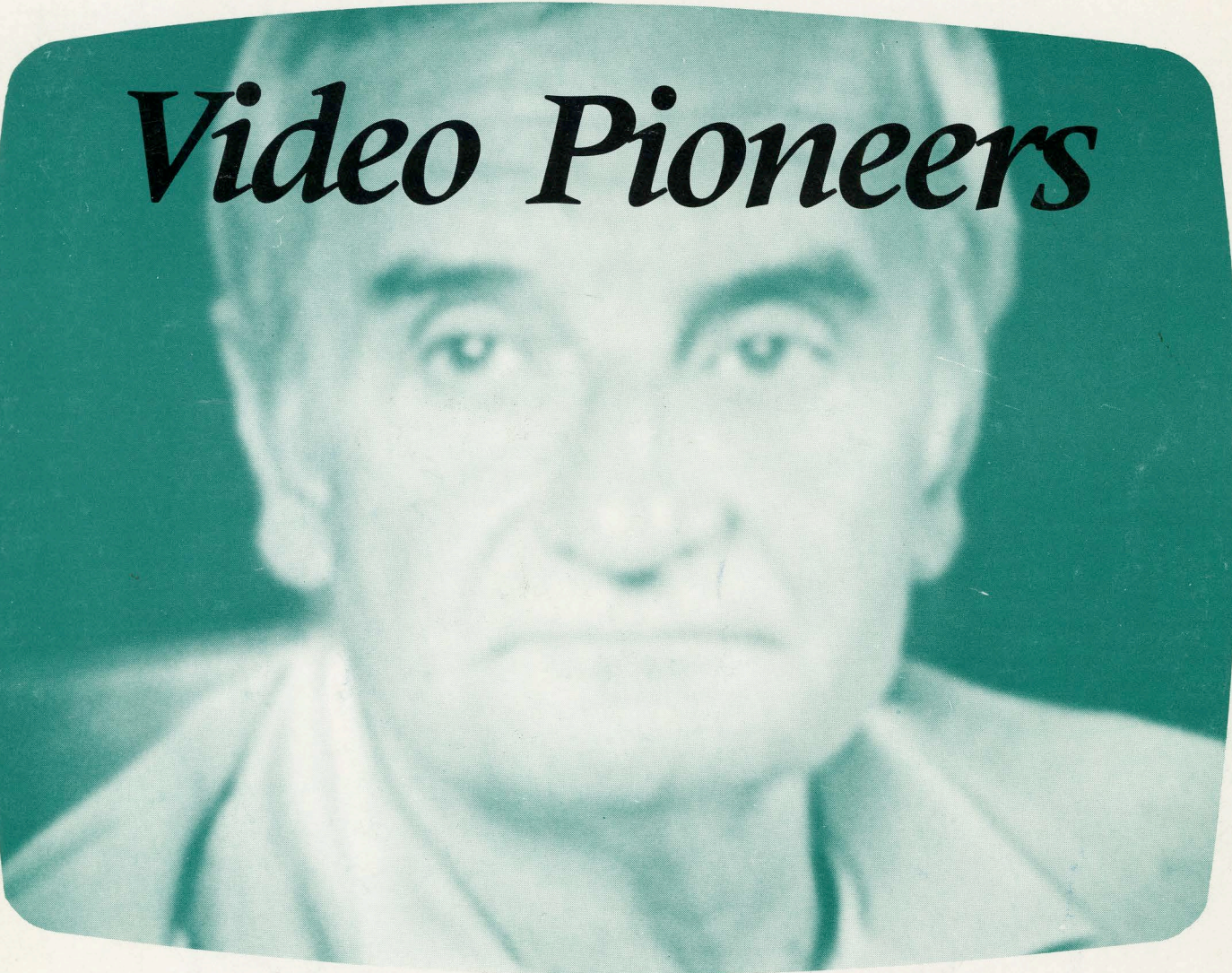


Video Pioneers



LINDSAY ANDERSON

CHUCK McCANN

JACK PARITZ

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TELEVISIONS

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VIDEO REVIEWS

Ithaca Video Festival

by Deirdre Boyle



For five years the Ithaca Video Festival has presented a stimulating selection of video art and documentary tapes. This year the four-hour program of 20 works was curiously disappointing. It's difficult to say whether it was because of the conspicuous absence of social documentaries. Previously they have created a structure for appreciating the more experimental art tapes. Or, perhaps it was simply the quality of the works selected by judges Pat Faust, Ann Volkes, Gunilla and Phillip Mallory Jones.

But, there was no disappointment in *Chott el-Djerid*, Bill Viola's magical exploration of electronic Impressionism and djinn-like illusions. Viola plays with light and the diffractions created by extreme heat and cold in silent landscapes of the Sahara, Saskatchewan, and central Illinois. His series of arctic and desert mirages evoke the subtle tones of Monet canvases: pristine, opalescent skies mirrored in stark, snowy landscapes; voluptuous, liquid colors — violet, apricot, rose, lemon — shimmering in pools of desert light.

Like the 19th century Impressionists, Viola explores the natural illusionism afforded by light, but he is also intrigued by the preception of abstract and concrete realities and the narrow margin dividing them. What at first appear to be pure color compositions slowly metamorphose into concrete objects: two undulating lavender lights are gradually revealed as two motorcycles traveling down a desert road. A wavy black dot on the pale horizon moves slowly toward the viewer: a man trudging hip-deep in snow, haloed in twin bands of light. Heat and light animate the inanimate and abstract the concrete, forming lovely, sensuous frames of pulsating, infinitely compelling, mysterious reality.

Bound Feet, A Performance by Winston Tong is also about illusions, but of a different sort. Tong and collaborator Tom Freebairn create the feeling of the past by switching between the vivid present of videotape to the flickering "silent movie" past of film, inviting yet finally barring the viewer from participation in a painful legacy.

Tong is dressed as a woman with whitened face and wistful expression. He sets down a small bowl of water, then deliberately washes and powders a long, gracefully-arched foot as we hear a poignant dialogue in Chinese between a

mother and daughter. Their cheerful banter shifts abruptly as the slender foot is tightly bound: the child cries out, remonstrating, but the mother is firmly, piteously insistent. A screen is placed, then withdrawn to reveal both feet bound and standing in tiny, pointed red shoes. To the plaintive melody of Satie's *Trois Gymnopédies*, Tong begins to walk, falters, falls. Kneeling, he unrolls a black cloth with two naked dolls, one male, the other female. The dolls are deftly manipulated into erotic play: the woman's stunted red feet arouse the male; he in turn strokes them to arouse her. Discreetly, Tong folds the dark cloth, tumbling the figures suggestively into darkness, and then pulls a black veil over his face. He is last seen seated with his back to us as a young woman reaches up and holds her hand over the camera lens.

Tong's haunting impersonation of a woman presents an effectively ironic reversal of sexual roles and is the source of the tape's foreboding beauty. The erotic aspects of foot binding are brilliantly conveyed by the unusual puppetry, with its supple, lifelike movements and sleight-of-hand illusionism. Freebairn's side-lighting and smooth edits match Tong's performance, subtlety for subtlety.

Not all puppetry calls up admiration. In *Jazz Dance*, Doris Chase manipulates a dancer's image until she is rendered anonymous, a puppet whose every movement is subject to Chase's video synthesized redefinition. This manipulation is characteristic of Chase's video dance works, where performers as dissimilar in style and body as Kei Takei, Sarah Rudner, and Gay Delache all blur together in the service of a mechanistic art. Delache, the dancer in *Jazz Dance*, is more dehumanized than most: she could be a computer-generated form, so little sensual reality is conveyed by the slo-mo disc abstraction of her movements. Chase apparently is not interested in collaboration between dancer and videoartist; she insists on having ultimate control. If she served the dancer and the dance as well as her own video wizardry, she might be able to lay claim to developing "original choreography." As it is, this is only video synthesis, and repetitive at that.

To find choreography for the video camera, one need only look at *Advance Riding Bowl* by Alan

Sixth Annual Ithaca Video Festival Tapes

The Breakfast Table,
Anita Thacher

At the Dump, Mimi
Martin

*The Laughing
Alligator*, Juan
Downey

*Electronic Masks &
By the Crimson
Band of Cyttorak*,
Barbara Sykes
and Tom Defanti

As a Public Service,
Collectivision

Bad, Steina
Advance Riding Bowl,
Alan Powell
and Connie
Coleman.

*Chott el-Djerid (A
Portrait in Light
and Heat)*, Bill
Viola

Jazz Dance, Doris
Chase

Shutter I & II,
Kathryn
Kanehiro

ITHACA VIDEO

ARTISTS

3rd Annual

ITHACA VIDEO FESTIVAL

6TH ANNUAL ITHACA VIDEO FESTIVAL

THE FIFTH ANNUAL ITHACA VIDEO FESTIVAL

2ND annual iThaca video festival Artists!

Powell and Connie Coleman. This is a lyric tribute to the skateboarder's skill as demonstrated by a group of handsome black teenage boys at a home-made track in North Philadelphia. Electronic edits loop their graceful movements, repeating or holding a rider suspended in space and time, silhouetted against the sky, defying gravity, then tumbling out of sight. The electronic edits choreograph their movements into a video dance of elegant twists, turns, and jumps.

Equally lyric in approach is Bill Charette's *Mixed Bag*, a sampler of four fillers produced for WGBH local news. Each is roughly two minutes in length and presents Charette's whimsical style and accomplished camera work and editing. *Happy Feet* is a brief series of interviews — recorded at ground level — of people roller-skating, running, jogging, walking a dog, bicycling, and so forth. *Sub Shop* captures the frantic pace of a fast food joint in lunchtime action, a prole version of *French Lunch*. *Apples* is a paean to autumn; it shows the toothy, juicy grins of young and old as they sink their teeth into succulent red globes in a sun-shot orchard. The last, *Pumpkin*, reveals the transformation of a large orange squash into a goulish jack-o'-lantern. Visual surprises of inside shots of the pumpkin being cut out are matched by the soundtrack's light-hearted humming which turns into the portentous organ swell of Bach's *Tocatta and Fugue in D Minor*. Shaped by filmic and television conventions, Charette's art is also distinctively personal—a pleasing blend of wit, poetry, and visual intoxication.

Barbara Sykes and Mimi Martin both work with computer-processed video images. Martin's delicately-colored images of garbage in *At the*

Dump are appealing, with their soft pinks, oranges, golds, pale blues, and fleshtones. The contemporary score of car sounds, tinkling glass, and eerie whale-like blasts intensifies the surreal atmosphere. Yet somehow, even at a mere two minutes in length, the work seems overlong, unable to engage the viewer's deepest attention by failing to provide a path to meanings beneath the visual surface.

Sykes' *Electronic Masks* is a computer-animated manipulation of boldly colorful masks that resemble Mayan stone sculptures. The slow distortion of one mask is succeeded by a rapid, rhythmic montage of different masks. Since this montage is so much more interesting than the slow, seemingly endless squeezing and pulling of the first, one wonders why Sykes left the opening so long, testing the viewer's threshold for boredom.

A quite different Indian mask greets the viewer in Juan Downey's *The Laughing Alligator*. This has been a work-in-progress for two years. In 1978 Downey first edited two short tapes, *The Laughing Alligator* and *The Singing Mute*, merged and reedited to form this new, half-hour tape. Downey has often recycled his images; he inserts sections of past works into newer ones as self-reflexive allusions. Here the hallmarks of his work — freshness of vision, lush romantic lyricism, and visual exuberance — have vanished, unexpectedly replaced by a dry, listless narrative push.

The search for his roots led the Chilean artist to live for several months among the Yanomami Indians of Brazil. Downey learned their language, lived in their culture, and probed the mysteries of their shamanistic rites and the use of

Bound Feet, A Performance by Winston Tong, Tom Freebairn and Winston Tong
Apple(s), Peer Bode
California I, Barbara Wright, Gordon C. A. Craig, Martha Olsen, Lewis MacAdams
Instant This—Instant That, Ellen Kahn and Linda Kahn
Bikers' Wedding, Lyn Tiefenbacher and Dave Pentecost
Mixed Bag, Bill Charette
Water, Wind and the Record of the Rocks, Laurie McDonald
Exquisite Corpse, Ernest Gusella
Tapes, Pier Marton

hallucinogenic drugs. The power of that experience, so strong in the tapes edited on his return, seems to have waned in this latest reworking.

In those early versions, Downey mocked the language and "objectivity" of anthropologists, who "cannibalize" the cannibals. Now he cannibalizes his own images of them, and he substitutes words like "excrement" for "shit," retranslating the Indian dialogues to fit new meanings. Such revisions cast doubt on his reliability as a translator of this culture and on the integrity of his own experience. Has the corruption of Western culture — loathed by Downey — infiltrated his own work? One notes that this new tape fits a conventional half-hour time slot and is careful not to offend the ears or sensibilities of certain viewers. In all, *The Laughing Alligator* is unhappily a watered-down, lifeless imitation of Downey's once moving and inspiring work.

Lifelessness is the very subject of *Instant This—Instant That*, Ellen and Linda Kahn's satire on a plastic, disposable culture. A day in the life of Nancy and Susie Twinart follows them from a breakfast of pop-tarts and Tang, to a toilette of spray deodorant, liquid mascara, and electric hair curlers, on to TV dinners, spam, spray starch, and bed. The driving rhythm of the title song by Taste Test carries us along to the predictable ending, a mirror image of the opening. The studied banality of the images is matched and reinforced by the rapid, regular pace of the edits. Amused at first by the visual glibness, one is finally left in doubt. The painted-on smiles and robot manner of the twins never takes on any edge, never invites the viewer to complicity with the satirists. A broad wink would be way out of line, yet some tipping of their hand seems necessary. Without it, the viewer is left vaguely uncertain whether the Kahns are really satirists or charter members of the bizarre culture they portray.

