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NATIONAL ACADEMY OF
TELEVISION ARTS
AND SCIENCES

JOHN CARDEN • CHRIS CHASE • BILL LEONARD
DOROTHY FULDHEIM • BILL GREELEY • FRED NASSIF
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ACCESS TO THE AMERICAN MIND

By Martin H. Seiden

Each weekday morning America's 67 million households purchase nearly 26 million newspapers. In the evening they purchase another 37 million newspapers. At night 40 million households or about 60 percent of the nation, have their television sets turned on and about the same proportion listen to the radio at some time during the day, while eating breakfast, cleaning the house, or commuting to or from work. In effect, more than one person in every household in America is reached by the mass media every day and a majority of Americans are reached by more than one medium in the same day.

A veritable torrent of information, advertising and entertainment pours through the 1,800 daily newspapers, 5,000 AM and FM radio stations and 950 commercial and educational television stations serving the American audience. In addition to this formidable array of facilities that provide daily service there are in the United States 8,800 weekly newspapers and over 9,600 weekly, monthly, and quarterly magazines and journals.

Only with the greatest difficulty can anyone in the United States avoid the mass media. Indeed, the average American is exposed to the messages of these media to a far greater extent than to formal education, organized religion, or political parties.

There seems to be a consensus that this extensive exposure to the mass media places it high on the list of social institutions that affect human behavior. One popular theory has gone so far as to assert that "the medium is the message," that it is the means rather than the content of communications that influences the audience. The fact that such a notion is taken seriously reveals the strength of the underlying conviction — generally shared by government officials, politicians, social scientists, and (with considerable pride) by people in the profession of communicating — that there is something intrinsically powerful about mass communications.

It is understandable in the light of these beliefs that the mass media are for many a source of anxiety, and for some a source of fear. This explains why the mass media are held responsible for so many of our social, political and even physical ills. Thus, political leaders blame the media when their popularity wanes, and as we shall see, the media are believed to

bear a large part of the responsibility for the growth of crime in America's cities, for social unrest and racial rioting, for narcotics addiction, for children's reading disabilities and even for lung cancer and heart disease.

But is this true? Do the owners, their employees, and those who buy time and space in the media in fact possess the power over the audience which both they and their critics agree is inherent in mass communication?

The available evidence does not support this view. Indeed the evidence shows that the reverse is the case. It is with the audience and not the media that the power resides. In the every-day, operational sense, the American audience influences the type of entertainment, consumer products and even the political programs, that are brought before it by the mass media. As we shall explore in some detail, the democratic character of America's mass media is a natural outgrowth of its economic structure. Our media system operates on the premise that the audience is the customer and those who own and use the system are salesmen. This relationship permeates the mass media, affecting its financing, the nature of its content, and even the character of political advocacy.

By constantly being polled, the audience determines the type of programming that is offered by television and radio. (Newspapers and magazines learn of consumer desires by their circulation figures.) Audience polls, as we shall see, also guide the design of political platforms, and the types of products marketed, including their packaging and even their names.

Because the audience's attention is so essential to the success of the system, its influence over the media is exercised in its day-to-day operation, rather than as some vague, intangible desire on the part of those who own, operate, or use the mass media.

Unfortunately, the inner workings of our mass communications systems are not generally understood. This author has found that even those directly involved — members of the government's regulatory staff and employees of the media themselves — lack a clear picture of the system's more important aspects. Each knows the workings of his own sphere, but has only the vaguest notion of how the rest of the system operates. Those in advertising only vaguely comprehend the issues and rules surrounding station ownership, few newspaper people know about microwave interconnection, and most program syndicators don't know what the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) license renewal process involves. The FCC staff has almost no knowledge of how time-buyers operate and few television program producers understand the strategy of newspaper or magazine editing. Least informed of all, however, are the so-called opinion makers, the nation's political leaders, writers, and intellectuals.

Can The Government Protect?

Under proper control, government can be an efficient provider of important social services. But without effective external control, its unbridled power becomes a public menace without parallel. The mass media, to the extent that they are independent of the government, are the government's principal adversary and therefore its principal external control. The American constitution, in its infinite wisdom, saw the press as an important countervailing force to government power and, through the First Amendment, in effect gave it an independence no less important than that of the Supreme Court.

Thus to call upon the government to control the mass media is to subvert the principal control placed over the government. A free "press" is the linchpin of the American political system. If it had had its way would the government have permitted such frank television reporting from Vietnam? Or would it have allowed the *Washington Post* to investigate and report on its findings in what later became known as the Watergate affair? These two issues alone raise serious questions regarding the effectiveness of the traditional checks and balances in our political system for neither the Congress nor the judiciary were equal to the task. This indicated the enormous importance of a free media as a partner in government.

No less important in evaluating the government's future role as a regulator of the mass media is its terrible record as a source of reliable information. In the past, Americans had been accustomed to expect from their government a high degree of reliability in its official announcements. Occasional scandals yes, but not the official release of blatantly false information or the concealment of information to which the public has a right. Unhappily, things have changed. Official concealment (and even falsehoods) have increased during the last two decades. The resulting tension between the media and the federal government has itself become news.

Erik Barnouw, a leading historian of mass communications, attributes the first really serious breach of the American tradition of free public access to information to the late Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles. In his book, "The Image Empire," he relates how in August 1955, the communist regime of Mao Tse Tung declared itself willing to admit American newsmen in return for the admission of Chinese newsmen into the United States. Dulles refused. Indeed so stringent was the ban on information from China that when in defiance of the State Department, William Worthy, a reporter for the *Baltimore Afro American*, went to China, Under Secretary of State Robert Murphy successfully prevailed on William Paley of CBS not to carry Worthy's shortwave news reports.

For the next 15 years, the American people were compelled to rely on the State Department, itself poorly informed, for information relating to

China. Our resulting ignorance of China had a good deal to do with the government's misreading of the situation in Vietnam. As the *New York Times* editorialized on the day before the final ceasefire in Vietnam, "the United States might not have gone into Vietnam had the depth of schism between the Soviet Union and China been clearly perceived."

With increasing frequency, the federal government also adopted a policy of releasing information that was patently false. The Eisenhower administration denied that U-2 overflights ever took place until the Russians paraded Gary Powers, the U-2 pilot, before the world press. Similarly the Kennedy administration initially denied our involvement in the Bay of Pigs fiasco, and gave numerous contradictory responses for our involvement in Vietnam. And President Johnson provided the Congress with patently false information on the Gulf of Tonkin incident. Subsequent attempts to disguise military and political bungling became so blatant that the term "credibility gap," a euphemism for government lying, came into widespread use. Today, falsification and concealment of information have become commonplace in the executive branch of the government.

The Watergate affair revealed a new and sinister dimension to this problem, since it involved experienced attorneys and presidential confidants who willingly adopted, as standard operating procedure, the most nefarious techniques in the exercise of power.

For our purposes, two aspects of Watergate merit particular attention. First, the entire affair revolved around the attempt to control, create and alter information. In the modern world the sum and substance of power rests on the public's ability or inability to obtain access to accurate information. The audacious manner in which the White House staff sought to monopolize political power by manipulating and stealing information was a natural outgrowth of the passivity with which the public and the Congress accepted the earlier concealment and falsification of information by the Executive branch.

Watergate also underlined the importance of a privately controlled mass media. The initial revelations of the affair were not the work of the Justice Department or of any government agency, but of two staffers on the *Washington Post*. And unlike most Congressional hearings that go unpublicized, the mass media, particularly television, recognized the importance of these disclosures and brought them to the public's attention.

The more than 300 hours of televised hearings carried by the three commercial networks on a rotational basis cost them a combined total of \$10 million in lost advertising revenue (Interestingly, the Public Broadcasting Service attracted \$1 million in donations through their coverage of these hearings). That the public wanted these hearings televised was determined by the audience surveys. They showed that on an average day 30 percent of the viewing audience tuned in to the hearings (the others chose to watch the other networks' routine fare). When it was

over, only 15 percent of the nation had failed to see at least one session of the hearings.

It is significant that all of the aforementioned examples of government misconduct, and not just the Watergate affair, were eventually brought into the open and disseminated by the mass media. This is no accident. Nor is it based on a unique American cultural trait favoring truthfulness. But it does reflect the economic fact that unlike any other major communications system, including the British and French, the American government does not (yet) have a part in the financial support of the mass media nor in the selection of the persons who are involved in its operation. The much maligned advertising dollar has protected the mass media from government controls as much as has the First Amendment.

Elitism in America

Unfortunately, there are many who regard mass communications as an excellent tool for educating the public and look upon its use for commercial ends — the appeal to the greatest number — as a waste of a national resource. The uplifting objectives which they would substitute for the present commercial objectives would, however, alienate the mass audience which attracts advertiser support. Inevitably the media would then become dependent on government support, and government support necessarily goes hand-in-hand with government control.

There is, however, more involved than the questions of economic support and lofty objectives. Implicit in the reformers argument is a belief that they know what is best for others. In effect, they see themselves as latter-day churchmen in possession of a more sensitive moral conscience than the rest of their countrymen. To some extent this outlook has begun to influence professional journalists who in increasing number are being trained at universities rather than on the job. The new journalists are becoming, in effect, a lesser clergy, seeking to educate the public instead of keeping it informed. As a result, the distinction between “news” and “editorials” is beginning to fade.

It is essential for the health of the American political system that there be a continuous state of tension between the government and the media and that the sharp lines separating their interest be maintained. But this state of tension must be for the right reasons. It cannot be sustained if the professional journalists themselves tamper with the information flowing through the system. Constitutional guarantees notwithstanding this would hand the government a moral imperative to “interpret” its way into the inner workings of mass communications.

The Contest Has Begun

Unhappily, this process of erosion has already begun, especially in broadcasting. The threat to the present system is greatest here. Newspapers, magazines and books have never been regulated in the United

States and therefore are one step removed from government control. In broadcasting regulatory tradition and it has taken substantial strides toward changing government regulation into government control.

Just one of several possible examples will indicate the extent of the government's aggressiveness. On January 23, 1969, a three-member majority of a four-member quorum of the FCC (which has seven members) held that the license of television station WHDH (Boston) would not be renewed and its channel would be given to a competing applicant because the licensee — who operated the station for over ten years — also owned a local newspaper (the *Boston Herald Traveler*) and the competing applicant did not. This ruling, which was well intended, (the idea being to increase the number of "voices" in the Boston market) wiped out a \$50 million asset and placed the future of the *Boston Herald Traveler* in serious doubt since the newspaper lived off the profits of the television station. The newspaper, the second largest in Boston, has since discontinued operation.

With the best of intentions, the government effectively deprived the Boston public of a major source of information. Worse still, the majority of the Commissioners held that this principle of not allowing a licensee to own more than one medium in a market now applied to all future license renewal proceedings (a policy also advocated by the Justice Department). An estimated \$3 billion in broadcasting assets were thus put in jeopardy. This policy, it should be noted, was not the result of a social, political or economic analysis of America's cities or of the mass media. Nor was it a reaction to a local or regional problem, nor even to public complaints. Indeed, the reverse applied in all these areas of concern. WHDH was an award winning station and a statistical analysis of media facilities in Boston, as well as in all the cities in the United States, revealed a plethora of voices and a highly diversified ownership of mass media. But the FCC did not have these data at its disposal when it made its decision. Clearly, much of public policy is motivated by serious misconceptions as to the basic nature of mass communications in the United States.

When Senator Pastore (Dem., R.I.) in the Senate and about 100 Congressmen in the House introduced a bill to reverse this decision, the FCC backed down. But the FCC's second thoughts were challenged in the U.S. Court of Appeals in the D.C. Circuit by the Citizens Communication Center and by Black Efforts for Soul in Television. On June 11, 1971, the Court set aside the FCC's revised policy statement. The Court of Appeals held that there must be comparative hearings whenever a licensee is challenged by another applicant at renewal time, that the Commission should consider superior programming service in renewal applications, and that the Commission should define both quantitatively and qualitatively what constitutes superior programming.

With broadcast licenses subject to renewal every three years, essentially at the discretion of the FCC and its staff, no broadcaster can

now be completely independent of government influence in his programming, news reporting or editorial expression. If the Commission, or just several Commissioners, are displeased with a broadcaster because of his programming, news reporting, or editorial expressions, they need not overtly censor. They can simply find legally acceptable reasons for not renewing his license.

With license renewal possibly depending on the vote of a single Commissioner, the views, prejudices, and whims of each Commissioner (as well as of Senators and Congressmen who are influential with the FCC and, of course, the White House, which appoints the Commissioners) all become a matter of assiduous research, study, and cultivation by every licensee. The desire to "improve" the quality of broadcasting thus shifts the industry's attention away from the audience, whose numbers have always been its primary concern, to the need to placate a small group of men.

Rules of the Game

Once the FCC has granted a license to operate a broadcasting station, it retains the authority to review the assignment every three years. At that time, the license can be renewed (which most are), or revoked (which is very rare) or reissued with conditions. (Its sale to others requires FCC approval, generally readily obtained.) At each stage, the FCC examines the station's programming.

Then there are the rules that limit the use of the license — the equal time provisions, the fairness doctrine, and the antitrust and libel laws. Despite these rules and the opportunity to review the stations' programming the FCC is plagued by the fear that the industry, more particularly the networks, will not perform in a manner that the government deems to be socially desirable. To ensure such (undefined) behavior, the FCC has enacted regulations that restrict the number of hours of programming that a station may receive from the networks.

This rule, enacted in 1971, sought to force the creation and growth of independent production companies in order to get greater diversity in programming. The results, thus far, have been extremely disappointing. The broadcasters are unable to spend the kind of money that would make the highly risky program production business attractive to newcomers. The consequence is a plethora of game shows which are relatively inexpensive, but far from the uplifting character intended by the promoters of the 1971 anti-network rule. Television station owners, with few exceptions, do not have the economic capacity to produce quality programming on a regularly scheduled basis. Yet for some unexplained reason, the FCC has for years looked upon the licensee as the arbiter of the programming he broadcasts. The commission has built a complex regulatory superstructure on this myth.

The FCC limited the number of stations a company could own (regardless of the station's size or location). This, it was hoped, in

conjunction with the duopoly rule (which prohibits the ownership of more than one radio station and more than one television station, respectively, within the same market), would preclude the domination of a market — or the political dominance of an audience — by a single firm.

This is not an unreasonable concern. Working from the unlikely though possible premise that all media owners are scoundrels, one can at least have confidence that the conflicting interest of different owners will permit the public, should it wish, to obtain information regarding all sides of an issue with relative ease. In this respect, diverse ownership of local media is important. However, a highly fractionate system which precludes the presence of large though competing media owners nationwide, could lead to a different type of problem. Small size can result in timidity. It can deprive the nation of powerful media groups whose voice can be heard on the national scene. The media should have the power to stand up to the government if the public is to be served.

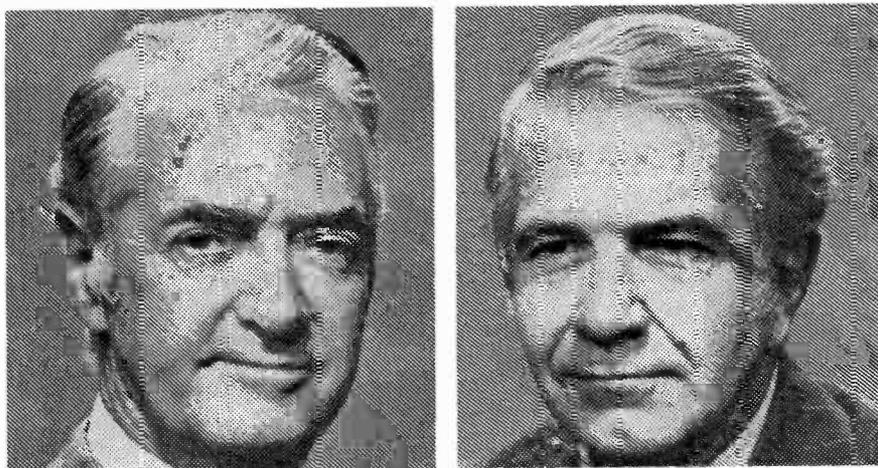
The media need organizations capable of resisting Congressional indictments, affording the legal fees needed to bring issues to the Supreme Court, and making their voice heard on matters of principle. True, rich and influential organizations do not always rise to the occasion but their ability to do so provides a necessary bulwark against an overbearing government bureaucracy.

* * *

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* * *

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Weeknights



CHESS ANYBODY?

By Chris Chase

In the summer of '72, my husband Mike, the stage manager, turned into a big television producer. He told me so himself. "Stick with me, baby," he said, "and it'll be T-bones right up to your tiara."

