disagreements. But it was Mabley's series of articles on excessive television violence that shocked the moral guardians of Chicago during that winter, prompting a hotly contested public debate played out on the pages of the *Daily News*. To begin his crusade, Mabley contacted Mrs. Leighton Cooney, a PTA officer at a local school, who organized the "study." Cooney masterminded a schedule and contacted like-minded parents in Winnetka, Glenview, West Chicago and Wilmette, Illinois, to monitor all children's programs from December 25, through 9 p.m. December 31, on WENR-TV, WGN-TV, WBKB and WNBQ, then Chicago's four commercial broadcasting stations. In all cases mothers were assigned to watch one station a day, with fathers and some teenagers pitching in, too. The monitors' watched 134 shows during the week from Christmas to New Year's Eve 1952, Mabley reported, counting a final total of 295 violent crimes, 93 of which were murders.

Outraged parents and community leaders flooded the newspaper with angry letters, wires and telephone calls over what they perceived as dangerous television content. The raging protests included a Chicago woman who maintained, "We as parents are trying to fight juvenile delinquency. Why

then must such slop be thrown at them?" Another, identifying herself only as "a frustrated mother," asked, "Are these programs aimed to undermine the youth of America by subversive agents? They could hardly be more damaging had they been planned by the communists." Pastor Reuben T. Nygren sent a righteous missive that was fully reproduced on page three of the January 2, 1953 edition of the *Daily News*. Nygren noted the Christmas Day "Chicago television bloodbath" would "give occasion to atheistic communist peoples to point with ridicule to America's observance of Christmas." By the second week of January 1953, Chicago Police Commissioner Timothy J. O'Conner weighed in, stating, "I'm certain there must be a relation between these television programs and the rise in crime." The same day, Alderman John J. Hoellen introduced a resolution asking the City Council of Chicago to scrutinize and fix the problem. Earlier Hoellen said he believed there was a clear "connection between the showing of crime films and the increase of teenage crime in Chicago." The Chicago City Council began subcommittee action on the volatile subject in mid-January, a full report and hearing came two months later. If the local

"There must be a relationship between these programs and the rise in crime," said Chicago Police Commissioner Timothy J. O'Conner.

Chicago stations did not give an indication of their "good intentions" during the City Council probe, Mabley predicted "extreme embarrassment" for broadcasters "that could lead to federal action to prevent renewal of their licenses." The crusading reporter vowed he would continue the pressure on the stations "until the present situation no longer exists," adding, "Anyone who thinks that the current exposure of crime in children's

shows is merely a circulation stunt which will soon blow owner seriously underestimates the deep sincerity behind this campaign." That statement notwithstanding, the interest generated by the controversy accrued favorably for the *Daily News* and Mabley.

Mabley next contacted the management of each Chicago station for reaction to the conflagration. WGN-TV, WBKB and WNBQ had no comment, but WENR-TV's general manager, John H. Norton Jr., responded. Norton said that, while the *Daily News'* criticism was not unfounded, Mabley and the others had ignored other key factors. Norton reminded that in America a viewer was free to change the channel or turn the set off if unhappy with programming, and he lectured parents not to use television as a babysitter for their children. He also chided Mabley and the monitors for ignoring many "splendid" non-violent shows, citing as examples, among others, *Ozzie and Harriet* and *Beulah*. "Of one thing we are certain," concluded Norton jingoistically, "our American system of telecasting is the best in the world and enables us to produce more good programs than are available in any other country."

By the time the Chicago City Council's subcommittee report was ready for a public hearing, other significant events had occurred. At least one local advertiser, Mages Stores for Sports, switched its advertising from Sunday afternoon movies to soccer games. Owner Morris Mages said that Mabley and the *Daily News* provided "documentary proof" of the presumed adverse effect some of these television shows had on adolescents. Mages pledged to carefully screen any future movie he sponsored to assure on-

ly "clean entertainment" was broadcast to homes where children might be watching.

By early March 1953, Mabley was taking credit for the significant ratings drop in televised afternoon cowboy and action shows. During December 1952 and January 1953, the American Research Bureau surveyed ten of Chicago's most popular adventure or cowboy films and

What have we learned about televised violence since 1952? We're still debating the same concerns, based on the same fears.

discovered a near 40 percent drop in aggregate audience after Mabley's crime series ran. Some of the significant losers were *Hopalong Cassidy*, sliding from a rating of 19.6 to 13.3, *Gene Autry* going from 13.8 to 7.2, and *Adventure Time Theatre* losing about half its audience, plunging to 7.5 from 14.7.

Harry Ward, NBC-TV's local censor, represented WNBQ at the Chicago council committee hearings on March 20, 1953. Ward characterized the testimony as "a cooperative effort of all stations in meeting the intemperate criticisms resulting from Jack Mabley's series in the *Daily News*," continuing with a flourish, "here for the first time in the history of man, the television industry of Chicago has put up a united front." That was factual to a point but Mabley later pointed out *only* WNBQ—a station he characterized as having "the highest standards in Chicago for children's shows"—had dispatched a top executive as its representative to the council proceedings (Ward). The other broadcast outlets sent low-level managers, suggesting to Mabley that other key station officials considered the issue of television violence unimportant.

Nonetheless, each station representa-

tive and supporting witnesses hammered away at two key points: there is no causal link between television and juvenile delinquency; and censorship is inherently un-American. Thus began the pro-television public-relations barrage: A doctor from the Psychiatric Institute of Chicago testified that "not one of over 2,000 juvenile offenders questioned attributed his downfall directly or indirectly to television."

Similar attestation came from a representative of the Chicago Bar Association: TV had not motivated juvenile criminals to misconduct, in fact the contrary was true. A Chicago Crime Commission delegate took issue with Alderman Hoellen's resolution that first prompted the city council's inquiry, testifying that there had been no rise in juvenile crime as assumed, certifying that the peak year for such delinquency was 1945—well before the arrival of television in Chicago! The only real citizen opposition came from one Chicago parent and grandparent who agreed with Police Commissioner O'Conner's ungrounded statement that the deleterious effects of television crime shows on children "may not be apparent for six months to a year." Finally, in an unprecedented joint statement by the four Chicago television stations—coordinated by Howard Bell of the National Association of Radio and Television Broadcasters—the operators declared "their devotion to the best interests of the City and the people of Chicago." Their unified statement again insisted that yoking actual crime to television crime would be like calling the classic plays of Shakespeare "crime plays" or labeling "the daily newspapers of Chicago crime papers," concluding, "Even the Bible would be suspect on this theory."

After all testimony was in, the Chicago City Council's Judicial Subcommittee

passed a "recommendation" that urged local television to "improve its product by strict self-policing." It should set up "an effective self-regulating organization similar" to the movies' Will Hays commission, the Council preached. The irascible Mabley in his follow-up column remarked that such self-censorship had better be "tougher than the ineffective Code of Good Practices which allegedly governs the nation's TV stations," wryly adding, "In Chicago it's a joke." A good scolding was about all the Chicago City Council could muster since the issue of television censorship is really a federal question and falls far from local government jurisdiction.

So what have we learned about televised violence since that contentious winter over five decades ago? In many ways, not much. At the start of the 21st century we're still debating essentially the same concerns, based upon the same fears, even exercising much the same rhetoric used in Chicago at mid-20th century. We know that, since 1950, the U.S. Congress convened 28 major hearings on television violence, none of which ended in substantive legislation to curb the perceived problem. We also

It's not the content of electronic media that does harm but the ever-increasing amounts of time children spend with it.

know from scientific content analyses that TV crime continues going up, while comprehensive national tracking studies since the end of World War II show real crime going down. And here's something interesting: We know those most likely to be involved in violence (as victims or perpetrators) are males in the 12-24-age cohort. Yet Nielsen ratings reveal that *that* young male demographic actually spends *less* time watching TV than any other viewing group. In fact,

those who watch the most television (and statistically are exposed to the most TV violence) are over 55 years of age—a demographic that spends more than four hours every day viewing the tube, as compared to a little over two hours for the younger male age group. So, if one truly believes in a powerful link between watching TV violence and violent behavior, the people you might want to avoid when walking down dimly lit streets are senior citizens.

If research is the key to the a media/violence connection, can social scientists design an instrument that measures, or a study that demonstrates, or a lab experiment that confirms, a *causal* link between violent television and violent behavior? If so, how would one catalog "violence"? Does a single definition fit? For example, is what Elmer Fudd does to Daffy Duck "violence"? Is watching a punch in the nose on TV the violent equivalent of a television gunfight? Are we really as sadistic a society as we keep telling ourselves we are? Such questions could go on *ad infinitum*, and that's the central problem with media violence studies—factoring in the mind-boggling number of variables. Since there is so much variance with which to contend, TV violence research by necessity is and will always be narrow and highly qualified.

In fact, of the more than 300 empirical studies extant, the investigative base is still fundamentally limited to three negative effects for heavy TV viewers: they will become desensitized to violence, they will perceive the world as a mean and fearful place and they will mimic socially unacceptable behavior. All studies imply strong correlations to the perceived problems, but none are convincing enough to suggest an undeniable TV/violence link. For example, what

about the overwhelming majority of us who watch all manner of media mayhem and are still regular, law-abiding citizens with normal, well-adjusted kids? Clearly, not everyone who likes to watch carnage on television will become violent, any more than those who like to watch *Will and Grace* will become gay.

I am more convinced by studies conducted at Stanford University a few years back that suggest it's not really the content of electronic media that does harm, but the ever-increasing *amounts* of time children spend with it. The Stanford study compared two groups of elementary school kids: one group significantly reduced its exposure to TV, and the other group did not. All the youngsters were from similar socioeconomic backgrounds and about the same age. The group that was exposed to less electronic media exhibited better social interaction and cut by half the incidents of playground bullying. So one may draw the conclusion that if children spend more time interacting with each other, and less time watching television, aggressive play may be reduced and kids might get along better. But, why should this be? In part because *people* still exert more influence over each other than media do—an important detail we've known since the Klapper/CBS studies of the 1960s.

During Chicago TV's "winter of violence," if those concerned parents had had the information we have today, perhaps they would have unplugged their sets, bundled up their kids and pushed them outside to interact with friends and family. Yet we 21st-century moderns—with the benefit of reams of data on TV violence—would sooner employ V-chip technology or the channel lock to "protect" our kids. Those are poor substitutes that simply don't address the real problem. Kids need to *disengage* from television more frequently and reacquaint themselves with the significant others in their lives. Experts suggest parents limit their children's viewing of *all* electronic media. Insist that your youngsters go outside to play team sports or join in any supportive activity that places them in cooperative contact with each other. This kind of behavior seems to reduce hostile, destructive play and, when you think about it, is essential for the blossoming of the human soul.

So it appears that parental attitudes have not appreciably changed since that Chicago TV winter of violence more than a half-century ago; and change is doubtful as long as parents believe that media exercise more power over their children than they do.

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Bob Dylan's TV Debut

The director of his first appearance recalls a “grungy” 22-year-old college dropout. | by Jack Kuney

As we grow older, I find that memory plays strange tricks on us. When I was in my forties, I prided myself on my memory. I could remember almost anything and everything with embarrassing accuracy. Things began to change as I grew older and the decades passed in frightening profusion. There were times when I felt I was in the early stages of that dreadful disease, Alzheimer's, but no, I reasoned, how could that be so, I remembered the name of the disease.

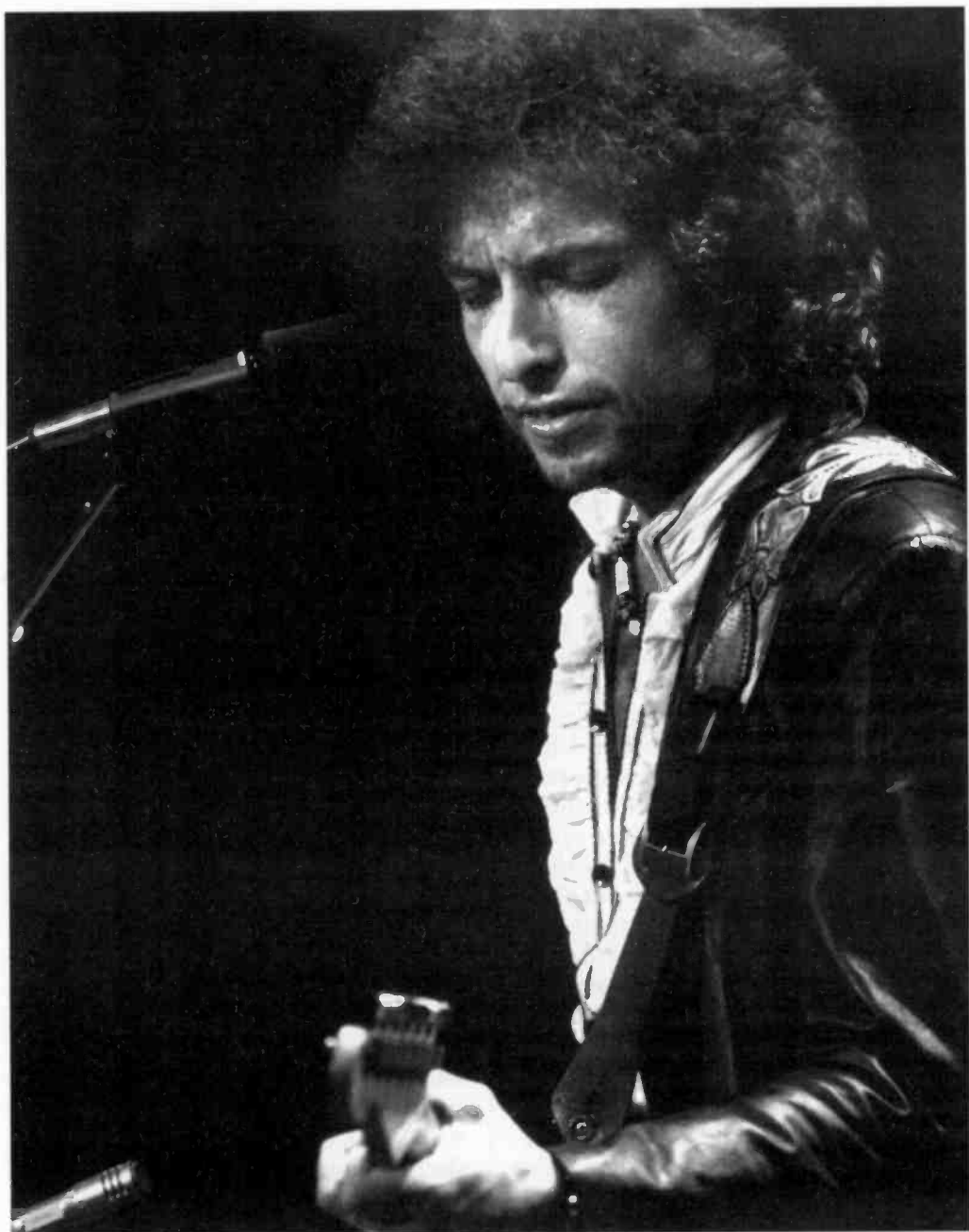
Since I am now in my 80's, I must say I am pleasantly surprised at how much I do remember of things past, and, doubly so, delighted that most of those memories are so pleasant. I seemed to have wiped out of my consciousness most of what had given me pain at various times in my life. I consider myself very fortunate. I live my life without too many of Jacob Marley's chains and shackles.

By my own reckoning, I once figured out that I had participated in more than 2,000 radio and television shows in my long career. It is a variegated list, span-

ning over 60 years. The details of those shows usually dissolve into a sea of faces and settings, and my recall usually comes with a cryptic “Oh, yes, I remember him/her, I think I worked with them once or twice.”

My strongest, and one of my most frequent memories, is of a man I never even met face to face: a powerhouse New York agent named Sam Cohn. He became a telephone acquaintance when I was the Director of Programming for Channel 13 in New York City, the city's main public television outlet. I became a resource for him in anything involving the whole public television system. I assume he thought, because New York was the center of his universe, that our station was the place where decisions were made for the entire educational broadcasting system. Little did he know of the diversity and singularity of the country's ETV stations.

Anyway, a typical phone call from my phone pal, Sam, would begin with a circuitous statement saying what he wanted to talk to me about, which would take me about thirty seconds to translate.



One I particularly recall went something like this: "Bobby got a call from some kackamamy station on the Coast that wants him to narrate a show about cutting down trees. He's into the environment and wants to do it. I think it's a waste of his time. Check it out for me, will you?" Well, Bobby turned out to be

Robert Redford, and, sure enough, he had agreed to do a show about clear-cutting for a Portland, Oregon PTV station. I called Cohn back and left a message with his secretary that it was all right for "Bobby" to do the show.

If anyone cares to know more about my relationship with Mr. Cohn, they can

go to their nearest library and find a copy of *Television Quarterly*, the Winter issue of 1983. Look for an article titled "The Closing Down of Woody Allen." That winter, Woody, who was one of Mr. Cohn's clients, had become disillusioned by the Nixon Presidency—who wasn't?—and was offering his services to public television to write and direct a satirical piece about the goings-on in the current White House. Well, the show got written, and it was very funny, but it never reached the air, censored by the newly-founded Corporation for Public Broadcasting. It was a big enough story to reach the front pages of *The New York Times*, where as producer of the program, I had a moment's fame.

