

PANORAMA

THE
TELEVISION
MAGAZINE

JUNE 1981

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NEWSPAPER MEN PICK

The Best Network News Show— And the Worst



How to Find VIDEO BARGAINS



*James Garner
Talks About His
Long, Troubled
Career in
Hollywood*

Shooting Holes in 'The Gangster Chronicles'

By George V. Higgins

Sex on Cable Why Business Is Better than Ever

THE MAKING OF 'THE WALL'

Purges, Feuds, Scandals, Extortion, Defection, Death and Disgrace



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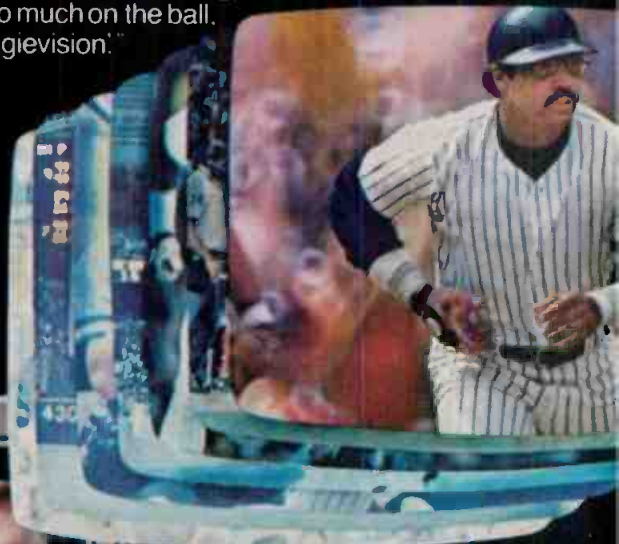
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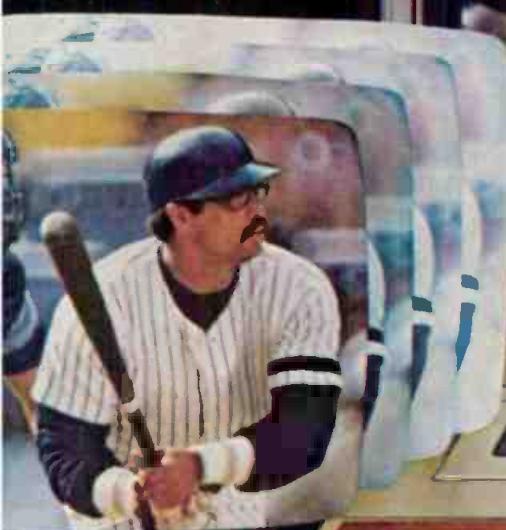
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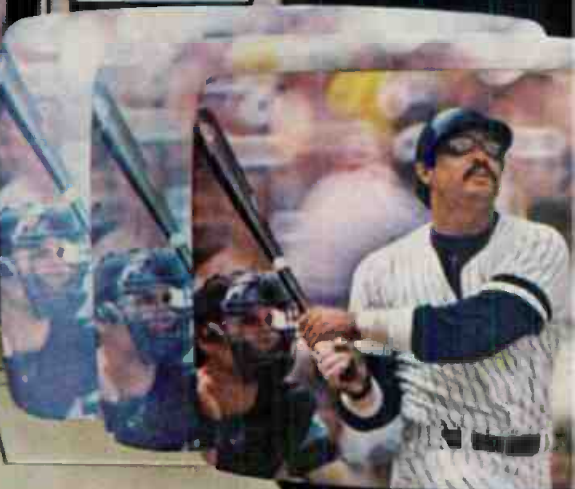
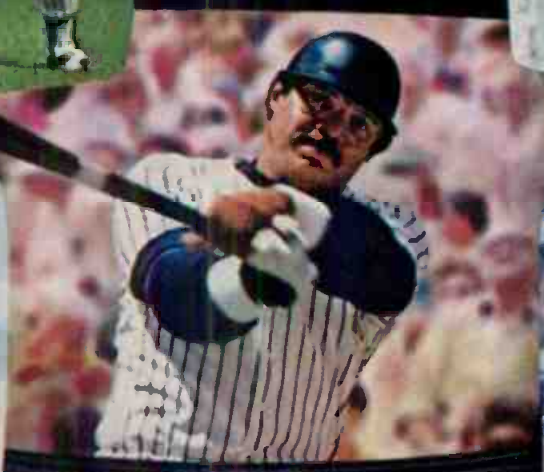
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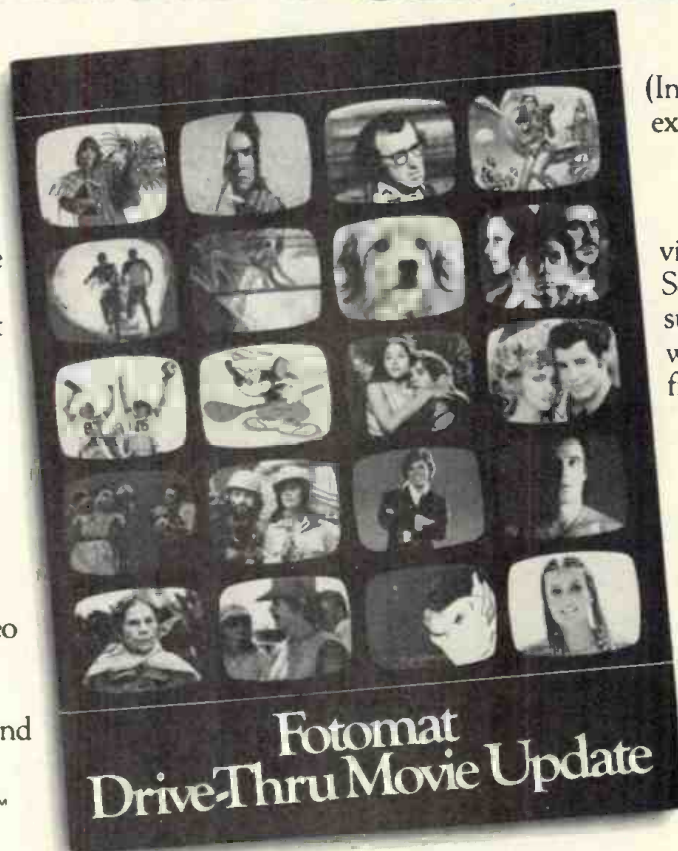
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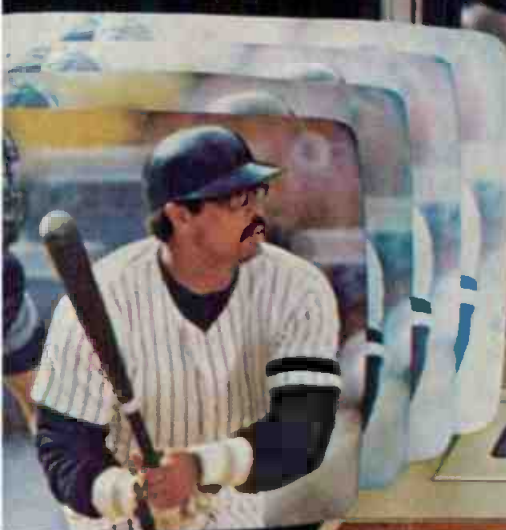
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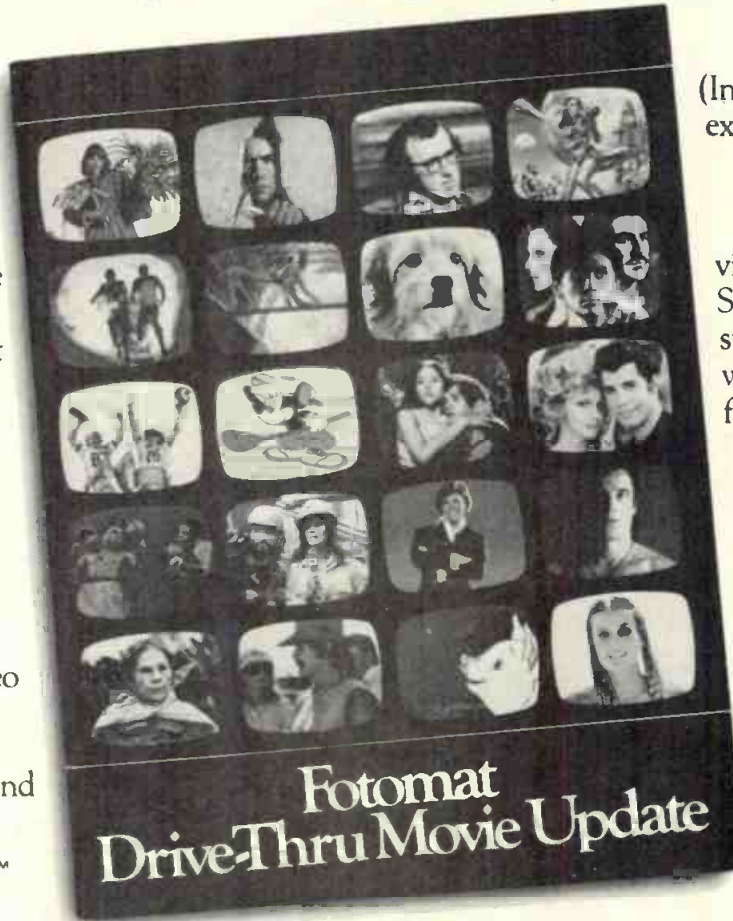
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LETTERS



CHIC CRITIQUE

Jessica Mitford's cogent critique of prison TV movies ("Jail-House Chic," March) reveals not only how ill-conceived or fraudulent most of them are, but it underscores the same truth about prisons as solutions to society's failures.

When one of our institutions fails, as prisons clearly have, the blame falls on the type of their clientele serviced. Prisoners are sociopaths who cannot be rehabilitated, but need to be dealt with more harshly, says the current fashionable analysis. After the horror of Attica, Superintendent Mancusi was asked during a Congressional investigation what lessons had been learned from this awful experience. Sadly, it was not the simple message that Ms. Mitford notes as so vital, namely to treat inmates (of any institution) as people and not as animals. Instead the official reply was: We have instituted two new gun posts in the rehabilitation of the institution.

Let us hope that future prison movies will be made by people who understand the significant role that prisons play in the evolving life of our country.

Philip Zimbardo
Professor of Psychology
Stanford University
Stanford, Cal.

Jessica Mitford's article on "Jail-House Chic," as she referred to the movie I produced [*Rage!*], is an outrageous insult to responsible journalism. Her criticism was based solely on the fact that the therapy treatment given sex offenders in *Rage!* is not reflective of the practice in most institutions. *That is absolutely correct.* The purpose of *Rage!* was to disseminate information about the very successful treatment at the Department of Corrections—Adult Diagnostic and Treatment Center, Avenel, N.J.

If Ms. Mitford had done her homework, she would have learned *there are no drugs at Avenel.* The "hoo-has" she

quoted from prison experts were "hoo-has" about other systems, *not Avenel.* The writer, George Rubino, and I spent a month at Avenel participating in every form of therapy with the prisoners and doing extensive interviews. Dr. Bill Predegast, the director of Professional Services at Avenel, was technical consultant and present on the set to supervise the accuracy of the group-therapy scenes.

I did *my* homework in making *Rage!* I wish Ms. Mitford had done 1/100th of that.

Diane Silver
Producer, *Rage!*
Culver City, Cal.

[*Jessica Mitford did mention that *Rage!* was based on the experimental program at Avenel. Her point was that the film treated an extremely complex subject in a simplistic manner, and that there is some danger that the film may give viewers the impression that such therapy is commonplace.*—Ed.]

There is not enough space in this forum to refute point by point the numerous distortions and defamations by Jessica Mitford about Golden West Television's Oscar and Emmy-winning documentary *Scared Straight!*, and me—its producer, director, writer. *Scared Straight!* is an accurate and honest report about the Rahway Prison Lifers' Program. I know. Unlike the three critics of the documentary quoted, I was there during the preparation and making of the film.

There were no improprieties in the making of *Scared Straight!* or in its content. Every statement Ms. Mitford quoted about the 17 juveniles seen in the film is absolutely false. Ms. Mitford attacks both the efficacy of the Rahway Program and the accuracy of our film about it—about neither of which she has any firsthand knowledge or expertise. New Jersey police and youth counselors have documented cases of young law-

breakers going straight after the Rahway experience. *Scared Straight!* accurately reported that phenomenon.

Contrary to Ms. Mitford's allegations, hundreds of letters from convicts, ex-convicts, and law-enforcement officials praise *Scared Straight!* as the most realistic look at prison life seen on film. Ms. Mitford says it all when she reveals: "As I know nothing about filmmaking. . . ." Obviously.

Arnold Shapiro
Los Angeles

Jessica Mitford replies: I stand by my research and reporting on the story.

THOSE WHO DO, CAN

How ironic to find Brendan Gill's "*Masterpiece Theatre's* Most Memorable Moments" in the same issue (March) as Stanley Marcus's "At PBS: The British Are Going!" and James Lehrer's "The Last Anchorman on PBS." The statement of KQED's Nat Katzman regarding BBC's commitment to RCTV, that "the BBC is not the only British producer of programming," is indicative of what he is really buying—an accent. Of all the lessons we can learn from the BBC, foremost is the fact that you must *make* television to become proficient at it. If Mr. Katzman can find his way out of his office, he might find a studio downstairs, with cameras, lights and technicians—just like at the BBC.

Bob Morris
New York City

I would like to make an addition to Brendan Gill's list: The superb, acclaimed "*Poldark*" is one of the crown jewels in the *Masterpiece Theatre* collection and certainly deserves to be remembered as a significant part of its first distinguished decade.

Terry Pranovics
New Brunswick, N.J.

APPLAUSE FOR ANN

Just a note to tell you how much I enjoyed your lovely photo of Ann Jillian ("Predicting the Stars of the Eighties," February). I agree with your assessment of her future, but I have held that opinion for a long while and am surprised it took you this long to catch on.

Chuck McKeen
Hillsboro, Ore.

Will Cable Become TV's Garbage Can?

By RICHARD REEVES

"Where'd you get that?" said the man with a teddy bear and a red badge to the man with a golf club and a red badge. "Upstairs. From Vipro, the people selling Paul Harvey and *The Gigglesnort Hotel*."

It was, however, extremely difficult to get upstairs at the New York Hilton during the 18th annual convention of NATPE, the National Association of Television Program Executives. NATPE members, you see, the people with the red badges, the people from the stations, the people who buy television programs, were lined up waiting for elevators to take them to their teddies and putters. The lines snaked through the lobby, past

the cocktail lounge where the police were dragging away an old man who was shouting: "I created *Romper Room*! I created *Romper Room*!"

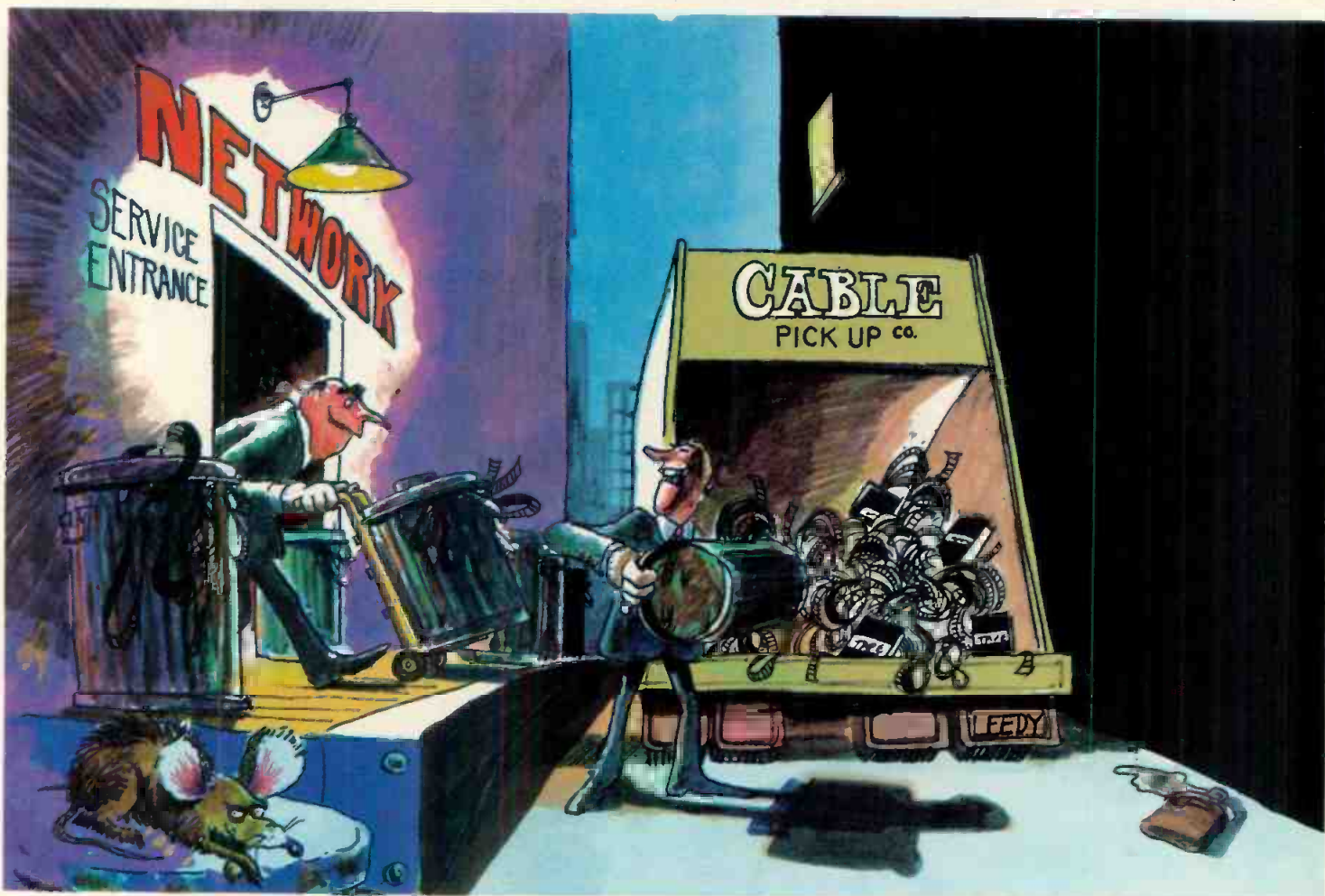
The crowd cheered the old man. He probably had and someone probably stole it from him. It is widely believed that ethics in the syndication business are not necessarily of the highest. "You think *this* is a zoo?" said the president of one of the 262 syndication companies, the sellers, the people with the yellow badges. "It wasn't so long ago that we weren't giving away golf clubs. We were giving away hookers."

For a now more discreet NATPE, this

was the Year of Cable. Of more than 5400 men and women at the convention, an estimated 500 were representing organizations with major interests in the cable-television business. A first! "ALL TOGETHER NOW! Programming for every service in one place at one time," trumpeted the convention poster.

"The distinctions between cable and broadcast are blurring," reported Cable-Vision magazine, a trade journal for cable-television operators. "At this year's NATPE, the cable industry will not be the same outsider looking in . . . many of the station executives ultimately responsible for the choices made at NATPE are also overseeing new business associations with cable."

"I'm just so depressed," said Arthur Unger, the television critic of *The Christian Science Monitor*, looking out at the bazaar, at Jack Lord and Paulist priests sitting booth to booth, selling their own videotaped visions of Paradise. "You walk around here and you go to all the other conferences and then it hits you: The



ame people are taking over cable television. It's going to be second-rate commercial and public-television stuff. They're going to have the same kind of shows, the same delivery of maximum numbers of warm bodies. It's all these people know."

As if to confirm Unger's projections, his excerpt from *Television/Radio Age* magazine, another trade journal, contains statements from some of "the same people"—R.E. Buchanan, executive vice president of the J. Walter Thompson USA advertising agency, and Don Menchel, president of MCA TV: "Is this a watershed NATPE? 'Maybe we're a year or two away from that,' Buchanan asserts, but he affirms that the melding of the programming interests of cable and broadcasting has certainly begun. . . . Menchel says that the day that cable will become fully competitive with over-the-air for popular programming 'is a long way down the road.' But programming that is less in demand is another story, and cable is a realistic market for this type of fare right now."

In other words, these same people are looking at cable as broadcast television's garbage can. Whatever fare isn't fair enough—bad enough?—for commercial channels, or is just so used up that it would smell up broadcast schedules, can be dumped on cable channels. I should have realized what was going on when I noticed that the children of our house, creatively switching among the very limited offerings of Teleprompter in Manhattan, had figured out some way to watch *Happy Days* three times every afternoon after school.

It's hard to imagine what will become the garbage of the garbage that was being shown to program executives. One candidate, for my tastes, was a Paramount show called *Entertainment Tonight*, a quasi-news program about show business, a sort of nightly electronic National Enquirer. Or perhaps Metromedia's *Uncle Latenite* show. "It's a 'kiddy' show," the promos say, "for adults only . . . lecherous and lovable."

Then there's *The People's Court*. Ralph Edwards of *This Is Your Life* has set up his own court system in competition with the state of California—except in Edwards' court, as shown in pilots at the convention, an orchestra plays

a fanfare as defendants and plaintiffs march into the courtroom. What he, as executive producer, has done is take advantage of a state law that allows the principals in civil litigation to hire their own arbitrator. Only Edwards has hired a retired judge and built a courtroom/studio in which the pilots' host, Stephanie Edwards, roams around asking witnesses and spectators how they feel: "Sir, do you think he did it?" The whole thing—courtrooms in television rather than television in courtrooms—has been bought for broadcast this fall by four of ABC's owned-and-operated stations. That is apparently what one ABC vice president, Phil Boyer, meant when he told a NATPE panel: "We're playing around with something we call 'infotainment'."

So, it's possible that the networks will have infotainment and most of cable television will be something—the words haven't been coined yet—that is even worse. An example of how bad things will probably get was the announcement just before the New York convention that Bristol-Myers, the drug and cosmetics company, had worked out a deal with the USA Network—which reaches more than six million cable-television homes—to present 10 hours a week of "health and fitness" programming.

That, of course, is a return to those thrilling days of yesteryear when the advertisers controlled the airwaves. If you're lucky enough to get the USA Network on your cable system, you'll get two hours every weekday of programs financed by the people trying to sell you more Bufferin. The drug company is prepared to spend \$40 million on cable programming over the next 10 years, which means they expect to sell us who knows how many dollars worth of their lotions and potions in the name of health and fitness.

That is not exactly the kind of thing many of us had in mind when we thought cable television might be "different." Perhaps we were naive. Radio people took over television; the natural order may dictate that broadcast people will take over cable. "In 15 or 20 years, we'll all be looking back," Art Unger said, "and wondering what people meant when they kept talking about 'the promise of cable.'" ■

PANORAMA

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“Fridays”—Though Flawed— Is Coming On

By CYRA McFADDEN

More evidence in support of the theory of evolution: ABC's late-night comedy show *Fridays* is currently edging out NBC's floundering *Saturday Night Live* in the ratings. Since *Fridays* is *SNL*'s imitator and descendant, the natural law at work appears to be survival of the funniest.

Like its predecessor, *Fridays* is a revue, a series of comedy sketches with musical interludes. These breaks in the humor are usually undistinguished, featuring the same, interchangeable band, dressed in cowboy boots and sunglasses and thumping out unmemorable music. An exception was Devo, whose appearances provided some welcome wit.

The show added guest hosts this year, the better to emulate *SNL*, and it aims at the same audience. *Fridays*' fans are young and cheerfully uncritical; they greet anything that comes along with cries of “Yeeew!”: a yelp of approval somewhere between a rebel yell and a dog bark. When the camera pans around the audience, anyone over 25 looks bored.

This hip young audience determines *Fridays*' approach to comedy and what a press release calls its “distinctly West Coast feeling.” The description is intended to suggest irreverence. But the West Coast has no monopoly on irreverence, and an equally sound translation is, “We do lots of drug jokes.” These, too, are in the *Saturday Night Live* tradition, as I was reminded when a rerun of that show featured Richard Pryor in a manic monologue about an acid trip.

Fridays is still relatively new and insecure, so the drug jokes, always good for an easy laugh, are more pervasive. A running sketch features Mark Blankfield, who can sweat on cue, as a speed-freak pharmacist at a store called “Drugs & Us.” “I can handle it,” screams Blankfield, racing around the set. It's a funny bit, but how can you lose, when your audience falls apart over lines like “My head feels like it's crawling with ants”?



In another running sketch, Darrow Igus stars as “Rasta Gourmet,” who liberally laces his cooking, and himself, with ganja. Same joke, but *Fridays*' audience can't get enough of it. The mere mention of drugs breaks them up.

Other, more inventive staples of the show are Michael Richards' forlorn loser of a swinging single; Bruce Mahler's Chicano radio show, complete with cornball Mexican dialect; and such *Saturday Night Live* classics as “Friday Edition,” a knockoff of *SNL*'s “Weekend Update,” with Melanie Chartoff as a TV anchor.

This last bit is generally well-written, but while Chartoff is sexy and pretty, she lacks Jane Curtin's deadly earnestness in the same role; instead, she projects amusement at her own performance. Not that she is alone. Nothing shoots down sketch comedy like self-consciousness, and *Fridays*' major failing is that it's riddled with it. With success, perhaps the show will relax a little.

Fridays already does some things very well indeed. I'm particularly fond of Bruce Mahler's and Larry David's kung fu rabbis and a nice bit of insanity called “The Society of Men Who Hum.” A segment on the Moral Majority kept its satiric edge despite nervous network censors, and, with “The Road to El Salvador,” the show did an ambitious job of combining politics and parody. And John Roarke, a first-rate impressionist who also does the best Ronald Reagan in the business, is especially entertaining; it's

worth staying home on Friday night to watch him traverse the Oval Office as if propelled by an off-stage puppeteer.

“You guys are hot now,” David Steinberg told the *Fridays* cast recently, in the course of a guest shot. It was at once true, in that the show is making steady, if unspectacular, ratings gains, and an attempt at self-fulfilling prophecy. At this point, *Fridays* is finding an audience not only on its own merits, but because, uneven as it is, it has filled a vacuum.

Sketch comedy, once a staple of prime-time programming, has now all but vanished from the tube: no Carol Burnett, no Smothers Brothers (except for the occasional special), and no *Laugh-In*. Saddest of all, *Saturday Night Live* offers no real competition for late-night viewers. The parent show went into reruns in March, after a season whose success vs. failure record compares to that of the New Orleans Saints. And though it went live again in April, the rerun period was not only a retreat, but a reminder of just how far the show had fallen.

So those of us who love comedy turn to *Fridays*, and forgive the sketches that drag on too long and then trail limply off, the wall-to-wall drug jokes and the grinding self-consciousness. In return, we get some glorious spoofs, such as “The Ronnie Horror Show,” John Roarke and not nearly enough of Maryedith Burrell. As for the rest—hey, we can handle it. ■


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June 1981

*Producers Rush to Pay-TV . . . It's Showtime for Peter Allen and the Rockettes . . .
The Hassle over Contraceptive Ads . . . Prince Charles' "Weddathon"*

What's Happening

HOLLYWOOD
DON SHIRLEY REPORTING

The Pay-TV Sweepstakes

Hollywood is rounding up its horsepower for a drive producer David Gerber predicts will rival "the Oklahoma land rush"—a stampede into pay-television by the same people who create most of the entertainment seen on "free" television.

The starting gun will go off when all of the required labor agreements are signed, enabling most of Hollywood's creative talents to work for pay-TV with the blessing and cooperation of their unions. The major issue in all of Hollywood's recent labor squabbles has been the distribution of the revenue from the pay-TV and home-video markets, and the intensity of these disputes is a measure of how much these markets matter in Hollywood's vision of the future.

In the meantime, however, producers are making pay-TV plans—or at least putting pay-TV high on their list of things to think about. Even such a "free"-TV stalwart as producer Garry Marshall (*Happy Days*, *Mork & Mindy*) says he

wants to enter the pay-TV arena—with a show for the over-55 crowd. "Somewhere there should be a place for a show that attracts only 10 million people," says Marshall. "The new markets will provide that. I just hope they don't get too hot, because then they could become like the networks."

The pay companies themselves report ever-increasing contact with the major Hollywood producers. After a visit to Hollywood last spring, Showtime president Mike Weinblatt noted that "everybody is interested in pay—and not just because we're one more buyer, but also because they'll be able to do their shows uninterrupted, at odd lengths and with more bite." Told that producer Grant Tinker, for one, had said he is not interested in pay, Weinblatt replied that "ultimately Grant, too, will come around. The key creative people he works with will want to do it."

Other than the labor agreements, the only serious roadblock separating the Hollywood chieftains from original production for pay-TV is the matter of money: Will the relatively limited resources of the pay companies suffice for producers who often complain that even the commer-

cial networks don't pay them enough? Weinblatt says they will: "Producers will have to use their creative juices rather than lavish sets." And, he adds, they will reap profits from the subsequent sale of pay-TV programs to other markets. If the predictions of Weinblatt and other pay-TV proponents come true, the only Hollywood institution that won't expand will be the unemployment office.

Indian Signs at the Networks



David Soul: Among the tribe elbowing in on Wounded Knee.

Wounded Knee, S.D., evokes disturbing images for most Americans. This notwithstanding, two TV movies are being developed about incidents at Wounded Knee, films that certainly tell us a lot about the current condition of network risk-taking.

The most advanced project is being planned by David (*Starsky & Hutch*) Soul. It would be a three-hour NBC

film about the American Indian Movement's 1973 occupation of Wounded Knee—as seen through the eyes of National Public Radio reporter Kevin McKiernan. A fictitious character based on McKiernan would be portrayed by Soul. Though he was raised in Sioux Falls, S.D., Soul "never knew anything about the Indian people," he says. "I woke up one day and realized I had left my roots behind me." After consulting with Russell Means, a leader of the Wounded Knee occupation, Soul sought out McKiernan and arranged an NBC development deal for a Wounded Knee film.

Meanwhile, at a much earlier stage of development is a miniseries based on Dee Brown's book *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*—the story of an earlier and bloodier era in Wounded Knee history.

Indians have not shown up on television much lately. Several major projects have experienced difficulties getting onto the air: ABC's *Hanta Yo*, besieged by criticism from Indian organizations; and NBC's already-completed *Born to the Wind* and *The Legend of Walks Far Woman*. Since the ratings fiasco of *Kent State* last February, NBC might also be expected to shy away from stories of recent American political turmoil.

But Soul says NBC has been completely cooperative. Besides, he adds, his film is "not necessarily told from an Indian point of view. And it's

not an anthropological study. Too often we deal with native Americans as if they're in a showcase, not recognizing that they're contemporary citizens of our country."

NEW YORK
DOUG HILL
REPORTING

Camping Up Cable

Keep your eyes open this summer for *Peter Allen and the Rockettes*, a musical special coming up on the Showtime pay-TV network. (Subscribers of ON TV in Los Angeles and Detroit may have already seen the special last month.) Taped at Radio City Music Hall last winter, singer-songwriter Allen's extravaganza sold out the hall for seven performances and brought rave reviews from the city's normally reserved critics.

The show is a paean to camp, featuring Allen (who's become something of a cult figure lately) riding a camel on-stage to introduce his "I Go to Rio" number. Allen's costumes range from top hat 'n' tails to T-shirts, and, of course, he spends some time high-kicking it with the Rockettes. Incidentally, this may be one of the few programs ever to list the star's shirt designers (Pinky and Diane) in the credits.

"The minute we announced the show, I thought, 'Just make sure this thing is filmed,'" Allen says. "Each time we come to New York we try to think of something else to do, and Radio City told us, 'If you do three nights, you can have the Rockettes'."

Quite a difference from Allen's first Showtime special a few years ago, taped at Philadelphia's tiny Bijou Café. "It's the Big Jump," agrees Allen. "A lot of the trick in playing Radio City is just not killing yourself. [Indeed, in the special he can be seen almost falling into the massive orchestra pit at one point.] All I needed was one exuberant fan giving me a tug on the arm and that would've been it. That stage is a city block long—by the time you get from one side to the other, it's intermission."

Wojo Comes Full Circle

Max Gail, who plays Detective Sergeant Wojehowicz on ABC's *Barney Miller*, was in town recently to drum up support for a late-night program he's trying to sell, and in many ways he seemed more like one of the charming eccentrics who end up in Barney Miller's squad room than he did a major TV star. His

hair was quite a bit longer and wilder than it is on the show, and his outfit was less Perma-press and polyester than it was Guatemalan print and turquoise.

Gail's project is called *Full Circle*. He says he's spent much of the past year, off and on, touring the country with friends in a 1952 Metro bread truck, taping folk singers, American Indians, hippie comedians, policemen, politicians and ordinary folks for the program. Gail describes the concept as "a musical collage that draws the poetry out of people's situations and the dance out of their movements in order to deal with the serious issues we need to deal with as human beings . . . an essay or examination of our relationships to each other, to the water, to the land, to all living things."

After being asked several times what the show would actually look like, Gail admitted, "That's a really good question. You might say it would look like home movies . . . a collage of images and sounds, with a real close-to-the-ground feeling."

Gail says he's been trying to sell ABC's program chiefs on the idea, but he suspects they're trying to humor him so he won't walk off *Barney Miller*. "They're a little leery of me," Gail says cheerfully, "so it's up to me to bring them into the circle."

WASHINGTON
STEVE WEINBERG
REPORTING

Finding the Facts on Birth Control

Right now, advertisements for contraceptives are taboo on television. But that might change in the next year or so—depending on the results of a controversial study being conducted for the National Association of Broadcasters by Market Opinion Research of Detroit.

Predictably, the mere thought of seeing TV commercials for condoms enrages some groups. The U.S. Catholic Conference, for instance, opposes such ads as a "gross violation of the rights of parents to guide the moral and social development of their children." A recent letter-writing campaign stimulated by the Knights of Columbus, a Catholic lay organization, has brought uncounted protests to NAB headquarters here and to its New York City office.

Countervailing pressures are coming from manufacturers of nonprescription contraceptives as well as population-control groups such as Planned Parenthood. (One source at the NAB, who asked not to be named, says, "I wish the whole controversy would go away. We can't win on this one.")

