

MEDIAWEEK

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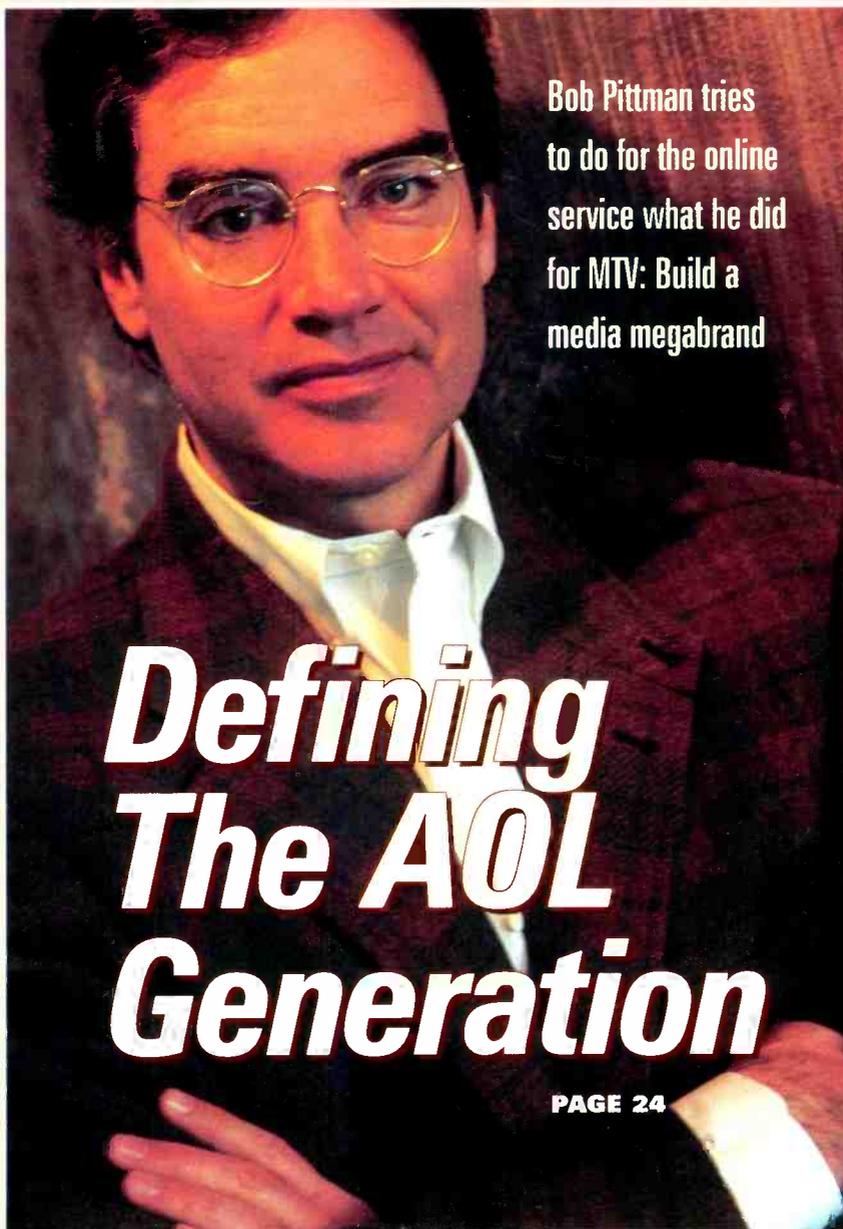
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Bob Pittman tries to do for the online service what he did for MTV: Build a media megabrand

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MARKET INDICATORS

National TV: Quiet

Inventory is scarce for fourth quarter. Some first-quarter plans are swapping hands; business should swing into higher gear this week.

Net Cable: Slowing

Though nets including CNN, Weather and Family still have some inventory, it's down to remnants. Some movie, home video and packaged-goods dollars are still working.

Spot TV: Middling

Most of the Hollywood studios have booked their buys for holiday releases. Autos are not as strong on year-end closeouts and new-model rollouts.

Radio: Steady

A fourth-quarter uptick has the industry looking forward to a bright 1997. The Southeast is rebounding, with financial advertisers providing the spring. Movie ads mean happy holidays for most of the country.

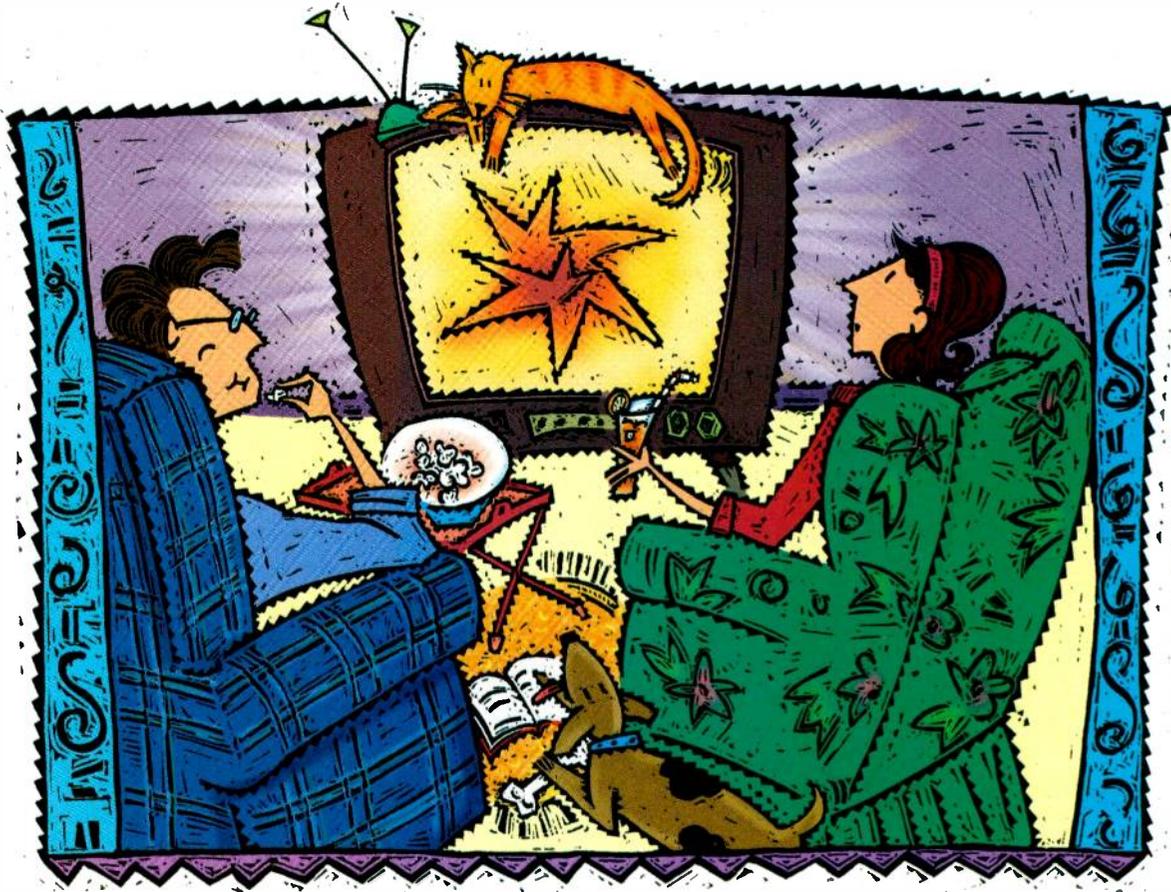
Magazines: Strong

Food and packaged goods are still cooking. Automotive is racing. And, says one publisher, "drugs and remedies are on fire." Cosmetics and toiletries are slow.



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Laura K. Jones DEC 10 1996

AT DEADLINE

Telerep Bags All Six Freedom Stations

In a major coup, New York station rep firm Telerep has won spot sales representation for the six-station Freedom Broadcasting group. Competing rep firm Petry Television triggered the scramble when it decided to bolt Freedom's CBS affiliate WRGB in Albany, N.Y., to handle Hubbard Broadcasting's NBC affil WNYT, which Hubbard acquired last month in a swap with Paramount. Alan Bell, president of Freedom Broadcasting, confirmed that Telerep's availability in Albany led him to "put all of the sales under one umbrella." Effective today, Telerep, a unit of Cox Enterprises, also will handle Freedom's stations in Medford, Ore. (KTVL), Chattanooga, Tenn. (WTVC), West Palm Beach, Fla. (WPEC), Providence, R.I. (WLNE), and Beaumont, Texas (KFDM). Four of those stations had been repped by Petry, the other by Katz.

Seagram, Stroh Under FTC Eye?

The Federal Trade Commission late last week would not confirm a *Wall Street Journal* report that the agency has initiated investigations of the Seagram Co. and Stroh Brewing over liquor advertising on TV. There is no evidence that the FTC has its sights set on all beer advertising. But the Stroh ads reportedly caught the commission's eye because they appear to be aimed at teenagers. FTC officials have already indicated they do not favor Seagram's recent decision to buy TV time for liquor ads.

Providers Anxious for AOL Meeting

America Online this week will hold its partners conference, a semiannual meeting of the company's content providers, including advertisers, in Scottsdale, Ariz. It is the first such gathering since AOL changed its pricing structure on Dec. 1 to a standard price of \$19.95 for unlimited access to both the service and the Internet. A topic of the conference is expected to be how content providers will be paid. AOL, which formerly charged customers based on access time, has paid its content providers partly based on how much time users spent in their content areas.

L.A. Alternative Rocker Goes Spanish

Long a staple of the Los Angeles adult alternative rock landscape, Golden West Broadcasters radio station KCSA-FM (101.9) is abandoning the format to go Hispanic. Though no specific date for the switch has been set, one executive close to the negotiations said it will be soon. "Nothing has been signed yet," the executive said last week, "but I expect it will be in the next few days."

Universal Outdoor Pays \$125M for Revere

Chicago-based Universal Outdoor Inc. last week agreed to acquire Baltimore-based outdoor advertising company Revere National Corp. for \$125 million in stock. Universal will acquire all outstanding shares of Revere, its debt and \$4 million in working capital. The deal is expected to close in about two months. Revere owns 6,100 billboards in Philadelphia; Washington; Wilmington, Del.; Salisbury, Md.; and Baltimore. Revere has estimated 1996 revenue of \$34.5 million. This was Universal's second major acquisition this year. In August, it bought Outdoor Advertising Holding for \$240 million.

Buick Launches on Web Tuesday

Major marketers continue to turn to the Internet to launch big promotions for their products. General Motors' Buick Division will unveil its newest Regal model at 12:05 p.m. tomorrow at www.regal.com. The event has also been promoted in teaser campaigns on 19 major sites on the Web, including Pathfinder, Yahoo and ESPNetsportsZone. The company also bought ads in *Time*, *People*, *The Wall Street Journal* and *The New York Times*. McCann-Erickson is the agency.

'Billboard' to Launch Daily Fax

Billboard magazine will launch a new daily publication called *Billboard Bulletin* to report news in the music industry and chart highlights. "The immediate goal of *Billboard Bulletin* is to create a new vehicle for reaching the music business with the freshest possible information," said Ken Schlager, director of strategic development for the Billboard Music Group. The new publication will initially be distributed via fax, but plans call for a future rollout of e-mail and Internet versions. A subscription costs \$300 a year for existing *Billboard* subscribers; \$400 for others.

Addenda: Parade Publications has named Sandra Lee Spaeth corporate vp of marketing, a new position. Spaeth had been associate publisher/marketing at Hearst Magazines' *Good Housekeeping*...Hachette Filipacchi Magazines' *Eating Well* has a new editorial director, Jane

Chesnutt, who will maintain her post as editor in chief of Hachette's *Woman's Day*. Marcelle Langan DiFalco, whose title changed from editor to editor in chief, will report to Chesnutt...King World's president of domestic sales, Bob Jacobs, announced last week that he is leaving the TV syndication company. No immediate replacement has been named.

INSIDE



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Sweeps Under Suspicion

NBC wins, CBS eyes No. 2 slot; but everyone says the numbers are funny

NETWORK TV / By T.L. Stanley

NBC swept the November sweeps for the eighth consecutive time, but the network's victory has been marred by the ongoing dispute between the networks and Nielsen Media Research over how many people are watching prime-time television and, more important, how many are not.

Nielsen reports that network viewing levels were down 320,000 households this sweeps period, which ended Thanksgiving night, compared to last November, and even more in younger

demographic groups. Network researchers, however, think it's not that people have turned away from their TV sets but that Nielsen's technology and data-gathering is not keeping pace with an increasingly complex viewing environment.

"We have a persisting problem, and it's reflected in the November sweeps numbers," said David Poltrack, CBS executive vp of research. "For viewing levels [in individual demographic categories] to go down more than 1 percent from year to year is unprecedented."

Network execs have threatened not to renew their contracts with Nielsen. CBS, NBC and

ABC also have invested \$40 million in the SMART project run by Statistical Research Inc., an alternative ratings system that is testing in the Philadelphia area.

Nielsen, while sticking by its numbers, has said it will work out some technology snafus and make other changes designed to get better feedback from the 5,000 households it now monitors.

Even with the surrounding ruckus, the networks found a few bright spots in the preliminary November numbers. NBC won with an average 11.4 rating/19 share in households, though those numbers represent a drop of 4 percent from the network's November '95 performance. NBC led in the key 18-49 demo, averaging a 7.5/20, also down 4 percent.

CBS at press time was in second place in overall viewing, with a 10.2/17, up 3 percent from a year ago. CBS netted a 4.6/12 in the 18-34 demo. Whether CBS would remain ahead of ABC depended on each network's performance last Tuesday and Wednesday nights. Fox averaged a 7.8/12 in households, also up 3 percent, and a 5.7/15 in the 18-49 demo, which, if the ratings hold, would tie Fox with ABC. ABC was in third place in households, with a 12 percent drop to a 10.0/16 and a 17 percent drop in the 18-49 demo to 5.7/15. The fledgling networks showed considerable growth, with The WB up 17 percent in households to a 2.8/4 and UPN showing a 13 percent jump to a 3.6/6.

Fox, though struggling through the cancellation of most of its new series, was pleased with its performance in 18-49. Despite a protracted rollout that saw *Millennium*, *The X-Files* and *Ned and Stacey* launching late in the new season, audiences responded quickly when the series settled into their regular pattern, said Giles Lundberg, Fox senior vp of research and marketing. "We've seen year-to-year growth and strength over the week," Lundberg said.

The fight over Nielsen's information-gathering likely will continue to intensify. A source at a major New York station rep firm said that Nielsen has not been as responsive as it should have been to the networks. "There is no doubt that Nielsen has problems when you see these big discrepancies," said the rep firm executive. —with Michael Freeman

Cable Ratings Keep Climbing

THE SWEEPS / By Michael Bürgi

The November sweeps ended last week with basic cable networks growing their prime-time ratings for the seventh straight sweeps period, although broadcasters were able to stem the rate of their losses to cable.

Basic cable in prime time was up 10 percent in rating to a 19.2 and up 10 percent in share to a 31.1 compared to the November '95 sweeps. Conversely, the Big Four broadcast nets were down 3.7 percent in rating and share. The Nielsen Media Research numbers, provided by the Cabletelevision Bureau of Advertising, did not include the final three days of the sweeps, which ended Nov. 27.

A major factor boosting cable was the growth of the cable universe, which stands at 75 percent penetration, said Jon Sims, vp of research at the CAB.

ESPN dominated the cable networks in prime time with its coverage of pro football;

the network had the four highest-rated programs for the month of November. ESPN creamed the rest of the cable pack with a 2.7 universe rating in 1.9 million households. There was a four-way tie for second place between TBS, TNT, USA and Nickelodeon,

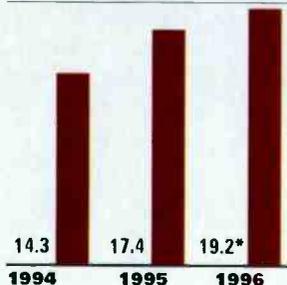
all of which registered a 1.9 universe rating. ESPN also took top honors in adults 18-49 and adults 25-54 in prime time. But ESPN's prime-time rating was down 7 percent from its 2.9 in November '95, thanks in part to lower viewership for NFL games.

Also off in prime time were USA, which dropped from a 2.2 in '95, and Lifetime, which dropped to a 1.3 from a 1.5 rating. Gainers in November included Nickelodeon, which rose from

a 1.6 universe rating last year; A&E, which grew to a 1.2 universe rating, up from a 1.0; and The Family Channel, which reports that its ratings were up 10 percent. ■

Harvesting Viewers

Basic cable has registered double-digit growth in prime time during the last three November sweeps:



Source: Nielsen Media Research
*through 25 days of sweeps period



Anchor away: Ex-WCBSer Marsh has helped lift Scarborough's 6 p.m. news on WNBC

News Tremors in Phila., D.C.

November shakes up the early news race in New York as well

THE SWEEPS / By Claude Brodesser

News directors and station general managers in the top 10 markets retreated to their homes for Thanksgiving and awaited the final crunch of the November sweeps. Many had reason to worry. November brought significant changes in the competitive local news races in Philadelphia, New York and Washington, D.C., according to preliminary Nielsen Media Research numbers.

At WCBS-TV in New York, the 6 p.m. newscast has lost a staggering 47 percent of its viewership since November '95, eking out a 2.9 rating last month. But since the wholesale firings of WCBS' senior news staff this fall, the station has shown signs of life on its 11 p.m. newscast. Despite being last among the Big Three network O&Os in the market, WCBS had the largest ratings gain in late news in November, posting a 6.4 rating, up 0.8 from May.

Meanwhile, the NBC O&O in New York, WNBC-TV, earned its best 6 p.m. news rating in nine years after hiring anchorwoman Michelle Marsh from WCBS to pair with veteran Chuck Scarborough. The station scored a 9.8 at 6 p.m. last month, up a point and a half from May. That was still not enough to catch perennial N.Y. early news leader WABC-TV, which earned an 11.7 at 6 p.m. in November.

Some of the most spirited jockeying for

position occurred in Washington D.C., where NBC's WRC-TV remained on top in news. The station's lead at 11 p.m., however, has eroded to a 10.7 rating, down 2.4 points from a February '96 high of 13.1. The real Washington nail-biter in November was the contest between ABC affiliate WJLA-TV and CBS affiliate WUSA-TV. WJLA netted a 8.1 rating last month to beat WUSA by just a tenth of a point. WUSA dropped from second to third in the news rankings.

