

PAT COSTA
As I
See It



Early in playwright Neil Simon's career he wrote a musical revue which bombed. Consequently he avoided the dramatic form of the sketch. Up until very recently, that is.

He should have been wary a little longer. A recent hour special featuring five sketches from the pen of the man who gave us "The Odd Couple," "Plaza Suite" and the "Out-of-Towners" ultimately bombed also.

Master of the one-liner, Simon piles one laugh upon another until, as in the case of "The Odd Couple," he has created a gem of a joke. But sometimes the laughs pile to form a wall that keeps rising, separating audience and actors. It happened with the movie, "The Out-of-Towners," the frenzy and frantic pace of the actors accelerating past the point of credibility. Quite perceptibly the fun slipped away and a pervasive nervousness took over, alienating the audience.

Reduced Fee
For Oldsters

A special reduced fee of \$25 per course will be offered at St. John Fisher College, starting in January, for anyone over 60 or any individual who is retired.

The new program underscores Fisher's ongoing development of programs designed to meet the educational needs of all segments of the community.

The special fee structure applies to all regularly offered courses at the college, depending on available space and registration.

Father Charles J. Lavery, Fisher president, noted that "Fisher for almost 25 years has offered a quality educational experience for thousands of young people, many of whom have remained in the greater Rochester area, adding their skills and talents to the business, cultural, and social enterprises here. The community has been generous in its support of the college and this new program is an effort to recognize the community."

This, I think, was what happened with the sketches. Each started out delightfully, marvelous pairs of actors asking us to believe what was happening. Each time, with perhaps one exception, the joke wore thin, finally vanishing into thin air.

In "The Greasy Diner," James Coco (who starred in Simon's "Last of the Red Hot Lovers") and Dana Dietrich (you know her as Mother Nature in those oleomargarine commercials) enter a greasy spoon and almost immediately lose contact with the audience when Simon tries too hard for a few laughs. Neither unclean food nor unclean hippie patrons do anything to enhance the fun.

"The Man Who Got a Ticket" with George C. Scott (starred in Simon's Plaza Suite) began brilliantly. Scott is a driver who had paid one parking violation then was cited for 369 more by a confused computer. Brilliantly, quietly, with expert timing, Scott lets us in on the joke. He is in command. It is at the point where Elaine Shore as an officious policewoman gets the upper hand that the humor begins to fail. Sure enough, by the time she has him standing spread eagled against a wall, hands behind his head for the computer error the joke is over. Unmistakably over.

"The Night Visitor" with Renee Taylor as the bait that catches a detective (Joe Campanella) instead of a prowler, was the only one in which one of the characters does not become frenzied with either pain, fear or irritation.

Most successful of the quintet was "The Office Sharers" in which Jack Weston and Gene Wilder demonstrate that it is not only marriages which go awry because of the mate's idiosyncracies. There was frenzy but it was sustained evenly, almost quietly without interrupting the flow.

The last, "Double Trouble", featured Alan Arkin and Valerie Harper as a married couple.

One had pneumonia and one had a backache and anybody who stayed with this particular vignette must have ended up with a headache.

At Home With the Movies

CHITTY, CHITTY, BANG, BANG (1968)
Thursday, Nov. 23 (CBS)

Here's an example of how commercial television invades your life — why does the network schedule such a fine family film on Thanksgiving Day, when you should spend all your time with the family and without the tube?

But, for those who must... the fun-packed fantasy takes widowed, erstwhile inventor Dick Van Dyke, his two children, and girlfriend Sally Ann Howes (alias Truly Scrumptious) on a magical mystery tour of storytelling, involving "evil" barons, cavernous castles in the air, rescued children, and a wonderful flying car whose name gives the movie a title. (A-I)

LIVE A LITTLE, LOVE A LITTLE (1968)
Friday, Nov. 24 (CBS)

How many Elvis Presley movies can dance on the head of a pin? This effort is just another one of the countless hip-shakers the King has made over the past decade and a half.

The gyrations are all vintage Presley, but there's an obvious attempt to update the stock dialogue and situations with a flurry of double-entendres and more "daring" forays into the titillating. (A-III)

HOW TO SUCCEED IN BUSINESS WITHOUT REALLY TRYING (1967)
Saturday, Nov. 25 (NBC)

This film adaptation of Shepherd Mead's Broadway musical gleefully satirizes the foibles of big business from mail room to executive suite. David Swift's direction did not have to be too inventive to carry the colorful production numbers. Comic business and Frank Loesser's sly songs come over well. Robert Morse is the best part of the whole show, with his inspired caricature of a "dedicated" employee with designs on a top job. Rudy Vallee, as the dullard who runs the company, makes the perfect foil for Morse's canary. (A-II)

ONCE UPON A TIME IN THE WEST (1969)
Sunday, Nov. 26 (ABC)

Any movie with as plainly mythic a title as that can't be all bad. And this one, starring Henry Fonda, Claudia Cardinale, and Jason Robards really isn't. The plot of the Sergio Leone "pasta" Western is mighty thin, but the foolish action involving outlaw Fonda's pursuit of an-

other outlaw is full of hokum and played for campy laughs. Fair adult entertainment. (A-III)

THE PRIVATE NAVY OF SGT. O'FARRELL (1968)
Monday, Nov. 27 (NBC)

Patchy Bob Hope-Phyllis Diller comedy set on a Pacific island during World War II. As O'Farrell, Hope manages to forget his old romance with Gina Lollobrigida while raising morale on an Army-Navy base.