At the present time, the NAB Television Code prohibits its contraceptive ads. Commercials are allowed for some personal-care products, including douches and pregnancy-test kits. But, says an NAB spokesman, because "ads for products of a personal nature raise special considerations, especially with regard to the canons of good taste," the Code restricts these messages to specific hours.

The Code Authority has been studying the question of contraceptive ads for some

continued on page 8



Rockettes: New York's Radio City Music Hall gives Peter Allen a leg up for his Showtime special.

What's On

SOME OF THE NOTEWORTHY PROGRAMS AND EVENTS THAT ARE SCHEDULED FOR TELEVISION THIS MONTH. (CHECK LOCAL LISTINGS FOR DATES AND TIMES IN YOUR AREA.)

DRAMA AND MOVIES

The Stunt Man. In this 1980 film, a fugitive hides out in movie director Peter D'Toole's production crew. The Movie Channel (cable).

The Ambassadors. Paul Scofield and Lee Remick star in the Henry James story. PBS.

Urban Cowboy. John Travolta is a nightclub buckaroo in this 1980 film. Home Theater Network, Showtime, The Movie Channel, Home Box Office (cable).

The Band Played On. A professional musician upsets a village brass-band competition. Trevor Howard stars. PBS.

Falke. Roger Moore leads a team of underwater commandos against hijackers threatening a North Sea oil rig in his 1980 thriller. Home Box Office (cable).

The Shakespeare Plays. This year's offerings conclude with *The Winter's Tale*. PBS.

Serial. Martin Mull, Tuesday Weld and Sally Kellerman in the 1980 movie adaptation of Cyra McFadden's Marin County comedy of manners. Home Box Office (cable).

Star Trek—The Motion Picture. Kirk, Spock, McCoy and the Enterprise crew boldly go back into warp drive for this 1979 theatrical release. Home Theater Network (cable).

Smokey and the Bandit I and II. Two rounds, from 1977 and 1980, of Burt Reynolds, Sally Field and Jackie Gleason in mutual hot pursuit. The Movie Channel (cable).

Honeysuckle Rose. Willie Nelson and Dyan Cannon in a 1980-release country-western love story. Home Theater Network, The Movie Channel (cable).

Caddyshack. Chevy Chase, Bill Murray and Rodney Dangerfield wage golfer/gopher warfare in this 1980 film. The Movie Channel (cable).

The Black Hole. Walt Disney's 1979 science-fiction flick. Showtime, Home Theater Network (cable).

Resurrection. Ellen Burstyn gains the power to heal from a brush with death; released in 1980. Home Theater Network (cable).

The Shining. Jack Nicholson and Shelley Duvall in the 1980 film of Stephen King's tale of off-season terror. The Movie Channel, Home Box Office (cable).

The Great Santini. Driven Marine in conflict with his family and himself; released theatrically in 1980. Robert Duvall, Blythe Danner. Showtime (cable).

The Black Stallion. 1979 film interpretation of the Walter Farley classic. Home Theater Network (cable).

Brubaker. Warden Robert Redford struggles to reform prison conditions in this 1980 film. Showtime (cable).

SPORTS

Monday Night Baseball. The weekly series returns. ABC.

U.S. Open Golf. From the Merion Golf Club in Ardmore, Pa.; final rounds, live, on June 20 and 21. ABC.

LPGA Championship. From the Jack Nicklaus Sports Center in Kings Island, Ohio, on June 13 and 14. NBC.

French Open Tennis. Final rounds in the first tournament of the Grand Slam, broadcast live on June 6 and 7. CBS.

Wimbledon. The All-England tennis championships begin June 27. Home Box Office (cable) will show same-day



Bjorn Borg: Courting a title.

highlights the first week, next-day broadcasts of quarter- and semifinal matches the second. NBC will begin with tape-delay/live combinations, showing the finals live on July 4.

The Belmont Stakes. Third jewel in horse-racing's Triple Crown; from New York's Belmont Park on June 6. CBS.

Championship Boxing. Marvin Hagler faces Vito Antuofermo for the world middleweight title June 13. Home Box Office (cable).

Black College Tennis. The championship tournament, from Louisiana's Grambling State University. Black Entertainment Television (cable).

Australian-Rules Football. The matches from down under return, on Friday nights. Entertainment and Sports Programming Network (cable).

MUSIC

The Fabulous Philadelphians: From Ormandy to Muti. Riccardo Muti conducts the Philadelphia Orchestra and pianist Alicia de Larrocha in Mozart's *Concerto No. 25 in C Major*. PBS.

Star City Roll Out. Taped at a New York roller disco; featuring the music of Zero Cool, Nona Hendryx and Blondie. Nickelodeon (cable).

The Rick Derringer Concert. Taped live at the Agora Ballroom in Cleveland. Nickelodeon (cable).

A Bayou Legend. American opera about a young idealist in love with a spirit. PBS.

SPECIALS

The Tony Awards. Broadway's top honors, broadcast from the Mark Hellinger Theater on June 7. CBS.

We'll Be Right Back. Avery Schreiber is host of this look back at 30 years of TV commercials. Showtime (cable).

The Los Angeles Big Laff Off. Dick Martin emcees the competition at the Cocqnut Grove nightclub. Showtime (cable).

David Letterman: Looking for Fun. The comedian takes a wry look at leisure-time pursuits. Home Box Office (cable).

Remember When: On the Air. Dick Cavett tours the history of radio broadcasting. Home Box Office (cable).

CHILDREN'S SHOWS

Incredible, Indelible, Magical, Physical Mystery Trip and Magical Mystery Trip Through Little Red's Head. Back-to-back explorations of the body and mind. Nickelodeon (cable).

Bon Voyage, Charlie Brown. The *Peanuts* gang as exchange students in France. The Movie Channel (cable).

Nick's Family Picks. A new series, reviving classic family films, this month will include *Tom Brown's School Days*, with Freddie Bartholomew, and *The Jungle Book*, with Sabu. Nickelodeon (cable).

Portrait of Grandpa Doc. Melvyn Douglas stars in a tale of grandfather and grandson. Nickelodeon (cable).

Matt and Jenny. Guest stars on the adventure series this month include Dina Merrill, Noel Harrison and Victor Buono. Nickelodeon (cable).

NEWS AND DOCUMENTARIES

ABC News Closeup. A look at the informant/witness program in the Government's war on organized crime. ABC.

You! Former *Mademoiselle* editor-in-chief Edith Locke is host of this series, begun last month, which combines fashion, career and health information for women. USA Network (cable).

The Best of Consumer Reports. A compilation of highlights from the earlier shows. Home Box Office (cable). ☐

The Ratings Race

The Family Show in Transition

BY PHILIP BURRELL

Can NBC's termination of *Disney's Wonderful World*, after a 27-year run, be construed as an early warning that wholesome, all-family network series are on the wane? Probably not, because the genre still has value to networks, advertisers and viewers alike. But *Disney's* end is symbolic of the many problems the family show confronts if it is to survive in the 1980s.

Without question, the family show already has undergone a major face-lift in the last decade, as the 1960s' simplicity of *The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet* yielded to the cry for relevance and realism. Even with shifts in manners and mores, however, there persists a core of warm, entertaining shows that still venerate the positive ideals of family life. Programs like *Little House on the Prairie*, *The Waltons* and *Eight Is Enough* stand as contemporary examples of such series. (Regrettably, the latter two programs have peaked in the ratings race, and are likely to fade from view at the end of the current season.)

To investigate whether network priorities concerning all-family entertainment may be shifting, we set out to measure future trends by reviewing the 85 to 90 pilots ordered by the three networks for the 1981-82 season. What we found was an alarmingly small number, seven projects, that fit the all-family mold. At CBS, which accounted for four of them, we contacted a net-

work executive who claimed "there were many others in development, but we ordered fewer pilots this year and [most family shows]

weren't unique enough to make the final cut."

Since strong family shows generally have a longer-than-average life span, the constant challenge seems to be identifying an idea with the right chemistry for its time. Today's producer bent on reaching a family audience

must deal with the sociological impact of later marriages, smaller families and the increase in the number of working women. These factors serve to reshape the definition of the family unit on both sides of the set—as viewers and as subject matter for a potential series.

A network source identified further challenges: "The creative process in developing a family show is very special," he said. "The softer story lines of family drama demand dynamic character structure, and casting becomes the key ingredient. Actors have to relate in an ensemble performance to create a believable family unit. Occasionally, we're blessed by the charisma of a Richard Thomas or Kristy McNichol, which registers quickly with viewers and helps thrust a series into the hit category."

Despite the current small amount of all-family programming, sponsors still are anxious to support the format. In 1979, TV's biggest-spending client, The Procter & Gamble Co., even co-developed its own family series on NBC. *Shirley* became the first client-owned nighttime series in a dozen years, although it wasn't a ratings success.

As for the networks and their future intentions, a spokesman identified the all-family series as "a viable form that has served us well. We'll keep on experimenting to develop a fresh approach . . . in fact, we've already placed orders for several family-type scripts for 1982-83."

Audiences, advertisers, and refugees from *Disney's Wonderful World* are rooting for these future prospects. ■



1980s' all-family realism: *Little House on the Prairie's* Albert Ingalls (Matthew Laborateaux) comforts a rape victim (Olivia Barash).



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CASSETTES IN REVIEW

Shark Sighted in Home-Video Waters

By GENE SHALIT

Jaws: (1975) color; 124 minutes; MCA Videocassette, Inc.*; \$65.

Jaws 2: (1977) color; 116 minutes; MCA Videocassette, Inc.*; \$65.

Take my hand, and return with me to June 1975, sweet with the promise of a swimming summer. Suddenly, a movie opens: *Jaws!* Beaches close. Oceans empty. People point fingers at sharks they see in rivers, lakes and ponds, and tremble in their swimming pools. Bob Hope fears his bath: "My rubber duck was circling me." Shark mania sweeps the country. Millions of copies of the Bantam paperback are swept from the stands. Movie mobs engulf theaters around the world. The box-office gross is an unheard of half-a-billion dollars. Now *Jaws* is available on videocassette—a home-screen scream. How did it happen?

Author Peter Benchley wrote a novel, *Jaws*, about a New England seacoast town terrorized by a great white shark, and stuffed his tale with marital deceit, infidelity and other suburban trash. The movie producers, David Brown and Richard Zanuck (who were also executive producers of *The Sting*, and were responsible for bringing *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* and *Patton* to 20th Century Fox), read through the book and saw its possibilities. With an exceptional touch and an obsession for detail, they dumped the pumped-up pap and ordered a script taut with pleasure and pulse. They gambled on a 29-year-old director (Steven Spielberg), they got the best in the business to compose the score (John Williams, who subsequently composed the music for *Star Wars* and *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, and who has won 15 Academy Award nominations), they signed one of Hollywood's most inspired editors (Verna Fields) and—perhaps the best sign of all—they signed a cast short on star names but long on talent: Roy Scheider as the sheriff, 28-year-old Richard Dreyfuss as the merry ichthyologist, and Robert Shaw as the haunted hunter of sharks.



(Shaw, as the Yankee fisherman who is by sharks possessed, explains his hatred in a masterful monologue that is a high point of the picture. Most people don't know that this speech was almost eliminated by the studio bosses—"Too slow," they finger-snapped—but Zanuck and Brown fought them and saved the scene.)

Jaws was shot on Martha's Vineyard, off the coast of Massachusetts. Its isolation almost drove the cast mad. Shaw went stir-crazy. Dreyfuss allegedly ran with all of the island's allegedly pretty girls, and the writers scribbled through the night, trying to keep the story one dawn ahead of the cameras. Technical problems proliferated. The sea wouldn't stay still and its color kept changing. The three mechanical sharks, collectively nicknamed Bruce, each weighed about a ton and a half, and, at various points during filming, each had to be manipulated by 19 men operating hydraulic pistons and ganglia of gadgets. Everything went over schedule and over budget, but, in the end, it was worth every migraine moment.

The movie was a phenomenon, and the studio hungrily wanted more. So Zanuck/Brown gave it to them in 1978 with *Jaws 2*, a picture that did not match the menace of the first: The shock was gone, and so were Shaw (who had been

devoured), and Dreyfuss (who said the hell with it). Spielberg was on another project, and the new director, Jeannot Szwarc, did not have Spielberg's daring or cinematic sense. Still, *Jaws 2* became one of the most successful sequels ever, grossing \$200 million.

"Let's have a third one," said the moguls, gleefully rubbing their bankbooks together. Brown and Zanuck said, "No thanks." The studio pressed them. Brown had lunch with Matty Simmons, chairman of the board of National Lampoon, Inc. and producer of *National Lampoon's Animal House*, and they concocted a spoof—a movie about the making of the third movie. Their title: *Jaws 3, People 0*. The studio was not amused. The project faded. But I've got an inside tip for you. There *will* be a *Jaws 3*, but it won't be produced by Zanuck/Brown. Enough is enough.

Still, the original *Jaws* is a classic. Its creators fondled the audiences' nerves into a frenzy of pleasure and fear. It deserves its spot on the best-seller lists, because it is marvelously made and definitely worth owning. No matter how often it's seen, it delivers shivery pleasure. Its theme is universal. It is *Everyman*. And *Everyfish*. ■

*MCA Videocassette, Inc., 70 Universal City Plaza, Universal City, Cal. 91608.

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An Artful Solution to PBS's Money Woes



By STANLEY MARCUS

Have you heard the one about the terminal influenza patient who jumped out of bed one morning and proceeded to win the marathon? . . . No? Then you haven't been talking to Lawrence Grossman, president of PBS.

Grossman, you see, has concocted an elixir of life that he believes will return the financially moribund body of public television to the state of vitality it enjoyed years earlier—before kindly Uncle Sam became embroiled with that nasty debt-collection agency, N. Flation & Sons, and before all those upstart cablemongers from New York started muscling in on high-class programming.

The general idea of this elixir came from the Carnegie Commission on the Future of Public Broadcasting, which a year ago suggested in a report, *Keeping PACE with the New Television*, that PBS's only real hope lay in the creation of its own pay-TV satellite network. Within a year Grossman had delivered to his executive committee a 41-page master plan outlining the establishment of a Public Subscriber Network (PSN) based on a "Grand Alliance" of PBS stations and America's cultural institutions. The

board loved it and told Grossman to devote the next year to further practical development of the idea, preparatory to a launch in 1983.

If the Grand Alliance becomes a reality, institutions like New York's Metropolitan Opera and Chicago's Museum of Science and Industry—both of which have looked into the venture—may become equity partners in PSN by investing multiples of \$5000 and sharing in revenues. They will thus acquire a new outlet for their work, and will also collect royalties on any of their programs that are later sold to free public television. Furthermore, their members will be able to subscribe to PSN at special discount rates. (The regular rate will be \$10 to \$13 per month.)

Participating PBS stations will each front \$20,000—and they too will share in the profits. They'll benefit from the additional use of their production facilities, as well as from the expanded supply of quality programming that will filter down to them from PSN. Station members will get preferential rates when subscribing to the new network; they

will also have access to a variety of arts-related services specially packaged by PSN: book clubs, videocassette and videodisc clubs, magazines, box-office ticket sales and perhaps even overseas cultural tours.

Each evening, PSN will offer a major performing-arts production, documentary program or feature film. During the day, the network will be given over to educational telecourses. Colleges, schools or other institutions that subscribe to PSN principally for its daytime programming will pay an annual fee.

PBS already has satellite interconnection among its stations. The establishment of a pay network will require just one further link in the delivery chain: Programs will have to be fed by each local station to cable, subscription-TV or microwave systems in its area. In its launch year, PSN is expected to have 360,000 family subscribers; by 1990, almost a million and a quarter.

Buoyed by the responses he's been getting from potential partners in the arts community, Grossman now talks about the rival cultural channels on cable as if they were more of a threat to themselves than to PBS. "There's a lot of rhetoric and a lot of promise," he says, "but the reality is quite different. ABC's ARTS channel and CBS Cable [which starts this summer] are purely advertiser-supported. In our judgment, there's no way that sufficient funds for original or significant productions can be generated on a cost-per-thousand basis with the very limited audience that exists for cultural material. It requires a subscriber base."

Not everyone in PBS, however, is seeing things the way Grossman sees them. John Jay Iselin, president of WNET in New York, says that while PSN is a great idea, it's premature. "At this point," he says, "we ought not to expose ourselves to undue financial risk." During the inevitable "shake-out" period among cultural services, Iselin would prefer to sell programming to "our wealthy commercial colleagues, and let them test the waters."

Tony Tiano, president of KQED in San Francisco, agrees: "I believe a major mistake that this industry could make now would be to go from one ill-financed operation to another." ■



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Q&A with James Garner

“They’d Rather Lie than Tell the Truth”

The “Rockford” star sounds off against the TV industry and also talks frankly about his bouts with depression and his shyness with women

Just out of the shower, James Garner stepped into the living room of his rented home outside Los Angeles, buckled his silver and turquoise belt and tucked in his shirt. Smelling of fresh soap and after-shave, 6 feet 2 inches tall, handsome and charming, he began to talk about his life and his career. Garner is about to resume the role that made him a star 24 years ago—the role of that lovable and independent Western antihero, Bret Maverick. Since those early days, he has starred in 32 movies, including *Grand Prix*, *The Thrill of It All* and *Move Over Darling*, and two television series, *Nichols* and *The Rockford Files*.

But Garner hasn’t had it easy. Born April 7, 1928, in Norman, Okla., he was the youngest son of Mildred and Weldon Bumgarner, who ran a country store. His mother died when he was 4, and three years later, when his father remarried, he found himself in constant conflict with his stepmother. He left home at 14, supporting himself as a chauffeur for a clothing salesman and at a variety of other odd jobs. When his father separated from his stepmother and moved to Los Angeles, Garner headed west and finished school at Hollywood High. Years later, after some college and after earning two Purple Hearts in the Korean War, Garner returned to Hollywood and began his acting career.

Today, at 53, Garner has been plagued

by physical injuries. After 24 years of marriage, he recently separated from his wife Lois. He has been grappling with major depression, and he says he’s content “just to remain on an even keel.”

As he began this interview with freelance writer Ann Salisbury, Garner casually mentioned that in recent years he has lost an inch in height. He smiled: “They’ve beaten me down over the years.”

PANORAMA: *You don’t look like someone who’s been beaten down. In fact, you seem to be an athletic person.*

GARNER: Well, when I was a kid, that’s all there was. Athletics. The rest of it they could have. As a matter of fact, I used to go to school just long enough to play sports, and I’d usually get a leg hurt or something.

PANORAMA: *You were prone to injury?*

GARNER: Oh, yeah. As a matter of fact, it started when I was in high school playing ball at 17. Since then, I’ve had about . . . well, I think I’ve got five incisions on the right knee and one on the left. But, ah well, I don’t like to talk about my injuries. It really gets kind of boring.

PANORAMA: *The part that hasn’t been talked about is the stamina it must take to get through a physical series like The*

Rockford Files. Haven’t you been in a lot of pain?

GARNER: Well, those injuries finally caught up with me a few years ago. And that’s when I quit *Rockford*. I’d just had it as long as I could take it. I was going downhill, physically, extremely fast. You know, one injury will bring on another. You start favoring one leg, and the other leg will go, and then the back will go, and you start taking medication, and then that’ll affect your stomach, or whatever, and then you get depression. And it just got so heavy. I’ve had a sinus infection for almost four years now. The bone has kind of grown over one sinus so the medication can’t quite get to it, so I have a constant low-grade infection.

PANORAMA: *What do you think caused all those problems?*

GARNER: Well, that was just overwork. I mean, you work every day, 12 to 16 hours a day, for five or six years through injuries. At one point, the studio didn’t believe I’d hurt my leg. They threatened to sue me the next day for anticipatory breach of the contract and they shut down production. My leg was swollen about twice the size. But they didn’t even look into it to see if I was really hurt. They don’t care about any actor or his physical well-being. They’ve got air dates.

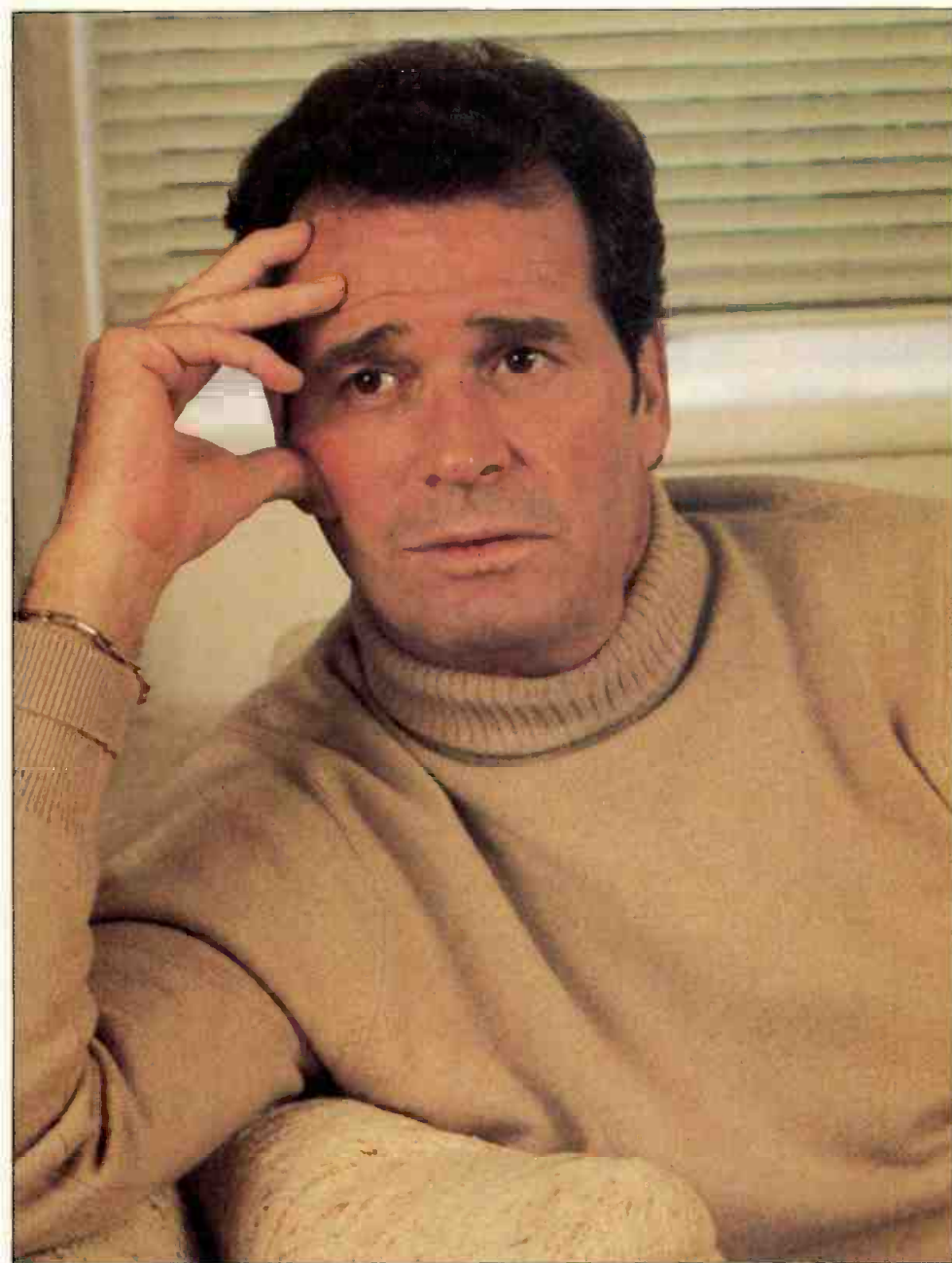
And so I worked with an injured leg when I shouldn’t have. And unfortunately, I think it caused lasting damage. I haven’t been able to bend it over 100 degrees since then.

PANORAMA: *How did you feel when that happened?*

GARNER: Well, there’s nothing else that exists while I’m working. It’s all-consuming. I don’t think my wife has been on the set three or four times in 25 years. I don’t want to have to worry if my wife’s upset, if she’s comfortable.

PANORAMA: *You’d actually worry about that? How considerate.*

GARNER: Well, ah, I actually sort of consider it selfish. She knows I would worry about her. It’s like, I remember years ago, I was doing love scenes with Audrey Hepburn. And, ah, we had to kiss and carry on. And I went home that day and my wife said, “How are



you?" And I said, "Well, I'm jus' worn out." She said, "Tough day?" And I said, "Yeah, I've been kissin' Audrey Hepburn all day and my pucker is tuckered." And she was ready to kill me. Now, ya know, you don't want her on the set when I'm kissing Julie Andrews or Audrey.

PANORAMA: *You have a cool, always-in-control image. Aren't you as cool in your personal life as you appear on the screen?*

GARNER: Not by any means, no.

PANORAMA: *I've heard you're shy around women.*

GARNER: Yes.

PANORAMA: *You're frightened by them?*

GARNER: Not frightened. Scared. I don't know why. I've known women I just melt around. I can't talk.

PANORAMA: *What kind are they? Good-looking?*

GARNER: Yeah, generally. They may not be to somebody else, but they are to me. And I'm afraid I might do something or say something wrong, that they'll dislike me. So I don't do anything.

PANORAMA: *Is that fear or vulnerability?*

GARNER: Terribly vulnerable.

PANORAMA: *Sounds like you really like good-looking women.*

GARNER: Yeah, I do. I love 'em. And it's not fear. It's my own fear. It's within me. I'm not afraid of them. I'm afraid of me.

PANORAMA: *Don't you think they'll like you?*

GARNER: I'm 'fraid they might not.

PANORAMA: *You're separated now. Are you dating?*

GARNER: I haven't dated—as such. I have had dinner with other ladies and been out with other ladies, and whatever. But I haven't dated really. As a matter of fact, I'm going to take my wife to dinner tonight. My wife and I aren't mad at each other.

PANORAMA: *But you're not living together.*

GARNER: No. But it had to do with a lot of other things. It was not so much between us. The last time my wife and I separated, it was for about three months, and it was between us. We had to have some understandings. But that was about 10 years ago.

PANORAMA: *This time you just needed space?*

GARNER: Yeah. Get my feet back on the ground, my head a little straight. And my wife's been wonderful about it. She's been very understanding. A lot of women would react a lot differently.

PANORAMA: *Do you think you'll eventually get back together with her?*

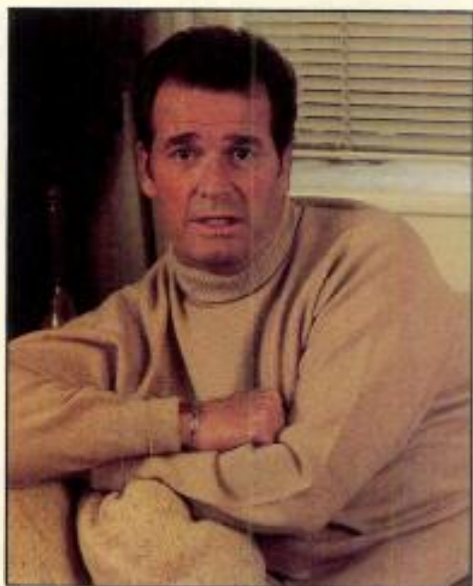
GARNER: Yes, I'd say the percentages are highly in favor. I mean, I love my wife. We've been together 24 years.

PANORAMA: *How is being apart going to help?*

GARNER: It was a matter of just pulling everything back together. I had a couple of really tough, hard years, a lot of problems, businesswise, and then I was physically ill, and getting worse and worse. And that bothered me mentally. I

Q&A

continued



was making some bad decisions and moves, and things were coming into my mind that I know weren't right.

PANORAMA: Like what?

GARNER: Oh, I was going to chuck everything. The business. The family. Everybody can go to hell.

PANORAMA: You were in a depression?

GARNER: We're talking depression.

PANORAMA: Were you having suicidal thoughts?

GARNER: I wouldn't want to say that. But I guess you could. You could go deeper and deeper, and it might end that way. I'm not saying that's what I was thinking. But, you know, when you see yourself in a depression, and I was in a depression for a year and a half. . . .

PANORAMA: How did you stand it?

GARNER: Working and working. And people have no idea what it's like. And they say, "How can a guy who's right on top of the world, all the money and the adoration. . . ?" They think that's what does it. That's not what does it. And I'd just sit there for hours.

PANORAMA: Did you see anyone about it?

GARNER: Oh, yeah. I have a history of depression. I saw a psychiatrist in Westwood.

"I have a history of depression. I saw a psychiatrist in Westwood."

PANORAMA: What kind of insights do you think you've gotten as a result of that?

GARNER: Oh, I don't know. I wouldn't want to go into it in depth, 'cause I don't know if I could put it into words. But I came to some conclusions. That I had to do something to put a stop to it. They had me on Elavil for a while. And I don't want to do that.

PANORAMA: Was it partly as a result of those talks with your psychiatrist that you decided to put some distance between you and your wife?

GARNER: Yeah. I wasn't doing my wife, my children, or me, or any of my friends or anybody else any good. And everything would have deteriorated and deteriorated until it was . . . ruined. . . . I don't like to get into those things. It's really my private life.

PANORAMA: You're doing a new Maverick show. Is there something specific you'd like to accomplish?

GARNER: Not really. But there is a challenge there. Nostalgia is really almost impossible to beat. What you remember is not necessarily what was. If you go back and look at the original series, maybe the shows weren't that good. They were fine for what they were at the time, but hardly any were original scripts. A lot were rewritten, cut-down Western movies, and we used a lot of stock footage from those old movies. That saved a lot of money.

PANORAMA: It's 1880, 20 years later in the life of Bret Maverick.

GARNER: But the same old attitude will be there. That's the antihero. A lot of the characters had a little touch of larceny.

PANORAMA: Maverick, people say, is a symbol of the American male—the rugged individualist, an independent soul. Do you identify with that kind of character?

GARNER: A little bit. I've been independent all mah life. I've always felt I have to live with me. When I flip off the light at night, I'm the one who's sitting there with my own mind, thinking about what went through the day, good or bad, so I make my own decisions. I'm an independent soul; I'm not a joiner. I'll join a particular cause at a particular time—like I was one of the organizers of the civil-rights march on Washington in 1963, where Martin Luther King gave his "I have a dream" speech.

PANORAMA: Do you think there might be a touch of romance in the new Maverick?

GARNER: Might be a little. But I don't think you can lock Maverick, the independent, into any one situation, with a lady or anyone else. I think you cut down his freedom when you do that. And that's what he's holdin' onto. He can have affection, and care for them, and lay down his life for them, but not forever and ever.

PANORAMA: Do you, personally, uphold that point of view? It sounds like

you're the type who's committed to sticking to things and working hard at them.

GARNER: Oh, yeah, if I make a commitment, that's it. I'll go down swinging. You can put me in my grave still tryin' to commit. I don't know, it's just the way I am. I think it comes from the part of the country I come from, where your word is your bond. But I'm in a business where they don't understand that. They'd rather lie than tell the truth. And that's where I have a lot of trouble with the studios and the executives and the networks. I learned early in life that if you tell one lie, you've got to tell two to cover that one, and pretty soon you've told 50 and you've gotta tell 100, and you're not gonna be able to separate the truth from the fiction.

PANORAMA: *Do you think the studios do that?*

GARNER: Yeah. I don't think they know the truth any more. They lie so much, they begin to believe it.

I learned something when I came out here: that somebody with a little street sense will get to them eventually. Most of 'em, see, are not that smart. There's nothing to be afraid of. And I've found that most people, when they get power, will abuse it. And when they get so taken with themselves that they cannot do anything wrong, they'll stick their foot in their mouths every time.

PANORAMA: *You came to live in Los Angeles in 1954, and three years later you were the star of Maverick.*

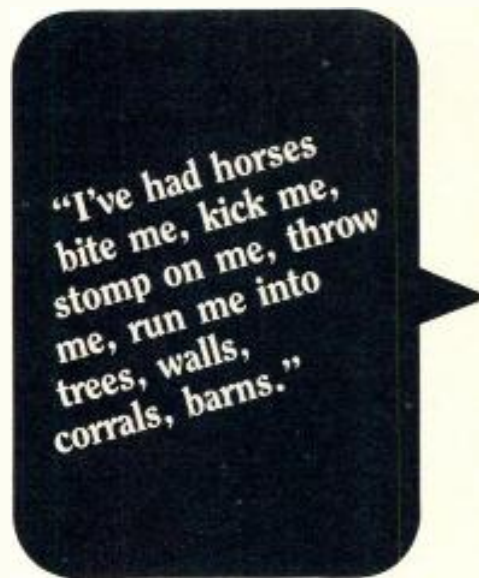
GARNER: Yeah, that was after I got out of the Army. I went to Oklahoma University for one semester. And I didn't feel like I was doing any good. The English final was one of those four-hour jobs. I packed my car and said, "That's enough school." I was workin' for a few months for my dad, layin' carpets, and I knew I didn't want to do that. I was 25, at an age where I figured, "I gotta do something," so I said, "I'll give myself five years to see if I can make a living in the acting business." I don't know why I did it. I really didn't want to do it. I'd fought it for many years. There were an awful lot of people who said, "You should, you should, you should."

PANORAMA: *Who was saying, "You should?"*

GARNER: Oh, my God, practically everybody I ran into. I was, you know, young, tall, good-lookin', if you wanna say that. And I didn't want it. I'd read those damn fan magazines. And I said, "Jesus, those people are so superficial."

PANORAMA: *How'd you get your start?*

GARNER: Well, Paul Gregory became a producer. He had been a drugstore soda jerk in the years when I was working in the Shell service station on Hollywood Boulevard. So I stopped by his office



by chance one day. And he offered me a nonspeaking role in a Broadway play he was producing, *The Caine Mutiny Court Martial*. I was one of six judges, and all I did was just sit there and listen. But it was the best lesson I ever learned. Listening is 90 percent of acting, because you're reacting to whatever is going on.

PANORAMA: *Are you ever frightened by acting?*

GARNER: Oh, yes. Every once in a while I'll get a little nervous twitch here, a nervous tic that I can't control. I think it sometimes comes from insecurity, either in the material or myself.

