

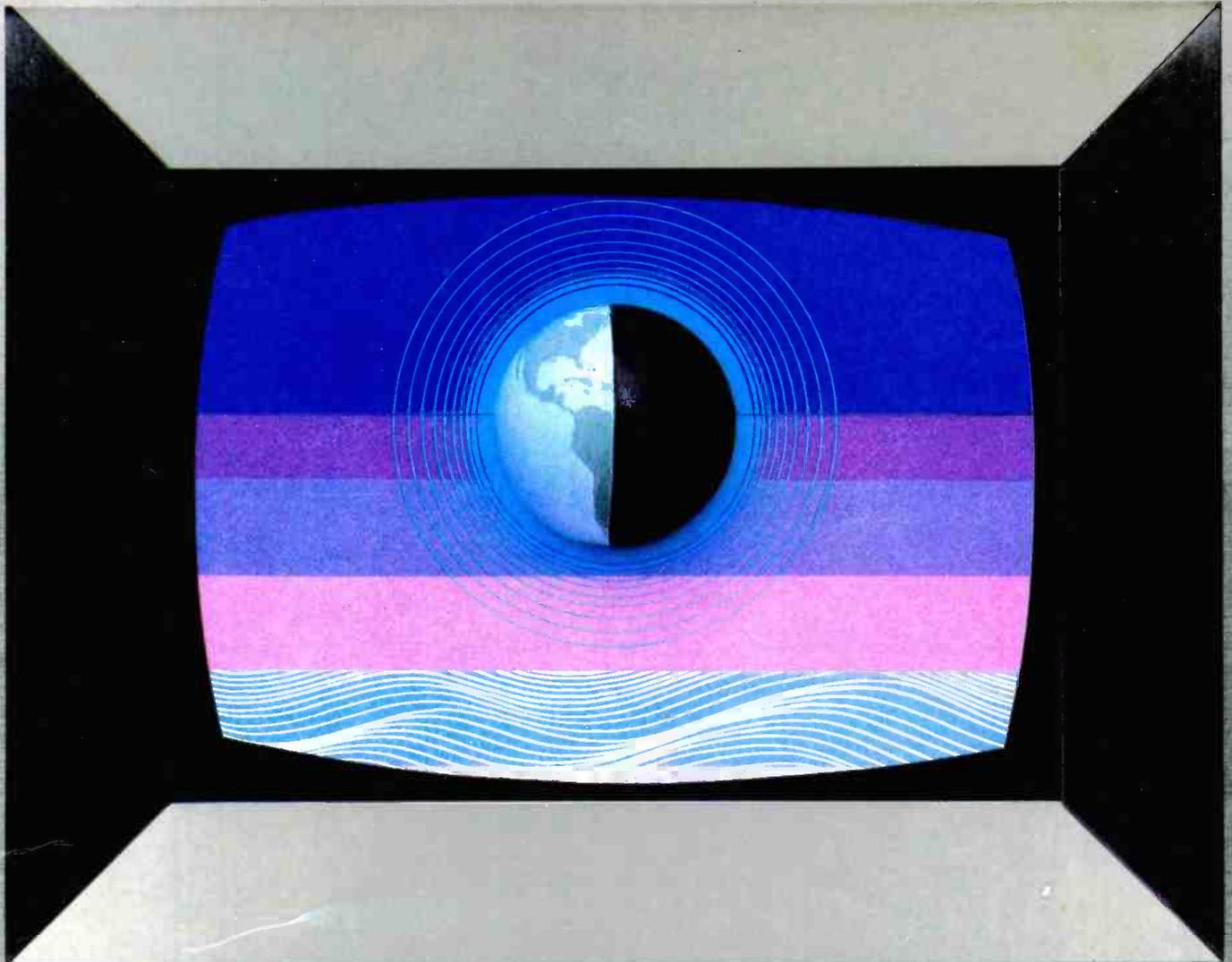
CLP

# PANORAMA

Television  
today and  
tomorrow

FEBRUARY 1980  
\$1.50

FIRST ISSUE



**HOW TV WILL COVER  
THE OLYMPICS**

*Cjivesty*

**VIDEOCASSETTE RECORDERS: COMPLETE BUYER'S GUIDE**

**ALAN ALDA TALKS ABOUT LIFE AFTER 'M\*A\*S\*H'**

**PICTORIAL PREVIEW OF  
1980'S BIG MOVIES AND MINISERIES**

**PAY CABLE: WAITING FOR UNCLE MILTIE**



**Come to where the flavor is. Come to Marlboro Country.**



**Marlboro Red or Longhorn 100's—  
you get a lot to like.**



Kings: 17 mg "tar," 1.0 mg nicotine—  
100's: 18 mg "tar," 1.1 mg nicotine av. per cigarette, FTC Report May '78

Warning: The Surgeon General Has Determined  
That Cigarette Smoking Is Dangerous to Your Health.

# WHAT IS PANORAMA?

*The simplest way to answer that question is by saying that PANORAMA is a new monthly magazine whose subject matter is indicated by its subtitle: Television today and tomorrow. It will be edited for the selective television viewer, the person who watches television about half as much as the national average, but who is concerned about the impact the home screen is having on his or her life and values, and on society in general.*

*Another way of answering is by quoting the words of Walter Annenberg, president of Triangle Publications, Inc. This is what he said when the birth of PANORAMA was announced a few months ago:*

*"The TV screen influences nearly every aspect of our society and its mores, as well as public attitudes on foreign affairs, social issues and government. We live in a time of rapid and significant changes. On network and public TV, programming is changing; movies and miniseries are creating an opportunity to develop characters and make social statements. And there is a technological revolution going on that by greatly increasing program sources for the home screen will drastically affect the viewing habits of the public, with cable, pay-cable and subscription television, satellite transmission, and videocassettes and discs growing in importance. PANORAMA will offer its readers an authoritative perspective on programming, new and future uses of the home screen, developments in governmental regulation and the changes in society that the 'television revolution' is causing."*

*But the most effective answer is, simply, to let the magazine speak for itself. This issue is our first statement. It shows you how PANORAMA will look and how it will express itself. In the months ahead, we will have much more to say, as we offer a panoramic view of television's constantly changing landscape.*

*We hope that you will like what PANORAMA has to say and the way it says it.*

Sincerely,  
The Editors

# PANORAMA

Television  
today and  
tomorrow

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# SETTLE FOR MORE

The Volkswagen Dasher isn't a down-sized something else. It wasn't wrenched into shape overnight.

It's exactly the size we had in mind, and so we've had plenty of time to make it more of a car instead of less.

For example, you have more than one choice: the 2-door hatchback, the 4-door hatchback or what we feel is the world's most fascinating station wagon.

Whichever you choose, you also get to choose either the fuel-injected gasoline engine or the optional diesel engine.

The Dasher Diesels deliver an EPA estimated **36** mpg and an extraordinary 49 mpg highway estimate. And the gasoline engine is no slouch, either, with **23** estimated mpg, 35 mpg highway estimate. Use "estimated mpg" for comparisons. Mpg varies with speed, trip length, and weather. Actual highway mpg will probably be less.

Don't go away. There's more performance than you thought: a gasoline Dasher Sedan will propel you from 0 to 50 mph in only 8.1 seconds\*, quicker than a few "sportscars."

More room than you thought: the

Dasher wagon holds 31 cubic feet of anything. Need still more? In 30 seconds, the rear seats fold down and you have 51.6 cubic feet.

More luxury than you thought: the carpeting in every Dasher is really plush and really everywhere. The AM/FM stereo radio is standard. So is the electric rear window defogger. The steel-belted radials. The quartz clock.

There's nothing cheap about the Dasher, including the price. But the fit and finish are equal to just about any car made.

The only thing you give up are some old-fashioned ideas about what a car ought to be.

\*Dasher Diesel Sedan 0-50 mph in 13.0 sec.

# VOLKSWAGEN DOES IT AGAIN



# Every Panasonic gives you a picture that's life-like. This Panasonic also gives you a picture that's life-size.

Panasonic brings you life in your choice of sizes. From our little 7" (meas diag) portable color TV with its brilliant color and realism right up to our biggest—the Panasonic Color Video Projection System—a super-real 5 ft. (meas diag) of picture so life-like you can't help feeling you're part of it!

Panasonic Projection TV, with a picture area nearly 10 times that of an ordinary 19" diagonal TV, transforms your living room into a screening room. A sports arena. A concert hall. You can even connect one of our Omnivision VI™ VHS™ six hour video recorders to it and replay great films. Favorite sports events. Or your own video tape masterpieces, wherever you made them!

Yet the Panasonic Projection TV folds into a compact one-piece unit that's just 27 inches deep. And it comes

with Panasonic remote control tuning, so you can relax in your favorite chair for an evening of brilliant television viewing.



To keep the viewing brilliant, this Projection TV, like many other Panasonic TV's, has two electronic color control systems. VIR, which "reads" color information transmitted by the TV station. And, when a VIR signal is not available, the Panasonic ColorPilot™ system takes over to maintain accurate, true-to-life color from program to program, from channel to channel—automatically.

Whether you choose a 7", 10", 12", 13", 25", or 5-ft. Panasonic Color TV (all meas diag) you'll get a picture so life-like you'll feel like you're part of it. If you choose the 5-foot Projection TV, you'll get a picture so life-size, you may begin to feel it's part of you!

Cabinetry is simulated woodgrain. TV picture simulated.



**Panasonic**  
just slightly ahead of our time

# PANORAMA

Television  
today and  
tomorrow

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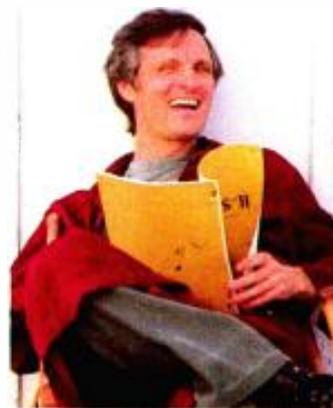
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# Should a corporation be judged by the television it sponsors?

To some degree, people do identify a company with the television programs it sponsors — and make judgements accordingly.

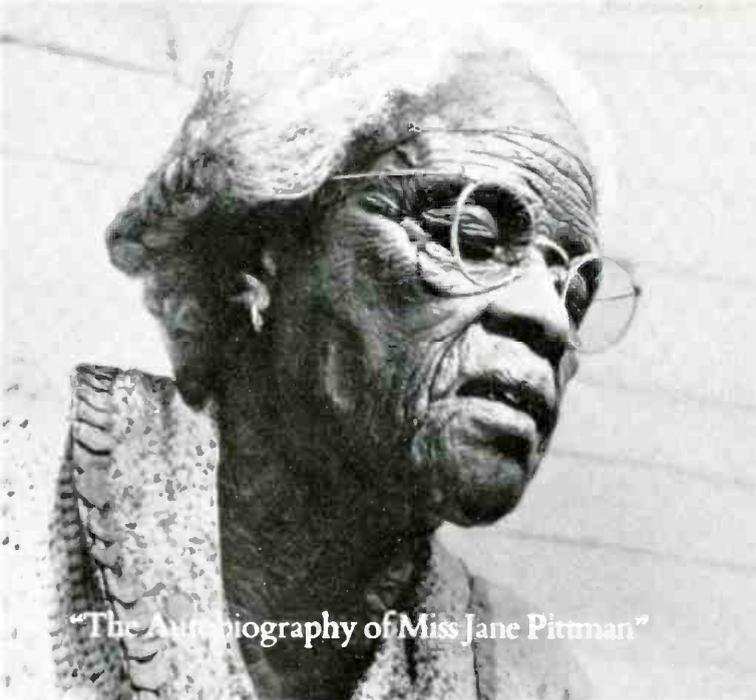
At Xerox, we've always chosen our specials with this in mind.

Over the years we've sponsored such programs as Alistair Cooke's "America" series, "The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman," and "A Family Upside-Down." Each has won critical acclaim and many awards.

This season we've presented "The Family Man," a mid-life love story. And will be presenting "The Boy Who Drank Too Much," a story of teenage alcoholism. And "The American Short Story," a series of stories by some of America's greatest authors.

Our motivation is simple. We'd like to make sure that if we are judged by the programs we sponsor, the judgement will be in our favor.

**XEROX**



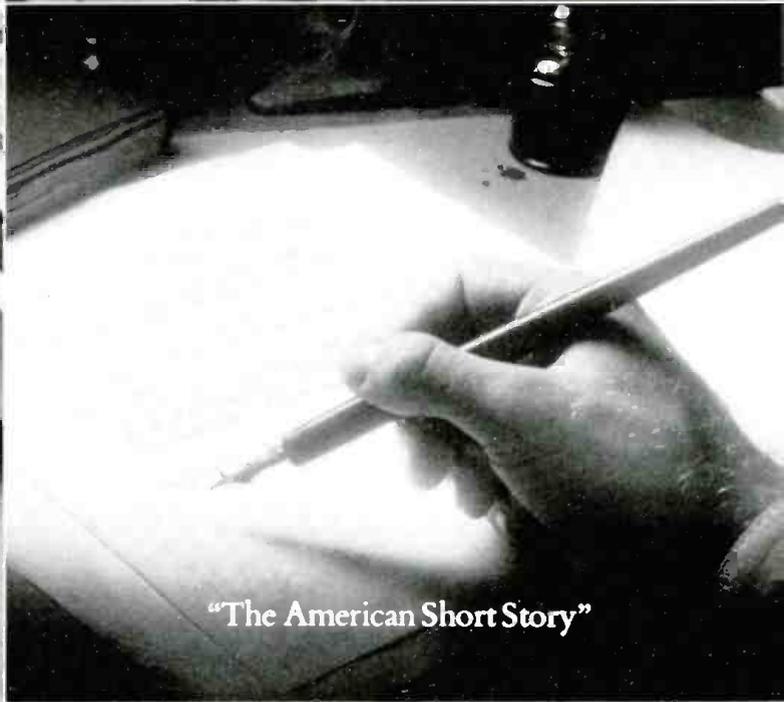
"The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman"



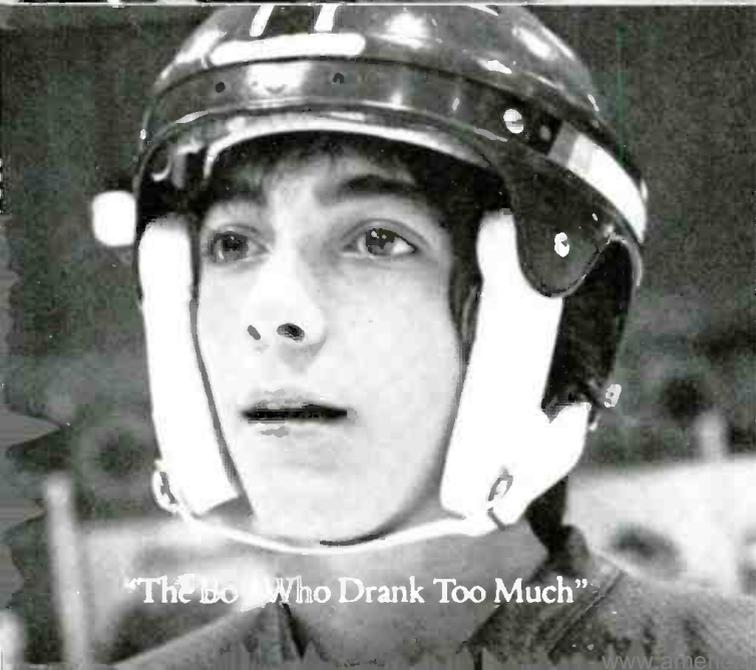
"A Family Upside-Down"



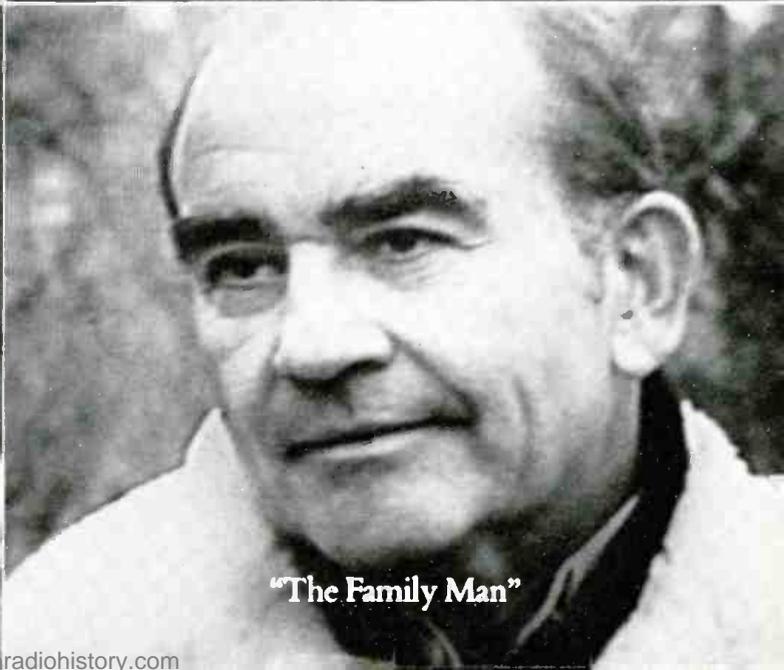
"America"



"The American Short Story"



"The Boy Who Drank Too Much"



"The Family Man"

In a world entertained by the  
great and the famous, we've  
starred for almost 100 years.

How rare.



# THIS MONTH

FEBRUARY 1980

White House Wants More Energy from Networks... Hollywood Comedy Goes Gay... How Loud Are Commercials?... Winston Churchill, Superstar... Talk to Your TV Set

## WHAT'S HAPPENING

### NEW YORK

*Doug Hill reporting*

**Priming the pump.** Top executives of ABC, CBS and NBC met last fall with President Jimmy Carter in Washington for a "brainstorming" session on what the networks could do to help raise public awareness of the energy crisis. What hasn't been known is that the White House followed up that meeting with a letter to all three networks detailing several quite specific proposals as to how such a "coordinated, sustained and highly visible campaign" might be waged.

Among the ideas was a series of *Energy Minutes*, patterned after the *Bicentennial Minutes* of 1976, in which celebrities would discuss "topics that run the gamut from 'What is shale oil?' to how to install a flow-controller in your shower." Similar spots featuring sports stars were also mentioned, a suggestion that met with a positive response from the NFL.

Other proposals included a *National Energy Quiz*, *The Energy Audit* (in which a "house doctor" would diagnose a home's energy efficiency) and *How To* (implement the doctor's advice). Network sources insisted the letter has not been interpreted as an attempt to exert undue pressure on programming, but neither could they say what, if any, results the letter might bring. "It's being mulled," was a typical reaction.

**Olympic gains.** Citizens of the Soviet Union can look forward to significantly improved television

coverage after the Olympic Games in Moscow this summer. Following the example of most host countries, the Russians are taking the opportunity to overhaul their TV facilities with the latest in equipment. A new five-story broadcast center is being filled with new cameras, videotape recorders and the like, according to Douglas Skene, coordinator of NBC Sports' technical operations there, and "literally a whole new fleet" of mobile coverage vehicles has also been acquired. That's important, says Skene, in a country so large it covers 11 time zones. NBC, meanwhile, has started

sending over a production crew that will eventually total 660 people. At night, in the new Kosmos Hotel, they scan their Russian phrase books for "pan," "tilt," "zoom" and other essential terms.

**Breakaway group?** Those who believe commercial TV doesn't do enough documentaries may be gratified to learn that some of the networks' local affiliate stations agree. ABC affiliates in Washington, D.C., Boston, Minneapolis, Seattle and Raleigh-Durham, N.C., have been quietly working on a series of jointly produced nighttime news spe-

cial, the first of which would focus on the working woman. Our source didn't want to say whether the programs would air in the prime-time access period usually occupied by syndicated game shows or later in the evening in place of network entertainment shows. "We're not ready to say that we're planning to preempt the network out of its socks," he said.

**Public purse.** Complaints that money is hard to come by for PBS productions are nothing new, but they've intensified considerably in recent months. The Corporation for Public Broadcasting, which distributes Federal funds to PBS, has been preoccupied with a reorganization effort since August, and some producers claim grants have been reduced to a trickle in the process. Among projects delayed were an American version of *Masterpiece Theatre* (see page 41) and plans for PBS's election-campaign coverage.

Though CPB's defenders argue that the benefits of reorganization will be worth waiting for, some producers fear a programming shortage six or eight months down the road.

## 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.)



Bob Hope



John Travolta

### NEWS AND DOCUMENTARIES

**Consumer Reports Presents: The Food Show.** An investigation of the nutritional and economic aspects of convenience foods and quick lunches. Home Box Office (cable).

**Mysteries of the Mind.** A National Geographic special explores the inner reaches of the human brain. PBS.

### DRAMA

**American Short Story.** A new season begins with original weekly productions based on works by Ring Lardner, Willa Cather, James Thurber and Nathaniel Hawthorne. PBS.

**Edward & Mrs. Simpson.** The six-part series, which began in January, continues on Wednesday nights this month. Edward Fox and Cynthia Harris star as the eventual Duke and Duchess of Windsor. Mobil Showcase Network (syndicated). *continued*

## HOLLYWOOD

*Don Shirley reporting*

**Clean gay fun.** Gay groups and anti-gay groups are both expected to pay close attention to *Adam and Yves*, a comedy series about two middle-aged gay men that is being developed for ABC. Danny Arnold, co-creator and executive producer of *Barney Miller*, and his partner Chris Hayward hope to begin production of *Adam and Yves* in March. They were inspired by the American success of the

## THIS MONTH

movie "La Cage aux Folles" and the acceptance of gay characters on *Barney Miller* and *Soap*, says Arnold. But don't expect the "bizarre, very European elements" that were in the French film, he adds. The characters will be upper-middle-class, and sexual details will not be allowed "to impose." The show "transcends the sexual."

**Before Guyana.** The authenticity of "The Mad Messiah," a four-hour CBS movie on Jonestown, was challenged recently when several Jonestown survivors said they had not been contacted by the filmmakers. However, screenwriter Ernest Tidyman says not all of the survivors were approached because the focus of the film is on cult leader Jim Jones rather than on his victims. "We're not picking over the bodies," says Tidyman. "I wouldn't be involved in anything so exploitative or garish." His story opens and closes in Jonestown but is strewn with flashbacks to the earlier career of Jones, who "did many good things" before he went astray, according to Tidyman. When Jones lived in Indianapolis, "he virtually desegregated the city single-handedly," he says. "And even most of his early church work was oriented toward social progress."

**Laughs from Nam.** Vietnam may soon become grist for the Hollywood comedy mill. NBC has ordered a batch of scripts for a half-hour comedy series set in Saigon in 1967, at an Armed Forces Vietnam Network TV station. Called *Six O'Clock Follies*, the show would be the first series set in Vietnam. Co-producer Norman Steinberg, calls it "'The Deer Hunter' with laughs," then laughs. "It would be a much harder show than *M\*A\*S\*H*," he says, "and much blacker—because Vietnam was a black man's war. If it's not done, you'll know why—because they're scared." Michael Zinberg, NBC's comedy development chief, denies that NBC would be frightened by the content of *Six O'Clock Follies*. But he offers another reason it

might not get on the air: "If we don't go forward with it, it will be because the show is too intelligent. It's not *Bilko Goes to Vietnam*, and the network would have to ask if it's a show that would reach a broad enough audience."

**Back to jail.** "Scared Straight," the highly rated documentary about a controversial rehabilitation program for young lawbreakers, has bred "Scared Straight—Another Story." "Another Story" is essentially the same story—cocky kids visit a prison, where the hardened convicts scare them into changing their ways—but this time it's all fictional, and this time it'll be on CBS rather than independently syndicated. The profanity of the original will be toned down. But scenes depicting the young toughs in their life of crime and with their families will be added, as will an account of how the fictional prison program originated. A judge will briefly question the accomplishments of the prison sessions, but a

youth counselor will answer the questions to the judge's satisfaction. Arnold Shapiro, producer of both movies, says CBS called to propose the dramatized version on the day following the initial broadcast of the documentary.



**Which woman?** Sally Field has turned down the central role in the ABC version of the Marilyn French novel, "The Women's Room." It would have conflicted with her work on the "Smokey and the Bandit" sequel. So the producers turned to Lee Remick. Executive producer Philip Mandelker says either of the two very different actresses could have played the character, a middle-class American who

ages from 20 to 43. The primary difference, he says, is that "Lee looks about 36 or 37, so we'll have to age her down. With Sally, we would have had to make her look older."

## WASHINGTON

Steve Weinberg reporting

**Three is enough?** The FCC has bad news — and bad news. As long as there are only three national television networks, viewers have little hope of seeing innovative programming. But the creation of a fourth commercial network is not likely. This pessimistic picture for dissatisfied television watchers emerges from a recently released FCC report.

The three networks — ABC, CBS and NBC — reach almost every American household. A fourth network could not do that, because only 62 percent of households can receive four or more stations on the VHF and UHF bands.

But, add FCC staff members, looking for a silver lining, new kinds of programming could occur without more networks if Government and market forces combine to increase the number and types of "available viewing alternatives." These are the preliminary conclusions of the FCC's Network Inquiry, the first FCC examination of ABC, CBS and NBC in about 20 years. Part two of the report is due to be released in May.

**Dollar bill.** Rep. Ronald Mottl (D-Ohio) has earned some unpopularity among broadcasters by introducing legislation that would disclose profits of television stations. He says he is not after disclosure for disclosure's sake; he thinks the bill might lead to better programming.

"Licensed broadcasters are by Federal law trustees of the public airwaves," says Mottl. "Yet a mint is being made from this national resource while the public sees new lows in tasteless, mindless and shallow programming."

## WHAT'S ON

continued

**The Legend of Walks Far Woman.** Raquel Welch plays an Indian who ages from frontier times to the 1940s (see page 82). NBC.

**Mystery!** Fifteen weeks of British thrillers begin with "She Fell Among Thieves," starring Malcolm McDowell. PBS.

**The Shakespeare Plays.** The second season of the Bard's works, featuring six productions, begins with "Twelfth Night" and a cast including Felicity Kendal, Michael Thomas, Sinead Cusack and Alec McCowen. PBS.

**The Voyage of Charles Darwin.** To the Galapagos Islands and back with the father of the theory of evolution. The seven-part series, which began last month, continues Sunday nights through March 9 (see page 77). PBS.

### OPERA AND DANCE

**Dance in America.** An episode to watch for this month features Mikhail Baryshnikov and Natalia Makarova in a Jerome Robbins pas de deux (see page 98). PBS.

### MOVIES

**Bogie: The Last Hero.** Here's looking at Humphrey, kid, in a made-for-TV movie with Kevin O'Connor in the title role and Kathryn Harrold as Lauren Bacall. CBS.

**Foul Play.** Chevy Chase's first full-length feature film, with Goldie Hawn. Showtime (cable).

**Halloween.** A low-budget horror film that received high praise. Home Box Office (cable).

**Saturday Night Fever.** The movie that launched disco fever and John Travolta. Home Box Office (cable).

Currently the Federal Communications Commission collects profit figures from broadcasters, but on a confidential basis. According to Mottl, the Nation's television stations had a total pretax profit of \$1.3 billion during 1978, with the average station showing a 25-percent increase from the year before.

Broadcasters thus far haven't attacked Mottl's statistics, but they certainly don't like his plan. Erwin Krasnow, general counsel for the National Association of Broadcasters, says disclosure "would cause significant harm" to stations. Broadcasters are pinning their hopes on other congressmen to oppose Mottl. Many members of Congress worry about angering local broadcasters because of the need for news coverage and other publicity during reelection campaigns.

**Volume control.** Television viewers have complained for decades that commercials are louder than programs. Many of these complaints wind up at the Federal Communications Commission, the Government agency with the authority to tackle the problem.

But the FCC has wondered: is this really a problem? In 1962, the agency started an inquiry into the complaints but gave up. The FCC was handicapped by the absence of equipment to measure loudness, says Bill Hassinger, an FCC staff member.

Technology has improved since 1962; recently the FCC evaluated 178 commercials and found about 35 percent of them "loud" in comparison with the voice levels in the programs in which the ads appeared. So the agency reopened its inquiry. It solicited comments from the public and has received about 400, Hassinger said.

Nobody is certain what will happen next. But the FCC has declared that if comments show "the problem is so pervasive or its cause so compelling that industry action is likely to be ineffectual, we are prepared to adopt whatever rules are necessary to obtain results."

**TOKYO**

*John Fujii reporting*

**Talk to your set.** Sanyo, Sharp and Toshiba are working on TV sets that will respond to your voice. Tell your set that you want Channel 8; half a second later, it will chirp "OK" and switch channels—or, if the order wasn't clear, it will courteously respond with "Once more, please."

The sets now being developed are designed to obey the voices of two masters. In families, kids are likely to be disenfranchised by this "two people, two votes" system; meanwhile, Mom or Dad will win the fights over programs by sheer force of decibels.

**Stereo fever.** You might think that, with 97.8 percent of Japanese households in possession of at least one color TV, television sales would have reached saturation point. Not so. The Japanese are buying TV sets as never before, lured by the seemingly endless array of

refinements that manufacturers dangle before them.

The major innovation in the past two years has been the stereophonic system, providing viewers with dual-channel sound for music, baseball and foreign movies dubbed into Japanese. (The system allows the viewer to choose whichever language he prefers.) Currently, 30 percent of all color sets being sold are stereophonic, and one manufacturer, Matsushita, reports that stereo accounts for 60 percent of its production. The sets are priced at around \$1100, only about \$150 more than a conventional TV.

**Honorable GIs.** The Japan Broadcasting Corporation (NHK) recently addressed a heartfelt plea to U.S. military personnel stationed here. In an advertisement in the English-language newspaper Japan Times, NHK requested that American servicemen please pay for the privilege of owning and watching their TV sets, as all Japanese citizens do. The fee, \$3 per

month, is the principal source of revenue of this corporation that runs the country's public-service TV channel.

There is no legal obligation to pay the fee; among the Japanese the system runs very nicely on honor, and there are few defaulters. The Americans have so far not been shamed into paying up; they claim they don't watch NHK programs.

**The greatest.** Fuji TV, eager to maintain a strong Japanese presence in the "Guinness Book of World Records," has signed a contract with the British publishers of the book that commits the television company to sponsoring some attempts on major world records. Soon to be telecast will be grueling contests in kissing, underwater kissing, backward running, hand-walking and stilt-running. Conspicuously absent from the company's list is backward underwater stilt-kissing. Is this record considered unassailable?

**LONDON**

*Richard Whittington reporting*



**Hail to the chief.** British TV is doing Churchill. Hot on the heels of the BBC movie "Churchill and the Generals," which was telecast here in the autumn and is likely to be seen in the U.S. later this year, come two more expensive items of Churchilliana from the commercial companies. Thames Television is spending \$8 million on a miniseries version of "Clementine Churchill," the biography of Sir Winston's wife, written by

**WHAT'S ON**

*continued*

**COMEDY AND VARIETY**

**The Big Show.** Variety, recently absent from network TV, returns in a weekly 90-minute series. The NBC set, which includes an ice rink and a swimming pool, is prepared for anything. NBC.

**Bob Hope Special.** A retrospective of Ol' Ski Nose's TV appearances over 28 years. NBC.

**An Evening of Brazilian Television.** Ninety minutes of comedy, variety and Villa-Lobos, interspersed with portraits of "typical" Brazilian television viewers. PBS.

**The Fort Lauderdale Big Laff Off.** The top comedians in the Southeast compete for laughs in a Florida nightclub. Showtime (cable).

**The Grammy Awards.** For the 22nd year, the record industry honors its best songs and songwriters. Feb. 27. CBS.

**Steve Martin Special.** The wild and crazy guy. NBC.

**SPORTS**

**Winter Olympics.** Thirteen days—51 hours—of coverage from Lake Placid begin Feb. 12 (see page 64). ABC.

**CHILDREN**

**The American Revolution: The Cause of Liberty.** A view of the American revolution based on the correspondence between Henry Lawrence, president of the First Continental Congress, and his idealistic son. Starring Michael Douglas. Calliope (cable).

**The Gold Bug.** A two-part ABC Weekend Special for kids revolves around an Edgar Allen Poe tale of a treasure hunt. Geoffrey Holder stars. ABC.

their daughter Mary Soames. And Southern Television has secured financing from the Mobil Corporation for an eight-part miniseries dealing with Churchill's relatively unknown years between the two World Wars. Co-producer Richard Brook says: "We will start with Churchill as Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1922 and then proceed through those years when he was virtually out in the cold right up to the point when war broke out." Production will begin later this year.

**D for effort.** The Independent Broadcasting Authority—the

body empowered by Parliament to oversee Britain's commercial TV system—was not particularly flattering about last year's creative output in its report for 1978-79. "The past year has produced no one production which would elicit a unanimous cry of overwhelming praise," it says. But in considering huge successes like *Edward & Mrs. Simpson* and *Lillie*, the IBA is more generous: "Many of these programs are more than merely entertaining—more than a way of killing time for those who like time dead—they can frequently illuminate aspects of personal,

social and historical relationships."

**Waking dream.** Britons are awakening to the fact that they face blank TV screens in the early morning, the period when 8.5 million Americans are diverted by *Today* and *Good Morning America*. A consortium of independent producers is bidding for an IBA franchise to introduce a breakfast-time news-magazine program modeled on the U.S. shows. Whether the British can be weaned from their dependence on radio news remains to be seen, but their routine won't be disturbed for a

while: the IBA will rule on the franchise bid in 1982.

**Dame of the dance.** The results of a three-year collaboration between prima ballerina Dame Margot Fonteyn and the BBC was seen this winter in Britain and will be coming to PBS in 1980. *The Magic of Dance* is a six-part potpourri of dance images from around the world, ranging from Chinese shadow-boxing to Sammy Davis Jr. Dame Margot conceived, wrote and oversaw the filming of the entire series, in which she dances many of her most celebrated roles.

## THE RATINGS RACE

### THE SEASON SO FAR: NEWS IS UP; MOVIES, MINISERIES DOWN

By MICHAEL DANN

The "first season" is officially over, the failures have been taken off the air and the three networks have mounted new schedules in an effort to do better in the second round of the 1979-80 ratings competition. And so, it is reasonable to ask at this point, "What happened in the first season?"

Without using program terminology like "stunting," "stacking" and "front-loading," we can come to certain basic conclu-

*Michael Dann will analyze the ratings every month for PANORAMA. A former programming vice president of NBC and CBS, he now is a television consultant for several companies.*

sions about the past four months:

1. In the overall standings, ABC was first, CBS second and NBC third—although CBS showed itself to be a much stronger second this year, and ABC a weaker first. NBC, despite a strong start, ended up exactly where it was the year before—in a weak third place.

2. Of the prime evening half hours, ABC won 22, CBS 16 and NBC 6.

3. Of the 21 new programs launched this fall, four were hits (they won their time periods): CBS's *Trapper John, M.D.* and *Archie Bunker's Place* (although it's stretching things a bit to categorize this *All in the Family* retread as new), and ABC's *Hart*

to *Hart* and *Benson*. No NBC new series won their time periods.

4. As far as all the new shows are concerned, NBC's average was better, but not enough to improve its third-place position.

5. Unlike previous years, there are no new basic trends in program concepts (e.g., ethnic comedies, money quiz shows or variety programs). There has been, however, a great deal more audience interest in the nightly news programs and magazine shows like *20/20* and *60 Minutes*.

6. The most interesting, but discouraging, trend to the network programmers was the substantial drop in the ratings of the miniseries and made-for-TV

movies. This was particularly tough on ABC, which earlier scored with such series as *Roots* and movies like "Elvis."

7. ABC daytime ratings stayed on top, but this is a race watched only by advertisers and network executives.

8. Any network can win any given week by scheduling one or more blockbuster movies in its weakest time periods.

9. No network has done poorly enough this season to cause any major executive changes. However, if a program executive wanted to ask for a raise, he wouldn't have a worry in the world if he had put together the schedule shown in the chart—he would have won every time period.

### TIME-SLOT WINNERS FOR FIRST HALF OF 1979-80 SEASON

	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30
SAT.	Local		ChiPis (NBC)		The Love Boat (ABC)		Fantasy Island (ABC)	
SUN.	60 Minutes (CBS)		Archie Bunker's Place (CBS)	One Day at a Time (CBS)	Alice (CBS)	The Jeffersons (CBS)	Trapper John, M.D. (CBS)	
MON.	Local		Little House on the Prairie (NBC)		M*A*S*H (CBS)	WKRP in Cincinnati (CBS)	Monday Night at the Movies—second hour (NBC)	
TUE.	Local		Happy Days (ABC)	Angie (ABC)	Three's Company (ABC)	Taxi (ABC)	Hart to Hart (ABC)	
WED.	Local		Eight Is Enough (ABC)		Charlie's Angels (ABC)		Vega\$ (ABC)	
THU.	Local		Laverne & Shirley (ABC)	Benson (ABC)	Barney Miller (ABC)	Soap (ABC)	20/20 (ABC)	
FRI.	Local		The Incredible Hulk (CBS)		The Dukes of Hazzard (CBS)		Dallas (CBS)	

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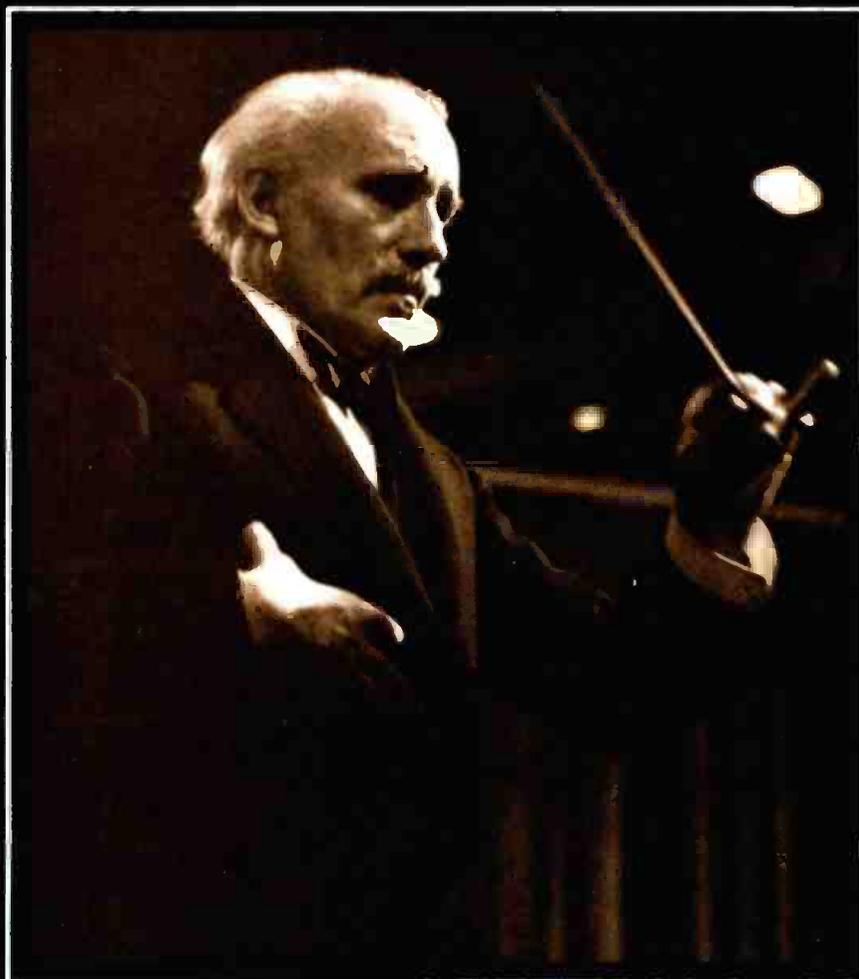
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# PERSPECTIVE

By RICHARD REEVES

## Who's in Charge Of the Presidential Campaign? Television!

The crisis came in Columbus, Ohio, in early September of 1976. Jimmy Carter was then the Democratic nominee for President of the United States and his staff placed stanchions at the bottom of the stairs of his airplane, Peanut One, to provide an aisle for him to walk through the crowd waiting on the runway. Television correspondents and technicians were told that they could work inside the stanchions, but they had to stay 10 feet in front of Carter.

Things, after all, had gotten pretty bad. At the last two stops—Philadelphia and Pittsburgh—Carter had been so tightly packed into the electronic mass of correspondents, cameras and microphones that he couldn't see or touch the crowds and they couldn't see him.

The networks didn't like Columbus one bit. "We can't get any right-angle shots," yelled one producer. "This is a violation of the First Amendment." They also had trouble getting footage of Mickey Mouse—or, rather, a guy dressed in a Mickey Mouse suit who welcomed the candidate to the capital of Ohio.

"What do you really need?" asked Jody Powell, Carter's press secretary.

"When Mickey Mouse is there," said ABC's Sam Donaldson in his usual conversational shout, "we all want the shot."

Television got what it wanted. And it was appropriate that Donaldson handled the negotiations. That year, 1976, was the year of Donaldson, the year the networks took total control of Presidential campaigning. Until then, the dominant press figure on the trail, the leader of the boys on the bus, had been a senior print reporter, usually a columnist or the top man from The New York Times or The Washington Post—that was the person who negotiated with the candidate's people for access and who set the tone for questioning at press conferences and other campaign appearances.

Last time, through sheer force of personality and determination, and the physical force of platoons of cameramen and equipment-bearers, Donaldson took over, with some help from aggressive producers from CBS and NBC. Political editors from newspapers in Toledo and Detroit were bumped off the campaign plane so

that television technicians would each have three seats, for equipment and in case they wanted to stretch out and sleep. Mickey Mouse defeated "the gentleman from The Times"... or elsewhere.

Television was triumphant, and in 1980, a year that should see only gradual change in the goals and techniques of the networks, the medium will almost certainly control campaigning and political analysis—and, arguably, the results.

Network news executives, campaign managers and consultants, in a series of interviews on the making of the President, 1980, generally agreed that the only possible major change in this year's coverage and advertising would be the ending of gavel-to-gavel coverage of the Democratic and Republican National Conventions. "If it becomes clear that, once again, the candidates are really chosen in the primaries and not in the conventions," said Richard Wald, senior vice president of ABC News and former president of NBC News, "then we are all going to be asking ourselves, 'Why are we spending all this time and money covering every minute of these shows?' The networks are all now saying that they are committed to gavel-to-gavel coverage, but don't believe that decision is final and binding anyplace. You have to go ahead with preparations as if

things are going to be the same, but you can always pull back at the last minute."

The other changes coming this year are being categorized—in network meetings and at campaign headquarters—as either advances in the art or mere cosmetics; but those descriptions understate the importance of what has happened over the last five years or so: television's takeover of Presidential politics is being institutionalized. There is more than meets the eye in what we will see on the screen this time—more and sharper documentaries, more polling and analysis and fewer paid commercials.

The first documentary report of the 1980 political season—"CBS Reports: Teddy," broadcast on Nov. 4, 1979—may have been boring to some, but I found it fascinating because it was not *fair*. Like print reporting—a magazine article or a newspaper analysis—"Teddy" had a viewpoint. Roger Mudd, the reporter, generally ignored Edward Kennedy's accomplishments as a senator and the high regard he has won in Washington. Instead, Mudd emphasized Kennedy's negatives—Chappaquiddick, his wandering marriage, extemporaneous prose and the bills he hasn't been able to pass in the Senate. A good job—perhaps a hatchet job, but a mature, intelligent one. It was what you'd expect from a political reporter as smart and experienced as Mudd, the



*Richard Reeves, the former chief political correspondent of The New York Times, will be a regular contributor to Panorama.*

only television correspondent I know who could have won a top political-reporting job at, say, The New York Times. Reports like that will almost certainly become more commonplace as networks train and produce correspondents and producers confident and capable enough to express pointed views. Less Mickey Mouse and more Mudd.

"The networks emphasize what they pay for," said John Deardourff, the Republican campaign consultant who handled President Gerald Ford in 1976 and signed on with Sen. Howard Baker this time. "And their big investment is in their own

polling." Warren Mitofsky, the head of CBS's elections and survey unit, agreed: "We may be polled to death this time."

CBS, for instance, will conduct 13 national polls during the campaign, an increase of three full surveys over 1976, and ABC, for the first time, will be competitive with the other networks in the extent of its national polling. That says nothing about the kind of effort that will go into the 15 or so "important" primary states as designated by the networks. (And the networks can make any political event important just by deciding to cover it.) "Poll-takers will be waiting in line to talk to voters when

they come out of the voting booths in New Hampshire," Mitofsky said.

Voting-booth polling—giving questionnaires to voters as they walk out of the booth—could provide some of the most interesting insights into the Presidential election. In 1980 all three networks will be analyzing primaries before they are over. Not projecting winners—that will still be done with real numbers—but, in Mitofsky's words: "Unless a primary is extremely close, we will understand the dynamics before the polls close and be able to give viewers a fair picture of what happened before it's finished happening."