I said I was more spiritual than that. "Even better," he said. "I got you a job don't pay a nickel, but you'll bring happiness to countless thousands." Then he put me on a Trailways bus and took me to Albany.

You probably didn't know that most of the important television in the country comes from Albany. I didn't either, until I got caught in the middle of the world chess championship match.

It began because New York City's Channel 13, WNET, had unprogrammed air time in the summer afternoons. And because my husband runs what is called an educational television network. (You must have seen some of the wonderful work they put on. Who else gives you a close look at gum surgery? Just as you're sitting down to dinner?)

And because they were both chess freaks, my husband and a Channel 13 vice-president, Frank Leicht, decided it would be nice to cover the Bobby Fischer-Boris Spassky chess games. They made deals to get the moves wired from Iceland, and another chess freak, who was going over for the match, promised he'd phone them with rich, warm human-interest stories.

"How much are you paying him?" I asked my husband.

"Whaddya mean, paying him?" said my husband. "He loves chess."

"You don't think it's naive," I said, "to assume some man is going to go to Iceland at his own expense to tell you if Bobby Fischer sleeps in pajamas?"

"I see what you mean," said my husband. "We'll try to get him fifty bucks a week."

Mike's choice for the star of Channel 13's "World Championship Chess" was a sad-eyed chess master named Shelby Lyman, a fixture at New York's Marshall Chess Club. Shelby, who'd never been on television, was going to post the moves on a king-sized board as they came in from Iceland, and then vamp till ready, analyzing the last moves until the next ones arrived.

There was no reason for Mike to assume that Shelby Lyman could do what Shelby Lyman subsequently did. All Mike knew about Shelby was that his work was teaching chess, and his hobby was buying country property with strangers, fighting with the strangers, and selling the property. At a loss.

But as an entrepreneur, Mike is fearless. (He once led a tall effete actor

— dressed in Bermuda shorts and dragging a poodle on a leash — all over New York, trying to raise money to star the tall effete actor in *King Lear*.)

This time Mike's gamble paid off. Nobody told Shelby it wasn't possible to spend six or seven hours a day, for a minimum of three days a week, talking on camera; as long as Shelby didn't find out, Frank Leicht and my husband were in business.

Because I owned a yellow Dynel wig and a navy blue nylon skirt that, like Shelby's black funeral director's suit, knew the way to Albany by themselves, the big boys offered me a three-times-a-week spot, too, but I was afraid of so much sudden glory.

"I'll do it Sundays," I said. "The rest of the week I'll stay home and feed the fish and try to remain humble."

We started in Albany (which is where we could get a studio cheap) early in July. Earlier than Bobby Fischer started in Iceland, if you want the truth of it. We went to Albany, but Bobby stayed on Long Island talking about money. He's not so spiritual as I.

On the Fourth of July, my husband was to bring the first game to the waiting audience. At that point, we figured it consisted of Mike's mother (if she could persuade the educational station in Denver to take the thing) and Frank's kids (who would lose their allowances if they didn't watch).

The opening game was canceled. "Do something," my husband said to me. "I don't know a rook from a handsaw," I said. "I'm going home." My husband pointed out that I didn't have the \$7.50 Trailways would require, and that he would abandon me in Albany, to turn into one of those old folks who scrounge around in garbage pails, unless I pitched in and helped fill some of that empty air time. So I wrote a little piece about Independence Day, and how we in the U.S. had the rockets' red glare, and in Iceland we just had the Reds glaring, and I went on camera and shared these deep thoughts with the world, and the magnetism of my presence was so strong that everybody who tuned in called up. "Why did you broadcast if there wasn't any game?" they wanted to know.

On July 6, still lacking a game, we did it again. This time I wrote a piece comparing Fischer to chess geniuses Morphy and Steinitz. Shelby's wet eyes overflowed. "That's wicked," he said. Morphy and Steinitz had been crazy, Bobby was not. Okay, I said, and wrote a piece comparing Fischer to chess geniuses Capablanca and Marshall. I didn't know one from another; I got all my information by eavesdropping.

On Wednesday, July 11, there *was* a game, and not only did the moves shoot in from Iceland, but Shelby was brilliant, lyrical, endearingly dopey. If he heard a voice from the control room in his ear, he looked up, startled, and answered back, for all the world like Joan of Arc, and often he tried, on a dead phone, to rouse a fellow master at the Marshall Chess Club in Manhattan ("Hello? Hello, Edmar? Are you there, Edmar?").

As the games went on, Shelby got smoother, everybody settled down, and the match became a rage, a fad, a hit show. Every day the switchboards at Channel 13 lit up with the people trying to help Bobby Fischer make his next move. Reviewers were saying it was great entertainment — one guy called it “addictive” — and people who didn’t play, or understand, chess watched it anyway.

Little girls baked cookies for Shelby, and I took the eye of many a television columnist. What wouldn’t a girl give for a notice which read: “Sometimes the producer’s wife comes on and acts as host.” And if that M.C. Pig columnist wasn’t bad enough, a woman I hadn’t seen in ten years phoned to tell me she was wild about the show and that there was a sensational girl on it. “She has this funny little face,” the woman said.

I thought about this. “Is she wearing a horsehair wig with bangs?” I said. “Yes,” she said. “It’s me,” I said. “Oh,” she said, confused. “Have you got a funny little face?”

Well, yeah, you could say that. Though it makes me want to strike back savagely.

We whiled away the summer with Boris and Bobby, in the dead city of Albany, a block away from Governor Rockefeller’s great marble mall which seems to commemorate the city’s demise. (Downtown Albany doesn’t even have a movie house anymore, and the rooms in the once proud De Witt Clinton — a hotel that rolled out a strip of red carpet back when Lucky Lindy came to spend the night — smell of dust and gasoline.) And when it was over, America had a new champ, Bobby Fischer. And a new television personality? Right. Shelby Lyman.

* * *

CHRIS CHASE, who used to act under the name Irene Kane, now acts and writes under her own colors. She has appeared in films, on the stage, on TV and in magazine advertisements. Her witty, self-mocking essays have appeared in TV Guide, McCall’s, Good Housekeeping and the Sunday New York Times.

The foregoing piece is from Miss Chase’s new book, “How To Be a Movie Star, or A Terrible Beauty Is Born,” is reprinted here with her special permission.

* * *

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CBS REPORTS: FIFTEEN YEARS OF SWEAT, TOIL AND GLORY

By Bill Leonard

Harvest of Shame . . . The Population Explosion . . . Carl Sandburg at Gettysburg . . . Biography of a Bookie Joint . . . Hunger in America . . . You'll Get Yours When You're Sixty-five . . . Abortion and the Law . . . The Selling of the Pentagon.

As Dan Rather becomes permanent host of *CBS Reports* this fall, he joins a series whose name carries — in this youngest of media — a certain historic grandeur. His words will become part of one of the more valuable archives of American history. *CBS Reports* has been on the air in prime time for fifteen consecutive years. There have been 178 *Reports*, essays on current affairs, portraits of leading figures of our time, documents of our tragedies and triumphs. Thirty one of the programs have been repeated at least once.

CBS Reports has been praised by critics and vilified by an impressive list of individuals and special interest groups. Among them: the American Medical Association, the American Farm Bureau Federation, the government of South Africa, Cardinal Cushing of Boston, the Goodyear Rubber Company, the American Rifle Association, former U.S. Senator George Smathers, the bookies and drug pushers of America, the white supremacy forces of the South and the Gay Activists' Alliance. And that list barely scratches the surface.

CBS Reports may not have comforted the afflicted but it surely has afflicted the comfortable. It has exposed chicanery in high places, it has awakened Americans to their remarkable history and to the unmet needs of their poor and ignorant.

Over the years, *CBS Reports* has been cited for excellence so many times that no award ceremony was deemed complete without a low bow to one of our entries. Plaques, statuettes, loving cups and scrolls now decorate the libraries and dens of more than 50 producers and correspondents who have had a hand in these documentaries. Nine Peabody Awards and seven Emmys head the trophy list.

Concerned citizens who regularly complain about “all that junk on television” should be reminded that CBS Reports earned its adulatory adjectives — “forthright, tough, hard-hitting” — without a great surge of audience support. Viewers who roam the channels in a spirit of, “All right, entertain me!” outnumber seekers after truth by a ratio of at least two to one.

It is a reflection on American taste rather than program quality that *CBS Reports*, whether seen in a regular time slot or spotted irregularly in the schedule, has earned a rating approximately half of that enjoyed by successful entertainment shows. Still, ten million viewers are ten million minds and hearts. And the outrage we have caused, the social and political reforms we have helped bring about, suggest that our efforts have not been wasted on desert air.

It will no doubt dismay feminists and students of broadcast journalism to discover that no woman has ever produced or narrated a *CBS Reports*, and that no less than thirty-five of the programs were either interviews with or film portraits of individuals. Among them were such fascinating characters as Walter Lippmann, Rafael Trujillo, Yul Brynner, Ronald Reagan, Carl Sandburg, John F. Kennedy, Charles de Gaulle, Pablo Picasso, Mayor Richard Daley, Justice William O. Douglas and *all* the Rockefellers.

Beyond subject matter, I suppose there must be such a thing as a *CBS Reports* style. But I have been told that our style is lack of style. In this context, lack of style means emphasis on content, not worrying so much about the comfort of the viewer as the discomfort of the fat cats, the bunglers and the wrong-doers.

Basically *CBS Reports* deals with things that don't lend themselves to television, very often abstracts — such things as laws, ideals, prejudice, education, economics. Tough to read about, even harder to shoot. It would not be fair to say that no subject suggestion was ever vetoed because it was too tough to film. But there have been mighty few — not even the question of proportional representation in state legislatures, God help us. (“Our Election Day Illusions — The Beat Majority” — 1961).

Most people, even some with long TV news memories, confuse *CBS Reports* with the old Murrow-Friendly *See It Now* which preceded it. *See It Now* ran for seven years in the 1950's, was normally a half hour, almost never in prime time, and always hosted by Murrow. *CBS Reports* was born after *See It Now* “died.” It was part of the CBS reaction to the old quiz show scandals. CBS would do something until then unheard of—set aside, first, several hours and then, later, weekly hours for prime time public affairs programming. The mantle was handed to Friendly, specifically not to Friendly and Murrow (who was in the midst of his famous differences with Frank Stanton that eventually led to his departure from the company).

Murrow narrated some, but only some of the first *CBS Reports*. More of them fell to Howard K. Smith, Harry Reasoner, Walter Cronkite and others.

Many, but not all, *CBS Reports* have been controversial. Broadcasts are not controversial merely because they deal with a controversial subject — although this greatly increases their chances. The real test is who gets mad, before or after, and for whatever reasons.

When *CBS Reports* was the child of Fred Friendly (1959-1965) the subject matter varied according to Friendly's interests and appetites, and they were catholic. Later the series became less the product of a unit than the general rubric of a kind of broadcast, the tougher, more probing kind. But whether under the passionate hand of Friendly or later under the calmer aegis of Palmer Williams, Burton Benjamin and Perry Wolff, the series has explored an extraordinary number of matters that television (at the time) had never touched, or almost never.

Some may seem a little tame today, but most were first flights at the time, and sometimes they scared hell out of us. In retrospect, the list is impressive: The plight of migrant workers — 1960. Cancer — 1960. Illegal gambling — 1961. Birth Control — 1962. Smoking and health — 1962. Heroin — 1964. Gun Control — 1964. Abortion — 1965. TV Ratings — 1965. Air pollution — 1966. Homosexuality — 1967. Hunger in America — 1968. Religion as a business — 1968. Inadequate health care — 1969. Pentagon public relations — 1971. Television commercials — 1973. The case for Palestine refugees — 1974. Corporate "loyalty" — 1974. As a documentary producer said a year or so ago, "I wonder if there are any more subjects left that we almost don't dare to do." Well, there are. But not as many.

The original *CBS Reports* "band of brothers" were called producers, although we were, perhaps, closer to being worker bees in the hive over which Friendly presided. He was an extraordinary editor, temperamental, driven by a sense of personal discovery and mission. One day Fred discovered WATER! and the fact, which some of us had known and accepted along with the moon and the stars, that there wasn't enough water to go around. Overnight the *CBS Reports* shop was whipped into a water reform machine. Research! Film crews to the ends of the earth! Fred had all of us in water up to our eyes. But out of it came a broadcast, and a good one, on the water famine.

There were great men in the Friendly stable, firebrands whose fine work was only somewhat obscured by the sparks from Fred. One was the late David Lowe, who produced not only the classic "Harvest of Shame," but half a dozen other tough, uncompromising and memorable documentaries. There was Jay McMullen, one of the only two original producers still working on *CBS Reports* after all these years, who turned out the Boston Bookie broadcast in the early 'sixties, the superb "The

Mexican Connection" in the 'seventies and a dozen others in between.

McMullen is a first rate investigative reporter, a good narrator and a fine editor. The other veteran of all the *CBS Reports* years is Gene DePoris, a thoroughgoing professional, whose broadcasts ("You'll Get Yours When You're 65" and "The Chicanos") are constructed with such a keen sense of fairness that the passion in them just barely breaks the surface.

The old *CBS Reports* teams of the Friendly days included some who had worked on *See It Now*, notably Palmer Williams, who was the glue that kept the Friendly unit together, a function he continues today as Senior Producer of *60 Minutes*.

The idea for *CBS Reports* is generally credited to Dr. Frank Stanton. The original staff included the late Arthur Morse, Al Wasserman, Bill Peters, Av Westin, Jack Beck, George Vicas, Steve Fleischman, and David Buksbaum. Among the first rate documentarians who have worked on the series over the years — many of them working on it today — are Executive Producers Burton Benjamin and Perry Wolff, John Sharnik, Martin Carr, Arthur Barron, Isaac Kleinerman, David Oppenheim, and Joe Wershba. The latter goes back to the *See It Now* days.

The first *CBS Reports*, broadcast on October 27, 1959, was Biography of a Missile, produced by Palmer Williams and narrated by Murrow. The most famous, in terms of national uproar, was unquestionably "The Selling of the Pentagon," produced under Perry Wolff by Peter Davis. We tend to remember best those broadcasts which shivered our timbers (there is some truth to the old line, "If someone doesn't get mad at you, you haven't done much").

Half the country (and almost half the House of Representatives) was mad at "The Selling of the Pentagon." Certain sections of the nation raged at "Hunger in America." Boston exploded over "Biography of a Bookie Joint." Birmingham threatened to secede again over "Who Speaks for Birmingham?" And Black Rock, the CBS building on 52nd Street, trembled but did not topple over *CBS Reports* examinations of television ratings in 1965, and television commercials in 1973. The gun buffs were in a rage over "Murder and the Right to Bear Arms." The big corporate farms and the Farm Bureau Federation are still denouncing "Harvest of Shame."

But it is a fair guess that having survived time period changes, management upheavals, and controversies galore, *CBS Reports* will go on for another fifteen years. If it stays on course, holding to its ideals, pointing out the inequities and injustices of our times, the public will be honorably served.

* * *

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* * *

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WHAT IS TV REALLY LIKE?

By Dorothy Fuldheim

*Excerpted from the book A THOUSAND FRIENDS
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There are no holidays for people known as "talent." I am at the studio on Christmas and all the other holidays as usual. Doing three shows a day takes time, my day at the studio starts at nine-thirty and doesn't end until six-thirty. There may be some newscasters who come in just to read their scripts, which have been written by someone else, but not in my case.

I write two editorials a day and that takes time — not only for reflection but to gather material. I read nine newspapers a day plus magazines and books at night. I'm a rapid reader and unless the material is scientific data unfamiliar to me, I can scan an article very quickly and decide whether it contains information that I can use. People say I have a photographic mind. Nothing could be farther from the truth. I do not have a photographic mind. I do not remember words and phrases but I have almost a prehensile mind which grasps and holds onto facts and stores them away like a squirrel gathering nuts until I need them.

Holidays are gloomy because only a skeleton crew is on duty to take care of the live shows. This particular Christmas the day was overcast, it was bitterly cold, the machine which dispenses canned soup and sandwiches was empty. I was idly wondering what editorial would be fitting on Christmas Day when the porter came in with a large box. "Here's a present for you," he said.

"There's no delivery today," I said. "Where did this come from?"

He shrugged his shoulders. "I don't know. Some guy drove up in a Lincoln and said I was to deliver this to you."

I opened the box and after getting rid of all the tissue paper, I lifted out an exquisite chinchilla wrap — no small gift. The card read, "To brighten your day." No name. Just the initial — P. I was bewildered. I knew of no one that would be sending me such a munificent gift nor did I know anyone with that initial.