Few video artists have chosen to explore the comic on tape. Anita Thacher's *The Breakfast Table* is a witty idea in a charming, cartoon setting; regrettably, it falls flat. Leaden performances by Karen Wheeden as an unappreciated '40s housewife and Jeffrey Tambor Sal as her insensitive mate don't help things along. The melodrama opens with Wheeden dutifully preparing hubby's morning meal, unable to engage him in mere eye contact. So she fantasizes herself into various roles that might catch his notice — from the grey-haired harridan she feels herself to be into a steamy temptress à la Dietrich, from a loose-limbed, gum-chewing baseball pitcher to a booming Brunhilde, and finally, to an erotic nymph floating in a bubble bath. The climax occurs when hubby, oblivious to her various Walter Mitty incarnations, removes his glasses, flicks the brim of his hat, and transforms himself into a Latin lover. He snatches her into his arms to a tango beat and plants a langorous, libidinous kiss on her eager, surprised lips. They untangle, covered in flowers, and part on the musical exit of "Falling in Love Again." Although the scenario reads humorously, the plodding direction, flaccid editing, and awkward use of the one-camera set-up undermine the effort. Thacher, whose surreal films are exquisite masterpieces, has yet to hit her stride in video. Given the fertile imagination and talent clearly in evidence here, one hopes she will strike it soon.

The 6th Annual Ithaca Video Festival is currently touring museums, media arts centers, and libraries across the country. For more information about the tapes and the circuit, contact: Philip Mallory Jones, Ithaca Video Projects, 328 E. State St., Ithaca, NY 14850.

HOME: Four Portraits by Global Village

By Ron Sutton



HOME is a quartet of four video portraits on birth, aging, marriage, and death, by Julie Gustafson and John Reilly of Global Village. Each of the vignettes stands alone, yet each is linked to the other by the central theme.

For it is a home-like, natural atmosphere that Barry and Irene seek for the birth of their second child. The expectant mother says quite candidly to the video camera, "I have more trust in myself and family than institutions." That comment sounds a

quiet but recurring theme that reverberates throughout all four of the portraits. There is some off-hand criticism of the institutional birth of the first child but the emphasis is positive, focused on the caring and knowing involvement of the whole family in the birth.

It is in a maternity center that this NY couple will have their birthing experience. They are shown participating in all phases of the process from prenatal examinations to bundling their new child

home twelve hours after she emerges into the world . . . a world peopled by mid-wife, assistant, father and the strained, tired but joyous mother. It's quite an experience for the viewer to share and illustrates one of the precious values of small format video. This format can go into situations like this and leave them relatively intact. We're there but we haven't taken over. There is no sense of "let's pretend we're not here." Questions are asked, and acknowledged by the video makers. People are obviously aware of the camera's presence at times. But the presence is gentle and unobtrusive as it mediates the experience for us. Seeing bear-like Barry cradle his newly born daughter just moments after her birth, watching the older sister match her hand to the newborn baby's hand, and hearing Irene's exclamation "Oh, I'm not pregnant anymore!!" are their own reward.

The theme of the larger family is introduced as both sets of grandparents are drawn together the day after the birth to see the baby at the couple's home. In this scene we find there is not universal approval for the new approach to birth. One also senses in these scenes at home that some problems may emerge with the first child in relation to the very special quality of the second child's birth. But the fade out shot of Barry, Irene and the new born babe totally absorbed in one another on the wide double bed offers a beautiful closing for the first movement of this video quartet.

The second portrait presents a more somber picture concerning *HOME*, or in this case, the lack of one for the main protagonist, Lena. She is a woman of 95 years who lives in a New England nursing home. Some attention is paid to her son and daughter and their involvement or rather lack of it in her life, but the piece doesn't carp or preach — just lays out the facts and feelings. Given the present drift of our culture — especially the "I must live my own life" credo of the seventies — one simply must prepare to live out one's own last days in such surroundings. That is deftly brought to bear in the portrait, understated, but there nonetheless. For if we can't or won't have our mothers and fathers live with us, it appears unreasonable to expect our children to turn 180 degrees and take us into their homes in twenty years . . . a harsh projection quietly unveiled.

This episode is nicely paced. We meet and know Lena and she comes across as a likeable person — someone we would enjoy knowing and visiting with as a friend. But the loneliness and feeling of abandonment are there, caught by wisps of conversation such as "I cried a lot when I first came here but then got used to it." You learn this early in the piece, then later experience Lena as such a strong person in her own right that to remember that she cried when coming to the home is quite a jolt. This type of subtle but firm resonance seems a hallmark of Gustafson/Reilly's work — a hallmark that I like and respect.

There is no sardonic put down of either her son or daughter. They're shown quite candidly as troubled by their mother's situation. They want to help but can't see their way clear to take Lena to their respective homes. So she, strong, sturdy lady that she is, must survive in this "home."

And this home, never prodded or poked as in some video investigations, is shown as trying to deal with its "family." A mix-up with a patient regarding what she can and cannot eat shows the way in which personal needs are "handled" in institutions. She is told she can have only one potato because she is diabetic. That is upsetting to the elderly guest — not the loss of the second potato, but the wrong label, "diabetic." Even though a breezy and easy supervisor corrects the mistake when challenged — the guest and viewer are left with an uneasy feeling that such mix-ups could be fatal if medication were involved. Indeed it is a "home" with limitations. Lena looks so strong as she blows out not the proper one but two candles on her 95th birthday cake — so strong and sturdy but still without a real home.

The third portrait is one involving a marriage that establishes a home. We first see the couple as they pick up their marriage license and follow them until they stroll into the soft night darkness after their wedding reception. It is Delores' second marriage, Lee's first. They are older and her two boys, about 9 and 11, are involved. The vignette brings out all the right nuances — the couple's love for one another, Lee's respectful but nurturing relationship with her children, De-



lores' warm and caring feelings toward her parents, even the cool and funning attitude of Lee's bachelor friends on the eve of the wedding.

The wedding is in a Church and in color with lights (cables were clearly visible in one shot). The service itself felt authentic but staged. It seemed abbreviated, "done for the camera," and contained no prayers or singing. It didn't work for me quite as nicely as two other moments in this segment. One of these occurs when the two boys walk in on a marriage ceremony being played out on a TV soap opera. The camera catches them as they act out the ceremony themselves, the older one remarkably accurate as he recites the ritual. The part concerning "If any man knows any reason these two should not be joined . . ." has special poignance for stepchildren and is picked up and given that special resonance when it occurs again later in the actual service.

The other powerful video image for me is of Lee and Delores dancing at the wedding reception. It is lovely, soft, black and white imagery and the hushed voice of Lee can be heard saying, ". . . but this *is* paradise." Only the stroll of the wedding party into the soft night's darkness exceeds the tender beauty of that shot in the tape.

All that happens here is the basis for a "home" — not one without stress and problems — finances, fidelity, Lee's relationship to the boys, the parents, etc. — but a home for living, warm, feeling human people.

And watching the effect of warmth and life slipping away from a home is the theme of the last tape segment. It took guts to end with this episode. True, death is last for us all, but no one enjoys facing that, especially on TV. Actually, the focus of the last piece is not really on the mother who is dying—it can't be really for she is in agony, comatose, and terminally ill with ravaging cancer. Instead, it centers on a young man, George, who takes the brunt of responsibility in caring for his mother as she dies in her own home over a two to three month period. The other children and the woman's sisters help, but George is the central figure.

The fine moments in this segment alternate between watching respectfully and at a tasteful distance as George cares for his mother's every biological and emotional need — and having George talk to us about why he is doing what he is doing.

"She never turned her back on anyone. We couldn't let her death occur in an institution."

He feels he is her last strand of hope. As long as he hangs in and admittedly pretends she may

improve, he feels she continues to fight for life. He does not talk to her realistically of death, but he is there facing the disease and death in all its ugliness with her. None of that ugliness is shown to us graphically but it is felt nonetheless and quite powerfully communicated in what is edited in and out.

George phones the family as the sensed moment of her death approaches and a freeze frame with title tells us she did indeed die later that night. That's as close as we get and as close as I wanted to be to actually watching a person die.

Intercut with the funeral and burial are further interviews with George. He describes the end for us, how all was the way it should be. "Her heart just stopped; suddenly there was no pulse." He tells how she cried and knew all the children were there with her before she died.

Later George says it was important to be with his mother. He felt his father slipped through his fingers without having the sense that he had a son, an ongoing male heir to carry his line forward. George admits he tried to stay close to his mother partly to relieve his guilt pangs at not being there when his father died. The shots at graveside are not overdone and they could have been. Finally, as expected, there is the final one of George, standing to the side by himself. For me, the powerful moments came before these ending shots. They are in the resonance again of hearing the 20 odd year old youth, wearing the inscribed tee-shirt with "Jabberwock—The Ultimate Trip," rap about himself and then watching him change his mother's bedding after a massive hemorrhage. In that juxtaposition and resonance we can see true adulthood emerge.

And that's the power of the entire tape for me. Not the content, though it is well-chosen. Not the style, though most shots are nicely done and a few are stunning in their portraiture. Not in jarring investigative reporting that results in smug conclusions, though some social comment is there. For me, it is the resonance—the catching of life almost unaware so it can live again in our perception of the particular moment: Irene saying, "I'm not pregnant anymore," Lena's crying and then adjusting, Delores' boys enacting the wedding ceremony and George coming into a mature adulthood many of us still grope for in relation to death in our family. This is the power of *Home* for me and indeed the very power of video portraiture itself.

Survival Information Television: Turning Waiting into Watching — and Learning

By Deirdre Boyle

After five years of planning, fund raising, and grit determination, the New Orleans Video Access Center (NOVAC) has at last launched *Survival Information Television*. Better known as *SIT*, this unique approach to delivering information to the poor turns waiting into watching and watching into learning.

The idea for *SIT* first occurred to the NOVAC staff in 1975. Given the high rate of illiteracy among the nation's poor, government pamphlets and social service agency brochures were predictably being discarded as useless by people desperately in need of the basic information they contained. NOVAC, founded as a nonprofit community video group by VISTA volunteers, was convinced that the TV medium offered a better way to serve the critical information needs of its vast low-income black community, which already turned to TV as its primary information source. The problem was how to get video programs out to the poor. Commercial TV stations were understandably uninterested in broadcasting such programs, and cable lines had yet to be laid in New Orleans.

NOVAC arrived at a deceptively simple solution. Why not set up closed circuit TV installations in the waiting rooms of community centers scattered throughout New Orleans' major poverty areas, places where the poor are already a "captive audience." *Survival Information Television* programs shown in clinic, hospital, and welfare office waiting rooms could educate people about consumer credit, jobs and job training, housing, literacy, crime prevention, health care, and legal rights. They could refer people to other agencies and offer tips on how to cope with the welfare system. By informing and entertaining, *SIT* might also help alleviate the boredom, tension, and frustration generated by long hours of waiting, facilitating better relations between social service staff and their clients.

It was an idea whose time had come — or so NOVAC thought. They began by researching the format and information preferences of potential viewers. An early pilot on how to save money at

the grocery store, titled "Smart Shopping," was tested in a neighborhood clinic and hospital. Questionnaires showed that 75% of the viewers were already familiar with the information provided in the tape. So, NOVAC went back to the drawing board. *Just Sign Here*, a later pilot on the dangers of cosigning a loan, was rated high for its pertinent information and appealing soap-opera format.

NOVAC decided to capitalize on TV rather than try to reinvent it, modeling *SIT* programs on TV news, commercials, and sitcom formats. They borrowed their programming concept from *Sesame Street*, planning a variety of short sequences ranging from 30-second commercials to 13-minute minidramas, which could be variously programmed onto a 60-minute tape for playback at different *SIT* centers.

Meanwhile, fund raising in 1975 led NOVAC to Baton Rouge and the head of the state Office of Family Security. According to former NOVAC staff Louis Alvarez, it took eight months of "stroking" to persuade the head of OFS to support *SIT*. On the day he was to sign the proposal providing liberal funding for *SIT* program production and installation of playback units in OFS offices, he suddenly "resigned," apparently "squeezed out" by the governor. This proved to be the first in a series of eleventh-hour funding reversals that not only set back *SIT* but led to "burnout" for several NOVAC staff members. Burwell Ware, now NOVAC director, remained undaunted. When CETA money for salaries came through in February 1980, Ware hired five new producers to put *SIT* production into high gear. The productions have been funded mainly out of NOVAC's operating budget, along with grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, Shell Oil, and private donations. Casting about for additional kinds of support, NOVAC joined with a local crime prevention group to produce a minidrama on using a whistle to call for help when criminally threatened. Finally, on June 13th, 1980, the first *SIT* center opened at the Office of Family Security. Although OFS had agreed to participate, it was



SURVIVAL INFORMATION TELEVISION



without the funding support for production and installation that had been planned five years earlier.

The premier *SIT* tape is aimed mainly at mothers and features spots on literacy, infant care, nontraditional employment opportunities for women, early cancer detection, family crisis centers, crime prevention, and housing. What links the tape's diverse episodes is Smart Alexis, a character who reappears throughout. She's a gossipy, practical, often funny welfare mother who counsels viewers on how to cope with welfare (arrive on time for your appointments, call to find out which documents you need to bring) and offers consumer advice (use cold water soap; it cleans better and keeps your utility bills down.) Smart Alexis is played by Victoria Fletcher, a former NOVAC staffer who is now a student in social-work school.

The high point of the program is a marvelous adaptation of the Vegemetic commercial, familiar to all late-night TV viewers. Delivered in machine-gun announcer fashion, the "commercial" sells viewers on the SITCO Formulamatic, a cheap, easy, no bottles, no-trips-to-the-grocery way to feed your baby—breastfeeding. The final shot zooms in on a grinning young black woman, panning down from her face as the announcer says, "It's best part is, it's portable. Why, it's right there, under your nose!" According to NOVAC's publicity director Marie Gould, the Formulamatic brings the house down every time.

NOVAC excels in these shorter, commercial or PSA-type programs. A series of shorts on the Operation Mainstream literacy project brilliantly uses techniques developed by commercial TV advertisers to strike a responsive chord in viewers. One episode shows a young girl sitting at a kitchen table, choking. She asks her grandmother to get her medicine. The older woman reaches into a cupboard, produces several bottles, and asks which one it is. Barely able to speak, the girl says, "It's the one with my name on it." Panic-stricken, grandma confesses she can't read. Similarly effective shorts on the YWCA Family Crisis Center, the Well Baby Clinic, and the advantages of breastfeeding are peppered throughout the hour-long program.