In Atlanta, deflation continues to haunt Fox's 6 p.m. newscast. The numbers for New World's WAGA-TV continued to drop significantly in November, as they have in each of the last two sweeps. WAGA slipped from an 8.8 rating at in February to a 7.1 in May and a 6.2 in November. WAGA is still No. 2 at 6 p.m., to WSB.

In Philadelphia, November ratings for the 11 p.m. newscasts brought ill tidings for WCAU (NBC) and WPVI (ABC). WCAU has dropped from a 16.4 in February to a 15.3 in May and a 14.6 last month. WPVI has lost an aggregate 2.4 points, sliding from a 13.5 in February to a 12.1 in May to a 11.1 in November.

The growth of early-morning (5:30-7 a.m.) newscasts, whose ratings have tripled in the last five years, has damaged 11 p.m. news ratings in many markets, says Eric Braun of station consultants Frank Magid Associates. ■

'SI' Spin-Off For Women Taking Shape

First test issue expected in spring

MAGAZINES / By Jeff Gremillion

Time Inc.'s *Sports Illustrated* is moving forward with plans to add its own entry to the growing women's sports category. "We're looking at a number of editorial and business concepts," a *Sports Illustrated* representative said last week. The rep offered few specifics, noting that *SI* president Don Elliman Jr. has not committed to a definite timetable for the launch or even to a title for the new book.

While a final green light from Elliman and the Time Inc. brass is still to come, sources close to the 3.2 million-circulation *SI* said that plans for two or three special test issues of the women's sports spin-off are well under way. A formal announcement of *SI*'s plans could come before Christmas, and the first issue of the new book will likely appear in the spring, probably in April.

SI already is shopping a TV show called *SI Woman* to broadcasters and cable networks. An *SI* insider said that is also the working title of the magazine.

The weekly is wrestling with what to cover in the women's title. The spin-off would likely "continue in the *SI* way of storytelling," the source said, focusing on news coverage of sports events and athletes. The women's book probably will not cover health and fitness or service of any kind. Yet a focus on news and athletes could conflict with coverage of women's sports in *SI*, whose readership is more than 20 percent women.

Staffing is not expected to be a problem. "It's safe to assume," said the *SI* staffer, "that many of the highest-ranking editors and writers at *Sports Illustrated* will be involved with the new magazine."

SI will be entering a field energized by the emphasis on women's sports at last summer's Olympics in Atlanta. Condé Nast is readying the bimonthly *Condé Nast Sports for Women* for a fall 1997 launch that the company says will be a bigger spectacle than its recent *House & Garden* relaunch. Two independent books are already in play: The 22-year-old, Boulder, Colo.-based *Women's Sports+Fitness*, which publishes nine times a year, and *Sports Traveler*, a year-old bimonthly. ■

Standard Set, Now What?

Several thorny issues in digital TV broadcasting remain unresolved

TV STATIONS / By Alicia Mundy and Michael Freeman

The sudden compromise on digital TV transmission standards between the TV industry and the computer industry has opened up newer issues. According to the timetable developed by the working group on HDTV and the Federal Communications Commission, spectrum allocation for signals will take place by spring 1997 in order to meet a 1998 deadline for the first TV sets to be manufactured using the high-definition technology.

But that raises new concerns for broadcasters. For more than a year, various politicians on Capitol Hill have been grumbling about the need to auction the new spectrum as a way to make billions for the government. Former Majority leader Bob Dole favored the auction, but he has retired. However, the new Chairman of the Senate Commerce Committee, John McCain (R-Ariz.), has been a vocal advocate of the auction and has already indicated that he will probably open the issue for debate. McCain's credentials in this area are solid: He is against regulation, a conservative and a free market advocate. Broadcasters like the first two aspects, but they are terrified about the free trade part. An aide to McCain says: "If you favor free trade, you favor people paying market value, not getting free rides. It's time the broadcasters began paying for the spectrum."

McCain would probably face opposition from Democrats on his committee, like ranking Minority member Sen. Fritz Hollings (D-S.C.). And, at least prior to the election, neither President Clinton nor Vice President Gore seemed interested in waving a red flag in front of broadcasters on this matter.

But McCain has a powerful ally on this issue in FCC chairman Reed Hundt. Sources at the FCC say that Hundt will probably try to bring his friend Al Gore on board in the name of deficit reduction. Other political figures who say they will buy the deficit-reduction argument for auctions include House Budget Committee Chairman John Kasich.

If the spectrum auction doesn't succeed, broadcasters don't expect McCain to just fade away. Another of his issues is campaign reform, including much more free TV time for candidates. A source close to McCain says that

he has looked at several ways to encourage this, including tying license renewals to offers of TV time. "Either way," says the source, "the Senator feels that the broadcasters have had too many freebies, and if he loses on spectrum, he'll find another way to make them pay up."

Meanwhile, the HDTV compromise highlighted the independence of one of the newer FCC commissioners, Susan Ness, who, encouraged by veteran commissioner James Quello, pressed broadcasters and the computer companies to come up with a plan by Nov. 29 in order to get agreement by Dec. 31. Hundt was reluctant to go for the Dec. 31 deadline but was pushed into it by Ness and others, according to Quello.

Meanwhile, the hottest rumor floating around the FCC these days is that Hundt, who singlehandedly brought Bill Gates and Microsoft into the HDTV standard debate (and held it up), may be considering a new job: general counsel for Microsoft. Hundt could not be reached at press time.

While broadcasters expressed relief that a compromise has been reached on the new digital television standard, they worried how, when and if consumers will spend thousands of dollars to buy new digital TV sets.

"I think most broadcasters have enough basic confidence in the new digital infrastructure being proposed by the FCC to be planning

"If you favor free trade, you favor people paying market value, not getting free rides." —An aide to Sen. John McCain

major capital investments now for a promising technology of the future," said Milton Maltz, chairman and owner of Cleveland-based station group Malrite Communications. On an individual market basis, station owners will have to "undergo an entire recapitalization" in separate signal towers, transmitters, video switchers, editing equipment and camera equipment on the new digital standard, Maltz said. Depending on the size of the upgrade, Maltz estimates any change to digital could cost between \$3 million and \$20 million per station.

Although broadcasters will continue to maintain the present analog system during the long-term transition to digital, John Rohrbeck, president of the NBC Television Stations group, says the pace of conversion will be "entirely dictated by how fast consumers decide to buy new television receivers, which could be well into the next millennium." A lot also depends, said Rohrbeck, on how much consumers will be willing to spend on digital TV receivers or set-top digital conversion boxes.

"Most households in this country have more than one TV set, and this kind of conversion is going to be prohibitively expensive for most people initially," Rohrbeck said. "The first consumers who make buys of digital TV sets will be dedicated sports viewers, but if we go with the progressive standard being pushed by the computer manufacturers, they're going to see a degradation in the picture."

Progressive scanning in the new digital proposal features a slower, 30-integer rate. Fast-moving sports (such as auto racing and hockey) may result in a blurring of the picture, critics say. In the ATSC's original proposal, Interlace scanning offered a faster, 60-integer scanning rate. ■

MCA, Eyemark Beef Up

Studio becomes instant player in talkers; CBS reels in Partner

SYNDICATION / By Michael Freeman

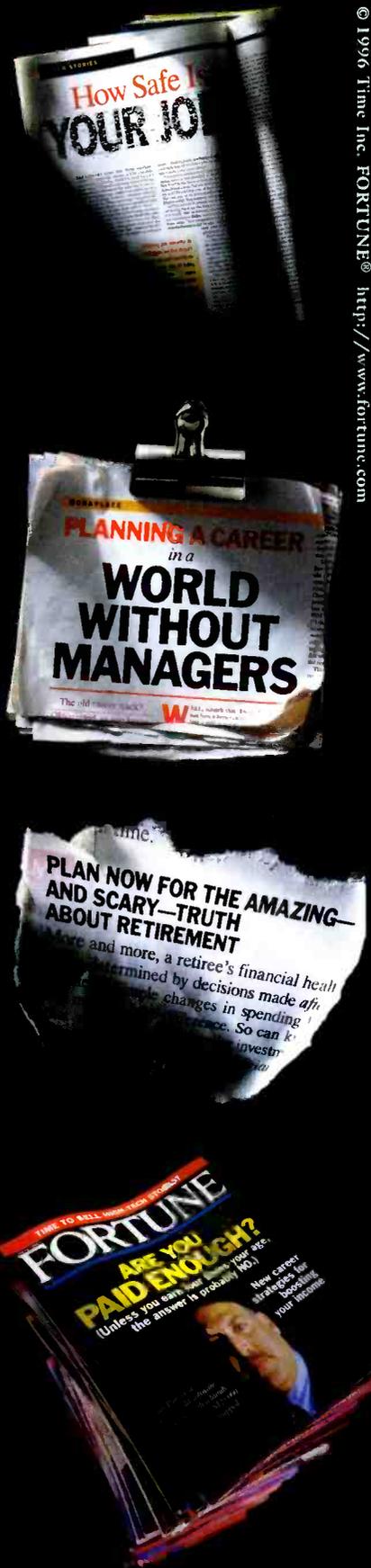
The ever-tightening syndication market got just a little tighter last week. MCA TV, absent from the first-run strip business for the past two years, returned in a big way with the acquisition of Multimedia Entertainment's four talk-show properties. Meanwhile CBS' Eyemark Entertainment syndication division, which cancelled its most expensive strip property, *Day & Date*, last week entered a programming alliance with the Partner Sta-

tions Network consortium, increasing its guaranteed coverage to 60 percent of the U.S.

MCA takes over four Multimedia talk shows—*Sally Jessy Raphael*, *Jerry Springer*, *Pat Bullard* and *Crook & Chase*—and several international talk-show properties from Gannett Co., for about \$45 million. MCA had been out of strip syndication since the cancellation of its *Suzanne Somers* talker two seasons ago. In the process of negotiating with Gannett, which had acquired Multimedia's station and newspaper

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MAGAZINES

Two computer magazines' premiere issues have hit newsstands. The stand-alone special *Family Circle's Computers Made Easy*, a partnership between G+J's *Family Circle* and PC World Communications' *PC World*, will be tested at least twice in 1997. Executives from both companies said that the advertising success of the special, which attracted blue-chippers including Microsoft and Kodak, led them to make the commitment for two more specials, one in April and the other in November. The magazine, a consumer guide for the family, has a total circulation of 600,000 and a cover price of \$3.99. The other new computer book, Los Angeles-based Metropolis Publications' *Digital Diner*, is a bimonthly guide for all digital entertainment, from video games to virtual reality. Initial circulation is 187,000; cover price is \$2.95.

Two other trend-surfing special-interest magazines are boosting their frequency. M. Shanken Communications' quarterly *Cigar Aficionado* will become a bimonthly next year. Editor and publisher Marvin Shanken said that paid circulation for the current winter issue is 380,000, up 57 percent from last year. And the Spanish-language sports magazine *Mundo Deportivo* will double its frequency and become a monthly, beginning in February. Santa Monica, Calif.-based JSA Publishing's 18-month-old, 1 million-circ *Mundo* has grown with the popularity of pro soccer in the Hispanic community.

The just-published January issue of David Lauren's *Swing* features its second annual "Most Powerful People in Their Twenties" section, the third such cover story in as many months. The November issue of independent, L.A.-based *Detour* hit first with its "Thirty Below Thirty" feature. Then came *People's* Nov. 18 "Young & Hot!" double issue. Time Inc.'s weekly focused on film stars; the monthly *Detour* expanded its criteria to TV. *Swing*, which publishes 10 issues yearly, covered several disciplines, including business and science. No one made all three lists. Likely suspects including Gwyneth Paltrow and Matthew McConaughey scored two mentions, as did a few relative unknowns, among them actors Matt Damon and Alicia Witt. —By Jeff Gremillion

holdings for \$2.3 billion last year, MCA was able to bring down the price tag for the series properties (including library episodes of the *Donahue* talk show) by separately signing Raphael to a \$9 million, five-year extension through the 2001-2002 season, sources said.

By buying established talk-show properties, MCA "eliminated" the \$15 million start-up costs typically needed to launch first-run strips, said Greg Meidel, chairman of MCA Television Group. "Out of the 15 talk shows in development for last season, only five made it to syndication, and all of those ended up dying in the ratings from the get-go," Meidel said. "When we have a chance to go out with four bona fide talk shows, why would we want to take the gamble of launching any new talk-show strip?"

MCA and other distributors will be battling



MCA's Meidel: Reducing risk by buying shows already on the air

for afternoon slots left open by the cancellation of Eyemark's *Day & Date* newsmag, which ends on Jan. 3. Even though *D&D* had been doing slightly better than a 3 rating in the metered markets (13 *D&D* stations are CBS O&Os), the hour-long strip has been plagued by weak clearances below the top 40 markets; the show is averaging a 1.6 rating nationally.

Eyemark last week forged a nonexclusive programming alliance with the 41-market Partner Stations Network consortium. PSN, made up of five medium-to-large-market station group owners, accounts for just over 30 percent U.S. broadcast. Its past series projects (*Jim J. & Tammy Faye*, *Behind Bars*) failed because the shows lacked top-20 market clearances. As the syndication division of Westinghouse-CBS, Eyemark brings in 14 CBS O&O stations, 10 of which are in top 20 markets. ■

Disney Debuts Kids Net

Kicks off in four test cities as network upfront breaks in Chicago

RADIO / By Mark Hudis

The Mouse is roaring—again. Radio Disney, ABC Radio Networks' new kids-under-12 radio web, officially launched last week in four markets across the country: Atlanta, Minneapolis, Salt Lake City and Birmingham, Ala. The network features a mix of kid-friendly music, sports, news and features. This marks Disney's official solo foray into the kids' radio market since terminating an agreement with now-rival Radio Aahs, based in Minneapolis. Radio Aahs is suing Disney, charging misuse of its trade secrets.

Despite its legal woes, Radio Disney says it is off to a strong start. Scott McCarthy, vp of new business for ABC Radio Networks, says that "early indications are very positive. We're getting a ridiculous number of calls [from listeners] per hour." So many calls, in fact, that Disney said it will have to update the telephone technology at its stations. Radio Disney and ABC Radio execs are still waiting for custom research ratings and financial results before expanding the rollout.

"It'll stay in these [four] markets for the near future as we refine programming and market-

ing," McCarthy said. "As soon as we feel we're on track, we'll roll it out nationally." McCarthy gave no time frame.

When and if it does hit the rest of nation, Radio Disney will be yet another powerful marketing weapon in the Disney arsenal, with the potential to reach millions of very young kids directly. "The calls we've been getting have been almost exclusively from 6-to-10-year-olds," McCarthy said.

In addition to launching Radio Disney, ABC Radio Networks executives have been busy with upfront presentations as well. Executives from the major radio networks were presenting to ad agencies in several markets last week, including Chicago. Most network radio execs say they expect a strong upfront this year.

Coinciding with the Radio Disney rollout, Radio Aahs parent company Children's Broadcasting Corp. last week announced it had closed a \$16.5 million credit facility with Foothill Capital Corp. of Los Angeles. The loan is secured by most of CBC's assets. The funding will help CBC reestablish Radio Aahs' marketing and sales efforts, both of which were scaled back during the partnership with ABC/Disney. ■

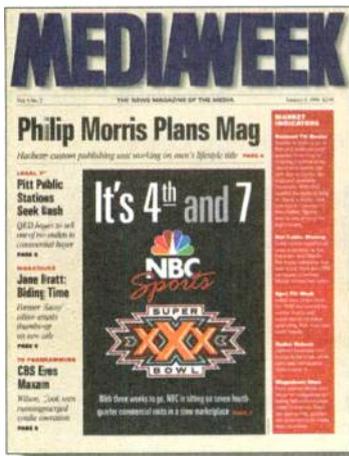
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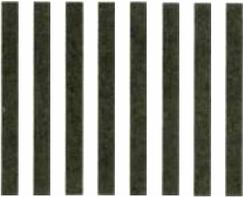
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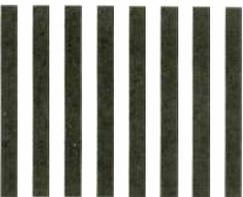
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First-Runs Sing the Blues

Development of new shows at low ebb; 'Martha' only sweet song

SYNDICATION / By Michael Freeman

Less than two months before January's NATPE program conference in New Orleans, pessimism is running high over this year's sparse, slowly developing crop of first-run syndication offerings.

There are little more than a dozen daily strip series in development; only a handful of those are considered legitimate contenders for next season. Almost all of the 16 or so weekly projects have typically high expectations, but their hopes are pinned more on prospects for robust international sales than on domestic TV station clearances.

"This really seems to be the year of the big yellow caution," says Lanie Richberger, associate program director for Seltel, the New York-based rep firm. "Very little product is going to get through. Certainly, there are going to be some holes on station schedules which will need to be filled, but there hasn't exactly been a prospect of *Rosie O'Donnell's* caliber to emerge yet."

Of the 10 strips that have either begun marketing or are exploring station group interest, only two—Eyemark Entertainment's *Martha Stewart Living* and *The Gayle King Show*—have reported any sales thus far. In little more than a month, *Stewart* and *Gayle King*, which are being sold in tandem for September '97 launch, have racked up station sales totaling 60 percent U.S. broadcast coverage. Several CBS O&Os have picked up the shows (including WCBS in New York and KCBS in Los Angeles) from their

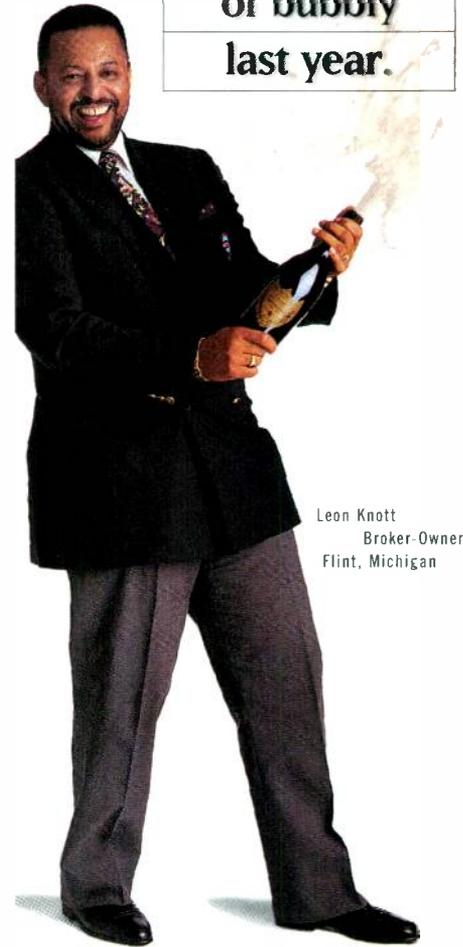
corporate sister, Eyemark. Most of the other sales were to individual stations.

