

As I See It  
'Odd Couple'  
Does It Again

By Pat Costa



In a continuing look at the new television season, it seems to be abundantly apparent that the entire schedule is heavy with situation comedies.

In a quick count, excluding "Headmaster" which CBS terms a sit com but whose premiere show indicated it was anything but, I tallied 26 of them for the week-in, week-out programming.

The Mary Tyler Moore Show, rated here last week as possibly the brightest of the new comedies, will have to move over and share the honors with the Neil Simon effort, "The Odd Couple."

Starring Tony Randall and Jack Klugman, the first show utilized most of the antics of the play and movie as well as the original Coo-Coo Pigeon sisters played by Monica Evans and Carole Shelley.

Randall and Klugman are at least as effective as Jack Lemmon and Walter Matthau, probably the best known of the various teams who have played the mismatched pair. Verdict: A situation comedy that actually generated some real laughs.

Neil Simon's other show on ABC, "Barefoot in the Park" does not come off with as happy results. Nothing wrong with the cast. In fact Scoey Mitchell, Tracy Reed, Nipsey Russell and Thelma Carpenter, making up an all-negro cast, are particularly engaging.

But the timing is off, the situation in the first show failed

to progress to its logical conclusion and Russell's role had him laying it on too thickly.

Another disappointment is CBS' "Arnie", at least for this Herschel Bernardi fan.

Bernardi plays a dock foreman elevated to an executive position with all the attendant advantages and problems. Story development is plagued by a sloppy approach and dialogue is nothing to write home about. Saddest thing about this one is that with a little more care it could be a hit. Roger Bowen as the maniacal (about polo) boss adds a funny touch.

"Nancy" NBC's story about the daughter of the president who falls in love with a veterinarian to the chagrin of her chaperone (Celeste Holm) is neither as bad as its critics think nor as good as it might be.

So Celeste's whipsnapping cracks were not worthy of a wet linguini. So the star Renne Jarrett is a bit bubbly and her boyfriend, John Fink, too middle-westernly sincere. Presidents' daughters do fall in love with very ordinary fellows as witness the Johnson girls—and a nation watched them with bated breath.

Afraid, though, that will not happen to "Nancy."

ABC's "The Partridge Family" with Shirley Jones makes nice music when it's singing. The rest left something to be desired but it could pick up. Miss Jones is attractive as usual.

Bishop to Deliver  
2 Radio Messages

Bishop Hogan will deliver two radio talks directed to parishioners in the whole diocese at 7 o'clock on Saturday evenings, Oct. 17 and 31, over a seven-station network on the subjects of parish education and reception of the Sacraments.

The Bishop will use facilities of WSAY, Rochester installed in his study at 50 Chestnut St., and besides the Rochester station will be heard via WRLX, Auburn, WCLL-FM, Corning, on Channel 12 of Elmira TV cable facilities, Channel 6 in the Auburn cable area, Channel 5 in the Hornell area and Corning cable outlet 88.75.

This network regularly carries the Family Rosary for Peace seven nights each week at 7 p.m. Msgr. Joseph Cirrincione, pastor of St. Francis of Assisi Church, founder and director of the popular devotional program, announced that the Bishop will use the facilities twice monthly this Fall and winter.

He estimates that this network will make the Bishop's messages available to 80 percent of the homes of the diocese.

The first talk will cover the steps the diocese is taking to meet the school crisis of finances, enrollment and personnel. The Bishop will discuss the prospects for the strengthening of the parochial school system and the religious education programs for public schoolers.

The new guidelines for the reception of First Confession and First Holy Communion and the parental role in the sacramental

life of their children will be the theme of the second address.

Foliage  
Report

ADIRONDACK-CHAMPLAIN AREA:

Ausable Chasm — 20% color, bright reds and golds appearing; Blue Mountain Lake—peak color; Indian Lake (Prospect Mountain) — 30% color, dull red and yellow; Lake Placid—peak color, major colors red and gold; Lake Pleasant-Speculator — 60% red and yellow; Long Lake — 75% color change, brilliant red and yellow predominates; Old Forge—60% change, predominantly red and yellow; Saranac Lake—80% color, brilliance average to bright; Schroon Lake — about 50% change, red, gold and yellow predominating; Warren County — 10% color in northern area, scattered color in southern section; Whiteface Mountain — 50% color change.

