

the VIDEOPHILE

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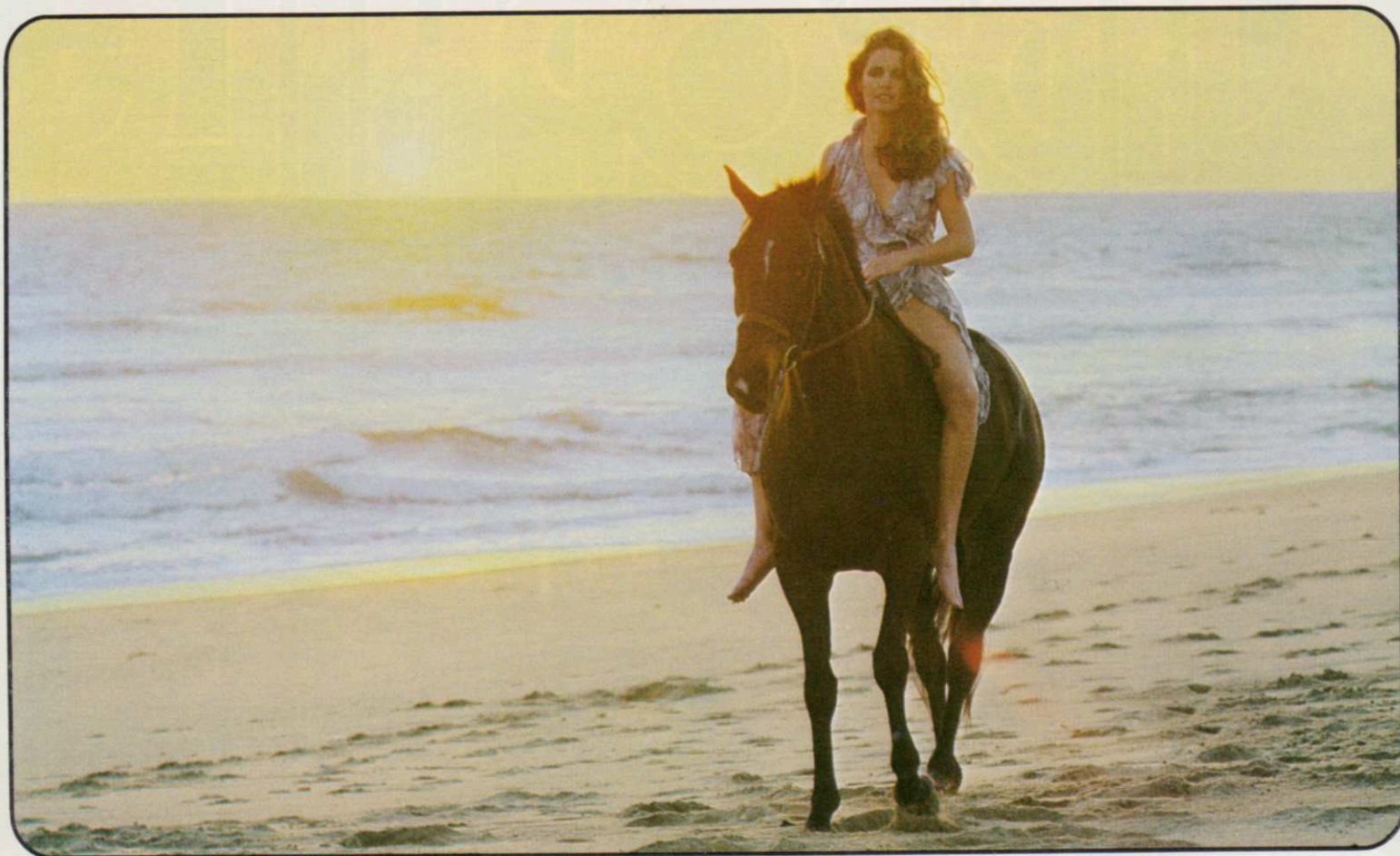
MAY/JUNE 1979

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- A conversation with Harlan Ellison: "The Man Who Hates Television"
- International Television Standards, the Betamax Changer, and more!

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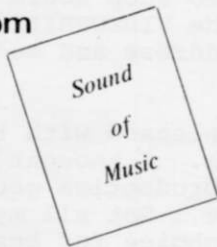
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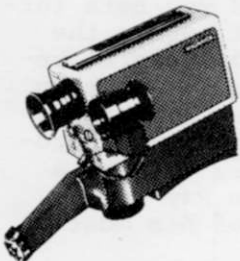


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tv wiggles

Once again we present you with a whopping new edition of the VIDEOPHILE. We get many letters saying, in effect, "I can't believe it, but each issue is better than the one before!" Obviously, this cannot continue to be the case indefinitely, but we trust that each of you will find at least a thing or two within these leaves that will be of interest.

We have lots of projects in various stages of development, and will take this opportunity to brief you a little in advance:

1. Bob Cooper, the editor of CATJ, and perhaps best known as "the backyard earth station man," has invited us to participate in his "Satellite Private Terminal Seminar" which will be held August 14-16 in Oklahoma City. We'll try to have the full details next issue, but right now it's shaping up as a pretty good chance for us videophiles to have a sort of convention within the convention.

2. We would very much like to sponsor a trip to Japan next year to coincide with the Japanese Consumer Electronics Show. As we see it, a group of less than 100 of us would spend about 17 days together in Japan, Hong Kong, and possibly, Peking. We would hope to arrange exclusive receptions and tours with Sony and Matsushita as part of the package. (Al Goldberger, of Tape City, tells us that he will be touring the Panasonic plant over there this May, along with several other selected dealers, but that he would be happy to go again when we do.) The target date for our trip is October 1980, quite a ways from now, but not too early for you to let us know of your interest, so that we can start a list. Such a tour would probably cost around \$2000 per person (double occupancy) from San Francisco. An advance deposit would be required about this time next year, so let us hear from you if you have a serious interest in making such a trip.

3. Newsstand distribution of this humble effort still appears to be just beyond our reach. We had one very exciting false alarm from some top people at Warner Communications (which owns Independent News, the nation's largest magazine distributor), but following a flurry of activity and phone calls, we were advised that The Vid was not "ready" for the newsstands just yet. We have other irons in the fire and will keep you posted. We have begun to have some success in getting video shops to handle the mag, Video Shack in Houston and

The Video Center in Beverly Hills among them. If your local video shop would be interested in carrying the VIDEOPHILE, send us their name and address and we'll hop right to it.

I wonder if you were as pleased with the Oscars this year as I was. I thought the television coverage and production generally was the best to date. Not all my choices won; shucks, my choice for best song wasn't even nominated -- Eddie Rabbit's "Every Which Way But Loose", of course!

Speaking of favorites, I have confessed all along to an unembarrassed affection for commercial television. Over the years I've sampled everything from "Greenacres" to "The Ascent of Man." If a biggie like Roots II is being run, you can count on me to be there. In case you're interested, my current favorites are: "Lou Grant", "Kaz", "60 minutes", "Quincy", "Nova", and "One Day At A Time". I also watch (via RCA programmable timer) "The Young and the Restless", which in my book is the funniest show on the air today. It's especially fun when you can save up a week or more of it on one tape, sprawl out on a rainy Saturday afternoon with a Dr. Pepper, a can of Pringles, and let 'em go.

Ray Glasser writes to remind you Beta format folks that you shouldn't get in the habit of using your old K-60 tapes to record at X-2 (ooops!), 'cause it can clog up the heads good. He suggests cleaning all the heads after a K-60 at X-2 recording ... everytime! We'll try to have a detailed report on this from Ray next time, along with a writeup of his most recent MIDEAST VIDEOCON.

Special "thank yous" go out this time to: Robin Holland, Bill Leary, Jim Gibbon, Julian Bosworth (oink, oink and woof-woof), David Scott, Ken Grimwood, R.J. Schweikert, Don Treglown, Stan Sieger, Jim Reed, and, of course, to Harlan Ellison, for agreeing to share his outspoken views with us.

ALL THE BEST —
Jim

P.S. Look for mentions of your favorite magazine in the April issue of Los Angeles, the May issue of Radio-Electronics, and the June issue of Apartment Life.

the VIDEOPHILE

There is an incessant influx of novelty in the world and yet we tolerate incredible dullness.—H.D. Thoreau (1817-1861)

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THE VOICE OF VIDEO FANDOM

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Ask the VIDEOPHILE



Q: I've got a friend in New Zealand who has a 3/4" deck. How can I trade tapes back and forth with him when all I can play are U.S.-standard shows?

--M.S., Boston, MA

A: Your best bet is to buy one of Sony's multi-standard VO-2630 U-Matic decks and a multi-standard monitor for playback. Be forewarned that you won't be able to record anything for him, since the deck can record only in our NTSC standard. For converting foreign-standard tapes, Marconi's \$250,000 D.I.C.E. (Digital International Conversion Electronics) system is used by two L.A. firms, Vidtronics and Image Transform, who can transfer 3/4" tapes for about \$200 an hour; other firms using optical techniques--pointing an NTSC camera into a PAL monitor, for example--provide less expensive transfers with lower quality. See Joe Mazzini's column in this issue for more details.



Q: I've looked at the new programmable VHS decks and would like to learn how to modify my deck's tuner to be able to do the same thing without spending too much money.

--J.C., Reseda, CA

A: Our advice to you is if you're already using the VHS format, go ahead and trade your machine on a programmable deck like Panasonic's PV-1500 or RCA's VCT-400. Otherwise, if you're into Beta, only Toshiba currently offers a programmable deck, the V-5420, but Sony should have their J-7 and J-8 decks out before too long. If you're determined to hold on to your old deck, however, the Chronotrol timer (see TV #17) would be one inexpensive way of turning it off and on several times a week. Also, both the Selectra Corporation (Newbury Park, CA) and The Cable Works (Westlake Village, CA) have programmable tuner/timers under development, and they're expected to sell for under \$300.

Q: I know there's a commercial-editing system for black and white programs, but is there a way I can automatically remove commercials from color movies and shows, too, with my VTR?

--J.S. & H.E., LA, CA

A: Well...yes and no. For years we were of the opinion that only a fast finger or a trained orangutan could operate a VTR's pause lever, but the folks at The Cable Works (2524 Townsgate Rd., #F, Westlake Village, CA 91361) claims that it has a system whereby you can rent a black box for \$5 a month that can be attached to any home VTR, guaranteed to remove any and all commercials during a recording. The secret? A dozen trained operators watching a dozen monitors tuned to all the commercial stations available in town, each operator depressing a button whenever a commercial break begins or ends on his respective channel, which sends an electronic signal to the tuner box (supplied by Cable Works) that puts your machine in pause for the duration. Sounds crazy, we know, [To say the very least.--Ed] but it'd work at least in theory. The only questions that remain are: first, what about commercial breaks longer than 3 minutes, after which some VTR's pop out of pause and continue recording? Secondly, what will the FCC, the NAB, advertising agencies and TV stations have to say about such a device? And lastly, what will the Orangutan's Union say about this threat of automation? Tune in next time to find out what happens provided we get one installed in our home...



Q: I'm getting sick and fed up of paying over-high prices to incompetent repair shops, trying to get my VTR's repaired. How can I learn to fix them myself without going to a lot of time, trouble and expense.

--G.G., Sherman Oaks, CA

A: One of the few easy questions this time around, with a simple answer: you can't. It just ain't that easy. Fixing VTR's is not quite the same as repairing a toaster; it requires much experience, test equipment and know-how to get the job done right. If you own any Sony products, you can send for maintenance manuals from their Technical Publications/Service Dept. at 47-47 Van Dam Street, Long Island City, NY 11101. These manuals will at least provide basic block diagrams, schematics and troubleshooting hints that will help you narrow down the cause of the problem. Other manufacturers offer equally helpful manuals for their products; Howard Sams & Co. (Box 558, Indianapolis, IN 46206) makes their own "PhotoFact" manuals for half-a-dozen different VTR's. In any case, just getting the manuals is only the first step to repairing a home VTR. If you're really serious about it, there are probably a number of local technical/vocational schools near you, and several of them should offer courses on electronics servicing. Once you learn the basics, getting into the specialized field of home VTR repair is a lot easier. You might also check out an excellent highly informative article on VTR repair in the April '79 issue of Radio-Electronics (\$1.25 from Gernsback Publications, Inc., 200 Park Ave. South, New York, NY 20003), which tells you basic operational info on VTR's, standard tools and test equipment to acquire, as well as where to go to learn more about servicing.



Q: I'm thinking about transferring some old CV and AV-series 1/2" reel-to-reel over to VHS cassettes for my collection. Where can I get a Time-Base Corrector needed to do this dubbing.

--P.M., LA, CA

A: TBC's are available from broadcast or industrial video equipment supply firms, generally costing between \$4,000 and \$20,000. But we think you may

not really need one unless your tapes are really bad off, with excessive skew or color problems. We suggest trying to dub the tapes straight across to VHS, which should work fine if the tapes are played on the original decks they were made on. Good luck with the CV $\frac{1}{2}$ " tapes, since those old circa-1968 machines lack even tracking or skew controls and can be a pain to transfer from. If you have problems doing it yourself, you might check with a local videotape duplication firm (listed under "Recording Service-Sound and Video" or "Television Equipment-Closed Circuit" in the Yellow Pages) and see if they can be of any help.



Q. Just exactly what are the dangers of low-level radiation associated with prolonged exposure to a color television set? I'm kind of worried about what all this viewing might do to my health in 20 years or so.

--K.W., New Rochelle, NY

A. We think it is safe to say that exposure to a color TV set, even for several hours each day, is no more dangerous on a cumulative basis than getting a chest X-ray every year. Indeed, the

United States has very stringent radiation shielding requirements for television sets. We're told that this accounts for the fact that Sony is not able to offer its larger 25" and 32" sets in this country at the present time. It's probably best to sit more than 2 or 3 feet from the set if you're the cautious type. Of course, if your set is faulty, higher levels of radiation could conceivably leak out and cause a problem over the long range. In extreme cases, your set could heat up to the meltdown point and sink through the foundation of your house, with unforeseen results. This extremely rare occurrence is known as the Nippon Syndrome.



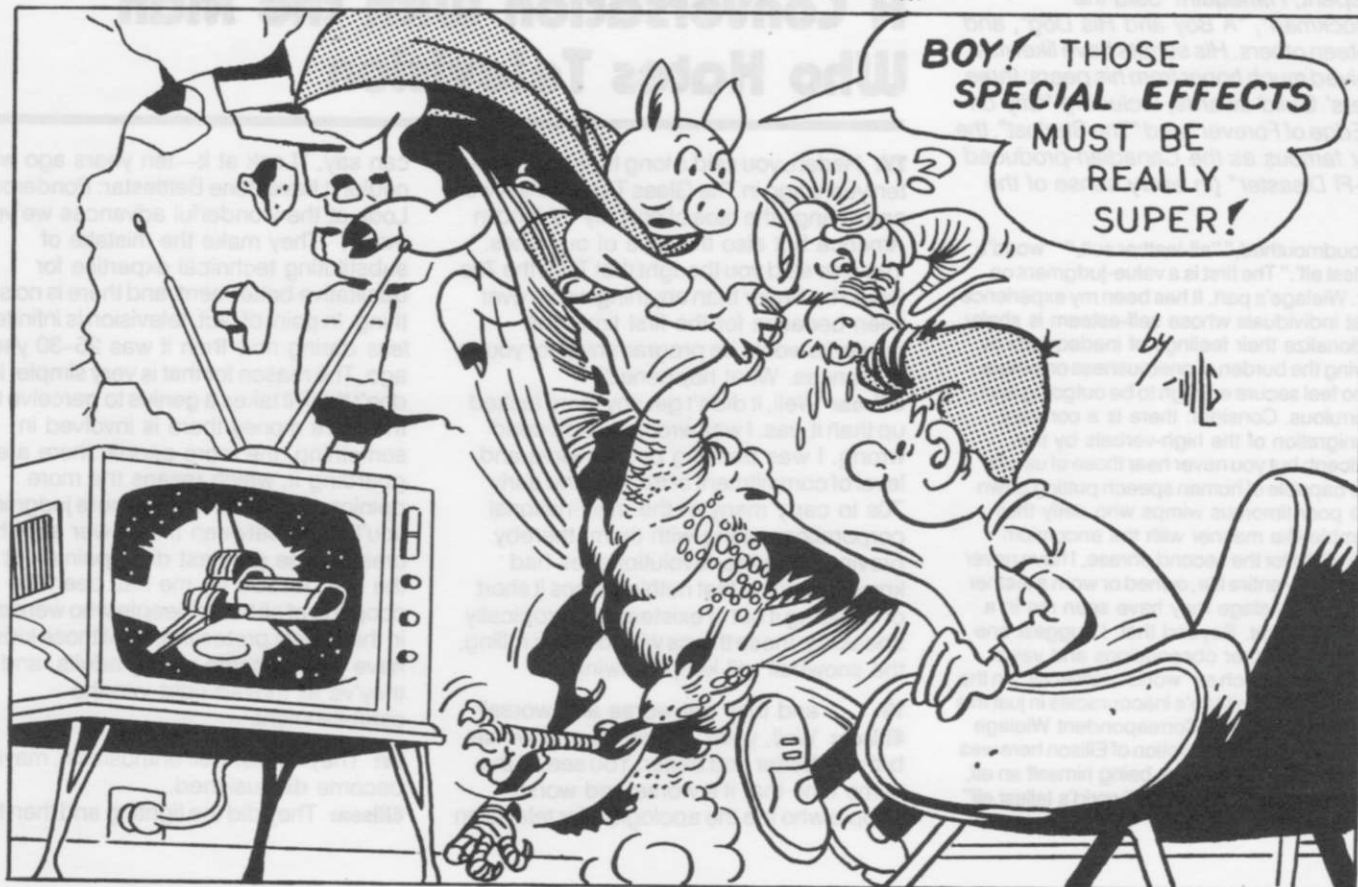
Q. Can the Sony SL-7200 be converted to the slow speed? Can it be converted to perform audio dubbing? How does one convert a 7200 to accept video input? I've heard that the 7200 is a superior machine to its successors. Any truth in this?

--J.L., New York, NY

A. The conversion to slow speed (assuming it is possible), would probably cost more than buying another unit. We should think that it would be possible to convert it for audio dubbing,

since its industrial model counterpart has this feature, and there is a space on the right hand side of the keyboard for the audio dubbing key. If someone will furnish us with instructions re: these modifications, we will be happy to print them. However, most such modifications are complicated enough to be dangerous to your machine, if not yourself, unless you have the equipment and expertise to go with it. Many service centers now offer the conversion for video input, but so far no one who has the details has passed them along to us so that we can tell you how to do it for free. (Steve? Rick?) Those who feel that the 7200 is a superior machine base this opinion on the fact that it has the widest recording track (60 microns) of any consumer model Betamax. The result is that the X-1 recordings made on it are superior to X-1 recordings made on the 2-speed Beta format machines.

Befuddled readers can send any questions regarding video or electronics problems in general to "Ask the Videophile," 2003 Apalachee Parkway, Tallahassee FL 32301. If your question is of sufficient general interest, our almost-expert staff will put on their thinking caps and do the rest.



We thought it might be nice to rock our smug little boat of videophiles by presenting the views of a well known, articulate and intelligent person who feels that television is pretty much a crock of slop. Marc Wielage informed us that he had just the man, so we sent Marc, with Mike Clark in tow, to beard the lion in his den. Herewith, Marc's report:

I first met Harlan Ellison about 5 years ago, at the 32nd World Science Fiction Convention in Washington, D.C. I was walking down a corridor in the hotel, when I heard a commotion up ahead of me—a crowd of at least 6 or 7 teen-aged lovelies who were laughing and smiling and giggling as if it were Senior Prom night. The center of their attention: a loud-mouthed, humorously obnoxious pipe-smoking gent wearing an all-leather suit, a man whose stature befitted the title of "the world's tallest elf."¹ He strolled past while on-lookers buzzed excitedly. "Who was that?" I asked a wide-eyed acquaintance. "That, nimnul, is none other than Harlan Ellison!" he replied.

Well, I recognized the name immediately as being the person who had written among my all-time favorite TV shows—"Soldier" and "Demon with a Glass Hand" from *Outer Limits*, "City on the Edge of Forever" from *Star Trek*, other episodes of series like *Alfred Hitchcock* and *Man from U.N.C.L.E.* as well as several features—and I was honestly in awe.

His stories have won countless awards and praise from the science-fiction community, including Hugos and Nebulas for "I Have No Mouth and I Must Scream." "Repent, Harlequin!" Said the Ticktockman", "A Boy and His Dog", and umpteen others. His scripts have likewise received much honor from his peers: three Writers' Guild awards, including "City on the Edge of Forever" and "The Starlost", the latter famous as the Canadian-produced "Sci-Fi Disaster" (in every sense of the

word) that Harlan deserted, leaving behind close to \$100,000 in profits—his bank account a little lower, but his integrity left intact. The full story of that sad yet hilarious escapade is given in *Phoenix Without Ashes* (Fawcett, 1975), complete with Ed Bryant's fine novelization of the pilot script for the show.

Television scholars, too, should be familiar with Harlan's fine essays on the medium in *The Glass Teat* and *The Other Glass Teat* (Pyramid Books, 1975). They're enough to curl the hair of any television addict, pointing out, among other things, the dangers inherent in television viewing—everything from stifling the imagination to numbing the mind's appreciation of real-life violence with fantasy-violence.

Harlan is not just your average angry man. I mean, he takes anger and energy and enthusiasm and wit and wraps them up into one personality that you will never forget, through his writings, his films, or his personal appearances. And his works won't just make you angry—no, they'll make you afraid, indignant, shocked, happy—any way you look at it, you won't be the same after picking up and experiencing a Harlan Ellison story.

In the industry, he's widely known as a guy who will not sell out, someone who's got to retain absolute control over what he writes. As Harlan put it on a recent appearance on the *Tomorrow Show*: "My words are not engraved in gold . . . but they are my words, and I want them done the way I want them. I don't want some

shithead changing them. I don't want some clown who was in the mailroom 4 days ago coming in and rewriting my story, which is what happens." And also: "If tomorrow they put one of those loyalty oaths in front of me—'are you loyal to the USA or to your writing?'—forget it, Jack! The country could sink into the ocean for all I care. I only care about the integrity of the work . . . that's all I really give a damn about. And I'll kill to keep those words that way."

And kill he will, as you'll see in the following interview we conducted with Ellison in late February, at his remarkable house in the LA foothills. If only as a warning to some of our more faint-hearted readers: Harlan's not someone to be taken, or read, lightly. If four-letter words aren't your bag, you'd better skip over to one of the less provocative sections of the magazine. And be prepared—he's bound to stir up some controversy being "The Man Who Hates Television." Let's face it, folks: in our heart of hearts, we know the guy is right—too much television, hell, too much of anything, is surely bad for us. We may wind up as the first civilization ever to fall because of orthicon tubes and electron guns instead of armies and H-Bombs.

We'll leave it up to you to decide. And don't be surprised if, after you've finished reading what he's got to say, you begin to wonder how many hours you spend before your electronic window each week. And start to worry if your brain sloshes like tapioca when you start to shake your head in disbelief.

A Conversation with the Man Who Hates Television

TV: Harlan, you said a long time ago, about ten years ago in *The Glass Teat*, "I think we can change the face of not only TV-land in America but also the face of our times." You also said you thought that TV in the 70s would be better than anything we've ever seen because for the first time, the networks would be programming for young audiences. What happened?

Ellison: Well, it didn't get any more fucked up than it was. I was wrong—I was dead wrong. I was banking on the verve and level of commitment of the 60s and early 70s to carry many of the multi-national corporations along with them, thereby proving what the revolutionaries had known, which is that nothing stops it short of bombing it out of existence. Entropically speaking, these things will continue rolling, the snowball will keep growing . . .

TV: . . . and they get worse and worse?

Ellison: Well, yeah . . . worse and worse, but also better and better. You see, at the same time that it's worse and worse, people who are the apologists for television

can say, "Look at it—ten years ago we couldn't have done *Battlestar: Ponderosa*. Look at the wonderful advances we've made!" They make the mistake of substituting technical expertise for qualitative betterment, and there is no such thing. In point of fact, television is infinitely less daring now than it was 25–30 years ago. The reason for that is very simple. I don't think it takes a genius to perceive that the more money there is involved in something, the more people there are guarding it, which means the more opinions there are and the more judgments you'll have between the viewer and the creator. The greatest disappointment of the last decade for me has been the coopting of all those people who were out in the streets protesting; all of those kids have now become young adults, and they've all moved right into the establishment.

TV: They've lost their enthusiasm, maybe become disillusioned.

Ellison: They did the fighting and then they

1. "Loudmouthed," "all-leather suit," "world's tallest elf." The first is a value-judgment on Mr. Wielage's part. It has been my experience that individuals whose self-esteem is shaky rationalize their feelings of inadequacy by laying the burden of onerousness on others who feel secure enough to be outgoing and garrulous. Consider: there is a constant denigration of the high-verbals by the reticent; but you never hear those of us who are capable of human speech putting down the poor timorous wimps who deify their zombie-like manner with the encomium "shy." As for the second phrase, I have never ever in my entire life, owned or worn a leather suit. Mr. Wielage may have seen me in a leather jacket. Beyond that, I suggest one weigh all further observations and value judgments (such as "world's tallest elf") in the scale of Mr. Wielage's inaccuracies in just this initial paragraph. [Correspondent Wielage tells us that his description of Ellison here was a first impression. Also, being himself an elf, he fails to look on the title "world's tallest elf" as derogatory.—Ed.]

said, "I've paid my dues. I'm tired." And they didn't take the time to solidify it. What we have now is a replay of the 50s: commercial success, security and "happiness" are the holy grails you go for. All the people who were out in the streets got tired . . . it happens. You fight the battle

about when I said, "Success meant being totally free. It meant being able to get as big as you wanted to be." They saw . . . they interpreted it as two cars in the garage and a microwave oven. And I started screaming at them, saying, "You fools! Don't you understand? Two cars and a

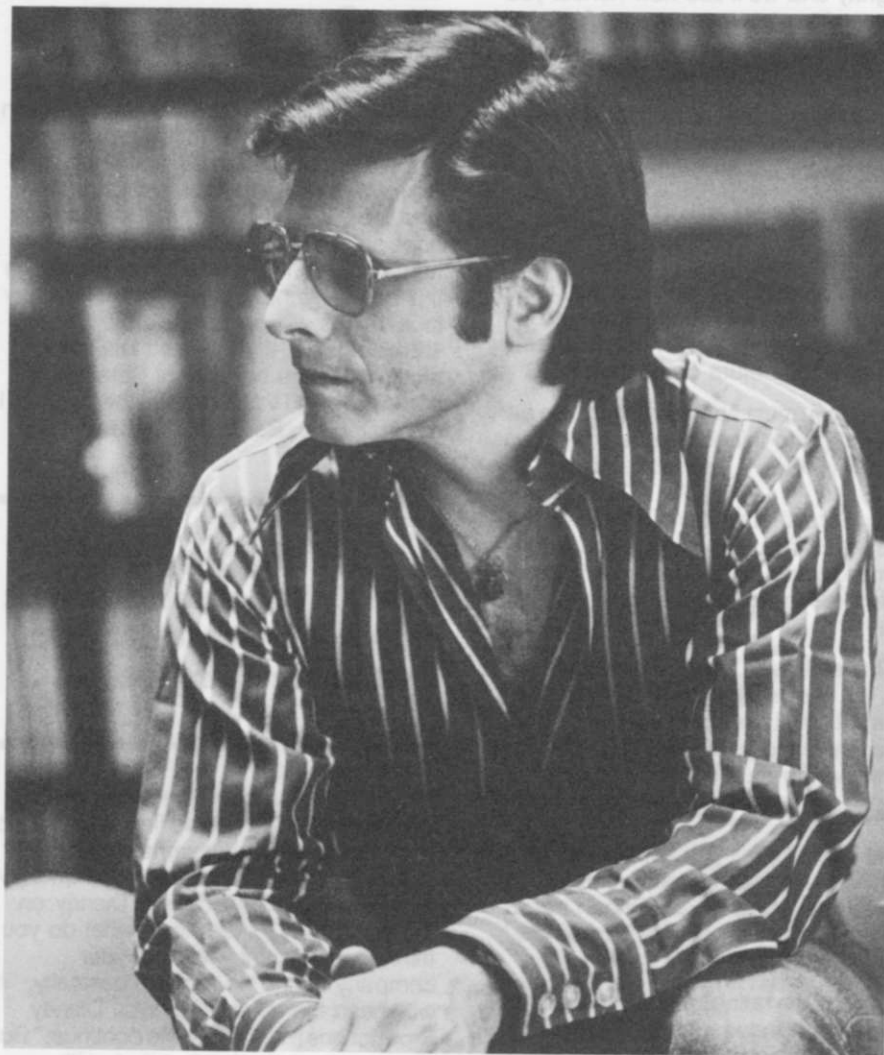
But, no: it's the same thing: they're illiterate, they can't read or write. Television has very adequately seen to that, and they keep saying, "Who is 'they'? Who is 'they'?" They want a villain. Who is the villain? Who do we pin it on?

TV: It's everybody.

Ellison: Absolutely—there is no villain. There are only villains in TV shows; and life ain't a TV show. It's an inarticulate conspiracy of the universe. The universe likes to keep the water nice and smooth—"don't want no trouble, don't make no waves." And society is like that, and systems are like that. Systems spend 98% of their time perpetuating themselves and leveling out anybody who is causing any disruption to the system.

TV: I know this is a very hard question to answer . . . maybe there is no solution . . . but what is the answer to all this? How can we stop people's brains from being turned to tapioca by TV?

Ellison: There is no answer and there is no way to stop it. We are as we have always been. The apologists again will say that things are no different now than they have ever been. The mass of people have always been drones. I suppose that it's true, but there is no *need* that it be so. I mean, we have, existent in our time, the paperback book, which has totally revolutionized life for everyone. For the first time, anyone on this planet has accessible—at a reasonable price, within his means—the totality of human knowledge, from the dawn of recorded history until today. Instead, they go for television, because television supersedes and transcends all other media. It makes it easy to sit and be entertained. One need not struggle to absorb the things you need to get through the day. The answer is, I suppose—if there is an answer, and again, it's an incomplete and inadequate answer, a chancy answer—there are cynical optimists, there are Zorros among us. There are *always* Zorros among us. There will always be Jonas Salks; there will always be Albert Einsteins, Ralph Naders, Margaret Meads. There will always be shit-kickers who will go against the grain. And they will in some way impede, to a very small measure, the progress from snowballing. They will keep it slowed down. I don't think it can be stopped. People left to their own devices will opt for the easiest way, and that is usually the dumbest way. But there will always be Messiahs. Unfortunately, most of them turn out to be Rev. Jim Joneses or Adolph Hitlers, Anita Bryants or Richard Nixons; because power does that to you. Any kind of power. You give some guy on the road an orange coat and a flag, and he suddenly gets fucking crazed with power. Ever notice that? A perfectly ordinary guy. That's because he's been on the bottom all his life, and now he can stop that Cadillac. He can stop that Rolls-Royce.



Dan Barker

for ten years, and you get tired. You say, "I can't take any more. I want to relax. I want to enjoy some of the good things I fought for." Many of those people who wrote for the underground papers, who worked in peace programs, who marched and went to jail, got ripped off for their time while the entrepreneurs were making money. There were as many rip-off people as those who were honestly concerned. The people who did the work said, "hey, it's my time to get a little something now!" And there is nothing wrong with that. They are entitled. But high school kids today sit and watch television constantly. I just came back from Seattle two or three days ago, where I spoke to a rather large class—about fifty kids—at Roosevelt High School. The teacher had gathered them all together, and they could not understand—really could not, gut-level, understand—what I was talking

microwave oven is what they throw at you to keep you from seeing what the important stuff is! They pay you money! They get you laid! They give you dope! They turn you on to religion! These are the things—television primarily—that go at you endlessly, day after day, so you won't pay attention to what the really important things in life are. The things that really and genuinely enrich you and make you great . . . things that permit you to paint the Sistine Chapel ceiling, or write Moby Dick, or discover radium, or put your foot on the moon. These are the things they give you to keep you blind, to keep you dull, to keep you stunned, to keep you stoned." A few of the kids began to respond, maybe three out of sixty. The rest of them all turned aside with dull expressions on their faces. These were high school seniors! And you say, "Well, they'll get better when they get to college."

TV: It's like the Disney cartoon where Goofy goes crazy once he gets behind the wheel of a car . . . it's the same thing. Speaking of power, the religious organizations are out doing television on their own terms. They're doing more and more spectacular productions.

Ellison: They've got unlimited funds, and it's scary. You know, you see it here. You see the PTL Club, and the 700 Club, and you say, "Oh, God—they're awful! They're ghastly!" And you turn the channel . . . you know, a rerun of Gilligan's Island is better than that shit. But you go to Montana or South Carolina or small towns, and that's all they've got. From morning to night on three channels, from 6:00 in the morning until noon, until the game shows go on. That's all there is on TV. They do it at night, late at night. They do it on radio. They've got their own satellite. They've got whatever they want. They can broadcast "perfect" productions anywhere, all over the world. And you can't stop them. You know, I'm constantly reminded of Margaret Mead's remark about the more religion a culture has, the lower its intellectual level. And she had graphs and statistics, and you could see it was true.

TV: Back on the idea of us being unable to stop the snowball, and those visionaries who try to slow it down a little bit: obviously, you were trying to do that 10 or 15 years ago.

Ellison: Well, I still do . . . but not in television anymore.

TV: It seems like in your *Strange Wine*² piece that you said you were going to give up. You were tired of fighting producers, networks and all that.

Ellison: That's an over-simplification. I haven't given up. What I have given up is cooperating with them in any way. Let me put it to you this way: you see, my philosophy about television is a very simple one. It is not the quality of the material on television that makes it necessarily bad. **It's the medium itself**, which is what I said in the introduction to *Strange Wine*. This isn't my philosophy wholly and solely. It comes out of 20 years of studies. People talk about television now as if it were *Terra Incognita*, and we don't really know anything about it, as if we didn't have any studies or actual statistics. But we do. We know. Johns Hopkins [Institute] just finished a huge, 20-year study of television on people. Clearly, it distorts the imagination. It turns people into drones—it's an opiate. That's what it does; that's what it is.

TV: We think it depends upon how you use it. Granted, if you were to use it like three or five hours a day, you . . .

Ellison: (Angrily) That's the same argument I get from everybody! I get it from idiots and I get it from intellectuals—it's the same argument! Look—you know human beings. You have seen human beings. You

have observed them. You give them a gun—they will fire it. Potato chips—*television is potato chips!* You can't eat just one. Yes, you may be able to turn off television after an hour. I may be able to turn off television after an hour. But most people can't! Now we'll get down to the nitty-gritty and we'll see how honest you are: haven't you sat many, many nights and started maybe at 5:00 and maybe wind up at 11:30, watching the late show?

TV: I don't think "many, many" nights. That's my honest answer.

Ellison: "Many", then?

TV: Rarely, at least nowadays; we just don't have the time.

Ellison: Even if it's one day out of your life, it shows the potential . . . because you're an intelligent person and you're prepared to fight it! I despise it! And it catches me, too—that's the nature of the beast.

TV: Well, you must admit that there are a couple of good things on every week, especially in LA . . . almost always, anyway.

Ellison: Sure, there's lots of good stuff and I would watch it, but I find that I don't have the time to watch it. I have too much other stuff to do. I'm working in the world too much.

TV: That's why we use our Betamaxes so often. We can't stay home and watch the shows, either. But we can turn the machine on, via timer, and go out and live. What kind of TV shows do you like? You mentioned the news earlier, but you've got to have some favorites.

Ellison: Well, I'll tell you something: I haven't had a TV set on in six months, once I realized how bad it was. Once I had a clear understanding of how bad it was I didn't watch it anymore.

TV: And yet the ratings still say that a lot of people watch these crummy shows.

Ellison: Okay, but one place they never get the ratings—and this is a place where TV is watched the most—is hotels. I was in Seattle . . . let's see, three nights. In the hotel room with nothing to do, and there, waiting . . . in my room, the television! A big brand-new 21-inch set with a built-in AM/FM radio. I turned on the FM, found the classical station when I was unpacking and never turned the TV on. Not once in three days! When I came back at night after lecturing, after eating and all that—you know, how you turn it on to keep you company—I didn't do it. I turned on the classical music, got out a book and was as happy as a fucking bug. They were some of the happiest nights I've ever spent in a hotel.

TV: It's been our experience, at least with most of the videophiles we know, that most of us don't really turn on the TV as a night-light or to have company or whatever. We only turn it on to watch it . . . really watch

and enjoy it. I often have music on . . . gotta have some bit of media going on in the background. TV, however, is a different thing. I can't even write a letter with the TV on because it is so distracting. It's just like you say . . . it sucks you in. It's like when people lecture and there's a TV set in the same room . . .

Ellison: The people watch the TV sets.

TV: Exactly. As you said in *Strange Wine*, when the teacher wanted to get attention from her students, she'd just turn the set on. Even though it only had snow on it, all the students would become mesmerized and would watch it—they'd quiet down and shut up. But at the same time, we honestly hope and believe that breakthroughs like home VTR's and the videodisc will change the way TV is now, enough that with any luck, things will get a lot better.

Ellison: Listen, if you would like me to testify as to the benefits of Betamax, I'll come out as a TV authority [in the lawsuit]. I mean, for me, Betamax has been a salvation.

"It is not the quality of the material on television that makes it necessarily bad. It's the medium itself . . ."

TV: The only problem is that for every Harlan Ellison Sony could find, MCA would find another Lew Wasserman or other industry official. For example, when they had Card Walker, the head of Disney, on the stand they asked him, "what do you think the Betamax will do to your company?" And he replied, basically, "it will mean the downfall of Walt Disney Productions if it's allowed to continue." But at any rate, we're hoping that, with videotape, the people can finally free themselves from the networks.

Ellison: That's what I've done. But you know, I can't bear to tape movies that have been cut.

TV: Censorship is a real problem. We get increasingly upset by some LA stations that cut great movies to shreds.

Ellison: . . . to shreds, and I can't believe it. One day—what was it that I was watching?—it was a fine film that was in a two-hour slot on an afternoon, I believe it was a Saturday. The movie was only 95 minutes long, so they didn't have to cut it: but they cut seven or eight minutes out of it. It was very, very disappointing to me. I'm very selective about what I tape. Like I'll tape the 1941 *Sea Wolf* with Robinson and Garfield; I taped *The Big Clock* with Ray Milland and Charles Laughton. Things like that—the ones I really remember, the ones I want copies of. You know, those films are

of virtually no financial worth to any of the people who made them. Most of them are dead or out of business now. But if you have them on a Betamax, you're going to [watch them] because you know it's better than the stuff that's on the tube.

TV: True, plus you can avoid the commercials from the tube, too—like Cal Worthington and his dog Spot, or Tom "CalStereoNow" Campbell [two particularly obnoxious local advertisers].

Ellison: Yeah. Now if they could only develop a system that can automatically cut out commercials.

TV: They have one for black and white programs, but they don't have one for color yet.³

Ellison: You mean, it automatically can tell where a commercial is?

TV: It senses the difference between color commercials and black and white shows, but it can't work with color shows. The only thing you can use to cut out commercials in

anyway. They're going against the system. This is not the way things are "supposed" to be; it also goes against the ratings. You watch something on tape—even if you delay it like by watching Saturday Night Live on Sunday morning—you're not going to be counted in the ratings, if you're a Neilson family.⁵

Ellison: I don't think that they have a prayer of winning because what they're trying to do is monopolize. You can't do that. There's no way to stop home taping.

TV: Ah, but there is. Universal decided to sue Sony, the instigator of the home video revolution, and in their opening arguments they are calling for the immediate destruction and removal of all Betamax machines and videocassettes on the market. And when I was called to testify, they got about 30 tapes away from me.

Ellison: Why did you loan them any of your tapes?

TV: Because they subpoenaed them. What can I say? Can I thumb my nose at a U.S. District Judge? Nope—can't do that.

Ellison: You mean, they can come into my home and take my Betamax?

TV: No, it won't go that far, but there could be a day someday when you can't buy any more blank tape. It'd be like trying to get Edsel parts.

Ellison: Do you think the problem is . . . well, first of all, they want to get into it for themselves?

TV: That's part of the story. MCA has come out with a video disc, a system that allows you only to play back programs; you can't record anything with it. So this way they can sell you a movie for \$16 and they can get their dollar or two profit out of it. It's their way of carving a niche for themselves in the future.

Ellison: I can see why they would have to fight the fight. But they haven't got a fucking prayer. A lot of innocent people are going to get crushed along the way; I hope you're not one of them.

TV: I hope not, too. But it's something we're all worried about. Several of us in The Videophile are in on it, those of us who've been subpoenaed and have given depositions and all that, so it's something we're concerned with. I hope it doesn't happen.

Ellison: This all ties in with the Roddy McDowell⁶ thing, right?

TV: I believe Roddy might have been selling films, though. But they're trying to show that a lot of people are doing this out there and this is slowly but surely going to deprive Lou Wasserman and Sid Sheinberg of the money to buy fuel for their Rolls-Royces. All those guys. They're really scared about this. Look at it this way: if you had a few Disney films on tape, you'd never go to see those in a theatre again because you can watch them all you want on your own set. You'd be able to play back all of your favorite scenes, whenever you wanted. Conceivably, if families get this stuff, they could hand it down for generations—tape lasts forever. Children can watch them, your children's children can watch them, grandchildren, the neighbor's kids. So it's possible that nobody will ever go to see a Disney Film again, at least in a theater . . . except for die-hard animation fans like us.

Ellison: But first of all, there aren't going to be that many people who'll do it. I don't think they'll have to worry about it. People will always go to a theater. Taking a kid to see Pinocchio—it's an event. It's like taking a kid to the ballet for the first time.

TV: But still, people are spending a lot of time at home, more nowadays than years ago. Things like Betamax and large-screen TV's are making people think they don't need theaters any more. It costs \$4.50 to go to the Chinese Theater [a large downtown Hollywood movie theater]; it's hard to park, you have to sit with audiences who are talking, coughing and spilling buttercorn down your back. Why put up with that? Why not just watch it at home in the comfort of your living room?

Ellison: Why, in fact, not?

TV: Are you the type of guy who goes to movies regularly?

Ellison: I see 300 films a year.

TV: Well, you obviously get upset with people who are rude in audiences. We've heard how some of the members of the Writers' Guild used to be very rowdy at their screenings. They'd sit there booing and hissing at movies they were previewing while the creators were in the audience; how rude that was! If I ever wrote or directed a movie, I'd hate to stand around and listen to the writers going, "oh, what a piece of shit. Godamighty, how could they waste the film on that?"

Ellison: You must mean the night I made them all sit down again.

"In point of fact, television is infinitely less daring now than it was 25–30 years ago."

a color show, other than your own index finger, is a trained orangutan.⁴ But you know, most of our television viewing is on tape. We hate to watch, for example, Saturday Night Live because of NBC's terrible commercial breaks every 10 minutes, so at least we can avoid that.

Ellison: You mean, you tape the whole thing, then you fast-forward . . .

TV: Right, fast-forward past every commercial. That's part of the lawsuit, by the way.

Ellison: Are you personally being sued?

TV: No, but some of us are witnesses and may eventually be sued. I don't know.

Ellison: By whom?

TV: Universal.

Ellison: For doing what?

TV: Well, about two years ago, Universal realized that there are a lot of people out there with these videotape recorders, and they're taping Universal movies and TV shows among other things off the air and they're watching them on tape. Some of them are keeping them and even inviting friends over to watch them. And because they have them on tape, they'll never again watch them off the air. And never again will they go to a theatre to see them. So as a result, they are slowly chipping away at Universal's financial structure—in theory,

2. *Strange Wine* (Harper & Rowe, 1979). "Revealed at last! What killed the dinosaurs! And you don't look so terrific yourself."—Essay on TV.
3. See this issue's installment of "Ask THE VIDEOPHILE" for new color "commercial killer" soon to be released by THE CABLE WORKS.
4. Ibid.

5. According to a new Arbitron ratings report, they may start counting delayed video tape viewings of a program if it occurs within 24 hours of the original broadcast.
6. Prominent actor who was questioned by the FBI some years ago in connection with a film piracy case. Charges against him were eventually dropped.

TV: Sit down again? You mean they were all standing up?

Ellison: What they always do is they stand up and start to walk out while the end credits are rolling, so the people who are sitting and watching the credits can't see the movie. It was the night of *The Gambler*. They all got up and started to leave, and I said, very loud, "SIT DOWN! SIT DOWN AND SEE WHO GAVE YOU THIS WONDERFUL MOVIE!" Everybody sat down for about four minutes, and then they said, "wait a minute . . . who . . . ?" And then they got defiant and got up and walked out. But I made them all sit down.

TV: We hate it when people do that in theaters, too. Maybe they should all be strapped in.

Ellison: I've stopped going to commercial theaters on weekends. I used to go a lot; now, apart from screenings, the theaters I most patronize are the NuArt, Fox Venice and The Sherman.

TV: All the reissue theaters.

Ellison: Yeah; because I'll catch up on things I've missed. I can see a double-bill of *The Horse's Mouth* and something else that I want to see, and it's terrific.

