



# TelevisionWeek™

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\$3.50 AUGUST 13, 2007



**SPECIAL REPORT**

**Eye on the Emmys: Oh, the Drama!**

TelevisionWeek zeroes in on the dramatic categories and talks with ATAS CEO Dick Askin in Part II of our look at the awards. Page 11

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Telepictures signs new faces for program based on the hottest celebrity news Web site. Page 2

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UFC President Dana White beat up boxing and wrestling. What's his next target? Page 3

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The network holds a seminar on how to hook advertisers on younger viewers. Page 3

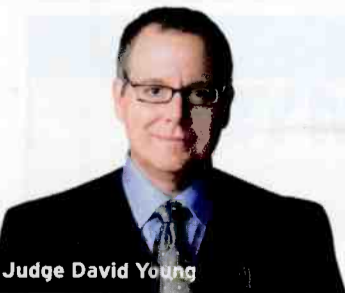
**Selling Syndicated College Sports**

ESPN Regional Television is stepping into a void in the marketplace. Page 3

**ON THE WEB**

**Holding Court on Syndicated TV**

Judge David Young blogs on TVWeek.com, dispensing wisdom and, possibly, a ditty.



Judge David Young



Fox affiliate WVUE rebuilt after the floodwaters receded, gaining a cutting-edge HD news studio.

## New Orleans Back on Track

The Big Easy's TV stations are inching back to normalcy as the two-year anniversary of Hurricane Katrina nears. *TelevisionWeek's* Michele Greppi looks at the market and documents how the business has changed. Page 26

▶ New Orleans television-station revenue estimates. Page 26

▶ A city changed, an audience altered. Page 26

## Another Upfront Ignites

Buyers Rush In to Calendar Year, Scatter Ad Markets

By Jon Lafayette

Some advertisers are moving earlier than usual to buy the commercial time left on broadcast and cable television after the spring 2007 upfront ad market.

▶ Scripps upfront nears end. Page 25

▶ Summer cable winners to return. Page 4

The rush on the so-called calendar upfront, which caters to companies that purchase ad time on a calendar year, and the scatter market, where commercial slots are purchased closer to air time, comes after a spring upfront that was stronger than many had predicted.

Buyers and sellers say the industry's adoption of commercial ratings as a basis for negotiating ad deals is prompting the dealmaking. The ratings change has reduced audience counts, and therefore the supply of ratings points available to buy on the market. That in turn is leading to anxiousness for marketers and higher prices for networks.

With the ink barely dry on upfront deals—and some cable channels, including Scripps Networks, still not done with their spring negotiations—the market is

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TAKEN The CW's "Reaper" is one of the pirated network fall pilots.

## TV Industry Battles Piracy Hydra

Defense Based on Three-Pronged Plan

By James Hibberd

With the fall season's top pilots already leaked to file-sharing Web sites, industry experts are renewing their anti-piracy efforts to try to halt illegal trafficking of popular shows.

During the past few weeks, nearly a dozen fall pilots have been made available via peer-to-peer servers. The pilots were seemingly ripped from DVD screeners and are of relatively high quality, akin to the streaming video offerings on the net-

works' own Web sites. The pilots join the thousands of previously aired television shows already available for illegal download.

Many of the peer-to-peer sites (or "torrent" sites, named after the popular file-trading software client BitTorrent) offering the programs are already being pursued by the legal representatives of

the Motion Picture Association of America, which also represents television studios in the anti-piracy fight. But in practical terms, experts said once the files are on torrent sites, they

become nearly impossible to track.

An MPAA study last year found that movie piracy cost \$6.1 billion in lost annual revenue, while an industry

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Broadcast ratings suffer summer swoon. Page 4



**THE INSIDER**  
Style diatribe hits female anchors. Page 6

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# Blink



Teresa Strasser

## Talent Lineup Unveiled for Telepictures' 'TMZ'

Perhaps the most talked-about new syndicated series for fall is Telepictures' newsmagazine strip "TMZ," based on the mega-Web site TMZ.com that breaks celebrity news online. A lot of questions have surrounded the format of and talent for the show, but with the approach of the launch comes some clarity. Executive producer (and main on-air personality) **Harvey Levin** has added four people to the strip's on-air talent list, including **Teresa Strasser**, who is perhaps best known as the host of TLC series "While You Were Out." Ms. Strasser currently co-hosts TV Guide Network's weekly pop culture roundup "TV Watercooler" with

comedian **John Fugelsang** and is a regular contributor to the Los Angeles Times' Calendar section. The show also has signed **Katie Daryl**, who has hosted the political MTV Special "Choose or Lose" and recently worked with HDNet as host and producer of "True Music"; **Ben Mankiewicz**, who co-hosts the Air America/XM radio show "The Young Turks" and hosts film presentations on Turner Classic Movies; and TMZ.com staffer **Michael Hundgen**. The "TMZ" hosts will be based in its new newsroom on the Sunset Strip in Los Angeles. The series was designed to complement the Web site, with news updates added to later airings of the show. ■ —CHRIS PURSELL

## NatGeo Goes Wild

It's a real zoo online, especially now that the National Geographic Channel's broadband site NGC Wild! is adding a new Wildlife Conservation Society category. Short-form videos available in the category will highlight the Wildlife Conservation Society's research efforts around the world and at its five zoos in New York City, including the Bronx Zoo. One set of videos, narrated by actress **Glenn Close**, features wildlife from



'Gabon: The Last Eden'

Gabon, one of the last unspoiled wild areas in Africa. Another group features video from a "Cittercam" worn by a lioness that allows viewers inside the lives of a lion family. Since its launch in May, NGC Wild! has streamed more than 500,000 videos, including a record 50,000 on Aug. 7. ■ —JON LAFAYETTE

## Reveille 'School' In Session

NBC Co-Chairman **Ben Silverman** sold his first reality series years ago by pre-packaging advertisers with the content. Now his former company Reveille is continuing the same ad-supported tradition for the Web. Last Thursday, the four recently promoted department heads of Reveille (managing directors **Howard Owens**, **Mark Koops**, **Chris**

## Student Counsel

"Cops" producer **John Langley**, second from left, and USC School of Cinematic Arts Dean **Elizabeth Daley**, second from right, were presented with Caucus for Television Producers, Writers and Directors Achievement Awards Aug. 4 for their continued support of student filmmakers. The awards were presented at the Caucus' second annual Casino Night held at the Hollywood Renaissance Hotel, where more than 200 television creative figures gathered to raise funds for the Caucus Foundation student film grant program. Foundation Chairman **Chuck Fries**, left, reported that the foundation has granted \$421,000 in completion funding to 64 student filmmakers since its inception in 2001. Also pictured is Caucus Chairman **Vin Di Bona**. ■



Photo credit: Steve Cohn

—TOM GILBERT

## QUOTE OF THE WEEK



"Nothing cheers me up quicker than a day of grooming and shopping on the company's tab! New York, here I come!"

Judge David Young, blogging on TVWeek.com about his last day on the Miami bench before leaving to start his new syndicated court show.

**Grant** and **Lee Rierson**) joined with MSN and Volvo to throw a party at the Petersen Automotive Museum in Los Angeles to celebrate "Mr. Robinson's Driving School," the company's third Web-exclusive series. Since "School" chronicles a competition between a pair of driving instructors, the series is able to readily incorporate Volvo into storyline. The 16-episode comedy launches on MSN Aug. 15 and stars

Craig Robinson of "The Office." ■ —JAMES HIBBERD

## Roberts Returns

**Robin Roberts** is scheduled to be back at the anchor desk with co-anchor **Diane Sawyer** on ABC's "Good Morning America" this morning. Her return comes two weeks after her stunning announcement that she had been diagnosed early

with breast cancer and a week and a half after undergoing surgery she said was successful. "She is still awaiting her test results, but is feeling great and looking forward to getting back to work," a "GMA" spokeswoman said. Ms. Sawyer's announcement on-air Friday of Ms. Roberts' return triggered a burst of applause from the crowd in the "GMA" studio. ■

—MICHELE GREPPI

## ON THE WEB



### Video: Emmy Nominees for Best Commercial

Visit TVWeek.com to watch all seven contenders vying for the Emmy for outstanding commercial.

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**'American Idol' Auditions Up and**  
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**Web Exclusive**  
 TVWeek.com's Buzz Tracker searches 90,000 online sources for the most compelling TV-related stories and blogs.



**Blog**  
 Steve Wilkos, former cop turned syndicated talk show host, blogs about his first week of filming.

## INSIDE LOOK



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Capitol Broadcasting pioneers ways to put signals on Web.

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"GH: Night Shift" part of cable net's healthy summer outlook.



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Columnist renderings by Risko  
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TelevisionWeek (ISSN 0745-0211) Vol. 26, No. 32. Is published weekly (except for a combined issue the last week in June and the first week in July, and the last week in December) by Crain Communications, 360 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60610. Periodicals postage is paid at Chicago, Ill., and additional mailing offices. \$3.50 per copy, \$19 per year. Canadian Post International Publications Mail Product (Canadian Distribution) Sales Agreement No. 025620. GST #R1230444. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to TelevisionWeek Circulation Department, 1156 Grand Ave., Detroit, MI 48207-2972. Phone: 888-283-5900; fax: 313-446-6777. Please allow four weeks' notice for change of address. Printed in the USA.

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how i met your mother





**SPORT OF THE FUTURE** Ultimate Fighting Championship usurped both World Wrestling Entertainment and pro boxing in pay-per-view audiences in 2006. "UFC Wired" will make its debut in broadcast syndication next month.

# UFC: Today Spike TV, Tomorrow the World

## Fast-Growing Sport Sets Sights on New Markets

By Chris Pursell

Ultimate Fighting Championship President Dana White, long dissatisfied with life on the fringe, has now set his sights on the world.

What is perhaps the fastest-growing sports franchise in the country—mixed martial arts knocked both boxing and World Wrestling Entertainment from atop the pay-per-view perches in 2006—will undergo a significant test of its popularity next month when the league makes its first foray into broadcast syndication with the debut of the series "UFC Wired." It will also finalize a deal with



**DANA WHITE**  
President, UFC

HBO for a series of fights, and counts among its projects the return of Spike TV's hit "The Ultimate Fighter" and two upcoming PPV-style fight cards, one in London Sept. 8 and the other in Anaheim, Calif., Sept. 22.

"Our strategy right now is global," Mr. White said. "We're at a place in the U.S. where it's going to keep getting bigger and bigger as our fan base grows. I think that will especially be true once our syndicated series launches. But we are now in 150 countries with a powerful product that everyone understands. What we want to do now is take our events to these markets and create the first global pay-per-view with people from all over the world buying the fight."

With "UFC 75: Champion vs. Champion" taking place in London

Sept. 8, the company is opening doors to do that. In addition, Mr. White said plans are in the works to take the UFC series "Live Event" on a world tour, with four stops in the U.K. and additional stops in continental Europe, Australia, Japan, Korea, Mexico and Canada.

"We have only started to tap the Hispanic market," he said. "That's the group that has kept boxing alive these past few years because they love watching fights. So we have big plans to get South America involved over the next few years."

The UFC, a private company owned by U.S. sports promotion firm Zuffa, broke the 1 million PPV-buy mark last December for the first time ever, according to analysts, on the strength of a match featuring Chuck Liddell vs. Tito Ortiz. One report said the company had a total gross PPV take of nearly \$223 million in 2006, more than boxing or the WWE has ever earned. Some

Continued on Page 25

# CW Teaches the Art of Selling

## Affiliates Meet, Get Seminar on the Allure of Young Audiences

By Michele Greppi

The CW took its run-and-gun sales act on the road to regional affiliate gatherings in Chicago, New York and Orlando last week.

No time was wasted on screening fall shows—the station sales and promotion executives were expected to have already seen the pilots; if they hadn't they would flunk the pop test handed out at the top of the program.

What CW Chief Operating Officer John Maatta and Network Distribution Senior VP Elizabeth Tumulty wanted attendees to take away—in addition to the hefty goodie box that included \$1,200 worth of Apple Final Cut Studio 2 editing suite software, a contribution arranged by Full Sail, the entertainment-media-focused college that helped The CW mount the affiliate programs—was how to be faster, better and smarter at



**JOHN MAATTA**  
The CW

selling advertisers on how to reach the 18- to 34-year-old demographic The CW targets, whether they are selling a product or a political candidate.

Because so many CW affiliates are part of duopolies alongside stations affiliated with networks that sell the more sought-after, traditional demo of

25- to 54-year-olds for local news, "There are a lot of folks out there who've never sold the young demo,"

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# Taking a Run at Syndie Sports

## ESPN Regional TV Tackles College Market

By Chris Pursell

The distribution of live sports programming, once a viable business for syndicators, has gone the way of the dinosaur with the exception of a few companies such as ESPN.

Before the explosion of cable and other delivery platforms, the syndication of sporting events was a business that stations relied on for everything from golf tournaments to NCAA games to NASCAR races. However, as rights were snatched by up-and-coming cable networks, and organizations such as NASCAR reined in their rights under one roof, few syndicator players were able to continue to make a living by selling live games.

ESPN Regional Television, however, is filling the void left by the plethora of distributors who are now out of the game, and now ranks as the country's largest syndicator of collegiate sports programming, producing more than 900 events every year. Among the national and regional rights being distributed by the syndicator are games from the Big Ten conference, the Big East conference, the Big 12 conference and the MAC. Some of these packages are then branded, such as "The Big East Network" to better identify the programming home of the games.

"We are always looking for oppor-



Tony Ding / Icon

**HEAD OF THE CLASS** ESPN Regional Television produces more than 900 collegiate events each year.

tunities to better serve the sports fan," said Dan Shoemaker, VP of college development for ESPN Regional Television. "The number of platforms out there has grown and we've been able to create a niche to serve, whether it's for traditional over-the-air platforms or for the growing num-

Continued on Page 27

## VIRAL VIDEO PICK OF THE WEEK

TelevisionWeek is trawling video-sharing Web sites to find the hottest clips spreading on the Internet. Visit TVWeek.com to view the latest.



**The setup:** Jim Cramer, host of CNBC's "Mad Money," loses his cool as he begs Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke to cut interest rates in order to help the market and prevent more people from losing their jobs. His explosion—complete with bright red face, shouting, flailing hands and bulging eyes—made for great TV.

Kevin Goldman, a spokesman for CNBC, said, "Jim Cramer is passionate about helping people with their investments and educating them about market conditions, and we couldn't be happier with the way he expresses that passion."

Whether it was passion or a meltdown, the public can't seem to get enough of Mr. Cramer's tirade.

**The source:** The video comes from CNBC's Aug. 3 episode of "Mad Money."

**The hits:** This clip is everywhere. It has appeared on YouTube, Metacafe, Break and various blogs. By Aug. 8, the video had been viewed more than 973,002 times on YouTube. ■

—STEPHANIE ROBBINS

Visit **TVWEEK.COM** for your daily dose of viral videos

# Strong Summer for Cable Debuts

With Some Exceptions, Most Originals Post Good Numbers

By Jon Lafayette

A number of cable's new summer shows will be coming back next year.

Last week, Turner Broadcasting announced that "Saving Grace," the drama starring Holly Hunter, got an order for another 15 episodes. USA Network also announced that it would be bringing back "Burn Notice" for another 13 episodes.

Earlier in the summer, Lifetime re-enlisted its hit show "Army Wives" for another season.

Other cable shows had good openings as well.

TLC's "L.A. Ink" won Tuesday night with a 2.16 household rating. The premiere drew the network's highest household ratings since the debut of "What Not to Wear" in 2003. "L.A. Ink" is set in Kat Von D's tattoo parlor in Los Angeles, where celebrities and musicians will be getting body art in upcoming episodes.

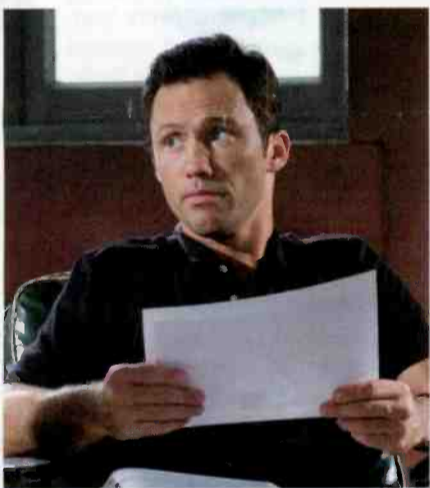
Style's "Kimora: Life in the Fab Lane," a reality series featuring Kimora Lee Simmons, drew the highest ratings for an original series debut in that network's history. It drew a 0.48 household rating and increased ratings in the time period by 522 percent among women 18 to 34 and 338 percent among women 18 to 49.

Cable networks usually pull out their original shows in the summer, when the broadcast networks offer reruns and reality shows as competition. Original shows usually cost more and are riskier than acquired shows, but they are popular with advertisers, establish value with cable operators and help the network build an identifiable brand.

This year, cable is drawing a



**HUNTER GATHERER** Turner Broadcasting has given the go-ahead for another 15 episodes of the offbeat Holly Hunter vehicle "Saving Grace."



**CONFLAGRATION** USA Network ordered 13 more episodes of "Burn Notice."

record share of viewers. But not every new show is proving to be a runaway success.

In its third outing, FX's heavily touted and critically praised series "Damages" drew its smallest audience

yet, winning just over 2 million total viewers and 830,000 adults ages 18 to 49. With stars Glenn Close and Ted Danson, the show is skewing older.

An FX spokesperson said that those figures reflected live-plus-same-day viewing on digital video recorders and the network's shows have been getting big increases when live-plus-7 days of DVR view is included. Those figures won't be available from Nielsen Media Research until next week.

Also skewing older was TNT's "The Company," a miniseries that reportedly cost the network \$30 million to make. On Aug. 5, the first of three weekly installments about the early days of the CIA drew just under 3 million viewers and a 0.7 rating among adults 18 to 49.

TNT is unlikely to renew "Heartland," the Treat Williams series about a transplant doctor that was bumped from its time slot following "The Closer" by "Saving Grace." ■

# Summer Ratings Take a Dip

Net Race Unchanged From Last Year; Reality Shows Still Lead

By James Hibberd

Broadcast programming struggled this summer, with all the major networks posting average-rating declines compared with last year.

Freshman series had a particularly rough time. If a new show didn't feature contestants trying to remember song lyrics, chances are it won't be back next year.

In the ratings horserace among the networks, however, the summer positioning looks exactly like 2006. With about a month of summer remaining, Fox is first, CBS and NBC are tied for second and ABC is in fourth—just like last year.

Coming off winning the season,

Fox firmly leads the pack with reality fare such as "Hell's Kitchen" and "So You Think You Can Dance." The network's "Don't Forget the Lyrics" has stabilized at about a 3.1 Nielsen Media Research rating among adults 18 to 49 and has earned a place on the Fox's fall schedule.

