



AS I SEE IT
Pat Costa

Eugenia Collier, a black editor and teacher, writing in the New York Times, has taken exception to the situation comedy "Sanford and Son."

The popular show seen Friday nights at 8 p.m. over NBC stars Red Fox and Desmond Wilson as a black junkman and his son.

Miss Collier makes a number of points:

1. You simply cannot substitute black characters for white, sprinkle around a little black English and think you have a black show. (This in reference to the fact the show is a copy of an English version "Steptoe and Son.")

2. Black humor has always been based upon solid reality and reality for the black man has been the tragedy of the Negro experience in America.

3. The characters are great examples of sick American humor, the father a selfish, immature old man who rules his adult son, by wheedling, scheming, faking illness and carrying on like a spoiled child.

She concludes that "Sanford and Son" is far from black, reflecting the culture of contemporary white America rather than any intrinsic black values.

She adds that "White America does not want black people to have a self-concept based on a proud heritage of suffering and strength for such a self-concept would liberate our minds and break the death-grip which threatens our destruction."

As one who believes that the American Negro has everything he can get coming to him in the way of positive, supportive help, I

have a feeling that Miss Collier and her race are simply one more horrible victim of the situation comedy, not a target singled out for debasement.

In this particular medium, the black person has achieved equality with the white person. He has become an object of ridicule, following a pattern carved out for whites since the inception of television.

If "Sanford and Son" is not indicative of true black culture which situation comedy does she think represents the white culture accurately?

Is Archie Bunker our mirror? Lucy? Do you know any family even closely resembling the inane Brady Bunch? How does the legal profession regard Paul Lynde? The medical profession "Temperatures Rising?" For that matter do you really know any career girl as attractive as Mary Tyler Moore who has never been married or seems to have no serious involvements? Not unless there's some problem or other.

Taking it a step further, the truth is that there is no area of television in which the American experience, black or white, is truly pictured. Even the highly acclaimed "The Waltons" is but a picture world. The show, an autobiographical work by Earl Hammer Jr., is the story of his family, but the author admits that his father could not speak a sentence without inserting a cuss word or two. Yet, we are spared this embellishment along with a multitude of others that would accurately show us a real family.

No, Miss Collier, "Sanford and Son" is not a real picture of the black. And we've yet to see anything other than a distortion of the white either.

Pro-Lifers Lose on 'Maude'

Rockville Centre, N.Y. [RNS] — The fairness doctrine does not require that CBS-TV balance the abortion episodes on the "Maude" program last fall by presenting anti-abortion programs in the same series, according to an official of the Federal Communications Commission.

Complaints against a network under the fairness doctrine must be based on its over-all programming, said William B. Ray, chief of the FCC complaints and compliance division, in a letter answering complaints made by the Diocesan Union of Holy Name Societies of Rockville Centre, and the Long Island Coalition for Life.

The letter was addressed to Eugene James McMahon, an attorney who filed the letter of complaint. The complaint was dated Feb. 9 and the response June 12.

The complaint was specifically directed against Station WCBS-TV in New York and referred to a two-part episode broadcast Nov. 14 and 21, 1972 and portraying "Maude's" discovery she was pregnant and her decision to have an abortion.

"Before the commission can take appropriate action on your complaint," Ray answered, "it must receive specific information setting forth reasonable grounds for the conclusion that the licensee, in its overall programming, has not afforded reasonable opportunity for the presentation of contrasting views on the particular controversial issue of public importance involved."

Noting that the groups represented by McMahon had asked for time to present their views over the CBS-TV network and had been refused by the network management, Ray said the fairness doctrine did not give any particular person or group the right to broadcast his views.

"The fairness doctrine is designed to insure the right of the public to be informed rather than the right of any individual to broadcast his views."

The complaint against WCBS-TV had also asked for time to present anti-abortion views on the grounds that the "Maude" episode represented an attack on unborn children and that the fairness doctrine requires broadcasters to provide time for answering attacks that are made against individuals or groups.

In response, Ray said the FCC's personal attack rule did not cover the kind of "attack" mentioned in the complaint but had in view an attack "upon the honesty, character, integrity or like personal qualities of an identified person or group."

In his letter Ray did not cite any action by the commission members on the "Maude" programs.

"Staff action is taken here under delegated authority," he

said. "Application for review by the full commission may be requested within 30 days."

McMahon told RNS on June 18 that a decision about appealing to the full commission had not yet been made, but that he expected there would be one.

In legal terminology, he said, this is a "case of first impression," one involving an issue that has not previously been ruled on.