TV: The Z Channel [pay-cable] is also good.

Ellison: Z Channel is dynamite; they're doing 1900, *The Driver*. They're doing *Madame Rosa*, *The Third Man*. They're doing a lot of good things . . . that's terrific. I can tape those films and keep them for myself.

TV: Don't tell Universal!

Ellison: If they give me any shit, I'll give them more fucking trouble than they ever thought they had.

TV: We wish they had subpoenaed you. You'd be much better at fighting them than we are.

Ellison: I'm suing ABC-TV and Paramount on their *Future Cop* . . .

TV: Yeah, that was your "Brillo" story.

Ellison: It's a \$3,000,000 suit, and we're doing very well on it. This is a big, big suit. Henry Holmes and Gunther Schiff are my attorneys, and you know what killers they are. Gunther just got Universal for \$11,000,000 out of court on Mario Puzo's suit on *Earthquake*. They're terrified of him. He's a heavyweight. We're definitely going to win. I mean, I don't even have a moment's hesitation in saying that we are definitely going to win. It's just a case of how big I want to win, and what I want to do to them; they already wanted to settle out of court for a lot of money, and I told them to put that up their noses.

TV: Maybe they'll give you a free videodisc player.

Ellison: (grinning evilly) I want their fucking blood! Anyway, my attorney talked to me about this *Star Wars*/*Galactica* thing.

They've got a clear-cut case. They've got Universal by the balls! I said, "it doesn't matter that they're both space opera. The crux of it is what you would call a superimposed pre-continuum. It's a matter of ambience. It captured the same style, and that, it seems to me is, if not copyrightable, at least protectable under law." So Schiff was talking to one of Lucas' attorneys, and they said, "Oh my God, this guy sounds exactly like what we need." I mean, I know the history of science fiction all the way back to 1926 for chrissakes, and I can give them chapter and verse on the idiom and use of it and what went before. *Battlestar: Ponderosa* is *in fact* a direct rip-off of *Star Wars*, which ain't that original, either.

TV: It isn't even a very good rip-off.

Ellison: I despise *Star Wars*, too, but I despise thugs who steal, like Glen Larson, more. I mean, his whole career has been one imitation after another, all the way from *The Four Preps* on to *B.J.* and *the Bear*.

TV: He even rips himself off on *Galactica* with *Buck Rogers*—a terrible movie. Meanwhile, Universal is saying that Lucas copied their *Silent Running* in their counter-lawsuit.

Ellison: It really is a snake-pit out there. These people not only have very little ethics or morality, they have virtually no creative instincts. It's the bottom line—it's always the bottom line on the payroll that they worry about. (angrily) This is no way to run an art form! Pauline Kael said this is an art form run by businessmen. Television, in that respect, is the kind of medium in which a Glen Larson and a Sid Sheinberg can flourish. They wouldn't last fifteen minutes in a medium that demanded originality, stern ethics, and a sense of responsibility. Their responsibility is to their stockholders and themselves . . . to make money. That's what they look for.

TV: Getting back to the problem of television taking over people's minds, isn't it easier for people like us who work in TV to get away from it than for people who have to work, say, in the office or a factory putting in the "9 to 5"? Maybe they need that when they get home.

Ellison: No! They don't need that! What did they do before they had television?

TV: They had radio . . . plays . . .

Ellison: Yes, but radio is a participatory activity, like books. There was conversation; there's no such thing now. People eat their dinner with the TV set going. Why do you think we have a rise in fast foods in this country? You know, I do an enormous amount of traveling around this country. But no matter what city or town I go into, it all looks the same. It all looks like Ventura Boulevard. It's got your Taco Bell, it's got your McDonald's, it's got your Burger King. It's got the motels, the bowling alleys, the Safeways, the shopping

malls . . . that whole thing. And that is what has become "the country." There is virtually no identity left in any part of this nation.

TV: It's all mediocrity.

Ellison: Exactly—it's all been leavened out. And not leavened out at the level of Proust, but at the level of McDonald's shitburgers.

TV: "Harold Robbins country."

Ellison: Exactly! Now you say, "isn't TV good for people because it gives them that 'going away' thing." No, definitely no! People say, "I gotta have escape." That's bullshit! We spend 90% of our day in escape! If it isn't escape into religion, it's escape into dope. If it isn't escape into dope, it's escape into sex. If it isn't sex, it's cheap paperbacks. If it isn't cheap paperbacks, it's TV. Television, movies, newspapers—there are a million different escapes—a million different areas—and that's all we do. We are a lemming race hell-bent on being entertained and

" . . . television is potato chips! You can't eat just one."

distracted constantly. Thus, we never confront the real world, which gets uglier and uglier because those who are manipulating the real world to their own ends, in whatever little areas, have us totally at their command. We stumble around like those stunned by the hammer. Television keeps you in that soporific state. It keeps you stunned. I've been saying this now for a number of years. Ten or twelve years ago in *The Glass Teat* I was saying something else; it took me years to learn. I shouldn't have been so stupid. I should have learned sooner. I'm not that bright, but I did finally learn. Now I'm speaking out. What I'm saying now is a very different thing than I was saying before; but if you look at the continuity of the things I was saying, all the way from 1962, when I got to LA to write for TV, to *The Glass Teat*, to the various magazines, to today, you'll see a steady progression, a steady drift, across the spectrum from, "gee, television is not so good, but I'll change it from within," which of course is self-duplicity. You know, you lie to yourself so you can keep getting that fat paycheck and say "I am doing some good." You're not doing any good! In fact, you're doing worse, because the better you work, the better you write, it means the more interesting those shows will be and the more people will watch. The more they watch, the more hooked they become and the more bad you are doing. I mean, it's the "Howard Beale" syndrome.

TV: Still, sometimes the best-written shows don't get the best ratings, and sometimes the worst shows get great ratings—like *Three's Company*, that's not exactly brilliant television fare.

Ellison: The mass taste has been steadily bastardized for so long that we turn to *Gilligan's Island* and *Supertrain* and *Love Boat* and *Fantasy Island* and *Charlie's Angels* and *Laverne & Shirley*. The very thing we're talking about: (in Archie Bunker-type voice) "Gee, I worked all day in the foundry and I wanna come home tonight, and I don't wanna worry about them taking away my home. I don't wanna worry that my kids are dope addicts. I don't wanna worry that my wife is trapped all day in the house and fucking the milkman. I don't wanna worry. Turn on the TV!"

That is not life. People should be kept from that . . .

TV: "... dependence?"

Ellison: Yeah, but it's more than that. It's pulling the wool over their own eyes.

TV: It's like what you talked about in *Strange Wine*, the people are accepting TV's fantasies as reality.

Ellison: It's a cleaning up of all the images. They do something like *The Chicago Teddy Bears* and the '30s gangsters.

TV: Or like *Hogan's Heroes* and the fun of *World War II*.

Ellison: They clean up everything because you cannot present reality on television. They program with what they refer to themselves as "least resistance programming." That means you reach the most people in the least troubling way. And anything that gets close to the bone, they throw out. I mean, they think *Soap* is daring! *Soap* doesn't compare with the mildest page of *Collette*, *DeMaupassant* or *Balzac* and that's 200 years ago. I just couldn't be a party to it any more . . . and you say you want to work in TV! Well, I can't say to you, "gee, that's terrific, I wish you well." I don't wish you well. I hope you fail miserably. I hope you find something else to do, because I think working in TV is the worst possible thing anyone can do. In the colleges I go to, that's what people are going into. They're not becoming doctors any more, or physicists; they want to get into "the media." The media classes, the television classes, are the biggest classes on any campus because it is, first of all, bullshit mickey-mouse classes where you don't have to do that much work, you don't have to study. It's all off the top of the head, it's all associated with glamour. The only thing that saves it for me is that most of the people are going to fail in the process.

TV: Half of them are going to stay in *Sioux City, Iowa*, and they'll never make it to *Hollywood*, anyway. And most of the people we knew in school gave up on careers in the industry long ago. But getting back to discussing fantasy and all

that, we heard you did a *Flying Nun* script a few years ago. What was that show about? We didn't see it.

Ellison: Hardly anybody did. Everybody always asks about that as if there is something strange about me writing a *Flying Nun*. I mean, I've also written comic books, and no one finds that peculiar. Anyway, the way I got to it was there was a guy who had been my personal manager about '65 or '66, a guy from Australia who worked for me six months and clipped me for about \$10,000, and I got rid of him immediately. Well, a few months later he called me after he got himself in at *Screen Gems*, and wanted to square away things with me. For doing *The Flying Nun*, they'd pay x-amount of thousands of dollars—in those days it wasn't much for situation comedies. I didn't have any comedy credits; I had written *Burke's Law*, which was as close to it as I'd gotten. I figured that yeah, I'd like to write a comedy. So I went down and saw the pilot and it was marvelous. It was called "The Last Pelican" or "The First Pelican" or something like that. Sally Field knocked me out, and I wanted to get next to her. I figured that if I liked the show, there was a chance that I'd get to meet Sally Field. Now that may seem to a lot of people as, you know, an ignoble reason to do it.* They'd much prefer to say that I did it for the money. I didn't do it for the money. I did it to meet Sally Field, and I did it because I enjoyed the show. I wrote a very funny script. The writing of it was very difficult because I had been in a street fight and got busted up pretty badly out in *Milford, Pennsylvania*. I was in the hospital writing it with a typewriter on my lap while *Billy Sackheim*, the producer, kept calling and screaming, "Where's my script? Where's my script?" Both my hands were bandaged, and I was typing with my thumbs; it was really difficult. But I wrote it, and I wrote a very funny, *Jewish Flying Nun*. It was that kind of thing, and they, of course, couldn't let the script go as it was. It was a nice little script called "You Can't Get There from Here." Nice little episode. But they fucked it around and wanted it re-written. They hired *Rocky and Irman Kalish*, who are very well-known television writers. And the *Kalishes* called me and said, "My God, we don't want to touch the script—it's beautiful! So, we're going to tinker around with it a little and give it back to them. We're not really going to change the script." Of course, *Sackheim* got furious when they sent it back, so what *Screen Gems* did was cut out half my show and run flashbacks of earlier shows. I took my name off it and put the name "Cordwainer Bird" on it. It was one of three times that I did that.

*Not me boy, I can hardly imagine a more noble motivation.—Ed.

TV: The first time you did that was on *Voyage*, right?

Ellison: *Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea*. The second time was *The Flying Nun*, and the third time was on *The Starlost*.

TV: We saw that *Voyage* episode a few months ago and noticed your name on the front of it, or rather, "Cordwainer Bird" 's name.

Ellison: They ran it?

TV: On *KTLA*, not too long ago.

Ellison: Damn—I missed it. You see, I don't have copies of any of those things. I don't have the *Alfred Hitchcock* I wrote. I don't have any of the *Burke's Laws*.

TV: Those are sometimes shown in *Tampa*, and the *Hitchcocks* are now on in *LA*: they're generally great shows. Did you work with *Irwin Allen* on that idea for *Voyage*?

Ellison: I was called in on a cattle call. This was 1964; I had been in town two years, and I was scuffling. I didn't have any money. They had a cattle call, and my agent said that a new series called *Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea* was happening and to go see it. I went to see it, and it was dumb. But those were the early days and I was writing TV and would write anything, and I was anxious to work. So I came up with an idea and I rushed back to his office while everybody else was still watching the pilot, so I was the first writer in his office. I told him the story and he said he liked it, so I wrote it. Well, he fucked it around. [shows us 18 drafts of the script]

TV: How much did they change it?

Ellison: They changed everything . . . I mean, it was ridiculous. The whole thing was changed so completely that it bore no relation to what I had originally written.

TV: If they changed it so much, what's the purpose of having a good original idea? Why don't they just do it themselves?

Ellison: That's right! But they're too lazy—they can't write. See, they're not writers.

TV: You're saying they can only re-write.

Ellison: Right. Give them something and they can tell you why it's wrong! You see, they haven't got the ability to dream the dream in the first place, and they hire you and pay you a lot of money to buy that dream from you, but then they have to establish that they are in control. They're power nuts! All of these people are crazy, power nuts! Once in awhile you'll find a power nut who's got the talent—a *Robert Altman*, or a *Fellini*. They're all on a power trip. But some of them have the humanity and the vision, and with them you'll sometimes get good film and acceptable television. Most of the time, what you've got are people who have no sense of craft, they're imitators. Now, *Irwin Allen*, who just directed *The Swarm* . . .

TV: A terrible movie.

Ellison: My God, a terrible movie! And not just terrible because it's a stupid movie from the start, but because it's totally illogical! The characterization comes from nowhere and goes nowhere. The characters are introduced and nothing's done with them. Irwin lives with the special effects. He's got this glandular condition in his films which has always existed, back all the way to the time he was doing *The Story of Mankind*.⁷ He'd get 500 old has-been stars and throw them all together and say, "Ok, here's a movie." And he thinks that names will pull money into the theater. Well, apparently, *The Swarm* lost a lot of money and I am delighted. I hope it's the end of Irwin's career because this man has single-handedly made it difficult to make small films. I mean, when he had a couple of films that made a lot of money, like *The Poseidon Adventure* and *Towering Inferno*, everybody said, "Ah, this is the way to go."

"We are a lemming race hell-bent on being entertained and distracted constantly."

TV: *Poseidon Adventure* was the one that really turned everything around.

Ellison: Precisely—that was Irwin Allen's "gift" to us.

TV: We've heard varying reports about you throwing people out windows, punching Allen out or breaking someone's back . . . all these rumors. What's the story on that? What did you really do to Irwin Allen?

Ellison: I didn't touch Irwin.

TV: You didn't touch him?

Ellison: It was the head of ABC Continuity.

TV: Oh, he probably should be punched.

Ellison: He's dead now. His name was Adrian Samish.

TV: Oh, we saw his name all the time on *The Invaders*.

Ellison: Yeah, he worked for Quinn Martin. He went to Q-M after he left ABC. I mean, that's what they do—they move from place to place. And nothing succeeds like failure. Samish was the head of ABC network continuity; he was the censor. Irwin called me into a meeting. He really liked me and the way I was writing. He wanted me to do many shows for him. I was going to become one of his regular stable. (with horror) My God! That was before the early stages of the script; then he found out that I wasn't going to cooperate. Anyway, he called me in and this guy started in on me and wanted me to do a lot of really stupid things.

TV: What kind of changes did they want?

Ellison: (reflecting) We're talking now of 14 years ago; it's very hard for me to remember. Well, there's a scene in the script where there's a beautiful woman on-board the *Seaview*, who's a spy. She pulls a gun on Richard Basehart and she's going to blow up the sub and escape in the mini-sub or whatever they've got, and everybody else dies. Well, I go to this meeting and it's in a room in Irwin Allen's office with a very long conference table so he can act like a "big massa." At one end is me and at the other end is Adrian Samish . . . a very long, shining table. All of Irwin's yes-men are down the sides of the table. There's a big model of the *Seaview* on the wall behind Samish, one of the scale models they used and he had it put on brackets on the wall and there it hung. This guy started saying things to me, and he was very, very stupid. I mean, they were more stupid than you can believe—really insipid! But the one that finally got me was when he said, "I have this wonderful idea." This was around the time *From Russia with Love* came out. "The commander should grab for her, and he grabs her by the face and it rips away, and we find that she's not beautiful—she's hideously ugly underneath." I said, "Look, this woman has been making love to people on the sub for months during this voyage. They've been hugging, kissing and touching her, and you're saying they don't know she had a rubber face?" They could be horny, but they couldn't possibly be that bad off. He said, "you can figure a way around that."

I said, "There is no way around that! You people are always telling me I can find a way around that—but there is no way around that! It's a stupid idea!" He replied, "well, I saw it in *From Russia with Love*, and I liked it." I said, "I saw it in *From Russia with Love*, too, and I liked it there, but I don't like it here." I said that it was stupid and wouldn't work. He said, "Look, you just do it. Don't tell me what's stupid." I said, "What the fuck do you mean, 'do it'?" He said, "You writers are just toadies. You just do as you're told."

(grinning evilly) And I went for him. I jumped on the chair and ran down the length of the table, slipped, fell, and slid along the table. I hit him right in the mouth as hard as I could. He went over backwards out of the chair; the *Seaview* came down on him and broke his pelvis! (laughter) And I didn't work on any ABC shows for five or six years. He killed \$30,000 worth of scripts. But that's fine. I don't object to that. Revenge is okay; I can dig revenge.

TV: We heard you were really into revenge—that you're still working on grudges from 1937.

Ellison: Yeah, people who fuck me around, I get them. Basically, I'm as nice and as kind as anyone else. But you come into my yard and fuck with me, I'm gonna . . . it's not

just an eye for an eye. I'm gonna take off both your arms and you're going to walk with a limp for the rest of your life. That's the way I am about it.

TV: We also have a note here that you wrote an unproduced Batman script.

Ellison: I did. I wrote a very good Batman script. We were going to use Two-Face [as a villain]. That was at the end of the four or five year period that I hadn't worked for ABC. I got hired at 20th to write a Batman. I was dying to write the show; it wasn't sensational, but I loved it. Anyway, [producer] Howie Horowitz signed me on. I turned in the treatment—it was a great treatment. He loved it; everybody loved it. They wanted to do it. The day that Adrian Samish was leaving ABC to go to work for Quinn Martin, whose offices were at that time at Warner Bros., I was in Howie's office at 20th and the phone rang. He automatically put it on the squawk box. It was Adrian. He said, "You can't do this Ellison script." Horowitz said, "Why not?" "Ellison is not allowed to work . . . blah, blah, blah . . ." He did a whole thing that I wasn't supposed to hear.

TV: You should've asked him, "How's your pelvis?"

Ellison: It was a gratuitous, last kick in the ass to me. I mean, it was a \$1500 script—who gave a shit, you know? But he got me. Now that one I thought was gratuitous, because he had killed \$30,000 worth of assignments over the years and I never complained, never said a word, never went after him. But this broke my heart. So I went down to Warner's the next day. I went to the building where Quinn Martin had his unit, and I waited in a little alcove where there was a Sparklett's water fountain and stood there right across from the door of Samish's office. (smiling) Sure enough, about 10:00, here he came walking down the hall. He didn't see me and he started to turn the doorknob. As he turned, I said, "Hey, Adrian!" and POW! I hit him right in the mouth again. He went backwards through the door, went over the secretary's desk, knocked her sideways and went right into a waste-basket.

TV: (laughter) I think we have a great potential here for an idea that we could turn into a concept for a treatment of a great situation comedy. . . .

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- 1957 pseudo-epic well known for being a "badly cast and poorly handled film highlighting man's history with a stretch of clichéd costume episodes," according to Leonard Maltin's *"Movies on TV."*
 - 1975 feature version of Ellison's Hugo Award winning novella starring Don Johnson, Jason Robards, and Susanne Benton. A big SF cult film about a war-desolated earth in the future.
 - Ariel: *The Book of Fantasy*, Volume 2 (1977): "Eggsucker," a book/magazine, now distributed commercially by Ballantine Books and available in most good paperback book stores nationally.

Ellison: And that took care of that. It's funny that you'd ask about the one thing and the other, because they're the opening and the closing of that whole story.

TV: Well, that's amazing. You sure got the last laugh. Did he ever try to sue you or anything?

Ellison: He was going to sue me and Irwin Allen when his pelvis got broken; Irwin settled out of court. I don't know how much he gave him. I heard that's what happened.

TV: It was nice that Irwin paid for it.

Ellison: Irwin was protecting his own ass. He wasn't doing it for me.

TV: Samish sounds like a real jerk.

Ellison: He was not actually like one of the censors. He was kind of a liaison. He thought he was the czar of writing.

TV: We wanted to ask you about some script ideas that never worked out. They looked pretty good in the beginning when you talked about them at conventions. You once spoke at a convention about an NBC show of *A Boy and His Dog*.⁸ What ever happened to that? That's about the most bizarre idea for a TV show we've ever heard.

Ellison: (nodding) Very bizarre. L.Q. Jones sold it to NBC without asking me, and before I knew it I was in bed with him—you know, business-wise—and doing a pilot script for a two-hour movie for the network, and I thought it was crazy. Oddly enough, I was able to produce a script that maintained the original concept and had the characters. It was based on . . . you see, *A Boy and His Dog* is only part of the story . . . there's a prequel called

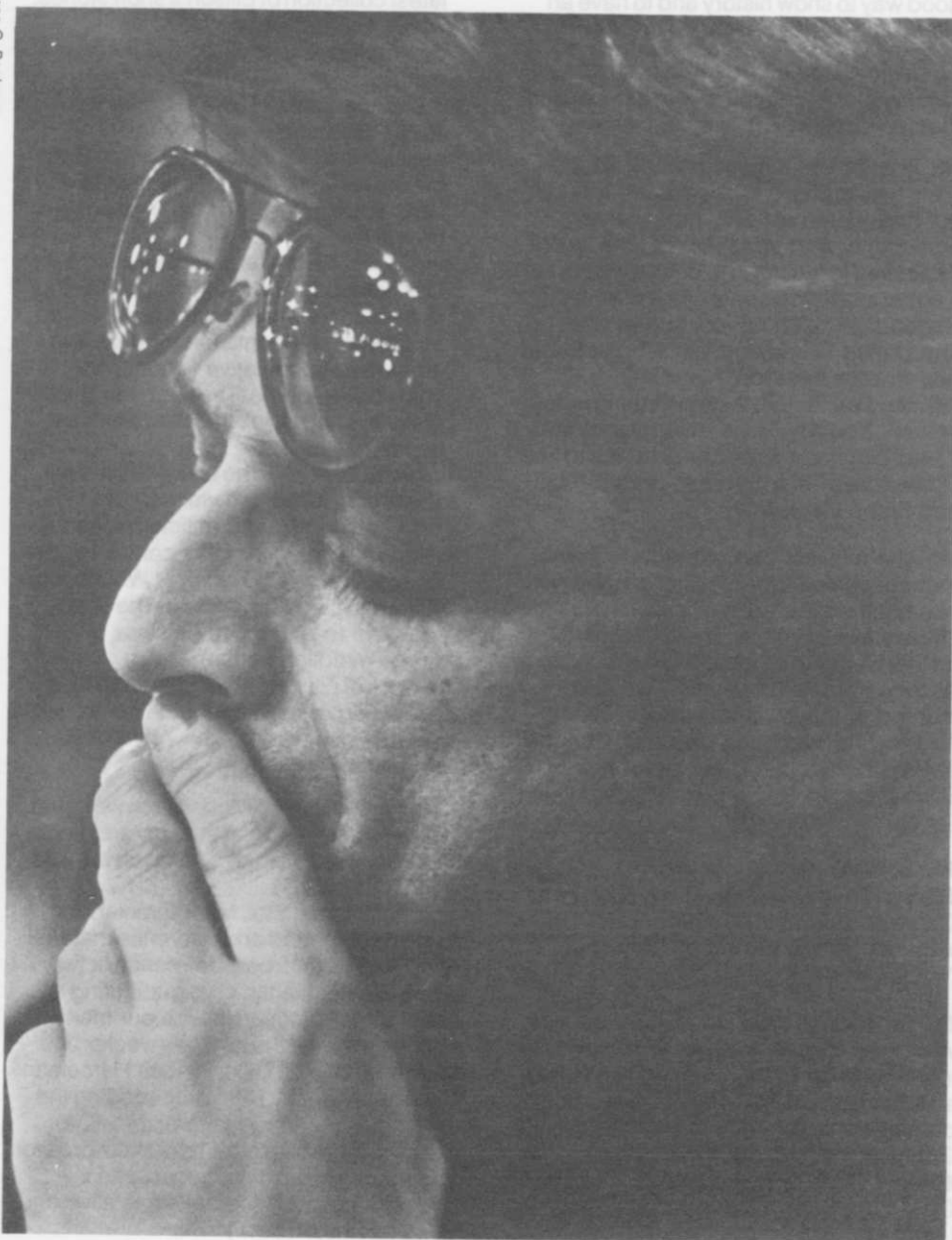
"Eggsucker" which was published in *Ariel*⁹ a few months ago. It's a marvelous little story. Boy and his Dog was what I wrote first. "Eggsucker" is a prequel in terms of time; it kind of sets the mood for *A Boy and His Dog*, which comes after. It was all intended to be part of one novel. "Blood's a Rover" introduces a female character who is a rover, the equivalent of Vic. She's tougher and meaner than he is! It was one hell of a good script. I am wild about it. I think it is dynamite. It's fun; it's mean, it's inventive; it's strange; it's unlike anything they've done on television. It has a different look and feel—and it's gritty and very nice.

TV: What happened? You seemed so convinced it'd really happen.

Ellison: (sadly) I was convinced it was going to go and everyone else was, too. NBC loved it. The problem was Jones—L.Q. Jones. He had deluded himself into thinking that he had created A

"I think working in TV is the worst possible thing anyone can do."

Boy and His Dog. He couldn't recognize the fact that it was my concept, my dream. He always thought there was a big difference between his view of what *A Boy and His Dog* was and mine. They were basically the same, but when he started to deviate from what I had written and put his own stuff in, he went flat. When he stayed with where I was and interpreted his way, it was fine . . . because he didn't understand plotting that well. So when I did the script, the network loved it! It was one of those rare occasions where usually a producer loves it and sends it to the networks and they make him rewrite it; in this case, the network loved it. There were three or four minor changes; otherwise, they liked it so much that we had started out with the concept that it was a two-hour movie. During the process of my writing it, they had a change of heart and said, "no, we want it 90 minutes;" but when the script came in, they said, "we'll do it two hours." That's how much they liked it. But L.Q. Jones didn't like it, and the project was tied up with him. I couldn't move without him. He couldn't move without me, and the network couldn't move without both of us. So they were locked in with him and he began fighting it and undermining it. He called up the network and said, "This isn't working. Ellison is giving me shit," things like that. Simcom International, the production company, had also been undermined, thought I was a madman, and until everything that he did started going



Melissa C. Beckman

wrong, they began to perceive that it wasn't me, it was him! Finally, I talked to someone who used to be at the network at that time, and I asked, "What happened? Whatever happened?" He said, "We never thought Jones could deliver."

It was Jones who killed it. It broke my heart. I own the property, but I can't move without him. We're still in business together. He's got sequel rights. I've got people who are trying to buy it away from him now and maybe, once I get it free from him, maybe I'll be able to get it on the air. It's a lovely, lovely, lovely script. I mean, it is really super duper.

TV: Was the Boy and His Dog feature successful? I thought it didn't make any money, with its limited distribution and all that.

Ellison: Very successful. In fact, it made \$6,500,000—not a penny of which I have ever received. I have 2 points in that picture and I've never received a dime.

TV: Oh, it's "the overhead," right?

Ellison: Yeah—Jones has been running his office the last four years. He pays his rent, he pays everything off it. If I ever want to go to court against him, I'm sure I could enjoin him and eventually get him to declare bankruptcy and collect and get my money. He's stiffed me for everything.

TV: That's too bad. You seemed very close to him at the convention; you said then you were very pleased with the movie.

Ellison: I was very pleased with the movie . . . with reservations about the sexism in it. I thought he did a very, very good job. I don't think anyone else would have had the sense to undertake such a film; you have to love that story to want to do it. He did it very well indeed, but L.Q. is not a very nice man. He's like me, he's an individualist who wants to be in charge. That's fine, as long as you don't have someone else equally as headstrong who wrote the original material, and since I wrote the original material my primary interest supersedes all else.

TV: You didn't write the script to the movie, though.

Ellison: I wrote the first seven minutes. The meanest line in the movie—where the woman is lying cut up on a table and the kid says, "Ah, shit, why did they have to do that to her? She could've been used again." That's my line. And the dog says, "War is hell, Albert."

A lot of people are going to do unadjusted gross. You start making money from "penny-one." That's the way to go.

TV: So they don't wait until one certain amount is reached before they pay you your percentage?

Ellison: From the first ticket sold, you get your take.

TV: That's great—that's the way it should be. You mentioned Man Without Time; it sounds like a great title for a series. What is it? Kind of a "Time Tunnel" show.

Ellison: It was a series about a man who moves all through history—all through the past—two great forces fighting through time. One of them is altering the past.

TV: I see—the hero's got to "de-alter" it. Like someone who is going to try to save Lincoln and he's gotta make sure that someone is killed so that the progression of events will still occur as they should have.

Ellison: Yeah, but you see, the story would come from the fact that he would get very close to Lincoln and really love and admire him, but he's gotta let him die.

TV: It sounds like your "City on the Edge of Forever" episode from Star Trek.

Ellison: I did that subsequently. I took that idea and developed it. History is very interesting to me, and I thought it was a good way to show history and to have an interesting kind of hero.

TV: Irwin Allen would use stock shots for it.

Ellison: Oddly enough, Allen ripped off the idea.

TV: The Time Tunnel is exactly like that. They'd try to change the past only to find out they were part of it, part of that time-frame. And speaking of time, we're beginning to run out of it. Before we go, we wanted to ask you about some of your other "legends," like about your appearance on The Dating Game and why Chuck Barris had to burn the tape.

Ellison: I wrote that, the whole thing in its entirety. You see, I hate telling stories that have been done. They can go and find The Other Glass Teat [Pyramid Books, 1975] and find it there.

TV: The funniest part of the story is that they call you up every so often to try to get you back on the show.

Ellison: Not any more. They called me up for The Newlywed Game two days after my divorce from my third wife—we were married 45 days—and it was in all the trades. She was quite beautiful, but now she's a born-again Christian. A real Bible-thumper. She's now married to Dean Jones.

TV: Sorry to hear about that.

Ellison: They called from The Newlywed Game and asked to have us on; I said that I was just getting divorced. They said, "What? WHAT?"

TV: So we can't have the story of how you were fired from Walt Disney Productions for idly remarking in the studio commissary about how you'd like to make a hard-core pornographic movie with Mickey, Minnie, Goofy and all the gang?

Ellison: That's in the November '78 issue of Oui—"The Three Most Important Things in Life."

TV: Well, our readers can find that if they really want to read it; it's a hilarious story. "At Disney, no one fucks with the Mouse," right?

Ellison: Right.

TV: In any case, Harlan, thanks very much for the talk. We'll be sure to tell our readers to do their best to avoid TV—especially bad TV—whenever possible. It's hazardous to our brains.

Ellison: Abso-fucking-lutely.

Afterword to Ellison Interview:

Those of you who are interested in reading more about and by Harlan Ellison are advised to look for the following, at any large book store near you:

Strange Wine (Harper & Row, 1979), the latest collection of Ellison's short stories, with a short essay on television's destructive influence on the human mind.

Six Science Fiction Plays (Pocket Books, 1976), featuring Ellison's original never-filmed script for "City on the Edge of Forever," plus Harlan's side as to why NBC wouldn't let the original version get on the air.

Dangerous Visions and Again, Dangerous Visions (Signet, 1972), a revolutionary multi-volumed set edited by Ellison and containing the best in new-wave speculative fiction. (And someday-to-come: The Last Dangerous Visions, capping off the award-winning series.)


The Glass Teat and The Other Glass Teat (Pyramid, 1975), a collection of "apocalyptic teevee criticism mean as Drano martinis," the latter containing the complete script to Harlan's "Whimper of Whipped Dogs" episode of The Young Lawyers (a damn fine episode of a fair-to-middling series).

The Book of Ellison (Algol Press, 1978), a collection of essays about Harlan, by several people who know him best (including himself).

And more works of fiction than we could ever possibly name. Chances are, if you find a book with Harlan's name on it, it'll be worth looking into.

Special thanks to: Mark Evanier, for much background and reference material; Alan Brennet for a book reference or two; Linda Steele, Harlan's long-suffering assistant for putting up with our many phone calls over the past few weeks; Joe Mazzini and Scott Lillie, for their Herculean help in transcribing and proofreading the entire mess; and to Harlan himself, for generously giving us his time and words for a couple of measly videocassettes. (Video/checkbook journalism is alive and living in Tinsel-Town.)

The Videophile's Newsletter



format wars

Format wars are now raging in both the VCR and video disc arenas. We have sorted out and condensed the details as best we can, and here's how it looks at press time:

-- With respect to VCR's, all the Beta format group (Sony, Toshiba, Sanyo, Sears, and Zenith) are expected to introduce a new generation of machine which will feature up to 4½ hours of playing time on a single cassette. As best we can tell, the deluxe Sony SL-J8 model (counterpart to the previously mentioned Japanese model J-7) will also feature a one or two week programmable timer, visible fast-forward, still, slow motion, automatic rewind, tape-end alarm, high speed "cue and review" (20 times normal forward and reverse with visible picture), and 10-function remote control (!). As usual, we expect to have more details shortly after this issue goes to press (sigh), so it is unclear whether this unit will have 3 or only 2 speeds. (The 4½ hours is achieved by a new speed, slower by about one-third than the X-2 speed, and using an L-750 cassette. An L-500 cassette would yield 3 hours.)

-- Hitachi now has a VHS unit in Japan that features a 10 day programmable timer and 6 speed "modes" including normal, twice normal, variable, slow motion and still. There would seem to be little doubt that the VHS format group could produce a feature-laden model like the J8 anytime they care to gear up to do so.

-- Waiting in the wings is the "LVR" format, mentioned in several back issues. This is the so-called ¼" (or 8mm) format, and folks we had better be prepared to take them seriously. BASF foresees introduction of an LVR recorder, weighing under 10 pounds, by the end of this year, and claims that it will surpass the "best features available" on any VHS on the market at that time, including time capacity, freeze frame and other options. If they can put their VCR where their mouth is, it'll be fruit basket turnover time. The unit is expected to cost under \$600 and a lightweight VCR/camera outfit for about \$1000 appears to be a target. Blank tape may be under \$10.

-- If all this were not enough, Kodak is known to have secret plans of its own. What it all means is that many "biggies" feel that the future of home video lies as much in compact home movie type equipment as it does in component type time-shift variety VCRs. There is every reason to believe that a smaller format could eventually come to be the standard for all home video equipment. What with metal tape and/or digital recording techniques, today's picture quality could be equaled or even surpassed. Costs of tape and everything else could be less. How many formats can coexist is anyone's guess.

On the video disc front, things are getting more complicated again, too. The Magnavox/MCA system is not expected to be available in large quantities before the end of the year, and this may not be soon enough to give them much of a lead over a couple of onrushing competitors.

-- As announced last issue, RCA has decided to go its own way, and may step up plans so as to reach the market by earlier in 1980 than was previously anticipated. RCA has reportedly secured the rights to 350 feature films (200 from MGM, 100 from 20th Century-Fox, but none from Universal -- gee, I wonder why?). RCA is also exploring avenues such as joint financing of original programming with Viacom's "Showtime" pay-cable system, as well as simultaneous release of video discs and phonograph albums of musical material.

-- Now comes MATSUSHITA again! At the recent ITA convention in Hilton Head, SC, they surprised everyone with introduction of the "Visc-O-Pac", a smaller and less expensive version of the mechanical "Visc" system first shown in 1977. The system, shown here,



achieves two hours of video on a 9" disc! Indications are that the Visc-O-Pac system, which at 16.5 pounds weighs less than half the MagnaVision player, could be marketed for substantially less than the \$400 being mentioned for RCA's system. As with the other non-optical type discs, this one cannot be handled directly, so it comes in a protective container which is to be placed in the player, where it is then removed after the lid is closed. Some industry sources seem to feel that Matsushita is not really serious about making a 3-way battle out of it, but only wants to give RCA something to think about before the latter completely abandons plans for a Japanese/US nonoptical standard. And so it goes ... as Lloyd Dobyns would say.

Testimony in the MCA/Disney/Sony "Betamax trial" was concluded on March 8. Judge Ferguson cut both sides short because he had "heard enough" without letting either side exhaust its lists of prospective witnesses. The schedule now calls for the parties to present their closing arguments to the court on June 14. A decision may be forthcoming by Fall. In a last ditch effort to sway the courts' opinion, Stephen

Kroft, attorney for Universal and Disney, said that he would like to produce an expert witness hired by the studios to experiment with the Sony machine. If allowed to testify, Kroft said, the witness would demonstrate that TV networks and stations (with FCC approval) could incorporate a signal into the unused part of the broadcast spectrum which could shut down the Betamax once it was modified to acknowledge the signal.

Kroft said the court could thus protect copyrighted materials by ordering such a change in Betamax, since the broadcasters could separate programs that they did not want to be copied.

Judge Ferguson commented, "When we talk about sending signals through the air -- Congress has said that's the exclusive province of the FCC ... I'm sure what you're telling me is true -- electronically, apparently there's nothing that can't be done. (But) if the court requires a device on the Sony that would jam broadcasts over the air, as sure as you and I are sitting in this room today, some bright young entrepreneur outside of Sony will come up with a device to unjam the jam -- and somebody else will come up with a device to jam the unjam."

If there was ever any doubt that earth stations are the wave of the future, read on. RCA has announced plans to build receive-only earth stations, free of charge for all the 725 commercial television stations in the country! The implications are mind boggling, nationwide distribution of programming other than through the facilities of one of the existing networks being one which comes most readily to mind. Industry sources are already theorizing that major producers, like MCA, could form their own networks, sell commercial time, etc. The immediate purpose of RCA's endeavor appears to be for the syndication of shows by satellite, rather than by shipping bulky film canisters or tapes to stations all over the country. So far, over 100 TV stations have signed up to have the receivers built.

In a separate announcement, RCA and UPI have joined in a plan to install 600 earth stations for radio stations, to permit reception of teletype services.

The Hughes Corporation earth station development project, reported on several issues ago, is beginning to bear fruit. It claims to now have a 3.7 meter dish that is mass-producible for \$1000. We expect to have more on this and related developments by the end of the Summer. A dramatic breakthrough in the price of "backyard" earth stations is said to be just around the corner. Our advice is to sit tight for a few months, rather than sinking \$10,000+ in a system just now.

In a related development, the FCC is thought to be seriously considering a stop to the compulsory licensing of earth stations, and going to a system of simple registration only. A recent issue of CATJ magazine proposed a centralized registration procedure through which earth station owners could pay a fee and receive monthly program listings from HBO, Showtime and other satellite programmers. We heartily endorse this proposal. Why disguise your dish as a hot tub, when you could be legit?

Blank tape prices are apparently on the rise, due to increases in cost of petroleum-based raw materials. Increased productivity has not resulted in savings great enough to offset inflationary increases. Thus, dreams of a near-term decrease in the cost of pre-recorded tapes now advance to the area of pipe dreams.

We continue to hear that there is a VHS 6-hour cassette. Some of the confusion and rumors are due to the fact that tapes of standard length run longer in certain foreign countries because of differences between their electrical systems and ours. Actually, there is a 6-hour cassette, but the JVC T-180 cassettes that reportedly showed up in New York were among a batch of 30 experimental samples stolen from a warehouse. Don't look for the 6-hour tape on the market much before the end of the year.

On the video piracy front, two recent seizures in Hollywood are of note. Gary J. Nestra, a recording engineer at ABC, had the misfortune of seeing 587 cassettes seized from his Los Angeles home through the effort of the district attorney's Entertainment Industry Task Force. The FBI and MPAA are reviewing the situation, with possible legal action in mind. Seems that Mr. Nestra's duties at ABC included working with lots of video tape, and you can imagine the rest. Among the titles of the 587 confiscated tapes: Star Wars, Close Encounters of the Third Kind, Animal House, Heaven Can Wait, and Fantasia. According to Variety: prosecution on copyright violation will now depend on whether Nestra sold any of the tapes to a third party for profit.

In a separate raid, March 13, the FBI and LA Police Dept. seized numerous videocassettes along with videotape duplicating equipment, decks and monitors at K & B Associates in Norwalk, and at the residence of Robert H. Wind, in Long Beach. Titles included: Star Wars (natch'), Superman, Pinocchio, and Fantasia. No arrests were made, but the tapes will all be turned over to a federal grand jury. If this subject is of consuming interest to you, you'll want to be here next issue when we present an exclusive interview with James Bouras, head of the MPAA's Film Security Office.

Triangle Publications (TV GUIDE) has announced plans to publish a monthly video magazine, which will include coverage of VCR's, discs, cable-TV, and all the rest. To be called "Panorama", the new magazine is expected to debut around the first of the year. The publisher has reportedly committed \$10 million to the project [Substantially more than the \$3.35 invested in the first issue of TVN. -- Ed], and we are told that they expect circulation to reach the range of 250,000 - 500,000 within 3 years. Editor is expected to be Roger Youman, presently executive editor of TV GUIDE.

Northwest Media Project (P.O. Box 4093, Portland, OR 97208) has produced a 21 page booklet entitled "Copyright Primer for Film and Video", which is available for the easy-to-understand price of \$2.00.

The U.S. Supreme Court has struck down the FCC regulation that requires cable TV systems to offer a public access channel, saying that only Congress has

the authority to so require. Our local cable system in Tallahassee has announced that it will continue to offer public access anyway, and would do so even if the franchise agreement with the city did not also require it.

A second batch of Disney features is about to be released to pay-cable systems. Among the titles will be: Pete's Dragon, and The Cat From Outer Space. Still no older classic animation.

Arbitron study of VCR owners indicates that 75% bought them for time-shift purposes. Average user records about 2 shows weekly, but 14% responded that they tape at least one show everyday. Half of all off-the-air recordings are played back only once, and that within a day or two. Timer-activated recording accounted for 45% of shows taped, 35% occurred while the show was being watched and 20% while the viewer was watching another show. Interestingly, only 11% confessed to fast-forwarding through commercials during playback. Our own interpretation of the results is that something like 10-15% of VCR owners are certifiable "videophiles". Assuming that there are now something like 700,000 owners, we wonder how we can reach the rest of the 100,000 folks who should be subscribing to this publication.

Magnetic Video claims to have improved its "MV-Gard" anti-piracy encoding system to the point that it will now prevent unauthorized duplication, yet not disturb normal playback on TV.

Latest figures indicate that nearly 20% of the nations "TV households" are served by cable-TV, up from 15% in 1976. Largest system in the country is San Diego's, which serves 152,000, followed by New York's Manhattan Cable (90,000) and Los Angeles' Theta system (87,000).

News from the recent annual convention of the Adult Film Association of America includes fact that business in hardcore porno pictures has shown remarkable growth [I'll resist temptation to make a clever remark here. -- Ed]. Sales of "xxx" cassettes are a big business in the lobbies of adult movie theatres. One San Francisco location reports weekly average sales of \$4000, another in New York averages \$10,000. There are now said to be 400 X-rated 35mm feature films on video tape and another 1000 from old 16mm features. One cassette company, TVX, sold an estimated 23,000 tapes in 1978 at prices ranging up to \$99. Many, if not most, of these titles are not protected by copyright, since the producers have generally shied away from registering their activities with the government. But, AFAA general counsel, Joseph Rhine, is now urging members to copyright their features and vigorously press charges against pirates.

LATE FLASH: We have just learned that Toshiba has announced a new L-830 Beta format cassette. This means 5 hours (!) playing time on the new units. List price is expected to be about \$23.50. New tape would give 3.3 hours at X-2 speed.

The Disc Player Revisited



MAGNAVISION MODEL 8000 VIDEODISC PLAYER

Manufacturer: Magnavox Consumer Electronics Company,
1700 Magnavox Way, Ft. Wayne IN 46804
(Unit reviewed made in Holland)

Source: Audio/Video Craft, 7710 Melrose Ave.,
Los Angeles CA 90046 (through Rich's
Dept. Store, Atlanta, GA)

Cost: \$695.00 (plus incredibly expensive air
freight)



The initial glow has worn off the thrill of Video-Disc ownership, so we now present the further observations of two of our contributing editors. Take it away, Marc and Bob.

Since our in-depth look at the Magnavision 8000 videodisc player last issue, we've had the chance to live and work with it enough to file this additional report on some of its more subtle workings.

Operationally, we've begun to discover several unusual quirks about the Magnavision, few of them happy ones. For example, the audio is indeed muted in all modes other than play, but it is still very faintly audible and can be heard if you turn up your set's volume enough. Reader C.L. in Atlanta writes to say that he leaves his player's audio unswitched at all times via the front panel controls so that the sound is at a constant low level; he then amplifies the audio through his stereo system so that the sound is heard during all modes. I might add here that the player has an irritating habit of automatically turning off its audio outputs once in a while after any of the special modes are used, particularly "fast-search," though you can quickly turn them back on merely by reactivating the appropriate buttons (See the diagram on page 33 of last issue).

We also discovered that, Magnavox's instructions to the contrary, you can leave the player on during disc changes. We have noted no mishaps or malfunctions thus far when the changer is "misused" in this manner, except that the image comes on the screen a few seconds faster--certainly a benefit in this case.

The biggest problem we had with the player occurred over a month ago after it arrived from Atlanta. It died. Ffffffft--just like that. Wouldn't

budge at all, not even after our most intricate attempts to revive it, including turning the player upside down...which only resulted in badly scratching the disc inside the player. After a couple of calls to Magnavox's Greenville, Tennessee office, owner Carl Vickery reached a serviceman who pinpointed the problem to the player's power supply, and one of Audio/Video Craft's crack technicians was able to quickly remedy the culprit--a bad solder joint. Afterwards, the player functioned as perfectly as before.

Reader C.L. mentioned that his Magnavox is beginning to act up in a similar manner: "I have found that the [player's] motors get very hot after a few hours, and will refuse to play." He also notes that the player's habit of endlessly repeating each disc, until turned over or changed, is somewhat annoying, plus providing unnecessary wear on the motor.

