

As I See It

Soap Operas... What's Their Magic?

By PAT COSTA

I racked up a first for myself this past week. I turned on a soap opera with bated breath, anxious to see what development the plot was going to take.

Lucky for me the woman on "Edge of Night" who appeared to be shot in the head by a sniper's bullet on Tuesday was shown on Wednesday to be hospitalized with merely a "superficial" shoulder wound.

I said lucky for me because if the consequences had been more drastic I might have been so titillated by the drama, as to have fallen prey to more of those unmeriting plays used so abundantly by the genre.

And that I do not want to happen. I know some women who are soap opera addicts. On the surface they may look like you and me. Under the dishpan hands and the dry-heat wrinkles around the eyes, common this time of year to Rochesterians, beat hearts racked with the passion of vicariously living the emotion-filled lives of their favorite soap opera characters.

One friend visiting me for lunch one day left half of her grilled cheese on her plate to run to the TV in the

living room to discover if today was the day the young intern would reveal to his lady patient that she was his mother. Absolute truth!

Another friend coaxed her husband into buying a color television because she was copying the decor of her favorite soap opera in her own living room. And how was she to know what the flowered sofa looked like in black and white?

My own mother is addicted in her own way to this kind of entertainment but I'm not sure it is particularly complimentary to the show in question. She lies down on the sofa every day when the program starts and sleeps for 30 minutes to wake much refreshed.

After watching both "Edge of Night" and "General Hospital" sporadically for the last couple of months I think I've guessed the not-so-secret ingredient utilized by this type of show.

It is the marital switcheroo. I have never seen so many romantic intrigues in such short space of time as I have watching these two shows.

The surprising thing, however, if my intermittent watching is any kind of accurate guide at all is that I've seen only one real villainess and a

couple of not-so-sweet other women types.

No, almost all the switching around of partners is done in a kind of innocence.

In "General Hospital," which I've not really followed long enough to know what happened way back when, there are a doctor and a nurse divorced over a misunderstanding and now taking up with new partners over more misunderstanding but still, according to the story line, in love with each other.

Another nurse whose husband-doctor walks out on her in scandal he fears will hurt her and whom she now believes dead is comforted by another doctor.

It would be interesting to know what kind of research was done by the writers for this particular show. Does this kind of programming, which sets up more daytime TV hours than any other type of show, really mirror the American way of life? Or does it merely represent American woman's dream fantasies, satisfying her own aspirations for extramarital involvement?

Whatever the case it does make us as a nation of viewers look just a little sick.

Do Teens Understand Drug Lyrics?

Catholic Press Features

New York—The frequent furors over "filthy" and other objectionable lyrics in some pop songs is "probably unnecessary," according to a team of psychologists, who have concluded that most teenagers do not understand the words.

The psychologists, John P. Robinson and Paul Hirsch, offered their conclusions in a recent issue of "Psychology Today," in which they reported the results of a study they made in two Michigan high schools.

"Adults tend to view teenagers as an undifferentiated horde, ears glued to transistors, chuckling gleefully at obscene lyrics designed to put one over on the Establishment," Robinson and Hirsch observed. "Adults reasonably assume that the teenagers who like rock songs also understand them."

Not so, reported the two psychologists after asking 770 teenagers in Detroit and Grand Rapids to "explain" the lyrics of several songs popular at the time of the study, including "Ode to Billie Joe" (about indifference to tragedy), "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds," "Incense and Peppermint" and "The Condition My Condition Was

In" (all three about drugs, with the key first letters in "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds" supposedly spelling LSD), "Heavy Music," "Gimme the Green Light" (about sex) and "Skip-a-Rope" (parental hypocrisy).

"Upper-middle-class teenagers were more likely to understand the meaning of the songs," said the psychologists. "Even so, the large majority of the students did not get the message of these hits. Only a third of them could write a half-way reasonable description."

Of the songs, only "Billie Joe" (telling how a girl's parents are coldly indifferent toward the news that a neighboring youth jumped off a bridge) made much sense to the teenagers.

Reported Robinson and Hirsch:

"But descriptions were either very literal ("Billie Joe jumps off a cliff"); or very vague ("What one says he knows is not always true; life is a mystery"), or a little muddled ("It's about a girl who falls off a bridge"). Occasionally they got the idea ("It's about life and how people are indifferent to a tragedy not concerning them")."

The psychologists also

asked the teenagers whether they would like more, fewer, or the same number of songs on several themes: drugs, school is dull, parents' lack of understanding, social problems, love affairs, freedom for teenagers, love and understanding.