The reluctance of such major syndication players as King World Productions, Paramount, Warner Bros., MCA, Buena Vista and Twentieth Television to launch any strip projects by this point in the development season has left domestic syndication in a stagnant state. "Like a lot of the majors, we have been pitched about 500 projects this year," says Andy Friendly, King World head programming. "But we're really intent on maintaining and building up core programming assets. Right now, with a crop of disasters like *Bradshaw Difference* [from MGM] and *Scoop* [ACI/Pearson] averaging 0.4 and 0.7 ratings, there is no reason for us to push a new project into the market for the sake of having something out there."

The one area where the studios and independents have remained aggressive this season is in weekly action-adventure series. ACI/Pearson Television's strength in European distribution helped the company attract Francis Ford Coppola, who will produce *First Wave*, an *Independence Day*-like series about space invaders starring Richard Grieco (*21 Jump Street*).

The strength of the international marketplace—a growing presence at NATPE—has bolstered the market for weeklies, which have seen their ratings decline among American viewers. MGM is placing two new weeklies, *Fame L.A.* and *Stargate*, in syndication next year but will not rent exhibit space at NATPE for the company's domestic division. Instead, only

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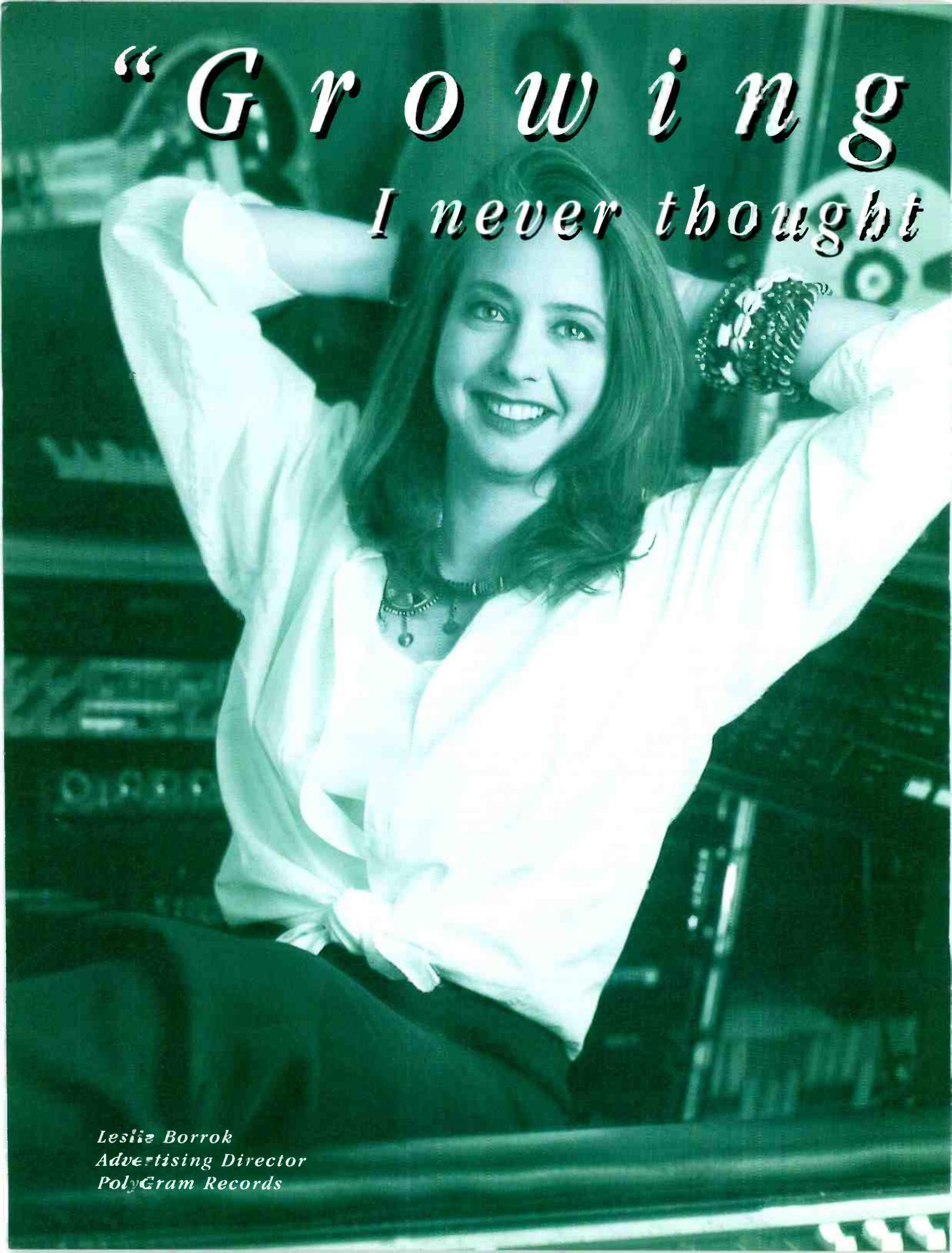
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There's Not Much Coming Down the Syndie Pipeline

The 1997-98 first-run syndication development slate so far

Program (Distributor)	Available	Status
<i>Arthel & Fred</i> (All American)	Sept. '97	Selling now; awaiting reception from stations
<i>Card Sharks</i> (All American)	Mar/Apr '97	Midseason entry; coupled with <i>Match Game</i>
<i>Celebrity Showcase</i> (SeaGull)	Sept. '97	Forming; celebrity home shopping, for noon and a.m.
<i>The Gayle King Show</i> (Eyemark)	Sept. '97	Firm; 60% U.S. sold; twinned with <i>Martha Stewart</i>
<i>Great Day</i> (Western Internatl.)	Sept. '97	Pitching for charter station-group partner
<i>Majority Rules</i> (DreamWorks)	Now	Testing in two markets; slow-rollout candidate
<i>Martha Stewart Living</i> (Eyemark)	Sept. '97	Selling well; proven record, advertisers' best bet
<i>Match Game</i> (All American)	Mar/Apr '97	Feeling out game show-shy station groups
<i>Naomi Judd</i> (Rysher)	Sept. '97	Music/variety/talk; another <i>Rosie?</i>
<i>People's Court</i> (TBA)	Sept. '97	Warner Bros., Col TriStar? Ex-mayor Koch possible star
<i>Pictionary</i> (Worldvision)	Sept. '97	Reps' favorite; no reported station sales so far
<i>Treasure Hunt</i> (Columbia TriStar)	Sept. '97	Making rounds; Quincy Jones said to be pitching Col TriStar
<i>Vibe</i> project (Columbia TriStar)	Jun. '97?	Late-night hopeful; Jones' spin-off of magazine



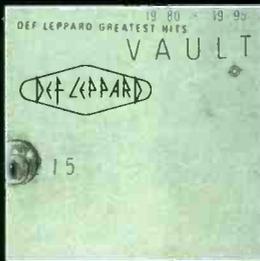
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MGM's international division will be at the show. "The international people felt it was a more important venue in which to meet with overseas buyers," says Sid Cohen, MGM syndication president. "My [domestic] sales force is already meeting with stations around the country. NATPE just didn't make sense for us."

The only other current buzz is from Columbia TriStar Television Distribution, where music/TV producer Quincy Jones is lending his talents to a strip adaptation of his magazine, *Vibe*. The to-be-titled entertainment/talk show, described by Jones' production partner David Salzman as "what's cool to the young, urban culture," is being targeted for late night—a daypart syndicators have largely abandoned after the cancellations of Buena Vista's *Stephanie Miller* and Paramount's *Arsenio Hall* talk shows.

Some major-market Fox affiliates and independent stations are dubious that Columbia TriStar can convince them to dump highly rated off-network sitcoms—including CTTD's own *Seinfeld* and *Mad About You*—in favor of the *Vibe* series.

Caroline Chang, program director of Fox affiliate KTVU in San Francisco, says that the Cox Broadcasting-owned station is "pretty content" with its 5-6 rating point averages from air-

ing such staples as *Cheers* and *M*A*S*H* at 11 p.m. "Without knowing what the content for this *Vibe* series will be, I still can't see too many stations who now get 4-to-7 ratings with sitcoms and sell all of their own inventory giving that up for an unproven first-run show," Chang says.

Western International Syndication's is positioning its strip, *Great Day*, as a 9 a.m. lead-out from NBC's *Today* and ABC's *Good Morning America*. WIS president Chris Lancey says that his sales force has made presentations to major-market groups including Tribune Broadcasting,

Chris-Craft/United Television and the ABC-Disney stations. It is an "absolute necessity" for WIS to bring in a major group as a "clearance and equity partner" that could also provide a production hub and supply national news inserts for *Great Day*, says Lancey, who recently named *Home Show* host Dana Fleming to headline the cast.

"We're going to be surprisingly similar in format and feel with the morning news shows, which have been proven ratings winners for over 40 years," Lancey says. ■

Fox Mulls More Animation

'Simpsons'-type prime-timer pitched by 'Mad TV' shorts creator

TV PRODUCTION / By T.L. Stanley

Fox is considering another animated show for prime time. The new show would be created by Corky Quackenbush, whose stop-motion shorts on the network's *Mad TV* have developed a cult following.

The net already has the animated *King of the Hill*, from *Beavis & Butt-head* creator Mike Judge, set for midseason, and *The Simpsons*, now in its eighth season, which was spun off from animated shorts on *The Tracey Ullman Show*.

Quackenbush recently met with Fox network and development execs about his idea for a stop-motion animation show about two teenagers. The show will "make the ordinary bizarre and the bizarre ordinary," he said, but without *Beavis & Butt-head*-ish tendencies.

"We want to do something grounded in reality," said Quackenbush. "It won't be a cartoon that shows people getting run over by a steamroller."

Quackenbush's edgy, twisted style might be just what Fox is looking for if it is to return to its roots, as new Entertainment Group president Peter Roth has said he wants to do. The net, which built its reputation on irreverence, has stumbled trying to broaden beyond its core young audience. With a number of aging shows and no new comedy hits this season, Fox is looking for signature shows that

will bring viewers back to the network.

Among Quackenbush's best-known Fox pieces is *Raging Rudolph*, a Martin Scorsese-inspired short that aired during last year's *Mad TV* Christmas special and set off an immediate flurry of comment on the Internet. Modeled after the cheesy but beloved Rankin-Bass holiday special *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer*, the parody mimicked the style and look of the classic show down to the voices, which sounded exactly like the original. But Quackenbush's elves were gangsters and Rudolph a ruthless don. Included

in the mayhem was a scene where an elf's head is wrenched in a vise, à la *Casino*.

"If we're going to parody a TV show, we want it to look as much like the original as possible to make it real," said Adam Small, one of the show's executive producers. "And this was dead-on."

Scorsese sent a fan letter to the show's production company, Quincy Jones/David Salzman Entertainment, but the network received complaints from viewers

when the short was broadcast again on a "best of" *Mad TV* that aired in early prime time slots in some markets.

Mad TV plans to air a sequel in its holiday special Dec. 14, hosted by singer/actor Harry Connick Jr. The short, called *Reinfather*, again draws on Scorsese's mobster movies. ■



Animator Quackenbush hopes to follow the *Simpsons* route

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LETTERS

Not That Far, Not That Fast

I write to correct two statements attributed to me in your Nov. 11 column "Hundt Outlines FCC Agenda," which discussed a recent FCC rulemaking proceeding considering changes to the television ownership rules. Your reporter, Alicia Mundy, apparently misunderstood my comments.

Contrary to the remarks attributed to me, I do not believe, nor did I state, that the FCC is "proposing to scrap" current rules to permit common ownership of two television stations in the same market. I said only that the FCC generally proposed to relax the standard by which it measures prohibited contour overlap between two television stations, provided they are located in separate DMAs. I stated that the new contour standard, if adopted, would merely tend to permit the ownership of two stations that are more closely located than is permissible under existing

rules. In addition, I noted that the FCC asked for comment on whether to allow certain waivers of the rule.

I also said that the FCC proposed to regulate television local marketing agreements according to the same rule as is currently applied in the radio industry. That is, a same-market LMA would result in an "attributable" interest to the brokering station's owner. In other words, if the broker *can't* own the station due to the ownership rule, an LMA also would be prohibited.

I would appreciate a clarification of my remarks in your next edition.

Todd Stansbury
Wiley, Rein & Fielding
Washington, D.C.

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FORUM

Is the prime-time ratings decline this fall attributable to the Nielsen sample changes, or are there other factors at work?

Betsy Frank

Executive VP/Director of Strategic Media Resources, Zenith Media Services

"Critics need to focus on the viewer as much as the viewing. With so much going on in people's lives and so many alternatives, both TV- and PC-based, competing for the viewer's limited leisure time, it shouldn't surprise us to see shifting [in TV viewership]. Improving what we've got would be a lot more productive for the industry than the selective denigration now taking place."

Ellen Oppenheim

*Senior VP, Media Director
FCB/Leber Katz, Partners*

"Several factors are at play. In kids, where the ratings decline is most severe, we know that kids aren't always accurate in their use of people meters. However, that does not explain the shift from network to cable viewing in the past two years."

Jon Mandel

Network Senior VP, Dir. of National Broadcast Grey Advertising

"It was a Nielsen guy who said this, but when ratings go up, [network execs] are creative geniuses, and when they go down, it's Nielsen's fault. I don't think by beating on Nielsen we can get anywhere. It's a societal problem; cooperation rates have gone down. I really don't think it's a research company problem. It's cultural."

Steve Grubbs

*Executive VP, National Broadcast Buying
BBDO*

"I don't believe that the sample expansion is the single cause. Is Nielsen successfully measuring out-of-home and visitor viewing? Are they accurately measuring satellite dish delivery? And is Nielsen receiving information about all the viewing that goes on from all the different sets in each home?"

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Though there are far too many times when the promise of cable ends up a viewer's nightmare, there's a handful of shows that forever fulfill cable's potential. *Remember WENN*, written by

Tony award-winning Rupert

Holmes, is one of these. This exquisitely done half-hour series recently began its second season on American Movie Classics, the cable network devoted to classic films. AMC has ventured beyond movies into original programming with documentaries, but *Remember WENN* is the first live-action series developed by the network, which brought in Paula Connelly-Skorka two years ago as director of original programming. Connelly-Skorka has two more series in the works for AMC, and if they manage to match *Remember*

ry follows both the on-air and off-air lives of the staff.

The series has a tiny budget, but the talent both in front of and behind the camera is as good as it gets. There is no laugh track and, thanks to its cable home, no commercial breaks either. As a result, Holmes writes each episode as if it were a one-act play.

"It's the longest one-act play in my career," says Holmes, who has written all but two of *Remember WENN*'s 26 episodes and rewrote the other two. "I think of it as one long arc, which hopefully will not land very soon."

There is also quite a bit of singing that goes on each week, a testament both to the time and place created for *WENN* and to Holmes, who moves easily between the roles of playwright and composer/lyricist. Many of the Broadway stars that Holmes has worked with over the years—including Patti Lupone, Betty Buckley and Roddy McDowall—make guest appearances on *WENN*, often performing original music that Holmes has composed.

Remember WENN's Christmas episode, a one-hour special that will air Dec. 21 in the show's Saturday 10 p.m. time slot, features an appearance by Buckley, who was most recently on Broadway playing the aging diva Norma Desmond in Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Sunset Boulevard*. Buckley sings two Holmes songs in the episode, a wonderfully sentimental story about life and death and the Christmas spirit.

Buckley first worked with Holmes in his hit musical *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*. Holmes personally won three Tonys, a Broadway first, for *Drood*—for best book, best music and best lyrics. *Drood* also won the Tony for best musical.

Holmes' key role in *Remember WENN* is in part due to Connelly-Skorka's philosophy of looking almost anywhere but prime-time television for talent. Because AMC features films from the 1930s to the 1970s, shown uncut, commercial-free and uncolored, Connelly-Skorka wanted to find a production and creative team and cast who could mirror that sensibility. So Connelly-Skorka looked to people who had spent most of their creative lives in feature films and on Broadway.

"We're a classic movie channel, and whatever we do I thought should closely resemble that," Connelly-Skorka says. Because AMC showcases the golden age of film, she believed that a series about the golden age of radio would be a good fit. "If we did a radio show as a play within a play," she says, "you learn about the lives of these people."

Connelly-Skorka, who serves as an executive producer of the series, met with Howard Metzer of The Entertainment Group/Turtleback Productions, which produces



Bringing in the boomers: *WENN* writer Holmes' take on radio's golden age is delivering young viewers to AMC

WENN, executives at the broadcast networks should begin to feel uneasy.

Remember WENN is a prototype for what is possible when virtually all of the conventional television wisdoms are tossed out the window. The show is set in 1939 at struggling Pittsburgh radio station WENN, where the sto-

TOM SCHULTZ/BLACK STAR

Remember WENN. Metzger loved the idea and told her he knew a writer who was also a radio buff. That turned out to be Holmes, a baby boomer who missed the golden age of radio but has nevertheless gone on to collect more than 3,000 vintage radio shows. All the elements, the tones and textures that Holmes would need to flesh out Connelly-Skorka's idea, had been marinating for years.

"I sat down to think about how you would tell a long story on a weekly basis about a radio station, and within maybe one day there was *WENN*," says Holmes. "I knew 1939. I knew Pittsburgh. I wanted [the cast] to be in a city where the radio station would mean a lot, but not one where they had reached the top. If this was set in New York, they would have made it."