Yet Fox stumbled with its highest-profile new show, "On the Lot," which it has continued to run despite a 1.2 average rating.

Overall, Fox has averaged a 2.3 rating for the summer, down 4 percent from last year. In fact, all the networks are down, with Fox losing the least amount of traction. CBS and

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## NEWS BRIEFS

### NAB Not Buying A La Carte Argument



Kevin Martin

If a la carte programming packages are supposed to offer consumers more choices and price cuts, they aren't visible in the proposal unveiled by XM and Sirius Satellite Radio to win merger approval, the National Association of Broadcasters is saying. The lure of price cuts and more consumer choices has been the main rationale behind Federal Communications Commission Chairman Kevin

Martin's push for a la carte cable programming. NAB on Tuesday unveiled a merger analysis showing that a la carte choices in the satellite radio merger would cost consumers more. The satellite companies have rejected that conclusion, calling it "misinformed" and "self-serving" and reiterating potential savings to consumers. NAB has been leading the charge against FCC and Justice Department approval of the merger. XM and Sirius have argued their merger would cut costs and create a more viable competitor, and that the original government decision to have two competing satellite broadcasters is outdated. Broadcasters argue that the government licensed two satellite broadcasters to ensure competition between them, not for them to merge.

—IRA TEINOWITZ

### Logo Hosts Democratic Candidates

Six of the eight Democratic presidential candidates appeared live on the gay-interest cable network Logo on Thursday, addressing questions about their positions on gay issues. The two-hour forum, held before a studio audience in Los Angeles, was co-sponsored by Logo and the Human Rights Campaign, a Democratic gay-rights group. The candidates appeared one at a time, seated in a living room-type chair, and addressed questions posed by a panel that included singer Melissa Etheridge and Joe Solmonese, president of the HRC Foundation. Logo, which is available in about 27 million homes, attempted to hold a second forum for Republican candidates but the channel said the GOP contingent had no interest in such an event.

—TOM GILBERT

### Kardashian Set for E! Reality Series

There's no more simple life for Paris and Nicole, but E! Entertainment is launching another reality show starring a young Hollywood celebrity famous for her family ties and for appearing in a sex video. The new show features Kim Kardashian, daughter of O.J. Simpson lawyer Robert Kardashian, and her family, which includes stepdaughters of Olympic gold medalist Bruce Jenner. "The Kardashians are just your typical, modern-day, celebrity, estrogen-driven, say-anything, blended family, as typical as any of that really is," said Lisa Berger, E!'s executive VP of programming and development. "There is much more to Kim and her family than meets the eye, and I think her hilarious home life and versatile career will appeal to our viewers." The show—as yet untitled—is being produced by Ryan Seacrest Productions and Bunim/Murray Productions and is scheduled to air in the fall.

—JON LAFAYETTE



Kim Kardashian

### HBO Orders New Series 'True Blood'

HBO has ordered the production of a new series, "True Blood," from Alan Ball, creator of "Six Feet Under." The show is one of the first to be greenlighted since former CEO Chris Albrecht left HBO earlier this year. The pay-cable leader is still looking for hits to replace "The Sopranos," "Sex and the City" and "Six Feet Under." "True Blood" stars Stephen Moyer as one of a group of vampires who move into a small Louisiana town. His character has a romance with an innocent waitress, played by Anna Paquin, who has powers of her own. The series is expected to air in 2008.

—JON LAFAYETTE

### Hallmark Preps HD Movie Channel

Crown Media Holdings, parent company of Hallmark, will launch Hallmark Movie Channel HD in the first quarter of 2008. Crown Media President and CEO Henry Schleiff announced the launch last Wednesday during a conference call addressing the company's second-quarter earnings. The new high-definition movie channel will be a simulcast of the standard-definition Hallmark Movie Channel, offering a combination of original movies, miniseries and feature films. The channel will feature a branded Friday night lineup of movies from the "Hallmark Hall of Fame" library, as well as exclusive Saturday night premieres. A special quarterly event featuring a four-hour miniseries also will be part of the channel's offerings, starting with "Son of the Dragon" starring David Carradine. It has not been determined which service providers will carry the new HD movie channel.

—STEPHANIE ROBBINS



"Hell's Kitchen" (Fox)

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# BROKEN TRAIL



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# For Station Owner, an Internet Quest

## Capitol Broadcasting Seeks Means to Stream Signals on Web

By Ira Teinowitz

When Capitol Broadcasting President-CEO Jim Goodman looks out at the growing number of laptop computer users watching video, he sees an untapped market—and a growing worry—for his five North Carolina and South Carolina TV stations.

"There are thousands of computers, where owners spend a lot of time watching video, and that's a lot of TV sets that can't pick me up," he said. "I don't know what market share it means for us, but I want to fight for some of it."

To reach those potential viewers, Mr. Goldman is turning to technology that would allow broadcasters to stream their live signals on the Web, but limit the signal's reach to local viewers.

Viewers who want access to that signal would outfit their laptops with a gadget that scans for the presence of FM signals from local radio stations. That gadget, upon detecting one of those frequencies, would grant access to the Web signal being beamed out by the local TV station.

The technology uses a USB receiver made by ADS Tech, which has been cooperating with Mr. Goodman's company in the testing process.

The National Association of Broadcasters has taken no position on the new approach, but an NAB spokesman said, "We would like to see broadcast signals accessible on laptops, so long as issues like territorial exclusivity for broadcast signals can be preserved."

One legal hurdle to Mr. Good-



**INTERNET TV** Capitol Broadcasting is trying to get permission to send station signals on the Web while limiting their reach to the local market.

man's plan is a U.S. Copyright Office opinion that says TV stations' signals can't be retransmitted onto the Web because those signals might be seen outside the local markets.

Mr. Goodman is asking the Copyright Office to provide an opinion on whether the new setup complies with copyright laws.

Peter Yankevich, head of information for the Copyright Office, said the request will be considered as part of a report to Congress to be delivered

next year.

"I don't think we will give private opinions at this stage," he said.

Mr. Goodman wants to piggy-back onto the compulsory copyright

licensing that cable systems use to re-air local stations' signals to their subscribers. He makes clear that he wants to get his local TV signal on local computers and doesn't much care if they get there by streaming or, instead, if laptop makers come up with a card that allows computer owners to see a digital over-the-air TV signal.

With few signs of other alternatives coming, he is pushing his streaming solution.

"There are all these computers and people watching video. It's a place we have got to compete," he said. "Audio and video usage is going up and up and we are not one of the choices."

In a filing with the Copyright Office, the company called its proposal "viewer and pro-competitive." ■



**JIM GOODMAN**  
Capitol Broadcasting

## DIGITAL DEALMAKERS

**The player:** Frank Barbieri, CEO of Transpera

**The play:** Transpera provides technology to turn Internet sites into mobile video channels. "We partner with online video publishers who want an easy-to-add rich mobile video experience or we partner with mobile operators who want easy ways to package and aggregate online video and we partner with advertisers," Mr. Barbieri said. Transpera builds the mobile channels, translating existing content into a form that works well on mobile phones.

**The pitch:** Mr. Barbieri said Transpera doesn't just port online video sites to mobile

phones. "Mobile is a feature of an online video brand. We are going to help all those existing online video brands create easy-to-use mobile features," he said. "You give us your video and we'll make you money."

**Backstory:** Mr. Barbieri founded Transpera in January and raised about \$250,000 in angel funding in April. In June, the company raised an undisclosed amount of venture funding from partners including Intel Capital, IDG Ventures and First Round Capital.

**In the mix:** The company launched in late July and is currently reaching out to online video sites, advertisers and



mobile carriers to strike deals. Transpera could partner, for instance, with a television network and transform the network's online video properties into a mobile experience. ■

—DAISY WHITNEY

Visit [TVWEEK.COM](http://TVWEEK.COM) for the complete interview with MR. BARBIERI



## The Insider

By Michele Greppi

### Clothes Encounters of the Worst Kind

**L**isten up, ladies. The whiny season is over. No more woe-is-us comments to anyone who won't put their fingers in their ears and make la-la-la-la noises to drown out the poor, poor pitiful complaint that nobody ever critiques what male anchors wear.

The Insider's rant today is a long-overdue list of some of the main reasons male anchors largely don't get the same fashion questions and scrutiny. They're not getting a pass, they're getting a passing grade.

No. 1. There's no guessing game about what/whom male anchors are going to look like when they show up on the air each day. Or whether they will be appropriately dressed. They will look like themselves. Like themselves going to work. They will look like they did the day before and the week before, like they will look tomorrow and next week.

When they depart from their norm—Dan Rather and his sudden affectation of a sweater vest, or Willard Scott and his on-



A natty Brian Williams

again, off-again toupee being two examples that quickly come to mind—they will get gleefully, brutally and endlessly written about.

The women, on the other hand, increasingly seem to regard a closet as a costume warehouse and an invitation to role-play. Ummmm, what shall we be today? Someone headed for lunch at Le Cirque? *Apres* duty cocktails? A picnic? The front row at a cutting-edge fashion show? Or Laura Ingalls headed for her little house on the prairie?

This is not to suggest that TV newswomen should adopt a uniform. But part of an anchor's job is to convey a sense of someone at the top of their game, in command, unflappable and focused on what's important. If they seem still to be figuring out just who they want to appear to be on any given day, they have lost The Insider's confidence.

We know it gets complicated for the women on morning shows, where the variety of topics ranges from heart-breakingly sad news (no umpire-sized stripes, please) to exercise segments (leave the spandex to talk-show cuties, please) and to beach scenes (no display of navels, please, no matter how attractive yours is).

No. 2. Male anchors don't wear f-me pumps on-air (The Insider does not pretend to know what they like to slip into off-camera).

Yes, career women have been told that they can and perhaps should have a little wardrobe fun with shoes, but four- and five-inch heels are not work shoes unless you are an actress, an astronomically wealthy and over-coutured talk-show host, a drag queen, a hooker, a stripper or a porn star.

On a recent Saturday-morning edition of a network morning news show, a rising business-news star appeared in a pants ensemble. It wasn't a great look but it wasn't inappropriate—until a full-length shot revealed she was wearing leopard-print, peep-toe platform shoes with towering heels. They didn't work. Not with the pants suit or the assignment.

No. 3. Male anchors don't flash cleavage on camera. Brian Williams, for example, can't bring himself to undo more than one button when he doffs his tie, and even then we see the neck band of his undershirt, no matter how hot or humid his location.

An increasing number of TV newswomen, however, are plumb-ing new depths of skin, real or suggested. If viewers even think they can see between-breast hollows of any size and count multiple buttons undone, it's a no-no-no-no-no. And if any female talent regularly has to add undershirts under her blouse, an adult should accompany her on her next work-related shopping trip.

No. 4. Male anchors don't wear clown makeup. Examples of the women who do are too numerous to mention. We can't reasonably hope to end all makeup abuses, but if we could at least stamp out the Star Jones lipstick look (dark liner and at least two graduated colors), it would be the cosmetic equivalent of changing to energy-saver light bulbs to reduce humankind's carbon footprint.

Clarifications of any or all of the above available on request.

Bottom line: Break these basic rules and you are begging to be written about. And next time we'll name names and really give a lot of TV newswomen something to whine about. ■

**INTERACT:** E-mail The Insider at [mgreppi@tvweek.com](mailto:mgreppi@tvweek.com) or comment at [tvweek.com/blogs](http://tvweek.com/blogs)

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# Originals Clean Up SoapNet's Summer

## Three New Series Bolster Channel's Upfront Numbers

By Jon Lafayette

It's tough when most of the cast and writers of your new top-rated show are committed to another project. But if you are SoapNet General Manager Deborah Blackwell, it's a small worry because the network is bubbling all around her.

On the heels of adding 13 million households to its subscriber base, SoapNet enjoyed record viewership in July. The channel's first original scripted drama, "General Hospital: Night Shift," is outdrawing SoapNet's prime-time reruns of the popular ABC soap it was spun off from, averaging 915,000 total viewers and 397,000 women 18 to 49.

Ms. Blackwell said she would love to renew the show, but when "General Hospital" ends its summer schedule of producing five episodes in four days, it's going to be tricky to continue to pump out episodes of "Night Shift."

"I'm talking to the writers and producers now to see if that's something they can accomplish," said Brian Frons, president of daytime for Disney ABC Television, to whom SoapNet reports.

"We didn't know what kind of physical and creative toll it would take on the 'GH' team, and while the 'GH' numbers have been great, people are getting tired. So I have to figure out how we can sort of keep the energy in both programs."

In the meantime, SoapNet is also getting buzz for its newest reality show, "The Fashionista Diaries," and next week launches the fourth edition of "I Wanna Be a Soap Star."

All of the above are contributing to big business in the upfront, with revenue up 40 percent and price increase percentages in the teens on a cost-per-thousand basis.

With the change to commercial ratings as the basis for ad sales, SoapNet was helped by its strong viewer loyalty and its retention of viewers through commercial breaks, said Heidi Lobel, senior VP of ABC Daytime and SoapNet Sales. "There were major CPM issues for other cable networks and we didn't face that, so I'm quite sure we will come out of this upfront with the highest CPM increases" after the differential between program and commercial ratings is taken into account.

The network picked up 24 new advertisers, including several in fast food, a new category for the channel, Ms. Lobel said.

SoapNet, now in 64.4 million homes, was the 39th-ranked ad-supported cable network in terms of total



**A BIG DRAW** "General Hospital: Night Shift" has proved to be a ratings success for SoapNet, but its future beyond the summer is in jeopardy.



**PEOPLE WILL TALK** "Fashionista Diaries" has generated a lot of buzz for the network.

viewers in prime time during the fourth quarter. Launched in 2000 to repurpose ABC's soap operas, in the past year the network has been evolving its programming, adding younger-skewing off-network shows such as "The O.C." and "One Tree Hill" to the mix to funnel new viewers into the soap genre.

"We want to ensure the future vibrancy of the soap genre. We want to always be sure that we're bringing new young viewers into it," Ms. Blackwell said.

But while young women have tuned in to see "The O.C." and "One Tree Hill," the network over its whole day remains flat among women 18 to 34.

With its original programming, the network is in a better position to offer the product-placement and integration deals sponsors are demanding. Diet Coke is featured in "The Fashionista Diaries" and L'Oreal cosmetics are being integrated into "Soap Star."

"Creating new opportunities for our advertisers is really a high priority for us," Ms. Blackwell said.

Advertisers are showing their appreciation. Derek Baine of SNL

Kagan Research said SoapNet "had a significant bump in ad revenue last year and we are predicting this will happen again in 2007." SNL Kagan projects that SoapNet's ad revenues will increase 23 percent to \$46.6 million this year.

"It seems like a lot of what they're trying has been successful," said Shari Cohen, co-president for national broadcast at Mindshare. "I think it comes from an understanding of who they are and understanding their audience and what they'll be receptive to watching."

Ms. Cohen said SoapNet was attractive in the upfront because "their price point makes sense and they're certainly growing."

SoapNet's broadened distribution—which brings added subscription and advertising revenue—is what is allowing it to acquire more current shows and ramp up original production, executives said. The network has been generating cash for Disney since 2003, according to SNL Kagan, and should have record cash flow of \$56.9 million in 2007.

The fourth episode of "General Hospital: Night Shift," which aired Aug. 2, was the highest-rated since the premiere, showing gains in the network's key demographics of women 18 to 49 and women 18 to 34.

"The idea we could put it on and actually have better ratings than 'General Hospital' is kind of a jaw-dropper to me," Mr. Frons said. SoapNet gets promoted on ABC

Daytime and as part of ABC Daytime media buys. He said about 10 percent of "Night Shift" viewers had never watched SoapNet before and 38 percent of women 18 to 49 watching "General Hospital" on ABC are watching "Night Shift" on SoapNet.

With the success of "Night Shift," SoapNet will look at extending other soaps on its air. "I think we do have to look hard at what 'One Life to Live' might be able to do for us in terms of an original spinoff," Mr. Frons said. ■



**BRIAN FRONS**  
Disney ABC Television

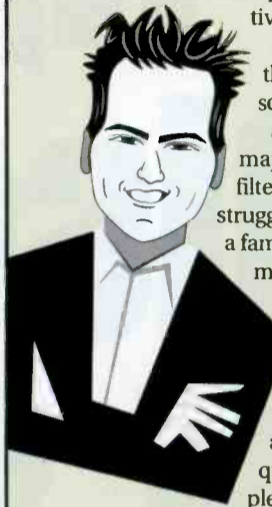
TVWeek.com

# BEST OF BLOG

## Penning Porn Euphemisms

Somewhere there is a copywriter who had to create a description for "Brazilian Butt Fetish" in 10 words or less without offending anybody.

This unique occupational challenge stems from two relatively new events: Cable and satellite providers quietly adding harder-edged porn channels to their lineups, and the advent of detailed on-screen interactive program listing guides.



So here's an activity for insomniac English majors who own a DVR: Apply the "Adult" content filter on movie listings to see how copywriters struggle to describe extremely lurid programming in a family-friendly—and often curiously uplifting—manner.

The aforementioned "Brazilian Butt Fetish" is described as "pretty women reveal curvaceous features." "The Hottest Housewife" is "sexy women reveal their best traits." "Strap-On Sally 18" is "gorgeous women please one another." And "Handjobs Across America" is, quite accurately, "young women enjoy simple pleasures." ...

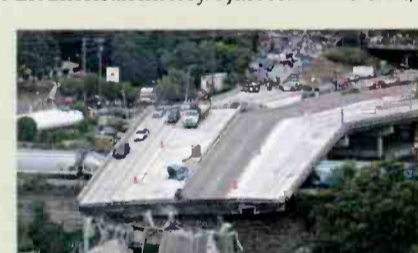
Though it might seem like all the descriptions emphasize women pleasuring others, that's not the case. The listing for "Pimp My Wife" is encouragingly female-empowering, if oddly verbose: "An average housewife learns to really let go and explore her deepest fantasies. She's finally free to release her inhibitions and be comfortable with her own body."

Once again, the movie is called "Pimp My Wife."

—James Hibberd's "Rated," Aug. 8

## 'Why Bridges Collapse'

A day after the bridge collapse in Minneapolis, the History Channel ran the special "Why Bridges Collapse," which documented some of the worst bridge-related disasters in American history. I just stumbled on it, because there was no on-air promotion for a special that ran at 10 p.m. (ET) following the tragedy the day before. There was no time to promote the show.



History was smart and lucky. In its archives it already had a documentary on the shelves, outlining the history of bridge collapses in the country. And smart because the channel moved quickly, obtaining fresh coverage from CBS News and quickly cut and spliced the existing footage with news coverage to create one of the scariest programs I have ever seen. It attracted 1.1 million viewers.

—Marianne Paskowski's "TVWatch," Aug. 7

## 'Big Brother's' Life Lessons

OMG, watching "Big Brother 8" suddenly is like watching the preamble to a multiple-car crash on a never-ending loop that plays in slow motion so we can all study (repeatedly) some pretty obvious life lessons and play drinking games.