"Most students wanted fewer songs about drugs," Robinson and Hirsch reported, "and more about love and understanding. On the others, they indicated that they would like just about what they had been getting."

The psychologist team also reported on how "anti-establishment" songs—which most teenagers reportedly bought for their psychedelic sound rather than their message—worked their way into "a respectable place in the Establishment."

"Drug, sex and anti-war

songs in the 1960s were first broadcast on underground FM stations in large cities. Middle-class teenagers and college students involved in various protest movements bought the records in huge numbers.

"Several groups became very popular on small record labels; a spate of imitations followed. The race was on. With one sniff of the sweet smell of success, every major record company began to acquire groups with the new psychedelic sound."

"Once they took this risk, they set about protecting their investments. So The Jefferson Airplane appears on Perry Como. Ed Sullivan tolerates at least one rock group a week. And Leonard Bernstein embraced the new rock in a TV special, the highest accolade of all."

Movies

Here is a list of motion pictures currently playing in Rochester area theaters and the ratings given them by the National Catholic Office of Motion Pictures.

Monroe—"Hello Dolly" (No Rating).

Panorama—"Goodbye, Mr. Chips" (General). G.

Paramount—"Dutch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid" (Adults). M.

Riviera—"John and Mary" (No Rating). R.

Regent—"The Arrangement" (No Rating). R.

Stoneridge—"On Her Majesty's Secret Service" (No Rating). M.

Studio 2—"I Am Curious (Yellow)" (Condemned). X.

Stutson—"The Believers" (No Rating). M.

Towne I—"Paint Your Wagon" (Adults). M.

Towne II—"Cactus Flower" (No Rating). M.

Waring—"101 Dalmatians" (General). G.

With the Catholic Office ratings, we include the ratings of the Motion Picture Association: G, general; M, mature audiences; R, restricted (persons under 16 admitted only when accompanied by parents or adult guardian); X, persons under 16 not admitted.

Cinema—"Midnight Cowboy" (Adults, with reservations).

Coronet—"Krakatoa, East of Java" (Adults and Adolescents). G.

Fine Arts—"Easy Rider" (Adults, with reservations). R.

Loew's—"Bob and Carol and Ted and Alice" (Objectionable). R.

Little—"A Dream of Kings" (Adults). R.

TV Movie Ratings

Ratings are those given by the former Legion of Decency, now the National Catholic Office for Motion Pictures, when films were originally shown. A-1: morally unobjectionable for general patronage; A-2: morally unobjectionable for adults and adolescents; A-3: morally unobjectionable for adults; A-4: morally unobjectionable for adults, with reservations; B: morally objectionable in part for adults; C: condemned. No Rating: film has not been reviewed by the National Catholic Office for Motion Pictures (formerly the Legion of Decency). N.B. Before A-3 classification was established, A-2 indicated morally unobjectionable for adults.

Movie listings supplied through the courtesy of TV Guide Magazine

Week of Fri., Jan. 2 thru Thurs., Jan. 8

Time	Channel	Movie	Rating
Friday, January 2			
10:30 a.m.	13	Dinosaur	A1
9:00 p.m.	10	The Law and Jake Wade	A-2
11:30 p.m.	13	Cash McCall	A3
Saturday, January 3			
1:30 p.m.	13	The FBI Story	A1
3:00 p.m.	8	The Count of Monte Cristo	No Rating
8:30 p.m.	21	Two-Way Stretch	A2
9:00 p.m.	8	Namu, the Killer Whale	A1
11:15 p.m.	13	Ironsides	B
11:30 p.m.	8	Night and the City	A2
11:30 p.m.	10	Doctor at Large	B
Sunday, January 4			
2:00 p.m.	13	Pepe	A1
4:30 p.m.	13	Koroshi	No Rating
9:00 p.m.	13	The Naked Prey	B
11:15 p.m.	13	Devil's Island	A2
11:25 p.m.	10	An Annapolis Story	A1
Monday, January 5			
10:30 a.m.	13	The Desert Song, Part I	B
9:00 p.m.	8	Ferry to Hong Kong	A2
11:30 p.m.	13	Nearly A Nasty Accident	A1
Tuesday, January 6			
10:30 a.m.	13	The Desert Song, Part II	B
9:00 p.m.	13	Black Water Gold	No Rating
11:30 p.m.	13	Five Golden Dragons	No Rating
Wednesday, January 7			
10:30 a.m.	13	Charley's Aunt	A1
9:00 p.m.	13	How I Spent My Summer Vacation	N.R.
11:30 p.m.	13	Everything But the Truth	A1
Thursday, January 8			
10:30 a.m.	13	Cash McCall, Part I	A3
9:00 p.m.	13	Bikini Beach	A3
11:30 p.m.	13	Babette Goes to War	A2

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'Muddy River': A Kind of Optimism

By "The Mission" **Creators of "Disco-Teach"**

Johnny Rivers, who sings "Muddy River," was one of the first pop discotheque singers. Now he has turned rock philosopher, and has linked himself with a profound tradition that is both modern and as ancient as one cares to consider it.