Holmes chose 1939 because he wanted to capture the innocence and civility that existed then, at least in our memories of the time. "That was the last golden era before the war touched our lives and the world changed forever," says Holmes. "I wanted the audience to watch this show like they listened to radio—very intimately, you had this special bond. In the world I wanted to create I wanted the people to be more civil. I wanted to show there was a way people could have fights and be rivals and get into mad-cap situations and still have a certain level of courtesy."

"I did go into it thinking that even though it looks back to another time...that the show could be something right for now, for viewers who wanted something unique," Holmes says. "*Remember WENN* started up when there were 11 new series that were all Xeroxes of *Friends*, which was an homage to *Seinfeld*, though I'm never sure where homage ends and rip-off begins."

AMC, which does not carry advertising, does not have the benefit of Nielsen ratings to provide the sort of detailed demographic breakdown that other networks live by. But viewer letters and e-mail messages paint a picture of an extremely diverse audience for *Remember WENN*. Not surprisingly, the show is popular with those who actually do remember when. But it has drawn probably its largest audience from baby boomers, who love the nostalgia. There is also a growing core of high school and college-age viewers. One college student who wrote to AMC listed his favorite shows as *The X-Files*, *Beavis & Butt-head*, and *Remember WENN*.

The series looks highly stylized and at the same time very real, as if you have stumbled back in time. The set is constructed as if it were an actual radio station; rooms have four walls, which makes it tough for the camera to



Broadway-bound: Buckley and other stage colleagues of Holmes are crooning for *WENN*

maneuver but opens up visual possibilities. All of the action takes place within those walls. The costumes, which look like they were pulled out of Great Aunt Maddie's closet, won the show an Emmy in its first season. A few weeks ago, *WENN* picked up two Cable ACE awards, for directing and editing.

By design, the comedy in *Remember WENN* ranges

from the subtle to broad farce, a particular favorite of Holmes'. "I wanted to find a very interesting and possibly unique blend of very sharp humor in a farcical tradition combined with an open sentimentality," says Holmes. "One of my favorite styles is farce based on mistaken identity and mistaken understanding."

In an upcoming episode, Holmes plays out the mistaken-identity angle with Hilary Booth, the station diva played by Melinda Mullins. Someone mistakes her for an FBI agent. Hilary, on the other hand, believes she has been recognized as a star. The more Hilary is reassured that absolutely no one recognizes her, the more she is dying inside.

The pace of *Remember WENN* varies from lightning speed to extended pauses. And watching the show, there is remarkable comfort in not having every plot twist and turn punctuated by an artificial laugh. "If I were writing

"We're a classic movie channel, and whatever we do I thought should closely resemble that," Connelly-Skorka says of AMC's first series.

for a show that had a commercial every seven minutes, I would probably be complaining about the forced structure," Holmes says.

On the laugh-track issue, Holmes says he finds them "debilitating. There's a disparity between people watching at home and the studio audience, who always seem like they are part of some sort of government experiment on Benzedrine. The lack of a laugh track and the coziness of the show...I thought, the audience is going to have a very close relationship with this family of characters."

Since the world of *Remember WENN* is the radio station, Holmes decided early on that the "Green Room" would be the living room. For the cast, he knew that he wanted a fading Broadway star, a man of a thousand voices, an organist who would be innocently passionate and entirely swept away by the soap operas they acted out each day, and a regular girl from the Midwest, Bet-

HOLLYWOOD

ty Roberts (played by Amanda Naughton), at the center of the show.

"Radio was such an incredibly democratic medium—it was so American," says Holmes. "I think about it all the time. I've worked with Barbra Streisand...she has a movie out now [*The Mirror Has Two Faces*], and the critics are discussing is she too old, is Jeff Bridges too young. You think about radio and you could go in as a 21-year-old woman and get the lead in a show and if your voice held out you could be doing it for 40 years and no one would say, 'We're letting her go.'"

Holmes played with that idea in one episode, when a

young blind girl, played by Molly Ringwald, falls in love with *WENN*'s man with a thousand voices, Mackie Bloom (Christopher Murney). "I knew we would have to have one show about how the fellow who isn't Errol Flynn would feel if he met someone that thought of him as this romantic figure," says Holmes. "[Radio] was this one odd part of the entertainment industry where it boiled down to talent and passion, a world where wall-flowers could be Cinderellas."

That episode is typical of what *Remember WENN* offers each week: a half-hour respite from the modern world, a glass of good vermouth with a twist. ■

One of the more interesting notes to come out of the recent Girls Inc. Celebration awards, the first to be held in Los Angeles, came from honoree Chris Albrecht, president of HBO original programming and HBO independent

The Backlot...

productions. Albrecht threw out what he had planned to say and instead told the audience about his two daughters, who are 7 and 13. The rule at the house of this TV executive is no TV.

"I have problems with how girls and women are portrayed on television," Albrecht said afterward. "I struggle, as I'm sure others in this room do, to reconcile those feelings with the fact that I work in this industry." Those who work with Albrecht say he is extremely sensitive to these issues.

Albrecht was among those honored by Girls Inc.'s Re-Cast TV project, a national media literacy program, for their efforts to develop programming that portrays girls in a positive way. The vision award went to Nickelodeon for giving girls strong role models on shows like *The Secret World of Alex Mack*. Others honored by the group included actress Alfre Woodard and Jeri Taylor, executive producer of *Star Trek: Voyager*.

On Dec. 8, the people who write, direct, produce—and this year, for a change—one who "green-lights" television projects will be the stars at the



Good for girls: HBO's Albrecht is working for more positive female roles on television

14th annual Caucus for Producers, Writers & Directors honors at the Regent Beverly Wilshire. The group chose UPN president/ceo Lucie Salhany as Executive of the Year, a rare honor since the Caucus has given the award, which recognizes creative excellence, only four other times (to Bob Daly, Ted Turner, Jack Valenti and Leslie Moonves). "[Lucie] demonstrates vision, commitment and an understanding of the creative process," says Caucus chair Bill Blinn.

The award is for Salhany's building of UPN, but it also honors her time at Paramount Domestic Television, where *The Arsenio Hall Show*, *Entertainment Tonight*, *Hard Copy* and *Star Trek: The Next Generation* were developed during Salhany's watch.

The group has also added The Caucus Honors—first to be recognized are Dean Hargrove, in the producer category (*Diagnosis Murder*, *Matlock*, *Columbo*); Gary David Goldberg, in writing

(*Spin City*, *Family Ties*, *Brooklyn Bridge*); and Dan Petrie in directing (*Mark Twain and Me*, *My Name Is Bill W.*, *A Town Torn Apart*).

Couldn't we just call it Earth Day? We have just lived through an alien invasion in Los Angeles—not *Independence Day*, but the recent *3rd Rock From the Sun Day*. Around noon, the cast arrived en masse at Planet Hollywood, where high commander Dick Solomon's (John Lithgow)

squeaky leather pants went up on the wall. That evening, the cast made its way to the Dolittle Theater near Hollywood and Vine for a reading of "The Official Report on Earth by High Commander Dick Solomon." When a recent episode of the NBC hit ended with the alien band, Tommy, Sally and Harry, gathered around Dick as he contemplated selling his report for \$1,000 a pop, it seemed like a joke. HarperCollins priced it at \$12.95 instead, and at least in L.A., the books are flying off the shelves—bookstores across the city were sold out. Earthlings will apparently gladly pay \$12.95 for a dose of alien philosophy from a totally fictional character. Hey, wait, maybe that's the joke.

Larry Hancock is NBC Studios' new director of prime-time series programs. Hancock's assignments include the creative and production elements of the Studios' prime-time series, including *Homicide: Life on the Street* and *Profiler*.

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WASHINGTON
Alicia Mundy

The In-Your-Face Race

Led by 'Roll Call' and newcomer 'The Hill', capital political pubs are winning readers and advertisers



Do politicians like to read about themselves? If you have to think about this answer, you don't live in Washington. Nor do you subscribe to the various chronicles published of, by and for the people of Capitol Hill.

Washington is awash in papers and journals detailing the daily actions of the powerful and their plenipotentiaries. Among the most influential publications (besides national dailies such as *The Washington Post*, *New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Washington Times* and *Wall Street Journal*) are *The National Journal*, a weekly; *Congressional Quarterly*, which isn't (it appears both daily and weekly); *Political Hotline*, recently purchased by *National Journal*, a faxed newsletter that gets the rumors to readers with their morning coffee; and *Congressional Digest*, a twice-daily pub from the *National Journal*.

And then there's *Roll Call*, Capitol Hill's version of *Variety*. Published twice weekly in offices behind the railroad tracks at Union Station, the tabloid is recognizable from a distance by its routinely unregistered pictures and often fuzzy print. *Roll Call* is not, as they say, "high concept." But it is highly visible and, surprise, highly profitable. New Yorkers and other trendy media watchers tend to assume that Washington's political scorecards are loss leaders for real publications, or are financial black holes for egoists who underwrite mags instead of merely paying for psychotherapy. That assumption is crazy.

Most of these Washington pubs are fat and happy. It was the delirious obesity of *Roll Call* that prompted several New York investors to launch a competitor. That's when they found out what a little giant *Roll Call* is.

Two years ago, Jerry Finkelstein, owner of New York-based News Communications (publisher of a string of weekly newspapers from Manhattan to the Hamptons), launched *The Hill* with publisher and Editor in Chief Martin Tolchin. Tolchin was a well-known *New York Times* White House reporter and Capitol Hill gadfly. At the time, the new guys on the block boasted that they were going to push *Roll Call* aside. These days, however, *The Hill*'s leaders settle for lines such as "There's room for both papers in this market." That doesn't mean that *The Hill* is getting flattened—its owners are just facing reality.

In 1994, the "Republican Revolution" spurred a surge of interest in Congress. *The Hill* had just been established. The GOP revolution served to increase the visibility of *Roll Call*, which responded promptly to the changes on Capitol Hill, and it gave *The Hill* a chance to strut its stuff.

In the strange world of Washington, the birth of a new paper in conjunction with the birth of a new Congress led to more advertisers. John Sullivan, publisher of *The National Journal* (another extremely profitable enterprise),

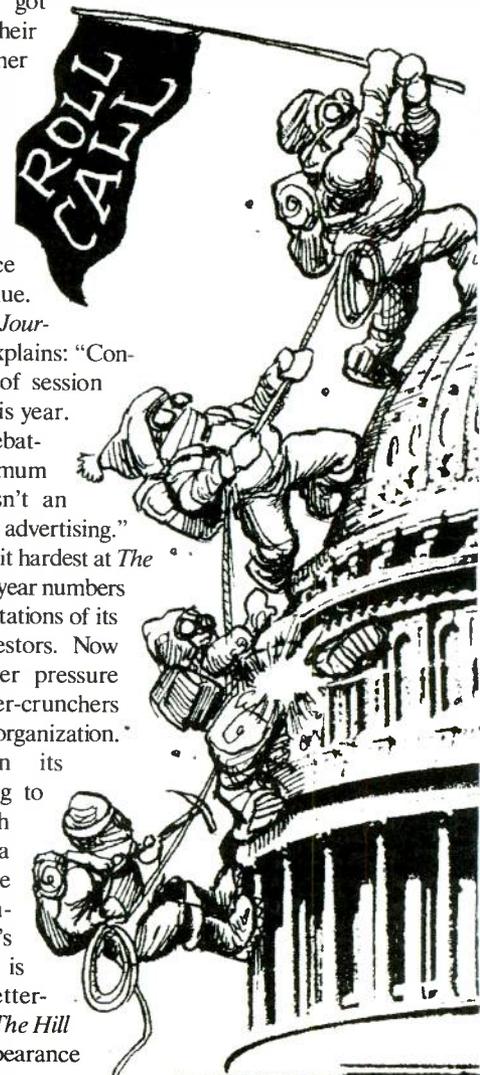
explains: "People in New York don't understand how successful financially the publishing industry is in this town." *National Journal*, in 1983, was the first publication to sell "advocacy ads." Now advocacy groups underwrite the major political journals. "And the increase in publications reaching the Hill audience has led to an increase in advertisers," Sullivan notes. Targeted advertising is hot.

The three-year debate over the telecom bill resulted in enormous profits for political pubs. And though *The Hill* lost money its first year, "it did much, much better financially than its backers expected," says a Washington media analyst. But so did *Roll Call*, which was bought by *The Economist* in 1993. "It's a f----- cash cow," says a former *Roll Call* writer. A couple of years ago, *Roll Call* began an employee profit-sharing plan, the writer says. But *Roll Call* had to amend the plan a year later when its profitability resulted in staffers making "unbelievable amounts of money—some got one-fifth of their salary," the former staffer says.

Yet 1996 was not the best year for political pubs. Election years should produce stronger revenue. But as *National Journal*'s Sullivan explains: "Congress was out of session too much of this year. Or they were debating the minimum wage, which isn't an issue that begets advertising."

The fallout hit hardest at *The Hill*, whose first-year numbers raised the expectations of its New York investors. Now Tolchin is under pressure from the number-crunchers in Finkelstein's organization.

Working in its favor, according to critics such as *Post* media watcher Howie Kurtz and members of *Roll Call*'s own hierarchy, is *The Hill*'s better-looking layout. *The Hill* has a clearer appearance



than its rival, thanks in part to printing by *The Washington Times* at its modern plant. *The Hill* has a color cover and (relatively) unblurred pictures.

What *The Hill* doesn't have is *Roll Call*'s high-powered columnists, such as Morton Kondracke (seen on *The McLaughlin Group*); quote meister Norman Ornstein; campaign expert Stuart Rothenberg; and Charlie Cook, whose independent publication, *The Cook Report*, is the Bible of election analysis. Cook and Rothenberg's forecasts on House and Senate races are to politics what Salomon Brothers and Merrill Lynch tips are to stock traders.

Roll Call's postelection special on the new Congress and the new freshmen was a must-read. It was *Roll Call* that broke the House banking scandal

that led to the downfall of Rep. Dan Rostenkowski. *Roll Call* stories ignited and fueled the investigation of Speaker Newt Gingrich. Most recently, *Roll Call* ran a series on the House Administrative office, which has been inefficient at critical trivia like paying members' rent for their district offices. When Congressional cell phones began getting turned off for late payment, *Roll Call* was on the case. About a month ago, Gingrich remarked that if he saw the House Administrator's name in *Roll Call* one more time, the man was gone. The next week, *Roll Call* had another story—shortly thereafter, there was a resignation to announce. At *Roll Call*'s 40th anniversary party last year, Gingrich toasted his nemeses at the paper. Gingrich said that when he has something to communicate to members of the House, "I do it on the front page of *Roll Call*, because I know they'll all read it."

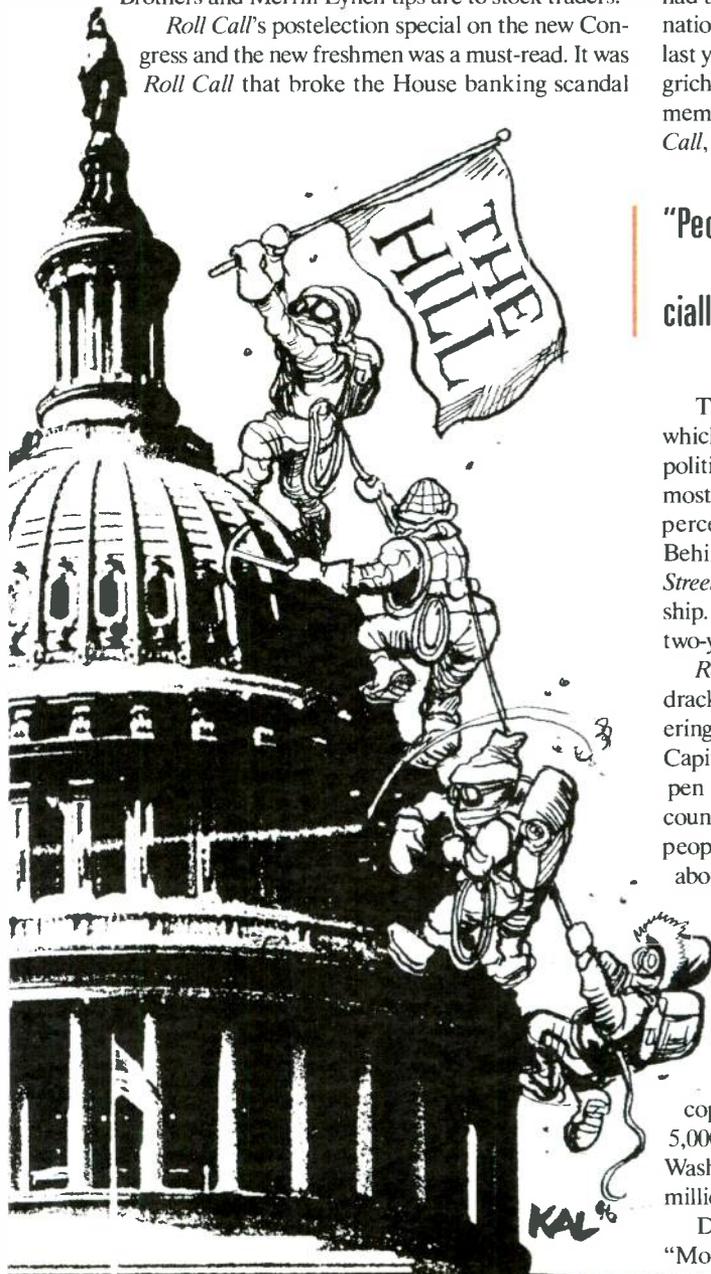
"People in New York don't understand how successful financially the publishing industry is in this town," Sullivan says.

The latest Erdis and Morgan opinion-makers poll, which charts what publications the Congressional and political elite read in Washington, ranks *Roll Call* as the most important journal after *The Washington Post* (79 percent read *Roll Call*, versus 93 percent for the *Post*). Behind them come *The New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal*. *The Hill* earned about 30 percent readership. The gap seems large, but it's a good showing for a two-year-old paper.

Roll Call loyalists don't see any comparison. Kondracke notes that *Roll Call* invented the concept of "covering Capitol Hill like a community newspaper. Think of Capitol Hill as a small town with 535 mayors—who happen to also be among the most important people in the country." *Roll Call* blankets the place, concentrating on people and politics—not policy. Only Kondracke writes about the issues, in his twice-weekly column. The rest of the paper focuses on the money trails, the personal conflicts, the political payoffs, the revenge factors, and the little cogs that screw up the big wheels.

