

Programing

Play-by-play on the fall TV schedule

Agency roundup by Bache runs down each night of the upcoming network race and picks ABC to come in first, CBS to finish a stronger second, and NBC to trail a poorer third

ABC will retain its position as the prime-time ratings leader next season, and CBS will close the gap between those two networks, while NBC will lose ground in third place. At least that is the opinion of advertising agency program executives consulted in Bache, Halsey Stuart Shields Inc.'s annual survey.

Last year's predictions proved reasonably accurate, with estimated and actual ratings for the three networks reading ABC 20.3/20.2; CBS 18.1/18.2; NBC 17.1/17.8. Reviewing the announced lineup of each network for next fall, the experts place ABC clearly out in front on Tuesday and Wednesday, capturing Thursday and Saturday by lesser margins. Sunday belongs to CBS, which will battle ABC for Friday and NBC for Monday, with NBC the likely winner of that contest.

If the agency people are correct in their estimates, the season will bode ill for NBC President Fred Silverman. With the industry looking on the additions to the network's schedule as the test of Silverman's widely touted programing genius, the agency executives feel that all the new NBC series will be failures, finishing in the bottom 20 of regular series. They'll be joined there by one of NBC's old standbys, *Disney*. CBS will have five programs in the basement, four premiering series, *Big Shamus*, *Little Shamus*; *Struck by Lightning*; *We're Cruisin'* and *Working Stiffs*, along with a show that's had several outings this year, *The Bad News Bears*. Two new ABC comedies are expected to fall by the wayside, *Out of the Blue* and *New Kind of Family*. The midseason replacements, *Angie* and *The Ropers* are the other ABC series predicted to hit the bottom 20.

On the bright side, three of ABC's new entries are expected to make the list of the top 20 series, and even achieve what Bache's Tony Hoffman calls "super hit" status, a better than 22 rating. They are *Man from Scotland Yard*, *Benson* and *The Associates*. None of the new ventures on CBS is expected to achieve that rank, although the network's *Trapper John, M.D.* will pass the "hit" mark of 20.0. The

only NBC regular seen as a candidate for the top 20 is *Little House on the Prairie*.

The survey also reveals an anticipation at the agencies of a continuing decline in HUT levels, leading to a 0.5% drop in predicted network ratings.

In analyzing the experts' guesses, Hoffman notes that there is divergence of opinion on new shows and those that have

changed time periods, with consensus on the fate of those returning at their old times. However, he asserts that even if the survey extremes were used as the basis of calculations, "the relative ranking of the three networks within each night would not change a great deal."

Because its predicted ratings average for six nights is only 16.6, NBC's fate is

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This chart represents Bache Halsey Stuart Shields Inc.'s pulling together of agency predictions on how the new network TV season will fare—show by show, network by network and night by night. Responses came from half of the top 25 agencies in network TV billings.

Network	Show	Share	HUT	Rating	Average	Nightly Rank
SUNDAY						
ABC	Out of the Blue	22	60	13.2		
	New Kind of Family	23	63	14.5		
	Mork & Mindy	39	65	25.4	20.6	2
	The Associates	33	67	22.1		
	Movies	35	64	22.4		
CBS	60 Minutes	42	61	25.6		
	Archie's Place	33	65	21.5		
	One Day at a Time	33	67	22.1	22.3	1
	Alice	33	67	22.1		
	The Jeffersons	30	67	20.1		
Trapper John M.D.	34	61	20.7			
NBC	Disney	26	61	15.9		
	Big Event	28	67	18.8	16.4	3
	Prime Time	20	60	12.0		
MONDAY						
ABC	240 Robert	24	66	15.8	19.1	3
	NFL Football	32	65	20.8		
CBS	White Shadow	29	66	19.1		
	M*A*S*H	36	68	24.5	20.6	2
	WKRP in Cincinnati	33	68	22.4		
	Lou Grant	31	62	19.2		
NBC	Little House on the Prairie	34	66	22.4	21.3	1
	Movie	32	65	20.8		
TUESDAY						
ABC	Happy Days	43	63	27.1		
	Man from Scotland Yard	37	66	24.4		
	Three's Company	42	67	28.1	23.6	1
	Taxi	36	66	23.8		
	Lazarus Syndrome	32	60	19.2		
CBS	We're Crusin'	22	65	14.2	16.1	3
	Movie	27	63	17.0		
NBC	Sheriff Lobo	24	65	15.6	17.4	2
	Movie	29	63	18.3		