Japanese subtitles on an enemy submarine sequence and a parody of the Lancaster-Kerr beach embrace in "From Here to Eternity" highlight an otherwise so-so production. (A-II)

HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS (1972)
Tuesday, Nov. 28 (NBC)

School Administrators
Form New York Board

The board of directors of CSAANYS (Catholic School Administrators Association of New York State), a newly formed association, met in Albany on Nov. 6. The representatives to this board from the Diocese of Rochester are Sister Mary Margaret Merkel, SSJ, principal of St. Agnes High School and Sister Mary Edwardine Weaver, RSM, principal of St. James elementary school. The newly appointed executive secretary, Brother Peter A. Pontolillo, SM, and field representative, Brother Thomas P. Draney, CFC, conducted the meeting.

Brother Pontolillo and Brother Draney will be operating out of

Original TV-film about a man who is convinced that his wife is poisoning him by slow degrees. And whom does he have for help? Only his four estranged daughters.

Walter Brennan is dear old dying dad, Julie Harris is the lethal cuisiniere, and Sally Field, Jessica Walter, Eleanor Parker, and Jill Hayworth are his "devoted" daughters. (Not rated.)

PRETTY POISON (1968)
Tuesday, Nov. 28 (CBS)

A good movie that failed at the box office because of the old "lack of publicity syndrome."

Anthony Perkins plays a youthful pathological killer, and Tuesday Weld his partner-girlfriend. Remarkable acting, interesting script, helluva finale. (A-III)

Albany area offices, and will be responsible for implementing the goals of the Catholic School Administrators' Association. These goals include: encouraging popular support for public financial aid to non-public schools; informing the public of the needs of Catholic schools; accelerating articulation between elementary and secondary Catholic schools; establishing communication among regions and with professional organizations; and publicizing the merits of Catholic education.

Brother Draney was principal of Bishop Gibbons High School, Schenectady, for the past five years.

GUIDE TO FINE DINING

The Big Elms Restaurant
196 Seneca St., Hornell, N.Y. Our Colonial Room—famous for 50 years. Home baked pastries our Specialty. Open daily 7 a.m. - 12 midnight. Introducing the new Victorian Dining Room (gourmet specials), Cocktails, Banquet Room. Authentic antiques, Tiffany-type leaded shades create the ideal Victorian atmosphere. Luncheon weekdays 11:30, Dinner 5:30, Sunday 12:30 1-607-324-7450.

Hofbrau Haus
Closed Sundays during June, July, and August
406 Lyell Ave. Home of real German & American cooking. Wide choice of continental dinners, such as Sauerbraten with potato pancakes and Bavarian beef goulash. Open daily for lunches and dinners. Bavarian music Fri., Sat. nights. Phone 254-9640. Your hosts, Bill and Betty Oswald.

Royal Scot Steak House
657 Ridge Road East, Corner Hudson. Route 104, Rochester's most distinctive dining spot featuring Scottish atmosphere, delicious food. Luncheons served Mon. thru Fri. 11:30-2 p.m. Dinners served Mon.-Thurs. 5 to 10 p.m. Fri. 5 to 11 p.m.; Sat. 5 to 12 p.m. Reservations: 342-4220. Entertainment Fri. and Sat. in the Scot's Pub.

Kar-Mac Manor
Routes 5 & 20, Between Geneva & Waterloo, Thruway Exit 42. Dinners from \$2.95 — Featuring Prime Rib — Char Broiled Steaks — Chicken Orzo — Liver & Onions — Seafood — Dancing Fri. & Sat. Rte 5 and 20 Between Geneva & Waterloo. Reservations —789-1305 or 539-8044.

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HOLIDAY SPECIALS

Sunday, November 26
5:00 PM/PRINCE & THE PAUPER

Sunday, December 3
7:30 PM/HOME WITHOUT A CHRISTMAS TREE

Monday, December 4
8:00 PM/HOW THE GRINCH STOLE CHRISTMAS

8:30 PM/FROSTY THE SNOWMAN

9:00 PM/PERRY COMO WINTER SPECIAL

Friday, December 8
8:00 PM/RUDOLPH THE RED-NOSED REINDEER

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Wednesday, November 22, 1972