The result is that *Roll Call* regularly beats the *Post*, which *Roll Call* editor Susan Glasser says covers the Hill more like a national daily, not like a Washington paper. *Roll Call* distributes about 11,000 copies free on Capitol Hill. But it also has more than 5,000 subscribers (at \$210 each) around the country and Washington. The paper projects revenue of more than \$7 million for this year.

Despite its success, *Roll Call* is still perceived as having "Mom and Pop-ism syndrome," one reason that some



WASHINGTON

Washington observers dismiss the paper's importance.

For its part, *The Hill* is also breaking stories—nailing Jim Sasser, Ambassador to China, for lobbying for a special law to help FedEx and getting the leak that Mathilde Cuomo is in line to become Ambassador to Italy. *The Hill's* circulation is almost all free. But, notes *National Journal's* Sullivan, "They give away about 10,000 copies that do get read. They are visible." Sources in Washington report that *The Hill's* annual revenue is \$2 million to \$3 million—no one from News Communications would confirm the number. Finkelstein recently lined up some

1996. Tolchin says: "These people are definitely in this for the long haul," a claim that other Washington publishers question. "We see a lot of outsiders looking at the money in the Washington market, coming in, and then running away when they don't see a profit in a year," says one Washington magazine owner.

"Not happening," counters Tolchin, who also denies rumors that *The Hill* is downsizing its editorial staff. *Roll Callers* note that they put out a paper averaging 64 pages twice a week, plus several additional editions (last summer's Democratic and Republican convention specials were 76 pages each) with the same size staff as *The Hill's*.

The Post's Kurtz thinks Washington has room for both papers. "*Roll Call* always had a lot of credibility with journalists and politicians," Kurtz says. "But I think *The Hill* is a good read, and it is becoming competitive on

its news reporting. And is clearly easier to read and look at. It's surprisingly good."

Sullivan says he likes both papers, but plugs that "*National Journal* is the best." *The Journal* was recently told by a staffer for Sen. Joseph Lieberman that one of its stories moved the senator to introduce a new bill. "Little things like that remind you that the audience here may be small, but it's important," Sullivan says. "That's why *Roll Call* and *The Hill* and all the rest can succeed." ■

When Gingrich has something to communicate to House members, "I do it on the front page of 'Roll Call', because I know they'll all read it."

additional investors for the company, including Wilbur Ross (husband of New York Lt. Governor Betsy McCaughey), who may become the chief backer. According to the *New York Observer*, other investors such as Carl Bernstein will add \$2 million to the "troubled" chain, whose investors already include Eric Breindel, editorial page editor of the *New York Post*. Tolchin says that some of the new investor dollars are going to *The Hill*, which, like all political publications, experienced an ad drop in

Below the Beltway...

When colleagues at newspapers and magazines in Washington publish nonfiction books, fellow reporters immediately check the index to see if they are mentioned. Richard Cohen, a syndicated columnist for *The Washington Post*, would probably rather pass on the honor. Carl Rowan, a *Post* contributor and capital institution, included Cohen in his new book, *The Coming Race War*. Rowan put Cohen in a list of people that he calls "hatemongers"—it includes radio hell-raisers Howard Stern and Rush Limbaugh, Speaker Newt Gingrich and Klansman David Duke.

The reference has caused a ruckus on the *Post's* op-ed pages and in its offices. Rowan is not a firebrand. Some African-American leaders have complained that he is too low-key, too attached to his memories of Thurgood Marshall, Lyndon Johnson and The

Great Society. Cohen is the *Post's* token liberal—a sensitive, '90s kinda guy. Both men can be self-righteous. And they both have attacked Louis Farrakhan.

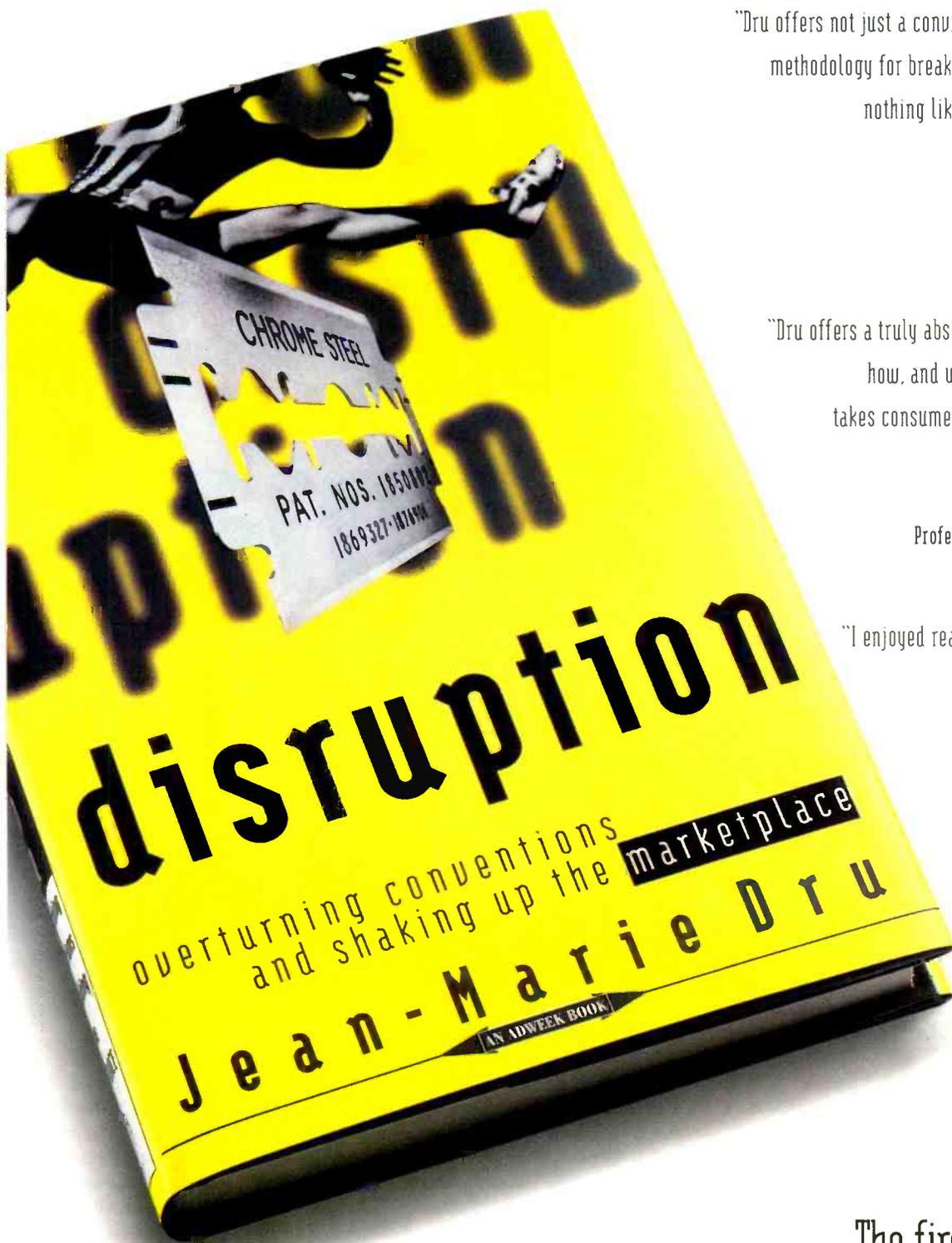
But the chances of Cohen and Rowan holding hands and singing "We Shall Overcome" at the next *Post* diversity seminar seem slim. Cohen recently defended himself on the op-ed page. He was followed by an unrepentant Rowan, whose response to Cohen triggered an "Is not—Is too" fallout inside the *Post*. Cohen says he was so shocked when he saw the Rowan slam that he went to his office neighbor, columnist William Raspberry, for shoring up. "I was upset," says Cohen, who adds that he learned about Rowan's assertion from *USA Today*. Al Neuharth was doing a column praising Rowan's book and wanted a one-line response from Cohen. "That was the first I heard about it," he says.

Rowan repeated his assertion recently on *Inside Washington*, the syndicated political talk show. A panelist there says: "Carl gets pretty heated up. But picking on Richard Cohen? Richard's the last bleeding heart. I don't get it."

Neither do several editors at the *Post*, who privately have questioned Rowan's grasp of the facts. Cohen himself says he thinks Rowan's resentment dates from "a run-in" between the two on a Freedom Forum panel about two years ago. Cohen mentioned that Howard University, which had sponsored a rally by a black leader spouting anti-Semitic statements, should have its budget reduced symbolically—by one dollar. "I haven't talked with Carl Rowan since then," Cohen adds. "He did not tell me he was writing about me in his book." The problem, explains Cohen, is that Rowan seems to think that "the force of his accusations should be enough—no examples needed to back them up. I think he's got a Louis XIV complex."

Rowan did not return phone calls.

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Adventures in Cyberspace

Welcome!

You've Got

Bob Pittman

At the security gate that bars the unannounced from dropping by the new offices of America Online, there's a delay as a guard tries to confirm that I have an appointment with Bob Pittman, the new president/ceo of AOL Networks. The cab driver this recent Wednesday morning is scanning the nondescript campus that is AOL's new headquarters. "Look," he snaps. "There's a buzzard flying over the building." Sure enough, there's a solitary black bird flying tight circles

By Cathy Taylor

Photos by John Neubauer

over 22000 AOL Way. Given AOL's recent financial performance, maybe the buzzard knows something.

If Robert Pittman, a legendary founder of MTV: Music Television and guiding force behind its early success, has seen the buzzard from his fifth-floor office, there's certainly nothing to indicate unease 15 minutes later, when, dressed in his own version of AOL's studied casual dress code, he greets me and starts talking his own cocksure version of new media theory. "I mean, this is not reinventing

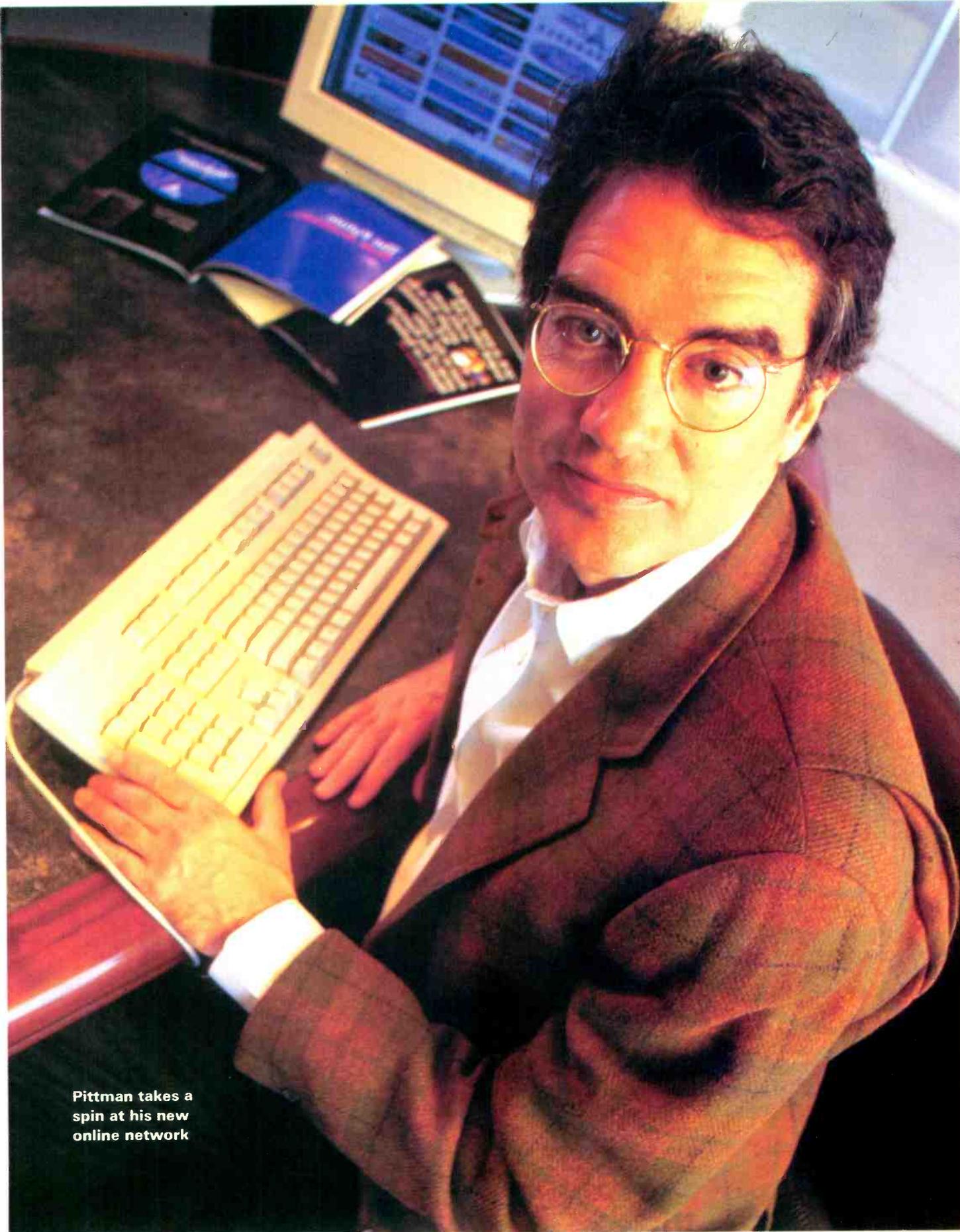
the wheel," he emphasizes. "We just have to apply what we've learned for 20 years in other businesses here. And we're in the process of doing that."

To some, the sight of Pittman in an office park in suburban Virginia, across from a Wal-Mart no less, would seem odd. This is not New York or Hollywood. But Steve Case, AOL's ceo, seems to wonder what took him so long to get here. The two had been talking for months in a business relationship that began when Pittman built an area for Century 21, his former employer, on the service. "I think he got more and more intrigued," Case recalls, by "the opportunity to build a medium."

In late October, AOL split itself into three units, naming former AOL Services chief Ted Leonsis to president/ceo of a new content production facility called AOL Studios (see sidebar), that hopes to become the Paramount or Lorimar of online media; Bruce Bond, a former British Telecom executive, to head of ANS, the infrastructure division; and Pittman to serve as president/ceo of AOL Networks, the residence of AOL, The Brand.

Pittman has been in the job for slightly more than a month, (though he has been an AOL board member since

***The mind behind MTV takes on
management of the brand called AOL***



Pittman takes a spin at his new online network

Adventures in Cyberspace

**"If I were a program supplier,
I'd be at AOL in two seconds."**

October 1995). In Pittman, AOL seems to have found somebody who has figured it all out. Or, and maybe this is the real point, somebody who thinks he has figured it all out. "Been there, done that" attitudes are extremely rare in the new media business; this is the same industry in which himself, Bill Gates, reversed the entire strategy for his own online service, the recently relaunched Microsoft Network, less than five months after unveiling the first version.

Pittman's job is to polish the surface of the first breakout brand in cyberspace, although one that has suffered megabytes of negative press in the last year as its stock price at one point dove to roughly a third of its 12-month high. Still, the headlines have obscured AOL's position as

chief consolidator, troubled or not, of the online universe. Currently at seven million subscribers—MSN, by comparison, has 1.6 million—AOL has crushed its former competition, Prodigy and CompuServe. Meanwhile, AOL has become the cyberspace town square. It's the place to go to mouth off about the O.J. Simpson trials or your annoying boyfriend. "We are the ones that are institutionalized at this point to the American culture," says Pittman.

A heady thought, but one that pales in comparison to what Pittman thinks it will take to keep AOL on top, which, in a word, is convenience. "So for me to be convenient I have to say, 'OK, you like to watch TV? OK, let me get you a great TV guide,'" he says, the words flying from his mouth. "You want to go to the movies? Let me get you great movie reviews all in one place." As long as AOL can do that, he says, the battle is won. "All I have to do is have parity. Make sure that nobody has a killer application that we don't have access to. So for us, we've got the easy job."

There are signs that AOL *has* reached a critical mass from which there is no return. Between July 1 and Sept. 30, AOL increased net subscribers by 414,000. Another 250,000 signed on in October. Further, although AOL is still frustratingly loathe to quote actual figures, a company representative claims that, since July, churn (the ratio of new subscribers to those who have quit) has been reduced by one-third. By comparison, *Wired* magazine reports, during the company's last fiscal year, 2.1 million subscribers signed on, but 1.4 million dropped out (a figure that Pittman says doesn't "jibe" with what he knows). The uptick coincides neatly with the resumption of AOL's marketing efforts, which included a new image campaign and the reappearance of the free AOL software disk, which had been missing in action for months while the company tweaked its 3.0 interface, a graphics confection that more than ever suggests to the masses that what's about to ensue will be fun. As Case puts it, "We really want AOL to be their dashboard into cyberspace."

Still, there are the financials, which do not look nearly so positive, as the stock price indicates. A change in AOL's accounting practices that quit treating marketing expenses as capital costs and put them on the balance sheet—announced at the same time as the Pittman appointment—disclosed that AOL has never made any money.

But these facts are of little concern to Pittman. "I probably did more due diligence on this company than the best investigative reporter will ever do," he asserts. He insists that AOL's churn is no worse than that of the cable or telephone industry and claims that the figures are overblown because they include trial users who never become members. "[It's] probably the most insane issue, if that would be an issue, of someone not doing their homework," he rails,

The Other Guy at AOL

As might be expected from anyone who has traveled aboard three red-eyes in six days, AOL Studios president/ceo Ted Leonsis seemed a little giddy during a phone interview several weeks ago. But it's also true that for Leonsis, whose new vistas have opened up. Not only does his new post make him the content kingpin of the online universe; he believes that his company, having atoned for its accounting and organizational sins, "is kind of back. We're going to play offense again," Leonsis says.

But the executive, who has had a public profile as high as that of AOL chairman/ceo Steve Case, is clearly miffed at speculation that had him losing clout to Pittman when the latter joined the company in October. The two executives are close friends.

Leonsis, like Pittman, reports to Case. Leonsis now sells content to Pittman, as though he were a 20th Century Fox TV executive and Pittman were the programming chief at the Fox network. But another aspect of Leonsis' mandate is to secure distribution. Naturally, AOL would be the distributor of first resort. But, says Leonsis, "I very much intend to sell our content to Microsoft and AT&T WorldNet and put it on the Web itself."