All of those things are done by the networks themselves. What can the candidates do? Less than they did in 1976, according to Deardourff. "Political commercial rates have been going up 20 percent a year, so they'll be double what they were when we did Ford," he said. "With spending limits for the candidates, there just have to be fewer commercials. What they'll be like is up to the networks and local stations; television people decide what time slots they'll make available and we have to take what we can get and pay what they ask. So, who's in charge? Them or us?"

Them. Television is in charge. A significant part of running for President has become the meetings between network producers and executives on one side and candidates and their managers on the other. The networks explain what they are able and willing to do—for instance, how much time they'll give to a convention or where their crews will be in California—and the politicians go back and adjust their schedules and procedures accordingly. That's the way it is right now.

It may get better. Not this time, but, ironically, in 1984, which network types like Wald are forecasting will be a "break-through year."

"By the next election," Wald said, "miniaturization should be complete. A correspondent should be able to carry around a television studio and research department in a case about double the size of my attache case. The only thing that won't be smaller is the lens. The tubes and everything else will be replaced by chips. The camera itself won't be much larger than a book. The person in the field will have the equipment and capability to edit his own piece and transmit it. He'll be plugged into computers with everything the world knows about elections or the state of Florida. Television is finally going to have a portable typewriter and a memory—just like real reporters."

Television, then, will have grown up—a little late for 1980. Maybe even no more Mickey Mouse. ■

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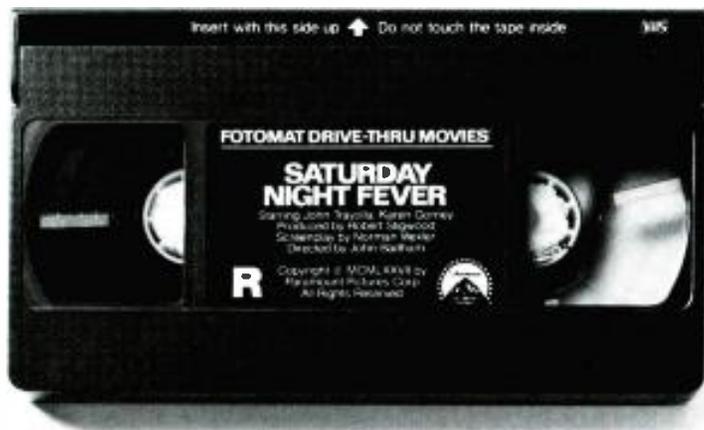
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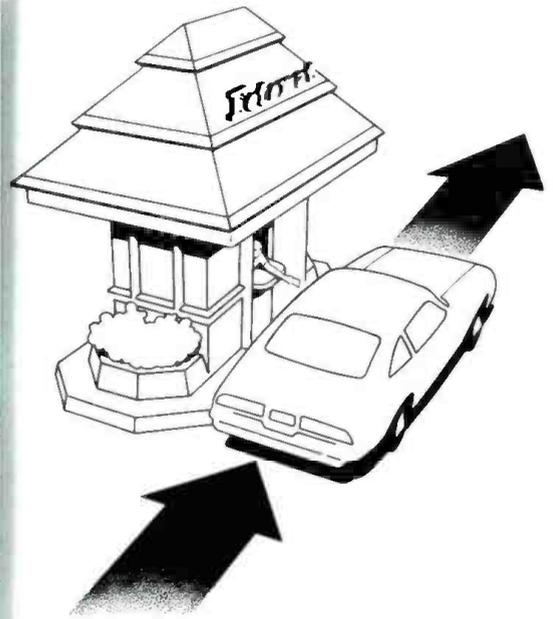
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# Smiling Through The Tiers

By SETH GOLDSTEIN



In the beginning, one pay-television service was considered more than enough — after all, how many cable subscribers really wanted to spend \$8 to \$10 a month atop \$6 or \$7 for their basic cable service? Plenty, as it turned out. Since Home Box Office and Showtime pushed pay-TV subscribership into the millions, the question has been escalated to “How many services will the public buy?” Again — plenty. Given the opportunity, subscribers have confounded the experts by not choosing among HBO, Showtime, Uptown, Front Row, Take 2, etc., but grabbing everything that’s available.

An apparently insatiable appetite for TV has sometimes raised the monthly ante to \$20 or more, including the original basic service, which itself has a greatly expanded program menu. HBO and Showtime at first worried about the prospect of head-to-head competition. No longer. HBO’s policy of buying exclusive telecast rights whenever possible meant Showtime couldn’t be a “me-too” network — with the result that each has a lot of programs the other doesn’t. Subscribers in more and more cable systems will have the opportunity to take both, plus the so-called “minipay” services like Front Row, Take 2 and Uptown, which were conceived as inexpensive substitutes for the real thing. Now they’ve become accessories, like the tape deck in a new Chevy: better to have than not.

And if you thought there were no more viewing hours left, you could be wrong. HBO is giving serious consideration to a brand-new service that might run 24 hours a day alongside its original package of movies, sports and special events.

## The Sporting Life

After feature films, live sports draw the largest crowds to cable channels. The big events like the World Series, Super Bowl, and Ohio State vs. Michigan, of course, are cornerstones of network TV. But

cable specialists do quite well with lesser-ranked teams and games. Home Box Office, which used to carry much more, still puts on four to six sports programs a month, and what it gave up — sports from New York’s Madison Square Garden — now is the basis of a prospering service operated by UA-Columbia, a multisystem cable operator.

UA-Columbia’s Madison Square Garden Sports Network has attracted nearly five million subscribers who pay nothing extra to watch 350-plus events a year, including pro basketball, hockey, and track and field. The tab for MSG Sports is picked up by cable operators around the country who pay a per-subscriber fee. In return, they get big-city sports glamour, plus the chance to sell commercial time to local advertisers.

MSG Sports’ success spawned a competitor called Entertainment and Sports Programming Network (ESPN), which has scheduled more than 1000 events during 1980, its first full year of operation. Backed by Getty Oil, which bought a controlling interest last February, ESPN began broadcasting on Sept. 7 over some 375 cable systems, reaching three to four million homes.

Also thriving are regional sports/entertainment cablecasters such as Prism in Philadelphia and Showtime Plus Sports in the Southwest, offering a continuing procession of baseball diamonds, hockey nets and basketball hoops.

## One if by Cable, Two if by Air

Pay-television generally comes two ways. The first, and most popular, is via cable. The second most popular is a scrambled over-the-air signal, from a conventional TV station, descrambled at the subscriber’s set. Over-the-air subscription television (STV), as it’s called, was something of a technological stepchild until two companies, National Subscription Television in Los Angeles and Wometco Home Theater in metropolitan

New York, launched their services in 1977. Then, last fall, the Federal Communications Commission deleted a rule that has limited STV stations to one per community, promising pay-TV’s poor relation a clear shot at prosperity. By the end of 1980, 15 to 20 STV stations should be on the air.

The big cities, which are expensive to cable, are the main targets, with Detroit, Chicago, San Francisco and Denver among the leading candidates. In keeping with pay-TV growth, the next step might be satellite delivery of programming, making STV, already similar to HBO and Showtime in its programming mix of movies and entertainment, similar in its distribution as well. National Subscription and Wometco have used this mix to great effect, signing up a total of 300,000 to 350,000 subscribers who pay \$15 to \$20 a month for the privilege.

## What Do They Watch Anyway?

Pay-television is attracting the audience-rating attentions of A.C. Nielsen, but Home Box Office hasn’t been taking its viewers for granted any more than broadcast networks do. In fact, on its own, HBO dares to measure something called “total subscriber satisfaction” (TSS), which ranks programs as excellent, good, fair and poor. Movies such as “Valentino” and “The Swarm,” both of which scored well in Nielsen’s first syndicated sampling of pay-TV, didn’t register an acceptable TSS rating and probably won’t be shown again.

Satisfaction measurements are taken from monthly surveys of 2500 HBO subscribers, 50 percent of whom usually respond. HBO thinks Nielsen can measure only “gross viewership,” not HBO’s more important “net viewership” (which eliminates viewers who have seen the same program more than once), although the Nielsen technique could be modified if the rating service decides to make pay-TV part of its national audience coverage. By then, HBO might be a step ahead. It hopes to meter TSS on two-way cable systems, giving viewers the chance to tell HBO exactly what they think — immediately. ■

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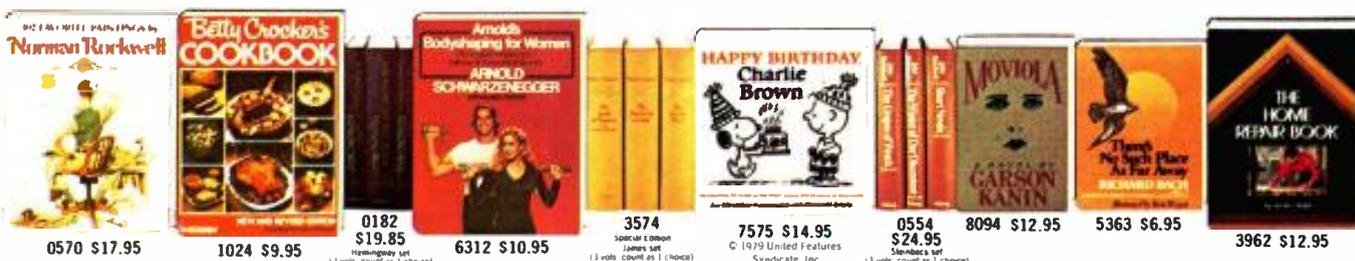
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# Q&A

A strong case could be made for the statement that Alan Alda is America's favorite television actor. Thanks to his role as Hawkeye Pierce in the apparently invincible *M\*A\*S\*H* series, Alda invariably ranks near the top of the controversial "Q" ratings, which attempt to measure the popularity of performers. In 1976 and 1977, he tied with John Wayne for first place on the "Q" list.

Alda is also exceptionally well-qualified to discuss the creative aspects of television. He is a director and writer as well as an actor. His *M\*A\*S\*H* Emmys include awards for acting (1974), directing (1977) and writing (1979). As he enters the Eighties, however, his professional ambitions are changing. Though he had starred in two notable television movies, "The Glass House" and "Kill Me if You Can," his theatrical-film career didn't get off the ground until last year, when he appeared in "Same Time, Next Year" and "California Suite" and wrote and starred in "The Seduction of Joe Tynan." The box-office strength of "Joe Tynan" led to a deal at Universal for Alda, who will write, direct and act in three feature films during the next six years. The first of the three, "The Four Seasons," is expected to begin production soon.

Alda was born on Jan. 28, 1936, in New York City, the son of Robert Alda, who became a movie star ("Rhapsody in Blue") and a Tony-winning stage actor ("Guys and Dolls"). The younger Alda attended Fordham and then studied acting at the Cleveland Playhouse and with Second City and the Compass Players. He achieved Broadway success in "Purlie Victorious" and "The Owl and the Pussycat" and received a Tony nomination for "The Apple Tree." His least forgettable films from the pre-*M\*A\*S\*H* era are "Paper Lion" and "Jenny."

*M\*A\*S\*H* went on the air in September 1972, and Alda began commuting regularly between his family in New Jersey and his work in Los Angeles. He and his wife Arlene, a photographer and musician, are the parents of three daughters.

In 1975, while working on *M\*A\*S\*H*, Alda created and produced a short-lived CBS series, *We'll Get By*. His other major extracurricular television credit from the



## 'I Don't Intend to Play Hawkeye the Rest of My Life'

As Alan Alda prepares to move in new directions, he talks candidly about life with—and without—'M\*A\*S\*H,' the challenges of acting, writing and directing, his work for feminist causes, his critics and his privacy

period was an adaptation of the Broadway comedy "6 Rms Riv Vu," which Alda directed and in which he played opposite Carol Burnett. Alda also became known as a campaigner for feminist causes.

With his daughters nearly grown and the Universal films coming up, Alda and his wife now spend more time at their West Coast house in Bel Air.

This interview was conducted in Alda's *M\*A\*S\*H* dressing room on the 20th Century-Fox lot. Hanging on the wall were a photo by his wife and an artist's caricature of Alda. A bicycle was parked in the middle of the room. Alda was slightly late, coming from a stroll through an exhibit of

Venetian paintings at the Los Angeles County Art Museum. Anticipating his arrival, his secretary switched the radio from a rock station to one playing soft classical music. When he arrived, Alda changed into his *M\*A\*S\*H* fatigues and bathrobe so he would be ready for his next call on the set. Then he answered questions from PANORAMA's Don Shirley. What follows is an edited and condensed version of the session.

**PANORAMA:** *I'd like to start at the end. The originators of M\*A\*S\*H, Gene Reynolds and Larry Gelbart, left their producers' chairs long ago. Much of the original cast has left. But the show is still going strong. Is it ever going to end?*

**ALDA:** I suppose so. The main consideration for us is whether or not we can keep finding stories that we think are worth asking people to sit down and watch. So we've been doing a lot more research. We do a lot of research anyway—we talk to doctors and nurses and we look into medical journals of the period, and talk to a lot of different kinds of people who went through things that reflect on that experience. We're just doing more now.

**PANORAMA:** *You don't think you're repeating yourself?*

**ALDA:** Very little. The show has explored the characters a little more every year, so that there is both more to work with and a greater challenge each year because we have to try to dig a little deeper.

**PANORAMA:** *Some shows make a point of retiring at the peak of their strength.*

**ALDA:** I think that it's important for us not to get lousy. It doesn't matter to me where we are in the ratings. As long as the network wants to keep us on, I think our main consideration ought to be how we feel about it artistically.

**PANORAMA:** *How would you like to see it end?*

**ALDA:** Well, I'd like to see the war be over and I'd like to see—I think that it would be a very powerful episode—I'd like to see a long piece, like an hour and a half, in which the people say goodbye to each other and

to the experience and have it end, have it be over. I think that the audience and this story, this experience, deserve that kind of conclusion.

**PANORAMA:** *How do you feel about the possibility of a spinoff?*

**ALDA:** I don't think it's a good idea. I don't think you can transfer any of what this program has to another setting because there are things built into this that are essential to its working. People don't watch this show because somebody named Hawkeye or somebody named Radar or Klinger or Hot Lips is in it. They watch it because of the interaction of these people in this setting under these highly pressurized circumstances.

**PANORAMA:** *What do you think of Trapper John, M.D.?*

**ALDA:** I haven't seen it. I think that whether it survives has nothing to do with the fact that the character is called Trapper John. As we speak, it doesn't seem to be doing badly. That's fine; I wish everybody there luck. I don't want to see anybody out of work. But I wouldn't consider that a spinoff of this show in any way. I don't think it has anything to do with this show except a crass attempt to commercialize on the success of something with quality. I don't think they had to do that. If they had a good doctor show to do, they should have done it.

**PANORAMA:** *You are listed as a creative consultant on M\*A\*S\*H. What does that mean?*

**ALDA:** I work with the other writers on developing stories. I sometimes sit with them polishing the scripts. If I think the construction of the story is not working even after we've got it into rehearsal, I sometimes make a suggestion about that and they go back and write a new scene or make some cuts and stuff like that.

**PANORAMA:** *Turning to directing for a moment, isn't it hard for you to direct yourself? Isn't it necessary for a director to have some objectivity about an actor's performance?*

**ALDA:** Yes. I usually have that objectivity, and I often have it when other people are directing, too. After a scene is over, I usually know what took place regardless of who is directing, not just with me but with everybody else in the scene. When I'm directing, of course, there's a little lag in the objectivity. That can't be avoided, and I make up for that by sometimes printing a few more takes than I would ordinarily print, just to make sure that I have covered

myself, that my impression of what took place was accurate. And then I check it out on the screen.

**PANORAMA:** *As a director, how would you assess your strengths and weaknesses as an actor?*

**ALDA:** I think the same way I assess them as an actor.

**PANORAMA:** *Could you assess them for us?*

**ALDA:** Yeah, I could, but I don't want to. That's my business. I succeed and fail in various ways, and that's part of my private work process—and I'm sensitive enough to criticism without adding to it. I'd just as soon do my work and let people make their own minds up about it.

**PANORAMA:** *What do you think of laugh tracks?*

**ALDA:** I'm not a fan of laugh tracks. They show our show in England without one, and it does fine over there. I get a number of letters every year from people who complain about the laugh track—but, interestingly, a number of them have enjoyed the show for years and think that we have just started a laugh track this season. They suddenly become aware that there's a laugh track on one episode and think that we started something new. I think the reason for that is that we have always kept the laugh track very low and very, very quiet, very, very low-key, as unobtrusive as we can make it. It's only there because the network, as all three networks do, considers it to be essential to a program that's mainly funny.

'It's really not accurate to refer to M\*A\*S\*H as a comedy.'



**PANORAMA:** *Some actors in television comedies say they appreciate the studio audience because of the feedback. You don't have a studio audience.*

**ALDA:** No.

**PANORAMA:** *Do you miss it?*

**ALDA:** No. Not if it's going to be shown on television. I think the studio audience on television shows encourages a heightened energy which is often not appropriate to the scene being played, and what you have is a filmed record of actors responding, not so much to each other as players, but to the audience. You don't get a believable picture of people in a particular setting; you get a picture of people on the stage performing for an audience. While some people like that, I don't find it as theatrically satisfying as people trying to convey a sense of place and time that's appropriate to the script.

It's totally inappropriate and always has been to call us a sitcom or a situation comedy. It's really not accurate to refer to M\*A\*S\*H as a comedy. Which is not to say that it's not frequently funny or perhaps mostly funny. But we have a problem sometimes when we present a show for Emmy consideration. If we present what we think is simply our best show, it will be judged alongside out-and-out comedies, but either it will have a mix of comedy and drama or it will be largely dramatic and largely serious, not comedic. It might be the best show under consideration, but since it doesn't fall into a clear category of comedy, or because it's not simple-mindedly funny, it doesn't get the award. There's no category, really, for what we do. So we receive perhaps more nominations than any other show and proportionately fewer actual awards.

**PANORAMA:** *You've won quite a few, though.*

*continued*

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**ALDA:** We've won a lot of awards, but you would expect a show that's good enough to get that many nominations to get a higher number of awards. It's OK; I'm not complaining. I just think that we're kind of stuck in a bind because we do something somewhat unusual. I think it's wonderful that a show that is that unusual is this successful, and I'm happy. I'm not complaining about a thing.

**PANORAMA:** *What was your most valuable training as an actor?*

**ALDA:** Oh, a number of things were helpful to me. Improvising with Paul Sills in his Second City, and then Story Theater was helpful. And his mother, Viola Spolin, invented a form of improvising which I found very useful. It was always very hard working with Sills, but it was always very useful. I think I've learned more doing *M\*A\*S\*H* than at any other period in my life about writing, acting, directing—all three of them.

**PANORAMA:** *How much of *M\*A\*S\*H* is improvised?*

**ALDA:** *M\*A\*S\*H* is all written. There's almost no improvisation—although one of our best shows was entirely improvised. That was "The Interview." Larry Gelbart took transcripts of our raw improvisations and reworked them and added things here and there. That particular show was based very largely on improvisation.

**PANORAMA:** *Would you like to be doing more freewheeling things? Saturday Night Live, for example.*

**ALDA:** I've been asked to host *Saturday Night Live*, and I told them that while I enjoyed the show, I didn't think I would want to do it. I think it's a very good show, although they occasionally lapse into good taste.

**PANORAMA:** *There was a printed rumor to the effect that you might become host of the Today show. Is there anything to that?*

**ALDA:** No, I would only have time to do that between 3 and 4 in the morning. I think that's too early for America to get up.

**PANORAMA:** *You once had an NBC Radio talk show.*

**ALDA:** I've done a lot of interview shows. I replaced Mike Douglas for a week when he had an appendectomy, and I've done local-television talk shows for weeks at a time. I really like to interview people. I learn a lot from it. I enjoy reading their books beforehand or preparing myself for them with research and stuff. I like to talk

to people. I really like to bring out what's there, to help present the person.

**PANORAMA:** *You like that better than being interviewed?*

**ALDA:** Very often I do, yeah. I know what I have to say, and I find it more interesting to hear what other people have to say.

**PANORAMA:** *You signed a deal with Universal to write, direct and star in three feature films. Does this mean that after *M\*A\*S\*H* is over you are abandoning television?*

**ALDA:** No, but I'll have to spend a lot of time on those pictures. I have to do them within a six-year period, and I imagine it'll take a year and a half or two years to get



*'If a movie is made for television, one set of censorship rules applies. If it's made as a feature and then bought for television, another set of censorship rules applies.'*

each one done, so I won't have an awful lot of time. But I really love to work on television. I love the process; I love the way it goes faster than movies.

**PANORAMA:** *Why haven't you done more television movies?*

**ALDA:** Mainly time. I've been offered some interesting things, but it took me a long time to get "The Seduction of Joe Tynan" written and made into a movie. I had optioned a wonderful off-Broadway revue that I wanted to do: "Starting Here, Starting Now." I really loved the material. I wanted to do it on television with Mary Tyler Moore and Carol Burnett, and I think they were both interested in doing it. I had to drop it because I was so swamped with work on the movie.

**PANORAMA:** *Some people say that the*

*television-movie form is more open to serious subject matter nowadays than the youth-oriented feature-film market. I assume you want to do thoughtful, adult films.*

**ALDA:** I've heard that too, and I see what people mean by that. I see some very interesting movies on television. I don't think I'd have been able to do the movie about Caryl Chessman ["Kill Me if You Can"] as a feature, and I think it was a very powerful film. However, "The Seduction of Joe Tynan" is an adult movie. It's about people. There are no car chases in it. It's not about ghosts or mechanical sharks. It's not a mechanical story, it's a human story, and here it is a very big success—and I'm really delighted to see that apparently what you just described as the difference between television and movies doesn't seem to apply.

As a matter of fact, we couldn't have done it as a movie for television, not without a lot of cuts. We couldn't have seen the interaction of these characters in bed; and they're not sex scenes, they're scenes between two people. But you see those two people at that intimate meeting, and that is something not allowed on television. There's a double standard that applies on television. I don't know if they speak about it openly to the press, but they talk about it openly to producers. If a movie is made for television, one set of censorship rules applies. If it's made as a feature and then bought for television, another set of censorship rules applies. So if we had made "The Seduction of Joe Tynan" for television, I couldn't have made the same picture. It would have been blander and, I think, less interesting.

**PANORAMA:** *Why was it about a senator? Why did you select a political setting?*

**ALDA:** Well I think a senator—a politician—is a very good example of what the picture is about. Politicians are tugged at from about as many directions as there are, and they have a great cop-out. Most men can say, "I'm working this hard to make life secure for my family." Politicians have that, plus making the world a better place to live for everybody on earth. So they are completely free to put their families on the shelf while they go. And then they find out that the shelf life of a family is very short and they pay the price. Because the concentration of stress is so high in a politician's life, it makes a very dramatic way to present this theme.

**PANORAMA:** *Did you learn about this through your feminist activities?*

**ALDA:** To a great extent. I've seen a lot of

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politicians in action while I campaigned for the Equal Rights Amendment. I've been in a lot of states and I've had to do politics with politicians—and I've observed a lot and I've read a lot and I've talked to a lot of people. I hung around Washington for a few days and watched people in senators' offices. Some of the most unbelievable events in the movie really took place, and it surprises me when I think back over the film that it's not fiction.

**PANORAMA:** Do you want an Oscar for that movie?

**ALDA:** I want all the awards they have.

**PANORAMA:** Acting, writing—

**ALDA:** Whatever they have, I'll take one.

**PANORAMA:** Some of the critics liked your screenplay but said that your performance was a little bland. And I've read this in reviews of other feature-film performances by you. It's something no one would think of saying about your performance as Hawkeye. When you select a feature-film role, are you looking for something that's different from Hawkeye?

**ALDA:** No. First of all, I look for something that I'd like as a picture, a picture that I'd want to go see, and then I think about the part. If I think I'm suited to the part and the part suits me, then I start to think about taking it.

**PANORAMA:** Does this rap bother you—about being bland?

**ALDA:** A little bit. I don't agree with it—and, by the way, I've read a lot of reviews and I can tell you it's a minority opinion. I think that what it may be is a response to the very strong impression that I've created with Hawkeye over the years. Hawkeye is a character that has a certain kind of energy, and any character that I play that doesn't have that particular kind of energy is liable to be compared unfavorably. I simply go in every day and try to be appropriate to the character I play. I don't intend to play Hawkeye the rest of my life, so people eventually will get used to the fact that sometimes I'll be on a different wavelength from what they enjoyed seeing me last in, and people will just get used to the fact that I'm functioning as an actor and not as a rubber stamp. That's my appraisal of it. Maybe somebody else would have a different opinion of what I do. But I can't make any other sense out of it.

**PANORAMA:** Do people other than critics expect you to go around wisecracking in real life?

**ALDA:** Sometimes, yeah. I'm basically a

serious person, although I like to have a good time, I like to be playful. But I don't do it on Fifth Avenue. And people will sometimes say to me, "Why don't you smile like you do on television?" I push them in front of taxicabs and then smile. That puts an end to that.

**PANORAMA:** In 1975 you created *We'll Get By*, a series about a suburban New Jersey family with three kids. You have a suburban New Jersey family with three kids. The show died very quickly. Was that a big blow?

**ALDA:** No, as a matter of fact I was a little relieved that I didn't have to go through that any more, because I'd taken on an enormous responsibility trying to act while writing and co-producing a whole other series at exactly the same time. I mean I was sleeping about four hours a night. Every waking moment was occupied with work.

**PANORAMA:** Like Joe Tynan?

**ALDA:** Yeah, it was a lot like that. And I was not seeing my family as much as I wanted to. I was barely seeing them at all for several months, and I didn't like it. I liked the show. I felt if we had gone on and done more shows, it would have gotten better. I wanted to deal with the problem of doing it in front of an audience. I think what we talked about before—doing it in front of an audience — was working against the show. It was a necessity to keep the audience laughing; otherwise you'd lose them completely.

**PANORAMA:** Why did you do it in front of an audience?

**ALDA:** It seemed like a good idea at first. All that talk about the spontaneity of the actors and the energy from the performance situation seemed like a good idea, but then I realized that it got in the way of telling a story.

**PANORAMA:** Do you think CBS made the wrong decision when they canceled it?

**ALDA:** CBS is in a slightly different business from the one I'm in, so I can't say they made the wrong decision. It's all water under the bridge, but I wasn't too happy. I was not unhappy about its being canceled—I wasn't too happy about the way everybody went about it.

**PANORAMA:** You read about it in the papers?

**ALDA:** No, no. Freddie Silverman called me up and explained to me that he was taking it off the air. I don't think he was happy after the phone call was over.



'The way I work for the Equal Rights Amendment just reflects the way I feel about people.'

**PANORAMA:** Getting back to your interests outside of show business—what's going to happen if the E.R.A. dies?

**ALDA:** It would be born again, the same thing that happened the last time it died. It was first proposed, as I'm sure you know, in Congress well over 50 years ago, and it periodically has died and been revived again. I don't think anybody feels sure that it will pass before its present time limit runs out, but I think that everybody is certain that we'll continue to fight for equality in the system. It's an intolerable situation not to have equality without regard to sex written into the Constitution.

**PANORAMA:** "The Seduction of Joe Tynan" featured strong women's roles and could be seen as having a feminist consciousness behind it. Would your Universal films be that way?

**ALDA:** Well, everything I write will reflect what I am and how I see the world. You have to understand that I don't subscribe to this week's party line and then try to fill in the blanks with what they tell me to say. I mean, what I write reflects my vision of people. And the way I work for the Equal Rights Amendment or the way I work in other feminist causes just reflects the way I feel about people and the way I understand the way things work.

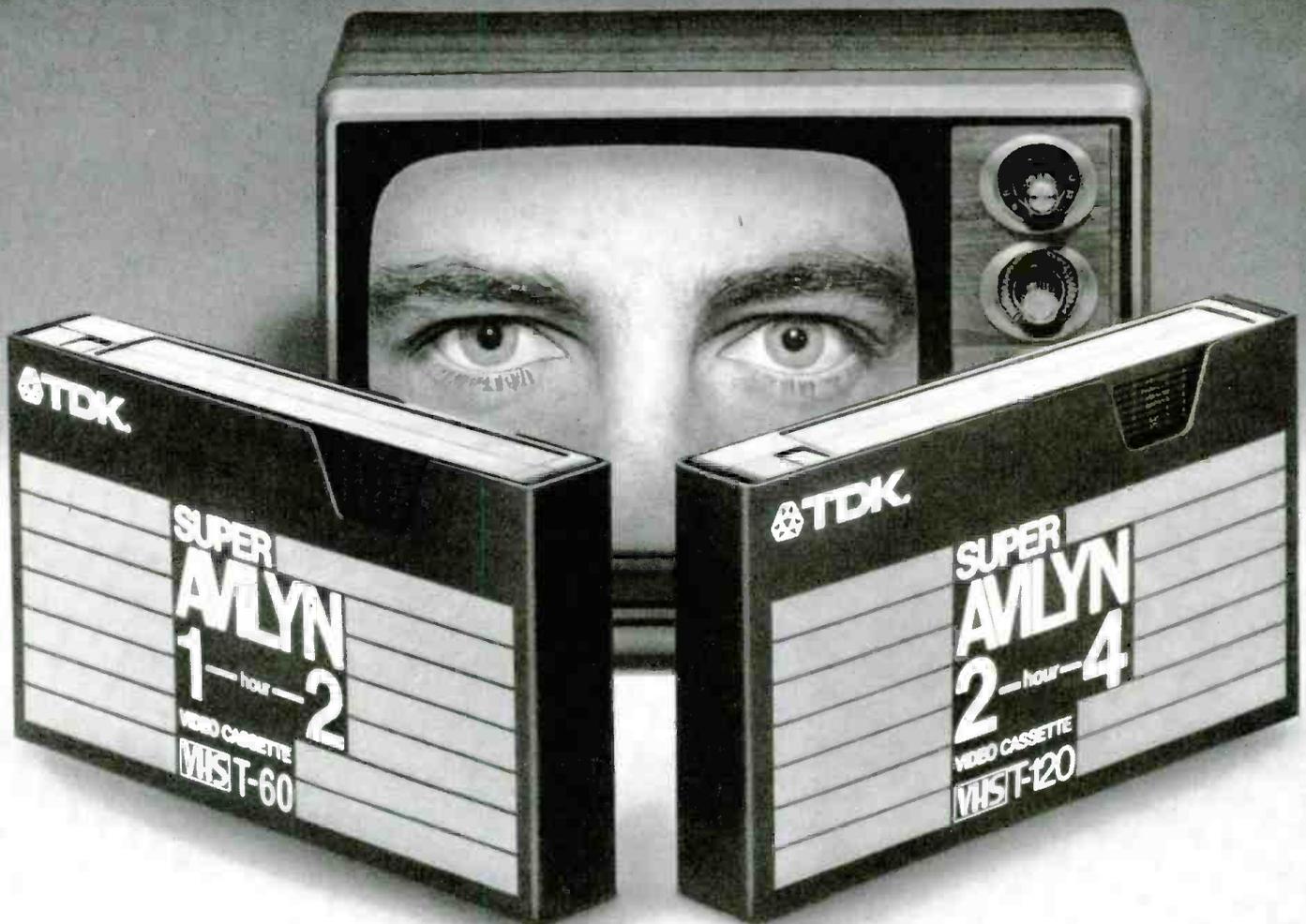
**PANORAMA:** "The Four Seasons," the first film for your Universal deal, is about three couples.

**ALDA:** Yes. Three couples and their friendship over the course of a year.

**PANORAMA:** Contemporary couples?

**ALDA:** Yeah. They go from the springtime when they're just beginning to be close friends, when they are just making the transition from being casual friends to being close friends, through the summer and the fall and the winter, and they have

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to weather the ravages of closeness. It's not that easy for people to be close. It's much easier to be casual friends.

**PANORAMA:** *You're talking about the relationships between the couples or the relationships within the couples?*

**ALDA:** Both. The couples relate to each other as friends in different ways from the way the individuals relate as friends. They relate as couples in a more complex way, but in addition to that, during the course of that time, the relations within the couples vary too. But it focuses mainly on the friendship among the three couples. And it's a comedy.

**PANORAMA:** *Do you know what your other movies will be?*

**ALDA:** No, I have no idea.

**PANORAMA:** *You haven't started writing?*

**ALDA:** No.

**PANORAMA:** *Earlier in your career, I believe you went out and made a series of short films to learn how to make movies.*

**ALDA:** Oh, I did that a few years ago. I don't know when that was. I think it was right before I did *M\*A\*S\*H*.

**PANORAMA:** *Has anybody else ever seen these movies?*

**ALDA:** No, they're little 8-millimeter movies. I just put up a sign in my little town in New Jersey saying that in April I would show an evening of films. That was in January, and from January to April I worked every day and got about an hour or an hour and a half of film to show people. Short pieces. All different kinds of things. Documentaries, dramatic pieces.

**PANORAMA:** *So long as the sign was up there, you knew you had to—*

**ALDA:** I had to show up with film. And I learned a lot. I learned how to light things myself, and I operated the camera. I did everything and I edited everything. And I scored the films. I learned a great deal about what you have to shoot to come up with what you want on film. I didn't learn anything like what I learned when I started directing on *M\*A\*S\*H*, but it helped me make the transition.

I started doing that when I was about 12 years old, making movies in my back yard. I've always loved making movies. I'm excited by the process.

**PANORAMA:** *You were born a D'Abruzzo?*

**ALDA:** Yeah. D-apostrophe-A-b-r-u-z-z-o.

**PANORAMA:** *And your first name was?*

**ALDA:** Alphonso.

**PANORAMA:** *I don't think many people know that you have this Italian heritage.*

**ALDA:** I don't keep it a secret.

**PANORAMA:** *Do you ever think of yourself as an Italian in any way?*

**ALDA:** Oh, sure. The part that eats.

**PANORAMA:** *You've never played any Italian roles, have you?*

**ALDA:** I don't think so. I don't think I have. I'm half Italian and half Irish.

**PANORAMA:** *Joe Tynan was Irish.*

**ALDA:** I guess Tynan is an Irish name, but I wasn't aware of that. I guess it is. I thought of it more as Presbyterian.

**PANORAMA:** *Do you think of yourself as a Catholic?*

**ALDA:** No.

**PANORAMA:** *Was there a break at some point with the church?*

**ALDA:** Well, that's, I think, between me and God. I mean, I think that's too private to talk about.

**PANORAMA:** *One reason I brought it up was that it struck me that the church is in a lot of trouble with feminists.*

**ALDA:** As well it should be.

**PANORAMA:** *So I wondered how you balanced that.*

**ALDA:** I just hope the Pope isn't too surprised if he gets to heaven and he finds

out that God is in fact a woman.

**PANORAMA:** *You've always been very protective of your privacy, but you went out on this big promotional tour for "The Seduction of Joe Tynan."*

**ALDA:** Well you know, it's funny. As I read interviews, I see that writers, in order to capsule a personality, often look for a short, pithy way to peg the person they're talking about, and I'm beginning to develop this reputation for being fiercely defensive of my private life. I just think I'm normally defensive of it; it doesn't seem all that fierce to me. But what I generally try to do in an interview is say things that will be fairly readable without giving up my own private life. I'm pretty good at it, and I usually satisfy writers and readers.

I felt fairly comfortable doing all that promotion for "Joe Tynan," even though I'd never promoted anything else that way, because it was important to me that the movie be a success.

**PANORAMA:** *If you had to choose one—acting, writing or directing—*

**ALDA:** That's a hard question. I can't answer that. But so far, thank goodness, not only do I not have to choose among directing, writing and acting, I'm being offered more and more opportunities to do all three, which makes me very happy. I really love it. It's wonderful. It's literally a boyhood dream come true, so I feel terrific.

**PANORAMA:** *You always wanted to be in show business?*

**ALDA:** Yeah, and I always wanted to do all these things. From the time I was a boy I did do all of these things. Only now I'm doing them in the real world. ■

'I'm beginning to develop this reputation for being fiercely defensive of my private life.'





## WILL DENVER GO DRY?

DENVER, Colo. — With all the snow and rivers in Colorado, many residents did not fully recognize the state's developing water problem.

While the population and economy have grown, the water supply has not. And much of the limited water supply flows out of state untouched because of water rights laws protecting states downstream.

Mardee McKinlay of KBTU in Denver went to work to develop greater public awareness of the situation.

KBTU is a former Combined Communications television station

that is now part of the Gannett Broadcast Group.

McKinlay produced several in-depth documentaries explaining the complexity of the problem. In one, "We Had Best Care," a leading geographer told of the long-term effects on the land. McKinlay also interviewed cattlemen and farmers to explain the impact on people.

A follow-up documentary, "Western Slope Pressure Cooker," reported how coal and oil shale development could put additional demands on the water supply.

These documentaries, along with supporting news reports and editorials by Station KBTU, alerted the people of Colorado. Water conservation efforts were improved and a lively debate over water and land management continues.

At Gannett, we support and encourage such efforts as those

of Mardee McKinlay and Station KBTU. They symbolize what we're most proud of: professional excellence in news coverage and a total commitment to strong, independent service to the community.

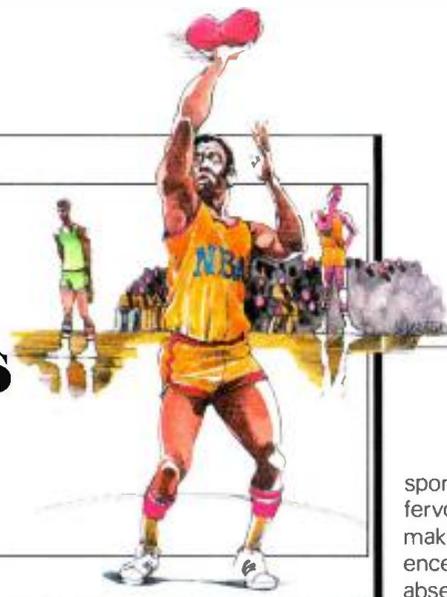
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# The NBA: Greed Breeds Boredom

By KENNETH TURAN



**T**he silly season of TV sports has arrived: the National Basketball Association is on the air.

Everyone knows the jokes about the NBA, about how its season is longer than some wars, how it's the only sport with an exhibition schedule that lasts 82 games, how its play-off system is more torturously exhausting than a brisk trot up Mount Everest. You get the picture.

Not laughing very hard is CBS, which paid \$74 million for the dubious right to put that picture on the Nation's airwaves for four years. Last year pro basketball's ratings were down around Julius Erving's kneecaps, down some 20 percent overall, to be specific. Industry observers say the sport may be getting ready to go the way of regular-season coverage of professional hockey and do an ungraceful half gainer off the network tower, disappearing forever from sight.

Part of the problem, as usual in professional sports, revolves around greed. Anyone who cares even a little bit about basketball loves the tingle of the play-off games, so the NBA hierarchy, a good-hearted bunch of guys if ever there was one, decided to share the wealth.

They couldn't let all 22 teams in the league be in the play-offs — that would be too much even for them — but they could let 12 teams in, and they do. And they could set up a play-off system with more steps than a Babylonian ziggurat, mandating first a two-out-of-three-game series, then a four-out-of-seven, followed by another four-out-of-seven, followed by still another four-out-of-seven, with whoever was left breathing after that potential 24-game marathon being declared winner and champion.

Except from a squeeze-the-fan standpoint, this is obviously not the best way to run a sport. And don't forget that all 22 teams in the league must wade through a sizable 82-game regular-season schedule — something like 900 games all

told — just to eliminate 10 of their fellows. Not making the cut turns out to be more of a feat than making it.

If all that seems like a waste of energy, that is exactly the way the players feel about it. Already tired out by the barbarous demands of an air-travel schedule that would exhaust Amelia Earhart, they save themselves by coasting through most of the regular season, treating it like the exhibition slate it really is. While this is perfectly understandable from a physical/psychological point of view, from the network's standpoint it is little short of disastrous, because bored, half-hearted behemoths just naturally lead to boring, lackluster games that fewer and fewer people want to watch.

Yet this is only part of the NBA's problem. For fans who like the sport but recognize the professional version for the painful charade that it is don't have to turn off the TV set and sulk in the darkness. They can light a single candle by simply changing the channel and watching the college variety on NBC. Judging by the ratings, more and more people are doing just that: last year's NCAA championship game between Michigan State (led by "Magic" Johnson) and Indiana State (with Larry Bird) appeared in prime time and claimed the highest rating of any televised college basketball game ever.

**A**mong the things the college game has going for it is the most rational play-off system of any sport, amateur or otherwise, a terribly comprehensive format that this year will include 48 teams. It also has a manageable regular season, usually 27 games per team. But where college basketball really has it over the professional version as a TV attraction is in the area of emotion. Its players, young and eager by definition, really care about what they're doing, and that is crucial.

What is often forgotten in the rush of numbers and dollar signs is how childish

sports are at their core, how things like fervor and enthusiasm are essential in making them palatable to a viewing audience. And these qualities, so woefully absent from the pro ranks, are precisely the ones college basketball has in abundance.

**I**f college players can't get fired up of their own accord, eons-old traditional rivalries that the NBA can't hope to match are an available prod. Then there are the crowds, with the combination of euphoric spirits and an enclosed place producing a mixture of noise and madness that is so great that spectators in snake pits like Philadelphia's Palestra literally are unable to hear anything said by people sitting next to them. While turning on a pre-game show in the NBA will get you a picture of some big galoots in sweats shooting a few layups in a near-empty arena, in the college game the picture is unbridled pandemonium. As someone at NBC put it, "People just don't put paint on their faces for NBA games."

However, CBS and the league are not going to give up the ship just yet. In an attempt to fight the enemy *mano a mano*, they have moved up the starting times of their Sunday games so that college telecasts will no longer have the 45-minute advantage they enjoyed in 1979. Recognizing the silliness of that long regular season, which runs from October through March, CBS will continue to televise only two games from the first half of the season, 15 from the second, and a possible 24 from the play-off period. And those play-offs, which didn't end until June 1 last year, will now conclude, a bit more tidily, by May 20.

While all this will no doubt help, the basic problem with the NBA on TV will remain untouched. While it would be a serious mistake to idolize college basketball as the home of pure-hearted amateurs, there is no escaping the fact that its players are obviously more interested in what they're doing than their well-paid counterparts. To the television viewer, that element of emotion, corny though it is, will continue to make all the difference. ■

*Kenneth Turan is a free-lance writer who formerly covered sports for The Washington Post.*



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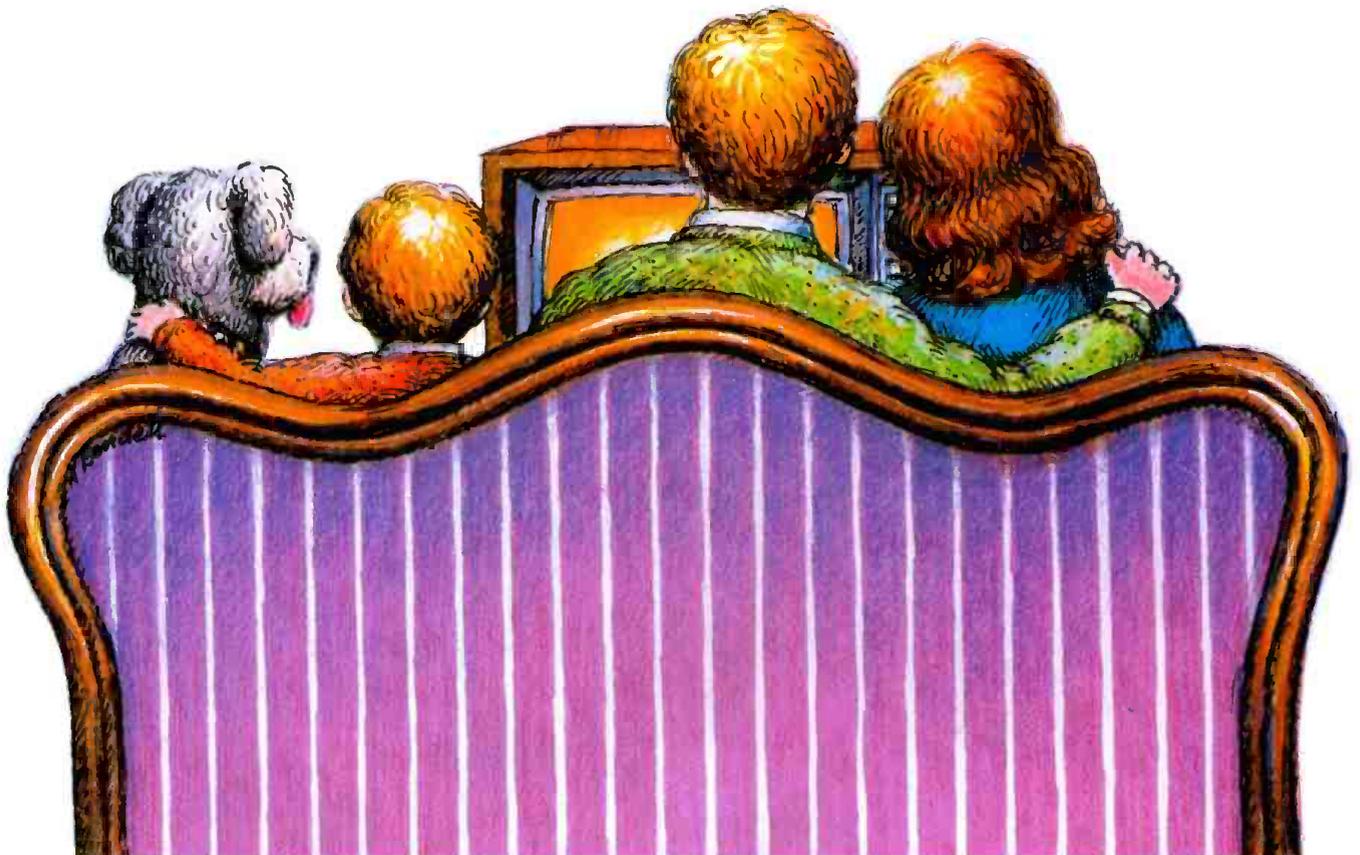
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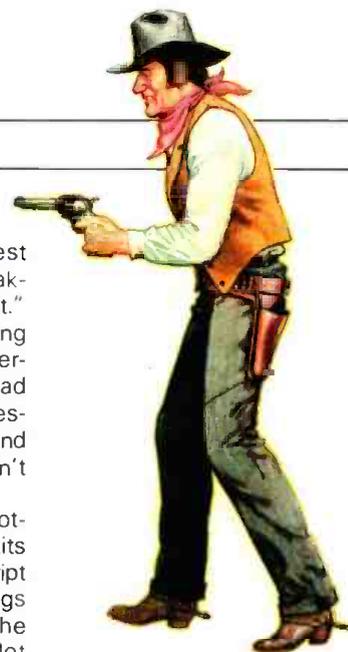
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# PANORAMIC VIEW



## DUELING DUKES

"Shooting Star" is shooting, and "The Duke" has put up its dukes.