PANORAMA: *Maverick is a Western. Do you enjoy horseback riding?*

GARNER: Baaaaaad form of transportation. Naw, I'd rather have a car or some-

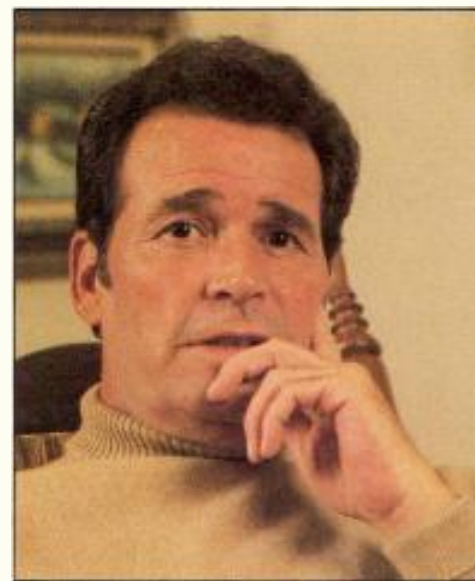
thing. (Laughs.) I've ridden horses all my life. We lived out in the country. My dad ran a country store. I rode a horse to school in the first grade. And I've had 'em bite me, kick me, stomp on me, throw me, run me into trees, walls, corrals, barns, whatever.

PANORAMA: *And guns?*

GARNER: Yeah. I got handguns and I've got shotguns.

PANORAMA: *Do you have them for protection?*

GARNER: Yep. I've used guns all my



life. I know how to use them. I'm against them, really. I'm in favor of gun control. And yet, I know it's not practical. It's just like anything else in this country: You can get anything you want if you really want it bad enough. And, unfortunately, in this country, you'd better be prepared to defend yourself.

PANORAMA: *Some people blame rising crime on TV shows with shoot-outs.*

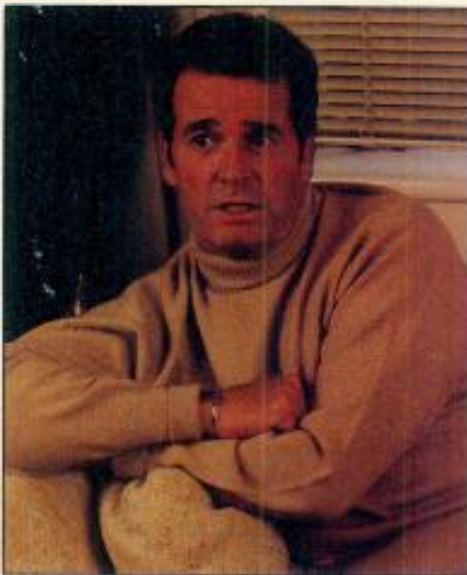
GARNER: Awwwww, that's horse pucky. No television show is gonna make you do somethin'. It may make you think, "Oh, I'd love to do that." So you go out and do it. But you're a sonofabitch before you see it. And if it wasn't that, it would have been something else.

PANORAMA: *You had your own problems not long ago with violence—with a man who attacked you after a traffic accident.*

continued

Q&A

continued



GARNER: Yeah. He hit me through the window, eight or nine times in the face, then I got out and I grabbed him, and we fell across the street, and I fell on top of him, but he grabbed me by the *cajones*. And squееееeed. And it does smart. And then he got up and started kickin' me in the head. And he kicked me about six times in the head, and then six or eight times around the rest of the body. He just started down this side and went all around. I was layin' on my stomach. I was bleeding, and cut, and busted up and stunned so much that I could hardly see. If I'd had a couple of minutes to recoup, I probably would have hurt him. But I had concussions and a broken tail-bone, and a lot of little things broken. But, you know, he wasn't all that tough. Anyone'll kick you and hit you that many times and not put you away, he's not that tough.

PANORAMA: You mean he wasn't that tough because he didn't kill you?

GARNER: Well, if there hadn't a been a coupla guys there to stop me from goin' after him when he and his sister were drivin' off with the car, he would have probably had to kill me. I've got a hair-trigger temper. But I give everybody about two chances. The third. . . .

PANORAMA: How does that temper work?

GARNER: It depends. It can be a word, an action, anything, really, that can set me off. But it has to build a little before I blow off. And then when I blow, I don't care what happens. To me or them or

"When I blow, I don't care what happens. To me or them or anybody else. I'll cut off my nose to spite my face."

anybody else. I'll cut off my nose to spite my face. But, generally, I look at it long enough to see whether I'm right or wrong.

PANORAMA: Why did you decide to do *Maverick* instead of more movies? Don't you have to do movies to become a superstar like Cary Grant and John Wayne?

GARNER: I don't want to reach that level. I don't want to be number-one box office or anything like that. Just stay on an even keel. I mean, I've seen 'em come and I've seen 'em go.

PANORAMA: Do you think that if you reached that point you'd fall?

GARNER: Where else you gonna go? It's too much pressure.

PANORAMA: Some people sustain it.

John Wayne and Cary Grant stayed up there.

GARNER: Yeah, but they had their ups and downs. You stay at it long enough and you become almost an institution. But I'm just tryin' to get along. You see, I never really wanted to be a star. Just to make a living. It never occurred to me that I would be a star. I never thought I would lose my anonymity.

PANORAMA: What kind of a toll has fame taken of you?

GARNER: Well, I've become more of a recluse. That's why I shun publicity. I don't go to the big to-dos, whatever. It's a pain in the butt to me.

PANORAMA: You don't go to parties very much. You play golf from time to time. You don't race your cars any more. What do you do for fun besides golf?

GARNER: Well, lately I've been doin' a little singin'. Waylon Jennings and Willie Nelson are very good friends of mine. I know, oh, 150 songwriters. I love country music, and I love the writers and I love the pickers.

PANORAMA: Are you going to release a record?

GARNER: She found out. I opened my mouth. Yeah, Waylon and I have made a record. He's going to make a deal with somebody in the near future, and we may finish an album. I really like to do harmony and stuff. I'd really rather do backup. But Waylon, I'm afraid, put me up front. It turns out he's doin' harmony in the background. My older brother is a really good singer, and my daughter Gigi, who's 22 or 23, wants to be a singer, too. I told her, "If we make an album, Waylon and I, you can sing backup a little bit." I want both my daughter and brother to do a little backup. Just so, you know, they were on the first record I ever made.

PANORAMA: So what's down the line 10 years from now for Jim Garner?

GARNER: I'm not gonna worry about 10 years from now. I'm just trying to make it through the night, honey. ☐

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3M

PANORAMIC VIEW

**Dallas Comic Strip . . . The Latest Accessory:
A Screen for Your Screen . . . Cavett Steps into
History . . . A Show That's a Commercial . . .
Unusual Names . . . American Quiz Shows Go
British . . . Late-Night Soaps . . . A Paperback-
Sized Set . . . WKRP's Prototype**



On the Dallas Strip

Dallas may be in reruns now, but you can still watch new plots thicken at Southfork all summer long. It'll cost you the price of a newspaper and it's only in color on Sundays, but it's bona fide Ewing intrigue. It's *Dallas*, but in still frames—a Los Angeles Times Syndicate comic strip that has become, in its first few months of publication, one of the Syndicate's hottest properties, currently published in about 350 papers around the country and in several others around the world.

New Jersey cartoonist Jim Lawrence dreams up the torrid schemes and writes the dialogue, and Los Angeles artist Ron Harris draws the familiar Ewing characters.

Lawrence creates his own story lines for the strip but must make them concur with the broadcast episodes; if Pam remains faithful on Friday nights she mustn't succumb in his daily strips. "There has to be constant checking with Lorimar," Lawrence says. "We have to submit story lines to them as well as the week-by-week script. I've written a number of strips [including *Buck Rogers* and *James Bond*], but writing a strip like *Dallas* is a good bit more complicated."

The strip has run three stories so far. (The current one centers on the gossip and speculation that arise when Miss Ellie writes a romantic novel, set in Texas, whose fic-

tional characters are clearly drawn from her own family.) Unlike the TV show, which deals with several characters' story lines in each episode, Lawrence's strip only focuses on one story line at a time. "A comic strip is a terribly circumscribed art form," he says. "We're crystal simplicity itself compared with the content of the show."

Lawrence doesn't worry that the show's popularity—and hence his strip's—may wane. An ardent *Dallas* fan, he says the show is well-written and has the potential to be around a long time. Besides, he notes, *Dr. Kildare* went off prime time in 1966 but still appears as a daily strip in 150 papers.—Karen Grigsby

TV Screened

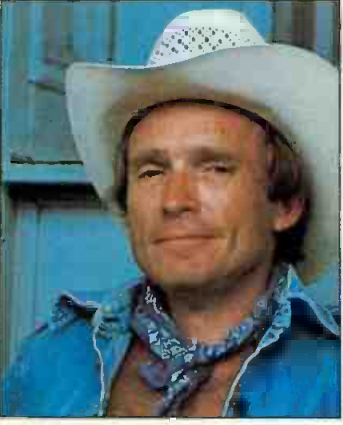
Those of you bored with the predictability of television programming take heart: Channel 1 has arrived.

Using a promotional campaign reminiscent of the "It slices, dices and makes julienne fries" epidemic, designers Vicky Doubleday and Peter Gutkin have brought to video what they believe to be the ultimate TV accessory: a plastic grid covered with parchment-like paper that, when attached to a TV screen, converts images into 88 squares of quickly changing color. The screen has been marketed as "visualized jazz."

Channel 1 is the brainchild of Dr. George Lowe, a computer expert at Chevron in San Francisco. Believing that people now need television "to lead them into creative moods, rather than just to occupy their idle hours," Lowe took his balsa-wood prototype to Doubleday/Gutkin, where it was refined and, eventually, mass-produced. Lowe feels that the finished product "brings to television what Mingus brought to jazz," and now watches TV almost exclusively *with* the screen.

Critics nationwide have been generous in their praise of Channel 1, calling it "a marvelous new TV toy," "the perfect Christmas present," and "good-natured, fun-loving craziness." Doubleday and Gutkin claim consumer response has been equally good—just under 10,000 people have already shelled out the necessary \$19.95—and plans are under way to peddle the screen in department and electronics stores across the country. "This is tongue-in-cheek video technology for the masses," says Doubleday. "Every generation has its artifact, and this is the artifact for the generation that was weaned on TV."

—Karen Wooten Iacobucci



Dick Cavett relives the myth and reality of the American cowpoke.

One More Time

Last year he tap-danced at the Cotton Club in Harlem and waded ashore with MacArthur in the Philippines. This year he ducks stray bullets from the gunfight at the O.K. Corral and finds himself pilloried in Puritan Massachusetts. Who? Dick Cavett, Time Traveler, of course.

The current Home Box Office series *Remember When*, like last season's *Time Was*, lets host Cavett seem to step in and out of the past, thanks to a bit of video wizardry called UltraMat. Last month's special treated the myth and reality of the American cowboy; others will explore journalism, invention, advertising, travel, radio, sports and

Going Buy, Buy

No, you're not watching something by Rod Serling. That talk-show host really has been talking about coffee-makers for nine minutes. Coming up next is a natty gentleman who will tell the audience all about the virtues of a best-selling motor oil. It's all part of *The Home Shopping Show*, which reaches 3.5 million homes via cable's Modern Satellite Network.

Guests pay (right, pay) \$4800 a clip (spots are shown

sex. In the course of preparing them, Cavett has umpired a Little League game; driven a vintage Ford; "nearly burned my nose off on a riverboat in New Orleans, on a day so hot the people who *live* there were hallucinating"; met Niño Cochise ("He says he's a descendant of the original Cochise—and he's a great old character"); and appeared in the center of a giant doughnut—"making a point about excess in advertising."

What's been the least agreeable experience in his rambles so far? "Being in the stocks [at Old Salem, Mass.]. It felt just as I'd always thought it would—uncomfortable. And I wish they'd told me what I'd done to deserve it, so I could be sure never to do it again."

How about the most exhilarating? "Actually printing a page of a newspaper, on a very old printing press. It really does give you a tremendous sense of power. It's not Xeroxing—it's *printing*."

Marvelous though the UltraMat process is, Cavett does have a development he'd like to see: "Wouldn't it be great if we could reverse the process and bring some of those great old characters from the past here?"—for interviews on *The Dick Cavett Show*, no doubt.

—Deborah Lyons

five times during a 30-day period) to be interviewed about their product by co-hosts Taylor Williams and Joanne Everett. Jim Perkins, the show's creator and producer, insists, "The program was designed not just as a service to advertisers, but to help people become better consumers." It will be up to those consumers—er, viewers—to decide whether this show is TV's version of a well-read mail-order catalogue.—Debra Sheer

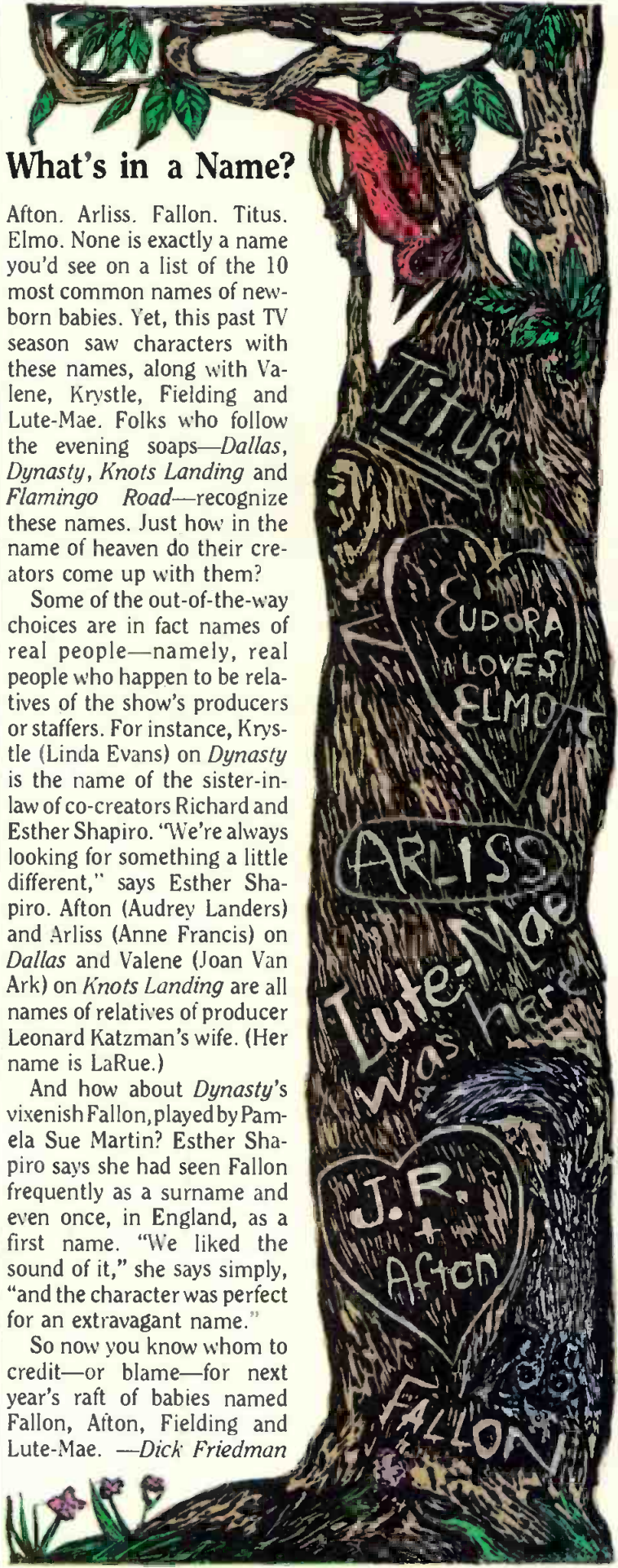
What's in a Name?

Afton. Arliss. Fallon. Titus. Elmo. None is exactly a name you'd see on a list of the 10 most common names of newborn babies. Yet, this past TV season saw characters with these names, along with Valene, Krystle, Fielding and Lute-Mae. Folks who follow the evening soaps—*Dallas*, *Dynasty*, *Knots Landing* and *Flamingo Road*—recognize these names. Just how in the name of heaven do their creators come up with them?

Some of the out-of-the-way choices are in fact names of real people—namely, real people who happen to be relatives of the show's producers or staffers. For instance, Krystle (Linda Evans) on *Dynasty* is the name of the sister-in-law of co-creators Richard and Esther Shapiro. "We're always looking for something a little different," says Esther Shapiro. Afton (Audrey Landers) and Arliss (Anne Francis) on *Dallas* and Valene (Joan Van Ark) on *Knots Landing* are all names of relatives of producer Leonard Katzman's wife. (Her name is LaRue.)

And how about *Dynasty's* vixenish Fallon, played by Pamela Sue Martin? Esther Shapiro says she had seen Fallon frequently as a surname and even once, in England, as a first name. "We liked the sound of it," she says simply, "and the character was perfect for an extravagant name."

So now you know whom to credit—or blame—for next year's raft of babies named Fallon, Afton, Fielding and Lute-Mae. —Dick Friedman



PANORAMIC VIEW

Commoners and Lords, Come On Down!

So maybe they don't have the class of *Masterpiece Theatre's* "I, Claudius" and "Upstairs, Downstairs" and all the fine Shakespearean drama that comes our way from England. So maybe the game shows do say something negative about our society.

One thing's for certain: We're no longer alone.

Three-and-a-half years ago, Fremantle International, Inc., an American programming distributor that owns European production rights to all the Goodson-Todman TV game shows, introduced British subjects to *The Match Game*, known in the U.K. as *Blankety Blank*. A year later Fremantle introduced *Family Feud* (known there as *Family Fortunes*) and *Card Sharks* (*Play Your Cards Right*).

At first British broadcasting magnates thought game shows were too vulgar for the refined tastes of their viewers. "Besides," adds Fremantle's

representative in London, Anthony Gruner, "British entertainment heads felt they knew enough about light entertainment without having to go to the Americans for lessons in what I call Game Show Know-how." However, Gruner has been successful in convincing the BBC and two commercial TV companies to bring in various Goodson-Todman staffers to get the games rolling. American ingenuity and vulgarity have paid off again—the three shows are regularly among the top 15 programs.

"The major lesson to be learned by us," says Gruner of his colleagues in British television, "is that all the money, all the experience, all the thought, energy and professionalism Goodson and Todman put into their games is apparent when you see how well-structured the shows are. The programs are built to last like a bloody good car.

"The American game-show



versions, even the best," claims Gruner, "seemed to be aimed at the cupidity of the studio audience and the viewers. The British game show tends to be based on the principles of the game and its entertainment value, with the amount of money that can be won as a secondary motive." Indeed, prizes on British game shows are considerably less than the take in America. But there are other special

factors: For instance, the BBC is financed by television license fees and viewers might not be too pleased watching a contestant walk off with a suitcase full of their money.

To attract a more "up-market" class of audience and contestant, Gruner arranged for two peers of the realm, Lord Bath and Lord Montague, to appear with their wives and heirs as contestants on a recent *Family Fortunes* show.

"Ironically enough," Gruner deadpans with a gleam in his eye, "they didn't turn out to be very much brighter than the average contestants. In some respects, they were a little duller." The game is not based on "correct" answers, but on the answer most often given when the question was put to 100 average people—commoners, so to speak.

Lords Bath and Montague did not appear on *Family Fortunes* out of love for equality and democracy. "The payoff was important for them," says Gruner. "They appeared in exchange for a nice plug for each of their stately homes . . . which are open to the public—for a fee."

—Deborah Lyons

—Mark Baker

Putting Soaps into Recycle

Deciding to take a 9-to-5 job can have its costs as well as its benefits. For instance, it means giving up soap operas—or it did until now. Help is on the way for the daytime-drama addict: On Sept. 1, superstation WTBS in Atlanta, owned by perennial America's Cup contender Ted Turner, will begin broadcasting half an hour of soap opera every

weeknight at 11:30. For the initial 13 weeks the featured show will be the 1966-71 ABC series *Dark Shadows*—just the thing to accompany your bedtime mug of warm milk. Next January the soap slot may expand to a full hour. Ned Gelband, the advertising executive who put the package together for Turner Broadcasting, says the station will

add "one of the current network soaps—a long-running, well-established show—starting from the first episodes ever broadcast." He won't mention titles just yet.

Who knows? Given the changing composition of the work force, yachtsman Turner may be coming about to just the right tack.

The Incredible Shrinking TV

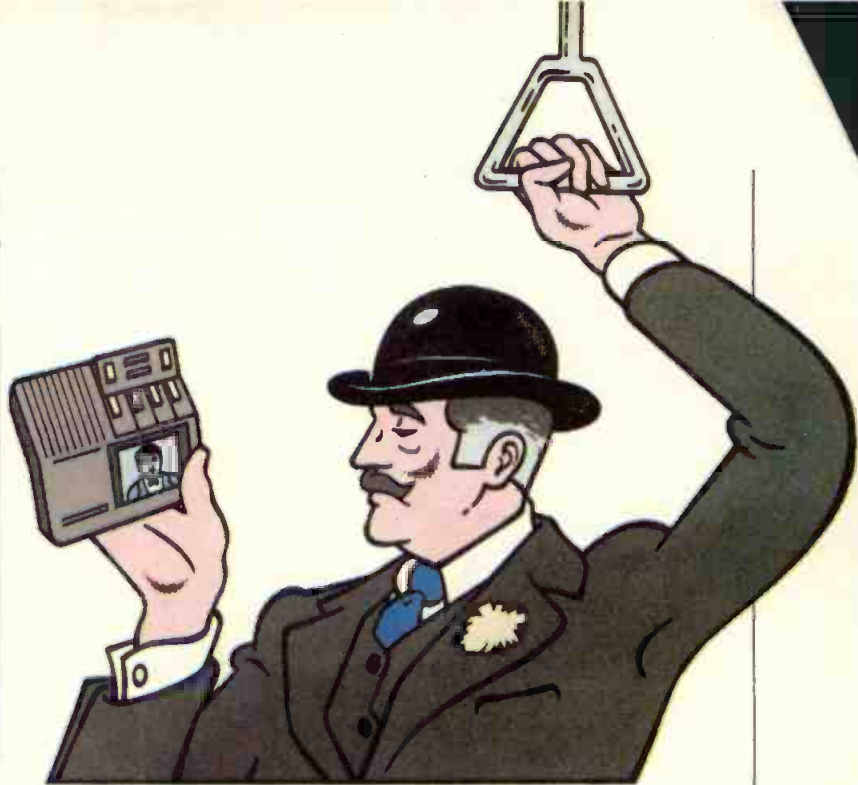
It's the size of a paperback book and weighs just a few ounces. Its screen gives a three-inch diagonal black-and-white picture anywhere in the world. And it has a built-in FM radio to boot. It's the world's first flat-screen, miniature portable TV, recently unveiled in London by its inventor, 40-year-old Briton Clive Sinclair.

Electronics whiz-kid Sinclair expects his Microvision pocket TV to sell for about \$100 when production begins

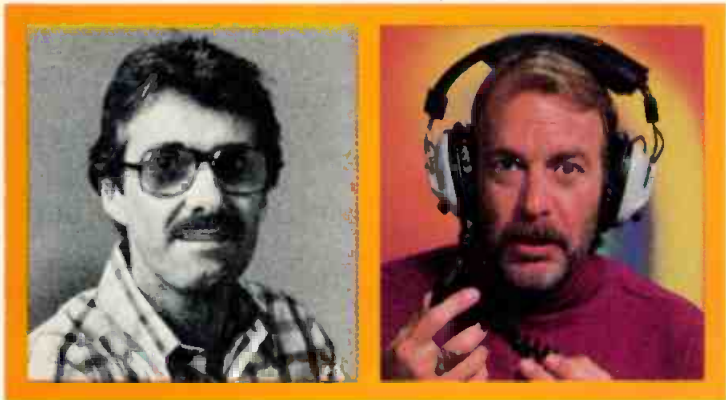
next year. (The U.S. watch manufacturer Timex has the contract to mass-produce the set at its factory in Dundee, Scotland.)

Sinclair is already working on a color version of the set and on a projection model that would throw a picture up to 3 feet by 4 feet onto a screen. Once these developments hit the market, Clive Sinclair plans to turn his attention to electric vehicles.

Are you listening, General Motors? —Richard Gilbert



Station Identification



The original "Johnny Fever," Bobby Harper, and WKRP's Howard Hesseman.

If you're an avid *WKRP in Cincinnati* fan, you probably remember the "turkey episode" of three seasons ago, when WKRP listeners were invited to visit a local shopping center to try their hands at catching *live* Thanksgiving turkeys released from a helicopter hovering over the parking lot. There was only one problem: Domesticated turkeys can't fly. Instead, they dropped like so many bombs onto the pavement.

Totally outrageous, right? No real-life radio station would ever pull such a ridiculous stunt. . . . Or would it? Turns out that episode was based on an actual incident that occurred during a similar promotion run in 1959 by Dal-

las radio station KBOX-AM.

So confesses Hugh Wilson, creator and executive producer of the popular CBS sitcom, who heard the turkey anecdote from Jerry Blum, a former KBOX staffer and current general manager of WQXI-FM in Atlanta. From 1966 to 1974, Wilson worked at Burton-Campbell, the ad agency in Atlanta that handles the WQXI account. When he left Atlanta to create *WKRP*, Wilson was inspired by three men he had worked closely with at WQXI: station manager Blum, on whom he based the character of Arthur Carlson; sales manager Clark Brown, the model for *WKRP*'s Herb Tarlek; and disc jockey "Skinny" Bobby Harper, who in-

spired—you guessed it—"Dr." Johnny Fever.

None of the men mind being parodied on the show. Says Harper (who has since joined rival Atlanta station WLTA-FM) of Howard Hesseman's wild and crazy rock-'n'-roll deejay, "It's flattering, and I can see the resemblance. . . . Back in the early '70s I was the 'Peck's Bad Boy' of Atlanta radio—I'd do anything to get people talking about our show."

Blum and Brown are not so quick to admit kinship with the Carlson and Tarlek characters (played by Gordon Jump and Frank Bonner), claiming the resemblance is mostly physical. According to Blum, "That's where the similarity ends. I'm not the bumbling manager Carlson is." Says Brown, "The physical resemblance is astonishing, but Tarlek's personality is not at all like mine."

A somewhat less coy appraisal comes from former co-worker Harper, who thinks the Carlson and Tarlek characters are very much like their real-life counterparts. "Blum is very close to his character on the show," he chuckles, "and Clark Brown is *exactly*

like Herb Tarlek . . . shiny suits and glad hands."

Do the pros see *WKRP* as a realistic portrayal of life in the commercial radio biz? Not really, says Brown, who explains, "There are some bizarre things that go on here, but we couldn't stay in business if we operated the way they do." Blum agrees, but admits, "Radio people like the show—lots of them recognize things they've done."

Again leading the pack in honesty is Bobby Harper, who thinks *WKRP* is *quite* realistic: "Most radio stations are like playpens—and most deejays are like little boys who have never grown up."

—Alison Nelson



The prototype for WKRP's Arthur Carlson is an Atlanta station manager, but Loni Anderson broke the mold.



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PANORAMA JUNE 1981

A DISTINGUISHED PANEL JUDGES...

Which Network Has the Best News Show— And the Worst

By **DON SHIRLEY**

Everyone has an opinion about the network news shows. Sometimes these increasingly popular and profitable half-hours seem to rival the weather as an all-purpose topic of conversation. But much of the sounding off is superficial at best. Does this anchorman raise his eyebrow too much when reporting certain stories? Does that one know nothing about how to select a tie? Heard far less often is this question: How well do these shows cover the news?

In an attempt to answer this question, PANORAMA asked three news professionals to monitor a week of each network's evening news and to rate the broadcasts on a variety of criteria. The only category in which the participants might possibly consider the anchormen's ties or eyebrows was "style," and

"style" was given no more weight in our ratings than were "timeliness," "comprehensiveness," "enterprise," "accuracy" and "perspective."

Our correspondents were not television critics or television journalists or anyone else who ponders the strengths and flaws of television news as a part of his or her job. Instead, we turned to newspaper editors, who presumably know the news better than they know television. Their expertise gives us a good idea of how the networks score as news organizations, while their inexperience in the mechanics of television assures us of the same living-room viewpoint that most news-watchers share.

Our panel of editors includes Sidney Epstein, editor of The Washington (D.C.) Star; Neal Shine, managing editor of the Detroit Free Press; and Mary Anne Dolan, man-



How to Find **VIDEO BARGAINS**

Your guide to locating the best buys for such items as videocassette recorders, videodisc players and giant-screen projection TVs

By DAVID LACHENBRUCH



Psst! Wanna buy some video equipment cheap?

There's a little of the bargain-hunter in all of us, and the video market sometimes can resemble an Oriental bazaar—but it's important to know your way around.

It might seem surprising that bargains abound in such a brand-new and unsaturated high-technology field as video. But video is an outgrowth of the overpopulated television-receiver industry, which has suffered historically from a surplus of manufacturers, brands and dealers, resulting in some pretty intense competition. On top of that, the hectic pace of electronic technology means that new developments come fast and furiously, so that new products are being introduced throughout the year, with some models lasting as little as six months. When a product is replaced by a new model, its price usually goes down.

continued on page 66

Sex on Cable: *Why Business Is Hotter than Ever*

Franchisers are generally cooling it—
with material at R levels—and sales are
heating up

By HOWARD POLSKIN

Outside the New Orleans convention center, a record rainfall is pelting the city. It is April 30, 1978, and, inside the center, a different sort of storm is brewing.

Tom Wheeler, executive vice president of the National Cable Television Association, surveys the organization's annual convention from the corner of the floor where he stands. He's quite pleased. A record number of exhibitors and attendees are jammed into the hall despite the weather. The show seems proof that the cable-television industry is ready to deliver on its promise to become an exciting new entertainment medium. *continued*

Suddenly the manager of the convention tugs at Wheeler's sleeve. "Tom, you'd better come see what's on the floor. It could be trouble."

Wheeler threads his way across the crowded floor until he comes to a booth run by Jason-Allan Releasing. Above the booth hangs a sign: Adult Films Suitable for Cable TV. A swarm of men is clustered around a TV monitor watching a videocassette of *The Cheerleaders*, an R-rated film.

Nearby, Jason Starr—a slender man in his late 30s and partner in the two-person company—is handing out lists of the 150 R-rated films he's offering to cable-TV systems. There's a wide smile across Starr's thin face. He barely had been able to scrape together the money to fly down from New York for the convention and pay the \$800 required to rent the booth for the four-day event. He hadn't been sure until that morning, the first day of the convention, whether the cable industry would be interested in buying his type of programs. His gamble seems to be paying off—until Tom Wheeler approaches him and asks Starr to turn off the videocassette recorder. Starr complies with the request . . . but continues to hand out his sales literature.

About an hour later, more representatives of the cable-industry association return and ask Starr to stop distributing his lists. "What the hell am I doing here if I can't turn on my videocassette recorder and hand out my lists?" barks Starr. "What did I pay my \$800 for?"

Someone answers that a U.S. congressman is visiting the convention and that adult films might offend him. Starr struggles to keep his temper. He's making valuable business contacts and he does not want to stop doing business. Someone else tells him that he will have to close down his booth and leave the convention. "If you don't leave voluntarily, we'll have to call the police," he is warned.

As he argues with officials of the NCTA, workmen arrive and begin taking down the booth. Three New Orleans policemen appear and surround Starr, who stands there shocked.


"Come with us please," they tell him. His face flushes with anger and embarrassment. He does not resist their suggestion and they quickly escort him out of the teeming convention center.

As he stands outside in the pouring

rain, Starr does the only logical thing. He heads for the closest bar.

Nobody's sure how pervasive adult entertainment is in the pay-TV business. In fact, few people can even agree on what to call it. There are specialized networks that feature sexually oriented minibudget R-rated films and action movies with explicit violence. Most industry insiders label these services adult networks, or drive-in channels, because they show movies that have mostly appeared in drive-in theaters. Estimates are that between 100 to 200 of the nation's 4370 cable and subscription-TV systems carry separate adult channels. Reportedly, only one system (in Allentown, Pa.) shows X-rated films. However, R-rated sexploitation channels are proliferating in pay-TV; they feature female nudity, occasional male nudity, but no hard sex.

Then there's the weird stuff that ap-



The cable industry
is already filled
with stunning success
stories about the
consumer acceptance
of adult channels

pears to be a phenomenon restricted to Manhattan. Unlike the adult pay-TV services with channels conceived by shrewd businessmen who perceived and capitalized on the strong demand for nudity on television, the sexually oriented programs that appear (or have appeared) on Manhattan's two cable systems seem to be the work of a small band of ragged video producers. It's debatable whether they're artists or pornographers, geniuses or madmen. But they all air their strange programs under the wide umbrella of the First Amendment and local cable regulations that guarantee virtually unrestricted public access to the cable channels, regardless of program content.

Of the estimated 300 public-access programs cablecast each year in Manhattan, perhaps fewer than six have any sexual content in them. The producers, who almost invariably star in these sex shows, are often scorned by the cable companies forced by the First Amendment to carry their programs. They are

rarely loved by the public. They are frequently hated. But they are always watched and talked about.

The adult pay-TV services and the sexually oriented public-access shows in New York have only one thing in common: They cater to the growing demand for stronger sexual content in television programming.

Despite the fears of those in the cable industry that their medium will be tainted by guilt by association with blue product, R-rated film distributors like Jason Starr are positive that the adult pay-TV market is booming. Although no organization has actually compiled specific figures, it's known that in the past year at least four companies, including one backed by an ex-governor, have announced plans to start national adult pay-TV networks, networks that would have the capacity to reach virtually all of the nearly 20 million U.S. homes wired for cable TV.

There seems to be little question that a sex service will sell. The cable industry is already filled with stunning success stories about the remarkable consumer acceptance of adult channels. What surprises some followers of the adult-film market is how tame most of the networks really are. For now, it seems to make good business sense to hover at the edge and not step over the line between "titillating" and "explicit." "We're selling spicy programming, not pornographic movies," says one cable programming executive. "There's no . . . no . . . well, you couldn't print it anyway."