SIT's longer programs are occasionally marred by their ambitiousness. The best of the longer features is *Blue Collar Women*, a documentary profile of three women placed in high-paying, nontraditional jobs by Women and Employment. It's strength lies in the strong camera work, the editing time to the rhythmic pace of the song "Working in a Coal Mine," and the clear focus on three real women.

Body Shop is a minidrama urging preventive health care for children. It opens with Georgia Fisher bringing her overheated car in for repair. Two mechanics lecture her on preventive car

maintenance, but when her baby starts crying in the back seat, they switch gears to advise her on EPSDT (Early Periodic Screening Diagnostic Treatment) for her baby. Though well-acted by members of the New Orleans' musical "One Mo' Time," *Body Shop*'s bridge from car care to baby care is rough. Once the expectation to learn about car care is raised, a viewer is confused and rather let down by the unexpected shift to a different topic. Tighter editing and simpler goals would improve what is an otherwise stylish production.

Head in the Sand suffers from similar problems. This feature on early cancer detection is part fantasy, part documentary. The opening trip to the beach is too drawn out to sustain the humor and irony of finding a woman dressed up as an ostrich. When she suddenly becomes serious, telling about her own cancer and leading into a hard-hitting discussion by patients and doctors, the radical shift from whimsical childlike odyssey to harsh reality is stylistically jolting. This break ultimately undermines the credibility of the speaker.

The most ambitious program viewed is the *SIT Housing Report*, a news feature hosted by local black TV news celebrity Sally Ann Roberts. This two-part report investigates problems in renting homes and apartments and covers code violations, eviction, renovation, subsidization, discrimination, and rent strikes. Roberts' rapid delivery style makes it difficult for an outsider to follow the complicated ins and outs of the New Orleans housing situation. But according to Marie Gould, *SIT* viewers—many of whom are Roberts fans—are familiar with her manner and find the *Housing Report* highly informative.

One of the most popular segments is a pastiche of *Sanford & Son*, where a Redd Fox look-alike calls up his son's "hot" new girlfriend only to discover that VIA is actually the Volunteer and Information Agency, *SIT*'s "hotline" for referrals. Since June 13, VIA has been receiving at least six calls per day that can be traced back to *SIT*.

The names, addresses, and phone numbers of all the agencies mentioned in the tape appear on the screen, but viewers are not expected to remember or jot them down. They are given a wallet-sized card printed with all the information and a "*SIT* Guide," a take-off on *TV Guide*, which provides a listing of programs and follow-up names and numbers.

The true test of *SIT*'s success will be its long-term impact on viewers, and Loyola University is working with NOVAC to measure this. The OFS staffs have been enthusiastic about *SIT* since it opened, noting how waiting room arguments have diminished and been replaced by laughter and rapt attention to the *SIT* monitor. Most of them have agreed to participate in the evaluation study, asking their clients if they plan to do

anything based on what they have seen on the tape. The follow-ups will be kept by OFS personnel on a voluntary basis. What NOVAC hopes to discover, for example, is whether some people go for a cancer check-up or enroll in a literacy class after viewing the tape. This information will determine the real effectiveness of the *SIT* concept.

Right now the future of *SIT* is both promising and imperiled. A series on parenting sponsored by the Junior League has been in production this summer and is being readied for the fall opening of the second *SIT* center at Charity Hospital's Ob-Gyn Clinic. However, on September 30,

CETA money will run out, and NOVAC staff may all be out of a salary. This is nothing new for NOVAC veterans. Eddie Kurtz, who wrote, produced, and directed *Body Shop*, *Head in the Sand*, and a new series on immunization, is ineligible for CETA money and has been donating his time. Director Burwell Ware has also been working without salary.

Dedication alone will not fund future *SIT* productions and installations. But NOVAC — looking back over five years of funding crunches — is hopeful that *SIT* will find a way to continue and even spread to other cities with similar information-poor communities.

Selections From the Native American Broadcasting Consortium

By Rebecca Moore

"It's hard to be an Indian," says a Mashpee Wampanoag in *People of the First Light*, a series of documentaries about the Indians of Southern New England. The Wampanoag's observation is echoed in six other programs I viewed from the Native American Public Broadcasting Consortium.

The Consortium library offers 16 individual tapes, and five series on Native American culture. The tapes are free to some 30 Consortium members, and available at a nominal charge to non-members.

"The aim of the library is to make quality programs available to the general public via public television and educational institutions," says Consortium Executive Director Frank Blythe. "We want to create a better understanding of traditional Indian values and culture."

Each year a screening committee previews tapes, and makes recommendations for acquiring new material. The library adds five to ten hours to its collection each year.

The sample that I saw shows the great diversity among Indians in the United States, in language, appearance, beliefs, and lifestyles. The Mashpee Wampanoags, for example, live on the coast of New England, and survive by being fishermen. The Menominees of Wisconsin, portrayed in a documentary called *Menominee*, are forest people, whose main source of support is a lumber mill which the tribe owns. The Navahos are primarily ranchers, living in vast open spaces.

Despite the differences, native Americans share an identity which transcends occupation or location. Respect for nature is a part of this culture. The closeness, or one-ness, Indians feel for the land is not mere romanticism. The Wampanoag, a man named Vernon, takes the viewer on a tour of destruction: the boat houses and neat gardens belonging to wealthy vacationers. "It may be pretty," he remarks, "but to me it's the end." A Navaho in *Dineh: The People*, says, "The sheep is our blood." The works of Indian artists shown in several programs reflect strong ties to the land.

The culture of oppression — alcoholism, poverty, illness, unemployment — is another theme common to the Native American programs. The Indian nations, existing in cities and on reservations, are Third World countries within the United States. Small, poorer than industrialized countries, the Indian nations have had to fight U.S. corporations, and the U.S. government, just like their counterparts in Africa and South America. The corporations want Indian land, and Indian resources: coal, uranium, timber, water, oil.

Rather than dwell on this exploitation, the tapes show the struggles, and occasional successes, Indians have had. *Menominee* shows how that tribe was "terminated:" legislated into non-existence so the state of Wisconsin could control, and tax, Menominee people. In a twenty-year fight the Menominees sought an end to termina-



tion, and in 1973 finally won.

Dineh shows how the U.S. government and oil companies manufactured a phony land dispute between the Navahos and Hopis. The reason: the second largest coal deposit in the nation sat underneath land both tribes used. Unlike the Menominees, however, the Navahos and Hopis lost. A re-location bill passed Congress so the oil companies could strip-mine their land.

Because of oppression, Indians have been forced to recover their heritage in order to survive. An Indian in *Dineh* expresses this effort poetically: Indians drown in mainstream society because they don't have a cultural "canoe." The Consortium tapes show how some are trying to find or make their own "canoes." *The Eagle and the Condor* follows a group of North American Indians as they perform traditional dances for Indians in South America. The group discovers the cultural heritage North and South have in common. The programs about artists Bob Penn, Fritz Scholder, and Arthur Amiotte show how they have fused Indian culture with Western culture.

Technical Considerations

I've separated technical considerations from the discussion of content because they usually muddy-up reviews. "The medium isn't the message," an Indian television producer tells me, "the message is the message." I agree. Unless the form of a program actually hinders the presentation of content, it should not be the main consideration. A technically-perfect show may be empty.

A good, or rather bad, example of this is *The Eagle and the Condor*, produced by KBYU-TV in Utah. The camera-work is fantastic. It's hard to believe, but it looks as though they made several crane shots high in the Andes. The editing is clean. Shots of a group of people dancing on a grassy plateau are intercut with shots of the vast mountains. Much of the music is original, or traditional. The narration consists of observations made by Indians participating in the tour of South America. They have slight accents and nice voices.

But aside from the pretty pictures and superb technical quality, *Eagle and Condor*, is basically uninteresting. The only message that comes through in 30 minutes is that North American Indians are a lot like South American Indians. There was nothing about the life-and-death issues' including genocide, facing Indians south of the border. In an effort to stress the positive, KBYU-TV neglected issues important to all Indians, issues which other Consortium programs confront.

Another tape, one on Fritz Scholder from the *American Indian Artist* series, is as well-executed as *The Eagle and the Condor*. But in it Scholder deals

with the strengths and weaknesses of his heritage. Many of his paintings find their origins on the back streets of the urban Indian ghettos. From a street scene the editor cuts to a gallery opening, contrasting the Indian and non-Indian worlds.

Producer Jack Peterson created a thoughtful and interesting portrait of Scholder. Every moment looks planned, scripted. The show opens, and closes, with Scholder carrying a huge blank canvas across a patio and into his studio. There is no sync sound for the first five minutes or so, only music accompanying poetry by James A. McGrath, read by Rod McKuen.

"An artist is a warrior. I am a warrior," McKuen intones. I found this baffling: were these Scholder's sentiments, or McGrath's? After getting to know Scholder through the documentary, McKuen's dramatic intensity seemed to conflict with Scholder's low-key personality. Despite the contradiction, the poetry, the music, the street sounds, the stillness of Scholder's studio, all worked to make a strong statement.

The thing that struck me about all of the documentaries I saw was the use of sound. With camera-work ranging from average to exceptional, the audio mix made the difference between an average and exceptional program.

Jonathan Reinis and Stephen Hornick make the best use of wild sound in *Dineh*. There are long moments when all you can hear are Indian boys calling to their sheep, a woman weaving, or the harsh sound of a bulldozer tearing up the land. You almost think you can hear the wind blowing through the grass. Reinis and Hornick have allowed the silences that occur in the world to exist on tape—wild sound in nature is often quiet. The audio is never dead in *Dineh*. It's simply quieter than what we're used to on TV.

Reinis and Hornick mixed a variety of voices to tell the story of the dispute between the Navahos and Hopis. An Indian's voice, and the feeling behind it, contrasts with what sounds like a New York public interest lawyer polemicizing about strip-mining.

The quality of the narrator's voice is more important than many TV producers realize. In *People of the First Light*, you hear a Wampanoag Indian speaking with a wonderful Cape Cod accent. Another Wampanoag, a youth, speaks in a slightly-accented voice. His diction is unusual. Then a narrator, who sounds non-Indian, busts in and essentially repeats what the Indians said. The Indian speakers were far more eloquent, and I wondered why producer Glenn Suprenard didn't let them tell the whole story.

In a complex piece that deals with issues, narration becomes crucial. It makes the difference between whether or not people will understand the subject matter. *Menominee* is just such a piece, where the narrator has to guide the viewer through a maze of complicated historical and

current events. But the student producers at the University of Wisconsin used a narrator who sounds non-Indian, although they had several Indians — men and women — who could have done a better job.

Indians frequently have a slight accent, or inflection. Their sentence structure and choice of words is often different from white narrators. A non-Indian narrator, therefore, evokes a different feeling about Indian culture.

Professional narrators, who have a professional tone and attitude, are especially irritating. They're not involved in the subject. Unfortunately, one of the worst narrators is in the piece about Indian Artist Bob Penn. By "worst" I mean inappropriate. The narrator, a theater person with a long list of credentials, has a booming, bouncy Encyclopedia Britannica films voice. It clashes with the soft-spoken Bob Penn, portrayed in the piece.

Another audio problem I experienced in the film on Bob Penn — and in some of the other programs — was an absence of ambient sound. We see Penn painting away, but we don't hear the sound of his brush scratching the paper. The same problem exists in the Fritz Scholder piece where we hear only music as he completes a painting.

The decision to use sync or wild sound is, ultimately, one of style. Music, narration, poetry create something that didn't necessarily exist at the time of shooting. That "something" can add to a program. Additionally, wild sound is often

unfocused, confusing. Sync sound can be dull, pedestrian.

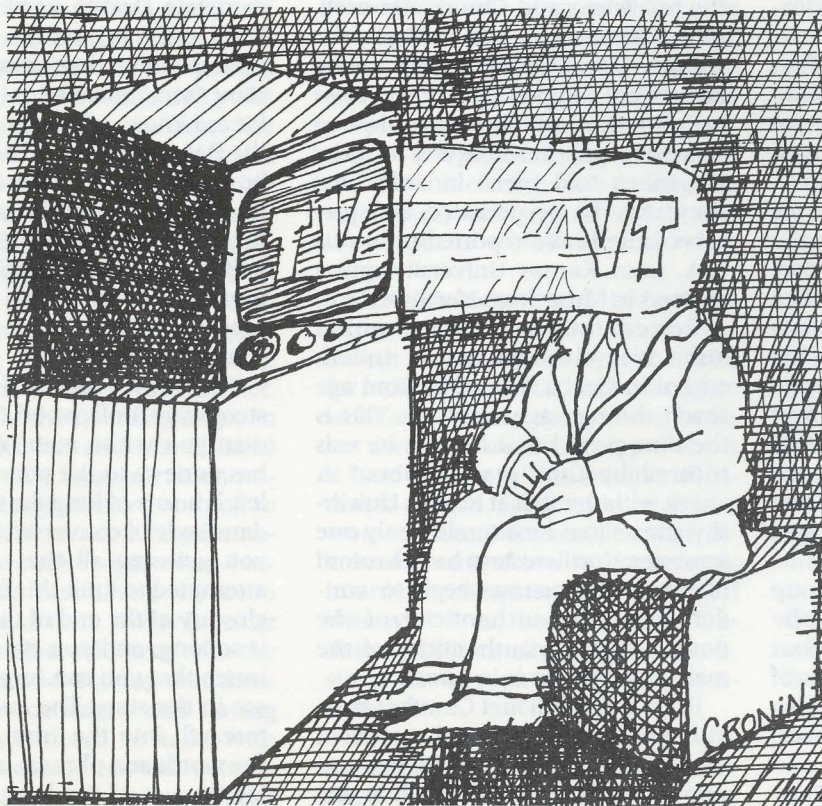
On the other hand, music, narration, or any other technical gimmicks can get in the way, preventing us from truly experiencing the subject, whether it's a person, an idea, or a place. The sounds a person lives with reveal identity as much as physical objects.