Luckily, most of the people I knew and worked with went beyond a telephone call, and there is some sadness when I see them listed in the obituary columns, delight when I find someone like Marion Seldes, a contemporary and a longtime friend, show-stopping at Lincoln Center in a recent revival of *Dinner at Eight*. It's a nice to know, there are many of us out there who are continuing to make their professional contributions, whether on Broadway, in Hollywood, on the stage, in movies, or television, obviously oblivious to the ravages of old age. My dear friend, Tony Randall, is now into his fourth—or is it fifth?—career, starting in NBC Radio in 1946, as I did. He became a star at Universal, big box office with Rock Hudson and Doris Day, returned to his beloved New York to become a featured and shining intellect on the Metropolitan Opera intermission broadcasts, started his own repertory company, acting, directing and producing, and best of all, married for second time in his late 70's, and became the father of two beautiful babies. He's a splendid example of someone who has

beaten the devil at his own game. Long may he flourish.

But memories are always coming to life for me. It was with some delight last year, when I was contacted through an overseas phone call, coming out of the blue, from a young man named Ian Woodward, who lives in Carlisle, Cambridgeshire, England. He has made a career out of the life and work of the great folk artist, Bob Dylan, and through his research, had discovered I was the director of a program titled "Folk Songs and More Folk Songs," produced by the stations of the Westinghouse Broadcasting Company in May of 1963.

Thirty-five years spun by as he talked about the show, of which I remembered little, except that it contained Bob Dylan's first television appearance. As I talked to Ian, I remembered the 22-year-old dropout from the University of Minnesota, who looked awfully "grungy" at the time—not your typical TV guest. (The clothing revolution of the 60's was yet to come.)

Normally, in shooting an act "in one," I wouldn't do a lot of cutting between cameras, just a slow zoom in, and another zoom out, enough to cover a song and its lyrics. But Dylan was something else again—for one thing, he was just tense enough in that early appearance to look as though his eyes were popping out of his head. And that crazy mop of hair, which his biographer, Robert Shelton, was later to describe as a "frizzy electric halo," well, that was enough to make me decide young Bobby Dylan had better do the show with his hat on.

The song Dylan had chosen to sing was a new one he had just written for his second album. It was titled "Blowing in the Wind." It epitomized some of the generational conflict that was stirring in the 60's. Lyrically, it was superb; musically, it had a wonderful pervasive line. From the first time I heard it during rehearsal, I couldn't get the music or the

words out of my mind.

When it came time to videotape, I instructed my cameramen to stay on him—tight, invading every inch of his privacy, from the soles of his sloppy boots, panning slowly up his strange collection of second hand clothing to the tassel of his Dutch Boy cap. We even went up close enough to note the cracks and electrical tape on his Gibson guitar, close enough to read the Hohner on his harmonica.

While I will always remember that one number, the rest of the show is forgotten memory. In the course of one of our conversations Woodward had asked me if a videotape of the show existed. I told him I didn't think so. It was a time when most broadcast companies didn't recognize the value of their old shows, and wiped almost everything. I told Woodward that Westinghouse, at the time I worked there, was a relatively small company, and had probably wiped the tape. But I did suggest, if he wanted to be in touch with the company's headquarters, in Pittsburgh, there was once an archive of old shows stored there.

So it was with some surprise that I got another call from Woodward. His tenacity and patience had paid off. He had obtained a copy of the first of my "Folk

Song" specials, and he was kind enough to send one to me. The floodgates of memory were opened! Names flew off the tape like swallows returning to Capistrano. The show was narrated by John Henry Faulk, now deceased, who had fought the blacklist when he was working for CBS Radio. The guest list was impressive: the Staples Singers, a famed gospel group, who still record and make the top of the black music charts; the Brothers Four, whose recordings in the 60's were always best sellers. (Paradoxically, I saw them recently on a PBS fund raiser titled "This Land Is Your Land," singing one of their great hits, "Try To Remember" from *The Fantastics*. They looked terrific, nothing like the group I saw on the Dylan tape, but more like successful businessmen.) Others on the show were folk singers Carolyn Hester and Barbara Dana. They both had their moments of fame. I assume they are both well, and singing their songs—somewhere.

It was a good list of people who helped introduce Bob Dylan to what is still an adoring public. I must admit I got great kick in watching the tape, knowing I was a small adjunct to a great career. I'm sure he doesn't remember me, but I remember him.

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How Demographics Reshaped The TV Family

Television made a commercial decision that turned the family topsy-turvy. | **By Earl Pomerantz**

Television's pursuit of the "right" demographics has altered the way it portrays the family. Never mind what families look like in real life; their image on the small screen has been permanently reshaped. And in my view, not for the better.

Family shows were the meat and potatoes of early television. *Father Knows Best*. (Was the title to be taken literally, was it ironic, who knows? The show was so gentle, it was impossible to tell.) *Father Knows Best* gave us the prototypical 50's family—Dad went to work, Mom stayed home, and the kids, those little devils, got into trouble, but it was nothing Dad and Mom couldn't forgive, give advice about, and fix. Were there ever really families like this, even in the fifties? Highly doubtful. TV families were an appealing, if unreachable, illusion, fea-

turing available parents, rules and boundaries, and a comforting sense of security, with milk and cookies at the end. Many kids bought into this illusion, wishing they were in such families. Can you imagine children today saying, "I wish I was in the *Seinfeld* family"?

Television sells fantasy, and not just in the commercials. The cops are decent, doctors dedicated, lawyers committed not to their clients, but to the pursuit of justice. It feels good just writing those things—what a wonderful world! Early television families promoted the illusion of stability and well-being. But with the advent of demographics and its pursuit of a younger audience, the portrayal of the American family began to change.

Advertisers were finished targeting the Boomer audience. (They must have figured they'd sold them everything they

could.) The younger audience had their unilateral attention. It wasn't a conspiracy, just their job. Besides, advertising executives were also young. It must have felt good catering to themselves.

From a family show standpoint, I noticed things changing with *Family Ties*, a comedy involving a former hippie couple who find themselves raising a conservative offspring. Word has it the series was intended to be viewed from the perspective of the parents, following the comedic line of "Where did we go wrong?" That strategy was soon to change.

Almost from the start, a young actor named Michael J. Fox "broke out," as they say, his portrayal of "Alex P. Keaton" quickly becoming the most popular character on the show. (NBC executives had strongly resisted casting Fox for the role, but that's a topic for another time.) Though I was never a writer on *Family Ties*, I could tell the "Keaton" character

was fun to write for, Fox making the material soar with his winning personality and comic instincts. "Alex P. Keaton" was also a refreshing character, one television hadn't seen before, and its concurrence with the Reagan Revolution could not have been more fortuitous.

The result of Fox's phenomenal success? *Family Ties* got realigned. "Alex P. Keaton" was moved center stage, nudging the parents' characters to the periphery. As they say in the movies, they were "shooting the money." But what was the price of this adjustment? Nothing, you say? It's only a show, so what does it matter? It matters. Precisely because it was a show, and people in substantial

Were there ever really families like the one depicted in *Father Knows Best* in the 1950s? Here are Robert Young and Jane Wyatt with their TV kids (left to right) Billy Gray, Lauren Chapin and Elinor Donahue.



numbers were watching.

True, there have been other programs, both on radio and television, where offspring emerged as the stars of the show. Ricky Nelson comes to mind. Ricky started out as a rambunctious little kid, constantly getting into scrapes. But as he grew older, his character (which was basically him) started a band which produced a series of hit records. Unquestionably, Rick Nelson was responsible for extending the show's popularity. But his development, both within the show and beyond, remained under the controlling hand of his father, Ozzie. Ricky may have

A powerful medium was offering an altered image of the family structure. Television people made a commercial decision and it turned the family topsy-turvy.

been the star, but Ozzie was still the Dad.

There were also shows where kids were featured from the get-go, from *Henry Aldridge* (radio) to *Leave it to Beaver* to—contemporary with *Family Ties*—*Happy Days*. But in all of them, the parents, though not central to the stories, retained the role of authority figures, the traditional bastions of wisdom and respect. The “Family Ties” parents still dispensed advice, but, especially in the show's later years, their own story lines, almost always “B” subplots or flimsy “runners” ran more to “Has anybody seen my glasses?” variety. Basically, this was filler surrounding the significant story line featuring “Alex P. Keaton,” a three-stage humiliation, opening with a parent (usually the Dad) wandering around saying “Has anybody seen my glasses?”, proceeding later in the show to “They've got to be here somewhere,” and coming to a thunderous resolution with “They're on top of your head.” How the mighty had fallen. The show was supposed to be about them.

Clearly, from a commercial stand-

point, the *Family Ties* realignment was the right thing to do. But what message was the show sending? If television, as it always has, idealized the family, was this, in fact, the new family ideal? Did “Alex P. Keaton's” ascension trumpet a global changing of the guard? Had kids taken over the family, their parents banished to the trivial world of “Has anybody seen my glasses?” What exactly was going on?

What was going on was that a powerful medium was offering an altered image of the family structure. Of course, people watching were not aware of the reason for this alternation. There was no

disclaimer at the bottom of the screen reading, “This program is not intended as a comment on the organization of the family. We're just trying to make money.” Television people made a commercial deci-

sion. And it turned the family topsy-turvy.

After *Family Ties* came *Seinfeld* and *Friends*, both shows where, in effect, your pals were your family and your real family were people you tried to stay away from as much as possible. And understandably. How close do you want to get to the Costanzas? And how much time do you want to spend with the *Friends* or the *Will and Grace* parents? Is there one normal one in the entire bunch? Now parents weren't even series regulars. They just dropped in sporadically, a hideous menagerie of visiting loonies. You had your sexpots, your suicides, your workaholics, your philanderers, your cross-dressers, everything but a decent human being.

Hardly a flattering portrayal of contemporary parenthood. If parents—I mean real-life parents—were a minority group, they'd be out in the street, protesting their unfair and highly negative depiction in the media. Of course, it wouldn't do any good. The ad world believes nobody that age buys anything, so

they'd be totally marginalized. As their counterparts are on the shows.

Recently, television started reshaping families in yet another direction. Children are included on traditional-looking family shows like *Everybody Loves Raymond* and *According to Jim*, but after an eyeblink of interaction, the kids are immediately sent upstairs. Why? So the show can focus on the characters representing the target audience.

It's a good thing real kids don't watch these shows, because I'm sure they'd wonder why the kids in these shows are always being sent upstairs. Don't their parents like them? If they do, why do they keep sending them away? And by the way—and this is no small “by the way”—if television parents aren't crazy about their kids, what does that say about their own parents? Do they not like their children?

In response, parents would then have to sit their children down, easing their fears with an introduction to demographics. “It's not that the people on these shows dislike their children,” they'd explain soothingly. “And by the way, we don't either. We love you. The thing is, we're the people the shows are trying to appeal to. So what they do is pretend they're shows about families, but they're really about us. Do you understand what Daddy and Mommy are trying to say? Good, sweetheart. Now, go upstairs so we can watch our shows.”

Of course, families shows aren't the only offerings distorted by television. Take a look at the news. Following the mantra of “If it bleeds, it leads,” news broadcasts create the impression that the places we live in are more dangerous than they ac-

tually are. In fact, as television's obsession with mayhem has increased, real-life mayhem has actually gone down. Ignoring reality, viewers respond to the mayhem on the screen, loading up on security systems and pit bulls.

Casting directors for all shows are encouraged to “go younger” whenever it makes sense to, and even when it doesn't. “Talking heads,” from spokesmodels to sports anchors are selected primarily for their resemblance to the viewers television is hungriest to attract. Even the History Channel, I have read, is searching for better-looking historians, believing, I suppose, that like-aged commentators will draw more “Gen Xers” to documentaries on the determining sea battles of World War II.

But that's just cosmetics. (And ageist discrimination, but that, too, is a topic for another time.) The family is the basic building block of society, and when you remake its image, you're messing with a something fundamentally important. And therein lies the problem. Financial necessity requires television to reflect the target audience back to itself the way it wants to be seen, which in this case is as neurotic semi-adults who barely survived their upbringing. The mothers are overworked and angry, the dads, put-upon and starved for sex. And both view encounters with their own parents as an appointment for root canal without anesthetic. And there you have it—the modern American family.

I can easily imagine single viewers watching these nightmarish portrayals and thinking, “I think I'll pass on the family experience.” And who can blame them? It's no *Father Knows Best*.

Earl Pomerantz is a television comedy writer whose credits include *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*, *Taxi*, *Cheers* and *The Cosby Show*. He has won two Emmy Awards, a Writer's Guild Award, a Humanitas Prize and a Cable Ace award.

TV Captured Magic and Tragic Moments

One reporter's up-close and personal memories
of Martin Luther King | **By Richard G. Carter**

"...So let freedom ring from the prodigious hilltops of New Hampshire. Let freedom ring from the mighty mountains of New York. Let freedom ring from the heightening Alleghenies of Pennsylvania. Let freedom ring from Stone Mountain of Georgia. Let freedom ring from Lookout Mountain of Tennessee. Let freedom ring from every hill and every molehill of Mississippi, from every mountainside. Let freedom ring..."

—*The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Aug. 28, 1963*

On Jan. 19, 2004, America celebrated the 19th national observance of the birthday of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.—arguably the greatest man of the 20th century. And with all the bad things going on in the world today, it is appropriate to pause and reflect. Indeed, what could be more worthwhile than Dr. King's inspiring message of hope delivered at the foot of the Lincoln Memorial at the March on Washington of Aug. 28, 1963? The dream inherent in those words has yet to

be realized. But the man who spoke them never will be forgotten.

King's epochal, 18-minute "I Have a Dream" speech is the most vivid memory of this special man that most of us retain. This was the first time a civil protest was aired live on national television and millions watched in living black-and-white as more than 250,000 people of all colors came from all over the country on a sweltering summer day to demand an end to racism. It was a once-in-a-lifetime tribute to the sacrifices, hopes and dreams of racial minori-

ties. Yet, everyone didn't grasp the significance of his words.

For example, Kay Gardella, who wrote about television for the New York *Daily News*, described Dr. King's oratory as "the most moving" for viewers. But inexplicably, she also said: "There were many moving pleas and speeches heard throughout yesterday. But without a doubt, the greatest and most persuasive participant on the home screen was a towering figure in the civil rights movement—Abraham Lincoln... Most effective and meaningful were the frequent camera pickups of his statue."

Yes, it was in the shadow of the Great

children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character. I have a dream today..."

Despite the electricity created by Dr. King's oratory, the March on Washington was more than a splendid speech by this great man, later to be martyred in one of the saddest moments of our lifetime. It was the culmination of long, arduous planning by such black leaders as the brilliant civil-rights firebrand Bayard Rustin, and A. Phillip Randolph, outspoken president of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters.

A total of 10 national organizations—



Emancipator from which Dr. King thundered out the phrases that have come to mean so much to so many. But it was his living, breathing eloquence—not an inert monument—that was unforgettably captured by the TV cameras as his memorable words cut a swath through the heavy, late August air:

"...I say to you today, my friends, that in spite of the difficulties and frustrations of the moment, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream....

"I have a dream that my four little

On Jan. 28, 1964, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., (center) was interviewed in Milwaukee by Richard G. Carter, associate editor of *The Milwaukee Star* (second from left) and other staffers:

Marilyn Morehouser (far left), Kenneth Coulter and Jay Anderson.

among them the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the NAACP and the Urban League— sponsored the event, punctuated throughout by surprisingly melodic choruses of the civil

rights anthem “We shall overcome!”

It was day of celebration for the multitude in attendance—many chanting “pass it, pass it...” of President John F. Kennedy’s civil rights program then before Congress. And, of course, it was a red-letter day on the small screen for countless millions who witnessed the historic event as it was being played out.

“...When we let freedom ring. When we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God’s children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual: ‘Free at last! Free at last! Thank God Almighty, we’re free at last.’”

Moved as I was by Dr. King’s poignant words and all that transpired that pivotal day in 1963—as well as by his many subsequent TV appearances—my best memories are more personal. As a young man, I was fortunate to meet, and interview him, on two occasions.

The first was in my hometown of Milwaukee in late January 1964, during an SCLC fund-raising visit. I clearly recall his warm handshake and easygoing manner at an airport news conference when I introduced myself as a reporter for *The Milwaukee Star*—a black weekly newspaper. “Ah, the Negro press,” he said. “I sure am glad to see you here. We need more papers like yours in this country.”

Later, at a reception in his VIP suite at the old Schroeder Hotel downtown, the 35-year-old Dr. King laughed heartily as he and I and three other *Star* staffers squeezed onto a couch together. We all wanted to be hear him.

The second and last time I spoke to Dr. King was in September 1967 in Cleveland, while on the staff of *The Plain Dealer*, when he was in town to

boost Carl B. Stokes’ successful campaign to become the nation’s first big-city black mayor. “Nice to see you again,” he said, as we shook hands in yet another downtown hotel surrounded by heavy security. “Milwaukee, wasn’t it?”

“You remember me?” I asked. “I never forget a friendly face,” he replied. Still a young reporter, I was awestruck by his unpretentious, friendly and gentle manner—a feeling I retained the many times I saw him on television in different venues the next four years.

I have always considered Dr. King’s greatest single accomplishment the Nobel Peace Prize. He was named the winner on Oct. 14, 1964—largely for his stance against the Vietnam War—much

Dr. King was a great man able to connect with every man and woman, regardless of station.

to the chagrin of those who felt he should confine his interests and opinions to racial and domestic affairs.

