

PAT COSTA As I See It



Do protests to television networks and program sponsors do any good or is letter writing simply an exercise in futility?

The following should remove any doubts viewers may have. At least two companies which advertised their product on the controversial "Maude" have stopped buying time after letter writers complained of an episode in which abortion was treated lightly.

What's more both cited viewers' letters as the reason for doing so.

Among area viewers who wrote and received answers were Mrs. Catherine K. Tanguay of 311 Tobey Road, Pittsford; Mrs. Irene Ailing of 40 Florence Avenue, Rochester; and Mrs. Peggy Dawson, 169 Depew St., Rochester.

Mrs. Tanguay forwarded us a letter from North American Philips Corp. which had advertised its Norelco products on the offending episode. It reads in part: "(The company) prides itself on being responsive to consumer opinion."

"We do not control the content of these shows, especially since our participation in 'Maude' and the other shows which carry Norelco commercials is usually quite minimal."

"We can, of course, remove our commercial from a show which is offensive or in bad taste. This is where letters like yours are very helpful. We have discussed this matter with the CBS television network and even though their mail from viewers of 'Maude' is both pro and con, we have re-evaluated our purchase of time on the show. Your opinion and that of others who have written to us has had a very important bearing on our decision not to continue."

Mrs. Ailing had answers from Whitehall Laboratories (Anacin, Dristan), Thomas Lipton Co. and North American Philips Corp. Four others who also signed her letter received answers as well.

Mrs. Ailing put it on the line to the companies telling each that not only would she and her co-signers refrain from buying their products but encourage others to avoid them as well. The Lipton firm's reply was to the point:

"Although any attempt at censorship on our part would be inappropriate, we have withdrawn from all future participation in this program."

There was some buck-passing by those concerned, an occurrence predicted in a recent communique from the area Right-To-Life Committee.

Whitehall Laboratories weaseled out by saying that it had no control over program content and looked to the network to keep tasteless and offensive material off the air.

And, when Mrs. Dawson complained directly to CBS about the abortion episode, that intervening organization passed the buck to Norman Lear, "Maude" producer, who responded with some appropriate double talk, neatly evading the issue.

The feeling here is that the entire situation is unfortunate. I have never believed that it is right for sponsors to censor or control program material. When this does happen the ensuing shows must by necessity reach us the viewer in an adulterated state. Yet, when a show's producers and the network fail to act responsibly, manipulation of sponsors by consumer boycott would appear to be the only recourse.

Reviewing New Movies

'1776'

By JOHN E. FITZGERALD

"I have come to the conclusion that one useless man is called a disgrace. That two are called a law firm," snaps Massachusetts delegate John Adams in the opening scene of "1776." And that three or more become a congress — And, by God, I have had this Congress!

That congress was the Second Continental Congress, held through May, June and July of that now-famous year, in the now-famous Independence Hall in what Adams calls "foul, fetid, fuming, foggy, filthy Philadelphia."

'1776' Slated For Pro-Life Benefit Show

The movie "1776" will be shown on Jan. 19 for the benefit of Rochester Area Right to Life, Inc., at the champagne theatre party of St. Mary's Hospital Staff Auxiliary, 8 p.m. at the Cine 1-2-3-4, Greece.

Tickets for the benefit are \$5.00 per person, and checks should be made payable to St. Mary's Auxiliary. Checks can be mailed to Mrs. Nino Trunfio, 40 Poplar Way, Rochester, 14618.

For additional information, call Muriel Trunfio at 244-4707 or Marge Lortie at 244-8541.

Courier-Journal

For a full year the do-nothing congress has been sitting "piddling, twiddling and resolving" without getting anything practical done. And Adams has been begging, pleading, haranguing and nagging them to "Vote 'Yes' for independence!" only to be told to sit down, that it's 90 degrees and that someone should open up a window.

"God help us!" snaps the frustrated lawyer in exasperation.

"He will, John," comments his friend, one of the three delegates from Pennsylvania, Dr. Benjamin Franklin, offhandedly.

The film is a mingling of history and drama and music — three fragilities, which here support and strengthen each other rather admirably. The music and lyrics of what is almost an operetta are by former high school history teacher Sherman Edwards, who worked ten years on the show's basic conception. I discovered that the score grows on you gradually.

Seldom has so much exposition been woven in so painlessly and skillfully as in the script fashioned from his book by Peter Stone. Peter H. Hunt has directed well, and Onna White's choreography is lively; as is the editing by William Ziegler and Florence Williamson. The only really false note in the show is a rather obviously painted scene outside the council hall window.

At Home with the Movies

THE SANDPEBBLES (1967)
Thursday and Friday,
Jan. 4 and 5 (CBS)

Three hour epic, a serious, grim study of the causes and effects of intervention by one country in the affairs of another. Concerns the crew of an American gunboat assigned to protect U.S. commercial interests in China in 1926 during the time of social and political unrest.