First let's tackle the life lessons as OMGreppi defines them midway through the "BB8" season in hermetically sealed hell.

► Never trust a dork with nipple rings, a tattoo and eyebrows whose arches suggest an ego far out of proportion with any of the social skills yet displayed. ...

► Never trust a reality game player who wraps themselves in a Bible and then breaks every one of the 10 Commandments (including Thou Shalt Not Bore) as Internet and "Big Brother After Dark" viewers watch the bad deeds on the house feeds from which HouseGuests can neither run nor hide. ■

—Michele Greppi's  
"OMGreppi," Aug. 6



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## EDITORIAL

### Who Will Step Up to Disband TV's Pirates?

For those who lack qualms about stealing, it has become relatively painless to download unauthorized copies of prime-time network television shows. While the TV industry has taken steps in the right direction to battle these copyright pirates, it needs to do more. Specifically, networks and studios need to suck the air out of the wrongdoers' rooms by supplying consumers with all the material they would otherwise get hold of by illegal means.

*TelevisionWeek* has reported on the availability of many of this fall's pilot episodes on peer-to-peer file-sharing services. While the industry is availing itself of legal means to plug the leaks, that's no recipe for success. Just as the music industry's defensive measures failed to protect it from catastrophe at the hands of Napster and similar services, so too will the TV business fail by playing defense only.

The solution is for the industry to play more offense. Kudos to ABC, which established the market for downloadable TV shows with its iTunes deal in 2005. And kudos to other broadcast and cable networks that have seeded their Web sites with episodes. Networks that are making more material available on VOD also deserve praise.

It is time to step it up. Almost two years have passed since the ABC-iTunes deal, and still the TV industry hasn't figured out a business model for making all episodes of every show downloadable so the consumers who are abandoning the medium can access the shows they want to watch, when they want to watch them.

The TV industry still has time. It still takes longer to steal a show on a peer-to-peer site than it does to enjoy it. In that, television and movie companies have more refuge than their peers in the music business, whose bite-sized entertainment packages were temptingly easy to steal.

We grant the fact that making everything available everywhere, all the time, also portends huge economic disruptions, particularly in the syndication market, where broadcast shows take on the lucrative afterlife that pads pocketbooks in Hollywood and New York.

The times compel boldness. Apple's Steve Jobs and Disney's Robert Iger are credited with breaking the dam that kept television shows on TV. It's time for them, or other visionaries, to complete the circle by completely integrating TV's great content with all the newer forms of distribution.

It may be worth placing another bet on Mr. Jobs and Mr. Iger. Or perhaps Rupert Murdoch and Jeff Zucker's new Web video site will evolve into a solution. Either way, the industry needs a leader. ■

## QUICKTAKES BY STEPHANIE ROBBINS

### Was Telemundo right to punish its reporter who became romantically involved with the mayor of Los Angeles while covering him?



"Yes—this was clearly a conflict of interest for Salinas. But it's a sad statement about the public's hunger for scandal when KVEA gets higher ratings for the Salinas/Villaraigosa scandal than for any of the news reporting she previously did on the station."

Sabrina Toledo, VP, sales and marketing, CABLEready

"First, Telemundo did the right thing in employing The Poynter Institute to aid in its investigation, which led to the suspension of Ms. Salinas. However, Telemundo clearly needs to have a firm, undeniable policy about conflict of interest when it comes to reporters fraternizing with public officials. Otherwise, its news credibility is as valid as a three-dollar bill."

Steve Beverly, professor of broadcasting, Union University, Jackson, Tenn.

## GUEST COMMENTARY By Michael Kernan

### Playing to the Strengths of a Very Small Screen

What will be the "I Love Lucy" of mobile? The answer remains to be seen. When TV was first invented, most television producers came from radio and did not know what to make of this new medium. So they put radio on TV, and it was less than impressive. Then "I Love Lucy" came along, and it showed what could be done with a filmed show that plays to television's strengths.

The parallel can be drawn that the answer to mobile is to produce specifically for the medium. That said, here are a few tips for producing mobile video.

**Produce specifically for the screen.** First, consider the screen size of the device the person will be viewing. Most cell phone screens on the market are approximately 2 inches. However, as mobile video becomes more popular, handset makers are designing larger screens. For example, the Apple iPhone has a 3½-inch screen.

One helpful pointer when shooting video for mobile devices is to use close-up shots. Wide shots lose focus, which makes it difficult for the viewer to see the characters.

Similarly, the fewer people in each shot the better. If a single character is in the shot, it is not necessary to frame the actor in the center. The character can be set to the side, using the rest of the shot to capture background or something else integral to the shot.

In choosing a background, use the simplest background that makes sense for the project. Overly complex backgrounds will not translate well to mobile and will detract from the focus.

**Avoid TV techniques.** Camera techniques used in television and film, such as tilting or zooming, do not cross over to mobile. The least amount of camera movement possible is best. The same is true for character movement. A lot of movement by a character is hard to watch on a mobile device.

Of course, camera movement

should not be excluded entirely. But the camera should move much slower and allow the scene to remain on screen longer than in other mediums. Finally, fast cuts between



**MEDIUM COOL** Directors must learn to shoot for the new media.

scenes are difficult for the viewer to comprehend and should not be used.

However, not all television techniques are bad. Storyboarding should be used in planning the video, just as it is in film and

**The most successful original-content mobile videos are those that present the characters and plot in a clear way to the viewer.**

television.

**Lighting is extremely important.** The best lighting to use is soft lighting. Lighting for mobile video is even more important than lighting for other media. Avoid any fluorescent lighting (unless specifically designed for filming) and dimly lit areas. One lighting technique that has been successful for mobile video is to have a sharp contrast between the background and the characters. This helps highlight the character without overloading the viewer and compromising the clarity of the video.

**Avoid text.** Text or subtitles most likely will distract the viewer. The small size of the screen makes it difficult for the viewer to pay attention to the text. It is better to use audio to get the message across.

**Audio is integral to mobile video.** Until handsets improve, speakers of mobile devices have a very limited capability. This is especially true when using fre-

quencies on the lower end of the audio spectrum. Bass-heavy audio should not be used, as it will distort the mobile device's speaker.

Many mobile video viewers wear headphones. Thus, audio should highlight the action taking place in the video. Any unnecessary sound effects or dialogue should be removed. Dialogue should be crisp and clean.

Think about where the video will be viewed. As the name "mobile video" implies, viewers will be watching the content in a vast array of situations. Thus, assume distractions. Plot lines or dialogue should not be so involved that if the viewer misses something, he is lost. This also should be considered when planning character development and in introducing new characters.

The most successful original-content mobile videos are those

that present the characters and plot in a clear way to the viewer.

**Be prepared for compression issues.** Another pre-shooting issue to consider is that the content will eventually need to be compressed. Producers who have made content for the Internet are already familiar with content compression.

When it comes time to edit, getting rid of empty frames will help reduce the size of the file that must be compressed. The frames per second used in shooting the video should be lower than traditional television frame speed. However, the frame speed should not be reduced to the degree that the quality of the video is drastically reduced. Advances in the technology, such as Qualcomm's MediaFlo, will eventually reduce compression concerns.

(With special thanks to Ryan Goodell.) ■

Michael Kernan is vice president of International Creative Management.

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# Media Planner

## Measurement Tools Spell Good News

### New Technology Means More Accurate Tracking for All Media Advertisers

By Adam Armbruster  
Special to TelevisionWeek

Two recent events brought exciting news to television broadcasters, advertisers and media planners.

First Arbitron announced last week that the new darling of the radio business, the electronic Portable People Meter listenership measurement device, has been accredited by the Media Rating Council for television measurement as well.

If you are not familiar with the electronic PPM device, it's a beeper-like device, worn on the waist, that tracks all radio stations a listener is exposed to without the listener having to do anything at all—no more diaries to fill out. The PPM effectively corrected diary error in the measurement of audiences and is already the radio industry standard.

The practice of using PPM data for television has already been a success at BBM Canada, and it is working well for both radio and television in Belgium. The folks at Arbitron have given themselves an opportunity to get back into the TV ratings game.

The acceptance of the PPM in the television industry will reclaim "lost" additional TV audiences—out-of-home viewers at sports stadiums, at movie theaters, in elevators, etc.

Finally broadcasters and networks can get credit for additional audiences they always knew existed but for which they were not able to charge a fee.

In the past the NSI measurement metrics lagged the growth of these audiences. This new technology could be a defining moment for the television industry; in the very near future media planners will be able to "gather" an audience among many separate television signals, thereby affording a significantly larger marketing opportunity than on just one network or station. (I often think of this on business trips when I see the local news on the TV sets in hotels, bars and restaurants. A hotel full of upscale business types is a desirable audience for many advertisers and the commercials are all being watched, but the advertisers are not paying a dime for this premium audience. This seems unfair to the local TV station.)

The second event that can change the media measurement world as we know it is Nielsen's announcement that it will measure and report audiences of same TV programs on different media platforms (or, in Nielsen speak: Unduplicated Average Audience Ratings). Finally buyers who purchase ads in a program will be able to aggregate their actual audience levels, and media outlets will be able to sell the power of multiple exposures over several platforms. An example of this would be if you purchased a "CSI" audience on a CBS station; if it telecast the program again in another digital format, the total audience would be reported.

#### Widening the Gaps

Also, the gap between the Big Four networks and cable will widen. If ABC decides to create a new way of airing "Lost" five days a week, it will want to get paid for the new massive audience generated. And as proven by the new DVR data, when networks and TV stations make very popular shows more accessible to more people, this creates a substantial new

**It's important that the industry embrace this technology to truthfully reflect the quantity and quality of audiences delivered by networks and stations.**

audience at a large scale. On the flipside, a program on a small cable network, when repeated, will still generate a small audience.

It's important that the TV industry embrace this technology to truthfully reflect the quantity and quality of audiences delivered by networks and stations. In our work with clients nationally, we see the alarming difference between the credibility of television audience reporting and that of other media.

For anyone who wants a crash course in this experience, consider newspapers and the direct-mail media.

Newspapers report "circulation" based on an annual survey. Newspapers "average in" the "fact" that there are multiple readers of each paper. Is



**NO 'LOST' DATA** With new methods of tracking audiences, even local television stations will soon be able to tell who's watching at any given time.

this really true? Also, newspaper section readership data has been successfully quelled by the Newspaper Association of America. Starch Scores used to report the readership of local newspapers by section. When the data became debilitating to the newspapers' sales efforts, the papers canceled the Starch research contracts. The only real statistic is that readership continues to plummet more than 2 percent each year. Yet when clients buy newspaper ads, they buy total circulation estimates and have little else to negotiate. Can

you imagine the media-buying community revolt if television stations reported only weekly "average penetration" numbers?

Another medium being sold based on Dark Ages research is direct mail. Direct-mail companies sell the "drop" count, meaning the promise to deliver the direct-mail pieces to a certain number of homes on a specific day. No promises are made as to who reads the piece, or what they even do with the piece. Direct mail simply mails a piece of paper to a home. It is a significant media spend that generates more than 20 percent of all advertising revenue, considerably more than even newspapers do today. By the way, the cost per thousand (CPM) for these direct-mail pieces is usually 10 to 20 times the

equivalent in television. At that premium, isn't it fair to be able to expect accurate audience statistics? Apparently not.

Clients we consult need to know what they can expect to get for their money. If they are planning a campaign to achieve a sales result, the proper math must be in place. For advertisers seeking real answers, television is becoming a wiser choice than print or direct mail.

If newspaper and direct-mail companies are able to secure massive amounts (20 percent to 30 percent) of all media dollars without accurate representation of their audiences, then why is television held to a higher standard of accountability? Because the current technology supports this standard.

But very good news for broadcasters is here. The Arbitron PPM, combined with the Nielsen unduplicated research, will turn the negotiating tide back to the sellers' favor and create an accurate measurement tool. Now the "lost" television audience can be found and sold at the proper value. This is what buyers want anyway: predictable reach for their ad dollars.

Soon local television stations will be able to sell their audiences wherever they may be found. And that fact is proof enough that we are truly in a new media world. ■

Adam Armbruster is a partner with Red Bank, N.J.-based retail and broadcasting consulting firm Eckstein, Summers, Armbruster & Co. He can be reached at adam@esacompany.com or 941-928-7192.

Sources: Nielsen, Arbitron, NRF 2007, NSI 2007, ESA&Company

## HISTORIC AT-BAT UPS ADS' EXPOSURE

### Three Sponsors Star in Replays

By Alice Z. Cuneo  
Advertising Age

Sponsors may be staying away from San Francisco Giants slugger Barry Bonds, but his 756th home run last week, which broke Henry Aaron's 33-year-old record, gave a handful of marketers with signs in the outfield a shot at a perpetual marketing opportunity.

Mr. Bonds' homer into the right centerfield seats at AT&T Park landed near signs in the outfield for Charles Schwab, Bank of America and Diamond Walnuts. The footage will become part of baseball history, to be replayed for years to come.

Rob Schwartz, executive creative director at Visa's ad agency, TBWA/Chiat/Day of Playa del Rey, Calif., was hoping the ball



Barry Bonds

would make it to a Visa sign at the Giants' home field. Although MasterCard is one of Major League Baseball's prime corporate partners, Visa had a shot at capturing the moment with its "Life Takes Visa" sign. That, Mr. Schwartz said, "would truly have been priceless."

The exposure isn't exactly priceless, however. Steve Rosner, founder of 16W Marketing in Rutherford, N.J., said the normal cost of a sign in the outfield is between \$500,000 and \$750,000. However, he said the Giants likely marked up the price at the start of the season.

But Mr. Rosner said the record won't persuade sponsors to sign up Mr. Bonds, who has been tainted by a steroids scandal. "Nobody is going to sponsor Barry Bonds," he said, "whether the allegations are true or not." ■

# EYE ON THE EMMYS

## Dramatic Tension Is Building

*'Sopranos' Finale, Strong Broadcast Hours Ratchet Up the Intrigue in Drama Races*

**A**s *Television-Week's* two-part "Eye on the Emmys" report shifts its focus to the drama categories, we find ourselves entering what Academy of Television Arts & Sciences Chairman and CEO Dick Askin calls "the golden age of drama."

"If you look at the five [nominated] shows, certainly all five deserve to be nominated," Mr. Askin said. "But there are probably another five or

### ON THE WEB

Go to TVWeek.com for additional "Eye on the Emmys" coverage, including a look at the races in the comedy series and comedy acting categories, along with reality and reality competition, nonfiction, children's programming, animation and casting. We also feature a Q&A with Alan Perris, chief operating officer of the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences.

10 or even 15 series that could have been serious contenders. ...

Every year the drama category is going to get more and more competitive."

On the following pages, Mr. Askin has more to say on the subject in an in-depth Q&A that covers how Emmy is keeping up and where it is headed in a

rapidly changing media environment. And in addition to the drama races, we spotlight miniseries, variety programming, TV movies and commercials.

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## Q&amp;A

# CEO Askin Keeps Eye on Emmy's Future

*ATAS' Chairman-Chief Exec Aims to Globalize Brand, Stay Ahead of Changes in Industry*

With the Emmy nominations out and the awards ceremony around the corner, this is a busy time of year for Dick Askin, chairman and CEO of the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences. He talked with *TelevisionWeek* correspondent Allison J. Waldman about the Emmys' submission and voting process, the challenges he faces in guiding the direction of the academy and what the future might hold for the Primetime Emmys.

**TelevisionWeek:** Tell me about an aspect of your position that people may not know about.

**Dick Askin:** It's an interesting position. First of all, it's an elected position. You have to run and be elected by the board to be chairman, and it's a large board. We have 54 governors on the board, an executive committee of 15, plus a full-time staff of 60 people. So it's a fairly good-sized organization for a nonprofit.

My role is essentially to look down the horizon and identify the strategic direction that the academy needs to take. How do we make the process better? How do we build the Emmy brand and make it more significant? How do we make the Emmy brand global? We did that by purchasing the International Academy a couple of years ago, and now we're trying to expand their operation.

It's also a fun position. You really do it to give back to the industry. It's a pro bono position, not a paid position. So you're doing it as a way of making the television industry better.

Over the course of the years I've been chair and vice chair, and I've met a tremendous number of very, very talented people—both stars and writers. You know, the Aaron Sorkins of the world, and Tommy Schlamme and John Wells, some of the most tal-



Dick Askin

ented people in our business. So in that respect it's been fun and also a privilege to be able to interact with these people.

You know, you never make people happy all the time, so sometimes after these nominations are announced, you should read the e-mails we receive. Some of them are very humorous. One thing about the fans who take the time to sit and write an e-mail is that they're very passionate and they want to know why "The Wire" wasn't nominated—



**TALKING POINTS** People are still debating the meaning of the series finale on HBO's "The Sopranos."

[SPECIAL REPORT]  
EYE ON THE  
EMMYS



Conan O'Brien hosted the 2006 Primetime Emmys telecast.

what's wrong with you guys? How could you forget "Gilmore Girls" Lauren Graham? There has been a campaign for her for years. That's probably an example of a very good actress in a show that just didn't have the visibility to be recognized.

**TVWeek:** Was there any problem caused by the change in executive producers for the Emmys show?

**Mr. Askin:** No. Every year has its own set of issues. I've done four of these and every year has a different set of things you have to work through. But I'm very, very glad to see Ken Ehrlich back [as executive producer]. I think it all turned out the way it should have all along. Ken has some very interesting, dynamic ideas for the show. It's like playing cards: Every year you're dealt a new hand of cards and you play them to the best of your ability. This year will be very interesting. Fox has been very supportive, and also they have a very wide-open attitude toward the show, so I think they're letting us have some fun, and they're a little more relaxed about what we're going to do

than some of the other networks.

**TVWeek:** How has the Primetime Emmy maintained its preeminence as the television industry's top award?

**Mr. Askin:** We're going to be celebrating our 60th anniversary next year, and I guess in a lot of ways we have exercised constant vigilance to make sure that the Emmys remain the symbol of excellence in television. What we've really focused on, especially in the last few years, are all the changes that are going on in the business. We've focused on keeping the Emmy Awards relevant to the industry and to today's viewers.

For example, four years ago we added the category of reality television and also reality competition. At that point it was a new genre of television that was just beginning to get some traction. Now, just a few years later, if you look at the new fall schedule for the four networks, I think about half the shows are reality programming. So what we wanted to do years ago and now, too, is embrace change. That's what I've

been trying to do, as chairman for the last four years, is to get our board and our members comfortable with the idea of embracing change and have the academy embrace change and try to put it at the forefront.

**TVWeek:** This is the last season of "The Sopranos," and the finale was one of the most talked-about shows of the television year. Would you submit that episode for outstanding drama series if you were David Chase, the executive producer?