The question, he said, is whether one side of a controversial issue can be presented on a comedy hour without the other side being given. For the network to argue that the other side was presented on some discussion program at another time would not be satisfactory, he argued.

The groups making the complaint want to present their views either in the context of the "Maude" show or in programs they would produce for the same time slot to reach the same audience, McMahon said.

Dialogue in Question

WALTER: ... now that you mention it, it (abortion) is legal in New York, isn't it?

CAROL: Of course it is Walter! Mother, I don't understand your hesitancy. When they made it a law you were for it.

We're free. We finally have the right to decide what we can do with our own bodies.

And it's as simple as going to the dentist.

It's a simple operation now. But when you were growing up it was illegal and it was dangerous and it was sinister and you've never gotten over that.

Mother, you don't have to have the baby. Look. I've told you before there's no reason to feel guilty and there's no reason to be afraid.

WALTER: Maude, I think it would be wrong to have a child at our age.

MAUDE: Oh, so do I. Walter. Oh Walter, so do I.

WALTER: We'd make awful parents.

MAUDE: Oh, impatient, irascible. For other people it might be fine, but for us. I don't think it would be fair to anybody.

WALTER: Are you frightened, about the operation, I mean...

MAUDE: Honey, it's alright. Just tell me. Walter, I'm doing the right thing not having the baby.

WALTER: For you, Maude, for me, and for the privacy of our own lives, you're doing the right thing.

At Home With the Movies

MOUSE ON THE MOON [1963] Friday, June 29 [NBC]

Margaret Rutherford, Bernard

Cribbins and Terry-Thomas star in a rollicking comedy about how a tiny principality repairs its hot water system by applying for U.S. foreign aid.

relieve the U.S. Mint of some of its cabbage. All

THE SPIRIT IS WILLING [1966] Monday, July 2 [ABC]

Sid Caesar freaks will love his antics in an old haunted house. Vera Miles also stars in this light, frothy, but adult entertainment. All

The film office has given it an AI.

THAT MAN FROM RIO [1964] Saturday, June 20 [NBC]

Jean-Paul Belmondo and Francoise Dorleac star in this spy spoof. Comedy writer-director Philippe de Broca admirably handles his plot and actors in a bright, often hilarious chase for three golden statues and a kidnapped sweetheart. All

THE RAILWAY CHILDREN [1971] Tuesday, July 3 [NBC]

If you didn't catch this movie on it's theater run, don't miss rounding up the kids and spending the night in front of the tube to see it now.

WHO'S MINDING THE MINT? [1967] Sunday, July 1 [ABC]

A few viewers will find a chuckle or two when Dorothy Provine, Milton Berle, and Joey Bishop carry through a plot to

Lionel Jeffries is the director and Jenny Agutter is the star in an odd little story about keeping a stiff upper lip when daddy gets hauled off to jail.

It's sort of a white, Victorian, English Sounder, and, in its own way, every bit as good. The Catholic film office said it's "an absolute gem, a delight." AI

Once Over Briefly

BLACK GUNN — Objectionable — Jim Brown, and violence of every description.

BOOK OF NUMBERS — Adults — The old one-two from Raymond St. Jacques.

BROTHER SUN, SISTER MOON — Adults and adolescents — The paradox of Franciscan life is that Zeffirelli will make a lot of fire off his patron saint.

CHARLEY-ONE-EYE — Adults — Somebody is going to pay. You.

CHARLOTTE'S WEB — Everyone — E.B. White's classic animals are now animated.

CLASS OF '44 — Adults — A Hermie, Oscy, and Benjy reunion.

DAY OF THE JACKAL — Adults — A real sizzler, this one centers around a plot to assassinate Charles DeGaulle. From the Frederick Forsyth novel.

EFFECT OF GAMMA RAYS ON MAN-IN-THE-MOON MARGOLDS — Adults — As good as its name is long.

HEARTBREAK KID — Adults — Neil Simon plus Elaine May equals enlightening adult comedy.

HIGH PLAINS DRIFTER — Objectionable — Clint Eastwood's attempt at directing proves that maybe he isn't such a bad actor after all.

HITLER: THE LAST TEN DAYS — Adults and adolescents — Masterful performance of a master villain by Alec Guinness.

KID BLUE — Adults — And we all took the promise of Last Movie literally.

LADY CAROLINE LAMB — Adults — Lord Byron had sense enough to drop her. Why didn't Robert Bolt?

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Scholarship

Patricia Gervin, a 1973 graduate of Nazareth Academy, has been awarded a full, four-year scholarship to Nazareth College; a \$1,000 scholarship by the N.Y. American Legion Auxiliary; and a Regents scholarship.

GUIDE TO FINE DINING

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