Upon accepting this most prestigious of all honors in Oslo, Norway, on Dec. 10, 1964, Dr. King, as expected, gave another fine speech. Among those words, what I find most meaningful was the simple phrase: “...I refuse to accept the idea that man is mere flotsam and jetsam in the river of life that surrounds him...”

To me, this is what Dr. King was all about—a great man able to connect with every man and woman, regardless of station. And it’s why I was so devastated on April 4, 1968, when Dr. King’s luck—often tested—finally ran out. And only the most optimistic among us deny that the dream he espoused died with him.

Prior to that night, he had contended with many death threats and violent acts. But when he fell victim, at 39, to a sniper’s bullet while talking with friends on a balcony at the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, Tenn., none of us who’d met him, knew him and loved him were pre-

pared for the news.

April 4, 1968 was unusually busy in the city room of *The Plain Dealer*, and I was glad the day was over. After filing my last story, I told the assistant city editor I'd call in later, and left. With my car radio tuned as always to a call-in sports talk show hosted by Pete Franklin, a knowledgeable albeit acerbic white guy, I relaxed and awaited the fireworks.

Thus, I wasn't surprised when at about 5:45 p.m., in the middle of a heated debate with a caller, Franklin suddenly shrieked: "Wait a minute! Wait a minute, now! I've got something important to say!"

And then he announced, in uncharacteristically sedate tones, the worst news I'd ever heard—that Dr. King had just been shot standing on the balcony of a Memphis motel. The words hit me like a thunderbolt and, without paying attention to where I was, I pulled the car over and listened some more—not really wanting to hear, but having no choice.

Franklin continued to take calls, but nobody wanted to talk about sports. They all wanted to talk about the sickening scene in Memphis and the fate of Dr. King. I recall one youthful-sounding caller in particular, who simply said: "Isn't it terrible, Pete?"

Ten minutes passed, and after composing myself, I continued on my way. Once home, I asked my wife if she'd heard the awful tidings, and turned on the radio to the sports talk show. Then I sat almost motionless for 40 minutes.

At 7:10 p.m., Franklin returned after a commercial with the news I dreaded. Dr. King had died at 7:05 p.m. of gunshot wounds in the throat, the victim of an unknown assailant. "The King is dead," he said, somberly. "Long live the King."

How ironic to have learned of this

senseless slaying of my greatest hero from a surly white sports analyst who shed his image in that hour of sadness to share a nation's grief. Ever since, whenever I view film clips of Dr. King's TV interviews or speeches, or even hear his name, I remember how I got word of his death, and how it shook me to my soul.

And like many mature Americans, I still choke up when I see the striking photo of the immediate aftermath, with Dr. King on his back and his colleagues pointing in the direction of the assassin's gunshot.

The night before he gave his life in an Old South city where he'd gone to lend his considerable presence to striking sanitation workers, Dr. King's stirring words from the pulpit of a friendly black church were tragically prophetic. In the 35 years since, millions have witnessed those powerful moments in color TV replays:

"...We've got some difficult days ahead, but it really doesn't matter to me now. Because I've been to the mountaintop. And I don't mind. Like anybody, I would like a long life. Longevity has its place. But I'm not concerned about that now. I just want to do God's work. And he's allowed me to go up to the mountain. And I've looked over and I've seen the promised land. I may not get there with you, but I want you to know tonight, that we as a people will get to the promised land. So I'm happy tonight. I'm not worried about anything, I'm not fearing any man. Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord..."

In 1984, the national holiday in honor of Dr. King was established—the only such observance proclaimed by Congress since Thanksgiving was officially designated in 1941. How very, very fitting. Indeed, the King may be dead, but long live the King.

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TV News Pioneers: Women at the Local Level

Facing many obstacles, they made an important difference.

By Michael D. Murray

No doubt about it: women have had an uphill fight in the field of television news. While early stereotypes—the peppy weather “girl” or “cooking show” matron was prevalent at the local level; dig deeper and you discover talent and tenacity in every facet of broadcasting, especially news. They faced early resistance from men who did the hiring but when they succeeded, education, dedication and commitment to community played a key role. Not long ago, Ruth Ashton Taylor told a national group of media historians how her education at Scripps College and the Journalism School at Columbia University in New York provided the foundation for a 40-year TV career in Los Angeles.

Like so many contemporaries, Taylor started in radio news in 1944 but soon switched to television—at a loss in pay. Women were compensated less than males and the field was new and untested. Undeterred, by 1948, Taylor covered

the first nationally televised political convention, called upon to provide the “women’s angle.” Since women were treated as appendages to their spouses, most of the early female broadcasters who aspired to cover politics were relegated to interviewing political wives. To avoid the stereotype of specializing in the “social scene” she focused on interviews with important figures in areas such as science and medicine. Taylor credits an interview with Albert Einstein to a large number of letters of request she wrote, followed by a trip to his home and a walk with him to work, the result of her unwillingness to take no for an answer. Persistence paid off. Taylor was the first woman hired by Ed Murrow for his New York staff. At a time when women’s voices were considered not authoritative, Taylor wrote news copy on behalf of leading male reporters: Robert Trout, Charles Collingwood, John Daly and anchor Douglas Edwards.

As a television pioneer, the issue of age

arose regularly—especially for women. Reflecting on the changing nature of challenges women face, Taylor laughed about confusion over her age and the fact that a biographical citation once noted that she was born in 1937 while also indicating her hire by Edward R. Murrow in 1949. She joked that press historians may wonder how an esteemed news operation such as CBS could hire a 12-year-old reporter. Beyond her obvious sense of humor, Taylor was gifted in being able to adapt to surroundings, taking advantage of symbolism associated with a woman advancing in the then male dominated profession. She noted special difficulty at the scene of breaking news, commanding a male film crew with the requisite delicate balance of tact and diplomacy. She returned to LA, a reporter for KNXT (now KCBS) where she worked for years, retiring in 1989. She demonstrated that women could attract audience while competing with seasoned males.

Taylor's success story was repeated in other markets. But there were also instances in which women had to stand up for their rights to be heard and seen on-air. Show-business elements of television news were highlighted, for example, in a lawsuit brought by Christine Craft, a former anchorwoman for KMBC-TV in Kansas City who had moved to the Midwest from the West Coast. Her suit raised questions about unequal pay and even sex discrimination, since she had been asked to change her appearance in deference to male managers. This also reflected on management's journalistic values.

A review of local television developments highlights some very talented women at the local level who were able to overcome some significant obstacles

and many of these stories are chronicled in the book, *Indelible Images*, edited by Dr. Mary Beadle and myself. In some instances it was easier for women to gain an entrée to broadcast news at the local level, particularly in the community in which they may have been educated, or where a support system was available. In some instances, station management was sympathetic. Dorothy Stimson Bullitt set the standard for management in Seattle, buying KING-TV in 1949. Jean Enerson followed in her footsteps as an issues-oriented reporter at that same station, someone who would eventually extend influence internationally by teaming-up with KCTS-TV and Tokyo's NHK, hosting *Asia Today*.

Over the years, women newscasters sometimes became so influential locally that the thought of leaving home base made little sense. Such was the case with Dorothy Fuldheim at WEWS, Cleveland, who anchored the evening newscast and conducted interviews with every president from FDR to Ronald



Dorothy Fuldheim (left), who anchored the evening news at WEWS, Cleveland, until she was 91, and Barbara Cochran, RTNDA president



Reagan and spoke on the record to Adolf Hitler and Martin Luther King, Jr. Her range of experience provided insight to offer commentary and when challenged about the scarcity of views on the air, she suggested that nobody was performing the function because no one was qualified. She left no doubt that she was able and willing. Her on-camera opinions attracted a wide audience while producing the station's most consistent and reliable early sponsorship. And while her public persona was sometimes outspoken, privately she insisted that she never asserted herself with men who worked behind the cameras because of the need to be fully supported by her staff. Fuldheim worked until the age of 91. When she died in 1989, the station's news anchor reminded viewers of the common, frequent reference to her station, "the Dorothy Channel."

Other women proved that community involvement could translate into viewer acceptance. Wanda Ramey of San Francisco was one of the first women to anchor prime-time news in a top market, at KPIX. Ramey's style was reflected in

Christine Craft raised questions about unequal pay and sex discrimination, since she had been asked to change her appearance in deference to male managers.

stories that took her out of the newsroom—riding with the police force and showing up at crime scenes of every variety. She became involved in many of her stories and reached out to the community at large. When California society evolved she interviewed representatives of the so-called counterculture, so viewers would know what made "free spirits" special. With assistance from her husband, Ramey started educational initiatives outside regular station confines. She visited San Quentin Prison for a story on life behind bars and was moved to

offer prison inmates a course of the basics of broadcast journalism. The result was a series of inmate produced documentaries airing over KQED, San Francisco's public station.

Marciarose Shestack of Philadelphia pursued similar initiatives. Always preferring to be called a broadcaster who happens to be a woman rather than a woman broadcaster, her prominence is reflected by the fact that she was identified by her first name only for both television assignments and in her *Philadelphia Inquirer* column. She completed all but her Ph.D. dissertation at the University of Pennsylvania. A television host assignment for an educational program led to a position as broadcast coordinator for Adlai Stevenson's campaign in 1956. Rejoining local television, Shestack continued developing programs with an educational flavor. In 1963, she traveled to Guatemala to explore Mayan ruins and an archaeological dig. As a result of her successes, she was selected to anchor an afternoon newscast and became the subject of news herself prior to the birth of her daughter. She featured regular news segments about the pregnancy and her condition.

While succeeding in a high-profile position with the support of male staff members, Shestack reported that many of those individuals also made it clear to her that they would not support such an active professional role for their wives. According to Shestack, on occasion, women would express similar views, privately challenging a professional role. Shestack kept broadcasting, making adjustments to accommodate her family. A second child was born. When KYW anchor, Tom Snyder, left in 1971, she became co-anchor for that station's 7 p.m. program, pointing with pride to occasions when she beat Walter Cronkite in that time slot. She joined with professional women visiting

the People's Republic of China in the aftermath of President Richard Nixon opening up relations there. The role of women in Chinese society was an interest with seriously overlooked areas.

More recently, ethnicity, race and lead-

The climb to the top began for most women at the local level...In TV news it may now be that gender is much less important than the ability to do a job.

ership have increasingly come into play. Today, Lisa Howard (known on-air as Lisa Thomas-Laury) is considered an heir to Shestack's Philadelphia legacy. Howard, an African American, gained a large following as anchor, having started as cameraperson and film editor, while raising two children. Similarly, Adele Arakawa at Denver's KUSA-TV covered Columbine High School shootings, concerned about violent effects—also a proud member of her Japanese-American community. Among a growing number of local female broadcasters, some have pursued news management positions.

Carol Kneeland gained national attention as a news director for her careful development of a crime coverage policy for her Texas station. The policy required the newsroom to re-think station decision-making, especially in cases involving children and reporting of violence. Similar patterns emerged in other locales with women in charge. In Chicago, Carol Marin received her first Emmy Award for a program on long-term effects of violence on children, before joining *60 Minutes*. Marin was the subject of national headlines in May 1997 when she resigned her anchor position in a dispute with management over news credibility

and the placement of station commentaries at WMAQ.

Interestingly, an emerging number of women role models are not only leading stations but also national organizations, opening up additional doors for women. Barbara Cochran, a former television executive producer in Washington, D.C., currently leads the Ra-

dio-Television News Directors Association while Joyce Tudryn is executive director of the International Radio and Television Society, based in New York. Some news leaders have joined the ranks of academe such as former network correspondent, Lee Thornton, now at the University of Maryland. Deborah Potter spent 13 years as White House, State Department and Congressional Correspondent for CBS News before becoming an educator at the Poynter Institute for Media Studies. And former local news director, Jill Geisler, is in charge of much of the media management programming, addressing those issues at that same institution in St. Petersburg, Florida.

And while opportunities are open for women at the national level, the climb to the top began for most at the local level. And the fact that pioneers fought battles locally tends to reinforce their accomplishments. Familiarity with local communities feeds broader awareness that to make advances, all human resources should be employed. In TV news it may now be that gender is much less important than the ability to do a job. Some outstanding women proved that to be the case.

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First a Line... A Triangle... Then a \$ Sign

The story of Philo T. Farnsworth,
the real inventor of television . | By Donald G. Godfrey

On September 7, 1927, almost 77 years ago, Philo T. Farnsworth produced his first electronic television picture. The image was a single vertical line. As today's national television networks celebrated the 75th anniversary of their incorporations in 2002, they apparently overlooked the fact that in 1927 these "television" networks were upstart radio organizations. Electronic television, in 1927, belonged to one man, Philo T. Farnsworth.

The years 1927 through 1930 were landmark years for television and for the young 21-year-old inventor. Television was making the transition from mechanical to electronic systems and Farnsworth was a key pioneer. In 1927, Farnsworth transmitted the first line photo and filed for three patents on his electronic system. The Farnsworth investors weren't too impressed with the creation of that vertical line, so the next

image was a triangle, but it was the dollar sign that really got their attention. Seeing it in the lab, one San Francisco Crocker Bank representative declared, "the damn thing works." July 2, 1929, was one of television history's most important days—for the first time in television history an all-electronic television system was operating. This is a Farnsworth accomplishment that has never been fully appreciated, according to broadcast historian Albert Abramson. The first motion seen by this TV system was the smoke within the laboratory. Then photographs were added. On October 19, 1929, Farnsworth's wife, Elma "Pem" Gardner-Farnsworth, was the subject of those demonstrations, thus making her the first woman to ever appear on television. The first television broadcast transmission, outside of the laboratory, followed in the summer of 1930 when Farnsworth was broadcasting between the Green Street Laboratory and the San Francisco Merchant's Ex-



change Building.

Farnsworth is easily cast and often dismissed as one of the last of the nation's independent electronic-media inventors. He struggled against the growing corporate strength of media empires and within himself. *Media Digest* called him the "forgotten father of television." He was described as a genius by those who knew and worked with him. Even Kenneth Bilby, David Sarnoff's biographer, describing the inception of television from the RCA point of view, concurred that there was, "an American inventor who I think has contributed, outside RCA itself, more to television than anybody else in the United States, and that is Mr. Farnsworth." Farnsworth succeeded in



Philo T. Farnsworth and Mable Bernstein (top) inspect one of the first portable TV cameras, built in 1934. Philadelphia Eagles football demonstration at the Franklin Institute, August 1934.

creating an invention, from it a profitable enterprise, and he did so during the challenges of the Great Depression, plus World War II. Farnsworth was a man possessed with a sharing humanitarian spirit, an enthusiasm for constant learning, a tireless work ethic and a vision for invention. As a boy, he dreamed of "capturing light in a bottle"—the phrase he first used to describe his television ideas to the family. As an established inventor he dreamed of an independent energy source called fusion. *Time* magazine described him as "an American original, brilliant, idealistic and undaunted by obstacles."

Philo was born August 19, 1906, on a farm in central Utah, seven miles west of Beaver in a community named Indian Creek (known today as Manderfield). There were five children in the Farnsworth family. Philo, the inventor, was the eldest son of Lewis Edwin

Farnsworth and Serena Amanda Bastian-

Farnsworth. Later two sisters and two more brothers joined the family (Agnes, Laura, Carl, and Lincoln). Indian Creek was the center of life, but the winters were long and the growing seasons short. So, in spring of 1918, at the age of 12, young Philo helped drive the wagons 500 miles to the new farm not far from Rigby, Idaho. Like most young children, Philo was oblivious to the hard-

ships of the family. There was always food on the table, and his thoughts were usually far from farming. In the attic of the Rigby farmhouse, he found some old popular-science magazines and learned that scientists were experimenting with words and pictures that could "fly

through the air," as biographer Paul Schatzkin described. The magazines aroused young Farnsworth's imagination—a fact not always appreciated by his mother, who worried that his boyhood enthusiasm for electricity would

The first experiment might have been humorous in retrospect, but Farnsworth's innovative vision kept him determined to succeed.

interfere with his music lessons. By age 12, Philo was repairing the electric machinery around the ranch. He drew up plans for a "thief-proof ignition switch" for cars and sent it to Hugo Gernsback's *Science and Invention* magazine. He was awarded \$25 as first prize for his work. He strung coils to build an electric washing machine for his mother. He trapped muskrats, weeded beets and plowed the fields.

A Rigby High School chemistry teacher, Justin Tolman, was a mentor who made a difference. Philo hung around his classroom laboratory after school and discussed the drawings of the young student. It was during one of these after-school sessions that Farnsworth drew the schematic for the first electrical television system. Years later Tolman's memory of the event, along with one of those drawings, helped Farnsworth Television win a patent battle with the giant of the industry, RCA.

Working in Salt Lake City, in 1926, to support his family and put himself through school, Farnsworth met philanthropist George Everson. Everson agreed to finance some of the initial tests on Farnsworth's ideas for television. It was the beginning of a lifelong business association and friendship. Everson wanted the experimenta-

tion to be conducted in Los Angeles, where he felt the resources were more extensive. Farnsworth was thrilled at the opportunity, but there would be two Farnsworths moving to California—on May 27, 1926, he married Elma "Pem"

Gardner. On their honeymoon Philo told Pem that there was "another woman in his life and her name was television." Everson and his partner Leslie Gorrell helped set up the first

Farnsworth television laboratory, which was in the dining room of the newlyweds' Los Angeles first apartment. Elma describes that maiden experiment — "Bang! Pop! Sizzle!" — as a power surge destroyed the test. The first experiment might have been humorous in retrospect, but Farnsworth's innovative vision kept him determined to succeed. The Los Angeles laboratory was short-lived. In San Francisco, Everson found banking friends willing to invest. It was at the 202 Green Street Lab where Farnsworth set the foundation for his work in television. He began in the fall of 1926. By 1927 he had filed for four of his most important patents.