As a side note, the Magnavox serviceman told Carl that they wouldn't be making available any service manuals on the players for some time, mainly because of the interest a certain three-lettered company from Indianapolis had taken in such material. (A hint: they're the same folks who are well-known as "the most un-trusted name in electronics.")

According to C.L., "The service engineers in Atlanta are very insistent that the unit should never be transported or even picked up without the shipping screw being in place." He goes on to say that he doesn't know what this accomplishes, but it probably holds the laser assembly from slipping and getting out of alignment, which we agree on. We have moved the Magnavision several times without realizing this screw should be set in place, but then we're probably just lucky nothing has gone wrong yet. It'd probably be a wise idea to follow Magnavox's advice, just to be safe.

To get some answers to a few remaining questions we had on the videodisc, we contacted Norman Glenn, Vice-President of the MCA/DiscoVision's programming dept. Mr. Glenn took a few minutes out of his busy schedule to let us know, among other things, that only three stereo videodiscs are currently available: American Graffiti, Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Heart's Club Band, and Saturday Night Fever (see the reviews elsewhere herein.--Ed.)

We mentioned to Mr. Glenn that one complaint we've often heard is that turning over the discs every 20 or 30 minutes can get to be a drag after awhile, and every time a disc is reinserted into the player, it takes at least 15 seconds before an image appears on the screen. He explained that they hope to eventually have all their feature films available in Extended Play (60 minutes a side) versions, but noted that they've taken great pains to insure that when you do have to turn over the currently available discs, it occurs at a proper point in the dramatic continuity of the film.

We asked Glenn about C.L.'s problem that some of the labels on the discs are beginning to come loose, probably because of the heat generated by the motor. C.L. fears that "soon one will come off and spin around at 1800 RPM, creating a mess inside the unit." He replied that this was the first time he had heard that particular complaint, and advised us to send any such defective discs back to the dealer for replacement.


He also commented on the defective copy of Abbott & Costello Meet Frankenstein I recently received, saying that it, too, should be returned to the dealer from

whom we purchased it. When we complained that this could take weeks, having to go all the way to Atlanta and back, Glenn retorted, "Well, nobody asked you to buy them in the first place." This brings up an important point: lest anyone misunderstand, the Magnavision player and the videodiscs are by no means perfected products. We have it on good authority from several sources that the players are undergoing as many as 30 changes a month, and the discs are still being manufactured in relatively small quantities; after all the test marketing is finished, and hopefully after all the bugs are out of the players and the discs, both products will be manufactured in large quantities for the mass market.

We've noticed that all the black & white videodisc programs we've viewed have had an unnecessary color burst; Mr. Glenn explained that he's well aware of that problem and that it's the fault of the player and not the discs. It seems that the current Magnavision player can only function with a color signal, so it adds the burst to all programs regardless of whether they're in black and white or color. As noted in past issues of TVN, B&W programs recorded with color burst can result in the familiar "purple snow effect" on some TV sets. Glenn added that the Universal/Pioneer industrial player will playback black & white discs properly, as hopefully will future improved consumer units.

As to the "superior" video quality of the videodisc discussed last issue, while we don't retract anything we said in our prior report, we must say that after our initial excitement, like C.L. in Atlanta, we're a little less infatuated with the disc than we were at the outset. From the dozen or so disc titles we've viewed so far, we continue to be unhappy with the "scratch-line" effect in some discs, which tend to impair otherwise excellent pictures. Also, the sound quality occasionally has an uncomfortably large amount of "tics and pops," similar to that heard in well-used conventional audio discs, only with less-pronounced transients--in other words, a kind of "soft" background noise which, again, impairs otherwise impeccable audio.

We haven't yet determined whether or not these problems stem from a player malfunction or defective discs, but we suspect the latter. Even given these minor abnormalities, they're still superior to almost all consumer Beta and VHS material we've seen, especially prerecorded programs. And, surprisingly enough, even a Beta or VHS tape recorded from a videodisc is better than many prerecorded programs, by a few tests we've seen. MCA's film-to-tape transfers are easily the best in the business--a lesson the operations at Magnetic Video, Allied Artists, and most of the others should learn.

All things considered, we can say that the Magnavision player coupled with Universal's discs still remain the best currently-available prerecorded programming source for the home video consumer/collector--still not perfect, but in many ways better and cheaper than anything you can get off the air.--MFW 

The multitude of features and technical achievements found in the Magnavision were outlined in great detail last issue and, by now, I'm sure you're all aware of what a great advancement in video entertainment the disc player is. Because of the massive press coverage received by the Magnavision in all recent electronics trade publications, I will limit my remarks to my personal experience with its operation.

Installation and operation of the Magnavox disc viewer is very simple and should be no trouble at all to the average 6 year old.

The connections to the TV are similar to those used by the current crop of video games. That is, a small box attaches to the back of your set near the VHF inputs. Your antenna or cable leads (if you have a 75 ohm cable, you'll need a transformer) attaches to this box and a separate 300 ohm twin lead outputs from this box to your TV's VHS input. A single shielded cable then connects this box to the back of the VideoDisc Player. Playback on either channel 3 or 4 is switch-selectable on the back of the player. Through circuitry located in this selector box, your VHF input is automatically shut out and the VideoDisc output selected whenever power is applied to the VideoDisc Player. This is an ingenious little device which makes the operation of the unit just that much simpler for the average person.


Initiating operation simply involves placing the disc in the machine with the proper side up. (Note: Although those technically familiar with the Magnavision will know that the unit "reads" the video information from the bottom, the discs have been encoded with the proper information on the opposite side of that indicated. In other words, to play side one, you place the disc in the machine with side one up, although side one information is actually on the opposite side.) Close the lid, turn the unit on, wait approximately twenty seconds as the turntable attains the proper speed, and then, as if by magic, VIDEO! (I'm assuming, of course, one knows enough to turn on the television and select the proper channel.) Each disc contains a kaleidoscope intro with the disc side number indicated prior to the actual subject matter. All controls, except lid release, are of the solenoid "touch" variety, with sophisticated logic circuitry which allows choosing any mode of operation without initiating any type of "stop" control. All of the various functions, which were thoroughly described last issue, work exactly as promised. The still picture is unusually clean, without the annoying sync line usually found in video tape.

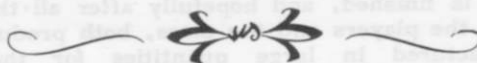
There are a few slightly annoying features. One is the fact that, as Marc and Jim mentioned last issue, it is not possible to initiate "play" through any specific control, q.v., "play" is automatically engaged when the lid is closed. Another is that the unit returns to the beginning of the disc whenever the "play" mode is disengaged. For that reason it is not possible to suspend play during some point in playback and then resume that location at some later time. (Note: It would be possible to stop playback with the still picture control and then to resume playback at that location with the forward control, however, it would be necessary to leave the unit on with the turntable rotating.) Of course, with the "search" control it would be very easy to relocate any point in the disc. It also proves very annoying to jump up and change the video disc every 20 or 25 minutes. I've not yet had any experience with the EXTENDED PLAY VideoDisc.

Other than these slight inconveniences, I believe the video disc will truly be the entertainment revolution of the 80's. As for the other video disc format that looms on the horizon, it would appear to me that Magnavox has the superior format at this time. Although I've seen very little literature on the RCA format, I understand that each disc is encased in a protective sleeve and cannot be handled.

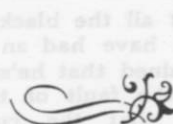
One point I did want to bring up is that I received an initial shipment of only three video discs just before I received my player. Upon playing the video discs I found one to be defective. During a particular section of the disc the unit would skip rapidly over certain portions as if it was in "fast forward." The instruction manual suggests that these symptoms can usually be attributed to defects in the video disc itself. Since the other two played perfectly, I must assume this was the cause. The reason I bring this up is to

point out that in three randomly-picked discs, one proved defective. This does not suggest very stringent quality control measures at MCA. It should be noted here that MCA does not give any hint as to what should be done with the video disc should it prove defective. If, as in my case, only one side is defective, should one return the entire video disc set, or just the defective disc? And, once that is determined, will the selling dealer replace it on the spot, or must it be returned to MCA?

But, not to worry. I'm sure all this will be worked out by the time the DiscoVision achieves national distribution (currently scheduled for Christmas 1979). But for all you eager enthusiasts who, like me, have to have the first one on the block, contact Joe Stein at Rich's. I'm sure you'll receive the same courteous treatment I did.--BB 



VIDEO - A Personal View

 by Sandy Winoker

Hello again, and welcome back to the PERSONAL side of "The Gospel According to THE VIDEO-PHILE"!

On the obscure chance that you missed the premiere of this column in the last issue, I'd like to briefly explain its aim. (What do you mean, "Not Again!?"?) As you know, if you've become a convert to home video, it's easy to get caught up in the technical aspects of video taping and to pay scant attention to the little "personal" incidents that often occur when a VTR takes a bow at your home, and thus into your life. So, this reader-participation column has been created in order for the readers of this mighty mag to talk about their video experiences.

We are asking you to write and share with the other subscribers of THE VIDEOPHILE the funny, interesting, or ironic experiences you've had since the addition of video tape to your home. What we'd like you to tell this column are the (small?) ways video has affected your life because of your VTR's time-shift and preservation capabilities.

Do all your parties turn into a "Look what I've got on tape now" get-together? What great recording and/or timer mistakes have you "invented"? Has your video involvement prompted any of your friends to acquire a VTR? What differences have you noticed between the way men and women think of and utilize home video equipment? And what led to your video interest and purchase of your VTR? These are just a few opening ideas that this column can explore. I'm sure many of

you have ideas of your own that you feel appropriate for this column, so please feel free to pass them along and they will be included as suggestions for reader contributions in future editions.

APOLOGIES are in order to any readers who may have written to this column with their Pulitzer Prize winning vignette about their amusing, sad or ironic video experiences, only to have had their letters returned by the Post Office, stamped "addressee (meaning me) unknown" (isn't that the truth!). Well video people, I'm here to tell you that Sandy Winoker is alive, living in San Francisco, and, as you can read, only slightly unwell, especially since I came down with a case of terminal videoitis the day I got my VTR. (My doctor says not to worry tho, since I can always have my tapes tightened.) Somehow the first installment of this column was printed exactly as I submitted it, with only one small error--my address was listed INCORRECTLY. While this was not enough to cause California to fall into the ocean (yet)--to a column like this, whose very existence will depend upon readers submitting, by mail, their video happenings, that could be a problem. So the editor, the entire staff of THE VIDEOPHILE, and of course I, your egg on the Betamax columnist, humbly ask your forgiveness for any letter submitted to this column that may have been returned to you as a result of our error, and ask that you please write again to the NEW ADDRESS (Staff, let's get it right this time!) listed at the bottom of this literary litter.

Now, to coax some of you reluctant video fans into disclosing to this column your great moments and great disasters of home video, I thought I'd take a walk with you down the Winoker video-memory lane and tell you the never-before-told, yet only slightly boring, story of how I became interested in home video.

ONCE upon a time (when dinosaurs roamed the streets of Chicago and Duncan Yo-Yo's were king of grade school recess period), there was a little eight-year old girl who would spend weekday afternoons and all day Saturday at the movies. It wasn't so much that I loved the old, drafty and dirty Howard Theater on Chicago's north side in the mid-50's, but that my parents both worked and, being unable to afford an after-school babysitter for their little darlings, decided that Hollywood could do the best (and cheapest) job of making sure my brother and I were off the streets after the school bell rang. Even though I always liked the adventure of going to the movies, I didn't always like or enjoy the feature playing, and would often wish last week's engrossing Susan Hayward drama were still showing instead of this week's Rory Calhoun western.

The idea began to form in my mind of having my very own movie library. How much fun it would be to have all my favorite films at home and be able to watch whatever movie favorite I fancied whenever I wanted! Of course, whenever I told people about my dream they reacted as though I were overdosing on the Brothers Grimm and promptly told

me to get back to my trading cards! Still, I refused to give up my fantasy and hoped that someday I'd be rich enough to have my own film collection.

It wasn't until 1967 that I began to get my first glimmer of hope. During a visit to the hospital to see my father, I met another patient who told me that he had semi-professional videotape equipment in his home and that he often taped favorite films and TV programs for repeat viewing later. (Shades of my fantasy come to life!) When I asked him if the \$100 I had stashed away would be enough for a videotape machine and some blank tape, he patted my head, smiled, and told me I'd better wait until I grew up. When I protested that I was already 21, he informed me that, at the rate I was saving my money, I was sure to have enough for video equipment at some point in my second life. Rather than being put off, however, the experience of meeting this gentleman, and finding out about the possibility of having a device in one's home which could actually record a favorite movie from television, made me believe that what I'd always wanted could really happen--even if it was still a few years away. (I'd already waited my entire life, what were a few more years?) Then, in 1974, when I read about Sony's plans for introducing an easy-to-operate videotape machine specifically for home use (at a price that was at least within this stratosphere). I knew it was just a matter of time (and many credit cards) until my childhood fantasy became an adult reality. Finally, in May of 1978, I could wait no longer and, although I still owed the vet for my canary's braces, I took the plunge and became the bubblingly happy owner of my VERY OWN VTR. It was a long time in coming, but I finally saw my dream emerge from the corner of my mind to the corner of my living room!

So there you have it ... the saga of my introduction to home video. Now that you've heard my video beginnings, perhaps you'll want to share you own, or some other video experience you've had since home video became something more than a wish for you. We welcome whatever contribution you submit to this column (and we will respect any contributor's

privilege of anonymity, although we do reserve the right to disclose the serial numbers of those old War Bonds you have hidden in the attic). It need not be extremely funny, sad, ironic or long, but simply how the introduction of home video into your life has affected you or those around you, helpful hints you think might be of value to other videophiles, or just about anything you think belongs in a column devoted to the PERSONAL side of home video (well...ALMOST anything).

To get the ball rolling, Bill Frankel of Ohio wrote to share with us the following "Timer Recording Blunder." Okay, Bill, take it away...

"I came home to a timer taping with about 10 minutes left to record on the tape. I ended the recording and threw in another tape to finish the program and start recording again. About 30 minutes later--clonk--the machine goes into STOP because it is still in the timer mode and shuts itself down."

Gee, Bill, I thought I was the only one with an external timer with a mind of its own!

Our editor has chipped in with a few remarks that he couldn't find an appropriate place for somewhere else:

"One of my most persistent goofs is to forget to push the 'Record' key down after setting the timer. Another is to set the timer, push the record key down, and then have doubts about whether I had the channel selector set to the right channel. Such are the risks of staying up until midnight every night and being too groggy to be fully aware of what you are doing. As for the most frustrating thing about all this, I nominate the VHS timers which recycle to 12:00 A.M. anytime the power fails, even briefly. So what if the power goes off for a moment? So I'd miss the first few seconds of the recording, but the way they have it, you not only miss the whole darn thing, you've also got to fool around setting the timer again. To top it off, the VHS timers don't have any way to indicate the seconds, only whole minutes.

"I've also found that the luxury of being able to set your own TV schedule is a two-edged sword. It's wonderful to be able to see something that you would have otherwise missed, but lately I have been falling further and further behind in watching, even on a delayed basis, the tapes of shows that I have recorded in anticipation of watching them 'sometime.' Included in this group are shows that were broadcast as long as two months ago. Will I ever watch them? Will I run out of tape and have to erase them first? The point is that having the luxury of tape recording takes the urgency out of the desire to watch the programs that are being broadcast. Without a recorder, I would have arranged my life in such a way as to not miss The Cracker Factory, with Natalie Wood. As it is, I arranged for 'the machine' to watch the show--so I can watch it any time. Trouble is, 'anytime' keeps receding into the future.

"Have you been doing 'the time zone'? This is great if you live in the East. Suppose you get home one evening and someone tells you that you just missed a feature about celebrity mud pit wrestling on the CBS Evening News. Well, the news isn't going to be broadcast out West for another couple of hours, so you just get on the phone and arrange with your trusty connection to record it for you. It works the other way, too. Lots of folks on the West coast knew in advance that the video piracy segment of 60 Minutes was coming up when it did, thanks to those of us in the East who saw it and alerted them to the fact. Other variations of this theme easily suggest themselves. Try it!"

Thanks, Jim, I needed that!

Well, Videophiles, this column is going to rest in the pause mode and await the many responses that I KNOW you're dying to contribute. (Sure hope things pick up tho. At this rate, how can I justify to my accountant the mail sorting service I hired?) Breathlessly awaiting and hopelessly devoted (Sorry, Olivia) to the arrival of your letters.

Sandy Winoker
P.O. Box 6344

San Francisco CA 94101

Instant Replay Video Magazine



gets better every time

INSTANT REPLAY, the world's first video cassette magazine, presents the owner of a video cassette recorder with the first real alternative to the networks, recycled movies and porno. Produced with repeated viewing in mind, Instant Replay demonstrates the world of possibilities open to the owner of a home video unit. From the creation of graphic video art to technical tips that enhance the utility of the home unit, Instant Replay is like no other magazine you've ever watched... Instant Replay - a magazine, a production crew, a worldwide network of correspondents - a first glance at the Global Village.

Video hobbyists will find that Instant Replay will quickly become the one video tape they'll want to show all their friends, as well as the one they'll spend the most time with themselves. The April issue includes an interview with video artist Ron Hayes, highlighted by footage of his incredible Star Wars concert that drew 62,000 to Montreal's Olympic Stadium, a session with Jack Valenti that confronts the explosive piracy issue, and a hilarious montage of commercials from the fifties to the present. For the technically minded,

there is a hands-on demonstration of Sony's new Betamax cassette changer, a look at Bob Behar's back yard satellite reception station and a graphically illustrated discussion of the application of the Spiratone wide-angle lens for home video cameras. And a whole lot more.

Video enthusiasts one and all, the Instant Replay crew is an extended family that reaches from

Coconut Grove to a string of correspondents around the world. Correspondents, the heart and soul of Instant Replay, bring the most creative examples of video technique to one place - Instant Replay Cassette magazine every month.



Now available, Instant Replay's landmark First Anniversary Issue, two hours of unique video for the special Get-Acquainted price of \$49.95. Interviews with Video Artist Ron Hayes, Jack Valenti, and Anthony Quinn, as well as a first look at the new Magnavox Video Disc system and much, much, more make this a must-have Collector's Item.



T-shirts? Of course we've got 'em. Pick up our distinctive black with Diamond Dust for \$11.95 (short sleeve) or \$12.95

(long sleeve or ladies cap sleeve). Regular Tees in a variety of colors cost a mere \$4.95. You'll wear them again and again and again.

Fill in, Tear out, Mail

INSTANT ACTION COUPON

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

☐ I'm psyched! Send me copies of Instant Replay's First Anniversary Issue at \$49.95 per copy.

☐ Corresponding is my thing. Send me the necessary info to join the IR team.

☐ The Anniversary Issue alone is not enough. I need subscription information.

☐ Make mine Diamond Dust. S M L

☐ Short Sleeve \$11.95

☐ Long Sleeve \$12.95

☐ Ladies Cap Sleeve \$12.95

☐ No glitter for me, send the \$4.95 model. S M L

 Red Pink Yellow Blue Beige

(Indicate first & second preference)

_____ Check or Money Order Enclosed

_____ Visa MC Exp. Date _____

Acct # _____

INSTANT REPLAY INSTANT REPLAY INSTANT REPLAY

4149 Bonita Ave.
Coconut Grove, FL 33133



Rambling Outtakes

by Marc Wielage

As promised last issue, and before we get to the final part of our excursion through the Winter CES in Las Vegas, we are setting forth below some of the testimony as nervously rambled by your humble scribe during the famous MCA/Disney/Sony copyright lawsuit in early February of this year. As stated previously, I had been assured by Mr. Kroft (MCA attorney) that almost all of his questions would cover the same material discussed in my two depositions given prior to the trial, and this was, by and large, true. On with the testimony:

MR. KROFT: Your honor, I would like to have the witness take a couple of his recordings and show us where the commercials were taken out. I think he can do that fairly quickly, with the Court's permission.

THE COURT: Is it really necessary? I think I understand the way the machine operates and what it does, and everything else.

MR KROFT: I just wanted the Court to see the quality of a recording which has had commercials deleted; only at that point where the commercial has been taken out.

THE COURT: All right.

[Later, after a compilation tape I had made of several titles was offered into evidence by Mr. Kroft...]

THE COURT: The time has come now when we have to recognize whether you have a right to subpoena somebody's property who is not a party and then have it introduced in evidence and it becomes the property of the court.

MR KROFT: He has given us this particular tape, your Honor.

THE COURT: Is that right?

THE WITNESS: Yes, that tape they can have.

THE COURT: That will be received then.

MR KROFT: That point will be reached shortly.

THE COURT: The other point is going to be reached eventually, yes.

THE WITNESS: I'm glad.

THE COURT: [Looking at the witness] No way in the world are they going to take that away from you. In this court, anyway.

THE WITNESS: Good.

[Later]

MR KROFT: Your Honor, we may as well face that point now. I do not want to make a big issue of it. We have offered to pay Mr. Wielage the cost of his tapes if he would be willing to leave them with the Court. They have been subpoenaed and are brought here pursuant to the subpoena.

I have no desire personally to deprive Mr. Wielage of anything, but they are examples of off-the-air recordings of motion pictures owned by the plaintiffs...

THE COURT: There is no question they are relevant material and maybe crucial, but that does not give private people the right to somebody's

property, to have them come into court and say, "Your Honor, we want you to receive this as an exhibit," and then it becomes the property of the Court and title is transferred from him to the Court without any compensation.

MR. KROFT: I wonder, your Honor, if I might offer a possible solution?

THE COURT: I was kind of hoping that you had time to think of one.

MR. KROFT: That solution would be, and I have discussed this, in part, with Mr. Dunlavey [Sony attorney]--I am not sure of this particular angle on it--that we leave the recordings with the Court while the Court is deliberating its decision and writing its decision, furnish Mr. Wielage with whatever amount of money he feels would compensate him for the loss, the use of those tapes during that period of time, and when the Court has viewed the tapes and made whatever use it feels necessary, return them to Mr. Wielage and, hopefully, we could go through the same process with the Court of Appeals, if the Court of Appeals and Mr. Wielage at that time agree.

THE WITNESS: That sounds all right with me, but there is no need to compensate me with any money, as long as I can be assured that I will eventually get the tapes back.

MR. KROFT: I am sure the Court will assure you of that.

THE COURT: Fair enough.

[From Mr. Dunlavey's cross-examination]

Q. You include in your articles and commentaries all of the half-inch recorders that are on the market, and you even have got a 3/4" section in the newsletter; am I right in that?

A. Yes. There are several different kinds of videotape and videodisc subjects covered in the magazine.

Q. You even cover videodisc, do you?

A. Yes.

Q. You have never relied upon anything that Sony has said or written with respect to whether it is or is not proper to copy off-the-air any kind of program; is that fair?

A. Yes, I have not.

Q. When you first got your 7200, you saw the statement in there about copyright warning of some kind, "Don't copy or you may be in violation," or whatever it said?

A. Yes.

Q. You read it, but it didn't alter what you were going to do with the machine at all; is that true?

A. Yes.

Q. What is your impression about the comparison between the DiscoVision picture and the VCR picture?

A. It is clearly better than a Betamax or most other consumer recorders available. I would say it is approximately equivalent to more professional recorders, like 3/4" players and recorders.

Q. Are you going to buy one of these Magnavision machines as soon as they are available?

A. Yes, as soon as possible.

Q. And if they put out such epics as "The Mummy's Hand" and "House of Frankenstein" [laughter] on DiscoVision, would you buy those, too?

A. Yes.

Q. And the fact that you have got something already prerecorded on tape is not going to stop you from buying it if they ever put it out on disc?

A. No. I can then use that tape and erase it and record something else on it.

It's obvious to see why the Sony attorneys were bringing up some of those points, if only to raise questions on Universal's fear that people who tape their shows off the air won't want to watch them off the air or from a disc, as well as their claim that Sony didn't warn people about potential copyright problems stemming from the use of their Betamax.

Again, no decision has yet been reached as of the time of this writing. If we can project a verdict from Judge Ferguson's attitude as we saw it in court, it wouldn't be a surprise if Universal were to lose at least this round in the battle. But the war will almost assuredly continue, all the way to the Supreme Court; and hopefully, somewhere, sometime, somebody will make a decision as to whether consumers can audio and videotape broadcasts off the air for their own personal use, once and for all.

For now, return with us, if you will, to a cold and windy January of this year, when photographer Steve Fineberg and I pounded the aisles of the crowded Las Vegas Convention Center in search of new video products at...

THE WINTER CONSUMER ELECTRONICS SHOW - PART II

Following our visit to Sony and Panasonic's large exhibits [see last issue for more details], we made our way over to Sony's plush suite at the nearby Hilton Hotel, to look over their new SL-3000 portable Beta deck and companion HVC-1000 color camera. The new camera works like a charm, providing adequate pictures in even low light levels, plus allowing easy access to its working controls. The new X-2 record, X-2/X-1 playback portable deck is likewise well-designed, and even includes audio dub, a welcome addition to Sony's Beta line. Our only disappointment with the SL-3000 was its lack of a freeze-frame/pause feature, which is also not found in any comparable VHS consumer portapack. The TT-3000 tuner/time accessory for the SL-3000 was not on display, but we did manage to find a photo of the similar TT-3100 Japanese model, courtesy of local collector K.L. in Van Nuys.

We plan an in-depth look and comparison between several 3/4", Beta and VHS portapack decks and cameras in a future issue; readers are invited to report their experiences with use of such products.



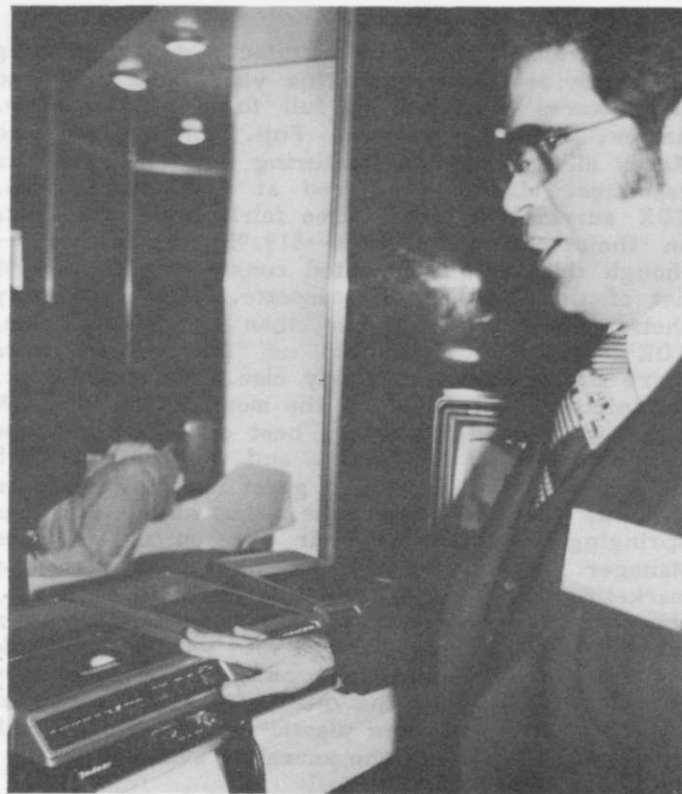


Back at the Convention Center, we chatted with smiling Magnetic Video Vice-President Bob Vandergrift and his Operations Manager, Larry Bennet, who answered several questions for us that had been brought up by disgruntled TV readers. First, why MagVideo's insistent use of Scotch brand tape for their Beta releases? Apparently, only 3M can meet Magnetic Video's demands for large quantity deliveries. We knew Scotch tape costs less than several other brands, but hadn't considered delivery to be a factor, too. We asked why they often used scratched 16mm prints instead of perfect-quality 35mm prints for some of their programs, and they answered that often that was all they could get from 20th Century Fox and that in several cases the print finally used for transfer was the best of several they had received. We remarked that now that 20th owned them, we hoped that any problems of getting good-quality prints would be worked out. On the question of whether their retail prices might be dropping soon, as mentioned recently by MV President Andre Blay in a speech concerning competition from the videodisc, Vandergrift replied that this might occur "as soon as blank tape costs goes down," which some foresee happening once home video becomes a huge mass-marketable entity. On my problem of receiving an X-1 copy of *The Day the Earth Stood Still* that had been recorded on an 8200-type deck (with a 30-micron head in lieu of a better 60-micron head), they replied that with X-1 all but gone in the consumer marketplace, I should be glad I can buy fast-speed tapes at all. They also mentioned that they were continuing to work with the EIA in getting the Copy-Guard/TV set interference problem worked out, saying that it's due more to the sets than the process itself. New TV sets coming out this fall should be able to handle playing back encoded tapes with no problem, and service shops should be getting information from all the manufacturers on how to adapt older sets to playing the tapes.



NEW VIDEO RECORDERS and CAMERAS

Quasar's Tony Mirabelli demonstrated their new \$1100 VH-5200 portable SP/LP VHS deck, with companion VA-510RQ and VA-515RQ tuner/timer



accessories. The \$395 515RQ tuner features varactor-controlled tuning for random-access channel-changing plus a remote control for searching through the pre-set stations one at a time; the 510RQ is a standard detent-type manual tuner. We told Mirabelli that we applauded their marketing the deck and timers separately, as opposed to Panasonic's selling them only as a single package. We also wondered when a programmable tuner/timer might be made available as an accessory, but were told that it's "still a few months away -- maybe before Christmas if the demand is there." As it was, we were impressed with Quasar's new units--identical to Panasonic's PV-2200 and PV-2100, which was understandable considering both firms sharing the same parent corporate owner, Matsushita--and thought the all-solenoid operation of the portable deck was a definite plus for the on-location recordist. Still, neither portable VHS deck is capable of running with a battery-operated camera for more than 30 minutes or so, which is a disappointment. Until they can either invent more powerful batteries or less "hungry" electronic components, an external battery is the only answer.

When questioned about the status of the suspiciously absent VX-1000 "Great Time Machine" deck, Mirabelli hedged a bit and declined to comment as to whether its discontinuance was imminent. He did state that GATM owners will be able to buy tapes for their units for some years to come.

Moving on, neither Mike, Steve nor I was able to locate Toshiba at the convention, a disappointment

since we looked forward to seeing their new programmable Beta X-2 deck. [A full report on this unit will appear next issue.]

BLANK VIDEOTAPE

All kinds of audiotape manufacturers are jumping on the video bandwagon this year, and they had their wares displayed in full force at the show. Ampex, Scotch, Memorex, Fuji, BASF, TDK and Maxell all had exhibits featuring new VHS and Beta cassettes, all to be offered at the usual prices. TDK surprised us with some fairly-high retail lists on their new Beta tapes--\$19.95 for an L-500--though this isn't unexpected considering the \$27.95 list of their T-120 VHS cassette. When asked why their prices were higher than everybody else, TDK's Grant Saidiner told us "it's easier--'cause we're better than everybody else." We must admit, the pictures displayed on the monitors in the TDK booth were among the very best of any of the tape manufacturers at the show, and many of the VHS collectors I know have had great results relying on TDK as their premium tape. Meanwhile, Fuji was springing surprises of their own on us as Sales Manager Barry Evans told us about their plans for marketing L-125 and L-370 Beta tapes in the U.S., the first time cassettes of those lengths have been offered to consumers (though they've been available in bulk to duplicators for months). We were very impressed with both the quality of Fuji's consumer videotape and their new plastic-coated boxes, which have got to be among the snazziest available.

Almost all of the videotape manufacturers seemed to have memorized the same speech: "We'll have an L-750 Beta tape by Spring, but don't count on a T-180 VHS tape until Fall at the earliest," implying some difficulty in bringing out the latter long-length product. We can only hope that they'll be able to perfect the tapes and get them out in time for evaluation at the Summer CES in Chicago, which (depending on Ye Editor's budget and our time-schedule) we'll be reporting on in a future issue.

Over at the Sanyo booth, National Sales Manager Russ Mayworm was tight-lipped about discussing future Beta models, and would not comment on rumors we had heard that his company was trying to develop a slower speed for a 4-hour + recording capacity (which we now know to be true), but did say that they'd have a programmable model by Christmas, get out more L-750's to dealers, and would not give up on the Beta format. He did express some concern over Sony's lack of improved models at the show, but felt certain that "they have something up their sleeves" for the coming months.

VIDEOTAPE PROGRAMMING

Almost everyone we met and talked with agreed on one thing here: of all programming on display, easily 90% of it was of an "adult" nature--except for Magnetic Video, Allied Artists and Nostalgia Merchant, who continue to offer only family or R-rated



features. But we really got an eye-full ogling with the crowds at the Hilton exhibits, many of which featured large-screen displays of material that would make even Larry Flynt blush. Wiping the sweat off our brow, we talked to several representatives who claimed that business was brisk, despite close-to \$100 price tags for most of the X-rated movies. A few manufacturers mentioned their plans of upgrading the quality and packaging of their lines, though we couldn't help but wonder if their prices might be lowered to more reasonable levels sometime soon. "Once the disc comes out, we'll cut prices 50%," one unidentified software supplier said, "but until then we've got to make an honest profit."

LARGE-SCREEN PROJECTION TV's

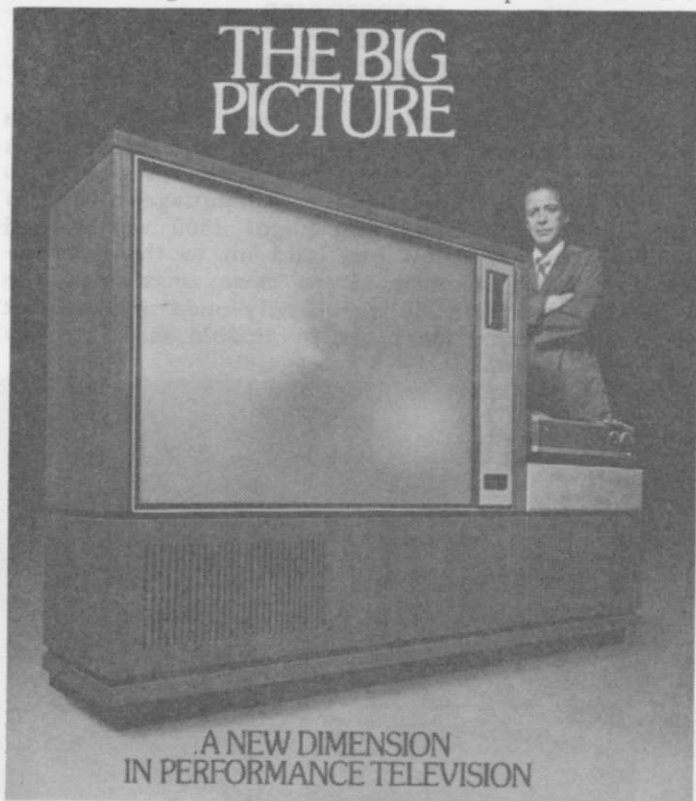
Nothing much new in this area, though we did stop by Advent's large booth, if only to look over the \$85,000 Aston-Martin Lagonda parked in front of their Audiomobile division's display. We were more impressed with the \$10,000 sound system inside the car than we were with the images on Advent's 700, 710 and 760 screens on display,

**Advent's new Model 760 VideoBeam life-size television:
Brilliant 6-foot VideoBeam TV picture and new lower styling,
new computerized tuner, new digital remote control.**



which were still among the best at the show. Even though we tried to cover everything, we missed the surprise appearance of Magnavox's videodisc player at the Advent booth on the last day of the show, but such is life in the big city.

GE had their model 1000 WideScreen TV on display, called by Gadget magazine "the world's smallest large screen TV...as overpriced as it is



undersized, this unit is a waste of everyone's time," to which we heartily agreed. We queried some of our compatriots over at the Video magazine booth as to why they had given the GE screen such a favorable review in their Winter '78 issue, but they only hemmed and hawed and replied that it wasn't all that favorable, though they did admit to saying it had "...among the best pictures we've seen from a large-screen projection TV," to which we heartily disagreed.

Most of the other screens at the show were of the "self-contained/magnifying lens" type similar to Muntz's under-\$2,000 sets, and few of them had pictures comparable to Advent's, Panasonic's, Quasar's and Sony's tube-type units--all of which were likewise on display. Henry Kloss, the man who founded Advent in the early 70's and pioneered their large-screen products' development, will be introducing an under-\$2,000 tube-type unit at the summer CES, and we'll have a full report on it at that time, as well as a comparison of half-a-dozen projection TV's in the next issue of TV.

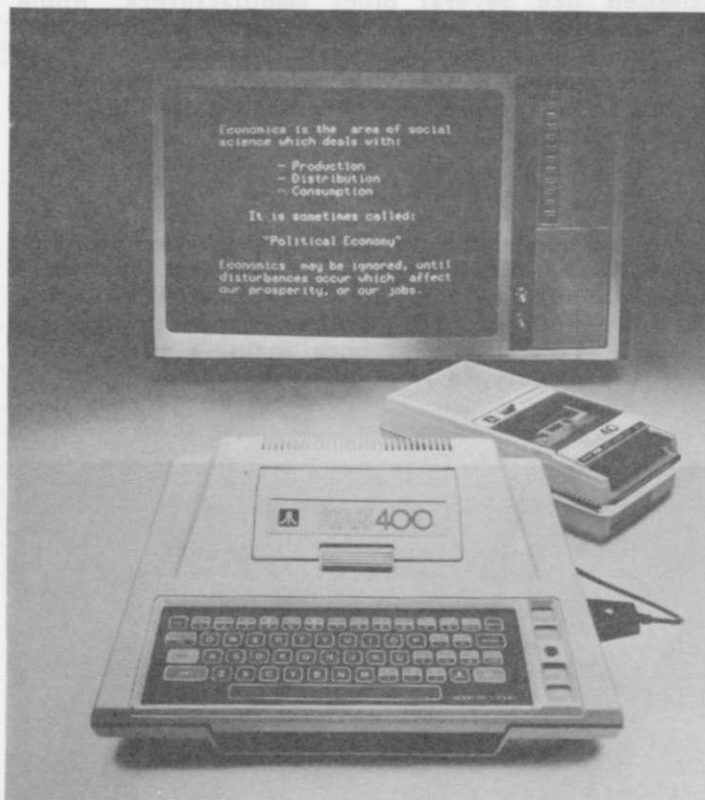


VIDEO GAMES AND COMPUTERS

There were a million of 'em, too many to detail here. Bally's large display featured their Arcade programmable game and its new 60-character keyboard terminal option. Right next door, Fairchild



displayed their "System F" home computer game system, and close by was Atari with their programmable game system and their new low-cost model 400



and top-of-the-line Model 800 computer systems. We didn't particularly like the 400's "toy typewriter" look and feel, but the 800's was very professional-looking and as advanced as any on display at the show.



Perhaps the best home computer display at the show was Apple's medium-sized booth in the Convention Center annex, featuring their consumer-oriented Apple II system. While they didn't feature all the flashy lights, way-out games and fast-talking salesmen like several other manufacturers, Apple did present a serious, down-to-Earth approach that we found appealing. We heartily recommend their free magazine, Apple, to anyone interested in getting into computers. Their address is 10260 Bantley Drive, Cupertino CA 95014.

THE VIDEODISC

As we explained last issue, Magnavox was nowhere to be found (except on the last day when Advent snuck one in), and Panasonic's VISC II was the only one we really had a chance to evaluate closely. JVC's disc was, once again, a no-show, as were any prototypes from other firms.



Teac did display an audio-only package of a PCM disc player that seemed suspiciously similar to MCA's DiscoVision player--featuring 1800 RPM rotation, laser beam scanning, and uncanny fidelity--but no one seemed to know whether it would be compatible with either MCA, Pioneer or Magnavox's products.

ACCESSORIES AND MISCELLANEOUS

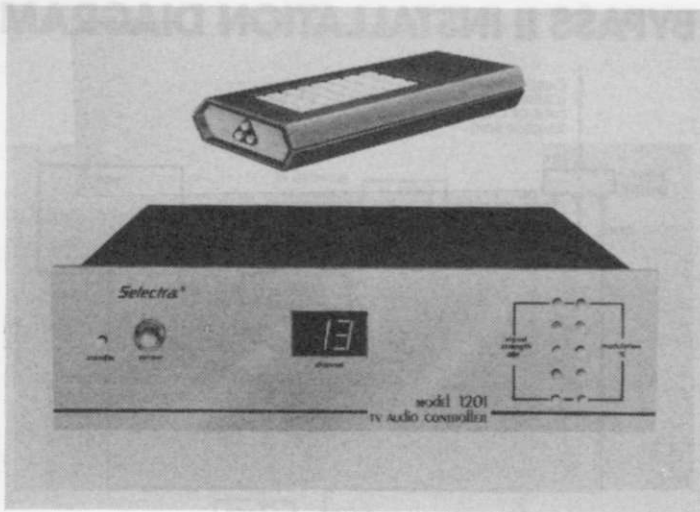
Easily the most unique product unveiled at the CES was Craig's M-100 "Language and Information Center," a calculator-sized box with the ability to provide instant translations in 5 languages. IC-chip cartridges, each containing about 1500 words, sell for \$25 each; the unit can hold up to three "memory capsules" at once. Even more amazingly, the M-100 can provide 50 frequently-used phrases at the push of a button ...an invaluable asset, to say the least.



The M-100 displays up to 16 characters on its blue LED read-out; longer translations roll from right to left just like election results on news broadcasts. Any short message can be quickly typed on the keyboard, with an instant translation appearing in seconds.

Craig's \$200 translator is easily one of the most amazing products we've seen in recent years, and it'll be great to use, if only to avoid walking into a French restaurant and accidentally telling the waiter, "I'll have a shoe with cheese on it, shove it down my throat, and I want to massage your grandmother." [(c) 1976, Wild & Crazy Jokes Co.]

Back over at the Hilton, we ran across a very exciting device we've been waiting and hoping for for a long time: a programmable tuner/timer that can attach to almost any home VTR. The Selectra Corporation's Model 614P will allow you to do just that, at a cost of just under \$300. Roughly similar to the Model 1201 on the following page, the 614P provides remote-controlled on-off, tuning and volume control, plus it lets you pre-program a sequence of time periods and channel selections using the built-in digital clock and microprocessor/memory system. Its only fault, unfortunately a major one, is the lack of a 75 ohm video output;



only a down-converted channel 3 or 4 VHF output is provided, so any VTR used with the Selectra tuner/timer has to have a tuner--a problem, in the case of a portable consumer and most 3/4" decks. They hope to have a unit with separate audio and video outputs available soon. [For more info, write Selectra Corp., 1500 Lawrence Drive, Newbury Park, CA 91320.]

Many manufacturers on hand at the show had all kinds of shelving units available for the home video consumer, but we found none more attractive and functional than those made by Interlock Furniture Industries (P.O. Box 2206, Waynesboro, VA 22980). Their 290 and 490 units would be at home in almost any surroundings, and their adjustable shelves are flexible enough to house any combination of audio and video equipment. As Interlock's John Virag explained to us, they've got the only reasonably-



priced shelving system made especially for audio and video components, with most units retailing for \$150 or less. We can't wait to get some for our video room.

As a concluding note, past CES gatherings have always seen the introduction of at least one turkey product. 1977 had Atari with their disastrous \$150 "Video Music" accessory, which nose-dived down to the point that some dealers are selling it for as little as \$30 today. Last year RCA showed their "Studio II" video game, the only over-\$100 black and white programmable system yet introduced, and likely the last. Well, 1979 was no exception to the "Turkey Product" theory, with Pioneer announcing what has to be the most idiotic excuse for a car stereo product ever made. In their wisdom, they decided that the autospeaker lacked the ability to reproduce those almost-subsonic tones which are more felt than actually heard, so they came up with a cushion-enclosed transducer designed to play frequencies below 20 Hz directly to your person--the "Bodysonic" system. What it really is, (let me stop myself from laughing) is the first "Speaker for the Ass," certainly something we have needed for



many years. As a matter of fact, I just don't know how we've gotten along without one for so long. What will they think of next?

To sum up the Winter Consumer Electronics Show, we can only say that it was disappointing (for the video consumer, at any rate), with very few of the expected hardware products--programmable Beta units, videodisc players, and so on--making their appearances at Las Vegas. There was far more shown in the way of audio products, particularly in the realm of Metal-based audio cassette tape, which seemed to be everywhere. We can only hope that Chicago's summer CES will provide more video decks and surprises. Whatever happens, you can bank on a thorough report in an upcoming issue of THE VIDEOPHILE.



The Quest For the Ultimate Patching System:

We continue to work on designing a deluxe audio/video patching system that will allow the user to select and connect up to 10 different sources to two or three video monitors, with provisions for multiple tuners, decks, disc players, stereo amps, et al, and we hope to have something finished along these lines for next time. For those of you on a budget, we'll also have a smaller system you can put together for around \$100 or so. Meanwhile, if you're too impatient to wait two months, you might write to Trompeter Electronics (8936 Comanche Avenue, Chatsworth CA 91331) for information on their patch panel system; we're using their J-3 jacks for video and JJ-042 jacks for stereo audio.

How To Do Two Things At Once Dept.