The Future

So far the Native American Public Broadcasting Consortium has concentrated on acquiring and distributing programs about Indians. The organization now plans to get into production, and has developed several proposals to train Indians in television production.

Using Native American crew, talent, and scholars, the Consortium hopes to eliminate one of the weaknesses of the current system. "The programs we've acquired have had little Indian involvement," notes Frank Blythe. "By producing shows ourselves the Consortium can present an authentic picture of Indian culture in a way that's informational, educational, and entertaining."

The NAPBC is a resource center for public TV stations, school, community groups and tribal organizations. For more information, write Native American Public Broadcasting Consortium, Inc., P.O. Box 83111, Lincoln, Nebraska 68501; telephone (402) 472-3522.



POINT OF VIEW

Hanta Yo Hollywood's Indian "Roots"

By Bruce Baird

Independent television producer David Wolper wants to create the *Roots* of American Plains Indian. His company is currently scripting a mini-series based on the bestselling novel *Hanta Yo*, by Ruth Beebe Hill. Wolper claims the series could be the most important work on the American Indian ever produced for television. Many Indian people disagree.

One woman, a Lakota from the Pine Ridge reservation, has filed suit in the Tribal Court to stop the production of *Hanta Yo*. Other tribal groups and Indian organizations have passed resolutions condemning the novel as inaccurate, insulting and offensive. There are plans at this time to file suit in a non-Indian court to stop production if necessary.

Indian and non-Indian critics of the book have serious questions about the historical accuracy, use of the Lakota language, and rituals depicted in the book.

Since the book *Hanta Yo* first came out in 1979 there have been many reviews written about it, I will not try and duplicate any of those, nor do a page-by-page analysis. What I can do is present my own perceptions of the book and its co-authors or collaborators, Ruth Beebe Hill and Chunksa Yuha (alias) Lorenzo Blacksmith. I don't pretend to be an authority on these two but I have met them and talked with them and read the book several times.

Hanta Yo is the story of a small group of people, the Mahto band of the Teton Sioux. It takes place from about 1750 to 1833. It involves the lives of two people, Ahbleza, the son of a warrior, and Tonweya, the scout. They have had similar visions and thus are linked together for life. They

are called "a dreaming pair." The setting for the book is the plains between the Black Hills and the Missouri River of what is now North and South Dakota.

The author, Ruth Beebe Hill, reportedly spent over 25 years in researching the book and insists it's not fiction. Every ceremony, every piece of culture that is used was verified by at least three collaborators in every case. She supposedly talked with over one thousand informants throughout the country. Unfortunately, only one, Chunksa Yuha, her main collaborator, remains alive today.

Chunksa Yuha himself is a case study. According to the author and the publishers and Chunksa himself, he is a messenger and a carrier of the culture. He and seven other young boys were supposed to have been taught the ancient, suppressed Dakota language, rituals and songs by the tribe's "old men" in order that they may be perpetuated and preserved. He is also reported to have a B.A. from Kansas University and a Masters in Music from Northwestern.

Records indicate that Chunksa Yuha was enrolled in the Indian school in Genoa, Nebraska from age seven through age eighteen. This is the time period that he says he was tutored by the "grandfathers." A check with the staff at Kansas University shows that he attended only one semester. Northwestern has no record of him at all. One must begin to wonder about the authenticity of the novel when the authenticity of the main collaborator is in question.

Ruth Beebe Hill met Chunksa Yuha in 1963-64 when she was in search of a person who could help her put some "real Indian" feeling into the

book. The book at that time was a two-thousand page manuscript in English. Chunksa Yuha felt the book lacked "spiritual substance" and the two spent the next fourteen years translating the manuscript into, they say, ancient Dakota and then back into English, using Webster's 1806 dictionary to give it a modern tone but remaining faithful to the original Dakota in vocabulary and sentence structure. As Sioux author Vine Deloria, Jr. puts it "How in the hell do you type up a manuscript in an ancient language, that if it existed, would have no symbols or alphabet?"

The author says that she has been misunderstood: she did not write a complete Dakota version but translated only important phrases and concepts and then went to the ancient "root" meaning of the word. As far as I know, when asked to produce the Dakota version of the manuscript, however, Ruth Beebe Hill has been unable to. Even if she could produce it, you'd still have to question the validity of it because Vine Deloria's question is still unanswered: "How do you reproduce a language that has no symbols or alphabet?"

The author has tried to avoid the stereotype Hollywood "Ugh, me Indian you white man" dialogue. She has done so to the point that what is left is a sort of long drawn-out mundane style of conversation that leaves you guessing all the time. She has attempted to limit this by providing a glossary at the end of the book, but it is so long, and you have to use it so much that you can forget where you are in the story. The author uses her research into the "root meaning" of the words and phrases, as her defense for the use of the language as it ap-

pears in the book. According to her and Chunksa Yuha, this is the true style of the Dakota language as it was used before the white man came to this country.

Ruth Beebe Hill and her main collaborator have set up a series of requirements that must be met before one can be called an "expert informant": 1) you must be three generations removed from the present *in thought*; 2) you must be an archaic language speaker; and 3) you must have a college education. These requirements contradict each other. But according to the author and Chunksa Yuha, the only individual who has met those requirements and is still alive is Chunksa Yuha. That's a nice neat package. There is no one left, according to these two, who can or has the right to criticize their work.

I first had contact with the author and Chunksa Yuha on Easter Sunday of this year as the two of them were making a tour of the area promoting the book. They had stopped in Vermillion on their way to the Santee reservation and wanted to meet some of the Indian people from the area. Four or five of us showed up along with some non-Indian friends.

As I was being introduced to her she asked if I was Lokota and I said no. I could see a sort of veil come down over her eyes. She had written me off. Nothing I said from that point on meant anything to her. She seemed to be interested in what a Traditional woman was saying until she probed into the woman's background and found out that the woman's great grandfather was part French. As it was being said you could see the veil come over her eyes again and I knew that none of us were going to make any headway with her.

I tried again the next day to get an interview with her after she finished another one in a local television station, but she would have nothing to do with me. In fact, a small confrontation occurred between us when I insisted that I at least have a chance to talk to Chunksa Yuha. "Why is he the one who is vulnerable here" was the answer I received. Having met them both on two occasions and having talked, or attempted to talk, with them I've come to several conclusions about both of them and their

work.

Ruth Beebe Hill has worked for so long on this project that she has come to believe everything she wrote is the total truth. She is a long time friend of Ayn Rand, and that same individualistic attitude is a part of her, and, I believe, a major influence of *Hanta Yo*. In *Hanta Yo* she placed the individual needs of the main characters above the needs of the community as a whole. This is contrary to any and all verbal, or written, material on the social make-up of the American Indian. Although David Wolper says less than 10 percent of the novel will appear in his TV mini-series, a script I read reflects the same individualism of the novel. One passage is lifted directly from the book.

Ruth Beebe Hill mentioned that her research had taken her to the East Coast and into the South and had covered the Catawbas and the Biloxi, as well as a number of other siouxian-speaking people, of which the Lakota-Dakota were only a part, rather than the main stock. This leads me to believe that she has taken any and all customs, and ceremonies she read about, heard about, or assumed, and as long as it was siouxian, she used it. She placed every bit of her research in one story and the one small group of people and called it the *Roots* of American Indians. I also feel that she believes the Indians, as a people, were a dying, or even a dead, race of people until the white man came to this country. She is using this small group of people, the Mahto, as the center of rebirth for the Indian people.

Others who have read the book object to her use of explicit sex, and believe it is used only to hype the book for better sales. Some have even gone so far as to say that the sex described is her own fantasies being played out. It is hard to believe that traditional Indians would have told a white woman about ceremonies that involved the use of oral sex, or sodomy, in order to complete the ceremony. If that were true, how come no Traditional Indians alive today can substantiate any part of those ceremonies?

If one knew nothing about the American Indian one could come away from *Hanta Yo* believing that

Indians were very cruel, even to their loved ones; that they were very individualistic, and placed themselves above the wants and needs of society as a whole; and worst of all, that they were totally without humor. In all of its one thousand pages there is not one bit of humor in *Hanta Yo*. How can one purport to have studied a whole society and not find any humor? For me, this is the single most important fact condemning the book — but then, its author has no humor either.

I have mixed feelings about *Hanta Yo* going on television. If it goes on the air as a novel, then it's no different from *Once An Eagle*, or *From Here to Eternity*, or any of the other novels for television. There is a group of Indian actors and actresses who have worked hard to get into the industry, and this would be an opportunity for them to perform in an Indian film. They're caught in the middle.

Wolper could do a good job, technically, on *Hanta Yo*. His productions are fairly slick, fairly well-done. From the two scripts I've read, I could see what he could do: make very pretty pictures. But I'm not sure what the story would be about.

Pressure from Indians across the country may stop Wolper and Hill. Other ethnic minorities have stopped offensive material from being broadcast. *Mandingo* wasn't released on television because the black community objected so strongly. That might happen with *Hanta Yo* — it could get produced and then shelved.

But the best thing for *Hanta Yo* would be a decent burial, although I don't think that will happen as long as the media hype continues to create the false impression that this is the Indian *Roots*. The public will eventually believe *Hanta Yo* is fact rather than fiction. If the commercial television people, and Ruth Beebe Hill, can make a buck, however, we'll probably see *Hanta Yo* on television. And that's a sad statement on the industry.

Bruce Baird, a Chippewa-Oneida Indian, is Director of Minority Affairs for South Dakota Public Television. He's also Chairman of the Board for the Native American Public Broadcasting Consortium.

VIDEO PIONEERS

Three Video Pioneers Talk About Their TV From the 50's to the Future

By John Hunt

Lindsay Anderson

JH: I put the cactus on the set to remind you of Los Angeles and it reminds me of your character.

LA: It's terrible to be thought of as prickly when one wants to be benign.

JH: I think you've had to do things in your life and you came to terms with that.

LA: I think it's surviving within the bourgeois world.

JH: What about being here in Hollywood?

LA: It's the first time I've been here with any degree of seriousness. I find it difficult to take seriously. I find it difficult to relate to, really. I'm not, unfortunately, enough of a careerist to be able to take advantage of it. I think you need to be a careerist in this town. . . .

JH: Tell me about television.

LA: When *The Old Crowd* was shown at London Weekend, at the end of it the head of drama turned around and said "well, he'll never work for television again."

Television is maddening I think but we don't really know what we're talking about when we talk about television. The word can mean so many things. Television is a means of diffusion, I suppose, cheaply. It implies the use of video and everything that you can do with video which seems to me could be very exciting except in Britain it's probably less developed than it is here and it's beset with problems, not so much technical as to do with labor relations, the impossibility of using the techniques because wage

Chuck McCann

During 1975 I began a detailed examination of Windward Ave. in Venice, California. My main tool was the old SONY 3400 Portapak. In my eyes' Windward was the end of the Western World, hugging the Pacific shore at the western extremity of Los Angeles. Constructed in the late 19th Century by an eccentric millionaire who modeled it after its Italian counterpart, Venice has been a poor place to live since the Thirties and the seamy side of life was not an unfamiliar sight on the Avenue. The drifters and winos, the junkies and madmen, revolutionaries, mystics — they all came here . . . After all, Venice had been the Southern retreat for the Beats.

But now famous and prosperous artists had studios there. Bagmen and derelicts could be seen sprawled next to the Bentleys of the patrons who visited these art studios. And, Hollywood came there in full regalia. Crowds gathered to ogle stars or watch the magic being exposed right in front of their eyes, like Chaplin and Sennet had done 60 years before, or when Orson Welles transformed the Avenue for his history-making *Touch of Evil*.

I have stood with these crowds, the real crowds from *Day of the Locust*. So, one warm March night in 1976, I went out into that crowd with my Rover to see what I would uncover and after playing back in the camera the first couple of takes for the director of photography — the scene

Jack Paritz

Jack Paritz was a major writer of the golden age of TV play drama, including Goodyear, Kraft, and Studio One. He was one of the earliest experimenters with half-inch portable video. He founded Hippo Video, and writes, produces, and acts in plays that mix live actors and pre-recorded material. At the same time, he has maintained his connection with commercial television.

JP: In a minute or two when I forget about the camera, I'll be a little bit more relaxed. But I feel funny when somebody points a camera at me right away.

JH: You expect other people to take your lines and be absolutely able to deal with them in front of a camera.

JP: Of course. No, but I do that all the time. I act in my own things. That's all right as long as I've got the lines all written and I know what I'm going to say. This is not that.

JH: You know what you're going to say, you've been saying this stuff for a long time.

JP: Oh, I know but . . .

JH: Just the stories about your life.

JP: My variations on a theme. It seems to me I saw television even earlier than 1939. It seems to me I saw it at a World Fair in Chicago in 1936. I really don't remember the story because like I say I tell stories differently different times. I do remember that around 1939 when just as the war was breaking and everybody had that terrible creepy sensation on the back of their necks that we were going to be at war at any time. You knew it

agreements haven't been hammered out.

Then, also, the unfortunate paradox is that this medium which should increase our ability to communicate with each other, because of the expense involved but also because of the danger implicit in a medium which is seen by so many people and can be so influential, is beset by censorship which are both official but mostly unofficial and therefore of a very dangerous kind. Television by its very nature is bound to be an instrument of conformism, both social and artistic, and that I found out for myself recently.

JH: So you can't work in British television anymore?

LA: I think it's unlikely, honestly. *The Old Crowd* was greeted with a storm of abuse. You know how people accept what is written by critics even when they don't accept the critics. The fact that it appeared in print, they carry away with them the idea that the thing is a disaster when they haven't seen it and of course are too lazy to screen it for themselves. It's not a very bright outlook, my relationship with British television. . . .