**Mr. Askin:** That's a good question. I think I probably would, only because I think in a lot of ways that particular episode typified the series. ... It was unpredictable and surprising. In a lot of ways, the ending itself was kind of shocking. David Chase has always done a very good job of surprising the audience and not allowing the audience to anticipate what was going to happen. So I think that would be a pretty good one to submit. I'd have to go back and see what else he's looking at.

I thought it was a wonderful episode. Initially, it was shocking and actually very frustrating, but when I started to think about it the following day, I came to the realization that it was a genius way to end the show. You think you know the ending, but you're just not quite sure. Isn't that clever? That's the way he handled the whole series, if you look at the Tony Soprano character, for example. You don't know whether to like him or to hate him because he's so multifaceted and complex that you probably have both emotions during the season watching what he does. I think that is why that show had so much genius to it.

**TVWeek:** There's such diversity this year among the nominees for outstanding drama series.

**Mr. Askin:** This is the golden age of drama. If you look at the five shows, certainly all five deserve to be nominated, but there are probably another five or 10 or even 15 series that could have been serious con-

Continued on Page 15

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## DRAMA SERIES

Emmy's  
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If Any Show Can Beat 'Sopranos' for the Top Drama Trophy, It Might Be 'House'

By Allison J. Waldman  
Special to TelevisionWeek

The nominees for outstanding drama series managed to take even the savviest experts by surprise this year. Yes, "The Sopranos" was expected to be there, especially given its controversial final season, and last year's medical drama nominees "Grey's Anatomy" and "House" were recognized again. But the inclusion of newcomer "Heroes," NBC's comic-book series, and ABC's 3-year-old "Boston Legal," never previously nominated for drama series, was unexpected. All things considered, the competition in this category may be the most wide-open in years—or maybe not.

"I think it's the last season of 'The Sopranos,' which has been a remarkable show that has done a lot in changing what dramas look like on cable and network TV, so I sort of think they're going to win," said Katie Jacobs, "House" executive producer.

"House" earned three major nominations, including Hugh Laurie for lead actor in a drama series and David Morse for guest actor. "It came as a thrill and a huge relief. I mean, there are so many good dramas on TV right now that we felt here at 'House' that it could go either way," said Ms. Jacobs. "We would understand if we weren't nominated, because there are other good candidates. This is our second nomination [for drama series] and it's a huge boost to everybody here."

Another boost for the "House" company was seeing Mr. Laurie, who stars as the prickly doctor Gregory House, nominated this year. Many experts deemed his being left out of the 2006 Emmy nominations a major error in the selection process. Some observers think he may be rewarded this time, partly to make up for last year. "We'll have to see," Ms. Jacobs said. "I think there's no more extraordinary performance on air today than Hugh Laurie's."

The success of "House" is due in large part to the title character. "He's not warm and fuzzy at all. I think it's his irreverence, his sense of humor, and then I think it's also that head writer David Shore is very careful to let you see parts of the character that are vulnerable and wounded," Ms. Jacobs said. "And Hugh Laurie is so talented that, even though he can be saying mean and curmudgeonly things, we see behind his eyes to a wounded soul in there. So he's not as simple as just being nasty and cur-



"Grey's Anatomy"  
(ABC)

mudgeonly. He's funny, he's entertaining, he is sexy ... and physically, Hugh has a great sort of masculinity to him, so it's not that he's simple to get. I think the most important thing is the split between his sense of humor and the wounded, everybody-wants-to-repair-House kind of sentiment."

In the past season "House" dealt with major challenges, in particular Dr. House's addiction to pain pills. "We felt it was time to deal with the issue, not just because it's the responsible thing to do, but we were interested in discussing this because it's fascinating," Ms. Jacobs said. "The pain in his leg is real, and you cannot function at your best with constant pain. Nevertheless, can you function at your best while taking God knows how many Vicodin?"

Emmy nominee David Morse



"House"  
(Fox)



"Boston Legal"  
(ABC)



"Heroes"  
(NBC)



"The Sopranos"  
(HBO)

played Tritter, the police detective determined to stop House. "The Tritter character is a guy who can't let go," said Ms. Jacobs. "Who is House really hurting? Well, that's not how Tritter saw it. He was as much as a dog with a bone as House is when he's trying to diagnose a case."

According to the creators of the show, there's a link between Gregory House and Sherlock Holmes, especially in their relentless need to uncover the truth. "House is, at the end of the day, a great doctor," Ms. Jacobs said. "When you don't know what's wrong with you, it's not about a doctor who's warm and fuzzy. It's about somebody who can figure out what's wrong with you."

"The thing about House is that he's the ultimate diagnostician. He

wants to figure out the answer to the puzzle," she added. "I'd like to be in his hands if I was on my deathbed."

Dr. House will face a new challenge when the next season begins because his three assistants all left him in last season's finale. "You'll be surprised by what House decides to do. At the end of episode one, Cuddy has left all of these resumes on his desk, and he brings them all in. He decides to play a game of 'Survivor' with all these doctors over the first nine episodes," Ms. Jacobs said.

"It's just very ambitious as far as casting and writing. And we have a new set to accommodate all of these characters. It's ambitious and we didn't have to do it, but—not to sound corny—it turns us on. Once we started having these conversations, David [Shore] and the whole writing staff and all the actors got very excited about expanding in this way. We hope our enthusiasm and excitement will translate into good episodes and the audience will follow us along."

Viewers have been on board with "House" since the show premiered in 2004. "It took all of us by surprise," Ms. Jacobs said. "One of the statistics I'm most proud of is that our audience has grown over each season; that is just very unexpected."

"When we were casting the pilot, Hugh Laurie wore on his lapel a little button that said 'sexy' on it. At the time, that was a joke because 'The OC' and 'North Shore' were on and, you know, we were not sort of the typical path for Fox to take. Now, in hindsight, he's obviously incredibly sexy. He couldn't wear that button now."

"The other thing is that our teen audience is huge," she added. "Last year at certain times our teen audience was bigger than 'American Idol's' teen audience. So we actually built on teens from the 'Idol' lead-in, which is a shock."

Even though "The Sopranos" is the odds-on choice to snag the drama series Emmy, "House" is tough competition. "I say let the chips fall where they may," said Ms. Jacobs. "I wouldn't change our show and I wouldn't want to be on any other show. ... To me the phenomenal thing is we have the ratings that 'Grey's Anatomy' has and a lot of critical support at the same time. It really is an honor to be nominated in that group of shows, and I hope that we just continue to grow and that next year we're talking about the fact that we have even more nominations." ■

## ASKIN

Continued from Page 12

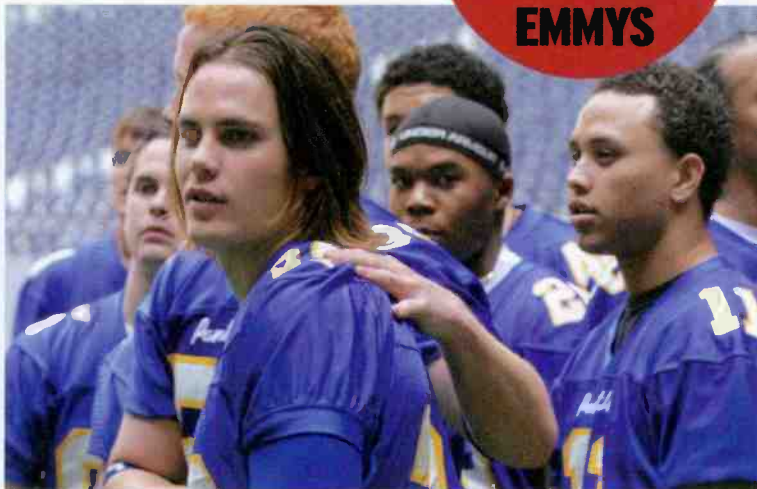
tenders. I think these last few years have been very difficult in the drama series category, just because of the quality of the episodes that are being produced for broadcast and pay cable, but also for basic cable, the FXs of the world as a good example. Every year the drama category is going to get more and more competitive.

**TVWeek:** Does the embracing of change by the Emmys include looking beyond the four networks and two premium cable outlets?

**Mr. Askin:** Yes, it does. Last year we changed our voting policy, our judging policy for nominations, to expand the way we look at programming, essentially to level the playing field, so that the smaller cable networks could have an equal shot of getting their programs viewed and judged by members of the Television Academy. That's where television is going. It's become an extremely fragmented business and we recognize that, and more importantly we've tried to address it and keep up with where the business has gone.

**TVWeek:** New technology has been incorporated into the Emmys now, including broadband, right?

**Mr. Askin:** Yes. All the new media, for lack of a better term—broadband, mobile, etc.—is now the next frontier that we're focusing on and how to have a stake and a claim to excellence in the



**LITTLE SEEN** Voters' unfamiliarity with the low-rated critical favorite "Friday Night Lights" may be why it wasn't Emmy-nominated.

new content platforms that are emerging. It's a new type of content that is being produced, let's say, specifically for the Internet and broadband.

**TVWeek:** Are the blue-ribbon panels at all affected by the access to programming via the Internet, be it via iTunes or the networks' Web sites?

**Mr. Askin:** No, not really. Prior to their sitting on a blue-ribbon panel, that accessibility may help them increase their familiarity with the shows. Let's say you didn't catch the premiere last night of "Damages" with Glenn Close, for example. Maybe you would go on the FX web site today and watch it. But the blue-ribbon panels specifically, when they sit down to judge, they are judging specific episodes that were submitted by the producers. So they aren't neces-

sarily seeing ones that are offered on a week-to-week basis on the Internet.

**TVWeek:** How important is the choice of episode submitted to the blue-ribbon panel?

**Mr. Askin:** I think it's extremely important. In the last couple of years, I've seen some classic examples of producers who have chosen wisely. They've chosen the episode that really captures the flavor of the show and enhances and highlights all the artistic merit of the show. Conversely, I've seen producers who have just made absolute poor choices in what they've submitted. It's not rocket science, but it does require some intuition and some understanding of the judging process.

**TVWeek:** For years Susan Lucci

was nominated for the Daytime Emmy, but rumor has it that she lost year after year because she didn't submit the right episodes to impress the blue-ribbon panel.

**Mr. Askin:** My understanding is that she was submitting the wrong type of episodes. This is just hearsay, but my understanding is that her producers were continually submitting over-the-top performances where she was extremely dramatic. For whatever reason, that was not what the judges were looking for. When the show finally submitted something that didn't have that over-the-top drama that soaps can have on occasion, that's when she broke her losing streak.

It's also very important in the Primetime Emmy judging process, where you have serialized dramas that are being submitted, that you have to be very careful because you have to assume that the person sitting down could be seeing your show for the first time. If you submit an episode that might be wonderful to a die-hard fan ... to a first-time viewer it might be extremely confusing. That's not going to help your efforts, and I've seen that happen. It really happens too often. There have been a couple of cases in recent years where shows that should have been nominated were not because of the producers' selection of the episode that they submitted.

**TVWeek:** What do you say to the critics who complain that a show that could use a boost from the Emmys, such as "Friday Night Lights," was overlooked?

**Mr. Askin:** I understand their frustration. Critics tend to have different sets of criteria than the Emmys do. They don't always align. I think most critics view "Friday Night Lights" as a long shot and some were disappointed that the long shot didn't pay off. But a long shot by definition usually doesn't pay off.

Actually, "Friday Night Lights" is one of my favorite shows; I have it TiVo'd. It did get pretty close to getting nominated, but I think the fact that not enough people were really familiar with it, which is a reflection of the ratings, I think might have hurt it a little bit. But there's always next year.

The purpose of the Emmys is not to keep shows that have marginal ratings on the air. A show needs to stand on its own. Our job is to evaluate excellence, and sometimes you're able to recognize the underdog or the long shot and sometimes you're not.

**TVWeek:** What do you see in the future for the Primetime Emmys—will there be more categories, more awards handed out?

**Mr. Askin:** I think so and you would hope so. Television is not going to remain static, and the Emmys will address those changes. I'll tell you one thing, we can't fit more than 27 or maybe 28 awards in the prime-time show. Some may have to move over to the Creative Arts Awards. We will continue to reflect the television landscape, so I fully expect the Emmys will change over time. I would be disappointed if they didn't. ■

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## ACTRESS, DRAMA

# Going for Matching Statuettes

Twice-Nominated Sedgwick, Newcomer Driver Join 2006, '05, '04 Series Winners

By Allison J. Waldman

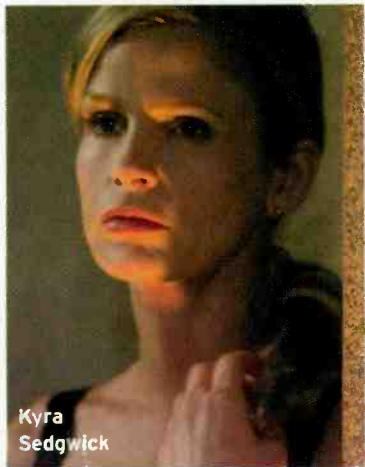
Special to TelevisionWeek

Six women of distinction are competing for the lead actress in a drama series Emmy. Last year's winner, "Law & Order: SVU's" Mariska Hargitay, faces off against 2005 winner Patricia Arquette, a contender again for "Medium." Two-time Oscar winner and double Emmy winner Sally Field ("Brothers and Sisters") joins triple Emmy winner Edie Falco ("The Sopranos"). Kyra Sedgwick has won a Golden Globe for "The Closer" and now has back-to-back Emmy nominations for the show. Oscar nominee Minnie Driver is the newcomer, garnering her first Emmy nomination for "The Riches." Whoever wins the Emmy will know that she has bested formidable opposition.

On July 19, when the Emmy nominations were announced live on TV, Ms. Sedgwick was one of the actors chosen to reveal the main categories, and she was grateful to hear her name read. "It could have been a total disaster. But it was great. I was a little self-conscious because I knew everyone was watching and that was nerve-wracking. But I'm really thrilled," said Ms. Sedgwick.

"It sure was different than if I had been lying in bed and got a phone call. It was a little strange, the whole setup. Nauseating, actually. You know, I've been doing this a really long time and I don't think this stuff will ever, ever get old for me," she added. "The whole show and the nominations and everything like the Golden Globes are just beyond my wildest dreams. It's been a great ride."

As Deputy Police Chief Brenda Leigh Johnson on TNT's "The Closer," Ms. Sedgwick gets to play a com-



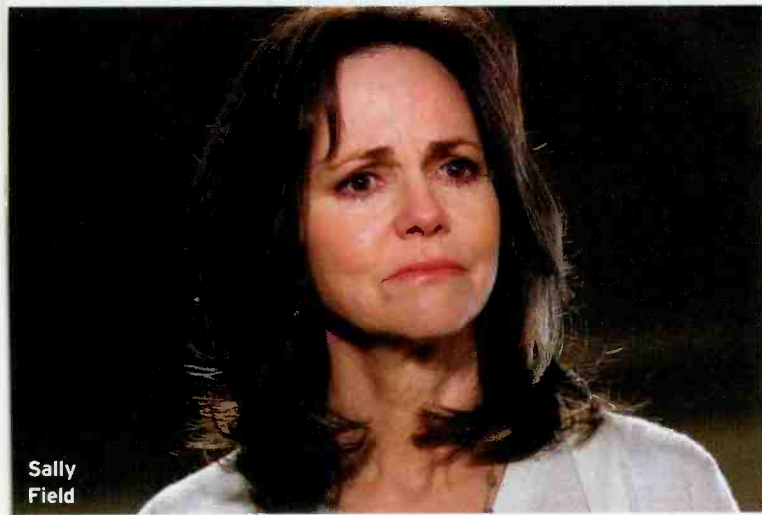
Kyra Sedgwick

elling, complicated character. "I like to play her contradictions. I like that on the one hand she's so incredibly able in her work life, brilliantly so, and then in her personal life, she's so unaware of herself and she's so unreflective," she said. "She's not at all self-analytical and yet she's analytical of everybody else. She can figure out how people tick and read people quickly, yet she hasn't a clue about herself. I love that about her."

Now in its third year, "The Closer" is the highest-rated original series on basic cable, as audiences have responded positively to the TNT drama. "What I like so much about her, and what I think makes everyone respond to her, is her flaws and her struggles and her trying to manage her life," said Ms. Sedgwick. "You know, her personal life and little things like trying to find her car keys, navigating Los Angeles, putting together a decent outfit, having to deal with food and getting older, her body changing—all these things make her human."

Ms. Sedgwick is most apprecia-

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Sally Field

[SPECIAL REPORT]

EYE ON THE EMMYS



James Spader

## ACTOR, DRAMA

# Legal Challenge to 'Sopranos' Star

Laurie May Win 'Make-Up' Vote, But Spader Looks Like a Strong Contender

By Allison J. Waldman

Special to TelevisionWeek

You could say they rounded up the usual suspects for the lead actor in a drama series nominations. There was "24's" Kiefer Sutherland, who took home the statuette in 2006; "The Sopranos'" James Gandolfini, who won in 2000, '01 and '03; last year's first-time nominee Denis Leary from "Rescue Me"; and two-time winner in this category James Spader, from "Boston Legal." The one fresh face, ironically, is the actor who was egregiously overlooked last year for a nomination, Hugh Laurie

of "House." Conventional wisdom suggests that since this is "The Sopranos'" final season, Mr. Gandolfini has the inside track to claim the Emmy. However, there also are experts betting Mr. Laurie will win, in part to make up for last year's omission. However, don't be surprised if Mr. Spader collects a third Emmy for playing Alan Shore, a TV lawyer who has redefined the type.

"He's a rascal. He's a troublemaker. He has appetites," Mr. Spader told Playboy in 2005 when asked about his character. "I haven't yet found what he's scared of, except maybe complacency. That would probably scare the hell out of him. He cares for people, but he feels that respect must be earned. Until that point there's fair play. He values truth, even in its most embarrassing, destructive form."

Mr. Spader has thrived playing the wily, unpredictable Alan Shore.

In fact, he stands alone as the only actor to win the lead actor Emmy for playing the same character on different dramas, "The Practice" and "Boston Legal."

"I know that he tremendously enjoys playing this character, and this is a guy that up until playing Alan Shore on 'The Practice' had pretty much done just a movie or two a year and played different characters," said Bill D'Elia, an Emmy-nominated director for "Boston Legal." "He enjoyed that, but he really likes playing this guy on 'Boston Legal' because he has such tremendous lat-

titude in where he can go with him."

For his Emmy submission, Mr. Spader chose a very dramatic episode that dealt with a real-life tragedy, Hurricane Katrina. "It was called 'Angel of Death' and it was really based on what occurred when Hurricane Katrina hit," said Mr. D'Elia. "This was a fictional-

ized account of a doctor who euthanized five patients who were not going to live or were not getting help soon enough and were in great pain. In our case, our guys got brought into defending the doctor. It was very controversial at the time that we did it, and we were very careful to fictionalize the account because some of the same things were really going on down there."

