

**PAT COSTA**  
**As I See It**



I don't know if it is because we went as a family to see the excellent movie, "1776" and because we have watched many of the programs in Alastair Cooke's "America" series but we have become temporarily history-oriented at our house.

Thus, when NBC scheduled "The Great Man's Whiskers" the night after Lincoln's birthday, anticipation was widespread. Unfortunately it was unwarranted.

The charming little story of how a young girl advised Abraham Lincoln to grow a beard to make his face more pleasing was more Disney than anything else, and about 90 minutes too long.

The only bright notes: young Cindy Eilbacher who played Elizabeth Cooper and Dennis Weaver's make-up job as the 16th president.

The FCC ruling which says network programming must be cut back in order to allow stations time for innovative, new shows must be the biggest joke of all time.

Between 7 and 8 every night the stations in our city show such wonderful "new, innovative" fare as "Truth Or Consequences," "That Girl," "Dragnet," "To Tell the Truth," "Let's Make a Deal," "Parent Game," "Price Is Right," etc., etc., etc.

We used a great many letters or parts of them in this column in the past couple of months but still we haven't been able to include all our correspondents' names. Some of them whose letters we have enjoyed and appreciated are: Desmond Dolan of Geneva, Mrs. Joseph Sullivan of Elmira, and Mrs. Thomas McCarthy of Elmira. M. E. Britt of Rochester suggested we take a

look at "Sunrise Semester" seen at 6:30 a.m. on Channel 10. The suggestion was made several months ago. Promise to do so even if it takes a while longer. When I'm up at that time I'm usually engaged in the battle of the cereal boxes.

When Fredrica H. Metroka of Union Springs, N.Y. received the standard CBS explanation letter of why it screened the controversial abortion Maude show she sat down and answered Thomas J. Swafford, vice president, program practices in sprightly fashion.

The letter is worth printing.

"Dear Mr. Swafford, Your letter of Jan. 15 was more entertaining than the "Maude" shows which prompted me to write CBS in the first place.

I am convinced that I am not the only narrow-minded viewer of "Maude", since I have letters in my possession from sponsors who have withdrawn their commercials from this program since the airing of the two shows on abortion. Now, really, Mr. Swafford, am I to assume that my one letter to these gentlemen carries that much weight?

You are absolutely correct that comedy and satire are proven theatrical art forms. I, for one, have always enjoyed both. I do feel that there are a few subjects to which neither can be applied. The creative talent you mentioned in your letter that seemed to be able to apply comedy and satire to abortion could possibly find something entertaining in the rape of a young child or the slow agonizing death of a victim of cancer.

If keeping this show off the air is a form of censorship, I welcome it. If keeping it on, an exercise of good judgment and good taste, spare me.

Fredrica H. Metroka

**Once Over Briefly**

- ACROSS 110TH STREET—Condemned — Indeed, as even the buildings are.
- AVANTI! — Objectionable — Angels have 47 chromosomes.
- BLACK GIRL — Adults — The superbly acted truth, and that's no joke.
- DELIVERANCE—Adults, with reservations — Not your ordinary camping trip.
- THE EMIGRANTS — Adults and adolescents—Epic masterpiece on the American experience.
- THE GETAWAY — Adults, with reservations — Mucho macho.
- THE GREAT WALTZ — Adults and adolescents — Oh, those saccharine oom-pah-pahs.
- THE HIT MAN — Condemned — Non-entertainment for blacks.
- JEREMIAH JOHNSON—Adults and adolescents — Robert Redford as legendary mountain man.
- THE KING OF MARVIN GARDENS — Adults, with reservations — Go directly to another movie.
- LADY SINGS THE BLUES — Adults, with reservations — The story of Billie Holiday, with everything from Amos 'n' Andy to Superfly.
- MAN OF LAMANCHA — Adults — The impossible nightmare.
- RAGE — Adults — George C.'s hot.
- THE RULING CLASS — Adults, with reservations — Pokes a sharp, funny finger at British aristocracy.

- RUSSIA — Not rated — A documentary.
- 1776 — Adults and adolescents— The Singing of the Declaration.
- SHAMUS — Adults — Burt Reynolds has proven himself a capable actor in this white version of Shaft.
- SLEUTH — Adults — Sir Laurence Olivier and Michael are splendid in witty British thriller.
- SOUNDER — Everyone — Unquestionably one of the best films of 1972, the story of a black family during the Depression.
- STEELYARD BLUES — Not rated — Jane Fonda, Donald Sutherland, and Peter Boyle in a weird comedy.
- THE SNOWBALL EXPRESS — Everyone — The driven snow.
- TOMORROW — Adults and adolescents — A sensitive look into William Faulkner's rural ethic.
- TRINITY IS STILL MY NAME — Adults and adolescents — Terence Hill throws all the spaghetti back in Clint Eastwood's face.
- THE TRAIN ROBBERS — Not rated — The Duke kin make Westerns faster'n you kin say "They went thataway."
- TRAVELS WITH MY AUNT — Adults, with reservations — Flim-flam adventure.
- UP THE SANDBOX — Adults, with reservations — Barbra's Walter Mitty.