Both of them are three-hour television-movie projects about the life of John Wayne. Warner Bros. is filming the former for CBS. The Wayne family company, Batjac Productions, is planning the latter for ABC. The makers of the latter are furious about the former.

"If you took honey and horse--- and put them in a blender," says Michael Wayne, John's oldest son and head of

Batjac, "what would you have? 'Shooting Star'."

He's referring to the book on which the CBS project is based. The Duke's son charges that the book, by Maurice Zolotow, is rife with inaccuracies. Furthermore, Wayne is angry at the makers of "Shooting Star" for deciding to do the movie without consulting him. "The attitude must have been 'John Wayne died, let's make a couple of dollars'."

Shortly after "Shooting Star" was announced, Wayne unveiled plans to do his own version of his father's story for ABC. His company will also "make a couple of dollars" from the deal, but, says Wayne, "The family is more entitled to make the money."

Tentatively called "The Duke," the Batjac film will be more than a family album, according to Wayne. Two outsiders, James Burns and Jack Miller, were recruited to write it. "They have a pretty objective viewpoint," says Wayne. "We're not going to try to hide the

warts. Some of his biggest strengths were his weaknesses. He was loyal to a fault."

Wayne fears that "Shooting Star" will concentrate on certain other warts: "If you read that book, you get the impression that all he did was fight and drink and carouse. That wasn't his whole life."

The screenwriter of "Shooting Star," Paul Monash, admits that he began writing the script "with a lot of negative feelings about John Wayne." But, he says, "I came out with a lot more positive feelings. It's a positive picture."

Monash also notes that the Duke "was not an Olympian figure. He did drink too much, his political attitudes might offend some people, his second marriage was a disaster. On the other hand, he was a strong and loyal friend, a man's man who appreciated women." Monash says the Zolotow book was not his only source.

Zolotow acknowledges that his book contained some errors (corrected for the paperback edition, he says) but defends his research methods and his longtime acquaintance with the Duke, whom he knew since 1953. Zolotow says he received a letter from the Duke three weeks before his death, commending Zolotow on an article he had recently written about Wayne.

"John Wayne is such a great character," says Zolotow, "there will be many interpretations. There should be."

## WHAT IS KODAK DEVELOPING?

One hundred years ago this April, a young man named George Eastman rented a third-floor loft in Rochester, N.Y., and began selling a new type of photographic plate. Today, Eastman Kodak is the 25th largest company on the Fortune 500 with annual sales of more than \$7 billion—80 percent of which are still derived from film. Ever since minicam TV news ushered in the videotape era in 1972, and especially now, on the eve of what looks to be the mass consumerization of tape, a



lot of people have been wondering: when and how will that giant in Rochester move into video?

Many experts are convinced Kodak is working to perfect a videocassette recorder that would fit, Instamatic-like, *inside*

a camera—the ultimate portable. As evidence of Kodak's interest, they point to the number of video-related patents filed by the company in recent years; to its experiments in making industrial varieties of videotape in France; and to its 1972 acquisition of Spin Physics, a San Diego-based manufacturer of professional video-recording equipment—a purchase Kodak said would give it a "window" on tape technology. Kodak spends more than \$1 million a day on research and development, and speculation is that significant amounts of that are pouring into

video labs at Spin Physics and elsewhere in the Kodak empire.

Kodak itself has revealed none of its plans, and the company's penchant for secrecy is most often compared to the CIA's. But Kodak executives, while not shedding much light on their darkrooms, do admit that *something* video is in development. "I'm confident there will be an increasing involvement [in tape]," said Kenneth Mason, general manager of Kodak's audiovisual and movie division, "but not to the exclusion of, or in any sense the abandoning of, film."

“When Ed Murrow, many years ago, asked me to succeed him as chief European correspondent of his network, I protested that I did not know a thing about the technology of broadcasting, and he said, ‘Good, don’t ever learn. You’ll start telling the engineers their business, then we’ll all be in trouble.’ I’ve followed his advice to the letter, and to this day, unless somebody who knows points the camera or the microphone in the right way, I would never know.”

—Howard K. Smith, former CBS and ABC correspondent and commentator, at a conference of the Radio-Television News Directors Association, Las Vegas

## IN LOK-O PARENTIS

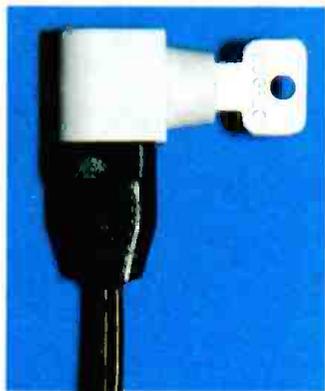
Last winter Morton Werner, an insurance executive from Clayton, Mo., became troubled by the 35-hour-a-week television-viewing habit of his 11-year-old son Kenny. Often Werner would leave the house instructing his son not to watch television, only to find him glued to the set when he returned.

So Werner decided to do something about it. He started tinkering in his basement with a device that would control the television set. What he came up with he called the Plug-Lok. He has since refined it into a simple piece of plastic, about the size of a big toe, that encases the plug of any television set, preventing insertion of the plug into a socket. The unit is locked onto the plug with a key and, thus, has been described as a “chas-

tity belt for the television set.” It’s available at \$4.95 a pair (most homes have two TV sets) from the aptly named Kenny Company, P.O. Box 9132, St. Louis, Mo. 63117, a firm created by Werner and run by his wife Marilyn.

About 7000 Plug-Loks have already been sold to customers, who often enclose desperate letters with their orders saying things like: “URGENT NEED! Two daughters with glazed eyes need rest.” “There seems to be a large group of working mothers who need it,” says Marilyn Werner. “But purchasers of Plug-Lok seem to be very affluent. Many of the checks say Doctor so-and-so on them... and very few of the checks bounce.”

No better advertisement for the Plug-Lok exists than the Werner home. “The first day, Kenny was angry with us,” Mort Werner recalls. “But then he got used to the idea. We found that he started reading books again. And he developed a healthier attitude toward television.” In fact, within two weeks after installation, the Werners were able to put the Plug-Lok away. But occasionally, admits Marilyn, Kenny drifts back into his old habit and the Plug-Lok once again must be plugged in.



## SEX DRAWS A CROWD

In retrospect the concept was perfect: an educational but entertaining documentary with sex appeal—literally. “The Sexes,” first telecast last May, featured the same combination of case-history drama and microscopic photography as its three predecessors in CBS’s *The Body Human* series. Unlike its predecessors, however, “The Sexes” pulled one of the largest audiences ever for a CBS documentary, a 39-percent share, and demolished ABC’s *Salvage 1* and NBC’s *Little House on the Prairie*.

Quickly recovering from the shock of this unexpected ratings

triumph, CBS told the producers, “Do another sex show before you do anything else.” The Tomorrow Entertainment/Medcom team outdid itself and came up with five such shows, several of which are expected to be shown in the next few months. Closest to a direct sequel is another one-hour special with a broader scope, “The Sex Drive.” There are two half-hour daytime specials for adolescents, “Facts for Boys” and “Facts for Girls,” and a five-part series of fictional dramas called *A Celebration of Female Sexuality*, also for daytime. This last show has been in development for two years and, if successful, may be extended to a full-time series. Finally, there is “The Sexualist,” a prime-time movie about the tribulations of a female sex therapist, based on actual case histories.

There is other activity in the sex-education field. PBS’s *Nova* has an episode in the works for next fall about cultural imprinting of sex roles, tentatively titled “Male/Female,” and Motown’s television arm is developing a fictional miniseries based on UCLA psychiatrist Aaron Hass’s recent study of teen sexuality.

Producers should be forewarned, however, that love does not conquer all. CBS’s rerun of “The Sexes” last October was trounced in the ratings by the seventh game of the World Series.

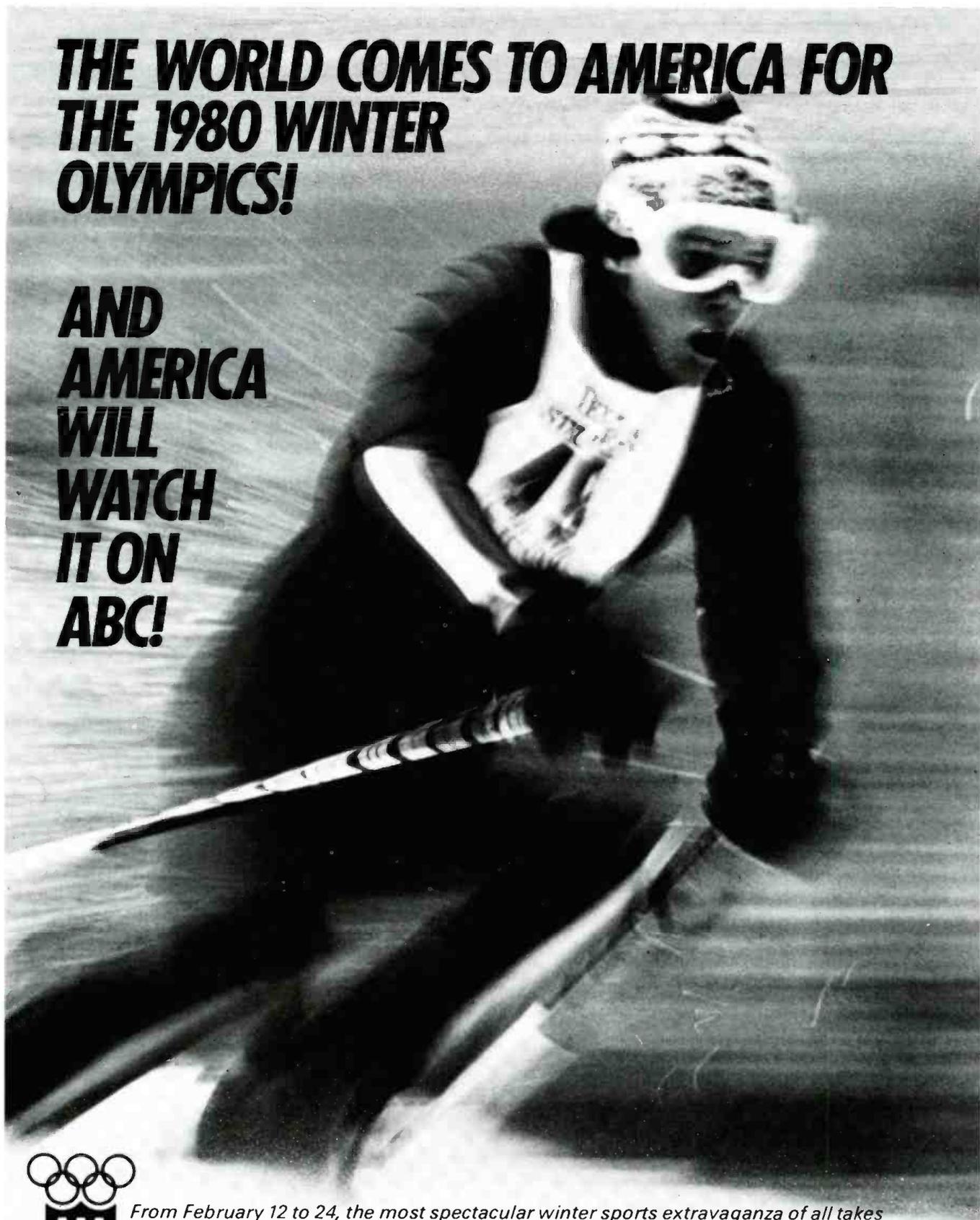
## PRIORITIES

A survey appearing in the Bruskin Report, a market-research newsletter, asked people to name what in their homes was really important to them. Thirty-two percent gave “my TV set” as their first choice; eight percent said “my bed.”



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**HIDDEN ASSET**

About two million deaf Americans and another 12 million or so with hearing impairments will be offered subtitles on network programs beginning next month, in a unique—and controversial—extension of the medium for so specialized an audience.

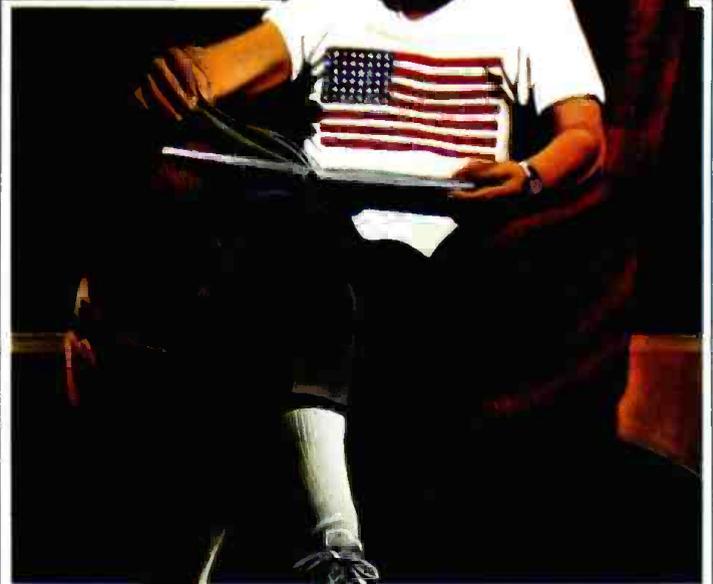
The captions will be carried in an unused part of the TV signal called the “vertical blanking interval”—that black band you see when the vertical hold flickers. They will be retrievable for display on the screen only by those with set-top decoders, available for about \$250 from the Sears Roebuck catalogue after March 15. ABC and NBC each have agreed to caption five hours of programming a week initially. Candidates for captioning are: *Barney Miller*, *Soap*, *Eight Is Enough*, *Vega\$* and *The Sunday Night Movie* on ABC; *Disney’s Wonderful World*, *Monday Night at the Movies* and *Friday Night at the Movies* on NBC. PBS, which developed the captioning system with technical inspiration from ABC, political encouragement from the Carter Administration and financial support from the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, plans to start with 10 hours each week, including *Masterpiece Theatre*, *Once Upon a Classic*, *3-2-1 Contact*, *Nova*, *Mystery!* and, later, *Odyssey* and *Over Easy*.

CBS is staying out of the project—and taking considerable political heat for doing so—because it believes its

grand designs for the vertical blanking interval will soon make the PBS system obsolete. Since last March, CBS has been testing two systems developed in England and France that store in (and can be decoded from) that same piece of electronic real estate not only captions, but also hundreds of screenfuls of other information: weather reports, sports scores, news stories, recipes, shopping bargains, movie listings, travel schedules, classified ads... anything, really, that can be printed on a page.

Variations of these systems are being developed in many countries, and CBS is not alone in wanting to bring them here. Dozens of broadcasters, cable operators, publishers and computer firms are actively exploring the possibilities, one reason that the Electronic Industries Association is rushing to recommend a standard system to the Federal Communications Commission this year.

ABC, NBC and PBS all are among those investigating “teletext,” as it is called, but they argue that its arrival in the U.S. is too far in the future to hold off on captioning. As a PBS engineer put it: “What a deal CBS is offering the deaf—wait 10 years and pay twice as much!” Others, of course, disagree. “ABC and NBC got their arms twisted on this thing by HEW and the Administration,” said an FCC official (contradicting the view held by at least some of his superiors). “CBS’s position is the correct one, no doubt about it.”



**AN AMERICAN  
MASTERPIECE  
THEATRE?**

Will American public television be able to produce a weekly drama series comparable to the one we import from Britain, *Masterpiece Theatre*?

It’s a question that has long plagued PBS, and the answer at the moment is, “Don’t hold your breath.” As with practically everything in public TV, it comes down to a question of money.

A group of the larger public broadcasters has banded together to try to overcome that perennial obstacle in its proposal to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting for just such a series, currently titled *American Playhouse*. The consortium would supervise a fund—set at \$16 million for 22 one-hour episodes the first year—which would be pieced together with contributions from CPB, various Government agencies and corporate underwriters.

Six corporations and a major foundation have expressed interest in providing some of that money. But according to Henry Becton Jr., general manager of Boston’s WGBH-TV and one of the leaders of the effort, “Everything is on hold at CPB” until it completes an internal reorganization. When the CPB does get around to considering the proposal—probably this spring—Becton believes its coffers will be prohibitively low. He also fears that Government agencies may have trouble justifying prime-time drama support under their required “social utility” guidelines.

Meanwhile, back in the Edwardian drawing room...

“This is what television has become: occasional flashes of humor and brilliance, an occasional exercise into dramatic excellence, set like occasional jewels on a huge bed of cold oatmeal. But we watch it. I watch it. Maybe you watch it—some six and a half hours a day if you’re part of the average household. Knowing what you know after 30 years of TV—knowing there are great books to read, spouses and children to love, parks and tennis courts for your body, museums and concerts for your mind—whose fault is it if you stare at flickering pictures to pass the time? It’s comforting to attack the industry, and Lord knows it’s earned it, but never forget that 74 million American households keep this system ever more profitable. And the odds are you’re in one of them.”

—Jeff Greenfield, TV critic, on the CBS program *Sunday Morning*

## THE YEAR OF THE FISH



The People's Republic of China is about to get its first look at a genuine "Made in U.S.A." prime-time TV series. What, you may ask, is the first show to scale the Great Wall? *Kung Fu*, perhaps? No, it's *The Man from Atlantis*, an action-adventure series whose main character is a half-superman, half-superfish secret agent played by Patrick Duffy (now Bobby Ewing on *Dal-*

*las*). The program kept its head above water on NBC for just 17 weeks in 1977 before being swallowed by the ratings sharks. Now, *Atlantis's* syndicator, Taft, H-B International, Inc., has exported 13 one-hour, one 90-minute and three two-hour episodes to the Chinese Central Television Station of Peking.

*The Man from Atlantis* may present the Chinese with a slightly unrealistic view of American life. Imagine a student in Szechwan province telling his cadre that "the reason America can export so much grain is that its people live on a diet of kelp and plankton." For an honest portrayal of the average U.S. worker, the Chinese viewer will just have to wait for *Laverne & Shirley*.



## PLAIN JANE

Jane Fonda as a backwoods whittler? In a made-for-TV movie?

Actually, the second is more of a first for the actress, who has played many kinds of roles, but—until now—none for television. As Gertie Nevels, the title role in ABC's "The Dollmaker," Fonda will play an uneducated farm woman from the Kentucky hills who moves to Detroit during World War II. Feeling like an outcast in the big city, Gertie finds in her ability to carve figures from raw cherry wood a link with her heritage, as well as a way to feed the family when her husband goes on strike.

Millard Lampell, who was enlisted by Fonda to turn the 1954 novel by Harriette Arnow into a three-hour television script, says that anyone who expects agit-prop out of the politically committed Fonda's first TV-movie will be disappointed. Any political significance in "The

Dollmaker" lies with Fonda's choice of medium, not message, says Lampell. "There's no doubt the people she would like to speak to the most are in the television audience, not the film audience. Television is where the working people are."

Television is also where uplifting endings are often added to inherently depressing narratives, and "The Dollmaker" apparently will not be an exception. "It's a rough story," says Lampell. One reviewer of the book called it "a harrowing tale completely unrelieved by one positively joyous occasion or a single scrap of humor." This will change for television. "The ending was one of the weakest parts of the book," explains Lampell. "It was artificial. There is more strength and hope and potential in this woman than the book allowed. We can show her resilience and her exuberance without making it cute."

“There seems today to be an unwritten rule among some of the TV newscasters that no week should go by without some denunciation of business and its advertising practices.... To expect private companies to go on supporting a medium that is attacking them is like taking up a collection among the Christians for money to buy more lions.”

—Leonard S. Matthews, president of the American Association of Advertising Agencies, in a speech to the annual conference of the eastern region of the association

## UP AGAINST THE WALL, TUBE

Interior designers in pursuit of the ultrasleek video environment of the Eighties often are forced to deal with the fact that the least sleek object in the

room is its focal point, the TV set. Not for nothing is it called "the box."

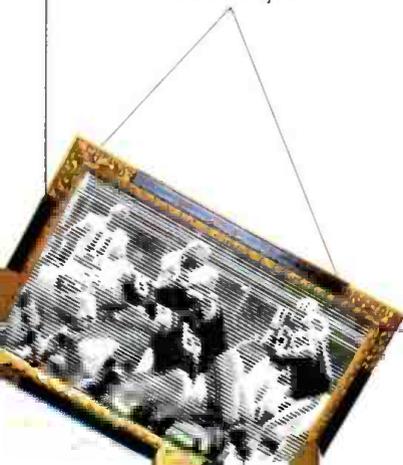
A tubeless, flat-screen set to hang on the wall like a painting has long been the dream of TV engineers as well as designers. Some of those engineers, in the laboratories of a dozen or more major companies around the world, are racing to be the first to perfect one. They talk, when they talk at all, of "fundamental breakthroughs in physical chemistry," involving such techniques as electroluminescence, plasma gas discharge, liquid crystals, thin film transistors and waterlike streams of electronics. Several Japanese com-

panies have said they will market very small black-and-white flat-screen sets within a year or two, but wall-size color eludes them.

For a progress report, we talked with Joseph Markin, president of Lucitron, Inc., Northbrook, Ill. Lucitron's executives formerly made up much of Zenith's research staff, and they are now working with GTE/Sylvania on the gas-discharge approach. Markin is among the more optimistic competitors in his hopes to market, by as early as 1984, a color set 40 inches high, 30 inches wide and less than 3 inches thick.

"It's the queen of problems," says Markin, who has worked on it since 1965. "The tube is, as they say in vaudeville, a hard act to follow—it's probably the most complex thing we have in our homes right now. But you want to look for an entirely different physical principle to make your [flat screen] picture. It should be brighter than today's large-screen TV, with no lack of color resolution and no bending of the image... so you're more likely to see whatever's wrong with the picture transmitted."

Until all the problems are solved, we'll have to be satisfied with pictures that don't move on our wall.





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**Great Movies — No Commercials**

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## WORLD SERIES



Marshall McLuhan's 1960s notion that telecommunications would make of the world one homogeneous "global village" more or less expired with that decade, but an ambitious program in the works for next fall brings it to mind again. Called *Agenda for a Small Planet*, it's billed as "a dialogue of civilizations" and may be Earth's first truly international TV production.

Coordinated by the United Nations and the Canadian International Development Agency, *Agenda* is a series of documentary films to be produced by broadcasting organizations of at least 11 industrialized countries. All will explore the implications of a common theme: the economic imbalance and cultural interdependence between the developed nations of the Northern hemisphere and the undeveloped nations of the Southern.

Each participating broadcaster has agreed to produce a one-hour film in return for the right to telecast, free, those produced by the others. KQED, the

public station in San Francisco, plans to represent the United States and PBS with an essay on environmental problems. West Germany is to focus on the immigration and integration of Third World citizens into industrialized nations while France examines the reverse phenomenon: the presence and influence of Northern business concerns in Southern-hemisphere societies.

Other participants and subjects are: Canada—a definition of economic development. Finland—the demand for a new international economic order. Japan—the force of economic development in shaping civilizations. Belgium—alternatives to the urban-centered development of large-scale industry. The Netherlands—the growth of cooperative self-reliance. New Zealand—the impact of communications technologies. Sweden—disarmament. And Italy—the problems of food supply and distribution.

Roxanne Russell, executive producer of KQED's effort, believes one of the group's biggest challenges will be to avoid a didactic tone. "What if a hundred years ago," she asks, "some industrialized country had come to the United States and said, 'Hey, stop what you're doing—you can't pollute the Colorado River, you can't develop Los Angeles?' We would have told them to take a flying leap." The South, in fact, could have the last word: if *Agenda* comes off as planned, a sequel produced by Third World nations may follow.

## THE EVERYTHING MACHINE

"You want minicombos? I'll give you minicombos. I've got minicombos designed for a two-foot pygmy with one eye in the middle of his head." Thus spake a salesman in one store we visited to find out about the phenomenon of minicombos.

What we learned is this: Minicombos are battery-operated, miniature TV sets with screens of anywhere from 1.5 to 7 inches, combined with such other electronic paraphernalia as audio-cassette recorders, AM/FM radios, police- and weather-band radios and digital alarm clocks. One even comes—shades of Dick Tracy!—with a wristband. Products of advances in solid-state circuitry and battery design, they have found a place in the lives of mobile Americans.

"It's a second set for the kid, or in the kitchen for Mom," says one manufacturer. "Next to the bed, in your car, at the game or on the beach," says another. Prices range from \$150 or so, for a miniature black-and-white TV alone, up to \$500 and more for the most exotic amalgamations (color, introduced recently, doubles the cost of any given set), and manufacturers say as many as a million minis move each year. They're most popular in California and other Western states and among sports fans, a unique tribute to that improvement on reality known as the instant replay. And although most buyers are thought to be interested primarily in the televi-

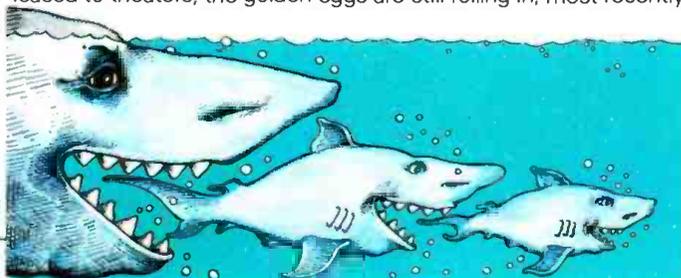


sion itself, others are apparently fascinated by the multimedia possibilities of the optional features. "It's seen by the consumer as a *personal* entertainment center," concludes another salesman. "It satisfies a lot of appetites."

## BIG BITES

What's the difference between a goose that lays golden eggs and a shark? None, when the shark is the star of "Jaws."

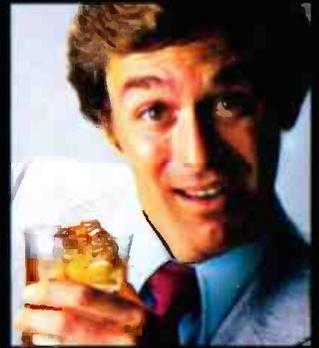
Four years after the blockbuster Universal movie was first released to theaters, the golden eggs are still rolling in, most recently



to ABC and the Nation's pay-television networks. An estimated 80 million people were watching when ABC telecast the film last Nov. 4, making it the second-highest-rated movie in the history of television (after "Gone with the Wind"). On pay-cable networks, where the killer shark surfaced in August, the story was the same. One such network, Showtime, had so much faith in "Jaws" that it centered its biggest marketing campaign ever around its August premiere—and the strategy paid off. Showtime's marketing vice president Susan Denison says Showtime affiliates promoting "Jaws" had a 35-percent gain in subscribers over the previous month.

Additionally, more than \$15 million was hauled in at theater box offices from May through July when "Jaws" was rereleased to 2000 movie houses. No matter the medium, it seems, the film draws fans the way...uh...blood attracts sharks.

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**SOUND THINKING**

Television sound is something you may have been hearing a lot more about lately, and a lot more of. Set manufacturers have gone audio with their 1980 product lines, beefing up amplifier power, improving speaker design, refining tuning controls and adding such tricks as simulated stereo.

There's more to it than just needing something new to peddle. AT&T, which transmits almost all network programs through its telephone lines, has vastly improved the quality of its audio transmissions by a process called diplexing—meaning sound and picture travel together instead of separately as before. That dissolved the manufacturers' syllogism: why build sets sensitive to sound they'll never receive in the first place?

AT&T subsequently went a

step further by adding a second audio channel, making stereo simulcasts in cooperation with local FM stations available for the first time nationwide. And music-conscious PBS has started sending some programs in four-channel stereo sound over its satellite network for new, improved simulcasts. Like satellites, cable systems have dozens of channels to use for audio as well as video; Warner Cable's elaborate Qube system in Columbus, Ohio, offers what programs it can get in stereo and installs connections through hi-fi receivers for a nominal one-time fee.

All these are harbingers of what's to come when the commercial networks, the program producers and the set makers are ready: all-stereo television. Multichannel broadcasts are already underway in Japan: newscasts are available in both Japanese and English, and stereo baseball is said to take you right out to the park. A committee of leading engineers from all segments of the U.S. television industry is working toward an American standard. The committee's chairman, Thomas Keller of PBS's WGBH-TV, Boston, says that if all goes smoothly, we could be getting network stereocasts as early as two or three years from now. When you add to that the fact that the superior audio quality of videodiscs is expected to make them an important new medium for recording artists, you can understand why one manufacturer says, "Sound is the feature of the future."

“ There's a general alienation in society, a disconnection. People do not feel connected to their Government, they don't feel connected to each other, they don't feel connected to issues and things, they don't feel they can matter any more.... So in the absence of a connection to a society and to neighbors and friends and government and leadership, they withdraw, they become isolated individuals. And what better to do in that circumstance than to watch television? ”

—Norman Lear, TV producer, interviewed for the NBC program "TV Guide—The First 25 Years"

**FROM KUNTA TO HANTA**

Wanted: another LeVar Burton. David Wolper, who produced *Roots*, may not exactly be phrasing it that way. But he surely wouldn't mind unearthing more unknown talent to fill some of the 40 lead roles in his planned miniseries *Hanta Yo*. The epic is based on Ruth Beebe Hill's 834-page best seller about a tribe of Plains Indians (Teton Sioux). The work recounts how these Indians lived and remained free of the white man's influence from 1769 to 1834.

Will any "Roots"-like problems grow out of plagiarism suits or scholars' charges of faulty research in connection with the new project? "This is the most well-researched book that's ever been written," says Wolper firmly, although scholars did take a few shots at the book's authenticity. "It took Ruth Beebe Hill 30 years to

research and write, and as far as I'm concerned, its authenticity is unimpeachable."

As for the talent search, Hollywood has traditionally cast non-Indians in Indian roles, but ABC has agreed that in *Hanta Yo* most of the Indian roles should be played by Indians. So Wolper and his casting directors are going to Indian acting schools and Indian acting troupes in search of authentic performers. Already, 200 Indian actors have written to Wolper seeking auditions.

Wolper concedes, however, that not all parts will be played by Indians. "You want the best actors you can get," he says. "The piece is depreciated if poorly performed. Now, there's no way I can discover 40 new faces. A couple, maybe, but not 40." He has until summer to complete his talent hunt. That's when filming begins on the 10-hour ABC miniseries.



↑

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## SUPERSET

When the Federal Communications Commission wants a new television set, an ordinary black-and-white portable won't do. The Commission is looking for an "ideal" set right now, in fact, and figures to spend at least \$500,000 for it—custom-made.

The development of this perfect set could make possible an increase in the number of television channels viewers can tune in. Some of those extra channels—the Ultra High Frequency (UHF) stations from 14 through 83 on the dial—are already on the air, but their signals are harder to pick up than those of the Very High Frequency (VHF) stations most of us watch most of the time.

An ideal set, the FCC believes, would be one that is sensitive enough not only to bring in existing UHF stations clearly, but also to allow more UHF stations on the air without having them interfere with each other. Right now, whenever a local UHF channel is assigned, as many as

nine channels on either side of it have to be left vacant.

The FCC has been trying to rid UHF of its second-class status almost since the inception of television, when it became apparent that the 12 available VHF channels were going to be taken very quickly. The success of those efforts may be gauged from the fact that, of the 615 or so stations affiliated with ABC, CBS or NBC, only 129 are UHF.

Public-TV stations have picked up many of the leavings: PBS now has 169 UHF affiliates versus 112 VHF's.

Congress got impatient with the situation about a year and a half ago and ordered the FCC to "devise a plan for UHF to reach comparability with VHF in as short a time as possible." That's where the ideal set comes in. The FCC had already paid an outside engineering firm, Texas

Instruments, close to \$200,000 to have a set designed that would give UHF a fair electronic shake. But after receiving the Congressional mandate (and the \$750,000 that went with it), the FCC formed a UHF task force, which has undertaken a review of everything that has been done, could be done and maybe should be done in UHF's behalf.

The explanation of how that project is to proceed fills 10 typewritten, single-spaced pages, among which is listed an \$80,000-\$120,000 grant for further development of the ideal receiver. A contract for that work has since been awarded to some of the same engineers who put together the Texas Instruments receiver (they've formed their own company), and the allocation has been hiked to \$350,000. Meanwhile, the UHF task force has issued a 227-page "preliminary analysis" and received a second \$750,000 to continue its work through another year. In short, if you're thinking of buying a new set any time soon, it isn't going to be ideal—not by the FCC's standards anyway.

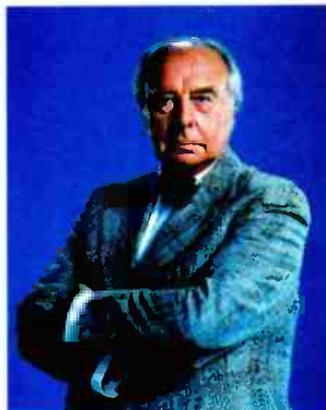
## CHANGE OF VENUE

If John Houseman has anything to do with it, *The Paper Chase* will return. "Having been traduced, betrayed and destroyed by CBS, we will appear on public television," declares the urbane septuagenarian who played Prof. Kingsfield on the 1978-79 CBS series about life at law school.

The series would appear on PBS under the auspices of WTTW in Chicago, where funds are being sought both to rerun the original episodes and to shoot some new ones. Houseman has no doubt the money will be raised: "It's not a hell of a lot of money. I know the economics, and there's no reason why they shouldn't do it."

Officials of WTTW appreciate Houseman's optimism but aren't quite sure that they share

it. In order to rerun the 22 original episodes, approximately \$1.8 million must be raised to cover the purchase price asked by 20th Century-Fox, plus production costs for seven minutes of filler material per episode so

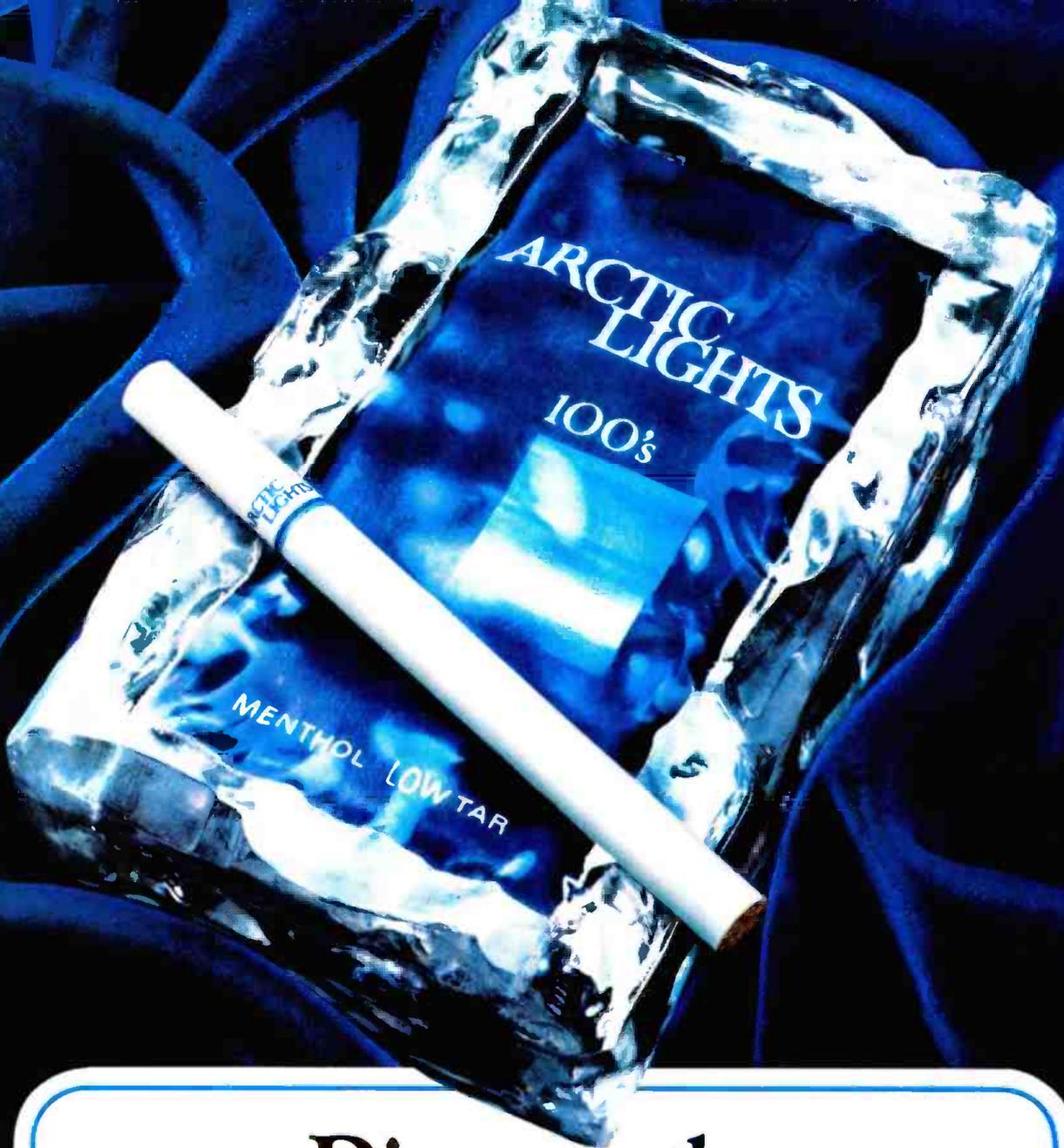


that the shows can fill hour time slots without commercials. (WTTW is considering recruiting Houseman to introduce and/or conclude the shows, a la Alistair Cooke on *Masterpiece Theatre*.) New episodes would cost nearly \$500,000 apiece. For a public-television station, that's a lot of green paper to chase.

Even if the money is found for purchasing the series and producing new episodes, does public television have any business picking up commercial television's rejects? "A good program is a good program," says WTTW's general manager, William McCarter. "Like the British programs on public television, shows like *M\*A\*S\*H* and *The Paper Chase* represent the highest form of the television craft."

“Suppose I gave each of you a multiple-choice question which asked, 'Which of the following is the most important educational institution in America? (a) Harvard, (b) Yale, (c) the University of California, (d) none of the above.' The correct answer is (d) none of the above. The correct answer is television.”

—Newton N. Minow, PBS chairman, addressing the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, Los Angeles



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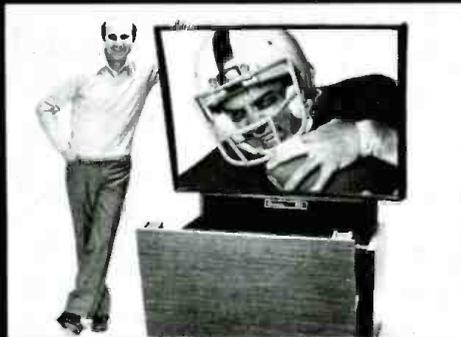
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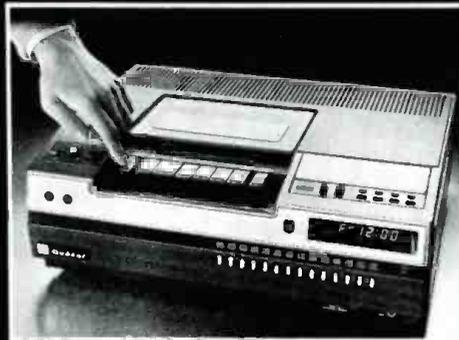
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A serious thing happened to American television viewers on the way to supposed inanity. They have become more demanding, and more active, in their television watching. In fact, television-watching habits have changed fundamentally in the United States while the critics and experts were looking the other way.

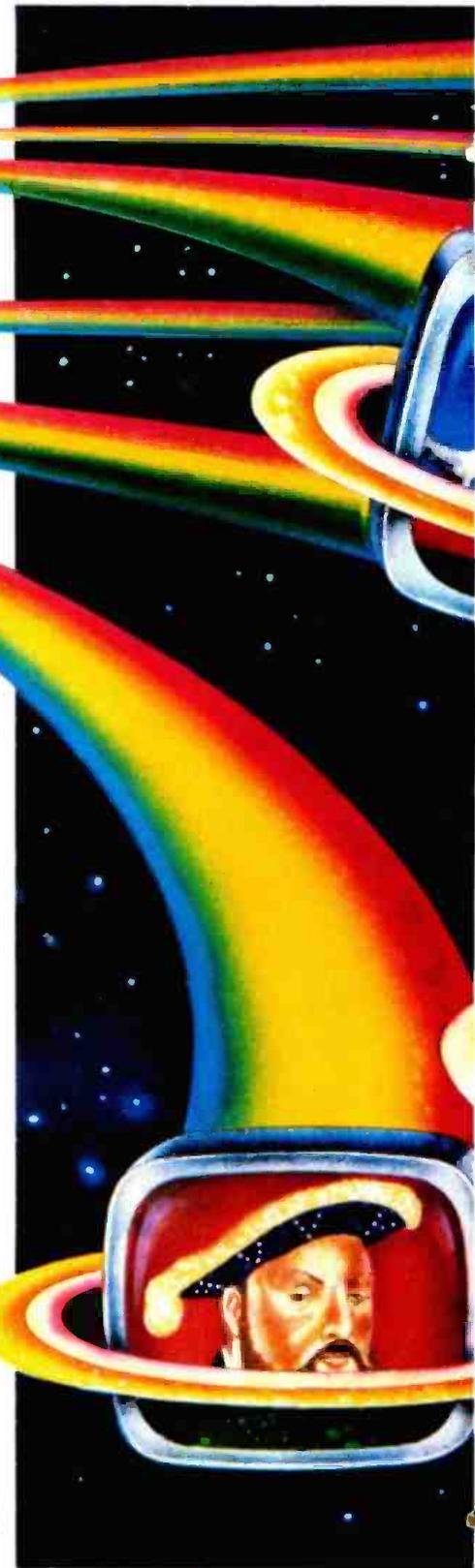
Some intellectuals may still put down television as the boob tube or the idiot box. Textbooks and communications courses may still talk about the passivity of the television viewer, the homogeneity of TV fare dictated by the Big Three networks and the dominance of audience-flow theory — the notion that viewers are sitting inertly in front of their TV sets all evening as one network show succeeds another like so much electronic wallpaper. Actually, the theorists' image of the typical video-tranquilized TV family was always an exaggeration. Now it is clear that the passive audience is being displaced by viewers who interact consciously with their television sets.