In 1975, Jason Starr was a restless businessman with a background in the textile industry and an itch to get into pay-TV. The more he explored the field, the more he came to the realization that the only way to share in the pay-TV boom was through the distribution of R-rated sexploitation films to cable systems. A lawyer he knew gave him a list of businessmen whose companies trafficked in those types of movies. On the very top of the list was the name Allan Shackleton, a promotional genius who, among other things, produced and distributed films to drive-in theaters.

Shackleton was a bright and eccentric man with a varied past. After graduating from MIT, he began work for the U.S. Government on a top-secret missile program. From there he drifted into the film business and quickly grasped the mar-

keting concepts of the grade-B sexploitation industry. Soon he was dubbed the King of the Rerelease.

For peanuts, he would buy the rights to a film like *The Cheerleaders*, which for years might have been collecting dust in a film vault. He'd come up with a new, sexy ad campaign, rerelease the film, and make a small fortune.

In the early '70s, he bought the rights to an unknown South American film, and tacked on a new 10-minute ending that showed the vivid stabbing of a woman. The rumor was that Shackleton used his engineering background to simulate a knife slicing through the woman's belly as a crude mix of pig and horse entrails spilled out. Worldwide press reports claimed that an actual murder had taken place in the movie, which he had retitled *Snuff*. One thing was known: The gruesome publicity helped the box office.

By the mid-'70s, the drive-in market took a nose dive because of the high price of gasoline. Teen-agers couldn't even afford to buy cars any more, much less fill up the tank. They were staying home, watching TV. Shackleton, like Starr, immediately sensed the potential of cable TV. It could be an electronic drive-in. They made a deal in 1975 and formed Jason-Allan Releasing, a film distribution company that specialized in cable TV. Allan knew where to get the films. Jason would sell the cable systems the product. Their grubstake was a paltry \$500, but Starr quickly sold a 35-title contract that netted him \$1000 a month for a year. With that deal, he could at least keep his office open and lights on for a year.

For the next several years Starr struggled alone in his New York office while Shackleton went his own way in California. Starr answered phones, licked envelopes, carried film cans to laboratories and fervently prayed for the checks to keep rolling in.

Fortunately for him, they did.

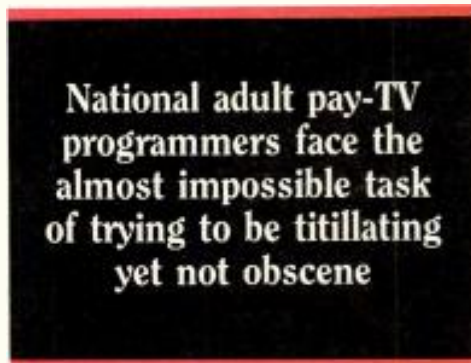
As his business increased, so did the growth of cable systems that showed adult movies. It wasn't a dramatic increase; just a slow, steady ascent. His customers were respectable cable companies from all over the country, including Warner Cable's revolutionary two-way system in Columbus, Ohio, Qube. At the end of 1978, Starr dissolved his association with Allan Shackleton and formed Starr Video. He was ready to go it alone in harvesting the growing riches

of the entertainment-thirsty cable-TV business.

Allan Shackleton would never have shared in that harvest anyway. On a fall day in 1979, while jogging in New York's Central Park, he clutched his chest and fell to the ground. The man who gave the world its only snuff movie and helped pioneer adult movies on cable TV was dead of a heart attack at the age of 43.

Jeanne O'Grady shakes her head and sighs. "I've lost count of the number of adult films I've screened the last year. I stopped counting after about 200." She knows one thing: Screening films is the worst part of her job as head of acquisition and programming for Escapade, a new adult pay-TV service that is being offered nationwide via satellite.

Sometimes she views as many as seven films a day, checking to make sure they don't violate her slim list of no-no's. No erections. No penetration. She also



has another more subjective criterion: The films can't be sleazy. "My philosophy is: Violence is abnormal. Sex is normal," says the middle-aged mother of one child.

Escapade was formed last December as part of an unusual pay-TV network called Rainbow Programming Services, which offered both a culture series and Escapade together for one monthly fee. Viewers got Escapade Tuesday through Saturday nights, and Bravo, the culture series, Sunday and Monday nights. The venture sputtered and at press time was being split into two separate pay-TV networks. Escapade will be carried by about 50 cable systems reaching roughly 90,000 American homes, making it the largest of the national adult pay-TV networks. But it is tiny compared with older, more conservative pay-TV networks like Home Box Office, which boasts more than six million paying subscribers. Bravo has fared far worse than Escapade. Only 10 cable systems offer the culture channel,

proving perhaps that viewers would rather pay for adult entertainment than high-brow programs featuring opera and ballet.

Private Screenings is another national pay-TV network delivered by satellite to just a few cable systems around the country. The network, which is on only on Friday and Saturday nights, offers a mix of mostly soft-core sex films and some violent movies for the monthly price of about \$5. The service has drawn some criticism for including promotional photographs showing nudity in its monthly brochure.

Then there's Atlantis Entertainment Network. If AEN can come through on its promises, it may become the dominant adult pay-TV network. Once up on a satellite, AEN will be able to compete with its two main rivals, Escapade and Private Screenings. "When we go coast to coast, we're going to blow the adult market wide open," predicts Bob Halgas, vice president of the network. Currently, AEN is hardly making a ripple while serving six tiny systems on the outskirts of Philadelphia. But the network has considerable clout behind it. Milton Shapp, former governor of Pennsylvania and a cable-TV pioneer, is one of the backers of the venture. The network intends to be on eight hours a day, seven days a week, offering spicy movies (no X-rated films), two sexually oriented made-for-pay-TV programs, plus two cable shows from New York, *Midnight Blue* and *The Ugly George Hour of Truth, Sex and Violence*.

Although all three fledgling networks have barely scratched the surface of the vast cable-TV market, most industry programmers agree that there is a very substantial consumer demand for adult channels. And film distribution companies like Starr Video and a handful of similar firms are meeting the market needs by supplying R-rated films to the pay-TV pipeline.

Some skeptics, however, maintain that a national adult pay-TV network will never get off the ground because of the geographically varying guidelines as to what's acceptable in sex-oriented television programming. National adult pay-TV programmers like Jeanne O'Grady face the almost impossible task of trying to be titillating yet not obscene to paying viewers from the Bible Belt to the sophisticated urban markets. What's acceptable on cable TV in New Jersey might

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PAY-CABLE

Americans take their television seriously—they soak up several hours of it a day, get their news from it, laugh about it, argue about it. . . but, most of all, want more of it. More viewing choices, that is: more uninterrupted and uncensored movies; more sports; more theatrical, comedy and musical specials; and preferably all of that without the ever-present blare of commercial interruptions—in short, more of what pay-television has to offer. Of the 24 percent of American households currently wired for cable TV, nearly half of them

Network	Headquarters	Month/Year Began Operation	Month/Year Began Satellite Distribution
Bravo	1355 South Colorado Boulevard Suite 100 Denver, Colo. 80222	December 1980	December 1980
Cinemax	Time-Life Building Rockefeller Center New York, N.Y. 10020	August 1980	August 1980
Escapade	1355 South Colorado Boulevard Suite 100 Denver, Colo. 80222	December 1980	December 1980
GalaVision	250 Park Avenue Suite 700 New York, N.Y. 10017	October 1979	October 1979
Home Box Office	Time-Life Building Rockefeller Center New York, N.Y. 10020	November 1972	September 1975
Home Theater Network	465 Congress Street Portland, Maine 04101	May 1978	September 1978
Private Screenings	250 West 57th Street Suite 2105 New York, N.Y. 10019	May 1980	December 1980
Showtime	1211 Avenue of the Americas New York, N.Y. 10036	July 1976	March 1978
Spotlight	2951 28th Street Suite 2000 Santa Monica, Cal. 90405	May 1981	May 1981
The Movie Channel	1211 Avenue of the Americas New York, N.Y. 10036	January 1980	January 1980

What You Get for Your Money



are now shelling out an extra \$9 to \$11 each month, on top of their basic cable fee, to enjoy pay programming.

In the April 1981 PANORAMA, we listed the basic cable networks, which come to you free if you are plugged into your local cable system. If you want to go a step further and cash in on the boom in pay-cable services, here's a look at what's available. The satellite-delivered services listed below are all available nationally to cable systems (regional pay services like Philadelphia's Prism have not been included). None show X-

rated films. Although the prices vary—the exact cost to the subscriber is set by each individual cable system—most can be had for under \$10 each month.

Of course, just because the service exists doesn't mean you can get it—most cable systems offer only a few of the pay services. Showtime president Mike Weinblatt predicted recently that within five years there may be as many as 50 pay-TV services. But why wait to sample what's there already? The explosion in pay-cable programming is well under way. ■

Number of Affiliates	Number of Households	Hours per Day/ Days per Week	Description of Programming
10	30,000	Eight hours/ seven days	Performing arts (dance, opera, symphony); classic and foreign films. Currently, the only pay-cable culture channel.
More than 200	Not available	24 hours/ seven days	At least 25 new movies per month. Films aimed at women shown from 10 A.M. to 3 P.M.; from 3 P.M. to 8 P.M. aimed at youth and families; after 8 P.M. aimed at families and adults. No R-rated films before 8 P.M.
50	90,000	10 hours/ seven days	R-rated adult movies.
65	60,000	Eight hours, weekdays; 13 hours, weekends	All programming is entirely in Spanish; includes first-run Spanish-language movies and <i>novelas</i> (soap operas), sports and specials.
More than 2500	More than six million	10 hours, weekdays; 14 hours, weekends	Movies, documentaries, musical and variety specials, including comedy and nightclub acts and theatrical productions; regular sports series include exclusive coverage of major boxing matches.
160	140,000	6.5 hours/ seven days	Family-oriented programming. G- and PG-rated movies, including Disney films on a regular basis. Four to six new films per month. Cost is roughly half of other pay-cable services.
Five	65,000	12 A.M. to 3 A.M. (ET)/ Friday and Saturday	R-rated adult movies.
950	More than 1.6 million	12 hours, weekdays; 24 hours, weekends	Mainly movies. Regular series include a comedy show, a monthly magazine, and taped concerts and nightclub acts on <i>Hot Ticket</i> . <i>Broadway on Showtime</i> features taped Broadway hits.
51	250,000	10 hours, weekdays; 12 hours, weekends	Movies and entertainment specials. Service available only to households hooked up to Times Mirror Cable Television systems.
800	150,000	24 hours/ seven days	Movies only. Formerly called Warner Star Channel.

PURGES, FEUDS, SEX SCANDALS, EXTORTION, DEFECTION, DISGRACE AND DEATH

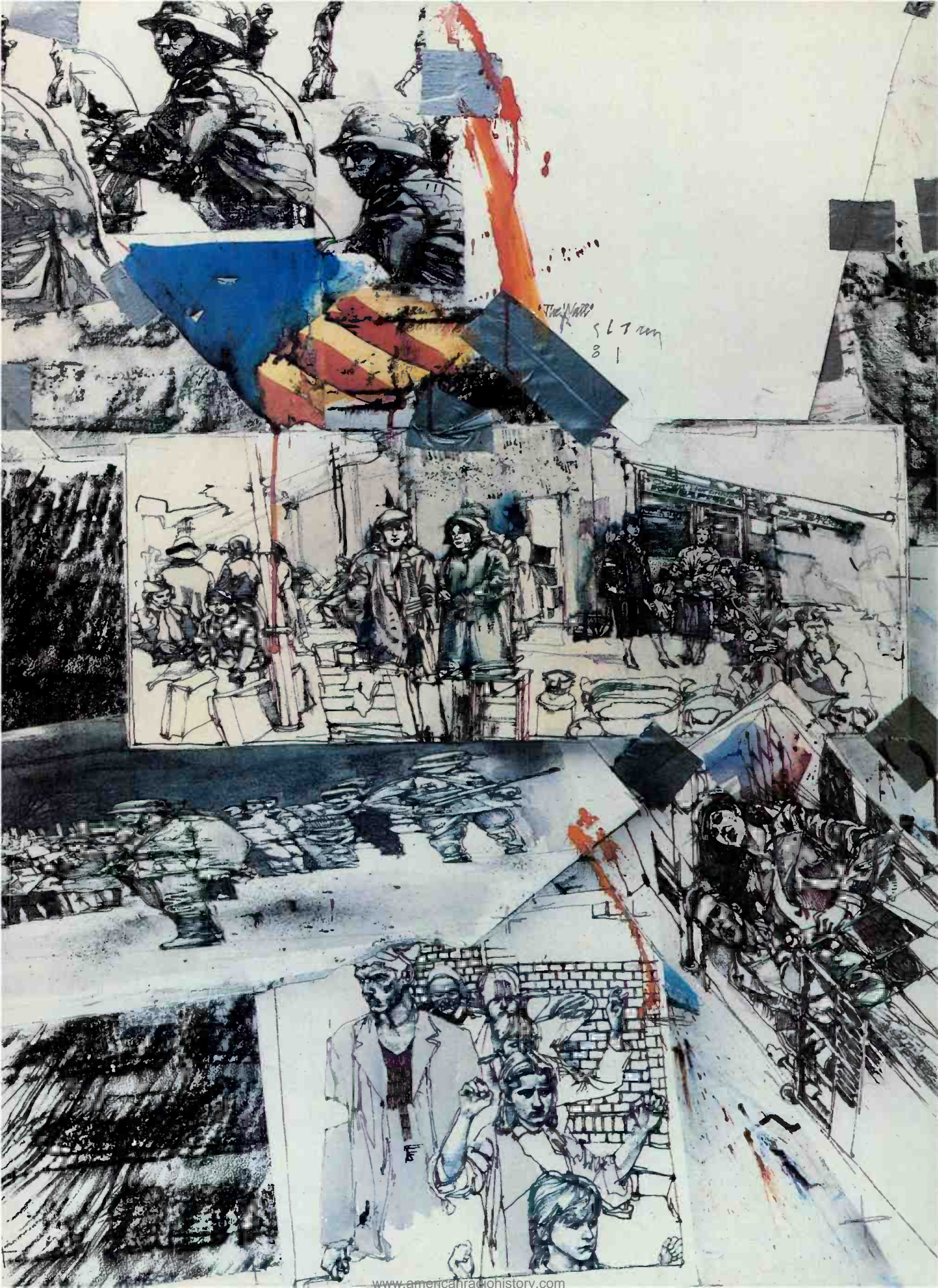
Filming "The Wall" in Poland turned into one of the most bizarre production stories ever

By **DOUG HILL**

In the fall of 1979, David Susskind and his crew at Time-Life Films in New York found themselves having to explain to the board of directors of Time Inc. how a producer actually goes about the business of making a movie. To the board, Time-Life Films—and Susskind in particular—had always seemed to operate uncomfortably close to the edge of witchcraft, juggling millions of the company's dollars in hocus-pocus show-biz schemes. So Susskind prepared a humorous flow chart, complete with cartoons, to illustrate just how long, complicated and delicate the gestation period of the typical "creative product" can be. As his example, the filmmaker chose what had been one of the more troublesome projects in the inventory, *The Wall*, an adaptation for CBS-TV of John Hersey's epic World War II tale of Jewish resistance in the Warsaw ghetto.

The chart wound its way through Susskind's purchase of the TV rights in 1977, the writing of a four-hour script, the pitches to the networks, the rejections, the eventual option from CBS, executive turnover at CBS, the resubmission, the second go-ahead, the recision of the second go-ahead, the submission of a three-hour script and then the final go-ahead. The chart ended where production would begin. That was fortunate, because although nobody at Time-Life could have dreamed it then, they were about to embark on what perhaps would become the most





The War
567 mm
81

difficult production in television history, an odyssey Kafkaesque in the truest sense of the word.

Before it was finished, *The Wall* would endure purges—both Communist and capitalist—feuds, sex scandals, extortion, defections, betrayal, disgrace and death. Not to mention the collapse of a government and the disintegration of Time-Life Films itself. “It was an experience second only to the making of *Apocalypse Now*,” says one who went through it, director Bob Markowitz. “There wasn’t anyone involved with this picture whose life wasn’t changed.”

The Wall did manage to survive the disasters; in what shape it survived won’t be known until some time next fall, when CBS plans to have the pieces together enough for broadcasting. A final flow chart of *The Wall*’s journey will never be made; but if it were, it might go as follows.

PREPRODUCTION: SEPTEMBER 1979-MAY 1980

The producers knew that to do justice to their story—how the Jews were sealed in the ghetto, their heroic decision to fight, their brief triumph over and ultimate annihilation by the Nazis—*The Wall* would have to be shot on location in eastern Europe. Despite a healthy license fee of \$3 million from CBS, that meant finding a co-production partner to split the costs and eventual profits. Time-Life’s man in Paris, Tom Johnston, already had scouted out Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and West Germany before he met Wojciech Kornacki of Poland.

Kornacki is described by those who knew him as the type of man who steps out of shadows, a high-living charmer whose smile seemed sometimes friendly, sometimes ominous. Chris Berardo, an American woman Kornacki met socially in London and hired as his associate, says Kornacki was filled with grandiose schemes that kept getting somehow delayed. “There are problems . . .” he would say. The chairman of the Polish Government’s television committee, Maciej Szczepanski, had set Kornacki up in London to find just the sort of co-production deals Time-Life was after. The Poles’ motivation was simple: Their economy was falling apart, and their currency along with it.

Of necessity, it had become the policy of Polish Communist Party leader Edward Gierek to trade outside the Com-

munist bloc as much as possible, as a means of luring Western money into Poland. A close friend of Gierek’s, who supported his mentor’s policies, the chairman needed cash to finance his own productions. The idea of a Polish production appearing on an American TV network also appealed to the chairman.

Thus Kornacki was anxious to close the deal, and he offered substantially more than the competing countries to do so. Essentially, Poland agreed to provide the “below-the-line” costs of the production: extras, who numbered in the thousands; sets, including more than half a mile of the 10-foot-high brick wall and two city blocks that would be burned in the film’s climactic scenes; tanks, guns and other munitions from the period; costumes, including Nazi uniforms; technical crews, transportation, hotel accommodations and food. Time-Life



would take care of the “above-the-line” costs: leading cast members, director, producer, principal technicians, script and postproduction. If it seemed Poland put up a lot, it did—but mostly in labor and people, two commodities in relatively plentiful supply there. In return, the Poles stood to gain rights to distribute *The Wall* as a theatrical film in most of the world and, more important, as much as \$700,000 in hard U.S. cash from Time-Life.

Kornacki, Johnston and Bruce Paisner, president of Time-Life Films, shook hands on the deal in Paris in October, but it would take another four months of haggling in Paris, London, Warsaw and New York before a contract was finally signed. Two fundamental obstacles emerged that would plague *The Wall* throughout its production: Neither partner trusted or understood the other,

and the Poles had their own idea of history when it came to portraying their role in the Holocaust.

Historians agree with *The Wall*’s screenwriter, Millard Lampell, that widespread anti-Semitism in Poland led few Poles to actively resist the Nazis’ persecution of the Jews, and made some actively assist it. Since involvement with a film that expressed that point of view could have serious repercussions at home, the Poles fought, from the moment of the first handshake, for deletions from the script of any less-than-valiant Polish behavior. “Any time they gave in to us, they put themselves at risk,” says director Markowitz. “They could be accused of collaborating with us to distort history.”

At one point, Tom Johnston and Mike Moder, Time-Life’s executive production manager, were on their way to Warsaw for a vodka toast with the chairman himself when word came that the deal was off: A hard-line faction within the television committee had compiled a list of “anti-Polish” references in the script, with the express purpose of getting the project killed. According to Chris Berardo, the chairman relented only on grounds that the script be revised. Johnston signed a preliminary agreement containing that provision the following day; by the time the final contract was drafted, Time-Life had given the Poles “consultation” rights on the entire story. What that meant in practice, says Bob Markowitz, was that “everybody had his own version of the truth, and everything had to be negotiated.”

There was, for example, the great carousel debate. As part of their psychological warfare against the Jews, the Nazis built a children’s carousel directly outside the ghetto wall. The Poles, fearing viewers would think *they* had built it, at first denied the carousel ever existed. After being shown irrefutable proof that it had, they then refused to concede that Polish children might have *ridden* it. After hours of screaming negotiations, it was agreed that only Nazi soldiers would be shown riding the carousel.

The Poles assigned as their chief arbiter of truth the unlikely figure of Jerzy Antczak, who along with Kornacki would become the Americans’ chief link with the Polish Government. A filmmaker himself, Antczak had gotten into some political hot water at home and had

ended up lying low for a while at the Polish Embassy in Washington. A man in his 50s, Antczak would swing from wild enthusiasm to deep despair with no stops in between, a transition that usually occurred at an hysterical pace. And for good reason, as Chris Berardo explains. "There is no doubt that Antczak was set up, in terms of his responsibility for the script," she says. "He *begged* Kornacki to read it, but Kornacki always refused, saying, 'Hey, you're the artist, I'm not.' And the chairman kept claiming *he* hadn't seen it either. If Antczak wanted to make films in Poland again, he had to do what they asked him to do, and what they asked him to do was to take the big risk." Antczak knew that the hard-liners in Warsaw continued to watch *The Wall* very closely, which may be why many of his demands were preceded by the phrase, "To you it is only a movie. . . ."

Markowitz says that late in the script negotiations and in production, Antczak began making what he calls "heroic" decisions not to resist the Americans on every point disputed by his Government, decisions that would eventually put his life in danger. Nonetheless, Markowitz and others involved concede that *The Wall's* history was to some extent compromised. "There was certainly more anti-Semitism [on the part of the Poles] than I was able to convey," Markowitz says. "If we were going to have 100-percent accuracy, the film would never have been made."

The Americans would add a twist of their own to the scenario before the final contract was signed. In January, Kornacki and his lawyer were in London hammering out the last details with a lawyer representing Time-Life, who consulted by phone with Time-Life president Paisner in New York. One morning she arrived at the bargaining table with a sheepish grin on her face. "Gentlemen, I'm in a slightly embarrassing situation," she said. "My client [Paisner] has been replaced."

The deal would be consummated a month later under Paisner's successor, but Paisner would not be the last Time-Life executive to depart before *The Wall* was through. Nor would that be the last time Chris Berardo would regret the

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The Apt family, victims of the Nazis, are played by: top, Griffin Dunne and Lisa Eichhorn; bottom, from left, Rosanna Arquette, Eli Wallach and Laurent Aidenbaum.



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Where do today's college students rush
when they're fed up with reality?

To the Sets— Not the Streets

By JOHNNY GREENE

It is early in the afternoon in a small, dark bar in Tuscaloosa, Ala. The bar is not packed elbow to elbow with the stone-faced, deadly serious drinkers I have seen crowd into it at night. Only 10 afternoon regulars are on hand, calmly draining plastic glasses of inexpensive draft beer and mumbling wacky wise-

cracks about the bar. They refer to their watering hole as the "Alsace-Lorraine," because of the number of times it has changed ownership. Some of these regulars say they can recite as many as four different owners. But they are obviously the older, wiser drinkers, the ones who are now juniors and seniors at the nearby



University of Alabama. The freshmen and sophomores present never dare to compete with their elders when the begats of the bar are chanted. They appear content to suck down their beers and stare as if in hypnotic oblivion directly into the bar's television set.

This group of 10 University students, along with several others who frequently join them, gathers in the Alsace-Lorraine just about every weekday afternoon. At first glance, they appear to be the sad victims of early, undergraduate alcoholism, drawn to the bar by the attraction of cheap pitchers of beer. But this is not the case. Like millions of Americans, these students share a far graver addiction. They meet here each day to get their fix of *General Hospital*, a soap opera.

I sit at the bar beside two students. The kids drain their plastic glasses of beer and refill them from a pitcher without once moving their eyes from the television set. It is an admirable exhibition of dexterity, and I am impressed. But I would like a beer myself. The bartender, however, has his back to me, his arms folded across his chest. He is also absorbed by the soap opera, and any customer who is not equally caught up in the daily traumas of Luke and Laura can apparently wait in Siberia until a commercial break.

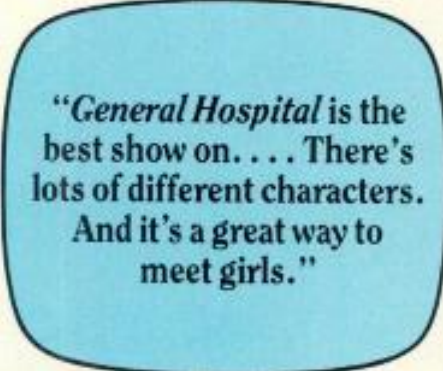
"Oh, Laura. Oh, poor Laura," says one of the women who is seated at a table near the bar. She quickly lifts her plastic glass, drains and refills it, and sadly shakes her head, as if in great distress.

Momentarily, I feel rather like a stranger who might have wandered into a private, family mourning room at a mortuary. The faces of these students are so solemn it is as if all of the light of youth had suddenly and inexplicably been snatched from them. In fact, the seriousness with which they watch a soap opera leaves me in a rather dark place myself. When I had been an Alabama student in the late '60s and early '70s, the only afternoon television we had the time to watch was the news, and it had been grim enough. Those daily reports from the war in Vietnam had left us in comparable states of distress, but we did not drain plastic glasses of beer in response. We hit the streets.

So now as a commercial breaks the funereal melancholy of this student bar, I order a beer and settle back to wait for a

clue that will unravel what is to me a new, mysterious student concentration on something as ordinary as an afternoon soap opera. I know from previous return trips home to Tuscaloosa and the University that student values and priorities can change radically in only a few years. Our idealism had quickly been replaced with a mid-'70s, "Me-Generation" pragmatism. I wonder where the current generation has taken that pragmatism. On my earlier visits, the students had appeared too involved in both their studies and the sports-conscious, resort nature of University of Alabama living to devote much time to television. Until today, I had seen no real evidence that television has become such an important extension of the lives of the students.

The two guys on my left are restored to life now by the commercial break, and one of them orders another pitcher of



"General Hospital is the best show on. . . . There's lots of different characters. And it's a great way to meet girls."

beer. "Wasn't that just terrible what happened?" one of the guys says.

"Awful," his friend says. "I couldn't believe it."

Naturally, I assume they are discussing the soap opera, and so I ask them if I have somehow not caught on to a sequence of monumental dread. The two of them look at me as if I have just crawled down from the side of a wall.

"We were talking about the big drug bust down in Miami," one of them says.

"Wasn't that just disgusting?" says his friend. "Man, another hit like that could dry us all out for a while."

Although I fail to grasp the immediate connection between the drug bust and *General Hospital*, I don't have time to inquire. The commercial break has ended and the boys are again entranced, hypnotized. I wonder if everyone in the bar gets stoned before watching *General Hospital*, and I decide to get to the bottom of all of this. But at the next commercial break, the boy beside me

turns completely around and faces one of the women at a nearby table.

"Where's Josephine today?" he asks.

"She's not completely with us, yet," the woman says. "She forgot to change her schedule, so now she has a Tuesday/Thursday class from two to three."

"How dumb can you get?" the boy says, as if disgusted. "I didn't know Josephine was that out of it." He shakes his head.

"Do you guys really arrange your class schedules so you can watch a soap opera?" I ask, and again I receive the alien-in-our-midst glances.

"Arrange our schedules?" the guy says, sounding surprised. "Josephine's the only person I know who could forget to work this in. I've dropped classes before so I wouldn't miss *General Hospital*."

While I wonder momentarily about this strange woman named Josephine, I instead ask the guy why he drops classes for a soap opera.

"It's the best show on," he says, flatly, as if answering an irksome pop quiz. "It's an hour long. There's lots of different characters. And it's a great way to meet girls."

There's no way I can argue with that explanation, so now I direct my concentration to the soap, and it is as if I am also hypnotized, entranced. Except I am not really following what's on the screen. I'm feeling like one of those stock, catatonic soap-opera characters who is constantly getting lost in the past while the other characters proceed to make out like bandits. What I am remembering, in fact, is a rather large wall that is covered from floor to ceiling with aluminum foil, and the first, direct experiences I had with college students a few years after my own graduation from Alabama.

The aluminum-foil wall is inside my own apartment in Tuscaloosa. It is the spring of 1975, and I have returned home to teach as a visiting instructor of journalism at the University. I have left all of my belongings in New York City and rented this apartment in the student ghetto adjacent to the campus. A number of my friends, my contemporaries from what we refer to almost generically as the "Revolution"—the convulsive years of the antiwar movement and the Southern civil-rights movement—are still in Tuscaloosa.

I have spent almost four years in New York at Columbia University's graduate

writing and journalism schools, and starting my career as a professional writer. My friends have been building their careers in Tuscaloosa as attorneys, university instructors, and field workers for various local and national social-service organizations. Now that I have returned, we are filling my apartment almost nightly with what appear to be hundreds of cans of beer and the voices of the long-ago years of our protest, our revolt against a war in Asia and the brutality of racial injustice at home.

I have not yet felt the need to cover my walls with foil, but I do sense that something is missing at these nightly gatherings. I cannot identify it at first, but I can tell something is wrong when I gradually feel I am either running a beer joint or an unstructured group-therapy session for unreconstructed hippies. While I am hearing again the voices of my youth, I am actually finding myself a hostage, inside my own apartment, to constant references to the past.

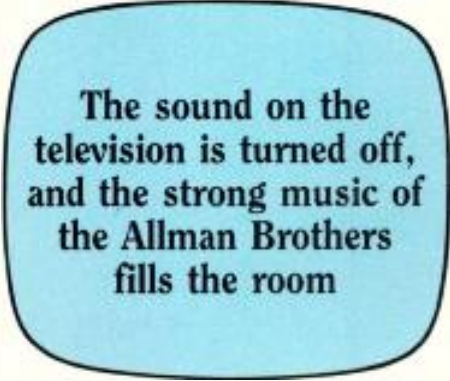
In reaction, I cover the walls of my apartment with aluminum foil, as if this rippling sheen of reflections might somehow slow down or stop the juggernaut of memories. I sit on the floor and listen to my friends recall the drama and urgency of our youth, and I see in the ripples of the foil only more reflections of those years. It is as if for some crazed, oblique reason we did not really want the antiwar movement or the civil-rights movement to end. Briefly I feel totally lost, someone from an entire generation of dreamers that now exists only in echoes, distorted reflections. I do not realize I am just a case study of someone who is taking himself too seriously. But I learn this soon enough from the students who live in the house next door to mine.

On one of those odd, warm Alabama February days, I sit on my front porch and read a magazine. The four boys who live next door, all students at the University, are out in the street playing Frisbee, dodging traffic. They yell for me to join them, which I do. Although we frequent the same local grocery store, we have never spoken before. Now, after we say hello, they immediately take away my name. To them, I am "J.G." I like their easy familiarity, and the fact that to them I am just someone with initials for a name, and no particular past. They are the most unconcerned people I have ever encountered in my life, guys to whom

the sum total of the universe is a perfectly thrown Frisbee, or a behind-the-back, one-finger catch of the spinning disc. I play Frisbee and dodge traffic with them until we have all worked up a healthy sweat and they ask if I'd like to smoke a joint at their house. I accept and, without realizing it at the moment, I am not only about to close a door to the reverberating memories of my own youth, but to unlock as well the secrets buried in the aluminum foil in my apartment.

Two of the boys effortlessly roll joints while the other two turn immediately to the business of the stereo system and the television.

Suspended from the ceiling, a turntable hangs by fish wire in midair. On the floor is a 23-inch, color-television set. One of the boys places a record on the turntable, another switches on the television. I wonder how these two competing forces will balance, but the answer is



The sound on the television is turned off, and the strong music of the Allman Brothers fills the room

not long in coming. The sound on the television is turned off, and as we watch characters dart about in a late-afternoon rerun of a '60s situation comedy, the strong music of The Allman Brothers Band fills the room. I cannot read the lips of the characters on the screen, but the boys are cracking up over the show. I am about to ask the guys if they are experts at lip reading, when one of them surprises me with a question.

"J.G., what did you do with all those rolls of aluminum foil I saw you buying at the store?" he asks.

"I put it on my walls."

"You did what?" he says, incredulously. "I've got to see this."

The other guys now ask to see the walls, the foil, and so we cross our front lawns to my apartment. It is late afternoon, almost twilight, and when I hit the light switches, the foil responds, picking up our reflections. It rather resembles the reflections cast by the curved mirrors in carnival fun houses. The boys howl in

laughter. They act as if they have never before seen aluminum foil stretched from floor to ceiling on the walls of an apartment.

"What is this?" one of them asks, and he runs his hand across the foil, rippling our images.

"It's my television," I say, and wrinkle a long panel of foil. "See, this is a documentary about the civil-rights movement. Right here, you can see the people lined up waiting to cross the bridge for the Selma-to-Montgomery march. And over here," I say, and wrinkle another panel, "if you look closely enough, you can see the riots at the Chicago Democratic Convention."

The boys step back and studiously examine the walls. Then, as if synchronized, each in turn doubles over in belly laughter. While I feel as if the great moments of my youth are being ridiculed, I also see the wonderful vision that students have when faced with transparent absurdity.

"That's not the Selma march, J.G.," one of the boys says emphatically, and he points to a wrinkled panel of foil. "That's Archie Bunker being a bigot. And over here are the Moody Blues. Look, you can see the audiences."

"Yeah, J.G.," another says, "that's not Chicago any more than I'm an ice cream cone. That's a Johnny Carson interview. You got to look for the real stuff, man. Selma's nowhere on this map."

Initially, as I recoil from their irreverence, I see they are undeniably accurate. Archie Bunker, the Moody Blues and Johnny Carson are all right there in the foil, waiting to be seen. I have not suspended images in the foil; I have trapped memories there, memories that do not relate to the pragmatic world in which these students live. And I realize, finally, in the laughter and antics of the kids that I am hearing something that has not been heard in this apartment since I took it over and bought the foil. The stridency and urgency of our years of protest have been replaced by the poetic comedy of their youth.