The mystery continued. On New Year's Day a magnificent array of flowers arrived with a similar card, "To brighten your day." Each holiday

brought a gift and always with the same card. Once it was a pearl necklace; another time, a black velvet dress with white mink. Then a basket filled with strawberries and pomegranates; still another time a jeweled evening bag. Who was the giver — a man or a woman? I never knew because after two years of lavish gifts I received a corsage of violets and this time the card read, "This is to say good-by."

It remains a mystery, I never have found out who the giver was.

I have a friend — breezy, highly intelligent, with a Ph.D. — who was converted to Catholicism at the early age of seventeen. She entered a convent; after 20 years she left, though remaining a devout Catholic. Robes billowing around her, she often sailed into the TV station accompanied by a student. Without waiting to be announced, she would storm my door. I learned from experience that her lovely smile, her enchanting ways resulted in my yielding to her request and she always had a request.

"All right," I would say, "what is it now?"

"There are a few books in your library that my class could use," or, "Listen, there is a family that I know of who need two winter coats — one for the mother and one for the youngster in my class. You wouldn't want them to be cold all winter, would you?"

"Of course, I wouldn't!" How could I disagree with her? She got the coats and was not above reminding me a few weeks later that they had no boots and wasn't it a brutal winter. She was the greatest con artist in the world but never for herself. I used to groan when I saw her coming into my office.

The house occupied by her and the other nuns was in a mixed neighborhood. It was an old house that had been repaired and converted into a convent for the use of the nuns. From the outside it looked like any other house in the run-down neighborhood. The nuns served as a teaching order for the school near by.

A lady of some promiscuity occupied the house next to the convent and as a result the doorbell was constantly being rung by some male who mistook the convent for the house with the promiscuous woman. The nuns were distressed. They were awakened at all hours and there is no doubt that the males who sought entrance were as aghast at having the bell answered by a nun as the nuns were bewildered by the variety of males who, apparently, mistook their house for the one next door. My husband, learning of their distress, looked into the matter.

"Don't you have a light over your door so the number can be identified?" No, they didn't have a light. It was too expensive having the necessary wiring installed. So my thoughtful husband instructed an electrician to put a light over the door and make it visible so the nuns would not be bothered by any of the men searching for the woman next door.

The electrician, eager to help the nuns and, apparently, not familiar with the origin of the phrase "the red light district," placed a huge red light

over the door. Baffled by the increasing number of males who rang their bell all night long, the nuns complained to the police. The red light was removed.

Procuring guests is no longer a problem. It becomes a way of life for celebrities and people in public life to expect to be approached and interviewed. When I wanted to interview Willy Brandt, my director phoned his office in Berlin and told him when I would be there. A time was agreed upon, which we then confirmed by letter. A month later I was in Berlin, and according to our instructions, went to the municipal building. In the room where we were told the interview would be held we set up our lights and at exactly ten o'clock, as had been arranged over the transatlantic phone, Herr Brandt appeared and we taped the interview.

In the dramatic mayoralty campaign in Cleveland in the fall 1973 the Democratic candidate, Jim Carney, announced his withdrawal from the race on a special show. Having completed that show, I rushed off to Severance Hall where the Cleveland Orchestra was opening its season. Mayor Ralph Perk, against whom Mr. Carney was running, was in attendance, and I wanted to get him on my show that night to express his feelings about the dramatic withdrawal of Mr. Carney. The question was how to steal the mayor. I knew his driver, so out to the parking lot I went. I got into the mayor's car and sent his driver to the box where he was sitting with a note saying, "I'm sitting in your car, it's important that you join me at once." He came, we drove to the studio, and I was able to do a follow-up program with Mayor Perk.

One year while I was on vacation my daughter, who is said to resemble me, substituted for me. When I returned, I found a letter from a gentleman who wanted to know where I had my face lifted because I had been looking so much younger. He would like the doctor who performed the surgery to do the same for his wife. It was with great glee that I wrote him that the doctor who had performed my face-lifting no longer was in practice. I saw no reason why I should tell him the truth. When I went back on the air, he must have been convinced that the doctor did a bad job.

I never use make-up. I'm allergic to most of it because of the lanolin component. For a while I tried fake eyelashes. They were marvelous and I felt like an irresistible beauty as I fluttered them. I became absolutely coquettish, I was so enchanted with my looks; but, alas, I'm allergic to the glue, so all my beauty faded and I was obliged to become my unadorned self. Imagine a nation being so rich that we can afford to spend seventy million dollars a year on false eyelashes. As for having my face lifted, I've had a number of specialists in the art of lifting sagging muscles offer to perform such an operation on my face. I'm told it's simple but expensive. I always ask. "What about my hands? Can you restore the round fullness of youth? And what about muscles in less obvious places, such as around the waist? But most of all can restoring muscles restore the appetites of

youth?"

When I interviewed Lillian Gish, who might have slipped right out of the nineteenth century with her charm and her ladylike manner, she protested because of the lights. Like Gypsy Rose Lee, she said, "Do you allow these harsh lights? Do you know these bright lights wash out blue eyes? The planes of everyone's face differ and, therefore, need special lighting." I thought how right Miss Gish was when I saw Barbra Streisand, that unbelievably talented performer. Though she is not precisely beautiful, with certain lighting she looked angelic. Any number of times I've told our engineers that I'm not eighteen, but they go on exposing me to the same lighting they use for children and young, beautiful women.

Then there is the problem of my clothes. If I wore white, the lightmen groaned. If I wore black, they lost their minds. Where in heaven's name did they expect me to find pastel shades? Now at last we have new cameras that take all colors. Nevertheless, certain materials and patterns photograph better — velvet, satin, and contrasting patterns are best. I once bought a suit with small checks; wearing it on TV made the checks crawl. It was a disaster.

I've faced many crises while broadcasting. One devastating experience was with a bee. There it was buzzing around my head. I had to struggle to control myself. I was afraid to move for fear the motion of my head would frighten the bee into piercing my face with its stinger. On another occasion a fly trumped its buzz around me as I was broadcasting. It was maddening. Providentially for me, one of our floormen is an expert fly catcher. I don't know how he does it, but with a swoop of his cupped hand he can catch the most evasive fly. On this occasion he not only caught the fly but kept it alive and presented it to me at the end of the broadcast. He named the fly Evelyn and thereafter whenever a fly was visible it was always referred to as Evelyn.

I've broadcast when I've had a raging headache, when a close member of my family was dying, and never revealed my own inner anguish, but the time I was really thrown and couldn't go on was when in the midst of the famous One O'Clock Club show, which was the first of the live variety shows between Chicago and New York, I was interrupted with a bulletin that John Kennedy was assassinated. I was stunned. I read the bulletin and said, "I can't believe it!" So he was gone, the man who for a short while had added glamour to the presidency. No one knew then of the strange doom encircling the Kennedy family nor that from that day forth there would be anguish, disorder, and distrust for our nation.

John Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Robert Kennedy, the assassination attempt on Governor Wallace, the unbelievable horror of Watergate and Agnew and Nixon, and to top all of that the realization that the earth was becoming like Mother Hubbard's cupboard — empty for the first time. There was a scarcity of all products in the land — copper, wheat,

meat, oil, and gas. Was this the drum sound of doom? Had Malthus' prediction come true, only more ominously than even he envisioned it?

It seemed absurd and silly to go on with a gay program when John Kennedy lay dead, destroyed by a bullet. (Where were the gun lovers then?)

* * *

I've never had an unlisted telephone but some of the calls are weird. At two o'clock in the morning the phone rang and a hysterical voice said, "Miss Fuldheim, I'm so worried. I don't know what to do. I'm not married, and I'm pregnant." At that time of the morning I wasn't feeling very friendly and I snapped, "You may be pregnant, but not on my time."

Another night at about one o'clock some woman called, I thought, to discuss my editorial. I was so annoyed I stopped talking and put the receiver down next to the phone. Thoroughly angry and wide awake I began to read when my buzzer rang. There stood two policemen. I looked bewildered. "Oh," they said, "you're all right, Miss Fuldheim."

"Well, why shouldn't I be? What made you think I wasn't?"

"We had a call from some woman who thought you had fainted or died because in the midst of a conversation, you stopped talking."

At that moment the night watchman came panting up the steps. He had seen the police and thought they were burglars in disguise. What could I do but invite them in for coffee. Once they left and I got back into bed, the phone rang again and it was the same woman who sent the police. If I was all right, could she discuss my editorial? This at two o'clock in the morning. I work my head off to perfect an editorial and I get a call not to express admiration for my thoughts but to inquire where I bought the blouse I was wearing.

Listeners call about their problems, an increase in their light bill; an argument about the age of the governor; how can they prevent another bar in their neighborhood; how can they survive on their pensions; why do I support the right of abortion; the oil shortage is phony — just to enable the oil companies to make more money, would I come to their daughter's wedding even though I don't know them personally because I would show their daughter's in-laws that they could have a celebrity on their guest list and if I would come, they would pay for my time; was I for impeachment of the President? What's the good of a Social Security increase if landlords raise the rent? The calls are really a panorama of people's needs and problems.

The one I love best was from a woman who told me she talks to all her plants and because of that they grow and grow. Her poinsettia plant is six feet and she calls it Murphy. Well, Murphy is getting so tall it won't fit into her house, so she told Murphy that she would have to give it away.

"Murphy," she said, "I want to give you to someone who is kind and will love you. Would you be happy with Dorothy Fuldheim?" Murphy, she told me, swayed slightly, which meant yes, it would like to go to Dorothy

Fuldheim. Who could resist Murphy even if it is a giant by now?

Television is powerful. On my program we helped settle a transit strike, which was crippling Christmas trade. We helped prevent a teamsters' strike. We presented the Duke of Windsor, Marian Anderson, Arnold Toynbee, Walter Lippmann, a man whose stature ennobled the nation long before talk shows became part of our life style. Critics said TV would kill books, the contrary happened. More books are sold today than ever before. We were the first station to allocate time for books every week and we are constantly interviewing authors and discussing their works. TV probably does more than any form of advertising to accelerate the sale of books. The first day my book "I Laughed, I Loved, I Cried" came out hundreds were sold.

It isn't all milk and honey because I take positive stands on controversial subjects. I have been threatened with bombs and death a number of times. After the Kent State episode, threats to kill me were serious enough to necessitate police protection. Just a short while ago, because of something I had said, the station received word that my home was to be bombed that night. The manager called me to tell me about the threat and that they had alerted the police. I was already in bed and decided bombing or not I was too tired to worry about it. The police came. My granddaughter was crying, "I don't want to be bombed!" But I was just too tired to rise and wait for the crisis. So, the police watched and I slept. For the sake of accuracy, let me say that I was nervous for a number of days thereafter.

People call to express their disapproval of what I've said. It's astonishing how strong people's convictions are. When I do an editorial criticizing the right of everyone to have a gun, I'm deluged with phone calls and letters of disapproval. I've even had disapproving letters about Spiro Agnew. "How come," they would write, "if you are always for the underdog, you can't defend Agnew? What makes you so prejudiced?"

One day a woman came in and asked for me. She had a long carving knife to kill me because she said I was destroying her head of hair, and so was Arthur Godfrey. But since she couldn't get to him, and I was accessible, I was to be the victim. I didn't know what she meant, but it was a frightening experience. The police took her away, and I collapsed.

I've never learned to shrug my shoulders at nasty calls. Sometimes I lose my temper and I snap back. After every broadcast there are calls; usually I take them. Many callers will explain, "Oh, I never thought I'd get to talk to you — just your secretary." But I'm always available. How will I know what people think if I don't talk to them? These conversations are one of the reasons I am practically unerring in my ability to foretell who will be elected both in local as well as national elections; people relay their anxieties by their questions.

* * *

I'm frequently asked how I got on TV. There is a certain logic to the steps that brought me there. Because it was a new medium I was able to formulate my own pattern. No one knew that TV was to become the most powerful influence in the world — it educates — it entertains — it persuades — and has become the formidable weapon of men in public life.

I was on radio for a number of years and did a unique program. It lasted for an unbroken hour — no commercials. I did the story of historical personalities — Cleopatra, George Washington, Maximilian, Marie Antoinette, Alexandre Dumas, Rasputin, Sarah Bernhardt — at least one hundred of these biographies, all historically accurate.

History can be taught in this fashion, changing the isolated and remote figures into people that lived and loved and suffered indignation and frustration as all of us do. Bismarck no longer remains a dead figure when the fact is known that, riding to a meeting with the king to plot the Franco-Prussian war, he was munching on some sausages that his wife had packed for him herself, not trusting it to a servant; to discover that Marie Antoinette's decapitated head revealed that her hair was white, not from worry but because she had no dye to maintain the color, makes her real. George Washington refused pay as commander in chief, but his expense account was monumental. The last of the Hapsburgs slept on an army cot but a carriage was sent out every morning to purchase two particular rolls that he liked for his breakfast — a carriage, a footman, and a coachman to buy two warm rolls.

I did programs without notes and always ended the historic biographies with the death of the individual whose life story I was reporting. When I started the death scene, the announcers who had gone out for coffee knowing they had at least an hour would come back into the booth aware that I would be finishing. Some of the educators wanted me to put these biographies together in a book but I never got around to doing it.

Later I did news analysis on a radio station and then an editorial every Saturday on ABC radio sponsored by the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen. It followed the New York operas. When a Wagnerian opera was performed, it was always touch and go whether they would get off on time. Milton Cross never knew how nervous I was waiting for his last words.

I was doing a great deal of lecturing in those days and was invited to join the Scripps-Howard radio and TV station. Since there was no formula to follow, I formulated my own — a news show with comments and interviews. Because we were the first TV station between New York and Chicago, we commanded a huge audience. Though the number of TV sets was limited, listeners were not. Neighbors came to the homes of those who had TV sets to watch the shows; bars were crowded with TV watchers. Many a man was heard to say, "I can't stand a woman giving the news." This was before the women's movement became official. So great was the attention given to TV that when I went off to Taiwan to cover the

evacuation of the Tachen Islands crowds came to see me off.

When Mr. Perris, now the brilliant manager of the Scripps-Howard station in Cleveland, and I left for Cyprus and Egypt crowds saw us off with singing and flowers.

The head of the station once explained why he approved of me. "I can call that woman at midnight and tell her to leave at nine the following morning for Asia and she never says, 'I can't until I have my hair set.'" What he didn't know was that I never have my hair set. When I get out of my shower, I simply comb it and brush it. The first time I had my hair set was when I returned from Taiwan — that's about seventeen years ago. Sent off to the Orient with a few hour's notice, I would protest that I needed some shots only to be told, "Get them on the way." I did. I've had doctors in Italy, Greece, Iran, and India; I prefer to have them in the U.S.

On one trip I had to change planes in Honolulu. As I disembarked, I was greeted by the governor with leis and kisses. Slightly bewildered as to why I was receiving the Red Carpet treatment, I discovered he thought I was Senator Margaret Chase Smith, who also was on the plane. The governor had kisses left for her but the leis were around my throat.

* * *

If television has been a demanding experience, it has also been an extraordinary one; achievers, thinkers, writers, have passed through my door. My position in TV has enabled me to share noble and great thoughts from an Arnold Toynbee to a Billy Graham, from a Walter Reuther to a worker in a Ford plant, from a president like Truman or Nixon to the parking lot attendant.

Who could have a richer life? I have watched television grow into maturity. I have seen commercials change from fairy tales showing only beautiful women to real women. I remember one particular commercial which revealed a young, exquisite girl with her yellow hair turning to gold under the glow of the sun, dressed in chiffon, sailing through the woods with birds chirping, flowers growing at her feet, music playing, and a male with his arm around her who had a torso so magnificent it would have put the ancient Greeks to shame — both floating through the woods to the sound of music. And where were they going? To buy a box of detergent!

Now commercials are short dramas in which people look like and act like people. And if a woman is shown waxing her floor, she looks like a woman and not a debutante. Admittedly, some of the commercials tax one's credulity, like the ad showing initialed men's pajamas — it's obvious that if a man doesn't know who he is by the time he is ready for bed, there is something the matter with him.

To be part of a newsroom, to listen to the sardonic conversations of the reporters who have learned to question everything and everyone, to observe their meticulous reporting, to be part of a news team made up of four men and myself, gives one an unusual perspective of life. It's a unique

association, although being the only woman enables me to ask provocative questions that a man couldn't get away with. My aim in conducting an interview is not to ask embarrassing questions or to top my guest. Since every individual has a story my purpose is to cut through and allow the personality of the guest to emerge like a cameo, clear in outline and structure, to discover what he believes, what he knows, and what he has done to distinguish himself. In my twenty-six years I have interviewed almost fifteen thousand persons. That is surely what may be described as a massive acquaintance.