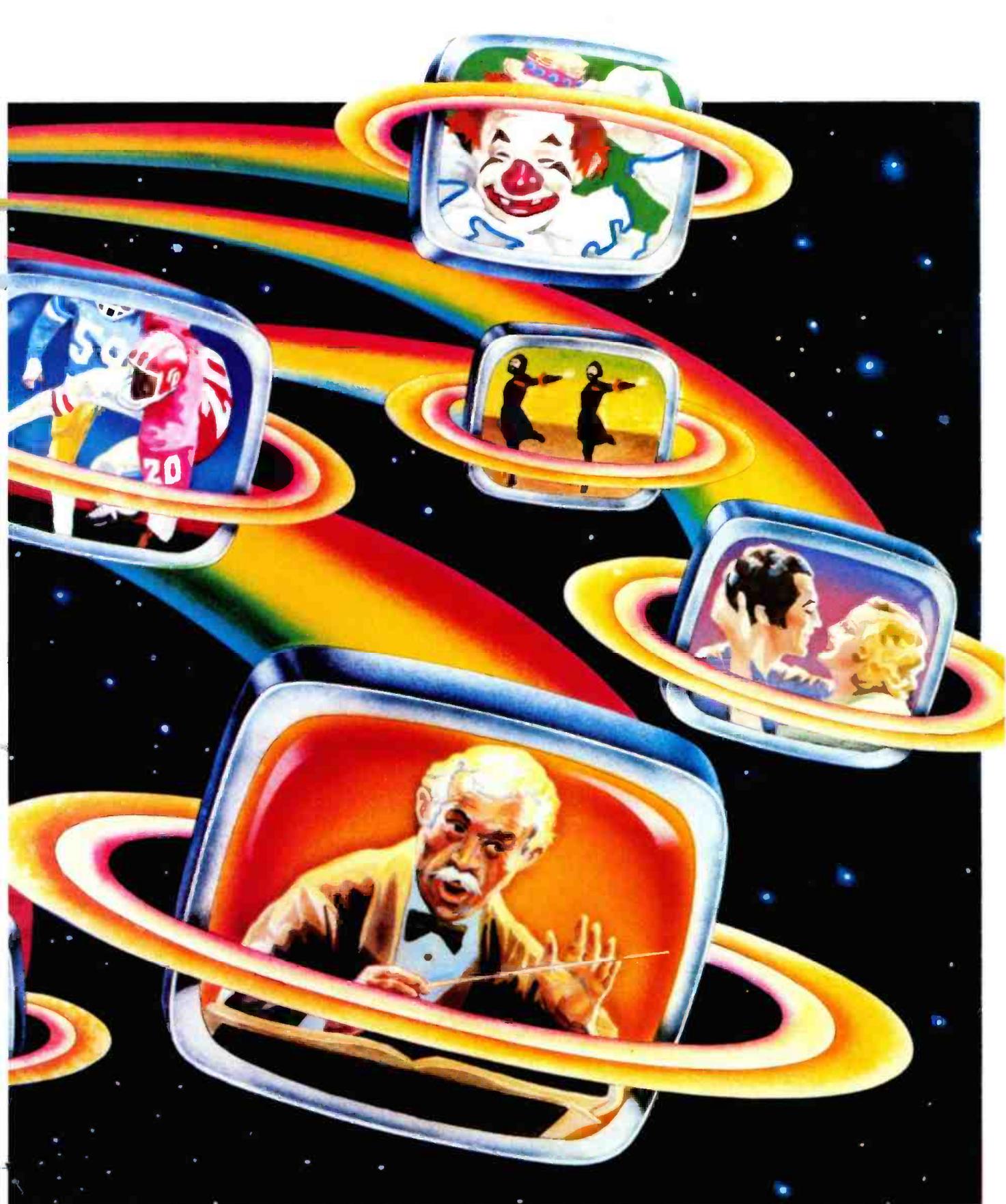
These viewers take an active role in programming, picking and choosing from among the week's offerings. Newspaper television pages have belatedly acknowledged the existence of this new audience in the past few years by providing serious previews of noteworthy programs and "Tonight's Choice" features. Magazines like TV Guide long ago understood what the newspapers have been discovering. The birth of this new monthly television magazine confirms again television's new-found status as an art-

In the pursuit of happiness, more and more of America's television watchers are taking advantage of new ways to expand their freedom of choice

# THE ACTIVE VIEWER'S DECLARATION OF

By EDWIN DIAMOND





# INDEPENDENCE




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The active viewers  
seek out what they want—old movies, sports events,  
quality productions, reliable news,  
pure escape, soap operas or grand opera—without  
regard for channel, network, lead-in  
or lead-out

---

and-commerce form worth reading about seriously as well as watching actively.

The most obvious vehicles of the viewers' new interaction with television are the cable-TV systems and the various videocassette recording machines (VCRs). About one in every five television households in the United States now gets extra non-network channels via cable TV. Ten years ago the figure was one in every 13 households; some analysts believe that 10 years from now a majority of homes will have multiple channels. The VCR units are selling at a rate of around half a million units a year, despite the relatively high price (between \$800 and \$1300) and the lack of a standard system. A recent marketing study by the A. D. Little company of Cambridge, Mass., concluded that by the 1980s one in every 10 U.S. households will have a VCR unit. When a family puts out \$1000 for its VCR player and \$5 to \$10 a month for its cable hookup, that's not the price of wallpaper; the cable/VCR family is going to take a closer, more active interest in its television fare than it did before.

The cable/VCR technology, of course,

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*Edwin Diamond is senior lecturer in political science at MIT, where he heads the News Study Group. He is co-author of "Jimmy Carter: A Character Portrait," published recently by Simon & Schuster.*

means more choice. In New York City, my cable system brings me 26 channels—the three networks *plus* three independent stations, *plus* three public stations (if one doesn't carry a certain PBS program, the others usually do), *plus* multiple sports events, including most of the New York home teams and selected Philadelphia and Boston games, *plus* several foreign-language channels (permitting me to brush up on my French during a Simone Signoret film festival), *plus* experimental video, soft-core *Midnight Blue* and other minority-taste programming. For a few dollars more a month I can get a subscription service—Home Box Office or Showtime. About four million U.S. households already are paying for these channels, which typically offer recent-issue motion pictures—more home choice.

**W**ith the addition of my VCR unit, as the one million Americans who own one can testify, I pay more attention to my programming choices from among these channels. VCR owners can record certain programs they want to save. And since a timing device permits recording a program while they are out of the house, VCR owners can have their cake and eat it too: they can go out to dinner and still see the evening news with Cronkite, Chancellor or Reynolds.

Technology succeeds best when it meets unfulfilled needs, rather than creating new wants. Sensurround and 3-D movies never caught on because nobody needed them to enjoy made-for-theater films. Cable and VCRs—and the even newer videodiscs—meet an important social need. More and more, Americans are opting for freedom of choice and for mobility in their lives. I leave it to the sociologists to agree on the right name for our times—The Me Decade, or Age of Narcissism, or Self-Improvement Era (with everybody jogging, dieting or reading books on self-assertiveness and Looking Out for Number One). The fact is, this is the age of education and affluence (despite inflation). While very few of us can affect the SALT treaties or the energy crisis, many of us have the knowledge and the means to take control of our personal time and our lives.

Applied to our leisure hours, this control means that the audience increasingly chooses to watch television at its own convenience. Equally important, the audience wants to watch specific programs, not television *qua* television. The active viewers seek out what they want—old movies, sports events, quality productions, reliable news, pure escape, soap operas or grand opera—without regard for channel, network, lead-in or lead-out. The independent, active viewer has established his/her own eclectic sovereignty throughout the broadcast schedule: NBC's *Today* show dominates in the early mornings, ABC soaps lead in daytime. The dials then switch to CBS and *The CBS Evening News with Walter Cronkite*, then to ABC for the prime-time hours before the dials change to NBC's Johnny Carson or *Saturday Night Live* in the late-night hours. Not so incidentally, each of these programs is qualitatively the best of its breed. So much for audience-flow theory.

One of the best places to observe the independent, active viewer is among younger, urban men and women in their



20s. They were supposed to be the lost TV generation, made passive by prolonged exposure to the tube. In fact, many of them have developed a lively, sophisticated view of television and film. They own VCRs just as they own stereos, and they collect videotapes of favorite movies (Bogart or Kubrick) and of classic TV programs (*The Honeymooners*). Peter De Forest, a member of our News Study Group at MIT, has observed this video culture at first hand. As he reports:

"They trade off-the-air videotapes of movies, TV programs and sporting events. They are members of informal video-trading clubs, whose sole purpose seems to be the nonprofit trading (no money changes hands, just tapes) of tapes for personal-entertainment purposes. In light of the Sony Betamax decision last October, which declared legal the recording of off-the-air copyrighted material for non-commercial home use, members of these clubs believe they are not violating the law. There is also, obviously, the illegal selling of copyright-protected material, currently released movies being the most popular, by video pirates who operate in much the same manner as drug dealers. These pirates manage to steal and videotape copies of popular movies, duplicate them and sell them for between \$50 and \$100."

**T**he marvel is that the present but fading system of standard television fare lasted as long as it did in the face of these individualistic currents of American society. As the public-opinion analyst Louis Harris has observed, television may be our hearth, but it has been too confining for our contemporary mood. The new technology of VCRs, cable and videodiscs merely recognizes the inevitable. Surveys suggest that TV viewing, after years of uninterrupted growth, has leveled off over the last few years. True, "everyone" has a TV set now, maybe two or three; but while the broadcasters always boast of the 80 to 100 million people tuned to TV sets nightly, they conveniently overlook the obverse:

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While the broadcasters always boast of the 80 to 100 million people tuned to TV sets nightly, they conveniently overlook the obverse: while two-thirds of all households are tuned in, one-third aren't

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while two-thirds of all households are tuned in, one-third aren't.

The independent, active viewer comes from both sides—the "ons" and the "offs." When *Roots* (part I), broadcast in January 1977, achieved the largest audience in TV history—36 million homes, or 80 million Americans, tuned to the last episode—the program managed something else in addition to high ratings. A significant percentage of those sets had been dark; people turned *on* as well as turned *over* from other fare. Whenever quality programming or special programming is presented, the results are the same. Daytime coverage of the solar eclipse of 1979 drew higher ratings than the regularly scheduled programs it competed against. Independent-station offerings of *Edward the King*, a British dramatic series, and "Scared Straight," a documentary made in a New Jersey state prison, topped their network opposition in many areas. NBC's *Holocaust* and ABC's second *Roots* series attracted people who are normally light or infrequent viewers.

But no one should conclude that the new viewers are some kind of elite, small in number and therefore easy to dismiss. A recent analysis of the purchasers of VCR units suggests that they tend to be heavy television viewers as well as frequent moviegoers. Not surprisingly, then, mo-

tion pictures are among the TV fare most recorded by unit owners. (Also not so surprisingly, when the TV networks, in their scramble for ratings, schedule blockbuster movies against each other—such as CBS's "Gone with the Wind" vs. NBC's "One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest" last February—the mad programmers drive more viewers to the VCR solution: watch one, record the other.)

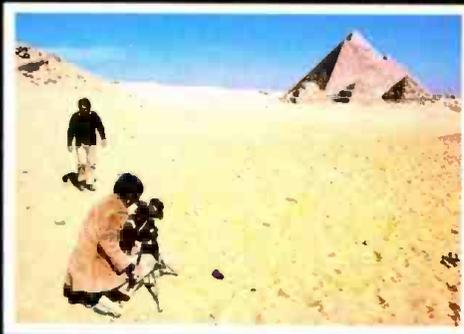
**T**he Declaration of Independence by the active viewer raises questions about another kind of elitism. Since cable, VCRs—and new television magazines, for that matter—cost money, will only the relatively affluent be able to afford them? Well, yes, we will have to pay somewhat for independence and freedom of choice. But the most innocent among us understand that no television is ever free; the present advertiser who supports TV collects hidden fees as part of his market prices, and public television depends on Federal tax dollars or grants from corporations (also passed on to the consumer). With cable, the payment for TV at least will be aboveboard. Also, with cassettes and discs, royalty or pooling arrangements are necessary so that the performers/producers are recompensed for their efforts to some degree. I, for one, will willingly pay for my independence and choice. ☐



It starts on Earth, where Carl Sagan is filming what may be public TV's

# The Road to the Stars

most ambitious series ever



*Like the Frenchman Champollion 150 years earlier, Cosmos creator Carl Sagan and cameraman Christopher O'Dell seek to reveal Egypt's mysteries (above).*

*Cosmos* is the Greek word for order of the universe and the title of possibly the most ambitious series ever undertaken for public television. Now in production for telecasting on PBS later this year, *Cosmos* explores the farthest reaches of space and time — one moment taking host Carl Sagan billions of light-years from Earth in a spaceship, the next to ancient Egypt and more primitive modes of travel, retracing the historic steps a Frenchman took one evening in 1828.

*continued*



Cosmos viewers will see the waterspout and hieroglyphs (above) Champollion encountered at the Temple of Dendera. Sagan: "What a joy it must have been for him to open this one-way communications channel with another civilization."

Sagan jounces through the streets of Alexandria (right) en route to an underground room, last vestige of the city's great one-million-book library. The library was destroyed, but Sagan can still show viewers what it looked like in its glory days—it is being 're-constructed' by means of a special-effects technique called Magicam.



#### COSMOS *continued*

The title means in some sense we should talk about everything, and it's kind of hard to talk about everything in 13 weeks," says Sagan, the scientist and Pulitzer Prize-winning author of "Dragons of Eden" and "Broca's Brain" who is also *Cosmos*' co-writer and co-producer. "But one of my major objectives is to present science as a fundamental human endeavor—not something just a few scientists like, but something that everyone can understand and enjoy—and that involves getting into aspects that aren't ordinarily gotten into. Also, we want it to be beautiful, to be so compelling on the visual and musical ends that people who don't like science will be riveted to the tube."

So it is that Jean-Francois Champollion becomes *Cosmos*' metaphor for communication with alien civilizations. Champollion broke the code of hieroglyphics by translating the Rosetta stone, that slab of black basalt inscribed in Egyptian and Greek with tributes to Ptolemy V, King of Egypt, in 196 B.C. In order to dramatize Champollion's feat graphically and explore its meaning, Sagan and *Cosmos* went on location in Egypt for one episode, a trip portrayed on these and the previous two pages. Explains Sagan, "The Rosetta stone is an example of something in common between Champollion and the ancient Egyptians: he knew Greek, they knew the hieroglyphs, and the stone translated one into the other. Our argument is that the Rosetta stone for interstellar discourse is science: we share the same universe with whoever would be sending a message, so we already know some of the things they will know. We can begin communication."

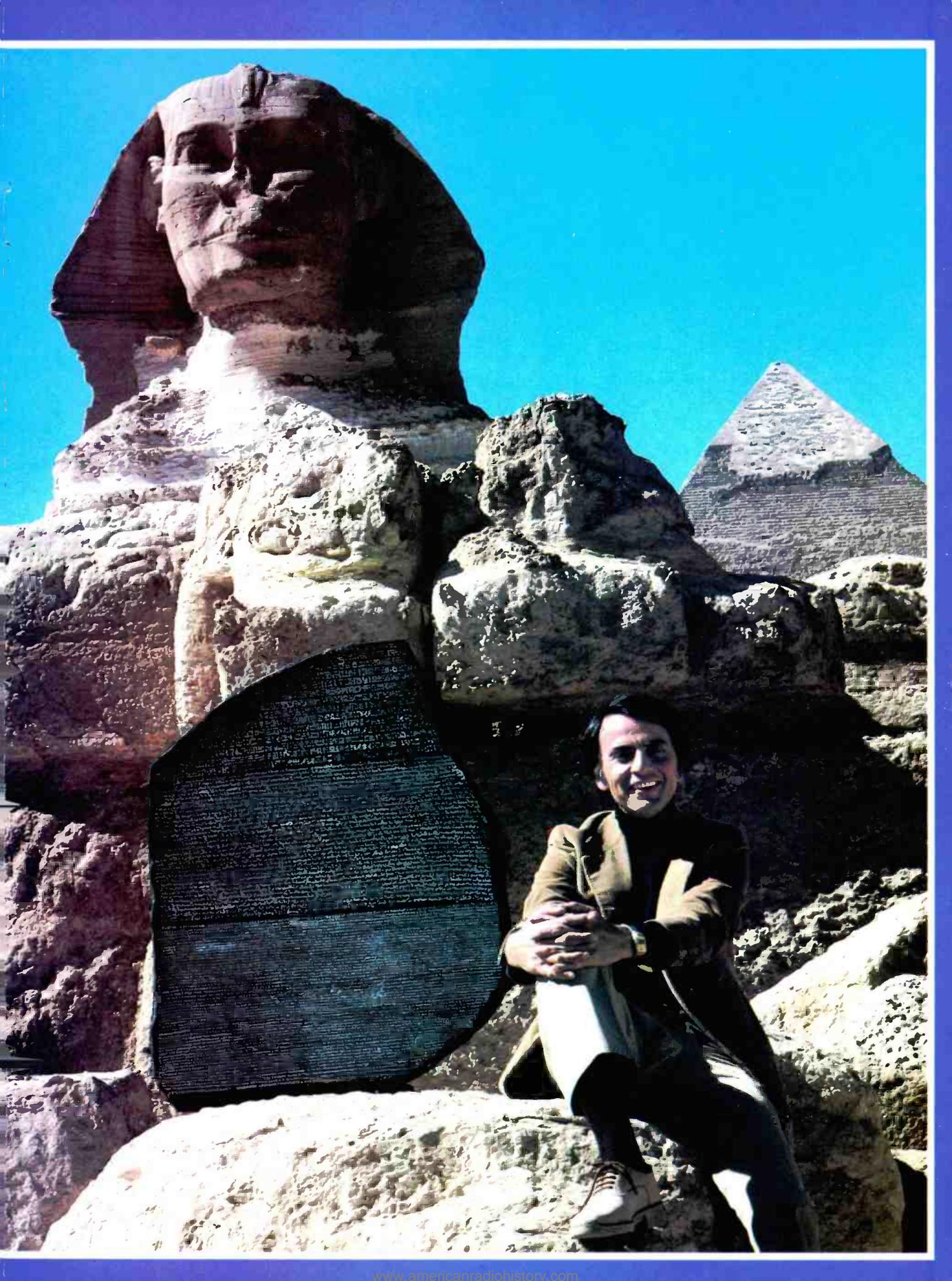
Just as important to Sagan, a passionate advocate of extraterrestrial exploration, is the impatience of Champollion's diary entry the night he finally docked in Egypt to see, firsthand, those messages only he could read. "There was magnificent moonlight, and we were only an hour from the temples," he wrote. "Could we resist the temptation? I ask the coldest of you mortals! Alone and without guards, but armed to the teeth, we crossed the fields."

Sagan has been crossing fields for *Cosmos* since KCET, the public station in Los Angeles, broached the idea more than three years ago. His co-writer/executive producer is Adrian Malone, whose credits include the BBC's *The Ascent of Man* and *The Age of Uncertainty*. By *Cosmos*' fall 1980 premiere date, they will have filmed at as many as 40 locations from Thanjavur, India, to Brooklyn, N.Y., and consumed a budget of \$8 million, probably a PBS record.

Much of that money is going into dozens of special effects being created for *Cosmos* by computer-animation experts at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in California and by former members of the "Star Wars" team, among others. Besides Sagan's spaceship, major sets include a room-sized model of the human brain and a re-creation of the great library of Alexandria, Egypt, lost repository of man's early wisdom. A memo from producer Greg Andorfer lists a few of the other sights: "Will execute the Big Bang, origin of the universe; a tour through the ring particles of Saturn; descents to the surface of Venus; a joy ride through the canyons and past the volcanos of Mars; how a comet is captured; galactic rotation; an evolutionary pathway from primitive cells to humans; and the destruction of a solar system by supernova explosion." As Sagan put it, "We won't talk about black holes and distant galaxies so much as visit them."

Since Sagan sometimes muses about the impressions extraterrestrial beings get from monitoring Earth's TV signals, he was asked what reviews *Cosmos* might receive if beings of other worlds ever translated its signals. "I would hope," he said, "they would see this as an attempt by humans to make themselves one planet, one civilization, and to understand their origins and their destinies." ■

*With the Great Sphinx behind him, Sagan explains the significance of Champollion's deciphering of the Rosetta stone, a replica of which is shown here. Sagan sees the tablet as a symbol, saying, 'The Rosetta Stone for interstellar discourse is science.'*



# Waiting for Uncle Miltie

Pay cable tries everything from Robin Williams to Dracula as it searches for *the* big programming breakthrough

By SCOT HALLER

In the beginning, pay-television's big lure was feature films. It wasn't enough.

Later, the medium's programmers added concerts and comedy. This bolstered subscriber lists, but it still wasn't enough.

Last month, five million pay-television homes received more diversity for their monthly fee than ever before: a documentary with Dick Cavett reprising the 1940s; Tony Randall as host of "The 14th International Championship of Magic"; an off-Broadway thriller, "The Passion of Dracula"; a biography of Abbott and Costello; "Us Magazine Looks at the '70s"; Diana Ross in a Las Vegas revue; George Segal headlining a showcase of new talent; and Conway Twitty "taped live" at a Nashville truck stop.

It still isn't enough. As Columbia pay-TV executive Scott Moger readily admits, "We're still trying to figure out what people will tune in for."

And pay-TV desperately needs to unlock that programming conundrum if that medium is ever to boast big numbers and an identifiable personality that is no longer tied to Hollywood's celluloid. Or as Harlan Kleiman, the former Home Box Office executive who helped pioneer the concept of specials made expressly for pay-TV, puts it, "We're going to make it when we find our *Milton Berle Show*. That show made people buy sets in the 1950s. The number of subscribers will jump when we get a big hit that gets everyone talking."

In its current state, pay-TV is a medium cursed by a Catch-22. With feature films as the primary lure for subscribers and the foremost component in programming, the pay companies are not masters of their own fare. The movie studios decide when a film may be released to pay-TV and influence the price. And with the dearth of major hits on the order of "Superman" or "10," pay-TV suppliers, cable systems and viewers quite easily can find themselves with a grade-B glut. As an industry veteran points out, "There were months when the subscribers seemed to be flooded with Ronny Howard film festivals."

Even the cost of low-grade movies is increasing because the purchase price of a feature film usually is based on the number of subscribers—and subscription lists are swelling. While pay-television

cannot control the flow and price tag of available films, it can control the flow and cost of shows it produces itself. Thus, the arrival of specials made expressly for pay-TV was inevitable.

Many of the specials pay-TV has come up with are offbeat—and off-color. Part of the reason for this development, says Home Box Office vice president Michael Fuchs, is that, unlike the networks, "Pay-TV doesn't have to satisfy sponsors, the Government or some bureaucracy of programmers." Eager to distinguish themselves from the networks in some way other than a \$9-a-month charge, the pay services have embraced the kind of material that ABC, CBS or NBC can't accommodate—from "Here It Is, Burlesque" and "The Candid Candid Camera" to "Pinups 2001" and "Disco Beaver from Outer Space." Adult revues and sharp-edged, sharp-tongued comedy allow a service to flaunt its independence and a subscriber to see "the kind of show that can't be seen anywhere else" (as one executive describes pay-TV's original programming). Tony Hendra, the producer-director of the "Disco Beaver" satirical revue, notes, "We did a segment called 'The Breast Game.' It was just an excuse to show a lot of nice-looking mammarys. HBO loved it."

By offering the kind of television that the National Lampoon might create for viewing on *Fantasy Island*, pay-TV networks such as Home Box Office and Showtime have presented some of the most outrageous original shows that have ever reached home screens. Dazzling—or dismal, depending on your point of view—moments in pay-TV history include Robin Williams standing in the center of a nightclub stage, smiling sweetly into the television camera, announcing, "I'd like to start off with something I'm very proud of right now," and then starting to unzip his pants. On another stage and another evening, Bette Midler grinned at the assemblage in a Cleveland concert hall and at the camera coming in for a close-up. "Have you heard the news?" she exclaimed. "Have you? I slept with Jack Kennedy!" Pointing to her trio of backup singers, she added, "You want to know something else? *They* slept with Jack Kennedy."

But the movers and shakers of pay-TV realize that they can't bank only on zani-ness and raunchiness to get potential customers to ante up the monthly fee. Thus, in its search for the most attractive mix,

the industry also mounts mild mainstream fare such as "Jonathan Winters' Salute to Baseball" and "We've Got the World on a String: The First Annual All-Star Puppet Spectacular." "If we have enough different programs, people are bound to keep subscribing," says Showtime vice president Jules Haimovitz.

For the most part, the specials have been "events," such as Peter Allen or Redd Foxx performing in concerts and clubs. "Our shows are \$20 tickets," contends Haimovitz.

Indeed, it's the expense of seeing such shows live—especially when there are a cover charge, drink minimum and babysitter involved—that makes staying home and watching such "events" seem an enjoyable bargain. And if they are bargain evenings for the customers, they also are relative bargains for the profit-conscious pay companies. Having already been created, choreographed and certified as hits elsewhere, concert and club acts can be translated intact with relatively little additional expense. And, since pay cable's five million homes constitute less than 10 percent of American households, cost is critical. Lacking the huge production staffs, studio facilities, established research divisions and, most important, the advertising revenues that the networks can tap, pay-TV cannot afford to take the costly gambles that sometimes result in multimillion-dollar hits such as *Roots*.

The pay service can, however, schedule an all-American John Davidson act and still claim "the kind of show that can't be seen anywhere else"—because the networks have all but forsaken musical-variety series. For the most part, though, pay-TV's middle-of-the-road musical shows haven't proven as distinctive or innovative as its comedy projects. Still, HBO's Fuchs contends that music-makers do well on pay-TV because "our customers want the whole show, the whole performance, which they don't get on the networks." And Haimovitz reports that a single Willie Nelson concert attracted an estimated 5000 new subscribers to Showtime.

Ironically, that less-than-10-percent statistic that has limited pay-TV's resources has also aided its success. Unlike free television, it can prosper by *consistently* pleasing only a small percentage of the total TV audience. Harry Chandler, a pay program executive at 20th Century-Fox, says, "Right now, the economics of

*Scot Haller writes on entertainment and cultural subjects for numerous magazines, including New York, Mademoiselle and Horizon, for which he was formerly an editor.*



pay-TV are such that it can afford to make some people very happy rather than making everyone just sort of happy."

But economics is a problem, too—on the supply side. Two years ago, HBO was presenting two or three original shows a month. This year, that number may triple. Jeffrey Reiss, president of Showtime, estimates that specials will constitute as much as 30 percent of his system's schedule by the end of 1980. And budgets for pay specials, which once hovered at \$50,000, have jumped tenfold in some cases. The bottom line is an old line: keep the customer satisfied. "People may not sign up for Home Box Office because of specials," says Iris Dugow, HBO vice president, "but they'll stay on because of these shows."

The challenge lies in making the pay special sufficiently special while possessing only a limited pool of funds and properties. Original shows have outgrown their "filler" status, but they are still second-class citizens in a movie-mad medium: the average special attracts only half as many viewers as the average movie on Showtime. And, most crucially, these programs have only intermittently sparked attention from the nonsubscribing public.

In production meetings and programming offices, the search for *the* show that will convince nonsubscribers that they *must* have pay-TV—the Uncle Miltie of the 1980s—centers on a comedy format. "Comedy is successful at the networks, but it's also limited by censorship," says Chandler. "Programmers realize pay-TV

can make big inroads in that area." Industry veterans believe the phantom blockbuster will be a show in the vein of *Saturday Night Live*, with a repertory troupe to rival the Not Ready for Prime Time Players. Showtime has such a project in development, and so does HBO.

What else does the future hold? That depends on which seer you consult. "We'll have sitcom series, miniseries, original drama and more documentaries very soon," says programmer Dugow. "Two years ago, documentaries would have been unthinkable. But if we can give subscribers information in an amusing way, they'll like it." She gets an argument from producer Kleiman, who says, "Pay specials will remain primarily entertainment. People very rarely pay for information." Distributor Moger says simply, "Pay-TV is going to be a supermarket."

And while there are arguments as to how much of that supermarket should be stocked with rich cream puffs as opposed to more serious main courses, pay-TV can compliment itself on being a precocious entrepreneur that after only five years in the product-marketing business has demonstrated extraordinary financial health and a willingness to upgrade and experiment with its products. "People are being conditioned to expect experiments from us," says Fuchs. HBO already has announced a *Consumer Reports* special that may become a monthly series, and it is currently showing *Time Was*, a six-part documentary review of the 20th century. Specials created by Playboy and Us may evolve into series on Showtime. Although theater has proven a costly endeavor—the budget for doing one stage production, "The Robber Bridegroom," reportedly rose to \$450,000 from an original estimate of \$175,000—Showtime is currently looking for more properties.

At the moment, however, a typical week of pay-TV special programming remains a mixture of Sammy Davis Jr., singing cowboys and Richard Pryor. Depending on whom you talk to, this kind of combination represents either a cornucopia or chaos. "We're looking to reach 60 percent of American homes eventually," says Showtime's Reiss. "To do that, we have to have enough unique programming to make people subscribe." But Warner Amex president Jack Schneider admits, "We don't know what will work until we put it on and people respond."

Though it isn't clear whether this young industry will ultimately mature into a happy medium or a schizophrenic one, the testimony of conflicting experts does confirm this much: not even the people who brought pay-TV programming into this world are certain what it will be when it grows up. All they know for sure is that they have yet to discover what to feed pay-TV so that it will turn into a giant. ■

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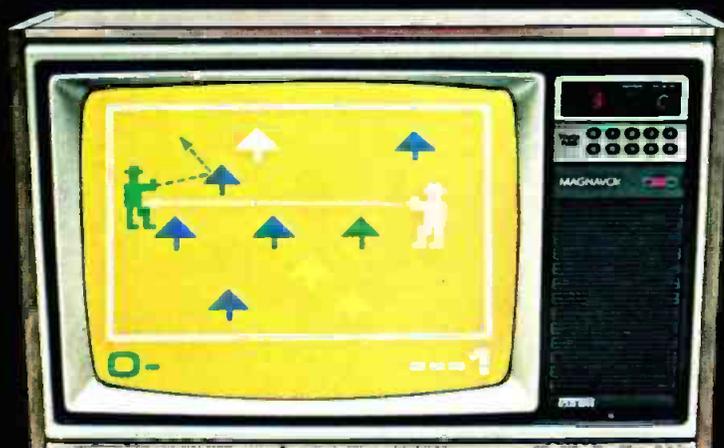
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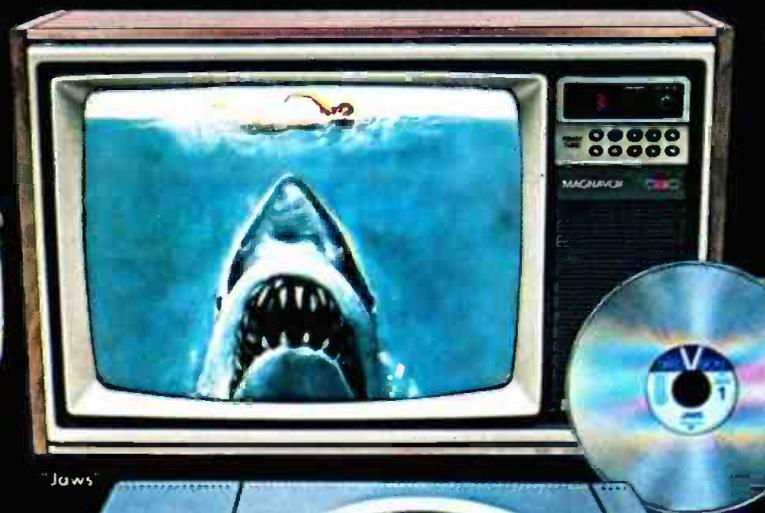
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# TV Brings You the Greatest Show on Snow

Once an event that few Americans noticed and fewer watched, the Winter Olympics have been transformed into a spectacular display of athletic skill and technological wizardry

By PETER FUNT

**T**wenty-four years ago, in the northern Italian resort village of Cortina D'Ampezzo, speed-skating champion Guido Caroli stood ready to carry the Olympic flame to the dignitaries' box where President Giovanni Gronchi waited to open the 1956 Winter Games. On cue, Caroli skated gracefully across the ice, tripped and fell on his face. His skate had become entangled in a television cable.

This was the first time television cameras were on hand to record the pageantry and competition of the Winter Olympics, and from that moment on, TV would have an impact on the Games.

The role of television has changed dramatically through the years from that of a clumsy interloper to a computer-efficient coordinator for the vast and complicated athletic showcase. This month, when the

1980 Winter Games are held at Lake Placid, N.Y., and the tiny village is jammed with as many spectators as it can possibly hold, one out of every 65 people will be an employee of ABC-TV. With an army of technicians, producers and commentators, plus carloads of video gear worth over \$75 million, the network will cover the Games for 13 days (Feb. 12-24) for a U.S. audience that ABC predicts will total 180,000,000 viewers. And for the first time since becoming this country's dominant sports network, ABC will also provide the pictures for countless millions in the rest of the world.

This enormous television production, the result of six years of planning, is certain to provide unprecedented exposure for the Winter Games and the athletes who participate. But even more signifi-

cantly, the coverage will make clear that, like the Super Bowl, the World Series and even U.S. political conventions, the Winter Games are no longer just major events, they are major television shows.

Before television's inauspicious inauguration at the 1956 Winter Olympics—and even then very little of the TV coverage was seen in the U.S.—the typical American was apt to think that the Winter Games involved unknown athletes

*Peter Funt, who has written about television for The New York Times and numerous magazines, is the author of a book about 60 Minutes, to be published this fall.*



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competing in unappreciated events in frigid corners of the world. Except for 1932 (when the Games were staged at Lake Placid) and except for a few superstar athletes—such as Sonja Henie, who parlayed her Olympic skating victories in 1928, 1932 and 1936 into a multimillion-dollar movie career—Americans little knew or cared about the competitions on ice and snow.

U.S. viewers got their first thorough exposure to the Winter Games in 1960 at Squaw Valley, Cal. That was the year a lack of snow threatened to ruin the Games. The desperate organizers hired an Indian tribe to perform a “snow dance,” and the sky responded with pouring rain. But temperatures dropped on the eve of the competition and there was plenty of powder on the slopes when CBS-TV broadcast the opening ceremonies, featuring Walt Disney as host and presided over by Vice President Richard Nixon. The darling of the Squaw Valley Olympics was Carol Heiss, a New York University sophomore who won a gold medal in figure skating and became the first of several top women athletes to achieve instant recognition because of TV’s presence.

Four years later Carol Heiss was back on television, as a commentator for ABC at the Winter Games in Innsbruck, Austria. It was ABC’s first attempt at covering the Olympics. (Since then, the network has won the rights to seven of nine Games, each time increasing coverage time, manpower, technical wizardry and budget.) Remarkably, most of the key personnel who launched ABC’s Olympic coverage in 1964 are still at it today: Roone Arledge, executive producer (and now president of ABC News and Sports); Jim McKay, chief commentator; Joe De Bonis, head engineer; and Chuck Howard, senior producer. But the total staff that ABC uses for the Games has soared from 100 in 1964 to nearly 800 this year.

The 1964 telecasts were in black and white, and because the number of camera positions was limited, coverage of some events consisted of merely watching athletes cross the finish line. It was, however, the first time satellite transmissions were used for live coverage of the opening and closing ceremonies—but only during the 14-minute “windows” when the orbiting satellite was in range. The rest of the material—all 17½ hours of it, compared to 51 hours this month—was taped and flown to New York for broadcast.

By 1968, at the Games in Grenoble, France, ABC’s coverage had become far more sophisticated. Although some events still had to be telecast in black and white, figure skating, hockey and Alpine skiing were shown in color. All material was fed by satellite—with the “bird” now in a fixed orbit. Slow-motion replays also were added to ABC’s bag of technological tricks. And the network hired its first researcher to gather background information on the athletes.

The undisputed star of the 1968 Games was Jean-Claude Killy, winner of gold medals in the downhill, giant-slam and slalom ski events. Had Killy been an American, there is no telling how many millions of dollars his heroics might have been worth in commercial endorsements; as it was, Killy did not do badly financially when he turned professional following the Grenoble Games. But America’s favorite was 19-year-old Peggy Fleming, whose figure skating earned the U.S. its lone gold at Grenoble. Shortly after donning her 1968 medal, she signed lucrative contracts with television and the Ice Capades, thus cashing in on the precious few days of Olympic television coverage that can catapult an athlete into stardom.

Peggy Fleming and the other stars of the 1968 Winter Games not only profited personally from the sweeping coverage, but also helped motivate a new generation of American athletes. There is no telling how many youngsters viewing the 1964 and 1968 Games were encouraged to try winter sports as a result of the telecasts. Lisa-Marie Allen, a 19-year-old figure skater from California, says that her earliest memory of the Olympics is watching Fleming on TV during the Grenoble Games: “I remember her costume, how pretty she looked. And I recall seeing her on magazine covers and wishing I could be like that.” Now, 12 years after being introduced to figure skating via television, Allen will try to duplicate Fleming’s feat in the 1980 Games. Allen is not the favorite, though. That honor goes to Linda Fratianne, also 19 and a Californian, the current U.S. and world champion.

After placing eighth in the 1976 Winter Games at Innsbruck, Fratianne is now in line for a gold medal at Lake Placid. “Peggy Fleming has always been my idol,” she says. “After watching her on TV [in 1968], all I wanted was to have a career like hers.” Fratianne lost in 1976 to Dorothy Hamill, who not only won a gold medal, but also inspired a new hair style—“The

Wedge”—and, following the Olympics, signed a contract to promote hair products on TV. For this month’s Games, Linda Fratianne has purchased a hair style by Vidal Sassoon and a fancy wardrobe of expensive costumes. “After all,” she says, “this is the biggest chance of my life.”

If it is true that Olympic competition has become a major television show, perhaps it is inevitable that its participants should be viewed as television stars. At the 1976 Games in Innsbruck, ABC expanded its policy of featuring athletes in a new light—“up close and personal”—thereby ensuring that viewers would regard them as personalities as well as competitors. Early in 1979, the network hired a full-time producer and sent him all over the world preparing more than 60 separate profiles of the 1980 hopefuls. “But I don’t think we make the stars,” says commentator Jim McKay. “Viewers make the stars, based on the information we provide.”

Cindy Nelson won a bronze medal in the downhill in 1976. “A few months prior to Innsbruck,” she recalls, “ABC spent three days filming me during training sessions and workouts.” Now Nelson is the top skier on the U.S. Women’s Downhill Team at Lake Placid. “ABC spent five days following me around this time,” she says. “They were at my home in Lutsen, Minnesota. Mostly they wanted to film me in my everyday life—to show what I do when I’m not skiing.” Will such publicity help in the future? “This is the last Olympics for me. I hope the coverage helps me get a job in broadcasting or promoting cosmetics or clothing.”

Opinion is divided on the question of how vigorously television—specifically, ABC—should promote the personalities at the Olympics. While some are critical of anything that might add to the creeping commercialism in the Games (“Schlitz: The official beer of the 1980 Olympics!”), others have lavished praise on the network for bringing the competition to life and helping a vast audience become familiar quickly with a roster of otherwise obscure athletes.

One outspoken supporter of television’s new role in the Olympics is Jack Shea, town supervisor in North Elba, N.Y. (which includes Lake Placid). “Television has made this a great show for everyone,” claims Shea. “All this attention raises the spirit of the athletes. It makes them perform better than they did in my day.”

Jack Shea’s day? That was Feb. 4, 1932, the day he won a gold medal at Lake

Placid in the 500-meter skating event. And the following day, when he earned his second gold medal in the 1500-meter race. "I remember being interviewed by Ben Grauer [covering the Winter Games for NBC Radio]. He was operating out of a little mobile unit, parked next to the field house. It sure didn't compare to the load of stuff they've got up here now."

That "load" includes 66 miles of televi-

sion cable, 105 cameras, 15 mobile units, 14 microwave towers, two helicopters, 40 videotape recorders and tons of other gear—about 300 percent more equipment than was used four years ago at Innsbruck.

Thanks to all this video sophistication, it is likely that by the time the coverage ends at 10:30 P.M. (EST) on Feb. 24, Americans will have found a new generation of

heroes. And, a new generation of heroes will probably have found a gateway to television riches.

It is not likely that any of the instant heroes at Lake Placid will trip over a television cable. But if that does occur, you can be certain that this time viewers will see it on instant replay, in slow-motion, from five different angles and, of course, "up close and personal." ■

## Meanwhile, in Network Control...

the technicians will be playing with lasers  
and other sophisticated new toys

As in previous Olympics, ABC will use the 1980 Winter Games as an occasion for unveiling new technology and video hardware. Most of this behind-the-scenes gadgetry will result in improved coverage for viewers, yet the most important technological breakthrough involves a process that only in the future—perhaps at the 1984 Games—will create dramatic changes in television.

This month, a small part of ABC's coverage will be fed from point of origin to the network's control center just outside of Lake Placid via fiber-optics cable, one of the first uses of this material for a network broadcast. The process makes use of transparent fibers within a cable to carry television or other signals along beams of light rather than sound waves. The result is faster transmission, less distortion and, most important, capacity for carrying many different signals within a single strand of optical fibers. If applied to cable television, for example, fiber optics will allow a virtually limitless amount of programming and other information to reach viewers' homes through a single narrow wire.

For this year's Games, ABC has contracted with two fiber-optics suppliers. One firm has installed fiber optics between the field house and the ABC center—a run of about three miles. The other installation is between the site of the opening ceremonies and the center—a distance of about 1600 feet. At both locations, however, the network also has installed standard coaxial cable as a backup for the fiber-optics feed.

"We feel this is a great step forward,"

explains Joe De Bonis, ABC's chief engineer at Lake Placid. "But our main purpose is to experiment; there are many unknowns about fiber optics. How will it stand up under extreme cold? Will it become brittle? And how far will the signal carry without need for repeaters [amplifiers] along the way?"

The introduction of fiber optics is also an occasion for friendly competition among the networks. Last November, Julius Barnathan, president of ABC Broadcast Operations, explained why he was being so secretive about his network's use of fiber optics. "CBS likes to come out and say they're first with everything," he said. "If they hear you're doing something new, they will go out and spend a fortune just to run a wire across town and say they used fiber optics first. I didn't want to say anything until it was too late for them to do anything about it." Despite the secrecy, just a few weeks later CBS carried a football game transmitted in part through fiber optics.

But there are some "firsts" for ABC at Lake Placid. The network will be inaugurating use of the Quantel 5000-Plus, a special-effects machine that allows five different pictures to be shown simultaneously on the screen in a variety of shapes and sizes. It also enables the technicians to create optical "zooms" that magnify one area of the picture up to 24 times normal size, or reduce it to the size of a pinhead. When the Quantel unit is coupled with a Grass Valley Group 300 switcher—a console that enables the director to cut from one image to another—a wide range of special effects and video

displays can be programmed in advance and then instantly recalled when needed.

Last fall, ABC technicians set up their complete control facility in what staffers called "the Olympic village"—a huge loft on West 65th Street in Manhattan. There, practice sessions were held so that the staff could familiarize themselves with the complex gear, and lay plans for covering the Games. Then the entire facility was broken down and trucked to the Olympic site where it was reconstructed in a building erected by the Lake Placid Olympic Organizing Committee at the local airport. When the Games end, the control-center equipment will be dismantled again and later transported to the 1980 political conventions.

Perhaps the most ambitious part of this year's coverage will come during the cross-country skiing, which will be telecast live to American viewers for the first time. For this task, ABC is using two Snowcat mobile units, each containing three cameras and a microwave transmitter. These units will be moved to strategic spots each day and will send back TV signals via 14 microwave towers constructed along the course.

All this TV magic will certainly make the Games more enjoyable for viewers, but how do the commentators feel about the added visual whoop-de-do that now accompanies their reports? "It still comes down to one thing," says veteran announcer Jim McKay. "The more gadgets you've got, the greater the chance that something will break down. And when it does, what does Rooney [Arledge] do? He says, 'Talk, Jim!'"

Is now the time to buy  
a videocassette recorder?  
What choices are available?  
What new features  
are being offered?  
How do you tell one model  
from another?  
What do they cost?  
What about cameras?  
What's on  
the drawing boards?

# Your Complete Guide to

By DAVID LACHENBRUCH

Last December, the videocassette-recorder population in American homes passed the one-million mark, which by most methods of reckoning makes the VCR a mass-market item. At a selling price of about \$1000 each, this represents a collective expenditure of approximately a billion dollars for the recorders, plus the better part of a second billion for blank and recorded cassettes and for accessories such as cameras.

This is quite a remarkable record for a relatively high-priced consumer product that has been generally available for considerably less than five years and represents a completely new and technically oriented item. Perhaps as significant as the inroads of the videocassette recorder into the consumer's budget is its invasion of the public consciousness as the leading edge in a new wave of wonder video products.