"Life is like a mighty river." While such a description might not be among the most intricate ever written, still it is a powerful picture of how many young people view their existence.

Most of these youths probably have never heard of the ancient philosopher who declared, "You cannot step twice into the same river, for fresh waters are ever flowing upon you."

Heraclitus, that pre-rock Johnny Rivers, is in fact comparing life to a river. Such an approach is interesting and says a lot both for the ancient philosopher and for modern youth. For the young person,

life is a process, a "rolling on and on forever."

"Muddy River" contains less than 30 different words of consequence, yet in the song is a profound concept of education. Anyone who accepts "Muddy River" knows that life itself is the source of education. "Life is like a mighty river . . . growing as we go along, channels deepen, minds become strong."

If life is a constant motion, it is not a mindless process. It is a movement which reacts to experience. At the turn of the century, the Mississippi River radically changed its course; it reacted to forces acting on it.

This is the way young people of today want to live. They want to be free to bowl along, to deepen their channels, to strengthen their minds (The mind, after all, is life's roadway. Another popular song notes that "thinking is the best way to travel."), to grow in experience as they react to life's pressures.

A dynamic view of life such as "Muddy River" takes has not always been accepted or embraced. For every person who wants to jump into the river of life, there are many who are content to wade in a stagnant pool. For every person who has pictured life as a free-flowing stream, there have been many who claim that life is a static lake which can be dammed or released only by the power of science and mechanics. For the past several generations, at least, the many have prevailed.

"Roll along, Muddy River, roll, your dirty water cannot taint your soul." Here is a truly inspired aspect of the young person's way of life. If, in the past, many people insisted on certainty, today there is no such insistence on the part of youth.

Speaking for a way of life, "Muddy River" recognizes that is a complex, oftentimes contradictory whole. The song admits that if you insist—as you must—on churning the waters, you're going to stir up a goodly amount of scum. But any person with a determination can remain untainted.

He will become dirty and soiled, certainly; anyone involved with life must expect that, although few people actually do expect it. (Perhaps that says something about their involvement.) But that dirt and soil can be washed out, while a taint is nothing less than an irreparable sign of decay. "Muddy River" reflects a basic characteristic of the thoughtful young person: a kind of fatalistic optimism. (Catholic Press Features)

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When life has its uncertainties There's a place I'd like to be, Waiting for the sun at dawn, Listening to the river's song.

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Lectures Slated At Holy Name

Dr. Douglas Hyde, a visiting professor at St. Bernard's Seminary and world-renowned Christian activist, will open a series of four lectures at 7:30 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 11, in Holy Name Church hall.

It will be the second winter lecture series to be sponsored by the Adult Education Committee of the parish. Other speakers are listed for the remaining meetings, slated Jan. 18 and 25 and Feb. 2.

The committee announced that the lectures will examine how Christianity fits into today's secular society.

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22 Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, 23 Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. 24 Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: 25 And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS.

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Unity Lane In Baptism.

Edinburgh, Scotland (NC)—The Catholic Church and the Episcopal Church in Scotland have agreed to honor each other's baptism rite and to work out a common rite to be used by both.

Father James Quinn, S.J., of Edinburgh, a consultant for the Vatican Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, described the joint report on baptism as "an ecumenical landmark of wide importance. The report will have an impact beyond the two churches immediately concerned."

The Very Rev. Provost A.I.M. Haggart of the Episcopal Church said: "We found ourselves talking the same language, with no emotional

Chicago (RNS)—Father William C. Cunningham, S.J., has been told not to wear his Roman collar the next time he appears in court.

The instruction was issued by U.S. District Court Judge Edwin A. Robinson when he told the Jesuit priest to wear secular clothes and not clerical garments will appearing as an attorney in court.

Father Cunningham, assistant professor of constitutional law at Loyola University here, told the judge that he would look up the law on the matter.

The priest is one of the lawyers defending anti-war demonstrators charged with burn-

Wear Secular Jesuit Lawyer

'Minister-in-

The Rev. Buckner Coe, United Church of Christ III, has returned to his School, for a year as a Yale program brings out the field in contact with parish work to study and with folded hands, discuss as an advocate of open "the minister as politician with his son, Andy, a senior varsity football team

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