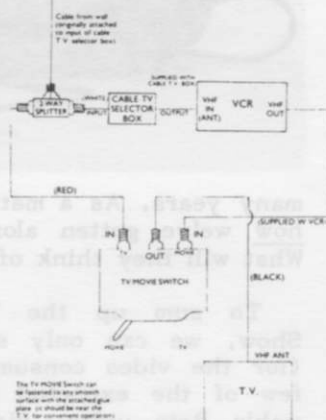
We're indebted, as always, to Audio/Video Crafts's Carl Vickery for providing us with the diagrams below detailing exactly how to wire up Cable TV to your VTR, even those with external selector boxes. The diagrams' notes should make everything self-explanatory; note that with the Bypass II diagram you'll be able to record from normal VHS and watch the premium channel or vice-versa, which you cannot do with a standard set-up. Carl mentions that AVC's got the Bypass I and Bypass II kits on sale for \$39.95 and \$59.95, respectively, and can ship 'em anywhere in the U.S. for an additional \$2.00 postage. Write him c/o Audio/Video Craft, 7710 Melrose, LA, CA 90048. (End of plug.) [Do-it-yourselfers will want to compare the approach in Bob Burns' column elsewhere in this issue.--Ed]

WHAT THE BYPASS II DOES

(Please refer to the installation diagram)

In an unmodified cable system with a premium channel (like Z) the incoming cable goes directly to a channel selector/decoder which selects the channel to be viewed (including the "scrambled" premium channel). Thus, when a VCR is hooked up between the decoder and the TV, it 'sees' only what is selected for viewing, and so one cannot watch a different channel from the one being recorded.

The bypass divides the incoming signal into two parts, one of which goes through the decoder/selector to the VCR as before, the other going to the A/B Switch (at the TV antenna input) which is also connected to the output of the VCR. Thus one can either select the output of the decoder/selector (or of the VCR, depending on the position of the TV/VCR Switch on the video recorder) and obtain all channels, including the premium one.

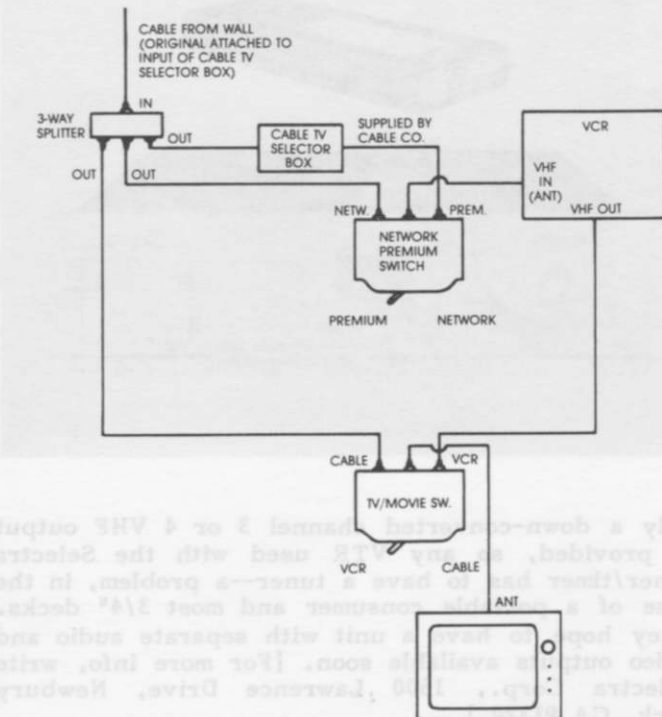


BYPASS II INSTALLATION DIAGRAM

BYPASS OPERATION CHART

Function	TV CHANNEL SELECTOR	CABLE CHANNEL SELECTOR	VCR CHANNEL SELECTOR	VCR/TV SWITCH ON VCR	TV/MOVIE SWITCH
Watch Channel 'X' (X incl. Z)	3	X	*	TV	Movie
Watch 'X' Record 'X' (X incl. Z)	3	X	3	*	Movie
Watch X Record Y (Y # Z)	X	Y	3	*(either)	TV
To Monitor Y While Recording	3	Y	3	VCR	Movie

BYPASS II INSTALLATION DIAGRAM



WHAT THE BYPASS II DOES

In an unmodified cable system with a premium channel, the incoming cable goes directly to a channel selector/decoder which selects the channel to be viewed (including the "scrambled" premium channel). Thus, when a VCR is hooked up between the decoder and the TV, it 'sees' only what is selected for viewing, and so one can not watch a different channel from the one being recorded, nor set a programmable VCR to record different channels over a week's time. (Though, of course, one may record 4 different programs on the same channel.)

The bypass divides the incoming signal into three parts in order to accomplish two functions:

1) One part of the signal goes to the cable TV selector box and from there to the Premium input of the Premium/Network Switch. Another part of the signal goes directly to the Network input of the Premium/Network Switch. Thus, by

turning the switch to the Network position, one can program the machine to record 4 different shows on channels 2 through 13. In order to record the Premium Channel the switch must be in the Premium position. (One cannot program the machine to record the Premium Channel as one of four other channels automatically.)

2) Part of the signal eventually reaches the VCR input as in (1) above and goes from there to the VCR input of the cable VCR switch. Another part of the signal goes directly from the splitter to the cable input of the cable/VCR switch. Thus, one can either select the output of the decoder/selector (or of the VCR, depending on the position of the TV/VCR Switch on the video recorder) and obtain all channels, including the premium one; or select the basic cable programming minus the Premium Channel for viewing independent of the selector box and recorder.

BYPASS OPERATION CHART

FUNCTION	TV CHANNEL SELECTOR	CABLE CHANNEL SELECTOR	VCR CHANNEL SELECTOR	VCR/TV SWITCH ON VCR	CABLE VCR SWITCH	NETWORK PREMIUM SWITCH
TO WATCH VCR INPUT OR PREMIUM	3	TO SELECTED STATION	<input type="checkbox"/>	TV	VCR	PREM
TO WATCH AND RECORD VCR INPUT OR PREMIUM	3	TO SELECTED STATION	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	VCR	PREM
TO WATCH ONE CHANNEL, RECORD ANOTHER	SELECTED STATION TO VIEW	SELECTED STATION TO RECORD	3	<input type="checkbox"/> (either)	CABLE	PREM
TO MONITOR STATION WHILE RECORDING	3	SELECTED STATION TO RECORD	3	VCR	VCR	PREM
TO RECORD NORMAL PROGRAMS MULTIPLE CHANNELS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PRE PROGRAM MACHINE FOR BROADCAST	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	NETWORK

☐ SWITCH POSITION UNIMPORTANT

What a Slap in the Face to Sony Dept.:

Gadget magazine, which we've mentioned in these pages as being a very worthwhile publication for fanciers of nifty flippety-gibbets and stuff, had a great section in their March '79 issue detailing "the worst gadgets of 1978." Among those listed: Polaron's interesting, but unfortunately-late, Polavision

("...they waited on introducing this instant home movie unit until videocassette technology had rendered the very idea obsolete...."), RCA's "Studio II" programmable video game (mentioned earlier), and the Sinclair Microvision TV ("...percentage of defective units is too high...."). Along with these Bad Gadgets was a scathing comment on our favorite Betamax manufacturer, which we reprint here:

"Rarely does so big a corporation fall so far, so fast. When they introduced their Beta unit, they had the VCR market to themselves. From that position of leadership this corporate monster started exhibiting all the grace of a skid row wino. Outflanked in VCR technology by VHS, in their desperate attempt to stay current they promised three-hour [L-750] Beta tapes months before they were available. They promised a tape changer that is even now not available [not quite--see the product report in this issue.--Ed], and in the handling of customer relations, their rating has dropped to zero. However, at press time we could not confirm the rumor that the U.S. Government is planning to declare the Sony Betamax an endangered species."

Well, we have to admit--as much as we like Sony, there is some truth to what Gadget has to say about their Beta marketing efforts. As Sony Vice-President Mort Fink told me a week or so ago, they feel their Beta sales took a beating from VHS on three major points: recording time, price and promotion. With the new models coming up, and a multi-million dollar ad campaign coming into full swing, they're sure to have a fighting chance at recapturing the home video market again by Christmas. (Gadget is \$15 a year from G.A. Publications, 116 W. 14th St., NY NY 10011 and is worth every penny. Oh, and thanks for the issue, Joe!)

The Usual Drastic Fubars Dept.:

Only two that we could find, this time. First off, we were misinformed again--Galactica is not currently available on videodisc in stereo (see the "The Disc Player Revisited" article elsewhere), though it is still pretty spectacular-sounding even in mono. Secondly, we hang our head in shame to report that we mis-corrected an earlier report that Sony's new KP-5000 and KP-7200 Projector TV's do not have VIR-controlled tuning, when in fact they do. Proving once again, that just when you think you know it all, it turns out you don't know nuthin'. Sheesh.

Next time: the video patching system, the usual babbling essays, fol-der-ol, meanderings, and...the end of Rambling Outtakes (as we now know it). See you then.

Marc Wielage
P.O. Box 480315
LA, CA 90048

[Upon checking with the bank deposit slips, we find that there is indeed, just enough money in our distressed account to assist Mr. Wielage to realize his dream of attending the Summer Consumer Electronics Show in Chicago. We'll try to have him rush his report to us in time for inclusion in the next issue. We're looking for the introduction of many new goodies. --Ed]



LAST MINUTE SQUEEZE-IN DEPT.

After nearly all our pages had gone to press, what should appear in our mailbox but a copy of Sony's post-trial brief in the copyright lawsuit. [We have also just received a copy of Universal's, but will not be able to read it in time to comment.] The brief runs to over 100 pages [Universal's is longer] and, unlike many legal pleadings, makes pretty interesting reading throughout. We were a little surprised at some of the subtle humor, sarcasm and outright poking of fun at the plaintiff's position. When your editor was in law school he got graded down for much the same thing, the idea being that it is not proper courtroom decorum to make clever comments which tend to denigrate your adversary. We can only assume that times have changed and that Judge Ferguson is casual enough to allow one attorney to refer to another's use of a well-known Latin maxim as "plaintiffs' Australian buzz-words" without taking umbrage. Here are a few excerpts:

"MCA's president has a VO 1600 [U-Matic 3/4" VTR] in his home and can record off the air anytime he wishes."

"It is futile for plaintiffs to ask the court to deny the American public the right and ability to record off-the-air television; plaintiffs might better ask the court to behead the Hydra."

"Count 7 - Marc Wielage ... he even has a padded suitcase which he uses to carry his Betamax on trips with him. He has Betamania."

"Another contention was that Betamax would decrease sales of video discs containing the same program as recorded off-the-air. ... However, Lowe and Wielage (the most avid Betamax owners of them all) both said they would buy the disc, if available, and then use the tape to record something else."

"The first and second main defenses in this action remain that home use off-the-air videotape recording and retail store off-the-air demonstration recording are not infringement--(1) as shown by the legislative history ... and (2) by application of the legal principles of fair use to the facts adduced at trial."

"A single sufficient answer to all the foregoing is that Betamax has been proved to be a staple article of commerce suitable for substantial unchallenged off-the-air recording -- the public therefore has every right in the world to buy it and defendants have every right in the world to make, advertise and sell it. Plaintiffs have not cited a single case where the manufacturer, advertiser or seller of a staple article of commerce (ie., typewriter, camera, film, Xerox) used by the direct infringer was held to a standard of strict liability for such usage."

"First, plaintiffs ask this court to be the first in American copyright law history to declare a personal home use to be an infringement. Today it is Betamax owners whom the plaintiffs would have the Court brand as infringers; tomorrow it will be all 750,000 VTR owners; and then it will be all the millions of people who record copyrighted music off-the-air. ..."

"Second, plaintiffs ask this court to be the first in American copyright law history to declare the manufacturer of a staple article of commerce to be liable (strictly liable at that) because that article was used by a consumer in an infringement ..."

"Either decision would be groundbreaking ..."

THE VIDEO COMPOSITE

by BOB BURNS

Since all my equipment was recently "ripped off" (check my "ways to prevent same" in our last issue), I have acquired a Panasonic NV-8310 Industrial VHS Recorder. This is Panasonic's latest addition to their industrial lineup and it supersedes their NV-8300 (which I had enjoyed owning for nearly 18 months). If you missed my article on the 8310 a few issues ago, briefly, the new model offers such additional features as still picture, variable playback speed control (allowing continuous adjustment from "still" to 1½ times normal speed), playback at two times normal speed, and a special automatic adjustment to remove the sync line from the still picture. The unit also features the usual remote pause control, built-in tuner and timer (with turn-off as well as turn-on times), a very convenient tuner/camera input selector, and a separate 10-pin connector for a color video monitor. Also, with the aid of one of the front-panel controls, it is possible to make the still picture, fast and slow motion features remote-controllable. I've had the unit about a month now, and I'm really impressed with the improvements.

The Panasonic NV-8300 is one of the second generation VHS machines (as are RCA's VCT-201 and 400) which feature an improved tape-loading system. Many of the first VHS models had a tendency to catch every 20th or 30th cassette during ejection. Although no permanent damage to the tape was sustained, it did prove very annoying in the long run. Also, in the earlier VHS units, the video head drum turned as long as power was applied to the unit. This was one of the first complaints I had with the VHS format (as the more dedicated follower will recall), and I was very pleased to find that this had been corrected in later models. In these newer models the video head drum turns only when absolutely necessary (i.e., during "play," "record," and "pause").

The fact that this is one of their industrial models indicates, among other things, that it operates at only the faster "SP"

speed. As most of you know, this is the speed I recommend for recordings intended for any type of "library" collection, although I have seen excellent results in the slower "LP" speed and it is, admittedly, a very economical way to collect movies since it is possible to get two 2-hour recordings on one cassette. At this time the industrial units are the only models in Panasonic's lineup to offer the unique optional features found in this unit. Comparably priced consumer models do include such options as a programmable tuner/timer and the slower "LP" speed.

I recently became a member of one of our advertiser's organizations. Namely, the "American Video Tape Library." This group boasts an over 300 feature film videocassette library available to members on a "loan" basis. Lifetime membership is \$59.95, with a monthly \$5.00 service charge. Under their plan, you may request any one videocassette and keep it for any reasonable length of time. The only restriction they impose is that you borrow only one videocassette at a time (this is to prevent the "hoarding" of videocassettes by any one member). With each selection you receive a library card which is returned with your latest selection. On it you indicate your next selection, along with first and second alternates. I'm not sure how many cassettes of each title they keep on hand, but my first selection was sent to me, by UPS, within one week. By the way, return postage (shipping) is the member's responsibility.

For those of you Beta-format owners who have had problems with your recorders (Dear Marc: I'm not insinuating that Beta-format recorders require servicing so, please, no nagging), either locally or with your nearest Sony Service Center, I would like to recommend Rick Redoutey in Novi, Michigan. He is employed as a technician in a Sony Service Center in suburban Detroit and has had considerable experience with Beta machines. Now some of you who might shudder at the thought of packing up your little

"jewel" and shipping it to some far-off location should weigh that against leaving your machine with some inept technician with little or no "hands on" experience with video. Not only can you be assured of fast, competent, and complete service with Rick, he knows what to look for in the way of preventive maintenance. In other words, replacing that borderline belt or component before it causes you machine to eat your favorite tape. Those of you within driving distance of Detroit can get one-day service by making an appointment. Rick can also perform some interesting modifications on your machine, including one he calls simply "The Blob" (you'll have to ask Rick to explain that one).

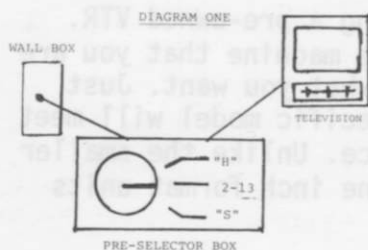
Although the Magnavox Video-Disc Player was well covered in our last issue, I'd like to offer my "user's report" this issue.

For approximately two weeks now I've been forming some very definite views on the Magnavision Player (see my comments elsewhere in this issue) and the video disc concept in general. I should mention that I also purchased my unit from Rich's Department Store in Atlanta by simply placing a call to Mr. Joe Stein at 404-394-1880, Ext. 7361. Mr. Stein is a salesman in the TV Department of Rich's store located in the Perimeter Mall. I was a little concerned that, since I am not a resident of Atlanta, my name would be passed over on the list. But sure 'nuf, early one Tuesday afternoon I received a collect call from Joe notifying me that my Player was available. By Friday of that same week I was playing my first video disc. I feel obliged to mention Joe's name and number here, not because I received any special treatment or discount, but because I didn't. He did not know me or know that I had anything to do with this magazine. Yet he was kind enough to confirm my order in writing after our initial phone conversation and was always eager to provide me with current information on the status of my order during subsequent phone conversations. His attitude was a refreshing change from the "don't

give a damn" attitude so often found these days. I ask only that if you call or write to Joe, be sure to mention that you read it in THE VIDEOPHILE.

Moving right along ... I've received a little more information on the RCA Videodisc from my source at RCA. He says the unit now has a definite date set for introduction, but he was not at liberty to disclose it. (I anticipate it will be before Christmas 1979.) [Dream on, Bob.--Ed] According to him, their video disc will contain two hours of video and stereo sound per disc (one hour per side). The disc rotates at only 450 rpm (as opposed to Magnavision's 1800 rpm) and uses a capacitance probe (diamond stylus) to track the record groove. The capacitive variations, according to RCA literature, are sensed (as the disc rotates) by the stylus tracking the groove. A subcarrier encoded system is used to change the capacitive variations into video and audio information which is passed along to the RF modulator. The pick-up stylus tracks the groove identically to that of the conventional audio turntable, that is, from the outer edge of the disc to the inner. The player, in its present design, will offer slow motion playback, random search control, and some type of program index to locate specific portions of programming within the disc.

I've fallen disgracefully behind on my correspondence and I hope to catch up this month. In the meantime, I'll tackle one recurring problem that a growing number of you are plagued with. That is the Pre-Selector (a.k.a. premium or "little black") Box used by many of the cable systems to provide additional channels (usually HBO, Showtime, Star Time, etc.) at additional charge. The problem is the ability to record this extra channel or channels and/or watching or recording other channels at the same time. Most setups provided by the cable companies are similar to this:



The problem is where to place the VCR in this setup. If it is placed before the BOX, it is not possible to record the premium channel. If placed after the BOX, recording the premium channel is possible, but with certain sacrifices. (I'll get to those in a minute.) Follow these steps to record the premium channel:

Step 1. Disconnect the TV cable from the back of your set. Connect this cable to the VHS input on your VCR.

Step 2. Connect the short 75 ohm cable supplied with the VCR from the RF output on the VCR to the VHF input on your TV.

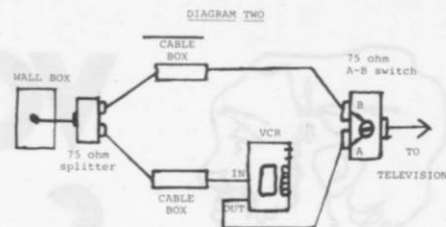
Step 3. Turn your BOX to the premium channel. Select the channel specified by your cable company (for premium channel reception) on your VCR's built-in tuner.

Step 4. Select either channel 3 or 4 on your television and, presto, premium channel recording.

As mentioned, there is one slight hangup. It is not possible to watch any other channel while recording the premium channel. Since one of the major conveniences of a VCR is the ability to tape one channel while watching another, this has proved to be a real drawback to many of you. Most cable companies are not eager to provide any assistance in connecting VCR's and you're, therefore, left to your own devices.

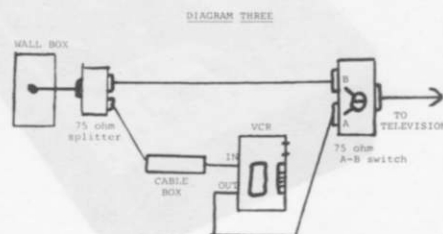
There're a couple of ways to get around this problem. However, I doubt that either of them would be sanctioned by your local cable serviceman. As a matter of fact, they've been known to get rather nasty if anyone alters their connections. However, neither of the methods I will mention involves any violation of the "theft-of-services" law enacted recently by the FCC.

The first method (and most obvious) would be to acquire another BOX from your cable company. I'm sure they would not connect it in the manner which I will describe, but one could be obtained by having an additional connection placed in another part of the house. With another BOX the connection shown in the following diagram would be possible:



Using the proper inputs and outputs of each component, this hook-up can be accomplished with a 75 ohm 2-way splitter, a 75 ohm A-B switch, and several additional lengths of 75 ohm cable. By first setting up the recording with the switch in the "A" position, you can then switch to the "B" position (bypassing the VCR) and select any channel you wish without affecting the recording. One should limit the 75 ohm cables to short lengths of no more than 5 or 6 feet per cable to prevent any loss of signal quality.

If an additional BOX is financially impractical for your situation (I understand some cable companies are charging up to \$50 for each additional BOX, plus a service charge of up to \$10 per month), there's another method which might prove just as effective in your situation. It looks like this:



With this setup it is possible to set the VCR to record the premium channel with the selector in the "A" position, then watch any of the regular VHF channels by selecting the "B" position. In areas where they offer only one premium channel this method proves as effective as the first. However, if you're able to select more than one additional channel with your BOX, you'll not have the option of watching those in the #2 setup. Naturally, if you have two or more VCR's the variations become staggering, especially since you'll probably want the option of dubbing between machines, either by the

Cont'd on p. 42



VCR NEWS & VIEWS

By STEVE COMET

of at least one disadvantage of owning an editing machine.

The advantages are obvious- if one records a substantial amount of material off the air, or if most of the recording done is with a camera. By using a chain of assembly edits, your tape will have a professional look, with transitions as smooth as camera takes.

In the case of off air recording, one must tape the entire program, commercials included, and then as a secondary operation, edit out the unwanted segments while transferring the useable program material onto another tape- the edited copy. The original recording is made on your normal format, and then this is transferred to the edited copy, which will be on open reel tape, since neither Beta or VHS formats offer editing machines at the present time.

Finally, the edited copy must be dubbed down to your normal cassette format. And therein lies the disadvantage: Although you have produced a professionally edited videotape, the final copy is now third generation.



Sony AV-8650

Obviously, one generation could be eliminated by collecting your library on the open reel format being used for the edits, but open reel tape is costly (one-half inch \$18 per hour; one inch, \$38) and inconvenient, as run time per reel is only 63 minutes.

Remember also that two monitors will be required for editing- the first to display the play (source) machine information, and the second to display the edit machines' picture. For a simple editing set-up, see VIDEOPHILE Mar/Apr..

All considered, if an open reel editor is still what you want, you can usually find a dandy used machine for a fraction of its original cost. While there is certainly much to be said for owning new equipment, current offerings in both one-half and one inch machines with full video and audio editing run from about \$3000 up. Used professional broadcast VTRs, as well as equipment removed from service in schools, universities, hospitals, and businesses can sometimes spell fantastic savings for videophiles who know where to find them.

There are a number of precautions one must take before purchasing a pre-owned VTR. Here are just a few things to consider: Get acquainted with the machine that you are considering, to make sure that the features which it offers are what you want. Just because a VTR is a Sony or an Ampex, does not mean that that specific model will meet your needs. Second, find someone who will assist you with service. Unlike the smaller format machines, the more sophisticated VTRs, especially the one inch format units

THE VIDEO EDIT: PART II

The videophile who decides that he or she has need for an editing VTR, need not spend thousands of dollars to obtain it. But- before making such a purchase, determine your requirements, and be aware

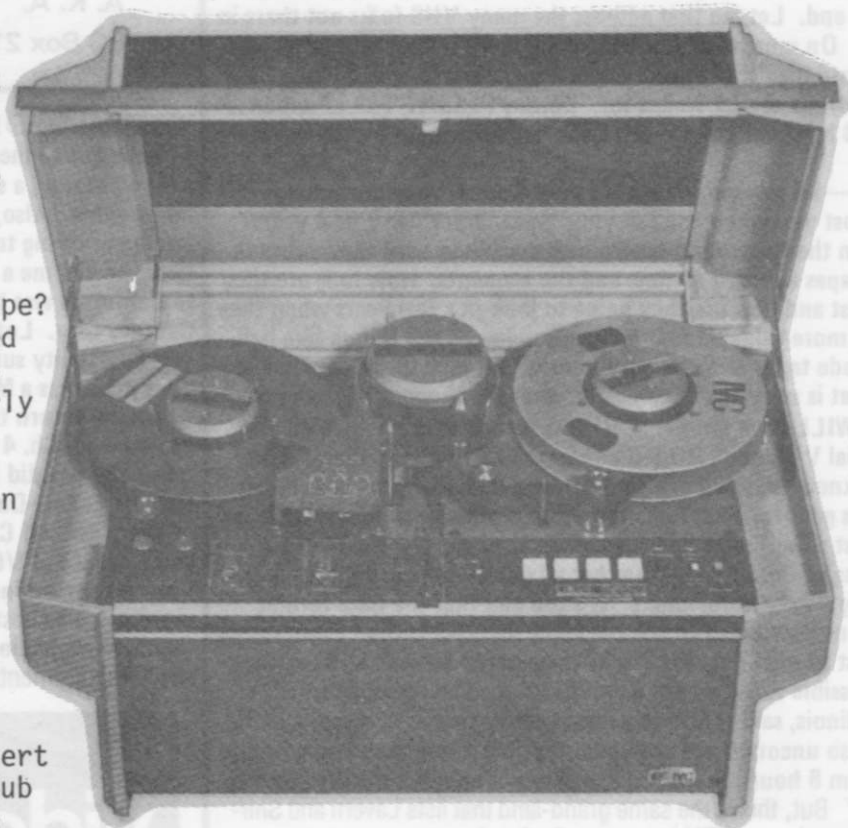
require continuous preventive maintenance. Replacement parts and components such as belts and bearings may be expensive, and if the manufacturer no longer produces the machine which you plan to buy, make sure that parts will be available. It is best to talk to the manufacturer of the equipment prior to making the purchase, as this is your best bet for finding out about parts and service, if you are unable to find these in your area. Which ever VTR you decide on, NEVER buy unless you can obtain a service manual.

Even the best technician will give up in frustration without the aid of a service book. If this is not offered with the recorder, purchase it from the manufacturer.

Most important, ask questions before you buy. How much is tape? how much service will be needed to put the machine in top condition? Is it operating properly now?

Of the used editing machines on the market which you are most likely to find, two makes are probably your best bet. Sony, and IVC.

The former offers its AV-8650, which is a 1/2 inch EIAJ 1 machine- with assemble and insert editing, as well as audio dub and slow motion features. The 8650 will be hard to locate, but if you locate one for under \$1500, you've got a bargain.



THE IVC 800 SERIES

International Video Corporation has made a number of superb one inch VTRs, and if you are willing to make the commitment to costly tape, and put up with tinkering, you can own a fantastic high quality VTR. There are two models which you will probably find, the IVC 760, and IVC 870. The 760 is an assemble edit machine, with two audio tracks, a built in monitor speaker, stop action, full audio and video metering, and beautiful color reproduction- IF the machine is equipped with a color board. Be sure that the VTR is noted as a 760-C, as the current cost of a color board from IVC is \$900! The 760, which was just dropped from the line about a year ago, sold new for \$6000. I own three IVC units, and was able to purchase my last one, a 760, used, for \$400! It seems that the market for used tape equipment is limited, and prices are usually attractive.

Another good buy is the IVC 870, which is the workhorse of the one inch machines offered by IVC. It assemble, insert, and audio edits, and new, cost \$10,000. When you can locate them, and you usually can, prices range from \$1500 to \$3500, depending on condition, and whether the unit is cased or in rack mount frames.

One of the best places to locate such video bargains, is at MATEC Incorporated, in Birmingham Alabama. I have dealt with them in the past, and have been satisfied. You may reach MATEC at 205-956-2200.

A word of caution: Know what you are buying, ask questions and call the manufacturer with any questions which the dealer can not answer.

Dear Videophiles:

This will be the very last time I discuss the topic which frustrates me the most—"QUALITY". First of all, I do not intend to "blast" anyone in particular, nor do I hope to offend anyone by the following comments, they are made only to help enlighten you with regards to a situation which I personally feel is worth serious consideration.

Now that the disclaimers have been filed—why do some of you, and I'm afraid it should read, why do most of you use the slow recording speed? Probably for economy. Well this is really gonna get you in the end. Let me first address the many VHS-folks out there in videoland. On most common VHS units there is a speed selector. SP for "standard play" (fast speed) and LP for, what they call "long play" (slow speed)... I say LP stands for "Lousey Picture". The LP mode is for 3 and 4 hour ball games—NOT for two full-length movies on one cassette.

People—I know we all want to save money, but how much is it going to cost you when none of your tapes "track" in 3 or 4 years? Look down the road. New heads, new machines, used tapes, stretched tapes, tapes exposed to time and the elements. How long are they going to last and how are they going to look in a few years when they will be far more valuable than they are today. They'll look like hell. The LP mode tapes also dub very poorly. LP tape to LP tape in the VHS format is so awful, technically, that the thought of it disgusts me. You WILL have problems, VHS folks and that is why JVC and all industrial VHS units DO NOT have the LP mode on them. The engineers know that you can't get professional quality at the slower speed. This goes for Beta folks too. The professional Beta machines are X1 (fast speed) only.

Speaking of Beta... I realize that all newer units are X2 (slower speed) only. Very unfortunate. It's too bad that the Beta format has to run at slow speed to achieve what the VHS format accomplishes at their fast speed. Yet, VHS folks (in general) elect to still use the slowest possible speed! Tom Konard, a Canadian fast speed VHS'er, living in Illinois, said it best in a recent letter to me: "I swear Americans seem so unconcerned with quality, that if someone figured out a way to cram 8 hours on one tape, losing a little more quality, they'd still do it." But, this is the same grand-land that lists Lavern and Shirley as the number one TV program. And so it goes.

Trading tapes in the slow X2 speed is dreadful. I personally find X2 to X2 copies look like shit. That is my opinion, but I'm finding more and more people that agree. The technical loss is enormous. I keep almost all of my master originals at X1 (fast speed). Another copy at X1 is excellent. A copy dubbed down to X2 from an X1 is acceptable to the average eye. If, however, you are fortunate enough to have excellent TV reception, or super cable pick-up on such bonus services as HBO or Showtime, why defeat it all by recording at slow speed? Aside from the initial expense, it is not logical at all.

Friends in video—I promise to never again come down on you all about this subject, but let's try to raise our standards just a little—OK? This magazine is called the **VIDEOPHILE**—a videophile is one who is a master at his craft. A vidiot is one who lacks common sense regarding immediate expense vs. long-range expense. Let's all strive for the best technical end result—we'll all benefit from it in the end.

Tips

There are still a number of you folks that leave your memory counter ON all the time.

The problem with this is that your tape will rewind **ONLY** to the 000 setting—which is NOT usually the beginning of the tape—then, right in the middle of that special program you are recording—"click" off goes the recorder! Always leave it OFF, unless you specifically need it to locate a spot on the cassette.

For Beta people, the round disc-like cover on the top of your unit is NOT a vent. It should NOT be removed. Some people take it off for cooling. Not necessary. It's so you can blow warm air from a hair dryer into the head-drum area if the unit is cold. They don't tell you this because most people are not intelligent enough to know how to correctly do this—so be careful. Leaving it off only causes more dust and dirt to be sucked into the machine.

MICHIGAN UP-DATE

ART VUOLO, JR.
A. K. A. "MR. MEDIA"

PO Box 219, Ypsilanti, MI 48197 (313) 434-2712

WESTWARD HO!! My trip to the coast in late February was tremendous! I finally got to meet the "infamous" Marcus F. Wielage, a little guy, with a lot of energy, a self-assured attitude and an excellent understanding of home video. Also, Mr. Colorful—the one and only Joe Mazzini! Words fail me in trying to describe these two equally unique individuals, but they showed me a super time while in L.A. My primary reason for going to California was to attend the R&R (Radio and Records) Convention at Century City. Lots of radio people are into VCR equipment. At the biggest hospitality suite—MCA Records bought out the Playboy Club—the door prize was a Magnavox Disco-Vision Player!

On my return trip a brief stop in Denver was highlighted by a TV appearance on Ch. 4 mentioned in the last "Update." I had 5 minutes to tell it all—and did I talk fast! At the end of March I went to the great state of Texas—Dallas, to be exact—for the N.A.B. (National Association of Broadcasters) Convention. Saw lots of video, most all of it professional stuff. Loads of VCR's, both Beta and VHS. No sign of video discs though! I did see something that was mind-boggling... it was a 32" Sony Trinitron monitor! The best big picture I have ever seen. It was incredible, better than any projection system. Not available in the U.S. yet because of radiation requirements—costs about \$4,500—really nice!

vide@bservations:

(Intended to instruct — not insult)

How many people do you know that still do dumb things like: Using an old tube-type color TV in serious need of repair or major adjustment as your video monitor. Tube sets are unstable and usually offer unbearable scow problems (where the picture bends at the top, flagging to the right.) DuMont may have been first with the finest in television, but we have come a long way since 1948. Perhaps quality lacks with so many because so many of you have never actually seen your tapes on a properly adjusted TV set.

Also, let's move all the Betamax and Select-A-Visions off the top of the TV sets of America. That's as silly as putting your TV antenna rotor control on top of the set—yet, most folks do. I'd like to meet the "ace" that started that. It makes NO sense at all. Place the rotor control and your VCR on an end table or a stand next to your easy chair, or wherever you watch TV from. With the machine at your fingertips it will be effortless to control everything. And, if you dial your channels through the VCR you'll have instant remote control!

Never connect the output of your recorder plus the TV antenna to the same set of terminal screws on the back of your set. Lately I've seen a lot of this. Run the antenna **THROUGH** the VCR like the instruction book tells you to.

At the NAB in Dallas, I talked with Mike Skelton of Memorex who indicated that his company is bringing out VHS tape in June, followed by Beta, no price quotes yet. I spoke to Whitie Henderson at the Fuji booth with regards to their new line of home video tape. My personal feeling is

that the Fuji Tape is excellent. The response and reproduction is superb and the packaging in creamy white soft plastic sleeves is a far cry better than the cheap backing cardboard of most manufacturers. The Beta comes in 4 lengths and the VHS in 3—note the timing charts below.

VHS

Model:	
T-30	68m (223.1ft) 30min.
T-60	128m (419.9ft) 60min.
T-120	248m (813.6ft) 120min.

BETA

Model:	
L-125	42 m (125 ft) 30/15 min
L-250	78 m (250 ft) 60/30 min
L-370	114 m (370 ft) 90/45 min
L-500	150 m (500 ft) 120/60 min



review

Video stores are popping up everywhere. Can Video-Shack be far off? There's a Houston-based company called Video Concepts that has already started to franchise video dealerships. They are hoping to have a chain of quality video centers nationwide. I spoke with Bob Koontz at their Denver outlet after he watched me on TV and called the station to say hi. In Denver, their store is in the Tamarack Square Center (S.E. side of town.)

In Detroit, the biggie seems to be Video Alternatives, a clean and very professional video store with sales personnel that actually know something about home video. Very refreshing indeed. They can be found on Woodward Ave. (the main drag of the Motor City), just south of 14 Mile Road in Royal Oak. It's worth investigation, if you're serious about video.

Right here in my own back yard there's a new place called the Video Warehouse. Greg Reynolds and Rick West are a couple of young guys with a sharp eye on the video marketplace. Projection systems, VCR's, tapes (blank and pre-recorded), plus rentals of units and cameras, both black & white and color, are featured. In mid-April, they acquired nine (9) brand new (still in the box) Magnavox Disco-Vision Players!!! They were sold in record time—(no pun intended.) The Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti area is very video oriented, with 5 local colleges and universities in the twin towns. The Video Warehouse is located dead-center between them on Washtenaw Ave. near Golfside Rd. Nice folks to trade with.,



Yours truly clutching a beautiful new Disco-Vision Player. Thanks Joe for taking the picture, and thanks to Rick West for trusting me with the equipment. Nifty jacket—no? It was cold in April folks!

FYI....

FINALLY IN THE NEWS... "ON," the subscription TV station in Los Angeles (Ch. 52) is coming to Detroit by mid-summer 1979! WXON-TV (Ch. 20) and a very strong UHF signal will be "ON" for the Motor City. This super service is like having HBO or Showtime over the air without Cable TV—but you still have to pay for it. The system is designed so that stealing the service is very difficult, but it is very easy to record programs—just don't sell them—OK?

The people at ARB (the ratings folks) did a recent study on VCR usage in the home. Arbitron is the same company that causes your favorite radio station(s) to change formats when things don't go well and prompts them to give away lots of cash prizes a couple of times a year. The findings of the home video research was very interesting. Just a few facts show that the programs most frequently recorded were: series (37.9%), movies (31.5%), sports (10.1%), entertainment specials (5.1%) and documentary/educational programs (2%). Only 18% fast forward past commercials on playback! Could it be those are the folks who have their VCR's on top of their TV sets instead of conveniently at their side. Also, fast-forwarding on VHS units is more time consuming than on Beta machines—could be a factor. The report contains a lot of very interesting statistics.

Special thanks to Dick and Bill at PS Printing & Graphics in Ann Arbor for the layout facilities and to all the nifty people that I've talked to since we last met. Keep your heads clean, titles legal, the trading up, contacts close and talk to you soon with a warm weather (I hope) summertime MICHIGAN UP-DATE. Stay in touch.

Arthur J.

The VHS Network

Greetings once again, fellow Videophiles, as we follow the Yellow Brick Road to another installment of The VHS Network. Who can remember way back to issue #13 (What a great omen, eh, Gregory?) which saw the first appearance of this humble column. It didn't even have a name and all the type-up was done by our dauntless editor.

This time our discussion covers, among other things, Fuji tape and RCA tape. Also, to quell all the letters I've received lately, we'd like to repeat a section on overriding the cassette tape retraction for all our new readers.

THE FUJI TAPE

The long heralded and anticipated Fuji VHS tape has finally arrived throughout the country. It is selling very fast, mainly due to the fact that (as its proponents claim) it performs better than any other brand.

Well, Gang, wanting to see it to believe it, your humble columnist went in search of some Fuji, only to be initially disappointed. Every place kept selling out. Finally I arranged to get part of a shipment that was to be delivered that evening, but when I got to the store I learned, to my chagrin, that the Fuji tape, along with the truck, had been hijacked that afternoon. Fortunately, about a week later I obtained a couple of Fuji T-120 tapes from Oregon and tested them with the following results:

I found that the Fuji tape provides a very crisp and clear picture with little or no dropouts. While I won't jump on the bandwagon and say that the Fuji tape is leagues better than the RCA tape (it definitely beats out JVC/Panasonic), I would say that it may be a tad better as far as contrast and clarity are concerned. Fuji tape is noticeably better than the TDK "Super" Avilyn tape. I have noticed a general decline in TDK's initial quality, and have also observed, of late, that JVC tape looks grainy when compared to Fuji and RCA tape. As far as the home

hobbyist is concerned, Fuji tape more than adequately does the job.

IT'S
NOT
HOW
LONG
YOU
MAKE
IT,
BUT



HOW YOU MAKE IT LONG DEPT.

Ever put a short on a tape, or stay up until 3 o'clock in the morning to edit out the commercials in your favorite episode of Twilight Zone, only to have the tape run out two minutes before the credits? You have, eh? Wanted to kill, didn't you? Well, it has also happened to Swan and me, and on too many occasions to really be considered a pleasant experience. As I talk to other videophiles, I find that this has become a whole new cult of video fandom (the "How I Suffered and Strived and Blew It When I Had It in the Bag" cult). It always seems that if I stayed up until 3 A.M. there's someone else who stayed up until 4.

So what's the cure? Well, you could do it on one tape and dub it down to the tape you want it on and lose a generation, or when you do it to begin with make absolutely sure you know how much tape you need versus how much tape you have. To find out how much you need for a movie, consult Maltin or Scheuer. If you're recording off commercial TV, allow approximately 24 minutes for each 1/2 hour of program. You can usually gauge this more accurately if you regularly record your favorite program. To find out how much tape you've got, just run it through the machine in advance and use your time chart to ascertain the time. We've found that if you have a good time chart, the time will always be accurate to within the minute.

Interesting things start happening when you start running all your new tape through your VCR to find the tape length and schedule what will fit on the tape. It can make a difference if the tape runs 2 hours/5 minutes or 2

hours/12 minutes. If you're running LP 4 hour/6 minutes or 4 hours/20 minutes, that can be a real important difference. What is really strange is how the length varies so dramatically on different VHS tapes and varies so little on Beta tape. Most Beta tape I have used runs between 2:05 and 2:07, whereas VHS tape can run anywhere from 4:06 to 4:24. That's right, 4 hours and 24 minutes! That's over five episodes of The Outer Limits, or 11 episodes of Superman, with commercials deleted, of course. What's really funny is the fact that this doesn't happen with all the brands of VHS tape. Our survey, based on over 200 tapes run, indicates the following averages:

	Avg.	High	Low
RCA VT 250	414/415	424½	411
Fuji T-120	409	409½	406
TDK T-120	410	413	407
JVC 120	409	410	406
Panasonic			
NV-T120	408	410	405
Hitachi T-120	409	412	407
Quasar			
VC-T120	414	416	412
Magnavox 120	410	414	408

We also found that the 1 hour/2 hour VHS tapes also vary quite a bit. Once again, the biggest margin was set by an RCA VT-125, which went 2 hours/19½ minutes. We find that RCA tape has consistently more surplus than any other brand we've used. Hence, if you need a few more minutes, run an RCA through and check your time chart. Maybe you'll be covered and you'll be spared the additional "fun" of switching tapes in mid-program.

DELETING COMMERCIALS WITH THE VHS

Another problem which continues to plague our newer readers in attempting to "edit" out commercials (or other material) is that of tape retraction. Tape retraction occurs whenever the user depresses the "Stop" key and the VHS winds the tape backward into the box. If the "Play" and "Record" keys are then immediately pressed, a small portion of the previously recorded segment will be destroyed by the

next recorded segment. In order to prevent this from happening, the following procedure should be observed:

1. Make it a practice to edit out commercials by use of the remote pause switch, rather than the "Pause" or "Stop" key. [If you click the remote pause during that instant between the time the program ends and the commercial begins, and if you don't mind leaving the pause engaged anywhere from one to two minutes, then all you have to do is wait until the instant before the show starts again and click the remote pause back into the "Play" position. The result will be an "edit" about as good as it is possible to get on a consumer model VHS recorder.--Ed]

2. If you fail to click the remote pause in time to trap out the commercials (or if you want to eliminate commercials, but prefer not to leave the machine in "Pause" for an extended time), click the remote pause anyway and climb out of your easy chair and push the "Stop" key.

3. Click the remote pause unit to the "Play" position.

4. Rewind one counter unit, or two units if you're at the beginning of the tape. [This is easiest to do if you don't fully depress, or engage, the "Rewind" key.--Ed.]

5. Push the "Play" key. The end of the program you have just taped will appear on the screen, so get the remote pause ready to trap the commercial. (Don't forget that most prime time commercial breaks are less than 2 minutes, so use haste.)

6. Now, this time click the remote pause at the right point.

7. Push the "Pause" key (the "Pause" key is direct functional, as opposed to the simple interruption function that the remote pause provides).

8. Push the "Record" key (the "Play" key is still down).

9. Release the "Pause" key (but not the remote pause) and the end of the commercial which has been in progress will appear on your screen. [On the VCT 400, the picture appears after step 8.--Ed]

10. Return to your easy chair, remote pause in hand ready to be clicked back to the "Play" position as usual after the commercial's end.

Good luck and happy pausing!

MOAT & MINE FIELD DEPT.

I'm sure we all read with horror the Bob Burns column in #18. We all fear that some night we'll come home and find that our VCR's and tapes have been "liberated" by a member of the mindless, slimy horde. Bob is, indeed, right. Get insurance--Drop the bucks and keep those receipts. At the risk of sounding like an agent for Allstate (You're in good hands with Nate ??), there is a large selection of insurance coverages available. Remember that you don't have to own a home to get insurance. On the average, you can get renter's insurance at \$6,000 coverage for \$100; \$8,000 coverage for \$120, etc., or you can get your tapes included in "floater" policies. Just remember that you can only insure the value of equivalent blank tape. There is no value placed on the material recorded. I know that you treasure (and consider priceless) your copy of Godzilla Versus the Smog Monsters Part II, but it can still only be valued to the equivalent "replacement" cost. There are also terms which override the depreciation clauses, and which also cost extra.

Please note that I am not in the insurance business. Since all the preceding information was courtesy of my Farmers Insurance agent, don't write to me asking about specific rates. My agent recommended that if you don't have any fire/theft insurance, you should contact your car insurance company. By the way, does your policy cover taking your VCR in a car to a friend's house?

GIZMO OF THE MONTH

In the Nov/Dec issue's edition of this column (#16), we discussed how you can attach your VCR to your stereo speaker. One trip to Radio Shack (our old friend, the Shack!) did it all. An expenditure of about \$9 enables you to get pretty good sound. The reason it's only "good," not terrific, is because there is a hiss in the background. Wanting to try to alleviate this annoyance, I got one of my electrical friends to listen to my hiss. [I presume that afterwards he listened to the hiss on

Nate's tape.--Ed] He said, "No problem," and presented me with the following solution:

1. Take the insulation off the cable to reveal the two conductors.

2. Get a capacitor and connect it from conductor to conductor. The only question he left was what size capacitor to use. My friend gave me a dozen capacitors to short out the cable and see when the hiss went away. After some progressive elimination, the capacitor we found to work reasonably well was a 2 micro-farad capacitor. (Get 'em at the Shack).