The videocassette recorder (whose abbreviation "VCR" threatens to become almost as ubiquitous as "TV") is, as you must know by now, a multipurpose instrument that gives its user more control over what the home screen provides, and when. Marketed principally as a "time-shift" device to record broadcast television programs and store them for later viewing, the VCR now is also doing duty as a somewhat bulky substitute for a home sound-movie outfit, as a home theater for viewing movies and other nonbroadcast material, and even as a convenient method of preserving and seeing home movies and slides.

Since the first practical videotape recorder was introduced by Ampex in 1956, the idea of a home version has captured

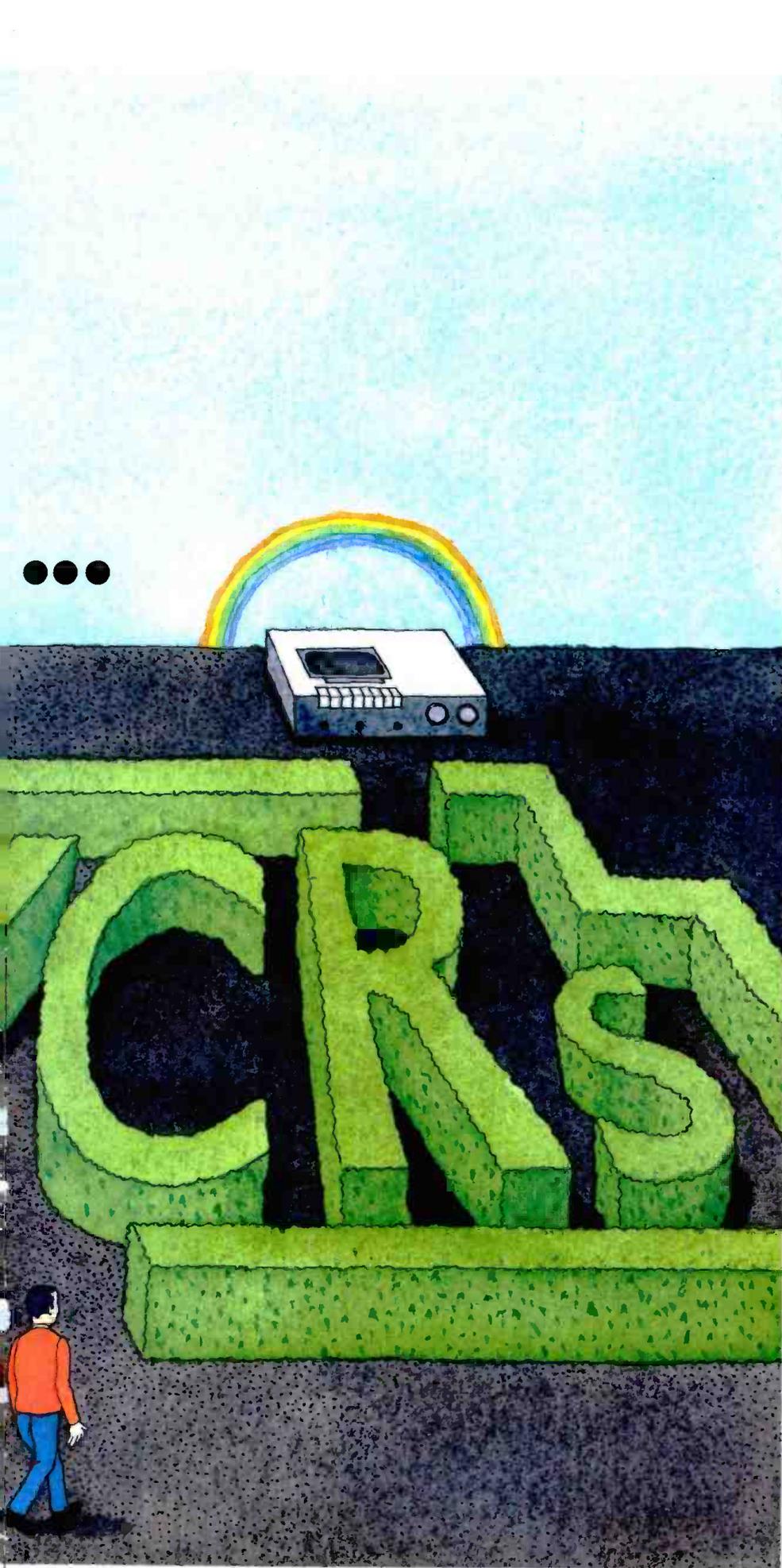
*David Lachenbruch is the author of "Videocassette Recorders—The Complete Home Guide," published by Everest House.*

the public imagination and become a primary goal of America's consumer-electronics industry. After several false starts by American manufacturers (and at least one bankruptcy), a practical video recorder for the home was developed—by the Japanese, of course. The original Sony Betamax, at a list price of \$1300, was an immediate success. Designed with ingenuity and with Sony's unerring eye for miniaturization, the Betamax recorded on a cassette about the size of a small paperback book, holding just enough erasable half-inch-wide tape to record a one-hour program. In words that later turned out to be edible, Sony officials insisted that 60 minutes was all the recording time the public would ever want on a single cassette.

When it became evident that Betamax was a hit, other Japanese manufacturers developed their own home video-recording systems, but none were able to challenge Sony's until the "Video Home System" (VHS for short) was introduced by Japan Victor Company, a relatively small high-technology firm. With a recording system similar to Sony's, JVC crammed two hours' recording time into a cassette just 30 percent larger than Betamax's by using somewhat more tape and running it at a slightly slower speed. Matsushita Electric Industrial Company, a globe-straddling electronics giant (which happens to own 51 percent of JVC's stock), scrapped its own system and adopted JVC's—and the battle of standards was on.

Other Japanese television manufacturers quickly chose one system or the other. Impressed by the success of Sony's Betamax in the United States, American manufacturers chose too. Not one elected to manufacture its own sys-





The chart on the next two pages contains the most up-to-date information on all current VCR models. The following explains what the letter codes mean under the headings "Format/Speeds" and "Family."

## KEY TO VCR SPEEDS AND RECORDING TIME

Speeds are identified in different ways on various makes and models of recorder. The following symbols are used to identify them in the chart:

### BETA

- B1** The original Beta cassette speed; records for one hour on an L-500 cassette, 90 minutes on an L-750 cassette.
- B2** Half speed; records for two hours on L-500 or three on L-750 cassette. (Often identified as BII.)
- B3** Slow speed; records for four and a half hours on L-750 or five hours on new L-830 cassette. (Often identified as BIII.)

### VHS

- V1** Original VHS speed; records for two hours on T-120 or VK-250 cassette. (Usually identified as SP.)
- V2** Half speed; records for four hours on T-120 or VK-250 cassette. (Usually identified as LP.)
- V3** Slow speed; records for six hours on T-120 or VK-250 cassette. (Usually identified as SLP.)

## VCR FAMILY GROUPS

Certain VCRs bear a close resemblance to others. Regardless of brand name, recorders may have been made on the same production line, and could be similar or identical. Here are some of the models you're likely to meet again and again under different names. Within these groups, there may be some differences in features or cosmetics. This list consists of models that generally appear under two or more brand names. The group letters below correspond to those used in the table.

### VHS FAMILY

- H1** Hitachi-made V1/V2/V3 programmable VCR.
- H2** Hitachi's V1/V2 portable VCR.
- J1** The original VHS recorder, made by Japan Victor (JVC); V1 only. (Discontinued.)
- M1** The original Matsushita-made two-speed (V1/V2) VHS recorder. When the timer is used, recording doesn't stop until the end of the tape is reached. (Discontinued.)
- M2** Similar to M1, except that the timer may be set both forward and backward and turns the recorder off as well as on. Has more advanced electronics.
- M3** Similar to M2, but with V1/V2/V3 speeds.
- M4** Matsushita-made V1/V2 programmable VCR.
- M5** V1/V2/V3 version of M4.
- M6** Similar to M5, but with fast- and slow-motion and other special effects.
- M7** Matsushita's V1/V2 portable recorder. Available with two different tuner-timers.
- M8** V1/V2/V3 version of M7.

### BETA FAMILY

- SA1** Sanyo-built B2 VCR. (Discontinued.)
- SA2** Similar to Group SA1, but with remote pause.
- SA3** Sanyo's B2/B3 recorder with special effects.
- S1** Sony's original B1 VCR. External 16-hour timer. (Discontinued.)
- S2** B1/B2 version of S1. (Discontinued.)
- S3** Sony-built B2 VCR with built-in 24-hour electronic timer.
- S4** B2/B3 model with variety of special effects. Some versions can also play back B1.
- S5** Programmable version of S4.

# COMPARATIVE TABLE OF HOME VIDEOCASSETTE RECORDERS

BRAND	MODEL	ACTUAL MANUFACTURER	FORMAT SPEEDS	PROGRAM TIMER	SPECIAL FEATURES	DIMENSIONS WxHxD (in.)	WEIGHT (lbs.)	SUGGESTED LIST PRICE	MANUFACTURER'S WARRANTY	FAMILY	DISCONTINUED MODELS
<b>AKAI</b>	VP-7300	Akai	V2	1 channel, 2 programs daily, 1 week (external)	Portable; freeze-frame; double- & variable-speed play; 1-hour recording on battery charge; pushbutton tuning	11-1/2 x 4-4/5 x 11-9/10 (recorder only)	13.3	\$1125	1 year parts, 90 days labor		
<b>GENERAL ELECTRIC</b>	1VCR0002W	Matsushita	V1, V2	1 program, 24 hours		19-1/8 x 7 x 15-1/2	38.3	\$1000	1 year parts, 90 days labor	M2	1VCR9000W 1VCR9001W (both Group M1)
	1VCR0005W	Hitachi	V1, V2	1 program, 24 hours	Pushbutton tuning	18-3/16 x 6-1/4 x 14-1/16	30.8	\$1000			
	1VCR0010W	Hitachi	V1, V2	5 programs, 1 week	Programmable; pushbutton tuning	18-13/16 x 6-1/4 x 14-1/16	30.8	\$1300			
	1VCR1010W	Hitachi	V1, V2, V3	5 programs, 1 week	Programmable; playback 3-times-speed on V3 speed; pushbutton tuning	18-13/16 x 6-7/32 x 14-1/16	30.8	N.A.		H1	
<b>HITACHI</b>	VT5000A	Hitachi	V1, V2	1 program, 24 hours	Slow-motion playback on V2; fast-motion on V3; freeze-frame; pushbutton tuning	18-13/16 x 6-7/32 x 14-1/16	30.8	\$1180	1 year parts, 90 days labor		Group J1 model VT4200
	VT7000A	Hitachi	V1, V2	1 program, 24 hours	Portable; assemble editing; soft-touch controls; pushbutton tuner/timer included	10-1/16 x 4-1/2 x 11-1/4 (recorder only)	14.3	\$1495		H2	
	VT5600A	Hitachi	V1, V2, V3	1 program, 10 days	Playback 3-times-speed on V3 speed; pushbutton tuning	18-13/16 x 6-7/32 x 14-1/16	30.8	\$1195			
	VT-5800A	Hitachi	V1, V2, V3	5 programs, 1 week	Programmable; playback 3-times-speed on V3 speed; pushbutton tuning	18-13/16 x 6-7/32 x 14-1/16	30.8	\$1395		H1	
<b>JVC</b>	HR-3600AU	Japan Victor	V1	1 program, 24 hours	Remote-control; freeze-frame; double-speed	17-7/8 x 5-13/16 x 13-15/16	31	\$1335	1 year parts, 90 days labor		HR-3300U (Group J1)
	HR-4100	Japan Victor	V1	1 program, 24 hours (optional)	Portable; tuner-timer \$399.50 extra	13-3/8 x 5-7/16 x 13 (recorder only)	16.5	\$1180			
	HR-6700U	Japan Victor	V1, V3	6 programs, 1 week	Programmable; remote variable-speed playback & freeze-frame; 4 heads; pushbutton tuning	18-1/2 x 5-13/16 x 13-3/4	31	\$1350			
<b>MAGNAVOX</b>	8220	Matsushita	V1, V2, V3	1 program, 24 hours		19-3/32 x 7-1/8 x 15	38.5	\$1075	1 year parts, 90 days labor	M3	8200 (Group M1) 8280 (Group M2) 8225 (Group M4) 8251 (Group M7) 8252 (Group M7)
	8227	Matsushita	V1, V2, V3	4 programs, 1 week	Programmable; pushbutton tuning	19-1/8 x 6-7/8 x 15-3/8	39.5	\$1375		M5	
	8229	Matsushita	V1, V2, V3	4 programs, 1 week	Programmable; remote fast- and slow-motion; freeze-frame; variable-speed forward; pushbutton tuning	19-1/8 x 6-7/8 x 15-3/8	39.5	\$1525		M6	
	8271	Matsushita	V1, V2, V3	1 program, 24 hours (external)	Portable; external tuner/timer included; no remote pause	12-1/8 x 5-1/2 x 14-1/8 (recorder only)	18.3	\$1500		M8	
	8273	Matsushita	V1, V2, V3	1 program, 24 hours (external)	Recorder same as 8271; pushbutton tuner/timer included	12-1/8 x 5-1/2 x 14-1/8 (recorder only)	18.3	\$1775		M8	
<b>CURTIS MATHES</b>	D729	Matsushita	V1, V2, V3	4 programs, 1 week	Programmable; pushbutton tuning	19-1/8 x 6-7/8 x 15-3/8	39.5	\$1299.95	4 years parts, 90 days labor	M5	C718 (Group M2) D722 (Group M4)
<b>MGA MITSUBISHI</b>	HS-300U	Mitsubishi	V1, V3	6 programs, 1 week	Programmable; 5 motors; fast- and slow-motion; freeze-frame; pushbutton tuning; 15-function wireless remote \$100	19-3/8 x 6-1/4 x 13-1/2	32	\$1350	1 year parts, 6 months labor		HS-100U (Group J1)
<b>PANASONIC</b>	PV-1200	Matsushita	V1, V2, V3	1 program, 24 hours		19-1/8 x 6-7/8 x 15-1/2	36.1	\$1095	1 year parts, 90 days labor	M3	PV-1000 (Group M1) PV-1100 (Group M2) PV-1500 (Group M4) PV-2100 (Group M7) PV-2200 (Group M7)
	PV-1600	Matsushita	V1, V2, V3	4 programs, 1 week	Programmable; pushbutton tuning	19-1/10 x 6-7/8 x 15-1/4	38.75	\$1295		M5	
	PV-2600	Matsushita	V1, V2, V3	1 program, 24 hours (external)	Portable; pushbutton tuner/timer included	12-1/4 x 5-5/8 x 14-3/8	18.3	None		M8	
	PV-1650	Matsushita	V1, V2, V3	4 programs, 1 week	Programmable; remote-controlled fast- and slow-motion, freeze-frame, variable-speed forward; pushbutton tuning	22-1/2 x 10 x 18-7/8	36.7	\$1395		M6	
<b>J.C. PENNEY</b>	5001 (1137A)	Matsushita	V1, V2	1 program, 24 hours		19 x 7 x 15-1/2	38.1	\$988	1 year parts, 90 days labor	M2	All models to be replaced by 3-speed versions
	5003 (1145A)	Matsushita	V1, V2	4 programs, 1 week	Programmable; pushbutton tuning	19 x 7 x 14-1/2	39.5	\$990		M7	
	5004 (1475A)	Matsushita	V1, V2	1 program, 24 hours or 4 programs, 1 week (optional)	Portable; accessory tuner/timers available; mechanical tuning; pushbutton tuning \$295; programmable, pushbutton tuning \$395	12-1/2 x 5-5/8 x 14-3/8	21.75	\$1188		M4	
<b>PHILCO</b>	V1300	Matsushita	V1, V2, V3	1 program, 24 hours		19-1/8 x 6-7/8 x 15-1/2	36.1	Approx. \$1100	1 year parts, 90 days labor	M3	V1100 (Group M2)
	V1500	Matsushita	V1, V2, V3	4 programs, 1 week	Programmable; pushbutton tuning	19 x 7 x 14-3/4	38.25	Approx. \$1350		M5	

BRAND	MODEL	ACTUAL MANUFACTURER	FORMAT SPEEDS	PROGRAM TIMER	SPECIAL FEATURES	DIMENSIONS WxHxD (in.)	WEIGHT (lbs.)	SUGGESTED LIST PRICE	MANUFACTURER'S WARRANTY	FAMILY	DISCONTINUED MODELS
QUASAR	VH5020	Matsushita	V1, V2, V3	1 program, 24 hours		19 x 6-7/8 x 15-1/2	38	\$1100	1 year parts, 90 days labor	M3	VR-1000 (nonstandard system) VH5000 (Group M1) VH5010 (Group M2) VH5150 (Group M4)
	VH5150	Matsushita	V1, V2, V3	4 programs, 1 week	Programmable; remote channel-change; forward & reverse program cueing	19 x 7 x 14-3/4	38.25	\$1325		M5	
	VH5200	Matsushita	V1, V2	1 program, 24 hours	Portable; accessory tuner/timers: mechanical \$300; pushbutton \$425	12-1/2 x 5-1/2 x 14-1/8 (recorder only)	19	\$1150		M7	
RCA	VDT-501	Matsushita	V1, V2, V3	1 program, 24 hours		19-1/16 x 7 x 15-1/2	36	\$1095	1 year parts, 90 days labor	M3	VCT-200 (Group M1) VCT-201 (Group M2) VCT-400 (Group M4) VDT-201 (Group M2) VDT-301 (Group M2) VDT-350
	VDT-600	Matsushita	V1, V2, V3	4 programs, 1 week	Programmable; pushbutton tuning	19-1/10 x 6-7/8 x 15-1/4	39.5	\$1350		M5	
	VDT-625	Matsushita	V1, V2, V3	4 programs, 1 week	Programmable; remote-controlled fast- and slow-motion, freeze-frame, variable-speed forward; pushbutton tuning	22-1/2 x 10 x 18-7/8	36.7	\$1400		M6	
	VDP-150	Hitachi	V1, V2	1 program, 24 hours (optional)	Portable; assemble editing; soft-touch controls; pushbutton tuner/timer \$329	10-1/16 x 4-1/2 x 11-1/4 (recorder only)	14.3	\$1200		H2	
SANYO	VTC-9100A	Sanyo	B2	1 program, 24 hours		19-1/2 x 7-7/10 x 14-3/5	44	\$895	1 year parts & labor	SA2	VCT-8200 (nonstandard system) VCT-9103/9104 (Group SA1)
	VCR-5000	Sanyo	B2, B3	1 program, 24 hours	Freeze-frame; forward & reverse fast-search; sleep switch	17-3/5 x 6-3/10 x 14-3/5	32.6	\$1095		SA3	
	VCR-5500	Sanyo	B2, B3	5 programs, 1 week	Programmable; remote-controlled record, play, fast-forward, slow-motion, still-frame advance; pushbutton tuning	17-3/4 x 6-1/4 x 15-1/6	32.6	\$1495			
SEARS	5305	Sanyo	B2	1 program, 24 hours		19-4/5 x 7-7/10 x 15-2/3	44	\$735	1 year parts & labor	SA2	5303 & 5304 (both Group SA1)
	5306	Sanyo	B2, B3	1 program, 24 hours	Freeze-frame; forward & reverse fast-search; sleep switch	17-3/5 x 6-3/10 x 16-1/8	32.6	\$995		SA3	
SHARP	VC-6800	Sharp	V1, V3	7 programs, 1 week	Programmable; Auto Program Locate Device; tape-remaining indicator; backup battery; front-loading; pushbutton tuning	19-1/16 x 6-9/16 x 15-25/32	30	\$1295	1 year parts, 90 days labor		
SONY	SL-8600	Sony	B2	1 program, 24 hours		18-3/8 x 7-11/16 x 16-1/8	37.9	\$1095	90 days parts & labor	S3	LV-1901 (color TV-VCR console) SL-7200 (Group S1) SL-8200 (Group S2)
	SL-3000	Sony	B2 (record); B1, B2 (play)	1 program, 24 hours (optional)	Portable; pushbutton tuner/timer \$495	11-7/8 x 5 x 13-3/4 (recorder only)	17	\$1299.95			
	SL-5400	Sony	B2, B3 (record); B1, B2, B3 (play)	1 program, 3 days	Freeze-frame; visible fast-forward & rewind; 3-times forward viewing; pushbutton tuning	19-3/4 x 6-1/2 x 15	33	\$1250		S4	
	SL-5600	Sony	B2, B3 (record); B1, B2, B3 (play)	4 programs, 2 weeks	Programmable; same as SL-5400 but with remote-controlled 3-times forward	19-3/4 x 6-1/2 x 15	33	\$1350		S5	
SYLVANIA	VC2700	Matsushita	V1, V2, V3	1 program, 24 hours		19-1/8 x 6-7/8 x 15-1/2	36.1	approx. \$1100	1 year parts, 90 days labor	M3	VC2450 (Group M1) VC2500 (Group M2) VC4000 (Group M7)
	VC3000	Matsushita	V1, V2, V3	4 programs, 1 week	Programmable; pushbutton tuning	19 x 7 x 14-3/4	38.25	approx. \$1350		M5	
	VC4500	Matsushita	V1, V2, V3	1 program, 24 hours (external)	Portable; pushbutton tuner/timer included	12-1/8 x 5-5/8 x 14-3/8 (recorder only)	18.3	approx. \$1500		M8	
TOSHIBA	V-5420	Toshiba	B2	3 programs, 1 week	Programmable; on-screen tape-remaining indicator; pushbutton scan-tuning	18-1/2 x 7 x 15-1/13	29.7	\$1295	1 year parts, 90 days labor		V-5210 (Group S2) V-5310
	V-5425	Toshiba	B2, B3	3 programs, 1 week	Programmable; visible fast-forward & rewind; pushbutton tuning	18-1/2 x 7 x 15-1/13	30.8	\$1345			
	V-5530	Toshiba	B2, B3	1 program, 24 hours (optional)	Portable; tuner-timer \$245	12-1/4 x 7 x 15-1/13 (recorder only)	19.8	\$1245			
	V-5535	Toshiba	B2, B3	1 program, 24 hours (external)	Portable; tuner-timer included	12-1/4 x 7 x 15-1/13	19.8	\$1345			
ZENITH	VR9000W	Sony	B2, B3	1 program, 3 days	Freeze-frame; visible fast-forward & rewind; pushbutton tuning	19-1/8 x 6-1/2 x 15	33	\$1195	1 year parts, 90 days labor	S4	JR9000W (Group S3) SJR9500P (color console version of above) KR9000W (Group S2)
	VR9700J	Sony	B2, B3	4 programs, 2 weeks	Programmable; same features as VR9000W, but with 3-times forward viewing	19-1/2 x 6-1/2 x 15-1/4	36	\$1350		S5	

## VCRs *continued*

tem; all of them chose to buy from Japan. Archrivals Zenith and RCA rarely do anything in the same way. Zenith, which was (and still is) pressing a \$900-million antitrust and antidumping suit against all major Japanese television-set makers except Sony, went along with the successful Beta system, introducing a Sony-made machine. By then, Sony had caught up with VHS's two-hour recording time by halving the speed of tape movement, thereby getting two hours' recording in the cassette that formerly held one.

Naturally, RCA picked the competitive VHS machine, and in its introduction pulled a double surprise. Using exactly the same technique as Sony, Matsushita had quietly halved the speed of its recorder for the American market, and RCA was able to unveil a machine that could store four hours of color TV and sound in a single cassette. The other half of RCA's whammy was a suggested list price of \$1000—\$300 below Sony and Zenith. The two moves (plus a heavy ad campaign) made RCA and VHS the best sellers in VCR, even after those particular advantages had evaporated.

Today 54 current models are available in the United States under 19 brand names. (The chart on pages 70 and 71 list them all with important details and specifications, along with 44 discontinued ones that might show up in stores, for a total of 98 models.) You can hardly tell some of them apart, because all of the models are currently being made by nine Japanese manufacturers: the original Beta-VHS "big three"—Sony, JVC and Matsushita—joined by Beta followers Sanyo and Toshiba and VHS adherents Akai, Hitachi, Mitsubishi and Sharp.

The current VCR buyer must choose either a player for the small Beta cassettes or one for the larger VHS tapes. There's no compatibility between the two. One of the byproducts of the recording-time race is the incredible fact that some machines sharing the same format aren't compatible with one another. A tape made on the original one-hour Beta recorder can't be played back on some Beta machines designed for double-playing-time recording and vice versa. A cassette recorded at the slow speed on a Matsushita-built two-speed VHS machine can't be played back on a JVC single-speed VHS machine (but in this case the vice isn't versa). None of the earlier machines in either format can play back tapes recorded in the super-long-play speeds featured in 1980 models.

There are no signs of a truce in the recording-time battle. In 1978, the Beta group partially offset some of VHS's advantage by introducing a longer-playing cassette loaded with more (and thinner)

tape, increasing the recording time by 50 percent and bringing its former two-hour machines to three hours. And this year Beta finally pulled out in front with 1980-model machines including a third speed—a slower one that will record for four and a half hours on the former three-hour cassette. A new Beta cassette containing slightly more tape increased this to an even five hours.

But Beta's one-hour advantage was short-lived. The VHS group now has introduced its own ultra-slow third speed, increasing its recording time to six hours, using the same cassette that on most 1979 machines had a capacity of four and originally could tape only for two hours. A new VHS cassette under development will contain thinner tape and extend recording time to as much as nine hours.



With its early advantage in playing time and the biggest ad budget in the industry, RCA rode the VHS horse to market leadership. The originator of home VCR, Sony, is now number three after Panasonic (VHS), with most other brands rather far behind, even though some of them have products identical to those of RCA or Sony, and others are fielding unique machines with interesting innovations. Just in case you can't tell the players without a program, here are the teams: The Beta varsity—Sanyo, Sears, Sony, Toshiba, Zenith. The VHS All-Stars—Akai, General Electric, Hitachi, JVC, Magnavox, Curtis Mathes, MGA Mitsubishi, Panasonic, J.C. Penney, Philco, Quasar, RCA, Sharp, Sylvania.

Despite cassette-size, tape-speed and tape-loading differences, all home VCRs work in the same way, regardless of format. They're easily installed without any technical skill—the main operation is disconnecting the antenna from the TV set, connecting it to the VCR, and running the VCR's cable to the TV set's antenna ter-

minals. This equips the VCR to record any broadcast program for playback through the television set. (VCRs also can record and play back cable-TV programs; this sometimes requires a slightly more complicated installation.)

Because the VCR has its own tuner, it can record one program while the TV set is tuned to a different channel or is turned off. The recorder shares only the antenna, the picture tube and the speaker system with the TV. Otherwise, it's a completely self-contained color-TV set. When people say they recorded a program "off of the TV set," they're being not only ungrammatical but incorrect. The VCR records independently of the set. It records in color, even if you have only a black-and-white set for playback. It will record even if you don't have a TV set at all.

All current-model home VCRs (except some portables) are equipped with automatic, electronic, digital-clock timers that can be set to turn them on even if no one is home or everybody is asleep. Most timers can be set to turn on the recorder at any time up to 24 hours ahead.

TV manufacturers are now in their third or fourth "model year" of VCR, changing models annually in the tradition of the TV-set industry. In addition to increasing recording time, they're preoccupied with developing "full lines" of VCRs, so the customer can be "stepped up" from a simple model to a deluxe one. This is definitely the year of the special-purpose machines: programmables and portables.

A programmable VCR is one that can, unattended, record several programs over an extended period of time. It can automatically record three to seven different shows on different channels over a period of a full week without being reset. The prize for the longest program period currently goes to a new Sony two-week machine. A built-in microprocessor, or minicomputer, takes charge when a program table is properly programmed, turning the recorder on and off and changing channels, so that when you return home from your weekend trip, you can catch up on, say, *The Rockford Files*, *Fantasy Island*, *Masterpiece Theatre* and *60 Minutes* at your own convenience.

Programmables feature indexing systems that let you locate the start of each show on the cassette merely by pushing the fast-forward or rewind button. A new Sharp VCR has an "Automatic Program Locate Device," which makes it possible to index up to 99 different points on every cassette for quick location. Programmable machines also can be used to record the same show every day in the week. So, for example, you can now watch

*Search for Tomorrow* in one big two and a half hour sudsy extravaganza—in prime time, even.

All current VCRs can be used with cameras for electronic home photography. Portables may be lugged outside the home, powered from their own self-contained batteries or from a car cigarette-lighter socket. But they can hardly be used for candid videography, since they weigh 13 to 20 pounds, and the color cameras an additional three to seven. Even with a shoulder strap, a portable VCR isn't quite suited to traveling light.

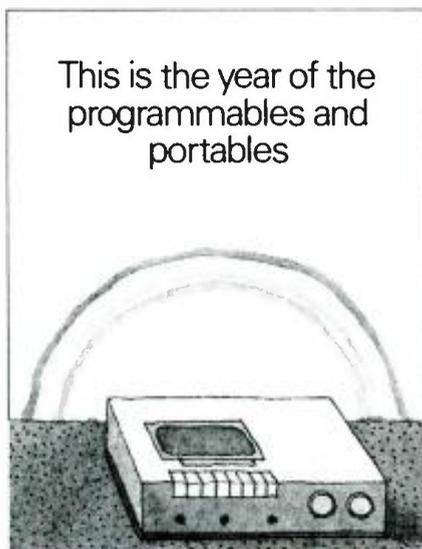
If you're accustomed to making home movies, a portable VCR will give you a mixed feeling of being both tied down and liberated—tied down by weight and bulk, but liberated from time and money constraints imposed by film. A reel of silent super-8 film, which plays for about three minutes, costs \$4 to \$8 including processing. Two hours of it, shot and processed, would set you back 40 times that, or \$160 to \$320. A two- or four-hour cassette costs around \$20, has sound as well as picture and can be used over if you don't like the results the first time. The cassette is ready for viewing as soon as you shoot it. If you want to put together a show from film, you must wait for processing, then submit yourself to the drudgery of splicing small lengths into a program long enough to put your friends to sleep. And that points up another advantage of tape—you needn't turn off the lights to watch your tapes on the TV screen, so you can monitor your guests to make certain they stay awake.

You can even "go video" retroactively, enjoying home movies and slides you shot before you bought a VCR—right on your TV screen. Your family film archives can be transferred to videocassette for viewing and safekeeping, the scratches removed and faded colors restored in the process, and you can add a soundtrack via the dubbing feature of your VCR. Several companies provide this service, the major nationwide chains being the familiar Fotomat kiosks and Familyvision, which operates through VCR dealers. If you have many old films or slides, it may pay you to make your own transfers with a handy-dandy little "telecine" (pronounced "tell-a-sinny") accessory selling for under \$150. You'll also need a movie or slide projector and a color video camera.

Owner surveys indicate that the vast majority of VCR owners bought their recorders primarily for time-shift, then started exploring new uses. The camera usually is an afterthought add-on, even though a color version can cost more than the VCR itself. Another auxiliary use that has achieved unexpected popularity

is playing professionally recorded program cassettes. The most popular are movies, and major film companies are making fairly recent high-quality features available on cassettes. Thousands of other movie titles are available, principally "public domain" films whose copyrights have expired.

You also may be offered some brand-new movies while they're still in their theatrical first runs. These are almost always illegally made bootleg tapes, usually of poor technical quality and almost always very expensive. And then there's pornography—nobody knows the size of that market, but it's huge, and VCR deserves credit for strengthening the American family by keeping people out of the sex-and-smut theaters, letting them watch the same thing at home.



Legitimate recorded cassettes generally are priced from \$40 to \$100, the average feature film going for about \$60 to \$70. Some companies and clubs rent feature films for \$10 to \$15 a week.

While playing time, portability and programmability are the main areas of competition in the new 1980 recorders, another trend stands out. This is the addition of convenience features that increase the utility of the VCR or make it easier to operate. While most current-model VCRs have remote pause buttons (principally useful for deleting commercials from the easy chair while watching a show and recording it), some of the new ones extend remote operation to channel selection, fast-forward, play and/or rewind. Many have still-frame controls that freeze a picture on the screen during the "pause" mode. Others have "visible fast-forward and rewind," an aid in locating any specific part of a tape. The visible fast-forward feature makes it possible to move rapidly through commercials in tapes made off the air.

Suggested list prices of VCRs vary all over the lot—from a low of \$735 (for a Sears machine) to \$1500 (for some new portables). Color cameras start at about \$750, black-and-white at a couple of hundred dollars. Discounts are available, and you'll see some discontinued Beta or VHS standard-cassette models as low as \$695, or even less. Some nonstandard machines have been spotted on the market at under \$400, but there can be problems in getting cassettes for orphaned recorders (and you'll never find any pre-recorded cassettes for them).

Buy now or wait? If you're waiting for something like one single, standard, interchangeable cassette system, you can forget it. It's a near-miracle that there are only two now (a very manageable situation), and it's an almost certain bet that some day we will look back on 1979-80 as the golden age of standardization.

The next major area of VCR development is almost certain to be in the field of electronic photography. For a true portable picture-and-sound recorder—the type you could take with you on a vacation—something far smaller and lighter is needed. And within the next 12 months, these could start showing up, probably with a proliferation of tiny nonstandard cassettes. In the next few years, you can expect the introduction of miniaturized solid-state color cameras with built-in VCRs, with a total size and weight comparable to a super-8 sound/film camera.

One technique that promises to reduce both the cost and size of VCRs is known as "longitudinal video recording," or LVR. It's based on the same simple system used in audio recording—the head lays down tracks that run parallel to the length of the tape, rather than at a slant as in Beta and VHS. This makes possible the use of fixed, rather than revolving, heads. Two LVRs already have begun or are scheduled for production. At its plant in Fountain Valley, Cal., BASF of West Germany is manufacturing a lightweight LVR that uses a cassette containing 8-mm. tape. Japan's Toshiba has demonstrated its own LVR, which it says has only about one-third the number of parts used in conventional machines, is about half the size and can be built to sell at around \$500. Both machines—mutually incompatible—could be marketed in 1980.

Not surprisingly, VCRs are preponderantly owned by families with higher-than-average incomes. At first glance, it may seem somewhat odd that a high proportion of owners are types generally considered to view less television than the average. But of course, these are the *selective* viewers—and selection is what home VCRs are all about. ■

# IS AMERICA READY FOR 'UNITED STATES'?

The creator of an

By BILL DAVIDSON

On the wall of the Hollywood office of Larry Gelbart, creator-writer-producer of the upcoming NBC series called *United States*, there hangs a stunning serigraph of a quotation from the "Iliad": "An unextinguished laughter shakes the skies." The print accompanies Gelbart wherever he goes. It was on his office wall when he did *M\*A\*S\*H* for TV, "Sly Fox" for the Broadway stage, "Oh, God!" for the movie houses. But along with the ancient Greek exhortation is another quote, this one from modern British playwright John Osborne, which Gelbart keeps in his desk drawer: "I only know I've been successful when people tell me I've gone too far."

As you may be aware by now from the advance publicity, Gelbart's *United States* seems to fit both quotes: an unextinguished laughter is expected to emanate from the series (its debut is scheduled for March 4)—and plenty of people have been telling Gelbart that he has gone too far.

The result is that we will have what some people are calling a "landmark television series" to contemplate and hassle about. As NBC chairman Jane Pfeiffer put it recently, "Gelbart's *United States* will do for TV in the 1980s what *All in the Family* did in the 1970s." But others are asking: Is Gelbart going too far in the direction of realism in presenting the intimate story of the marriage of Richard and Libby Chapin (played by Beau Bridges and Helen Shaver)? Are the American people ready for humor derived from close-to-the-bone examination of such subjects as marital conflict, sexuality, infidelity, monetary problems, child molestation and the learning disability called dyslexia? In the era of comic-strip sitcoms like *Happy Days* and *Mork & Mindy*, will audiences laugh at real-life funny dialogue and real-life funny plots that do *not*, says Gelbart, "cure a kid's dyslexia by giving him a puppy at the end of 23 minutes and before the last commercial"?

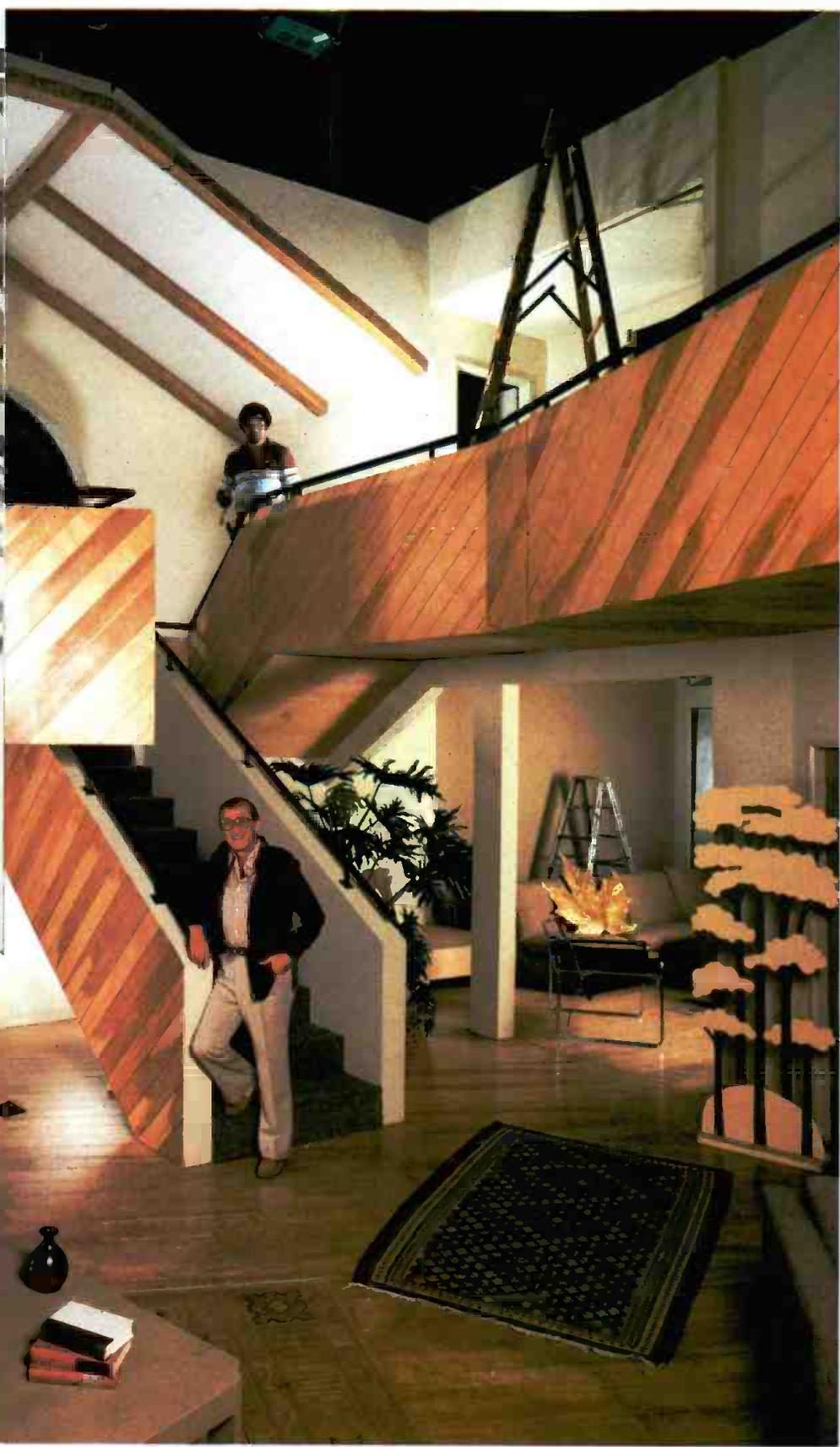
There is some extraordinary dialogue in *United States*. Here, for example, is Richard Chapin discussing a long-ago sexual affair of Libby's: "God, how I hate that word 'affair.' It sounds like you're having a few people in for drinks, a little onion

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*Standing at the foot of the stairs, Larry Gelbart feels right at home in the United States set, as workmen put some final touches on it. He had the interior of the entire house built on a Hollywood sound stage, and installed replicas of furniture from his own Beverly Hills home, as well as paintings from his art collection.*



unconventional new series tests the limits of situation comedy



dip. It's got nothing to do with sneaking around, fogging up windshields from the inside. It's even worse than 'sleeping' with someone. 'Sleeping' is barely a verb, it's so passive. Our son still sleeps with his Peanuts doll; bears sleep through the winter; China was a sleeping giant. Men and women who are having an affair rarely, if ever, sleep together. There is a whole lot of thrashing about and tossing and turning, but there is no sleeping. That happens when the man—or in this case the woman—actually goes home and sleeps with the poor clown who has no idea his wife has just returned from her affair, at which not one drink or onion dip was served."

In another episode, in a long monologue, Libby tells Richard how her Uncle Ralphie molested her when she was only 8 years old: "Of course, I knew better than to get into a car with a stranger. Someone fly-casting for little girls, using M&M's as bait. But this was Uncle Ralphie. It was like getting in a car with Art Linkletter, for God's sake.... He drove to a hardware store, said he had to pick up a few things. And when he parked the car, I found out that one of them was my skirt.... I felt mortified. I felt like I was outside watching the scene through the window. Sounds seemed magnified: the traffic, the dashboard clock, Ralph's voice, saying how much he liked me.... This kind of pathetic *Romper Room* heavy breathing. Only this wasn't Billy Kanter, the 7-year-old premed student next door. This was Uncle Ralph.... It took me a moment to collect the thimbleful of sense I had at that age. I moved as far from him as I could.... He stared at me, but he didn't see me. Not me. I'd become this terrific sex bomb—all 58 pounds of me, including the braces on my teeth."

Will this sort of thing play in the Nielsens? We shall see.

In the meantime, the television community is marveling over the fact that such an innovative series is being launched by NBC, traditionally the most conservative of the networks; and that the show's principal motivator and champion is NBC czar Fred Silverman, who, in previous incarnations at CBS and ABC, brought us such shows as *Me and the Chimp*, *Charlie's Angels* and *Blansky's Beauties*. It is more or less forgotten that Silverman also brought us *Family*, *Roots* and *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*.

Nevertheless, the behind-the-scenes account of how *United States* got fi-

nanced by Silverman's network is one of the most fascinating and bizarre stories in the recent history of television.

It all begins with Gelbart, about whom NBC's West Coast programming chief, Perry Lafferty, says, "If you want Larry Gelbart, you take what he has in mind. Getting Gelbart to come back into TV is

as well as write. The only time he emerges from his self-constructed cocoon is when his humanistic instincts are aroused—such as his recent leadership of a campaign within the industry to shame CBS for hiring Palestinian-rights advocate Vanessa Redgrave to play Fania Fenelon, an Auschwitz survivor, in a TV-movie.



Gelbart (left) chats in the kitchen set with Beau Bridges and Helen Shaver.

like getting another great playwright, Neil Simon, to do a half-hour situation comedy for you every week. Except that a lot of experts think Gelbart is better."

Who is Larry Gelbart and why are they saying such wonderful things about him?

At 51, he is a tall, urbane man, the son of a Los Angeles barber whose clientele, in the early 1940s, included Danny Thomas. Getting to know the comedian by hanging around the barber shop after school, young Larry was writing radio skits for him at the age of 16. In 1950, when he was 22, he worked on Bob Hope's very first television special and proceeded to become one of the industry's top comedy writers for such stars as Danny Kaye, Sid Caesar, Red Buttons and Art Carney. At 30, Gelbart had already written his first smash-hit Broadway show (with Burt Shevelove), the Tony Award-winning "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum"; and had done three movies, including a Jack Lemmon-Kim Novak film, "The Notorious Landlady."

Then, as now, Gelbart was a loner in the entertainment industry, an anomaly in a vocation that fawns on stars and stresses upward movement into directing and producing. Gelbart eschews all of these. His only close friends are other creative types like Carl Reiner and he maddens studio executives by turning down major film projects in which he is expected to direct

The rest of the time Gelbart remains housebound in one of his two principal dwellings in Beverly Hills and Palm Springs, with Pat, his wife of 23 years, to whom he is devoted. Most of his writing is done at home—in longhand, on yellow legal pads. He spends about nine hours a day writing. "Writing is the most important thing you can do, if you have the gift," he says, "and you seek out the most salubrious places in which to do it."

It thus came about that, in 1963, Gelbart and Pat went to London for the opening of the British stage version of "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum"—whereupon Gelbart fell in love with England "as a salubrious writing environment." He remained in Great Britain for nine years, during which he turned out plays for the London stage, one good British movie, "The Wrong Box" (plus other films) "which I did just for the eating money and had better be left nameless." (They were "spaghetti Westerns," which at that time were attracting Clint Eastwood and the like to Europe.)