Now, years later, inside a small, dark Tuscaloosa bar, the soap opera, *General Hospital*, is again interrupted by a commercial break, and the wall of aluminum foil evaporates from my memory as rapidly as it appeared. While the bartender responds to the heavy demand for a fast refill of pitchers of beer, the guy on my left mutters another disparaging com-

continued on page 68

Learning the

At station WDFW, elementary-school students run the whole show—and find out quickly about everything from news judgment to technical goof-ups

By PETER ANDREWS

The production meeting for the upcoming news telecast at station WDFW has been going on for 15 minutes, and Tracey Schwartz, conducting the meeting, is clearly the kind of producer who likes to run a tight ship. A reporter and camera crew for a remote scheduled that afternoon are quickly briefed. The shooting on the last assignment was a little sloppy, and the crew is admonished to keep the pictures tight. The footage of yesterday's softball game has some good stuff, but it will have to be boiled down to a two-minute segment. The sports reporter grimaces at the drastic cutting, but agrees it has to be done. Tracey checks the program schedule and reviews assignments with all personnel, from the announcer to the lighting technicians, and then swings into a discussion of possible stories for a spring season wrap-up planned for the following week.

It is the sort of production meeting that goes on in television stations all over the country every day of the week. The only surprising thing about this session is that Tracey is a slim, attractive 12-year-old girl, and the staff, all students at the DuFief Elementary School in Gaithersburg, Md., are boys and girls ranging in age from 8 to 12. Together they put on two 15-minute news shows a week during the school year for closed-circuit broadcast to the classrooms of the school. The shows report on the school lunch menu, filmed class projects, library news, weather and sports. And there's even complicated coverage of events and personalities throughout the local area and nearby Washington, D.C.



Above, members of the WDFW staff, from left: Lynn McDonald, cameraperson; Michelle Marks, on-air reporter; Tracey Schwartz, producer.

WDFW started in February 1975, run by four sixth-grade students and a man from the County Board of Education who taught them how to work a portapak camera. Their first program consisted of showing a class reciting the Pledge of Allegiance, and the school principal, George Goldsmith, explaining the school seal. Since then it has developed into a school activity; at times there have been as many as 50 students on the staff and another 50 in training.

"This program is definitely not a frill," explains Mr. Goldsmith. "Most of our parents are technically oriented professional people who assume their children are learning good reading and motor skills. They are more worried about computer illiteracy in a technological age. Television is a part of the modern world, and we have a responsibility to deal with it intelligently."

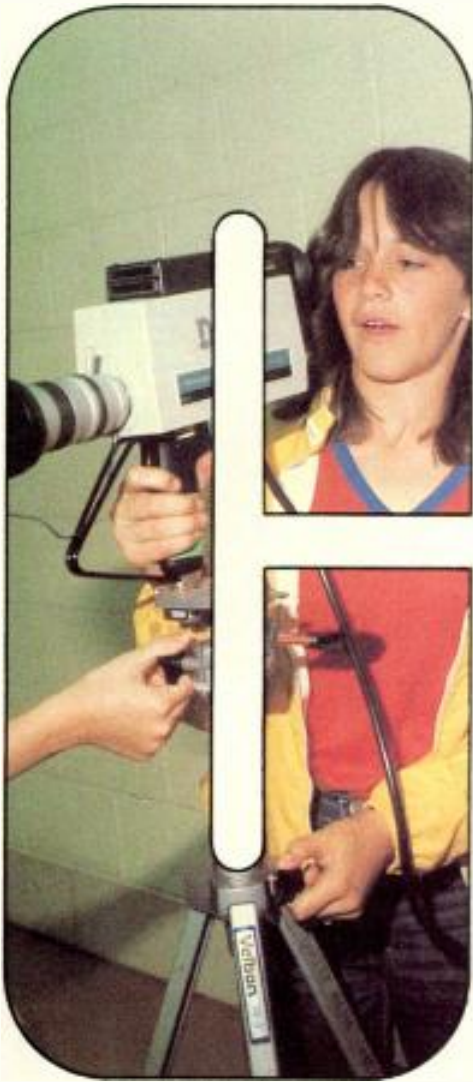
Each semester, interested third- and fourth-graders sign up to become train-

ees and are taught all the jobs involved in the station's operation. Among staff members, the tasks are rotated: This week's producer may be next week's announcer and a cameraperson the week after that.

Television may not yet have reduced the entire world to Marshall McLuhan's global village, but it has helped create a community out of DuFief Elementary. Principal Goldsmith, who has found the station an invaluable tool for communicating with the students, has to request time on the station when he wants to speak. Like the President, he usually gets the time, but he admits that there are few things a WDFW staffer enjoys more than being able to draw a finger across his or her throat to indicate to the principal he is running overtime and has to wrap it up.

If WDFW is a teaching tool to the school, it is a learning opportunity that the staffers approach with a relish few of their professional counterparts can

'S of Broadcasting



Even at such a young age, the children fall into typical "TV types." Some of the youngsters are shy about appearing on television in costume, but there is one camera-hound who simply will not leave stage center.

Several in the camera crew display the easy sophistication endemic to the breed.

"I only got half of Jennifer in that shot," says one crew member.

"Half of Jennifer is plenty," the other replies.

The class gets a taste of the inevitable intrusion that occurs when a television crew arrives on the scene. There is some grumbling over the fact that the cake for the after-class celebration cannot be cut until the cameras get their pictures. But there is also some refreshing candor. Most of the students say they dressed up as characters they like in stories or want to grow up to be like, but one girl admits she came as Calamity Jane because her mother had the costume.

After the remote taping, and between classes, Tracey goes over the schedule for the next day's telecast. (Since this was written, Tracey has left DuFief and, hence, WDUF. She was kicked upstairs—to seventh grade and junior high school.) "It should be a good show," she says. "We have a nice balance. There's a serious piece on the Shakespeare production we're doing of *Twelfth Night*, and a light piece on the faculty-student softball game." The academics will be taken care of by a class report on dangerous animals, and 11-year-old Michelle Marks, who is cute enough to be in the movie, will be giving a spirited review of *The Empire Strikes Back*. As is true of television everywhere, there is not enough time to do everything that has to be done. "You can't get out of class around here," Tracey notes wistfully. "so I'll have to come in early in the morning and pull it all together then. It will be all right, though," she says with the air of someone who is used to responsibility. "I am the producer. I know everything."

On the morning of the show itself,

there is the chaos all professionals are familiar with. At 8:40, 20 minutes before air time, sports reporter Kevin Howard is still writing his copy; some of the tech crew, who should be checking on more serious matters, are sneaking a look at Bullwinkle on the monitor; and the softball-game tape is missing. Two children who will be giving class reports are concerned about their work.

"You think yours is boring, wait till you hear mine."

Her friend looks briefly at the paper. "You know, you're right."

In the control room, Tracey stays on top of the frenzied situation with considerable aplomb. "I like working right on the minute," she says. "It's exciting."

Minutes before show time, the softball tape is discovered and Tracey cues anchorwoman Kim Maher, an enormously self-possessed 11-year-old with a silky-smooth delivery, and manages to keep everything running on schedule. While cameras are switching, Kim adlibs an extended introduction to the dangerous-animal segment. The piece itself is an interesting audio-visual presentation delivered by a serious young boy who offers the comforting information that although a tarantula is dangerous, "He will only jump on you if you are a cricket or something like that."

Following the animal segment is the rehearsal scene from *Twelfth Night*, which Kim introduces by noting that Olivia is pining over the death of her brother. Tracey, who is playing Olivia, looks up, surprised. "Say, I didn't know that," she says, and then watches intently as she sees herself emoting.

In the control room, Tracey finds herself faced with a problem worthy of an Orson Welles. While Tracey Schwartz, actress, is performing, Tracey Schwartz, producer, looks up nervously and sees the program is behind time. With only a second's hesitation, she cuts into her own speech and moves on to the weather report. The show is back on schedule.

Tracey is a born producer. ■

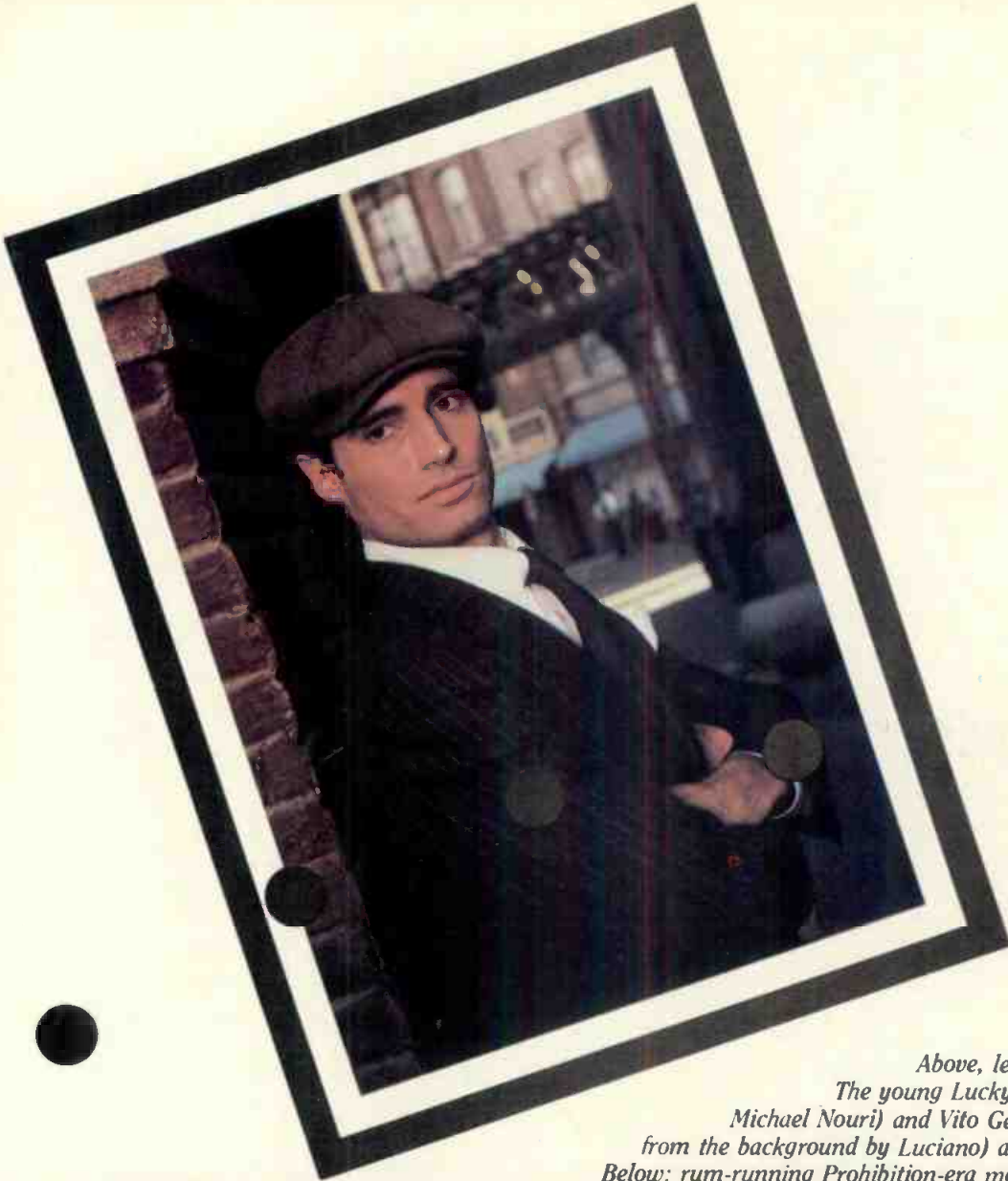
match. At the production meeting, everyone agrees they want to try a variation of *Candid Camera* in the school classrooms.

"Let's get pictures of teachers yelling at kids," suggests one staff member.

"OK," says another, "but if you get Mrs. Mitchell she will personally decapitate you."

Mrs. Mitchell, a tough-minded lady who is currently lashing the drama club through a production of *Twelfth Night*, is on record as calling television "that silly little box." While everyone wants to go ahead with *Candid Camera* some time in the future, it is prudently agreed to give Mrs. Mitchell a wide berth.

The remote for that afternoon is coverage of a fourth-grade "show-and-tell" session, in which children dress up as their favorite characters in various heroic folk tales. The visuals are good, with just the right kind of human interest that Tracey wants for a strong feature story.



*Above, left and right:
The young Lucky Luciano (played by
Michael Nouri) and Vito Genovese (Robert Davi, watched
from the background by Luciano) are two Gangster Chronicles mainstays.
Below: rum-running Prohibition-era mobsters protect a shipment of illegal hooch.*





Shooting Holes in “The Gangster Chronicles”

Why shows like this NBC series can't match
the power and fascination of “The Godfather”

By **GEORGE V. HIGGINS**

This past season, NBC introduced to its weekly schedule The Gangster Chronicles. The one-hour program follows the exploits of mobsters “Lucky” Luciano, “Bugsy” Siegel and a reality-based fictional character named (to avoid lawsuits) Michael Lasker during their heyday earlier this century.

But has the show chronicled these gangsters factually, to say nothing of entertainingly? PANORAMA put this question to George V. Higgins, Boston attorney and best-selling author of crime novels, including The Friends of Eddie Coyle, Cogan’s Trade, Kennedy for the Defense and his latest, The Rat on Fire (Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.)—books that richly detail the lives and deaths of today’s underworld denizens, who carry on in the checkered tradition of Luciano, Siegel and Lasker, the protagonists of The Gangster Chronicles.

The tape recorders were the old Grundigs. They were arrayed on long, scarred wooden tables in a small office that was double-locked in a main headquarters



that was triple-locked around it. There were no closed-circuit TV cameras aimed at the elevators and the stairs outside, because the investigations were conducted before such additional gadgetry was available. There were two sets of keys to the small office, one kept by the man on days, who saw to the needs of the audio equipment, the other kept by his supervisor. Nobody was admitted to that room except by either the case investigator or the supervisor, after first satisfying the supervisor that one was a trustworthy sort with actual need to know what was being gathered on those Grundigs.

The Grundigs were started and stopped by IAT (Impulse Actuated Tape) devices. Those devices worked thusly: when the tapped phone received an incoming call, the Grundigs commenced silently turning; the same thing happened when the tapped phone was used for an outgoing call. The equipment was spliced into the tapped phones on lines leased from the telephone company, after a court of competent jurisdiction had found probable cause to believe that the phones were being used as a means to conduct commerce forbidden by law. Phones 20 and 30 miles away could be tapped without fuss, bother or damaging the crease in one's trousers. Best of all, there was virtually no chance whatsoever that the people using the tapped phones would discover until far too late that they had shared a great many of their confidences with several people who had a consuming ambition to put them in jail, and could make good use of their chats to do it.

Out of all of this was developed what may be called the "Me 'n' Tony" stories. There was nobody named Tony targeted in the investigation, but he apparently contributed a great deal to the leisure-time activities of those who were suspected. For about three weeks, virtually all of the calls made on the tapped phone consisted of reports by the speakers on their adventures with Tony.

At first, Tony's exploits were of absolutely no official interest. Tony had not attracted the attention of the investigators. His prowess at arranging entertainment for bachelor parties, while breathtaking, was not the kind of enterprise that had attracted the disapproval of the cops. His exploits in assuring companionship for businessmen, forced by the demands of trade to leave their loved



ones at home and visit Las Vegas, were impressive, but not particularly imaginative. His weakness for a sure thing at the track was not unique, nor was the sum of money that he lost in indulging it.

The only substantial means of income at his disposal came from a family business, which was managed successfully by others who paid him a good income to stay the hell away from it. Good enough income, in fact, to leave him days and nights on end to spend in the company of the gentlemen who had been selected for pursuit, because there was probable cause to believe that they were engaged in an organized criminal enterprise.

As time went on, the prevalence of Tony stories and his apparent ubiquity among gangsters made the cops uneasy. It inspired the suspicion that there was no Tony. The gentlemen, it was surmised, had invented Tony and the adventures in order to use him as a cipher. The theory ran that when one of Tony's excursions was reported in the past tense, it was a coded message explaining what the listener was to do next.

The investigation was therefore expanded to check out Tony. The investigation established that Tony did exist, and was precisely the feckless rogue that he had been described as being. Tony *had* impregnated a young lady who *had* accepted his representations that he could insure her stardom in Hollywood. The young lady *had* indeed reported her condition and its cause to Tony's wife. Tony's wife *had* brought this news to the more senior members of his family. Tony *had* wrecked a Thunderbird after a wild night on the Cape. And so on.

Everything on those Grundigs, in other words, was true. The trouble was that none of it was about organized crime, or at least about the organized crime that interested the investigators. Plainly, what "me 'n' Tony" did was more entertaining to the people who used the phone than any hard-nosed business that they might have had in common. However much conversation that business required, it was obviously being conducted elsewhere, either with other phones or face to face. The conclusion was that while Tony's inability to stay out of



Above, left: Spiffed up for an underworld parley are, from left: Tommy Lucchese (played by Jon Polito), Tommy Gagliano (Bob Giovanni), Mangano (Charlie Guardino), Albert Anastasia (John Aprea), Joe Adonis (James Purcell), Lucky Luciano (Michael Nouri), Salvatore Maranzano (Joseph Mascolo), Al Capone (Louis Giambalvo), Vito Genovese (Robert Davi). Right: Joe "The Boss" Masseria (Richard Castellano, right) puts the arm on rival Lucky Luciano (Michael Nouri).

trouble was diverting, it was not worth the cost and effort of securing and transcribing it in detail. The tape was discontinued, although not without some regret on the part of the more elderly ladies in the transcript-typing pool, who had had a preview 20 years before *Dallas* of the steamier side of life, while at the same time enriching their vocabularies.

It is that sort of thing that plagues the effort to make organized crime into riveting drama for the screen, whether the screen be situated in a theater or in the home, and the folks involved in *The Gangster Chronicles* have had one hell of a time with it. The guys who told the "Me 'n' Tony" stories at length and with gusto were demonstrating at least the visceral understanding that the speaker and the listener were far more interested in Tony's latest outrage than in the latest line on the Patriots. The betting spreads are as important to a sports-wagering

enterprise as the vigorish rates established for illegal small-loans businesses are to gangland usurers, but the data itself is neither interesting nor entertaining. Not even to the bookies or the shylocks themselves.

That is all very well for the Mob, the Mafia, the Office or the Organization, as it is variously called. The Organization is not in the business of furnishing entertainment or drama. Drama, as a matter of fact, is proof positive that somebody in the Organization has screwed up. Confrontation, as between rival gangs, or between affiliated gangs and the cops (*vide The Untouchables*), means that business will be interrupted, overhead inflated, returns reduced, valuable subordinates incapacitated (whether by assassination, indictment or incarceration), prized contacts discombobulated and huge legal fees incurred.

For gangsters, a denouement is a big pain in the ass, and it plays the very devil

with the balance sheets. For producers and directors, a denouement and precedent dramatic tension are mandatory.

Francis Ford Coppola had the wit, or the luck, to accept from Mario Puzo the safe passages from that paradoxical dilemma provided by the story line of *The Godfather*. The book has been roundly and unjustly maligned as a specious and misleading treatise on the rise and fall of the Vito Genovese Family in organized crime, when it was no such thing. The emphasis in book and movie alike was upon the evolution of the family within the Family, the dramatic tension developing from the conflict between Sonny Corleone and Michael Corleone. It was brought on by the Nights of the Sicilian Vespers, the Castellamare War, and the Gallo-Profaci War, to be sure, but those were the occasions, not the focus. There was a reluctance to resort to violence, much as there was in *Shane*; this reluctance had to be overcome, and was.

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Who Talks the Best Game?

In judging baseball's broadcast teams, the writer tells why he favors Kubek and Garagiola over various Clown Princes, Homers and Hindenburg Harrys

By **SCOTT KAUFER**



Joe Garagiola isn't exactly steamed, just sort of . . . *exasperated*. He's talking about a newspaper guy from Detroit who criticized Garagiola's rendering of last year's World Series. Specifically, the columnist had written that Garagiola's introduction to Game Five was terrible. Lacked drama. Made no sense. But let Joe tell it:

"I said something like, 'If you caught the championship series, and the way

these two teams have gone, it's difficult to pick a winner. . . . ' Then I said: 'And that's what makes the game of baseball so great—the expected is always happening when it's least expected, and vice-versa.' Which is a Casey Stengel line. It means *nothing*, right?"

Right. Which was precisely what the guy from Detroit was complaining about. Said Joe was talking gibberish. "He missed the whole point," Garagiola sighs. "It's just like the guy in Los Angeles."

Ah, yes—the guy in Los Angeles. Howard Rosenberg of The Los Angeles Times, by name. In the middle of the World Series, he, too, ripped into poor Joe: "On to Garagiola, baseball's *Bartlett's Book of Quotations* [sic]. . . . I wrote down just a few of Garagiola's anecdotes (or whatever you want to call them): ' "Don't be in a hurry to lose, be in a hurry to win." Joe McCarthy used to say.' 'I remember Roberto Clemente said he let his bat and glove do the talking.' 'I love what Bob Forach calls buzzard's luck: "You can't

kill anything, and nothing will die”.

“When Joe quoted Amos Otis about the Phillies (‘It takes four nails to put that lid on the coffin—they only have two’), I really wished he would shut up. ‘Noise is a torture to all intellectual people,’ Schopenhauer used to say.”

And so on, this Rosenberg fellow keelhauling Garagiola for seemingly every quote and anecdote he uttered. Now, to Garagiola, such is the very stuff baseball broadcasting is spun from. Arcane statistics, players’ home towns—that sort of thing bores him. So he found this L.A. guy’s column “ridiculous.”

“I mean, what does he want me to do—get up and say a guy is six-foot-two, a hundred and ninety pounds, saves bowling balls, his wife saves Bic pens, and they both went to SMU?”

But there was more. In Philadelphia, critics said Garagiola was rooting for Kansas City in the Series because he’s from Missouri. In Kansas City, they said that, as an old National League player, Joe was tilting toward the Phillies.

And there are always critics who complain that Garagiola tells nothing but Yogi Berra stories, quotable Yogi being an old friend. “I know they weren’t watching,” says Joe, “because that just isn’t true.”

Maybe not. But any way you slice it (to use a Garagiolaism), Joe and partner Tony Kubek both have been maligned a bit lately. In Tony’s case, the rap is that he has become too querulous, too combative, too quick to pick nits when it comes to the boys’ game played by men. . . . Joe and Tony deserve better, because—and these may be fighting words—their act on NBC is, well, the best in baseball broadcasting.

To support this modest proposal, it is necessary to do a little chin-scratching on the subject of why we need announcers in the first place. NBC raised the question in a much-ballyhooed way last December, when it televised a New York Jets-Miami Dolphins football game in blessed silence, with the audio coming only from the crowd, the crunch of bodies and the P.A. announcer. It was a strange feeling at first, watching this football *vérité*, but it began to grow on you. What a pleasure not to listen to, say, NBC’s John Brodie—who, last season, shrewdly observed that a touchdown pass had “a lot of trajectory on it.” How sweet to be spared the likes of George

Allen, who once told CBS viewers that a player “got his body between himself and the ball.”

“We are telecasting this game without the benefit of announcers,” said a subdued Bryant Gumbel at one point during the NBC broadcast. You wondered whether “benefit” was the right word.

On the postgame show, there was talk of how announcers had been vindicated



A lot of fans think Vin Scully—broadcaster for the L.A. Dodgers—has the classiest solo act around.

by this “noble production experiment,” as Gumbel called it, how their presence had been missed. Hardly. The real lesson was this: On television, where the picture is the story, sports announcers are expendable. They are holdovers from radio, at least as annoying as they are useful.

So the trick, for television announcers, is to figure out what they can add to the fairly complete coverage that already exists without them. The good ones learn to use language imaginatively but economically. They keep the game in the foreground and theatrics to a minimum. And they know when to keep quiet.

Garagiola and Kubek stack up pretty well next to this paradigm, unlike most baseball broadcasters. Locally and nationally, booth jockeys come in a handful of varieties, most of them grating:

- *The Clown Princes.* These are the San Diego Chickens of the broadcast booth. Chief offender: Skip Caray (son of the legendary White Sox announcer, Harry Caray), who works the Atlanta Braves’ telecasts. Perhaps the Braves’ plodding style has set Skip’s mind to wandering; or perhaps Ted Turner likes his telecasts a bit silly. Whatever the reason, Caray is a blizzard of bad jokes and cryptic asides. You say there’s a game going on? Son of a gun!

- *The Homers.* These are guys who root openly (sometimes lustily) for the home team, and they’re all over the place. Chief offender: Phil Rizzuto, the former Yankee shortstop, who now handles (with more panache than most ex-jocks) the team’s play-by-play. Rizzuto once actually tried to phone the Yankee dugout in midgame, to tell manager Billy Martin that an opposing runner had missed home plate.

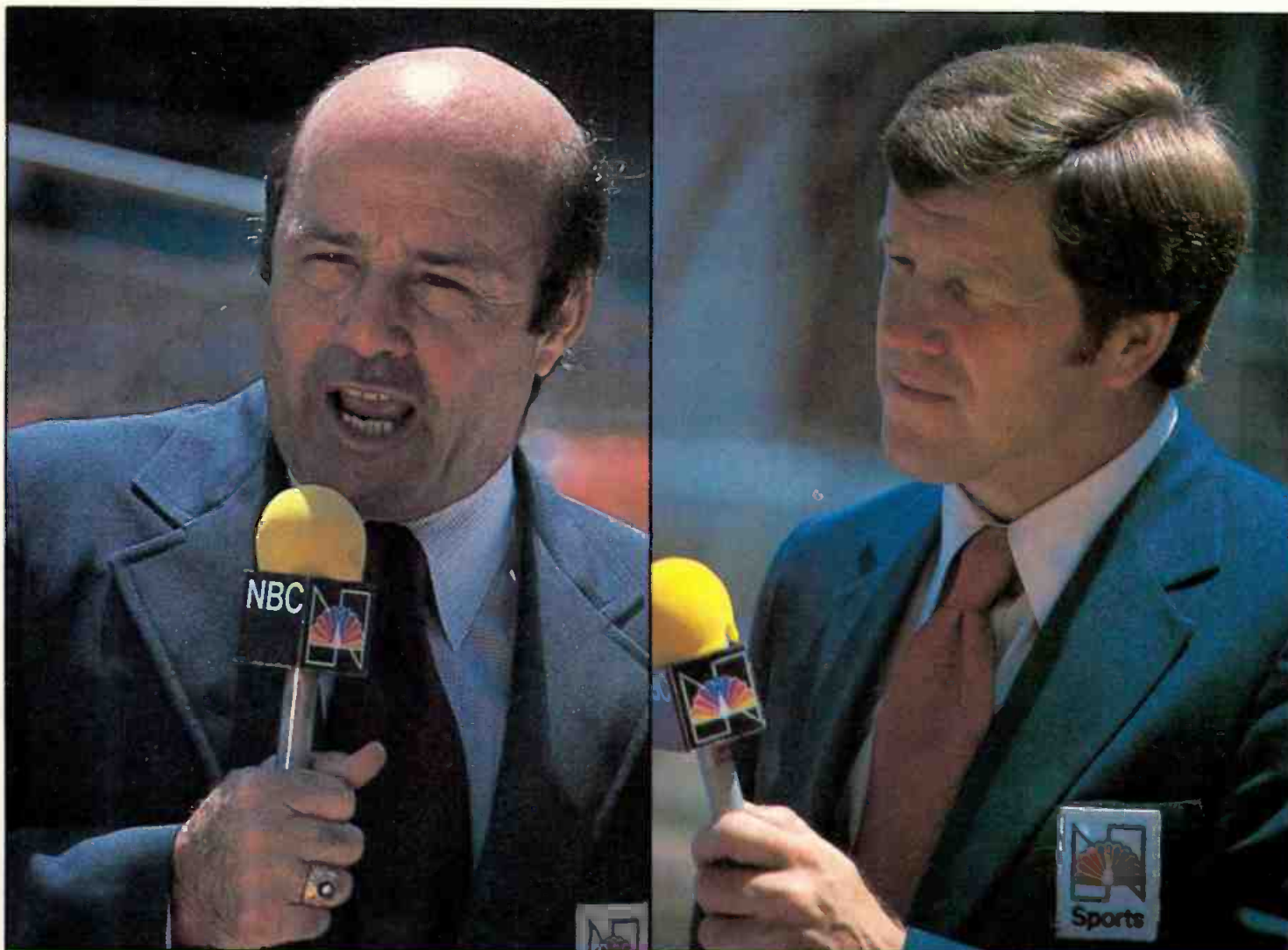
- *The Hindenburg Harrys.* You know the type—guys whose breathless, you-are-there style overwhelms the action. Dick Stockton’s theatrical frenzy when the Red Sox won the 1975 pennant leaps to mind. You would have thought he had just seen a dirigible explode.

- *The Malaprop Men.* Chief practitioner: the San Diego Padres’ Jerry Coleman, who became the team’s manager in 1979 (and was fired in 1980) after his eight-year stint at the mike. Coleman’s gems include, “There’s a fly deep to center field. Dave Winfield is going back, back. He hits his head against the wall. It’s rolling toward second base”; “Rich Folkers is throwing up in the bullpen”; and “He slides into second with a stand-up double.” Nobody will ever top Coleman, but other announcers gamely carry on the tradition.

- *The Echoes.* Also known as the Right-You-Are-Ralph guys. An announcer will say, “Well, you can be sure Carlton doesn’t want to give up a walk in this situation,” and his sidekick will pipe up, “Right you are, Ralph.” Worst offenders: ex-jocks.

- *The Roar of the Crowd.* Chief offender: ABC Sports. By putting three men in a broadcast booth (and by making one of them Howard Cosell), the network erected a tower of babble that often obscures the game.

And then there are Tony and Joe, who have managed during their five-year partnership to avoid the above-mentioned sins. They are not, individually,



Garagiola (left) is the folksy phrase-maker: "That's about as much fun for a catcher as a root canal." His partner Kubek, brash and perhaps earnest to a fault, helps keep him honest. According to Don Ohlmeyer, their producer, there's definitely a bit "of Odd Couple" to the relationship.

the best in baseball. Vin Scully of the Dodgers nailed that down years ago. ABC's Al Michaels is arguably Scully's heir. And Bostonians will claim (inexplicably, to an outsider) that Ned Martin is state of the art. But as a team—and that's how nearly all baseball broadcasts are handled these days—Kubek and Garagiola can't be touched.

Joe is the phrase-maker. When a pitcher's knuckle ball is bouncing all over the place, he says: "I'll tell you, this is about as much fun for a catcher as a root canal." Asked whom he would rather face if he were a pitcher, Henry Aaron or Willie Mays, Joe says: "That's like asking a guy in the electric chair. 'What do you want, AC or DC?'" A batter gets a fat pitch: "If there's ever a pitch you would call room service for, that's it."

None of this is poetry, exactly, but it

catches the mood and avoids the cliché. Some of it you even remember.

Garagiola says his on-camera demeanor is simply his off-camera personality—and apparently that's the case. While viewing clips of old Garagiola broadcasts, I came across network news outtakes of Gerald Ford's 63rd birthday party aboard Air Force One. Ford was returning from Philadelphia, where he had thrown out the first ball at the 1976 All-Star Game. The tape shows him being led into a cabin where aides and reporters had gathered. They break into a chorus of "Happy Birthday." Ford beams. Someone hands him a cake. It's . . . *Joe Garagiola*. Joe Garagiola handing the President of the United States a cake! Ford slices it, gives Joe the first piece, then starts to cut a slice for Ernie Banks, the Chicago Cubs great who is also aboard

the plane. "A small piece," Garagiola tells the President. "He's got bad hands; he might drop it."

He is folksy—sometimes cloyingly so. But Garagiola's bar-stool wisdom is usually apt, and that distinguishes him from the corn-pone, court-jester school of broadcasting.

Kubek helps Joe stay honest, too. They are perfect foils for each other—Joe's irreverence held in check by Tony's earnestness: Joe the squat, journeyman catcher, Tony the handsome star; Joe prone to brashness, Tony more retiring—but more than willing to argue a point.

"If you were going to watch the game, have some beers and eat some popcorn, wouldn't you want to have Joe drop by?" asks Don Ohlmeyer, executive producer of NBC Sports. "He's like your favorite

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BASEBALL BROADCASTERS

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bathrobe. You feel comfortable with him. And Tony, if he drops by, you know he's going to argue with you—like, should that guy have bunted?—but he knows what he's talking about. I think there is a little bit of the Odd Couple about them."

There is—and it goes deeper than baseball strategy. "I think our political philosophies are different," Kubek says. "I think Joe's a conservative. He did some work for Ford, and I think he supports Reagan, whereas I've done some work for Mo Udall and George McGovern. And it shows up in our coverage of the game."

Kubek, for example, has always seemed more sympathetic than his partner to longhaired ballplayers and striking umpires. But talk about changing the game and he becomes the conservative, the traditionalist. He calls himself a purist and is appalled by designated hitters, designated runners and artificial turf. Garagiola tends to feel innovations spruce up the game.

Of their many arguments ("discussions," Kubek calls them), perhaps the most dramatic came in 1979, when umpires began the season by walking out in a job dispute. "I walked the picket line with them and would not cross it until the umpires asked me to," Kubek says. "But Joe went in immediately; he felt he had to do a job."

"Well," Garagiola says, "the umpires did not call it a strike, and I got into an argument with them about it. I said, 'All your life, you guys have been calling strikes, and now you won't call a strike—you call it an *informational action*.' And I said, 'Until you call it a strike, I'm going in.' Tony said he was thinking about staying out, and I said, 'Well, you do what you want, but it's not a strike.'"

What they said to each other on the air, sadly, is lost; NBC did not save broadcast tapes. In any event, Kubek needed fast advice on whether or not to cross the line, and consulted his lawyer. The lawyer's name is Joe Garagiola Jr., a point worth bearing in mind when tempted to regard the ongoing Kubek-Garagiola joust as anything bitter.

"We've never had any animosity," Kubek says, "although we've had columnists call us and say, 'Gee, you guys are having this feud, there's a big breakup, the NBC brass has got to be *very concerned* about this.' And we both have to

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THE GANGSTER CHRONICLES

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The show was to be informative and Good for Us, like wheat germ

The aspect of the film that most troubled the queue—the alleged tendency to humanize and glorify gangsters—was certainly the same aspect that appealed to people who know nothing about organized crime, and who care less: *The Godfather* was a good story about characters of some human dimension, whose troubles and ambivalences were entirely understandable. The firearms furnished a certain amount of commotion in their use, but the story was about lives lived and chances taken.

