

# Tele-Visions

BY THORTON KANE

Hour-long trivia—the latest development in TV programming.

Perhaps because of the critical acclaim given to documentary studies in the past, the networks have now gone all the way in that area of programming.

"Armstrong Circle Theatre" last week presented a dubious effort that was devoted, for an entire yawn-filled hour, to a daring expose of gypsy fortune tellers, tea-room variety. And in the political field, "JFK-No. 1" drew on the almost two months of the new President's tenure, producing 56 minutes of trivial comment. Perhaps if they'd waited six months, the show might have had more to say, but as it was, there just wasn't enough material to go on.

"Medicine '61" is another show that dwells overlong on minutiae. After watching one 60-minute study of genetics, involving elaborate models much like Tinker-Toys, but actually representative of chromosome linkage, one thought occurred to us. That this show told us more about chromosomes than we wanted to know.

Giving credit where it's due, we must admit that there have been some among this year's documentaries that have been unusually interesting.

In the documentary vein, although dramatic in presentation, are two excellent shows, NBC's "The Lincoln Murder Case" (a one-time-only offering that we hope will be re-telecast). Also on NBC, we have consistently enjoyed "The Americans," a weekly drama based on authentic Civil War history.

As for documentaries per se, KTLA's "City at Night" returned last week with a well-written, well-produced study of warm-blooded sea animals, the bright and talented dolphin family.

The difficulty that seems to plague lesser documentary offerings seems to be that they manage to turn out consistently dull. In too many cases, factuality has been stressed at the expense of dramatic value and interest. In even more instances, the subject of the show has been of such small interest in itself that it has drowned in a sea of triviality.

WELL WHADDYA KNOW—Warners has given starring roles in their new western series "Tumbleweed" to two newcomers, Evan McCord and Chad Everett. (What ever happened to actors with names like Tom, Dick and Harry?) . . . A Dallas millionaire wants to buy a TV series for teen-age songstress Dodie Stevens—plans to call it "My Heart Belongs to Dodie" . . . "The Hathaways," a starring vehicle for the Marquis Chimps, is practically set on ABC next season. Oh yeah, Peggy Cass and Jack Weston are in it too . . . Tom Duggan has returned to KCOP after a forced vacation due to a disagreement with Alvin Planagan. If anyone's happy about it, he can thank the mediator, Jack Douglas of KCOP . . . Ernie Kovacs will tape portions of "Silents Please" at his Beverly Hills home . . . Mickey Rooney hops out of a "checkmate" segment and into a plane bound for a guesting spot on Jackie Gleason's show. Watch that coffee, Mick, Gleason looks a little too happy while he's sipping it . . . Darryl Hickman is really burning the candle. Days he films "The Americans" and nights he writes scripts for the "Loretta Young Show" . . . Clu Gulager, rugged (?) Billy the Kid of "Tall Man," just bought a motorcycle; he fell off on the way home and broke his wrist . . . NBC's "Omnibus" on March 6th will do a musical, "Battle of the Sexes"—starring Edie (MM) Adams and Myron McCormick . . . Gene Barry's wife Betty will get back into acting harness on her husband's "Bat Masterson" show in "No Amnesty for Death" . . . My Sister Eileen is having sponsor trouble and is destined for the scrap pile. (That's the best news we've had all week.) . . . Looks like Natalie Wood will say "yes" to a Perry Como guest appearance . . . If you're curious about Al Jarvis's beard, he's not going beatnik. It's part of the new character he's building to get into dramatic acting. His first role will be in an "Out-laws" segment.

## Life and Deeds of Adolf Eichman, Study of Inhumanity

"Focus on Eichmann," a probing documentary of the man responsible for unforgettable atrocities against the Jews during World War II, is presented as a special hour long program Tuesday, Mar. 7 from 9 to 10 p. m., KCOP, Channel 13.

Also studied in the vital program are the background of this man, who will never be forgotten by hundreds of thousands of Jews, and some of the infamous implications of the case.

Eichmann will go on trial for his war crimes in Israel some time early in April.