To many experts, this year's Emmy nominations for "Boston Legal" were a surprise. Even Mr. D'Elia was taken aback. "I was pleasantly stunned. Stunned is the right



Hugh Laurie

word. I woke up very early that morning with a terrible headache and had gone downstairs to get my medication. It was around 5:30, the nominations were being announced, and I thought, 'I already have a headache, I might as well watch this and get depressed as well.' 'Boston Legal' was the first name that came up, then I saw that James got nominated. Then I went online and saw that I got nominated for directing an episode and my sound guy got nominated as well. It was quite a morning.

"It's hard to guess exactly what that reason is, but I do think we had a particularly good year," Mr. D'Elia continued. "And I do think that because the show is so different, it had been hard to categorize as a drama or a comedy, and I think it took a while for people to understand what it is in and of itself. It's not strictly a lawyer show in that traditional mold. It took a couple of years for people to catch on to that."

"During the third season something was fairly obvious to me. It seemed that the show itself crossed

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James Gandolfini



## SUPPORTING ACTRESS, DRAMA

Experienced  
at Being  
Nominated

*Heigl Is Only Newcomer to Nominations in Category Sure to Have a First-Time Winner*

By Allison J. Waldman

Special to TelevisionWeek

A lot of familiar faces can be found among the Emmy nominees for supporting actress in a drama series, where five of the six actresses are previous nominees. Three of the contenders are from "Grey's Anatomy": first-timer Katherine Heigl, Chandra Wilson and Sandra Oh. Rachel Griffiths from "Brothers and Sisters" and a pair of actresses from "The Sopranos"—Aida Turturro and Lorraine Bracco—also are nominated.

Whoever takes home the trophy in the category—won last year by Blythe Danner for "Huff"—she will be a first-time Emmy winner.

Contacted shortly after the nominations were announced, Ms. Turturro had just received flowers from her "Sopranos" co-star James Gandolfini. "He sent me gorgeous roses, and what's really exciting about [the nomination] is that you see the amount of love you have around you," she said. "You're just doing your job, you're working hard, and all of a sudden you get something like this and all your friends and family are happy for you. They're so happy it's almost like they got something, too. I get embarrassed a little bit, but it's really great."

Winning would be a feather in Ms.



Aida Turturro

2001, and that year's Emmys ceremony is a special memory for the actress. "My dad came with me and he's no longer with us," she said. "So it was a little sad this time, because I wanted to call my dad and he's not there."

Reuniting with the "Sopranos" cast and crew at the Emmys presentation is important to Ms. Turturro as well. "That's the best thing about going," she said. "We used to always get to see each other, but now that we're not on anymore and we're not working anymore, the opportunity to get together has made us all more excited about the Emmys."

"The best thing about the show was how we all got along. You ask a lot of people, the crew and technicians, and they will all tell you that it was great. I don't like it when actors separate themselves from the crew. You know, they get like divas. We were never like that. We were a very down-to-earth group. It was a homey place to work. We were all one family, and that included the crew."

Few shows garnered as much attention during the past television season as "The Sopranos." With 15 nominations, it led all regular series.

For Ms. Turturro, the final season of the HBO drama crystallized her character. "When I look at the whole thing, I see more of a change in Janice, from her coming into the show as a Bohemian little hippie girl to the mafia wife," she said. "Janice is a chameleon. Whatever she has to be, she is. ... You think she's one thing, and then she's something else. She fits her needs, however she has to survive."

"Who knows what would happen next in her life because now she doesn't have a husband. Which way is she going to go? She's always trying to get money; she's going to get

Continued on Page 21



Rachel Griffiths

Turturro's cap, and she would welcome it. "I've never gotten up on stage and won something like that," she said. "It would be really cool. But it wouldn't be the end of the world if it doesn't happen. I'm not looking at it like I'm going to win it. I'm just happy that they nominated me and recognized me again. It's been great to be nominated twice for this role. It would be nice to win; it would be different."

The first time Ms. Turturro was nominated for her performance as Tony Soprano's sister Janice was in



Masi Oka

## SUPPORTING ACTOR, DRAMA

Good Guys, Bad  
Guys Vie for Honor

*Workplaces, Strange Spaces Settings for Varied Acting Opportunities*

By Allison J. Waldman

Special to TelevisionWeek

Of all the supporting actor in a drama series nominees, Michael Emerson stands alone in a unique way: His character on "Lost," Ben Linus, is the man everyone loves to hate. "When they tell me they hate me, they do it so gleefully. They love to hate me," said Mr. Emerson. "They're delighted by their fear and hatred of me. It's kind of cute, really."

On Sept. 16, we'll learn whether the hatred of Mr. Emerson's character fueled an Emmy victory over his competitors, William Shatner of "Boston Legal," T.R. Knight of "Grey's Anatomy," Masi Oka of "Heroes," Terry O'Quinn of "Lost" and Michael Imperioli of "The Sopranos."

It wouldn't be the first time Mr. Emerson has been honored for playing a hated character. In 2001, he won an Emmy as guest actor in a drama series for his performance as the murderous William Hinks on "The Practice." "The award for my category came at the very end of the evening" at the Creative Arts Emmys, he said, "and I was sitting there getting glassy-eyed and beside myself with nerves."

"Then they made an announcement during the commercial break that they were going to be cutting off acceptance speeches twice as quickly as they had done earlier in the show because they were running behind," he said. "I had a little something prepared to say running in my head, and it was now twice as long as the time limit was going to be. So I was sitting there barely paying attention, trying to edit my remarks, God forbid I should actually have to climb the stairs and make them. Of course, I was busy processing that when my name was actually read, and I wasn't sure I'd properly heard it. I looked



Michael Emerson

around and my wife was staring at me and said, 'You better go up there.'

"Climbing those six steps or whatever they were was one of the hardest things I ever did, because I was just so conscious of the chances of embarrassment if I stumbled or fell down or passing out. But I got up there ... and I said something, but I was relieved there was a statuesque blond lady there to steer me off the stage or I might have wandered around up there for hours," he said.

Ironically, winning that Emmy isn't all happy thoughts for him. "My memories are forever tied up with 9/11, because we flew home to New York and I had the Emmy in my lap—which will never happen again in the history of aviation. It was the night of Sept. 10, 2001," said Mr. Emerson. "We just left the bags in the living room and fell asleep, only to be woken by the phone the next morning with friends calling to say, 'Turn on

the television.' That colored everything. That whole fall season of 2001, it's like I sort of forgot that I had won this thing. You just stop thinking about the concerns of your career. Your little victory just didn't seem worth discussing. It was a unique season, one that I'll never forget."

On July 19, when this year's Primetime Emmy nominations were revealed, he wasn't paying attention. "I had forgotten the date. My wife and I had just returned from Barcelona the night before, and ... it just sort of slipped my mind," said Mr. Emerson. When his agent called with the news, "There was much jubilation around the apartment."

Masi Oka, a first-time Emmy nominee for "Heroes," also was overjoyed to be selected. "I would have never guessed in my wildest dream that this would happen to me on my first major role and in the first year," said Mr. Oka. "It is such a unique role and I'm blessed to even be part of this great project. Above all, I'm really happy the show got nominated, and I am quite proud of that."

While Mr. Oka plays a beloved good guy on "Heroes," Mr. Emerson's role is darker. As on "The Practice," he gives Ben a creepy malevolence that belies his looks. "They are physically cast against type, and maybe that's the point of it; maybe what people respond to is the tension between the deeds and the package the deeds come in," said Mr. Emerson. "It's like a trope in our culture, isn't it, when people do heinous things and they interview the neighbors on the evening news and they say, 'I can't believe it; he was such a mild-mannered man. He seemed like such a nice, quiet person.' We should have learned long ago to worry about the nice, quiet ones."

Continued on Page 19

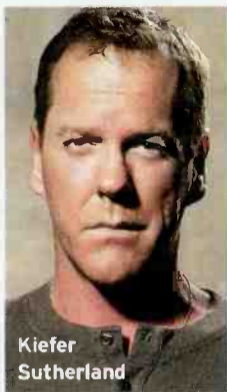
## ACTOR

Continued from Page 16

over into the cultural conversation. When comedians started to make jokes about 'Boston Legal,' Denny Crane, Alan Shore, there seemed to be something happening. Even if you don't watch a particular show, like 'ER,' everyone knows the references to it," he said.

For a show like "Boston Legal," the line between comedy and drama is often blurred. There's dark humor in even the most serious episodes. How do the creators keep things balanced? "All of us approach the characters and stories to make them as believable as possible. We don't necessarily try to go for jokes or try to be funny. If we make that character believable, it's all going to work," said Mr. D'Elia.

Believability is key to Mr. Spader's performance. "James' approach is exactly that. He really thinks about the believability of what Alan Shore does and says," Mr. D'Elia says. "Within the context of that, then he's abundantly aware of what might be funnier than some other thing, or in some cases, perhaps, to not go for the funny thing."



Kiefer Sutherland

That's the tricky part of doing the show and playing a character like Alan Shore. He is very dramatic and emotional at times, as well as quite funny. I find that James' approach is to bring real honesty and integrity to the core of the character, and everything comes from that center."

As much as believability is essential to the success of Mr. Spader's performance, there's another key to his playing Alan Shore. When asked by Playboy how he keeps the character fresh after the audience has gotten used to him, Mr. Spader said, "I'll tell you exactly how: You put him in a set of circumstances, you think about what he might do, and you do the opposite."

On Emmy night, the "Boston Legal" contingent will be out in full force. In addition to Mr. Spader's and Mr. D'Elia's nominations, the show was nominated for drama series and William Shatner is again nominated as supporting actor in a drama series.

"We still aren't over the euphoria of being nominated," said Mr. D'Elia. "We've learned to enjoy it all, every moment between now and September, because on Emmy night, who knows what's going to happen? But, yes, we're all planning to go." ■

## ACTRESS

Continued from Page 16

tive of her supporting cast, including J.K. Simmons, Jon Tenney, Anthony John Denison and Robert Gossett. "In some ways, they're the reason I enjoy so much going to work. ... They're all so brilliant and bring so much to the table," she said. "Everybody has something really special to give to the show, and after three years the writers are really writing to everyone's character in such a brilliant way that it's making it even more fun to watch. ... In some ways, I feel that we have the audience that we do because people have stuck with us and they've grown with us. We've grown and made everything richer and better."

"The Closer" is different from other police dramas, not only because of its reliance on character over plot, but for its ability to switch effortlessly from comical episodes to dramatic ones.

"It's all about the characters," said Ms. Sedgwick. "This show is character-driven, absolutely, 100 percent. While I think those other shows are fantastic, they are procedural-driven. They're sometimes about the character, but they're not driven by character. They're driven by the story."

Ms. Sedgwick enjoys the comic and serious shows equally, "although in some ways the dramatic ones are exciting. You pick up the script and go, 'This is going to be important.'"

"We did a really amazing one recently called 'Ruby,' about a little girl who was missing. They gave us extra time on TNT because they thought it was so special. But sometimes I pick up the comedy ones and I think, 'Can we pull this off?'"

"What I think is so amazing," she continued, "is that we're able to go there. And people like it and we're able to keep it grounded. The fact of



Mariska Hargitay

the matter is, if you talk to these cops, there are a lot of laughs. I mean, you got to laugh or your soul would just shrivel up."

Ms. Sedgwick submitted an episode called "Slippin'," in which Brenda and her squad investigate the murder of two USC students in an apparent gang shooting at the same time that Brenda's struggling to keep her mother, visiting from Atlanta, entertained.

"It was a really good episode, and it was more of a personal story than a gang drive-by," said Ms. Sedgwick. "My mom was in it, too, so there was drama and some comedy in it. I tried to submit something that had both. Next year, for sure, I'd submit 'Ruby.'"

If Ms. Sedgwick wins the Emmy this year, she'll be prepared. "I'll have to have something ready, because last year when I won the Golden Globe, it was the one time I really hadn't brought a speech," she said. "I forgot to thank my cast, and I forgot to thank my unforgettable crew. That can't happen again. I will for sure bring something written." ■

## [SPECIAL REPORT] EYE ON THE EMMYS



"The Comedy Central Roast of William Shatner" (Comedy Central)

## VARIETY SERIES; VARIETY SPECIAL; VARIETY PERFORMANCE

# Contenders Range From Class to Crass

Variety Emmys Include Awards, Roasts, Talk Shows, Much More

By Jarre Fees

Special to TelevisionWeek

For Comedy Central's Elizabeth Porter, deciding on what the roast should be comes after the holidays.

"Every Christmas, I know it's just around the corner and we have to decide who to roast this year," she said.

The senior VP of specials and talent is the network executive for "The Comedy Central Roast of William Shatner," the network's first special to be nominated for an Emmy.

"These roasts have been going on for over 10 years, but they've evolved into a huge production," she said. "The whole concept probably started years ago with the old Dean Martin roasts [at the Friars Club]. You'd see commercials for them on Saturday afternoons. But those were small, intimate affairs compared to this."

Earlier Comedy Central roastees have included Hugh Hefner, Jeff Foxworthy and Pamela Anderson, with each year's event growing in budget, production value and the number of guest roastees. But Ms. Porter felt it was a real coup to nab Captain Kirk.

"The beauty of Shatner is he's had a career of 40 or 50 years but he's still current, with 'Boston Legal,'" she said. "He generates multigenerational interest and has a good sense of humor about himself. It's a big thing to put yourself on the line like that, but he was game and gracious and funny. Everything he does, he does with a sense of humor. He's always in on the joke."

Although censorship isn't much of an issue at a Comedy Central roast, Ms. Porter admitted one of the



"The 79th Annual Academy Awards" (ABC)

concerns about roasting someone is whether a speaker will go too far in poking fun at the guest of honor.

"It's a real talent to roast somebody," she said. "We get all these comedians and you don't know how they'll do. But there were so many moments where you could feel the love right there with the roasting."

In contrast to the roast is the perennial elegance of nominee "The Kennedy Center Honors: A National Celebration of the Performing Arts," a George Stevens Jr. presentation for Kennedy Center TV and CBS. Hosted by Caroline Kennedy, December's 29th annual program feted Zubin Mehta, Smokey Robinson, Andrew Lloyd Webber, Dolly Parton and Steven Spielberg.

Other nominees are "A Tribute to James Taylor" ("Great Performances") from PBS, with Warner Music Group

in association with Thirteen/WNET New York; HBO's "Lewis Black: Red, White & Screwed" (Rick Mill Productions in association with HBO Entertainment); HBO's "Wanda Sykes: Sick and Tired" (Sykes Entertainment/Music Link Productions and Image Entertainment in association with HBO Entertainment); and "Tony Bennett: An American Classic," from RPM Productions and NBC.

For individual performance in a variety or music program, the only surprise might be the omission of Jay Leno, whose slot was taken by (pick one) Ellen DeGeneres, a beacon as host of "The 79th Annual Academy Awards" (ABC), or Tony Bennett, celebrating his 81st birthday with the likes of Barbra Streisand, Elton John, Stevie Wonder and k.d. lang in "Tony Bennett: An American Classic" (NBC). Other nominees are David Letterman ("Late Show With David Letterman," CBS) and Comedy Central's Stephen Colbert ("The Colbert Report") and Jon Stewart ("The Daily Show With Jon Stewart").

For variety, music or comedy series, it's the usual talk-show suspects: "Late Night With Conan O'Brien" (NBC), from Conaco and Broadway Video in association with Universal Media Studios; "Letterman" (CBS), from Worldwide Pants; "Real Time With Bill Maher" (HBO), produced by Kid Love Productions and Brad Grey TV in association with HBO Entertainment; "Colbert," from Central Productions with Busboy Productions and Sparina Productions; and "The Daily Show," produced by Central Productions and Hello Doggie. ■

## MINISERIES

# Three Top Productions Square Off

AMC's Western, PBS' British Import and USA's Best-Seller Adaptation Are in the Mix

By Hillary Atkin

Special to TelevisionWeek

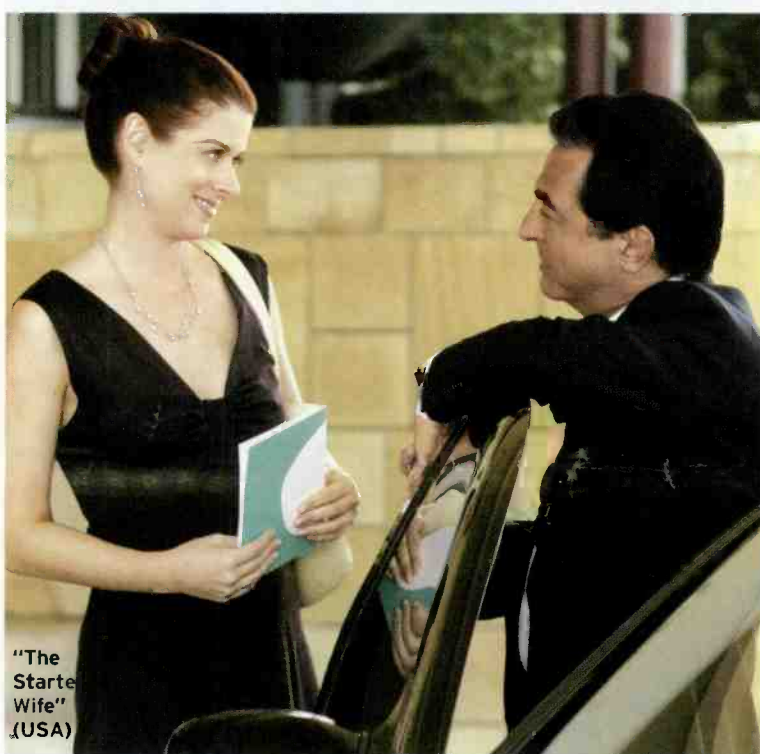
Only three productions are vying for the miniseries crown: AMC's "Broken Trail," which scored 16 Emmy nominations; PBS' highly regarded "Prime Suspect: The Final Act," with four nominations; and USA's "The Starter Wife," which racked up 10 nods.

Directed by Walter Hill, "Broken Trail" is set in 1898, and stars Robert Duvall as Prentice Ritter and Thomas Haden Church as his estranged nephew Tom Harte. They become the reluctant guardians of five abused and abandoned Chinese women who have been sold into sexual slavery. Ritter's and Harte's attempts to look after the women are complicated by their responsibility to deliver a herd of horses while evading a group of bitter rivals intent on kidnapping the women for their own purposes.

"We needed to differentiate ourselves with high-quality original programming. Looking at movie genres, we were really strong on Westerns, and that's how we arrived at 'Broken Trail,'" said Rob Sorcher, AMC's executive vice president of programming, packaging and production.

"The package of feature film talent that was attached made all of the difference," he added. "When you have Robert Duvall as the icon of the genre and the executive producer, and Walter Hill, one of a very few guys who knows what a Western is, how to film it, and what it means to a whole generation, we really made a movie we showed on television as opposed to a TV movie."