Gelbart was lured back to U.S. television the first time—in 1972—when Gene Reynolds called him in London. Reynolds, a TV producer under contract to 20th Century-Fox at the time, asked Gelbart if he would be interested in writing the pilot for a project he was developing for Fox and CBS—a TV series based on the movie

"M\*A\*S\*H." Lafferty, a CBS programming executive in those days, sent Gelbart the little-known paperback on which Robert Altman had based the movie and pointed out that Gelbart could write the pilot "without tearing yourself away from London, of course."

The upshot was that Gelbart was won over by the project's irreverent attitudes toward war and the military. "I wrote the pilot in London," he says, "and then, just out of curiosity, I flew to Los Angeles for the first reading and rehearsal. Before I knew it, we had cast Alan Alda as Hawkeye; I had teamed up with Gene Reynolds as one of the show's two executive producers; and I had returned to London to move my wife, Pat, and our five kids back to L.A. for a few months." The few months extended into four years, during which Gelbart wrote a large percentage of the M\*A\*S\*H segments, directed several of them, and helped shape the Emmy-winning show into one of the ongoing TV classics.

But by 1976, at the height of the show's popularity, Gelbart had had enough. "M\*A\*S\*H had become my home away from home," he says, "and there were other creative juices flowing in me." That's when he did "Sly Fox," a Broadway play based on Moliere's "The Misanthrope," starring George C. Scott; after which he entered a busy period of moviemaking: "Oh, God!" with George Burns (an Oscar nominee for Best Screenplay), "Movie, Movie" (a Christopher Award winner), the soon-to-be-released "Rough Cut" starring Burt Reynolds, "Two Plus Two," and an as-yet-untitled M\*A\*S\*H-like black comedy about the Cambodian War.

In the midst of all this big-screen activity, Gelbart continued to be an interested observer of what was happening on the small screen. He did not like what he saw. So much so, in fact, that he let it be known to Fred Silverman through a mutual friend "that Silverman's Hardy Boys-type programming at ABC was poisoning the industry." The next thing Gelbart knew, the unpredictable Silverman had offered to let him program the entire four hours of the ABC Sunday-night schedule. Says Gelbart, "It never came off because I met with all the ABC department heads and all I could say was 'I'm thinking about what I have in mind.' Nevertheless, it was the most flattering thing that ever happened to me—like the King saying, 'Here is my court. Do with it what you will.'"

All of which is why Gelbart picked up the phone in November of 1978 to call Silverman—and no one else—when he had an idea that could impel his return to television. "The idea had been rattling around in my mind for four years," Gelbart tells me. "It was a situation comedy based on the real things that happen in my mar-

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An eminent scientist assesses a seven-part series  
that charts Charles Darwin's momentous journey

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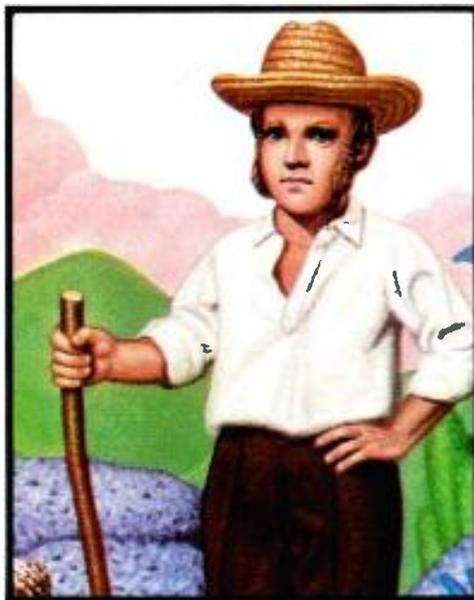
# 'He Returned as a Man with an Idea'

By STEPHEN JAY GOULD

At the opening of this remarkable seven-part series on biology's greatest contribution to human thought, Charles Darwin, as an old man, recalls his unpromising youth: "I was considered a very ordinary boy." Perhaps he was, by the false standards of his schoolmasters—for he excelled neither in obedience nor in the diligent parroting of received wisdom. Yet, from the first, he followed the pattern of many geniuses: independence of thought and strong motivation to pursue his own interests. Thus, when presented with an opportunity to delay his preparation for the ministry by sailing around the world on H.M.S. *Beagle*, the 22-year-old Darwin eagerly accepted. Capt. Robert FitzRoy, rather than God, received the young Charles and the seeds of intellectual revolution were sown.

The *Beagle*, a 90-foot surveying sloop, took five years to fulfill its mission of charting the coast of South America and extending a string of chronometric measurements around the world. Darwin sailed as the gentleman companion of Captain FitzRoy, not, at least initially, as the ship's official naturalist. Read no modern innuendoes into this statement. The two men had just met, and it was not uncommon for captains, who were shielded by convention and naval regulation from social intercourse with their subordinates, to bring a companion on long voyages—if only to have some conversation at mealtime. FitzRoy, in particular, feared what he considered a hereditary taint of madness in his family. (He did commit suicide in 1865, and he did have a markedly unstable—probably manic-depressive—personality, even as a young man.) FitzRoy knew that the previous skipper of the *Beagle* had shot himself at sea and he feared the toll that years of loneliness might take. Thus Darwin, the mild-mannered, even-tempered Whig, shared quarters for five years with the moody, blustery Tory aristocrat, Captain FitzRoy. Yet FitzRoy was no one-dimensional martinet. He inspired intense loyalty among his crew, and his fanatical dedication to perfection in pursuit of his mission can only win our admiration (as much as it nearly drove the crew to mutiny as FitzRoy continually lengthened the voyage by backtracking to check slight discrepancies in his charts).

Darwin left as a young, conventionally pious (though unenthusiastic) student for the ministry. He returned as a man with an idea that, although by no means original with him, would rock the world in his theoretical formulation 20 years later. Darwin surely



experienced, as Shakespeare once wrote, a "sea change, into something rich and strange" during his voyage. This excellent series probes the nature of that change and succeeds, largely but not completely, in conveying it to us.

In producing this seven-part series, the BBC, still the unquestioned world leader in portraying science and most things intellectual through television, built a replica of the *Beagle* and sailed it from England to South America. The first episode covers Darwin's early years in England. The next five recount his South American adventures aboard the *Beagle*. (One would never know, from the series, that the *Beagle* also called at Tahiti, Australia and South Africa on the way home, with major effects upon Darwin's life and thought. Did the BBC simply run out of funds? However, the *Beagle*'s voyage was primarily a South American affair.) The last traces

Darwin's life from his return to the promulgation, more than 20 years later, of his evolutionary views, to his aging and death. Its most dramatic scene is a reconstruction (for there is no official written record) of the famous British Association meeting of 1860, at which T. H. Huxley, acting as stand-in for the reclusive, perennially ill Darwin, creamed Bishop "Soapy Sam" Wilberforce, the slick-tongued, ill-informed and self-appointed defender of the faith.

The story is a natural winner for at least four reasons: it is dramatic; it is exotic; it is full of beauty; and it is of undeniable importance. We may consider the success of this series in each of these four categories.

A series about Charles Darwin presents a definite problem with drama. Darwin was such a soft-spoken, infallibly decent man that one hardly knows how to portray him in an exciting way. Oh, I suspect he was as tormented internally, and as wracked with fear, doubt and depression as any revolutionary thinker, but he kept it all in and expressed it as ill health and daily vomiting, rather than as flamboyant or bizarre behavior—and you can't get much dramatic mileage by depicting a man bent over the sink.

FitzRoy, on the other hand, was the very stuff of drama—moody, talented, tyrannical and expressive. Thus, the producers made a wise and creative decision to center the drama of the entire series on the love-hate relationship between these two contradictory personalities. Malcolm Stoddard plays Darwin with compassion and accuracy, but the kudos goes to Andrew Burt for his brilliant portrayal of the mercurial FitzRoy. At times, this theme becomes thin or forced, especially since the two men were often separated for many months when Darwin went

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Stephen Jay Gould, a professor of geology at Harvard University, is the author of "Ever Since Darwin."

## Filmed beautifully, the Galapagos tortoises steal the show

ashore. Moreover, since they saw each other only rarely after the Beagle returned to England, the extension of this theme into the seventh episode must clutch at the few straws of their infrequent meetings in later life.

But if the character of Darwin does not lend itself to drama, the exotic situations in which he lived for five years during the voyage contain enough interest in themselves to carry the story by the authenticity and excitement of their reconstruction. For Darwin hobnobbed with the plantation owners and commanders in chief of a true frontier. He witnessed firsthand both their cruelty and their missionary zeal, and he had direct contact with the Fuegians, a people virtually untouched by Western influence. (FitzRoy, in a notably unsuccessful experiment, had previously transported to England and "educated" three Fuegians whom he released when the Beagle reached their homeland. Within a few months—and how could it have been otherwise?—they resumed their native ways, but FitzRoy, in a statement that typified the stiff upper lip, proclaimed that the experiment had been worthwhile because, in the future, one of the Fuegians' descendants might be kind to a shipwrecked British sailor!) He crossed the Andes and experienced earthquakes along the western coast. He lived with gauchos on the pampas and met the sadistic and despotic General Rosas in the course of his genocidal war against native Indians. All this is filmed beautifully, accurately and on location.

Any series on Darwin and the genesis of evolution must be judged in large part on the natural-history photography. It is, as I would expect from the BBC crews, exquisite, meticulous and enlightening, though I would have preferred to see more of it. The Galapagos tortoises steal the show, even from FitzRoy himself.

With so many triumphs, it is a shame that the series falls down somewhat where its success is most greatly needed—in reflecting the intellectual importance of this odyssey. After all, Darwin's Beagle voyage was not any rich man's tropical adventure; it was the trip that served as antecedent to one of the most important

events in our intellectual history. Therefore, the series must ultimately be judged not only as an adventure story with good nature photography, but as a document that tries to give us insight into the genesis of evolutionary theory. Just how was Darwin transformed from a student for the ministry into the nemesis of preachers? What role did the voyage play in this transformation? How much do new theories owe to new facts, how much to changing social contexts?

On these questions, I fear that the series has reinforced some tired stereotypes and lost a fine opportunity to present a more accurate version of the history of science. The common myth holds that great thinkers are dedicated empiricists who cut through the prejudice of their age by stepping outside it and reading accurately the messages that nature is trying to convey. A more ample reading does not deny the role of new information but emphasizes that all knowledge comes in social contexts and that great thinkers are the people who can integrate the competing visions of an age into something new and creative. Since the series spends so much time setting a social context with such scrupulous accuracy, it is a great shame that the producers fail to utilize it at the crucial point and that they do not challenge the conventional account of Darwin reaching his theory by clearing his mind of the context and reading nature more accurately than most.

Thus, following the chief dramatic theme of Darwin vs. FitzRoy as futurity vs. bad old past, the series takes license with history,



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## The series takes license with history and invents a scene

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and invents, as a stimulus for FitzRoy's temporary mental breakdown at Valparaiso, a scene in which the impetuous Darwin breaks in upon the depressed captain to tell him that fossil shells discovered more than 10,000 feet up in the Andes cannot be products of the deluge. It also conveys a similar and false impression by juxtaposing the bloody scene of FitzRoy's suicide (by slitting his throat) with the captain's presence five years earlier as Wilberforce's supporter at the British Association meeting in Oxford. But we have no evidence that FitzRoy's genuine distress at being the unwitting midwife of evolution had anything to do with his despair and death. He was, at the time of his suicide, far more despondent over the fact that nobody was taking his system for weather prediction seriously.

The producers might argue that these are mere dramatic reconstructions, or, as Pooh-Bah said, "merely corroborative detail, intended to give artistic verisimilitude to an otherwise bald and unconvincing narrative," but I regard them as misplaced examples of the myth of the intellectual hero as objectivist.

In the most misleading scene of all, Darwin, prototype of the lonely hero, ponders all the way home during the long voyage from South America to England (made to seem even longer by a failure to acknowledge any intermediate port of call). He thinks (via flashbacks) of all the facts he has seen: the adaptive mimicry of insects; the fossil bones of extinct giant mammals; the high shells of the Andes; the earthquakes that permit us to view the world as an active, renewing body, not merely as a young object

declining from the original perfection of Eden; the variation of Galapagos tortoises and birds. And he realizes, alone as a man can be in the vast emptiness of the Pacific, that evolution must be true. He has simply induced it from the facts he has seen more clearly because he could free his mind from prejudice.

To their credit, the producers must have recognized this as romantic nonsense because they do try to make amends in a very forced scene in the next and final episode. Fellow scientists T. H. Huxley, Sir Charles Lyell and Sir Joseph Hooker are sitting together in their club and Huxley explains: "The idea seems to be in the air." Too little and too late. In fact, Darwin did return from the voyage pretty well convinced that evolution had occurred. But he had not an inkling about its mechanism. What we know him best for today—the theory of natural selection as evolution's mechanism—came two years later, as a result of intense intellectual effort, carried on entirely within the bounds of greater London and recorded in a series of remarkable notebooks that show Darwin in the midst of his culture, reading poetry, philosophy, economics, psychology, literature, trying to find insight, trying to synthesize. When he finally hit upon natural selection in 1838, it was more by a transference of Adam Smith's laissez-faire economic arguments into nature than as an induction from Galapagos finches or Andean fossils.

Yet, and to close on a note of praise for such a generally praiseworthy series, watching these seven programs taught me that we intellectuals have our own hang-ups and misperceptions. We work with the written record since it forms our primary data, and we tend to neglect or undervalue what cannot be stated in words. I think I can now see how utterly discombobulating to all cherished ideas and attitudes such a voyage must have been to a well-educated, upper-class young Englishman who had neither traveled extensively nor lived outside the confines of his own background. And demolition is the necessary prelude to fruitful reconstruction. ■



# Destination: Television

An advance look at some of the major productions that will come to your home screen from all over the world

"The long form" is what people in television call it. It's that increasingly large portion of programming devoted to dramatic films that run longer than an hour—and sometimes stretch into miniseries of epic dimensions.

As we move into the 1980s, the long-form trend is continuing to assert itself. Although fewer miniseries are being produced this year, because of cost factors, the networks have many dozens of long films in development. And if recent television history is a fair indication, a number of them will turn out to be among the most watched and most acclaimed programs of the next several months.

A few of the most promising prospects are pictured on the following pages. The boat shown opposite, leaving San Francisco's harbor with its sails billowing, symbolizes another trend that is blowing in the television wind: many of these films are being produced far from Hollywood's soundstages. *Shogun*, for example, went on location in Japan, "Gauguin the Savage" in France and Tahiti, "The Legend of Walks Far Woman" in the hills of Montana, and "Attica" in a Lima, Ohio, prison.

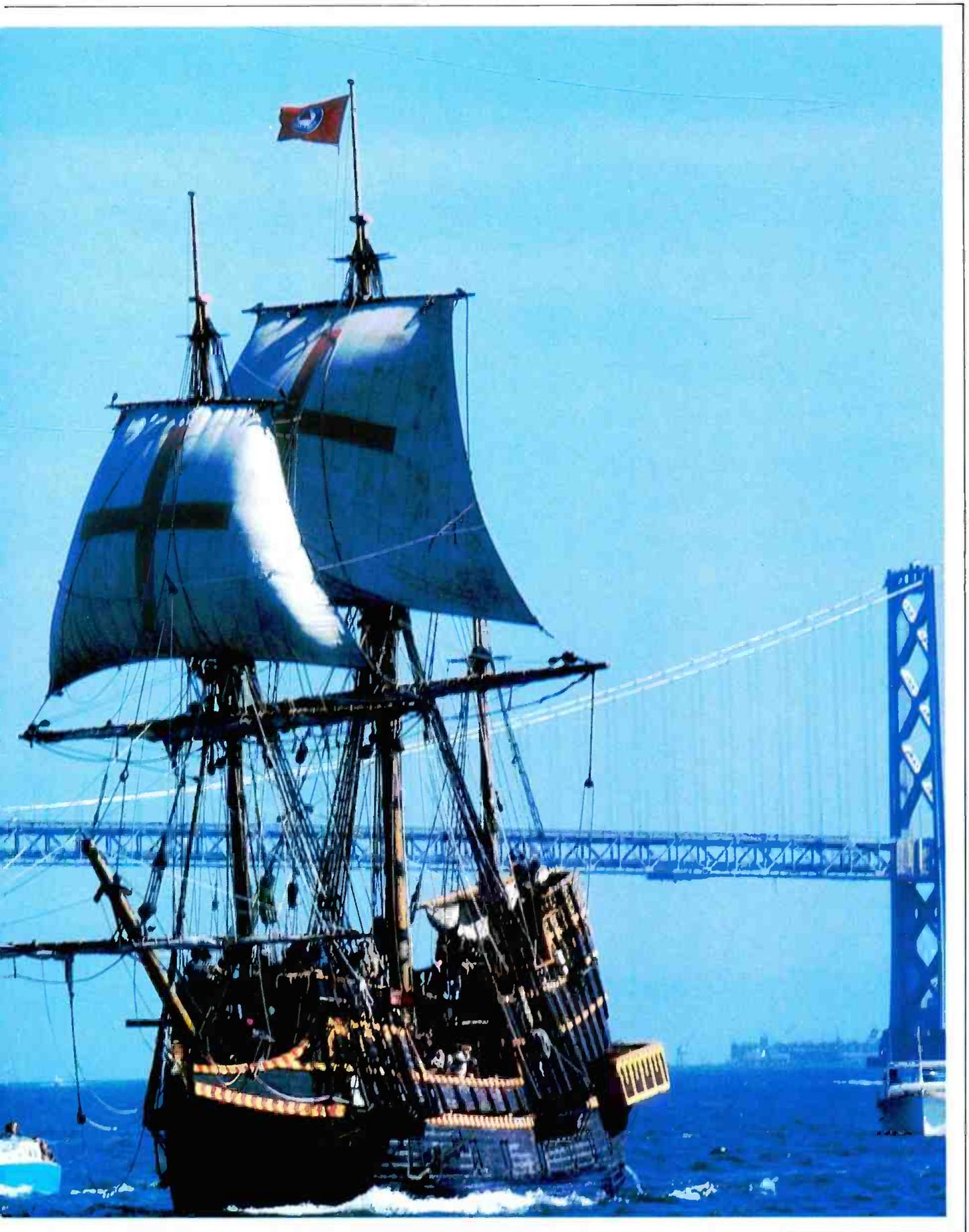
Among the books currently slated for long-form treatment are "East of Eden," by John Steinbeck; "The Winds of War," by Herman Wouk; "Brave New World," by Aldous Huxley; "A Rumor of War," by Philip Caputo; "Beulah Land," by Lonnie Coleman; "The Women's Room," by Marilyn French; "The Deer Park," by Norman Mailer; "Appointment in Samarra," by John O'Hara; "The Wall," by John Hersey; and "A Tale of Two Cities," by Charles Dickens.

And, attesting to television's persistent belief that history can be rewritten in two-hour segments, with frequent interruptions for commercials, there are works in progress about, among others, Thomas Jefferson, Eleanor Roosevelt, Robert Kennedy, Hubert Humphrey and the siege at Masada in 73 A.D.

## SHOGUN

The boat is the Golden Hinde II, a replica of Sir Francis Drake's flagship, which has been a San Francisco tourist attraction for several years. The 102-foot square-rigger is seen here making its way out of San Francisco's harbor a few months ago, beginning the long voyage to Yokohama, Japan, where it was welcomed by the Japanese Navy and a Paramount television crew waiting to repaint it, refit it and prepare it for its role as the *Erasmus*, the boat that is central to much of the action in *Shogun*. The 12-hour miniseries, due to be telecast on NBC later this year, is an adaptation of James Clavell's best-selling novel about a 17th-century British sea captain shipwrecked in Japan and absorbed into its feudal society, dominated by an all-powerful military governor, the Shogun. The large cast is headed by Richard Chamberlain as Captain Blackthorne and Toshiro Mifune as Toranaga, the Shogun. James Clavell is executive producer.

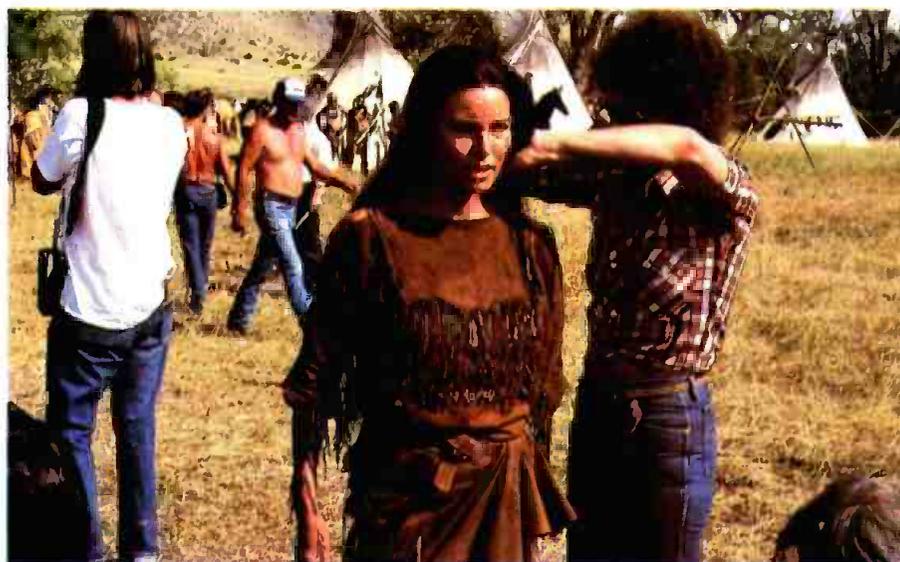


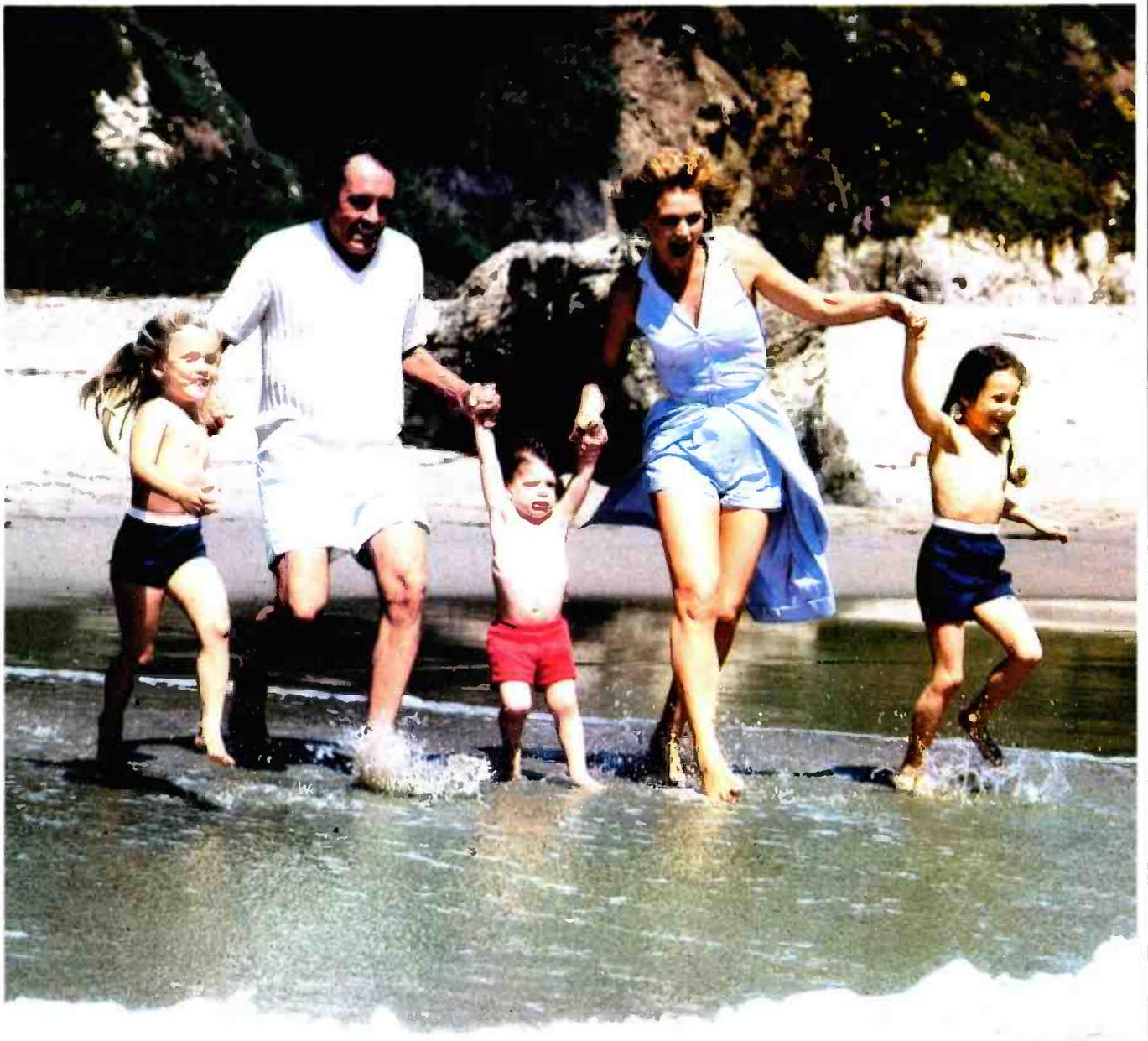




## THE LEGEND OF WALKS FAR WOMAN

Raquel Welch makes her TV-drama debut on NBC as a Sioux who lives through the upheavals of 19th-century frontier America and survives into the 20th. Captivated by Colin Stuart's novel "Walks Far Woman," Raquel took it to producer Roger Gimbel. "I identified with this woman," she says. "She was liberated before her time. The cliché Indian woman is stoic, sober; but Walks Far Woman is willful, stormy, and is devastated when she loses her husband and child at the Little Bighorn [above]. As for shedding my own glamour, it wasn't hard at all. I am committed to this character, and getting dirty, aging were the only way to tell the story." Left, a small physical detail is adjusted during filming.

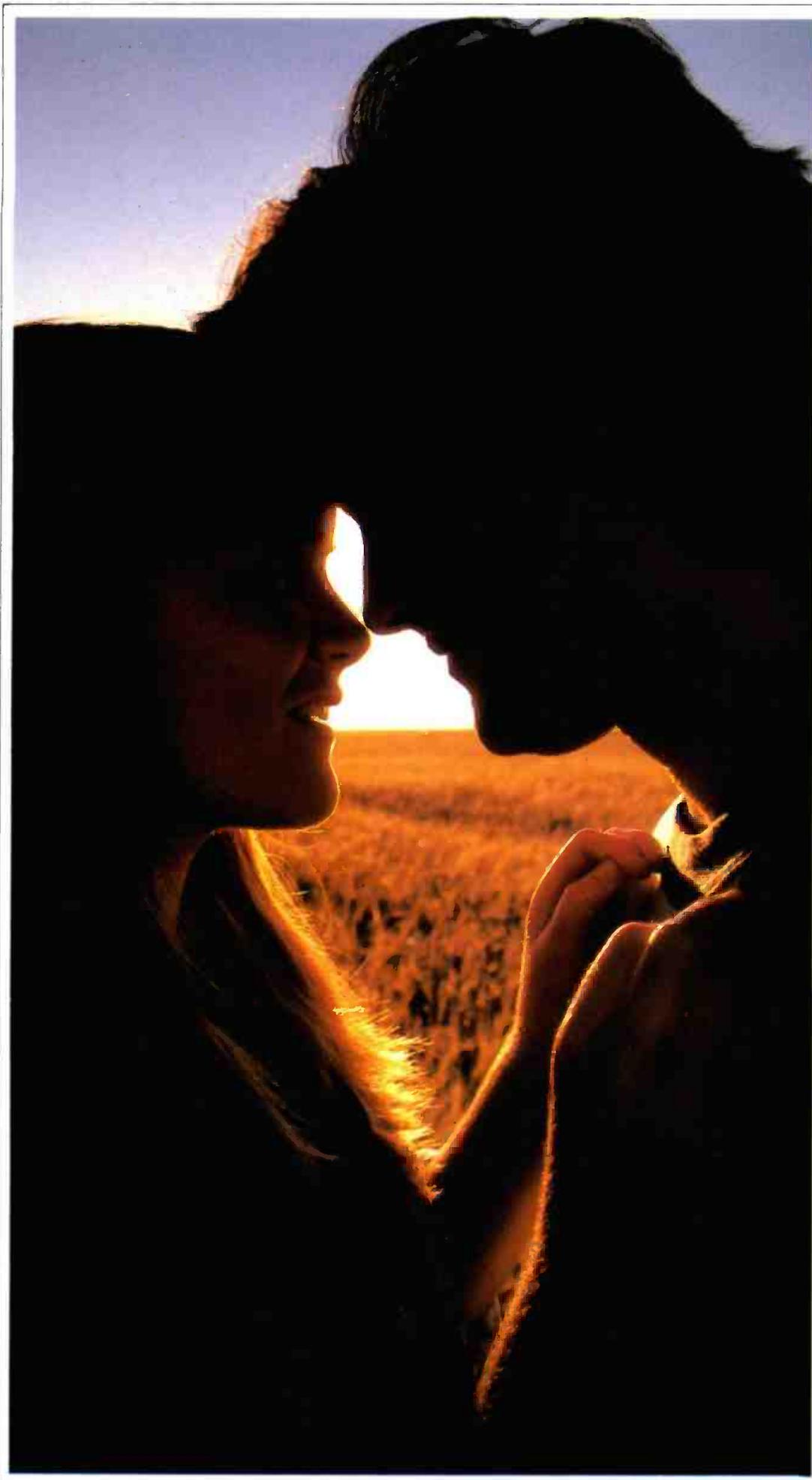




## HAYWIRE

"Haywire," Brooke Hayward's best seller about her illustrious and ill-starred family, is being brought to television as a four-hour film by Warner Bros. and CBS. Above, the Haywards appear as a model of happy family life, in the years before tragedy began to stalk them: (l.-r.) Kimberly Knox as Bridget Hayward, Jason Robards as Broadway agent-producer Leland Hayward—whose shows included "South Pacific" and "Gypsy"—Brian Kend as Bill Hayward, Lee Remick as actress Margaret Sullivan, and Lindsay Brooke King as the young Brooke Hayward. Left, two members of the cast meet their originals: Hart Bochner and Deborah Raffin (left) portray Bill and Brooke Hayward as teen-agers and young adults. The real Bill Hayward was not an unknown face on the set of the film: he produced it.





## AMBER WAVES

The wheat fields of Kansas are no place for a young Manhattan-bred fashion model like Larry Koenig. Or so they say. Koenig, played in this ABC movie by Kurt Russell (seen last season in "Elvis"), finds himself stranded and penniless in farming country and drifts into the household of wheat farmer Bud Burkhardt (Dennis Weaver). The model's feckless ways don't endear him to Burkhardt, but the two men come to appreciate each other as Koenig shows that he is capable of mastering the mysteries of the combine.

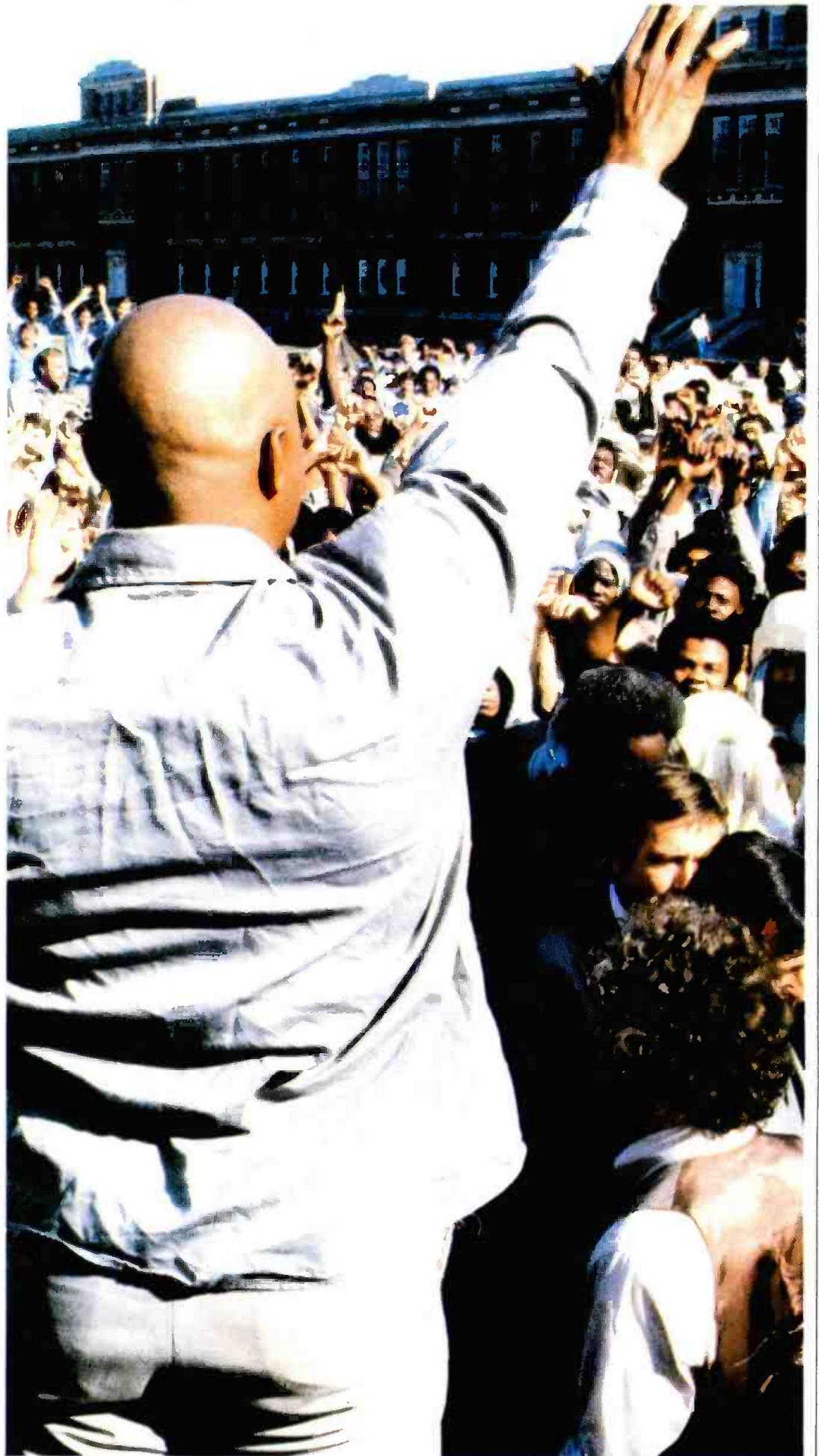
Burkhardt's daughter Marlene (Mare Winningham) plays a big part in Koenig's reeducation as the two of them (left) become involved in a deep romantic relationship. And her kid brother Dougie (Ross Harris, pictured above with Weaver) offers daily proof of the fact that you don't need to be a tough guy to take on heavy duties.

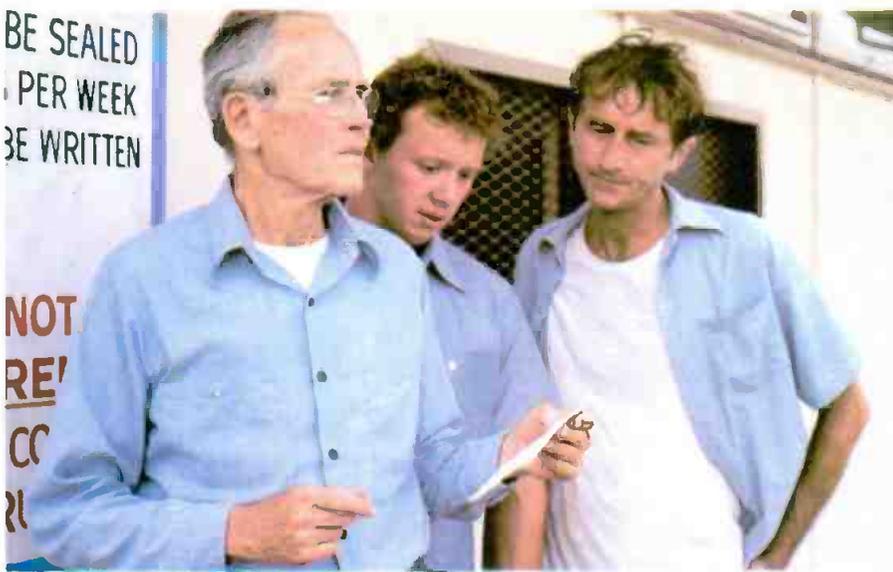
"Amber Waves," beautifully shot in the prairie lands of Alberta, Canada, is scheduled for telecasting next month.



## ATTICA

The uprising at Attica State Correctional Facility, N.Y., in September 1971, which led to the deaths of 43 prisoners, guards and hostages, was observed at first hand by New York Times columnist Tom Wicker. His book "A Time to Die" is the basis for this two-hour ABC movie, scheduled for the spring. The prison scenes were filmed at the Lima (Ohio) State Hospital for the Criminally Insane. Wicker was a member of a committee of public figures called in by the insurgents to hear their grievances; right, the committee is seen filing through the crowded prison yard as the rebels take a vote. Above, a state trooper mounts guard over the inmates after they have been overcome in a huge air and ground assault. "Attica" stars George Grizzard, Anthony Zerbe and Charles Durning.





## GIDEON'S TRUMPET

The U.S. Supreme Court has not, despite the evidence of the above photo, been opened up to TV cameras. Seen here is the meticulous reconstruction of the courtroom that CBS used in the filming of "Gideon's Trumpet," the story of an obscure convict who made legal history. Clarence Earl Gideon was denied access to counsel when he was tried and convicted for a Florida burglary in 1961, but a penciled note to the Supreme Court, written from prison, won him a new trial. Left: Henry Fonda, as Gideon, receives the news that his petition has been granted; he is on his way toward acquittal—and a defendant's right to representation is on its way to the lawbooks. In this adaptation of Anthony Lewis's book, scheduled for March, John Houseman plays the U.S. Chief Justice and Jose Ferrer plays Gideon's attorney.



## GAUGUIN THE SAVAGE

Paul Gauguin is portrayed by David Carradine in the biographical drama "Gauguin the Savage," written by JP Miller ("Days of Wine and Roses"). These two photos, shot when the company went on location in France, show Carradine as himself (above), in an artist's studio where copies of Gauguin's works were being painted for use in the television film; and as Gauguin (right), before he abandoned his wife, his five children and his career as a Paris stockbroker to go to the South Seas to paint. In addition to the locations in and near Paris, the three-hour CBS production was filmed in Tahiti and Los Angeles. Gauguin's wife, Mette Gad, is played by Lynn Redgrave; Dame Flora Robson plays the part of Sister Allandre, the nun who nurses the sick artist in Tahiti.



## DISRAELI

*Masterpiece Theatre* (PBS) continues to import the best of British television drama. One of this season's lavish historical picture books, scheduled for May and June, is *Disraeli*, a four-parter from ITC.

Benjamin Disraeli, one of the great Conservative prime ministers of Victorian England, was essentially neither Victorian nor English. His mores were those of an 18th-century



libertine, and his ancestry was a mixture of Jewish, Italian and Spanish. That a flamboyant outsider such as "Dizzy" should have become the sober Queen's intimate, as well as her chief minister, is a curiosity that this series goes some way to explain.

On the opposite page we see Disraeli (Ian McShane) standing at the dispatch box in Parliament at the height of his power. There is a touch of wistfulness in his expression. Could he perhaps be reviewing the tortuous path that led him to this place? Is he reliving the trials of his younger self (above)—the literary fop who found it easy to win the affections of women but hard to stay out of debt? Is he thinking back to the times when his sister Sarah (Jenny Lipman) was the only person to whom he could confide his turmoil (top, left)?

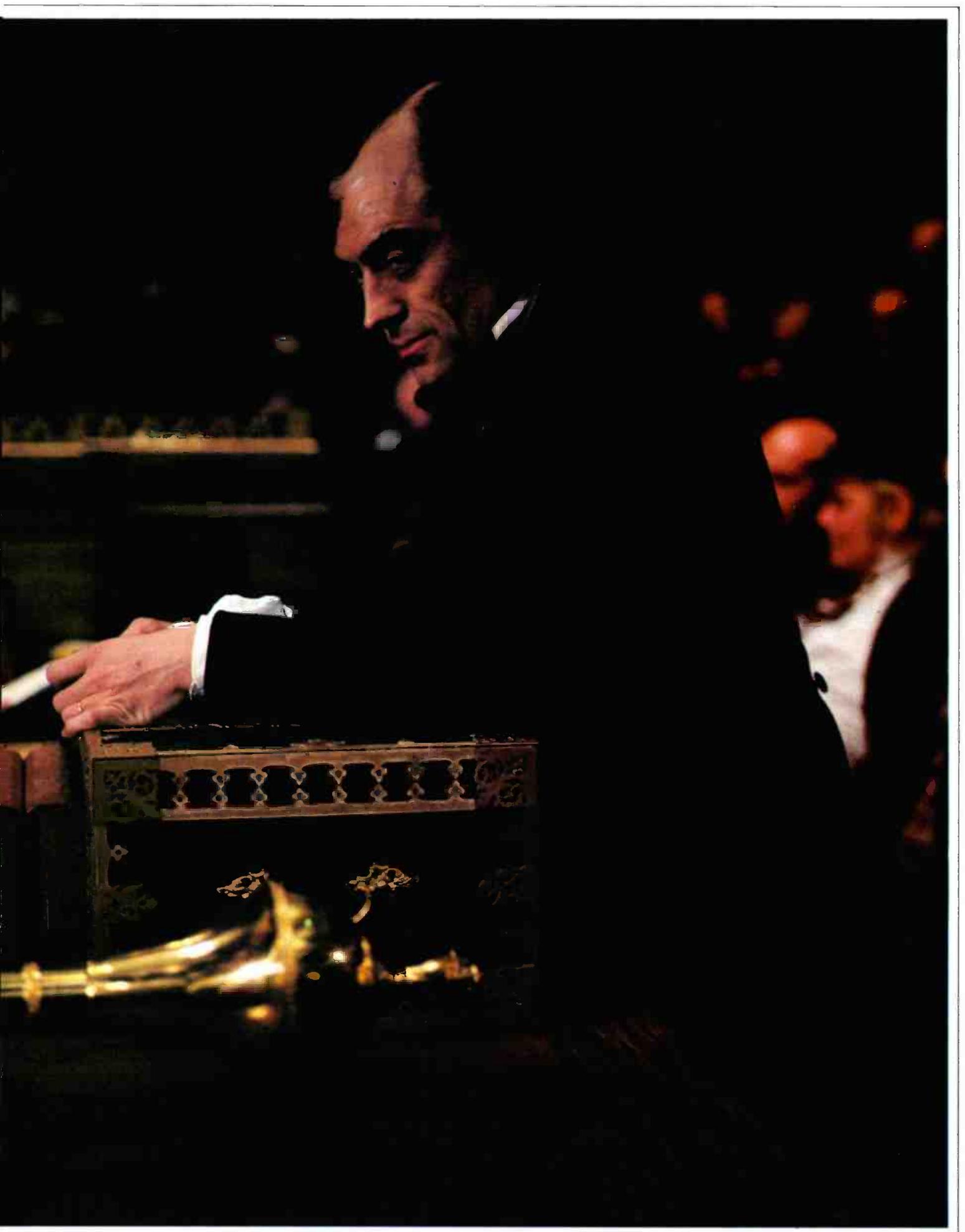
Or are they happier memories? The day when



Mary Anne Wyndham Lewis (Mary Peach) became his wife (top, right)? The time when he was the darling of party, country and Queen (production shot at center)? Interwoven among the memories of personal struggle and triumph are the moments when the fate of an Empire hung on his deliberations in the councils of state (bottom). High romance and cold political pragmatism are the two motifs of Disraeli's story.

McShane captures the inner contradictions of the man and, as these photos show, also succeeds in embodying the physical changes wrought by half a century. ■





# It Finally Clicked

Before her success in those wry camera commercials, Mariette Hartley struggled through an out-of-focus life

By GLENN ESTERLY

The tears are coming now, from hurt. No longer evident is the playful, bantering woman who gibes James Garner on those wry Polaroid commercials, or the off-the-wall quipster and witty raconteur who's in constant demand to chat with Johnny and Dinah and Mike and Merv. That Mariette Hartley, genuine and appealing, has been in the forefront during the first two hours of this interview in the living room of the West Los Angeles home she shares with her husband and their two small children. There have been plenty of Hartley-style anecdotes along the way, animatedly re-enacted with arms flailing and strawberry-blond hair swirling. Anecdotes about her children's latest antics, about appearing years ago in an all-time turkey of a movie called "Drums of Africa" (in which the penurious producer had her fake a pool scene by splashing herself from a pail of water), and about the vagaries of television work.