The Gangster Chronicles does not enjoy the same advantages. This is not the fault of the writers. It is the error of the official who declared that the show would be a docudrama, and thus sentenced the producers, directors and writers to abide more or less by what is known of Salvatore (a k a "Charlie" or "Lucky") Luciano, Ben ("Bugsy") Siegel, and a gentleman of longevity inconvenient to NBC-TV, who was called "Michael Lasker" because of fear of libel and defamation suits.

Puzo didn't have to worry about whether Vito Genovese got along with his kids, what he actually thought of his sons, or their comparative suitability to succeed him as *capo di tutti capi*. Puzo was writing about Don Vito Corleone, and he could make it all up. If there were some resemblances to people who had and might be persisting in living, that was no problem, because they could scarcely complain that everybody knew that Puzo meant them when he wrote about some nefarious deed or struck off some imperious dialogue.

Locked into the docudrama vise, which demands that the teleplay at least bear some resemblance to the reality, Richard Alan Simmons, the series' creator and chief writer, drew upon 10 years of study on the subject and the expertise of Ralph Salerno, retired after long service with the New York Police Department's Criminal Intelligence Bureau, to draft the structure of the evolution of organized crime in the United States. (So dissatisfied was Simmons with the final product, however, that he withdrew his name from the credits, replacing it with

the pseudonym Richard DeKoker.)

There is a wealth of material on the topic, and Ralph Salerno is its most accomplished raconteur. He has spent years on the lecture circuit as a polished keynote speaker on gangsters, their habits and their deplorable excesses. It has been said, accurately, that Salerno knows more about gangsters than the gangsters know about themselves. (Ralph has taken a whale of a lot of abuse from his fellow Italian-Americans for his choice of life's work, which he bears with the same cheeriness that he brings to most of his ventures.)

The trouble with the literature—the term is used broadly, and includes grand jury and trial transcripts—is that it relies for data upon what some people say about what other people have done. Sometimes their disclosures are made before grand juries, prompted by the recognition that the prosecutor has them hooked pretty good and requires the scalp of at least one other gentleman, higher up, in return for a safe-conduct pass. Sometimes their disclosures are made unwittingly, in discussions with undercover agents or on telephones accessorized with Grundigs. Occasionally, and with increasing frequency, they are vouchsafed to writers engaged in the production of books (*vide* Ovid DeMaris with James Fratianno, collaborating on the dreadful best seller, *The Last Mafioso: The Treacherous World of Jimmy Fratianno*). But **always** they are made by men who must be presumed to be telling the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

Always those men are self-proclaimed murderers, robbers, drug merchants, fences, loan sharks or other stellar citizens of their communities. It is very hard to be sure that such gentlemen would not stoop to lie, whether boasting among themselves or seeking to save their skins and fortunes by jabbering away to grand jurors and writers. The people who manage organized crime do not value veracity more highly than they value human life. Their disability as sources for Simmons, Salerno or anybody else, is identical to that manifested by the fellow discharged as treasurer and tax collector

in the Maine village, on the grounds that the citizenry knew he told the truth about half the time but was never sure which half.

It is that highly questionable source material upon which Simmons and Salerno rely for their complementary supplies of expertise. They are forced to rely upon it, of course, because *The Gangster Chronicles* is presented as a docudrama, not a work of fiction, even though, in fact, it may be nevertheless a work chiefly of fiction. That source material by its nature does not include many “Me ‘n’ Tony” stories. NYPD’s Criminal Intelligence Bureau was not interested in Tony stories when it was investigating the hoods during Salerno’s tenure, nor were any of the grand jurors or writers compiling the texts that fill out the remainder of the *oeuvre* of organized crime. It is therefore unfortunately true that the bulk of the raw material for the NBC-TV series is neither wholly trustworthy, nor especially entertaining.

Thus burdened, Simmons fleshed out, as it were, the characters of the principal gangsters. He did so by extemporizing dialogue and situations based upon what attitudes and behavior each of the protagonists supposedly displayed about his women, and women of other affiliations. Joe Penny, playing Siegel, has a perfectly dreadful time woodenly impersonating—to call his performance acting would be to debase the term unconscionably—a thug of the early 20th century, somehow caught up in a maelstrom of feminist consciousness and sexual liberation theretofore manifested only by Susan B. Anthony and Mother Jones. Neither Ms. Anthony nor Ms. Jones is represented in the series, thus leaving unexplained where Bugsy’s wife and whores obtained views modestly trendy even by the standards of NOW and PRO-ERA, or why, 50 or 60 years in advance of his time, Siegel felt so compelled to demonstrate that he was not a male chauvinist pig.

Vito Genovese, played by Robert Davi, on the other hand, demonstrates his greater villainy by refusing an executive directive to stop messing around with another man’s wife. This prepares the audience for the events showing Genovese to be quite agreeable to murdering his superiors, though presumably not entirely in order to facilitate his practice of adultery.

A better model for the impressionable young, surely, would be a man who clove unto his lawfully wedded wife and did not stray into illicit carnality, though remaining regretfully willing to countenance necessary homicides. That is helpfully provided by the Michael Lasker “composite.” The part is adequately played, considering the disabilities visited upon Brian Benben by the hilarious script requiring him to strive for “Father of the Year” while conspiring to knock off his competition. As the old song goes, “Something for everyone, a comedy to-night.”

The trouble with that desperate invention is that comedy seems not to have been what NBC had in mind when it



Above, gangsters and molls, from left: Michael Lasker (played by Brian Benben), Ruth Lasker (Madeline Stowe), Lucky Luciano (Michael Nouri), Luciano’s girls, Joy Osler and Chris Brennan (Chad Redding and Markie Post), Bugsy Siegel (Joe Penny).

commissioned this farrago. Ralph Salerno, ever the instructor, is quoted by NBC as hoping that the series will jolt America into wakefulness that the Mob is the greatest subversive organization in the history of the Republic, and that it is time at long last to do something about it. *The Gangster Chronicles*, in other words, was to be not only exciting and factually informative, but also inspiring: It was to be Good for Us, like wheat germ.

It was that sort of didacticism that crippled the episodes of the *Chronicles* televised this spring. Lucky, Bugsy and Michael were by definition precluded from being made into very attractive fellows. Their struggles to achieve control of the rackets involved a great deal of

gun-playing. Audiences comfortable in the awareness that they are watching fictional characters can put up with this and root for the good guys. But these were supposed to be real people, and when you shoot a man, he doesn’t bleed machine-washable ketchup. This makes audiences uncomfortable, especially when there’s no good guy.

The palliative for this handicap was to devote much time to palaver among well-spoken, well-coiffed men conferring in posh surroundings. This reduced the running time of slaughter, but it invited the audience to ally with Lucky, Bugsy and Michael on the grounds that they were reasonable about the whole thing and the other guys were not.

That didn’t work either. It was a cop-out on the putative historical mission of the series as well. The egregious example of this tactic depicted the pilgrimage of the three Rover Boys to the Great Meet with Capone and Schultz and them other guys in Chicago. All the boys were splendidly got up in black tie, and even the whores looked gorgeous. Lucky made nice and declined the crown of *capo di tutti capi*; for this statesmanship, he was given a hooker whom he rather fancied, but while everybody was jawing, she was being beaten goofy in his room by goons from the Chicago gang. As a demonstration of the brutality of mobsters it was unnecessary; as a relief from the tedium of the meeting, it failed.

That, I think, is what went wrong in this NBC-TV partnership with Universal Television: To their credit, they attempted too much, or at least their claims demand the conclusion that they did. Gangsters and their activities can be endlessly fascinating—especially when the “Me ‘n’ Tony” stories are thrown in—as much to themselves as to people sitting in their living rooms on Saturday nights; they are just not very promising vehicles for the transportation of ideas.

Still, we are pitifully grateful that somebody, somewhere, finally decided to serve up a program a bit more suited to adult viewing than *The Love Boat*. That gamble in scheduling merits kudos to NBC-TV, as does its venture with the vastly more symmetrical MTM Enterprises production of *Hill Street Blues*. For all its deficiencies, the *Chronicles* was a genuine effort toward television fit for adult consumption.

That should have been enough. ■

and the buyer usually benefits.

So, in spite of the fact that the video-cassette recorder, or VCR, is the fastest-growing product in the history of the consumer electronics industry, there are bargains galore to be had. If you're in the market for this popular new home entertainment product and shop carefully, you can match your purchase to your needs, buy from a reputable dealer and save big bucks to boot.

"Reputable dealer" is the key phrase: While every VCR is covered by a manufacturer's warranty, you can get satisfaction more quickly and much more easily in case of trouble if the dealer also stands behind the product and goes to bat for you. And by buying from a store or mail-order house with a reputation to uphold, you help guard against bait-and-switch tactics—coming home with a model other than the one you thought you were buying—or being sold somebody else's return in an opened carton. A low, low, low price is no bargain if the product doesn't do what it's supposed to do.

Let's assume that you're in the market for a VCR. First figure out what's available and exactly what you want—shop around at several stores that carry a representative sampling of the 21 brands on the market. (See "VCR Update," February 1981, for a list of what's available.)

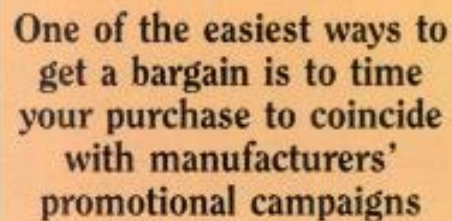
One of the easiest ways to get a bargain is to *time your purchase to coincide with the manufacturers' promotional campaigns*. Most major VCR promotions occur in the summer months, some of them extending into early fall. The purpose of these events is to boost sales during normally slow months and to clear out inventory before the new models arrive. They often start with a reduction or special giveaway by the manufacturer, and sometimes the pot is sweetened by the distributor and/or dealer. With VCRs, a favorite device often is a giveaway—\$100 worth of blank tape, a selection of prerecorded movie tapes or membership in a tape club—but sometimes it's a factory rebate or savings bond. A popular promotion for portables is the offer of a color camera at a reduced price if you buy both at the same time.

These promotions usually are widely advertised in local newspapers, which publish a list of "participating" dealers. Don't assume the recorder will be priced the same at all stores: since the giveaway is largely subsidized by the manufactur-

er, the price of the VCR may still be subject to the same discounts the store usually offers. As a matter of fact, if the dealer *raises* his price along with a "free" giveaway promotion, he's indulging in a practice of questionable legitimacy—how "free" is something if you must pay extra to get it?

With or without a special promotional offer, shopping around is always the key to a VCR bargain. But be certain that you're not comparing passion fruit with pomegranates: Know the model number to be sure all dealers are talking about the same thing. Even if you're shopping for a particular brand whose products you like, compare the price of the total package, taking into account such extra dealer services as free delivery and extended warranties or free installation and setup.

Most manufacturers have some kind



One of the easiest ways to get a bargain is to time your purchase to coincide with manufacturers' promotional campaigns

of "suggested list price" or "guide price." These are generally the highest prices you should be asked to pay, and many dealers offer substantial discounts. But prices vary considerably by region. Generally, the greater the competition in terms of number of stores, the sharper the discounts.

Those are some general rules. One specific one to remember if you want to get more than your money's worth in a VCR: *Don't buy more than you need*. Most manufacturers offer three different versions of their standard nonportable home model, the highest-priced often selling for twice as much as the "low-end" unit. The top of most manufacturers' lines is the full-function programmable. This has a complex, microprocessor-controlled timing system that lets you program the recorder for up to

two weeks in advance to turn on and off, record and change channels. This is a great feature if you're an avid TV viewer and are going to want to record multiple programs while you're away for the weekend or on vacation. These same high-end recorders usually have multiple special effects, including stop-action, fast-action, high-speed forward and reverse scan, sometimes slow motion and frame-by-frame advance, and a wired remote control.

But if your main goal in buying a VCR is to record one program while watching another, or to tape an occasional show while you're asleep or away for an evening, bear in mind that even nonprogrammable home Beta and VHS recorders have 24-hour "single-event" timers. If you move down from the top to the middle of the line (generally to a list price of \$1000 to \$1200), you'll get this feature plus some of the special effects. Most middle-of-the-line machines have rapid forward and reverse scan and also have remote channel-change; all have remote pause.

If you'll be satisfied with a "basic" machine—one with a 24-hour timer and remote pause—you'll do well to consider a rash of recently introduced VCRs that have been designed to "broaden the market" for video recorders. These forsake special effects, have simpler cabinets and eliminate such niceties as the lighted channel indicator and push-button tuning, but they work fine. One note of caution: Many of these machines don't have the little-used "audio dub" feature that lets you record your own sound track after the picture has been taped, in place of the sound originally recorded. But chances are if you want this feature, you also want some of the other special features and are better off buying a middle-of-the-line or high-end model. The best news about these new market-broadening machines is that they generally sell at about \$650 to \$700, regardless of the suggested list price.

All of the VCRs discussed so far are capable of recording and playing at all the popular speeds—the Beta units are two-speed, the VHS are three-speed. But there is one basic single-speed machine that's a four-star bargain if you just need a basic recorder for time-shift purposes or for viewing recorded tapes, or as a second VCR for your home. This unit has all the necessary features—three hours' recording time on Beta tape, remote



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TV AND CAMPUS

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Each August, on boiling hot, late-summer afternoons, when the peaceful and quiet, drowsy streets of Tuscaloosa suddenly fill with dangerous traffic and the sidewalks are jammed instantly with no-nonsense joggers, it is obvious the students are back in town for another semester. It is on these afternoons that I like to hit the streets and test my fate in the crazed, high-voltage student traffic.

As I drive, I watch with unabashed curiosity as the students unload their enormous automobiles, or the trucks and vans they have rented to haul their belongings to the campus.

I have heard it said, by visitors, that there are no physically unattractive students at the University of Alabama. While I realize this is an exaggeration, I see some of the basis for it as I watch the students unload their gear. Despite the brain-baking heat, the fallout of stinging grit and dust kicked up by the frantic, bumper-to-bumper traffic, the students are uncommonly well-dressed. In fact, they appear to be ready for an afternoon cocktail party. They are clad in trendy, severe military-preppy garb and each one is wearing the required combination of penny loafers, Chemise Lacoste alligator shirts and khakis. The boys resemble Air Force junior officers on leave. The girls appear to be from well-to-do families who have looked down on the summer's heat from mountaintop retreats.


As I watch these students unload mountains of belongings, I have the horrifying vision that I am seeing thousands of well-groomed, immaculately turned-out preppy looters hauling off imported bicycles, bag after leather bag of golf clubs, stacks of tennis rackets, boxes of running shoes, racks of croquet mallets, and innumerable color television sets. This staggering apocalyptic vision of the dead end of materialism leaves me so rattled that I drive at once to the nearest student bar.

Through the years, I have reached an oblique accommodation with the predictable changes in styles of dress and grooming because—even in the face of the most devastating political and social convulsions that have struck the University—a consistent campus conversational common denominator has been sports, especially Alabama football. Now, as I reach the nearby student bar and order a drink, I wonder if this recent, blatant student materialism might have shredded the one thread that has

bound together Alabama students and graduates.

It is only midafternoon, but the bar is already crowded. I am surrounded by so many guys who have short hair and who wear khakis and alligator polo shirts that I feel as if I'm on a military base. If someone were to yell, "Attention!" conceivably everyone in the room—including the women—would freeze.

But there is something odd about this bar that I sensed the moment I stepped inside. The stereo sound system is blaring. The bartenders are standing idle. As I look around, it does appear that every student present is actually standing at attention, eyes front, staring into the bar's silent television screen. No one is speaking to anyone else. I fear some international disaster has taken place and we are in the final moments before nuclear missiles strike Tuscaloosa. I



Dallas, Knots Landing and Flamingo Road initially attract and, for a short time, appear to hold the attention of the students

edge my way closer to the television so I can also watch what must be the most important TV event in the lives of these students, if not the world. But when I see the screen, I quickly drain my drink.

On the silent television screen I have just looked directly into the eyes of Alabama's legendary football coach, Paul "Bear" Bryant. The students crowded into the bar are not only watching the television as if in rapt astonishment, they appear to be reading Bear Bryant's lips and then nodding their heads reverentially in agreement with whatever on earth it is he is saying. I have searched for the common denominator of sports, but as I look at the faces of the students around me, packed before the television, it is as if I have found instead the faces of the pod people from *The Invasion of the Body Snatchers*. And I realize that the University's sports obsession is no longer a conversational bridge for this fresh crop of students: This sports obsession has the same effect on each student as a

prefrontal lobotomy.

For almost 20 years, Alabama football has dominated the campus, and these days it seems as if every game Alabama plays is televised. The team and its coach are so overexposed on prime-time TV that students like these in the bar have no alternative other than to nod their heads reverentially. Even if they cannot be present at a Saturday home game, the students can see replays two or three times a week on the Entertainment and Sports Programming Network (which some students refer to as the "Emergency Sports Network"), or they can watch a rerun on Bear Bryant's own weekly TV show.

I am backing away from the television and the obedient lobotomized crowd when I feel a hand on my shoulder. I think at once it must be the white-hot hand of fate taking a perverse revenge on the heresy of my inattention to a football coach on a silent television screen, and I am relieved to see it is just my friends, Phillip and Mark, grinning, stoned, and wanting me to leave with them.

I leave with them and we fight our way across town, through the traffic, to their apartment. As we drive, it hits me that they may well be two of the few remaining students on campus who will not only resist the comfortable lobotomization I have just witnessed, but two of the last remaining students I may ever meet who would even remotely understand the meaning of aluminum foil.

I notice, as the last month of summer evaporates into the school year and I frequently join Phillip and Mark on forays to the bars or the apartments of friends, that we are constantly exposed to television, not only football reruns, but a few other shows as well. *Dallas, Knots Landing* and *Flamingo Road* initially attract and, for a short time, appear to hold the attention and imagination of the students I encounter. In fact, when I schedule a party for a class I teach, I am asked by the students if the party can be delayed so everyone can watch *Dallas*. These evening soaps, with their tawdry goings-on rooted in the South, offer a distorted mirror reflection of the lives of the students, who at first accept these distortions at face value. As the television season wears on, however, they begin turning off the television sound and turning up the stereos.

So it is that we enter apartments

where stereo systems blare and the inhabitants stare in silence at the television sets as J.R. commits some dastardly deed. We go to bars where live rock bands are playing and there are 6-foot-wide television screens replaying tapes of Alabama football games. We visit apartments of friends and again encounter the face of Bear Bryant or an Alabama basketball game. Finally, I no longer bother to glance at the television set when we go to different places. I know already what is on them. I too am conditioned.

But late in the winter, as Phillip and Mark and I sit watching a rerun of *Dr. Strangelove*, and they ask me to interpret for them what is happening, what missile gaps were all about, it hits me. For months we have traveled together through the small town of Tuscaloosa and everywhere we have gone we have encountered in bars and in living rooms a football team that is not so much at play as it is at war. And it is as if all the memories I once paralyzed in aluminum foil are now making sense, unraveling in the reflections of the foil.

During the late '60s and early '70s, the afternoon news made the Vietnam War a living-room war, an unavoidable extension of our lives. Now television has transformed Alabama sports and all sports into living-room sports. I mention this to Phillip when he asks if I have ever by chance been a fan of a rock group called The Doors.

We talk of The Doors and the '60s and the revolution. Mark tells me a television movie will soon be broadcast that deals with Kent State. "What was Kent State all about?" asks Mark.

I tell him what little I know about Kent State, and the shooting of students by National Guardsmen.

"Did that end the war?" asks Mark.

"The war was not lost at Kent State," I say. "It wasn't even lost in Vietnam. Television lost it in the living rooms of America."

Mark is tall and blond, and his wide, blue eyes now look as if they are about to sail right out of his head with the force of a Frisbee.

"What does that mean?" he asks.

"It means television did a number on Vietnam," I say. "And it means that if we ever get involved in a war in the future, then television will make that war into another living-room war."

Phillip and Mark sit in silence for a moment, and then they both laugh at

what I have said.

"After the next war," says Phillip, "there are not going to be any living rooms left."

One afternoon, I am running late. I have agreed to join Phillip and Mark at a bar to watch *General Hospital*. Phillip has given in to the major student attraction of this soap opera. He has discovered this is a convenient way to meet girls.

I have bundles of laundry to wash and so before I join Phillip and Mark, I stop at a laundromat directly adjacent to the bar. I throw the stack of laundry into a washer, plug in two quarters and head for the door.

"You forgot something," a voice says from behind me.

I turn. A tall, good-looking woman, perhaps 20 years old, holds a box of laundry detergent in one hand and a

"The war was not lost at Kent State. It wasn't even lost in Vietnam. Television lost it in the living rooms of America."

college notebook in the other. She is wearing a pastel version of the preppy look and, although the day is steamy, she has a pullover sweater slung over her shoulders, its arms knotted casually around her neck.

"Just use what you need," she says as she hands me the box of detergent.

I pour the detergent into my washer. Turning, heading for the door, I search for the woman in order to return the box. I spot her in the rear of the laundromat, studying a dryer.

"I've done something wrong," she says, and points to a dryer loaded with clothes. The dryer is not moving.

I thank her for the detergent and tell her the dryer is broken.

"But this one is working," she says, and points to the adjacent dryer. "And nobody has been around it for at least an hour."

I feel immediately as if I am ready to wheel on my heels, dash from this laundromat, grab my friends out of the *Gen-*

eral Hospital-Alsace-Lorraine bar and head for Canada. But I stop and study this tall, red-haired woman. She appears confused and smart simultaneously. By handing me a box of detergent while her own clothes sit wet in a dryer, she has reminded me of the obligations of a Southern gentleman. I will have to sacrifice Luke and Laura and offer her whatever help I can.

I open her dryer and try to turn the thing with my hand. It doesn't budge. I close it and give it a swift kick with my foot. That doesn't work either. But the adjacent dryer continues spinning. I am not a mechanic and I have no idea what is wrong with the machine. I tell her this and suggest she move her wet clothes to another dryer.

"But I've already put my quarters in here," she says, and puts her hand directly over the coin feeder for the adjacent, spinning dryer.

Immediately I want to take this woman aside and tell her she has to be the wackiest person I have ever met. She has been loading a dryer with quarters and the dryer doesn't even contain her clothes. In fact, she has probably been baking the clothes of someone who is now calmly sitting next door slugging down beer and watching *General Hospital*.

I fish two quarters out of my pocket, drop them into the coin feeder for her dryer and it immediately begins to work.

"That should do it," I say, and head for the door.

"Wait," she says, and it sounds like a commandment.

I stop and watch her extend her hand. It's full of dimes and nickels.

"I don't have any quarters left," she says, "but take these. The bartender next door will give you quarters for them. Just tell him you're a friend of Josephine's."

Around me in the room, washers are tumbling and somewhere this strange woman's clothes are now drying. But it no longer makes any difference. I push her hand away. "Were you ever a *General Hospital* freak?" I ask.

She giggles with that remarkable demeanor of a tall young woman and says, "I used to watch it. But like everybody else, I'm switching back to *As the World Turns*." ■

Johnny Greene is a free-lance writer living in Alabama and a contributing editor to Harper's magazine.

RATING NETWORK NEWS

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If this makes NBC's news sound like an exciting show on the cutting edge of journalism, Dolan couldn't disagree more. Her notes on NBC are strewn with such words as "dull," "very routine," "why so late with this story?" and "blah blah blah." She summed it up: "Overall, NBC's is a remarkably passive presentation. With its commendable refusal to sensationalize, it comes across so blandly it completely lacks authority. No perspective."

Dolan allowed for one notable exception: a four-part report on crime and labor by NBC's Brian Ross that was "as good as you get . . . a clear presentation with superb film . . . convincing and thorough with on-the-record denials and appropriate official backup . . . restores my faith (briefly)." On March 11, Dolan wrote, "If it weren't for Brian Ross, I'd be nodding off, waiting anxiously for *Family Feud* to begin." The Ross report also won accolades from Shine: "Each part was as interesting as its predecessor."

But on March 13, with Ross's report over, Dolan found nothing of interest on NBC. She attributed some of what she sees as the network's lassitude to the low-key presence of both John Chancellor and Roger Mudd. "NBC should do something to make Chancellor like what he's doing," she commented. "He's the best when he's enthusiastic." She advocated removing Mudd "from the silly graphic of the Capitol dome" and pushing him back into reporting, using him as an "on-the-screen anchor": "Mudd has been a great TV journalist because he was the calm voice in the middle of the bustle, the Cronkite-like one you could rely on as all the young CBS hotshots spouted off; he's so cool, he needs some heat around him."

Epstein concurred: "Mudd's contribution is neither fish nor fowl—he isn't really an anchorman and doesn't seem to be doing much reporting. His Capitol backdrop seems artificial and his assignment as 'Chief Washington correspondent' sounds like make-work. . . . Have him go back to what he does well—reporting." Even NBC fan Shine agreed about the "fixation with backdrops," but he added that the other networks were equally culpable on this count.

Chancellor drew highly favorable reviews from Epstein and Shine. "He might emerge as the number-one anchor of all three networks if he were . . . not sharing with Mudd," said Epstein.

And Shine lauded both men: "They are terribly good at what they do. Their delivery is polished, professional and sincere. If believability is an important part of news presentation, Chancellor and Mudd certainly score well in that area."

NBC also won kudos for its ability "to package a subject by using three or four correspondents to good advantage," in the words of Epstein. Dolan noticed this quality in a March 10 package of stories from three cities on programs affected by budget cuts, but she also regretted that it was only a "very occasional" happening on NBC. She placed NBC "dead last in foreign coverage."

According to NBC admirer Shine, the high point of the network's week was footage of an exchange between budget director David Stockman and three members of the Senate Budget Committee.

"Mudd's contribution is neither fish nor fowl—he isn't really an anchorman and doesn't seem to be doing much reporting."

One of the senators, Donald Riegle, from Shine's state of Michigan, was shown demanding a study of how budget cuts affect that state. "By simply letting the questions and the answers play while the camera rolled," said Shine, "Mr. Stockman's response and his expression told the viewers more than he might have wanted them to know about himself."

CBS EVENING NEWS WITH DAN RATHER

CBS's is the only network news show with a title containing its anchorman's name. So the network can hardly complain if the most prominent comments made about its show are on the subject of its new maestro, Dan Rather. Our editors, watching Rather in his second week on the job, gave him mixed reviews.

Almost all of the "style" points Shine

bestowed on CBS were for Rather, he said, but "it would help if Dan would smile a little more." Dolan requested the opposite: "That fake grin has gotta go."

Dolan also labeled two of Rather's introductions to stories as the worst moments of the CBS week. The first was when he preceded a story on the National Enquirer libel trial with these words: "To most of us, the name of Carol Burnett is linked forever with comedy and music. But there was no laughter in the air today when she testified in a Los Angeles courtroom." Then, setting up a story on a settlement in a blue-jeans price-fixing lawsuit, Rather inquired, "Now, what does the word 'California' conjure up to you? Sunshine? Free spirits? Hollywood? Chablis and Brie? A great university system? Well, they're now offering a rebate on what casual observers consider the state uniform. And some consumers don't think the suit has a leg to stand on." Such "schlock," said Dolan, "hurts Rather, a serious and sophisticated reporter, and it makes me want to frow up."

Even Epstein, the most dedicated CBS supporter among our editors, decided that Rather "is still nervous and unsure of himself. He smiles occasionally and it seems artificial. . . . I'd force him to stop pontificating a little, relax more, smile naturally and be himself."

However, Epstein hastened to add, CBS got his vote for the best "style" of the three network shows. "It is direct, uncluttered by needless graphics, uninterrupted by flashes of what is coming later and, in general, businesslike." And that's not all. Epstein found that "CBS met my criteria each night for selecting the proper lead story" and that "it gave the listener the most on a given subject, most often," meriting top ratings for timeliness and comprehensiveness.

Dolan disagreed. On March 19, when ABC and NBC led with reports on a space-shuttle accident, CBS led with the latest word from Alexander Haig on the subject of Central America. The shuttle accident was "clearly the main story of the day," decreed Dolan.

And CBS didn't always give Dolan enough information. Not until a story about mine workers' thoughts on a prospective strike was almost over did CBS reveal that the location of the story was Kayford, W. Va.; the opening identification of the place had simply been "the coal fields astride America's Bible belt." Commented Dolan: "ABC would never

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RATING NETWORK NEWS

continued from page 72

"The remarkably deep and experienced reporting staff" at CBS is the biggest plus for the Rather show

have let that happen; NBC wouldn't have had the report in the first place." And Dolan wanted more facts from a story about East African drought, too: "Why no maps, no visual demonstration of population densities?"

Ironically, one of the features Shine admired about the coal-miner story was "somebody's wisdom to let the pictures tell the story and avoid the temptation to voice-over." Shine called for a similar muzzle on the sound track of the drought story: "The amplified sound of buzzing insects and crying children . . . [was] a pointless device with footage that was dramatic enough without enhanced sound."

"The remarkably deep and experienced reporting staff" at CBS is the biggest plus for the Rather show, said Dolan. A favorite of both Dolan and Shine is Morley Safer, who returned to the *Evening News* to assist his *60 Minutes* comrade Rather and delivered a report on the questionable quality of U.S. Army manpower on March 20. It was the high point of the week on CBS, said Shine, "done with typical Safer attention to detail and with the predictable, and welcome, Safer analysis built in." Dolan agreed, adding only that there was "utterly no point in having this story right now, but it was worth it because it was Morley Safer."

Dolan reduced CBS's accuracy score on the basis of figures on the death count in the El Salvadoran civil war. On March 16, Rather remarked that "in the past 15 months, 15,000 lives have been lost"—with no mention of the source of the figure. On March 19, CBS ran a story on the difficulty of compiling an accurate count of those killed in El Salvador, noting that "counting bodies is . . . imprecise and very political." The March 19 story did include several estimates; none of them was 15,000. Said Dolan: The

second story "serves to correct Rather the other night, but they don't say so."

It may sound as if the editors couldn't find much to agree on, and this is true within individual categories. But one further point must be made about their overall reactions. In the words of Dolan, following the three weeks of viewing, "They all seem to blur together, don't they? There really aren't that many stories I remember." Shine also noticed "a sameness" to the broadcasts: "A large percentage of the total coverage of all three networks involved a handful of story subjects—the President and his friends, the economy, the budget cuts, El Salvador, Poland and the Atlanta killings. Even on days when there was no fresh news in these areas, the news shows felt compelled to keep [these subjects] before the viewers against the day when something newsy would happen."

But the editors also have some nice things to say about the general level of network news. Shine gave all of the networks good grades for timeliness and comprehensiveness: "They've got big news staffs and they miss precious little of the important happenings in the world each day. . . . They spend a lot of time, effort and money to be where news is being made or likely to be made."

Dolan believes the "blur" may be breaking up slightly: "The most encouraging sign is that nightly-news executives now recognize the importance of single stories approached in some depth in the middle of the blat blat blat. Until there are longer newscasts (which there should be, of an hour), these so-called special reports will help broaden and deepen the approach. The reports are still hit or miss at this point. NBC hit the week I was monitoring [the Brian Ross story]. ABC completely missed. But it's the right direction."

And that's the way it seems to be. ■

BASEBALL BROADCASTERS

continued from page 64

chuckle about it, because it's not so at all. We take our arguments seriously for the moment, I guess, and then we go on to the next one."

And the arguments cement the broadcast. They may not be what viewers tune in to see, but it helps pass the time, especially when the score is Pirates 12, Mets 2.

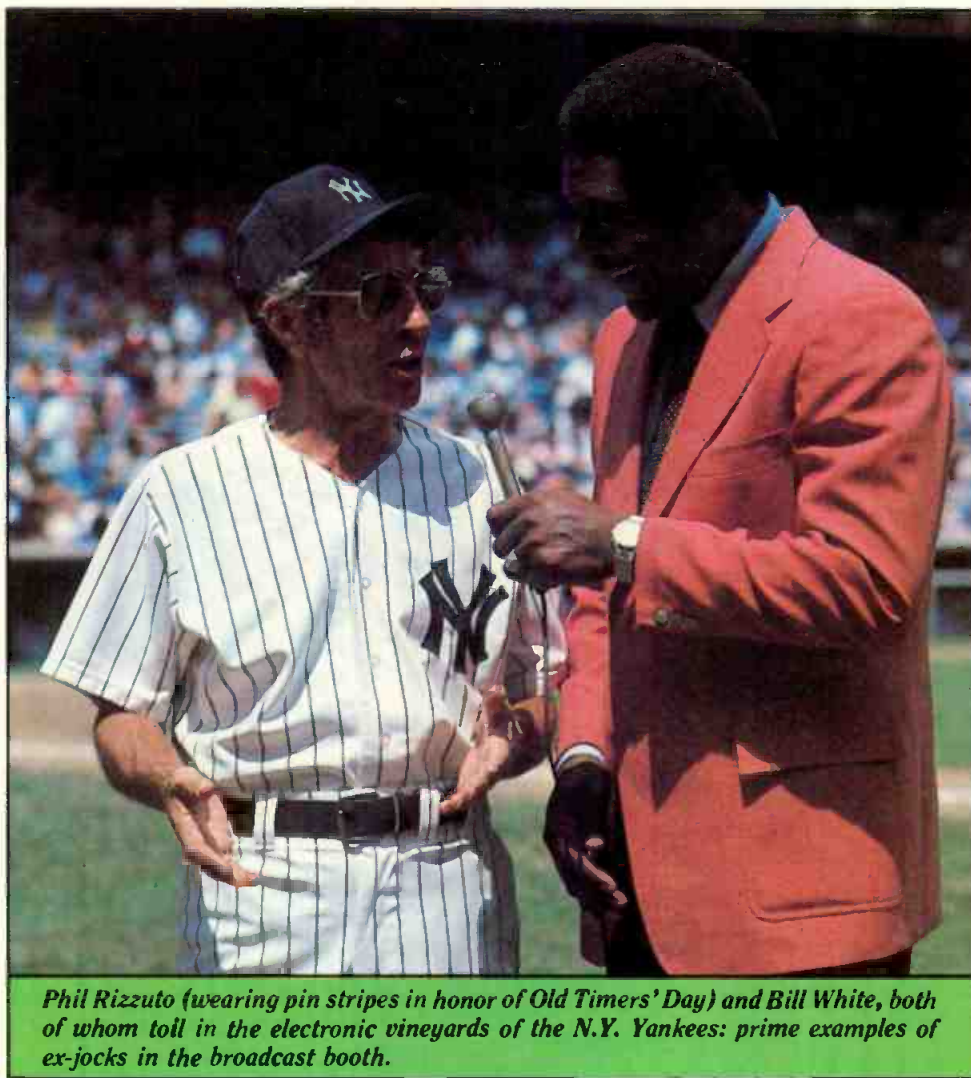
"The viewer should really be eavesdropping on two guys coming into the dugout talking about [baseball strategy]," Garagiola says. "That's the way we broadcast it. The day is over when you can explain the infield fly rule and think you've done a great job. I want a reaction when I say something. For example, a guy comes in out of the bullpen and they [other announcers] say, 'Here comes the pitcher out of the bullpen,' Well, if your set's *working* you can see that."

