

AS I SEE IT



Pat Costa

Concerned about the ever increasing sexually oriented and violence filled prime time TV shows? If so, you are not alone. Many of the nation's tube critics are beginning to holler, and loudly.

The New York Times Critic John J. O'Connor, for example, has pointed out that soft core pornography is sneaking into the prime time shows "usually in the sincerity-laden guise of social concerns."

He points out, as we've have done here, that the one new hit of the season "Charlie's Angels" is in effect "a girlie show, starring three beautiful women in a succession of splendidly revealing costumes. The boss, Charlie, is never seen. That is, his face isn't seen. His body is frequently shown being massaged by female hands or being surrounded in a giant bath by female bodies. Says O'Connor, "The plots are merely convenient pegs on which to hang these soft-core fantasies."

O'Connor of course has only uncovered the tip of the iceberg. Angie Dickinson as "Police Woman" in the line of duty frequently reports for work in costumes that might make a streetwalker smirk. "Police Woman" combines soft-core porn with violence. And speaking of violence, Dwight Whitney last week in TV Guide points the finger at "Starky and Hutch" as the most violent series in TV today and quotes other filmmakers as saying that S&H producers Aaron Spelling and Leonard Goldberg directly and the networks indirectly are responsible. The networks know that violence boosts ratings and demand it in the products they buy. The producers happily supply it.

They'd put autopsies on the air if they thought they'd make a buck at it," says a former president of the Screen Writers Guild. We declared "S&H" off limits a long time ago at our house.

Former policeman and author Joseph Wambaugh who has fought for less violence on his own show "Police Story" argues that if violence is shown then people must be in awe of it, frightened by it, not see it as a throwaway joke.

The TV screen night after night is filled with such "throw-away jokes" — many of them unbearable even for mature viewers.

One "Serpico" episode had the adults here thoroughly repelled by on-screen brutality accompanied by repeated references to victims as "pieces of meat." Graphically described rape is also big on this series with teaser scenes of the victims before and after the attack inserted to grab the viewer. Such rape segments in fact are commonplace on nearly every cops and gumshoe show, particularly "Baretta," "Streets of San Francisco," "Kojak," etc. etc. etc.

According to industry insiders, the violence comes from networks' demands for "more action," a euphemism for gore and mayhem.

Syndicated columnist Nicholas vonHoffman describes what turns out to be a dilemma: "three large multimillion-dollar corporations can't be allowed to exercise powers which can influence an entire nation of viewers; but we can't get a consensus as to what sort of thing they should be allowed to do," he said making reference to those who decry any form of censorship.

Is there any way viewers who abhor such use of the airwaves can change things?

Yes, it is doubtful that writing to networks or producers will help. The suggestion here is that irate viewers should jot down all sponsors of such irresponsibly written shows (you can get addresses from the business division of Rochester Public Library) and write in protest, threatening boycott of their products. Personally I dislike such tactics. It is not cricket. But then neither is the garbage being thrown at us.

Holy Day Mass At St. Luke's

Roman Catholic Mass for the feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, a holy day, will be said at St. Luke's Episcopal Church, 17 South Fitzhugh St., Rochester, Wednesday, Dec. 8 at 12 noon.

The Wednesday Mass will replace for this week the Mass regularly celebrated every Thursday noon at St. Luke's Church.

Workers and shoppers in the Four Corners area will find the holy day Mass convenient for their lunch hour.

Regional Highlights

NORTH

A letter was sent to Bishop Joseph L. Hogan, by the North Region, dealing with the recent conference in Detroit, A Call To Action. The letter said the region will accept Bishop Hogan's proposal suggesting that all Regional groups and parish councils thoroughly study the Detroit Conference Platform, did not feel that the delegates sent to Detroit were truly representative of the North Regional interests, and the delegates input to the Detroit Conference did not represent North Regional thinking.

Deaths

Helen Dengler

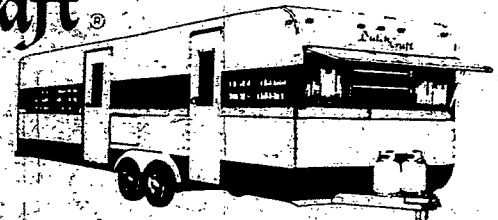
Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Saturday, Nov. 27 at St. John the Evangelist Church in Greece for Helen L. Dengler who died on Thanksgiving Day, Nov. 25, 1976.

Father Thomas Koester, priest intern at the parish, was the celebrant of the liturgy.

Mrs. Dengler is survived by two sons, Clarence R. and Edward J.; two daughters, Mrs. Robert (Marian) Wallace, and Mrs. James (Ellie) Shaanon; three brothers, Lewis and Ralph Barker of Florida and Paul Barker; one sister, Mrs. Christine Beers; twelve grandchildren; three great-grandchildren and several nieces and nephews.

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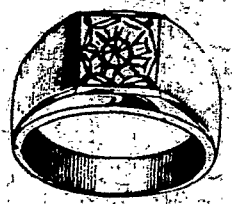
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