3. To put it together, we soldered the capacitor into a little electrical project box which had two female RCA plugs attached. Solder the inside conductor of each female plug with a wire. Solder the capacitor from the wire to the project box (the box conducts). After you mount the capacitor in the box, cut the cable (which you previously bought) in half and attach a male RCA plug to each cut end and plug these ends into the box. I then plugged the other ends into the VCR and stereo as described in #16. I've tested this little gizmo for about a week now and it works fine. Even though it's somewhat "experimental," give it a try if you're interested in improving your audio playback.

MINDLESS HYSTERIA DEPT.

One of the questions which has arisen lately in my letters is ... What were those people on the cover of Jan/Feb? (I would have mentioned it last time, but not too many folks can write and make each column's deadline.) They are from The Rocky Horror Picture Show, a classic cult flick, and were alluded to also on the cover of the Nov/Dec issue: "Let's Do the Time Warp Again." I find it fascinating that video fandom provides an interesting cross section of cultists (especially cinema cults). Let's see more of this in THE VIDEOPHILE. I will personally lead all VIDEOPHILE Eastwood fanatics in our charge for equal time. Too long have we had to listen to the Disney and porno cults (interesting combo, though). Why must the only action/violence in THE VIDEOPHILE be directed toward Stephen Kroft (who, lest we forget, is

just a lawyer trying to do his job for his client)? Steve, we dislike your job, but we don't hold grudges. Okay?

Cult members and Eastwood folk, ARISE. Let's let our numbers be known. Let's get Clint on the cover. It could blow you head clean off.

On top of that raving, here's another reader participation quiz. (Last time we reported no results from our trivia question, but I have since gotten some positive results.) Here, then, the bi-monthly Nate contest: Somewhere in California, or, for that matter, the rest of the country, there are some cars with the following license plate numbers: 400 VBT, 201 VCT, VCR 400. (California is in the V series now, so watch for new cars.) The first of you to spot a reasonable facsimile of the above plates and send me a photo and story will receive a picture of The Big Nate in his favorite position.

While we're on the topic of cars, let's consider bumper stickers. Let the world know you love your VCR. Let Jim Lowe get some "Cash-In" Products VCR bumper stickers. Send Jim your ideas. Here are some of mine: "VHS'ers Do It Longer," "I Love My VCR," and, my favorite,

"Have You Hugged Your VCR Today?" LET'S GET VISIBLE... Let's get some by-play and ideas. Let's hear from you out there in Videoland, and we'll organize ourselves into a giant taping horde--unstoppable by any force on earth. [Nate, I've been thinking about bumper stickers, too. My favorite, so far, is one suggested to me by Marc: "They can have my VCR when they pry my cold dead fingers from around it."--Ed]

Well, that just about ends another Natework. But before we're overcome by a religious cult who wants our time charts (which are still available), thanks are due to the following folks: Jim Sutton, Larry & Susan & Dave, Brad & Janet, Harry Callahan & The Major. As usual, send all correspondence, questions, answers, dollars, and ferns, to:

THE BIG NATE
c/o R&D Fernandez
2617 Deerford St.
Lakewood CA 90712

P.S. If anyone knows of the whereabouts of a copy of Robert Altman's *The Long Goodbye* (a cult classic?), your humble columnist would appreciate a line. Thanx.



Hogging attention

Edna Lynn and his wife doesn't mind if their pet pig, Lucky, reclines on their living room floor. Just as Arnold the pig wallowed in glory on television's 'Green Acres,' Lucky can do just about anything she wants out in Duncan, Okla.

COMPOSITE

Cont'd.
from p. 35

direct or RF method, without having to alter connections each time.

I'm sure most of you saw the advertisement and accompanying article in our last issue regarding home satellite TV reception. This is a subject I've been interested in for years, and it now looks as though it's becoming a reality. If any of you out there have had any personal experience with earth terminals (such as building or having built them), I would appreciate hearing from you. As a matter of fact, I'm sure all of our readers would be interested in any information you could provide concerning cost, construction, quality of reception, maintenance, and any experiences you may have had with the government or the broadcasters. Please write to me at the address below, and I'll pass your comments along to our readers in the next edition.

"STAY TUNED"

Bob Burns
Box 23-16
Wheelersburg OH 45964

EDGAR BUCHANAN, who appeared in dozens of westerns and played the cantankerous Uncle Joe on television's "Petticoat Junction,"



died Wednesday at Eisenhower Memorial Hospital in Palm Springs, Calif. He was 76 and had recently undergone brain surgery.

Buchanan

The gravely voiced performer had been comatose for six weeks and died at 5:50 a.m. as a result of the prolonged coma, complicated by pneumonia and a stroke, said hospital spokesman John Millrany.

Buchanan, who gave up dentistry at age 38 and became one of Hollywood's most successful supporting actors, underwent surgery Jan. 29 to remove a tube that was put in his brain four years ago to help circulation of spinal fluids, Millrany said.

The heavy-set actor, usually cast as a likeable rogue, appeared in more than 80 movies, including many westerns, and in 150 television dramas before landing the role of Uncle Joe in the "Petticoat Junction" series on CBS-TV in the 1960s.

The Videophile PRODUCT REPORT

SONY AG-120 Cassette Auto-Changer

Manufacturer: Sony Corporation, Tokyo, Japan

Source: Sony Consumer Products Company, 9 West 57th St., New York NY 10019 [from Joan Bardong of Sony's Product Information Department]

Serial Numbers: 22836 (MFW) and 22837 (JM)

Price: \$50 (Special "customer satisfaction" offer only; expected retail price to be around \$100-\$150)



If there ever was a product that has been hoped and prayed for by Betamax owners for the past 4 years, this is it--a mechanical device that would eject a videocassette out of a machine and automatically drop in a new one, as fast as a human hand could do so. With such a device, finally those poor unfortunates among us who spent \$1300 on a now archaic X-1 only SL-7200 could experience the wonders of unattended recording up to two hours long, 3 hours with L-750's. Likewise, SL-8200 owners could record up to 4 hours on two

L-500's at X-2, or a mind-boggling 6 hours on two L-750's. Now, maybe they would no longer hang their heads in shame when VHS owners come over to demean and insult the lowly Beta format.

Well, folks, the changer really exists, honest and for true. Best of all, it's being made available now by mail for only \$50 (not sold in any stores). Sony's offering it to appease unhappy SL-7200 owners, who get to keep the device free of charge for 90 days, during which time the owners will test and evaluate them

for Sony, offering their ideas for improvements and suggestions for future marketing efforts.

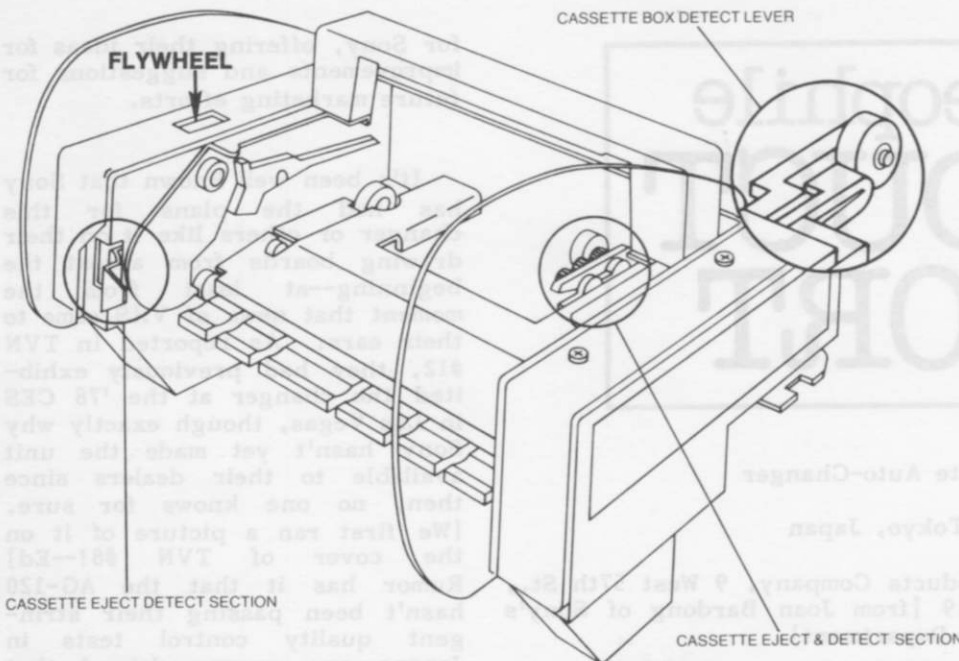
It's been well known that Sony has had the plans for this changer or others like it on their drawing boards from almost the beginning--at least from the moment that news of VHS came to their ears. As reported in TVN #12, they had previously exhibited the changer at the '78 CES in Las Vegas, though exactly why Sony hasn't yet made the unit available to their dealers since then, no one knows for sure. [We first ran a picture of it on the cover of TVN #8!--Ed] Rumor has it that the AG-120 hasn't been passing their stringent quality control tests in Japan; one source claimed that the changers were still failing once out of every ten times, an unacceptable ratio for Sony's high standards, and rightly so.

Whatever the case, we have approached the problem of reviewing the changers very carefully for two main reasons: first, they're only available to owners of the LV-1901 console or the 7200/7200A deck; secondly, we know the AG-120's are still being tested for their suitability and dependability, and that those of us who do buy the changers are probably getting heavily-tested units that might be less likely to fail than a mass-marketed unit bought in a store. Given these two prerequisites, we think our review, which follows, is a fair one; but bear in mind that the changer you might buy in a store someday may not be exactly the same one we discuss here.

APPEARANCE: The AG-120 is a complicated mother, no doubt about it. Upon examining it carefully, one gets the opinion that some poor demented Japanese engineer spent 6 months of his life working on the device until his mind cracked like a piece of bent chalk. As a matter of fact, we understand that Sony has a special loony farm just a few miles from their factory in Osaka for engineers who have either gone nuts working on the changer or simply had breakdowns in trying to combat VHS.

Getting back to the changer, it's larger (9½"x8"x10") and heavier (4 lbs.) than one would

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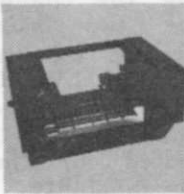
attached only with its handle in the "up" position; otherwise, you might inadvertently strip the gears or ruin the intricate spring/lever system within the changer's complex innards.

We noted that installation is the same for either the SL-7200 or 8200, but were unhappy to find that, as mentioned last issue, it can't be used with the X-2 only SL-8600 due to the location of the solenoid pause control right next to the record lever. It can also be used with the industrial SLO-260 deck. [We saw Chuck Azar do it on the "Instant Replay" tape reviewed elsewhere in this issue.--Ed] None of the other industrial decks (SLO-320, SLP-100, etc.) can be used with the changer, however, because of their solenoid-assisted transports.

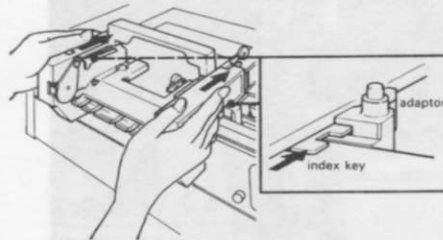
think from examining the illustrations from past brochures. Two gleaming lucite "ear-like" panels are affixed to either side of the device; they're not visible in most earlier brochures we have on file, as shown here.

INSTALLATION: Even though we had our doubts, it could hardly have been simpler. We attached the plastic adaptors on the deck in all of one minute, using the handy Phillips-head screwdriver supplied. The changer slides on with the cassette eject detector levers resting lightly on top of the cassette compartment, right into the adaptors which lock it into place.

AG-120 Automatic cassette changer.
Holds an extra Betamax cassette and automatically switches from one cassette to another—so you can record up to four continuous hours.



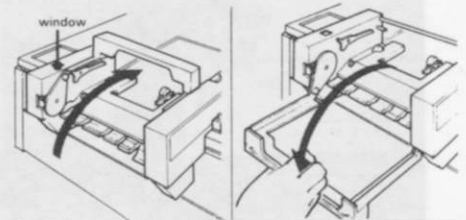
A row of transport control levers line up on the front of the AG-120; they're used to control the Betamax rather than the deck's own keys, which are covered up by the changer. A hinged handle is used to set up the internal spring mechanism from which the operating power is derived via a flywheel mounted in the left side of the device. Two black plastic adaptors (supplied) are used to hold the changer onto the deck.



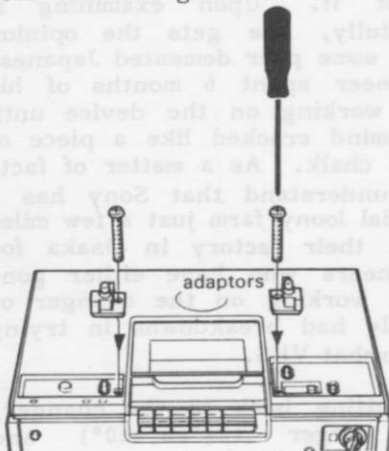
That's really all there is to it. The extremely well-detailed instructions show exactly how to attach the changer to the deck, making it clear for all but the most low-grade moron. For those people, and for others that might get a defective AG-120, Sony provides a list of Customer Service experts who can answer questions and provide help via phone.

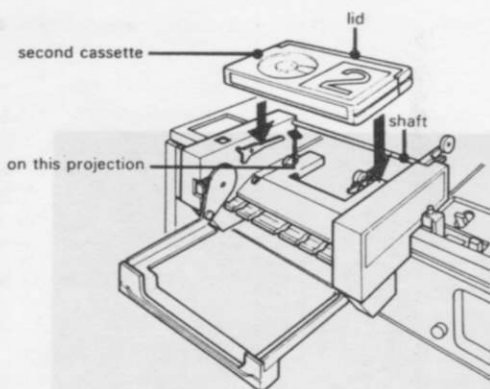
To remove the changer, you simply depress the two adaptors' spring-clip buttons and pull it straight forward. We judged this operation to be somewhat more difficult than putting it on, but still, it didn't take more than 30 seconds to do so in even the worst case. We noted that the changer should be removed or

OPERATION: Again, much simpler than we feared. As shown in this series of illustrations, you

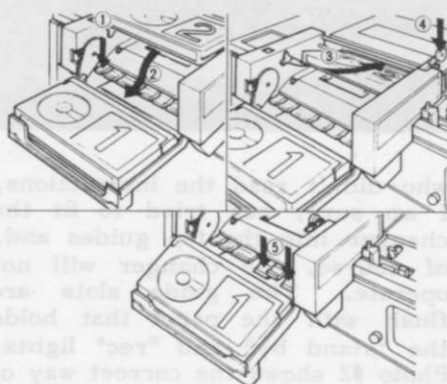


begin by dropping a cassette through the front of the changer and into the deck's cassette compartment--probably the most difficult part of the operation--and closing it. Next, you place the deck into the record mode; it doesn't matter whether the power is on as the changer works by its own inertia, not by batteries or AC. Then the handle is pulled forward until it locks in place, down and in front of the machine. The second cassette is dropped in place on top of the changer, on the white plastic sliders that hold it in place.





When the first cassette ends, or when the deck otherwise stops and the record key pops up, the changer literally springs into



action. (1) It quickly presses down the eject button; the moment the compartment pops up, the cassette flies out onto the backside of the handle via a geared rubber roller mechanism (2), immediately causing the second cassette to drop down (3) and slide into the compartment, which the changer's detector lever slams shut (4). A second or two later, the record and play buttons are automatically depressed (5), and the new tape has started. Total elapsed time: not more than 12 seconds. Since it takes us at least 10 seconds to perform the same operation by hand, we decided that this was admirable performance, especially coming from a \$50 Rube Goldberg-esque machine.

What didn't we like about it? Well, first I was disappointed that the changer can only be used for recording and not playback as well. I envisioned non-stop viewing of my favorite multi-cassette features, but apparently this isn't possible with the AG-120 at this time; if it can be modified to

provide record or playback cassette changing, we'll have all the details in a later issue.

We'll be suggesting to Sony that they consider someday coming out with an improved AG-120 that will add a switch for using the changer for record or playback, and possibly also a super-deluxe unit, like their unreleased experimental 6-cassette AG-1000, that will allow us to stack several cassettes for super-extended recording.

As far as the changer's failure rate goes, it fouled up 7 or 8 times out of the 50 we tried it--far from a perfect ratio. There seemed to be 4 basic types of failures: 1) the first cassette doesn't come completely out of the cassette compartment (the most common failure) or 2) it doesn't come out at all; 3) the second cassette doesn't slide into the compartment properly; and 4) the record/play controls aren't fully depressed for proper operation. I also experienced a fifth problem in which the handle refused to allow me to cock it back into place for another cycle; the first time this occurred, I tinkered around with it and eventually convinced it to let me force it back into place, with no apparent problem. The second time it happened a half hour later, I again tried to force the handle back, which resulted in one of the eject detector levers breaking off--how, I'll never know. After explaining what happened to the local service center, they cheerfully agreed to send me another changer at no charge, and picked up the old one to take it for evaluation by a team of engineers to find out why it broke down. (Special thanks to Sony's Linda Van Nordeen for helping us out so thoroughly!)

Sony suggests in a "Prior to Use" card that the user try it out a time or two to be certain it's working properly; also, a checklist of potential problems is given in the event of a mishap. We noted that the changer makes no small amount of noise during its cycling; it also bumps and grinds up and down on the top of the deck, but they assure us that both the noise and movement are all normal parts of its operation.

Before Joe Mazzini follows up with a report of his own, let me

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conclude by saying that I, for one, was very impressed with the AG-120 despite my problem with it, which I'm very sure was probably a fluke. It's easily one of the greatest home video accessories that's come out so far, and we look forward to seeing continued efforts by Sony along the lines of new changer products in the future. We wonder if perhaps making the changer an integral part of a deck rather than an add-on unit might make it easier to use, as well as being more dependable. Surely it would add little to the cost of a deck, yet would be a highly desirable feature for most home video consumers.

As a last note, several of the VHS folks to whom I demonstrated the changer expressed a keen interest in it and were disappointed to learn that they'd be unable to attach it to their Selectavisions. Our only response was simply, "eat your hearts out," while we chuckled evilly. (At least until RCA, Panasonic and friends come out with a similar device for their home VCR's.)

--MFW



Because the Betamax changer has been so long awaited by so many, we have assigned the task of reviewing it to two of our contributing editors. We realize that this may be boring as hell to some of you, but on the other hand we prefer to be able to say that we have given in-depth treatment (an overdose, if you will) to products which we consider to be of particular interest. Having said that, we present another point of view on the AG-120 Betamax Changer commencing on the page following.

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AG-120 BETAMAX CHANGER

Sony, as promised, came through with their Changer. However, there's some good news and some bad news about the AG-120. Let's start with the good news: IT WORKS. The bad news is that it doesn't work all the time.

I first heard about the changer from my good Beta friend Jim Laycook of LAYCOOK PRODUCTS COMPANY in Memphis, Tennessee. Jim is an authority on friction and wear and was most helpful in getting this product review together. Jim told me that he had called Sony in New York and they shipped him a changer in a matter of days. He told me that it changed tapes in less than 13 seconds and only had one major problem: the machine must be kept level while operating the changer.

I dropped a line to Joan Bardong, of Sony's New York office, and in a flash she sent me the necessary form to fill out. I did so and received the changer within a couple of weeks. Now, don't depend upon that type of service. I imagine that once the word gets out she will be swamped. I have no way of confirming it, but I believe I was #23 on her list. Jim Laycook's invoice says #8. These numbers, of course, could be an internal coding system.

The serial number on the outside of my AG-120 says 22915, but inside it says 1076 so I suspect that this was the 76th one manufactured.

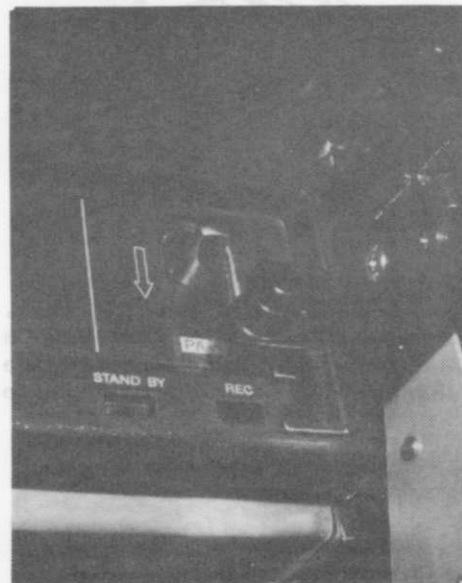
Installation was a snap, but reading the instructions (which appeared to be translated literally

from Japanese) made the going a bit tough. You'll notice several pictures with this article, and I think that using them in combination with the instruction sheet will make life a little easier for you when installing the unit.

The two screws on the left and right of the loading chamber are removed and replaced with two guides (see Photo #1). This takes just a couple of minutes to accomplish and is made easy with the enclosure of a Phillips-type screwdriver with the changer.

A card in French & English (dated 1977) makes installation relatively easy if you go by the illustrations. A full set of stickers are provided to prevent any cosmetic damage caused by the changer rubbing against the metal framework of the Betamax.

The most important thing is to be sure to slide the index keys into place correctly. You will notice in Photo #1 that a groove is provided under the push-release buttons. Many a person



who didn't read the instructions, I am sure, has tried to fit the changer into the top guides and, of course, the changer will not operate. The guide slots are flush with the panel that holds the "stand by" and "rec" lights. Photo #2 shows the correct way of mounting the changer.

The engineering that went into the changer surpasses the mechanical design of the recorder itself. Photo #3 (at the top of the following page) shows the changer with its sides removed. This photo was taken of the underside to show you how the secondary system pushes the correct buttons on the primary system.



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Notice in the center of Photo #4 a button. In real life, this button is colored red. It unscrews up anything that you might have screwed up when getting the changer to operate. I didn't have reason to use it, but I can imagine it comes in handy when something in the cycling process gets out of its usual order.

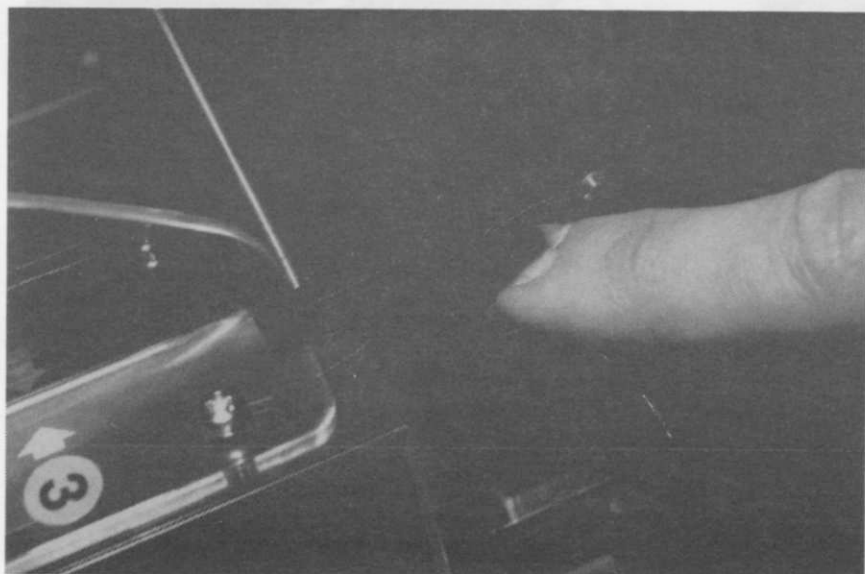
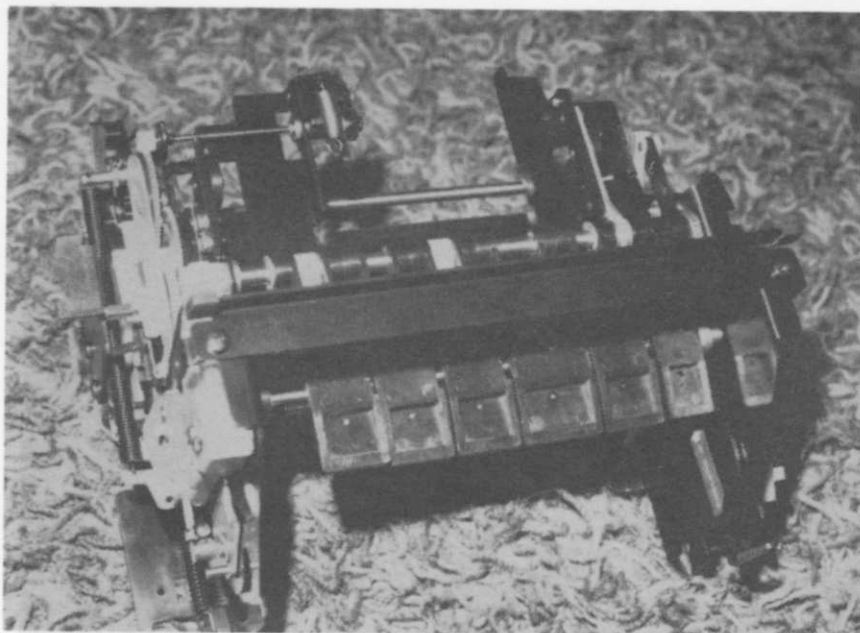
Photo #5 shows you another guide on the changer that is essential in the change operations. The wheel pointed out by Fred's finger is to ride on top of the lid compartment. There are probably some out there who would insist on inserting this wheel assembly into the cassette compartment. I can only imagine the results...

My first test with the changer was not that successful because I ignored (in my hurried enthusiasm) Jim's recommendations of making sure the machine was perfectly level. The first tape had trouble ejecting, but once the machine was planted firmly on a flat piece of wood, everything was fine.

I timed the changer doing its function in 9 seconds. Later on, I found it took 12 seconds. After talking more with Jim, I learned that it varied a little and that he had been deliberately conservative in his figures. The average, I learned, was closer to 11 seconds. Risty (an X-1 only collector) says that it takes at least 10 seconds to change the tapes by hand so we have to be impressed with the changer's quick speed.

Through an elaborate clock-like mechanism (Photo #6 at the top of the next page), the changer waits for the machine to thread and then activates the record and play buttons. Photo #7 (on the following page) shows the right hand side of the changer with its brilliant spring-usage to get things to operate.

Now, I don't recommend that you take your changer apart. In



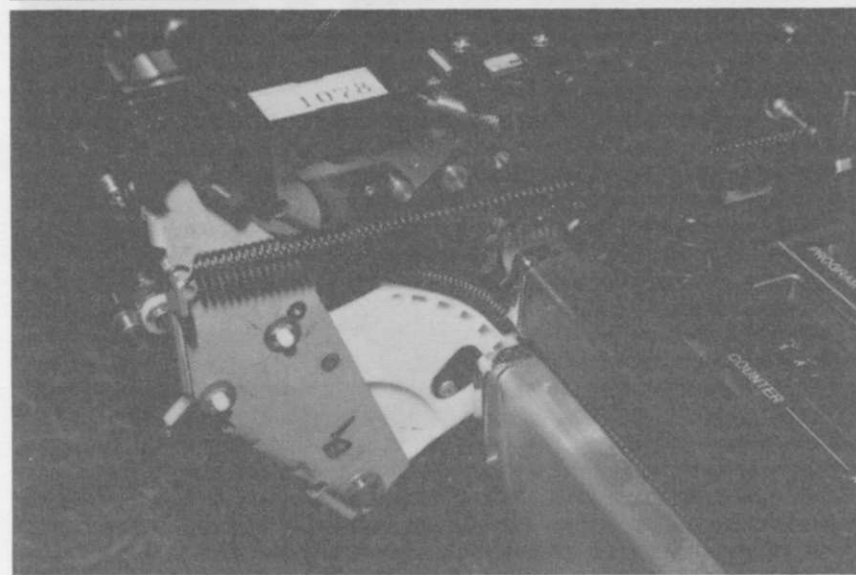
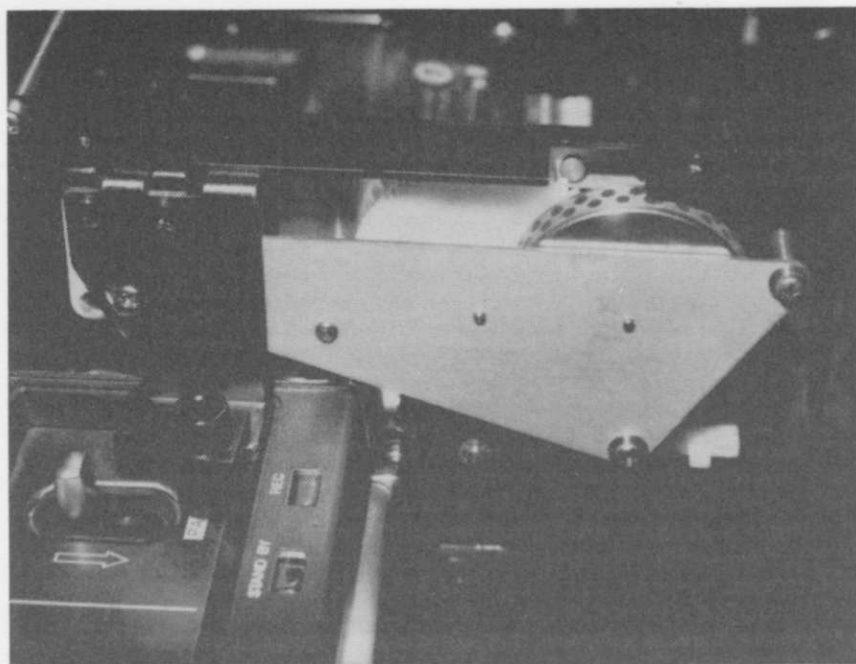
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fact, I reassembled it entirely after taking the photos and I have left it that way. However, it is a delight to watch when things have been done to the procedure that shouldn't be done. For one, if the record tab has been punched out on the tape to be recorded, the changer gets "confused" and goes through a "dry-run" and then gives up.

Fred Wesner, a computer engineer for VARIAN CORPORATION, tried to get the changer to operate correctly 10 times in a row. This, of course, was the early criteria for judging success and was the reason, I suspect, that the changer was not released as intended in 1977. The first time Fred tried 10 changes in a row, he was able to obtain six without a problem. The second time he got nine, but he was never able to get 10. The difficulty lies in getting the first cassette to eject properly. A rubber spacer is provided that goes under the lid of the 7200 and is supposed to help things out. Its function is debated, however, since both Fred and Marc were able to get their 8200's to work fine without it.

It is not practical to leave the changer on the machine at all times. Looking at Photo #8, you can see that it is a bit bulky in appearance. In fact, it's damned near impossible to use the 7200 on a shelf where vertical clearance is limited, as it is in my installation.

If you use the 7200 with just one cassette, the obstructions the changer provides make it difficult to insert and eject the single cassette. Since the changer is easily removed from its two guides, I recommend this procedure. Besides, we found that if the changer were removed and then re-installed, it functioned perfectly every time we tried it. Since I don't think there are many of you out there who plan to use the changer 10 times in a row, this can solve that little problem we spoke of earlier. I think the changer, through its



normal bouncing around--and it does bounce a little--finds it easier to function when detached and reattached every so often.

A flywheel is easily viewable on the left hand side of the changer. In fact, you'll notice in Photo #6 its position. There are dots painted on it and when the wheel is moving you are not to do anything with the changer's operations. Of course, we wanted to know why, so we did things while the wheel was turning. **THIS IS NOT A RECOMMENDED PROCEDURE.** If you mess around when the changer has just finished its function, you'll hear the most God-awful sound of grinding of plastic and brass gears imaginable! If you'll wait a few seconds, you can work the handle with no problems. The key is to listen to the sounds being made by the changer. When those popping-of-springs and clicking sounds stop, you can proceed. But to make things safe for the guts of the AG-120, Sony gives the mechanism another 15 seconds or so before stopping the flywheel and recommending further functions.

The true test, for me, was to leave my Chronotrol timer set with the changer loaded. I did so and checked it a few hours later. The changer did its job perfectly in three separate tests. I attribute successful operation to the removal and reinstallation of the changer between tests. Had the changer been left on the machine, I wonder if it would change the tapes all the time.

Using it on my Sony SL-8200, I found it worked equally well. In fact, it gave me six hours of recording time (on two L-750 cassettes), which is really far beyond any length anyone in their right mind would need.

Sony is apparently going to bill us \$50 for the changer. They are supposed to do this after three months of use, but I noticed a six-month due date on the invoice. Jim Laycook sent in his \$50 immediately. I'm going to wait until billed, but I am definitely going to keep my AG-120.

Whether or not you have a need for it is up to you. I like the idea of being able to record three hours in X-1 without attending to the machine. If you're

around, you can reactivate the changer and put in other tapes as they are needed.

All of us found the plastic sides to be a hassle, but learned they are absolutely necessary for safety reasons. They help guide the cassette into the machine and prevent the machine from causing harm to the operator's hands.

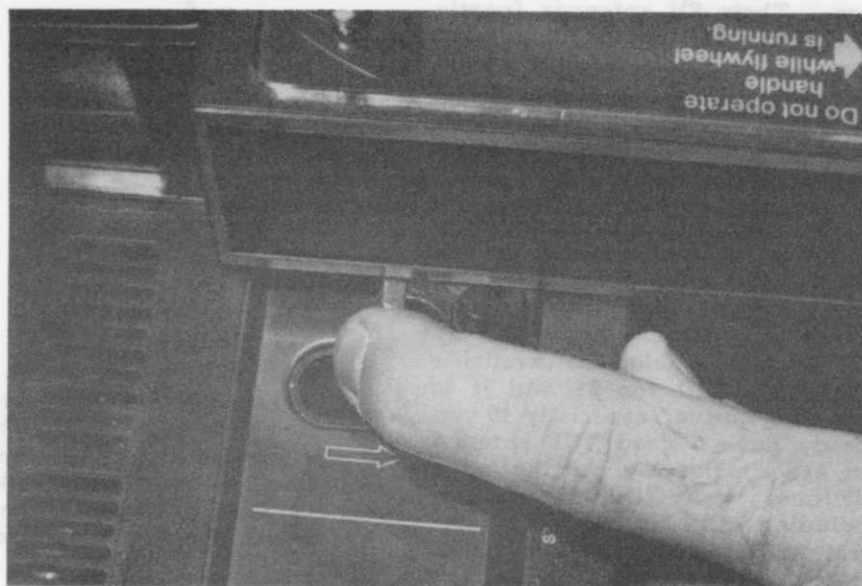
So, in conclusion:

PRO--

1. The changer works.
2. It is easy to attach and remove.
3. It's cheap (but for how long, we'll see).
4. It's brilliantly engineered.
5. Sony encloses everything from a screwdriver to protective stickers.
6. A "reset" button is provided if you screw up the cycle.

CON--

1. The guides interfere with using the pause control easily (as you can see in Photo #9), but why in hell would you be pausing with the changer operating, you say? Well, the guides are supposed to be left attached, so if they really bother you, remove the left one when the need arises.



2. It doesn't work 10 times in a row, but then, again, do you?
3. The mechanism can jam, but only if you cause it to by not waiting for the flywheel to stop.
4. It works in the record mode only, so abandon those plans you might have to use it as a video "juke box" for long evenings of uninterrupted entertainment.

The Videophile PRODUCT REPORT

I was going to enclose a copy of the form Sony provides, but I like Joan Bardong, and such an act would surely deluge her with requests. I recommend that you write

Joan Bardong, Manager
Product Information
Sony Consumer Products Co.
9 West 57th Street
New York NY 10019

You may apply for a changer only if you have a 7200. You must provide the model number (in case you own a 1901 console Betamax-TV combination) and the serial number.

Sony has five national service centers for the changer. All but one are managed by women. All are very helpful. Sony will even make arrangements to pick up the changer and return it should you decide not to keep it.

Only Sony would go to this amount of trouble for their customers and, believe me, it is appreciated by us consumers!

--JM



WINEGARD ANTENNAS

Readers of my column know how pro-WINEGARD antenna products I am. A couple of new models have just been released that you should be aware of.

My previous experience with WINEGARD products has proven to me that they are the best priced, most durable and highest picture-receiving quality of anything available on the market.

Harold D. Sorenson
Marketing Service Manager
WINEGARD
3000 Kirkwood Street
Burlington IA 52601

was nice enough to provide me with a wealth of technical information concerning their antennas.

If you have space on your roof and the neighbors don't object, I highly recommend the CH-8100 for super-fringe reception. This beauty is 142" long and 110" wide! But, boy, will it bring in those distant stations. I used one for several years when I lived in Northern California and combined it with their AC-9130 booster to receive TV stations up to 140 miles away with watchable color. Their FM antennas (particularly the CH-6065) have been given rave reviews by such people as AUDIO magazine, and I had great success in bringing in stereo FM signals from 110 miles away.

Ironically, the apartment house I live in in Los Angeles has a WINEGARD master antenna system and it's really high quality even though 66 units are being fed by it. A full catalog is available from WINEGARD for \$1 and it is very informative, especially if you already have a good VHF antenna and are considering putting up a UHF one. Many UHF TV stations (including PBS Network) recommend WINEGARD's CH-9095, a 42 element UHF antenna. When the 9095 is combined with an AC-9990 preamplifier (booster) you can easily receive stations that were before unwatchable.

Now, don't get me wrong. I belong to the school that says, "If there's not a signal there to begin with, you won't get a good picture with a super antenna system." However, if there is

something there, you can be assured that the Winegard antennas will use the full potential of that signal for you.

It was this approach I took with me when I evaluated their new line of 20/20 antennas. Marc Wielage and Steve Fineberg saw these antennas at the CES in Las Vegas and came back with glowing reports about them.

I plunked down my hard-earned money and bought the cheapest one (the AT-5000). It lists for \$42.95, but can be obtained for less. Within moments, I had installed in my apartment a most unusual-looking creature. As you can see from the photo below, the design is unlike anything attempted before.



Recommended for: Indoor apartments or home use up to 25 miles from stations.

Carton includes: • Antenna • Floor-to-ceiling pole assembly extends 7½' to 9' • 25' cable with connectors • UHF-VHF Band Separator.

The complete instructions made installation a snap. The bottom of the monopole goes on the floor and the top is spring-loaded to make a firm fit against the ceiling, much like the standard pole lamp.

The antenna came with a 25' cable with connectors and a UHF-VHF band separator. It worked very well and was equal to my master antenna system on the middle channels (5-7-9 here in LA).

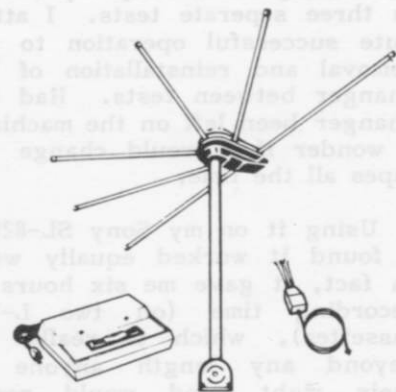
It was disappointing on the very low channels (2 & 4) and

The Videophile PRODUCT REPORT

pretty weak on the UHF ones, but then again I live in a concrete box (wood allows TV signals to pass, concrete does not), surrounded by concrete boxes near the center of Los Angeles where, ironically, reception isn't too hot to begin with.

For an apartment dweller almost anywhere within 25 miles of a TV transmitter, the AT-5000 is ideal because it can be rotated manually to achieve good results and requires absolutely no outside connection. It far surpasses anything else available in indoor installations, such as rabbit ears and the like. It was better than my master antenna system for FM reception, but I suspect that the FM trap was in to prevent FM interference on Channel 6 and 13.

Knowing that I had the cheapest one available, I acquired the most expensive to test: the AT-4000. This little jewel retails



Recommended for: Locations with weak signals on one or more channels and ghosting problems, or stations in different directions.

Carton includes: • Antenna with built-in signal amplifier and rotor • Rotor control box • 3' Mast with clamp • 3' cable with UHF-VHF Band Separator • Mounting hardware for indoors or out.

for around \$110, and, boy, is it worth it! The basic AT-5000 is outfitted with a rotator and a signal amplifier. By putting

together parts from both the AT-5000 and AT-4000 I was able to have an indoor antenna with rotator and booster. The AT-4000 is designed for attic or roof-top installation and, should you decide to use it in your home, you can easily modify it without buying the less expensive antenna too. All you need is a lamp pole and a knife to cut a hole in the top of the AT-4000's housing. However, attic installation would be ideal for signal quality.

The AT-4000 (standing in my apartment) received VHS channels equal or better than the master antenna system. It is particularly good for the usual 5-7-9 channels, but gave me excellent 11 & 13 and very, very watchable UHF, which I can barely receive with the TV's built-in hoop antenna.

Part of the success of the AT-4000's receiving ability is the built-in booster. It has a gain of 15-16dB on the VHF channels and 9dB on the UHF frequencies. WINEGARD told me that the preamp (booster) used the same circuitry that was used in the Gold Star line for the past four years.

Now, don't expect the AT-4000 to be as good as the cheaper AT-5000 for FM reception. The preamp has built into it a fixed FM trap that eliminates any local FM interference. WINEGARD, however, plans to release an FM model in the future that will be strictly for FM reception and it will be boosted with a preamp.

So, if you're an apartment dweller or a renter who moves quite frequently, I highly recommend the AT-4000. It saves all the hassles of installation problems and wear from the elements of weather with a normal installation. The front-to-back ratio is a respectable 16-18dB on the UHF and 10dB on the VHF, which helps to eliminate ghosting. The rotor takes only 33 seconds to make a 360° rotation and has a minimum life of 5000 complete turns.

Five different models are available. The basic AT-1000 is designed for attic or roof systems and retails for around \$30. The AT-2000, like the AT-1000, does not have a signal amplifier, but

does have a rotator and runs less than \$80. The AT-3000 is identical to the AT-1000 and AT-2000 in design and has an amplifier but no rotator and goes for less than \$80 also. The AT-5000 is for indoor use and includes the necessary wiring and pole lamp assembly but no booster or rotor and is, as mentioned, under \$42. The top-of-the-line AT-4000, my favorite, has everything for less than \$115.

The only thing that bothered me about the AT-4000 was that it did not include any connecting wire other than the splitter cable for VHF and UHF. This was kind of disappointing because it meant that I had to find some 300 ohm lead for the rotator and use the 75 ohm lead from my old antenna for the signal, so be aware of this and buy the WINEGARD CS-2020 kit for less than \$14 when you buy the antenna. The CX-2020 contains a 50' 75 ohm cable and 50' of 300 ohm twinlead for the rotator. You get connecting wire only with the AT-5000.

WINEGARD has also come out with two relatively inexpensive ghost-killer TV antennas. As you know, Matsushita announced a super-ghost-killer system and it was reported on in the last VIDEOPHILE. But, who can afford several hundred dollars for one?

The WINEGARD CH-7210 (for VHF and UHF) and the CH-4210 (VHF only) have a special phasing coupler that helps to eliminate ghosts. The key lies in their extremely high front-to-back ratio and super directivity. So, if all of your stations lie in the same transmitting path and are ghosted and you live in a relatively strong signal area, all you have to do is put up a CH-7210 which runs, at the most, \$48. The VHF CH-4210 is only \$32.

On a rotator you can really clean up those variously-located stations. A friend out near the beach purchased a CH-7210 on my recommendation and has had great results with it on his PANASONIC projection TV system where ghosts are particularly apparent and annoying because of the large screen size.

--JM



BEFORE YOU BUY VIDEO TAPE MOVIES, READ THIS!

Now you can enjoy all the movies available on video tape plus any future releases for a fraction of the purchase price.

Choose any movie from our list of over 100 titles. Keep it as long as you wish. When you're ready for another selection just mail the tape back and indicate your next choice. *There's no limit to the number of selections you can make. And we keep you updated on new selections with monthly catalog mailings.*

Here are just a few of the selections available in Beta II or VHS cassettes:

Patton	Castle of Fu Man Chu
W.C. Fields	The Day The Earth
(Selections)	Stood Still
Hello Dolly	The Hustler
Flash Gordon	Day of the Triffids
MASH	The Boston Strangler
The Seven Year Itch	The French
The Beatles	Connection
Dr. Doolittle	The Grapes of Wrath
Groove Tube	von Ryan's Express
The Bible	Vanishing Point
Rolling Stones in	Elvis (7 films)
Concert	Love All Summer

Lifetime membership in the American Video Tape Library is just \$59.95 plus a \$5 monthly service charge. That's less than the cost to buy two movies a year.



For additional selections and information Call Collect: 303-798-3389

Or if you prefer, mail this coupon today and indicate your first selection. Please allow three weeks for first delivery.