* * *

I dislike being a guest on a talk show. My last experience with Jack Paar was enough to confirm that dislike. When Jack Paar was first on television he had the rare ability to discover personalities of individuality. They were on frequently and the nation grew to know them. Names that are now forgotten had instant acclaim after being on Jack Paar's show.

His was one of the first of the talk shows and an overwhelming success. He showed emotion, he was real, and people responded to his interest and feelings. The most enigmatic, unpredictable equation is what makes a television personality. There is no formula, no method by which one can test the quality which would assure one of being popular. It may be described as charisma, but what does that really mean?

Flip Wilson, Danny Kaye, Leonard Bernstein, Johnny Carson — each one is so different and yet each has appeal. Why does one newsman have a higher rating than another? Is it his smile, his voice, his earnestness, or his ability to transmit his humanness? No one knows what it is but everyone recognizes it when it is present.

Paar had it, but he certainly had none of it the night I was on his show. Sergio Franchi, a singer whose voice and sexy physique always bring him an ovation, was also on the program. Another guest was Uri Geller, the young Israeli psychic.

The interview with the Israeli was dismal and the interview with me was unbelievable. It ended abruptly with Mr. Paar rising from his seat with tears in his eyes. He left me there with Peggy Cass, who motioned me to remain seated and whispered, "He would have cried if he had remained."

I left the studio without seeing Jack or receiving an explanation from anyone for his peculiar behavior — a display of bad manners which left me bewildered. When I returned to Cleveland the next day I was pounced on at the station with "What did you do to Jack Paar?" Everyone presumed I had done or said something unkind to him. That really got to me. No one worried about me, only about Jack. We were besieged by telephone calls not only from local viewers but from other parts of the country with, "What happened? Why did Paar leave?"

That afternoon Paar called me from New York to give me an explanation. The fact that I came from Cleveland reminded him of his

brother, who had died recently and is buried in Canton; his mother lives there; and he remembered his beginnings in the area. When he realized all that I was doing at my age and so on and so on . . . he ended his conversation with me by delivering the worst blow of all, "I only wish," he said, "that I were half the man you are." What could have been more deadly?

I've appeared on the Douglas show a number of times and once Eva Gabor was on at the same time. Her English vocabulary is somewhat limited and our dialogue was hilarious. I said that I loved sleeping with gardenias on my pillow. She exclaimed, "Gardenias! I love sleeping with my husband!"

But I protested, "He couldn't smell as sweet as gardenias."

"Pooh," she retorted, "I perfume him before he comes to bed."

Interviewing can be phony or honest, and it comes through to the viewer. My purpose in an interview is to reveal the guest's opinions, prejudices, erudition, etc.

A panorama of individuals whose names are familiar to most Americans have been my guests. Most of them I've interviewed in WEWS-TV studios. Some, such as Willy Brandt, Beatrice Lillie, Hitler, the governor of Cyprus, Madam Chiang, Diego Rivera, the Shah of Iran, I've crossed the seas to talk to.

But the presidency does strange things to men. Harry Truman rose to the office with nobility; the late FDR proved that an aristocrat could be moved to action by the agonies of a nation. In my interview with him he moved easily from political to personal questions. Unlike President Nixon, he did not avoid newsmen. He was gregarious enough to realize that a news conference is both dramatic and revealing, and a performance in which the President must use skill since the reporters direct questions with little delicacy when the purpose is to get information from the President.

Julie Nixon Eisenhower and her young husband, David, were a delightful couple — so eager and interested in everything. Julie observed a picture of the late Duke of Windsor and myself in my office. She wanted me to tell her all about the Duke, what he said to me, whether he talked about the Duchess. However, when an interview with Julie Eisenhower was arranged when she came to Cleveland on September 9, 1973, she was anything but charming. She, apparently, didn't know about the interview and left abruptly. If whoever was in charge couldn't arrange a publicity tour for Julie Eisenhower, it's no wonder they messed up the presidential campaign.

Governor Rockefeller is a most likable human being. I told him I was surprised that he was elected governor. "Why?" he demanded, looking perplexed and I think slightly annoyed.

"Because," I answered, "I don't see how you can relate to the average American who has to worry about a job, about payments for the mortgage,

the insurance, children's shoes, etc." "You," I told him, "have never known what it is to worry about money. Never once in your life! How can you comprehend the worries of the average voter?"

"That's not so," he answered. "I have some poor friends."

Whether you approve of what Jane Fonda stands for or not, she is an independent spirit. When she came to Cleveland, she was stopped at the airport and her bags examined. She was suspected of bringing in dope because her bag had a great quantity of pills. Actually, chemical analysis proved them to be vitamins. She protested and was forced into a room where she was detained. She was allowed one call to her attorney. He called her back but she was denied the right to talk to him. So that he would know that she was being held, she burst into the *Marseillaise* at the top of her lungs. She was carrying some tapes of interviews she had made with GI's; they were confiscated without any legal right.

I interviewed her in the lobby of the jail surrounded by reporters. She had just been released. Here she told me her story — she had been held in some room at the airport for four hours. She wanted to go to the bathroom and a policeman blocked her way. She pushed him and he yelled, "Did you see that? She attacked me. You're under arrest for assault and battery."

She was handcuffed and stripped and searched by a policewoman and then taken to jail. It was when she was released from jail that I talked with her. I offered her a change of clothes if she needed any or anything else I might be able to provide. The fact is that none of the charges stuck — neither the accusation of assault and battery or the pills. They were exactly what she said they were — vitamins — and the policeman would have had trouble persuading the judge that she was a physical menace to the officer, for she doesn't weigh much over 115 pounds.

Did this experience break her? To the contrary she continued to talk against the war and when she ran out of money, she went back to the movies and won an Oscar for her brilliant performance of a call girl in "Klute." She is a conscientious craftswoman and before she played the role she managed to acquaint herself with some of the New York City prostitutes so that her interpretation would be realistic.

The second time I talked with her was in October of 1973. She had with her her baby son — four or five months old. Her eldest child, Vanessa, was frequently taken with her on her journey around the country. The baby needed a change of diapers (the operation was performed in my office) and I'm sure that such a scene is never likely to take place again in my office — Jane Fonda and the nurse taking care of the infant's needs.

Whether one approves of her or is alienated by her support of the so-called Left and her attitude toward the war, particularly journeying to North Vietnam where, of course, she was enthusiastically welcomed because she was against the war, the fact remains that she is one of that rare group of dissenters who will pay any price for their convictions. It is

the dissenter, the rebel, that creates chaos but who also opens new paths for those of us who support the establishment, the majority, who have neither the desire nor the courage for change.

I pointed out to Miss Fonda that the attention she receives is not so much for her convictions as it is for the fact that a famous movie star is involved in an anti-war crusade. She admitted that this was so and also freely said she was willing to use every asset to achieve her goal.

"Why," I asked her, "do you do this? You could lead a comfortable life. Why don't you go back to the theater?"

"I have plans to do that but first I must help obtain the release of the political prisoners in Vietnam."

"The case consumes you, doesn't it?" I asked.

"Yes," was her reply. "I can't sit by and see injustice done."

"But you could have an easy, luxurious life as a famous movie star."

She shrugged her shoulders. "We all obey our destiny." And this cause was a burden she had assumed.

In my office her son lay peacefully sleeping because he was dry and had been fed. Perhaps that is all of our hungers equated in simple words — we want to be dry and fed.

To see her dressed in slacks and a sweater instead of furs and jewels, which we generally associate with movie stars, is startling, but only adds to her unusual attitude to society and our life style.

Here was a young woman who had everything — family, breeding, fame, money, looks. Why would she expose herself to jail arrest, censure, and disapproval? This is the mystery, the power of an idea, a conviction. It is the glory of the human mind and heart that there are those who are willing to pay any price to maintain the integrity of their convictions. It takes extraordinary courage — a price is always exacted by society for those who differ loudly and articulately with the accepted action.

In my years as an interviewer I've talked to literally thousands of generous, heroic, principled, warm men and women. Since appearing with me in an interview, Bing Crosby's wife still sends me a Christmas card every year. Erma Bombeck has a wonderful, whimsical sense of humor. The whole country is obsessed with diets and how to stay thin and I have talked with a number of diet specialists. Melina Mercouri is a fine actress and completely dedicated to the cause of freedom for Greece. There is something magnificent about such dedication and uncompromising repudiation of a government that is not a democracy. Eartha Kitt exuded sex appeal. Marian Anderson, in addition to an unforgettable voice, has more dignity than any other person I've ever interviewed. Ed Sullivan is a fortunate man who took what destiny gave him and brought pleasure to millions of people. And like all really successful people he was modest and friendly. Sybil Leek insists she is a witch (a good one) and has made a lucrative career of it. Teddy Kollek, the urbane and courageous mayor of

Jerusalem, is a courageous man. During the Six Day War he rode through the streets of his city unmindful of the shells and gunfire. Daniel Ellsberg, whose court case will remain one of the most dramatic in our legal history, was on my show. As a result of Watergate his story has had a dramatic ending and proved once more that the dissidents, those who put their beliefs into action, are the real molders and makers of man's history.

Scientists, oil magnates, heroic firemen and policemen, governors and senators, economists, nuns and priests, rabbis, circus performers, an endless array — literally thousands have appeared on my show. We once tried to add up the number and gave it up after we reached ten thousand. How many gifted, how many brainy, how many compassionate, how many ambitious, how many great performers I have sat with and talked to. A galaxy of stars and I have taken whatever wisdom and erudition they have offered. The human animal is amazing — the challenge to achieve constantly animates him.

* * *

DOROTHY FULDHEIM has been a leading personality in Middle Western radio and television for nearly 30 years. Now 80 years old, she still appears on WEWS-TV, Cleveland, every weekday. A recent Gallup Poll ranked her among the Most Admired Women in America. She has travelled the world interviewing heads of state, royalty (in and out of exile) and leading figures in the arts.

Mrs. Fuldheim lives in Cleveland with her daughter and granddaughter.

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THE SIGN OF GOOD TELEVISION

A CONVERSATION WITH HENRY LOOMIS

By John Carden

The President of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, Henry Loomis, has been a career public official since the Truman Administration. He served as director of the Voice of America under Edward R. Murrow, resigning in 1965 in protest against what he considered illegal efforts by President Johnson to use the agency for propaganda purposes.

Mr. Loomis then became Deputy U.S. Commissioner of Education and, later, deputy director of the U.S. Information Agency. In 1972 he succeeded John Macy as president of the CPB. The Corporation is governed by a 15 man board of directors, appointed by the President and approved by the Senate. It may not own any facilities nor produce any programs.

The interview which follows was conducted in Washington in late August.

Q. Mr. Loomis, seven years ago the Carnegie Corporation spoke glowingly of public broadcasting's potential. "We seek freedom," it declared, "from the constraints . . . of commercial television."

And it added, "We seek for the artist, the technician, the journalist, the scholar . . . freedom to be heard in this far-reaching medium."

Today, nearly 80 per cent of the nation's viewers have access to public television. Are they glimpsing the potential implied in this report?

A. Yes, I most emphatically believe the viewing audience has glimpsed the potential of public broadcasting. This is reflected in such programs as *Great American Dream Machine*, *VD Blues*, *Sesame Street*, our drama series, and our public affairs documentaries and interview series. In fact, we have only scratched the surface. I hope you'll see that as this interview progresses.

Q. A new arrangement seems to have emerged from a recent agreement between CPB, which funds public radio and television stations, and the Public Broadcasting Service, set up by the Corporation in 1969 to handle the scheduling and operation of the interconnection.

The arrangement I refer to involves the Station Program Cooperative starting this fall. Just how does it work?

A. Well, it is complicated, but when it gets going — let me remind you this is its first season — it shouldn't be all that confusing. This new plan was set up within PBS to allow the public TV stations to buy programs

within a free market operation. Each station will be funded in accordance with the size of the station, and will then use the funds to buy programs. The Ford Foundation and CPB are helping the stations this first year, but they'll be funding themselves from now on.

Q. How will the programs be priced?

A. They will be priced to recoup their production costs. But again, the charge to each station will be weighted according to size, with the largest public TV stations paying about fifteen times more than the smallest stations. The selection process will be handled by very sophisticated telex-computer equipment which connects all stations with PBS.

Q. Where will CPB spend whatever money it has left?

A. On new programs. On development and on production for two years of broadcast, after which these programs will move into the Station Cooperative, where they must make it on their own. In other words, to survive, they must be purchased by the stations. We'll have about 11 million dollars for new programs each year. This fund will not increase, but the funds to be passed on to the stations will.

I'd like to point out that the new plan is giving this country the world's first democratic system of broadcasting, in which local stations will be able to acquire programs that meet the needs of its own community. Minority interests will be met, and community groups will have a major voice in the programming.

Q. Speaking of funds, it is the popular impression that the director of the White House Office of Telecommunications Policy, Clay Whitehead, worked out this arrangement with public television: Provided PBS decentralized its programming — giving the 246 local stations greater power of program selection, the White House would provide these stations with financial aid. Lending support to this impression was Mr. Nixon's support of a bill giving between 70 and 100 million dollars in annual grants to public broadcasters over a five year period. (These ceilings have since been raised to 88 million for fiscal 1976 and 160 million for fiscal 1980.) All this is quite a change from the present two year authorization, which furnishes about 47 million a year.

Now, it's no secret that Mr. Nixon felt PBS was turning into a "fourth network," relying heavily on the views of such liberal commentators as Bill Moyers and Sander Vanocur. Was their departure from PBS connected with Mr. Nixon's attitude?

A. Let's untangle two separate questions. One is the question of supposedly "liberal" commentators; the other is the entirely different question of public broadcasting's structure, as suggested by your use of the words "fourth network."

The key to this last question is the actual meaning of "fourth network." This is a term that obscures, rather than illuminates, a subtle and serious issue in public television. That is, the issue of who controls the selection of

programs for national distribution.

Because public television is a system that serves specialized needs, its energy must come from sources close to those needs — the stations. Realizing this, the stations and national agencies in public TV have tried to develop a system in which a large portion of the national schedule will be selected by the stations themselves. The best system we've hit upon is the station program cooperative.

There's no question that the administration, especially the Office of Telecommunications Policy, was concerned that public television might become a "centralized" network. There is also no question that public television representatives themselves were concerned about the problem. It's worth noting that the president of PBS, Hartford Gunn, was working on an early version of the cooperative plan long before public broadcasting's political problems reached a critical point.

So, the answer to one of your questions is that the evolution of the cooperative did alter the administration's attitude toward public broadcasting, because it gave the stations a real voice in their own national schedule. Now, this solution was not devised as some scheme to get the administration off our backs. It was a response to a basic structural problem — a problem transcending the political climate of any particular day, month, or even year.

As for the question about "liberal" commentators — that's another matter entirely. I can't speculate about what was in Mr. Nixon's mind, but I have no reason to conclude it was decisive in the administration's consideration of public broadcasting.

Q. The president of the National Public Affairs Center for Television, James Karayn, says he is concerned "about the lack of serious investigative journalism on public TV this fall." While cooperative members purchased two series produced by his organization (N-Pact), they turned down six of the other offerings. Mr. Karayn adds: "The cooperative didn't buy one single documentary. It would be awful if we convinced ourselves that Washington Week in Review or Wall Street Week or a series of personal observations can say what should be said." What is your reaction to this?

A. I'm convinced there is clearly a place — and a need — for serious investigative reporting, but there's also a need for many other things. The stations did not buy the programs N-Pact offered in this area, and I'm sure this disappointed Mr. Karayn and his staff.

He believes them to be of absolute importance; to me, they are very important, but not absolutely so. I think there are many things public television does of equal significance. It's true, perhaps, they're not as much fun to do. Gavel to gavel coverage, for example — now, that's not much fun for a news analyst, but it may well be just what an audience wants.

There is, however, another point to be stressed: the difference between national and regional-local public affairs. Statistics from PBS and CPB

tend to deal only with national programs. That is most misleading, because most public affairs broadcasts are local, and hence not exportable. If you cover your city council or school board, no one else cares. A lot of time and energy is expended, and no one else knows about it. Shocking as it may seem, there is no central place now in existence that can give you accurate, timely information on how much public affairs programming is locally produced. A lot of the figures from Washington are deceptive; there is really no breakdown of programming as seen in the home. Mr. Karayn would like a large percentage of the programs aired to deal with public affairs. So would I. Nevertheless, I think his large percentage is more than we can afford for our diverse audience until we get cable, with its parallel diversity of lines. Right now, though, we're talking about one frequency, on which you have to program in series.