Like the time she portrayed a frigid doctor on *Peyton Place* and was advised to keep her legs crossed and to never, ever smile, and how the director admonished her every single day, "Don't forget—you're frigid!" And then, on the episode in which the dour doctor, Claire Morton, was at last due to experience the tingle of true love, the show was preempted by an astronaut's blastoff. "Meanwhile," Mariette has noted, "Claire missed her blastoff."

Now, though, we've plunged beyond such anecdotes into uncharted territory—personal crises during a 29-year acting career that Mariette has never discussed in any depth publicly. This Mariette Hartley, voice catching, is saying, "I'm very

sensitive, and things have been coming out, bit by bit, in magazines, as one-line shockers. Kind of brutally, it seems to me. It hurts my mother, too. There's no way to get rid of the scars."

The interviewer observes that now that Mariette's an Emmy winner for best actress, now that momentum seems to be shoving her inexorably toward well-deserved stardom and a wide choice of desirable roles (she recently finished a comedy movie, sharing top billing with Alan Arkin), her personal life will inevitably be a source of intense interest. That there is a good deal in her past that contributes to her depth as a person and an actress is revealed in the insights of people close to her, like public-relations counselor Marilyn Reiss, who says that, in terms of experience, "Mariette's a 104-year-old in a 39-year-old body"; and manager Arlene Dayton, who calls her "an old soul—you can see it in her eyes"; and playwright Anne Commire, who sees her as "the classic clown with a tragic side"; and actor Bill Bixby, who says, "Her difficult experiences certainly must have contributed in a positive way to the first-caliber actress and person I know now." Also, husband Patrick Boyriven, a TV director, points out how she can "inject moments of pathos into scenes where no one else would see the pathos; she digs that out of her own suffering."

Maybe, the interviewer suggests, now that her life is going so well, it's appropriate to deal with the bad times; maybe there are others who might be comforted to know that someone who has been through so much can still make it.

She nods and decides she's strong enough to expose her vulnerability. The tears start, and she begins talking about her father's suicide 18 years ago: "It was a paradox and very ironic, in the sense that it

eventually brought me back to *life*. It took a long time for that to happen, but I don't think I ever would have gone through therapy and gotten well otherwise." She is sitting in an antique rocking chair, fingertips touching her cheeks. "There's no way you can watch a man suffer the way my father suffered without realizing how absolutely *vital* your life is. I realized when I saw him dying that there was no more futzing around with funny little childhood things."

Her childhood seemed, on the surface, extraordinarily happy and productive. The family—father Paul (an artist and advertising executive), mother Polly, Mariette and younger brother Tony—lived a stimulating life in the creative community of Weston, Conn. Her mother's father, John B. Watson, the pioneer of behaviorism (the basis of behavior-modification techniques used in psychotherapy), lived nearby.

Mariette, a precocious kid who skipped a grade in school, determined by age 10 she would be an actress. Fortunately, she turned out to be as gifted as she was headstrong. Immediately, she took on all the parts she could get with a local theater group, usually playing male roles because of her tallness. (She had already reached her full height of almost 5 feet 9 inches by age 12.)

Heady progress followed: at 14 she was studying under Eva Le Gallienne; at 17 she was working with John Houseman's American Shakespeare Festival; at 18 she was playing leads with Joseph Papp's Shakespeare in the Park.

But her unnerving teen-age abilities didn't insulate her from the turbulence of growing pains. Although she had rejected grandfather Watson's anti-emotion, anti-touching behaviorist philosophy (as did,

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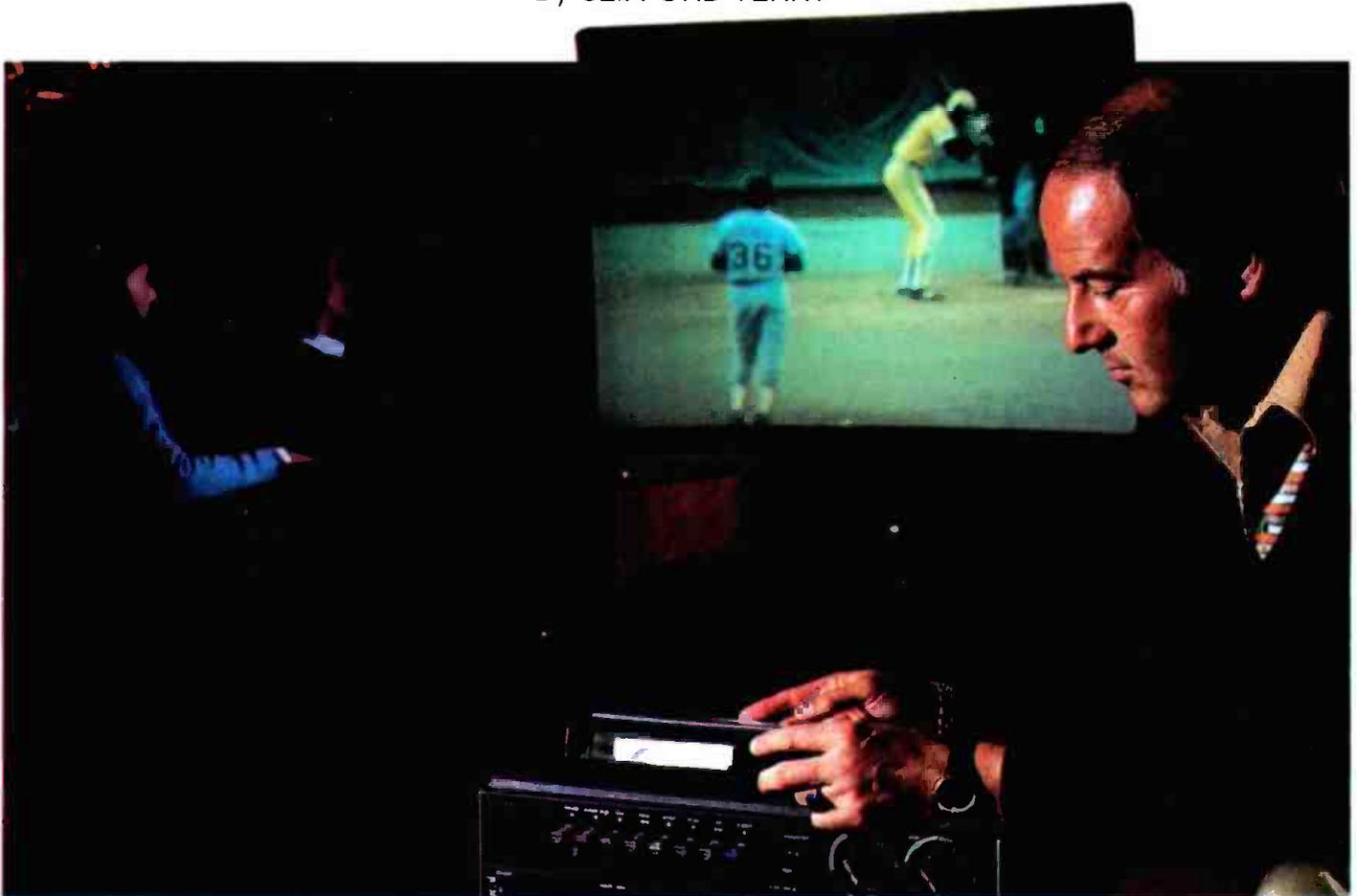
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Glenn Esterly has written for many magazines, including *TV Guide*, *Rolling Stone*, *New West* and *Los Angeles*.

# 'Once You Have One, It Spoils You'

What can the new television gear do for you? Here's one family's answer

By CLIFFORD TERRY



While his family watches a baseball game on their 7-foot screen, Bob Chatz cues his VCR to tape part of the action.

This is the first in a series of articles in which PANORAMA will visit the homes of various American families and report on the different ways in which they are using television equipment.

It is an unseasonably warm fall afternoon—that time of year when Midwesterners are lulled into thinking that perhaps *this* winter will be different—and the Robert Chatz family is viewing a game between the Philadelphia Phillies and the Montreal Expos (the last regular game of the season, in fact) in their spacious home in a suburb on Chicago's posh North Shore. They are not watching just any old low-rent television rig, however, but are seated a few yards in front of an imposing 7-foot-diagonal screen that serves as a suitable playground for Pete Rose and his colleagues.

"Now there's no reason for missing sports events like this," says Bob Chatz, a 50-year-old lawyer who has exchanged

his LaSalle Street suit for leisure garb. "If I'm out of town and there's a game I want to see, I can tape it. The thing is, there's nothing on television these days that we have to miss because of this."

The "this" he is pointing to is a videocassette recorder that sits on a table near a fireplace in the downstairs family room and has a taping capacity of two hours. Like the large-screen system, the VCR is made by Mitsubishi. "If we're out," he goes on, "all we have to do is set that timer for, say, 8 P.M., and we might come back and watch at midnight. Mostly, we tape movies and sports events. I do some investment work for athletes and one of my clients is Bob Avellini, the Bears' quarterback. He bought the same Mitsubishi system for his parents, who live on Long Island, and I'd tape the Chicago games that weren't on national TV and send them out to them. Then they'd send me back a blank tape and we'd do it again the next Sunday. Bob and some of the other

players—Doug Plank, Gary Fencik—also came over to watch *Monday Night Football*, which is *something* on that screen."

"It's especially great for football games," enthusiastically agrees his wife, Joyce. "It really brings you into the action. Another thing: the concept of what the movie stars look like on a 7-foot screen is quite different from what they look like on a 19-inch. You can see all their imperfections. They really don't look as good."

Prior to the start of the ball game, one of the Chatzes' daughters, Barbara, had been watching the "Elvis" movie, starring Kurt Russell, that originally had been shown on ABC last February (on that memorable ratings "sweeps" night that also gave us "Gone with the Wind" on CBS and "One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest" on NBC—thereby frustrating those viewers who were fresh out of videocassette recorders). Barbara, a 19-year-old sophomore at Sophie Newcomb College, Tulane University, had asked her father to

Clifford Terry, based in Chicago, has written for many magazines, including *TV Guide*, *Cosmopolitan* and *Holiday*.

continued  
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## 'I'd love to record a trip to Europe. How much nicer than showing slides.'

tape the Elvis film, as she hadn't been able to see it on campus.

Meanwhile, another daughter, 22-year-old Cathy—her twin, Julie, is a first-year law student at Northwestern—had given the Chatzes yet another reason to use the VCR. While honeymooning in California, she and her husband appeared on a game show, which Bob and Joyce preserved on tape. Cathy, a schoolteacher, now lives in Michigan, and when she and her sisters return home on visits, "all of us have our friends over for viewing parties. We just throw big pillows on the floor and get out the popcorn and diet drinks." Cathy recalls a weekend during her engagement when "my fiance and I were supposed to register for wedding gifts down in the Loop, but all he wanted to do was watch the baseball games. Now he wants to get a 4-foot screen for our apartment outside Detroit."

"The apartment, by the way, is *also* about 4 feet across," Joyce Chatz notes with a laugh.

Bob Chatz decided to purchase the sophisticated system a year and a half ago, when he and Avellini were watching a taped exhibition football game at the home of a friend who had a similar big screen. ("I remember my immediate reaction: 'God, this is *sensational*.'")

"When you first get it, you go crazy. We'd experiment and tape *everything*. As they say, the difference between men and boys is the cost of their toys. Now, after we've had it all this time, if there's something special we want to see, we'll come down. But it isn't something that draws us here every minute of the day. We have five other TV sets in the house, and if I come home late at night and want to watch the news or Johnny Carson, I'll probably just stay upstairs. I do have some lawyer friends, incidentally, who still tape *everything*. They'll come home after work and just get it *all*."

As Chatz points out the features of his recorder to some visitors, he makes it perfectly clear that he is no latter-day Edison. "None of us are electronics nuts—we're *entertainment* nuts. I can't even work a plain old movie camera very well, but this recorder is simple to use even for a mechanical klutz. I do, though, find it difficult to work the pause button and take out the commercials. I'm always afraid I'll wipe out the stuff I want to save."

"This is a perfect room for the equipment," inserts his wife. "It's dark enough and it's big enough [17-by-26 feet]. I don't know how it would be in a smaller place. It'd be overwhelming. That's the only drawback as far as I can see. That camera or transmitter or whatever you call it is so

big, it really could ruin the aesthetics of a room. We're planning on selling the house, now that the girls are away, and we're looking for a condominium. Every time we look at one, I ask if there's a family room, and then I measure it."

The Chatzes have a small, but intriguingly diverse, collection of videocassettes sitting on an old conventional—and now totally unused—TV set. There are two movies they bought when they first got the equipment ("The French Connection" and "Patton"), two movies taped off the screen ("The Wizard of Oz" and "Gator"), and the second Ali-Spinks fight. "That same night the network put on a filmed



Barbara Chatz does her homework to 'Elvis,' which her dad taped for her months earlier.

history of Ali's career—his fights starting with the Olympics," Chatz says. "I thought that would be great to save, and I've watched it a number of times. My thought on taping 'The Wizard of Oz' was that maybe in five years or so I could play it back for my grandchildren. After all, you never know whether they'll still be showing it on TV.

"I have a book that shows the movies—all about a year or two old, some Academy Award winners—that can be bought for anywhere between \$50 and \$90. I don't find that to be advantageous, though, because I don't think you actually watch a film that often. I mean, to pay \$90 to look at a movie one more time! What we usually do instead is invite people over and swap cassettes of movies we've taped ourselves. Some friends live in downtown high-rises, where they can hook into that Showtime [pay-cable] thing and tape first-run films. One couple brought over 'Coming Home,' and we also saw 'Annie Hall'—which was great for this because you could stop it and catch all that fine Woody Allen stuff you might have missed originally in the theater."

He also finds that the equipment comes in handy in his business dealings. "For instance, we have a videotape downtown

at my firm, Arvey, Hodes, Costello and Burman," says Chatz, who specializes in debtor/creditor problems. "It's a four-hour tape made at a three-day seminar at New York University on a bankruptcy bill. It cost about \$400 to go to the seminar, which was taught by three of the foremost experts in the country, and when you have six or eight people in your department, it's much cheaper to watch the tape instead. What I did was cut down the four hours to about an hour and 45 minutes by previewing it on my system; I determined where I wanted to fast-forward it through subjects that aren't pertinent. Ideally, we'd watch it here, but since everyone is scattered all over the area, it's more convenient to watch it downtown—although this means renting equipment."

The family also has had some old 16-mm. home movies converted to videotape. They own a Sony video camera, which is several years old—and quite neglected. "Again, with my mechanical ability, I find it difficult to use," Chatz admits. "Also, it's limited because you can shoot only in black-and-white and you can't take it outdoors. We really don't have that much occasion to use it inside. I've tried it at parties, but every time you try to tape someone, he turns out to be a comedian who wants to tell his entire repertoire of jokes. What I'd like to do is buy one that's lightweight and portable. I'd love to record a trip to Europe. How much nicer than showing *slides*."

He adds that he and his wife haven't stayed at home more because of their new electronic goodies. "Now we can go out and not worry about missing something. On a cold Sunday, it's awfully nice to come down, light a fire, and, when there's nothing good live on television, watch that movie you taped the night before. I don't agree that the home equipment will hurt the movie theaters. The good films will always draw, just as they do now. We'll always go out when there's something we want to see."

"All things being equal," says Joyce Chatz, "I'd rather watch a good movie in this room than go out to a movie. But of course, that isn't always possible. It's far more comfortable, and with the big screen, you really get into it. And you aren't bothered by the talkers. Plus, movies are getting more expensive."

At this point, the screen shows a close-up of Pete Rose at bat, clenched in concentration. "Look at that picture," Mrs. Chatz suddenly declares. "I mean, that screen is really great. Once you have one, it spoils you. We will *have* to find another family room big enough for it. Definitely. We just *cannot* move without it." ■

## LETTERS



PANORAMA welcomes comments—pro or con—about topics covered in our magazine and about television in general. Readers are invited to address their letters to: Letters Department, PANORAMA, Box 950, Wayne, Pa. 19087.

### IS AMERICA READY FOR 'UNITED STATES'? *continued from page 76*

riage and the marriages of my friends. *All in the Family* and *M\*A\*S\*H* had made some important steps in the direction of realism and honesty, but I was sick to death of all the other half-hour shows that were straying more and more into fantasy and frustrating the viewers, who do not lead such happy, carefree, instant-solution lives.

"I figured that if anyone would listen to me it would be Silverman, who had said, 'There isn't enough Bad to go around on TV any more, so let's try some Good.' Fred listened. He asked me to come to New York to see him, and he bought the series, committing the network to an outlay of maybe four million dollars, on the basis of just one sentence that I verbalized to him. The sentence? 'This is a comedy show about a couple in the middle of a marriage—not happily, not unhappily, married—with those challenges and crises that occur after 15 years'."

But Silverman made an even more radical commitment. Gelbart insisted on writing 22 scripts in advance of production, "the way they do it in England, where you know exactly where you're going with an entire series and the network can't screw you around in midseason." Without batting an eye, Silverman said, "Fine. That's the only way to get better television." As an indication of *how* radical this commitment was, NBC's Perry Lafferty says, "To my knowledge, there hasn't been such a deal in TV in more than 25 years. The last time was when it *had* to be done in order to keep Fred MacMurray starring in *My Three Sons*."

So Gelbart set up shop—while still working on the script of his Cambodia movie. He called his new television production company O.T.P. The initials stand for "on the page" and derive from an old theater adage: "If it ain't on the page, it ain't on the stage." Such is Gelbart's reverence for writing.

The reverence also was evident in the fact that he risked allegations of nepotism by hiring his own stepson, 28-year-old Gary Markowitz, as the show's producer "because Gary did wonderful scripts for *M\*A\*S\*H* and is one of the best writers I know." So that Gelbart could devote most of his attention to the scripts of *United States*, he hired a veteran production manager named Chuck Kalish to be supervising producer, in charge of all the technical details. Growled Gelbart, "I don't want to be distracted by minutiae like what color dress the girl should wear tomorrow."

Unlike other theater-film bigwigs (e.g., Mel Brooks with *Get Smart* and Mike Nichols with *Family*), Gelbart did not simply launch the series and then leave it. He has involved himself in all 22 of the first season's scripts, writing many of them alone, some with Markowitz, a few with a small handful of writers he felt were not too corrupted by the comic-strip writing required by most of today's sitcoms.

By August 1979, 13 of the scripts had been completed. Silverman and Lafferty read them and both had the same reaction: "My God, this is the way people really *talk*. Even about sex. You've done a very funny American version of Ingmar Bergman's 'Scenes from a Marriage'." Turning white, Gelbart said, "Bite your tongue. If anyone hears *that*, they'll be looking for us on PBS."

Casting began in September. Gelbart made a list of movie stars who had said they'd never do a television series. At the top of the list was Beau Bridges, a consistent performer in big movies like "The Other Side of the Mountain," "Two-Minute Warning" and "Norma Rae." The eldest son of Lloyd Bridges, Beau had had one previous series experience in *Ensign O'Toole*, back in the early 1960s when he was an easily disillusioned stripling. Gelbart's approach was direct. He simply sent Bridges a copy of a *United States* script. "That's how we got Alan Alda for *M\*A\*S\*H* and I got George C. Scott for 'Sly Fox,'" Gelbart says. It worked with Bridges, too, who explains: "I did a picture called 'The Runner Stumbles' because I wanted the experience of being directed by Stanley Kramer; and in the same way,

I'm doing *United States* because I want to speak words written by Larry Gelbart."

Gary Markowitz was almost solely responsible for the casting of Helen Shaver, a husky-voiced, offbeat beauty, as Bridges' wife. Markowitz says, "I was watching cable TV at home one night when I saw this incredible young actress in a comparatively small role in a movie called 'In Praise of Older Women.' I found out that she was a Canadian but that she just happened to be working at the time in a play called 'Are You Looking?' at a little theater in Hollywood.

"I went to see the play and she was superb. I talked with her backstage and found out that she had the kind of theater training we wanted—a lot of Ibsen, George Bernard Shaw and the classics, at the Phoenix Theater in Victoria, British Columbia, where she went to college. Helen had to fly to Toronto the following week to do a movie there, but we got NBC to pay for her to come back to L.A. for a test with Beau. She almost literally jumped off the screen in the test and was so good with him that she beat out a half-dozen big-name actresses for the part."

The two children in the show, Ross Harris and Justin Dana, were cast by more orthodox means—and production got under way on Sound Stage 2 at Golden West Studios on Oct. 16.

The first two weeks were a nightmare of technical problems. With his obsession for realism in production as well as words, Gelbart had an entire house built on Sound Stage 2—a replica of the interior of a modern home in Woodland Hills, an upwardly mobile suburb of Los Angeles. There were full connecting rooms with paintings from Gelbart's own art collection and reproductions of furniture from his Beverly Hills manse. Hollywood tape-TV crews, used to working with flimsy, open-sided, one-dimensional sets, tended to get lost and disoriented trying to move their equipment around in such a true-to-life maze.

A few weeks later, when the problems were overcome (and when the NBC executives, having seen the tapes, were already worrying about whether the show would have to survive early ratings struggles, like *M\*A\*S\*H* and *All in the Family*), I wandered around the astounding set with Gelbart. Looking at it, he said, "Do you remember the woman who loved her Ferrari so much that she was buried in it? Well, I think I want to be buried in this set."

Then, being a realist, he added, "Or maybe it will bury me." ■

"We have a live performance coming up in an hour, and I don't want you to get tired," Robbins calls out from the audience. "So I just want you to dance until I say cut."

"I know that trick."

"Trust me."

Baryshnikov dances the steps over three more times until Robbins is finally satisfied.

Off-stage again the dancer smiles to a pretty woman in the wings. "That's what happens when you trust directors. You do the same thing three times."

As performance time nears, the tension level rises appreciably. Ardolino finds that his headset is not working. "Whatever system we have worked out is not working," he announces and turns to his assistant. "I've reached the shouting stage, as you can hear."

A cameraman notices that the piano on-stage is picking up a glare and an assistant is dispatched to spray it down.

"Let's get on with it," Robbins says frostily. "If people are looking at the piano, we're all going to be in trouble."

Robbins is still working out last-minute adjustments with his dancers when the audience, which has been kept waiting outside, starts to filter in. Robbins orders the hall cleared for the second time and in this sweep he even expels John Jay Iselin, president of WNET, New York, the producing station for the series.

Finally, it is time to stop adjusting and start taping. "The advance scouts are out and there's no calling them back," Brockway announces. "It's march or die."

Balletomanes swarm into the orchestra, leaping over seats to fight for the best locations. Brockway makes a graceful welcoming speech and the audience quiets down. The pianist begins to fill the air with Chopin and the stars appear: Baryshnikov as a handsome cavalier and Makarova as a tiny Dresden figure.

While the audience, rapt, watches the performance, Ardolino works quietly in the back of the house directing the camera shots. His assistant is on the phones calling out directions to the cameramen. "We have a lift coming up... now."

For the first time, Robbins begins to relax. There is nothing for him to do except watch his creation come to life. In the dark of the theater he begins to break into a little dance of his own. His head bobs from side to side as he does a little stork step. He could be Petrushka in a blue sweater and tennis shoes.

On the stage is the result of weeks of planning and days of travail. Two supreme artists dancing together. Not perfect. Nothing ever is. But beautiful. ■

for the most part, her parents in raising her), she still couldn't come to terms with her feelings.

"When I was 15, I was going steady and felt I was in love, and I was going all the way, as they said then. I felt a lot of guilt about it, and then one day I completely panicked because I thought I'd gotten into trouble, as they also said then. I hadn't, but that experience, combined with other insecurities, led me to consider harsh, negative means of getting away from my problems. I suppose most teen-agers go through that sort of thing. In my case, I was very intense, and maybe I just grew up too fast. Anyway, I wanted to reach out for help, but I didn't know how to do that in a positive way."

By 19, despite her success on the stage, she felt "very empty—there was a lot of applause for my work, but I couldn't accept it. I didn't know how to handle that success."

Impulsively, she married a man she hardly knew. A disaster.

Still, her career seemed to be taking off. Auditioning for a movie part as the rebellious daughter of a Bible-thumping rancher, she was informed by director Sam Peckinpah that she was "wonderful," a verdict shared by critics when "Ride the High Country," now considered something of a Western masterpiece, was released in 1962. MGM signed her up. Stardom seemed imminent.

"Then I got a physical by a doctor who told me I had hepatitis," she says ruefully. "There was nothing wrong with me, but I was crazy enough to let him treat me. Mistreat me. He did exotic things to my blood and turned me into a vegetable—I became exhausted and lost my chance for other movies that would have capitalized on my momentum."

On top of that came her father's suicide. By then the Hartleys had moved to Los Angeles. While Mariette and her mother were eating lunch together in another part of the house, Paul Hartley, 67, shot himself with a handgun in his bedroom. "Things hadn't gone well for him in his last years. He was terribly depressed; he felt he was a failure." His death left Mariette "on the verge of a nervous breakdown. I did self-defeating things, like gorging myself with food."

Hands folded in her lap now as she rocks gently in her chair, she says, "Suicide is really a family disease, like alcoholism or drug addiction, in the sense that it affects everyone in the family so profoundly. I was locked into that vortex of pain. One day I was lying in bed and I thought, 'I've got to get into therapy or I'll die too.' But at that point I was so crippled,

the therapy didn't help much."

For more than a year, whenever she turned her head to the right, she heard a gunshot. Her father's wound had been in the right side of the head. When she finally went back to work in TV, she occasionally found herself required to hold a gun in cop shows. It always left her shuddering.

After a couple more years of work, she earned a costarring role with Richard Mulligan in a short-lived comedy series, *The Hero*. When it was canceled, 26-year-old Mariette became a salesperson in a Beverly Hills store. "I discovered I could survive doing something besides acting. I also found out I missed acting."

She joined a small theater group—starting over meant going back to where she had begun at age 10. She also went back into psychotherapy. And then back to television, doing guest roles with a vengeance—everything from *Gunsmoke* to *The Streets of San Francisco* to *Star Trek* (she had the distinction of making the passionless Spock feel like taking cold showers). In the late Sixties and early Seventies she probably did more guest shots than anyone apart from Vera Miles.

Lots of commercials, too. One of which was directed by Patrick Boyriven, a Frenchman with aristocratic features but a down-to-earth demeanor. They went out. He made obscene pig-in-heat noises in her ear that cracked her up. He told her she was a better actress than she had ever imagined. She almost believed him. They got married. Dr. Victor Monke, who had been Mariette's psychoanalyst for five years and whom she calls "my surrogate father," gave her away. Then Sean, now 4, arrived, and then Justine, now 20 months. Finally Mariette's personal life had jelled.

Professionally, however, she remained adrift. "She was categorized as a workhorse supporting actress," Patrick has noted, "and since television is run by accountants—only the figures matter—no one wanted to take a chance on her doing more, like carrying a TV-movie. Her comedic talent has always been there, too, but TV executives somehow didn't quite manage to discover it."

The people who finally did were with Polaroid's ad agency. She ad libbed at the end of the filming of her first commercial with James Garner, and the agency decided to swing with it. The public ate it up, and soon Garner and Mariette, with their fine rapport, were cranking out dozens of them, spicing the scripts with their own improvisations and needling. Then, when people started mistaking her for Garner's wife, Mariette had T-shirts printed proclaiming, "I am *not* Mrs. James Garner." At which point the media went crazy, run-

ning her ploy right into the ground (she rolls her eyes now when still introduced on talk shows as the woman who's not married to Garner).

Her role as Carroll O'Connor's mistress in the TV version of "The Last Hurrah" bolstered her mounting reputation as an actress and earned her an Emmy nomination. She won her Emmy, incredibly, for an *Incredible Hulk* show in which she and Bill Bixby made palatable and touching a story that featured Bixby, still battling his Hulk attacks, and Mariette, a dying hypnotherapy researcher, getting married. (That prompted Mariette's memorable line: "I went to bed with Bill Bixby and woke up with The Incredible Hulk.")

**D**uring the interview, Mariette manages to find time to rock Justine to sleep, to praise a plaster-of-Paris creation of Sean's, to issue instructions to the housekeeper, and to greet the neighbor children who come and go at the house. The only outward sign of Hollywood-style success is a Mercedes in the driveway, parked next to the toys scattered around the lawn. The Spanish-style house has plumbing that groans with age; it's the kind of home reporters typically describe as "modest." "We've looked at huge, \$750,000 houses," Mariette says, "but the kids can grow up more normally in this neighborhood."

She can scarcely fathom her good fortune these days, with both the family and the career. It's as if the roller coaster finally stopped and deposited her at the Fun House instead of the Haunted House. "It may be hard to believe, as leaky as I've been today, but I really don't cry that much," she says, smiling. "The other night, though, Sean was hanging on my arm and Justine was chewing my foot, and it simply overwhelmed me how well everything's turned out—I just bawled. Sometimes I wonder if I go overboard in showering attention on the kids, but I can't help but think how my mother was raised. Her father never kissed her until he went off to World War I. I was reading a book on child rearing once, and there was this section on how parents shouldn't raise their kids with sentimentality—no hugging or kissing. I got to the bottom and it was signed by John B. Watson. God, I almost dropped the book, thinking how my mother must have been raised. In spite of that, she's been very loving and supportive with me."

Mariette is devoted to her own two children, and has no intention of making studio orphans of them. "With my family now, the commercials are ideal—they give me the money and visibility I'd get in a

series without being tied down to a series. That's important while the kids are young. Right now I just want to do an occasional TV-movie, maybe a comedy special, and the talk shows, which I enjoy, plus an occasional feature film."

She would especially like to do a TV-movie based on Anne Commire's play about hyperactive children, "Put Them All Together," which Mariette performed on the stage. "If 'stardom' means anything, it means being able to do the things you feel are important."

What can she tell young actors and actresses after waiting 29 years to really make it herself?

"Ohhh." Her hand goes over her mouth. "I get so scared for the young ones like Linda Blair who make it big when it's so hard to handle; I certainly wasn't ready after 'High Country' at 21. If it had happened then ... I don't know, if they really have talent, just hang in there, I guess. But they should have options. Like some actor friends of mine are writing now, too. You have to be willing to turn new corners; you can't be afraid to walk off in new di-

rections. Personally, I had to learn to get in touch with my internal life and let my emotions show—through my therapist and then through Patrick and others around me now. You can't fake it in front of the camera. For a long time, I couldn't cry on-camera. *Could not cry*. I was holding back so many emotions. Now I'm not afraid to be open and vulnerable. That makes me a better actress."

Pause. "The one thing that grabs me once in a while, even yet, is that when happiness and success arrive, I wonder: Will it be taken away? Do I deserve it? After I won the Emmy, I had to go back to Dr. Monke for a couple of sessions—I was feeling undeserving again. We had to nip that old problem in the bud." Long sigh. Her emotions are suddenly bubbling just below the surface again, about to erupt. "Something I've kept in mind that really helped me was when Michael Douglas accepted his Oscar for 'Cuckoo's Nest.' He said something like, 'Don't give up—dreams can come true.' And they can. Damn it, dreams *do* come true."

The tears are coming now, from joy. ■

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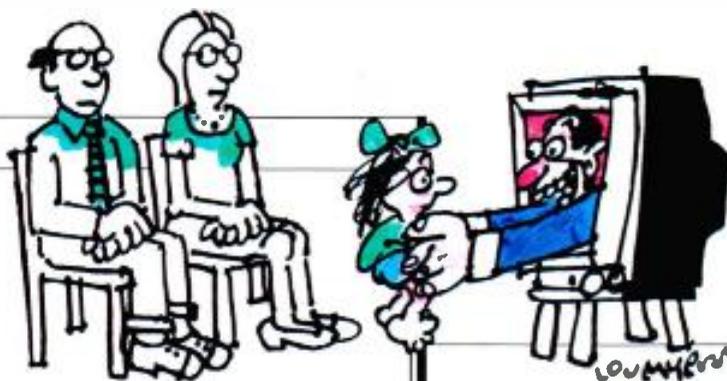
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# Like Parent, Like Child

By DICK FRIEDMAN



Some educators view television's influence over children with dismay. Others — like Dr. Dorothy G. Singer — are now deciding, in essence, that if you can't beat it, teach it. Dr. Singer and her husband, Dr. Jerome L. Singer, are co-directors of The Yale University Family Television Research and Consultation Center. There, with support from the American Broadcasting Company, they spent a year trying to develop a curriculum that would teach grade-schoolers how to understand television — its programming, its commercials, its messages and even how it works electronically. The lessons will be available for general classroom use in the fall of 1980.

Reporting on her project in the fall 1979 issue of the National Council for Children and Television Forum, Dr. Singer related some findings yielded by her work with 200 middle-class children. About home-viewing patterns Dr. Singer writes: "We found that parents' television-viewing habits were the most important predictors of children's television-viewing habits. Children who spend more time watching television tend to have fathers who are heavy television viewers. Also, children who watch many violent programs tend to have parents who watch violent programs." Children with higher IQs "spent more time reading, watched fewer 'fantasy violent' programs and have limits on television viewing imposed by their parents." The italics are Dr. Singer's.

## How Germans View 'Holocaust'

*Holocaust*, NBC's miniseries on the World War II mass murder of Jews by the Nazis, has provoked intense debate on both sides of the Atlantic. In Germany, where the program literally and figuratively hit close to home, Prof. Karl Stahl of the Institute of Media Studies at the Technical University in Berlin attempted to measure the drama's impact upon viewers. He found, as might be expected, that the nine-and-a-half-hour show made

its strongest impression on the postwar generation. Sixty-nine percent of teenagers surveyed claimed to have learned more about the period of National Socialism by watching the show, while only 46 percent of those 40 or older did.

Before the show appeared, only 15 percent of those surveyed thought Nazi criminals should still be prosecuted today; in a comparable survey following the show the figure jumped to 39 percent among viewers. Especially notable, adds Stahl, is that "the number of people who before the screening of *Holocaust* had not thought about this question decreased significantly after the broadcast of the series."

## Murderous Comparison

True or false? A murder of a woman receives more network news coverage than the murder of a man. True, say Rebecca C. Quarles of Cleveland State University and Everett S. Lee of the University of Georgia. Analyzing the networks' evening newscasts from January 1972 to January 1978, Quarles and Lee found that the networks spent significantly more time reporting on the average female homicide than they did on the average male homicide.

During the period studied, the murders that interested the networks most, say Quarles and Lee, were serial murders — slayings committed over time — involving women. They received roughly seven times the coverage of those involving only men. The authors point out that the disproportionate amount of news play given female serial murders may have a sinister byproduct (although no causal link has been established): three serial murder sprees directed against females closely followed the massive coverage of "Son of Sam."

## Short Subjects

A poll by the National Commission on Working Women chose the title char-

acter on CBS's *Alice* as the prime-time role that best portrays the image of a working woman. No comment yet from Alice's boss, Mel. . . . ABC was number one in the Niensens in the 1978-79 season but it was also tops for prime-time violence, says the National Citizens Committee for Broadcasting. Based on NCCB's monitoring of May 1979 programs, NBC was runner-up in the mayhem department and CBS finished a distant third. However, violence overall was down compared to 1976 and 1977 monitorings.

## The Current Curriculum

The University of Michigan's Dalton Lancaster is investigating the effects of cameras in the courtroom by comparing two codefendants' separate trials for the same alleged crime. One trial allowed TV coverage, the other didn't. . . . The International Association of Machinists is monitoring prime-time television to see how it portrays the American worker. The results are expected in May. . . . The Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Southern California has launched a study called "Media '90" that will explore the impact of new telecommunications technology in the home.

## Hypothesis

"...Is there a sense in which television viewing is a creative experience akin to dreaming? We know that subjects deprived of REM-sleep [the stage in the sleep cycle in which rapid eye movement indicates that dreaming is taking place] go on 'dream binges' to make up for the deprivation. People who are engaged in creative activities during the day need less sleep (and less dreaming) than people whose work is not creative. The question that comes to mind is whether heavy television viewers dream less than other people. Current dream research techniques could answer this question easily. If heavy television viewers dream less than light viewers, it is as conceivable that television meets a creative need as it is conceivable that it deprives people of creative experiences." — Caren J. Deming, Broadcast Communication Arts Department, San Francisco State University. ■

paying them any royalties?" I ask.

"I don't think they'll care that much," he says. "It wasn't such a big scale. I suppose that if they feel really hurt by it, they'll send someone out here and I will be killed. They can't stop it through the courts because it will take years and years and years."

For a man committed to a mental institution, Iwan talks like a shrewd businessman firmly assessing his market, his suppliers and his enemies.

As he walks me to the door of the clinic, I ask him what he'll do for a living when he leaves the institution. "I was thinking of opening a luxurious whorehouse in the red-light district. It's very easy to do. You buy a building, get some girls and then advertise it."

In Amsterdam, many things are easy.

## October 12

Tonight is my last night in Amsterdam and I've been invited to Videoheads to watch more films in one 12-hour period than I've ever watched in my life. I arrive at six o'clock. A big feast is planned for later in the evening when Peter Rigby, Iwan's London connection, who is a friend of Moore's, is flying in from England. Three Videoheads are preparing dinner. I watch the end of "Invaders from Mars" and a pirated videotape of "Star Wars" with about half-a-dozen people. Twenty people gather around the table for dinner. The dinner movie is "Moonraker," which I purchased earlier in the day in the Waterlooplein. As we watch the tape, another videocassette recorder tapes the movie so that the Videoheads will have their own copy.

Halfway through dinner, Peter Rigby walks in with two friends. He's carrying a bag full of videotapes. Apparently Jack Moore has told Rigby about me because he immediately starts asking me about my story and what I've found out.

"Have you heard from Iwan lately?" I ask him.

"No, is he dead yet?" he replies. He clearly dislikes Iwan and is reluctant to talk

about his association with him, although he admits that he did tape programs off the air for Iwan. I know that on May 17, 1978, police confiscated at least 100 pre-recorded videocassettes from Rigby's business, Video Techniques. I also know that on May 22, 1979, he sent the chief commissioner of police at New Scotland Yard a bill for some \$52,000 for the rental of the prerecorded movies and blank cassettes that were confiscated. He was never convicted and was miffed that his tapes were never returned.

After dinner, I watch a pirated copy of a Bette Midler show taped for Dutch television last year but never telecast because Midler didn't like the production. Somehow it landed on the bootleg market, reportedly through a leak in the press office of the Royal Family, who had screened the tape the day after it was shot. Someone puts on a copy of Jacques Tati's movie "Traffic," but no one is interested. We put on a tape of "Gold Diggers of 1933" that Peter Rigby has brought over from London. At 2 in the morning, the 1976 version of "King Kong" is screened, and about six of us watch in the darkened rear section of the commune. Near dawn, Moore and Rigby return from a night on the town. Jack tries to persuade me to stay one more day because there's going to be a big party tonight.

"How big?" I ask.

"About 1800 people all over Europe were invited to this large bathhouse on the outskirts of the city. Some guy puts on about one a month. About 60 percent of the people are gay, 25 percent will be nude and half of them will be on acid. There are four swimming pools. The wading pool will feature nude dancing, but you should try the pool with the wave-making machine if you drop some acid. We're going to take our cameras and tape the show."

After 10 days in Amsterdam, descriptions like this no longer sound all that strange to me. My brain is beginning to get frosted. I tell Jack I can't make it. Too much weird input already. One more night

and I'll blow a fuse.

I say goodbye to Jack Moore, high priest of European video, as he slips into the dark, on the way to his houseboat on one of the canals. I throw a foam-rubber mattress on the floor and stretch out. Sleeping bodies are scattered between television monitors and videocassette recorders. Peter Rigby, London's video prankster, is sacked out a few feet away from me.

As the dawn's light threads its way into the room through cracks in the ceiling, I lie awake, replaying the scenes from my Amsterdam visit on the screen of my mind. It would make one helluva movie, I decide. But then, of course, someone would pirate it.

## Epilogue

On Dec. 6, 1979, two months after my trip to Amsterdam, police in the Netherlands and England conducted the largest movie anti-piracy operation in history. In one carefully coordinated sweep, the Amsterdam and Rotterdam police, Scotland Yard and Interpol arrested some 30 people in Amsterdam, Rotterdam and London.

Police closed down Video Club Nederland, arrested J. P. de Haas, operator of the store, and seized 600 tapes. Members of an organization thought to be one of the largest suppliers of pirated prerecorded videotapes in the world were also raided by police, who confiscated more than 200 master videotapes, 29 duplicating machines and nine video monitors. Their film-to-videotape transfer facilities in Rotterdam were shut down by police, and 200 more tapes were seized there. In London, police raided 10 locations running bootleg videotape operations, at least some of which were tied in with the Amsterdam pirates.

Iwan de Bruin, reported to have been released from the mental institution last October, apparently was not picked up by the police, nor were members of Videoheads.