Please print clearly your first movie choice. _____

Please specify: Beta II... VHS... _____

The brand of your recorder: _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Enclosed check for membership (\$59.95) Payable to American Video Tape Library. Or bill credit card:

Master Charge _____ Visa _____

Card # _____

Expiration Date _____

Sign here _____

AVTL

AMERICAN VIDEO TAPE LIBRARY
6650 S. Broadway Denver, CO 80121

Letters:

Dear Jim:

Intrigued by the cover (on the Video Disc), I bought the Spring issue of VIDEO magazine, and found: one photograph of the machine, a (partial) price list, and an article assembled from press releases with little more information than was in a two-year-old issue of POPULAR SCIENCE. (I also noted that VIDEO's advertising policy prohibits advertisers from offering material at discount!) // A week later, the VIDEOPHILE #18 arrived: dozens of photos and diagrams, on the consumer model, the original design, the industrial model; an extensive report on tests made of industrial and consumer models, reviews of disc-movies, and an interview with the president in charge of development! Not only that but reports on the latest in Dreamland Electronics and more. -- Steven Pond, Glastonbury, CT

We noticed that too, Steven. We would have enjoyed your letter more, though, if you had sent it to them instead. They could run it on their letters page.

Gentlemen:

I assumed when I ordered a sample that I was ordering a magazine on Video, without biases as to format, race, color or creed. Instead, what do I stumble upon ... a mag put together by a bunch of people who bought "The Other System" (Beta) and refuse to face the fact that it's slowly but steadily falling by the wayside. And I know of what I speak! I TOO WAS A BETAMAX OWNER! But I realized my mistake early enough to dump it and get a VHS. ... I say that VHS LP and beta-2 are comparable, not only by looking at the pictures, but looking at the transport speed. LP runs at 0.66 IPS, beta-2 runs at 0.79 IPS. BIG DIFFERENCE! [I grant you that this is a difference of only about 20%.--Ed]. At least we VHS people have the high speed option open to us. Beta people on the whole do not anymore. ... Being the first system doesn't make beta the best system. There are ads in your classified section from people who are "getting out of beta." There are none for VHS. It's a free country. And we have the right to tape whatever way we choose on whatever format we like. But if you must cut down the format you're not using, make sure you have some facts to back it up. -- Don Brody, Music Director, WTRC, Elkhart, IN

With the coming of the new generation of Beta format machines announced elsewhere in this issue, it looks like we are in for another round of "who has the momentum now". My own view is that we had all better look out for the new $\frac{1}{4}$ " formats. Most consumers are not "videophiles" and can, therefore, be contented with equipment of lesser quality. Incidentally, Don, honest differences of opinion do not constitute bias.

Dear Jim:

One day, while sick at home, I was dialing around the TV channel selector, and stumbled upon the HBO channel. It was 12 noon and they normally have color bars and a 1000 cycle tone on, but this time it was something new. As I watched in amazement, I was pleasantly surprised as it turned out to be a closed circuit program for the cable operators and management called "Satellite Magazine". I instantly became a bi-weekly fan (as they repeat every other week) and subsequently subscribed to their print magazine "CATJ" magazine. -- Paul J. Allen, Greensboro, NC



I, too, have noticed that the HBO channel is sometimes active during noon hour. That's how I knew back in September that "The Goodbye Girl" and "Saturday Night Fever" would be showing up on HBO this season. They were running a special preview for the cable operators. I've also caught episodes of "Family Feud" and a show called "Circus" coming from who knows where (without commercials), just by setting the timer for the noon hour and catching as catch can. // Those of you who missed our last issue may want to get a copy for all the info re: Mr. Bob Cooper and his Satellite Magazine.

Hello!

Where is my March/April issue of the VIDEOPHILE? I'm always being disappointed every day when I look in my mailbox. -- Lewis Brooks, Tucson, AZ
P.S. On the opposite side is my trade list. I'd get a big kick if you'd print it, but you wouldn't do that would you? [Are you known as the local clairvoyant?]

Many of you continue to scream about how late your issue reaches you. We are usually a few days late mailing them out, but after that it's all up to the postal service. Reports to us indicate that those of you who pay extra for 1st Class may receive your copies as much as two weeks earlier, especially on the West coast.

Dear Sir:

I greatly enjoy your magazine in spite of occasional lapses into sophomoric humor and the great differences in tastes between your readers, your contributors and myself. It would be of more service if some of the incomprehensible technical jargon was explained to the uninitiated. The terms used are frequently unknown to us neophytes. What, for instance are VIR, NTSC, PAL, SECAM, muting, ff idler belt, etc. I don't even know what RF is. -- J.J. Fabara, M.D., Alexandria, VA

Several of these terms are discussed in this issue. Others have appeared in our glossaries and elsewhere in other back issues (available for a measly \$2 each). We do expect to have a more complete one eventually.

Dear Jim:

When is the Consumer Electronics Show in Chicago? I heard you have to be registered to go to it. If so how do I get registered, how much for an entrance fee. I want to go, but don't know how to go about it. -- John C. Harrington, Waterloo, IA

The following info is courtesy of Marc Wielage. The Consumer Electronics Show will be held in Chicago from Sunday, June 3 through Wednesday June 6. It is free, but registration is limited to members of "the trade" only, and no minors are admitted. For information, write: C.E.S., 2 Illinois Center, Suite 1607, 233 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60601. Although you are supposed to be in the electronics business to attend, it may be possible to have a friendly dealer smuggle you in. The point is, that the convention is intended as a showcase for dealers and their representatives.

Dear Jim:

I'm new to this. Will those looking for movies accept those taped off TV with commercials "phased" out? Also do I send a TV GUIDE to someone or just check ads against the Guide and tape it for someone looking for that show? Sorry for my dumb question, but I don't know how to proceed. -- O.H., Roseville, CA

Establish contact first. Then exchange TV Guides and want lists. I'd recommend looking over the mini-ads in this and past issues with an eye for those which indicate that they were placed by someone who shares your general interests, then write or call 'em. Everyone "prefers" movies without commercials, but if you want something bad enough ... oh, say, like "Devil Girl From Mars", you'd take it anyway you could get it. As for network shows, some folks like myself prefer to leave the commercials in, figuring that they have historical value. As to exchanging, everyone is expected to pay his own postage, package tapes securely, stay within the law, and generally not take advantage of each other. I feel it is best to establish a few (4 or 5) contacts that you feel comfortable with, and stick with them.

Dear Jim:

I remember way back when TVN was "small" and I believe that I read that the purpose of TVN "was to bring together videophiles from all over the globe." I felt then, as I do now and will continue to do so, that this was absolutely fantastic. I would pace up and down waiting for the mailman to bring the next issue. As soon as it arrived I would devour it from cover to cover, especially the classified ad section. There seemed to be so many of them "way back then". To get to the point, I think your ad rates are a little bit out of sight for the individual. Remember when a full page ad cost only \$5.00? Now it's \$100. Obviously, your commercial advertisers can afford \$100, but what about people that made TV so successful? ... I realize that the cost of everything is escalating. Isn't it possible to "cut corners" in other areas? For instance, your covers are really beautiful. Nice colors and a lot of work. I would settle for one color covers like the old TVN had and pass the saving on along to the consumer. In other words Jim, let's get back to the original goal of TVN and use the magazine "to communicate with one another." -- Paul Hill, Londonderry, NH

Paul, I love you, but we just can't have the best of all worlds. The last issue that had the \$5 page rate had a circulation of 190 (2.6 cents per subscriber). This issue has an initial mailing to subscribers of at least 3700. At \$100 that comes to 2.7 cents per. Our memory sometimes plays tricks on us. There are far more mini-ads now than there were in the past. Each issue costs us thousands to print and mail, and the income tax return I have just filed indicates that we lost money in 1978. If we are "successful" it has not been in monetary terms, but rather in the very thing that you seem to feel that we have lost sight of ... bringing people together. As for the color covers, etc.: Hey, there has to be some reward in terms of personal satisfaction with the product that we labor over during every spare moment. Indeed, if your steadfast editor can ever get to where he can do this full time and hire more (some) staff, he intends to make the appearance of the magazine (graphics, typestyle, and all the rest) far more attractive than it is now. Just as children grow and mature, so must this magazine. While we are as nostalgic as the next person, and feel that the VIDEOPHILE will probably always suffer from arrested adolescence as does its publisher, we cannot remain true to our future without allowing our natural growth to take the shape that it requires. Incidentally, classified ads for a buck is as cheap as it ever was.

Dear Jim:

Thanks for the super fast service in sending the VHS tape of The Cheerleaders. I believe that I had it in a week after sending you my check. Now, if only some of your advertisers were as quick! My faith in THE VIDEOPHILE is confirmed: the quality of this tape was the best I've seen, from the film master to the dub (the soundtrack was a little noisy in spots, however). Just one problem: my tape came with the "record tab" still in place. Please ... until VCRs are made idiot-proof, some of us are going to hit the audio dub key, instead of pause, and record over the existing sound track. There is no reason that the manufacturer can't remove the tab. // Anyway, I'm looking forward to see what your next offering will be, in spite of the fact that I personally feel that your reviewer somewhat over rated the story interest of The Cheerleaders. Re video-guarding: it appears to have been so protected, but played perfectly on my Sylvania TV (in which an integrated circuit automatically adjusts the vertical sync; there is no user adjustable vertical control). Another guarded tape gave me problems (occasional vertical roll) but by switching off the AFC (automatic frequency control) and manually tuning in the best picture, a cure was effected. Since all (?) TVs have some means of defeating the AFC perhaps this information will be of use to other readers. (Note that one turns off the AFC on the TV, not the VCR.) I was in a local store buying more blank tapes and a video salesman offered me \$5 for the copy of the VIDEOPHILE I had with me. -- Stan Sieger, NJ

Send me his name, Stan. I have a little piece of property in the Everglades that I'd like to unload. We don't punch out the "record tab", because we don't even remove the cellophane wrappers from the tapes when they come to us from Channel X.

Dear Jim,

I got a good laugh from this cartoon and thought maybe you would like to run it in the VIDEOPHILE. This is from the Western Ontario edition of TV GUIDE in Canada. -- Mike Hogan, Grosse Point Farms, MI

Thanks, Mike. One look at my own shelf indicates that I am, regrettably, not as particular as that lady.

"Our tape library of the best TV programs. Of course, we started only a year ago."



Dear Sir,

Do you know of a magazine in Europe that concerns videorecorders? Is your magazine distributed to certain people in Europe? There seems to be a matter of opinion on whether a tape recorded in Europe will play here. -- R.V., Philadelphia, PA

I know of no such magazine at the present time. We have about 25 subscribers in Europe, and others elsewhere around the world. We would like to start an international column of some sort in the future. Re: the compatibility of various standards, turn to Joe Mazzini's column in this very issue.

Dear Jim:

Please forward names of those who voted against the cartoons in your survey. -- A.H., St. Petersburg, FL

I see that it's Q. & A. time again, but this time with a difference. At the prodding of Marc Wielage, we're going to try to consolidate all the technical questions in our new "Ask the VIDEOPHILE" column. So, we'll handle only those questions here that don't fit in that group or in the column of social significance compiled by Leo J. Weams (Where is Leo, anyway, this'll teach us to get him a season pass to the roller derby.)

Q & A



Q: This is a question you may not choose to answer.

You see, I'm looking for a copy of "Superman" and obviously I'm going to have to go underground to get it. I am hoping that you can help direct me to a source. If you think it's all too naughty you don't have to reply, I just began subscribing to your magazine and I'll love you anyway. -- S.S., Golden, CO

Sounds like an offer I can't refuse S.S. Please send me your picture and phone number. As to the man of steel, I'm sorry, there is just no way. You might try contacting your local FBI office, they may have a few confiscated copies on hand.

Q: If Universal wins an injunction against making Betamax and Betamax tapes, will this affect the machines and tapes manufactured by others, or just the Sony product? How is it that the VHS manufacturers have been kept out of all this? Do JVC and RCA have some kind of deal with Universal or will they have to abide by the decision also? -- D.S., Pearland, TX

There was no such thing as VHS when the lawsuit was initiated against Sony way back when. It appears that any ruling forthcoming against Sony, assuming that such a thing were to happen, would be limited to the Sony products. However, such a ruling would become a precedent and the movie studios could very quickly begin legal proceedings against the other manufacturers too.

Q: Is the tape of the QUBE samples still available from one of your friends? -- M.B., Whitestone, NY

You must mean charter videophile Ray Glasser. Write Ray at 27621 Chagrin Blvd., Apt. 215, Cleveland, OH 44122. And while I've got it in mind it's about time for another of his QUBE updates. What say, Raymond?

Q: Is there a catalog available which lists all movies on VHS cassettes, including adult, the sources for obtaining these cassettes, the prices listed by each source, and a brief description of each film listing stars, running time, etc. -- H.P., Bloomington, MN

In a word -- No. Such a catalog would be out of date before it could be printed. Stabs at such a thing have been made (eg. The Video Log, from Esselte Video, and The Complete Home Video Recorder Book, both either advertised or reviewed in Issue #17 of this mag), but neither is as complete as you would desire.

Q: I would appreciate information about buying tapes in Canada. If I buy from the States, are tapes affected by X-Rays coming across the border? Also, if I order X-Rated films, will customs let them through? Do they consider a collection of magnetized particles on a tape as being obscene? -- K.H., Bramalea, Ontario

We've been assured that the X-Rays will not hurt the tapes. As to the ins and outs of Canadian customs I'll have to throw the question open to our readers. Doug?

The Good, the Bad and the Ugly

As promised last issue, we know present the first installment of a column devoted to steering you toward and away from those dealers that deserve mention.

Dear Mr. Lowe:

One of the companies which sent me a catalog was Discotronics, Inc., in Cranbury, N.J. I sent to them for a tape which I received by UPS two days later! I was very pleased at their prompt service and I thought you might like to know about it.

-- C.M., Westfield, NJ

Dear ---

I own a Panasonic NV-8310 and a Panasonic NV-8300 and wondered if anyone ever encountered "bad" cassettes. It's worth noting which manufacturers give guarantees. I had a few problems with Panasonic cassettes and the runaround I got from Panasonic is something I've warned other collectors about. (Xerox copy of letter enclosed outlines problem.) JVC offers a 90 day guarantee, RCA a first time. One of your advertisers, Tape City, personally guarantees tape, I found out after writing. -- T.M., Franklin Park, IL

Dear Jim:

Enclosed is a copy of the Federal Trade Commission rules of mail order merchandise. The fine print boils down to this: the seller must ship merchandise within 30 days of receiving an order (unless his ad or catalog states that a longer period may be expected) or offer the customer a refund (unless the customer agrees to wait for the merchandise) and provide the customer with a postage-paid means of making his (the customer's) wishes known. -- S.S., New Milford, NJ

Many thanks, Stan. The complete rule runs 3 pages of small print. It's Part 435 of Chapter 1 of Title 16 of the United States Code. Those desiring a copy could probably get one by writing the FTC.

Dear Sirs:

I believe I'll compliment one of your advertisers, Video Service Center in Sacramento, California. I selected them "blind" from a VIDEOPHILE ad last Fall, on the basis that they were closest to me here in Wyoming, their prices were quite competitive, and they would accept credit card orders. The several case-lot tape orders I have made with them have been filled promptly. -- D.T., Casper, WY

Dear Jim:

Sony parts (audio and video) may be obtained from: East Coast Transistor Service Inc., 2 Marlborough Rd. West Hempstead, NY 11552 (516) 483-5742, post haste. They are extremely nice people to work with and offer very quick shipments.-- J.S., Daytona Beach, FL

As to complaints in general we have had 2 regarding the service and/or tape quality of Golden Videocassette Library in Bethesda, Maryland; at least 2 regarding Entertainment Unlimited of Bend, Oregon, one relating to the slow service of National Video Marketing of New York City, 2 with regard to unsatisfactory dealings with Cinema Concepts of Chester, CT, and at least 3 with regard to Parker Video of One Penn Plaza in New York City (Don't send them any more \$\$!) We would also avoid "Toll-Free Shopping" of New York City, until further notice. // More next time.

The Videophile PROGRAM REVIEWS

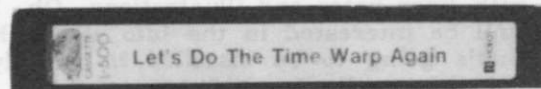


Now that the review and evaluation of video tapes available for the home market is becoming a major feature within these pages, we feel it necessary to preface these reviews with a few remarks and admonitions:

1. Lest there be any doubt, and in case your expectations are unrealistically high, the editor of this magazine would like to say that he has seen few, if any, prerecorded tapes of color feature films that have a picture quality as good as everyday network broadcast television. There are reasons for this that we hope to expound on in a future issue.
2. Most of the tapes reviewed herein were specifically requested from the mentioned dealers. It is unlikely that they would consciously send us a defective copy to be used for this purpose.
3. Any reputable dealer will exchange or otherwise make adjustments for any tape that is defective or fails in some way to be what it is represented to be. Please advise us of any disreputable dealers with whom you may have experience.
4. Unlike audio cassettes, prerecorded video cassettes are currently being sold on standard length tapes. Often this means that there will be a substantial amount of blank tape left at the end, maybe even enough to use for a 1/2 hour recording, thereby perhaps offsetting the otherwise unjustifiable expense of purchase. If a tape contains a film that runs, oh, say 90 minutes, you can be pretty sure of getting usable blank space along with it (at least in VHS or Beta formats).
5. The source from which we obtained each tape is indicated at the end of each review. Their full addresses are set forth at the end of this entire column.

Except for the segregation of Ted Reinhart's western reviews and the "adult" tape reviews, we are now mixing reviews by all our contributors under two general headings--TAPES and DISCS. Reviewers this issue, identified by their initials are: BB-Bob Burns, JL-Jim Lowe, TR-Ted Reinhart, DS-David See, D&MT-Don and Maggie Thompson, MFW-Marc Wielage. Their views are necessarily the views of themselves.

TAPES



INSTANT REPLAY (First Anniversary Issue)

Produced by: Chuck Azar and his gang

Content: "Instant Replay" is the world's finest video cassette magazine. the "magazine" format consists of some 10 or so "columns," and the indication is that these will be regular features in the issues to come.

1. VIDEO NEWS, which includes a demonstration of the Magnavox disc player, the LVR 1/4" format, the Quasar projection TV set and the Quasar KT-502 TeleCine converter.

2. VIDEO ART, which features Ron Hayes' video images set to music.

3. COMMERCIALS, featuring a dozen or more spots which range from the old black and white "original" Marlboro man, through European commercials (I liked the one with the two live models in bras, but you know me), to the classic Japanese Olive Soap spot with all the little bathing boys.

4. SATELLITE NEWS, which gave us a tour of a backyard earth station setup, together with a sampling of available programming. (A chance to hear Howard Cosell off-camera while the network is broadcasting a commercial, but the satellite keeps carrying the location shot at the football game.)

5. SPORTS, which includes highlights of the Super Bowl with musical accompaniment by Willie Nelson singing (what else?) "Mamas Don't Let Your Babies Grow Up to be Cowboys," and even a nice clear shot of the famous punch by Woody Hayes that lost him his job.

6. DID YOU MISS THIS? Odds and ends from broadcast TV, HBO and elsewhere (e.g. Johnny Carson and Dolly Parton talking about her breasts.)

7. TECHNICAL CORNER, featuring a demonstration of the Betamax AG-120 Changer, and the Spiratone wide angle lens attachment for cameras. ETC., ETC.--There are also other segments featuring clips sent in by "correspondents," a spot on Anthony Quinn's upcoming film, and a clip from an exclusive interview with Jack Valenti, President of the Motion Picture Association of America, in which he discusses video piracy. All in all, two full hours of stuff which is directly aimed at home video enthusiasts.

Evaluation: In a word--"Bravo!" Mr. Azar and his crew can be justly proud of what they have accomplished. If you ever thought you'd like to see a 2-hour edition of "60 Minutes" in which every segment had to do with video, this is for you. In truth, I could hardly have been more impressed. Quite frankly, when Mr. Azar called to say he was sending me up a copy, I was hoping that I would be able to give it a good review, but secretly afraid that I wouldn't be. My review of their first issue (see TVN #15), while not negative, was really only lukewarm, yet this project has such potential that I didn't want to see it fail for lack of support. There were a couple of weak spots, sure, but this cassette was packed full of so much good stuff that it was a rare pleasure to sit down with it, and there is little doubt that I will do so again. The "cassette magazine" format is capable of "showing" you what we, for instance, can only tell you about. The video disc and Betamax changer demonstrations were both well handled, and the visit to the backyard earth station is guaranteed to make your collective mouths water. The Video Art segment was

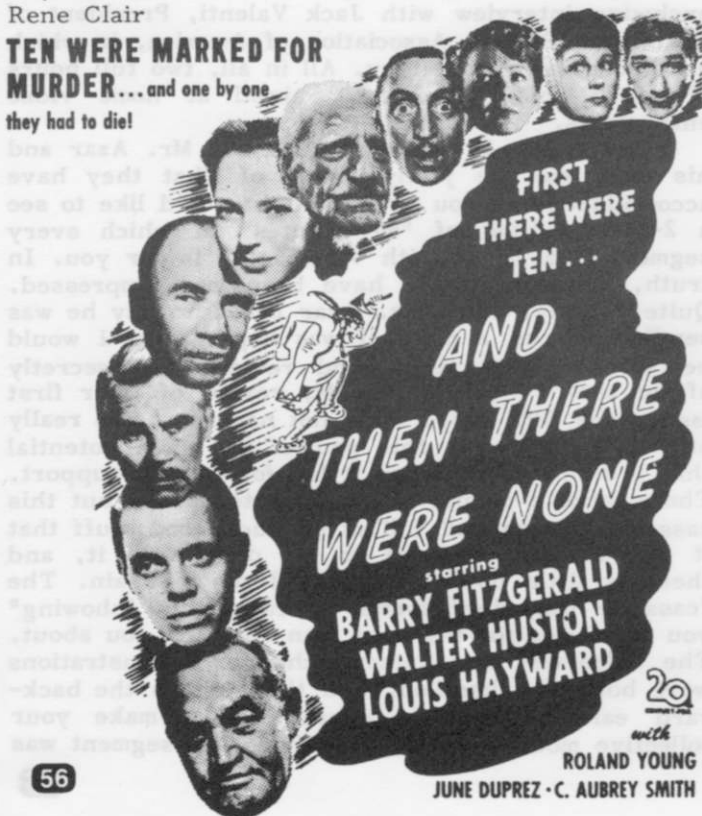
also a high point. Those of you who have heard of the video art/Star Wars concert performance will be in for a real treat. I was very impressed with the thing, and that's saying something, because I watched this segment at a late hour when I was too tired to function otherwise and couldn't face watching anything else in the stack of tapes that were demanding my attention. The Super Bowl footage was notable, too, for its very interesting mix of normal speed and slow motion shots. I don't want to mislead you, so I should add that not every segment will work for every viewer. I thought some of the attempts at humor between segments fell a little flat. Also the liner notes indicate, with regard to one segment (a mixture of Jane Pauley interview and Saturday Night Live footage)--make a funnier tape than this one and we'll be glad to use it." Well, I'm pretty sure that I can rise to that challenge without too much difficulty, so INSTANT REPLAY can start watching their mailbox soon after I get outfitted with a camera and portable recorder. There was one "glitch" or two, and also a couple of hot spots, but Chuck tells me that the tape I reviewed was a preliminary production run, and besides I thought the uniformly good quality throughout was very professional considering the diverse sources from which much of this material must have been pieced together. The copy I received was Beta-2, but it is available in VHS, and comes to you in a rather unique package consisting of a more-or-less standard cassette carton attached to a stiff "album cover" (same size as a record album) with liner notes and illustrations. Oh, I also think you'll be interested in the info about the 75' screen that's going to be installed in a Hollywood disco, and the...well, I could go on, but I think you're going to buy this one, so I'll leave a few surprises for you. At the introductory price of \$49.95, it's a VIDEOPHILE BEST BUY.--JL

Source: Instant Replay

AND THEN THERE WERE NONE

Cast: Barry Fitzgerald, Walter Huston, Louis Hayward, Roland Young, and others. Director: Rene Clair

TEN WERE MARKED FOR MURDER... and one by one they had to die!



Content: Based on Agatha Christie's "Ten Little Indians," this is the definitive tale of folks being invited to a lonely island mansion by a mysterious host. One by one, they're murdered, and everyone wonders who the killer is. When the group gets down to only 2 or 3, it's pretty hard to understand how each of them can continue to act so convincingly bewildered. This is one of the films that was spoofed by Neil Simon's "Murder By Death," right down to the maid and butler.

Evaluation: This one gets four stars in any book you care to check. The story is a typically fine Agatha Christie effort (the first one of you to tell me the original title will win a free T-shirt), and the fine cast maintains interest throughout. If you, like I, loved Walter Huston in The Treasure of the Sierra Madre, this would be a good chance for you to sample another dose. The black and white print and the VHS cassette we viewed were of top picture and sound quality. The reference books say it's 98 minutes long and so does my VCR counter. You needn't hesitate on this one. It's recommended.--JL

Source: Maljack Productions

CHARIOTS OF THE GODS

Credits: Director and screenplay--Dr. Harald Reinl. This originally appeared in 1969 from the West German Terra Filmkunst as Erinnerungen an die Zukunft; it is based on Erich von Daniken's books Erinnerungen an die Zukunft and Zurück zu den Sternen. Walt Lee's Reference Guide to Fantastic Films lists its original time as 92 minutes. Stephen Scheuer says it's 97 minutes; Leonard Maltin says 98 minutes. Our Zenith (Beta) counter says it's about 86 minutes. Whether that means it's cut here or overestimated elsewhere, we don't know. It certainly seems more than long enough.

Content: This is the sort of film that will have all but the very gullible yelling, "What!" and "Says who?" at their TV sets. The credits say it's based on von Daniken's "novels"--which, at least, admits to more fiction than his followers do. It purports to be a scholarly exploration of the possibility that extra-terrestrials have visited the Earth in ages past and that records of such visits survive in religious archives and drawings. There is shot after shot of imposing tombs and statues and speculation after speculation concerning religious accounts of visitors from the sky. Some, if not all, footage apparently is stock--of Easter Island, an assortment of pyramids, and artwork from around the world, some of it repeated and re-repeated.

Tape Quality: Our tape kept rolling and we had to readjust the set several times; presumably this is due to the anti-copying method used. It is a nuisance. The print was not outstandingly good, but not terribly bad either.

Content: We won't pretend we caught all the logical lapses or questionable statements in this film, but...

The narrator keeps talking of "life on other stars" and wondering what will happen when our astronauts "set foot on another populated star." Stars are suns; our astronauts will be incinerated. This is not a minor point: The difference between stars and planets is probably the most basic fact about astronomy. Ignorance of that fact throws doubts on one's scientific qualifications.

Scientists are discredited as an amorphous group for their wrong guesses, but scientists (usually Russian scientists, whose statements are damned

hard to check) are also quoted as the ultimate authority when they side with the film's premise.

Like most films of this type, the movie first suggests that all accounts of gods are eyewitness reports of visitors from other planets, then accepts this premise as fact and offers unrelated "evidence" to back it up.

The story of Gilgamesh bears a striking resemblance to the Creation sequence in the Book of Genesis, yet the Gilgamesh was written thousands of years before Genesis. This is delivered as if it proves something. No consideration is given to the possibility that the writer(s) of Genesis cribbed from Gilgamesh.

Schlieman, who found Troy (maybe; a lot of archaeologists are not convinced that that is what he found), is NOT considered "one of the greatest archaeologists of all time," as the film claims. He is considered a vandal; he found the city, yes, but looted it for his own profit, giving jewelry found there to his wife. This is not the act of an acceptable archaeologist, let alone a great one.

It is suggested that Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed by an atomic explosion. Evidence: Lot and his little band went behind a mountain to escape the destruction and we know today that mountains offer protection from radiation. The narrator goes on to say that the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah was beyond the power of man in those days--but who says man destroyed them? The Bible says God did it and, even if you don't accept that, you surely must believe in earthquakes and volcanoes.

For some reason, pyramidology is brought in: if you multiply the height of the Great Pyramid by a billion it comes out pretty close to the distance from Earth to the sun; pi can be figured another way, etc. This is supposed to be the work of some incredibly intelligent race. Hardly. Why build this immense stone thing to keep track of pi and the distance to the sun? A truly intelligent being would carry a notebook.

To show how inferior our technology is to the ancients, the film compares disassembling and reassembling of temples with their assembly. This is spurious. It's like comparing the laying of egg with breaking, scrambling and reassembling an egg. This feat is, indeed, beyond the technology of modern man. It also is beyond the technology of the chicken.

Two more points (though we have several pages of notes) to wrap up. (1) "Scientists" and "scholars" are used very loosely. To quote them as authorities on primitive architecture may sound impressive, but the skeptical (who, us?) might wonder if the "scientist" is a marine biologist and the "scholar" is a translator of modern Lithuanian. (2) This is the most BORING film we ever sat all the way through, with the possible exception of Last Year at Marienbad.

Evaluation: We would say that the movie is totally unconvincing --except that it apparently has convinced some people. Since it is designed to make an audience admit the possibility of visitors from another world, this is a valid criticism. NOTE: We are NOT saying visitors from another world are an impossibility! We are saying that this film is full of logical holes, question-beggings and deliberate imprecisions. We recommend watching the NOVA show in which von Daniken's work was examined by

scientists involved in the sciences in question.

This may be good for a laugh or for starting group discussions, we suppose.--D&MT

Source: Maljack Productions.

MORNING GLORY (RKO, 1933)

Credits: Cast--Katherine Hepburn, Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., Adolph Menjou, C. Aubrey Smith. Director--Lowell Sherman.

Story: This is the sensitive tale of a young stage-struck maiden (Katherine Hepburn) who is bound and determined to become a Broadway star. Her attempt at "crashing" a producer's (Adolph Menjou) office results in the girl being considered a bit unstable in mind. Hepburn meets a kindly old veteran actor (C. Aubrey Smith) who befriends and agrees to help her. She attends an "opening" party at Menjou's apartment suite, and becomes acquainted with Doug Fairbanks, Jr., who eventually falls in love with her. Circumstances later lead to the young actress being selected as understudy for the star of a new stage success. At the conclusion, the star is replaced by Miss Hepburn just one minute before curtain time, [Natch.--Ed] and the show performance results in giving birth to a new star that she had always dreamed of becoming.

Evaluation: After viewing Morning Glory, it is understandable why Katherine Hepburn received an Oscar as "best actress" of 1933 for her role in this picture. She is sensational! The plot is general... the old routine story of girl makes good in show biz. But the Hepburn touch provides that quality which makes a trite scenario an exceptional one. This marks the very first Blackhawk product I have reviewed, and I am most impressed with the attractive packaging, and especially the eye-catching animated logo flashed on the screen prior to opening credits. Overall quality of the Beta II tape I reviewed is excellent.--TR

Source: Blackhawk Films, Inc.

STAR TREK: "Where No Man Has Gone Before"

Credits: Cast--William Shatner, Leonard Nimoy. Special guest star--Gary Lockwood.

Story: The Enterprise encounters a tremendous energy field which has destroyed a previous starship by converting several ESP-gifted crew members into god-like superhumans. The energy field has an identical effect on two of the Enterprise crew members, and they attempt mutiny. As usual, Captain Kirk "cools their coffee" in the closing scenes.

Evaluation: This was the second "pilot" episode, and the first to feature William Shatner as the Captain. The first pilot, later incorporated into a two-part episode entitled "The Menagerie," starred Jeffery Hunter in the lead. Most of the series regulars are not featured in this episode since it was filmed nearly one year prior to the series' debut on NBC. I consider myself a dedicated "Trekker," and am, therefore, slightly biased in regard to content. However, I consider the quality of this particular episode exceptional--especially since all of the 16mm prints currently available have been shipped back and forth across the U.S. and 20 foreign countries for more than 10 years. The episode now available was never copyrighted, and the duplicators do not exactly have the blessings of Paramount/Desilu Studios (who currently own the copyrighted episodes).--BB

Source: Cinema Resources (formerly CR Sales)

"Hey, Meester..."

SUPERMAN



SUPERMAN: THE CARTOONS
(Paramount/Fleischer Studios 1941-44)

Credits: Producer--Max Fleischer.

Director--Dave Fleischer, among others. Voice of Superman/ Clark Kent--Bud Collyer.

Story: This program is made up of seven of the eighteen or so Superman cartoons produced by the Fleischer Studios. They are all in color.

(1) **SUPERMAN**, the first Superman cartoon-- Superman battles an evil scientist intent on destroying Metropolis with a powerful electric ray.

(2) **THE MAGNETIC TELESCOPE**: Superman fights another mad scientist who uses his magnet-like telescope to pull a comet closer to earth for observation. The comet runs amok.

(3) **THE MECHANICAL MONSTERS**: a master criminal uses huge robots to pull off fantastic bank and jewel robberies.

(4) **THE MUMMY STRIKES**: the curse of an Egyptian pharaoh brings to life four huge mummies, determined to kill Lois Lane.

(5) **THE JAPOTEURS**: a WW II story of a Japanese spy's attempt to steal the Army's newest experimental bomber.

(6) **THE BULLETEERS**: a gang of crooks use a high speed, destructive "Bullet-Car" to extort money from the Metropolis city treasury.

(7) **JUNGLE DRUMS**: another WW II adventure, which finds Lois in the hands of Nazis in the African jungles. Mr. Hitler even makes a brief appearance here.

Evaluation: The Superman cartoons were made at the height of the Fleischer's association with Paramount. The budget per cartoon was higher than usual, and it is evident in the production values. The drawing style adheres closely to the style of the comic book artwork, and in many cases the animated drawings are more detailed. The animation is smooth and fluid, thanks to careful use of Fleischer's rotoscoping process (the tracing of live-action footage into animation). The special effects, such as the explosions and the flying sequences, are nicely executed. A rousing musical score, arranged by Sammy Timberg, provides the perfect complement to the animated adventures. The quality of the video recording is excellent. Color and sound are very good considering the age of the films.

Some pre-print damage is evident in the prints used, but it is not objectionable. It usually consists of a splice or two in the credits, or a missing word of dialogue here and there. Of all the cartoons, only "The Magnetic Telescope" is a little too dark, but it is still very viewable. Even with these minor imperfections, these animated episodes are far superior to the "animated" Superman cartoons on the air today. This videocassette belongs in the collection of every fan of animation or superheroes. (A similar version of six of these cartoons, excluding "Magnetic Telescope" is available from numerous dealers, but at \$49.95 is no bargain. Another videocassette featuring several black and white Superman cartoons, none duplicated from this cassette, is being sold by Reel Images.)--D.S.

Source: Studio Film & Tape, Inc.

Price: Beta II \$39.95, VHS \$44.95

**A 2 HOUR
VIDEOCASSETTE
OF HIGHLIGHTS
FROM OUR
X-RATED FEATURES**



X-RATED PREVIEWS #1

Content: What we have here are the previews of 36 individual "XXX" rated (hard-core porno) feature films, each of which runs about 3 minutes and 20 seconds, giving a grand total of 2 hours. I'll not burden you with the full list of titles. Suffice it to say that they include "Hollywood She-Wolves," "Way Down Deep," "Nattie's Pleasure Palace," "Blackmail for Daddy," "Bad Black Beulah" (a Western, Ted), "A Hard Bargain," and such as that. There is quite a bit of duplication among casts and credits and, while I'm no expert on such matters, I've never heard of a single one of them, not even "Ray Deo," one of the stars of "The Tender Trap." (To be fair, I have, of course, heard of Alex de Renzy, director of "Babyface" and Big John Holmes, who appears in one of the titles, "Episodes of an Oriental Kitten.") In short, the 36 do not include the better known, higher budget films that fans of this genre are most familiar with.

Evaluation: First the good news: the picture quality of the VHS tape we viewed was bright, sharp and colorful throughout. The soundtrack was a tad muffled at times (give me credit for noticing!), but dialogue was not abundantly present in any case. The first title, "Babyface" (reviewed in issue #18), is easily the best, and the remainder are, for the most part, pretty lackluster. An unintentionally funny narrator chips in throughout. Mike, if that is your voice, forgive me, but I couldn't keep from cracking up as such remarks as "Passions erupt and flow like molten lava" droned on endlessly over the most boring, albeit gynecologically generous, two hours of such fare that I have ever endured. Oh, I guess there was a moment or two: the girl in "Daughters of Darkness" with the head of the devil strategically tattooed on her lower abdomen, for instance. But, overall, I cannot recommend this to you. If you insist on going for it, on the basis of never having seen such stuff and getting twice as much exposure for nearly half the price, I advise that you limit each session's viewing to 4 or 5 segments. As the narrator, himself, observes: "An overdose can be deadly."--JL

Source: Astronics TeleCine





Ted Reinhart's

Western Roundup

It's "back in the saddle, again"...more tape reviews. My phone continues to ring; our rural route mail carrier continues to curse me (loaded with more and more letters) as new friends introduce themselves to this old cowboy (really not so old). I am so grateful to all who have been helping me locate "want" titles for my cassette collection, I'm still looking for: Lassie movies (I like Collies, too), Garden of Evil (Cooper), Saddle Tramp (McCrea), Toast of New Orleans (Lanza), Magnificent Obsession (Wyman), Red House (Robinson), The Gunfighter (Peck), and Sequoia (Parker). If you have any of these, let me know... Edgewater Acres Resort, Alexandria PA 16611, 814-669-4144.

I have a good sales item. If you like Gene Autry, you'll love Loaded Pistols (see review). Beta II is \$30, VHS \$35, plus \$2 shipping.

This coming June 10 to 13 I'll be staging my fifth annual MOVIE VACATION. Besides offering our full resort facilities, twelve hours of movies will be shown daily in our theater. Many of our guests bring some of their rare movies to share with all. This year I hope to have video projection demonstrated. There will also be group discussions on video. For the three full days, which includes three meals per day, accommodations, use of all resort facilities, and free movies, the rates run: Single \$90, Double Bed (for two) \$153, Twin Beds (for two) \$159. Write me for a brochure describing our resort. We're located in Central Pennsylvania, 30 miles East of Altoona. (See address above.)

TOMBSTONE CANYON (KBS-World Wide, 1932)

Credits: Cast--Ken Maynard, Sheldon Lewis, Cecilia Parker, Lafe McKee, Frank Brownlee. Director--Alan James.

Story: Sheldon Lewis plays the role of the Phantom, a mad man and murderer whose face was disfigured by outlaw leader Frank Brownlee. The Phantom, wearing black mask, hat and cape, terrifies everyone who ventures near his hideout in Tombstone Canyon. Maynard attempts to capture the mystery man and learn the motives for his actions. The Phantom saves Ken from certain death at the hands of Brownlee and his gang, and in so doing loses his own life. At this point, and conclusion, Maynard discovers that the man dying in his arms is none other than his long-lost father,

who went "bad" when Brownlee took his property, did him physical damage, and left him for dead.

Evaluation: Without question, Tombstone Canyon is a pure "poverty row" product (low, low budget). But it's a good one, pardner. In fact, one of Ken Maynard's better movies. There's action aplenty, all well blended within the mystery man "gimmick," making this, perhaps, the very first horror-western. Sheldon Lewis (an "A" performer from the silent days) steals the show with a high calibre performance... unusual for a film of this type. Picture quality from the Beta-II tape I screened is on a par with most B-Westerns... satisfactory, but not stupendous. Sound is average.

Source: Thunderbird Films.

THE BANDITS

Credits: Cast--Robert Conrad, Jan Michael Vincent, Roy Jenson, Pedro Armandariz, Jr. Directors--Alfredo Zacarias and Robert Conrad.

Story: Bandits, Conrad, Vincent, and Jenson, are rescued by three Mexicans from a lynching along the Texas border. The six then join forces and ride over into Mexico, where they wipe out a small army of attacking soldiers. Only the wounded commanding officer is permitted to survive. The men then proceed to a small village and learn of a hidden quantity of gold in a far off mountain monastery. The men, in quest of the riches, reach their destination, only to be killed by a waiting group of Mexican soldiers under the leadership of the officer who was spared during their first encounter.

Evaluation: Our VIDEOPHILE "Commaner-in-Chief" sent me this tape to review, after discovering that it was not X-rated. (Jim, you're going to have to screen more Westerns, yourself. It's tough on an old fella to review all those erotic cassettes--dropping the "c" would be more fitting--you need a change of pace, like a trot or canter.) But, let's get on with our work. The Bandits is one of the worst movies that ever wasted my eyesight. Depressing, empty, and over-acted, Robert Conrad would be better off to "dare" anyone to show this tape, rather than knock a battery off his shoulder (We've all made mistakes, Bob). This is the first Western I ever viewed where the heroes (in this case, anti-heroes) never once wear any kind of hat. When all the principals of this movie are "done in," they're really D.O.N.E. Conrad could have changed his name to "Colander"...You know,

the holes...with lotsa blood oozing. The musical score, especially the central theme, is an obvious steal from Clint Eastwood's Hang 'Em High. I searched through my entire library of Western reference material to learn some background on this title. Not one document even hinted that there ever was a Western titled The Bandits. I am assuming that the movie was filmed in Spain, and that this was Bob Conrad's first attempt at directing (co- in this case). Strangely, a "worst" movie happens to be the "best" in color picture quality of any video cassette I have viewed to date. But this still does not justify spending anything for this product. I reviewed in the VHS format.

Source: Astronics Tele-cine, Ltd.

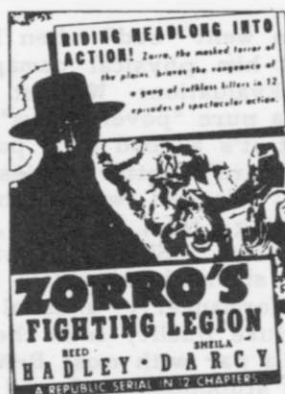
ZORRO'S FIGHTING LEGION

(Republic, 1939)

Twelve Chapter Serial

Chapter Titles:

1. The Golden God
2. The Flaming Z
3. Descending Doom
4. The Bridge of Peril
5. The Decoy
6. Zorro to the Rescue
7. The Fugitive
8. Flowing Death
9. The Golden Arrow
10. Mystery Wagon
11. Face to Face
12. Unmasked



Credits: Cast--Reed Hadley, Sheila Darcy, William Corson, Leander de Cordova, Edmund Cobb, John Merton, C. Montague Shaw. Directors--William Whitney, John English.

Story: Don Del Oro, in the guise of a Yaqui Indian God, is inciting the Indian tribes into warfare so that he can gain control of the Republic of Mexico by stealing its gold from the San Mendolita Mines. The Fighting Legion is organized by Don Francisco to protect the gold, but he is soon killed. Instantly, the Legion has a new leader, known only as "Zorro," who is in reality the foppish Diego Vega. Zorro and his Fighting Legion succeed in thwarting all of Don Del Oro's schemes. Finally, the false god is unmasked and turns out to be Pablo, who is chief magistrate of the mines. Zorro then brings peace between the whites and Indians.

Evaluation: This is the best of all "Zorro" serials. A really good performance by Reed Hadley, as Zorro and Diego Vega, well staged "cliff-hanger" sequences, and an outstanding musical score combine to make Zorro's Fighting Legion a very appealing chapter play. To my knowledge, this was Hadley's only lead acting role in the movies. He had been a very successful radio actor-announcer, playing Red Ryder and in constant demand for network narration duties (a fantastic voice). Yak Cannut took charge of all dangerous stunts, thus Zorro comes across as a very convincing hero. This well directed serial was allotted a healthy budget, and it shows. The Beta II cassettes (3) reviewed provided good picture and sound quality, although there were scattered moments of vertical "shakes," defects I'm sure would be made good by the dealer.

Source: Thunderbird Films.

LOADED PISTOLS (Columbia, 1949)

Credits: Cast--Gene Autry, Barbara Britton, Chill Wills, Jack Holt, Russell Arms. Director--John English.

Story: Russel Arms (remember him as male vocalist on the old "Hit Parade" TV show?) is accused of murder. Gene Autry hides the young cowboy while trying to solve the mystery of the real killer. This proves to be a major problem on two fronts. First with Arm's sister (Barbara Britton) and then with the sheriff (Chill Wills), who is constantly "hounding" Gene. All ends well when Autry uncovers the murderer and romance begins to bloom with Barbara.

Evaluation: I consider Loaded Pistols as one of Gene Autry's five best all time vehicles. A better cast you couldn't list. Plot structure is very adult. All music (singing and background) is terrific. This is a good mystery Western which really keeps you guessing the identity of the killer. Sight and sound of both VHS and Beta II masters is very good.

An added attraction to this full length feature is Chapter One of the 1938 serial, The Lone Ranger, with Lee Powell and Chief Thundercloud.

Source: Ted Reinhart Entertainment Enterprises.

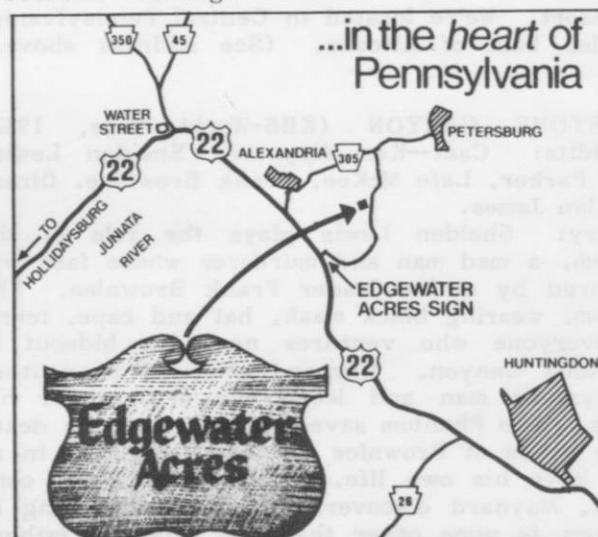
BLOOD ON THE MOON (RKO, 1948)

Credits: Cast--Robert Mitchum, Barbara Bel Geddes, Robert Preston, Walter Brennan, Phyllis Thaxter, Tom Tyler. Director--Theron Warth.