**At Home with the Movies**

**AND NO ONE COULD SAVE HER**  
Wednesday, Feb. 21 (ABC)

Made-for-television suspense drama stars Lee Remick and Irish actor Milo O'Shea in a chilling tale about an American wife searching through picturesque Dublin for her unaccountably missing husband (who thoughtfully left behind no evidence of his ever having existed!) The only one who pays any attention to the woman's desperation is a shadowy figure who comes on strong as the Speeter of Death.

**THE NORLISS TAPES**  
Wednesday, Feb. 21 (NBC)

Television feature film with Roy Thinnes as a writer interested in uncovering and analyzing supernatural phenomena. In the present case, he runs into a fellow who is supposed to be dead — but someone apparently forgot to tell him.

**WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF? (1966)**  
Thursday, Feb. 22 (CBS)

Controversial (then, at least) film based on the Edward Albee play amounting to a bitter encounter-group session involving two college-faculty couples who thrash out their frustrations during a drunken evening.

The couples are Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor, and George Segal and Sandy Dennis, with the main focus on Burton and Taylor as George and Martha. Mike Nichols savagely directs them at each other's throats. Presentation of the film for television will involve many lucid language problems. This Woolf is biting, and it's not for the casual viewer. (A-IV)

**WAIT UNTIL DARK (1967)**  
Friday, Feb. 23 (CBS)

Audrey Hepburn stars to perfection as a recently blinded housewife determined to become the world's champion blind lady to please her husband (Elrom Zimbalist, Jr.). She undergoes a harrowing trial when her life is threatened by three men (Alan Arkin, Richard Crenna, Jack Weston) in search of a doll that contains a cache of heroin.

The film is scripted and edited with such intensity that even its slightly incredible elements pass in a super suspense drama for all but the youngest members of the family. And there's one scene you won't forget as you fly off your chair with fright. (A-II)

**I WALK THE LINE (1971)**  
Saturday, Feb. 24 (NBC)

Gregory Peck and Tuesday Weld are a pair of unlikely and tragic lovers in a bitter-sweet backwoods ballad of a film that has local peace officer Peck falling in love with moonshiner's daughter Weld. The consequences for the respectable townsman, husband and father are predictable, and prove once more the dictum about the wages of sin. As far as the movie itself goes, it has its dramatic and touching moments, and it does not let Peck off the hook. Ms. Weld is effective as the picture of hill country corrupted innocence, but the film is ultimately reduced to a final series of heavy melodramatic sweeps which undercut its otherwise gripping tension and visual beauties. (A-III)

**PAINT YOUR WAGON (1969)**  
Sunday, Feb. 25 (ABC)

Chalk this up as another near miss in transporting a Broadway hit musical to the screen, even further reduced for the home tube. Josh Logan's huge production tries hard — with help from the original musical by Alan J. Lerner, and some creditable acting by Lee Marvin, Jean Seberg, and Clint Eastwood.

Plot spins around two mining partners, who "marry" the discarded second wife of a Mormon. Plenty of lush scenery and swirling action to go with the music, but have you ever heard Lee Marvin sing? (A-III)

**THE STRANGER**  
Monday, Feb. 26 (NBC)

TV feature stars Glenn Corbett, Cameron Mitchell, Dean

Jagers and others in a sci-fi drama that's literally out of this world. Seems that Corbett as an off-course astronaut crash-lands on another world-like planet, and becomes the desperate prey of the uptight inhabitants, who view his sense of individual freedom with intense alarm.

**I LOVE A MYSTERY**  
Tuesday, Feb. 27 (NBC)

So do we, and if we try hard enough, perhaps we can like this plumped-up spoof of a private-eye yarn. This one casts three detectives on a search across the sea for a missing billionaire insured for \$12 million. The trio (David Hartman, Les Crane, and Hagan Biggs) are sidetracked by strong-willed mystery lady Ida Lupino, who directs them to a remote island. Things get curiously from there. Terry Thomas and Don Knotts guest star. Could be fun.

**CONNECTION**  
Tuesday, Feb. 27 (ABC)

Made-for-television feature that is a spin-off of sorts from "The French Connection." The title refers to a "fence" or go-between in a jewel heist who brings a gang of thieves and a set of insurance company investigators together in New York City. It's all pretty familiar, but done with a bit of flair by producer Phil D'Antoni, who produced "French Connection."

**CALL TO DANGER**  
Tuesday, Feb. 27 (CBS)

When a Mafia informer is kidnapped in the middle of testimony before a grand jury looking into mob activities, there is a "call to danger" for the stalwart Federal investigator Peter Graves, whose task, natch, is to rescue the canary from the mob's hungry cats.



**Renoir Film**

Jean Renoir's classic 1939 film, "The Rules of the Game," will be shown on PBS' Film Odyssey Series, Saturday, Feb. 24. With Marcel Dalio, left, and Carotte, it satirizes social and sexual mores of decadent pre-World War II French society.

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