Finally, a word about investigative reporting: I believe there is no excuse for a one-sided controversial report. On the other hand, there is every reason to cover a controversial subject. If you do it as it should be done, both sides to the argument will think you've done it right. Unfortunately, the idea persists that controversial reporting is the name of the game. Usually, it means that you get an unbalanced, biased, and propagandistic story, one reflecting the author's own point of view. There is no place for it in either public or commercial television. But, of course, that is not what Mr. Karayn is advocating.

Q. Mr. Karayn has suggested it be national policy that five to ten percent of all corporation and foundation grants to public television go into a national public affairs fund. He says, "That's the only way to get money." Do you agree?

A. There are two points to this proposal. One, I believe, has some merit; the other, none. Those who interest themselves in public affairs tend to assume everyone else does or should do the same. Therefore, they say, TV should feature many public affairs programs.

Now, all our information indicates the audience for these programs is a very specialized one. For example, in Florida, the state legislature was covered for six weeks, a couple of hours a night. A survey was conducted before the series began to ascertain how many members of the general population would be interested in viewing such a program. Fifty percent indicated they would be. Another survey, conducted after completion of the broadcasts, revealed fourteen percent had tuned it in once or twice, or occasionally; only two percent had watched faithfully. In the case of the Watergate hearings, about ten percent had followed them avidly on TV. The people that did watch saw each other constantly, and this reinforced their impression that everyone was watching.

So I see very little justification for public affairs programming having a four or five percent override, any more than women's programs should have four or five, or black programs the same, etc. But members of every

group seem to think they should have it — and some groups want more than four or five percent.

There is, though, a valid point in Mr. Karayn's proposal. He wants to insulate the funds going into public affairs, as opposed, for example, to funds that finance musical programs. I'm convinced the funding by the Corporation, and particularly by the Station Program Cooperative, is pretty well insulated by its nature. I would agree it would be wrong for Corporation X or Y to support public affairs programming only — the appearance of influence would be too strong. I think the Cooperative is clean — no one controls it — as is our own CPB funding arrangement. When we give a grant for a series, without knowledge of what the series will turn out to be — well, that grant certainly has no strings attached. And, of course, CPB states clearly it has no desire to control.

Q. One of the big problems in public television seems to be the reluctance of local stations to air anything other than discussion programs. In the words of Martin Mayer, "They don't want to do music, or dance, or animation, or anything else requiring the employment of professional talent other than journalists." Yet, if ratings are to be believed, many viewers, at least those who watch commercial productions, find discussions deadly. Where, then, are the other types of programs going to come from?

*A. I don't agree with Mr. Mayer's statement. I can safely say there is no reluctance on the part of station or program managers to air music, dance or film (be it animated, experimental, or whatever). Program managers have voiced repeatedly the need for additional programming in all of these categories. If you take a look at the current and past, as well as the upcoming fall PBS schedule, you will note programs focusing on the very categories Mr. Mayer says PTV has a reluctance to broadcast. For example, music programs like *Evening at Pops*, *The Boarding House*, as well as *International Performance*, featuring both music and dance. And these recently purchased series: *Soundstage*, *At the Top*, and *Evening At Symphony*. As you can see, public television will offer a wide musical spectrum.*

Now, to produce top quality programming devoted to dance, like WNET's *American Ballet Theatre*, takes a lot of money. The American public has been fortunate, via PTV, to have seen Nureyev in "The Sleeping Beauty" and "Swan Lake." And let's not forget a series produced by the New Hampshire network entitled *Festival of the Dance*. It's true, more dance programming would be a great addition to the schedule. Many local PTV stations are producing such programs.

As for film, a new animated series has been bought from San Francisco's KQED. This summer PBS is offering a series, *Video Visionaries*, produced by WBGH in Boston, WNET in New York, and the National Center for Experiments in Television. Upcoming is a package called *Festival Films*, featuring student productions from the University of

Maryland.

Where are all these programs going to come from? From the system. From PTV stations in such towns as Trenton, New Jersey, and Carbondale, Illinois, as well as cities like Los Angeles and New York. In the future, many more programs produced locally will be distributed nationally.

Q. How will such distribution be implemented?

A. A local PTV station or independent production house makes a proposal. A catalog is made of such proposals, along with the costs of the projected programs. Local stations can indicate what programs they want to buy for their schedules by means of the computer setup I mentioned earlier. When a program's production costs are covered by station support, it is then produced and distributed to the stations that ordered it.

Q. What, in your opinion, is the most significant programming success story in public broadcasting?

A. In the public affairs area, the Watergate hearings. CPB funded that coverage, demonstrating PTV could contribute gavel to gavel coverage not economically feasible for the commercial networks. The successful program series are well known to your readers.

Q. What working relationship, if any, does CPB have with broadcast audiences?

A. CPB has organized and funded an Advisory Council of National Organizations to represent the public interest by assisting CPB in gauging the need for public broadcasting. ACNO now has forty-nine member organizations, representing many millions of people.

Q. As you know, the Federal Communications Commission encourages commercial stations to editorialize. Do you believe public broadcasting stations should be prohibited from doing the same?

A. First, I suggest we get a perspective on the question. Since 1967, the Federal Communications Act has specifically forbidden any noncommercial educational broadcasting station to editorialize or support or oppose any candidate for public office. Although this prohibition was also contained in the Public Broadcasting Act establishing CPB, its burden is almost exclusively upon the individual licensees of educational stations. Many of these licensees are tax-supported state or local universities or school systems, or non-profit corporations. They might find legal difficulties in editorializing, or opposing political candidates, even without the specific prohibition contained in the Federal Communications Act.

Q. Has any public broadcasting station ever defied this law?

A. To the best of my recollection, no station has ever been cited officially for violation, nor has the prohibition itself been challenged before Congress.

Nevertheless, some have raised constitutional objections to it. This is very much a matter for the lawyers and scholars. The prohibition may, in fact, be challenged in the courts some day.

But to return to your question: the impact of the prohibition is somewhat a matter of speculation, but I am convinced that, in and of itself, it has not impaired the ability of public broadcasting stations to produce, distribute, and broadcast programs treating controversial public issues. The record of public broadcasting's treatment of controversial issues, local and national, is an excellent one, reflecting great credit for public service upon the stations.

Your question brings to mind one of my favorite passages from the Carnegie Commission report, which served as the foundation stone for enactment of the Public Broadcasting Act of 1967. You quoted a portion of the report in your first question. I'd like to close by quoting another:

Public Television programming can deepen a sense of community in local life. It should show us our community as it really is. It should be a forum for debate and controversy. It should bring into the home meetings, now generally untelevised, where major public decisions are hammered out, and occasions where people of the community express their hopes, their protests, their enthusiasms, and their will. It should provide a voice for groups in the community that may otherwise be unheard.

Here, in this passage, we see the promise of public broadcasting. I believe that we are doing a good job in living up to that promise.

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UNIVERSAL TELEVISION

where movies made-for-television began, has brought you:
A CASE OF RAPE, THE EXECUTION OF
PRIVATE SLOVIK, SUNSHINE, THE MARCUS-
NELSON MURDERS, THAT CERTAIN SUMMER,
DUEL, THE SNOW GOOSE, MY SWEET CHARLIE,
THE HARNESS, A CLEAR AND PRESENT DANGER,
THE NEON CEILING and SILENT NIGHT-LONELY
NIGHT... among many esteemed programs...

this season presents:

THE CALIFORNIA KID

THE CAY

THE LAW

THE GUN

THE GREATEST GIFT

and other important productions.

HOW DO THOSE RESIDUALS WORK?

By Fred Nassif

Sometimes I wish I were a pearl diver. Or a tree surgeon. Or a dirigible commander. Not that I have any special aptitude for these vocations. But were I a dirigible commander and a stranger asked what I did for a living, I could answer, "Well, I happen to be in command of a dirigible" — and the conversation would end right there.

But when I admit to earning my daily bread performing in television commercials, the conversation takes wing. We're off to Cloud-Cuckoo Land and the questions never stop.

Because we who toil in television practice our craft in full view of the world, the public regards us as public property. After all, we come into their homes, over and over again. They know how we suffered from painful arthritis or embarrassing dandruff or dingy kitchen floors until a benevolent neighbor set us on the right path. They've shared an intimate experience with us. They were right there, by God, in the bathroom, the kitchen, the boudoir. And, as old friends, they'd now like to ask a few questions.

Can you imagine anybody approaching a doctor, a lawyer — or even a dirigible commander — and asking, "How much money do you make?" Or, "What do you do between jobs?" Or, "Have you ever really swallowed that stuff you sell?"

I find it hard to believe, too. But those are the questions I have been fielding for years. Inevitably, certain generalities leap to mind about these nosey admirers. And the first is that the average viewer knows virtually nothing about the medium's paid messages or its messengers. But they've picked up a bit of jargon and a lot of misinformation.

The question asked most frequently is, "Say, how do those residuals work?"

Translation: "You fellows must make a lot of money. How much?"

When I was new at this commercial dodge I regularly took the time to explain the complicated fee structure to anyone who asked. I'd go into careful details: that I am paid a "session fee" for making the commercial, a "replay fee" for each network showing and another separate fee for each 13 weeks of play on local stations. It's not international stardom but it's better than a walk-on off Broadway.

After a while I learned that the curious folk who asked how I was paid were not at all interested in the formula. They wanted the figure. How much? \$50,000 a year? Or maybe \$100,000? They'd read about the "fabulous fees" commercial spokesmen get for singing "I Smell Clean!" or advising us, "When you've got your health. . . ."

One of my questioners thrust a clipping at me, the morning line from *Newsweek*. It read, in part, "An actor who is constantly in demand for such work (i.e., television commercials) can average \$50,000 a year, with the top earners drawing up to ten times that much."

Well! How do you tell somebody possessed of glittering figures like those that in 1973 the average income from television commercials for the 29,295 members of the Screen Actors' Guild was only \$2,450 per year? As the song says, they wouldn't believe me.

Not only do civilians believe that commercials spell instant riches, they are also convinced that such assignments are easy to come by and quick and simple to do. Wrong, wrong. When one of the innocents sighs, "What a great way to make a living! You just hold something up in front of the camera and smile," I don't smile back. I glower. Then I produce my dazzling statistics.

For every product that needs to be held up and smiled over, I inform this innocent, there are 300 actors available, able and panting for the assignment. Of the 300, only 20 or so are approved to audition for the job.

Occasionally, when I have completed my statistical lecture, I smile and confess that while auditions may be tough, the actual filming of some commercials can be embarrassingly easy.

Case in point:

Not long ago I auditioned for a salad dressing commercial that was to be performed in pantomime. I was asked to improvise the part of an amorous bachelor scheming to seduce his female guest by tossing an utterly irresistible salad. An oily but crunchy love potion, if you will.

In the course of three auditions, each lasting about ten minutes, I wooed that salad bowl as if it were the girl of my dreams. I kissed the bowl, sang to it, caressed it, danced with it, leered at it, hugged it to my chest and, finally, proposed we stop all this intellectual chit-chat and get married.

My third audition struck a responsive chord. When I ended my ten minutes of frantic nonsense, the agency people, the creators of the commercial, gave me a sitting ovation. I got the job.

I was flown to Miami by the agency and, after three days of agreeable loitering beside a hotel pool, I was summoned to a private home with a splendid kitchen. There the producer and camera crew were waiting anxiously to record my love scene with the salad bowl. They were ready, I was ready. *Avanti!*

Waiting for the prop man to toss the greens into the bowl, I reviewed

the passionate wooing of my three prize auditions. I would give this fine product only my best stuff, my tenderest sighs and sexiest leers.

Then the director issued his orders. "All right, now. On 'Action!' pick up the salad bowl, smell it and show that you like it."

"And then I go into my seduction number?"

"Oh, no," he directed. "Just sniff the bowl, please. And smile."

I'm no fool. I sniffed, I smiled. I sniffed and smiled again. I didn't carry on like Romeo, I just sniffed and looked beamish. Three takes later I was on my way back to New York. It was, I admit, easy money. But if I hadn't done that eloquent pantomime, improvising my way through three auditions, the "easy" job never would have come my way.

Not all my assignments have left me serene and in love with my work. There was, for example, a certain hamburger commercial. I still wince at the memory.

This time the scenario featured a nice American family — Mom, Dad, son and daughter — setting out on a vacation trip. The fifth member of the family refused to come along.

That reluctant traveller was a big, dumb, drooling St. Bernard. He was assigned to sit off-stage and bark twice when I gave him the cue. I sensed at once that I had two terrible problems. One, I'm afraid of dogs. Sounds absurd but there it is. Two, this hairy brute knew I was afraid of dogs. He was unhappy and hostile. He hated sitting under hot lights in his heavy coat. He hated me. And I had to work a mere ten inches from his angry, massive head.

The prospect of being eaten by this creature didn't disturb me half as much as his breath. St. Bernards clearly do not avail themselves of the many excellent mouth wash products advertised on TV. They don't even brush their teeth. They exhale the bouquet of an old silo. My eyes watered, my face dripped. The makeup woman hardly left me. It was a rather full day.

After some 20 takes, with this pony-sized dog, I grew accustomed to his face. And his halitosis. And his head-rattling bark. But now he began to drool profusely. (St. Bernards, Newfoundlands and certain other large dogs drool under stress.) Each time the beast heard my voice he whipped his head around and drenched me.

Finally, after 30 takes, the director cried, "That's it, thank you." But my co-star wasn't quitting. He had to show his appreciation. He did so by knocking me down and licking me, full on the lips. It was a day to remember.

Perhaps the most perplexing question I'm asked is, "Have I seen you in a commercial?". Now, shouldn't someone know whether he has seen you in a commercial? Especially when he or she is looking right at you? The questions boggle the mind:

Fan: Have I seen you in a commercial?
Fred: Perhaps. I have about five running now.
Fan: Really? Which ones?
Fred: Well, there's one for Liberty Mutual Insurance. I play a golfer.
Fan: No, I don't think I've seen it.
Fred: I have one on for Campbell's Chunky Sirloin Burger.
Fan: What do you do in that one?
Fred: I play a father. I have a wife and four . . .
Fan: Doesn't sound familiar.
Fred: You may have seen the Schaefer Beer commercial I'm in.
Fan: Is that the one with the basketball players?
Fred: No, I'm at a golf club and this singer . . .
Fan: Doesn't ring a bell. What else?
Fred: Aqua Velva?
Fan: Nope.
Fred: Bayer Cold Tablets?
Fan: Which one?
Fred: I have this bad cold and . . .
Fan: Nope. I guess I've never seen you in a commercial. (Pause) Hey, wait a minute! Aren't you the guy in that Ford commercial?
Fred: No, I . . .
Fan: You drive up to this car dealer in a real piece of junk . . .
Fred: No, I've never done . . .
Fan: . . . and the dealer gives you a dirty look so you zip out of there right over to the Ford dealer. Am I right?
Fred: You must have mistaken me for . . .
Fan: Boy, that look on your face. You were really great in that commercial.
Fred: Thank you.

The one question from fans that really hurts is, "Do you ever do any *real* acting?" By this is meant, Have you ever sustained a part longer than one minute on the stage or in a film?

Here I smile the way I smiled at that St. Bernard and explain that the acting one does in a commercial is as "real" as any other kind. In some ways, it is even more demanding.

An actor starring in a commercial has about four seconds to establish the character (concerned husband, let's say), his motivation (getting his wife to use corn pads on her aching feet) and about 24 seconds to show how Dr.

Scholl saved the marriage.

Now, were this plot — how a loving husband saved his marriage and made his wife happy — to be extended to 90 minutes, the actor would have at least a full reel to indicate his anxiety about his wife's feet.

Like a good teacher, I must stress my point. Given less time, more exacting movements, plus banal dialog and intense pressure, a good actor must still give style and zest to a commercial. Our brethren who must "get into the mood," probe the deeper feelings of the character and interpolate emotions not in the script would find commercial assignments a shattering ordeal.

A message that cannot be conveyed to the curious who ask how much you earn is, "You must prove worthy of your hire." Acting in commercials isn't easy. It just looks that way.

* * *

FRED NASSIF, a member of the National Board of Directors of Screen Actors Guild, has acted in hundreds of television commercials and written about them for numerous publications including the New York Times.