Audiences responded in force, making the two-night event the highest-rated cable miniseries in a decade.



"The Starter Wife" (USA)

For Mr. Duvall, whose summers on his uncle's ranch in Montana as a young man made a lifelong impact, the original story idea about a couple of cowboys who rescue some Chinese women came to him and writer Alan Geoffrion, his neighbor in Virginia's horse country.

"'Broken Trail' is a humanitarian thing that caught people's imagination," said Mr. Duvall. "It was one of the most difficult shoots in my life, yet one of the most wonderful projects. The special time we had and the memory of doing it is still with me two years later. The Western goes out and comes back in, but it never goes away. It is ours, and truly American."

"I think it starts with Robert

Duvall and then Walter Hill with his formidable resume," Mr. Church said. "What I liked about the adaptation [from two-hour feature script to four-hour miniseries] is they managed to keep it very lean, with very spartan storytelling."

"This was a passion project," Mr. Sorcher said. "It was about character and emotional story set against an epic Western landscape. You had the story of women in that time and what happened that was very emotional, powerful and moving, and which hadn't been seen in that way."

"The Starter Wife" tells the story of devoted spouse Molly Kagan, dumped suddenly by her studio executive husband and faced with



"Prime Suspect: The Final Act" (PBS)

piecing her life back together after the split. The six-hour miniseries was based on the 2005 novel by Gigi Levangie Grazer, who was an executive producer.

"This was probably the most exciting and satisfying work experience of my life," Ms. Levangie Grazer said. "I think the writers did a great job capturing the tone of the book."

"The writing was simultaneously really heartbreaking and spare and in the next scene would swing to really funny and large," said Debra Messing, who plays Ms. Kagan and is nominated for a lead actress Emmy. "It had a very biting sense of humor, a darkness to it that I found kind of delicious. I felt like the writers and the director, myself and the producers were all interested in making it complicated for ourselves in trying to dance from dramatic and simple to comedic and broad and back again, while keeping it in the same universe."

After 14 years on PBS, the Emmy-nominated British import "Prime Suspect" said goodbye last season with "The Final Act," the last hurrah for brilliant but troubled police inspector Jane Tennison, brought to life by the Emmy-nominated Helen Mirren.

The show has been critically acclaimed on both sides of the Atlantic, and Ms. Mirren created an indelible female character who is driven, difficult, highly regarded and excellent at doing her job.

The series is lauded for creating the blueprint by which most crime procedurals operate today, with compelling crime stories and behind-the-scenes detail.

"Helen Mirren may be the primordial effective detective, handling real issues with her squad," said Kevin McDonough, United Feature Syndicate's television critic. "She's a really messed-up character who's completely relatable." ■



Michael Imperioli

## SUPPORTING ACTOR

Continued from Page 17

On "Heroes," Hiro is very straightforward with his emotions. Much of his lovable character was in the script. "He's very appealing to me because of his enthusiasm. He is a kid at heart, a wide-eyed adventurer, who never gave up on his dreams," said Mr. Oka. "As we grow older, in societal pressures, we tend to let go a lot of our childhood dreams, but Hiro never did, and it came to fruition. He immediately embraced it with passion, optimism and goodness."

Mr. Emerson had no clue when he

was cast that Ben was the manipulative schemer he's become. "There really wasn't any back-story, and there was never really any discussion about the character or how he fit into the story. I dropped into it as a guest player, sort of by the seat of my pants," he said.

"But I guess they suspected I had some qualities that were right for it, and my instincts were good about the playing of the part, I think. In a case like that, the things you don't know, you don't try to tell. I tried to keep it in a neutral mode, and the ambiguity of my playing him turned out to be the

key to the character," he added.

Ben's future is as much a mystery as the rest of "Lost," and Mr. Emerson is as curious as viewers to see what will happen next. "I have no idea, of course. I hardly knew how the season ended," he said. "There were secret scenes in it—all that stuff between Jack and Kate—that we weren't privy to. Those were blank pages in my script. I had to watch the broadcast finale to see how the show ended."

Is it possible that we'll find out it was Ben in the coffin in "Lost's" finale? "I don't know. I thought maybe it's John Locke, because as it stands now, Locke is sort of an out-

sider, but I don't know. That's a tremendous mystery and I haven't a clue. It's someone that Jack cares for but no one else does. Who could it be? The show is loaded with those subliminal clues and puzzle pieces, and none of it's accidental. Those guys are brilliant. I can't wait to see the puzzle pieces come together."

Like "Lost," "Heroes" is putting puzzle pieces together and enthralling viewers. The comic-book series was an immediate hit for NBC, and "to have it nominated in our freshman year is quite a coup," said Mr. Oka. "It's fantastic and a testament to the entire writing staff, cast and crew." ■

[SPECIAL REPORT]  
EYE ON THE  
EMMYS



"Broken Trail" (AMC)

## ACTRESS, MINISERIES OR MOVIE

# Stretching Talent to Suit Roles

*Playing for Laughs or for Sympathy, Women Show Wide Range in Long-Forms*

By Hillary Atkin

Special to TelevisionWeek

After "Will & Grace" finished its eight-year run as one of TV's most lauded comedies, Debra Messing did not plan to go straight back to work. But when the script for "The Starter Wife" landed in her lap, she threw herself into a character very different from Grace Adler.

Ms. Messing was nominated for an Emmy five times for that role, and won as comedy actress in 2003. Now she's up for lead actress in a miniseries or movie for playing rejected wife Molly Kagan in the USA miniseries that first aired in late spring.

"I had a hard time keying into this character and this world. It was so far away from myself," Ms. Messing said. "I'm not a starter wife and I don't live the life of privilege the way it was dramatized in the miniseries.

"However, I realized there was a parallel [between] being a recognized actress and a starter wife, with different rules and expectations placed upon us, and higher standards of beauty and thinness and glossiness and glamour that seem to be part of the job of being an actor.

"Starter wives have that burden as well, to support their husbands and have the manicure and beautiful hair and Chanel jackets and [involvement in] charity events.

But they don't get paid for it and they're much more vulnerable, and that's how I keyed into it at first."

"The Starter Wife" was based on the novel by Gigi Levangie Grazer, who said, "Perhaps the most important thing was to have Debra. I could not

have picked a finer actress and am thrilled at how it turned out."

Queen Latifah earned her first Emmy nomination for a very different type of woman, Ana in HBO's "Life Support." The character is based on writer-director Nelson George's sister, who had committed petty crimes, became a crack addict and become infected with the HIV virus as a young adult. She went through a remarkable transformation inspired by the diagnosis, which gave her a sense of purpose in her life.

"Latifah emotionally committed to do very difficult work," said Mr. George. "She got so embedded in this



Debra Messing

character and really dug into her. Two of her close friends had died of HIV, and that experience drove her to want to do this. She even canceled a concert tour [to do it]. I think her performance is heartbreaking and inspiring at the same time.

"I said to her, 'Your character is not the nicest person, and is sometimes duplicitous.' That complexity in life and realism embedded in fact comes from Latifah's willingness to be naked. It's so emotionally vulnerable and so startling where she comes from. I can't think of another performance that matches it. It's all there on the screen."

In Lifetime's "What If God Were the Sun?" Gena Rowlands plays a terminally ill patient whose vitality and unswerving faith helps a nurse cope with her father's unexpected death.

Ms. Rowlands has won three Emmys, for "Hysterical Blindness" (2003), "Face of a Stranger" (1992) and "The Betty Ford Story" (1987).

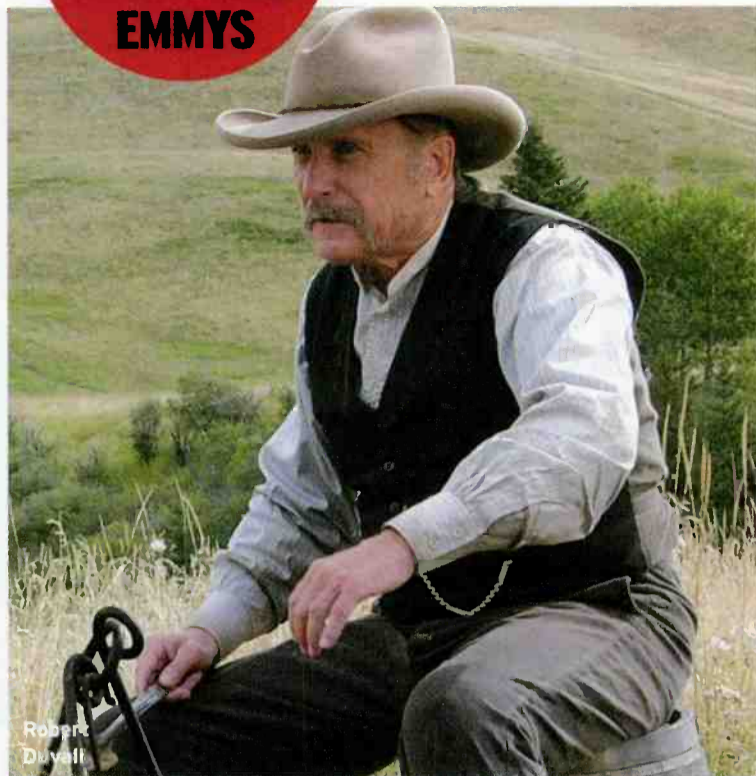
Mary-Louise Parker got two Emmy nominations this year, for her Showtime series "Weeds" and for playing Zenia Arden in the Oxygen movie "The Robber Bride," based on the popular Margaret Atwood novel.

The character is a treacherous manipulator who steals what other people hold dear: a job, a husband and a child. The film begins with her mysterious death and works backward through her manipulative exploits.

Helen Mirren won an Emmy and a Golden Globe last year for HBO's "Elizabeth I" and then took home the Oscar for "The Queen." As the much less regal Jane Tennison in "Prime Suspect," she won an Emmy in 1996. With "The Final Chapter," she can punctuate the end of the series' 14-year run with another for her performance as the brilliant but troubled Tennison. ■

[SPECIAL REPORT]

## EYE ON THE EMMYS



Robert Duvall



Matthew Perry

## ACTOR, MINISERIES OR MOVIE

# Drawing Portraits From Real Life

*Actual Events, People Inform Actors' Performances in Telefilms*

By Hillary Atkin

Special to TelevisionWeek

The last time Robert Duvall was up for an Emmy Award for a televised Western was in 1989, as Augustus "Gus" McCrae in acclaimed miniseries "Lonesome Dove," for which he went on to win a Golden Globe Award.

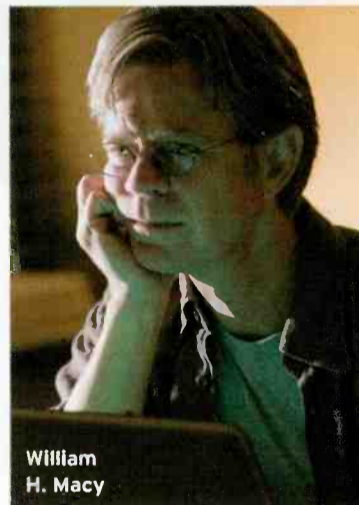
Now, Mr. Duvall is an Emmy contender again for playing another stoic cowboy, Prentice "Print" Ritter in "Broken Trail," the well-received AMC miniseries. As executive producer, Mr. Duvall was the driving force in bringing the story to the screen.

The actor prepped for the role for nearly a year, buying a quarter horse to ride in order to get into shape. "I ride only if I have an objective," said Mr. Duvall. "I wanted to make sure I was ready with a horse that was bomb-proof. I wanted to develop a good seat and practice drawing a weapon. All you need for a Western is a good hat and a good horse."

For the milieu of the cowboys in "Broken Trail," driving horses a great distance more than a century ago, Mr. Duvall said he was inspired by the history of a family he knows in Arthur, Neb., whose great-grandfather drove a herd of nearly 500 horses from Oregon to Nebraska.

Matthew Perry is Emmy-nominated for his lead performance in TNT's "The Ron Clark Story," which takes place in Harlem. The telefilm is based on the true story of a teacher from a small town who moves to New York and teaches economically deprived fifth-graders at a public school.

"The movie is about never giving up on yourself and meeting somebody in life that is just a hero," Mr. Perry said. "It's a story about one of the toughest schools in Harlem and a



William H. Macy

guy from North Carolina who came in and changed their view of themselves and life. Without being corny, it told a truly inspirational story.

"The most challenging part with [director] Randa [Haines] is if she saw any part of Chandler in 'Friends,' she would just stop the camera and stop me from falling into an old, sarcastic bent that just wasn't going to work," Mr. Perry said. "The challenge for me was to believe it was interesting if I didn't do all the stuff.

"The most fulfilling part is that I realized I could be sort of interesting being real and not resorting to old wink-at-the-camera tricks," he said.

Jim Broadbent already has a BAFTA TV Award for his performance as the title character in HBO's "Longford." The British actor earned his second Emmy nomination for playing an eccentric member of the House of Lords who is motivated by his Christian faith to befriend prisoners and read to them.

"It's a character study of someone

who does something so unpopular, a character that is very powerful and riveting," said Kevin McDonough, United Feature Syndicate's TV critic. "His performance is astounding because he's so unattractive and alienates his wife and daughter because of his obsession with helping a person who may or may not be a child murderer."

In the fourth installment of the Jesse Stone movie series on CBS, Tom Selleck is vying for an Emmy for reprising his role as a small-town police chief who reopens an old murder case while coping with his penchant for beautiful women and alcohol.

"He gave a solid performance," Mr. McDonough said. "He can still be a romantic lead, a cop of few words, and kind of an old-fashioned gentleman. It's a tough sort of acting, to go from being a sex symbol to where he is today, but Tom Selleck has accomplished it. He's a man's man."

William H. Macy, a six-time Emmy nominee and winner for 2003's "Door to Door," is up for playing two characters, Clyde Umney and Sam Landry, in TNT's "Nightmares & Dreamscapes: From the Stories of Stephen King." One is a figment of the other's imagination, a character in a book who comes to life from a different era.

"The idea of playing two roles is delicious—and two very distinct characters, and something that was going to be a hoot," Mr. Macy said. "We hired a guy who looks like me, Paul Gleason. He sort of doubled me, and I got to act with someone instead of with a blank screen."

To prepare, Mr. Macy said he watched noir films from the '30s with director Rob Bowman and imitated himself as the fast-talking announcer in "Seabiscuit" to play Clyde. ■

[SPECIAL REPORT]  
EYE ON THE  
EMMYSSUPPORTING ACTRESS AND  
ACTOR, MINISERIES OR MOVIEPlaying  
Cowboys  
and Indians*'Wounded Knee,' 'Broken Trail' Join  
'Starter Wife' Among Multiple Nominees*

By Hillary Aitkin

Special to TelevisionWeek

In HBO's "Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee," supporting actor nominee August Schellenberg plays legendary Sioux chief Sitting Bull—the iconic symbol of Native American Indian resistance—for the third time in his career.

He is competing for the Emmy against castmate Aidan Quinn, who portrays Sen. Henry Dawes; Thomas Haden Church in AMC's "Broken Trail"; Joe Mantegna in USA's "The Starter Wife"; and Edward Asner in "The Christmas Card" from Hallmark.

"I tried to bring as much dignity and honesty to the role as possible," said Mr. Schellenberg, a Canadian-born descendant of the Mohawk Nation. "He is still revered as a champion of his people, and as he says, he was the last chief to give up his rifle. He didn't want reservation life for his people and he fought it to the very end. I was very honored to be given the opportunity to portray Sitting Bull, and hopefully I did a respectable job. It was an absolute joy for me."

When Mr. Quinn was a high school student in Rockford, Ill., he did a book report on Dee Brown's 1970 tome about Wounded Knee that gave him the credits he needed to graduate. Years later, he did research for his role by studying Sen. Dawes' diaries and speeches. He even unearthed part of an unpublished biography of the legislator, the author of a law authorizing the government to survey tribal land and divide it into individual allotments, which presaged the Wounded Knee massacre.



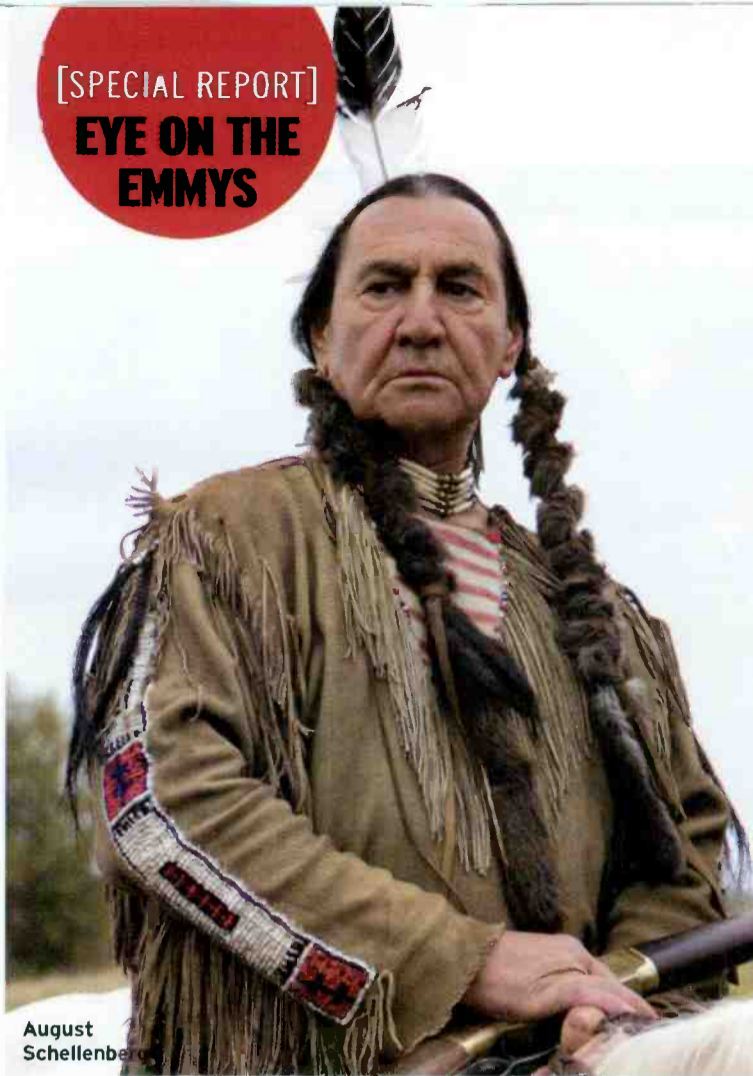
Anna Paquin

"What I liked was he wasn't black-and-white," said Mr. Quinn. "He did start out well-intentioned but got swept up in the flow of Manifest Destiny, with the power and inevitability. Even when he didn't like their customs, he believed the Indians still had rights. Without him as a buffer, there may have been several more Wounded Knees."