"There's no question that this will dry it up for a while in Europe," commented James Bouras of the Motion Picture Association of America. "But the basic demand remains for prerecorded video entertainment—whether it's legal or illegal." ■

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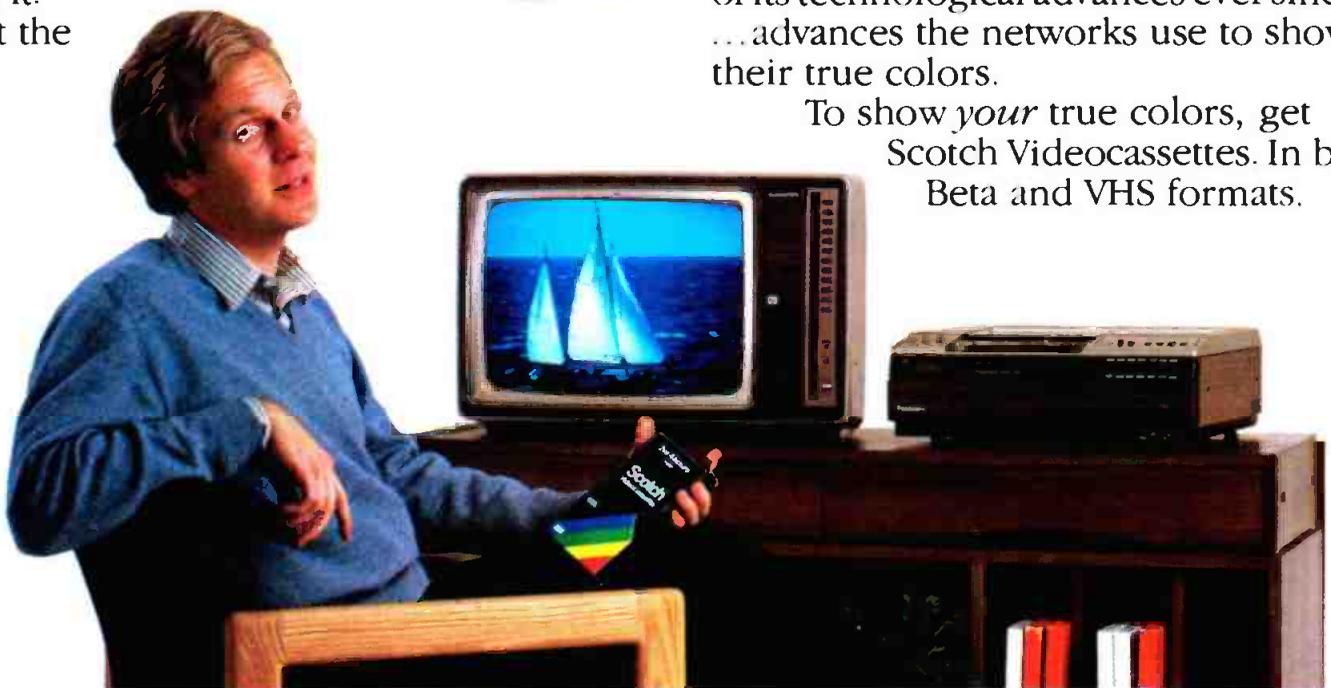


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**The Bad News Bears** (1976)—Walter Matthau as the crabby coach of an inept sandlot-baseball team featuring an 11-year-old girl (Tatum O'Neal) with a wicked curve ball. (Paramount Home Video; \$59.95, \$9.95 rental) (PG)

**Barbarella** (1968)—Sexy sci-fi cult favorite starring Jane Fonda in a skintight spacesuit. (Paramount Home Video; \$59.95, \$9.95 rental) (PG)

**Blazing Saddles** (1974)—Producer Mel Brooks' wild sense of humor permeates this parody of Hollywood Westerns. Gene Wilder, Harvey Korman, Madeline Kahn, Cleavon Little. (WCI Home Video; \$55) (R)

**Breakfast at Tiffany's** (1961)—Romantic comedy based on Truman Capote's novel about a vivacious New Yorker (Audrey Hepburn). With George Peppard, Martin Balsam, Patricia Neal. (Paramount Home Video; \$59.95, \$9.95 rental)

**The Bugs Bunny/Road Runner Movie** (1979)—The latest adventures of the cartoon cutups. (WCI Home Video; \$50) (G)

**Charlotte's Web** (1973)—Animated version of E. B. White's children's classic about a lonely piglet and his best friend, a practical spider. Features the voices of Paul Lynde, Debbie Reynolds, Henry Gibson, Agnes Moorehead. (Paramount Home Video; \$59.95, \$9.95 rental) (G)

**Chinatown** (1974)—Roman Polanski directed this Oscar-

winning story about murder and corruption in 1930s Los Angeles. Jack Nicholson, Faye Dunaway. (Paramount Home Video; \$79.95, \$9.95 rental) (R)

**Days of Heaven** (1978)—Beautifully filmed story of two men who love the same woman, set in pre-WWI Texas. Richard Gere, Brooke Adams. (Paramount Home Video; \$59.95, \$13.95 rental) (PG)

**Death Wish** (1974)—Charles Bronson wages a one-man war on muggers in Manhattan after his wife is killed and his daughter raped. (Paramount Home Video; \$59.95, \$9.95 rental) (R)

**Deliverance** (1972)—Based on James Dickey's acclaimed novel about a canoe trip that turns into a nightmare. Burt Reynolds, Jon Voight, Ned Beatty. (WCI Home Video; \$55) (R)

**Dirty Harry** (1971)—Clint Eastwood as a San Francisco police inspector after a sniper. (WCI Home Video; \$55) (R)

**East of Eden** (1955)—James Dean in John Steinbeck's story of fraternal rivalry, set in California during World War I; Elia Kazan directed. With Julie Harris, Raymond Massey. (WCI Home Video; \$55)

**Enter the Dragon** (1973)—Vengeance in an island fortress; Bruce Lee in his last role. (WCI Home Video; \$50) (R)

**Everything You Always Wanted To Know About Sex but Were Afraid To Ask** (1972)—Woody Allen wrote, directed and played four roles in this episodic farce. (Vid-America; rental price to be announced) (R)

**The Exorcist** (1973)—William Peter Blatty's Oscar-winning adaptation of his best seller about a child (Linda Blair) possessed by demons. With Ellen Burstyn, Max von Sydow. (WCI Home Video; \$60) (R)

**The Fountainhead** (1949)—Based on Ayn Rand's novel about a brilliant architect (Gary Cooper) who refuses to compromise his ideals. With Patricia Neal, Raymond Massey. (Vid-

America; \$10.95 rental)

**Goin' South** (1978)—Jack Nicholson directed and starred in this romantic comedy set in the 1860s. With John Belushi. (Paramount Home Video; \$59.95, \$13.95 rental) (PG)

**The Green Berets** (1968)—Action yarn about the U.S. Special Forces in Vietnam. John Wayne, David Janssen. (WCI Home Video; \$55)

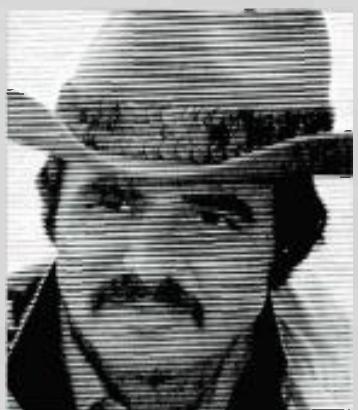
**Gunfight at the O.K. Corral** (1957)—Wyatt Earp (Burt Lancaster), Doc Holliday (Kirk Douglas) and the Clanton gang mix it up at you-know-where. (Paramount Home Video; \$59.95, \$9.95 rental)

**The Godfather** (1972)—Francis Ford Coppola's Oscar-winning crime drama. Marlon Brando, Al Pacino, James Caan, Diane Keaton. (Paramount Home Video; \$79.95, \$13.95 rental) (R)

**The Godfather, Part II** (1974)—Further adventures of the Corleone family. Robert De Niro, Al Pacino, Robert Duvall. (Paramount Home Video; \$79.95, \$13.95 rental) (R)

**Hair** (1979)—Broadway's hit musical about the hippies and the Sixties, brought to the screen by Milos Forman. (Vid-America; rental price to be announced) (PG)

**Harold and Maude** (1971)—Ruth Gordon and Bud Cort play unlikely lovers in this black comedy about a suicidal young man and a frisky old woman. (Paramount Home Video; \$59.95, \$9.95 rental) (PG)



**Hooper** (1978)—Burt Reynolds as a Hollywood stuntman. With Jan-Michael Vincent, Sally Field. (WCI Home Video; \$55) (PG)

**The In-Laws** (1979)—A staid dentist (Alan Arkin) is drawn into

wacky adventures by his daughter's new father-in-law. (Peter Falk). (WCI Home Video; \$60) (PG)

**Islands in the Stream** (1977)—George C. Scott as an expatriate artist in Ernest Hemingway's study of love and loneliness on the island of Bimini. With Claire Bloom. (Paramount Home Video; \$59.95, \$9.95 rental) (PG)

**King Kong** (1976)—Big-budget remake of the 1933 classic. Jeff Bridges, Charles Grodin, Jessica Lange. (Paramount Home Video; \$79.95, \$9.95 rental) (PG)

**Lady Sings the Blues** (1972)—Diana Ross as blues singer Billie Holiday. With Billy Dee Williams, Richard Pryor. (Paramount Home Video; \$79.95, \$9.95 rental) (R)

**Lenny** (1974)—Adult portrait of the late, controversial comedian Lenny Bruce (Dustin Hoffman). With Valerie Perrine. (Vid-America; rental price to be announced) (R)

**The Little Prince** (1974)—Musical adaptation of Antoine de Saint-Exupery's classic fable. Gene Wilder, Bob Fosse, Richard Kiley. (Paramount Home Video; \$59.95, \$9.95 rental) (G)

**A Little Romance** (1979)—Adolescent love in Paris, Venice and Verona. Laurence Olivier, Arthur Hill, Sally Kellerman. (WCI Home Video; \$55) (PG)

**The Longest Yard** (1974)—Burt Reynolds quarterback's a team of convicts in a no-holds-barred football game against prison guards. (Paramount Home Video; \$59.95, \$9.95 rental) (R)



**Looking for Mr. Goodbar**. (1977)—Diane Keaton in Richard

# THIS MONTH

Brooks' strong movie about a compulsive young woman in New York's singles-bar subculture. With Richard Gere, Tuesday Weld. (Paramount Home Video; \$79.95, \$13.95 rental) (R)

**Love Story** (1970)—Erich Segal's best-selling tear-jerker about a rich boy-poor girl romance. Ali MacGraw, Ryan O'Neal. (Paramount Home Video; \$59.95, \$9.95 rental) (PG)

**Marathon Man** (1976)—Suspense yarn pits a Nazi war criminal (Laurence Olivier) against a Jewish graduate student (Dustin Hoffman). With Roy Scheider, Marthe Keller, William Devane. (Paramount Home Video; \$79.95, \$13.95 rental) (R)

**Murder on the Orient Express** (1974)—Sidney Lumet directed an all-star cast in this adaptation of Agatha Christie's classic thriller. Albert Finney, Lauren Bacall, Ingrid Bergman, Jacqueline Bisset, John Gielgud, Anthony Perkins, Vanessa Redgrave. (Paramount Home Video; \$79.95, \$9.95 rental) (G)

**Nashville** (1975)—Robert Altman's study of the lives of 24 characters during five days in the country music capital of the world. Lily Tomlin, Henry Gibson, Ronee Blakley, Keith Carradine. (Paramount Home Video; \$79.95, \$9.95 rental) (R)

**The Odd Couple** (1968)—Film version of Neil Simon's Broadway hit about mismatched roommates. Jack Lemmon, Walter Matthau. (Paramount Home Video; \$59.95, \$9.95 rental) (G)

**Oh, God!** (1977)—George Burns plays the title role in this comedy about a grocery-store assistant manager (John Denver) singled out to spread the word of God in contemporary California. (WCI Home Video; \$55) (PG)

**Paper Moon** (1973)—Tatum and Ryan O'Neal team up as a tomboyish orphan and con man in the Depression-scarred Midwest. Filmed in black and white by Peter Bogdanovich. With Madeline Kahn. (Paramount Home Video; \$59.95) (PG)



**Play It Again, Sam** (1972)—Woody Allen's comedy about the romantic problems of a neurotic writer (Allen). With Diane Keaton, Tony Roberts, Susan Anspach. (Paramount Home Video; \$59.95, \$9.95 rental) (PG)

**Pretty Baby** (1978)—Brooke Shields as a child prostitute in the red-light district of New Orleans in 1917. (Paramount Home Video; \$59.95, \$9.95 rental) (R)

**Race for Your Life, Charlie Brown** (1977)—Charles M. Schulz's Peanuts gang returns in a summer-camp adventure. (Paramount Home Video; \$59.95, \$9.95 rental) (G)

**Rebel Without a Cause** (1955)—James Dean, Natalie Wood and Sal Mineo are three middle-class teen-agers on the verge of delinquency. (WCI Home Video; \$55)

**Romeo and Juliet** (1968)—Franco Zeffirelli's version of Shakespeare's love story. Olivia Hussey, Leonard Whiting, Michael York. (Paramount Home Video; \$79.95, \$9.95 rental) (PG)

**Saturday Night Fever** (1977)—The movie that triggered the disco craze and made John Travolta a household word. Music by the Bee Gees. (Paramount Home Video; \$59.95, \$13.95 rental) (R; PG and R rental versions)

**The Searchers** (1956)—John Wayne in a John Ford Western about a Civil War veteran who tracks down the Indian tribe that kidnaped his niece. John Wayne, Vera Miles, Natalie Wood, Jeffrey Hunter. (WCI Home Video; \$55)

**Shane** (1953)—Alan Ladd in a

classic Western about the conflict between homesteaders and cattle ranchers in early Wyoming. (Paramount Home Video; \$59.95, \$9.95 rental)

**The Shootist** (1976)—John Wayne plays a dying gunfighter in turn-of-the-century Nevada. With Lauren Bacall, James Stewart. (Paramount Home Video; \$59.95, \$9.95 rental) (PG)

**The Shout** (1979)—Psychological thriller about a man who has the ability to kill people by shouting. Alan Bates, Susannah York. (Films Inc.; \$49.95) (R)



**Some Like It Hot** (1959)—Jack Lemmon, Tony Curtis and Marilyn Monroe in Billy Wilder's hilarious spoof of the Roaring Twenties. (VidAmerica; \$10.95 rental)

**Sunset Boulevard** (1950)—Billy Wilder's dark study of an aging silent-film queen (Gloria Swanson) and a struggling writer (William Holden). (Paramount Home Video; \$59.95, \$9.95 rental)

**Superman** (1978)—A super-budget film starring Christopher Reeve, Marlon Brando, Margot Kidder, Gene Hackman and the special effects. (WCI Home Video; \$65) (PG)

**The Ten Commandments** (1956)—Cecil B. De Mille's lavish blockbuster about the life of Moses (Charlton Heston). With Yul Brynner, Anne Baxter, Edward G. Robinson (Paramount Home Video; \$79.95, \$9.95 rental) (G)

**Three Days of the Condor** (1975)—Robert Redford plays a

CIA researcher on the run after the mysterious slaughter of seven of his colleagues. Faye Dunaway, Cliff Robertson, John Houseman, Max von Sydow. (Paramount Home Video; \$59.95, \$9.95 rental) (R)

**True Grit** (1969)—John Wayne's Oscar-winning performance as a crusty, one-eyed U.S. marshal who helps a teen-ager (Kim Darby) track her father's killer. With Glen Campbell, Robert Duvall. (Paramount Home Video; \$79.95, \$9.95 rental) (G)

**The War of the Worlds** (1953)—The Martians invade Earth. Based on H.G. Wells' novel. Gene Barry. (Paramount Home Video; \$59.95, \$9.95 rental)

**White Heat** (1949)—Treasury agents hunt a robbery gang headed by James Cagney. Virginia Mayo, Edmond O'Brien. (VidAmerica; \$10.95 rental)

**The Wild Bunch** (1969)—Director Sam Peckinpah's violent tale of aging gunmen in 1913 Texas. William Holden, Ernest Borgnine, Edmond O'Brien. (WCI Home Video; \$60) (R)

*Most movie descriptions courtesy of TV Guide magazine. Ratings (G, PG, R and X) are those assigned by the Motion Picture Association of America for theatrical showings. Rental prices are those in effect at Fotomat outlets, although cassettes can be rented, at varying prices, in some other stores.*

## SPECIALS

**Birth**—An examination of childbirth practices in Western societies. With R.D. Laing. (Films Inc.; \$49.95)

**Bremen Town Musicians/The Shoemaker and the Elves**—Two award-winning programs for children on one cassette. (Films Inc.; \$39.95)

**Circus Town**—Clowns, trapeze acts, high-wire action. (Films Inc.; \$39.95)

**City Out of Wilderness: Washington, D.C.**—A history of the Nation's capital. (Films Inc.; \$49.95)

**Color Me Barbra**—Streisand's first color television special, recorded in 1966. (Inovision; \$79.95, \$10.95 rental)

**Death of a Goldfish**—Mister Rogers explores the subject of death. (Films Inc.; \$39.95)  
**Dentist and the Tooth Fairy**—Tooth care and dental examinations, featuring Mister Rogers. (Films Inc.; \$49.95)  
**Following the Tundra Wolf**—Robert Redford narrates this 44-minute documentary. (Films Inc.; \$49.95)  
**Georgia O'Keeffe**—A glimpse into the life of the artist—her work, her marriage to photographer Alfred Stieglitz and her role in the modern-art movement. (Films Inc.; \$49.95)  
**How the Myth Was Made**—The story of pioneer film documentarian Robert Flaherty's making of the legendary "Man

of Aran." (Films Inc.; \$49.95)  
**IAI Collection I**—Musical performances by winners of the French Prix du Jazz Award, Japan's Gold Disc Award and Grammy Award nominees. (Inovision; \$59.95, \$10.95 rental)  
**I'm a Stranger Here Myself**—Homage to Hollywood film director Nicholas Ray, with clips from such movies as "Rebel Without a Cause" and "Johnny Guitar." (Films Inc.; \$49.95)  
**Jim Stirling's Architecture**—The ideas and art of an internationally acclaimed architect. (Films Inc.; \$49.95)  
**Judy & Liza Live**—Judy Garland and Liza Minnelli at the London Palladium in 1964. Songs include "Over the Rain-

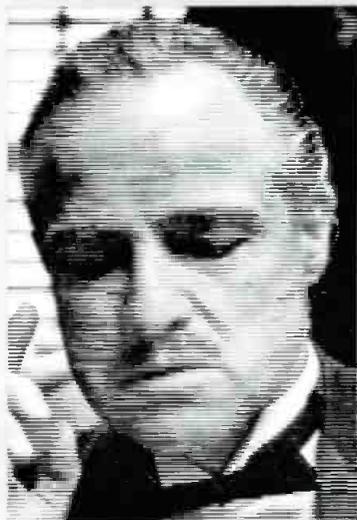
bow," "Chicago" and "Happy Days Are Here Again." (Inovision; \$79.95, \$10.95 rental)  
**Judy, Judy, Judy**—Rare Judy Garland footage, including outtakes from the never-completed Garland version of "Annie Get Your Gun." (Inovision; \$79.95, \$10.95 rental)  
**Key to the Universe**—How the laws of nature work to turn matter into stars, planets and living things. (Films Inc.; \$49.95)  
**Mud and Water Man**—The story of Michael Cardew—potter, teacher and writer. (Films Inc.; \$49.95)  
**My Name is Barbra**—Streisand's first television special. Recorded in 1965; black and white. (Inovision; \$79.95,

\$10.95 rental)  
**1976 Summer and Winter Olympic Games**—Highlights of the Games, including clips of Bruce Jenner, Sugar Ray Leonard, Leon Spinks and Nadia Comaneci. (Sports World Cinema; \$75)  
**Otto: Zoo Gorilla**—A behind-the-scenes look at the life of a gorilla at Chicago's Lincoln Park Zoo. (Films Inc.; \$39.95)  
**Pop Art**—This 66-minute film explores the works of three pop artists: Roy Lichtenstein, Richard Hamilton and R.B. Kitaj. (Films Inc.; \$49.95)  
**Ron Hays: Music/Image**—Video artist Ron Hays' combination of music and computer-animated video effects. (Inovi-

**BEST SELLERS**

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

**1. Saturday Night Fever (1977)**—John Travolta stars as a hip-wiggling dancing champ in a Brooklyn disco. (Paramount Home Video; \$59.95)



**2. The Godfather (1972)**—Francis Ford Coppola's gangster epic about the rise and near-fall of the Corleones, a Sicilian family in America. (Paramount Home Video; \$79.95)

**3. M\*A\*S\*H (1970)**—Robert Altman's antiwar farce that was turned into a TV series. (Magnetic Video; \$44.95)

**4. The Sound of Music (1965)**—Julie Andrews in one of the most popular musicals of all time. (Magnetic Video; \$64.95)

**5. The Godfather, Part II (1974)**—More tales of the Corleone family. (Paramount Home Video; \$79.95)

**6. The Towering Inferno (1974)**—Flames engulf the world's tallest building. (Magnetic Video; \$64.95)

**7. Patton (1970)**—George C. Scott's Oscar-winning performance as Gen. George Patton. (Magnetic Video; \$64.95)

**8. Harold and Maude (1971)**—Comedy about a young man and an old woman in love. (Paramount Home Video; \$59.95)

**9. Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid (1969)**—Comedy/Western about two bank robbers on the run. (Magnetic Video; \$44.95)

**10. Deep Throat (1972)**—Rated X. (Arrow Film & Video; \$99.50)

**11. The War of the Worlds (1953)**—The Martians invade Earth and almost nothing can stop them. (Paramount Home Video; \$59.95)

**12. The Story of O (1975)**—Rated X. (Allied Artists; 79.95)

**13. Barbarella (1968)**—Sexy science fiction with Jane Fonda. (Paramount Home Video; \$59.95)

**14. The African Queen (1951)**—Voted by the American Film Institute one of the ten best films ever. (Magnetic Video; \$44.95)

**15. Babylon Pink (1979)**—Rated X. (TVX; \$84)

**16. The Mr. Bill Show (1978)**—Selected segments from the popular *Saturday Night Live* feature. (Video Tape Network; \$39.95)

**17. Debbie Does Dallas (1978)**—Rated X. (VCX; \$99.50)

**18. The Devil in Miss Jones (1972)**—Rated X. (Arrow Film & Video; \$99.50)

**19. Pretty Baby (1978)**—Sensitive, tasteful drama of a child raised among prostitutes in the early 1900s. (Paramount Home Video; \$59.95)

**20. The Sand Pebbles (1966)**—Sprawling adventure of post-World War I China. (Magnetic Video; \$64.95)

Retail outlets participating in our survey include: Associated Video, Houston; Brenda's Movie House, Philadelphia; Concord Video Center, Stamford, Conn.; Conlon Service, Litchfield, Ill.; Entertainment Horizons, Portland, Maine; Giffen Video, Staten Island, N.Y.; Golden Videocassette Library, Bethesda, Md.; Home Entertainment Emporium, Manhattan Beach, Cal.; Integrity Entertainment, Gardena, Cal.; Modern Communications, St. Louis, Mo.; Nichols Electronics, Wichita, Kan.; Precision TV and Video, Bellwood, Ill.; Record Rendezvous, Cleveland, Ohio; Red Fox, Elizabethville, Pa.; Select Film Library, New York;

The Sheik Film Store, Metairie, La.; Southwest Video, San Antonio, Texas; Stansbury Stereo, Baltimore, Md.; Thomas Film Video, Royal Oak, Mich.; Video Audio Electronics, Williamsport, Pa.; Video Cassette, Phoenix, Ariz.; The Video Center, Beverly Hills, Cal.; The Video Connection, Toledo, Ohio; Video Corp. of America, Edison, N.J.; Video Dimensions, New York; Video Industries of America, Council Bluffs, Iowa; Video Library, Bala Cynwyd, Pa.; Video Mart, San Bernardino, Cal.; Video Services, Towson, Md.; Video Shack, New York; Videospace, Bellevue, Wash.; Video Specialties, Houston; Video 2000, San Diego, Cal.

sion; \$59.95, \$10.95 rental)  
**Seconds to Play/The Whole Truth**—Television sports and the quiz show *To Tell the Truth* are examined in two programs; one cassette. (Films Inc.; \$49.95)  
**Six Tennis Strokes**—Billie Jean King demonstrates basic techniques of the service, forehand, backhand, volley, lob and overhead shots. (Films Inc.; \$49.95)  
**The Great Silence/For the Love of Fred**—Two adventures featuring the Ritts Puppets. (Films Inc.; \$44.95)  
**The Madhouse Brigade**—A 45-minute compilation of satirical comedy sketches. (Video Tape Network; \$49.95)  
**The Making of a Quarterback**—Featuring Dallas Cowboy Roger Staubach. (Inovision; \$59.95, \$10.95 rental)  
**The Unexplained**—The late Rod Serling narrates this film about uncharted frontiers of knowledge, from ESP to life in outer space. (Films Inc.; \$49.95)  
**Twinkle, Twinkle Variation**—Violin lessons for children. (Films Inc.; \$39.95)  
**What is Love?**—Mister Rogers talks and sings about love. (Films Inc.; \$39.95)  
**Women in Art**—Profiles of two artists: Louise Nevelson and Betye Saar. (Films Inc.; \$49.95)

**PASSAGES**

**BORN**  
 To actress *Meryl Streep*, a son, Henry.  
**WED**  
*Shaun Cassidy*, singing idol of the teeny-boppers and former star of ABC's *The Hardy Boys*, to model Ann Pennington.  
*Erik Estrada*, star of NBC's *CHiPs*. He married Joyce Miller secretly in Las Vegas.  
 Actress *Liza Minnelli* and Broadway producer Mark Gero. Her third marriage, his first.  
**EXPECTING**  
*Phyllis George*, former Miss America, CBS sports announcer and host of *People*, and husband John Y. Brown Jr., governor of Kentucky.  
**SEPARATED**  
*Bruce Jenner*, 1976 Olympic

decathlon champion and his wife Chrystie. The Jenners have appeared together in numerous TV commercials.



*Cheryl Ladd*, Kris of ABC's *Charlie's Angels*, and actor/producer David Ladd, after seven years of marriage.

**RESIGNED**  
*Ford Rowan*, NBC's Pentagon correspondent, protesting his network's "irresponsible journalism" in the handling of its Dec. 10 telecast of an interview with one of the American hostages held in Iran.

**RETIRED**  
*Muhammad Ali*, from acting. He appeared this season in "Freedom Road" on NBC, and received less than knockout ratings.

**SIGNED**  
*Theodore H. White*, author of "The Making of the President" volumes, as consultant-commentator for NBC News during the 1980 election year.

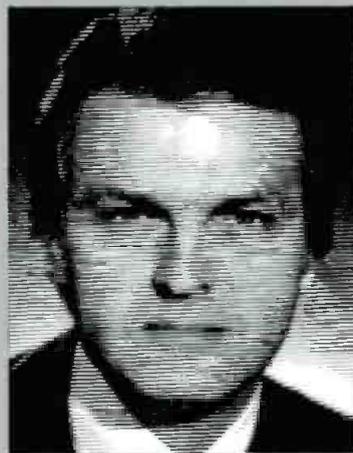
**RE-SIGNED**  
*Joe Garagiola*, NBC baseball commentator, under a new multi-year contract with the network.  
*Johnny Carson*, as host for the 1980 Academy Awards, April 14. This will be his second Oscars stint.

**APPOINTED**  
*Pierre Salinger*, as ABC bureau chief in Paris, where he has been a correspondent. Salinger was formerly press secretary to President John F. Kennedy.  
*Jack Schneider*, former CBS Broadcast Group president, as president of Warner Amex Satel-

ite Entertainment Corp.  
*Maurice R. Valente*, as president of the RCA Corporation. He was formerly executive vice president of ITT.

*Carl Bernstein*, one of the two celebrated Watergate reporters at The Washington Post, as Washington bureau chief for ABC News. He takes over March 1.

**SWITCHED**  
*Bill McLaughlin*, from CBS News to NBC News, where he will be UN correspondent. He has reported for CBS from Paris, Bonn, Beirut and Saigon.  
*Garrick Utley*, NBC News chief European correspondent, from London to New York, to cover politics. He has been in Europe since 1973.



*John Hart*, NBC News national-affairs correspondent, from Washington to London, to become chief European correspondent. Before joining NBC, Hart was anchorman on *CBS Morning News*.

*Leslie Midgley*, from CBS News, where he was executive producer, to NBC News, where he has become vice president, special programs. He will be responsible for documentaries, *Prime Time Sunday*, *Tomorrow* and religious broadcasts.  
*Nigel Ryan*, vice president, special programs at NBC News, to Thames Television, London, where he has become director of programs.

*Hartford Gunn*, vice chairman of PBS and its first president, to PTV station KCET in Los Angeles, where he is now senior vice president and general manager.



**HONORED**  
*Frank Sinatra*, on his 40th anniversary in show business (and his 64th birthday), at a Las Vegas gala taped for NBC telecasting this past Jan. 3.

*Ken Howard*, star of the CBS series *The White Shadow*, with a "Coach of All Seasons" award from St. John's University, Jamaica, N.Y.

*William J. Small*, president, NBC News, with the Wells Memorial Key, highest award of the Society of Professional Journalists, Sigma Delta Chi.

**LOST**  
*Satcom III*, an RCA communications satellite. Launched Dec. 6, the one-ton bird was expected to be used for new cable services. Trackers on Earth lost contact with Satcom when it was being maneuvered into final orbital position.

**DIED**  
*Zeppo Marx*, last surviving Marx brother, aged 78. He appeared with Groucho, Chico and Harpo in their first five films, but left the team in 1934 to become a theatrical agent.

*Merle Oberon*, veteran Hollywood actress ("Wuthering Heights," "The Scarlet Pimpernel"), in her 60s. She starred in a CBS series, *Assignment: Foreign Legion*, in the Fifties.

*Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen*, aged 84. Achieved ecumenical fame through his weekly prime-time TV series in the Fifties, *Life Is Worth Living*.

*Jon Hall*, 66, of gunshot wounds, assumed to be self-inflicted. His movie career began in the Thirties and brought him to TV as *Ramar of the Jungle* in the Fifties.

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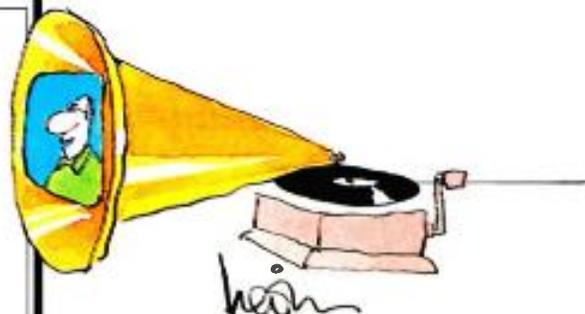
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VIDEOCASSETTES AND DISCS

## Videodisc Jockeying

By DAVID LACHENBRUCH



**T**hey drove from Indianapolis, New York and Miami. They camped in front of the stores before midnight. They phoned in their orders from as far as Acapulco and Paris. By noon on the first day of sales, thousands had mobbed the three Atlanta stores to scoop up the video age's wonder product—a phonograph that plays pictures with motion and color and stereophonic sound. The customers who were too late to get the Magnavision videodisc players loaded up on the DiscoVision records. When V-Day was over, it was estimated that there were at least 100 potential buyers for every videodisc player in stock.

The trouble was that the stores in the pilot city of Atlanta had a grand total of 37 Magnavision players to sell. Within a few weeks of opening day, Dec. 15, 1978, a New York Times classified ad offered a \$695 player for "\$10,000 or best offer."

Thus two corporate giants in show business and electronics—MCA Inc. (which made the discs) and Magnavox's parent, N.V. Philips of the Netherlands (players)—made good their pledge to bring their system to the public in 1978, with 16 days to spare. Now, more than a year later, players and discs are available only in Atlanta, Dallas and Seattle.

Year 1 of the videodisc was marred by start-up headaches. Magnavox and Philips had planned to make and sell more than 20,000 players in 1979, but a well-informed guess would put the actual total at about 5000. Even to support this small number of players, discs were in short supply all year. Although MCA had promised discs that played for one hour per side (a two-hour movie on a two-sided disc), virtually all of those sold could play only 30 minutes per side. When Magnavox introduced the player, it had a suggested list price of \$695. This soon escalated to \$775. Discs of recent movies, which originally sold at \$15.95, climbed to \$24.95.

MCA's initial catalogue of DiscoVision records contains 202 titles—including

many made by MCA's subsidiary Universal Pictures—such as "Animal House," "The Sting," "Jaws" and sequel "Jaws II," and "Smokey and the Bandit." The Philips-MCA system scans the 12-inch discs with a laser pickup, which never touches the record. When the 30-minute-per-side records are played, they can be stopped at any point to "freeze" the action, or they can be run backward or forward in slow or fast motion. An indexing feature can quickly locate any part of the program.

This flexibility, plus the system's capability for operation by minicomputer to achieve many special effects, spurred General Motors to order more than 10,000 of a more sophisticated industrial version of the player to demonstrate features of its cars in dealer showrooms. These were made and delivered last year by Universal Pioneer, a Japan-based company then owned jointly by MCA and Pioneer Electronics. The versatility of this system for demonstration and training purposes, as well as its ability to store up to 54,000 pictures on one side of a disc, created a sensation in the data-storage industry, and mighty IBM entered the videodisc scene by buying a 50-percent interest in DiscoVision from MCA.

Pioneer Electronics, the Japanese-owned hi-fi company, plans to introduce its own consumer version of the Philips-MCA player in the United States at about midyear, competing with Magnavox but able to play the same MCA DiscoVision programs.

Other videodisc players are on the way. The most imminent is RCA's SelectaVision VideoDisc, under development since the 1960s. This is a no-frills, needle-in-the-groove system designed to play discs forward only at normal speed, up to two hours per disc. Taking dead aim at the current vulnerability of the Philips-MCA system on deliveries and price, RCA promises a full-scale launch of its system through 5000 dealers coast to coast in the first quarter of 1981, about the same

time Magnavox and Pioneer go nationwide. The RCA player is target-priced at less than \$500, and the discs will be "competitive" with MCA's.

The Philips-MCA and RCA systems are incompatible—that is, records made for one can't be played on the other. In addition, a half-dozen other systems have been demonstrated, all incompatible with the two predominant systems and with each other.

A videodisc player attaches to the television set at the antenna terminals, in the same manner as a videocassette recorder (VCR). But, unlike a VCR, it's designed to *play back only*. All proposed systems can be connected to a home stereo, if desired, for better audio, and the discs can carry stereophonic sound. The picture and sound qualities of videodiscs are far superior to those of videocassettes and to received broadcast pictures. While prerecorded videocassettes are inherently expensive (\$40 to \$100 for a movie), discs can be stamped out at little more than the cost of phonograph records.

**A** battle royal for the videodisc market is shaping up between the RCA and Philips-MCA formats, with some dark-horse entries possible, probably from Japan. The television networks aren't saying much, but they're seriously concerned about the potential competition for viewers' time. (RCA forecasts that disc players will be in 30 to 50 percent of color-television homes within 10 years.) Meanwhile, the three networks' parent companies, plus PBS, are up to their eyeballs in preparation for disc programming. Most active, of course, is RCA, where former NBC president Herbert Schlosser has assembled a 300-title SelectaVision premiere catalogue.

Magnavision's first year doesn't prove much, except that you can sell 5000 of anything—already proven by the electric shaving-cream warmer and four-channel stereo. By its very nature, the videodisc must become a mass-market product to exist. That doesn't mean thousands of players in American homes, but millions—millions per year. In the world of videodiscs, a small success will be a flop. ■

David Lachenbruch, a consumer-electronics expert, is a contributing editor of PANORAMA.

# Innovations

**The sharpest picture ever achieved in big-screen projection TV**

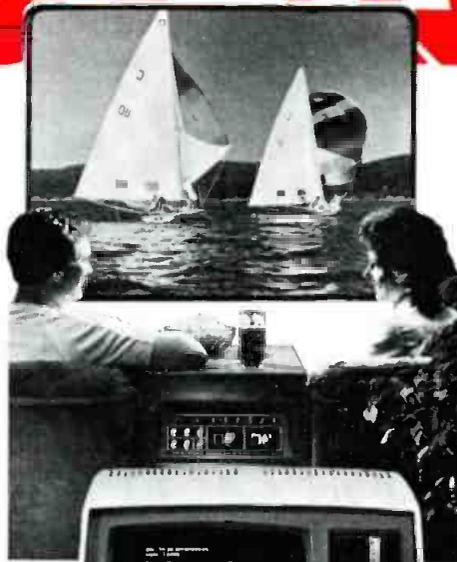
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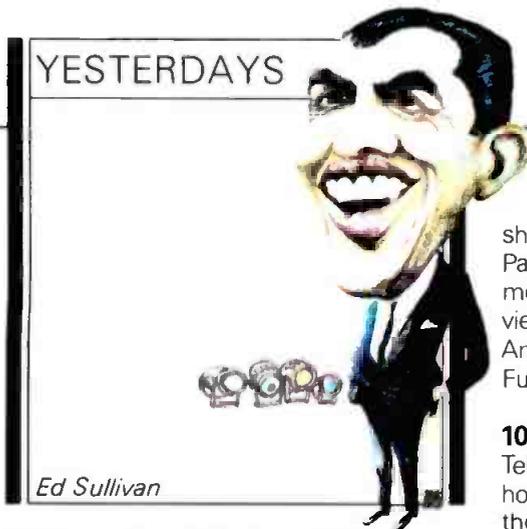
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## YESTERDAYS



Ed Sullivan

### 25 Years Ago: February 1955

There are 32,500,000 TV sets. They're in 64.5 percent of U.S. homes... Color TV is in its infancy... Nielsen's Top 10: *I Love Lucy*, Bob Hope, Jackie Gleason, *Disneyland*, "Academy Award Nominations," Ed Sullivan, *Dragnet*, *You Bet Your Life*, Jack Benny, Milton Berle... Weekly live drama series are on the air five nights out of seven... "Patterns," Rod Serling's corporate drama, is repeated, live, on Feb. 9, in response to the acclaim it received when it was first telecast a month earlier... Network newscasts are 15 minutes long, with Douglas Edwards anchoring for CBS, John Cameron Swayze for NBC and John Daly for ABC... Ed Sullivan's guests include Eddie Fisher, Teresa Brewer, the dance team of Mata & Hari, and Gen. Mark Clark with the Citadel College Glee Club... President Dwight Eisenhower allows Presidential news conferences to be shown on TV for the first time — on film... Dave Garroway is doing the *Today*

show, Steve Allen is host of *Tonight*, Jack Paar and Garry Moore are on weekday mornings, Edward R. Murrow is interviewing author Kathleen Winsor ("Forever Amber") on *Person to Person*, and Betty Furness is opening refrigerator doors.

### 10 Years Ago: February 1970

Television is now in 95 percent of U.S. homes; color sets are in 39 percent of them... Black performers are getting their chance to star in TV series... Diahann Carroll is in *Julia*, and black actors have regular roles in such shows as *Room 222*, *Mission: Impossible*, *The Mod Squad*, *Ironside* and *Star Trek*... Evening newscasts, now 30 minutes long, are anchored by Huntley and Brinkley, Walter Cronkite, and Frank Reynolds and Howard K. Smith... *The Beverly Hillbillies*, *Petticoat Junction* and *Green Acres* are all going strong... So are *Get Smart*, *Hogan's Heroes*, *My Three Sons*, *That Girl*, *Bewitched* and *The Flying Nun*, as well as *Bonanza* and *Gunsmoke*... Everybody's talking about the zaniness of *Laugh-In* and the success of *Sesame Street*... Vice President Spiro Agnew's Feb. 1 appearance on *Face the Nation* is his first network interview since his November speech attacking network news practices... Soames is preparing to sue for libel on *The Forsyte Saga*... Ed Sullivan welcomes Gwen Verdon, Sergio Franchi, George Carlin and The Su-

premes... Anne Bancroft wins raves for her comedy special "Annie, the Women in the Life of a Man"... A CBS documentary previews the upcoming environmentalists' demonstration, Nationwide Earth Day... Mary Tyler Moore, formerly of *The Dick Van Dyke Show*, is readying a new situation-comedy series for fall. She'll play a woman who takes a job at a Minneapolis television station.

### 5 Years Ago: February 1975

Cops and private eyes are swarming all over prime time: *Hawaii Five-O*, *The Rookies*, *Adam-12*, *Kojak*, *The Streets of San Francisco*, *Columbo*, *McCloud*, *McMillan & Wife*, *Police Story*, *Police Woman*, *Mannix*, *Cannon*, *Barnaby Jones*, *Harry O*, *The Rockford Files*, *Baretta*, *S.W.A.T.*... But comedy dominates the ratings, particularly CBS's *All in the Family*, *M\*A\*S\*H*, *Mary Tyler Moore*, *Bob Newhart*, *Maude*, *Rhoda*, and *The Jeffersons*... *Kung Fu* adds an exotic touch to the schedule... Network — news anchormen are Walter Cronkite, John Chancellor, and Howard K. Smith and Harry Reasoner... *The Ascent of Man* is thriving on PBS... Maureen Stapleton stars in "Queen of the Stardust Ballroom"... Cher launches a variety series without *Sonny*... The new Norman Lear series *Hot L Baltimore* proves to be too hot for TV. It is banned in three cities, including Baltimore. ■

## NEXT MONTH IN PANORAMA

Behind-the-Scenes Battle for Johnny Carson's Chair



'Henry IV' and 'Henry V' Come to Public TV

Investigative Report: How Blue Is Cable TV?

'Attica': The Making of a Powerful TV-Movie

'3-2-1-Contact': The New Science Series for Kids

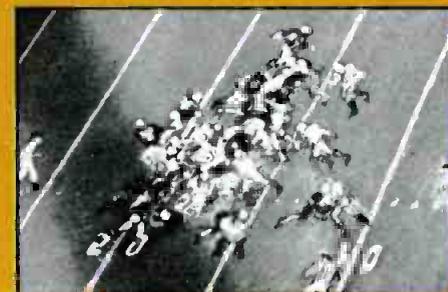
Alex Haley Writes About His New Series

Conversation: Henry Fonda and John Houseman

Electronic Newspapers Are on Their Way

Complete Buyers' Guide to Giant-Screen Sets

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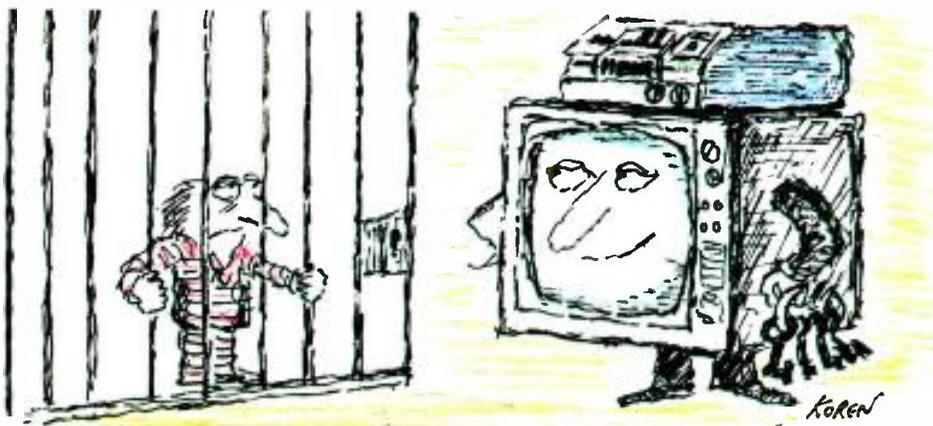
# THE VIDEO CLUB OF AMERICA

Magnetic Video

# REAR VIEW

By HARRY STEIN

## Help! I'm a Prisoner of My Video Recorder



Last night, sitting in front of my videocassette recorder, the magic machine that was going to make my life a breeze, I found myself face to face with an excruciating choice. Starting at 9 P.M., Channel 9 was presenting "Naughty Marietta," the old Nelson Eddy-Jeanette MacDonald musical. An hour later, over on Channel 11, they were showing "A Night to Remember," the Fifties film about the sinking of the Titanic.

Now, before I'd bought my machine, I'd have had no problem at all. What I'd have done is go out to dinner with friends, which is exactly what I felt like doing. But there was no question of doing that now since, like virtually every other VCR purchaser, I had vowed to start a "film library." What if one day someone showed up at my place intent on seeing Nelson Eddy? Or the orchestra playing "Nearer My God to Thee" as the big boat goes down?

It had not taken me long to discover the immensity of the responsibility I had taken on when I bought a video unit. Unlike my hot-dog roaster, unlike my electric body-scratcher, unlike my shower massage, unlike any other gadget ever devised by God or man, this thing, its little red clock blinking away, screamed out to be used. Buying my machine, I had deluded myself into believing that I was buying freedom; I imagined myself solemnly discussing the Palestinian question over dinner with business higher-ups, while back at home my VCR was keeping tabs on Mork. Uh uh, that ain't the way it happens.

Look, for example, at my friend Claude. Before he invested in his video recorder, Claude was the most placid person I knew. Tommy Newsom in designer jeans. When I called him the other day, he was so agitated he could hardly speak. "Can't

talk," he snapped. "'Annie Hall' is gonna start in a minute and 10 seconds. Gotta get back to my machine."

Strictly speaking, of course, Claude did have another option. He could simply have set his machine to the timer and talked as long as he wanted. But Claude would never do that. He wouldn't do it because he has become utterly obsessed with not cluttering up his tapes with commercials.

"What's wrong with an occasional commercial?" complained his wife one afternoon when I stopped by.

He stared at her with vacant eyes. "Are you out of your mind? I'm recording for the ages here."

There are even more dispiriting obsessions that go with the territory. Me, I dream of putting together a long series of "best of" tapes, an ambition that many nights has me bound to my set until 5 in the morning. I have one tape of only "Carnac the Magnificent" bits; on another, I'm getting memorable moments of the 1979-80 sports season; on a third, all the ads for Miller Lite I can find. Most evenings I prowl from station to station like a starved jackal, shoving cassettes in and out of the machine with a kind of numb mindlessness. Recently I sat back to watch my tape of Carl Yastrzemski's 3000th hit; as the historic pitch was delivered, the tape suddenly cut to Johnny Carson, in a turban, holding an envelope to his head. "Toyota, Datsun and Rabbit," he intoned. A pause, then he opened the envelope. "Name two cars and something that terrorizes the President."

On the other hand, I find myself constitutionally unable to erase *anything* on purpose. Last fall, for example, I recorded by timer the first game of the National League play-offs, intending to watch it at

my leisure and then record over it. Fat chance. In 35 years, I found myself reasoning, I'd be thrilled to have that tape. Where else would I find a record of the great Tom Seaver? Or the magnificent Willie Stargell? Or the endlessly stupid Joe Garagiola? These were phenomena that had to be seen to be believed; to erase them would be like smashing the Rosetta stone. And so I kept all three hours of that tape, as I have kept the *One Life to Live* episode I accidentally recorded instead of "Moby Dick," and the hour and a half of Mike Douglas with Charo.

With tape costing six and seven dollars per hour, all of this can run into a fortune—which is the other thing about these damn machines. They can absolutely wipe you out. Then, too, though I've always been a happy-go-lucky sort, I suddenly found myself plagued by the thought that someone was about to burst into my place to take my machine and all my tapes. So I added another lock to my front door, and installed an alarm system. Then I bought \$10,000 worth of insurance.

By last night, I was at last beginning to feel secure. I was sitting there, wrestling with the decision on what to record, when Jerry—a friend of mine who claims to know about such things—called to inform me that my machine would soon be worthless. "What do you get on your machine?" he asked. "Four or five hours at a time?"

"Three," I admitted.

"And does it have stop action? Can you set it to record five programs? Can you set it a week in advance?"

"No, I'm afraid not."

He cleared his throat gravely. "It's as if you had a wind-up phonograph instead of a stereo, a Model T instead of a classic Thunderbird. Soon everyone else will be using discs, and where will you be then?"

"Oh, God," I wailed, "what should I do?"

He reflected a moment. "How much insurance you got?"

And so it came to pass that I elected not only to set my machine to "Naughty Marietta," but to dine out with friends and leave all my expensive locks open behind me. With any luck, one of these days my machine will be gone, soon to be replaced by a newer, even more glorious model. My new machine will be able to record "Naughty Marietta," "A Night to Remember" and Carl Yastrzemski all at the same time. And maybe even edit out commercials on its own. ■

Harry Stein, a contributing editor of PANORAMA, has been published in many magazines and is currently at work on a novel.

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