In July 1931, Farnsworth moved to Philadelphia. He worked with Philco Radio and Television, helping them become competitive with RCA. He established the first Philco television station, W3XE, which became WPTZ and is today KQWY-TV. Following Philco, he set up a second lab, with the first still functioning in San Francisco. Farnsworth's greatest Philadelphia triumph was the world's first general public demonstration of the electronic television system. It occurred on August 25, 1934, at the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia. Yes, five years before the 1939 New York World's Fair, when RCA later launched its own system, Farnsworth was already parading dignitaries in front of the cameras. At the Franklin Institute the first

football was thrown on television. It was tossed by the Philadelphia Eagles Coach Lud Wray. Players showing off their tackling talents were Lackman and Roger Kirkman. These television demonstrations continued for two weeks as athletes paraded before the camera tossing a few balls and swinging tennis rackets along with the performance of vaudeville skits. The night shots of the moon drew the most attention.

Farnsworth's life was not without its struggles: the death of his father, brother and a son, battles with the giant corporation of the time, RCA, and his own health. The most publicized of these challenges was the contest with RCA. After Farnsworth's successful experiments in San Francisco started gaining press attention, RCA's leading scientist (Dr. Vladimir Zworykin) followed by its president (David Sarnoff) visited the small Farnsworth lab and reportedly offered the now 26-year-old Farnsworth \$100,000 for his invention, the equiva-

RCA had more funding for its public-relations campaigns than Farnsworth had in his entire budget.

lent of \$1,126,310 today. Farnsworth's refusal set the stage for a corporate legal battle that would take almost a decade and cost valuable time and money. Mrs. Farnsworth described the RCA crusade as a "David-and-Goliath" confrontation. It was corporate warfare. RCA had more funding for its public-relations campaigns than Farnsworth had in his entire budget. In the end, Farnsworth won the battle. By 1939, RCA had agreed to pay Farnsworth one million dollars (\$11,263,100 today) for use of his patents. That agreement paved the way for our present television system.

The confrontation between Farnsworth and RCA was a business battle at its best and at its worst—a battle between two highly competitive corpo-

rations whose leaders were strong-willed, stubbornly independent and futuristically driven. One was the giant of industry at the time, one of the nation's largest industrial enterprises. The other was an imaginative and entrepreneurial inventor. The clash between Farnsworth and RCA basically took place on two fronts: in the legal world of the patent courts and in the general courts of public perception. Farnsworth won the legal battle.

During the court sessions Zworykin had not shown the conception of an operational device from his 1923 patent and on the witness stand, according to his biographer Albert Abramson, "he was his own worst enemy." In contrast, Farnsworth had an operating system and when on the stand withstood days of extensive cross-examination. Tolman, the former teacher, produced Farnsworth's 1922 sketches. The victory for Farnsworth was a validation of his personal contributions. More importantly,

the agreement, according to the *New York Times*, was "critical to the continued development of television in the United States. It was of pivotal importance in reaching an industry-wide television standards agreement and future technological progress." It brought the patent portfolios of both organizations together and thus cleared the way for commercial development. The battle for recognition in the press was won, hands down, but RCA—until this last decade when Farnsworth has been given credit for his inventions.

For Farnsworth public relations was essential to fund-raising. Most of the early publicity was created by George Everson as he traveled seeking investments. In complete contrast, RCA's public relations department was a much

larger operation. They had publicity campaigns moving on all fronts—television was only one of those campaigns. The Sarnoff Library houses a multitude of books in which press-release campaigns chronicled Sarnoff's every move. RCA waged an effective public-relations campaign from the beginning—this is what made the long-term difference in public awareness, and is why RCA got the original credit for the invention of television. The Farnsworth corporations did what they could just to stay alive. Their story was told effectively only during the '20s, through the Depression and into World War II. It faded from public attention when Farnsworth moved from commercial television to defense and fusion products during the war and the postwar period.

Farnsworth should be remembered for his contributions, not his confrontations. He was one of the most important television pioneers. He himself once noted, sharing credit, "I have no doubt God could inspire two scientists at the same

time in different places with similar ideas." Acknowledging his wife, who worked in the labs with him, he said, "my wife and I started this TV...you can't write about me without writing about us."

Farnsworth was a successful innovator challenging big business, the Depression and the World War II environments. He was a successful inventor with over 130 television patents. He established Farnsworth Laboratories, Farnsworth Television, the Farnsworth Television and Radio Corporations. He provided public demonstrations in San Francisco and Philadelphia long before the BBC (1936) and RCA (1939). His vidisector tube, which lacks storage capacity for commercial television, created 2,000 lines and was used in star tracking, astronomy and space navigation.

The legacy of Farnsworth denotes a man of science, an inventor, an entrepreneur and a humanitarian. He fought against all the odds, becoming a modern-day Horatio Alger who created the foundation for today's electronic television.

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Advertising Disguised as Entertainment

With radio as their model, TV advertisers blazed the “branded content” trail a half-century ago. Is a backlash brewing? **By Lawrence R. Samuel**

“**B**randed content.” “Organic advertising.” “Advertainment.” Much of the buzz in the brave new world of television is about marketers’ attempts to create a seamless blend of programming and advertising as a way to keep viewers viewing. After a half-century and change, it’s indeed becoming clear that television’s “interruptive” model, where content is continually interrupted by commercials, is as clunky as that 1950s Westinghouse console. The TiVo-ing of television has made it possible for viewers (or non-viewers, in this case) to skip commercials entirely, making advertisers justifiably nervous that the interruptive model is broken beyond repair.

More viewing options, coupled with ever-niftier technology to find those options, are rapidly making the ideas of dedicated blocks of commercial

messages more of a cute anachronism than an effective marketing strategy. The tried-and-true theory that it is better to approach consumers in a receptive mode versus a defensive one is also driving marketers to disguise advertising as entertainment (and vice versa). Fox’s *The Best Damn Sports Show*, where guests have been paid to wear Dockers Go Khaki pants and Outback Steakhouse serves up dinner for the cast during the show (washed down with Mike’s Hard Lemonade), is the poster child for the industry’s big idea of branded content.

Coca-Cola’s and Ford’s ubiquitous presence on *American Idol* and the AT&T Lifeline on *Who Wants to be a Millionaire* are considered great examples for other marketers to follow if they want to be in the branded-content fast lane. And with the advent of a whole network, *Fine Living*, where marketers

like Viking, BMW and Prudential get to sponsor shows, one would think that there is indeed something new circulating in the televisual air.

Breaking news: what's being hailed as the new model of television advertising is quite a bit less than a revolutionary, cutting-edge idea. Branded content is simply a new name for integrated advertising, something that had in fact already been around the block a few times when television was brand new, a legacy of radio. Karen S. Buzzard has noted that radio shows were "conceived, more or less, as one continuous commercial," and Susan Smulyan has observed that sponsors' ultimate goal in radio was to create a "program [which] personifie[d] the product." J. Walter Thompson was recognized as the master of the radio program-as-advertisement, its goal, in one advertising executive's words, to "get radio shows that would work as advertising." And in his definitive book on advertising in the 1920s and 1930s, *Advertising the American Dream*, Roland Marchand noted radio's "dovetailing of entertainment with advertisement," with radio commercials often resembling the tone, locale and pace of their host programs or, better yet, using the programs themselves as the advertising delivery vehicle.

This interweaving of entertainment and advertising, Marchand pointed out, was in fact not even original to broadcasting but had its origins in print. Advertising agencies had long practiced the art of "editorial copy," in which newspaper and magazine ads were blended into articles through similar type fonts and writing style. With their presentation of entertainment-as-advertising (or advertisement-as-entertainment), television advertisers were carrying on a long tradition known to be an effective technique to sell products and services.

Advertisers and their agencies not

surprisingly exploited this successful formula when it became clear that the sponsorship system of radio would carry over to television. As early as 1943, in fact, Lever Brothers used integrated advertising for its brands Rinso detergent, Spry shortening and Lifebuoy soap on a weekly half-hour TV show on the DuMont network called *Wednesdays at Nine is Lever Brothers Time*. In one skit on the show, for example, the master of ceremonies led a game of charades, with the correct answer one of the sponsor's slogans, "A daily bath with Lifebuoy stops B.O." After the war, when the



floodgates of commercial television spilled open, many marketers quickly fell in love with integrated advertising, firmly convinced that the most effective kind of television commercials were those which did not appear to be

that they actually applauded his readings of Havoline oil and gas commercials. And on *Private Eye*, a detective drama sponsored by U.S. Tobacco, the hero of the series regularly "dropped in" on his favorite smoke shop, bantering with other characters about the merits of different types of tobacco while surrounded by counter and shelf displays of the sponsor's brands.



Jack Benny and Arthur Godfrey were pioneers in introducing brand names into their skits

Best of all for early TV advertisers, integrated commercials were deemed "off the clock," i.e., not subject to the six-minutes-per-hour guideline recommended by the National Association of Radio & Television Broadcasters (NARTB). With integrated advertising, sponsors thus had, theoretically at least, unlimited time in which to sell their products on television and

skirt around the voluntary code. Hal Humphrey, the noted television and radio critic for the *Los Angeles Mirror*, half-seriously feared that:

commercials at all. Communicating with viewers was most effectively achieved, advertising theory went, when commercials were perceived as an integral part of shows. "A truly good commercial is the well-integrated one," said Norman Nash, assistant copy chief of the Kudner Agency, "one that does not break the mood of the entertainment vehicle." So with common sense and hard research (both then and now) suggesting that any form of overt selling causes a certain level of skepticism among consumers, a variety of integrated advertising tactics flourished on early TV. A classic case was the "pitchman" on the *Texaco Star Theater*, for example, who was presented as simply one of the show's characters. Studio audiences considered the ads just another part of the show, so much so

some sponsor will come up with the brainy idea that he can build an entire 30-minute plot around his product. The hero will be floundering around in the Sahara Desert, ready to die of hunger, exposure and thirst, when suddenly he will come upon a cache of food, clothing and beer upon which will be the brand names of all the participating sponsors.

In the case of new products, integrated advertising offered double protection from the NARTB code, as mentioning a sponsor's product during a program was not considered a commercial if the product was considered "new." The names of new car models, thus hardly coincidentally and often rather oddly, found their way into the scripts of many variety shows. This loophole in the

NARTB code led Goodman Ace, another leading observer of the postwar television scene, to wonder what would prevent a sponsor from introducing a square aspirin, a circular refrigerator, a rectangular cigarette, or "a laxative that actually tasted like a laxative instead of chocolate."

What's being hailed as the new model of television advertising ...is a legacy of radio.

Integrated advertising during the postwar years was also used to counter sponsors' and ad agencies' worst fear—that viewers were using commercial breaks to prepare snacks or visit the bathroom. In order to avoid spending good money on temporarily absent viewers, sponsors had performers extol the wonders of their product as part of the program. When Bill Goodwin, the announcer on the *Burns and Allen* show, chatted it up with Gracie about the joys of Carnation Milk, for example, it was intentionally clear when the interchange would segue back into the main part of the show, unlike a traditional commercial break. The level to which commercials were integrated into the story lines of television shows rose through the 1950s as sponsors recognized the value of a seamless presentation of program material. Story lines often referenced not just products but brands, as on a Milton Berle episode, when guest star Gertrude Berg (in character as *Mama's Molly Goldberg*) asked the star to donate a Buick to a raffle her ladies' auxiliary was holding.

The two heavyweights of integrated television advertising in early TV—Jack Benny and Arthur Godfrey—had long experience in the technique from their radio days. During their radio careers, Marchand has noted, Benny, Godfrey and other stars like Ed Wynn were encouraged by sponsors to mention

("kid" in showbiz lingo) brand names into their skits and routines as a means to link their personality to the product. When these stars entered television, they continued to personalize commercials by blending them into their schtick, often to critical acclaim. "Some of [Benny's] 'Be Happy, Go Lucky' plugs [for Lucky Strike]," Humphrey, wrote, "are more entertaining than the programs."

Over the course of *The Jack Benny Program's* long history, advertising was woven into sketches and character personalities to the point where it could hardly be distinguished from other elements of the show. Both regular cast members and guest stars sang commercial jingles and endorsed products for the show's principal sponsors, Lucky Strike, Lux soap and detergent, State Farm Insurance and Jello-O—a direct lift from radio days. Announcer Don Wilson usually delivered the commercial, but was often joined by Benny, Dennis Day, Rochester (played by Eddie Anderson) and Harlow, Don's teen-age son. The Sportmen Quartet regularly sang the sponsor's jingle in a style accordant with a particular show's theme, occasionally joined or replaced by a guest singer. *The Jack Benny Program* was as pure a commercial vehicle as television could possibly get, with the sponsor's product almost infinitely malleable, able to fit into virtually any scenario or plot line.

Like *The Jack Benny Program*, Arthur Godfrey's show represented state-of-the-art integrated advertising and raised the bar of "commercialness" in commercial broadcasting. On his radio show, Godfrey was known to surprise both listener and sponsor, as when he audibly ate Peter Pan peanut butter on the air. Godfrey effortlessly transferred his relaxed, folksy style from radio to television, furthering his reputation as a master in subtle persuasion. Godfrey was

the king of the “impromptu” commercial, weaving announcements for Lipton, Pillsbury and Chesterfield products into his *Talent Scouts* show. In a classic 1950 plug, for instance, Godfrey said he wished that all the seats in the theater were equipped with fountains flowing with Lipton tea. With observations like these, Godfrey defied another staple of postwar advertising, the rational approach calling for facts, figures and diagrams.

Recognizing the power of presenting advertising within a context of entertainment, today’s marketers are carrying on the tradition of integrated advertising through branded content. Indeed,

The Jack Benny Program was as pure a commercial vehicle as television could possibly get, with the sponsor’s product able to fit into virtually any scenario.

marketers of the 21st century are raising the bar of the practice, elevating it to a height never imagined by their radio and television ancestors of two or three generations ago. Many action-adventure movies, especially the James Bond series, have evolved into one long commercial, as film studios reposition their products from entertainment properties to advertising vehicles. It is product placement in video games, however, which has emerged as the new frontier of integrated advertising.

One hundred and forty-five million

of us (that’s 60%) play video games, according to a recent survey by the Interactive Digital Software Association, with North American sales of games and related hardware adding up to \$11.7 billion in 2002. That’s already more than total annual movie ticket sales and, with 25% growth a year, it’s safe to say that digital gaming may very well turn out to be in the 21st century what movies were in the 20th. And with integrated advertising considered by most users not an annoyance but an element which makes video games more “real,” marketers are, not surprisingly, rushing headlong to include their brands as part of the game

experience. Video game players have the opportunity, for example, to eat McDonald’s hamburgers, make calls with Nokia phones and slip on Dole bananas, moving the consumer from passive viewer to interactive player in the

advertising equation. How will these marketing strategies impact television, especially with the slow but inevitable convergence of entertainment as broadband and wireless come online? Will viewers accept or reject the continually escalating encroachment of advertising into entertainment? Is there a branded content backlash brewing? Stay tuned as marketers push the envelope of integrated advertising until the very lines between popular culture and consumer culture become indistinguishable.

Lawrence R. Samuel is the author of *Brought to You By: Postwar Television Advertising and the American Dream*, (University of Texas Press), from which this article is adapted.

The Television Documentary Today

With a few notable exceptions, documentary filmmaking now minimizes reporting and emphasizes personality, process and entertainment

By Howard Weinberg

The core of a well-made documentary always has been keen visual observation and strong story structure, but much recent non-fiction filmmaking slights context and shies away from journalism. Documentaries made in the guise of drama slide into melodrama, soap opera, or at best "poetry." The trend in documentary filmmaking today is to minimize reporting and emphasize personality, process and entertainment.

The difficulty of raising money to make documentaries and the sheer complexity of the task means that films that are visually compelling, emotionally engaging and journalistically significant are rare. Some recent examples from a wide-ranging spectrum of documentaries show the problems and trends.

Directed, photographed and edited by Thomas Riedelsheimer, *Rivers and Tides: Andy Goldsworthy Working With Time* is a gorgeous, fascinating film about the Scottish artist whose exquisite response to the natural environment has resulted in museum and art center commissions worldwide. The film that Thomas Riedelsheimer directed, photographed and edited (Germany, 2000, Roxie Releasing) first played in New York at Film Forum, then moved to Cinema Village.

From the look of *Rivers and Tides*—time-lapse and aerial photography, international venues, four seasons—German, French and Finnish television put quite a bit of money into the film. It depicts the 46-year-old Goldsworthy as he makes several ephemeral creations that sun,

HOLLYWOOD

THE SMARTLY DIFFERENT SCREEN MAGAZINE

FEBRUARY
15c

ANNA
MAY
WONG'S
CHINESE
LOVE
CODE



Scenes from *Becoming American,
The Chinese Experience*



Lt. Fred Gong (center),
lead bombardier on B-17
Flying Fortress during
World War II.

water or wind soon destroy. Some fall apart in his hands. Other works, such as pear-shaped cairns, made of wood as well as stone, defy the tides of Nova Scotia or last through a year's cycle of growth and death. We watch him placing brilliant yellow clumps of dandelions amid gray rocks, linking together a glistening green ribbon of leaves and sending it twisting and turning down a dark river, arranging black stems of uprooted bracken to create a circle within a larger pattern of ash-colored sticks. He grinds brick-red powder from iron-rich rocks to turn rushing whitewater rapids blood red.