So Garagiola will tell us that the guy's a low-ball pitcher. Then Kubek will say, "Well, it should be an interesting match, because this batter tees off on low pitches." Then Joe and Tony will argue strategy.

Kubek thinks the formula works because he and Garagiola are ex-jocks who know their baseball. Even a top announcer like Vin Scully, he feels, suffers noticeably from the absence of playing experience. "It helps if you've smelled the sweat, to be very honest with you," says Kubek.

But plenty of old sweat-smellers have moved up to the broadcast booth over the years—Don Drysdale, Maury Wills, Sandy Koufax, Bob Gibson, Frank Quilici, Ken "Hawk" Harrelson, Ralph Kiner and Bill White among them—and most add little to the proceedings. Ex-jocks know their stuff, but many never learn to communicate it concisely (in 10-second bursts, not 30-second rambles), do their homework, avoid clichés and come to terms with basic syntax.

Even when you find a smooth-talking ex-jock, as ABC did in Bob Uecker, your problems are not over. On paper, Uecker is a Garagiola clone—an obscure former catcher who turns a nice phrase. Trouble is, too many of those phrases are about Bob Uecker. He has cast himself as baseball's Rodney Dangerfield, and his patter is replete with one-liners about his ragtag career. On the *Tonight* show, where Uecker is an occasional guest, this sort of thing goes over big (or at least medium). When you're trying to watch a



Phil Rizzuto (wearing pin stripes in honor of Old Timers' Day) and Bill White, both of whom toll in the electronic vineyards of the N.Y. Yankees: prime examples of ex-jocks in the broadcast booth.

ball game, it tends to wear thin by about the second inning.

That's the problem, in fact, with ABC's baseball coverage in general. Its announcers have an annoying obsession with themselves. Kubek and Garagiola argue about baseball fundamentals, or reach back for a metaphor that captures the game situation; ABC's men, led by Cosell, drone on about themselves, or tell private jokes about production staffers that viewers can only assume produce lots of yuks out in the truck.

Garagiola and Kubek, by contrast, have learned well the lesson Vin Scully has been preaching for four years: Silence is golden. After a dramatic home run, Scully likes to have about 20 seconds of crowd noise, figuring that words are unnecessary. Both Kubek and Garagiola have worked over the years, as though under the tutelage of E.B. White, to cut verbiage from their act. Garagiola points with pride to his new-found method of describing a double play, from start

to finish, in only seven words—sort of a verbal haiku:

Double-play ball . . .
out . . . out . . .
double play!

Other baseball announcers are more prone to verbal hara-kiri. Consider the case of Phil Rizzuto, who was working a Yankee-Orioles game one summer's day in 1978. The Yankees were ahead when suddenly the picture cut away for a news bulletin. From the studio, a disembodied voice announced that Pope Paul VI had just died. "Details at 10," the voice said. Then the picture resumed, and the normal sounds of a baseball broadcast returned. All the normal sounds, that is, except the announcer's voice. Finally, Phil Rizzuto spoke.

"Well," he said, "that kind of puts the damper on even a Yankee win." ■

Scott Kaufer is a writer and editor who lives in New York.

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SEX ON CABLE

continued from page 41

be considered obscene in Louisiana. Or what's not sexy enough on a California cable-TV channel might be positively erotic in Georgia.

So individual cable operators have started to package their own channels. Faced with the rising demand for adult entertainment, many operators are creating their own adult channels for two reasons: It garners higher profits, and it allows them to program adult material to community standards of taste and decency.

Take the case of Gill Cable in San José, Cal., the fifth-largest independent cable company in the country, with 82,000 subscribers. On Jan. 1, 1981, Gill Cable launched its own adult channel, Rendezvous. "For the past several years our subscribers have been asking us when we were going to have an R-rated service," says Sam Ewing, media services manager for the system. "We received upwards of 1000 calls per month requesting

consistent complaint. Says Oak president John Gwin: "Customers want harder material. Personally, I feel that X-rated films would be going over the line."

Fran Beck took cable-TV programming about as far as it could go. Her show, appropriately titled *I Can Do Anything*, ran on Manhattan Cable TV from 1975 until a few months ago. Several people who worked at the system during the mid-'70s describe her program as mostly an innocuous talk show. There were, however, nights when Beck would soar into the outer limits: About three or four times a year she would hand in very graphic videotapes featuring brutal acts of sadism and masochism, including brandings and beatings.

But Fran Beck continued to get air time and usually her shows were straight. In fact, says Barbara Perkins, former public-access coordinator for Manhattan Cable TV, most of the public-access producers who floated through her office were, on the surface, far stranger than Fran Beck. One producer showed a program that gave visually explicit lessons in female masturbation. "You have to remember," says Perkins, "every week back then was weird."

And there was more madness to follow: The years 1975 and 1976 gave the cable world Al Goldstein's sexual variety program *Midnight Blue*, as well as *Ugly George*, in which George Urban stalks attractive, well-endowed women on the streets of Manhattan, and convinces them to bare their breasts while his camera rolls. The two cable companies in Manhattan, which are obligated to carry those programs, are upset by the sexual content of *Midnight Blue* and *Ugly George*.

Says Janet Foster, vice president of programming for Teleprompter Manhattan: "It looks bad for our company to be transmitting programs like *Midnight Blue* and *Ugly George*. People think our company produces them and that's untrue. We'd love for them to stay off our channels, but because of the First Amendment, we're forbidden to censor the local-origination channels. They've created a problem for us. This year, we offer subscribers about 215 public-access programs per week and only three fall into the adult area."

Foster isn't the only person disturbed by the frankness of some public-access programming. Alfred R. Schneider, an

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Faced with the rising
demand for adult
entertainment, many
operators are creating
their own adult channels

such a channel." In fact, Gill Cable, which operates and programs its own G- and PG-rated channel, was stung with only one repeated criticism during the past five years: It was not providing an adult channel. More than 10,000 subscribers have signed up for Rendezvous, which for \$7.95 per month offers about nine R-rated movies. Ewing tries to give subscribers what they want: big-studio R-rated films like *Lipstick*, plus "sleazy stuff" like *Cover Girl Models* and *2069: A Sex Odyssey*.

Over-the-air subscription-TV operators also are jumping on the adult bandwagon. National STV operators like SelecTV and Oak Communications have chosen to offer viewers adult channels. Sometimes the results are astounding. Oak's subsidiary in Phoenix, ON TV, last fall initiated a new service called Adults Only for its 22,000 subscribers. In four months, more than 13,900 customers had signed up for the new sex-oriented channel. So far there's been only one



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SEX ON CABLE

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ABC vice president and supervisor of ABC's Broadcast Standards and Practices department, objects to the difference in content between free TV and cable TV. "Broadcasters operate under the public-interest obligation with self-imposed standards for programming," he said recently. "Cable operates under a non-policy of 'anything and everything goes'."

Eighteen months ago *Midnight Blue* and Manhattan Cable TV tangled in a bitter fight riddled with censorship overtones. Goldstein, the program's chief backer and publisher of *Screw* magazine, challenged the cable company's decency guidelines, threatening a Federal lawsuit if they were not rescinded. Manhattan Cable TV backed off.

Naturally, Goldstein would love to have *Midnight Blue* syndicated national-

"Once government gets its foot in the door prohibiting X-rated films on cable, they may go after R-rated films."

ly on cable TV. Although for years he has predicted that the show will one day be available throughout the country, only 12 cable systems currently offer *Midnight Blue*. Ugly George has also talked of national cable-TV syndication, but so far only one cable operator has picked up the show. Once Atlantis Entertainment Network gets up on the satellite, it may open the door for coast-to-coast blanket-ing of the country with the likes of these programs.

Such notions have the cable industry looking over its shoulder for a possible conservative backlash. At present, there are few organized efforts aimed at curbing freedoms on cable TV. But voices within the television industry itself are being raised. ABC's Schneider recently blasted cable TV's presentation of programs with sex and violence. "Cable facilities carry orgies in late night, masturbation, and call-in programs on sexually explicit topics with nude men and women as hosts," he told a broadcasters' convention last fall. "Cable isn't struggling with what's acceptable and what's not."

Perhaps Richard D. Heffner, chairman of the film industry's Classification and Rating Administration (the board that

rates a picture G to X), summed it up best in an article last summer for *The New York Times*. "The new home-communications industry is on a collision course with the manners and morals Americans have traditionally accepted as appropriate in their homes," he wrote. "When they collide, there is reason to fear a reaction destructive to freedom in every medium and in every area of creative expression."

Already provisions banning X-rated films from being shown on cable systems are pending in Florida, Massachusetts and Utah. "Once government gets its foot in the door prohibiting X-rated films on cable, they may go after R-rated films and we could really get hurt," warns William Nix, counsel to the Motion Picture Association of America and the film rating board. "The public should be concerned, because these types of bills will simply limit viewing options."

One way to halt possible government restriction of cable-TV programming is to have the cable industry police itself, a move advocated by Gustav Landen, a former member of the film rating board. Landen, who is now chairman of Ithaca College's cinema and photography department, favors a cable rating board that would review programming and provide ratings for all cable-TV programs, from public-access shows to major productions on the largest pay-TV networks.

Although the National Cable Television Association has not taken a position on such a board, Tom Wheeler, currently its president—and the man who booted Jason Starr out of the 1978 convention—says, "The porn issue goes to the guts of society. I have a right to see what I want to see. Cable operators have a First Amendment right to show what they want to show. However, those rights must be exercised responsibly."

It's questionable as to whether some programs on cable-TV have been responsible. One thing is certain: Despite talk of restriction and censorship, the cable industry is giving the green light to blue programs. "I don't think putting pornography in cable-TV subscribers' homes is what we in the cable industry have worked so hard to accomplish," laments Janet Foster of Teleprompter. "I mean, is this the promise of cable TV?"

Replies Jason Starr, cynically but perhaps realistically. "Sex sells subscriptions. It's as simple as that." ■

THE WALL

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memorandum she had given the Poles, explaining what a bulwark of corporate America they were dealing with in Time Inc. "You know Time magazine," she had told them; "you know Life magazine—that's who these guys are. You won't have any trouble with them."

PRODUCTION: JUNE-SEPTEMBER 1980

The partners had agreed that production would begin in May, which is when the Poles had their cast of thousands, their tanks and their crews ready to go. This was one of the Poles' basic problems, a Time-Life executive would later complain—they always took things too literally. Western filmmakers *never* assume production will begin on time. Sure enough, the Americans would keep the Poles waiting until the third week of June.

Eight of those weeks had been lost in futile pursuit of the big-name stars CBS insisted fill the leading roles, among them Dustin Hoffman, Liza Minnelli, Richard Gere, Michael Douglas, Jon Voight and Nick Nolte. By the time CBS settled for Time-Life's original choice, English actor Tom Conti, Conti had signed to star in a stage musical in London, and Time-Life would be forced to pay his producer \$200,000 to delay the opening several months. When Conti arrived in Poland, he found the script bore almost no resemblance to the one he'd agreed to play. "Change it," he told Time-Life, "or I'll go home and have the summer in my garden."

There was little of the English garden about Sosnowiec, the coal-mining town west of Kraków that the Poles had selected for the shoot, though by all accounts it lent a somberness appropriate to the subject at hand. Eli Wallach, who spent three weeks there filming a cameo role, described the ambiance as "Pittsburgh, circa 1949"—coal dust filled the air, coating shirts and skin, while the skies remained gray through one of the wettest Polish summers in years.

The Wall's entourage of between 50 and 80 cast and crew members found itself ensconced in a cheerless hotel reminiscent of a second-rate motor lodge, where the pool was empty, the rooms bugged and the cuisine limited. Rumor had it that supplies of meat and other such luxuries not destined for the Moscow Olympics that summer were to be diverted to Sosnowiec for *The Wall*.



Two of the embattled protagonists up against *The Wall*: director Bob Markowitz (left) and star Tom Conti.

and the elegant six-page menu printed in English bore testimony to the sincerity of the Poles' intentions. But it wasn't long before the waiters began answering "*Nie ma*" ("There isn't any") when most of the items on it were ordered, and eventually the selection boiled down to little more than cabbage and potatoes.

Evenings were spent at the bar, where KGB Michael, as he came affectionately to be known, provided silent but attentive companionship, though he drank only water. Like most of his fellow spies, KGB Michael stood apart from the citizen Poles assigned to the film, many of whom were members of the local filmmaking community and quite vocal in their contempt for the Soviet Union and their own Government. "The spies were very obvious about what they were doing," says executive producer Diana Kerew. "The point is not to be secret, but to let you know you're under very close scrutiny."

If conditions off the set were uncomfortable, on the set they approached chaos. In a country so poor that the bricks for the wall itself had to be pro-

tected by armed guards, many of the promised supplies—lumber, nails, trucks, lighting equipment—simply didn't materialize. The Polish drivers, when they weren't threatening to strike for lack of pay, were running out of petrol; every instruction had to be translated three times, every correction another three times; scenes were regularly interrupted by someone shouting "*Cisza!*" ("Silence!") on the set; minor altercations turned into major confrontations.

At times the atmosphere took on the manic air of a Marx Brothers comedy, punctuated by sobering reality—like the time Kerew lost an hour when her driver saw sausage on sale at a market and stopped to get in line so his family would have meat that week. "The hysteria, the confusion, was such that you had to laugh or just crack up," says actor Griffin Dunne.

These concerns were not, however, foremost in the minds of Time-Life's executives back in New York. At the end of the first week of production, *The Wall* had already fallen three days behind schedule. "We knew right then we were

in trouble on this picture," says Nick Durrie, then Time-Life's vice president of financial administration. A project that had started out as Important Television rapidly turned into Problem Television, and the operative principle became: Get It in the Can.

Says director Bob Markowitz: "There were executives calling me in a panic at two o'clock in the morning, telling me, 'The film is way over budget: we're flying in to straighten things out.' They'd fly in, stay two or three days and then leave, saying, 'OK, it's all straightened out.' When it came down to it, nobody wanted to withstand the pain and live through what it would take in Poland to make that film. When they saw that things were not going the way they'd planned, they said, 'Get it done—don't worry about the quality, just get it done.' It wasn't *Heaven's Gate*, but that's the way it looked to them."

One executive who flew in for a visit was David Susskind. He stayed three days. "He came in to wave from the royal carriage," laughs screenwriter Lampell, "but David panics when he gets too far away from his barber."

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time. In 1976, it conducted a mail poll of 210 national organizations. In 1977, it met with numerous nonbroadcaster groups, and "town meetings" have been held in eight cities. Up until now, all the reaction has simply led to further research.

Whether the latest study will result in the ban being lifted is doubtful, says an NAB official: "With the mood of the country so conservative, I can't see such a change being accepted." However, he adds, doing the study makes sense. "Too many bans have been enacted because we thought people wouldn't want to see certain kinds of ads. This way, we're finding out the facts before we act."

The Reshuffled Congress: What's in the Cards for TV?

Given the Republican landslide in November—and in light of past Democratic inaction—the GOP has some fairly grand plans for TV legislation. Specific targets of the Senate Communications Subcommittee: the Fairness Doctrine and the equal-time rule.

The Fairness Doctrine requires a television station to provide reasonable opportunity for the presentation of conflicting views on controversial matters. The equal-time provision requires a station to provide air time for all competing candidates if it provides time for one. Some experts contend that both measures have failed to achieve their intended purpose of unrestricted political discussion. In fact, some critics claim that they have had the exact opposite effect: Since TV stations are unwilling to give away potentially huge blocks of air time,

they tend to shy away from truly debatable issues.

While the Senate committee decides how to approach the Fairness Doctrine and equal-time dilemmas, Senators Barry Goldwater (R-Ariz.; chairman of the Communications Subcommittee) and Robert Packwood (R-Ore.; chairman of the full Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation) have started to move on other fronts. One of their key watchwords is "deregulation," which means giving station owners more freedom from Federal Communications Commission rules.

Goldwater, with the support of Packwood and other heavy-hitting committee members, has introduced legislation that would lengthen a TV station's license term from three to five years. The bill would also make it easier for station owners to retain their licenses if challenged by an outside group.

"My bill recognizes that growing competition in the broadcast industry is quickly eliminating the need for restrictive regulations," Goldwater said. "The best test of whether the public's needs are being met by television stations is their record of performance and not cumbersome rules and lengthy proceedings."

On the House side, the subcommittee with jurisdiction over television is talking about scrutinizing the FCC more closely, in the belief that over-regulation has limited programming choices for viewers. Rep. Tim Wirth (D-Colo.) is the new subcommittee chairman, after last fall's defeat of Lionel Van Deerlin, the California congressman who tried to change the status quo in television. Wirth said the subcommittee will try to change things piecemeal. Van Deerlin tried, and failed, to change things all

at once.

"The basement-to-attic review was unrealistic—our eyes were bigger than our stomachs," Wirth said. "We'll have to do it piece by piece; we learned that it's not possible to rewrite the whole 1934 Communications Act."

Wirth's subcommittee has ambitious plans to venture into areas more or less uncharted by Congress. For example, Wirth said he hopes to hold hearings on whether there will be enough programs to fill "the multiplicity of delivery systems now being created. . . . We want to see if there's any way we can encourage more supply by removing legislative and regulatory barriers that might exist."

LONDON

RICHARD GILBERT REPORTING

The BBC's Wedding Plans



Prince Charles and Lady Diana: They follow the bouncing balls.

The most spectacular TV event of the year, if not the decade, will be seen on British screens on July 29. That's the day the BBC will broadcast a seven-hour, live "wed-dathon," featuring Prince Charles and Lady Diana Spencer.

The royal wedding will be the BBC's most ambitious outside broadcast ever, in-

volving 60 cameras—a dozen of them inside St. Paul's Cathedral—and 300 technical and planning staff. The timing of the wedding has delighted the TV bosses because, by the end of July, Wimbledon and the British Open golf tournament will be over—allowing 75 percent of outside broadcast resources to be devoted to the splendid occasion.

Cliff Morgan, who heads the BBC's outside broadcasts and also acts as liaison between the Royal Family and the BBC, said he dropped a hint "over a cup of tea or a gin and tonic" that late July would be a most convenient time. "It will be the most glamorous event since television began in 1936," he boldly predicts.

The BBC has been planning for Charles' wedding for about 18 months, but obviously without knowing a specific date. The day producer-in-charge Michael Lumley heard the official news of the nuptials, he walked the four-mile route between Buckingham Palace and St. Paul's Cathedral, "to refresh my memory." On the wedding day, Lumley will be sitting in an outside broadcast van in front of a bank of 30 TV monitors. "I have to find out every single thing I can. I shall dream the event night after night in bed—but in the end it's what happens on the day that is important."

In financial terms, the royal wedding is a bargain for the BBC. The operation will cost about \$340,000, or \$49,000 an hour. The average cost of a typical hour's viewing is \$70,000.

Apart from providing a boost to the languishing tourist trade, the royal wedding has led to a mini-boom in the rental and sale of video recorders among those who want a permanent record of the year's top TV show.

continued

Critics at Large

Everyone who watched last night's TV is a TV critic. The British Film Institute (BFI) in London, which has an increasing interest in television, decided as an experiment to structure the public's instant reaction to programs. So, for a week, the BFI organized a series of seminars/discussions held at lunch time in the New Gallery Centre, Regent Street, in London's West End.

Each day a different speaker introduced informal discussions about aspects of the previous night's TV programming. Ordinary viewers as well as TV professionals turned up to hear wide-ranging debates about children's shows, science documentaries, the two recent series on Irish history (*Ireland*, on the BBC, and *The Troubles*, on Thames TV) and soap operas like the long-running *Coronation Street*. The week ended with a feminist critique of women's roles on television.

Philip Simpson of the BFI says he was pleased at the public's response to this experiment, which will certainly be repeated later this year in a different part of London. "The debate about the programs was informed and friendly," he says. "A valuable experiment" is the reaction of teacher Helen Behr, who led the discussion about women on TV. She says, "We examined a documentary about the unemployed, *Kojak* and the sitcom *Three's Company* from a woman's point of view. We discussed stereotyping and concluded that imported American programs are the worst offenders. One of the main problems with TV is that people receive programs far too passively. These discussions will help viewers to be critical about what they see on television. In my opinion, it's an educational process that should start at school."

France's Teletel: Phone Books a Non-non

France's phone system has traditionally been a joke in Western Europe, but there is one area where France is way ahead of the pack: its plan to abolish printed phone directories in favor of Teletel computer terminals.

The French Post Office has already begun its ambitious scheme to replace costly and out-of-date phone books with special black-and-white terminals. (The view-screens are to be given free to all telephone subscribers.)

The first of these terminals were recently distributed in the Ille-et-Vilaine region of western France. By the end of the year, 250,000 subscribers should be able to find any number they want by computer. Englishman Roy Bright, who left Britain's Prestel system to run France's viewdata development, is enthusiastic about the French plans: "The French are adding new phone subscribers at the rate of two million a year—this means that phone directories are getting out of date almost as fast as they are printed. About 40 percent of the information they contain is worthless within a few weeks of publication."

Bright foresees commercial applications of the electronic directory. "It will supply Yellow-Pages business information, and companies will be able to rent advertising frames on the screen in the same way as they buy page space." By 1990, the French hope to have 35 million subscribers equipped with their own video terminals, and the same small video screens could be used to receive further Teletel services. Remarkably, the cost of giving away the units, \$101, will be saved by simply not printing phone directories. ■

Videocassettes

New Releases

MOVIES



Ronald Reagan and Bonzo: Woos the boss's daughter with monkeyshines.

Bedtime for Bonzo (1951)—Ronald Reagan as a young professor who attempts to win the dean's daughter through the antics of his baby chimpanzee. With Diana Lynn, Walter Slezak. (MCA Videocassette, Inc.; \$55)

Black Magic (1949)—Romance and intrigue in the life of the 18th-century hypnotist Cagliostro, who saw his parents killed by nobility and vowed to take revenge when he grew up. Orson Welles, Nancy Guild. (The Nostalgia Merchant; \$54.95)

The Corsican Brothers (1941)—Alexandre Dumas' story of twins—companions in the fight for liberty but rivals in love. Douglas Fairbanks Jr., Ruth Warrick, Akim Tamiroff. (The Nostalgia Merchant; \$54.95)

The Count of Monte Cristo (1934)—Lavish version of the Alexandre Dumas classic about the unjust imprisonment and vengeance of Edmond Dantès (Robert Donat). With Elissa Landi, Louis Calhern. (The Nostalgia Merchant; \$54.95)

Flash Gordon (1980)—Spectacular outer-space adventures of Flash, Dale and Dr. Zarkov, who battle to save Earth from destruction by the evil Emperor Ming. Sam J. Jones, Melody Anderson, Max Von Sydow. (MCA Videocassette, Inc.; \$65) (PG)

The Island (1980)—A journalist investigating mysterious ship disappearances is caught in a battle for survival on a remote Caribbean island. Michael Caine, David Warner. (MCA Videocassette, Inc.; \$65) (R)

The Killers (1964)—Two gangsters are sent to kill an ex-racing driver who had been involved in a robbery. Lee Marvin, Clu Gulager, Angie Dickinson, Ronald Reagan (his last screen appearance). (MCA Videocassette, Inc.; \$55)

The Last of the Mohicans (1936)—James Fenimore Cooper's story of a Mohican brave who cherishes a hopeless love for the daughter of an English commander. Randolph Scott, Binnie Barnes. (The Nostalgia Merchant; \$54.95)

The Man in the Iron Mask (1939)—Dumas' classic story about Philippe of France, imprisoned in a locked mask by his twin and rival for the

Best Sellers

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



Keir Dullea: His out-of-this-world voyage charts the way for runaway Hollywood productions.

throne, Louis XIV. Louis Hayward, Joan Bennett. (The Nostalgia Merchant; \$54.95)

My Fair Lady (1964)—Audrey Hepburn and Rex Harrison in the musical adaptation of Shaw's *Pygmalion*. With Stanley Holloway, Gladys Cooper. (CBS Video Enterprises; \$89.95)

Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band (1977)—Beatle-inspired musical fantasy featuring Peter Frampton and The Bee Gees singing many Beatles favorites. With Donald Pleasence, Steve Martin, Alice Cooper. (MCA Videocassette, Inc.; \$55) (PG)

Somewhere in Time (1980)—A budding playwright travels back in time for a bittersweet romance with a beautiful turn-of-the-century actress. Christopher Reeve, Jane Seymour, Christopher Plummer, Teresa Wright. (MCA Videocassette, Inc.; \$65) (PG)

SPECIALS

The Hostages: From Capture to Freedom—A 90-minute special from CBS News covering the 444-day ordeal of the Americans held hostage in Iran and the jubilant aftermath; narrated by Charles Kuralt. (MGM/CBS Home Video; \$49.95)

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

Readers wishing to obtain more information from the distributors of the above-listed movies and specials may do so at these addresses: CBS Video Enterprises, 1700 Broadway, 35th floor, New York, N.Y. 10019; MCA Videocassette, Inc., 100 Universal City Plaza, Universal City, Cal. 91608; MGM/CBS Home Video, 1700 Broadway, 35th floor, New York, N.Y. 10019; The Nostalgia Merchant, 6255 Sunset Blvd., Suite 1019, Hollywood, Cal. 90028.

- * (17) **1. Nine to Five** (1980)—Jane Fonda, Dolly Parton and Lily Tomlin declare war on office sexism. (Magnetic Video Corp.; \$69.95)
- (2) **2. Airplane!** (1980)—Zany spoof of airport disaster movies. (Paramount Home Video; \$79.95)
- (-) **3. The Stunt Man** (1980)—Peter O'Toole as a film director who imperils the life of a fugitive from the law. (Magnetic Video Corp.; \$69.95)
- (6) **4. Urban Cowboy** (1980)—John Travolta in a glossy Texas melodrama. (Paramount Home Video; \$79.95)
- (1) **5. Caddyshack** (1980)—Slapstick comedy starring Chevy Chase and Bill Murray. (Warner Home Video; \$65)
- (-) **6. Star Trek Bloopers** (1966-69)—Offbeat outtakes from the popular science-fiction TV series. (Video Dimensions; \$39.95)
- (3) **7. Smokey and the Bandit II** (1980)—Bandit, Frog and Sheriff Justice are reunited.

- (MCA Videocassette, Inc.; \$65)
- (4) **8. Honeysuckle Rose** (1980)—Willie Nelson as a country singer who begins to live his love songs. (Warner Home Video; \$55)
- (-) **9. Flash Gordon** (1980)—Flash, Dale and Dr. Zarkov battle to save Earth from destruction. (MCA Videocassette, Inc.; \$65)
- (12) **10. Star Trek—The Motion Picture** (1979)—Starring the original TV-series crew. (Paramount Home Video; \$84.95)
- (8) **11. Xanadu** (1980)—Musical fantasy, starring Olivia Newton-John. (MCA Videocassette, Inc.; \$65)
- (7) **12. Fame** (1980)—Energetic musical set in a New York high school for performing artists. (CBS Video Enterprises; \$69.95)
- (19) **13. 2001: A Space Odyssey** (1968)—Stanley Kubrick's milestone space epic. (CBS Video Enterprises; \$69.95)
- (-) **14. Cruising** (1980)—Al Pa-

- cino as an undercover cop searching for a killer of homosexuals. (CBS Video Enterprises; \$59.95)
- (15) **15. Alien** (1979)—Haunted-house drama in outer space. (Magnetic Video Corp.; \$59.95)
- (-) **16. Brubaker** (1980)—Robert Redford tackles prison corruption. (Magnetic Video Corp.; \$69.95)
- (-) **17. M*A*S*H** (1970)—Robert Altman's antiwar farce. (Magnetic Video Corp.; \$59.95)
- (-) **18. The Black Hole** (1979)—A Disney sci-fi tale of the search for Ultimate Knowledge. (Walt Disney Home Video; \$59.95)
- (-) **19. Fists of Fury** (1973)—Bruce Lee avenges innocent pals slain by mobsters. (Golden Video; \$59.95)
- (-) **20. The Chinese Connection** (1973)—Bruce Lee searches for his boxing master's killer. (Golden Video; \$59.95)
- * **Position last month**

Sales figures are from the month of March. Retail outlets participating in our survey include Associated Video, Houston; Audio Center, Honolulu; Audio Video Craft, Inc., Los Angeles; Barney Miller's Inc., Lexington, Ky.; Cinema Concepts, Inc., Wethersfield, Conn.; Communications Maintenance, Inc., Litchfield, Ill.; Concord Video Center, Stamford, Conn.; Cyclops Video, Sherman Oaks, Cal.; Discotronics, Inc., Cranbury, N.J.; Godwin Radio Inc.; Godwin Video Centers, Bir-

mingham, Ala.; Jantzen Beach Magnavox Home Entertainment Center, Portland, Ore.; Kaleidoscope Video Shops, Oklahoma City; Media Associates, Mountain View, Cal.; Media Concepts, Inc., St. Petersburg, Fla.; Modern Communications, St. Louis; Movies Unlimited, Philadelphia; Newbury TV & Appliances, New Bedford, Mass.; Nichols Electronics, Wichita, Kan.; Select Film Library, New York; The Sheik Video Corp., Metairie, La.; Stansbury Stereo, Baltimore; Televideo

Systems, Richmond; Thomas Film Video, Royal Oak, Mich.; Video Audio Electronics, Williamsport, Pa.; Video Cassette, Phoenix; Video Cassettes, Etc., Lubbock, Texas; Video Connection, Boston; The Video Connection, Toledo, Ohio; Video Dimensions, New York; Video Library, Torrance, Cal.; The Video Library Company, Narberth, Pa.; Video Services, Towson, Md.; Video Specialties, Houston; Video 2000, San Diego; Visual Adventures, Cleveland

Passages

SIGNED

WCBS-TV (New York) reporter **John Tesh**, to a multiyear contract with CBS Sports as a reporter for its new weekend sports anthology show.



Erma Bombeck: *The grass is greener over septic tanks and sitcoms.*

Humorist **Erma Bombeck**, by Marble Arch Productions, to create and write a half-hour comedy series for ABC.

Tim Kazurinsky, **Tony Rosato** and **Robin Duke**, all veterans of Second City improvisational troupes, as repertory players and writers for NBC's *Saturday Night Live*. **Laurie Metcalf**, another Second City player, and **Emily Prager**, from the National Lampoon, have been signed as featured players. Syndicated Hollywood columnist **Marilyn Beck**, as entertainment reporter for KABC-TV (Los Angeles).

Randy Hamilton, as host of ABC's *Kids Are People Too*, replacing **Michael Young**.

Rock Hudson, to an hour-long comedy/melodrama series for NBC.

HONORED

Tom Brokaw, co-host of NBC's *Today* show, with a Coro Pub-

lic Affairs Award from the Coro Foundation; also honored was new RCA chairman **Thornton Bradshaw**.

CBS sportscaster **Curt Gowdy**, by the National Sportscasters and Sportswriters Association, with induction into the NSSA Hall of Fame.

Ann Jillian, who appears on CBS's *It's a Living*, as the Ziegfeld Girl of 1981, by the Ziegfeld Club of California.

Ted Turner, president and chairman of the board of Turner Broadcasting Systems, Inc., with the Valley Forge (Pa.) Freedoms Foundation's 1981 Private Enterprise Exemplar Medal, for his innovation and leadership in the communications industry; Turner was also cited by the Gallagher Report as the "person who did most for the progress of marketing/advertising" in 1980.



Danny Kaye: *The jester wins a prize for his serious gestures.*

Danny Kaye (*The Danny Kaye Show*), with the Carnegie Foundation's Wateler Peace Prize for "the numerous and outstanding activities he has carried out on behalf of needy

children, as good-will ambassador for the United Nations Children's Fund."

Jerry London, director of NBC's *Shōgun*, with a Directors Guild of America Award as Best Director of a Television Special.

Monty Hall, host of *Let's Make a Deal*, with the United Jewish Welfare Fund's award for service "on behalf of all people."

Two stars of the 1940 film *Knute Rockne—All-American*: **President Ronald Reagan** (*General Electric Theatre*, *Death Valley Days*), who played "the Gipper," and **Pat O'Brien** (*Harrigan and Son*, numerous drama anthologies), who portrayed the legendary Notre Dame football coach, with honorary LL.D. degrees, by the University of Notre Dame.



Suzanne Somers: *Her demands for big numbers led to her subtraction.*

FIRED

Suzanne Somers, from the ABC comedy *Three's Company*. *Saturday Night Live* players **Charles Rocket**, **Ann Risley** and **Gilbert Gottfried**.

APPOINTED

Attorney **Mark Fowler**, to the chairmanship of the Federal Communications Commission.



Walter Cronkite: *Takes flight.*

Walter Cronkite, to the board of directors of Pan American World Airways.



Martin Balsam: *Murray taps out.*

RESIGNED

Martin Balsam, from his rôle as **Murray Klein** on CBS's *Archie Bunker's Place*.