* * *

The \$25,000 Pyramid
Family Affair
Don Kirshner's Rock Concert
Viacom Features I
The Beverly Hillbillies
The Price Is Right
The Andy Griffith Show
Hogan's Heroes
The Twilight Zone
Gomer Pyle
The Amazing World of Kreskin
What's My Line?
Wild Wild West
Perry Mason
The Most Important Person
I Love Lucy
Petticoat Junction
The Dick Van Dyke Show
...all from Viacom

NIXON — 'OUT OF SYNC' AND (At Last) OFF THE TUBE

By Bill Greeley

Richard Nixon and television were sprung on the nation at about the same time. They came together importantly for the first time in 1952 with the famous Checkers speech, and ended, almost a quarter of a century later, with what The Manchester *Guardian* called the President's "wretched, slobbering, sputtering" farewell address.

The Checkers appeal, credited with saving Nixon's political career, was artfully keyed to the new medium. It was full of half truths, innuendo and self-pity. But it tugged at the heart. The plain folks loved it.

It seems to me of passing interest that the Checkers speech coincided with the era of the sewing-machine pitchmen. The Brooklyn district attorney drove the pitchmen and their fantastic claims off the air. He did so by planting under-cover police in slum apartments and secretly taping the sales pitch of the sewing machine field agents. It's one of the curious twists of the Nixon saga that 22 years later, secret recordings — the historic White House tapes — should play a decisive role in blowing Mr. Nixon out of the White House and off the tube.

Like the pitchmen, the Checkers speech could have worked only in the early, unsophisticated days of television. Nixonites knew it would be a damaging joke to subsequent audiences, and it is indicative of the influence they exercised over the medium that it has never since been seen on network television. Film producer, Emile de Antonio ("Point of Order," "Year of the Pig,") tried desperately to get a 'Checkers' kinescope before the 1968 election. He was told it was the property of the Republican National Committee, and no television archivist would admit to having a print. He later did get a rare print (stolen by young radicals) and produced his scathing documentary, "Milhous: A White Comedy," around it (courtesy of de Antonio, the speech subsequently aired on public stations WNET and WNYC in New York).

But Nixon was always a "bum act," in *Variety* lingo, and never worse than when he faced telegenic Jack Kennedy in the debates which ruined him in his first run for President. Much has been written about his inept projection, but never has it been summed up better than by a cameraman with Nixon on the campaign trail in 1968. In the frustration of trying to shoot the candidate's familiar arms-up V-greeting before the Nixonettes

could crowd in and block the shot, the cameraman turned to the other newsmen at the airport, and commented, "The guy is two frames out of sync."

Even with the Kennedy brothers shot to death and the Democratic party disastrously polarized over the Vietnam issue, Nixon was almost defeated by Hubert Humphrey. Some experts contend that if the campaign had continued another two weeks, Nixon's image on TV would have turned off enough voters to turn the election around.

But Nixon went on in his first term to use television to excess, even to the point of introducing his cabinet in prime time. In his six years in office, he commanded enough time in across-the-board national television to program a weekly prime-access game show for a year without a repeat.

"Golden Age" is not an inspired label for those rich TV years of live drama, but it's descriptive. Nor is "Dark Age" an inspired identification for the television years under the Nixon administration, but it serves, probably better than most of us realize. When was the last time comedian David Frye, renowned for his hilarious Nixon impressions, was seen on primetime television? Frye was a variety show guest in high demand before the start of the Dark Age in 1968. A few months ago he appeared in a segment of the CBS magazine show, *60 Minutes*. The appearance was carefully balanced off, back-to-back, with a segment on the Jesuit speech writer in the White House. And, with Nixon safely out of office, Frye recently guested the *Tonight Show* (Sammy Davis Jr. hosting), although the tape jumped nervously from censor cuts.

Few probably remember, or perhaps were even ever aware, that it was the Nixonites who drained the life out of NBC's fine comedy series, *Laugh-In*, which before the Dark Age included some excellent bits of political satire (remember Dan Rowan as General Key?). George Schlatter, who, with Ed Friendly, created the show, was replaced as producer by Nixon gag writer Paul Keyes. The parade of ultra-conservative, pro-administration guests was on — William F. Buckley Jr., John Wayne, Spiro T. Agnew, and Richard Nixon himself. Vulgarity was substituted for the show's high good humor. "More bathroom jokes than a plumbers' convention," is the way Schlatter described it, with no irony intended.

Schlatter recalls that as producer he actually kept a chart of the special guests, carefully balancing off hawk and dove, right and left.

But the real crunch of the Nixon years was on network news. In reflection it seems that the elaborate and complex schemes of the Nixon administration to exercise control over television came very near capturing the medium. To skim the surface of a subject which surely will some day occupy volumes, I should mention, to start, the Agnew speeches, White-House scripted in an alliterative vulgate appropriate to the administration, aimed at making the press, particularly TV, the villain instead of the President.

Then there was the White House Office of Telecommunications, set up by Nixon which decimated an already weak national public television system and worked against the commercial networks through the affiliates (who, as the *New York Times*' Les Brown said, "are pushovers for a government that would seek absolute rule"). Besides CREEP, which needs no further discrediting here, Nixon put together the November Group, high-paid Madison Avenue hucksters on leave from their ad agencies to mastermind and engineer his low-key campaign of 1972.

By 1972, the manipulations and bullying seemed to have the networks mesmerized. Although the Equal Time rule didn't apply, the networks were sufficiently intimidated to allow a string of photogenic surrogates, particularly John Connally, to stand in for Nixon while Democratic candidate George McGovern tried to force his opponent to answer the challenges personally.

Nixon won by a landslide as television — not to mention the daily press around the nation — was shamefully slow to pick up on the Watergate and related scandals. For much too long the greatest political scandal in the nation's history appeared to be the exclusive franchise of *Washington Post* reporters Woodward and Bernstein and Jack Anderson (remember Dita Beard?). A Columbia Journalism Review survey after the elections showed the overwhelmingly Republican daily press widely ignoring the Watergate revelations of the *Washington Post*. In some major cities newspapers were not carrying the original stories but printing the White House denials.

There are, however, some mitigating factors in the case against the network news operations. This was the first time the relatively new medium had been faced with coverage of a major national political scandal. The record of the nightly newscasts is not easy to trace. But I go along with those who view the two-part Watergate wrapup aired by the CBS Walter Cronkite news 10 days before the elections in November of 1972 as a breakthrough. For television, always better at rewriting than originating, it was a bold exposition, not for any new revelations but for putting the whole story in focus in striking visual terms.

The Nixon camp naturally viewed the Cronkite effort as a threat. They had believed until then that the story had pretty much been localized in the *Washington Post* and *New York Times*, with national attention limited mainly to the news weeklies. The Cronkite piece nationalized the story, and reaction from the White House was instant. Presidential assistant Chuck Colson called CBS Chairman William S. Paley after Part One, which ran 14 minutes, was aired. Among other things, Colson complained that it was an old story. The call resulted in the second part of the piece being cut in half. The facts remained, but the visual impact was lessened.

Network news operations had more to worry about than top-management reluctance in coverage of Watergate. One only had to view affiliate owners and managements giving Nixon a standing ovation as late

as last spring in the so-called news conference televised from the National Assn. of Broadcasters Convention in Houston to understand the chronic hostility to hard news at the ends of the network feeds.

Network newsmen have told me that what their managements really fear is a defection on the part of the radical right wing among the affiliates to something like ultra-conservative Joe Coors' independent TVN. In the McCarthy era, the Taft stations pulled out of CBS for ABC, declaring in the trade press that they didn't like the network's politics. Possibly the fact that ABC was on a raid and offering higher compensation on network shows was the main cause of the switch, but the chill lingers at CBS.

Maybe someday someone will compile a thorough study of network Watergate coverage from a source like the Vanderbilt U. nightly newscast archives. I think they will find that CBS continued on from its first brave expose of the scandals to a foremost position in daily Watergate coverage. NBC would rate second and ABC a rather poor third.

Charlie Crutchfield, the president of Jefferson Pilot Broadcasting in Charlotte, N.C., and a former chairman of the CBS affiliates board, who has long been a loud critic of his network's news, unwittingly demonstrated CBS News' superior professionalism in a widely distributed pamphlet during the summer of 1973. For comparison purposes, Crutchfield reprinted segments from the CBS and ABC newscasts of August 6, 1973, declaring that the CBS handling was an example of how the White House, the Hill and the public come to the charge that the media is biased and distorted even though the facts may be straight. By any and all journalistic standards, however, the CBS story was far better than ABC's, as a glance at the two leads should clearly reveal:

H. K. Smith (ABC): "Last week the House Government Operations Committee voted to subpoena government records on expenses related to President Nixon's homes in San Clemente and Key Biscayne. That was in spite of a White House promise to make information available anyway."

Dan Rather (CBS): "At least 10 million dollars in taxpayers' money has been spent at President Nixon's houses and the houses he sometimes uses belonging to friends Robert Ablanap and Charles Bebe Rebozo. Here is the breakdown. . . ."

In addition, what Crutchfield didn't point out is that CBS led off the news with the story while ABC (and NBC) dropped it down inside their newscasts. So much for recent criticisms that Rather was really not all that tough in television news conferences. I for one believe CBS's steady, night after night handling of the scandals was sharper and harder than that of other networks, consistent with Crutchfield's misbegotten example of implied bias.

The nightly network attention to Watergate as it accelerated surely was a major force in bringing down Nixon and the White House-CREEP Mafia. Probably of equal impact were the televised Senate Watergate

hearings in the summer of 1973. And public television had its best show ever in the primetime full replay of the hearings. N-PACT's Jim Karayn estimates that grateful viewers contributed \$2,500,000 to public stations around the country. N-PACT in Washington, D.C., received 85,000 letters with another 75,000 going to stations and the letters were 98% favorable.

It's strange now to believe that the coverage barely got on the Public Broadcasting Service. The public system, like commercial, had its reluctant affiliates (member stations, as they are called at PBS) and top management. A poll of stations on whether they wanted primetime, gavel-to-gavel replay of the hearings pulled a slight 52% majority in favor. Even after the highly favorable public response to the coverage of the first phase of the hearings, the PBS program committee sent a recommendation to the stations that further coverage be curtailed (edited down) and shoved back out of primetime. The proposal was finally defeated when major city stations, which had promised viewers full coverage to the end, raised hell. Thus PBS became the only feed for the final phase of the hearings, featuring top executives from major corporations which had funnelled illegal campaign funds into CREEP. Among the witnesses during public television's lone vigil were top executive representatives of the medium's major commercial advertisers.

After the televised Ervin Committee hearings, the tube went full blast with fine Watergate specials and "instant specials," especially from CBS, NBC and PBS. The main event, however, was probably last summer's national televising of the Judiciary Committee's impeachment debates. The documented recital of the sins of the administration, so cogently served up by the congressional adversaries is credited with finally turning the public majority (silent and otherwise) around to favoring impeachment.

Variety capped the finale under a standing head:

D.C. to L.A.

Richard M. Nixon

That should have been the end of a tawdry era, but the new President reopened the Watergate with his full pardon for Nixon. His televised announcement — (after Sunday Church, precisely as Dick would have done it) — was followed immediately by a fine Dan Rather special on CBS at 6 p.m. NBC was on with a half-hour at 10:30 (ABC offered nothing.)

I suspect that not too many years ago the networks would have waited until Monday morning to see how the *Times* handled it. Our only hope now is that the lessons of Watergate have been felt all the way down the network lines.

* * *

BILL GREELEY has been covering television for Variety for the past 15 years. He attended the University of Minnesota's School of Journalism and after graduation worked for the Beaumont Newspapers in Texas. He was born and raised in Duluth.

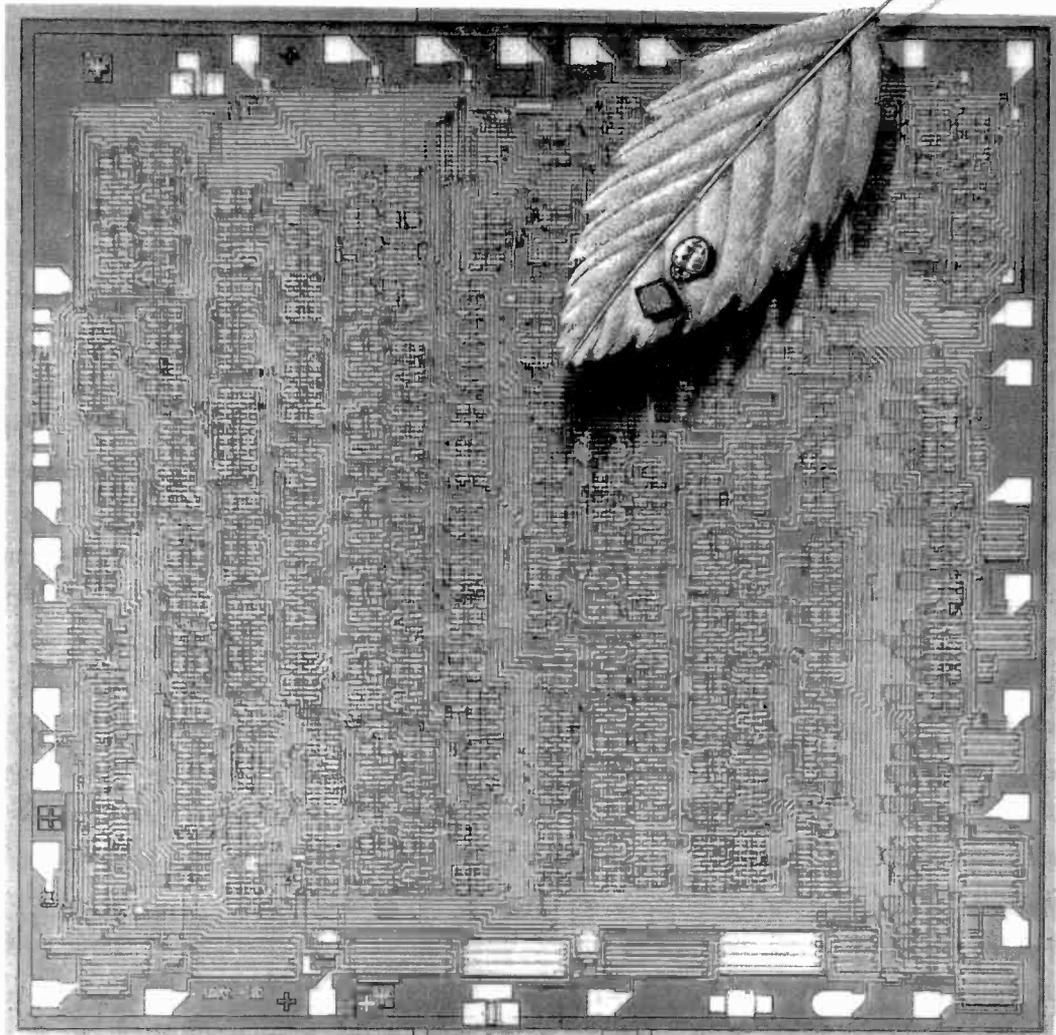
PIECE OF MIND. That little chip on the leaf next to Ladybug is the brain of an electronic watch. It's an RCA integrated circuit with 1,300 built-in components.

In the background, we've magnified it hundreds of times so you can see it a little better.

Such tiny circuits are making solid state—and our solid stake in it—one of today's fastest-growing industries.

They can help operate a camera, a security alarm, a calculator, and many systems inside a car. Almost anything done electro-mechanically, they can do better. More accurately, reliably, economically. With low energy and no pollution.

Electronics is creating new ways to make life better. And RCA, which helped create the technology, is still innovating the electronic way.



The electronic way

RCA

THE MAKING OF A NEW NEWS

By Earl Ubell

When Lee Hanna marched into the NBC newsroom on the fifth floor of 30 Rockefeller Plaza in the summer of 1972 to take charge of local news at the five NBC-owned stations, conditions at the New York flagship had reached the desperation point. Once the news leader in New York, WNBC-TV had at six o'clock a one-hour albatross news that for seven years steadily turned away viewers. The bird had rotted.

Two years later Channel 4 has a new news. It is startlingly different in execution and intention from any other in the country. It runs from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. It is a two-hour panorama of life in the metropolitan area, reavealing not only the sordid but the beautiful and useful. Our broadcast — *NewsCenter 4* — is still young, but it is slowly attracting an audience, reversing the previous sad decline.

In those seven years of famine, ratings dropped year by year despite the energy and good sense of producers and news directors. They tore down and erected sets as though there were an urban renewal project in set design. They changed anchormen with the regularity of the seasons. Producers trotted through on their way to the Far East or to government jobs. Nothing seemed to help.