Although Thomas Haden Church was signing on at the time to be the villainous Sandman in "Spider-Man 3," as soon as he heard about a Western directed by Walter Hill and starring Robert Duvall, he wanted a part in "Broken Trail." He got the role of Tom Harte.

Mr. Church is an authentic Westerner who grew up in rural Texas, where his great-grandfather was a federal marshal in the early 1900s; he now lives on a ranch there.

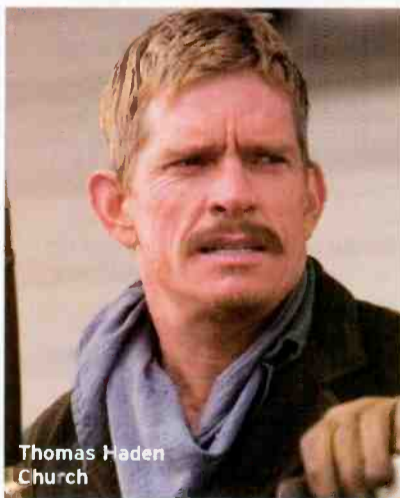
"I had to tighten up in the



August Schellenberg



Aidan Quinn



Thomas Haden Church

saddle and grow a mustache," Mr. Church said. "It was not negotiable. If you want to have credibility in a Western, you must have a mustache. Razors were few and far between at the time, and mirrors even scarcer. They actually called them nose and chin whiskers. It's the first time I grew a mustache. My mom thought it was fake."

With nominee Edward Asner playing Luke Spelman, Hallmark's "The Christmas Card" touched audience heartstrings.

"Ed Asner gives a little bite to his role as the owner of a family lumber company who takes in a soldier who saves his life and who ulti-

mately falls for his daughter," said Kate O'Hare, TV columnist for Tribune Media Services/Zap2it. "Mr. Asner makes use of his unique, gruff persona and comedy timing to lift it above the ordinary."

If "The Starter Wife" had gone strictly by the book upon which it was based, Joe Mantegna's character, studio chief Lou Manahan, would have been killed off early. In the USA production, however, he lived through the run of the miniseries as a love interest for the lead character.

"He was a wonderfully surprising, sexy and viable romantic option for Molly Kagan," said Debra Messing, referring to her character. "I loved that Joe was able to humanize Lou, someone who was privileged and powerful."

Also nominated from "The Starter Wife": Judy Davis for her supporting role as one of Ms. Kagan's most supportive friends, even as she battles the bottle.

"Judy Davis is a genius and she's a powerhouse," Ms. Messing said. "She's able to be funny and simultaneously be rooted in realism, which is not an easy task."

For Anna Paquin, appearing in a period piece, as Elaine Goodale in "Wounded Knee," felt like familiar ground after the films "The Piano" and "Jane Eyre."

"Getting to play a woman in that period of time who was strong and independent was very exciting, and everything about it was appealing," Ms. Paquin said. "I was one of the few people who had to speak Lakota, and I was obsessive about doing it right."

Toni Collette also had to learn another

language for her role in HBO's "Tsunami: The Aftermath." Part of her dialogue was in Thai as she played a rescue worker helping victims of the natural disaster.

Greta Scacchi received her second Emmy nomination for portraying prostitute Nola Johns in "Broken Trail." Ms. Scacchi took home the Emmy in 1996 for her role in "Rasputin."

Samantha Morton, who played the controversial role of child killer Myra Hindley in HBO's "Longford," has defended it as her duty as a performer to raise issues people are afraid to look at. It's Ms. Morton's first Emmy nod. ■

## SUPPORTING ACTRESS

Continued from Page 17

anything that'll take care of her. She was always like that. Whether it was going after a husband or money, Janice needs to be taken care of. She's looking out for herself first."

Family, as much as the mob, is at the heart of "The Sopranos." "Janice is definitely her mother's daughter. Tony has it in him, too. It is all about family," said Ms. Turturro. "Janice is a real survivor, but I think with her, her conniving and her manipulations

always come from survival tactics. She never did anything thinking that she was going to connive or manipulate someone. She always did it thinking, 'Oh, poor me. How will I survive?'"

Looking back at the final season of "The Sopranos," one episode stands out for Ms. Turturro. "I really loved the Monopoly scene," she said. "I think everyone related to it. Who hasn't played Monopoly and had a fight? I thought it was really well

done, with just everyone being themselves, getting a little drunk and hanging out. Not all games end in fistfights like that, but fights, yes. People get like that, accusing each other of cheating. It was very competitive and very funny."

As for the controversial ending to the series, Ms. Turturro supports creator David Chase's choice. "I loved the way David ended it. I was just like everybody else when I was watching it. I thought the TV had gone out," she said. "Then I wondered, what does it mean? I think it was brilliant and intelligent and bold. He just con-

tinued wowing people.

"A lot of people didn't understand it. I don't know if I understood it at first, but now I do. I think it's open to interpretation. That's what he did with the whole show. It was open to choices and things didn't always end," she said. "So many people just want an answer, but there aren't always answers. It could go in many different ways."

For Ms. Turturro, family continues to be a theme as she makes her plans to attend the Emmys. "I'm going to bring my brother to the Emmys," she said. "I'm excited about

that, and he'll be really happy and have a good time."

And if "The Sopranos" were to return as a film, which has been rumored, she's ready to play Janice one more time. "I'd come back, sure. She's not dead. It would be great. I think if David has a great idea, then maybe he would get us together for a film," she said. "It's all about the right material. That's why the show worked. He ended it because he wanted to end it on a good note, when it was still strong. It would be really great to be back with everybody and to do a film, but who knows?" ■



"Inside the Twin Towers"  
(Discovery Channel)

## MADE-FOR-TELEVISION MOVIE

# 'Knee' Bent on Historical Saga

*In TV Movie Category, True Stories Offer Strong Competition*

By Jarre Fees  
*Special to TelevisionWeek*

The adaptation of Dee Brown's 36-year-old book about the defeat of General Custer and the ensuing decimation of the Sioux nation garnered 17 nominations for HBO, leading all contenders in this year's Emmy race and tying the record for a made-for-television movie, set in 1977 by ABC's "Eleanor and Franklin."

Going up against "Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee" for the TV movie trophy is another look at American history, albeit a more recent glimpse.

"Inside the Twin Towers" is a foray into new territory for Discovery Channel: a dramatized version of what took place Sept. 11, 2001, at the World Trade Center, interspersed with actual footage and interviews with survivors and family members of those who died in the attack.

"There are a lot of ways to tell a story, and we were committed to telling this one," said Bill Howard, executive producer for Discovery Channel. "We wanted to take a serious look at what happened on Sept. 11, and we said, 'Do we want to do it as a straight documentary, or do we want to try and bring these characters to life?'"

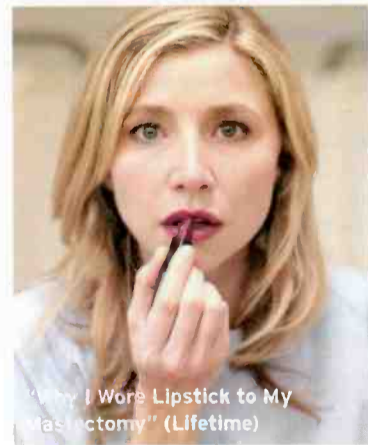
Once the producers had made the decision to go for the dramatization, writer Andrew Bampffield started interviewing survivors. Director Richard Dale took the interviews and a crew of designers and carpenters and reconstructed what the insides of the buildings looked like on Sept. 11.

"We wanted to tell this in a sensitive way and from the people who were really there," Mr. Howard said. "Then we aired it without a tremendous amount of promotion and the audience just found it. ... We got great ratings from it. It was a risky thing for Discovery to do."

"This is kind of a defining moment at the beginning of this

century," he added. "Everyone has their own overview of what happened that day. We didn't want to do [the film] just to be provocative. Before it premiered, we showed it to all the families in New York [who had been involved in the project]. When the film ended, everyone sat there for a good four minutes, and you don't know—are they unhappy? And then people just got up and came over and said, 'That's how it was. That's just how it was that day.'"

If Discovery set out to explore new terrain, Lifetime elected to do what it



"Why I Wore Lipstick to My Mastectomy" (Lifetime)

does best: tell stories about women.

"Why I Wore Lipstick to My Mastectomy" is adapted from the memoir by Geralyn Lucas, who was diagnosed with breast cancer at 27 and now is Lifetime's director of public affairs, working on the network's breast cancer awareness program.

"We found the book by pure good fortune," said Linda Kent, who executive produced the film with partner Jack Grossbart. "We took one look at it and said this is a movie if there ever was one. We assumed that Lifetime was just waiting for the day when someone would walk in and want to do this book."

"She had survived. She had chil-

dren. Their response was immediate, and not just because it was Geralyn, who did not work at the network when she wrote the book," she added.

If Ms. Kent was drawn to the book primarily because of its subject matter, Mr. Grossbart was just as attracted by the humor and spunk.

That humor is translated onto the screen via Nancey Silvers' script, including a scene in which Ms. Lucas—played by "Scrubs" Sarah Chalke—tries on a bra after her mastectomy and sees in a dressing room mirror just how lopsided she is now. Not everyone would find that funny, but there's no denying the spunk.

"So many other movies about breast cancer, they're so intense. Geralyn kept a sense of humor. Her courage came through the humor," said Mr. Grossbart.

And then there's the matter of the lipstick: Ms. Lucas considered it war paint in the battle of her life.

To fit the film into Ms. Chalke's "Scrubs" schedule, yet finish it in time to be the centerpiece of Lifetime's Breast Cancer Awareness Month, meant they had only 16 days to prep.

"That was the toughest part," Mr. Grossbart said. "We knew the picture was going to air in October. When Sarah said yes, the director [Peter Werner] jumped on a plane to Toronto that night. Then for insurance purposes—in case the shoot went over schedule—we had to have five business days between our shoot and the start of 'Scrubs.' So we had to convert to six-day weeks in order to get it all done in time."

Rounding out the nominees are HBO's "Longford," about the British earl who befriended, to his grief, accused child killer Myra Hindley during her trial for murder in the 1960s; and TNT's "The Ron Clark Story," about a white Southerner who moved to New York to teach inner-city kids. ■

## COMMERCIAL

# Production Values at a Premium

*Great Look Helps to Distinguish Nominees in Field That Attracted 120-Plus Entries*

By Jarre Fees  
*Special to TelevisionWeek*

"Why do you insist on treating me like an adult?" the teenage girl screeches at her mother in the Emmy-nominated commercial "Battle" for Cingular's Go Phone. "Because you insist on acting like one!" her mother retorts. "You're getting this new phone!"

This Cingular (now AT&T) alternate universe is the brainchild of BBDO New York, which pulled in three of the seven Emmy nominations for commercial. (Normally there are five nominations, but there was a tie this year.)

BBDO isn't the only agency or production company churning out creative spots.

MJZ Production Company pulled down two nominations—one for "Snowball" (Fallon Ad Agency, for Travelers) and the second for "Singing Cowboy" (Arnold/Crispin Porter + Bogusky, for Truth.com).

"Snowball" shows an accumulating pile of debris that grows to include a motorcycle, a Jeep Cherokee and a bride and groom, zeroing in on a hapless guy moving down the streets of San Francisco. Peter Jackson's company Weta Digital, which did the special effects for his "Lord of the Rings" trilogy and "King Kong," provides the visuals.

Michael L. Faulkner and Rick Fishbein, governors of the commercials division of the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences, were quick to note the high production values in this year's crop of nominees. And high production values tend to be expensive.

"The per-second production value on a TV commercial is the most expensive media on the television or film screen in today's world," Mr. Fishbein said.

Even with today's expanding markets and the ongoing debate as to how commercial viewership should be measured, "Commercials are still an important part of the television industry," Mr. Faulkner said, "because, in fact, that's still what supports their business."

This year's nominees include the usual clever ads for Coke and Pepsi, but not all the spots are aimed at selling phones or soft drinks. "Jar," also masterminded by BBDO, is about GE's attempts to harness wind power for energy.

"Singing Cowboy" is a disturbing public service announcement—



Cingular's "Battle"



GE's "Jar"



Pepsi's "Pinball"

maybe it's only disturbing for anyone who has ever smoked—that shows a cowboy, accompanied by a guitarist and a couple of horses, as he croons his tune: "You don't always die from tobacco; sometimes you just lose a lung." The cowboy must use an artificial voice box to get his message across.

More than 120 applicants submitted commercials for this year's Emmy nominations. A few were disqualified because of air date or other constraints.

"We only give out one Primetime Emmy, so there's a real distinctiveness to it," Mr. Fishbein said. "Other categories, you've got more than one chance."

"And because there's only one, it's hard to win," Mr. Faulkner added. "You're competing against public service, small spots, everything. It makes the best and brightest apply."

Other nominees are "Animals" for American Express, produced by Hungry Man (Ogilvy & Mather, ad agency); "Happiness Factory" for Coca Cola, produced by Psyop (Wieden + Kennedy Amsterdam, ad agency); and "Pinball" for Pepsi, produced by Partizan Entertainment (BBDO New York). ■

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## Industry Opportunities

### Research Director

Washington's CW is seeking a Research Director. Candidate must be able to analyze audience trends and handle multiple tasks. Job includes summarizing daily LPM ratings, maintaining One Domain inventory, creating ratings estimates, and qualitative presentations. Minimum 3 years research experience in Broadcast TV/Cable, thorough knowledge of Nielsen, Scarborough, One Domain, Stellar, & PowerPoint. Email resume to cshenkan@tribune.com. EOE.

### Sales Traffic Coordinator

KTRK-TV, a Houston based ABC owned and operated television station, has an opening for a Sales Traffic Coordinator in their Traffic Department.

The ideal candidate will be a strong team player with television station experience, a working knowledge of all traffic functions including order entry, log preparation, program and break timing, commercial copy, maintaining commercial inventory, as well excellent communication skills for interaction with co-workers and other departments.

The individual must have an excellent work record, be detail-oriented, possess good arithmetic skills, and the ability to handle a high volume of detailed input and computer work particularly Microsoft Word, Excel and Powerpoint, with accuracy. Duties also include maintaining commercial inventory. This is an excellent opportunity to join a first-class station and live in a fun and affordable city.

Candidates must apply on-line at [www.disneycareers.com](http://www.disneycareers.com) by uploading a resume file. Please Reference Job ID: 106343 or 106344 on all materials submitted. No phone calls please. Equal Opportunity Employer M/F/V/D. Reporting Location - Houston, TX.

### Accounting Manager

KTRK-TV, an ABC owned station located in Houston, TX has an immediate opening for an ACCOUNTING MANAGER to be responsible for all monthly JE's, GL account review/reconciliation, expense analysis and preparation of the monthly financial statements. Assist in the preparation of forecasts, annual operating plan and budget. Supervise A/R, A/P and cash management. In addition, maintenance of capital projects, fixed assets and preparation of annual property taxes.

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### Programming Executive Producer

KTRK-TV, an ABC owned station located in Houston, TX is looking for a highly creative PROGRAMMING EXECUTIVE PRODUCER with a specialty in long-form content production. This position will work on a variety of projects as assigned by KTRK. Ideal candidates will possess long-form content producing television experience, outstanding writing and organizational skills, and the ability to work a flexible schedule. Must also possess the ability to build and maintain strong working relationships with all departments at the station as well as outside content suppliers and advertisers.

This is an excellent opportunity to join a first-class station and live in a fun and affordable city. Candidates must apply on-line at [www.disneycareers.com](http://www.disneycareers.com) by uploading a resume file. Reference Job ID: 106520. Send non-returnable vhs or dvd to the attention of Human Resources, KTRK-TV, 3310 Bissonnet, Houston, TX 77005 and include the job reference ID #106520. No phone calls please. Equal Opportunity Employer M/F/V/D.

### Internet/Digital Sales Account Executive

KTRK-TV seeks a self starter to assume the role of INTERNET/DIGITAL SALES ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE for our fast paced sales staff. Two to three years experience in Internet Sales is preferred. This position will be responsible for developing new business and partnership opportunities, including selling and execution of internet and digital projects, promotions, sponsorships and packages. The position requires a proven track record in sales/new business development, with experience in advertising agency, internet agency, retail, vendor and direct client contact. Position requires daily interaction with, and support of Local and National sales teams.

Strong writing and presentation skills, and computer knowledge a must. Conversant in online advertising, search marketing and mobile marketing. Familiarity with online metrics and an ability to glean stats from a page full of analytics. We are seeking a self-starter with excellent telephone and people skills.

Candidates must apply on-line at [www.disneycareers.com](http://www.disneycareers.com) by uploading a resume file. Please Reference Job ID: 106521 on all materials submitted. No phone calls please. Equal Opportunity Employer M/F/V/D. Reporting Location - Houston, TX.

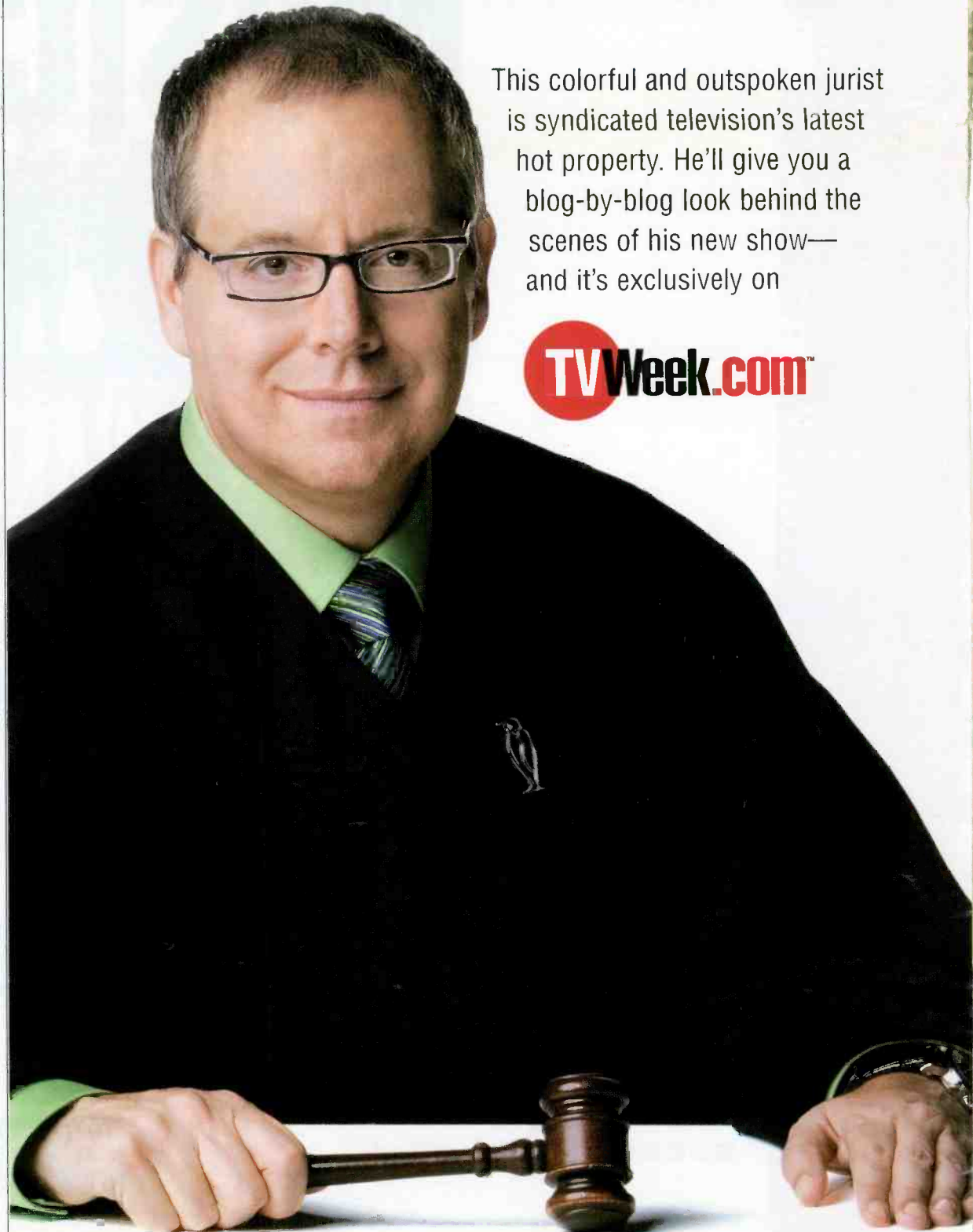
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**TVWeek.com™**





**GROWTH INDUSTRY** Matt Serra, trying on his UFC title belt after beating Georges St. Pierre, is part of one of the world's fastest-growing sports.

