

Tele-Visions

BY THORTON KANE

Winston Churchill is said to have remarked about a number of things "up with which I will not put." No-where could those words be better applied than to television series.

There is no viewer who hasn't some pet dislike among the current shows, and most of us have several "up with which we will not put." As we start the new year, wouldn't most of us like to see the speedy demise of shows like the following.

"Dennis the Menace" — this show gets our unqualified vote as the worst ever seen on national TV. First of all, the boy who plays deadly Dennis manages to retain all of the comic character's destructive and annoying habits without inserting any of his charm. The adult actors are not much better and only serve to underline the fact that what is good in one medium can be disastrous in another.

"Flintstones" — second in line for the worst of the year title, has turned out to be an unfunny, surly remake of Jackie Gleason's "Honeymooners." The characters arouse no sympathy and the cartoon portrayal of Fred Flintstone shows us nothing but a loud-mouth of too small intelligence to be even occasionally amusing. Created by the talented producers of "Huckleberry Hound," "Flintstones" has been the most unpleasant surprise of the season.

Third on the worst list is "The Price is Right." Tele-cast for some mysterious reason in color, the show is a simple appeal to greed and envy, without even the small challenge of an interesting quiz game.

Of all the westerns that defame the screen, our worst vote goes to "Rebel." A maudling soap opera about a homeless refugee of the Civil War who wanders the west doing good works and writing a book that is inferred to be the unpublished masterpiece that will one day discredit Shakespeare.

The above constitute what we think are the bottom four shows in television. There are others no doubt even more annoying to other viewers. After the bottom four we find ourselves feeling less belligerent as we move up the line. Some others that have proved to be moderately to extremely distressing are: "Peter Loves Mary," "Lassie," "My Sister Eileen," "Angel," "Hawaiian Eye," "Aquanuts" and Michael Shayne.

Amazingly enough, the ratings on these shows are not as high as many shows that have been discontinued. It makes one wonder whether producers really care about the viewers or the ratings. Having long suspected that the viewer is of little interest to industry execs., we must conclude that the much-feared ratings have lost their hold as well.

WELL WHADDYA KNOW — "Bonanza's" Don Blocker has a MEAN wife. She cut off his goody supply to keep his weight down for the show — to 300 lbs!! . . . Barbara Heller, a local Hollywood hit in "Vintage 60," is rumored to be CBS-optioned as co-star of a new comedy series . . . Mrs. Miller (the regular member of Jack Paar's audience—who even follows the show out of town) SOMEHOW got a bit part in 20th Fox's "All Hands On Deck," What?? . . . Animated cartoon series programming will continually rise during the 1961-1962 season, which proves that consumer product sales are pretty encouraging . . . Channel 7 has bought the new Screen Gems TV series "Tallahassee 7000" (oh, no, not more numbers), starring Walter Matthau . . . TV news from Rio de Janeiro: "Father Knows Best" was elected the best TV film program of 1960. A happy surprise — and let's hope they see more than just comedy in the stories . . . KHJ, looking toward more adult viewing, has inaugurated a new format of 15 minute newscasts on the hour. Many local newscasters have been added to their current stable to provide variety of personalities . . . The "Shirley Temple Show" will present as its first western "rebel Gun" . . . NBC will cover the Inaugural Ball, Jan. 20, and actress-model-socialite, etc., etc. Dina Merrill will hostess.



TOP ATTRACTION is NBC's "Bat Masterson" for western shows. Gene Barry, with cane, stars on the successful half-hour series seen Thursday nights.

Anyone for Golf?



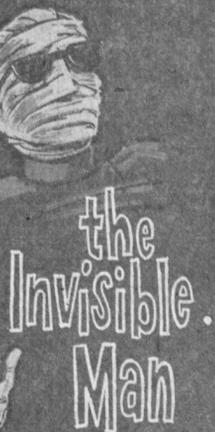
OFFICIAL HOSTESSES Carol Antonson, left, "Miss Duffer," and Arlene Hunter show KTTV's director of special events, Bill Welsh, the way the ball is slated to "curve," at Los Angeles Open Golf Tournament now in progress. The local station will air the balance of the event today and tomorrow at 2:30 p.m.



CHECKMATE—Charles Laughon on Saturday at 8:30 p.m. on ton portrays a far eastern missionary in "Terror From the East"

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RATED HIGH in TV circles is Channel 7's "THE FLINTSTONES," adult-aimed and animated cartoon situation comedy of the stone age. Seen Friday's at 8:30 p.m.

Monday — Friday 7 p.m.



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