Story: Bob Mitchum, a gunslinger, is hired by an old friend (and cattle rustler), Robert Preston, to persuade ranch owner Barbara Bel Geddes to either sell her cattle at a ridiculously low figure or face the consequences of having them stolen. Mitchum falls in love with the girl and takes sides with her. This leads to brawls and battles with the Preston crew, who are eventually vanquished. Mitchum then goes ranching with his new bride.

Evaluation: This is an "all the way winner." A good solid story, top notch acting, and all the ingredients necessary to make a good Western GOOD are dished out in the 88 minutes of Blood on the Moon. The movie shows a touch of the psychological Westerns which were much in vogue beginning in the late 50's. The VHS cassette I viewed of this title showed beautifully on my screen (and sounded fine, too).

Source: Nostalgia Merchant.



DISCS



SGT. PEPPER'S LONELY HEARTS CLUB BAND

Credits: Cast--Peter Frampton, The Bee Gees, George Burns, Steve Martin, and a multitude of rock stars and groups.

Story: Good question! I'm not certain, but I believe the main theme of the movie (musical) is that Sgt. Pepper's LHC Band, in its latest edition, leaves Heartland to acquire fame and fortune in Los Angeles, as many rock bands are inclined to do. Unfortunately, Mean Mr. Mustard and his cohorts steal the original SP's LHCB's instruments in an effort to undermine world peace (honest!). Naturally, the latest edition of SP's LHCB (in the form of Peter Frampton and The Bee Gees) cannot let this happen, and the story ensues.

Evaluation: If one looks at this movie in the way in which it was intended (that is, as a vehicle for the talents of several of the major rock stars of the late 70's), it can be very entertaining. However, if you try to make any sense from this you'll get your head in a real mess. Actually the writers had the most impossible task of trying to make some kind of sense out of the Beatles' album. The quality of the video disc is incredible, and the music more than makes up for any lack of story line. The picture, as monitored on my 25" Zenith, was easily the best I had ever witnessed. The sound, through the TV's speakers, was exceptionally clear and with unusual frequency response. Even more remarkable was the fact that the disc was recorded in stereo and, after making the proper connections to my stereo receiver, I experienced frequency response and S/N ratio considerably better than its 33 1/3 RPM stereo disc counterpart. Is the video disc here to stay? I hope to tell 'ya!--BB

Source: Rich's Department Store

PSYCHO (Universal, 1960)

Credits: Cast--Anthony Perkins, Janet Leigh, Vera Miles, John Gavin, Martin Balsam, John McIntire and Pat Hitchcock.

Director: Alfred Hitchcock.

Length/Format: 108 minutes - MCA Videodisc (Standard play)

Story: This well-known classic tale begins with Marion Crane (Janet Leigh) and her lover Sam Loomis (John Gavin), who cannot marry because of his heavy financial responsibilities. Marion steals \$40,000 from her employer and leaves town (Phoenix, AZ) to start a new life with Sam in California. A storm forces her to spend the night at a lonely roadside motel, where young Norman Bates (Anthony Perkins), the owner, apparently lives with his mother, an old and cranky woman.

Without giving too much of the bizarre plot away, let us just say that from this point on there are enough terrifying murders and other sinister goings-on to keep even the most brave and stalwart types on the verge of cardiac arrest.

Evaluation: It's been called Hitchcock's greatest screen triumph--at least his most successful black and white film--and easily the finest psychological horror story ever made.

Even after seeing the movie 50+ times, it still has a powerful effect on me. (I still get nervous taking showers.) Bernard Hermann's sinister score, complete with screeching bird-like violins and low, rumbling cellos, is arguably the best the composer has ever done. John Russell's eerily-lit photography is also brilliant, effecting many tension-filled moods throughout the film.

Without using up the rest of TV to go into all of Psycho's subtleties and fine black-comedic touches, let us suffice to say that it is a classic of the highest order, one that belongs in any true fan's collection. Two great essays on it can be found in The Art of Alfred Hitchcock (Hopkinson & Blake, 1976) and The Films of Alfred Hitchcock (Citadel Press, 1976) and complete frame-by-frame blowups with dialogue can be found in Richard Anobile's Psycho -- The Film Classics Library (Avon Books, 1974).

As far as the audio and video quality, I have a couple of bones to pick (so to speak) with MCA's DiscoVision mastering department. Again, like Jaws, they chose to put the film on 3 discs, using up only 5 sides and leaving the last side blank. Surely only 4 sides are needed for a movie under 2 hours long, or they could have at least put the long Psycho trailer Hitch made in 1960 on this empty side. Also, we noticed a larger number of horizontal "scratch-like" drop-outs than usual, probably more noticeable because of the large number of dark scenes in the film. We were impressed with the quality of the 35mm print used in the initial film-to-tape transfer, with fewer splices and scratches than we have ever seen in any theater showing of Psycho, though they did manage to clip the main title music at the very beginning of the film with a newly-inserted Universal logo.

With the above drawbacks to consider, we give the discs a B for overall audio and video quality, with the film getting a shower-full of stars. Let us hope that Universal will eventually release the rest of Hitchcock's classics, like North by Northwest, Vertigo, Rear Window and the rarely-seen Rope and Trouble with Harry, the latter four unavailable for viewing on TV or in theaters.--MFW

Source: Rich's Department Store (Disc #11-003)

Price: \$15.95

SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER (Paramount, 1977)

Credits: Cast--John Travolta, Karen Lynn Gorney, Barry Miller, Joseph Cali, Paul Pape and Donna Pescow (now seen as TV's Angie). Director--John Badham (with Robert Stigwood as auteur producer).

Length/Format: 188 minutes - MCA Videodisc (Standard Play - stereo audio)

Story: Once a week, after working six drudgeous days a week in a Brooklyn Hardware store, Tony (Travolta) douses himself with cologne, dons a floral bodyshirt and platform shoes, and ritualistically prepares himself for Saturday Night Fever. But the disco king begins to question the narrowness of his perspective when he meets Karen Gorney, a born and bred Brooklynite shedding her origins for a more sophisticated life-style, who

agrees to become Tony's dancing partner for a \$1,000 disco contest at a local nightclub.

Evaluation: Well, I honestly can't figure out what caused all the fuss and excitement, to say nothing of the incredibly high box-office profits, for this boring film. Other than blaring forth more disco music than I'd ever care to hear in two hours, plus showing us some pretty snazzy people bumping away on a neon dance floor, there's not much to the film at all. Fans of the movie will be pleased to note that this is the original "R" version of Saturday Night Fever, as opposed to the less-temperid "PG" version recently re-released.

We were particularly interested in the audio on this disc, being the first stereo DiscoVision release we've had a chance to evaluate closely. Aside from being marred by slight persistent ticks and pops (with corresponding drop-out lines appearing in the image), the audio was of excellent quality, providing reasonably good stereo sound throughout the picture. Even the dialogue was mixed in stereo, so that when a character walks from one side of the room to the other, his voice will follow the same direction in moving from speaker to speaker; we can see this could add a dramatic dimension to films viewed on large screens with a good-quality sound system on hand for two-channel audio reproduction.

Being a film that has many night action scenes, often the picture quality seemed somewhat dark and noisy, but then considering the difficulties in transferring such films to tape, this problem is understandable. Still, we've had several complaints from others who have seen this disc program, so be forewarned: the quality on this release isn't quite as good as most of the other discs we've seen.

We'll give the movie a ho-hum 2 **'s, and an overall B- for the slightly disappointing audio and video quality--which is still not much worse than most pre-recorded tapes we've seen.--MFW

Source: Rich's Department Store (Disc #P10-521)
Price: \$15.95

[We've heard that Paramount's recent announcement to sign over several of their films to Fotomat's new VHS and Beta home entertainment division may mean there's a possibility that Saturday Night Fever will not be available on videodisc for much longer. We'll attempt to corroborate this rumor by next issue.--Ed]

AT HOME WITH DONALD DUCK

(Walt Disney Productions, 1956)

Credits: Cast--Donald Duck, his nephews Huey, Dewey and Louie, plus guest appearances by Mickey Mouse, Pluto and Goofy. Director--Jack Hannah and C. August Nichols.

Length/Format: 46 minutes - MCA Videodisc (Standard play)

Story: Our story beings with the nephews plotting a way to make enough money to buy their Unca Donald some cigars for his birthday (Donald's Happy Birthday"), which they earn by doing all the yard chores around the house. Donald, curious as to why the need money, spies on them and finds out they're spending their ill-gotten gains on the Devil's Weed. After cruelly punishing the boys by forcing them to smoke each and every one of the cigars, Donald realizes his grievous error and invites them all to his birthday party.

Once at the party, however, the happy nephews are forced to watch Donald's old movies, much to their chagrin; but Donald's conscience comes to the

rescue and convinces him to run some different pictures for a change. "Mickey and the Seal" features the antics of a seal who escapes from the zoo and finds refuge in Mickey's bathtub; this cartoon features the only appearance of Mickey in the buff, though he still never takes off his gloves, not even when taking a bath. "Fowl Hunting" stars Goofy as an inept hunter in his eternal war against a clever flock of ducks (none of them looking even remotely like Donald). "Pluto's Blue Note," the funniest of the bunch, features Mickey's dog despairing because of his inability to carry a tune, which he solves by using his tail as a stylus and playing vocal records through his mouth, causing the local canine lovelies to scream and swoon. "Mickey's Circus" takes us to Orphan's Day at the circus, where anyone can get in for free provided they look exactly like junior versions of Mickey; it details Donald's battle against a group of trained seals, culminating in Mickey and Donald's death-defying perils on the tight-rope over the center ring.

When the nephews tire of watching Donald's movies, they turn on the Mouse Club show on TV only to find that he's had the program rigged to show "Sea Salts," in which Captain Donald and a cricket crew-member are shipwrecked on a desert island.

Evaluation: Being a Disney fan, I couldn't help but enjoy every minute of the program. The 35mm picture and sound quality throughout were excellent, though we did notice some chroma noise from time to time.

We were surprised to note that, unlike the original TV show presented about 25 years ago, Walt's intro to the program was excised as was some 3½ minutes of Mickey Mouse Club songs and dances. Well, we can live without the Mickey Mouse Club kids any day, but it would have been nice to see Mr. Disney again after all these years. We also noted the insertion of the "New" Mickey Mouse Club disco theme song, plus the addition of an extra cartoon, "Mickey's Circus," which has never been broadcast as part of this show.

All in all, we found the entire program to be highly enjoyable and fun for, as they say, "kids of all ages." And for animation fans, it's a wealth of vintage Disney classics unavailable in Super 8 and with better quality than anything you can tape off the air yourself.--MFW

Source: Rich's Department Store (Disc #D61-505)
Price: \$9.95

[Special thanks to local animation fans Horace Horsecollar and Mark Kausler for background information on the above videodisc review.]

*In response to several inquiries,
MCA DiscoVision, Inc.'s address is:*

100 Universal Plaza
Universal City CA 91608

The complete name and address of each source for the tapes and discs reviewed will be found on page 72.



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URGENT! Interested in following titles: Pat Garrett and Billy the Kid, Missouri Breaks, W.C. Fields It's a Gift, Invaders From Mars, It Came From Outer Space, Amos & Andy TV shows, Errol Flynn's Robin Hood, Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman, Sherlock Holmes. Contact Bill Seneca, 130 E. Winnick, Las Vegas NV 89109 or call collect 702-731-4675.

Does anyone remember George Pal? Want War of the Worlds, Time Machine, etc. Looking for many Hitchcock films, certain James Bonds, all Mel Brooks, all Bakshi, some Kubrick, and a few specifics like Hobbit, 3 & 4 Musketeers, Last Waltz (band), and more. Have list of wants and trades. Can dub Beta-2 (no charge) if you pay mailing and tape. Want to meet videophreaks in upstate NY for wifeswapping or whatever. Tim Davis, RD 2, Cincinnati NY 13040. 607-863-4409. 7-9 P.M. EST only.

I'm new to this, but would like to get Rocky, Superman (the movie), Star Wars, Jaws, Rabbit Test. All I have now for you to copy & return is Deathwish, The Wizard of Oz, The Great Caruso by M. Lanza and XXX Teenage Cowgirls. Could tape lots of old movies in Sacto area for you. Please let me know what can be worked out. Otto Haiungs, 400 Greenridge, Roseville CA 95678. 916-783-0364.

HBO SPECIAL titled "Standing Room Only" starring Barry Manilow. Will trade or buy. Please contact R. J. Schweikert, 1101 W. Cermak Rd., Broadview IL 60153. 312-344-8240.

WANTED: Beta-2 trading lists. Varied interests: animation, Japanese classics, anything. High priority: Hope/Crosby's Montreal Olympic TV special. Joe Onorato, 46 S. Main, Northfield VT 05663. 802-485-9732.

TV Series wanted: Man from U.N.C.L.E. (first season), Dr. Who (Jon Pertwee only), Amos Burke, Champions Invaders, Departments, Jason King, Return of the Saint. Movies wanted: Kiss Kiss Kill Kill, So Deadly So Darling, Death is Nimble, Death is Quick. Have many action and Sci-Fi shows to trade. Larry Charet, 1219A Devon Ave., Chicago IL 60660 Phone 312-274-1832.

WANTED on BETA II format: As a child of the golden age of television, I would like to obtain programs from this era (1952-1965). I am particularly interested in the following shows: "Red Skelton," "Burns & Allen," "Sugarfoot," "Twilight Zone," "Life of Riley," "Dragnet" (original version only), "The Patty Duke Show," "Superman," "The Adventures of Robin Hood," "Topper," "77 Sunset Strip," "The Real McCoys," "Combat," "Waterfront," "Hawaiian Eye," "Twelve O'Clock High," "The Tennessee Ernie Ford Show," "The Gary Moore Show," "The Steve Allen Show," "Alfred Hitchcock Presents," "People Are Funny," "My Little Margie," "Oh, Susanna," "Our Miss Brooks," "Make Room for Daddy" or "The Danny Thomas Show," "Car 54 Where Are You?," "Bat Masterson," "Highway Patrol," "The Rough Riders," "State Trooper," "Rescue Eight," "Whirlybirds," "Frontier Circus," "Circus Boy," "The People's Choice," "George Gobel Show," "Grindle," "Dobie Gillis," "Ichabod & Me," "Perry Como Music Hall," "Tall Man," and "Have Gun, Will Travel." I am also interested in the "Tonight Show," circa 1958-1968. Please contact Andrew H. Richter, 7902 Hershe, Houston TX 77029.

Very anxious to get any type of Indian Movies in Beta X2 format. Will be very happy to exchange tapes and list of my collection of movies. Write immediately to me. K.C., 1650 Glen Oak Court, Lafayette CA 94549.

Adult cassette dubs exchanged for only \$2.00 each to cover return shipping. Beta 1 or Beta 2 only. Send from 1 to 50 by UPS or insured mail for equal exchange. Send list of what you have so I will not duplicate. H. Wallace, 8633 N. Springfield, Skokie IL 60076. (312-676-1771.

WANTED BETA X2: Fellini: La Dolce Vita, The White Sheik, Variety Lights, Il Bidone, I Vitelloni, Boccaccio 70, A Director's Notebook, Orchestra Rehearsal. Also Killing of a Chinese Bookie. Trade only. D. Scott, P. O. Box 606, Springfield OH 45501.

WANTED: Betamax X2, excellent copies of: American Guerrilla in the Phillipines w/Tyrone Power, a 20th Century-Fox 1950 release. Also, Africa Addio, Mondo Cane and any of the "Cane" sequels that followed the original Mondo Cane. Trade? Robert Dorser, P.O. Box 11275, 2201 North Grand, Santa Ana CA 92711.

WANTED ON BETA: Tortilla Flat, Captains Courageous, Inherit the Wind, Auntie Mame, classics, current, 3 Little Pigs and other Disney. Please send lists to Steve Henry, 159 Elizabeth Rd., San Antonio TX 78209.

WANTED-BETA FORMAT-Anything on rock group Emerson, Lake and Palmer. Will buy or trade (preferably buy) these segments or any others known of: 1968 NBC Special stars Emerson with Nice; 1973 (?) feature "Rock and Roll Your Eyes"; 1974 ELP Documentary, U.S. TV release 1 hr.; ELP performing "Fanfare for the Common Man"; 1975 Greg Lake- "I Believe in Father Christmas"; 1977 Promo, ELP with full orch; 1975 British TV, Emerson interviewed, plays Honky Tonk Train Blues; 1975 ABC Rock Concert, ELP segment (with Black Oak Ark.) 1½ hour. J. Stangeland, 1649 N. Latrobe, Chicago IL 60639.

BETA FORMAT WANTED: Want lists from those who have tapes for trading, selling, loaning, or any combination. Interests are SF movies, old TV and XXX. Contact J. W. Taylor, 611 N 2, Cabot AR 72023. Call 501-843-6031 between 6-10 P.M.

Will swap X-2 cassettes or trade for blank tape. I have many Showtime movies, uncut and no commercials; F.I.S.T., Damnation Alley, Bananas, Ray Stevens, Heroes, High Anxiety, and many more. Send me your phone number and I will call you. Fred Kline, P.O. Box 324, Janesville WI 53545.

WANTED ON VHS

Invaders, Dark Shadows, When Things Were Rotten, Alias Smith and Jones. Dorothy L. Palmer, 17182 Lumpkin, Detroit MI 48212.

WANTED ON VHS

EARLY TV SHOWS WANTED ON VHS Especially "live" variety like "Colgate Comedy Hour," "Caesar's Hour," "Calvacade of Stars" (with Gleason)...and any TV appearances by Dean Martin & Jerry Lewis as a team. Also want WESTERNS, TV and B's (all Rex Allen films, ½ hour "Gunsmoke," "Gene Autry Show" IN COLOR. Does anyone have 1958 "Wide, Wide World" program devoted to Westerns??? Running in the Washington/Baltimore area: "Hopalong Cassidy," "Space 1999," "Man from U.N.C.L.E.," "Alfred Hitchcock," "Father Knows Best," "Champions," "Twilight Zone," etc. Also movie series, including Abbot & Costello, Bowery Boys, Blondie, Charlie Chan, Three Stooges. I own an RCA unit. Especially want someone to trade tapes with in Los Angeles area. Let's trade TV Guides. (Also have many old TV Guides, 1953-1970, to trade or sell). Joe Olesksiewicz, 430 E. Nelson Ave., Alexandria VA 22301.

Beginner (3 days today) interested in good VHS feature-length films of decent quality, circa 1970-1979, all categories. Any 30's and/or 40's animation features of all cartoon characters. Steve Martin, prime time players, or Mel Brooks comedy, if they'll wake up a class or two of my high school sophomores. SPEC WANT: J. Fonda, D. Sutherland, "Free the Army" visit to Vietnam film. Will buy, trade for tapes I can provide, if you will supply me with duplicates of your good stuff. Bill Placzek, 2723 N. Dayton St., Chicago IL 60614 312-477-9272 3:30-4:30 weeknites.

NEW TO VHS: X-rated tapes wanted to start my own collection. Will trade or tape your wants in my area for almost any adult tape. Will also exchange TV Guides. Also any hints or suggestions most welcome. G. E. Ducker, P.O. Box 112, Highland Springs VA 23075.

VHS FORMAT WANTED: Boxing--Norton-Holmes, Norton-Shavers, Galindez-Rossman, Ali-Young, Ali-Norton 3rd. Call Jerry Gomberg, Kansas City MO office 816-842-4767.

Desperate for following movies on trade/loan only basis: Joyride with Anne Lockhar, Private Afternoons of Pamela Mann, The Stud with Joan Collins, The Gay Deceivers, Wicked, Wicked, Prime Cut, Slaughterhouse Five, The Stewardesses, Houston, We've Got a Problem, Distant Early Warning, Boxcar Bertha, Bluebeard (1972), Moment by Moment, In Praise of Older Women. ALL UNCUT. Also in TV--Does anybody have: "Ellery Queen," "Tales of the Unexpected," "Petrocelli," "Big Hawaii," "The Invaders," "City of Angels," "Night Stalker," "Fantastic Journey," "Harry-O," "Primas." Ray Radford, Rt. 1, Box 322-A, Eclectic AL 36024.

WANTED ON 4-hour tape at long-play speed: Specific ½-hour Twilight Zone episodes (ten per tape w/o commercials), Outer Limits, Wild Wild West, Thriller, Batman, etc., and movies Rear Window, Time Machine, Dr. Strangelove, etc. Write for details: D.L. Doak, P.O. Box 230033, Tigard OR 97223.

ATTENTION VIDEOPHILES in the DALLAS-FT. WORTH-ARLINGTON TEXAS area! Would be interested in swapping VHS tapes of Baltimore Orioles baseball games for upcoming season in exchange for Texas Rangers games. Howard McKinney, Jr., 8004 Jordan Park Blvd., Forestville MD 20028. Please call me COLLECT 301-736-9137.

WANTED ON VHS: OLIVER. If you have a good a copy, send me your want list and we will trade. Bruce A. Epstein, 9023 St. Andrews, Seminole FL 33543.

Do ½-hour Twilight Zone episodes air daily in your area? If so, you can record my 54 favorite episodes for me. Write NOW for details. D.L. Doak, P.O. Box 230033, Tigard OR 97223.

VHS FORMAT: Anyone who collects "I Love Lucy," "3 Stooges," "Little Rascals," "Maverick." Have many episodes to trade. Charles E. Bush, Rt. 16, Rogers Lane, Knoxville TN 37920. 615 577-9845.

VHS FORMAT WANTED: Walkabout, Beyond the Valley of the Dolls, Umbrellas of Cherbourg, Rebecca, 2001, Fearless Vampire Killers, Candy, Hellstrom Chronicles, Red Tent, A Place Called Today, David & Lisa, If..... Will trade or purchase from legal sources. Stan Sieger, 848-C Berkley St., New Milford NJ 07646. 201-967-9740.

WANTED VHS only, First Run Movies, like Annie Hall, Lenny, Semi-Tough, The Fantastic Animation Festival, Steam Bath shown with Valerie Parrine on PBS), Kentucky Fried Movie and other first run films. I am new to video, but will exchange "Brand New Tape" for above or make copies of the many old TV shows in the area or even buy tapes of above movies. Write to P.O. Box 35, Braintree MA 02184.

VHS -- Desperately want episodes of The Outer Limits in LP mode (will consider SP mode if reasonable). Prefer uncut, but will accept anything (even with commercials). Will buy/trade. Have cable TV including HBO. Can supply HBO Guide. Call or write Michael Peterson, 4 St. Augustine St., W. Hartford CT 06110. 203-523-5764. Call collect.

BIRDMAN cartoon show, now in syndication in various cities. Please help. Have lots to trade and access to cable TV. Send TV Guide to: Michael Swanigan, 1522 S. St. Andrews Pl., LA CA 90019.

WANTED ON VHS. Purchase only or will trade blank tape for, LP or SP: Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea, 11 Days to Zero, Time Tunnel, Rendezvous with Yesterday, Untouchables - especially early episodes, various series like: Twilight Zone, Superman, Topper, Ben Casey, 77 Sunset Strip, Father Knows Best, Peter Gunn, Cisco Kid, Burns & Allen, My Favorite Martian, Mr. Ed, etc. Steven Charles Peel, 1345 Grable Ct., New Albany IN 47150.

WANTED ON VHS: Very "recent" films that have grossed big money in theaters. Also would like to know of someone with access to cable stations for obvious reasons. Also, does anyone know the address of Adwar Films in NYC. Please write on above. Angel Morales, 607 State St., Camden NJ 08102.

WANTED ON VHS: Jack Jones. Guest appearances on any of the talk shows or TV specials. Mary Smith, 2286 Morley Way, Sacramento CA 95825.

Wanted on VHS format: Movies--Airport, Birds of Prey, American Graffiti, On a Clear Day, Skyjacked. Old programs: Highway Patrol, Laredo, Major Adams, Rawhide, Rin Tin Tin, & Texas Rangers. P. Bernstein, 382 N. Mill St., Saukville WI 53080.

Wanted: Reefer Madness, Resurrection of Eve, Secrets-J. Bisset, Here We Go Round The Mulberry Bush, School for Soundrels, History of the Blue Movie, Aphrodisiac - Sex Secrets of Marijuana, The Gauntlet, Inside Marilyn Chambers. Outtakes and bloopers on Star Trek, Tonight Show, etc. Interested in any hard-to-find movies--buy or trade. Have X-rated to trade--Deep Throat, Behind The Green Door, Babyface, Naked Came the Stranger, Health Spa, Sex World, 1001 Danish Delights, Cry Uncle, Seven Into Snowy, Sexual Freedom in Brooklyn. Also have many HBO movies. Particularly interested in trading material with Central IL or St. Louis area residents. Marc Kesinger, 3 Brian Ln., Dawson IL 62520.

Want to trade VHS ADULT tapes. I have over 150 tapes to trade. Especially want All About Gloria Leonard, Candy Strippers, Pretty Peaches, Hot Cookies, Misbehaven, Odessey, Anyone But My Husband, Senator's Daughter, Debbie Does Dallas, China Cat, Anna Obsessed, Pleasure Palace and many more. I want excellent quality, but what have you? Send me your list and I'll send mine. Jack Laydon, 1427 S. 9th St., St. Charles IL 60174. Phone 312-584-4988. PLEASE no calls after 6:30 P.M.

VHS FORMAT WANTED: 1969 Superbowl, 1972 Oklahoma vs. Nebraska football game, Oklahoma Crude, Goldfinger, Deliverance, Flesh Gordon, Secrets, Heaven Can Wait, Midnight Blue episodes and uncut HBO movies. Have much to offer in exchange. Please don't hesitate to write--you will be answered. Ernest McKinley, P.O. Box 537, Olney IL 62450.

WANTED: VHS format science fiction films. The Thing, This Island Earth, It, the Terror from Beyond Space, It Came from Outer Space, Creeping Unknown, Clockwork Orange, 2001, CE3K, Planet of the Apes, Omega Man, Earth vs. the Flying Saucers, Science Fiction Theater. Also Fantasia, Woodstock, Jesus Christ Superstar, Tommy, Freaks. Will buy or trade (have growing list of items). Mark Mitckes, 226B Countryside Cir., Knoxville TN 37919.

Wanted in VHS format: Charles Aznavour in concert around late '77 or early '78--one man concert from Alberta, Canada. Also Johnny Carson show Feb. 20, 1978 and Dec. 8, 1977. Phone Kansas City MO office at 816-842-4767.

Wanted in VHS format: old "Daniel Boone" TV series. Specifically looking for the episodes with Ed Ames as a regular. Also looking for fellow VHS owner in Kingsport TN area to tape show off channel 19. Will supply tape if unable to trade. Deanie Smith, 1716 McConnell Ave., Owensboro KY 42301.

VHS format wanted: Anything on the Nuclear Power Plant accident in Pennsylvania. Any Garbo, Doris Day, Laurel & Hardy, Chaplin or Olivia Newton-John movies. "Classics," too, including Psycho, Citizen Kane, "M", The Man Who Knew Too Much (1956), 7th Seal, Dracula, Frankenstein, King Kong, etc. Also wanted: The Rockinghorse Winner, Creeping Terror, House of Dark Shadows, Love Me or Leave Me, The War Game, plus TV shows All That Glitters and Twilight Zone. I have pay cable and HBO, with 10 channels on Cable. Receive The Outer Limits and have 15 taped. Access to another VHS. Brian Gray, 5711 S. Gary Place, Tulsa OK 74105. Member WSA, #767.



WARNING

Federal law provides severe civil and criminal penalties for the unauthorized reproduction, distribution, or exhibition of copyrighted motion pictures and video tapes. (Title 17, United States Code, Sections 501 and 506)

The Federal Bureau of Investigation investigates allegations of criminal copyright infringement. (Title 17, United States Code, Section 506)

VHS WANTED: Looking for the following: Hooper, Animal House, The Wild Ones, Rebel Without a Cause, Giant, Jailhouse Rock, Hard Times, Godfather (both), Blazing Saddles, Reefer Madness, Young Frankenstein, Thunder Road, King Creole, 1977 NCAA Championship Basketball Game (N. Carolina vs. Marquette), and some others. Will trade, dub, or just plain trade information. Unlike some of these other nerds who advertise, I'll answer if you write. Steve Purdy, R #6, Olney IL 62450.

JUST PLAIN WANTED

The Glass Bottom Boat, Colossus of Rhoades, Atlantis the Lost Continent, any Clint Eastwood westerns, and any Mondo movies are NEEDED DESPERATELY! Send your trade list to me. I'll trade TV Guides. Lewis Brooks, 6596-B E. Calle La Paz, Tucson AZ 85715.

Uncut BARBRA STREISAND movies: The Way We Were, The Owl and the Pussycat, For Pete's Sake. Also TV specials "Color Me Barbra," "Belle of 14th Street," and "Other Musical Instruments," and her appearances on Burt Bacharach and Ed Sullivan shows. Also want "Liza with a 'Z'" starring Liza Minnelli; Bette Midler's HBO special; "Old Red Head is Back"; and Rosemary's Baby. Contact Dennis Berno, P.O. Box E, Dewar OK 74431. Phone: 918-652-4738.

SONJA HENIE films desperately wanted! Will buy, pay to dub, trade for the following Sonja Henie films: Sun Valley Serenade (1941), Thin Ice (1937), The Countess of Monte Cristo (1948). I have 300 hours of features, SF, TV to trade. And many thanks to those of you who came through on my last ad. Contact Susan Nierenberg, 771 West End Avenue (5C), NYC 10025. 212-749-3756.

WANTED: Uncut versions of all James Bond movies. Also, all animated movies. Rich Olson, 8110 Curran Blvd., New Orleans LA 70126. Phone 504-241-1071.

PREFER VHS but can copy Beta and 3/4" formats. Want Vertigo, North by Northwest (uncut), Bobby Darin, Neil Diamond, Bette Midler and Frank Sinatra TV appearances, Grateful Dead, Up in Smoke, Superman, and adult films. Have list to trade and VHS copy facilities. Bob Bogan, 14 Yorkshire Pl., Parlin NJ 08859.

Would like to trade BOB DYLAN video and movie material with other collectors. In addition to Dylan tapes, I have videotapes by other rock performers. Bill Pagel, P.O. Box 35398, Phoenix AZ 85069.

Do you have a copy of the Singapore segment of 60 Minutes aired January 8? Prefer Beta format, but will accept any. Contact J.Y. Davidson, P.O. Box 3321, Little Rock AK 72203.

DESPERATELY WANTED - ANY FORMAT: The Seven Samariai. Also information on where "Dr. Who" is now running. Barbara E. Warne, P.O. Box 4678, Albuquerque NM 87106. 505-268-8531.

INTERESTED IN EXCHANGING videotapes on 3/4" or 1/2" VHS featuring SINATRA, Streisand, Bennett, Garland, Beatles, Elvis, Como, or Darin. Please write: Scott Sayers, P.O. Box 10512, Dallas TX 75207.

WANTED: You Can't Take It With You, any Jimi Hendricks, London R&R Show, The Cheerleaders. Contact with Boston area 'Philes for mutual benefit. Dave Bonner, 19 Prospect Hill, Somerville MA 02143. 617-628-3657.

PORTLAND, ORE, VHS or Beta: I am a new video collector. I am interested in collecting HORROR FILMS: Example: Christopher Lee films, The Dunwich Horror, Succumbus, The Devil's Daughter, etc. Do not have anything to trade yet except movies that come off TV stations in my area. Will be glad to exchange TV Guide lists and tape your wants in exchange for a horror film that I desire. Or tell me what I can do to trade with you. Can you help, please? Bob De Francisco, 9316 S.E. Grant St., Portland OR 97216.

Will swap Adult cassettes. Also want boxing, old time silent movies and serials on Betamax 1 or 2 or RCA systems. Send your list for mine. I have 120 adult features. Will buy films or trade. Ray Wencil, 2904 N. Keating Ave., Chicago IL 60641. 312-685-0398.

WANTED ANY FORMAT: The Man Who Fell to Earth, ANY episode of: Men Into Space, Science Fiction Theatre, Strange Report, UFO, Supercar, Fireball XL-5, Stingray, Thunderbirds, Captain Scarlet, Outer Limits, and Twilight Zone, especially the "Nightmare at 20,000 Feet" episode. I have Beta X-1 and Beta X-2 but can dub to or from any format. Send your want lists to John F. Donigan, RR1, Box 377, E. Carondelet IL 62240. 618-286-3557.

CLASSICAL MUSIC, OPERA--Looking for Callas, Horowitz 1968, Glenn Gould, Otello '78, Ruby 90 minute special w/Beeth. 3rd & Brahms 1st, any Fleisher. System mainly U-Matic, but access to VHS & Beta. Erik Hillman 301-229-6634. A.M. best time, or write 6102 Namakagan Road, Washington DC 20016.

WANTED-VIDEO DISC

Magnavision owner seeking other owners for the purpose of exchanging video discs on a temporary basis. Contact Bob Burns, Box 23-16, Wheelersburg, OH 45694. 614-574-8342 after 9 P.M. EST.

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ADVENT Projection TV for rent. Also Beta, VHS machines. Repair, modification, service. Dave. 617-628-3657.

Would like to correspond with VHS owner with access to off-air recording of B Westerns. Will buy or trade items I can record for you. State wants. Gerald E. Jackson, Rt. 2, Box 40, Russellville AL 35653.

Video Request, Inc., P.O. Box 3201, N. Las Vegas NV 89030. Newsletter and Club Membership still only \$2.00 a year. Subscribe now. Thanks to VIDEOPHILE for help in forming this club.

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VIDEO TAPE RESPONSE is compiling a listing of hard-to-locate TV series being broadcast in various parts of the country. Please send TV Guides for the week of June 2 to June 8. Should this publication be delayed, then send current edition. Those who respond will be offered a discount on the listing. The listing will feature: the TV Station airing the programs, frequency of showing and geographic origin of broadcast. Video Tape Response, P.O. Box 878, N. Arlington, NJ 07032.

WANTED: Access to 16mm and 35mm color film chain to transfer public domain titles to video tape. Video Tape Response, P.O. Box 878, N. Arlington NJ 07032.

Wanted: Beckett (O'Toole), Katherine (Henry Winkler), Straw Dogs, Liz, The China Cat, Hot Cookies, Myra Breckenridge, Take-Off, The Cheap Detective, Time Tunnel TV series, Zorro TV series, Green Hornet TV series, Celebrity Charades TV series, Soupy Sales TV series. Video Tape Response, P.O. Box 878, N. Arlington NJ 07032.

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14. RANGER AND THE LADY...ROY ROGERS
15. SONG OF TEXAS...ROY ROGERS(1943)
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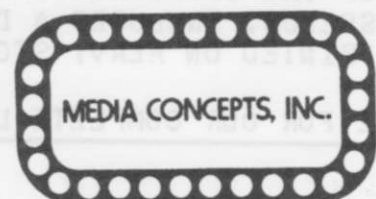
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TV BLOOPERS

HERE ARE ALL THE BLOOPERS THAT YOU NEVER, EVER SAW ON TV. THE FIRST HALF IS A COLLECTION OF OUTAKES THAT WILL AMAZE YOU. INCLUDED ARE LEE TRAVINO AND ANGRY JOE GARAGIOLA, THE LONE RANGER, BILL COSBY, STEVE ALLEN, BASEBALL'S "MAD STREAKER", THE CRUNCH BIRD, THE "HEE HAW" CROWD, AND SOME OF THE MOST INSANE TV COMMERCIALS EVER. PART TWO IS DEVOTED ENTIRELY TO THE MARY TYLER MOORE SHOW, AND BOY DID THEY HAVE FUN ON THAT SET. IT'S A LAUGH-A-MINUTE (MOSTLY GOOD CLEAN FUN), BUT YOU WILL NOT BELIEVE ONE LINE THAT MARY SAYS (AND WHICH CAN'T BE PRINTED HERE). THIS IS A VIDEO DIMENSIONS EXCLUSIVE, AND IS NOT AVAILABLE ANYWHERE ELSE! 30 MIN. ALL IN COLOR.....CODE K (NOTE: DUE TO STRONG LANGUAGE IN THE FIRST PART, THIS TAPE IS NOT RECOMMENDED FOR CHILDREN.)



THE WACKY, ZANY, SATIRIC FILM OF THE 70'S WITH A SQUAD OF LOONIES, INCLUDING TV'S CHEVY CHASE.

95 MIN.

CODE A



THE GRADUATE

DUSTIN HOFFMAN STARS IN HIS AWARD WINNING ROLE AS BENJAMIN, A DISSATISFIED YOUTH. ALSO WITH KATHERINE ROSS, ANNE BANCROFT AND BUCK HENRY.

106 MIN

CODE P



THE SOUND OF MUSIC

THE SOUND OF MUSIC --- THE DELIGHTFUL ROGERS AND HAMMERSTEIN MUSICAL WITH JULIE ANDREWS IN THE TITLE ROLE. HEAR "CLIMB EVERY MOUNTAIN", "MY FAVORITE THINGS", AND "DO-RE-MI" AND MORE. WINNER OF FIVE ACADEMY AWARDS.

102 MIN. COLOR

CODE Y

FOR ADULTS!

SWEET TASTE OF HONEY.....CODE T
BLONDE VELVET (JENNIFER WELLES).....CODE T
THAT LADY FROM RIO.....CODE T
TEMPTATIONS (JENNIFER WELLES).....CODE T
MIDNIGHT DESIRES (C. J. LAING).....CODE T
FRENCH SHAMPOO.....CODE T
ORIENTAL BLUE (PEONIES JONG).....CODE T
WHEN A WOMAN CALLS (BREE ANTONY).....CODE T
THE LOVE BUS.....CODE T
COME FLY WITH US (L. LOVEMORE).....CODE T
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PENTHOUSE PLAYGIRLS.....CODE A
INSIDE BABY SISTER.....CODE A

Carsons Cellar

YES, IT'S TV'S OWN LATE NIGHT HOST AS HE APPEARED ABOUT 20 YEARS AGO. THIS WAS HIS FIRST BREAK, IN LOS ANGELES, AND MANY OF HIS FAMOUS BITS WERE JUST IN THEIR FORMATIVE STAGES. HERE CARSON IS SEEN CONDUCTING A QUIZ SHOW WITH NONE OTHER THAN JACK (QUEEN FOR A DAY) BAILEY. AND THEN CARSON DOES THINGS TO A THANKSGIVING TURKEY THAT MUST BE SEEN TO BE BELIEVED.

30 MIN. B&W

CODE K



FACED WITH BANKRUPTCY, SCHECTER STUDIO IS FORCED TO COME UP WITH A WINNING PICTURE. THE RESULT IS "NUDIE MUSICAL", A MOVIE WITHIN A MOVIE FEATURING SINGING AND COMEDY WITH AN EXTRA HELPING OF SEXY GIRLS. STARRING THAT TV FAVORITE CINDY WILLIAMS PLUS DIANE CANOVA AND STEPHEN NATHAN

94 MIN

CODE P



THE MAGIC CHRISTIAN

THE MAGIC CHRISTIAN - PETER SELLERS AS THE RICHEST MAN IN THE WORLD SETS OUT TO UPSET CONFORMITY & EXPOSE HYPOCRISY. ALSO WITH RINGO STARR, RAQUEL WELCH, CHRIS LEE AND SOME SURPRISE GUESTS.

95 MIN. COLOR

CODE A

THE 1936 CLASSIC MARIJUANA



HERE IS THE ALL TIME CAMP CLASSIC OF THE 30'S THAT WARNS OF THE DANGER OF MARIJUANA!!! YOU'LL SURELY BE ADDICTED TO THIS GREAT PROPAGANDA EPIC.

65 MIN CODE K

STAR TREK



STAR TREK: WHERE NO MAN HAS GONE BEFORE. THE PILOT SHOW OF THE BEST SCI-FI SERIES EVER. WITH WILLIAM SHATNER AND LEONARD NIMOY. ALSO INCLUDE IS STAR TREK BLOOPER REEL #2 (THE FIRST SEASON GOOFS).

60 MIN. COLOR

CODE N



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Comedy

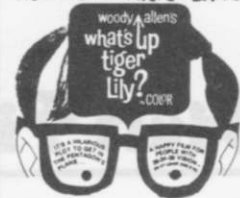


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THE ACE TRUCKING COMPANY...An improv group doing biting satire on "The New Army. With TV star Fred Willard. 30 MIN, Color.CODE K
THE CHICKEN LITTLE SHOW...Madcap comedy from the San Francisco group.CODE A
MOTHER'S LITTLE NETWORK...Campus comedy from Boston. 30 MIN, Color.CODE K

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"WHAT'S UP, TIGER LILY?" IS PURE WOODY ALLEN INSANITY. THIS IS A JAPANESE GANGSTER MOVIE WITH ALL OF THE SOUND-TRACK REMOVED AND REPLACED WITH WOODY'S DIALOGUE. IT'S A TOTAL RIOT!

80 MIN

CODE N

STAR TREK BLOOPERS

SUPER BLOOPERS #1 - A GREAT GROUP OF GOOFS, THAT ARE NOT NEARLY AS ELEGANT. FIRST, WE HAVE THOSE "EVEN-LOVIN'" STAR TREK BLOOPERS (REEL #1 IF YOU MUST KNOW), AND THEN 10 MINUTES OF OUTRAGES FROM ROMANIAN PICTURES (OH I, THAT LANGUAGE). INCLUDED ARE THE "MY MAN GODFREY" BLOOPERS. ALSO HERE ARE THE ABBOTT & COSTELLO BLOOPERS, OUR SPORTS SAKU REEL, AND THE TV BROADCAST BLOOPERS WITH KING CRISBY, SAKU DAVIS & PETER LAMFORD. SPRINKLED THRU-OUT ARE COMMERCIALS, BOTH REAL AND ON-REEL. COLOR AND BLACK & WHITE.CODE X

SUPER BLOOPERS #2 - IF THE FIRST TAPE IS NOT ENOUGH, HERE IS MORE HAPINESS FOR YOU. WE START OFF WITH STAR TREK AGAIN (REEL #2) AND THEN GO TO THE JAMES ARNESS "GUNGHOE" REEL. FOLLOWING THAT IS THE SAKU REEL WITH SAKU HAWK, SAKU RICKLES & OTHERS. THEN ITS THE "ALL STAR BOMB DRIVE" (IN COLOR) WITH HAWKIE, THE BOO COUPLE, AND THE HISSON-HISSON BURCH. TOPPING THIS OFF ARE NEWS SAKUS THAT YOU NEVER SAW ON THE 6 O'CLOCK NEWS, AND MORE CRAZY COMMERCIALS. COLOR & BLACK & WHITE.CODE X



A WIERD LITTLE BLACK COMEDY BY ROGER CORMAN ABOUT A BOTANIST WHO DEVELOPS A NEW STRAIN OF PLANT. "FEED ME 1" SAYS HIS CREATION, AND HE DOES...WITH PARTS OF HUMAN BEINGS. VERY FUNNY, AND WITH JACK NICHOLSON IN A GREAT CAMEO ROLE.

80 MIN, B&W

CODE N

CHEECH AND CHONG PERFORM

CHEECH AND CHONG PERFORM AGAIN?

TWO DIFFERENT TAPES BY THE COMEDIANS WHO CREATED "UP IN SMOKE". WATCH THEM IN THEIR HIGHLY FUNNY ANTICS AND SEE IF YOU CAN TOKE IT ALL IN.

CHEECH & CHONG PERFORM (50 MIN, COLOR).....CODE N
CHEECH & CHONG AGAIN (50 MIN, COLOR).....CODE N



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CODE N



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100 MIN

CODE P

Andy Warhol's "HEAT"



BETTY BOOP FESTIVAL - AN HOUR OF CLASSIC ANIMATION FROM THE DRAWING BOARD OF MAX FLEISHER. INCLUDING 'SOS', 'BETTY'S MUSEUM', 'MOTHER NUGELAND', 'IS MY PALM RED?', 'BETTY'S RISE TO FAME', 'BETTY IN BLUNDERLAND' AND 'MAKING STARS'. BLACK AND WHITE.CODE K



NUDIE CLASSICS - NOT VERY DARING, BUT THIS WAS HOT STUFF IN DAD'S DAY. AN HOUR OF WHOPEE WHICH BEGINS WITH "WHY GIRLS WALK HOME", A CLASSIC FROM 1925. THEN "DORMITORY SECRETS", WHICH LETS YOU IN ON THE GOINGS-ON IN A TYPICAL (?) GIRL'S DORM OF 1937. FOLLOWING THIS ARE TWO GOODIES. A FANTASY ABOUT NUDES ON TV, CALLED "UNCLE SI AND THE SIRENS" AND THE DANCE EPIC "THE FOLLIES". ALSO HERE IS "NUDE FROLICS", A HOLLYWOOD POOL PARTY, AND A COUPLE OF CARTOON GREATS, "BURIED TREASURE" AND "LITTLE ANNIE". COLOR AND BLACK & WHITE.CODE K



FAIRYTALES

IN ORDER TO SAVE HIS THRONE, THE PRINCE MUST PRODUCE AN HEIR. WITH THE HELP OF HIS LOYAL ADVISOR (PROF. TWIN COREY) HE SETS OUT TO FIND A PRINCESS. WILL HE SUCCEED? SOMETIMES FAIRYTALES DO COME TRUE.