Director Robert Wise has managed to sustain suspense almost to the end of this perhaps over-long film. Panoramic location photography, musical score and key performances by Steve McQueen, Mako, Richard Attenborough and Simon Oakland are outstanding. (A-III)

**WHAT DID YOU DO IN THE
WAR, DADDY? (1966)**
Saturday, Jan. 6 (NBC)

Another example of Hollywood's attempts at showing us how hilarious war really is. The fun presents a combination of bosomy Italian bambinos and a local wine festival sidetracking a platoon of invading American GI's who are supposed to be sniffing our Nazi stragglers.

Dick Shawn is the clown-in-chief, aided and abetted by Carroll O'Connor, James Coburn, and Cameron Mitchell. Vulgarly and dumb sight gags are the order of the day, and the only reason anyone could possibly have for watching this one would be to keep up his attendance record at Aldo Ray movies. (B)

HURRY SUNDOWN (1967)
Sunday, Jan. 7 (ABC)

Even sanitized for TV, this is a loser. Lots of dirty doings down south, with the feds against the locals, uppity blacks against righteous whites, not to mention grotesque, "scabrous" adaptation of the interminable K.B. Gilden novel about social, marital, and racial unrest in a little Georgia town, all done up to a crisp in a hotly sensational style. Michael Caine is a Cockney-accented cracker, sultry Jane Fonda his somewhat bruised Georgia peach. Forget it, you all. (C)

SET THIS TOWN ON FIRE
Monday, Jan. 8 (NBC)

Now that his newspaper exposee has sent a big-city politician (Chuck Connors) to prison for manslaughter, publisher Carl Betz begins to have doubts about the case — which naturally sets the wheels of melodrama spinning. Lynda Day and Charles Robinson co-star in this made-for-TV low suds.

FIVE CARD STUD (1968)
Monday, Jan. 8 (ABC)

An exciting mystery Western that pits Dean Martin as a fast-talking gambler against Robert Mitchum as a hellfire preacher who also carries a gun. Director Henry Hathaway spins a simple story of retribution motivated by the lynching of a card cheat. Eight slayings, most of them

Once Over Briefly

UP THE SANDBOX — Not rated — Will the real Barbara S. please stand up?
THE POSEIDON ADVENTURE — Adults — Sinker stinker.
DELIVERANCE — Adults, with reservations — Not your run of the mill camping trip.
THE RULING CLASS — Adults, with reservations — Pokes a sharp, funny finger at the British upper class.
THE SNOWBALL EXPRESS — Everyone — The driven snow.
TRAVELS WITH MY AUNT — Not rated — Film-film frolic.
THE HIT MAN — Condemned — Non-entertainment for blacks.
1776 — Adults and adolescents — The Singing of the Declaration.
THE GETAWAY — Not rated — Sam Peckinpah's version of Bonnie and Clyde.
PETE N. TULLIE — Adults, with reservations — Awkward serio-comedy.
THE GREAT WALTZ — Adults, and adolescents — Oh, those saccharine oom-pah-pahs.
THE EMIGRANTS — Adults and adolescents — Epic masterpiece on the American experience.
THE KING OF MARVIN GARDENS — Adults, with reservations — Go directly to another movie.
CARTER VISUNIST, VESBENSDW
Wednesday, January 3, 1973

sensationally staged, pile up before Dino rides off into the sunset. The average viewer should feel pleased to sense all along the identity of the vengeful killer, Roddy McDowall, Inger Stevens, and Katherine Justice co-star. (A-III)

THE DEVIL'S DAUGHTER
Tuesday, Jan. 9 (ABC)

Original TV-made mystery. It dredges up an unusual marital problem for us to wallow in: a young woman discovers that her soul was bartered to Satan when she was an infant, and that that gentleman has now come to ask for her hand in marriage. If it were not for the fantastic, hysterical script and direction,

this impossible mess might have been something other than simply ridiculous. Belinda J. Montgomery is the reluctant bride, and Shelley Winters is her step-mother, who tries to cope with the girl's dilemma.

HUNTER
Tuesday, Jan. 9 (CBS)

Original TV feature deals with the topics of brainwashing and germ warfare. It all begins when a U.S. Government agent is injured in an auto crash. John Vernon plays the agent sent out to investigate, and his poking around uncovers a complex brainwashing scheme and takes him to a secret germ-bomb plant run by "the enemy."



Essay Winners

Five of the 15 winners of the annual Monroe County Fire Prevention Essay Contest, including the first place winner, are from St. Rita's School, Webster. The theme of the essays was "It's Up to you! Stop Fire, Save Lives." The winners and their teachers are (l-r) Susan Masters; Karen Prager; Mrs. Daneen Esposito; Sister Mary Carmel, RSM; Mary Haefner, first place winner; Ann Marie Garczynski; and Sandra Peckham. The winners were picked from more than 800 entries from all over Rochester and Monroe County.

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