The strategy is based on the widely held belief that, as with all other media, the online world will consolidate into a medium with a handful of major gatekeepers. The challenge for its production executives then becomes getting their content past the gates. "When you look at media in general, media coagulates. It does not disaggregate," Leonsis observes, obviously pleased with his phrasing. —CT

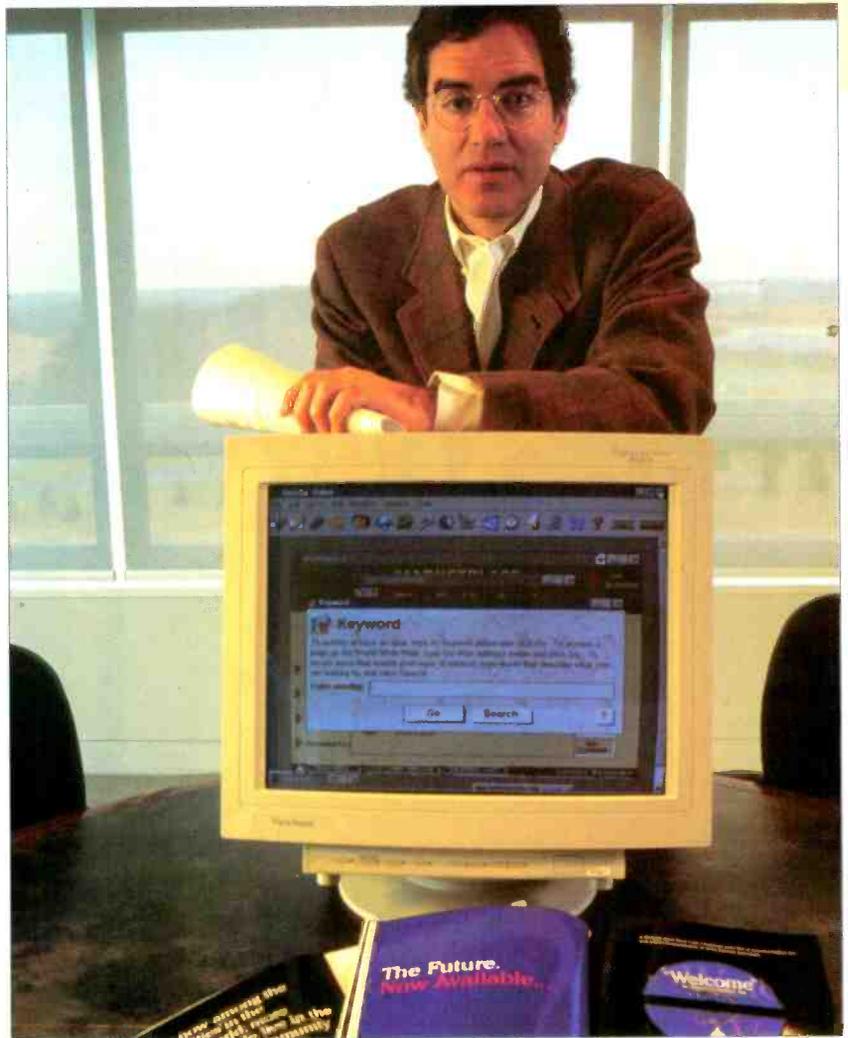
**Pittman on competition:
"All I have to do is
have parity."**

in a manner that, given the hints of his Mississippi drawl, manages to sound soft-spoken as well as sharply critical. AOL's acquisition costs (basically, the amount of money it takes per capita to pull in a subscriber) have been equally misunderstood, he contends. Pittman says most people analyze acquisition costs simply by dividing the number of new subscriptions by total marketing costs, a misstep that once again strikes him as "insane." AOL's marketing budget builds subscriptions *and* the brand itself.

But is Pittman right? Once he starts spinning his thick, um, web of past media anecdotes, it seems as though part of what has made him successful is his ability not to see buzzards, real or imagined. Like his coworkers Case and Leonsis, he's hesitant to admit to any major weakness in the AOL firmament. Suggest that, for instance, MSN should be viewed as more than just some online service that has a fraction of the subscribers, and it takes minutes' worth of AOL spin for him to finally say, "Microsoft has more clout than their subscriber level would suggest." Not, of course, that MSN could constitute a threat to AOL.

But to his credit, Pittman is long past making direct MTV analogies when summing up what AOL could come to mean in a demystified, massified cyberspace. He agrees that perhaps the best way to compare AOL to other media businesses is to think of it as a hybrid, with the concern with brand image that typifies the most robust cable networks, but the nuts-and-bolts of a TCI. The trick becomes to turn what could be seen simply as a distribution channel into a brand in its own right. "The problem is that TCI and Time Warner never developed an identity for their service. They were just generic cable," he says. The beauty of having AOL to brand rather than, say, Time Warner Cable, is that even if AOL is viewed merely as a distribution platform, it runs all of the program brands beneath it, the "channels" that range from The Hub to Kids Only. "As a cable network person, the frustration was we didn't even know who our customers were," he says.

While Pittman is still short on details about what will happen under his stewardship, it's apparent that he will work to massage the service towards the consumer, without abrupt changes. Instead, he'll look for alterations that make the service easier to use. And look for something else, a sort of Pittman-style positive reinforcement that harks back to even before MTV. Marshall Cohen, a longtime associate of Pittman's, recalls how Pittman managed to give mere movie reruns a positive spin while at The Movie Channel. His positioning? That showing the same movie over and over was really a convenience since people had other leisure-time choices. Similarly, MTV promos were chock-full of propaganda. "We always told the audience why it was a good thing to be watching MTV," says Cohen.



The focus on making consumers feel good about AOL looks like it will go much further than the welcome screen. A footnote in the October restructuring was that member services, the kind of tech support that many first-time users encounter on AOL, has become a marketing function, ultimately reporting to Pittman. Further, Pittman has reorganized the programming group and created a channel promotions group, the focus of which is to promote and cross-promote throughout AOL in ways that make the service easily navigable. Historically, the service has not promoted content contained in one channel on another. But Leonsis predicts that consumers will start to see ads in traditional media touting the content brands within AOL.

Content that Pittman believes will gravitate to AOL as part of the natural order of things. "If I were a program supplier, I'd be at AOL in two seconds...I know that mentality, I've been that before. They want eyeballs," he exclaims, his drawl becoming particularly pronounced. "They want strength. They want to be with the winner. And they want it today."

No buzzards here. ■

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marketing computers icon awards Official Entry Form

Deadline for entries: January 8, 1997

Each entry, including multiple entries submitted in the campaign categories, must be accompanied by a separate entry form. Photocopy this sheet for additional entries.

Submitted by

Name _____
Title _____
Company _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone _____
Fax _____

By submitting your entry you agree to allow Marketing Computers use this entry in any editorial or promotional product associated with the ICON Awards.

Entry Information

Entry name _____
Category name _____ Category no. _____
Materials submitted: Flat _____ Tape _____ Slide _____
Dates during which this entry appeared or aired _____
Is this entry part of a campaign entry (categories 1-4 or 22)? _____
If so, this entry is the _____ (1st, 2nd or 3rd) of three.
URL (Category 30) _____

Client

Company _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Client contact _____
Phone _____
Fax _____

Agency

Company _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Agency contact _____
Phone _____
Fax _____

Credits

Creative Director _____
Art Director _____
Photographer _____
Illustrator _____
Copywriter _____
Other credit _____

Checklist

- Send all entries to: **Marketing Computers ICON Awards, 1515 Broadway, New York, NY 10036.**
- Official Entry Form: In addition to the original form, please send 2 copies of each entry form and ALSO attach a third copy to the actual entry.
- Collateral materials presented as indicated in the category list.
- Check or money order made payable to Marketing Computers Icon Awards must accompany entry.
- Photocopy your entry for your own files.
- ENTRIES CANNOT BE RETURNED. CAMPAIGNS MUST HAVE RUN DURING CALENDAR YEAR 1996.

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All entries must be received by January 8. Entry fees are:

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First Campaign \$150. Each additional Campaign \$125.

- Single Entries (categories 5-21, 23-36) *First Single Entry \$125. Additional Single Entry \$95.*

Checks or money orders should be made payable to Marketing Computers ICON Awards. Send all entries to: Marketing Computers ICON Awards, 1515 Broadway, 12th floor, New York, NY 10036.

Eligibility

Entries must have been published, aired or taken place during the calendar year 1996 (1/1/96 - 12/31/96).

Who is eligible: Products and services in the following categories: computer hardware, computer software, online services, computer distributors, computer and electronic retailers, resellers and VARs.

Who is not eligible: Products and services in the following categories: video games, consumer electronics, telecommunications (including beepers, cellular phones, etc.), magazine, newspaper and newsletter publishers.

Advertising Categories

CAMPAIGNS

(all product and service categories)

1. Print
2. TV
3. Radio
4. World Wide Web banner campaign

>Entry criteria: A campaign entry comprises THREE samples from a campaign consisting of at least three spots, ads or banners. Each print campaign entry must be mounted, full size, on three boards. Each video campaign entry must be submitted on 3/4 inch tape (entries on 1/2 inch tape will be returned), with all three samples on a SINGLE cassette. Radio campaign entries must be submitted on a SINGLE standard audio cassette, three samples per tape, and be accompanied by transcripts of all spots submitted. World Wide Web banner campaign entries must be submitted on a SINGLE high-density diskette. Each banner submitted must be a copy of the GIF or JPEG file actually used on the Web.

>Note: Any single ad or spot in a campaign may be judged also as an individual entry. However, it must be submitted separately.

PRINT/corporate

(all product and service categories)

5. Corporate, image or branding
Non product-specific advertising
6. Corporate, channel or trade
Channel and/or trade advertising

>Entry criteria: SINGLE ad, magazine or newspaper. Entries must be mounted, full size, on board.

PRINT/hardware

7. Complete systems

Desktop computers, workstations, minicomputers, microcomputers, mainframes, etc.

8. Components

Monitors, keyboards, mice, trackballs, micro-

processors, memory chips, video boards, etc.

9. Peripherals

CD-ROM readers (external and internal), speakers, modems, scanners, etc.

10. Network hardware

Hubs, routers, switches, etc.

>Entry criteria: SINGLE ad, magazine or newspaper. Entries must be mounted, full-size, on board.

PRINT/software

11. Applications (all platforms). Word processors, spreadsheets, databases, communication programs (including commercial online services), etc.

12. Operating systems, languages and utilities (all platforms)

13. Non-gaming entertainment, education or reference (all platforms)

14. Games (all platforms)

>Entry criteria: SINGLE ad, magazine or newspaper. Entries must be mounted, full-size, on board.

PRINT/channel

15. Master distributors, distributors, wholesalers

16. VARs, resellers, business and consumer retail

>Entry criteria: SINGLE ad, magazine or newspaper. Entries must be mounted, full-size, on board.

PRINT/service and support

17. Consumer services

18. Business-to-business services

>Entry criteria: SINGLE ad, magazine or newspaper. Entries must be mounted, full-size, on board.

BROADCAST

(all product and service categories)

19. TV commercial (short-form)

(2 minutes or less)

20. TV commercial (long-form & infomercial)

(2 minutes or more)

21. Radio

>Entry criteria: SINGLE spot; video on 3/4-inch tape (entries on 1/2 inch tape will be returned), radio on standard audio cassette. Each entry, video or radio, must be submitted on a separate cassette (i.e. one entry per tape). Each radio entry must be accompanied by a transcript.

Marketing Categories

DIRECT MARKETING

(all product and service categories)

22. Direct mail/campaign

>Entry criteria: A campaign entry comprises THREE samples from a campaign consisting of at least three spots or ads. Each direct mail campaign entry must be separated and mounted, full size, on three boards.

23. Direct mail/flat

24. Direct mail/package

>Entry criteria: SINGLE direct mail piece. Components must be separated and mounted on a single board.

PROMOTION & SUPPORT PROGRAMS

(all product and service categories)

25. Promotional video, short form

>Entry criteria: SINGLE, NON-BROADCAST video, less than 15 minutes in length. Each entry should be submitted on a separate 3/4 inch tape. (Entries on 1/2 inch tape will be returned.)

26. Promotional video, long form

>Entry criteria: SINGLE, NON-BROADCAST

video, greater than 15 minutes in length. Each entry should be submitted on a separate 3/4 inch tape. (Entries on 1/2 inch tape will be returned.)

27. Print collateral and point of purchase (POP)

>Entry criteria: Each entry comprises a single print collateral piece OR a maximum of three related collateral pieces. Each entry must be mounted on a single board. Print collateral EXCLUDES direct mail pieces, which must be entered separately in categories 23 or 24.

28. Product packaging

>Entry criteria: Each entry comprises a single shelf-ready product package (i.e. not collapsed) and a 35mm slide of the entry.

29. Trade show exhibit

>Entry criteria: Single trade show booth or exhibit. Each entry comprises a maximum of four 35mm slides of the exhibit as it appeared on trade show floor. (Artist's renderings, blueprints, design drawings, etc. will not be accepted.)

MULTIMEDIA & NEW MEDIA

(all product and service categories)

30. World Wide Web site

>Entry criteria: SINGLE Web site. Submit three screen shots ("Welcome" or opening screen and any two others) in PICT format on a single Mac-readable diskette. (Entries not in this format will be returned.) Also list URL address on entry form.

31. Multimedia presentation or demo/diskette

>Entry criteria: SINGLE multimedia presentation or demo, comprising one or more diskettes, any format. Entries in other media (Zip or Syquest disks, portable hard drives, etc.) will not be accepted.

32. Multimedia presentation or demo/CD-ROM

>Entry criteria: SINGLE multimedia presentation or demo, comprising one or more CD-ROMs, any format. Entries in other media (Zip or Syquest disks, portable hard drives, etc.) will not be accepted.

GRAPHIC DESIGN

(all product and service categories)

33. Corporate identity or logo

>Entry criteria: New corporate identities introduced in calendar year 1996. Each entry comprises a maximum of five pieces: a standalone, camera-ready rendering of the identity/logo, plus examples of its use on corporate letterhead, a #10 envelope, a single miscellaneous promotional piece and a single print advertisement (where applicable). All pieces must be submitted on a single board.

34. Product or service identity or logo

>Entry criteria: New product or service identities introduced in calendar year 1996. Each entry comprises a maximum of four pieces: a standalone, camera-ready rendering of the identity/logo, plus examples of its use on product packaging, a single miscellaneous promotional piece and a single print advertisement (where applicable). All pieces must be submitted on a single board.

35. Annual report

>Entry criteria: All entries must have been issued in calendar year 1996.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

(all product and service categories)

36. Media kit

>Entry criteria: A single product or corporate media kit. Entries must be submitted exactly as delivered to the media (including any and all photographs, slides, diskettes or product samples). Do not include any supporting documentation on effectiveness (e.g., binders of clippings, etc.).

MOVERS

NETWORK TV

Lindy DeKoven has been promoted to executive vp of miniseries and motion pictures for television, NBC Entertainment, and long-form programming for NBC Studios. DeKoven joined NBC as senior vp of miniseries and motion pictures for television, NBC Entertainment, in March 1993... Also at NBC, **Dr. Rosalyn Weinman** has been promoted to executive vp of broadcast standards and content policy for NBC. Weinman, who had previously served as senior vp of broadcast standards and practices since 1994, is the network's representative on the television ratings implementation committee, headed by Jack Valenti.

CABLE TV

Chris Lonergan has been upped to vp of Northern region affiliate sales and marketing for Discovery Networks. He had been director of the post. Lonergan joined Discovery Networks in 1992... **Tony Fox** has been promoted to senior vp of corporate communications for Comedy Central, up from vp of corporate communications. Fox has been with Comedy Central since its inception... Also at Comedy Central, **John Cucci** has been upped to senior vp and controller. Cucci joined Comedy Central in 1991 as vp and controller.

NEW MEDIA

Rodale Press has named **Tony Pribyl** Western ad manager for Rodale Interactive. Pribyl joins Rodale Interactive after serving as Northwest sales manager for Rodale's *Men's Health*.

The Media Elite

BY MARK HUDIS AND ANYA SACHAROW

The Artful Dislodger

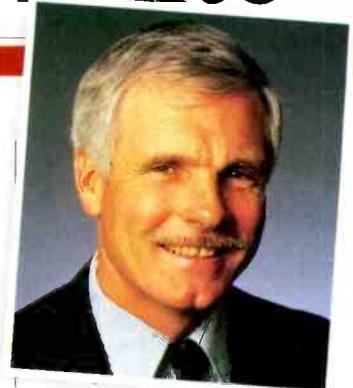
Sure, he's having to lay off hundreds of people—including his own son—in the course of merging his company with Time Warner, but Ted Turner apparently still has a big heart to go with his solid business head. A story now making the rounds has the straight-talking, big-thinking, small-spending Turner (who drives a Ford Taurus rather than a fancy European number) giving the gang at Time Warner a lesson in frugality.

Turner reportedly admired Time Warner's art collection during a recent trip to the company's Manhattan offices. As he

walked around the cavernous Time Warner conference room prior to a meeting with top TW execs, he asked a Turner employee with him to identify the paintings.

When the TW muckety-mucks, led by chairman Gerald Levin, joined Ted and company in the conference room, Turner again walked around the room. He pointed out the works of art one by one, noting the names of the prominent artists. The TW suits nodded proudly, accepting Turner's apparent praise.

"Well, I want them out of here," Turner snapped. "You have a million-dollar art col-

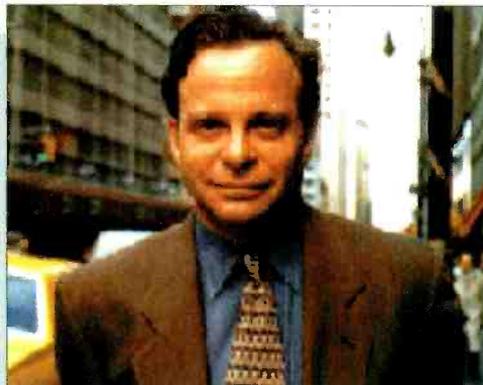


GEORGE BENNETT/TBS

Turner to Time Warner: Can those canvases

lection, and we're laying off people in Atlanta."