LA: The problem with television is that it takes away the one indispensable factor in a work of art which is freedom. The only way to make anything, at least for someone like myself, is to be free in making it. To, if you like, make one's own rules; because I don't believe in being undisciplined but it has to be a self imposed discipline. That was the one thing I have done for television, *The Old Crowd*. I paid for it, fine, but it was done in complete freedom and in that way practically unique I should think in television production. And it's the only reason it is any good. It was made totally without any inhibitions and certainly no kinds of censorship and with complete freedom amongst all of us, myself, the actors, the technicians, and as I say unfortunately you pay for it. But never mind. I'm glad I did it.

JH: You mentioned the "free cinema" movement. You're one of the co-founders of a school of modern day cinema. What about now 20 years later?

LA: It's extremely sad because free

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they were shooting outside my door involved getting a familiar unmarked police car to skreech around the corner perfectly — a large friendly man came up and began expounding on the portable video hardware I was carrying, telling the nearby film crew that now this small format tape could be broadcast, that the color was terrific, and that, with a grand flourish that included the movie set behind us, "The handwriting is on the wall. . . ." Instantly I recognized this man's face from my television childhood. I walked up to him with my camera and asked him what he was doing here:

CM: I'm guest star.

JH: Is this cops and robbers stuff? I never see the show.

CM: *Starsky and Hutch*. It's the hit of the season.

JH: It is, huh? I work in TV every day and I don't watch it. I'm not following the shows.

CM: What do you watch?

JH: I'm looking at little bits of stuff all the time just to see what's going on but the television I want to do is completely different than the television that's on right now. I have a studio over here and a company and we do great television, right now for colleges and universities. But TV is changing to the point of . . . you work in television. Is it changing?

CM: Do I think it's changing? Constantly.

JH: Yeah, how?

CM: I did a kids' show in New York for 14 years.

JH: Yeah, I know. Tell us your name?

CM: Chuck McCann. I did a television show for 14 years and I remember the first day that they wheeled the videotape machine into the studio and I started experimenting with it at that time. I had an idea one night. I just hated the fact that the camera was in the studio and stationary so I asked my video engineer Bert Vitorious, can we make this thing go backwards? And I loved Ernie Kovacs, and he said, let's experiment so I took the cue track and the control track which is the same heads and I reversed the heads and just inverted the tape and we were able to make the video picture go backwards. That

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was going to happen but not quite when. People were saying "television is just around the corner." Of course I had seen television and I had thought, "Oh, my God, this is so incredible. This is going to come into everybody's home" and the war came and all the technologies went to war.

So, it wasn't until I guess 1945 or so that I went out as soon as I could afford one. My little tiny box cost me a fortune in those days, but I did manage to get the money together and get one and I watched it 24 hours straight. I watched everything, I even watched a football game and I don't even like football but I watched it from beginning to end and loved it because I could see the people. And this was black and white and little and people were even putting magnifying plastic discs in front of them. And then I remember the first color sets.

By the way, a play that I did for NBC call *Primary Colors* (I think it was done by them because of the title,) was the first dramatic show ever shown in color on NBC and it was done on the Goodyear Playhouse. It was marvelous, it was done live but what they did was, since the woman was an artist, they had a real artist there painting her portrait and before every act you saw the portrait a little further along until at the end over the credits he finished it up and it was a great frame for the story itself. So I was in at the very beginning of color which was very interesting.

JH: How did you get into TV?

JP: A friend of mine, Peter Reed, who is the husband of the woman who is in *Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday* with me, so I've known them for 25 years or so. Joan and I have acted together for 25 years literally but he got a summer job in Laya Salisbury's office. She was a big, big agent in New York who died just recently. She handled *Diary of Anne Frank* and so on, and she was opening a television department in her offices. And so, that summer Peter took over and I had written sketches and stuff like that. Just for fun, just for things that I was doing myself and he said now that I have this job, why don't you try to write something seriously and I'll try to sell it. I thought that's a great idea; so, I thought of something that had

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cinema was a specifically British movement within the context of British cinema by a very small number of people who were friends and working with very limited means at a time when the contemporary adjuncts to filmmaking hadn't been developed. There was no such thing as tapes, no tape for editing and you couldn't have a handheld camera. We were people who were interested in movies and wanted to make films at a time when the British cinema was totally congealed and in its pre-war image and resistant to new talent, new ideas or exploring new territory.

Many things happened in Britain by chance. It was an empirical movement. I had been working on the film *Together* which was a 35mm picture. Carroll Reisz and Tony Richardson had been making a 16mm movie about a jazz club called *Mama Don't Allow* and I had in my bottom drawer a 10 minute documentary impression, film poem called *Oh Dream Land* which I had made about 4 years before in Margate at a fun fair. We were talking about these films and realizing that when you made a movie of this kind there was absolutely nothing you could do with it. Nobody wanted to see it, there was no way you could show it, they weren't

regarded as real films, they weren't things that critics would ever bother to turn up to review because critics work entirely within the establishment.

I suddenly got the idea of forming a movement but it was a movement after the films had been made because if we put our films together, if we found a label for them and if we wrote propagandist publicity we could create the idea of the movement which would be journalistically viable and then we knew the journalists would write about it. Therefore, we would be able to make some kind of mark.

So that's what we did. We picked the name "free cinema" and we managed to get the National Film Theater in London to give us 4 days and we made this program of *Together*, *Mama Don't Allow* and this film that I had made about 5 or 6 years before and which nobody had ever seen. We made propaganda, we whipped up a certain aggressive feeling about the British cinema at the time and played the youth scene rather hard and there was enough in the films to make an impression, get the press and it was extremely successful.

JH: How much of a publicity idea was the "Angry Young Man" thing?

LA: The angry young man thing

wasn't a publicity idea. That was a term invented by a journalist. It came out of the play *Look Back in Anger* and it linked various dissident talents or talents wanting to break through in Britain in the mid-50s with the play *Look Back in Anger* which had been the most sensational breakthrough of the time. Really had affected the British theater fundamentally. So a lot of people were called angry young men. I don't know if they were angry or impatient or just wanted things to change and they went on being called angry young men long after they were no longer young. But it was a brilliant journalistic invention. It wasn't accurate like most journalistic inventions, but it did in fact convey the very rough feelings of a number of people in different arts who were loosely associated at the time.

I suppose "free cinema" was part of that. I think there were only 3 "free cinema" programs of British films. We also showed other films like Lionel Rogerson's film *On The Bowery* and we were the first people to show Truffaut and Chabrol in England and we showed some Polish films. We used "free cinema" as a means of showing our films. My own film *Every Day Except Christmas* and Carroll Reisz' film *We Are The Lambeth Boys*. We also built free cinema programs around them.

Lindsay Anderson's *The Old Crowd*

By Bill Creed

Lindsay Anderson began his career writing film criticism for *Sequence*, the Oxford University Film Society magazine, in 1946. Two years later, now an editor of *Sequence*, Anderson directed his first film, *Meet the Pioneers*, a documentary about conveyor belts. Between 1948 and 1957, Anderson continued both to write criticism and to direct films: 15 documentaries in all, including two award winning films — *Thursday's Children* and *Everyday Except Christmas*. During this period Anderson was an outspoken critic of British middle-class films, arguing for rejuvenation and the need to capture on film something "fresh, spontaneous, individual."

In 1957, Anderson left films and did not return until 1963 when he

made his first feature, *This Sporting Life*. He has made three more features and two short films. Most of his efforts since 1957 have been in the theater where he is the prime directorial interpreter of David Storey's material.

In 1955 and 1956 Anderson directed five episodes of *Robin Hood*. There, he first encountered dramatic form and actors in television. In 1978, with *The Old Crowd*, Anderson returned actively to television.

This time the medium was videotape instead of film and Anderson was working with an original hour script by Alan Bennett. I enjoyed the program but there are a lot of things that are merely good. The question that must be raised with this show,

because Anderson himself raises it: is it great television?

Alan Bennett's script strikes me as derivative: a little Pinter, a little Stoppard, a little Wilde. If one enjoys this sort of thing (as I do), the arch British humor, wisecracks politely hidden amid seemingly mundane conversation, deliciously employed non-sequiturs, then Bennett's script is enjoyable. The plot revolves around three couples and one unattached male who gather at the new home of George and Betty for a dinner party. The rest of the cast include George and Betty's old mother, two rather mysterious hired servants, a couple of entertainers, a blind piano tuner, and an unexpected guest whose death may be construed as the climax of the

Although in a sense "free cinema" was defeated because this was at the time, the late 50s, when television was becoming dominant and young people were no longer responsive to the idea of film independence and they all wanted to get into television and become part of the television establishment and that's where they went.

So, we couldn't get backing for "free cinema" films. The Ford Motor Company withdrew its sponsorship after we had given them two prize winning documentaries and we stopped. We went on to make films and we went on to make feature films, if not immediately. I went into the theater for a few years, Carroll Reisz did some stuff for the Ford Motor Company till he got his chance to do *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* which was given him by Tony Richardson. Tony who was at the Royal Court Theater and out of that made films *Look Back in Anger* and *The Entertainer* and then went on in films to make *A Taste of Honey*, *The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner* and I did *Sporting Life* produced by Carroll. We were a very small, just at that time, quite closely knit, group, mutually quite suspicious, but then I think those groups usually are, and there was a feeling that we were breaking

new ground, opening things up and creating the possibility of a British cinema.

Then it all ran into the ground in a very tragic way. This is part of history. Why it happened you would have to analyze in depth. Tony Richardson, having achieved the huge success of *Tom Jones* which came directly out of that whole activity and movement, proceeded to throw it away. He came to the States and he made *The Loved One* here which wasn't very successful. He then went to France where he made a couple of features with Jeanne Moreau. These weren't successful and it really dissipated the whole effort.

The other disaster that took place was the mid-60s disaster of swinging London, nurtured by the Americans, which gave rise to a school of swinging filmmaking, pioneered by Dick Lester. They were films that played around on the surface of things in Britain, drew no nourishment from the British situation and in the end, the swinging movement was responsible for a large number of films which were too bad ever to be shown and as history progressed, economic history, the Americans found it no longer particularly inviting to invest in British production and since the British had never really invested in

their own production, the thing ran into the sand and British directors who wanted not only to work but to make money, came to America. If there had been a British cinema now, we'd have 6, 7, or 8 pretty top directors, but they are now essentially American directors like John Schlesinger. Carroll Reisz' last two films have been American; Tony Richardson lives in Los Angeles and doesn't really do very much; Jack Layton doesn't do much and goes from one development deal to another and his last film was *The Great Gatsby*; Peter Yates, who is an American director; Ken Russell is working in Burbank. Those are the talents which should have been the talents of the British cinema if the free cinema movement of the mid-50s had been able to go on and develop and flower and mature.

JH: How does that make you feel?

LA: It makes me feel sad and isolated. You can say I'm now in Hollywood in a kind of phantasmagoric way. Nobody wants to make British films anymore. The British themselves don't want to make anything decent. They want to make international films which even when of very poor quality will get their money back on the international rubbish market and the Americans on the whole are a bit

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evening.

The conversations range from discussions about the abysmal economy and dreadful neighborhood to anecdotes about missing hands found on buses. The date of the teleplay is uncertain; it could be now or it could be two, five, or ten years in the future. Decay is everywhere. The ceiling cracks, there is no furniture, economic chaos and violent disasters are the norm the world over, but "The Old Crowd" carries on resolutely in the face of adversity.

Having always worked well with actors, Anderson has peopled *The Old Crowd* with superb, though caricatured and familiar, performances. It is a tribute to the director that no one performer stands out in this repertory. Though, the most interesting characters—the two actors moonlighting as servants, the blind piano tuner who used to be a cop—are the least developed. Indeed, when the two actor/

servants mysteriously disappear during the show, there is a definite feeling of loss.

Yet, Anderson has taken this script about decay and transformed it into a Brechtian parable about television and the desensitization of life through the media.

The Old Crowd works on several different levels. First, we have Harold and Glynn the servants who are really actors. During the program, one of the guests tries to draw Harold out with his admiration of actors, particularly their ability to remember lines but Harold replies, re: teleprompters, "They're reading it."

Anderson continually makes us aware that *The Old Crowd* is enacted with shots of cameras, crew, and studio, one memorable shot using a mirror. But this brings up a third level: the crew become actors. There is even no assurance that the people we see are really crew members.

In *The Old Crowd* reality has now become a function of media. The old mother remains glued to her television whether it shows eye surgery or auto crashes. Two members of the household meet for some violent, illicit sex in her room but after a cursory glance, the old woman returns to the reality of her television.

The most brilliant example of Anderson's theme is an after-dinner slide show. Shots of unidentifiable people, animals, food, and teeth are accompanied by excited reminiscences of the past. These meaningless images have become icons for "The Old Crowd." While for the viewer the past and present merge into one reality as the images of the slides and the guests click back and forth.

The program ends when the old woman's station has gone off the air and she says, "Don't switch it off. It may come on again."

more adventuresome.

But whether I'll end up making an American picture is very moot. The only thing I feel safe about is perhaps some kind of genre picture which I could approach a little bit like I approach a stage play. Not something of outrageous poetic ambition like *Oh Lucky Man* which I don't think one can conceive of making in this country and anyway one wouldn't get money for it...

In fact, what is in fact relevant, what is actually happening, makes no kind of an appeal to people for treatment on a film. I think terrorism is a fascinating subject. In this country however, Hollywood would be terrified of it. They wouldn't do it. They feel they're going to get all the cinemas blown up if they do it, so they won't...

I was talking at one of these endless meetings you have, with somebody who'd just taken over a Hollywood company and I said I thought a very good subject was the IRA violence in Britain which I'm sure would be a very exciting as well as significant subject. He said, "people don't like violence anymore. For instance, there was this movie in which they put a man's hand down a waste disposal and it's all chewed up. I think that's disgusting." What this had to do with talking about the IRA, I don't know, but that's the kind of logic you're confronted with...

Look at a British director like Alan Parker, *Bugsy Malone* and *Midnight Express*, which I hasten to say I haven't seen. He made a statement, before *Midnight Express* about how things that happen today are so boring and he doesn't want to make films about that. It's rather an interesting point of view. I don't know where it comes from. It's so foreign to me that I have no sympathy with it. I don't understand it...