85 MIN

CODE P



PLAYBOY'S KRISTINE DeBELL STARS AS ALICE WHO STEPS THRU THE LOOKING GLASS AND LANDS IN A STRANGE AND SENSUAL WORLD

74 MIN

CODE P



THESE ARE THE TALES OF ROBIN AND HIS BOLD AND LUSTY MEN. IT ALL HAPPENED WHEN KNIGHTHOOD WAS IN FLOWER - AND MAIDENS IN DISTRESS GOT MORE THAN JUST A HELPING HAND. THIS STORY TELLS YOU WHAT REAL LY WENT ON IN SHERWOOD FOREST!!

82 MIN

CODE P

THE POINT

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90 MIN

CODE P



FOR YOUR ENTERTAINMENT

THE CLOWNS...BRILLIANT STUDY BY FEDERICO FELLINI.....CODE P
THE CHINESE GODFATHER...GREAT FUNG-FU ACTION.....CODE P
LOST IN SPACE...THE PILOT SHOW OF THE FAMOUS TV SERIES...SEE HOW THE ROBINSONS GOT LOST.....CODE K
POPCORN...A CONCERT FILM WITH THE MUSIC OF HENDRIX, THE STONES, THE BEE GEES, VANILLA FUDGE AND MORE.....CODE N



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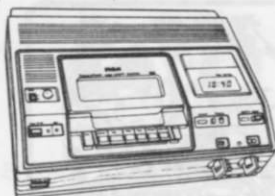
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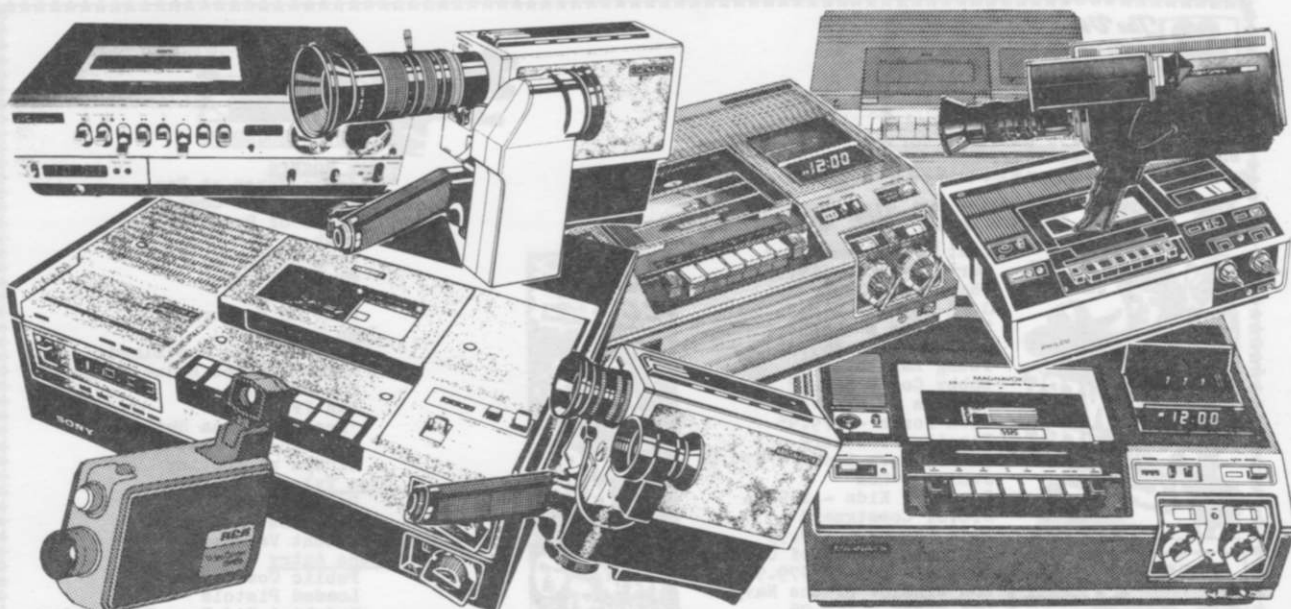
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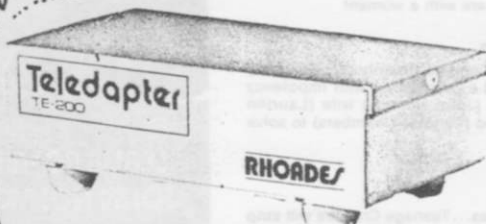
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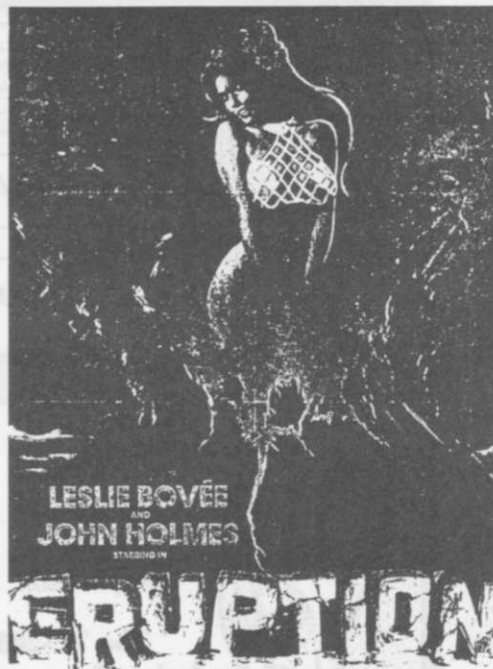
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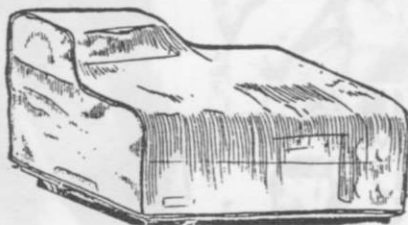
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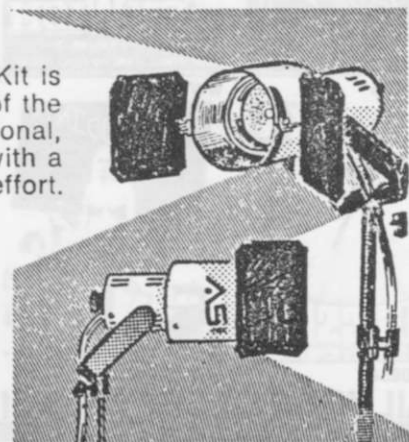
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U-Matic and Beta Notes

by Joe Mazzini

Fate is certainly a strange creature! For six months now I have been collecting material on the three color TV systems that are in operation around the world. My file is now over four inches thick and I was really depressed with the thought of sifting through all of it to write a few pages. Well, VIDEOGRAPHY has come to my rescue with the best condensed study I have ever seen of the NTSC, PAL, and SECAM systems. I highly recommend the March issue of that magazine to you.

There was a great deal that wasn't said, however, and since we are known far and wide for our "folksy" approach, I thought that I'd tackle the problem anyway.

Whether or not you know it, our system (NTSC) is the most complicated and difficult to work with. It requires extensive additional electronics in the TV receiver. It also has been aptly called Never The Same Color. Even with the advent of VTR (a hue control signal transmitted by many TV stations and received by the new sets manufactured by Sony, GE, and the like), the hue varies from station to station.

NTSC was accepted as the U.S. standard because it was compatible with the B&W receivers invented in the late '40's. Politics and General Sarnoff (of RCA) were also involved, so we're stuck with NTSC.

The map on the next page (provided by those nice people at Panasonic) shows how the world is divided in terms of TV systems. Unfortunately, the map uses red and green, which will probably translate into the same shade of gray when printed with this article, but a chart appears below the map giving you more detailed specifications for each sub-system.

Basically, only the U.S., Canada, Mexico, and Japan are on the NTSC system. PAL exists in

most of Europe (except France) and appears in Australia and Brazil (modified). SECAM is used in France and the communist countries.

My personal viewing tastes favor the PAL system (also called Peace At Last by its advocates).

Chart #2 (from Devlin Productions, Inc., 150 W. 55th St., New York NY 10019) shows the breakdown for each country. As you can see from this chart, you receive 625 lines on 50 fields with the PAL and only 525 lines in 60 fields with the NTSC. The SECAM system gives you 625 lines in 50 fields also, but is different electronically.

Seeing PAL or SECAM for the first time in a bright room is kind of disturbing because of the "flicker" created by the 50Hz line voltage frequency. We are used to a quicker 60Hz frequency, which gives us 10 more fields per second. Strangely enough, the Rand Corporation released a paper that discussed how, in rare cases, the 50Hz frequency can cause epileptic seizures. Apparently the rate is just slow enough to trigger such a seizure. The idea is reasonable enough because of the U.S.'s experience with upset stomachs and epileptic attacks during strobe lamp usage at rock concerts and discos.

Experience has shown that the NTSC system has one main problem, which is its great sensitivity to phase errors in the sub-carrier containing the color information. All transmitter and relay stations, therefore, must be fitted with expensive phase correction and stabilization circuits. Videocassette machines must be provided with extremely precise auxiliary circuits for keeping the tape speed constant.

In 1958, the SECAM system came about, thanks to the work of Dr. H. de France. Dr. de France used basic NTSC ideas, but instead of putting two sub-carriers for the color, he was able to achieve better results by

using one. Because of this, you need not adjust your color or hue controls on SECAM TV sets.

There are problems, however, with the SECAM, and they appear when a program that is telecast in color is viewed on a B&W set. The picture has a net pattern to it and, therefore, requires some of the same NTSC circuitry to deal with it. But, if you have a color set, there is no problem.

Ironically, it costs just as much to make a SECAM color TV as a NTSC one. Though the cost is basically the same, there are still several advantages to SECAM. SECAM is much easier to operate and gives you an additional 100 lines of information (resolution). In regions with good reception, the two systems can give identical results, but as the reception conditions deteriorate, it is largely a matter of personal taste as to which is more annoying: the increasingly false reproduction of colors in the NTSC system or the unpleasant interference by noise in the SECAM system.

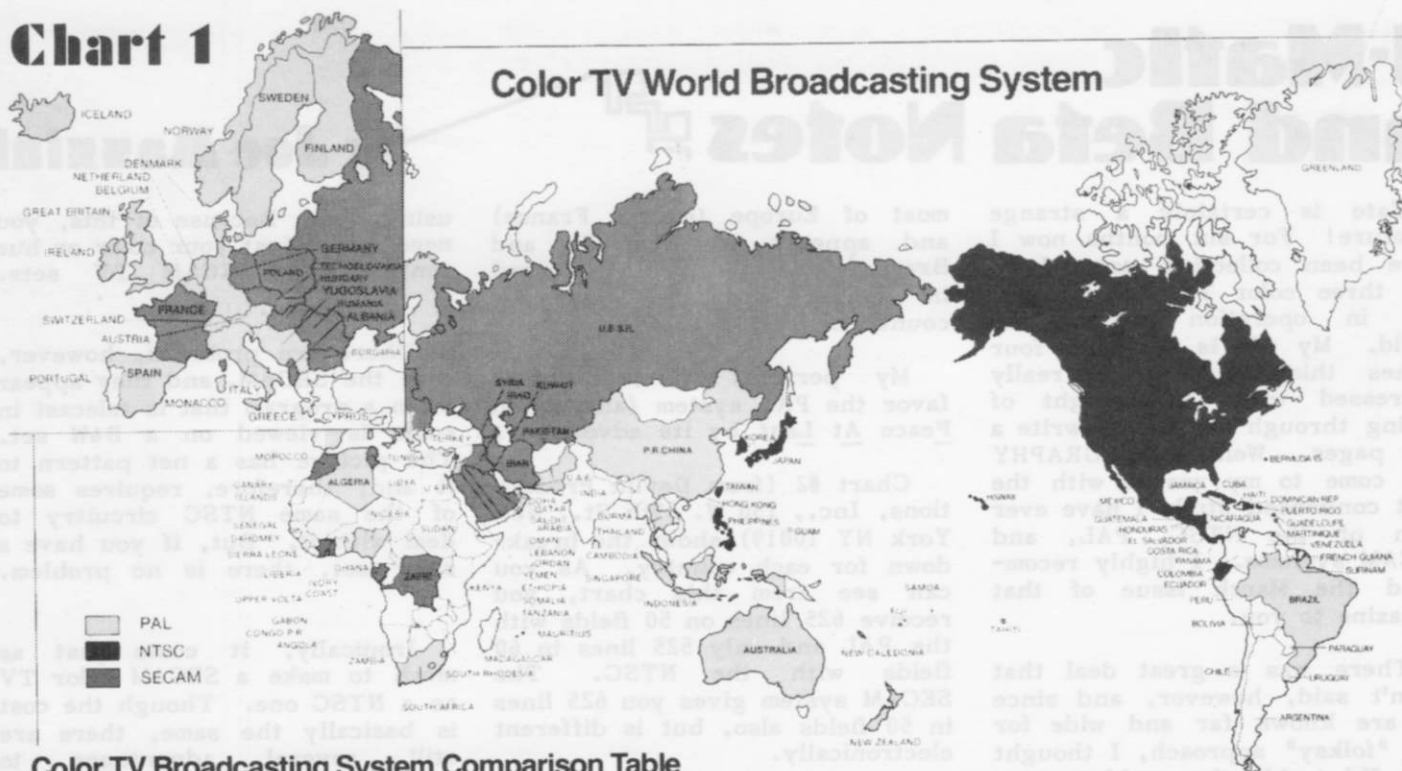
However, the SECAM system has very definite advantages in connection with use in magnetic recording of color television programs. With the NTSC system, the videocassette recorder must be fitted with extremely complicated control circuits or with variable electronic delay lines to keep the tape and head speed constant (as mentioned before).

But a serious problem arises when a recording made on SECAM is transferred to NTSC. It is a very complicated process and only a few companies in the U.S. make transfers from one standard to another.

Image Transform is the best known. Devlin, however, is becoming widely known because of their lower cost and superb

Chart 1

Color TV World Broadcasting System



Color TV Broadcasting System Comparison Table

CHARACTERISTICS	A BRITISH	B GERBER	C BELGIAN	D O.I.R.T.	E FRENCH	F BELGIAN	G GERBER	H BELGIAN	I BRITISH	K modified O.I.R.T.	K1 modified O.I.R.T.	L FRENCH	M R.T.M.A.	N R.T.M.A.
	VHF	VHF	VHF	VHF	VHF	VHF	VHF/UHF	UHF	VHF/UHF	UHF	VHF/UHF	UHF	VHF/UHF	VHF/UHF
Number of lines per picture (frame)	405	625	625	625	819	819	625	625	625	625	625	625	525	625
Field frequency (fields/second)	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	42	42
Picture (frame) frequency (pictures/second)	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	30	25
Line frequency (lines/second)	10 125	15 625	15 625	15 625	20 475	20 475	15 625	15 625	15 625	15 625	15 625	15 625	15 750	15 625
Nominal video bandwidth (Mc/s)	3	5	5	6	10	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4.2	4.2
Nominal radio-frequency bandwidth (Mc/s)	5	7	7	8	14	7	8	8	8	8	8	8	6	6
Sound carrier relative to vision carrier (Mc/s)	-3.5	-5.5	-5.5	-6.5	-11.15	-5.5	-5.5	-5.5	-6	-6.5	-6.5	-6.5	+4.5	+4.5
Nominal width of vestigial sideband (Mc/s)	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	2	0.75	0.75	1.25	1.25	0.75	1.25	1.25	0.75	0.75
Type of polarity of vision modulation	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	POS	NEG	NEG	NEG	NEG	NEG	POS	NEG	NEG
Type of sound modulation	AM	FM	AM	FM	AM	AM	FM	FM	FM	FM	FM	AM	FM	FM
Pre emphasis	—	50% s	50% s	50% s	—	50% s	50% s	50% s	50% s	50% s	50% s	—	75% s	75% s
Ratio of effective radiated powers of vision and sound	4/1	10/1	4/1	2/1 5/1	4/1	4/1	10/1	5/1-10/1	5/1	2/1-5/1	2/1-5/1	8/1	10/1-5/1	10/1-5/1

Chart 2

DEVIN
WORLD VIDEO STANDARDS

	LINES/FIELD	COLOR	VOLTAGE (V)	FREQUENCY (Hz)
A	AFGHANISTAN 625/50	PAL SECAM	220	50
	ALBANIA 625/50	PAL	220	50
	ALGERIA 625/50	PAL	127-220	50
	ANDORRA 625/50	PAL	220	50
	ANGOLA 625/50	PAL	220	50
	ARGENTINA 625/50	PAL	220	50
	AUSTRALIA 625/50	PAL	240	50
	AUSTRIA 625/50	PAL	220	50
	AZORES 625/50	PAL	220	50
B	BAHAMAS 625/50	PAL	120	60
	BAHRAIN 625/50	PAL	220	50
	BANGLADESH 625/50	PAL	120	60
	BARBADOS 625/50	NTSC	120	60
	BELGIUM 625/50	PAL	127-220	50
	BERMUDA 625/50	NTSC	120	60
	BOLIVIA 625/50	PAL M	115-230	50
	BRAZIL 625/50	SECAM	220	50
	BULGARIA 625/50	SECAM	220	50
	BURUNDI 625/50	PAL	220	50
	CAMEROON 625/50	NTSC	127-220	50
	CANADA 625/50	NTSC	110-240	60
	CANARY REP 625/50	PAL	220	50
	CENTRAL AFRICAN REP 625/50	PAL	220	50
	CEYLON 625/50	NTSC	230	50
	CHAD 625/50	NTSC	220	50
	CHILE 625/50	NTSC	220	50
	CHINA (PEOPLES REP) 625/50	NTSC	160-240	60
	COLOMBIA 625/50	NTSC	160-240	60
	CONGO (PEOPLES REP) 625/50	SECAM	220	50
	COSTA RICA 625/50	NTSC	115	60
	CUBA 625/50	SECAM	120	60
	CURACAO 625/50	NTSC	120	60
	CYPRUS 625/50	SECAM	220	50
	CZECHOSLOVAKIA 625/50	SECAM	220	50
	DAHOMY 625/50	SECAM	220	50
	DENMARK 625/50	PAL	220	50
	DOMINICAN REP 625/50	NTSC	110	60
	ECUADOR 625/50	NTSC	120	60
	EGYPT 625/50	SECAM	220	50
	EL SALVADOR 625/50	NTSC	110	60
	ETHIOPIA 625/50	SECAM	127	50
	FILIPINES 625/50	SECAM	240	50
	FINLAND 625/50	PAL	220	50
	FRANCE 625/50	SECAM	115-230	50
	GABON 625/50	SECAM	127-220	50
	GAMBIA 625/50	SECAM	220	50
	GERMANY (DEM REP) 625/50	SECAM	220	50
	GERMANY (FED REP) 625/50	PAL	220	50
	GHANA 625/50	SECAM	230	50
	GIBRALTAR 625/50	SECAM	230	50
	GREAT BRITAIN 625/50	PAL	127-220	50
	GUATEMALA 625/50	NTSC	110-220	60
	GUINEA 625/50	SECAM	127-220	50
	GUINEA-BISSAU 625/50	SECAM	115-220	50
	HAWAII 625/50	NTSC	117	60
	HONG KONG 625/50	PAL	220	50
	HUNGARY 625/50	SECAM	220	50
	ICELAND 625/50	PAL	220	50
	INDIA 625/50	PAL	220	50
	INDONESIA 625/50	SECAM	220	50
	IRAN 625/50	SECAM	220	50
	IRAQ 625/50	SECAM	220	50
	IRELAND 625/50	PAL	220	50
	ISRAEL 625/50	SECAM	220	50
	ITALY 625/50	PAL	127-220	50
	IVORY COAST 625/50	SECAM	220	50
	JAMAICA 625/50	PAL	110	60
	JAPAN 625/50	NTSC	100-200	60
	JORDAN 625/50	PAL	220	50
	KENYA 625/50	PAL	240	50
	KOREA (NORTH) 625/50	NTSC	100	60
	KOREA (SOUTH) 625/50	SECAM	110-190	60
	KUWAIT 625/50	SECAM	120	60
	LEBANON 625/50	SECAM	120	60
	LIBERIA 625/50	SECAM	120	60
	LIBYA 625/50	SECAM	120	60
	LUXEMBOURG 625/50	SECAM	120-208	50
	MALAGASY REP 625/50	SECAM	127-220	50
	MALAWI 625/50	SECAM	220	50
	MALAYSIA 625/50	PAL	240	50
	MALI 625/50	SECAM	125	50
	MALTA 625/50	SECAM	240	50
	MARTINIQUE 625/50	SECAM	125	50
	MAURITANIA 625/50	SECAM	220	50
	MAURITIUS 625/50	SECAM	220	50
	MEXICO 625/50	SECAM	127-220	50
	MONACO 625/50	SECAM	125	50
	MONROVIA 625/50	SECAM	115	50
	MOZAMBIQUE 625/50	SECAM	220	50
	NETHERLANDS 625/50	PAL	220	50
	NETHERLANDS ANTILLES 625/50	SECAM	220	50
	NEW CALEDONIA 625/50	SECAM	220	50
	NEW ZEALAND 625/50	PAL	230	50
	NICARAGUA 625/50	SECAM	117	60
	NIGER (REP) 625/50	SECAM	220	50
	NIGERIA 625/50	PAL	220	50
	NORWAY 625/50	PAL	230	50
	OMAN 625/50	PAL	220	50
	PAKISTAN 625/50	PAL	220	50
	PANAMA 625/50	NTSC	110	60
	PARAGUAY 625/50	SECAM	220	50
	PERU 625/50	NTSC	120	60
	PHILIPPINES 625/50	SECAM	115	60
	POLAND 625/50	SECAM	220	50
	PORTUGAL 625/50	SECAM	110-220	50
	PUERTO RICO 625/50	NTSC	120	60
	RHODESIA 625/50	SECAM	220	50
	RUMANIA 625/50	SECAM	220	50
	RWANDA 625/50	SECAM	220	50
	SAMOA 625/50	SECAM	120-230	50
	SAUDI ARABIA 625/50	SECAM	125	50
	SENEGAL 625/50	PAL	230	50
	SERBIAN REPUBLIC 625/50	PAL	220	50
	SINGAPORE 625/50	PAL	220	50
	SOMALIA (REP OF) 625/50	PAL	220	50
	SOUTH AFRICA 625/50	PAL	127-220	50
	SPANISH SAHARAN TR 625/50	NTSC	220	60
	ST KITTS 625/50	PAL	220	50
	SUDAN 625/50	PAL	220	50
	SURINAM 625/50	NTSC	115-127	60
	SWAZILAND 625/50	SECAM	220	50
	SWEDEN 625/50	PAL	220	50
	SWITZERLAND 625/50	PAL	220	50
	SYRIA 625/50	SECAM	115-220	50
	TAHITI 625/50	SECAM	120	60
	TANZANIA 625/50	NTSC	100	60
	THAILAND 625/50	PAL	220	50
	TOGO 625/50	SECAM	127-220	50
	TOGOLESE REP 625/50	SECAM	117-220	50
	TRINIDAD & TOBAGO 625/50	NTSC	110-220	50
	TURKEY 625/50	SECAM	120	60
	TURKISH REPUBLIC 625/50	SECAM	117-220	50
	UGANDA 625/50	PAL	220	50
	UPPER VOLTA 625/50	PAL M	220	50
	URUGUAY 625/50	SECAM	110	60
	U.S.A. 625/50	SECAM	220	50
	U.S.S.R. 625/50	PAL M	110-220	60
	VENEZUELA 625/50	SECAM	120	50
	VIETNAM 625/50	SECAM	115	60
	VIRGIN IS 625/50	SECAM	220	50
	YEMEN 625/50	PAL	220	50
	YUGOSLAVIA 625/50	SECAM	220	50
	ZAMBIA 625/50	SECAM	230	50

quality. My favorite is ECC:

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Bernie Keach, Jr., is the man to contact if you need some transfer work done. ECC charges only about 1/3 of what Image Transform does. Be prepared for rates of \$100 to \$300 per hour for standards conversion.

You all know that to duplicate within the same format or to transfer from one format to another (both within the same standard) only two machines are required: one to play a tape and the other to record it.

To convert from one standard to another also takes two machines: one capable of playing back on the standard on which the tape that's being converted is recorded, and the other a recorder capable of recording on the standard that is ultimately required. However, in this case,

the output of the playback VTR cannot be directly connected to the input of the recorder. A device called a "Scan Converter" must be inserted between the two VTR's.

There are basically two types of "Scan Converters": Digital and Optical. The digital scan converter is a more recent development and is better suited for broadcast use. The best quality one is the D.I.C.E., which runs, I believe, around \$250,000.

The optical scan converter is more basic in design and is well suited for non-broadcast use. Books can be and have been written about these two types of converters, and I suggest that you check out Broadcast Management & Engineering magazine for advertisements and details.

The optical approach creates more degradation in the quality of the material being transferred and is mechanical in nature.

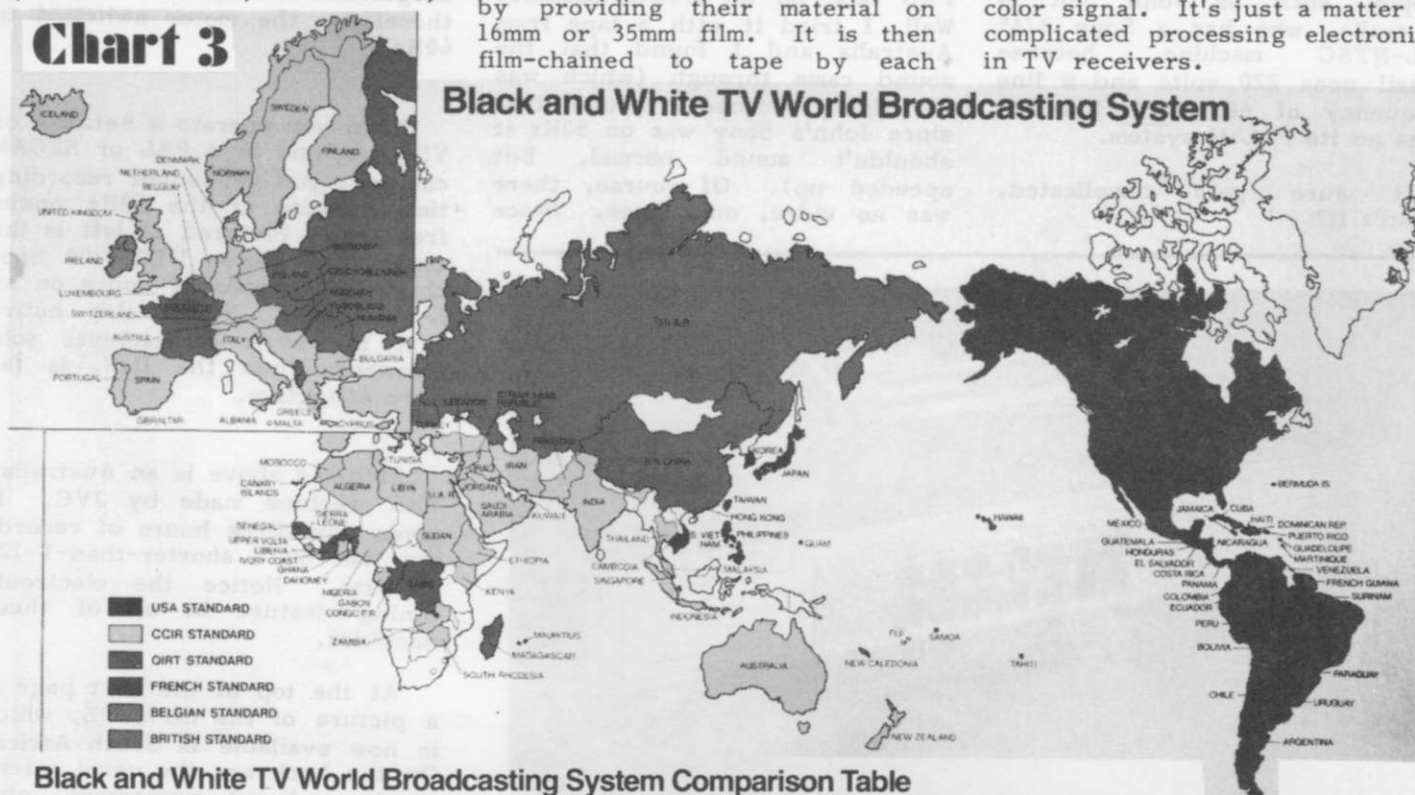
Most program suppliers get around the three-system problem by providing their material on 16mm or 35mm film. It is then film-chained to tape by each

country for its own system.

The original intention of SECAM was to reduce the technical complications inherent in the NTSC system. Ironically, the PAL system is a little more complicated than both. In the PAL system, an identification signal must be transmitted for the phase synchronization between the electronic switches in the encoder and decoder. The PAL system requires the transmission of a line-switching signal as well as a color burst.

Though this article is primarily concerned with color TV standards, you should be aware that there are six black and white systems in operation around the world. Chart #3 gives details. The first thing that you'll notice is that the number of scanning lines varies tremendously, from a high of 819 in France to a low of 405 in Britain. I'll leave this mess for you to research on your own because we're obsessed with color. Suffice it to say, the black and white signal is compatible with each system's respective color signal. It's just a matter of complicated processing electronics in TV receivers.

Chart 3



Black and White TV World Broadcasting System Comparison Table

ITEM	SYSTEM	USA	CCIR	OIRT	BRITISH	FRANCE	BELGIUM
Number of Scanning Lines		525	625	625	405	819	625
Channel & Frequency Width MHz		6 MHz	7 MHz	8 MHz	5 MHz	14 MHz	7 MHz
Video Frequency Band Width		4	5	6	3	10.4	5
Position of Audio Carrier (as compared with Video Carrier) (MHz)		+4.5	+5.5	+6.5	-3.5	+11.15	+5.5
Position of Audio Carrier (as compared with Channel End) (MHz)		-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	+0.25	+0.1	-0.25
Interlace		2/1	2/1	2/1	2/1	2/1	2/1

ITEM	SYSTEM	USA	CCIR	OIRT	BRITISH	FRANCE	BELGIUM
Linear Frequency (Hz)		15.750	15.625	15.625	10.125	20.475	15.625
Field Frequency (Hz)		60	50	50	50	50	50
Number of Images Transmitted		30	25	25	25	25	25
Video Modulation (Polarity)		Negative	Negative	Negative	Positive	Positive	Positive
Audio Modulation System		FM	FM	FM	AM	AM	AM
Synchronism with Power Frequency		Synchronizable or not synchronizable	Not synchronizable	Not synchronizable	Not synchronizable	Not synchronizable	Not synchronizable

Not long ago a friend in Brazil sent me some commercials. The tape was recorded in PAL-M. It is completely compatible with NTSC except in color. The chroma (color) sub-carrier has been moved down to 3.75611 MHz, while the NTSC's carrier is 3.579545 MHz. Another major difference is the way the color green is coded/decoded. In the PAL-M system, the color levels are presented by Y-B, Y-R, and Y. In the NTSC system, the levels are Y-B, Y-R, and Y-G. They use a matrix and, by combining the three levels of the PAL system, a green level appears.

Bob replaced his RCA VHS's original crystal (X802, VXO) to a frequency of 3.575611 MHz and was able to record PAL-M. With this modification, I was able to play his VHS tapes in color with good results as long as I turned my hue control all the way counter-clockwise on my receiver.

Now, such a simple modification won't work for "normal" PAL people, such as John Seit in Australia, who has a Sony 3/4" PAL-NTSC machine, because Brazil uses 220 volts and a line frequency of 60Hz and has 525 lines on its PAL-M system.

It sure gets complicated, doesn't it?

VIDEO SYSTEM

HR-3300EA

VHS

PAL



What happens when you play a PAL tape on an NTSC machine? Well, I tried it with a tape from Australia and I found that the sound came through (which was surprising because I thought that since John's Sony was on 50Hz it shouldn't sound normal, but speeded up). Of course, there was no video, only lines. Since

John's machine is switchable, I imagine he switched to NTSC and, therefore, the motor switched to 60Hz.

When you operate a Betamax or VHS machine in a PAL or SECAM country, you get longer recording time because of the 50Hz power frequency. Pictured at left is the cover of a Sanyo VTC-9300 brochure that claims 3½ hours on an L-750 tape. You'll also notice that the style of machines sold elsewhere than the U.S. is far more attractive.

Pictured above is an Australian VHS machine made by JVC. It gives you three hours of recording time on a shorter-than-T-120 cassette. Notice the electronic tuning feature in all of these machines.

At the top of the next page is a picture of the SL-8000E, which is now available in South Africa. On the back are the usual antenna in and out connectors, plus video in and out. But, included too, is a voltage selector switch to make the machine compatible with 110V, 127V, 220V, or 240V 50Hz systems. The neatest thing is that a test switch is also included which allows you to tune your TV set with a test pattern. A nice touch!



Betacord Color Video Cassette Recorder For Programmable One-Touch 3½ Hour Recording

- ☐ 3 hours and 15 minutes recording and playback time with L-750 video cassettes.
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The SL-8000E features many advantages



Just now available here in the U.S. is the Sony VO-2630, a remarkable 3/4" machine that records and plays in the PAL/SECAM/NTSC systems. Now, remember, you can't just put a PAL tape into this machine and copy it onto an NTSC one. In fact, you must purchase one of the several monitors available from Sony to view the tapes the

2630 plays. The PVM-1850PS is an ideal monitor because it receives all three systems. A combination package of receiver and VCR will run you about \$7000.

What's the solution to all of the headaches involved in trading tapes from one country to another? I feel it is to adopt a

super-system with, say, 1000 lines resolution. This new system would be the standard all over the world. TV receivers would be sold with a switch. In England, for example, you would watch PAL most of the time, but could switch to the 1000 line requirements to watch satellite broadcasts, video discs, or the yet-to-come revolutionary digital video tapes. This way, no present system would become obsolete.

Matsushita is also thinking along these lines. At the CES show in Las Vegas they demonstrated their high-definition color TV system. In the demonstration they used a special wide-screen projection system that had an aspect ratio of 3.5 (much like Cinemascope movies you see in a theater). 1125 lines of information are used, creating a resolution of 800 lines at the red, green and blue input.

Most critics were very impressed with it. Marc, however, was not. The most fascinating thing is that this system (camera and projection system) is now available for purchase. If you're interested in such a closed-circuit system, contact Matsushita. I'm afraid that the price will be rather steep, but it may be the perfect solution to medical and educational instruction.

A high source at MCA told me that they, too, were thinking along these lines. A 1000 line resolution technology is possible right now with the disc. For projection TV systems it would be ideal. At the same time we could standardize the voltage and frequency requirements of the power supply for the 1000 line mode.

Several manufacturers have come out with outboard tuner/timers for use in 3/4" decks and portable videocassette recorders. The new Sony TT-300 is a jewel with digital timer and light-touch channel selection. NEC has also come out with a tuner/timer called the TU-810, which is pictured at the top of the following page.

Though Sony doesn't advertise it, I am sure that their TT-300 is available in SECAM and PAL. The NEC tuner, however, gives specifications in their brochure for such systems and it might be a solution to some problems you

SONY

CCIR/PAL/SECAM
U-matic
U-matic Colour Videocassette Recorder
VO-2630



NEC

TUNER TIMER

TU-810



foreign readers have been having in updating your tuner/timers.

The TT-300 runs around \$250-\$300. The NEC costs about the same, but requires a special adaptor (RB-100) to provide switched voltage to turn the machine on and off when unattended.

Well, that's about it folks. Just a couple of bits of trivia:

A couple of issues back I alerted Betamax owners to belt failures. It appears that this is not entirely a Betamax problem. The same difficulty occurs with VHS machines as well. It seems that manufacturers are using polyurethane in their belts and smog interacts with the chemical compounds composing the belt making them crack and eventually break. It's a problem that naturally (or unnaturally!) strikes only urban areas with high smog levels. I should have been suspicious long before now because I noticed that the vinyl roofs on cars around LA all eventually rot and come apart.

If you hear any unusual ticking sounds, get that belt replaced. In every case that I've seen (and now I've examined seven Betamax belts and two RCA VHS belts), it's the small crack

in the belt that gives you the warning. Tend to this soon because you don't want to go through the hassle of having to remove a partially-loaded or -unloaded tape.

Coming up next issue I'll review a new RF modulator which allows you to use Channel 33 rather than 3 or 4 for monitoring your videotapes. This way you can free your regular VHF channels and switch back and forth to UHF to see how your dubbing or whatever is coming along. Thanks go to Paul Weiss or PRI for telling me about it. I haven't tried one yet, but he says that a couple of his customers are delighted with it. Since it's available for only \$29.95, I'm a little suspicious. I do suggest, though, that you write to

JAMECO ELECTRONICS
1020 Howard Avenue
San Carlos CA 94070

for their catalog which lists and describes the "SUP 'R' MOD II."

Thanks to Devlin (those nice people I told you about that do great transfers from one TV system to another--located in New York) you 3/4" people now have a timing chart. It's printed a the right. [Of course, Jim Gibbon's more complete chart, first printed

DEVlin DATA CARD #1.

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000 — 00					
026 — 01		415 — 21		677 — 41	
052 — 02		430 — 22		688 — 42	
078 — 03		445 — 23		700 — 43	
101 — 04		459 — 24		711 — 44	
125 — 05		473 — 25		723 — 45	
147 — 06		487 — 26		734 — 46	
168 — 07		501 — 27		745 — 47	
189 — 08		514 — 28		756 — 48	
209 — 09		528 — 29		766 — 49	
229 — 10		542 — 30		777 — 50	
248 — 11		555 — 31		787 — 51	
266 — 12		568 — 32		798 — 52	
284 — 13		581 — 33		808 — 53	
302 — 14		594 — 34		820 — 54	
319 — 15		606 — 35		830 — 55	
336 — 16		618 — 36		840 — 56	
353 — 17		631 — 37		850 — 57	
369 — 18		642 — 38		860 — 58	
384 — 19		654 — 39		869 — 59	
400 — 20		665 — 40		879 — 60	
				889 — 61	
				899 — 62	

in TVN #5, is still available as part of our annual.--Ed]

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- Issue #13: How to defeat the muting circuit in the Betamax SL-8200 (or Zenith), Bob Burns' first column for "VHS" folks, Rambling Marc battles Universal attorneys, and reports on pay cable systems, lotsa questions and answers, great America 2Night cover. Biggest ish to date.
- Issue #14: First color cover. Report on new products at Summer Consumer Electronics Show, L-500/ Sony SL-8200 counter/index time chart, lots of info re: VHS format including Q & A's, report on the Sony SL-8600, TVN goes to two conventions, The Ultimate Video Room, much more!!
- Issue #15: How to clean the heads on a Betamax, QUBE update, How to dub from/to a VHS recorder, first installment of Ted Reinhart's reviews, "Skew Error" explained, we dream of the Betamax future, VHS and Beta formats brashly compared, 3 pages of letters, Q's & A's, etc.
- Issue #16: First issue of THE VIDEOPHILE, features our annual roundup of over 80 sources for pre-recorded videocassettes, an exclusive interview with video pioneer "Madman" Muntz, reports on our visits to two video shows, news, letters, much, much more in its 88 pages.
- Issue #17: VHS and Beta Counter/Index time charts, "Time Base Correctors" and Dropouts explained, how to defeat the muting circuit in the Betamax SL-8600, lots of tips, advice, letters, questions and answers, book reviews and tape reviews too. 80 pages.
- Issue #18: Our 1st Annual Video Disc Issue, featuring reviews of the Magnavox disc players, the MCA DiscoVision discs, and an interview with John Findlater, president of MCA's DiscoVision division. Also news of the "Betamax" copyright trial, backyard earth stations, and new products galore.

Most issues also contain Joe Mazzini's notes for 3/4" folks. Also advertisements galore!

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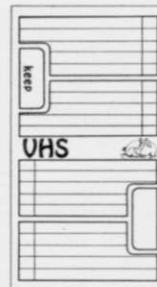
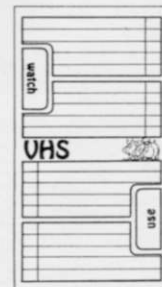
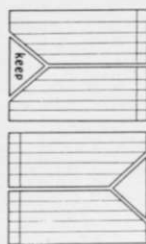
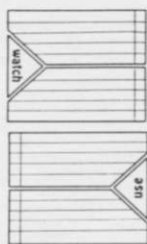
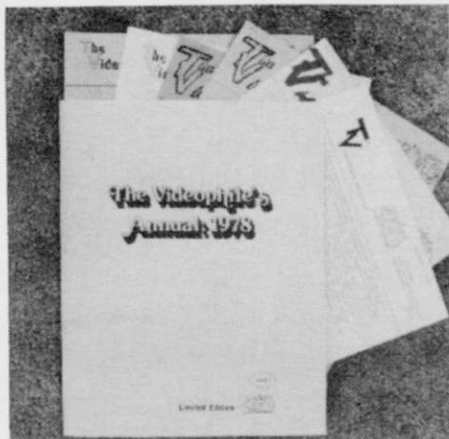
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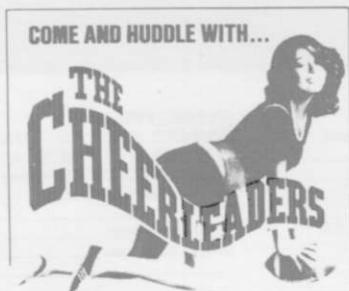
"Thanks for the pads. Fantastic design job!"--J.B. of Miss.

"Got my tape index cards a couple of weeks ago. Every tape has a card in it now. They're just great."--M.R., of Nebraska

At last! Cassette index cards for both formats! If you're like me, you never seem to have a 3x5 card or appropriate slip of paper at hand to write down titles on and slip into the box. The collector's cassette cards (shown here in both front and back views, reduced) are custom designed to fit into Beta and VHS format cassette boxes. They are deliberately designed without column headings so that you can adapt them to your own purposes, whether for temporarily or permanently indicating the contents of each cassette. When inserted in the box, the words "Watch," "Keep," "Use," or another of your choice, will be visible through the notch in the box. Best of all, these stiff cards come to you in pads of 50. Just peel one off when you need it,... the rest of the pad remains obediently available right next to your machine. The price? A true giveaway at 2 pads for \$2.50. (Yes, the expense of postage finally required an increase.)



Despite popular demand, we are proud to present THE VIDEOPHILE T-shirts! These are not cheap paper "iron on" transfer shirts, nor are they of the rubbery "peel-off-in-the-dryer" type. Rather they are expensive 50% polyester/50% cotton shirts which have been individually hand screened. The shirts are blue, come with the design shown, and are available in men's sizes S, M, L, and XL, as well as in a ladies' style in size L (or, if you prefer, one-size-fits-all). We'll have a picture of it and our even nicer [more expensive] one next issue. For those of you who can't wait, the "piggie" design shirts are \$6.00 each and are available for mailing now.



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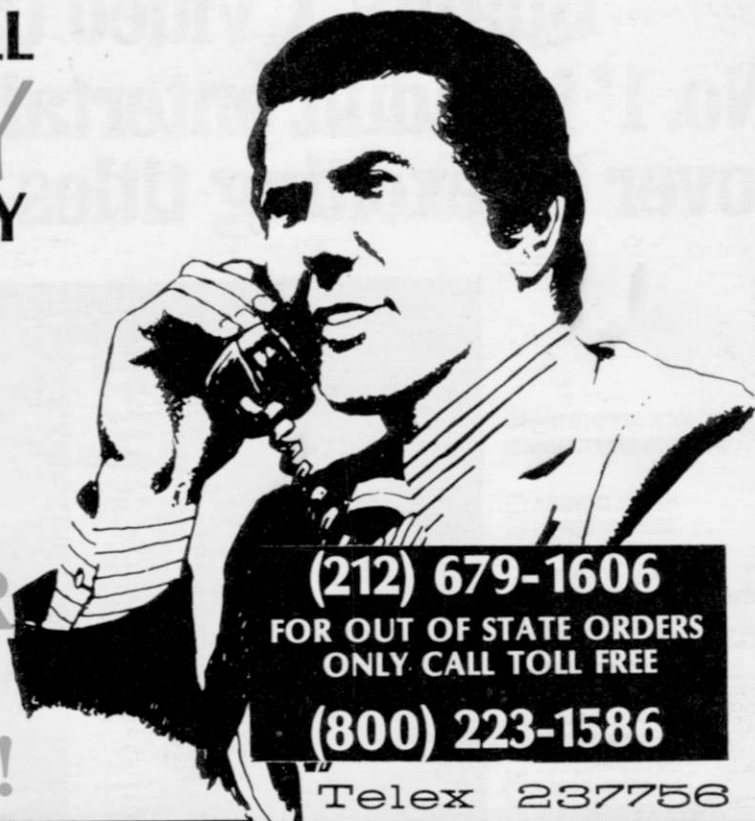
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