"Focus on Eichmann" will feature Dr. Ralph Kaplan, noted lecturer, radio and television commentator and one of America's top experts on the moral and legal implications of the Eichmann trial, and KCOP news editor Baxter Ward.

The only surviving member of his family who went through the Eichmann purge, Dr. Kaplan will question Dr. Eduard Schneider, German consul general, and Jacob

Nash, Israel consul for the 12 western states, and interview survivors of German concentration camps.

Also featured during the hour-long special will be film footage of Nazi atrocities, the Nuremberg trials and a look at Israel's courageous recovery program.

## Business Forecast

Three of the nation's top economists will present the "Business Outlook for 1961" in a live telecast from Concert Hall, Long Beach Municipal Auditorium, Tuesday, March 23, 9:30 to 10 p. m., Channel Eleven.

Moderating the discussion will be Dean Arthur M. Weimer, from the Indiana University School of Business, a nationally recognized authority on real estate and land economics. His topic will be the outlook for real estate, housing and mortgages.



PRIVATE EYE, PRIVATE EYE, a comedy-and-music spoof of the American private investigator, will be seen on U.S. Steel Hour, Wednesday, March 8, at 10 p. m. via Channel 2. From

left, Hans Conried, Edie Adams and Ernie Kovacs, stars of the show.



HONG KONG—Beautiful Rhonda Fleming is a witness to a crime in "The Woman in Gray," Wednesday's episode on ABC-TV, Channel 7, at 7:30 p. m.

## 'Steel' Hour Spoofs TV Detective Shows

A quartet of superb comics—Ernie Kovacs, Edie Adams, Hans Conried and Pat Carroll—will take a satirical look at the American private investigator in "Private Eye, Private Eye," to be seen on the U. S. Steel Hour. The Max Liebman comedy and music special will be presented Wednesday, March 8, at 10 p. m., Channel 2.

Pace, style and humor will be the weapons employed by the four laugh getters when they take good-natured aim at television's multi-form hero. Musical numbers, songs and dances, will punctuate the irreverent sketches dealing with many phases of a private detective's existence, including his domestic life.

Beginning behind scenes of a private eye TV series, Kovacs and Conried furnish a glimpse of an advertising agency representative confronting with some off-beat ideas from the sponsor, who would like to see a little culture like a murder committed on the steps of a library, woven into the violent episodes of the show.

In another sequence, "the private life of a private eye," the hero (Kovacs), while shooting it out with a dangerous criminal in a warehouse, is hounded by his wife (Miss Carroll), who insists he take time out to drink some soup she has brought him to safeguard his health.

Kovacs and Miss Adams, in "the good old days," kid the murder mysteries of an earlier period, when not violence, but elegance was the hallmark of the private investigator.

Charles Sanford will conduct the music and Barry Shear will direct the production.

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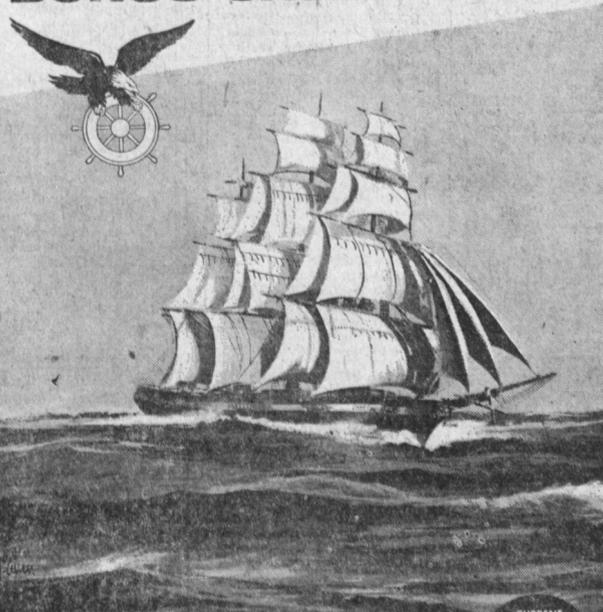
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