FINGER LAKES

Penn Yan—10% color, yellow and orange, average brilliance.

HUDSON VALLEY

Sterling Forest—beginning to turn; Tarrytown — 90% 95% green.

SOUTHWEST GATEWAY

Allegheny State Park — 10% change, still mainly green; Olean — widely scattered dull yellows and reds.

Thursday, Oct. 8 (CBS)  
THE GREAT RACE (1965)

To be televised in two parts (on Thursday and Friday), this is a delightfully entertaining spoof of old-time movie-making — all the way from dressing the hero in white and the villain in black to a spectacular pie-throwing sequence at the film's end.

The great race of the title is a turn-of-the-century round-the-world auto race between Leslie Gallant (Tony Curtis) and Professor Fate (Jack Lemmon).

Dedicated by director Blake Edwards to Laurel and Hardy and filled with comical sight gags, broad characterizations and slapstick, this film was rated A-1 by NCOMP and recommended as superb family entertainment. The two-part showing will insure that you get to see all of the film's riotous 2½ hours. Commercial breaks would cause too much to be left out in a one-night showing.

Friday, Oct. 9 (CBS)  
THE GREAT RACE—Part 2  
(See Thursday, Oct. 8)

Saturday, Oct. 10 (NBC)  
DEATH OF A GUNFIGHTER  
(1969)

This is an off-beat Western that is neither for children nor for people who like to remember the Old West "the way it was."

Richard Widmark plays a competent sheriff who refuses to resign just because the city council finds him an embarrassment now that the town fathers want to entice industry to come into their "modern" town. He knows too much about the personal lives of the councilmen, so he can't be pressured to leave. Their solution: hire a gunman to kill him.

Lena Horne has a brief co-starring role as a madam who marries him just before he dies, and a milquetoast priest is afraid to protest the councilmen's treachery and later "repents" to a dying Widmark in the church.

The film got so-so reviews — probably because several directors had a hand in making it. NCOMP found it "only fitfully successful either as a Western or a social document" and rated it A-3, for adults.

Sunday, Oct. 11 (ABC)  
THOSE MAGNIFICENT MEN  
IN THEIR FLYING  
MACHINES (1965)

This comedy is subtitled, "How I Flew from London to Paris in 25 Hours and 11 Minutes," and is about a 1910 international air race.

It was praised almost unanimously by the critics as a disarming, charming and funny film, with Stuart Whitman as the American flier, Sarah Miles as the girl he wins, and Terry-Thomas as the comically-teachercous "Sir Percy" who will do just about anything to win the race.

The real "stars" of the film, however, are the vintage planes themselves, lovingly reconstructed and actually flown in the film. Try not to miss the opening prologue, an animated sketch by Ronald Searle on man's early attempts at flight.

NCOMP rated this A-1 and praised director Ken Annakin for "this colorful comedy spectacular," complete with "tongue-in-cheek script."

Monday, Oct. 12 (NBC)  
THE STORY OF A WOMAN  
(1970)

Extra-marital love is the topic of this film starring Robert Stack as a U.S. diplomat and

This is a summary and evaluation of prime-time films offered by the network to its affiliate stations. Check your local listings to ascertain if your channel is scheduling the network offering.

Bibi Andersson as a Swedish pianist who marries him. When he is transferred to Rome, she meets again her past lover (James Garentino) and she is immediately torn between her passion for the Italian and her new obligations as a wife and mother. She goes off with Garentino for an affair in which she hopes to rekindle their former love.

Originally released only this year, it was rated "Restricted" by the motion picture industry (for scenes that will likely be cut on TV) and B, morally objectionable in part for all, by NCOMP, which commented: "If it were not for the lush sound track, this film would be such an oppressive bore that the audience would leave before the end of the screen credits. . . . 'The Story of a Woman' could only be convincing drama for those who accept for real the shallow portraitures of 'true romance' magazines."