Riedelsheimer intensifies Goldsworthy's work. A painter who saw *Rivers and Tides* said he was disappointed that the



Shawn Wong. "I wanted to be Willie Mays, Roy Rogers."

film included brief scenes with Goldsworthy's wife and four small children at his farm near Penpont, Scotland. He said the domestic scenes interrupted the pure art of the film. But these moments are significant. They convey a sense of Goldsworthy's prosperity and, suggest, like the brief notation of his photography, that he has a rich gallery life. The filmmaker only hints at the art world's acceptance of the extraordinary Goldsworthy. A more

explicit depiction that didn't spoil the film's rhythm and harmony would increase our understanding of the artist.

Horns and Halos is by Suki Hawley & Michael Galinsky, a husband-wife team, who see a newspaper story saying that St. Martin's Press is recalling and destroying all copies of a controversial biography of George W. Bush. They learn that a small East Village publisher, Softskull Press, is going to print and market the book, "Fortunate Son." From their previous work in and around the

Properly used, narration is not a "crutch" but an effective tool for storytelling.

independent music scene, they know of Sander Hicks, the 29-year-old founder of Softskull, a self-described "punk from DC," activist, rebel journalist, playwright and songwriter. Beginning at the offices of Softskull in the basement of a building where Hicks is the janitor, the filmmakers decide at the very least they'll have an interesting character to follow. This is seat-of-your-pants video making.

The title, *Horns and Halos*, a phrase that Bush biographer J.H. Hatfield uses to describe his portrait, is another way of saying "warts and all" with emphasis on the warts. But alleged excesses of privilege, favoritism, irresponsibility and lawbreaking only lurk in the background of the film—hinted at, but not documented.

If *Horns and Halos* were more about the contents of the book "Fortunate Son" or more about the motivations of Hicks and Softskull, and less about the promotion process of the book, it would be a better film. But either alternative might have required narration—an anathema to most documentary filmmakers today. While showing is preferable to telling, many filmmakers use narration "in disguise" as printed paragraphs on screen, first-person story-

telling, or group-recollection of events.

Filmmaking depends on luck as well as skill. Without both, a doctrinaire avoidance of narration can result in an awkward, convoluted film—or as a journalist would say, a story with "holes" in it. Properly used, narration is not "a crutch" or an easy substitute for refining story structure, but an effective and efficient tool for storytelling. Documentary filmmakers who refuse to use an omniscient narrator often cite their audience's skepticism of authority. They are reacting also to the excesses and clichés of television journalism where too many

stories are "told" using narration over visual "wallpaper."

Many producers believe that the television audience is inattentive, distracted, not focused on the screen image, and more likely to be reached by words than pictures; but stunning visual evidence and excellent reportage require disciplined editing and storytelling. Without it, audiences must do the filmmaker's job of sorting out the story. Even sympathetic viewers have trouble with films where too much information is conveyed via narration. A current example is *Trading Women* by anthropologist and filmmaker David A. Feingold. The film investigates the sex industry in Thailand and why girls and women from the hill tribes of Burma, Laos and China increasingly enter this seamy world.

Interestingly, Feingold first made a 77-minute version of his film. Viewers may find it hard to stay with the 56-minute television version that tries to cover too many political bases with far too many interviews and heavy narration. Yet we see remarkable footage that takes us inside the hill tribe communities where parents condemn a villager who has abducted their daughters and inside the murky world of brothels, massage



Trading Women, by anthropologist and filmmaker David A. Feingold, investigates the sex industry in Thailand

parlors and karaoke bars where owners and sex workers speak frankly.

Feingold has represented UNESCO at an Asian conference against trafficking and serves on the UN Working Group on Trafficking. Clearly an insider, he has

***Becoming American: The Chinese Experience* is television documentary filmmaking at its finest—a rare film that is beautiful, moving and significant.**

written scholarly papers on most of the issues covered in the film and on many of the tribes, some of whose languages he speaks. He just hasn't been able to stuff 10 pounds into a five-pound bag and public television won't air his longer

version.

Bill Moyers spent five years raising more than \$5 million to make *Becoming American: The Chinese Experience*, a three-part, four-and-a-half-hour documentary series. Filmmaker Thomas Lennon, executive producer and principal writer, and Mi Ling Tsui, who did much of the original research for the series, produced Part Two: "Between Two Worlds." From the time of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 through the World War II, it portrays the struggle of Chinese immigrants to overcome racism and earn a place in American society. This is television documentary filmmaking at its finest—a rare film that is beautiful, moving and significant. Seeing it in a theater enhances one's experience

of the superb production design and excellent score.

Despite the film's inclusion of the poignant story of Anna Mae Wong, the first Chinese-American Hollywood movie star (she was forbidden to kiss a white American on screen!), and dramatic incidents of violence and cruelty against Chinese laborers, it's doubtful that a theatrical distributor would consider it "entertaining." Finding money

for advertising, promotion, and a re-edit for a theatrical release is a hard, if not impossible, slog uphill. Yet more and more documentaries are being seen both in theaters and on television thanks to HBO, Sundance, the Independent Film

Channel, enterprising distributors, and an increasing public interest in non-fiction films.

The critical and box office success of Michael Moore's *Bowling for Columbine* (*Are We A Nation of Gun Nuts or Are We Just Nuts?*), makes theatrical distribution for other documentaries thinkable. *Bowling for Columbine*—very much about “us” and our violent behavior at home and around the world—became the first documentary in 46 years to be accepted into competition at the Cannes Film Festival where it won the jury prize. Word of mouth spread as *Bowling for Columbine* won at least 22 awards around the world including the Writer's Guild of America's Best Original Screen-

play and the Academy Award for Best Documentary. *Bowling for Columbine* raises the bar for every documentary filmmaker. It shows that a documentary can include plenty of journalism and advocacy, be both personal and wide-ranging in scope if it is presented with humor, imagination and passion.

As theatrical audiences glimpse quirky, humorous, beautiful, inspirational or emotionally-wrenching documentaries, will they become less or more receptive to films respectful of journalism? Will filmmakers continue to slight reporting because their primary focus is to get their films shown in theaters and on television as non-fiction dramas? Context now suffers as documentaries thrive.

An award-winning independent documentary filmmaker and television journalist, Howard Weinberg was the founding producer of *The MacNeil/Lehrer Report*, served as executive producer of *Listening to America* with Bill Moyers and was producer of *CBS Sunday Morning* and *60 Minutes*. He has taught at the Columbia Journalism School and is a successful script doctor.

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SEX IN ADVERTISING: PERSPECTIVES ON THE EROTIC APPEAL

Edited by Tom Reichert and
Jacqueline Lambiase
*Erlbaum Publishers: Mahwah, NJ (294
pages, \$32.50 paper, \$69.95 cloth)*

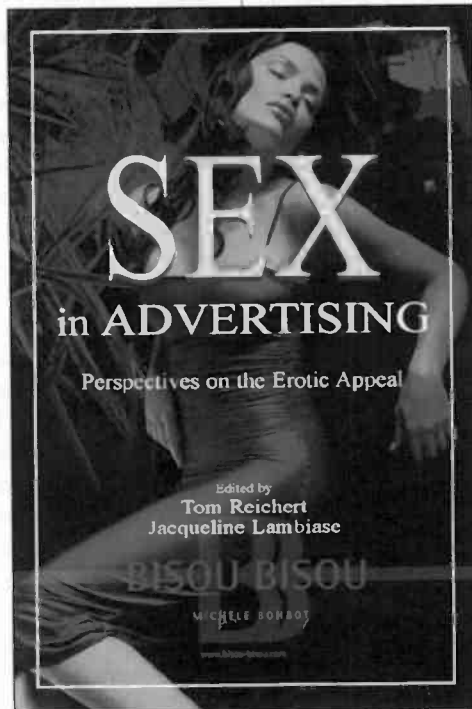
By **Thomas J. Cottle**

If you are someone who believes that the highly recognizable advertising device of employing sexual stimuli to get people to buy products is simple, self-explanatory and worthy of little thoughtful exploration, then Tom Reichert and Jacqueline Lambiase's *Sex in Advertising* is an anthology that will, in the spirit of contemporary advertising, open your eyes. A remarkable collection of essays has been assembled here, each of them deserving close inspection and mindful consideration. The worlds of psychology, sociology, neurophysiology, communications theory, art, politics, even moral reasoning, are examined in these pages, as a group of scholars once again make respectable that pulsating field known as popular

culture. And once again, that which appears so obvious has its dynamics and hidden resources revealed to us in a manner that on occasion is perfectly arresting.

Reichert begins his discussion of sex appeal, noticing, of course, the play on the word appeal, and just what it is that causes us to remember so-called brand names. Does the appeal arouse a wish-fulfillment fantasy, or the gratification, perhaps, of some motive? In order to, well, incorporate the advertisement, we are involving our capacities to attend, and cognize the perceived events, as well as develop attitudes about them. Alas, the brain never perceives and thinks without having some sort of concomitant emotional response. The sexual behavior of the ad involves individual behavior as well as interpersonal interaction.

Believe it or not, researchers now are able to differentiate sexual from cute and trendy images of attractiveness, all of which have implications for appealing to consumers. Not surprising is that physical attractiveness, however defined, can effect our evaluations of ads but quite possibly have little or not effect on whether we are going to purchase a particular item. But the story grows more complicated because many sexual referents



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are implicit, quietly embedded in ads in the form of what advertisers call "embeds," a vital form of the act of "subliminal seduction," to borrow the title of Silson Key's book. We also learn that men and women may not be reacting to sexual stimuli in the same way.

The historical transformations of advertisements, and particularly those including sexual stimuli, is traced by Sivulka, who speaks of the predictable diversions of sexual advertising and the treatment first of women, and now of men as sexual objects. If modernity offers us anything, it is that technology makes the reproduction of advertisements infinitely more delectable, just as our knowledge of consumer behavior and the psychology of need and motivation become more sophisticated. With Freud and his followers, advertisers got more than a peek at what, theoretically, motivates people to do certain things, like buy something, and what one can do to control these motives. Imagine Madison Avenue executives glomming onto the notion of the unconscious sexual fantasies of men and women, and the intense desire to gratify various wishes in some unthreatening manner. Imagine too, how Americans were responding to the liberation from Victorian restraints on sexuality and the growing knowledge of social nobility generally. Buy the right vodka or soap, and you, too, may end up in the house on the hill with the white picket fence.

All was going rather well for the advertisers employing sexually laced products until the modern feminists came along. But their own protestations seemed to be utterly overwhelmed by still a new wave of openly sexual appeals. Remember Brook Shields' face as seductively she confessed that nothing came between her and her erotically charged blue jeans. In truth, Ms. Shields was

dressed by Mr. Klein and Dr. Kinsey.

In one of the more intriguing chapters, Schroeder and Borgerson describe what they call fetishes in advertising, and then relate this notion of fetishes to the manner in which human beings are turned into commodities. Even if we wished to, advertisers won't let us forget that products offer symbolic as well as utilitarian qualities. Anyone who has ever put on a pair of leather pants knows this, especially if the pants are tight, and black. We experience the world in part through fetishistic behavior, images, and sights constantly defining the world to us, and us to the world. More precisely, we represent ourselves to the world and ourselves through fetishistic objects. We are controlled or released, made powerful or helpless, by the fetishistic object. Who among us has the strength to click off a commercial revealing a fabulous looking model in tight black leather pants? That we don't remember what was being sold is another matter altogether. The god Amor is alive and well. As the authors write, "Web sites crave eyeball capture." Without advanced visual technology, advertising is lost, and we are left to suffer with our unfulfilled fantasies and a headful of inaccessible desires.

In their chapter on understanding the arousal process, LaTour and Henthorne make clear the face of capitalism, which is, after all, contemporary advertising. How is it, these authors inquire, that we become aroused, and what then happens when we are? What, in other words, describes the relationship among arousal and energy, tension and the activation of consumer behavior? What are the ethical implications, moreover, of sexual appeals? Is there even a role for moral reasoning in the script of sexually charged consumer appeals? Do people even care about such matters when it comes time to make their purchasing decisions?

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In fact, according to the authors, they do, thus advertisers, cognizant of contemporary research, are compelled to reflect on the content of their own products if only for economic reasons. Madison Avenue needs to appreciate the fact that women, generally, are made more tense by explicit sexual advertising than are men. Indeed, sex does sell, but only to a point. In some contexts, an advertisement may actually be repellent, a literal turn-off for the consumer.

In exploring the sexual appeals of alcohol billboard advertising, Annie Lang and her collaborators introduce us to the dynamics of information processing in so-called mediated messages. It is our

Madison Avenue needs to appreciate the fact that women, generally, are made more tense by explicit sexual advertising than are men.

brain, after all, that is asked to perceive, incorporate, encode, store and finally retrieve those titillating images. Interestingly, the authors report that negative messages are remembered better than positive ones, and thus advertisers know to throw highly emotionally charged messages at us. Research also confirms that we remember better when we are aroused. Simply put, when a positive sexual appeal incites us, we'll store that image, as if we didn't know this when we were children. A little sex appeal and a little alcohol appeal really solidifies the message in our brains, as if we didn't know this when we were teenagers.

What particularly the sexually charged advertisement does is alter the very taboo or ritual contained within the message, hardly an innocuous phenomenon. The insidious part of the transformation, however, is that the viewer can become desensitized to both the taboo and the

ritual. At first we are disarmed, agog, even, but over time, for good or bad, we become inured to the visual stimuli we encounter, as well as the artistic, political and even ethical contrails. But let no one believe that anyone represents the typical consumer, the mother of all buyers. No one can predict the success of an advertisement campaign; the mediascape, like the human brain, is just too complex. Who is to say how anyone of us responds to the untouchable, the unapproachable, the unattainable? Who of us knows whether we even wish to touch, approach, or attain the objects launched upon today's mediascape? All we do know is that we have encountered the felt sense of desire. But will this felt sense turn into economic consumption? For without this final payoff, all the sex, all the appeals, all the seduction go for naught.

Ostensibly the exploration here is precisely what the title proclaims: *Sex in Advertising*. Latently a far more, well, appealing venture is underway. And that would be an exploration of the postmodern social, cultural, and yes, economic worlds of sex and sexuality, a world Freud, in many respects, dared to open up for us. We've come a long way, baby, in less than a hundred years from sex as unspeakable, even unthinkable, to sex as fetish, ritual, ceremony, trope, message, product. Part of this extraordinary evolution is made possible by the very people whose words are collected in this volume. Like Freud, in making the invisible visible, the secretive public knowledge, they offer us a chance at liberation from artificial restraints and outright ignorance.

Thomas J. Cottle is professor of education at Boston University. His recent books include *Mind Field: Adolescent Consciousness in a Culture of Distraction*; *At Peril: Stories of Injustice*; and *Hardest Times: The Trauma of Long Term Unemployment*.

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THE SUPERBOWL OF ADVERTISING

How The Commercials Won The Game

By Bernice Kanner
Bloomberg Press, Princeton, NJ
 (240 pages, \$27.95)

By Howard Davis

Most viewers of Super Bowl games have one of its commercials etched in their memories. My own unforgettable is "Mean Joe Green." The huge and sweating player plods down a tunnel toward the locker room. His Pittsburgh Steelers have lost. He's mad as hell! *Mean*-looking too. The spent athlete ignores a small, shy boy of about 10 who tries to hand his hero a consoling Coke. Mean Joe stops, takes the bottle, ingests the Coke in a breath and a swallow. The kid watches lovingly. Mean Joe walks on without speaking. Then he stops again, turns and throws his sweatshirt to the lad. He even smiles! The music swells up—"A Coke and a smile make you feel good, make you feel nice"...Wowee!

Bernice Kanner's book, *The Super Bowl of Advertising—How the Commercials Won the Game*, begins with a bang-on quote from agency head and restaurateur Jerry Della Femina, writing in *The Wall Street Journal*: "In my world—advertising—the Super Bowl is Judgment Day. If politicians have election day and

Hollywood has the Oscars, advertising has the Super Bowl."

Ms. Kanner possesses all the bona fides needed to write this excellent and handsome book. She worked at J. Walter Thompson, then for 13 years wrote a weekly column called "On Madison Avenue" for *New York Magazine*. She's a near-peerless commentator on marketing.

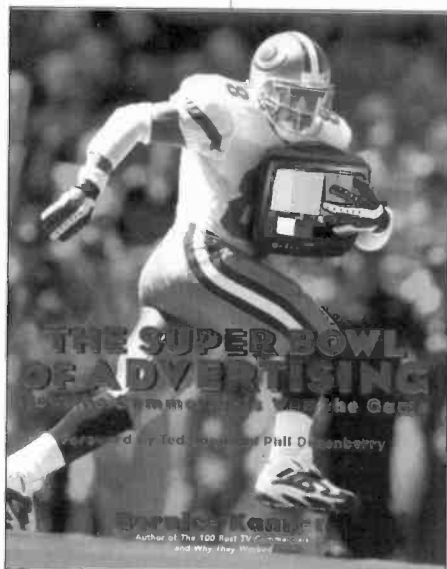
Ms. Kanner leads us into her pages with a shocker. Thirty thousand seats remained unsold for 1967's Super Bowl One—let's call it SBI—between the Kansas City Chiefs and the Green Bay Packers. A good seat set a fan back all of eight bucks. (Today the average is about \$400.) It was telecast on both NBC and CBS.