He is a completely career director; he did *Midnight Express* because he was hired by Columbia to direct it and he wanted to make an American picture which it is essentially...

It's interesting how many of these directors have been formed by television and formed by the worst of television which is in making commercials. Cimino and Alan Parker and it's

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was at a time when Ampex was brand new. I was on "I've Got a Secret" ... I created it for Kovacs and Kovacs died and I gave it to Steve Allen and he used backwards tape and that was a forerunner to stop action and slow motion. Now it's done with a disc.

But, I've always been experimenting in video. I had the first CV1000 six months before they actually put it on the market in this country. There were 12 units in the country and I had the first Sony. I was always experimenting. I think that's more interesting.

JH: That's right, you had a show for a long time. That must have been quite an experience.

CM: It was. Those were the days when nobody bothered you. So therefore you could experiment and you could do a lot of things visually that today you can't. Today it's the almighty buck and you're dealing not so much in an art form anymore as you're dealing in a business, weights and measures, you know. It's how fast you get it done and they turn out into commercial crap.

JH: Is it going to change?

CM: Oh, yes, sure.

JH: How?

CM: With the advent of the disc. The advent of home outfits, like yours, and people that are out creating television, creating visual effects, and telling stories, because after all that's what we are, we're all storytellers. We're not filmmakers or television people, we're storytellers. And whatever device you use to tell your story, whatever medium you use, you're still a storyteller. And with the advent of discs, I think it's going to bust the

characteristic that the other British director who has been discovered by the Americans in the last two-years also is a maker of commercials, Ridley Scott...

Of course this results in a movie making style that is based on effect like the style of a television commercial and actually has very little feeling for dramatic organization and very little feeling for true narrative and story telling and is forced to depend more and more on sensation. In the end these things are very unsatisfying.

business wide open. Then the public will buy what they want to buy. They won't be force fed so many hours of television. They'll go to the marketplace and buy it. And when they buy it, then it'll be demand, you'll see a whole new roster of creative people working in the media. Today, it's very commercial and very hack.

JH: What about this out here?

CM: Oh, it's interesting. It's a good show. There's action and the public's buying that type of television today. It's running in cycles. It's cops and robbers. There are good people on the show. I'd just like to see a little more varied television. I don't think public television is doing enough creatively. There aren't enough areas for young video storytellers to show their wares. You find that most of the television stations are religious. It's amazing.

JH: So what else are you doing?

CM: I've got a series that's on the air on CBS now called *Space Nuts*, Science fiction, it's on Saturday morning at 10 o'clock. A lot of wild effects which I had a ball doing. That's the closest I've gotten ... I created the series and wrote about eight of the episodes and I star in it. This is the closest I've gotten to free rein in the last ten years when I left New York. I worked at a station in New York City that was owned by a newspaper, they didn't know the first thing about television.

JH: WPIX, right? I'm an old New Yorker.

CM: They let me do what I wanted to do and one day I put little circles on my eyes and I put a wig on and I said I'm Little Orphan Annie and I got a red dress and then the president of the station came out and grabbed me in the hall and he said, what are you some kind of a transvestite or something? Today, Flip Wilson could do it and get away with it. We did a four hour show from eight in the morning until one in the afternoon and there was absolutely no budget so I got all my props out of the garbage on the way to the studio.

JH: Those were the old days.

CM: Things have changed. It was a more creative period, I think. I think television isn't developing the Sid Caesars, the Ernie Kovacs...

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happened to me when I was in high school and a situation that I remembered and I think I wrote the first act on the train going about 20 miles up from New York to visit a friend of mine and wrote the second act coming back and the third act took me two weeks to write and then he sold it to Kraft immediately. In those days it was a lot easier. You did a script, if they liked the script, they did it, and they liked my script and I was very lucky because they got Jo Van Fleet to play the lead in it and she was just wonderful and I found a young actress in an Equity Library Theater production by the name of Barbara Barrie who has since become a very well known actress and she was just wonderful. But anyway he sold it to Kraft and that year Kraft was doing a best play of the year thing and I got to be a finalist, which was good. . . .

I go back to the fairly early days of television. I did my first play in '55 during what was called the golden age of television. I don't think it was any more golden than any period is. It's just that people remember it so fondly because it was new. But as soon as I started writing for television I knew that it could be more than what it was. I saw other things could happen with it and I was really always waiting for the day when I could get my hands on some kind of equipment so that I could also take off on it, do some of the things that I wanted to do. Because I realized that television was bringing a dimension to people's lives that would change their lives forever. People could never go back to being the simple beings that they could be before the days of television and of course as we get into computers and synthesizers and all the things that are happening, it makes it more and more complex particularly for artists who have to deal with technologies. You can't leave the technologies to the technicians. It has to be put into the hands of the artists.

So, later on when half inch black and white television was available. . . I remember the first thing we ever did, we borrowed a deck from the musical group, "Spanky and Our Gang." They had a deck but they didn't have a camera that worked and so Maxine

Sellers, a friend of mine, borrowed a camera from George Carlin and we used it with that deck. It was a CV, the old CVs, remember them, and I have a tape that we made, kind of a soap opera, a hip soap opera we thought we'd do. We did a whole afternoon of that and did a half an hour thing and I've never been able to see it since because I don't have any CV equipment and I've never been able to transfer it. Do you have any down there? Nobody does anymore, it's very hard to get it transferred so that I could watch it. But that was the very first thing we ever did. It was just borrowing stuff and little by little I started to buy some stuff.

The first things we started doing were taping things pretty much as you are right now. Just taping people, taping situations and then since my original background is theater because that's what I started in as an actor and a dancer and so I began to think what can you do with this technology so that it is not applied to existing theater work, so that it is an organic art of the work itself and that's when I started a workshop that we did. We did experiments in the workshop and I started working on the first play that we ever did which that poster on the wall is for, *Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday*, which I'll show you a scene from later on. It involves a man and his wife and his mother and his dad and his daughter and all the women were played by the same actress and it was about role playing and one of the reviewers said that in the end the video took over and the video images became more real than the real people and that was really what the play was about.

A play that I have not had done yet called *Money* has 56 characters in it and only one of them is live, everybody else is prerecorded. A character in it is called the Computer and it uses laser images to accompany the voice of the computer. It has a hologram at the end of it and it's part of the play and people say "how could you integrate a hologram into a play?" But you have to see it because it can be done and will be done in this play. . . .

I still write for TV sometimes, I wrote two *Space Academys* recently and in one of them there is a scene that really demonstrates the place

where my mind is. I began myself perhaps to feel more comfortable with technology than with people themselves and that is of course what the story of my play, *Money* is about, about the richest man in the world who cannot deal with people but he deals only with technology. But in this play there is a scene where this man, Commander Ganpu, who is 300 years old, makes a mistake. He makes an error and he decides that he's getting too old—this is because of a time warp thing that he's 300 years old, everybody else is normal age but his thing speeded up and he stays looking 50 something years old but he's actually 300. And so he can't talk to anybody about how he feels so he goes in and he talks to the robot and the robot has been injured in an accident and it's in a repair bay and it's laying there lifeless, motionless on this table and Ganpu who can't really tell other people how he feels the way that he can talk to this robot and I think once again even in this children's show showing how people are becoming more comfortable with anthropomorphic technology. This is a scene where he comes in and he talks to the robot, the little robot called "Peepo," I guess it's their R2D2 and it's a kind of moving scene and the reason why I want you to see this is because again I think it spells out my involvement with the ability of people to relate to technology as if it were alive. . . .

In *Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday* Damon talks to his mother who has been dead. She is dead and she's left these videotapes for him to play, one a day, so she can still control his life. So once again we have a man who is relating emotionally to technology better than he can relate to his own wife who is live on stage with him. . . .

Another play that I've done is called *The Revolution Will be Televised Tonight*. And in it I play the owner of a cafe who is half white man and half black woman, split down the middle. Like I say, I try not to do plays like other people. In this scene that I want to show, this is the way it would be used in the play: it would be shown on a projection screen, this close-up of two people dancing the tango. The woman in the tango is a woman who

used to work in the club, her name is Carrie and she is played by Victoria Hugo, a very beautiful woman, and in it they talk and as they dance they talk but her husband who is standing nearby watching them dance doesn't hear the conversation, but the audience can, because at the same time they dance and talk to themselves quietly, above them on this giant video screen you see a prerecorded close-up of what they are doing and saying. This again is me as Madame George, her name is Madame George, by the way. Madame is the black side and George is the white side. . . .

JH: And yet, I know you can work for commercial television and when you do that, of course it's pretty standard.

JP: Well, it's as standard as it can be. It's a sausage factory, it's something I wish I didn't have to do at all. I would like really to work in the theater, in this multi-media theater that I envision, that's been my dream, but it's very difficult as well you know. That means you know it's very hard to get anything done because of money problems.

JH: How do you think the sausage factory is changing and how do you think it's going to change?

JP: That I think there is a great deal of change going on now, ever since the home video systems that they have now. The large screen projection systems and the BetaMax, things like that are enabling people now to get away from this schedule kind of thing that people are doing. Right now it's the ratings, ratings, ratings, but if you can watch *Mash* on Sunday mornings at breakfast because you've recorded it whenever it was done and play it then, the rating thing is going to be ludicrous, it doesn't make any difference. I think there'll be more and more tapes that are made specifically for a particular home viewing audience. So it'll be a million people, it won't be 48 million people, it won't be 56 million people, what the hell, a million people is a lot of people. You can show them something that they want to see. . . .

I think in the next five years, you're going to recognize it . . . I don't even know if the networks will survive. Whether they might not just become a dinosaur that will die of its own

ponderousness. I almost hope so. I know that's like cutting my own throat at the moment but I don't give a damn because weird things happen. I've written two shows, two hour long shows for television this season and they never got on the air and for the most peculiar reasons. In one show it was very peculiar in that the executive producer was fired because the star of the show found out that he was moonlighting by teaching and he had him fired and with him went his staff and four completed scripts including mine and a whole lot of story ideas that had been purchased already. Oddly enough, for that show, I received more money than for anything I've ever done in television and it won't ever be shown or ever be filmed. You cannot feel loyal to it, you cannot feel good about it. It is literally a sausage factory and the people in there for the most part are sausage makers, including me.

When I do it, I try to do the best job I can. I doubt if there's anybody who works as hard as I do to get a script right, even for that children's show. I worked very, very, very hard to get that exactly right so that it wouldn't shame me when my name is put on it but still, you know you're still making cracker boxes.

JH: Were you ever loyal in the old days?

JP: Yes, oh, yes, indeed I was, because in the old days, when I was doing Kraft and Goodyear Playhouse and Studio One and things like that, you would write a play and you would take the play and you would give it to your agent and I was lucky enough in the early days that when I wrote something, there were people waiting for it because my shows all played well and I had a good reputation so there were always two or three people waiting to see what my next show would be and they were almost always sold. There was only one show that I ever wrote in the early days that was never sold. And one show I sold twice because it was sold to one show and they didn't do it and it was sold to another show and they did it.

But, in those days it was your baby, you wrote it . . . nobody else was fooling with it or fucking around with it; they never did that. If changes had to

be made, I used to sit on the set every day while they were filming the thing and if changes had to be made, I made the changes, not the director, not the actor. I listened to everybody, I mean if an actor had trouble saying a line or felt that something wasn't comfortable, of course I would change it but in those days, I felt I was participating. It was a great group effort and I found those . . . I wish I had the kinescopes so you could see scenes from those plays. I have audio tapes but no kinescopes because I don't know, somehow in those days the purchase of kinescopes seemed extravagant to me. Now I wish to hell I had done it. In those days they didn't pay you very much either. My first television show which was an hour show on Kraft, I made less than half of what I made for the half hour children's show; so, I wasn't in a position to buy kinescopes. And now I don't much care about having copies although there are certain things. I did two *Space Academys* and one I was very proud of because I thought the writing on it was . . . went a little above standard but that's about as far as you can go. I don't want to settle for mediocrity and be a television writer for the television as it exists now. I would love to write for a television where you would appeal to thousands of people. . . .

Primer on Satellite Access

By John Schwartz



A satellite interconnection consists of three parts: a device which transmits a signal up to the satellite, the satellite itself and a device which receives signals that the satellite sends back to earth. In many cases, a fourth component is added: the program material to the local transmitting device. These parts are often referred to respectively as the uplink, the space segment, the downlink, and the local loop. It's a good beginning to learn a bit about each.

Uplink

Uplink consists of a dish-shaped antenna which is connected to transmitting electronics. This combination is a powerful directional microwave emitter which sends such a strong signal across some 22,000 miles of space so that it can still be picked up when it arrives at the satellite. Usually the same "dish" which is used to uplink signals is also connected to receiving equipment so that transmission and reception can take place simultaneously using separate electronics.

Space Segment

Satellites are sometimes described as bent pipes in the sky, in that their mission is to send back to earth precisely what is delivered to them.

The satellite's basic unit is known as the transponder, which in present-day satellites can accommodate one television channel. This feat requires a lot of information carrying capability, known as bandwidth. A single transponder, however, can carry a great many narrow-band

transmissions such as telephone calls or data circuits.

Each transponder receives what is by now a much weakened signal sent by the uplink and transmits it back down to earth. Present American commercial satellites deliver signals that are receivable throughout the continental United States, Alaska, and Hawaii.¹ To keep its transmissions from interfering with its own ability to receive signals, a satellite used completely different bands of frequencies for transmission and reception; thus the transponder must perform the intermediate function of transferring the received information from the frequency used for uplink purposes to an amplified carrier used for downlinking.

Satellites have multiple transponders. In existing commercial satellites, transponders' receiving frequencies are adjacent to one another, but separate (so that incoming signals don't become an interfering jumble). Transmit frequencies are also adjacent to each other within their own band.

The power which each of a satellite's transponders can deliver determines a great deal about whom it can serve, in that low-power satellites require expensive ground equipment to receive their weak signals. At the other extreme are so-called direct broadcast satellites which are so powerful that they can be picked up with a three foot dish costing as little as a few hundred dollars.