## UFC

Continued from Page 3

estimates place the value of the privately held company around \$1 billion, although others think it is closer to \$750 million.

Set to boost company revenue in 2008 will be the launch of UFC's first videogame since the beginning of the decade, which is expected to be released in the early part of the year.

With the success of the UFC, a slew of other MMA leagues have hit the circuit, including the International Fight League, which airs on MyNetwork TV in prime time (and boosted the network's ratings, particularly among men 18 to 49, a demographic that grew from a 0.2 to a 0.8 Nielsen Media Research rating in its first month), and BoDog fights.

However, the UFC has become known as the staple of the sport, particularly after acquiring rival Pride Fighting Championships earlier in the year. That acquisition set up the London PPV bout, which pits UFC heavyweight champion Quinton Jackson against Pride champion Dan Henderson in a title unification match.

The Sept. 22 PPV event in Anaheim will be headlined by a bout between Mr. Liddell and Keith Jardine.

"They had really good timing," said Deana Myers, senior analyst at research firm Kagan. "I think not only was the public tired of the WWE, but the UFC has good product that was able to capture audiences."

### Brand Evolution

She noted that a lot of work would have to be done before the UFC would be able to pull off worldwide PPV events, including pinning down international platforms.

One deal Mr. White says won't take long to complete is the UFC's programming agreement with HBO, noting, "It will happen." He said the HBO series of fights would be used to complement programming on Spike (which has exclusivity on the UFC on basic cable) and the PPV events.

"What we're doing is going to get guys started on 'The Ultimate Fighter,' where they can then progress to a show like 'UFC Fight Night' before landing on HBO. HBO would then give them the opportunity for a title shot on PPV," he said.

"The Ultimate Fighter" marked a

milestone for both the UFC and Spike, with airings of the series beating both baseball and National Basketball Association games on a regular basis. In fact, the three-hour finale of the fifth season in June won the night among men 18 to 34 and men 18 to 49 on broadcast and cable.

"The power of television has been simply incredible for this brand," said Brian J. Diamond, senior VP of sports and specials at Spike TV. "When we debuted 'The Ultimate Fighter' in 2005, we were able to bring in not only hard-core fans but casual sports fans as well as fans of reality. The whole sport kind of took off from there, and it's been a fantastic relationship for both parties."

Mr. Diamond noted that the channel is in talks to extend its agreement with the UFC, which expires in 2008, and said there have been internal discussions to expand Spike's UFC programming—which can vary from five to seven events depending on the month—in new ways.

The launch of syndicated series "UFCWired" from Trifecta Entertainment this fall marks the league's first foray into broadcast television. The series is currently cleared in more than 85 percent of the country, with many major-market stations carrying it in early access or prime time, according to Trifecta President Hank Cohen.

"Mixed martial arts are becoming such an important mainstream sport, not only to fans but to television, it makes sense the next evolution of the brand is to be seen in broadcast," Mr. Cohen said. "Right now they are putting the little things in the show that they really didn't have to do, and that speaks to the quality of the organization."

"UFCWired" will feature the best bouts from the history of the UFC as a measure to introduce the sport and its fighters to the mainstream public. The series will be hosted by former "Fear Factor" host Joe Rogan, who emcees UFC fare on pay-per-view.

"These are going to be fights that millions of people have never seen before," Mr. White said. "By learning about the sport as well as about our fighters, people are going to be interested in the next fight. I like to think that that's one way we can reintroduce ourselves to the public, who will surely learn to love this sport as much as I do." ■

## UPFRONT

Continued from Page 1

heating up again.

"Do the math. If the ratings are down and if the networks did indeed write more [upfront] business, that leaves less for calendar and scatter deals. So I think it would behoove everybody to get in there sooner than later," said Andy Donchin, head of national broadcast at Carat, who has started talking to cable networks on behalf of his calendar clients.

Several network executives said they've already begun talking with advertisers who buy on a calendar year. Usually, those talks don't begin until September. Last year negotiations weren't completed until January.

Mel Berning, executive VP for ad sales at A&E Television Networks, said he has received early calls from calendar upfront clients.

"Last year we were talking about it in the middle of the deep freeze," he said. "This year we're talking about it in the middle of the big heat."

Heidi Lobel, senior VP, ABC Daytime and SoapNet sales, said she has also begun early negotiations on calendar upfront deals.

About 20 midsize to large clients—including pharmaceutical companies Johnson & Johnson, AstraZeneca and Eli Lilly; retailers Ace Hardware, Marshall's, TJ Maxx and True Value; fast-food chains Boston Market, Denny's and Outback Steakhouse; and auto sector marketers Subaru and Cooper Tire—prefer to make their upfront cable buys on a calendar-year basis.

Network executives say the calendar upfront is about 10 to 15 percent of the size of broadcast year upfront for cable, which this year was estimated at \$7.6 billion, about 5 percent higher than the year before. For some networks, the calendar upfront accounts for about 5 percent of their annual revenue.

Johnson & Johnson, which contacted some cable networks last week, made news last year when it decided to delay making its upfront deals with the broadcasters until late August.

This year, market conditions are very different. Usually broadcast networks sell about 75 to 80 percent of their commercials in the upfront and cable networks sell about half.

## SCRIPPS EYES BIG FINISH

Scripps Networks may be having one of the slowest upfronts, but it may turn out to be one of the best.

Jon Steinlauf, senior VP of ad sales for Scripps, said the company, which runs cable channels including HGTV, Food Network, DIY, Fine Living and Great American Country, was done with most of the major agencies and was about three-quarters of the way to meeting its revenue goals.

When the upfront advertising market is completed, he expects the company to show a high single-digit to low double-digit increase in revenue and a low double-digit increase in pricing on a cost-per-thousand basis using the new commercial ratings.

Mr. Steinlauf said that the change to ratings based on commercial viewership rather than program audiences has highlighted many of the issues Scripps has been touting for years: engagement, attentiveness, trust and intent to purchase.

"It's put a big spotlight on the commercial break," he said. "Where can I communicate best with my customers during breaks?"

The change to commercial ratings has also persuaded many scatter advertisers to buy in the upfront to avoid what could be high prices and a shortage of quality ratings points once the season starts, he added.

One thing that hasn't changed: Scripps' late finish to upfront negotiations with buyers.

"They have their reason. It has to do with price," Mr. Steinlauf said. ■

—JON LAFAYETTE

With commercial ratings in effect, many networks seem to have sold an even bigger share of their ad time in the upfront to make up for having fewer ratings points to sell.

That makes some non-upfront clients nervous.

"I think they have concerns about inventory being readily available," said Shari Cohen, co-president of national broadcast at MindShare. "That's probably why there's an accelerated time frame for that

"Usually there's a lull," he said. "You get through the broadcast upfront and you have a scatter lull that gets real quiet. Throughout the entire upfront, the scatter pace has been strong and consistent. In all my years, I have not seen a stronger and healthier market."

Mr. D'Alba declined to comment on pricing.

The strength of the scatter market leading up to the broadcast upfront contributed to that market's relatively good performance this year. Marketers shifted money to the upfront to avoid having to pay the big price increases being commanded in the scatter market.

Despite that movement of money into the broadcast year upfront,

ad sales executives expect scatter to be strong again this year, partly because commercial ratings will mean fewer ratings points available for sale.

Some networks say upfront customers have approached them to try to increase the size of their buys—at upfront prices.

"Our answer was, we'll do that, but let's start at 30 to 40 percent over upfront pricing, because that's typically where we've been closing scatter and we think we'll be there again," said Bill Abbott, executive VP for ad sales at Hallmark Channel. ■



**"In all my years, I have not seen a stronger and healthier [upfront] market."**

Greg D'Alba, COO, CNN Advertising Sales

commitment."

Network executives also say some clients have shifted their upfront buys from calendar year to broadcast year.

Several broadcast and cable networks said they've started to sell fourth-quarter ad time on the scatter market. That's also happening earlier than usual.

Greg D'Alba, chief operating officer of CNN advertising sales, said the scatter market for news has been "blazing hot," with a record-breaking pace in the third quarter and a record-breaking pace into the fourth quarter.



**SUMMER STOCK** The CW has been running off "Hidden Palms."

## SUMMER

Continued from Page 4

NBC averaged 1.8 ratings and both were drained by 14 percent. ABC averaged a 1.6, was down 16 percent. The CW averaged 0.7, on par with The WB and down a tenth from UPN.

CBS generally stuck with repeats, which have less pull than in recent years, though it also struck out with a couple of attempts at original programming. The reality series "Pirate Master" walked the cancellation plank along with animated effort "Creature Comforts."

NBC had the highest-rated show of the summer, "America's Got Tal-

ent." "The Singing Bee" got off to an incredible start, but has been sinking in recent weeks. NBC's attempt at reviving the dating reality series "Age of Love" delivered modest returns.

ABC tried more than a half-dozen new shows for summer, including "Traveler" and "Masters of Science Fiction." The hidden-camera series "Just for Laughs" fared best, averaging a 2.8 rating in its strongest time period.

The CW played it quiet this summer, stocking its schedule with repeats and running off the drama "Hidden Palms." MyNetworkTV has averaged about a 0.4 rating with its post-telenova combo of ultimate fighting and movies. ■

# New Orleans' New TV-Station Norms

## First Post-Katrina Ratings Book Shows Changes

By Michele Greppi

For the first time since Hurricane Katrina slammed into New Orleans on Aug. 29, 2005, knocking many stations off the air, the TV community is once again doing business by the book—the ratings book.

For two years, advertising deals on the city's television stations have been based on anecdotal evidence, market history and back-and-forths between veteran buyers and sellers.

"Negotiations on cost per point were pretty loose," said Joann Habisreiter, media director for Zehnder Communications, a local ad-buying agency in New Orleans.

The July book of household data released by Nielsen Media Research, based on an all-new sample, is a profile of the new New Orleans as reshaped by Hurricane Katrina and its deadly aftermath.

While the return of overnight ratings effective July 5 was welcomed as another sign of recovery in the city, it was preceded by some apprehension about just what the data would show for individual stations—and what the numbers would reflect about their competitive standing.

WVUE-TV, the Belo-owned CBS affiliate that dominated the market pre-Katrina, remained on top. Looking back on the station's response to the storm and devastation that followed, President and General Manager Albert "Bud" Brown asked his staff: "Is there anything we would have done differently from a content standpoint or marketing standpoint?" The answer was "No," he said.

Emmis Communications-owned Fox affiliate WVUE-TV ranks No. 2 in early and late-evening news after bouncing back from flooding that destroyed its first-floor news studio, General Manager Vanessa Oubre said.

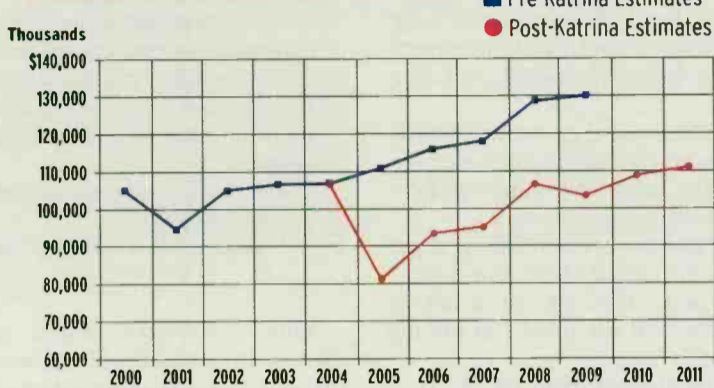
"We were probably the station hardest hit with the most destruction, she said. "Our entire first floor had to be rebuilt. If there's anything good that came out of it, we have a new facility."

As WVUE and other New Orleans stations have adjusted to life post-Katrina, the city they serve has taken on a different character. The relocation of some 250,000 residents to other states, other towns or into other people's homes and the loss of more than 100,000 TV households dropped the market from the 43rd-largest in the country in 2005 to the 56th-largest now.

The market lost a lot of revenue. What had been an \$85 million to \$90 million TV market before is now a \$65 million to \$70 million market, observers estimate.

Before Katrina, media research

## New Orleans Television Revenue Estimates Pre- and Post-Katrina



Source: BIA Financial Network, Inc.

firm BIA Financial Network had projected New Orleans TV station revenue would range from \$110 million to \$120 million. BIA now projects the market's revenues may regain 2005 levels in 2008, a year in which political advertising will boost all local TV fortunes. New Orleans may lose a bit of ground in 2009 and then begin a

**"Obviously the local population is less ... and the economy is also still recovering."**

Mark Fratrick, BIA vice president

slow rebuild again, BIA says.

"It is incredibly difficult to predict. Obviously the local population is less (and it's not clear how many will ultimately return) and the local economy is also still recovering," said BIA Vice President Mark Fratrick. The projections, he said, ultimately rest on "a gut feeling that the market will continue to grow along the same lines as before, but starting at a much lower base."

Because many poor residents could not afford to return to the Big Easy, the market is more upscale. Most of those who stayed or returned had to replace everything in their homes.

When they bought new TVs, they tended to buy high definition. Other signs of a different New Orleans television market: The growth rate since 2005 exceeds that for the country as a whole in number of homes with four or more TV sets, personal computers and Internet access. Additionally, there are more channel choices in 2007 than in 2005, which could contribute to fragmentation of ratings.

The July book offered a glimpse at the effects of all these changes and some that haven't even been quantified yet.

At Zehnder Communications, the colored pens came out last month when Nielsen delivered the num-

bers. Purple was used to mark programming that showed audience decreases compared with July 2005. Yellow indicated little or no change. Blue denoted increases.

"Most everything is purple," Ms. Habisreiter said, adding, "Most of the decreases are not monumental."

The potential explanations for the decreases range from new priorities for viewers (longer commutes, for example, leading to earlier bedtimes) to the possibility that a stormy July 2005 had helped inflate that month's viewing levels, thereby guaranteeing some viewing declines in hurricane-free July 2007.

Even with some erosion of viewership, WWL had 18 of the top 20 shows. Its noon newscast was the most-watched show of the month for the entire market, getting ratings that not many prime-time shows ever get in the nation's largest markets.

Sandwiched in between WWL's popular 5 p.m. and 6 p.m. newscasts, "The CBS Evening News With Katie Couric" in New Orleans proved immune to the ratings malaise that has it languishing in deep third place nationally. "Evening News" was the

## The New New Orleans

The characteristics of the television audience for New Orleans stations shifted after Hurricane Katrina, with signs pointing to a more affluent market.

Sample	2005	2007
Homes with four or more TV sets	25 percent	39 percent
Homes with computers	70 percent	76 percent
Homes with more than \$75,000 in income	19 percent	25 percent
Homes with some college education	30 percent	35 percent

Source: Nielsen Co.

sixth most-watched program in July in New Orleans. Indeed, WWL delivers the best "Evening News" ratings of any CBS affiliate in the country, attracting more than 20 percent of the viewers in New Orleans.

WWL's four-hour early-morning local news program has always been so strong that the station refused to carry CBS's morning news programs. The network's "The Early Show" finally got into the market earlier this



WVUE's newsroom post-renovation



WVUE's newsroom before renovation

year after Belo purchased former UPN affiliate WUPL-TV from CBS. On WUPL, now a MyNetworkTV affiliate, "Early" generally attracted fewer viewers than "The 700 Club" on CW-affiliated WNOL-TV.

WDSU-TV, the Hearst-Argyle NBC affiliate, traditionally the distant No. 2 station in the market, finds itself facing stronger competition from WVUE.

Ms. Habisreiter at Zehnder theorizes that WVUE formed a bond with some viewers by doing its newscasts against the backdrop of audible and visible signs of major repairs to the station's damaged building.

"It kind of mirrored what was

barely buy inventory," Ms. Habisreiter said.

Striking the deals required a mix of historical knowledge of the markets and comparisons with other cities.

"When you had a client who was savvy enough to want to sit down and talk to you about ratings and reach and impressions, you would either use the previous book, applicable time periods, or the national ratings, or markets of similar size or demographic makeup," she said. "You could use that a little bit in terms of negotiating your cost per point at a pre-Katrina level if you needed to."

The return of ratings finds WGNO-TV, the Tribune-owned ABC affiliate, still in deep fourth place. Sister station WNOL will have New Orleans-specific, program-specific data to work for the first time as it goes into The CW's second season in mid-September.

At WDSU, the two-year anniversary of Katrina will bring the return of NBC's "Tonight Show" to its regular start time of 10:35 p.m. A local live half-hour weeknightly program of news and information, "6 on Your Side," which was deemed helpful to local residents since the storm, will become a series of quarterly prime-time specials.

"We're extremely proud of the work we've done," said WDSU General Manager Joel Vilmenay, who says the lineup change is one "symbol of how far the city has come in two years."

Another sign: On Aug. 1, WDSU became the last local station to restore its HD signal to the market. Construction on the new transmitter

going on in viewers' lives that they were living in a house under construction," the media director said.

In the immediate aftermath of Katrina, advertising on the airwaves was driven by immediate needs of the community: construction and roofing, legal services and insurance, autos and other goods that had to be replaced.

"All of a sudden they were advertising to the point that you could



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