Indeed, when Hanna arrived that summer the rating services reported that only 3 per cent of the area's television sets had the *Sixth Hour News* from Channel 4. Don't worry, he was told, at least things cannot get worse. A week later an asterisk appeared on the rating sheet. Translation: no measurable audience. That for a once proud, brilliant and vigorous news organization,

Three months later Hanna hired me on the radical theory that a science editor with twenty-five years of newspaper and television experience might have some fresh ideas about television news. It remains to be seen how crazy the notion was.

To rebuild the news organization and to create our new news, Hanna and I had great resources at our command. We had all of NBC News. It is not well understood outside of television that almost all other local news operations chafe under reins held by station managers. At the five NBC-owned stations local news directors report up the chain of command to Dick Wald, president of NBC News. Newspeople handle the news.

We also had a strong eleven o'clock news broadcast that led the market for years, and continued to be at or near the top much of the time. Jim Hartz, the Eleventh Hour News anchorman, stood out as an intelligent, charming and writing news man. (Alas, he left *NewsCenter 4* for full-time duty on the *Today Show*.)

If WNBC-TV had all that power why was it failing at 6 o'clock? Everybody has an answer. Here's mine, for which I make no special claim. Television news of the 1950s and 1960s was suffused with newspaper tradition. Many of the writers and reporters were former newspapermen. At Channel 4, they emphasized the fastbreaking stories, always briefly told with the anchorman doing most of the voice-over narrations and introducing the talking heads. It was not unlike a mildly illustrated newspaper. At the time it worked beautifully.

By the mid-1960s the TV news environment began to change, WCBS-TV (under Lee Hanna) began to emphasize longer film stories, snappy studio production, specialists in politics, education, arts, and science (me), and reporters with good broadcast presence. In other words, there was a shift to television values in addition to the journalism. It worked. Channel 2 passed Channel 4 in 20 months.

Toward the end of the decade, WABC-TV moved in with entertainment values. Indeed, the advertising for Eyewitness News suggested that something outlandish might happen during the broadcast. Sometimes it did. A bag of feathers was opened over an anchorman's head. More recently three (male) reporters went topless in the studio. At the same time there was strong reporting by reporters willing to seek out the emotional values in a story. It worked. In 18 months, Channel 7 passed Channel 4 and in another year tied with Channel 2.

Our problem lay in trying to break away from the stranglehold of the newspaper tradition and to create a news broadcast demonstrably different from our competitors' efforts. We could not ape the "happy talk news," nor "go tabloid" by spraying our screen with blood-and-guts crime, nor turn to entertainment. We wanted a news broadcast.

We wanted to cover the breaking news of the day but would not be dependent on what was happening for all the content. On a day when "nothing happens" we wanted to be interesting.

We wanted a broadcast that included investigative reporting and news that didn't appear only on the wire or in the *New York Times*.

We wanted to give deeper meaning to the news, to provide background reports and explanations.

We wanted to give viewers news that was useful — a consumer ombudsman, information about where to buy beautiful or inexpensive things, news about medicine, the theater, movies and entertainment.

Most important of all, we wanted the audience to know that they could expect all of this on a regular basis. If they tuned in on any day, they could

find the new, the background, the useful and the beautiful.

Out of these “wants” we created a fully departmentalized broadcast so that each ingredient appears at a specified time presented by a specific individual. To be sure, other news broadcasts have recurring features — sports, weather, consumer reporters, crime segments — but none that I know has created a totally segmented presentation.

We feel the audience will come to be comfortable watching a broadcast whose order is familiar but whose content holds the surprise — Newspapers, news magazines and television variety shows have understood this idea. They play with the content, not the format.

Our emphasis, too, has been on content not cosmetics, although we have not slighted the look of *NewsCenter 4*. Fred Harpman, a man with 3-D dreams, created a working center that proclaims: This is a television broadcast, not an airline ticket office or an insurance company headquarters. Neil Fujita, one of the nation’s leading graphics designers, produced a graphics look that went beyond still photography and cartoon-like symbols.

Our format separates the breaking news of the day from the news we have dug up on our own. We present the breaking news four times during the two hours in segments called *NewsDesk*: Thus, if you watch any hour of the broadcast, you get a full report of the top local, national and international stories of the day. Even if you miss the opening quarter hour of the 6 p.m. portion of *NewsCenter 4*, the 6:30 *NewsDesk* still gives you a substantial news report. This is not true of any other news broadcast. We also interpolate short news items between the other departments.

To be sure, we repeat stories from *NewsDesk* to *NewsDesk*, but we alter the content of the repeated material, up-dating it, including new information and presenting it in a different way each time. So, if you watch the whole two hours — and many people do — you are not bored by the repetition.

Our other departments — each of which appear at a specified time — include heavy doses of original reporting to explain the complicated world.

Topic A: our daily, television equivalent of a “cover story” — an original report about a topic of major news interest. We have uncovered the way murderous teenagers spin through the revolving doors of family court; we tell how doctors and dentists carry guns; we trace the rise of soccer.

Close-Up: our daily backgrounder on the major breaking news story of the day — ranging from the stockmarket, the 35-cent fare, and Israel-Arab negotiations to daredevils who tight-rope walk between the trade center towers.

News Comment: daily commentary by Ed Newman, our lucid and far-ranging national correspondent, and William Rusher, a conservative who is editor of the “National Review.” We used to have Jimmy Breslin, but he has

gone off to write books. We seek his replacement.

Urban Journal: Carl Stokes' three-times-weekly examination of major urban problems — abortion clinics, Harlem private schools, Newark's Puerto Ricans, Long Island development. An expert's view unmatched in the city.

Neighbors: Tony Guida and Jim Collis roam the metropolitan area, tell of troubles and triumphs in the towns, neighborhoods and cities. Our way of getting local stories that don't hit the wires.

We also have departments that deliver news the viewer can use.

Action 4: Betty Furness heads a seven-person team that takes viewers' complaints against utilities, government and business and resolving them either by investigation or by bringing the parties together.

Beat the System: Carol Jenkins each day tells you where to find inexpensive, hard-to-get or quick goods and services.

Sidewalk Gourmet: Bob Potts tells you where to eat and how to buy food without going broke. He also joins Chauncey Howell in reporting on what's good in

Arts & Entertainment: the pick of plays, museums, music, architecture presented in film and still pictures.

Medicine: Frank Field reports on developments in the health area useful in finding a doctor, a treatment, a preventative. Frank also gives detail reports on

Weather: sure, maps and numbers but done in a way that is ultimately useful to somebody who wants to do something tomorrow.

Children: Marjorie Margolies reports on the psychology, learning, rearing and entertainment of children.

LifeStyle: Pia Lindstrom reports every day on the changing fashion in the way people live in families or out of families. It's the kind of news usually reserved only for the print media: we brought it to television.

Five Minutes: An interview with an important newsmaker: Mayor Beame, a candidate for election, an author of a controversial book or on a lighter side an actor opening in a play or a movie.

Jim Hartz and Chuck Scarborough, our two anchormen, take turns at the *NewsDesk*, conduct the interviews, introduce our other reporters and departments and give the broadcast a unity and direction.

We also have two segments on sports by Marv Albert and Tim Ryan, but they are more likely to emphasize participant sports than the traditional report. We believe we serve a wider audience with such material.

Lest you think that our format is cast in iron, let me assure you that we change it when the news warrants. We throw away whole sequences of features to cover a disaster, a presidential resignation, an election. In one instance we broke the format to present, live, a kidney operation to inform the public of the need to donate their kidneys when they die. Nearly 4,000

people signed donation pledges.

After this recitation, you might ask, Who would want to watch all this stuff? We designed the broadcast so that you don't have to watch it all. You can join it anytime and get all the important news of the day plus sports, weather and a good hunk of the other departments. It has heartened us to learn that a great many people do watch the whole two hours.

Our research on audiences suggests that more and more people like what we are doing. Ratings are improving. But we are not home free. We know it will be eighteen months before we see any real signs of success. That has been the pattern of every new broadcast in New York and Los Angeles.

I cannot end this dissertation without making one very important point. Almost all news broadcasts depend for their content on assignments carried out by reporters. Those assignments originate with the news director, the producer or the assignment editor. Traditionally they follow the breaking news so that they are dependent on what happens on any given day for an interesting news broadcast.

By departmentalizing, *NewsCenter 4* has shifted the burden of creating content to the reporters and field producers. Each unit must come up with the ideas for *Topic A*, *Action 4*, *LifeStyle*, etc. Our executive producer Paul Friedman, selects their ideas, edits them and exercises quality control. By creating departments we have created obligations to fill them. We do not have to wait for the world to be kind to us to make a good broadcast.

At this juncture in television news history, news directors all over the country look to outside consultants for some magic formula to bring in the folks. As a result, there are scores of Eyewitness News shows with a lot of in-studio intra-mural jokes and chatter but with a notable lack of the style that characterizes our show in New York.

There are scores of Action News shows where the anchorman delivers thirty stories in five minutes with quick clips of film, much in the manner of a fast-talking disc jockey. The cancer of tabloid-crime news lurks over the western horizon.

In *NewsCenter 4*, we have a journalistic alternative. News directors from all over the country have sent for our tapes. At news directors meetings, I am besieged with questions because we have indeed constructed a 'new news'. It is pure television news. And it has deepened the journalistic enterprise for local television.

* * *

EARL UBELL, Director of Television News for WNBC-TV, New York, assumed that post in 1972 after 25 years in newspaper, magazine and broadcast reporting. Immediately prior to joining NBC, he had spent six years as science editor at WCBS-TV and 15 years as science editor of the New York Herald Tribune.

Mr. Ubell's articles have appeared in such magazines as Reader's Digest, Saturday Evening Post, McCall's, Vogue and the New York Times Magazine. He is the author of several children's books on science. He holds two Emmy Awards for his science reporting. He was graduated from the City College of New York with a degree in physics and membership in Phi Beta Kappa.

* * *

**The
Wonderful World
of Disney (NBC-TV)**

from

WALT DISNEY PRODUCTIONS

THE MEDIUM TAKES STOCK

“Excerpts From A TV Symposium”

When television turns a critical gaze upon itself, that's news.

On Labor day, as the curtain was about to rise on the new season, *ABC News Closeup* offered a colloquy on the industry's problems, with emphasis on entertainment programs. (News and documentaries were ruled out of this discussion, as was public television).

Under the umbrella title, *Prime Time TV: The Decision Makers*, producer Marlene Sanders sought opinions from network executives as well as television critics from the daily press and representatives of viewers' protest groups.

What follows are a few random selections from this unusual television caucus. The moderator was Roger Grimsby.

ROGER GRIMSBY:

Paul Klein, now President of Computer TV, was vice president at NBC for 10 years. He has a theory about why people watch television.

PAUL KLEIN:

Well, people watch anything. The medium is the most important thing. The content is then consumed along with the medium and you could tell by the fact that, irrespective of the content each year, no matter what programs are in what time periods, the sets in use remain the same. This is my theory of least objectionable program, LOP theory: that people come home, generally, in the evening and they say after they've finished dinner, 'I think I'll watch a little television tonight.'

They leave out saying to themselves, because they don't want to hear it, 'Just like I watched last night and the night before and the night before that.' And then they sit down and they start flipping the dials faster and faster. And eventually they settle on one, which is the least objectionable program. Because the alternative to that is to do nothing or to use another medium; that is, to go to read or talk to your family or something else. And they would prefer to choose this medium, looking at that content, whatever that content happens to be, to any other pursuit, generally.

The television executives — they're always talking about. . . "This is good enough for the public." They wouldn't watch it themselves, but "This is good enough for the public."

ROGER GRIMSBY:

Michael Dann, for over 20 years, a top programming executive at CBS.
MICHAEL DANN:

I can say now that I'm out of the commercial broadcast world, and both a teacher and consultant, that there were many shows that I put on the air or was responsible for putting on the air that I never saw once in the three, four, five or ten years that it was on the air, ever. It was not my particular taste.

I never programmed for my own taste. I would have been fired and should have been, the way broadcasting is run, because our responsibility is to get most of the people to look at the program. I've never been in a program meeting where responsible executives . . . (and they're all very able, hard-working fellows) . . . They never sit down and say, now, we have enough of this kind of programming . . . to please that kind of group, and now let's do this kind of a program to please this group. That isn't done. We do not put programs on the air that are carefully balanced, as in other countries. We can't afford to.

* * *

ROGER GRIMSBY: (TO ROBERT HOWARD):

Would you say that demographics and the consideration of demographics has changed the program scheduling at all over the years?

ROBERT HOWARD (PRESIDENT, NBC TV NETWORK):

I think it has, again from a commercial standpoint. Agencies who purchase time on networks give great credence to demographics particularly women eighteen to forty-nine. I would say that it definitely has to be a factor in program consideration. It's not an overwhelming factor but it is a very important one.

FREDERICK PIERCE (V.P., ABC-TV):

Let's just say that people over 50 have less purchasing power, and are more ingrained in their buying habits than those that are under 50. So on a relative scale, the adults that are 49 years of age and under have more of an advertising value than those over 50. We don't program to the exclusion of those over 50 — we try to program for everybody, but the central appeal of our shows is to those adults under 50.

* * *

ROGER GRIMSBY:

Station manager Mike Shapiro has to answer to his viewers, if programming is too violent, or too permissive.

At the ABC affiliates meeting, producer Marlene Sanders talked with Mr. Shapiro, and asked him . . .

MARLENE SANDERS:

Do you feel that programming executives in New York and Los Angeles are in touch with the tastes of your community?

MIKE SHAPIRO:

I think they're aware of the differences in sensitivities across the country but unfortunately I think that the sensitivities of the East coast and the West coast are far ahead of the Midwest and I think some of the things that might be acceptable in the larger metropolitan markets are still a little shocking to middle America.

MARLENE SANDERS:

Would you tell me some of the specific programs that you've had a little difficulty with?

MIKE SHAPIRO:

Well, one that stands out in my mind is "Wedding Band", which was a special *ABC Theatre* two-hour presentation. Now the problem in our particular market was a matter of dialogue, which I thought was a little rough for family viewing time, and our station delayed it and put it on later on another night.

MARLENE SANDERS:

Do you think that networks should avoid all controversy and do bland, safe programs?

MIKE SHAPIRO:

No. Under no circumstances. I think that we've made some tremendous strides, ABC in particular, with "That Certain Summer," on the subject of homosexuality. It was done with excellent taste and it was done properly and many of the shows can be done this way. What I object to — and this is something that creeps into shows from time to time — is the shock or sensationalist approach to get an audience, with one scene or one set of dialogue, which . . . the play could go on just as well without it.

* * *

ROGER GRIMSBY:

It is not only the citizens and pressure groups who find television wanting, but social scientists are now beginning to examine the effect of television on viewers, in terms of their attitudes, values and behavior.

Psychiatrist Roderic Gorney of UCLA told Marlene Sanders . . .

DR. RODERIC GORNEY:

I think young people today, particularly who have grown up with television, have grown up with a conviction that they may run into difficulties, but they should be resolved and happiness restored in a short amount of time. Now, their parents and grandparents, I think, made the assumption about life that things were going to be elusive and that if one was lucky enough to grab it for a few minutes here and there, he should count himself very fortunate.

MARLENE SANDERS:

Do you think people expect instant gratification from television watching?

DR. RODERIC GORNEY:

Instant gratification is a good example of what I'm talking about, but there are other things. Not uncommonly, you'll find that all doctors are represented as uniformly devoted, self-sacrificing, generous and completely focused on one patient. They may spend the whole day trying to help somebody unravel his life's problems.

Well, when human beings who've come to expect that sort of behavior from entertainment shows find that their doctor has twelve minutes to spend with them in an office and says, 'Now, look, I'll see you again next Wednesday,' they're very disappointed because they really do expect that physician to take the same kind of devoted attitude towards them that they had seen portrayed on the screen.

* * *

ROGER GRIMSBY:

It is not only psychiatrists and pressure groups who have cast a critical eye on broadcasting, but it is the official critics of the business as well — the daily newspaper TV critics.

Les Brown is broadcast correspondent for the New York Times. Earlier, while he was TV editor of Variety, he wrote a book about the business, and he continues to feel television is a major force in our society.

LES BROWN:

I think that it's one of the most important stories in this country . . . one of the most important news stories. I think we're only at the beginning of the video age. Television may, in the 21st century, be our principal source of news and information. And television may be the greatest invention since movable print.

ROGER GRIMSBY:

How would you rate the choice the television audience presently receives?

LES BROWN:

Well, we have what seems to be a lot of television service in this country: three networks, more than 600 stations; but what we really have is one service in triplicate. If you took the three networks, if you took the programs and turned them into cards and then shuffled the cards and dealt them out so that the programs fell differently in all — you'd still have three networks. They're very much alike.