The following year, 1968, saw a rear end plopped on every SBII seat. The game never looked back, selling out every year since. The Superbowl exists because of the merger of the National Football League (NFL) and the upstart American Football League (AFL). One decisive contest between the champions would result in a "World Championship." There would be no seven-

game play-off, as still exists in baseball and pro basketball. The game is sink or swim, do or die. It's the Super Bowl!

The commercials for SBI, priced at \$75,000 for one minute, were judged to be quite good, nothing special. Many had previously played on network television.

Tareyton Cigarette smokers were prepared to fight rather than switch. President Johnson came on to urge us to buy war bonds in support of our Vietnam



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troops and their noble cause. Hagar slacks "just fit better naturally." Winston and Salem cigarettes recommended themselves highly and smartly. Shaeffer Beer was still "the best beer to have when you're having more than one."

In SBIII, quarterback Joe Namath, who had "guaranteed" that he would lead the New York Jets to glorious victory over the Baltimore colts, became a national hero by keeping his promise. Eighteen sponsors had bought their minutes of time at \$135,000 if played during the game, and a dozen others at \$50,000 pre-game. Now, all of a sudden, real folding money was needed to get your product on the Super Bowl. (But just wait!)

"During the 1970s," Ms. Kanner tells us, "while the game gained in popularity, the advertising remained largely pedestrian." She then describes one gigantic exception. "During SBVII, on January 16, 1972, while the Dallas Cowboys stampered over the Miami Dolphins in New Orleans, Coca-Cola was making ad history with music." Music sure, but what viewers saw in "Hillside" was just as appealing. Some 400 young people from many countries were gathered on a hillside in Italy singing (lip-syncing, of course). They were fresh-faced and beautiful, skin tones and facial structure as varied as the United Nations. In a pristine setting, nature lent its hand to the kids and to the song: "I'd like to teach the world to sing in perfect harmony...I'd like to buy the world a Coke and keep it company." A helicopter-borne camera widened back to reveal the throng. "I'd like to buy the world a home and furnish it with love, grow apple trees and honey bees and snow-white turtle doves..."

Some bottlers found "Hillside" treacly, but viewers folded it in their minds and hearts. The campaign went on for six years.

"As 'Hillside' wound down," writes Ms.

Kanner, "Coke was preparing another blockbuster, 'Mean Joe Green,' neatly pre-vindicating the reviewer's choice."

The author chose the year 1984 as the most spectacular year ever for Super Bowl commercials. It's likely that a vast majority of the players and fans had never read George Orwell's book "1984." Written in 1949, it describes a fascistic society of the future— of 1984, in fact— and a world lacking in democracy, warmth and kindness. Ms. Kanner writes:

Apple's seminal '1984' spot transformed the Super Bowl from a football game to an advertising showcase. Filmmaker Ridley Scott's mini-epic told the story of devolved automatons shuffling in and watching Big Brother's harangue on an overhead screen. Then an athletic blond, outrunning the 'thought police,' hurls a sledgehammer at the screen. The screen explodes in a blinding flash of light. The announcer reads 'On January 24th, Apple Computer will introduce Macintosh. And you'll see why 1984 won't be like '1984.'

Almost 100 million viewers watched Apple's visually stunning tease. The Monday after, 200,000 consumers flocked to dealers to view the Mac, and 72,000 bought one in the next 100 days, exceeding Apple's goal by 50%. The ad ushered in the era of advertising as news. The three major networks played the ad on their evening news shows. "1984" went on to sweep awards shows, and became *Advertising Age's* Commercial of the Decade.

The following January, Apple tried again. All the seats in Stanford Stadium, 85,000 in all, were cushioned with the Apple logo. The commercial named "Lemmings" cost \$60,000 to produce, the airtime nearly a million. Nobody liked the commercial. Sales went kerplow, and

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in 1986, the ad agency, Chiat-Day, lost the client that had made it famous in 1984.

In 1988 Gallo's new wine cooler, Bartles and James, was the hit of Super Bowl XXII. The stars were two very rural guys, Frank and Ed. We laughed when Frank said that the cooler would sure help Ed out because he had taken a second mortgage on his house. Also, he had a big balloon payment due soon.

Taste-alike coolers proliferated, with Bartles and James leading the pack! But the industry learned a valuable lesson. Super Bowl sensations could not keep a brand afloat if the product is suspect. Wine coolers appealed only to the most unsophisticated drinkers. (OK, it's a lousy substitute for a drink.) So sales fell. By 1985, Frank and Ed returned to their day jobs.

The Superbowl of Advertising devotes a dozen pages and a dozen color frames to Anheuser-Busch's Budweiser Beer. "Mr. Insincerity" tries to flatter Charlton Heston into giving up his Bud Light. Instead, the actor coaches him on the reading of his goofy line, "I love you, man."

Many Super Bowl commercials, before and after 1984, have turned mediocre performers into big winners. Tabasco Sauce, a fiery concoction from Louisiana's Cajun country, was made by a stable small company waiting for the Bloody Mary to really take off. Doyle Dane Bernbach talked them into going for broke, to spend most of their year's ad budget to say simply, "It's a great hot sauce!" A young man sits on the porch of his house beside the bayou. He splashes Tabasco prodigally on his pizza slice. A mosquito bites his arm and flies on, only to explode in mid-air as the guy grins knowingly. A DDB copywriter explained it to Ms. Kanner, "We wanted to say it's cool before saying it's hot."

One chapter is devoted exclusively to

car ads, usually a longeur to this car-renting Manhattan type. However, Ms. Kanner's choice of the best woke me up to American reality. Car ads are important. In "Topiary" a hedge is clipped down to a car's shape for Plymouth's 1967 "Neon"—"No matter what color you choose, we do our darndest to keep it green." A neat and clever environmental pitch.

But trouble was brewing at century's end. Ms. Kanner warns that "In 2000 internet start-ups threw away money on Super Bowl even faster than investors had thrown money at them." In her last chapter, "2003: Short of the Goal Posts," Ms. Kanner concludes: "Sadly, most of the ads were flat, silly, boring or just ordinary." This for spots costing more than two million dollars for 30 seconds of air time (remember that \$75,000 for a full minute on SBI?)

Such a judgment was given, I'm sure, in sorrow. Ms. Kanner is an honest and savvy reporter who has given us an enthusiastic and encouraging account of her subject, not just another finger-pointing exposé of the faults and scandals of advertisers and their agencies. This good book will surely interest a large marketing audience and possibly a fair readership by the general public and Super Bowl fans.

After a decade as an NBC director Howard Davis joined the N.W. Ayer advertising agency, where he became an international account manager. He has reminisced for Television Quarterly about Howdy Doody, The Today Show and Bill Stern's Alarm Clock War.

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Roone: A Memoir

By Roone Arledge
HarperCollins, New York
 (432 pages, \$25.95 hardcover, \$ 13.95 paperback)

By Dan Einstein

If one were to sit down and draw up a list of the 50 (or the 25, or the 10, or the five) most influential figures in the history of television, then put that list in alphabetical order, the name at the top would have to be Roone Arledge. Indeed it's no stretch to argue that Arledge's impact on the development and presentation of news and sports programming, especially at the network level, has been the most profound and long-lasting of any individual in television history, in this country or any other.

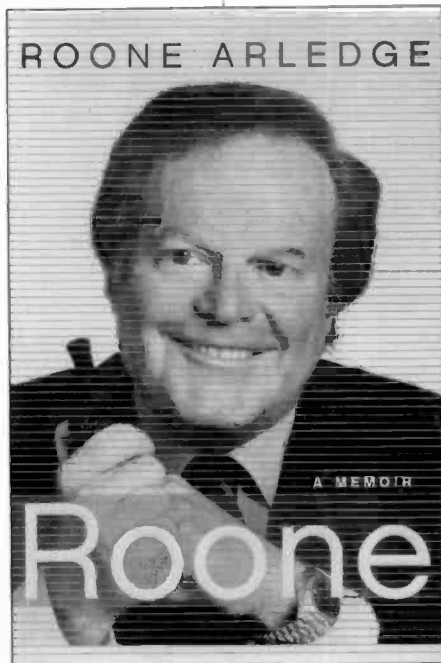
For 38 years the most prominent and successful executive at the American Broadcasting Company, Arledge had a hand in creating a remarkable number of landmark programs and in nurturing of some of television's preeminent on-air talent. As head of ABC Sports in the 1960's and 1970's, he masterminded the construction of *ABC Wide World of Sports*, TV's longest-running and most successful sports series, and guided the rise of *Monday Night Football* into a ratings powerhouse that literally changed the American way of life (and offered up Howard Cosell to a dubiously grateful nation). He, more

than any other person, was responsible for turning the Olympics into a quadrennial worldwide television spectacular, producing 10 games during his stay at ABC. He was in the producer's hot seat during the horrible hours of the 1972 Munich games when Palestinian terrorists kidnapped and murdered 11 Israeli athletes, an event whose live coverage stunned the world, and convinced Arledge that his destiny lay not in sports, but in news.

In 1977, he took over ABC's troubled news division, which had for years been mired in third place among the three networks, and before long, he transformed ABC News into a top-flight and—for the first time ever—a profitable institution. During his nearly 20 years as president of ABC News, he created *World News Tonight*, and launched *Nightline* and the highly successful newsmagazine *20/20*. He brought David Brinkley and Diane Sawyer to the network and guided the

rise to stardom of among others, Barbara Walters, Sam Donaldson, Peter Jennings and Ted Koppel.

His influence has even extended to the language. He professed to coining the term "summitry" to explain a confrontation between President Eisenhower and Nikita Khrushchev in the 1950's, but of greater import was his coinage of expressions while at ABC Sports; the classic "Up Close and Personal," and of course, "The Thrill of Victory and the Agony



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of Defeat," enduring phrases which long ago entered the American lexicon.

During his lifetime he was the recipient of 36 Emmy Awards, 4 Peabodys, 2 Christopher Awards, the International Olympic Committee's Medal of the Olympic Order, and countless other honors. In 1990, he was elected to the Television Academy Hall of Fame, the same year he was listed by Life magazine among its "100 Most Important Americans of the 20th Century." And in 1994, Sports Illustrated, in its 40th anniversary issue, ranked him third, after only Muhammad Ali and Michael Jordan, in its list of the 40 most significant individuals in sports since the magazine began publication.

On December 5, 2002, Arledge died after a long battle with prostate cancer. In his last years and in his spare time, he penned his memoirs, which in May 2003 were posthumously published by HarperCollins under the simple title, *Roone*. In the book, he provides a chronological overview of what must have been an incredibly full and rewarding life. It's a light and fairly breezy read, a good book for the beach next summer. But if one is looking for something more substantial, it's a frustratingly incomplete telling of his travels in the world of network television from the relatively freewheeling 1950's through the corporate 1990's, an account that is often more notable for what is left unstated than for what is included.

Roone Pinckney Arledge II was born in New York in 1931, son of a lawyer father who imparted "an almost insatiable curiosity about the world...and a devouring appetite for news and media, and a mother from whom he learned "good manners...personal reserve, and most of all the love of excellence and attention to detail." Like thousands of others he first encountered television at

the 1939 New York World's Fair, but never considered making it a career. Interested in journalism at an early age, he entered Columbia University at 16, and though for some reason or other he doesn't mention it in the book, he was editor of the school yearbook, and was elected president of both his class and his fraternity.

Footloose in New York after leaving Columbia in the early 1950's, Arledge's experience was similar to that of many other bright young people who seemed to accidentally fall into their television careers. A chance meeting led to a job at the DuMont network as "assistant-to-the-assistant-program-director," a humble assignment interrupted by a two-year hitch in the army. Returning to New York upon his discharge, he went to work as a stage manager at WRCA-TV. Rising through the ranks, Arledge grew to love working in "live" TV. The "vividness, the immediacy, and above all, the unpredictability that the medium brought to our living rooms" stayed with him throughout his career and was one of the main reasons he enjoyed working in sports and news, the two areas he considered the last bastion of "live" television.

In 1960 Arledge moved from NBC to lowly, struggling ABC, and in *Roone* he describes his rise and reign as head of the network's sports division. He details his realization that television was selling itself short when it came to sports. When he arrived at ABC, the televising of games basically "amounted to going on the road, opening three or four cameras and trying not to blow any plays." In other words, television was merely "documenting" the games it covered. But coming from the entertainment side of broadcasting, Arledge knew that every sporting event was, in effect, a narrative story that televi-

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sion was "uniquely equipped" to tell. He recognized that while "television has done a remarkable job of bringing the game to the viewer," now was the opportune time to "take the viewer to the game." He began, therefore, to "utilize every production technique learned in the production of variety shows, political conventions, and travel and adventure programs to heighten the viewer's feeling of actually sitting in the stands." He created or assisted in the development of devices now standard in the telling of a sporting event: the instant replay; slo-mo; underwater cameras; microphones and cameras in the midst of on-the-field action, and the production of "up close and personal" feature stories on athletes. He selected and groomed such on-air talent as Jim McKay, Howard Cosell, Frank Gifford, Keith Jackson and Don Meredith to tell his stories. He brought not only the Olympics to television, but a host of other sports and sporting events that heretofore had not been covered at all: the LeMans and Firecracker 500 auto races; the World Water Skiing Championships; the "Frontier Days" rodeo championships, to name just a few. He used the new Telstar satellite to bring to American viewers the USA-USSR track meet (the first sporting event televised from the Soviet Union to the United States), and the Irish Sweepstakes. The list goes on and on, but the concept of sports as a story, and of emotion and gripping narrative as central to each sportscast, were the hallmarks of his tenure at ABC Sports.

Coming to the ABC News division in 1977 was a fresh and daunting challenge. As he had done with sports, Arledge quickly moved to revamp and invigorate the network's news programming, which was in then deep trouble. He immediately brought something novel to news: a sports mentality characterized by a need

to be first, not only in the ratings, but also in the competition for breaking stories. Being last, he imparted to his staffers, was "for losers."

In short order he created *World News Tonight*, *20/20* and *America Held Hostage*, (which morphed into *Nightline*.) He negotiated (and these endless machinations take up page after endless page in *Roone*) to bring David Brinkley and Dianne Sawyer to ABC. He moved Peter Jennings into the sole news anchor slot (after the trials and tribulations of dealing with Harry Reasoner, Barbara Walters, Frank Reynolds, and the difficult and ultimately tragic Max Robinson). He turned a onetime laughingstock news operation into a powerful, profitable and respected organization that after his death remains his enduring legacy.

It's a shame that so much of Arledge's telling of his own life should turn out such a spiritless and pedestrian read. His literary style can be charitably characterized as basic, and while he offers a decent enough chronology of his life, there is frustratingly little reflection on that life. He declines any sort of self-analysis or revelation of intimate details on wives, family, and co-workers (we are given example after example of Cosell's difficult personality, but no attempt whatsoever to explain the man); the kudos and awards that certainly must have meant something to him; the effect events (in particular those of Munich in September 1972) must have had on him. In short, what is sadly missing here are those things that fill in the outlines of a life lived: we get the rather cold skeleton of a career, not the meat and muscle of a complete life.

Dan Einstein is the Television Archivist at the UCLA Film and Television Archive and author of the two-volume *Special Edition: A Guide to Network Television Documentary Series and Special News Reports*.

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**My Anecdotal Life:
A Memoir**

By Carl Reiner

*Saint Martin's Press, New York (236 pages, \$24.95)***Caesar's Hours**

By Sid Caesar with Eddy Friedfeld

Public Affairs, New York (294 pages, \$26.00)

By Earl Pomerantz

The front cover of Carl Reiner's *My Anecdotal Life* shows a picture of a youngish Reiner sitting at his typewriter, looking at the camera, it appears, a little impatiently. The back cover shows Reiner, half a century later, sitting at a computer with a mock gruff look on his face, as if saying to the photographer, "Are you still here?" Comparing the two pictures, it appears the older Reiner has added a few pounds, and, confounding Nature, has improved his posture. The stories in this memoir substantiate the upgrade. His award-winning accomplishments as actor, writer and director allow Reiner to stand, or in this case, sit tall. And as many of the anecdotes involve gourmet dining, it is clear the expanded waistline has been well and pleasurefully earned. (The only other difference in the two pictures is the older Reiner lacks substantial hair; Reiner the Younger sports wavy locks, though they may not

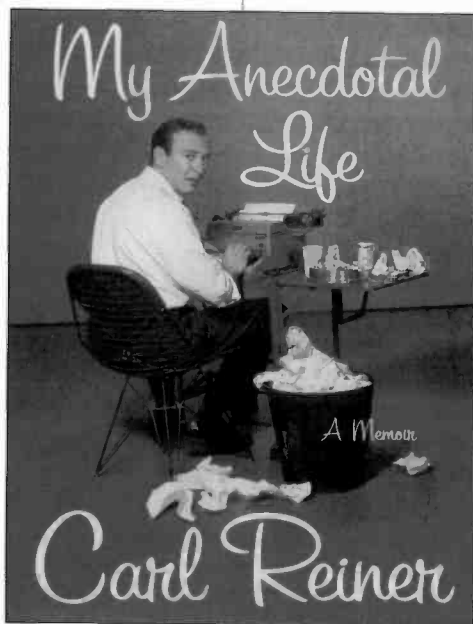
be his own.)

In lieu of a full-blown autobiography, Reiner has elected to give us, as his title suggests, a series of anecdotes. These anecdotes are related "in the order that they popped into my head," producing what he calls a "literary variety show." And a fine entertainment it is.