There are a number of tricks one can use to reduce the cost of receiving hardware required to pick up a given satellite: reduce the number of transponders in the design so that the satellite's

¹A satellite's coverage area is known in the jargon as its footprint.

solar power doesn't need to be divided up very much; reduce the area on the earth to be served so that a more directional, and thus more powerful, transmitting antenna may be used; and, for narrow-band applications such as audio, used an entire transponder's power to drive only one or two downlinked signals, thus giving them the combined power that would normally be divided among hundreds. Present American satellites used only the last of these three tricks, although experimental Japanese direct-broadcast satellites have used the first two.

Downlink

Although uplinks usually contain receivers, most satellite downlinks are receive-only dishes. For receive terminals designed to pick up video, the downlink is referred to as a TVRO (TV receive only).

TVROs can be purchased with a receiver that is fixed in frequency and thus can pick up only one of a satellite's transponders. For a bit more, you can buy tunable electronics which can select any transponder just as your home TV set can pick up any broadcast channel. It is also common to hook up more than one set of receiving electronics to the same dish so that a cable system, say, can pick up more than one transponder at a given time. Generally, TVROs can access only one satellite at a time, but many are built so that they may be physically repointed from one satellite to another.

Local Loop

In many cases, the signal to be uplinked does not originate at the uplink point, and must be delivered there. This delivery can be made by live microwave link, cables, telephone lines (for voice circuits), or, more mundanely, by hand-carrying a tape to be played back at the uplink point. Less commonly, ultimate reception point of a satellite communication may be distant from downlink location; in such cases, the same techniques can be used to create a local loop at the receiving end.

Uplinks

The FCC reports that it has licensed about 330 transmitcapable earth terminals. You can buy one that will send video signals for about \$250,000, but you probably won't need your own unless you're planning to transmit full time. It is possible to rent time on someone else's video

uplink for as little as \$150 per hour. See Table I for a partial listing of uplinks capable of transmitting video.

Space Segment

There are now eight commercial communications satellites in orbit. Two are operated by RCA (Satcom I and II), three by Western Union (Westar I, II, and III), and three by Comsat (Comstar D-1, D-2, and D-3). The Comstar satellites are rented out completely to AT&T and GT&E. The Westar satellites have 12 transponders each; the Satcoms and Comstars have 24 apiece.

All these satellites are operated by common carriers, which means that the company that owns the satellite rents transponders out to others, and does not provide the material which the satellite transmits. Also sources of transponder time are satellite time brokers, who buy in bulk and in turn resell at a mark-up to occasional users. An hour of occasional satellite time can be had for \$200 - \$500. Finally, because time on some satellites is at such a premium, transponder lessees have been known to sublet to others on a full-time basis for mark-ups of over 300% above their cost.

If you buy direct from RCA, a full-time protected nonpreemptible transponder costs about \$1.2 million annually. Some of these terms bear explanation. A transponder is protected if the common carrier has made provision for you to take over another one in case yours conks out. A pre-emptible transponder is one that can be given to someone else under certain circumstances (such as the failure of a protected transponder). Transponders that are rented on an unprotected or preemptible basis are cheaper.

Western Union's full-time protected non-preemptible service costs \$1.8 million annually with a two year minimum rental. Full-time transponder service is not available on the Comstar system, although one group of emergency exceptions has been made, as I'll explain later.

The big problem is that full-time transponders are getting very scarce indeed, and there is also a shortage of occasional time during prime satellite hours. The most sought-after real estate is to be found on RCA's Satcom I, which is the bird that the cable systems use. No transponders are available there, and it would probably cost you more than \$5 million annually to sublease from somebody who has one.

All existing American commercial satellites operate in what is known as the C band, which means that the uplink frequencies are clustered around 6 gigahertz² and the downlink frequencies are around 4 gigahertz (abbreviated GHz). As I'll discuss in greater detail, the future may well lie

with new generations of higher frequency satellites in the Ku band (14 GHz uplink, 12 GHz downlink), and, eventually, the Ka band (30 GHz uplink, 20 GHz downlink).

At present, there is a tremendous crush of pending applications before the F.C.C. from companies that want to build more C-band satellites; in fact, there are more proposed satellites than there are orbital slots to accommodate them. Among the new firms trying to get authorization to orbit new C-band birds are Hughes Aircraft, Southern Pacific Communications, and AT&T. In addition, all the existing carriers want to orbit new ones.

Satcom II is fully booked for such uses as message traffic, government purposes, and Alaska communications. Westar I is used by PBS for its interconnection (4 transponders), National Public Radio, AP Radio, Muzak Corporation, Dow Jones, US News and World Report, and Time, Inc. Westar II is used by Robert Wold Company, Hughes Television (both of the preceding are time brokers), Spanish International Network, the Public Service Satellite Consortium, CBS, and American Satellite Corporation. Comstar D-1 and D-3 are used for telephone message service, government communications, and WATS service.

Various techniques have been evolved to used transponder space more efficiently, thus reducing costs and helping to cope with space segment shortages.

One of these methods is known as STRAP, which allows two television signals to be sent on a single transponder. This system transmits only half of the information from each video signal and uses a device at the downlink end to fill in the missing frames by interpolation. STRAP is economical for the transmission of multiple video signals from one point to a limited number of locations. But both STRAP must be uplinked from the same terminal to insure proper synchronization, and expensive decoders are needed for each downlink. This technique therefore would be impractical for cable TV distribution where signals are sent to hundreds, perhaps thousands of different TVROs.

RCA has held out the hope of a more versatile means of doubling transponder efficiency. Its engineers claim that a new generation of C-band transponders in future Satcoms will be able to handle two video signals apiece.

Probably the most advanced means of improving bandwidth efficiency is known as time division multiple access (TDMA), to be used in the future for computer data, voice, and video. This all digital system allows communications originating from many different points to be

closely interwoven on the same transponder by tightly synchronizing bursts of communications from the various sources. Expensive and sophisticated computer-controlled uplinks are the key to this system.

There is as yet no squeeze for orbital slots for Ku-band satellites. Satellite Business Systems, a joint venture of IBM, Comsat, and Aetna Life and Casualty, plans to orbit three Ku-band satellites within the next few years. The SBS system is all

Table I: Partial List of Uplinks Capable of Transmitting Video

Satellite Uplinks (partial listing)

Operator	Location(s)	Transmits to:
RCA Americom	New York, Chicago, Houston, Miami ('81) Los Angeles, Atlanta, San Francisco	Satcom I, Comstar D2
Western Union	New York City, Atlanta, Lake Geneva (Wis.), Los Angeles, Dallas, San Francisco, Seattle	Westar I, II, III
Satellite Syndicated Systems	Atlanta	Satcom I
Public Broadcasting Service	Washington, Denver, Detroit, Columbia SC, Hartford CT, Tallahassee FL, Lincoln NE	Westar I
Cable News Network	Atlanta	Satcom I, Comstar D2, Westar
WIVB-TV	Buffalo	Satcom I
Public Service Satellite Consortium	Denver	(can be aimed at any bird)
Transponder Corp of Denver	Denver	(can be aimed at any bird)
Greater Starlink (Greater Media)	Detroit	(can be aimed at any bird)
Wold Communications	Los Angeles, Honolulu, New York	(can be aimed at any bird)
Rainbow Programming	New York	(can be aimed at any bird)
PTL Network	Charlotte NC	Satcom I
Christian Broadcast Network	Portsmouth, VA	Satcom I
Trinity Broadcast Network	Santa Ana, CA	Satcom I, Comstar D2
Communications Technology Management	Washington, DC	(can be aimed at any bird)

Transportable uplinks (partial listing)

Operator	Based in:
ESPN	Bristol CT
Western Telecommunications	Denver
United Video	Tulsa
Satellite Syndicated Systems	Tulsa
Wold Communications	Los Angeles
Compact Video Systems	Los Angeles
Public Service Satellite Consortium	Denver

²A gigahertz is one billion cycles per second; it is equivalent to 1,000 megahertz.

TDMA. The intrinsic lack of full-time transponders and need for costly earth terminals to unscramble the many interwoven communications on each transponder will make SBS impractical for such uses as cable TV program distribution. Western Union plans to orbit an Advanced Westar, which will be a hybrid satellite with 12 G-band and 4 Ku-band transponders. And GTE has applied to launch two 16-transponder Ku-band birds. That leaves room for still more operators.

There are a couple of noteworthy advantages to Ku-band satellites. First, 1,000 MHz of downlink bandwidth has been provided for them, as

opposed to 500 MHz for the C band. Second, the downlink frequencies for the Ku-band are not now heavily used for terrestrial communications, whereas 4 GHz downlinks operate on the same frequency that AT&T used for its long lines microwave network. For that reason, C-band satellites' downlink power is strictly limited to avoid crippling the nation's long distance phone service. There is less concern about this sort of problem with the Ku-band, making it possible to use higher power and thus cheaper earth terminals. In fact, Comsat has proposed to establish a multiple channel direct broadcast satellite system in the Ku-band which would serve one meter dishes costing only a few hundred dollars. It has not released complete details of its plan, however, or asked the FCC for permission to establish its system.

NASA is now in the process of developing the hardware for Ka-band satellites, just as it pioneered the development of the equipment used in C- and Ku-band birds. 2,500 MHz are available for Ka-band downlink use—nearly twice that of the C- and Ku-bands combined. I doubt, however, that we'll see commercial Ka-band satellites until the end of the decade, at the earliest.

The disadvantage of the higher frequency satellites is that their signals are far more vulnerable to atmospheric loss from rainfall and other causes than C-band birds, since at such high frequencies microwaves grow so short that their behavior begins to resemble that of light.

The 1970's saw an initial glut of satellite capacity, slowly transformed into the present dearth. Most predictions for the coming decade envision a continuation of this pattern of alternating excess and insufficiency. Demand for transponder capacity is projected to be very strong, but a rush of new C-band and Ku-band satellites will probably create periodic surpluses immediately following their launch.

If recent years are any guide, video distribution for cable TV will continue to expand—perhaps doubling or tripling—but the overall climate of demand is likely to depend far more on satellite uses which are not nearly so mature, such as data transmission and video conferencing. Some estimates have these relatively new services expanding tenfold or a hundredfold in the coming decade.

Because new satellite uses are emerging and there is only a short track record on which to estimate their future growth, the prediction of overall satellite demand is tricky and major studies have disagreed. But an accurate anticipation of the balance between supply and demand would greatly reduce the risks in a venture involving the leasing of transponder time. After all, what program supplier—no matter how unsuccessful—could lose out right now by holding a lease to a transponder on Satcom I?

Table II: Transponder Use on RCA Satcom I

(Note: In addition to cable-oriented video, many transponders carry audio programming, text, slow-scan video and other services on auxiliary circuits within the main video transmission)

Transponder Number	Lessee	Program Service	Type of service
1	Warner-Amex Satellite Entertainment (WASE)	KTVU-TV Oakland, Cal.	broadcast TV retransmission
2	PTL	PTL Television Network	religious programming
3	United Video Inc.	WGN-TV, Chicago, Ill. WFMT-FM Radio, Chicago Seeburg Music Dow Jones Cable News	broadcast TV retransmission stereo audio retransmission mono audio "background" music teletext-type news service
4	Inoperative		
5	WASE	The Movie Channel	pay TV, 24-hour movies
6	Satellite Syndicated Systems (SSS)	WTBS TV Atlanta Women's Channel UPI Newstime UPI Cable Newswire Reuters News View	broadcast TV retransmission slow-scan still pictures with narration slow-scan news pictures with narration alpha-numeric news "ticker" alpha-numeric news "ticker"
7	Entertainment & Programming ESPN Sports Network (ESPN)		Sports events and reports
8	Christian Broadcast Network	Christian Broadcast Network	religious programming
9	UA-Columbia Satellite Services	USA Network (evenings and weekends) Cable-Satellite Public Affairs Network (C-SPAN), (daytime) Black Entertainment Television (BET) (Friday late night)	sports, Calliope (kidvid), women's programs live coverage of House of Representatives and other public affairs shows Black-oriented movies, sports specials

Downlinks

In many ways, downlinks are the key to the exploding use of satellites. According to the FCC, there are about 3,000 licensed receive-only earth terminals, with perhaps another 1,000 that are not licensed.³

Depending on what features you want, you can pick up a 4.5 meter dish with video receiving electronics for around \$10,000. Dishes intended for home use were shown at the 1980 consumer Electronics Show priced under \$5,000, and since that time prices have continued to fall.

Virtually all public TV stations have their own 10-meter satellite earth terminal, which contains two fully tunable receivers. These dishes are almost certain to be aimed at Westar I, but they can be repointed by an awkward manually-operated mechanism. An increasing number of commercial TV stations have TVROs, especially stations that aren't affiliated with a network. And a small, but growing number of private homes are equipped with TVROs.

But the most significant statistic is that about 2,300 of the nation's 4,100 cable systems have a satellite earth terminal. These 2,300 systems serve roughly 13 million of the United States' 16 million cable homes. Only a handful of systems have more than one dish.

Comsat has invented a new type of antenna known as the TORUS which can pick up more than one satellite at a time, but models now on the market are too expensive for routine cable use. A Comsat representative claimed the firm is developing a far cheaper version, however. The February 1980 issue of *Radio-Electronics* magazine published plans for a do-it-yourself non-parabolic receive terminal which can also pick up multiple satellites. The author claimed it could be built by the hobbyist for around \$1,000.

Despite these developments, there seems to be no immediate move afoot to equip cable systems with antennas that will pick up more than one satellite. Traditionally, all cable services have been carried on RCA Satcom I (see Table I), and thus only one dish was necessary. New services were to be added and the old ones moved to the new Satcom III when it went into service this year. But, in an odd turn of fate, Satcom III was lost in space shortly after launch. Satcom I has thus remained the prime cable bird, and RCA arranged for nine (very disappointed) program suppliers to be accommodated on Comstar D-2. This emergency arrangement was made under a contract that can be extended through the end of 1981, and merely provides unprotected preemptible service.