After everyone's heart skipped a beat, Levin and company agreed to sell. A Time Warner representative confirms that, as part of a "cost-reduction effort," the company is in the process of selling some art acquired several years ago.



Andy Plesser gathers gossip from the pros and puts it up on his Web site

Cyber-Dishing Dissed

If there's one thing this world needs, it's more gossip. And all the better if it's free. So says Andy Plesser, a New York PR man who has decided to crib from the nation's hottest gossip columns—the *New York Post's* Page Six, Rush & Molloy from the *New York Daily News*, to name two—and paste the clips in the Gossip Central section of his new Web site (www.plesser.com) for all the world to see, gratis.

Which isn't sitting well with all the crib-

ees. Richard Johnson, of the *Post's* Page Six fame, can't fathom why anyone would get their dirt from the Web.

"I don't understand the whole Internet thing anyway," Johnson confesses. "And I'm not sure anyone is looking at Page Six on their computer to avoid paying fifty cents at the newsstand. But if they are," he adds, "I hope they rot in hell!"

Neal Travis, a fellow *Post*-er and unwilling Gossip Central contributor (at least for the moment), is even more forthcoming with his disapproval. "What kind of bull is this?" he wonders. "I don't understand. Why should we put our stuff on the Web? I thought our job was to make money for the *New York Post*," he says.

Plesser, for his part, just wants to offer up a bit of Web-based fun.

"Gossip's certainly of interest to a lot of people. Our site is totally free, and the columns we've assembled certainly break a lot of news," he says. But he did neglect to ask the scribes' permission before launching the site last week.

"I'm assuming they'll all be delighted," he explains. —MAH

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MARIBETH BURKLEY, DIRECTOR OF CREATIVE SERVICES
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MEDIA DISH

'Glamour' Honors 10 for Clout and Chutzpah



At the Glamour Women of the Year Awards, presented at the New York Public Library, (from left): 'Glamour' publisher Mary Berner; Rosie O'Donnell, one of the 1996 Women of the Year; and 1990 Women of the Year honoree Pat Schroeder

'Business Week' Indulges Indulgences



On hand to sample and learn about wine and cigars at the "Enlightenment and Indulgence Dinner" at New York's Maloney & Porcelli restaurant, (from left): Adam Diamond, assistant manager, media services, Tiffany & Co.; Bruce Kostic, consumer ad manager, 'Business Week'; and Rebecca Edelmann, buyer, Bloomingdale's

Elite Murder Wrap

Hearst's *Marie Claire* and King World's syndicated TV show 'Inside Edition' have scored an FBI assist, helping to nab a convicted murderer. On Nov. 15, 'Edition' ran a segment inspired by *Marie Claire*'s November special report on female fugitives. Shortly thereafter, a Chicago waitress called the feds to turn in her coworker—Bobbie Louise Raspberry, alias Misty Bruneau. An FBI agent on the case says the two media groups "greatly shortened the time...required to catch a dangerous fugitive."



Will He Kiss the Brando of Latin America?

Call him the Larry King of Latin America, only younger and better-looking. Last month, Jaime Bayly, 31, began his latest gig, a weeknight one-on-one talker



Jaime Bayly to do that Larry King thing in Spanish

with a call-in element, called *En Directo con Jaime Bayly* on CBS TeleNoticias, a Spanish-language news service that reaches 21 countries worldwide and will launch full-time in the U.S. early next year. Currently, *En Directo* (translation: *Live With*) is carried on WEYS in Miami. Bayly had been a full-time print and TV journalist in his native Peru, working as a political columnist for the daily newspaper *La Prensa* and on Peruvian TV until his move to Miami in 1995. Over the years, Bayly devoured American TV icons like King ("I like him very much—he's a combination of journalist and entertainer," says Bayly in workable English), David Letterman ("He doesn't take his guests or himself seriously") and the gang from *60 Minutes*. Though he's not averse to conducting English-language interviews, Bayly's best interviewees have been other Spanish-language TV jockeys Cristina (the Oprah of Latin America, as long as we're in this vein) and Dom Francisco, host of Univision's *Sabado Gigante* (translation: Giant Saturday). Up next is Julio Iglesias...you know, the Johnny Mathis of Latin America. —MAH

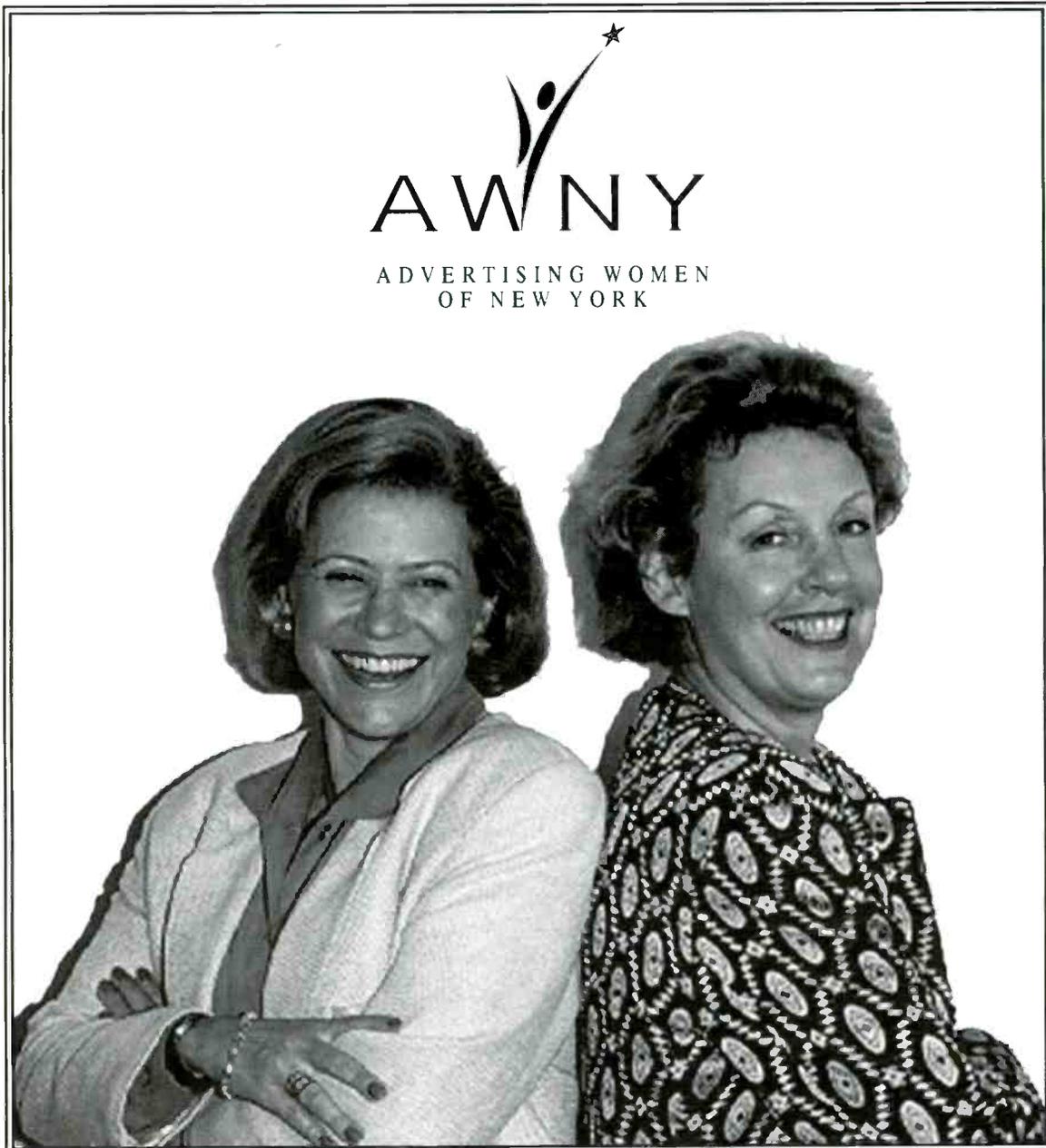
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Culture Trends is a compilation of data collected from *Billboard*, *The Hollywood Reporter*, MTV and Nielsen Media Research to track current trends in the movie, television, video and recorded music marketplaces.



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Billboard's Top 20 Albums

Compiled from a national sample of retail, store and rack sales reports, for the week ending November 30th, 1996 provided by *Sound Scan*.

This Week	Last Week	Peak Pos.	Wks on Chart	Artist	Title
1	New	1	1	Snoop Doggy Dogg	Tha Doggfather
2	1	1	2	Makaveli	The Don Killuminati : The 7 Day Theory
3	4	3	46	No Doubt	Tragic Kingdom
4	3	1	36	Celin Deion	Falling into You
5	2	2	2	Mo Thugs Family	Family Scriptures
6	New	6	1	Soundtrack	Evita
7	7	2	7	Kenny G	The Moment
8	8	4	8	Soundtrack	Set It Off
9	11	2	22	Toni Braxton	Secrets
10	6	1	4	Van Halen	Best of Volume 1
11	New	11	1	Lil' Kim	Hard Core
12	5	1	3	The Beatles	Anthology 3
13	New	13	1	Soundtrack	Space Jam
14	14	1	75	Alanis Morissette	Jagged Little Pill
15	24	15	3	Soundtrack	Romeo + Juliet
16	New	16	1	Soundtrack	The Mirror Has Two Faces
17	15	15	2	Journey	Trial by Fire
18	9	6	3	Babyface	The Day
19	13	12	3	Alan Jackson	Everything I Love
20	18	5	21	Keith Sweat	Keith Sweat

© 1996 Billboard/Soundscan, Inc./Broadcast Data Systems

Nielsen's Top 15 Network Programs

These are the top 15 Network programs for the week ending November 10, 1996.

Rank	Program	Network	Rating	Share	Rank	Program	Network	Rating	Share
1	E.R.	NBC	24.9	41	9	Touched by an Angel	CBS	15.2	23
2	NFL Football	FOX	22.3	36	10	60 Minutes	CBS	13.8	22
3	World Series, Game 4	FOX	21.6	33	11	Cosby	CBS	13.2	21
4	Seinfeld	NBC	19.2	30	12	CBS Sun. Movie	CBS	12.6	19
5	Friends	NBC	18.0	29	13	20/20	ABC	12.4	23
6	NBC Sun. Movie	NBC	16.1	24	13	Drew Cary Show	ABC	12.2	19
6	The Single Guy	NBC	16.1	25	15	Grace Under Fire	ABC	11.7	18
8	Mon. Night Football	ABC	15.9	27					

Source: Nielsen Media Research R=Repeat S=Special

EASTERN

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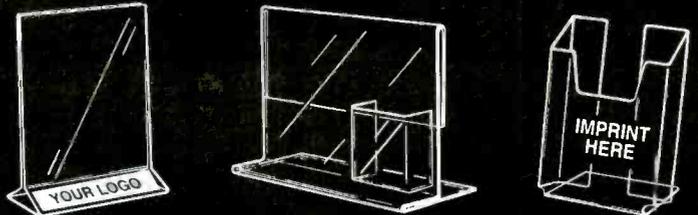
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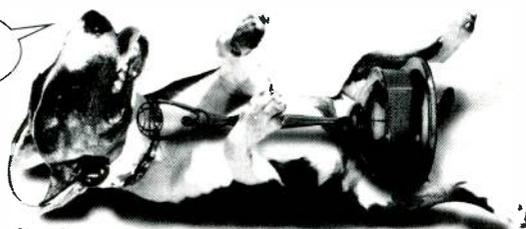
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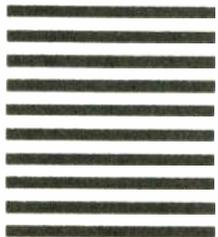


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CALENDAR

The 5th annual **International Children's Television Festival** is running through Dec. 15 at the Museum of Television & Radio in New York. Contact: 212-621-6600.

Online Advertising '97, a conference presented by Jupiter Communications, will be held Dec. 3-4 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in New York. Contact Melissa Lester at 212-780-6060, ext. 103.

The 4th annual **Fall Internet World conference and exhibition** will be held Dec. 9-13 at the Jacob Javits Convention Center, New York. Contact: 1-800-MECKLER.

California Cable Television Association presents **The Western Show**, Dec. 11-13 at the Anaheim Convention Center, Anaheim, Calif. Contact: 510-428-2225.

The National Association of Television Programming Executives will hold its 34th annual **program conference and exhibition** Jan. 13-16 at the Ernest Morial Convention Center in New Orleans. Contact: 310-453-4440.

The 19th annual **International Sport Summit** will be held Jan. 15-16 at the Marriott Marquis in New York. David Downs, vp programming, ABC Sports, will be among the featured speakers. Contact: 301-986-7800.

The Cabletelevision Advertising Bureau's 10th annual **Sales Management School**, focusing on building winning sales teams, will be held Jan. 16-18 at the Del Lago Conference Center in Houston. Contact: 212-508-1235.

Media Notes

NEWS OF THE MARKET

'Guy' Creator to Big Ticket

Brad Hall, creator and executive producer of Castle Rock/NBC's *The Single Guy*, has signed a production deal with Big Ticket Television. Hall brings to the partnership a three-series development deal with CBS (*Mediaweek*, Nov. 18). Hall will remain a consultant for a short time to *The Single Guy*, which has been taken over by coexecutive producers Bill Rosenthal and Michael Davidoff. Paramount and Castle Rock also sought a deal with Hall. His CBS package is said to be worth \$15 million. Hall's first show for CBS is expected for midseason 1997 or fall '98.

Fox Reshapes Program Unit

Fox Entertainment Group has restructured, with Bob Greenblatt, executive vp of programming, named to oversee current development and current programming for the network. The revamped division will be more like those in place at NBC and ABC, where shows are shepherded by a group of executives from concept through their broadcast lifespans. In the restructuring, Jeff Eckerle has been promoted to vp of current programming, focusing on drama series, and Mark Ganshirt joins the net from ICM as vp of current programming, focusing on comedy.

New Head of NYC Cable

On Jan. 1, Barry Rosenblum will take over Time Warner Cable of New York City, the country's largest single cable system with 1.1 million subscribers. Rosenblum has held a variety of management positions in the company for the last 17 years, starting in Jacksonville, Fla., as a sales manager

before coming to New York via Denver. Most recently, he was in charge of consolidating the two systems serving Manhattan into the group, which also includes Queens, Staten Island and a portion of Brooklyn. Rosenblum succeeds the retiring Dick Aurelio, who has served as president of TWCNY since 1989. Aurelio will remain a consultant to New York 1, the local all-news channel.

A&E Goes 'Unexplained'

A&E in January plans to launch a new weekly series in prime time called *The Unexplained*. The reality series centers on UFO sightings, exorcism, astrol-

ogy, ESP, miracle cures and "the eternal riddle of sexual attraction," the network said.

States Urged on Liquor Ads

Center for Science in the Public Interest, the Washington, D.C.-based nonprofit health advocacy and educational organization, last week asked the directors of 17 state alcohol sales monopolies to "join citizen efforts to restore the voluntary ban on hard liquor advertising on radio and television." In a letter, George Hacker, CSPI's director of the alcohol policies project, exhorted state officials "to turn up the heat on Seagram and other distillers" by refusing to sell any



Libassi brings special-interest expertise to his new job

'Investor's Change

A *Reader's Digest* veteran is the new editor of the fast-growing independent personal-finance magazine *Individual Investor*. Paul T. Libassi, who as *Digest's* editorial director for magazine development oversaw special-interest titles, including *American Health* and *The Family Handyman*, has replaced Gordon T. Anderson. Anderson has joined a Boston Internet services firm. Libassi had previously been in charge of developing *Digest* original articles, and he is a former editor of three-time National Magazine Award winner, *The Sciences*.

Media Notes

CONTINUED

liquor brand that advertises on radio or television within [that] state." Hacker claimed that Seagram's ads "have put kids directly in the crosshairs" by airing during p.m. telecasts of the *Cosby* show and during sports telecasts.

AOL Links to Excite

America Online and search engine Excite last week struck an alliance that makes Excite the preferred browser on the online service. The deal calls for Excite to purchase WebCrawler, the AOL search engine. In return, AOL has increased its equity stake in Excite. AOL said that the combined market share of the two search engines would be 44.1 percent, making it the highest in the competitive search engine category. Bob Pittman, the AOL Networks president and ceo, who had a seat on the Excite board, has resigned that post.

NBC Names EVPs

Lindy DeKoven and Rosalyn Weinman have been promoted to executive vp posts at NBC. DeKoven, who joined the network in 1993, heads up miniseries and telefilms at NBC Entertainment and long-form programming at NBC Studios, the network's production arm. She also oversees production of *The Center*, a midseason drama starring Kellie Martin. Weinman now is executive vp of broadcast standards and content policy for the network. She oversees NBC's award-winning *The More You Know* public service campaign.

TCI Keeps Bond Rating

Tele-Communications Inc. last week named John Malone to the post of chairman, replacing TCI's founder and former chairman, Bob Magness, who died Nov. 15.

Malone will keep his duties and titles of president and ceo. In related news, Fitch Investors Service reaffirmed its evaluation of TCI's debt rating at BBB- (triple B minus), keeping it at investment grade.

'Judy' Gets Some Upgrades

Worldvision Enterprises' freshman syndicated strip *Judge Judy* has been upgraded in nine markets since the beginning of the sweeps period. *Judy*, starring plucky New York magistrate Judy Sheindlin, has shown steady ratings growth since its debut two months ago, and through the first three weeks of the November sweeps the show has averaged a 2.1 rating/8 share (NSI, Oct. 28–Nov. 22) in Nielsen's 34 metered markets. *Judy* airs mostly in late-morning and early-afternoon time periods in the metered markets.

'Universe' Is Renewed

Los Angeles-based syndicator Rysher Entertainment has extended a 13-week order for additional first-run episodes of Chris-Craft/United Television Productions' *Strange Universe*. Ira Bernstein, Rysher president of syndication, said the decision to pick up the paranormal strip is based on ratings growth in such major markets as New York, Chicago, Dallas, Atlanta, Houston and Phoenix. Cleared in 143 markets representing 82 U.S. coverage, *Strange Universe* continues to struggle near the bottom of Nielsen's national ranking report, with a 1.1 rating season-to-date (NSS, Sept. 2–Nov. 10).