ROGER GRIMSBY:

Well, given television networks what they are, what is the alternative?

LES BROWN:

I think that one alternative would be to have a second service in this country. They have a second service in England, in Japan. A lot of these countries have a commercial system and a noncommercial system, that are both strong. We have a very strong commercial system in this country, and

a very weak noncommercial or public system.

But an alternative system would be very healthy. I think it would be very healthy for the viewer and healthy for the television industry as well, because it would help them to break the lock-step they're in. The networks are in a competitive lock-step, where they can't try anything too experimental, too unusual, without running the risk of ceding some audience to the other two networks.

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WHAT HAPPENED TO HAPPY ENDINGS?

By Dore Schary

Why is it that if a movie is not stupid, violent, dirty, silly, scary or weird, it must be sad? Why is tragedy the only kind of significance we understand? Is it eccentric to want to be happy? Please give me a happy ending.

— David Carradine in the
Los Angeles Times

Years ago, Lin Yutang described America as a "happy ending nation." We've had a lucky history. We have survived depressions, panics, national disasters and a bloody civil war. For generations, all our novels, plays and films have ended with lovers embracing, virtue triumphant and evil biting the dust.

But in the past decade, the American dream has taken on a nightmare quality. The world has changed and our art forms have changed with it. Happy endings, Mr. Carradine, belong to a young, happy country. We're old and sad and a little jaded now. The Vietnam War tore us apart. "Peace with honor," as Mr. Nixon called it, was a sham. Our sons, the best and the brightest, fled to Canada and Sweden thereby avoiding the butchery in Indo-China. Our national psyche, if there is such a thing, was torn by guilt, rage, and the feeling that the government in Washington was a gang of brigands.

Bitterness has hung over this land like a pall of smoke for many years now. Old-fashioned happy endings, Mr. Carradine, would be hooted off the screen. Even television shows now go in for melancholy fade-outs. Art is mirroring life, as it should.

America has lost a lot of innocence since 1960. Three assassinations left a deep scar, a smouldering distrust. We live with a fear that Americans of a gentler age never imagined. We still talk about the day John Kennedy was shot. We can still see Robert Kennedy's body, sprawled dead in that hotel kitchen.

Like Macbeth, we have supped full of horrors.

Add to these tragedies our aching social problems — poverty, crime, corruption in government, the drug culture — and you have, Mr. Carradine, an unhappy ending in every block.

American entertainment, theatre, films and television, invariably reflects our society. Rarely does entertainment innovate, in a social sense. (Excepting in such delicate matters as encouraging the use of bath-tubs, French telephones and discouraging hats and undershirts for men.) The sexual permissiveness that started off-Broadway and now extends to the cinema and television is merely a mirror image of what has been going on in our culture for a long time.

If we could revert to a stage of innocence and propriety, if we could recharge our old ideals and believe virtue always triumphed over evil, then happy endings might come back in style.

A question one would like to ask Mr. Carradine is "How do you give a porno flick a happy ending?" By its very nature, pornography tends toward unhappiness. Love and tenderness, as they are understood in Western society, are systematically corrupted in these sex-thrill epics. The whole genre is sleazy and inept.

Still, a respected film critic, Arthur Knight, was willing to testify that "Deep Throat" had redeeming social values. Perhaps someday Mr. Knight will tell us what those values were.

In its obsession with unhappy endings, both television and the movies have permitted a new wave of violence and blood to sully the screen. The reasoning seems to be, "Give them murder and danger, lots of shows about private eyes and good cops. See Bill kill John. See how George cuts up Tom. Do it in slow motion. Let's see that stab wound up close . . ."

Tell it, as the tired saying goes, like it is. Give them murder, terror, torture. It's part of life, after all. Why try to pretty up the ugly facts of life?

Happy endings? In some productions, Mr. Carradine, you're lucky if you get any ending. There's a new art form known as the No-Ending Story. Lots of exposition, a bit of mystery, a climax . . . and Finis. Write your own ending on your way home.

Adlai Stevenson once said, "We get the public servants we deserve." We also get the entertainment we deserve. Until we demand quality, and boycott pornography, we shall have dirty trash on our screens, including the small one in every home.

In our long-ago age of innocence, we worshipped heroes. They had to win. Because they were heroes, and because there was a heroine waiting to be claimed. Goodness and honor had to carry the day. Lin Yutang was right. We were a happy ending nation. "Aren't we clean, brave and lovable?", our entertainments used to ask the world.

Now, if you listen to the inner voices of Americans, you hear radically different questions. "Is everybody crooked?", people wonder. "Is the government lying to us again?" "We're all losers, aren't we?"

In a world of little faith, a world that has seen too much evil, happy endings may be outside the general public experience. This may be why "Love Story" and "Brian's Song" have been successful. They made people

ery.

If you're really determined to have happy endings, Mr. Carradine, then you'd better get involved with the problems of Real Life. There's a lot of work to be done before we can return to the green pastures of truth, moral indignation and justice. Put the old ethical values back into society and they'll turn up on the screen. With values in proper focus, happy endings are easier.

Mr. Carradine should bear in mind that we have been going through a social and moral revolution for the past ten years. People have grown up. They've suffered, lost their virginity, endured humiliation. Such people laugh at happy endings.

Until our society is healed, our economy mended and our world made safe and secure, those merry old happy endings haven't got a chance.

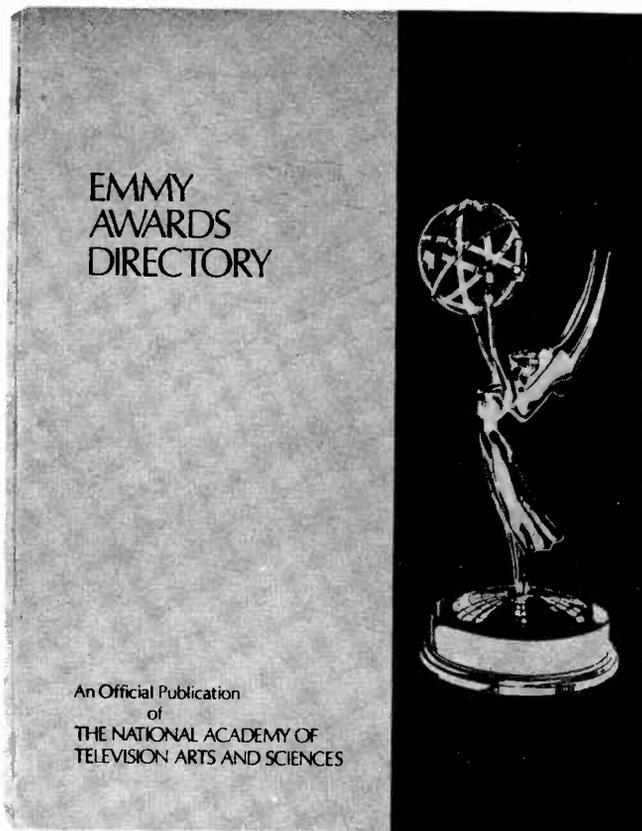
* * *

DORE SCHARY has served the arts as author, playwright, producer, director and motion picture executive. He has written forty screen plays, including Boys Town and Sunrise at Campobello. He has produced more than 300 films, among them: Joe Smith, American; Mr. Blandings Builds His Dream House, Lili, An American in Paris, Red Badge of Courage and Tea and Sympathy. He is the author of four plays and innumerable magazine articles.

A man of style as well as keen public spirit, Mr. Schary has received 160 professional, charitable and community awards including an Oscar and two Tony Awards. He served as Commissioner of Cultural Affairs in the administration of Mayor John Lindsay.

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In Memoriam

Hubbell Robinson

With the death of Hubbell Robinson, Television Quarterly loses not only a board chairman but a fighting advocate, a stern critic and a warm, true friend.

Mr. Robinson was associated with the Quarterly from its fledgling days in 1962 until his death from lung cancer on September 4. He took a paternal interest in Academy affairs, attending every Board meeting, giving the best of his long experience in the medium.

Hubbell Robinson was a pioneer in television and an aficionado. He followed program trends as avidly in 1974, when illness confined him to his home, as he had in the 1950s when he was, by general agreement, the most creative and influential program chief in television history.

As Executive Vice-president in charge of programs, Mr. Robinson was responsible for bringing to the air such durable entertainments as *I Love Lucy*, *Climax*, *Gunsmoke* and the Sergeant Bilko series. He was creator and executive producer of the much-honored *Playhouse 90* dramatic series. It was under his aegis that Sir Noel Coward, Sir Alec Guinness and many other theatre and film stars made their first appearance on the home screen. It was also during the Robinson years that CBS News began its finest epoch. *Twentieth Century*, *See It Now* and *Adventure* were concepts he fostered and in which he took particular pride.

After a brief period as head of his own company, Hubbell Robinson returned to CBS as a Senior Vice-president and became one of the victims of the "Aubrey purge." It was a wound that never fully healed.

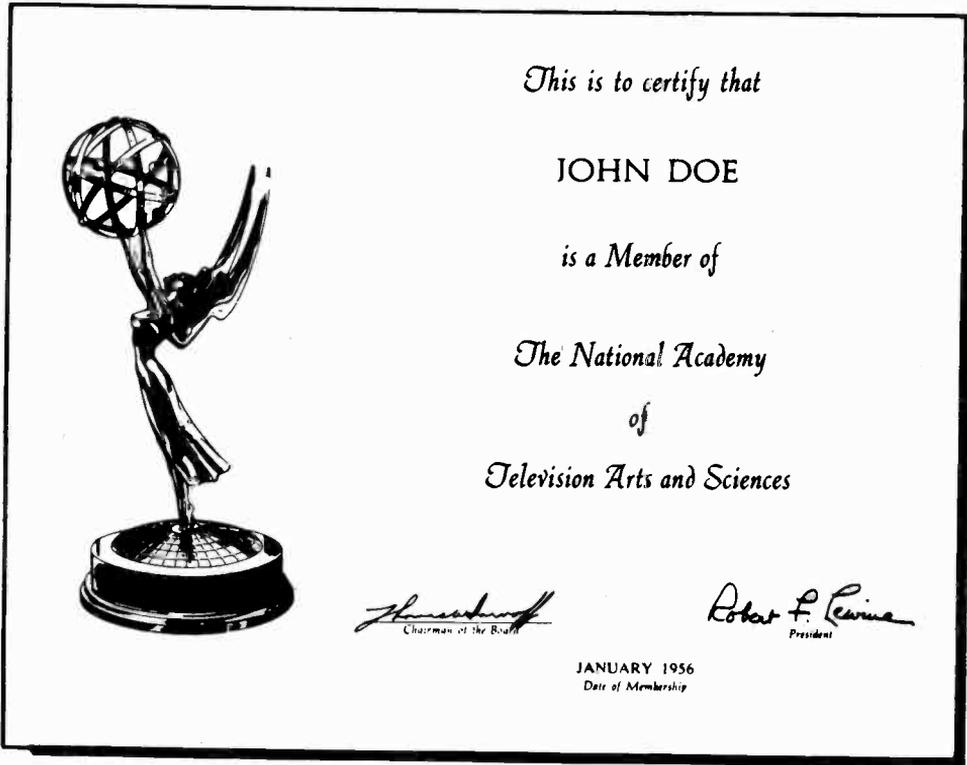
In 1966, Mr. Robinson joined ABC as Executive in Charge of Production for the weekly series, *Stage 67*.

Behind a facade of cool reserve, Hubbell Robinson was a sentimental man, witty, irreverent and skilled in self-mockery. He was an authority on the Civil War and invariably had to suppress a sob in his throat when he spoke of Lee's Army at Gettysburg. He was also a classical scholar who, in his final retirement, read Greek and Latin for pleasure.

While most men cherish an abiding affection for Alma Mater, Hubbell Robinson liked to say he had three "maters" — Phillips Exeter Academy, Brown University and CBS. He had an old school tie with all three, and it never sagged or snapped. His loyalty was total. Of all the honors bestowed upon him in his long career, the one he prized most was being named to the Board of Trustees of Brown University.

CBS Chairman William S. Paley mourned the passing of his friend

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"Hub" with a statement that said, "Throughout his distinguished career in broadcasting, including 16 years with CBS, Hubbell Robinson's name was synonymous with quality entertainment. . . ."

In an editorial written for *Television Quarterly* in the Fall of 1972, Mr. Robinson said, "We should remind ourselves anew that the pursuit of excellence is the only worthwhile pursuit in life." He tried to live by that creed. We of *Television Quarterly* will miss him. —The Editor

* * *

In Memoriam

Bill Bluem

He was, properly, A. William Bluem, Ph. D., author, editor, teacher — but everybody called him Bill. He was a full professor at the Newhouse Communications Center of Syracuse University with important books and scholarly papers to his credit. But he was also full of zest and humor, and as un-professorish as your favorite cocktail companion. His death was a shock, and a lasting grief, to everyone who knew him.

We at *Television Quarterly* have special reason to lament his going. He was the founding editor of this publication. With unflagging zeal and intelligence he set its style and guided it to a place of high respect in its field around the world. And such praise and applause as has come our way since can, in some degree, be attributed to the start that was given us by A. William Bluem.

Bill's special field was the television fact film. His book, *Documentary in American Television* (Hastings House, 1965), has become a standard work, highly readable as narration and analysis and permanently valuable for reference. He brought a full background to his career in communications. He was graduated from Western Reserve, earned his doctorate at Ohio State, and was associated as Visiting Scholar and teacher with other major universities before being called to Syracuse.

Besides his academic credits, he won several awards for television writing. Though no one ever heard him mention it, he also earned distinctions that were as far from the bookish and academic as it is possible to get: the Bronze Star and the Combat Infantry Badge in World War II.

Bill Bluem was a rounded man. His life was varied and richly productive, and it ended untimely. *Television Quarterly* salutes him now with respect and affection.

He will be missed.

—Richard Hanser

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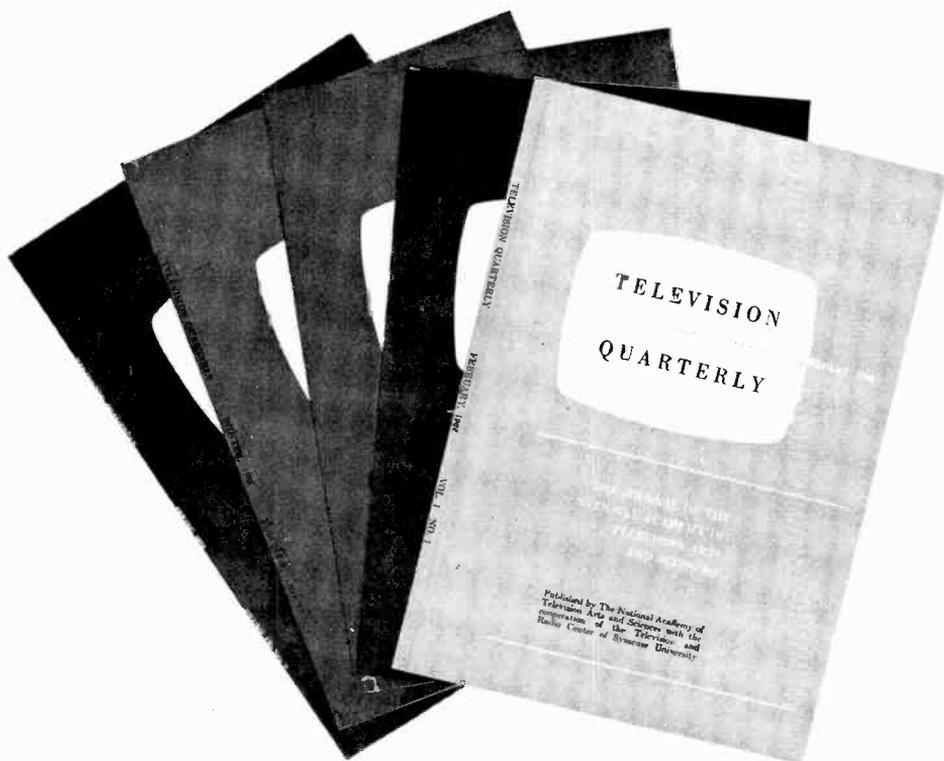
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Honoring its twentieth birthday, the National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences prepared a handsome publication titled "EMMY'S TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY ALBUM." This soft cover book, filled with more than 150 photographs, is a detailed history of one of the most important awards in the entertainment industry. It was presented as a souvenir to all members and guests attending the 1968 Awards Telecast in New York and Hollywood.

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