³It is no longer required that one license a receive-only earth terminal, although the FCC will not protect unlicensed terminals from terrestrial microwave interference.

Only two of these companies have pressed ahead with the offering of new program services on Comstar, due to the tenuous nature of these arrangements and the lack of cable system receive capability. One firm which has tried to attack this problem is Satellite Communications Network, which plans to distribute two services via Comstar: Las Vegas Entertainment Network and Cinamerica (a service for viewers over 45). SCN announced plans to *give away* 300 5-meter earth terminals to selected cable systems. SCN also offered to share this network of TVROs with other programmers for \$100 per TV channel per terminal per month. Thus a programmer using the full SCN array of downlinks would be adding \$360,000 to its already hefty transponder bill. Despite the *eclat* of SCN's announcements and projection of 200 terminals in place by September

10	Showtime	Showtime (western time zone feed) American Educational TV Network (occasional daytime)	pay TV professional training courses
11	WASE	Nickelodeon (daytime, early evenings)	children's, music programming
12	Showtime	Showtime (eastern time zone feed)	pay TV
13	Trinity Broadcasting Network	Trinity Broadcasting Network	religious programming
14	Turner Broadcasting	Cable News Network	24-hour news reports
15	noncable programming		
16	Showtime	Compact Video (early morning, daytime) Appalachian Community Service Network (operated by Appalachian Regional Council) Video Sports Network	closed circuit production public service regional program
17	Eastern Microwave	WOR-TV New York	broadcast TV retransmission
18	Reuters	Galavision (operated by Spanish International Television)	Spanish language pay TV
19	noncable		
20	Home Box Office (HBO)	Cinemax (eastern time zone feed)	all-movie pay TV service
21	Satellite Syndicated Systems	Satellite Program Network I Home Theatre Network (early evening)	movies, music, short films, information G and PG pay TV movies
22	Home Box Office	Home Box Office (western time zone feed) Modern Satellite Network (daytime)	pay TV "sponsored" PR/information films
23	HBO	Cinemax (western time zone feed)	all-movie pay TV service
24	HBO	Home Box Office (eastern time zone feed)	pay TV

Independents

of this year, none of the manufacturers under contract to the project had begun work by late August. The reason: SCN's failure to make promised initial payments.

The other Comstar programmer which has announced plans to begin service is Rainbow Communications, a consortium of several major cable companies. Rainbow will offer two mini-pay services. The first is "Bravo," a package of cultural programs including ballet, jazz and classical music, as well as two first-run feature films monthly. The other, known as "Escapade," is an action-adventure series of movies of the John Wayne genre. Rainbow Communications is not giving away any TVROs.

Finally, a firm known as Satellite Syndicated systems is giving away 100 3-meter dishes to cable companies to enable them to receive its programming off of Westar III, which it hopes to establish as a major satellite for cable. SSS also plans to share its terminals for a fee: \$60 per terminal per month if one program supplier joins in; \$35 per terminal per month if two participate; \$25 per month if a third is added; and \$20 per month for four users. In addition, SSS is making arrangements to sell 300 more of the 3-meter dishes to cable systems for \$2,500 apiece. SSS will offer a 24-hour program service called Satellite Program Network consisting, *inter alia*, of movies, talk shows, and women's programs.

Despite these rather intricate machinations, it is still an open question as to which satellite will come to be widely used by cable systems, if any, and what technologies will be used to expand cable systems' reception of satellite programming.

A related capacity problem is the fact that over two-thirds of the nation's 16 million cable subscribers are served by systems with 12-channel capacity or less, according to industry estimates. Thus the hopes of most future satellite cable programmers rest with the establishment of new high-capacity systems, the expansion of existing high-capacity systems, and the rebuilding of older systems. In *Keeping PACE with the New Television*, several Carnegie II staff members rely on estimates that these changes will produce about three million new subscribers per year to high capacity systems for the next four to five years, with the expansion slowing after that.⁴

Finally it is worthwhile to note that the present generation of electronics used to receive C-band satellites will not be usable to bring in Ku or Ka band transmissions. In fact, many of the dishes themselves will need to be replaced in order to receive higher frequency satellites.

⁴A.C. Nielsen reports an increase of only about 2.2 million households in total cable subscribership between July, 1979 and July, 1980, although the rate of increase has grown substantially in each of the last few years.

Independents have always had a tough time distributing their work and making money at it. Satellites will not bring an end to that traditional problem, but they do offer some interesting new distribution possibilities. I'll mention a number of ideas here, listed in order of present feasibility. The approaches toward the bottom of the list are highly speculative, but since well-established ideas like satellite-cable superstations and Home Box Office were speculative as little as five years ago, I think it's better to consider outlandish ideas than dismiss them out of hand.

1. *Public Television Distribution by Satellite*. A proven approach: you can get Westar I satellite and uplink time for as little as \$350 per hour. The problem is principally getting clearance for a program on local stations, especially if there is a charge for airing it. The Public Interest Video Network handled its own marketing for coverage of the big Washington anti-nuclear rally, and the Eastern Educational Network helped get nationwide clearance for the Bay Area Video Coalition's *Western Exposure* series (although these programs were provided to local stations for free). The Independent Film and Video Distribution Center (affiliated with KBDI-TV, Broomfield, Colorado) was established to sell independents' work to public TV stations nationwide, and returns about 75% of the gross proceeds to the independent. Independent Cinema Artists and Producers in New York City is launching a similar project to try to sell to New York State public TV stations.

2. *Ad Hoc Cable Distribution by Satcom I*. Also a proven concept. The Center for Non-broadcast Television in New York City has distributed a special on foreign trade policy, a debate on America's energy future, and *The National Breast Cancer Teach-In* using RCA Satcom I transponders leased by Home Box Office and Showtime. The energy debate received the widest carriage: it was cleared on about 400 cable systems in all 50 states, and was also picked up by some two dozen public TV stations. Underwriting was needed to pay production and distribution costs for these programs, however, as participating cable systems and public TV stations got the shows for free. Another problem with this approach is the difficulty in obtaining sufficient nationwide promotion to attract a significant audience.

3. *Regularly Distribute Independent Material by Piggybacking on Someone Else's Satcom I Transponder*. Transponder users sometimes don't program on a 24-hour basis, and help pay for their time by sharing with others. The Appalachian Community Service Network, a project of the federally-funded Appalachian Regional Commission, distributes over 20 hours per week of public service

and educational programming via Satcom I's transponder 16, which is leased by Showtime. ACSN has announced plans to expand to 60 hours per week by this fall. Similarly, the Modern Satellite Network distributes five hours per day of promotional films made by businesses and government agencies via Satcom I's transponder 22, leased by Home Box Office. (MSN, needless to say, is a profit-making business and often transmits some pretty self-serving material.) There are unanswered questions about piggybacking, however. Is more piggyback time available? The cost will be considerable, but how much? How will operating costs be recouped? How will individual film and video makers benefit from such a networking arrangement?

4. *Lease a Full-time Transponder to Distribute Independent Material to Cable Systems on a Pay, Advertiser-Supported, or Government-Supported Basis.* The initial problem with this approach is that at the moment it is far from clear where to get a usable transponder for this purpose. Premiere, the pay TV service backed by Getty Oil and four major Hollywood studios, recently subleased a Satcom I transponder, but the rumors are that it cost them \$5 million per year. With a bit of wheeling and dealing, you might be able to get a transponder on Comstar D-2 or Westar III, but it's not certain that you'd be able to reach many cable systems by this method. But the possibility of a full-time transponder bears watching to see if a second satellite attracts a critical mass of programmers and if cable systems buy second earth stations, convert to antennas capable of picking up more than one satellite, or start accessing the new generation of Ku-band satellites. The Corporation for Public Broadcasting — under a Congressional admonition to help independents and explore new technologies — is one place to ask for money to pay for the transponder, as is the Department of Commerce's Public Telecommunications Facilities Program. In a somewhat analogous vein, the staff of the Carnegie Commission has issued a recent report calling for the establishment of a national Performing Arts, Culture, and Entertainment pay cable channel to be distributed by satellite. They estimate needed initial capitalization at \$30 million, mostly to buy programming until the service becomes self-sufficient.

5. *Feed a Network of Translators⁵ by Satellite.* The advantage here is that you can use any transponder to feed earth terminals and translators you control. And as an added bonus, present FCC rules require cable systems to carry a translator's signals if the translator is licensed to the same

⁵A translator is a low-power device which retransmits a broadcast station at low power. Traditionally, translators have been used to fill in shadow areas within a local station's coverage radius, but recently the FCC has allowed them to be fed by microwave, including satellite transmissions.

community (although older systems don't have to carry translators of under 100 watts, and no system has to carry them if they are under 5 watts). But the problem is that you have to pay for all the earth terminals and translators (at \$10,000 to \$25,000 per installation), in addition to transponder time.

7. *Participate in a Direct Broadcast System.* Not much to say here, as too little is known about what eventual direct broadcast proposal(s) will be accepted by the FCC. But you can bet that the public broadcasting establishment will be watching these developments closely, and independents should too.

Table III: Transponder Use on Comstar D2

(Temporarily being used by RCA Americom customers in emergency situation while awaiting launch of Satcom III-replacement)

V means "vertical polarization" H means "horizontal polarization" — putting two different signals aboard the same transponder

Transponder Number	Lessee	Program Service	Type of Programming
1 through 3 Non-cable			
4V	National Christian Network	National Christian Network (daytime) Rainbow Program Service: Bravo (Sunday/Monday nights) Escapade (Tuesday-Saturday nights)	religious programming cultural events and performances action/adventure movies and specials
5	non-cable		
6V	Warner-Amex Satellite Entertainment	(for future service)	
7V	Trinity Broadcasting Network	TBN	religious programming
8V	Showtime	(for future service)	
9V	Home Box Office	(for future service)	
9H	Home Box Office	(for future service)	
10H	Spanish International Network	Galavision	
10V	Satellite Communications Network	Las Vegas Entertainment Network (evenings and late night) Cineamerica (daytime until 8 p.m.)	floor shows and other specials from Las Vegas. entertainment and information programs for older audiences
11H	Warner Amex Entertainment Network	Total Communications	regional sports
12V	United Video Inc.	Times Mirror Satellite Program Network	original programming, shop-at-home video catalog service

Major Sources

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"For the Record," *Broadcasting*, July 7, 1980, p. 54

Mahoney, Sheila, et al, *Keeping PACE with the New Television*, New York: VNU Books International, 1980.

Pancoe, Patricia (Ed.), *The 1980 Satellite Directory*, Washington, D.C.: Phillips Publishing, Inc., 1980.

Rushton, William, "Nonprofit Networks: The New TV Service to Citizens," *Access*, June 16, 1980, p. 1.

I especially recommend *Keeping PACE with the New Television* as a far-reaching background report on all the new television technologies, from satellites

to pay TV to home video to teletext. It can be obtained from the National Association of Educational Broadcasters, 1346 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. 20036 for \$3.25, postage and handling included.

The information in this article was current as of the end of August, 1980, but because the satellite and cable fields are changing so rapidly people should keep track of data like subscriber counts, current satellite program offerings, transponder assignments, etc. on a continuing basis, through these periodicals.

Sat-Guide Magazine

Box 1569

Hailey, ID 83333

\$28 annually

(Monthly—lists all program services on Satcom I in an hour-by hour *TV Guide* format)

Satellite News

7315 Wisconsin Ave.

Washington, DC 20014

\$167 annually

(Bi-weekly newsletter, usually 8 pages on fast-breaking developments in satellites)

Cablevision

2500 Curtis St.

Denver, CO 80205

\$42 annually

(Glossy weekly — usually over 50 pages — with information on the cable industry. Some of the writing is bad, but it does carry some useful information)

Satellite Communications

Cardiff Publications

Box 1077

Skokie, IL 60077

\$14.95 annually

(Glossy monthly. Has faults and is slower, but is a much better buy for the dollar than *Satellite News*.)

The accompanying tables list who holds what transponder on Satcom I, Comstar D-2, and Westar III, the satellites of most interest to cable satellite distributors.

The table listing transponder usage for Satcom I was drawn from information in the August, 1980 issue of *Sat-Guide* magazine. The table listing transponder usage for Comstar D-2 was drawn from the June 2, 1980 issue of *Broadcasting*, and that showing transponder usage for Westar II was taken from *Broadcasting*, June 16, 1980 edition. Information for the table listing video capable uplinks was supplied by Joseph Bakin.

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Revised Tables by Gary Arlen, January 12, 1981.

Transponder Allocation/Use on Westar III

Transponder Number	Lessee	Program Service	Type of Programs
1*		Radio broadcasting	
2*	Hughes Television Network	occasional user, mainly for broadcast TV	sports, specials
3	Intelsat	Televisa	carries Mexican TV programs to U. S. for STN (National Spanish TV Network)
4*		Radio broadcasting	
5	-non-video-		
6	CBS Cable	CBS Cable	cultural, fine arts performance (due to begin June '81)
7*	-non-video-		
8	Spanish International Network	broadcast programming	Spanish-language programming for broadcast TV stations
9	Satellite Syndicated Systems	Satellite Program Network II	movies, information, music, miscellaneous, special interests
10	ABC	(for future service)	
11	Cable News Network	Cable News Network	for in-coming news reports to CNN's Atlanta newsroom

*Also on Westar III: Associated Press Radio, RKO General Radio, UPI, Blairsat (commercials beamed to TV stations)

Note: On Westar I: Public Broadcasting Service (3 TV transponders) Mutual Radio, Muzak, Enterprise Radio, National Public Radio, Bonneville International (Mormon Church and TV programs), Satellite Communications Network, Vidsat (Group W-TV programming)

*When Man imitated walking
he created the wheel
which is nothing like the leg*

APPOLINAIRE, 1917

*The cinema is still in its infancy
and the intelligence of a film-maker is to be judged
partially by what he refuses to attempt*

RENE CLAIR, 1923

*Don't start from the good old things
but the bad new ones*

BRECHT, 1938

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Institutional subscription (\$15/per year)

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