Prodded by his friends that "You ought to write those things down!" Reiner has set sure-fire dinner-table material to paper, where it can be enjoyed by those not fortunate enough to have attended the dinner. The majority of his reminiscences are hilarious, even in written form, though I have to believe that in Reiner's hands, and voice and prodigiously-expressive face, they were even funnier in the telling.

From a career standpoint, at least, Reiner seems to have experienced the charmedest of lives. He entered show business because his brother badgered him into responding to a newspaper announcement offering free acting classes. He went to an audition and got two jobs out of it. A stint in a failed project led straight to *Your Show of Shows*. He got a novel published because his neighbor happened to know a guy. He wrote a play because his bored secretary needed something to type. And every time he had a kid, a great new opportunity materialized. Somebody must really like this guy.

And with reason, it appears. Besides his obvious gifts, Reiner seems to be a truly



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decent fellow. Though not a man to boast, in maybe his only boast in the book, Reiner proclaims "I've never sued or been sued, and I'm very proud of that." In keeping with this nice guy image, Reiner, amongst other anecdotes, relates several stories concerning what he calls "shmuckery," wherein he confesses to insensitive behavior, though with one exception, he was unaware of the insensitivity while the behavior was taking place. These inadvertent misbehaviors generate moments of explosive hilarity, the funniest an encounter with an apparently disfigured advertising executive in a chapter entitled "The Man with the Blue-Veined Cheek." The one deliberate piece of misbehavior occurred when Mary Tyler Moore requested a meeting during the successful run of *The Dick Van Dyke Show*. When Mary informs him of a painful personal situation, Reiner is elated that her problem, as he mistakenly feared, is not a threat to the show. For this lapse of selfishness, Reiner belatedly though sincerely apologizes in the book.

Traveling in such circles, Reiner inevitably encounters famous people—Georgie Jessel, Cary Grant, Herman Wouk, Billy Wilder, Mel Brooks, Mickey Rooney, Joseph Heller, Jean Renoir and Paramount heavyweight Charles Bluhdorn, among other notables, and his celebrity-studded stories never fail to elicit a well-deserved chuckle. But the stories that struck home were the ones involving Reiner's own family—his immigrant mother hiding her illiteracy, his ailing brother chatting with President Clinton about his World War II experiences at Normandy, and especially his stoic but visionary father, a remarkable inventor who never struck it rich. I would happily have traded learning about cow brain preparation or the search for the perfect sausage—the

centerpiece of two other anecdotes—to hear more about these fascinating people.

And more about other things as well. Maybe Reiner's just shy. Or maybe he feels his personal struggles aren't interesting. Maybe he thinks only funny stories are worth telling. Or maybe he feels the deeper elements of his life are none of our business. But I'd like to have heard more about his early years. And what about his time in the army? What was it like having to go on "live" and deliver a side-splitting 90-minute *Show of Shows* presentation week after week? Was he ever jealous of Sid Caesar? How did he feel when Dick Van Dyke replaced him in a show he wrote to star himself? How did he and his son Rob get along, competing in the same business? Did he ever turn down a job he wished he hadn't, or lost one he really wanted? What work has brought him the greatest satisfaction? The answer to these and many other questions are not to be found in *My Anecdotal Life*. Which makes this "memoir" frustratingly incomplete.

Carl Reiner is someone I enormously admire. I consider *The Dick Van Dyke Show* the shining template for the best half-hour comedies that came after, and I hunger for insight into the mind and spirit that made it up. Though he has no obligation to do so, I just wish he had trusted us with more.

Of course, Reiner's still a vigorous 81. There's still time to tell it all.

He's still hilarious.

When Carl Reiner, the Roving Reporter, asks the distinguished Viennese authority on mountain climbing, "What is the most dangerous mountain in the whole world?," Sid Caesar, playing his iconic

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Professor character replies: "Mount Slippery. In the Slippery Valley." Reading those words in Caesar's lively memoir *Caesar's Hours* forced me to get out of bed, fearing my shaking with uncontrollable laughter would awaken my sleeping wife.

Sid Caesar has many natural gifts, among them the gift for double-talk in various languages, the gift for pantomime, and a prodigious energy driving himself and his brilliant staff of writers toward perfection, 90 minutes a week, 39 weeks a year. What he couldn't do so well was be himself. I remember at the end of shows Caesar's coming out in a dressing gown to say thank you and goodnight to the audience. The man could barely get through it. He'd either cough through his "Good night's", or he'd stammer "G'nigh-g'night." I imagined he was just exhausted. But it was more than that. Often, a performer with a talent for going deep inside his characters feels naked and vulnerable coming out as himself. It's almost like he's hiding in the characters.

But that time seems over. Now Sid Caesar wants us to know him. He wants us to know where he came from. He wants us to know about his 30-year battle with alcohol and pills. He wants us to know how he now faces life one day at a time, living in the "now," stopping to smell the roses. And most of all, he wants us to know how grateful and appreciative he is, especially to his wife of 60 years, and his older brother. In

fact, his almost overly effusive testimonial to his brother Dave made me ponder what a Caesar in his prime might have done with a "Grateful Guy" character.

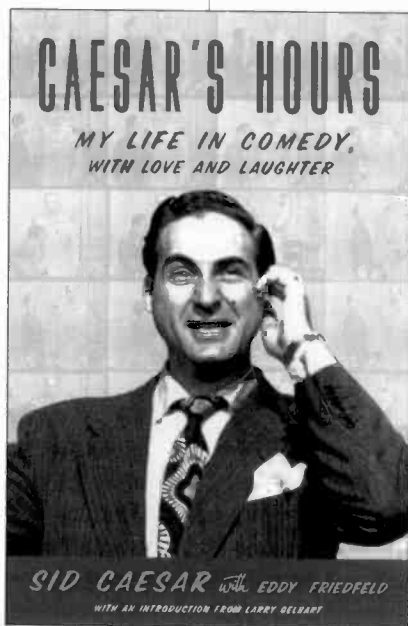
Caesar's Hours is divided into three sections of unequal length. Though the early background section leading to *Your Show of Shows* was illuminating, and the much shorter third section concerning overcoming his addiction and his later performing successes fills in the story, the extended middle section is the one

most worth cherishing and buying the book for. Even at full price. In this section, Caesar exposes us to the inner workings of the two monumental variety series that make the name Sid Caesar synonymous with the greatest comedy in the history of television.

Caesar takes us inside the Writers' Room, or the sanctum sanctorum as he called it, where he sat with writers the likes of Mel Brooks, Neil Simon and Larry Gelbart, crafting

comedy that drew belly laughs and huge ratings throughout the 50's and still holds up today. Holding to the conviction that comedy is exaggerated truth, Caesar drew his ideas from everyday life, playing identifiable characters in believable situations, exaggerated slightly for comedic effect. The best comedies continue to live by these dictums (see: *Everybody Loves Raymond*). But most shows go elsewhere for their comedy. And their laughs have a ring of falseness.

Though Caesar has nary an unkind word for anyone, reading between the



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lines, you can tell he was less than thrilled by *Your Show of Shows* producer Max Liebman's constantly squeezing the sketches to make room for his ever-expanding production numbers. And the network's yanking his natural partner-in-comedy Imogene Coca to give her her own show must have tested Caesar's fabled proclivity for punching his fist through walls. Splitting up this perfectly matched duo was a really dumb idea. But, you know, that's life. Or at least that's how Caesar sees it today.

Stories and observations recur from Caesar's 1982 memoir *Where Have I Been?*, but the overall tone here is more balanced and more forgiving. The bad times are still there, but the mellowing of time has placed them in their proper perspective. The question of the relationship between talent and excess remains contentious, but to me, that's how it should be. It's a hard question.

Though a certain delight to any reader interested in television's Golden Age, for a comedy writer, *Caesar's Hours* is never less than an education. If, as he suggests, Caesar's training in the Catskills was his high school, the Coast Guard was college, and *Your Show of Shows* was graduate school, *Caesar's Hours* stands as his Ph.D dissertation on comedy. And his grade? As Caesar's lovable jazz aficionado Progress Hornsby might have said:

Solid.

A multiple award-winning television comedy writer, Earl Pomerantz is the author of "How Demographics Reshaped the TV Family," elsewhere in this issue of *Television Quarterly*.

COLD WAR, COOL MEDIUM:

Television, McCarthyism, and American Culture

by Thomas Doherty

Columbia University Press, New York
(320 pages, \$27.95)

HIDE IN PLAIN SIGHT:

The Hollywood Blacklistees in Film and Television, 1950-2002

by Paul Buhle and Dave Wagner

Palgrave Publishing, New York (320 pages, \$27.95)

By Douglas Gomery

Simply put, *Cold War, Cool Medium*, by Thomas Doherty, ranks as one of the seminal books ever written about the history of television and politics in the USA. Conventional wisdom — as surveyed in *Hide in Plain Sight* — offers that television was a disseminator of Cold-War paranoia in the early 1950s. That TV executives blacklisted helpless writers, directors and actors. That Joe McCarthy first used TV skillfully as a power-grabbing political medium. And so on. Conclusions which have become "common sense."

Doherty brilliantly challenges this conventional wisdom and indeed turns it upside down. He skillfully, systematically, and clearly demonstrates that early television helped the USA become a more tolerant nation, and provided for more open discussion. While a blacklist existed, studying it to death only distracts from the "real news" that 1950s TV helped set up the civil rights movement of the 1960s. He explores what people saw — not the absences caused by the blacklist.

Rethinking and reconceptualizing as

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Doherty does, we learn that early TV brought the horrors of McCarthyism into American homes; it allowed viewers the opportunity to see ethnic minorities (*The Goldbergs*) and watch political debate (*Meet the Press*), instead of simply listening to these shows on the radio or reading press accounts in Hearst newspapers or other biased dailies. It crossed ghetto boundaries and presented the whole of ethnic USA in news — showing what all of could only listen to or read about before.

Ultimately, early TV aided the decline of anti-communist hysteria, Doherty clearly demonstrates. "Television became an artery as vital to the pulse of American life as the refrigerator," he writes. Indeed; absolutely. Doherty, a Brandeis professor and truly a scholar of import, simultaneously explores TV's wonders and skillfully exposes the power of pressure groups on the new medium, which acted out the social and cultural psychosis that dominated the 1950s.

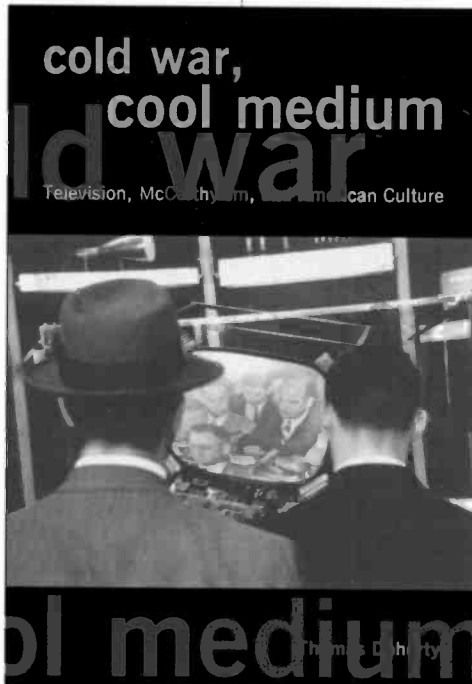
Just when you read of the horrors of the blacklist for *The Goldbergs*, one then reads about Lucy and how when the bottom line mattered CBS looked the other way and allowed its star to have a tainted past. Many were accused; far fewer were actually blacklisted. This does not make blacklisting any fairer, but downplays the horrors that its victims always tell an omnipresent. Doherty writes as an historian, not as a victim.

Relying on thorough and enlightening research, Doherty notes the ironies, anti-Semitism and class prejudices that underlined Joe McCarthy's ascension on the heels of HUAC, the House Committee on Un-American Activities. TV and the

blacklist were the weapons of choice for McCarthy-styled politicians, whose ambitions and paranoia assaulted the decencies and legalities USA held dear. In its embryonic stages, TV needed to fill air-time, hence, Doherty reports, "commitment to free expression and open access was self-interest."

Early set adopters in the USA saw the Hollywood Ten testify, but they also saw regularly African-American performers on *The Ed Sullivan Show* and Arthur Godfrey's various shows, and the first presidential press conference. Indeed Governor Herman Talmadge threatened to pass a Georgia state law because Godfrey presented the Mariners quartet — two whites, two blacks. Again CBS knew that Godfrey was controversial, but since he was providing one-eighth of the company revenues, Paley, Stanton, and the suits allowed Godfrey make a joke of Talmadge's bigotry on the air — in those days simulcast on both CBS TV and radio.

Television brought Bishop Fulton J. Sheen's *Life is Worth Living* into all home, tethering Catholics to Americanism. Edward R. Murrow's *See It Now*, coupled with McCarthy's disastrous attacks on



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the army and rumors of homosexuality, displayed the flim-flam man McCarthy was — for all to see — and contributed to McCarthy's downfall. Doherty chronicles the medium's history and its players with a rich writing style and skilled and impressive scholarship, breaking new ground in every chapter.

Cold War, Cool Medium was timed to be published to coincide with the 50th anniversary of the McCarthy hearings. But do not mistake this as some anniversary nostalgia text. This is an intellectually dazzling portrait of mid-twentieth-century American politics and culture, whereby Doherty can argue that through the influence of television the United States became a more open and tolerant place. To the unjaded, wide-eyed viewership of Cold War America, the television set was not a harbinger of intellectual degradation and moral decay, but a thrilling new addition to the cornucopia of communications media capable of bringing the wonders of the world directly into the home.

The "cool medium" permeated the lives of every American, quickly becoming one of the most powerful cultural forces of the twentieth century. While television has frequently been blamed for showcasing the ascension of Senator Joseph McCarthy, it was also the national stage upon which America witnessed — and ultimately welcomed — his downfall.

In this provocative

and deeply textured cultural history, Doherty chronicles some of the most memorable moments in television history: the unlikely working-class Jewish sitcom *The Goldbergs*; the immensely popular hit, *I Love Lucy*; the sermons of Fulton J. Sheen; the anticommunist series *I Led 3 Lives*; the jousts between Murrow and McCarthy; and the garish, 188-hour spectacle of hysteria that was the Army-McCarthy hearings. He only missed Arthur Godfrey and his vast change on culture of American music stylings.

By rerunning the programs analytically, flipping the network offering in contexts, freezing the frames, and reading between the lines, Doherty details how the blacklist (with a wink) really operated within the television industry, but also how the shows themselves struggled to defy it, arguing that television was pre-programmed to reinforce the very freedoms that McCarthyism attempted to curtail.

I cannot praise book this more highly. Indeed, it is so good I read it twice, and urge all who want to understand TV's profound effect on life in the USA during the 1950s read and study it. It should be on anyone's bookshelf who fancies she or he knows something about TV's initial influences.

Hide in Plain Sight offers the conventional wisdom, following the careers of targeted individuals to explore the presumed horrors of the



THE HOLLYWOOD BLACKLISTEES IN
FILM AND TELEVISION,
1950-2002

PAUL BUHLE and DAVE WAGNER

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blacklist's effects on the artistic rights. As the authors try to show — their previous book was *Radical Hollywood* — expulsion from the Hollywood studio system forced these artists in new directions. To their credit, sometimes better ones than they would have found in Hollywood. Directors like Joseph Losey and numerous screen writers to Great Britain to work, where aesthetics like neo-realism and the subversion of traditional genres (for example, the Western into the "Spaghetti Western") opened new modes of expression.

Many blacklisted artists who didn't emigrate started working in New York's television industry in the early 1950s where live drama flourished until the Hollywood studios embraced television production in 1955-56.

The authors spot TV themes of the outsider in such Warners' 1950s classics as *Maverick*. This re-examination of Hollywood's entry into TV production offers the most engaging portion of the book. *Hide in Plain Sight* reveals how some of the blacklistees went on to create the best and most intriguing shows of the 1960's and 1970s, including: *The Rocky and Bullwinkle Show* (remember Boris and Natasha?), *Daktari*, *Lassie* and *Flipper*. Many wrote adult sitcoms such as *Hogan's Heroes*, *The Donna Reed Show*, *The Dick Van Dyke Show*, *M* A*S*H*, *Maude* and *All in the Family*, while others worked on such socially progressive series as *Juticee*, *Naked City*, *The Defender* and *East Side/West Side* — among many others.

The authors focus on the difficult Carl Foreman, Jules Dassin and Dalton Trumbo — whose tales of persecution have produced at least two shelves of career histories. After all these tales of woe, the authors surprise one with their conclusion: "Hollywood's potential as a 'democratic art form returning the embrace of its vast audience'" remains. Why a couple

of radicals seem so optimistic seems a stretch to me. Why would the owners of the Hollywood studios and their TV networks act any differently today? Profit still drives this business.

Hide in Plain Sight is Paul Buhle and Dave Wagner's last book in a trilogy that explores the Hollywood blacklist and its aftermath. They did a great deal of research work. What they did not do — and what Thomas Doherty did — was rethink the implications of the blacklist within a larger social and cultural history. *Cold War, Cool Medium* is so good that the nice contribution Buhle and Wagner made simply pales in comparison. Their book will be lost. But as Jack Benny used to say: "Timing is everything."

Douglas Gomery is professor of media history and economics at the College of Journalism, University of Maryland, where he has just been appointed resident scholar of the Library of American Broadcasting. He is the author of *Who Owns the Mass Media*, which won the best-book award from the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication.