New Film Violence  
Need XX Rating?

New York — (CPF) — "If the Motion Picture Association of America rated films as strictly on violence as it does on sex, this one would be rated X," commented Variety on the R-rated Soldier Blue.

In The Saturday Review, critic Hollis Alpert questions the supposedly altruistic motives of film-makers like Sam Peckinpah and Ralph Nelson, who have made brutally explicit films — The Wild Bunch and Soldier Blue—to show the "real meaning" of violence in our history.

These are two reactions to a steadily increasing explicitness in screen violence that many regard as just as harmful—if not more so—than the increasing explicitness in screen sex.

Most of the criticism is currently being leveled at Soldier Blue, a film about a U.S. cavalry massacre of Cheyennes in 1864, an incident based on fact. NCOMP has condemned it for its violence.

Directed by Ralph Nelson, earlier responsible for such gentle films as Lilies of the Field and Charlie, Soldier Blue features vivid violence: scenes of impaled arms and heads, blood spurting from a soldier's heart, bullets piercing skulls, women being mutilated.

It has been claimed that depiction of such violence is necessary in order to make Americans fully ashamed of the alleged U.S. massacre at My Lai and of our treatment of the American Indian. But the critics, almost to a man, have questioned such motives.

"Never, for one moment, do such film-makers as Nelson and Peckinpah mention that a plethora of blood on the screen is commercially exploitable," complained Alpert in The Saturday Review's put-down of Soldier Blue. "Heavens no! They spend their \$3, \$4, and \$5-million budgets showing us truth and assisting us in changing our ways."

"The advertising arm of the industry is not so easily taken in by this kind of bull, however. One big ad for Soldier

Tuesday, Oct. 13 (NBC)  
THE NIGHT OF THE  
FOLLOWING DAY (1969)

This was an attempt by Marlon Brando to make an artsy-craftsy, surrealist kidnap picture, in which four Americans capture a wealthy American girl in Paris and then see their relationship disintegrate as they try to collect the ransom.

Practically all the critics agreed that the attempt failed and that what resulted was what NCOMP summarized as "a bloody exercise in sex and violence," with shoot-outs, double-crossing, sadism and even dope. (One of the gang members, Rita Moreno, is an addict.)

Many of the critics criticized the film, also, for a "cop-out" ending, in which it's revealed that the kidnap victim had dreamt the whole thing, a plot gimmick that one critic called "doubly an insult because it lets the film give us a dreary load of sex and violence and then takes it back, takes it all back."

NCOMP rated it A-3, for adults, but the movie industry rated it R, restricted.

Blue is headlined: THE MOST SAVAGE FILM IN HISTORY.

In America magazine, critic Moira Walsh also accused Nelson of using an approach in Soldier Blue that "seems to me to be both a fraud and an artistic mess and largely self-defeating."

"Basically," she said, "the film operates on the fallacy that if an atrocity story is atrocious enough it precludes the necessity for accuracy, historical perspective, sound dramatic construction, human insight or any other troublesome nuances."

"Nelson latches onto an actual incident, that was an aberration even by the unappetizing standards of the frontier, takes it out of context and falsifies details and tries to make it serve as a generalized indictment of our treatment of the Indians."

"Ironically, it is the Indians who are the chief victims of this approach. They are never portrayed as three-dimensional people whose fate we become really outraged over because we have become involved with them as human beings."

The National Catholic Office for Motion Pictures condemned Soldier Blue, calling it representative of "the sort of gross disservice American film-makers insist on rendering to their public and their flagging industry."

The violence in the film, said NCOMP, "leaves one shocked, as director Ralph Nelson intended, but shocked in a way that sickens, not shocked into an awareness of an ugly event in the past or into a sense of sorrow at how the Indians were abused . . ."

"The original good intentions, the honest desire to illuminate a painful segment of our history, to perhaps stir shame for the past in order to achieve justice in the present—all evaporate before the god Mammon. Soldier Blue wallows in what it ostensibly abhors, it becomes an example of precisely what it condemns: atrocity and dishonesty."

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