Turner Movies 'Now Playing'

Turner Classic Movies, a commercial-free vintage movie service that now reaches 12 million



ROBIN GIRAUBARD

Hamill did a stint as *N.Y. Post* editor four years ago

New Chief at N.Y. News

Pete Hamill, the veteran newspaper columnist and novelist, was named on Nov. 26 to edit the New York *Daily News*, succeeding Martin Dunn, who resigned to return to his native England. The *News*, once the nation's most read newspaper, nearly folded several times in recent years as a succession of owners, starting with the Tribune Co. of Chicago, made key strategic mistakes at a time of tumultuous change in the newspaper business. Under present owner Mortimer B. Zuckerman, the *News* has returned to profitability and circulation growth. Hamill, a native New Yorker, said he expects to make the paper more reflective of the city it serves, particularly of the city's collective wit and sense of irony.

homes, will launch a new program guide in January, called *Now Playing*. TCM on-air host Robert Osborne will pen some of the feature articles in the magazine, which will also profile the network's star and director of the month and special programming events and themes.

Boston's WBZ Retools

A flurry of changes at CBS' O&O station in Boston, WBZ-TV: Veteran anchorman Gary LaPierre has been named to anchor the noon newscast; Alisa Becerra has been named weekend morning anchor; and Beth Germano, formerly a freelance reporter for WBZ-TV, has been tapped as a general assignment staff reporter. Lapierre will continue as morning news anchor at WBZ-TV newscast, a position he has held since 1964. Lapierre replaces Uma Pemmeraju, who left in August to join the Fox

News Channel in New York. Becerra comes to Boston from Phoenix Fox affiliate KSAZ-TV, where she was a general assignment reporter and fill-in anchor. She replaces Greg Liggins, who left to take an anchor job in his native San Francisco.

SeaGull Taps Thompson

Los Angeles-based syndicator SeaGull Entertainment has appointed Lance Thompson as president of its international programming operations. Thompson most recently headed up Santa Monica-based Film Brokers International, a sales and marketing firm representing a wide range of television, film and home video product for overseas markets. In his new post, Thompson will shepherd such SeaGull series as *Tarzan: The Epic Adventures*, *Team Extreme* (for fall 1997) and *Merlin: The Quest Begins*.



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BIG DEAL

GENERAL MOTORS

Agency: Hal Riney & Partners, San Francisco

Begins: Dec. 5

Budget: \$25 million

Media: TV, print

General Motors kicks off a \$25 million marketing push for its new EV1 electric car with a 90-second TV spot called "Appliances." GM agency Hal Riney tries to get its client's message across by likening the electric car to common household appliances.

The agency is preparing a 12-week advertising blitz for the EV1 beginning Dec. 5, the day the car becomes available at dealers.

In the TV spot, dozens of electrical appliances come to life via animation. Toasters, waffle irons and vacuum cleaners unplug themselves and stream out of a suburban home to greet their "relative," the EV1. The machines squeak and gurgle in anticipation as dramatic music rises to a crescendo just before the car appears. Actress Linda Hunt (*The Year of Living Dangerously*) provides the voiceover: "The electric car is here."

"The TV ad is a launch piece only and is really a celebration of the arrival of the electric car," said Joe Kennedy, Saturn's vp of sales, service and marketing. "The sustaining work will be more contemplative," Kennedy said, referring to magazine ads that stress the vehicle's technical innovations and the forward-thinking style of buyers.

There are 30-, 60- and 90-second versions of the spot. The 90-second spot also will be shown in movie theaters in Los Angeles and other cities, said Steven J. Morrissey, Hal Riney senior vp and account director.

The media campaign for EV1 also includes high-profile events. For example, celebrities will arrive in EV1s for the premiere of the new Sylvester Stallone movie *Daylight* on Dec. 5. Vehicles will be available for test drives. There will be 27 outdoor billboards in Los Angeles and San Diego, and a teaser page at EV1's Web site, www.gmev.com. The full Web site goes up Dec. 5.

Real Money

ADVERTISING ACTIVITY IN THE MEDIA MARKETPLACE

DISNEYLAND

Agency: Leo Burnett, Chicago

Begins: Early 1997

Budget: \$10 million (est.)

Media: TV, print, outdoor, radio
Disneyland, the first theme park created by Walt Disney more than four decades ago, will freshen up its image with a new advertising and marketing effort in 1997. The campaign will carry the tagline "Disneyland. Let's Go Play."

"It's a new theme for us," said Michele Reese, senior vp for the marketing and sales division of the Disneyland Resort in Anaheim, Calif. While most of the new ads are still in development, Reese said the campaign will have a "brand" strategy. "We're trying to reestablish the preeminence of Disneyland in people's minds and hearts."

The campaign will include TV, print, outdoor and radio work, said Reese, who declined to comment on spending. Disneyland is planning at least three new general market TV spots.

Western International Media in Los Angeles handles media planning and buying.

TV ads will be bought in major domestic spot markets with the bulk of the spending on the West Coast. The campaign will run for at least six months. Most of the ads will appear on family-oriented programs to reach Disneyland's target market.

A separate advertising effort will target the Hispanic market with two new spots, also created by Leo Burnett.

—Michael McCarthy

VOLVO

Agency: Messner, Vetere Berger McNamee Schmetterer/Euro RSCG, N.Y.

Begins: Spring 1997

Budget: \$10 million

Media: Feature-film tie-in, TV
Volvo is borrowing from BMW's Z3 play-book by investing \$10 million in a tie-in with Paramount pictures for the spring release of *The Saint* as it seeks a less typical

safety-minded family buyer and more performance-minded for its \$40,000 '98 Volvo C70 coupe.

The deal includes rights for Volvo agency Messner, Vetere Berger McNamee Schmetterer/Euro RSCG, New York, to use film footage for an ad, VIP screenings for potential Volvo customers, vehicle placements at film premieres worldwide, plus use of the car in the movie itself. Promotional materials will play up the association at the showroom level.

In the spring Volvo breaks an ad on network and national cable TV touting both *The Saint* and the car, with the copyline, "Coming to your theater this month; coming to your dealer this summer."

"This car embodies the new look of Volvo," said Bob Austin, Volvo North America's marketing director. "It's our icon. The world of entertainment has a sense of glam-

our that you can't hit as an automotive company. [*The Saint*] gives Volvo a sexy cachet."

Volvo sales are about flat this year at 76,913 cars, down .6 percent from last year as of Oct. 31. —Steve Gelsi

HEALTH O METER

Agency: Meldrum & Fewsmith, Cleveland

Begins: Dec. 2

Budget: Undisclosed

Media: Spot TV, print
Serving as the mayor of Nothing, Ariz. (pop. 4), isn't considered a stepping stone to stardom,

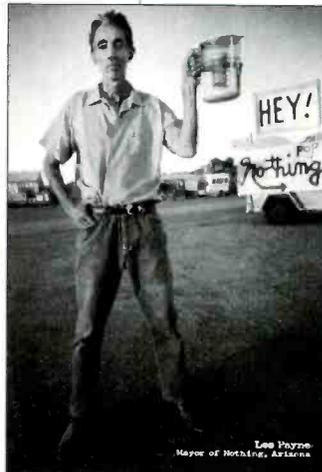
Payne, mayor of Nothing, bears water

but Les Payne gets his 30 seconds of fame in a national TV spot breaking today.

Mayor Payne has been enlisted by Health o meter Inc. in Bedford Heights, Ohio, to serve as spokesman for its new water filter pitcher.

A self-proclaimed "expert on nothing," Payne explains that Health o meter's pitcher removes impurities to make water taste the way it should: "Like nothing."

"We learned [through our consumer research] that taste is the number-one reason



Les Payne
Mayor of Nothing, Arizona

CMR Top 50

A Weekly Ranking of the Top 50 Brands' Advertising in Network Prime Time

Week of Nov. 11-17, 1996

Rank	Brand	Class	Spots	Prime-Time Ad Activity Index
1	BURGER KING	V234	77	1,849
2	MCDONALD'S	V234	37	888
3	TACO BELL	V234	27	648
4	CADILLAC AUTOS (CATERA)	T111	24	576
5	MISSION IMPOSSIBLE (VIDEO)	H330	20	480
6	DODGE TRUCKS (DAKOTA)	T117	18	432
7	1-800-COLLECT	B142	17	408
	DURACELL (ALKALINE BATTERIES)	H220	17	408
9	JC PENNEY	V321	16	384
10	BRITA (WATER FILTER PITCHER)	H235	15	360
	FANNIE MAE FOUNDATION	B189	15	360
	LITTLE CAESAR'S PIZZA REST.	V234	15	360
	PHILIPS MAGNAVOX	G561	15	360
14	AT&T LONG DISTANCE (RES.)	B142	14	336
	EVEREADY (ENERGIZER BATTERIES)	H220	14	336
	M&Ms	F211	14	336
	SPRINT LONG DISTANCE (RES.)	B142	14	336
	TIMEX (WATCHES)	G212	14	336
19	JELL-O (INSTANT PUDDING)	F115	13	312
	KMART (SPORT/TOY/HOBBY)	V324	13	312
	LINCOLN AUTOS (TOWN CAR)	T111	13	312
	SEARS (MULTI-PDTS)	V321	13	312
23	KMART (MULTI-PDTS)	V324	12	288
	METROPOLITAN LIFE INS.	B220	12	288
	NISSAN MOTOR CORP.	T112	12	288
	NUTTY PROFESSOR (VIDEO)	H330	12	288
	PRIMESTAR SATELLITE SYSTEM	H320	12	288
	TYLENOL (EXTRA-STRENGTH GLTB)	D211	12	288
29	EXCEDRIN (EXTRA-STRENGTH TAB.)	D211	11	264
	POLAROID ONE-STEP CAMERA	G230	11	264
	REMINGTON MEN'S SHAVER	D126	11	264
	TOY STORY (VIDEO)	H330	11	264
	WARNER BROS. (SPACE JAM)	V233	11	264
34	ALL CONCENTRATED DTRGNT.	H412	10	240
	CERTS (COOL MINT DROPS)	F211	10	240
	DIRECTV SATELLITE SYSTEM	H320	10	240
	HEALTHY CHOICE (PASTA SAUCES)	F117	10	240
	MAYBELLINE GREAT WEAR (LIP COLOR)	D112	10	240
	NIKE (MEN'S SNEAKERS)	A131	10	240
	RED LOBSTER	V234	10	240
	TYLENOL CHILDREN'S COLD+COUGH	D212	10	240
42	CALVIN KLEIN CK BE (FRAGRANCE)	D113	9	216
	CAMPBELLS (SOUP)	F121	9	216
	EGGO (FROZEN FRUIT WAFFLES)	F161	9	216
	ENTERPRISE RENT-A-CAR	T414	9	216
	JERZEES (SPORTSWEAR)	A117	9	216
	LEVIS (JEANS, MEN'S)	A116	9	216
	LOREAL PLENITUDE EYE CREAM	D111	9	216
	MAYBELLINE GREAT FINISH NAIL POL.	D115	9	216
	OLIVE GARDEN RESTAURANT	V234	9	216

consumers buy water filters," said Dan Dahlen, senior vp and management supervisor at Meldrum. "They do not respond nearly as significantly to the types of scientific claims and scare tactics presented in most other water filter ads."

Payne also is featured in print ads for the water pitcher, running this month. The campaign carries the tagline "Nothing tastes better." —*Scott Hume*

SMIRNOFF VODKA

Agency: Lowe & Partners/SMS, N.Y.

Begins: Dec. 20

Budget: Undisclosed

Media: Print

Heublein will break its first "spectacular," or high-tech, print ad for its Smirnoff Vodka in 450,000 subscriber copies of the Dec. 20 issue of *Entertainment Weekly*. The ad is the opening salvo in the brand's pledge to raise its profile in 1997.

A four-page insert, the ad opens to flashing red and white lights and a pop-up Smirnoff bottle on top of a shot of a man guiding Santa's reindeer to a landing. An ordinary, one-dimensional execution is running in 27 magazines, part of the brand's ongoing "Pure Thrill" campaign by Lowe & Partners/SMS, N.Y.

Smirnoff competitor Absolut has made Christmas spectaculars a yearly event, this year giving *Entertainment Weekly* subscribers a magnetic board toy, with words to construct one's own message, dubbed "Absolut Inspiration." Meanwhile, Stolichnaya vodka, imported by Carillon, is planning its own \$5 million ad blitz for early 1997, sidestepping the holiday spectaculars. Stoli will launch six new flavored vodkas with a seven-page gatefold in February's *Details*. "(Spectaculars) aren't what Stolichnaya is about," said Robert Manni, group account director at agency Margeotes, Ferritita & Partners, N.Y.

For Smirnoff, the spectacular ad heralds a broader imperative to make more of a splash with the brand's advertising. Smirnoff also hopes that more dazzling creative will raise the brand's image with consumers in their 20s, an age group the brand is anxious to attract to bolster its 35-ish demographic base. —*Elaine Underwood*

Ranked in order of total spots. Includes ABC, CBS, NBC, FOX, UPN and WB. Regional feeds are counted as whole spots. Spots indexed to average spots for all brands advertising in prime time, i.e., if McDonald's Index=1308, McDonald's ran 1208 percent more spots than the average. Source: Competitive Media Reporting

Media Person

BY LEWIS GROSSBERGER



Gothamite@aol.com

Quirky Queries

ONCE AGAIN, DEAR READER, MEDIA PERSON PLACES himself completely at your disposal as an act of contrition to cleanse himself of his sins. Berate MP, if you must, lash him, beat him, perform sadistic acts upon his naked, quivering body but please, please, don't ask him a lot of boring questions about the media. It's the only torture he can't bear.

Dear MP: I've got a problem with the Chinese. They won't let me build China Disneyland unless I put the kibosh on this Marty Scorsese film about the Dalai Lama. What to do? —*Mike E.*

Dear Mike: Again you come sniveling to MP with your Mickey-Mouse problems. Listen, this is easy. Let Scorsese do the flick; just put Stallone and Snipes in it, make it an actioner and yank the political stuff. (Title it, *Lama, Yo' Mama!*) Of course, in the long run, you want to handle Beijing with toughness. It's about time Disney had a military arm. That way, some tinpot dictator messes with you, you send a nuclear sub or two up the Yangtze, threaten to blow up every McDonald's north of the Forbidden City and he folds like Boston in a pennant race. And, Mike, babe, in the personal empowerment area, repeat this mantra to yourself every day: *I AM Disney, dammit! Nobody pushes me around. Not Ovitz, not even God!*

Dear MP: I read in the paper that the Evi-ta look is going to be very big. What should I do to be among the first to get in on it? —*Trendy in Trenton*

Dear Tren: Better believe it. In January, when the movie comes out, America goes Evi-ta crazy! This will be bigger than the Macarena. First of all, all women will be blond, so buy up some dye before it's all gone. Secondly, you'll wear your blond hair in a chignon and on your chignon you will place a snood. MP is

warning you right now that without a snood on your chignon, you're gonna be dogmeat! No snood, no dude. Once you have your chignon, your snood, your Dior dress, your feathered, veiled hat and your big red lips, what do you do? You tango! You go out and tango with an ambitious, fascist-leaning man in uniform, dance until dawn. Having your body embalmed and lying in state is optional. This is gonna be soooooo big, MP can't wait.

Wear your blond hair in a chignon and on your chignon you will place a snood. Without a snood on your chignon, you're gonna be dogmeat!

Dear MP: So the day after the election, Elizabeth goes off to work and I'm sitting around reading *Primary Colors* when Air France calls up and says, "Wanna do an ad?" So I say, "What the hell, whatever." But now I'm thinking, did I do the right thing? I mean, if I decide to run again, can they use this against me? —*Bob D.*

Dear Bob: No problem; you *are* getting away with it since, fortunately, there are no longer any standards. In fact, with your new, more relaxed image emerging thanks to your appearance on Letterman, you may well become a cult hero. Never mind running again; nobody's gonna invite you. Besides, show biz pays better. MP hears there are some beer guys looking for

you for a TV commercial. Start rehearsing the phrase, "I love you, man." Try and get some emotion in it for a change.

Dear MP: Did you see this new movie *The Crucible*? Sensational! It's a powerful allegory that shows how a completely innocent guy can get screwed by a hysterical mob of vindictive white people. Remind you of anybody? And by the way, that Wynona Ryder is one great-looking babe. —*O.J.*

Dear O.J.: Media Person does not really think that Arthur Miller had you in mind when he wrote the play or adapted the screenplay.

Dear MP: I saw that telemovie about the Titanic and really loved it! Why don't they give us more high-quality entertainments like this? —*Lars in Labrador*

Dear Lars: You're in luck! The network is planning to turn the movie into a weekly dramatic series. Every week, a male and female passenger meet and fall in love, and the audience watches in rapt suspense, wondering if one, both or neither will survive when the ship sinks at the end of the hour. The show already has one sponsor: Ivory soap. It floats.

Dear MP: I think I've got those stinking paparazzi on the run. Thanks for advising me to boycott *Entertainment Tonight* and *Hard Copy*, Media Person. I never would've thought of it myself. —*G. Clooney*

Dear Cloon: No problem, pal. Now could you just come over and take a look at MP's sore throat? This cough is driving him crazy.

Dear MP: Where can I get one of those nifty new high-tech TV sets of the future with the picture so sharp you can probably see right through Jenny McCarthy's clothes? —*O.J.*

Dear O.J.: The way things are going lately, MP's afraid you and Kato will have to watch the set in the electronics department at K-mart. Oh and by the way, get the hell out of MP's column. ■

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A merger is a curious beast. Two distinctively different corporations come together to form a bigger and more powerful one. From a business point of view, it makes perfect sense. But from a consumer's point of view, it brings up just as many questions as it answers. Like, "Will this new company still see me as an old chum? Or just chum?" Perhaps the most effective way to avoid such an identity crisis is with advertising.

A strong and consistent corporate message is critical to maintaining a company's identity in today's climate of merger

mania. Especially when you consider in 1995 some \$503 billion in mergers and acquisitions were reported by Securities Data Company, surpassing the old record of \$357 billion set in 1994.¹ And, according to Advertising Age, there were 11% more corporate name changes in 1994 than in 1993, with 56% of them resulting from mergers alone.² With all these changes going on, it's more important than ever to preserve your corporate image.

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