DIED

Actress **Ysabel MacClosky**, 64, whose many rôles included Aunt Hagatha in *Bewitched*. **Bob Elson**, 76, baseball announcer whose long broadcasting career earned him entry into the Baseball Hall of Fame.

Character actor **Michael T. Enserro**, 62, best known for his rôles in television commercials, particularly as the crying plumber for Drano and "Father Spinelli" for Ragu spaghetti sauce.

Television director **Allan Angus**, 48, whose credits include *The Johnny Cash Show*, *It Was a Very Good Year* and *Music Country U.S.A.*

Eleanor Perry, 66, screenwriter (*Diary of a Mad Housewife*, *David and Lisa*), who received Emmy Awards for two TV plays, *Christmas Memory* and *The House Without a Christmas Tree*.

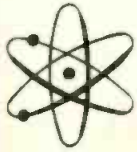
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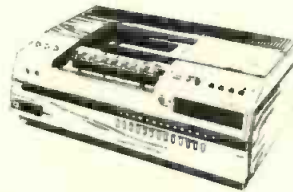


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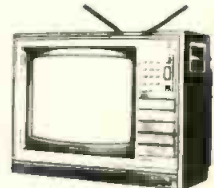


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THE WALL

continued from page 79

Relations among the production team, already tense, began to fall apart. Tom Conti's scenes had to be hurried through to avoid paying a \$25,000 daily fee if he wasn't out of Poland in time to open his London musical. Actress Rachel Roberts drank so heavily off the set that some members of the crew worried about her emotional stability; in November she would be found dead in Los Angeles, a suicide. Producer Harry Sherman feuded with director Markowitz; leading man Conti feuded with leading lady Lisa Eichhorn. Finally, Nick Durrie arrived to try to pull things together.

At first, he'd considered firing Markowitz, but after several "horrible, horrible" meetings with Markowitz and Sherman, and after one long talk with Eichhorn, Durrie changed his mind. As he recounts his conversation with Eichhorn: "She told me, 'I'm going home. I can't stand this place; the director's re-writing my part, giving Conti the big role—I'm leaving.' I talked her out of it. I told her she'd been taken off her last picture [*All Night Long*, in which Eichhorn was replaced by Barbra Streisand] and that she'd never work again if she did that. She said, 'Harry [Sherman] will back me up on this,' and I said, 'No, he won't, because I'm going to fire him right now'."

It wasn't long after Sherman's departure that the real trouble started.

Throughout the summer, economic conditions in Poland had worsened, as had the mood of the Poles. In mid-July the unprecedented series of labor strikes, which made headlines around the world, broke out to the north and later to the south of Sosnowiec. No headlines heralded the news in the Polish press, of course, and, like the Poles around them, the cast and crew of *The Wall* found themselves relying on word of mouth for their information. "There was an excitement and tension that came from not knowing what the hell was going on," says Griffin Dunne. "There were these great inspirational rumors sweeping the country."

One not-so-inspirational rumor had it that Soviet troops were massing on the border. Tom Conti put in a call to his wife in London to find out the latest news from the BBC, disguising his voice in a 13th-century Scottish accent to confuse the Government eavesdroppers. The BBC had heard the same rumor. Later, Diana Kerew, who had returned to New

York, would begin sending daily bulletins via telex (a source of news appreciated as much by the Poles as by the Westerners); she would also inform the U.S. ambassador in Poland of the names of the cast and crew on location, just in case they had any trouble leaving.

As the union movement swelled, the distinct possibility arose that the hundreds of Polish soldiers working as extras on *The Wall* would be summoned to real-life combat—either to put down the strikes or to defend their homeland from Soviet invasion. Cast members heard some of the soldiers discussing whether they would fire on their countrymen if that command ever came. "We didn't know if we'd have our Nazi soldiers on any given afternoon," says Chris Berardo. "They were confronting far more serious issues."

With millions of dollars invested and

The distinct possibility arose that the Polish soldiers working as extras would be summoned to real-life combat

only a few weeks left to shoot, the filmmakers had little choice but to finish their picture as quickly and as quietly as possible. Almost obsessed, Markowitz had covered the walls of his hotel room with World War II photographs of the Warsaw ghetto, and for the remainder of the production he more or less lived in that era. "All I was told when we got down to the last two weeks to 10 days," he says, "was that at any given moment it could all come to an end, that the army was going to be taken away, that we would all have to leave. And all I would say was, 'I don't want to hear about it. There's no adjustment I can make'."

When solid news did come, on Aug. 24, it was bad, very bad: The chairman, head of the Polish television committee and sponsor of *The Wall*, had been purged. His downfall became an especially lurid story, one that would earn

him the nickname "the Playboy of Poland" in the Western press. Investigated by the Supreme Chamber of Control and charged with 21 counts of embezzlement, personal enrichment and moral depravity, the chairman stood accused of maintaining 10 or more luxury homes, including a forest lodge furnished with \$1 million worth of antiques, a 32-acre sheep farm, a 40-room Warsaw palace and a Greek island retreat. His villa near Warsaw was said to have a glass-walled swimming pool and four prostitutes in permanent residence; his office a sauna, pool, masseuse and a projection room stocked with 900 pornographic videocassettes.

The chairman's purge left *The Wall* and its producers in delicate circumstances, to say the least. That Party leader Gierek would feel compelled to sacrifice one of his closest friends suggested that Gierek himself might very well be next (and indeed he was, 12 days later). To Chris Berardo, the message was clear: Despite continued public concessions to the striking workers, the hard-liners inside the Government were ascending to power. And since the hard-liners had long viewed Gierek's courting of Western corporations as a dangerous flirtation with the corruptive influence of the bourgeoisie—"Give them *Kojak* on television and the next thing you know we'll have strikes," is how Berardo describes their philosophy—it could be assumed a cooling of the official attitude toward *The Wall* would be forthcoming. "I knew at that point everything was up for grabs," Berardo says. "Hopefully it would take them [the leaders of the new regime] a little while to get their act together—they had more important things to take care of. So that meant we had, maybe, a week."

Thoughts of an identical nature had been going through the mind of the chairman's man in London, Wojciech Kornacki. At midnight the day before the chairman's ouster became publicly known, Kornacki placed a call to Nick Durrie in Sosnowiec to play, as Durrie put it, "his trump card." Kornacki demanded that Time-Life pay the final \$112,000 installment on its contract with Poland, plus an additional \$150,000 to \$200,000 owed, Kornacki said, for overages and delays attributable to Time-Life. Both sums were to be deposited immediately in Kornacki's London account; if they were not, filming would be

halted and Time-Life's personnel in Poland detained. Durrie avoided using the word he was thinking—"extortion"—and stalled, telling Kornacki there wasn't anything Time-Life could do until the banks opened on Monday.

The next day, Sunday, another midnight call from London informed Berardo: "We can no longer count on discipline in Warsaw; it may not be advisable to send the film with our usual courier." From that day forward, the film remained hidden under the production manager's bed. The next Tuesday, the regular courier who drove the film to the airport for shipment to New York disappeared; Berardo later would hear he'd been arrested for dissident activity. Kornacki, meanwhile, went into hiding.

For Jerzy Antczak in Poland, escape was not so simple. As the main Polish liaison to *The Wall*, with the chairman under arrest and Kornacki underground, his position became more tenuous than ever—a fact that did nothing to soothe his already volatile personality. In mid-week, he was called to Warsaw to confront the new head of the television committee, who told him, according to

Berardo, that the Westerners should finish their film and get out of the country.

Antczak decided to leave with them. Nick Durrie, not wanting to trust the vagaries of the commercial flights from Warsaw, chartered a plane to leave the following Sunday from Kraków. When the remaining 25 or so members of the production crew arrived at the airport, Antczak was there, but his passport had been revoked and he was under orders to return to Warsaw for further questioning. He asked Berardo to call his wife in Washington with instructions not to leave there under any circumstances. As a baggage cart took the final few days' worth of film to the plane, a member of Time-Life's crew rode with it.

Soon after she arrived in London, Berardo sent a telex to Poland requesting that Antczak be present to lend his "advice" during the editing of *The Wall*. The Poles forced him to sign a waiver of his salary, blocked his bank account and confiscated half his luggage, she says, but they allowed him to make the trip—a trip from which he has yet to return.

Today Jerzy Antczak lives in New York City. The whereabouts of Wojciech Kor-

nacki are still unknown, although several members of the Time-Life crew received Christmas cards from him last December. He wrote that he plans a visit to the United States as soon as his affairs are in order.

POSTPRODUCTION: SEPTEMBER 1980- FEBRUARY 1981

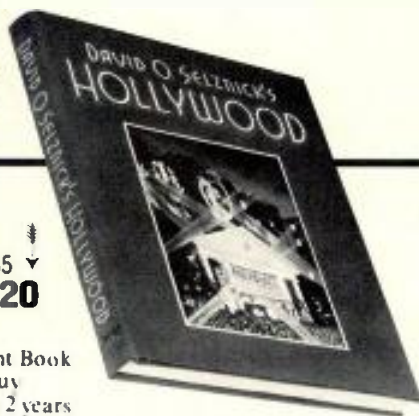
With his hands full in Poland, Bob Markowitz had no way of knowing how badly the situation had deteriorated at Time-Life headquarters in New York. He would soon find out—the hard way.

The man who in January had replaced Bruce Paisner as president of Time-Life Films was Austin Furst. Furst had won his corporate spurs at another Time Inc. division, Home Box Office, during HBO's spectacular growth into the undisputed king of the pay-cable industry. It was there that Furst had earned the reputation, justified or not, as one of the toughest S.O.B.'s in the business by using HBO's dominant position to extract the lowest possible prices for the feature films HBO bought from the movie studios. "Take it or leave it" had been

continued on page 88

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THE WALL

continued from page 87

his bargaining policy, and though the studios took it, they didn't like it. Even Furst's admirers concede that he is hard-nosed, "a real cowboy"; his enemies, who are legion, call him "ruthless." Says one of those enemies, "All over the film industry, when people heard he was taking over at Time-Life, they were saying, 'Austin Furst? My God, I hope he fails'."

It's not unlikely that similar sentiments had occurred at one time or another to one of Time-Life's own producers, David Susskind. The chemistry between Furst and Susskind was similar to that between Billy Martin and Reggie Jackson of the New York Yankees: From the moment Furst became Susskind's boss, it was all but ordained that the latter would soon be leaving. Furst's predecessor, Bruce Paisner, had more or less seen his role as lending management support to Susskind's creative genius, which is just the way Susskind liked it. "If Susskind brought him a roll of toilet paper, Paisner would have approved it," says a former Time-Life executive.

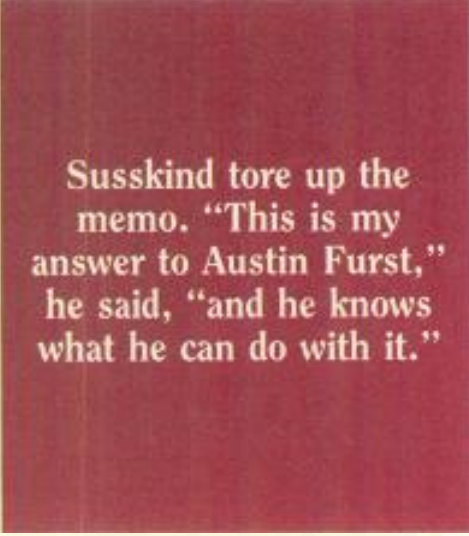
When Furst came in, he hit the ground running, hiring dozens of new employees and setting up his own executive hierarchy, and he lost no time letting Susskind know who was in charge. "Furst's attitude from the beginning was, 'Don't let David have his way on anything,'" says an executive who was there at the time. "David reacted accordingly." In other words, Susskind started looking for employment elsewhere; by October he had decided to take an offer from MGM.

It was at this unsettled juncture that Bob Markowitz, still editing *The Wall* in London, was summoned to Los Angeles to screen the film for Susskind. The timing couldn't have been worse. The day before the screening, Susskind had blown up over some remarks of Furst's and threatened a lawsuit. Then, 10 minutes before the screening was to begin, Susskind was handed a memo from Furst. According to one of the executives in the room, Susskind tore up the memo without reading it and shoved it back at the man who'd delivered it. "This is my answer to Austin Furst," he said, "and he knows what he can do with it." After watching *The Wall* in silence, Susskind stalked out with a cursory, "Thank you, gentlemen, you'll be hearing from me." A few days later, Bob Markowitz received word by telephone that his services were

no longer required.

As it turned out, Susskind had decided his own services on *The Wall* were no longer required, either. Several of those who saw that first cut agreed it had significant problems, chief among them being the absence of several transitional scenes needed to improve the flow of the story. "That may have been the final straw for David," says a Susskind intimate. "He looked at *The Wall* and said, 'Jesus, there's a lot of work to do here. If I get involved in this, it'll be April before it's done, and I'm not sticking around till then.'"

Susskind ignored pleas from CBS to help edit the film, a decision many people saw as an abrogation of his responsibility as executive producer. "It's like having a child and leaving your child," says Bernie Sofronski, the CBS vice



Susskind tore up the memo. "This is my answer to Austin Furst," he said, "and he knows what he can do with it."

president in charge of the project. "I committed to David Susskind, and we're the ones who are getting stuck. I think it's wrong, I think it's irresponsible and I think it's unfair."

David Susskind says he no longer talks to reporters, but when these charges were relayed to him through a secretary, he returned the call. "I never walked away from anything in my life," he says. "To stay with *The Wall* would have meant another eight months of work, and I was obliged to report for work at MGM." Couldn't he have finished up *The Wall* while he was at MGM? "Yes, by dying," Susskind answers. "I chose to live. Another eight months at Time-Life was inconceivable to me." Because of his relationship with Austin Furst? "No comment."

Susskind's departure left *The Wall* in

the hands of foster parents at Time-Life, but in a matter of months the film would be orphaned entirely and left on CBS's doorstep. It seems that Austin Furst never quite realized his ambitions of turning Time-Life Films into a major force in television and movie production. By last February, Time Inc. announced it was getting out of the production business altogether. Almost overnight, Time-Life Films was no more.

Time Inc.'s public-relations spokesmen explained the decision by saying the company wanted to devote its resources to developing its cable operations. Exactly why that required the dismantling of Time-Life Films was a question they wouldn't entertain, but most observers in the industry were sure they knew the answer: Time's board of directors felt no more at ease with the sorcery of show business in the spring of 1981 than they had a year and a half earlier, when David Susskind had shown them his flow chart explaining *The Wall*. Austin Furst, the consummate negotiator, had brought a businessman's instincts to a gambler's game, and it didn't work. "Austin didn't bring in creative talent; he brought in business people," says a former Time executive. "And to run a successful film company, you need heart. Austin has feelings, obviously, but he feels you don't need them to do business." Time turned to cable, this executive says, because, "Making programs is a risk; distributing programs is not a risk." (At press time, Austin Furst was still with Time Inc., overseeing the sale of the film division's assets.)

What direct role *The Wall* played in Time's decision, if any, will probably never be known, although one former executive there believes it may have been "instrumental" in Time's retreat. "Time likes everything in nice, neat little packages," she says, "and *The Wall* was anything but that."

Indeed, plotting *The Wall's* progress on chart paper would be an exercise akin to playing connect-the-dots with a Jackson Pollock painting—a lot of things just wouldn't fit on the page. Bob Markowitz, who has been rehired to finish editing the film, still shakes his head when he remembers that production was completed only 12 days over the original schedule. "At the time, that seemed horrendous," he says. "Looking back, it seems like a miracle." ■

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Hocus-Pocus, Sharpening the Focus



By DAVID LACHENBRUCH

Hi-def is coming. High-definition TV, that is. CBS brought it out into the open with a demonstration, for Government communications officials, of a new television system developed by the Japan Broadcasting Corporation (NHK). The system boasts 1125 scanning lines, in place of the current 525. Using equipment by Matsushita and Sony, CBS showed off clear pictures with enhanced color, razor-sharp detail and no discernible line structure. As demonstrated on specially made wide-screen picture tubes and projection TV sets, the proportions of the picture were closer to Cinema-scope than to today's boxy image.

What CBS has in mind is a deluxe TV service, and it has already asked the FCC to look into setting hi-def standards for direct broadcasting from satellites to homes. The company sees hi-def becoming the future standard for home videotape recorders, and eventually spreading to all of television. But there's still plenty of work to be done: One hi-def channel occupies the spectrum space of five standard TV channels.

By applying computer technology, CBS hopes to squeeze the same quality

picture into approximately the space taken up by an existing channel, for reception on present TV sets (though not in wide-screen form). When? Before the end of the '80s, according to CBS.

SKINNY TAPE

The future of videotape was foreshadowed by two recent announcements from Fuji Photo Film, one of Japan's largest magnetic-tape makers. Fuji announced an extra-long-play VHS cassette, using a thinner tape backing, that could increase recording and playing time from the current six to eight full hours—just as soon as the necessary testing and approvals are completed by recorder manufacturers.

Even more fascinating is the development by the same company of two brand-new tape coatings for a future generation of home VCRs. One of them, when used with an ultrathin tape backing, will make it possible to record up to four hours of quality video on a cartridge the size of today's audio cassette, or eight hours on a slightly larger one. Fuji has submitted samples to Japanese manufacturers as possible standards for new ultramini-

ature recorders, which may be small enough to hook onto your belt or to be combined with tiny video cameras. Look for this advance in less than five years.

KID STUFF

Innocent children may become pawns in the battle between the two available videodisc formats: LaserVision (LV) and Capacitance Electronic Disc (CED). In the course of the struggle between these systems, a completely new form of home entertainment has been born. It's called "participative," or "interactive," video, and its most intriguing product to date is the *First National Kidisc* on the OPA (Optical Programming Associates) label.

Kidisc is designed to take advantage of the unique characteristics of the LV format (Magnavision and LaserDisc players), which aren't available in the RCA-type CED system. It's a one-sided disc, which actually can be played from start to finish in 27 minutes, but it can entertain, amuse and instruct children from 5 to 10 years old for hours on end by making use of such features as stop-action, slow motion, reverse, dual sound tracks and direct access to individual chapters. It contains 25 program sequences, or chapters, each requiring the child to interact with the disc.

One sequence is a step-by-step lesson in building paper airplanes, in which kids can set the pace of each operation by using the player's stop and frame-advance controls. Another shows them how to do the Irish jig: One sound track contains verbal instructions, the other music; they can be played separately or together.

There are also segments that the child can run slow or fast or backwards just for fun, magic tricks that can be revealed by rerunning the disc in slow motion, a chapter on making a water-glass xylophone with 25 play-by-number tunes, a trip to the San Diego Zoo, and so forth. Or how about 101 jokes and riddles, with the screen pace controlled by the user to match his reading skills?

Kidisc is like a great big animated fun book. It makes television a two-way experience for children for the first time. As for the merely young at heart, the participative OPA series has some other discs: *How to Watch Pro Football*, an upcoming Craig Claiborne cooking course and an exercise program. ■

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IT'S WORTH IT.



TV's Invisible Men: Here's to the Losers

By JOHN SCHULIAN

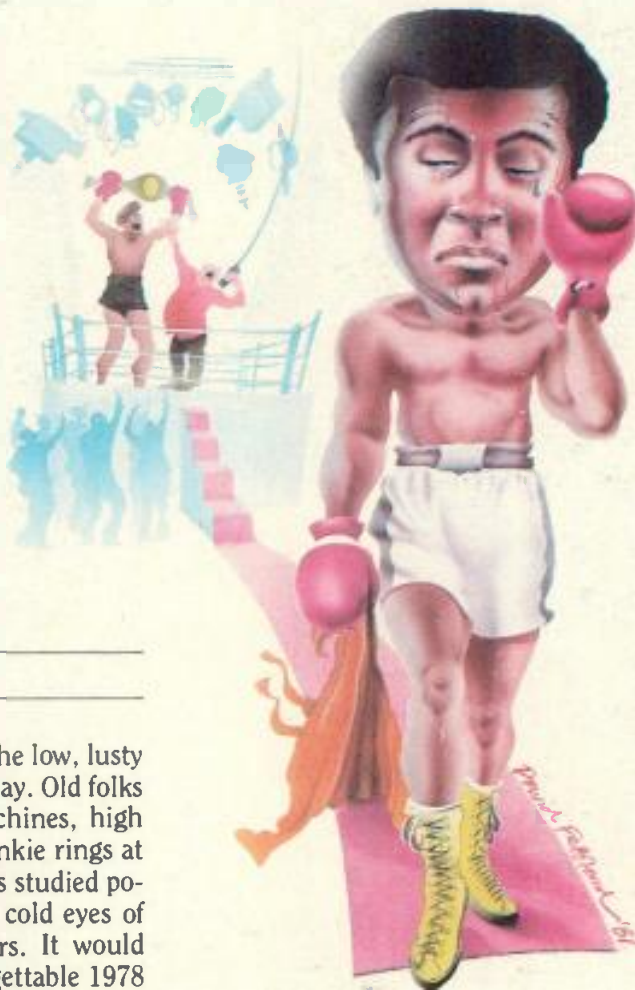
The casino swelled with the low, lusty roar of fortune-seekers at play. Old folks pounded away on slot machines, high rollers nervously twisted pinkie rings at baccarat tables, and hookers studied potential customers with the cold eyes of slaughterhouse executioners. It would have been just another forgettable 1978 Wednesday night in the Las Vegas Hilton if Muhammad Ali hadn't suddenly appeared, bearing the emotional baggage of inglorious failure.

Four hours before, he had strutted into the Hilton's auditorium to defend his world heavyweight championship against a supposedly toothless monster named Leon Spinks. Now Ali was emerging as an improbable loser, a pitiable soul who had no idea he would win back his title seven months later. All he wanted to do was get through the casino and up to his room, where he could close the door and hide. For once in his life, he wasn't courting the love of the masses, but he got it anyway.

"Ali! Ali!" cried a true believer. "You still the champ."

"No I ain't," Ali whispered hoarsely, and hurried toward the elevator.

It was one of those scenes where life is better than art, one of those moments that deserve to be showcased on television. But there were no cameras around, nor any sportscasters. The only witnesses from the media were a handful of after-



noon newspapermen who hurried back to their typewriters and tried to paint the picture with words. No matter how good a job the sportswriters did, though, they had to be haunted by the thought that TV could have done it better.

I know because I was one of them, and the feeling I have had ever since is of creeping powerlessness. But just as the tube can reduce me to a puddle of printer's ink, it can also fill me with an unparalleled sense of superiority. And never does television feed my ego quite so vigorously as when it does what it did that long-ago night in Vegas: allow the most touching story in the house to evaporate because it happens to be about a loser.

Even when NBC captured Kansas City's Freddie Patek crying in the dugout after losing to the Yankees in the 1977 American League play-offs, I couldn't help thinking it was an aberration. TV considers winners more fun. They splash champagne on one another and say outrageous things and, most important to

any network's plans, convince viewers to watch them the next time they're on TV. So CBS could sell the Philadelphia Eagles on their way to the Super Bowl, but the New Orleans Saints, victors only once in 16 tries, were just so much wilted electronic lettuce.

To get anything out of the Saints, a sportscaster would have had to hang around long after one of their losses, and that is the kind of time television doesn't have. The next show on the schedule won't wait, particularly when the cameras are focused on a bunch of teary-eyed mesomorphs with their heads in their hands. Overlooked is the fact that those mesomorphs provide so much of the stuff of sports drama.

Maybe I wouldn't recognize that either if I hadn't chanced upon the story of Kitten Hayward. It was the late '60s. I was doing time in graduate school, and part of my escape was burrowing through one of E.P. Dutton's old *Best Sports Stories* anthologies. Kitten Hayward could be found there in the words of Stan Hochman, a Philadelphia Daily News columnist who had watched the battle-scarred pug turn a sure victory into a draw because he wanted the knockout he couldn't get. He was, in Hochman's words, "a writer's fighter," and from that day on, I began looking for his spiritual brethren.

They dwell in places like the cracker-box gymnasium where I came across a woebegone drifter working out there just so he could see the overweight Ali waddle through a three-round exhibition. And they dwell in the penthouses of sport: Carl Yastrzemski weeping at his failure in baseball's 1978 sudden-death play-off; and Buddy Delp, the beguilingly roguish horse trainer, philosophizing about luck—good and bad—after a freak accident and an outclassed jockey robbed his Spectacular Bid of the 1979 Triple Crown. They are studies in grace and emotion and honesty, these beautiful losers, and TV treats them almost as if they didn't exist.

There is no room for them on post-game shows, nor are there any network sports essayists capable of capturing their poignance, either live or after a week's reflection. The void is filled with winners, and more winners, and in the process, television turns its audiences into the thing it loves least—losers. ■

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YESTERDAYS

**Milton Berle welcomes
Elvis Presley . . . Gidget
hears wedding bells . . .
A baby for the Stivics on
All in the Family**

25 YEARS AGO: JUNE 1956

Presidential aspirant Gov. Averell Harriman of New York appears on NBC's *Meet the Press*. . . Milton Berle's last show of the season features Elvis Presley. . . In observance of the 12th anniversary of D-day, ABC's *Cavalcade Theater* presents Peter Graves as Maj. Thomas Howie in "The Major of St. Lo." . . Gail Davis has been signed for \$6 million worth of new *Annie Oakley* episodes, which will carry the show through mid-1958. . . The average daily audience for the four-month-old *Captain Kangaroo* show is 3,677,603. . . Because a Census Bureau rundown shows that families with two or more children make up 60 percent of the U.S. TV audience, all three networks are preparing more shows aimed at kids and teens. . . *Disneyland* viewers visit "Tomorrowland" and learn that man will one day be able to travel to the moon. . . On the comedy series *Dear Phoebe*, Bill (Peter Lawford) Hastings' statement in his newspaper column that "career girls make mediocre wives" is challenged by female sportswriter Mickey (Marcia Henderson) Riley.

15 YEARS AGO: 1966

Gov. George W. Romney of Michigan, a likely candidate for the 1968 Presidential race, is interviewed on CBS's *Face the Nation*. . . Host Jim Backus introduces British chanteuse Petula Clark on the CBS variety show *Continental Showcase*. . . Basil Rathbone narrates an ABC special on *The Baffling World of ESP*. . . On *Flipper*, Sandy and Bud's pet is flown to the Bahamas for studies of dolphin communications. . . ABC presents *Year of the Gun?*, a documentary about present-day Communist China, featuring an interview with Secretary of State Dean Rusk. . . The Beatles are on *The Ed Sullivan Show* in a segment filmed in London. . . Comedian Dick



Sally Field as Gidget: Jeff's invitation invites daydreams of wedding bells.

Gregory discusses civil disobedience with William F. Buckley on *Firing Line*. . . Gidget (Sally Field) thinks marriage when Jeff (Stephen Mines) sends her a formal invitation to meet his parents. . . On *Daniel Boone*, Daniel sprains an ankle just before the hotly contested annual footrace with the Indians.

5 YEARS AGO: 1976

Nine Democratic Presidential candidates, including Jimmy Carter, Jerry Brown and Frank Church, discuss their positions on ABC's *Issues and Answers*. . . On *The Jeffersons*, George is accused of being a sexist when he refuses to hire a woman as a manager. . . The prime-time schedule lists no less than 21 crime dramas this season, including *Kojak*, *Ironside* and *Police Woman*. . . Though divorced, Salvatore and Cheri-

lyn Bono are back together on CBS for *The Sonny & Cher Show*. . . On *All in the Family*, the Stivics' overdue baby decides to make his appearance just as Mike and Gloria are sitting down to a fancy restaurant dinner. . . Rumor has it that Tom Brokaw, NBC's White House correspondent, will leave his beat to replace Jim Hartz as host of the *Today* show. . . Lily Tomlin joins the Not Ready for Prime Time Players in a takeoff on *Jaws* on NBC's *Saturday Night Live*. . . ABC covers the U.S. Olympic Trials, featuring boxers Leon Spinks and Sugar Ray Leonard, sprinters Steve Riddick and Houston McTear, high jumper Dwight Stones, and swimmers John Naber and Shirley Babashoff. . . An *NBC News Special*, "The Search for Something Else," discusses the growing "self-awareness" movements in the U.S.

—Alison Nelson

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Network Queen for a Day

By SYBIL ADELMAN

As a television writer, I've always puzzled over how networks decide which shows go on the air. I imagine a conference room filled with executives scoffing at a script. "It's literate and there's no part for Suzanne Somers or a chimpanzee. Why would anyone watch it?"

One typical morning I was lying on the couch, reading the classified ads in *The New York Times* simply to avoid working. I was checking the list of restaurant supplies to be auctioned when the phone rang. It was a network vice president calling from Los Angeles. I'd done scripts for him, so I anticipated he was about to ask me to do another pilot. "Would you be interested in being vice president in charge of comedy development?"

"No way!" I blurted out. I couldn't see myself dressing like a grown-up, dictating memos to a secretary, having someone pour my coffee. And it would mean leaving New York and moving back to Los Angeles. Just the year before, I'd packed my art collection—assorted New Yorker cartoons and a Peanuts wall calendar—and left L.A., vowing I'd never again live in a city where bag ladies carry Gucci shopping bags.

I spent the rest of the day on the phone. Some writer friends supported my decision. "You'd be crazy to take a network job. You'd hate it. And you'd have to give up writing!"

Others argued, "You're crazy not to take the job. Think of the power. You could say no to all the producers who've said no to you. And you'd never have to write again!"

Thoughts of the corporate job danced through my head over the next few weeks as I agonized at the typewriter, again trying to make a character conform to some television mogul's grand



vision: "He should be thoughtful yet impulsive, serious but equally flamboyant. A combination of Phil Donahue and Liberace." *Who needs this? How could I have cavalierly said no to my only shot at revenge?* I thought. *As a network vice president, I'd be calling the shots. I could make up for years of abuse.* I stopped typing and began to picture myself in a windowed corner office.

Me to my secretary: "Tell David Susskind if it's so important he see me today, it'll have to be at Saks' shoe department. I need silver sling-backs for the Emmys."

Me to an old boyfriend: "Sure, I remember you . . . the actor! Hard feelings? Don't be silly. Plenty of people say, 'Move out here, we'll make a life together,' and then disappear without a word. Gee, it's too bad you're not right for any of our shows."

And I'd be generous. I'd share my new power with friends. For Christmas I'd give the gift of revenge: "Tell me who's been rotten to you. They'll never work in this town again."

I grabbed the phone, too eager to wait for the cheaper evening rates. "Hi," I said to the senior vice president. "I think we were disconnected. You were saying something about a job?" He told me to fly out to L.A. immediately.

The search through my closet was disturbing. My choice for apparel was limited to a mauve peasant dress or a stained mauve peasant dress. I got nervous about how I'd look at the interview. I have the knack of doing something with a scarf that makes doormen point me to the service entrance.

Now desperate for the job, I ran out to the nearest book store and bought

The Woman's Dress for Success Book, which outlines the musts for a top executive: a dark, skirted suit, pumps, straight hair, an attaché case and a gold pen—Faye Dunaway's look in *Network*. With my frizzy hair, Zabár's shopping bag and Bic Banana, I was closer to Harpo Marx's look in *Duck Soup*.

I satisfied all the dress requirements and my efforts appeared to be paying off. The interviews went well. At a big Hollywood party, I practiced giving the brush-off to pushy agents and would-be producers. I forgot the name of anyone who'd ever forgotten mine.

There was only one final lunch meeting between me and the job. The senior vice president looked up from his Shecky Greene salad and said, "I've been meaning to ask you. What made you change your mind about the job?"

"I want to leave David Susskind on hold. For a week."

He laughed. "No, really," he said.

"I want to see to it that nobody from the network flies on TWA again. They did something with my luggage. It's a long story."

"Seriously, what do you feel will be your contribution to making television better?"

I was stunned. "Television?! I never watch television."

I didn't get the job.

The next day I sulked all the way back on TWA's noon flight to New York. My luggage went to Zurich. ■

Sybil Adelman's television-writing credits include *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*, *Maude* and scripts for *Lily Tomlin*.

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Our new model VFP-170 lets you record up to six full hours of your favorite television shows on a single videotape cassette. It lets you record one show while you watch another. And it gives you the option of playing back those programs at your convenience.

You can even record while you're away from home. Convertible SelectaVision has a 14-day programmable memory that automatically turns itself on and off—and even changes channels—when you've got places to go and people to see.

And that's just for starters. Because Convertible SelectaVision doesn't just make it easy to record your favorite shows on videotape. It makes it fun to watch them, too.

There's a twelve-function remote control unit that lets you play back your tapes with special effects like *slow motion*, *frame-by-frame advance* and *stop action*.

Want to locate your favorite scenes? Press the picture search button, and you can view cassettes in high-speed forward or reverse motion without having the screen go dark. And you can edit out unwanted programming with the *remote pause* while you're recording—all from the convenience of your chair.

Now, this might seem like a lot for any video recorder to do. But Convertible SelectaVision is really two video recorders in one. And that's only half the story.



CONVERT IT TO A HOME MOVIE OUTFIT.

Chances are, some of the best shows you watch on Convertible SelectaVision will be family entertainment programs—*starring your own family*.

That's because Convertible SelectaVision gives you the option of adding a videotape camera (RCA's new CC010 would be an excellent choice). And converting the recorder to a home movie outfit that you can use indoors or out.

Birthdays, weddings, bar mitzvahs, reunions. The best family times all become Prime Time material when you've got Convertible SelectaVision.

It's lightweight, compact and has a *built-in, rechargeable battery*. So you can carry it most anywhere. And videotape your family and friends for *over an hour on a single charge*.

There are practical uses, too. Convertible SelectaVision can videotape your backhand, your sales presentations and record your possessions for insurance purposes.

Best of all, Convertible SelectaVision gives you an *instant television playback* of whatever you record. No waiting for expensive film processing. No additional screens or projectors. And, because videotape can be used again and again, no money wasted on bad film.

Convertible SelectaVision. It's the *two-in-one* video recorder you've been waiting for. And it's waiting for you at your RCA Dealer's now.



For the complete line of SelectaVision VCR models and color video cameras, write to: RCA Consumer Electronics, Department 32-312, 600 North Sherman Drive, Indianapolis, IN 46201.



Let RCA turn your television into
SelectaVision®