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**Journalism:
Truth or Dare**

By Ian Hargreaves
Oxford University Press, New York,
312 pages, \$19.95

By **Bernard S. Redmont**

You may think of "Truth or Dare" as an old children's game. It has also provided grist for the mills of several television shows, for at least three movies (one starring Madonna), popular songs, electronic amusements and countless amateur nights at slumber parties.

Ian Hargreaves, a distinguished former Director of News and Current Affairs at the BBC, offers us a different "Truth or Dare" challenge: He focuses critically on journalism—in all of its facets—television, radio, print and online.

Hargreaves possesses unique credentials for this game. A journalistic Renaissance man, he is one of the few to have held top posts not only in broadcasting, but also as Editor of *The Independent* daily newspaper, Editor of *The New Statesman* magazine, Deputy Editor of *The Financial Times* and author of several books. Like many of us, wishing to share his experiences with new generations, he eventually shifted into teaching, as a professor of journalism. It must be a privilege—even for advanced professionals—to sit in on his classes at the University of Cardiff. One guesses Wales would rate, in the words of the Michelin Guides, three stars and "worth

a journey."

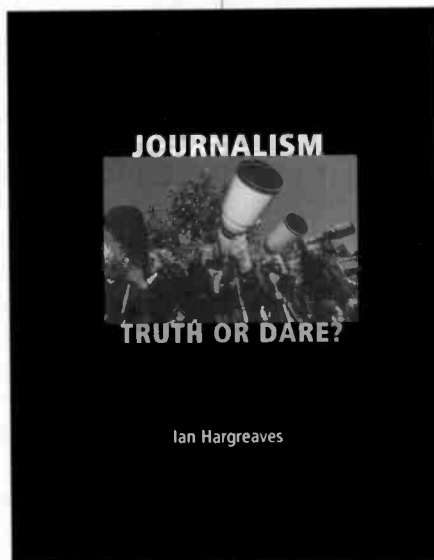
Hargreaves uses his unique position in the media to dare to tell the truth, as he sees it, about the current state of journalism, and particularly broadcasting. Faithful to his BBC ideals of accuracy, fairness and balance, he paints a reasonable, timely and wholly credible picture of our contemporary journalism world.

His perspective is far from narrowly British. It is, in fact, international, and ranges from the U.S. to the U.K., and beyond to Canada, Australia, Russia, France, Germany and Sweden.

Like the respected broadcaster and journalist that he is, he dares to be provocative, tackling contentious issues like concentration of ownerships, excessive commercialization, lack of accountability, tabloidization, intrusion, trivialization, obscenity and libel.

Well researched and soundly presented, his book reads easily. It provides the essential historical perspective. It digs deeply into relations with the state, show business, the entertainment world, spin doctors and public-relations practitioners. Readers will also prize his dogged attention to the ethical responsibility of the journalist.

He believes that "journalism matters not just to journalists, but to everyone: good journalism provides the information and opinion upon which successful democratic societies depend." Without pontificating, he illuminates the link between democracy and journalism. It's clear that this is essential for active and engaged citizenship. He points out that,



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"obsessed with a world of celebrity and trivia, the news media are rotting our brains and undermining our civic life."

Many Americans share this view. It's hardly a comfort that dissatisfaction with media trends is not a purely American phenomenon. Hargreaves tells us that "across Europe, falling turnout at elections has been linked to the failings of the news media, which are accused somewhat self-contradictorily of both dumbing down and failing to appeal to young people."

He quotes Serge Halimi, who writes for *Le Monde Diplomatique*, that France has "media which is more and more ubiquitous, journalists who are more and more docile and a public information system which is more and more mediocre." The French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu's study of television journalism found a system where "all production is oriented toward preserving established values" and where competition "rather than generating originality and diversity, ends to favor uniformity."

Writing about the decline of popular journalism, Hargreaves quotes Australian writer John Pilger as arguing that British television is just as parochial as American television. He "certainly does not spare the BBC from his characterization of the mass media as a willing tool of a propagandizing political establishment, blind to wider issues of poverty and injustice. In Pilger's assessment, most journalists have become either puppets of tough proprietors like Rupert Murdoch or lazy and largely passive victims of public relations experts."

In Italy, notes Hargreaves, Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi "is regarded by his critics as commanding patronage

in the state broadcasting system, RAI, as well as still benefitting from his history as a dominant figure in a private company, Mediaset, which owns most of Italy's commercial television. In effect, say his critics, Berlusconi pulls the strings in 90 percent of the country's television journalism, which is, as result, fatally compromised."

Looking at Russian TV, which he has inspected at first hand currently as well as during the Soviet era, Hargreaves finds the pressures on journalists today easily as challenging as before, and more complex.

Hargreaves doesn't simply rant against the lack of personal accountability on the part of media proprietors, concentration of media ownership and entertainment-based news. He tries to reflect

In the last 30 years the average soundbite on American TV news has fallen from 42 seconds to eight seconds, and the proportion of time devoted to international news has fallen from 45 to 13 percent.

his own "fair and balanced" values, although occasionally with some self-contradiction.

He expresses an abiding faith in the free-market system to correct the failings of news journalism. He argues that to a great extent "market mechanisms operating within a framework of strong competition policy will do the job of sorting out the trustworthy from the unreliable." Is that really true? He qualifies this by saying that "well functioning markets also need honest, accountable suppliers ready to correct mistakes and willing to submit to public scrutiny and debate."

Hargreaves seems to cast doubt on the merits of de-regulation. He chides the FCC for inattention to broadcasters'

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public-service obligations. He feels that "American network television news has become increasingly prisoner of an entertainment ratings culture: building its bulletins around shorter items and a more parochial news agenda. None of these trends have occurred to anything like the same extent in Europe."

In the last 30 years, as he reports sadly, the average soundbite on American TV news has fallen from 42 seconds to eight seconds, and the proportion of time devoted to international news by U.S. TV networks has fallen from 45 to 13 percent.

Hargreaves recalls that "television was assailed from its inception as a superficial thing. Winston Churchill called it a 'peep show' and many have argued that it is doomed to trivialize all it touches. But, in fact, television brought unprecedented authority to news, along with a repertoire of tricks from the entertainment business. The evidential quality of a moving picture (seeing is believing) proved superior, certainly in terms of a mass audience, to the most finely marshaled evidence in the most measured prose. The televised interview, by conveying the facial and body language of the interviewee, was able to operate at a richer and more convincing level than its newspaper equivalent."

Like other serious journalists, Hargreaves laments the climate in which TV personalities have turned into celebrities. He deplores the theory propounded by Van Gordon Sauter, former head of CBS News, that journalism was "a kind of theater," and what he wanted to see from his correspondents and producers were "moments" rather than facts. Media companies eventually decided it was just as well not to keep a well-informed but unglamorous foreign reporter in London, Paris, Rome or Moscow when "if there's a big story the audience 'wants to see' the star roving correspondent or anchor, live

from the news scene."

Hargreaves condemns this policy: "First of all, fly-in, fly-away presenters are no substitute for reporters who know the terrain and who can make judgments based upon much off-air inquiry. Stars are seldom in place long enough to find anything out. These days, it is not at all unusual for an on-the-spot reporter to be given the latest news he is supposed to be 'reporting' on the phone or by email from the head office, in order to then appear before the camera and pretend that he or she has just discovered it on the spot."

Hargreaves tells us that the ethic of truthfulness and accuracy is at the heart of the morality of journalism. He emphasizes that journalists "are part of the societies in which they work. They acquire within those societies, a sense of right and wrong; they have, thank goodness, a moral compass learnt outside journalism. It is up to every individual to preserve that compass, to be true to their own and their community's values. In short, don't expect your employer, or the news industry, to do it for you."

This is good advice to all of us, at any stage of a career. It's heartening to know that across barriers of nationalities and generations, journalists are out there fighting the good fight.

Journalism: Truth or Dare? provides professionals with a reliable moral compass, along with a sound analysis of the state of modern media. All who are concerned about the quality of news and information on which we all depend to live as engaged citizens in a democracy would do well to read and ponder this work.

Bernard Redmont is Dean Emeritus of Boston University College of Communications and a former foreign correspondent for CBS News, Westinghouse Broadcasting Company, *US News & World Report* and Agence France-Presse. He is the author of *Risks Worth Taking: The Odyssey of a Foreign Correspondent*.

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Ball of Fire: The Tumultuous Life and Comic Art of Lucille Ball

By Stefan Kanfer

Alfred A. Knopf, New York
(368 pages, \$29.95)

By Cary O'Dell

After numerous biographies, her own abbreviated, posthumously published autobiography, two made-for-TV movies, a PBS American Masters documentary and countless magazine articles and tributes, is there really anything left to be said about the life of Lucille Ball?

Apparently author Stefan Kanfer, whose previous show-biz biography *Groucho* was well-received a few years ago, believes there is. Thus, arrives his wonderfully and appropriately titled *Ball of Fire: The Tumultuous Life and Comic Art of Lucille Ball*.

Though highly readable and entertaining, except for a few nuggets of info that might come as a surprise to even the most die-hard Lucy fans (for example, who knew that the producers of *The Manchurian Candidate* considered Lucy for the mother monster role that would eventually be played by Angela Lansbury?), Kanfer's book sadly does not chart any new ground or delve any deeper into, the life and legend of TV's undisputed Queen of Comedy.

Kathleen Brady's *Lucille: The Life of Lucille Ball*, which came out in 1994, has already done a wonderful job of

recounting the high points of Lucy's life from her Jamestown, N.Y. girlhood to her living legend status. Meanwhile, fans who are specifically seeking greater insight into Lucy's childhood should seek out Lucy's own autobiography *Love, Lucy* which was published in 1996. Those interested in Lucy the business-woman should seek out *Desilu* by Coyne Steven Sanders and Tom Gilbert (1993) or, perhaps surprisingly, *Inside "Star Trek"* (1996) by Herbert Solow and Robert Justman, since the launch of the original Enterprise on the small screen was done during Lucy's tenure as head of Desilu Studios.

For a full analysis of Lucy's small-screen legacy, last year's appearance-by-appearance *The Lucy Book* by Geoffrey Mark Fidelman (1999) is both exhaustively detailed and utterly fascinating. Meanwhile, up close and personal, first-person memoirs of Lucy in her latter years can be found in such books as *Lucy in the Afternoon* by Jim Brochu (1990) and *I Loved Lucy* by Lee Tannen (2001).

That said, Stefan Kanfer's *Ball of Fire* does deserve praise for the great level of fairness and balance he brings to his subject. Lucille Ball was, unquestionably, a genius and like most geniuses she was a complicated and at times difficult person. Despite her ongoing success on the small screen and the financial comfort it brought with it, Ball seemed to grow more and more hardened and embattled with each passing year of her life. Her abrupt and bossy manner would eventually drive



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away directors, co-stars and even lifelong friends. Yet this book is not pathology; those seeking a Lucy Dearest-type exposé won't find it here.

However, being fair and even-keeled should not be confused with not having a sharp point of view or with not taking this opportunity to provide insights into Lucy's overall character, two things we don't really get in *Ball of Fire*. In the book, it is not until literally the final few pages that Kanfer bothers to list some of the dichotomous qualities that seemed to define Lucy's personality: she was often short and harsh with others, but was herself tragically hypersensitive when it came to criticism aimed at her; she longed for a family but after the birth of her two children often placed them second to her work; she was loved by the world, but despite the constant standing ovations that welcomed her everywhere she went later in life, she never seemed to truly feel wanted.

Granted, Kanfer is a biographer, not a psychologist, but his book would have been better aided if his reportage was a bit more fleshed out with speculation as to why Lucy was the way she was and why she did the things she did. One of the great luxuries to be found in undertaking a project as substantial as a full-length biography is the freedom, and the informed foundation, it grants the author to draw conclusions about what makes its central subject tick. In fact, it could almost be argued that such speculation is in fact a learned biography's *raison d'être*.

But since Kanfer does not attempt to connect any of the dots for us, it is therefore left up to the reader to formulate, from the well-chosen, illustrative vignettes that the author reiterates, whatever theories they can regarding the chasm that existed between "Lucy" the TV character and Lucille the person.

What was it? Was it that following her hard fought rise to Hollywood B-movie star after toiling unappreciated in the choruses of various New York shows, Lucy could never bring herself to let her guard down again? Certainly the most successful actresses of the golden age of film—from Bette Davis to Joan Crawford to such iron butterflies as Loretta Young—often developed tough exteriors and less-than-flattering reputations in order to hang onto their careers. Or was it Lucy's enduring bitterness over Desi who loved her enough to make her a small-screen superstar but not enough to remain a faithful husband to her? Or was it resentment over her unwelcome ascension as the first female head of a major film and television studio? That role came to her mostly by default: after Desi's drinking made him unfit to run the Desilu empire, Lucy bought him out and took control of the company's operations more, it seems, out of a moral responsibility to Desilu's vast family of employees than any great desire on her part to be a Hollywood mogul.

Of course, such personality analysis may not be what the general reader and Lucy fan is looking for in books on this beloved icon's life. If that's the case then *Ball of Fire* is a useful and worthwhile read. But to television historians and devoted "Lucy-heads" the world over, *Fire* comes across a bit like a TV rerun—still highly entertaining, but nevertheless you've still seen it before.

A frequent contributor to *Television Quarterly*, Cary O'Dell is the former archives director for the Museum of Broadcast Communications in Chicago and is the author of the book *Women Pioneers in Television*.

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Clash of the Titans: How the Unbridled Ambition of Ted Turner and Rupert Murdoch has Created Global Empires that Control What We Read and Watch Each Day

By Richard Hack
*New Millennium Press,
Beverly Hills, CA
(544 pages, \$28.95)*

By John V. Pavlik

Whether sailing on the high seas or battling for control of the world's media, media barns Keith Rupert Murdoch and Robert Edward (Ted) Turner III have been arch and bitter rivals for most of their adult lives. This is the core theme of this riveting new book by Richard Hack.

Hack, an investigative author for more than 20 years, has written biographies of billionaire businessman Ron Perelman, the Jackson family, and Howard Hughes.

In this dual biography, Australian-born Rupert Murdoch and American-born Ted Turner are the titans who clash in their struggle for world-wide domination of the news and entertainment media. Hack weaves together personal biographies of each titan's early life with their cut-throat boardroom warfare.

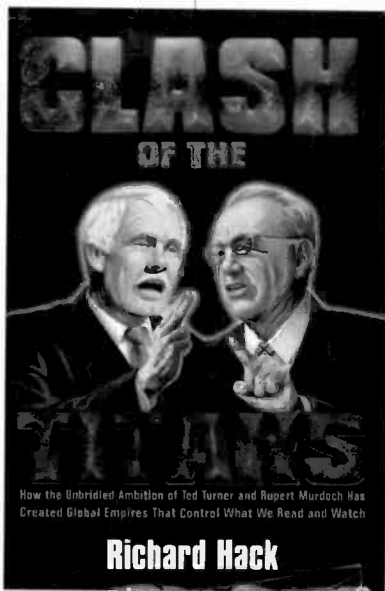
Illustrative is one early story pitting Murdoch against Turner shortly after Time Warner had acquired Turner Broadcasting. Time Warner, which carried Turner's

CNN, refused to carry Murdoch's Fox News Channel. The result was a torrent of "back stabbing and name-calling" between Turner, Time Warner's largest stockholder, and Murdoch, the head of News Corp.

Throughout the book, Hack writes effectively about the two men's complex and gargantuan financial dealings. Yet, he also reveals the psychological underpinnings of two men with towering ambition. He writes, "Ted Turner and Rupert Murdoch are two storm fronts colliding.... Turner—the high front that swings erratic.... Murdoch—the low front that appears at rest, then moves with amazing speed, absorbing all in his path."

Much of the book flows chronologically, taking the reader along as Turner and Murdoch build their media empires in the 1980s. Turner, who started his \$3 billion global empire from a small billboard company in rural Georgia, ultimately built his media world around cable television and the Cable News Network (CNN), plus superstation WTBS, Turner Network Television,

Turner Classic Movies, the Atlanta Braves, the Goodwill Games and MGM Studios. Murdoch focuses on newspapers and satellite television. Ruthless and driven for success, Murdoch started with one Australian newspaper and built the multi-billion-dollar News Corp. empire with 125 newspapers and magazines, the Fox, Inc., motion picture and television conglomerate, and news satellites on four continents.



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The book also examines some of the twists and turns of the protagonists' personal lives, with Turner evolving from a rakish sea captain to settle down (for a while) with Jane Fonda and to fight to save the world, and conservative family man Murdoch dumping his wife of many years for a much younger woman employed in his media empire.

Hack keeps the reader's interest through his combination of elegant prose and sweeping views of the two titans. "They will clash and they will win, with the power to determine what is seen, how it is received..." At times, Hack borders on the cliché and hyperbole, often repeating the view that these men forever changed the world. That they changed the world is unquestionable... whether the change is forever remains to be seen.

Both Turner and Murdoch are risk takers and technological innovators, Hack reveals, and although they have both known failure, their grand vision, energy and hard work, not to mention some hard-nosed business acumen and perhaps some questionable business ethics, leads them to huge success. The book is thoroughly researched and offers great detail and colorful prose.

"In another time, they might have dueled on a grassy plain with muskets, or faced each other at high noon at opposite ends of a dusty street, holsters slung low on their hips," writes Hack. He concludes that although there are two men with competing political and business agendas, in the end there is just one victor. Read the book to find out which man remains standing.

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