

TV sells people; programs just bait for commercials

Consider: television stations and networks do not sell detergents or toothpaste or little cars with rotary engines.

TV stations and networks sell you. Or rather they promise to deliver your body at a certain time to people who sell the aforementioned items as well as fried chicken, deodorant or time-released aspirin tablets. Remember this. It's important. Tests may be given.

TV is able to hand you over to the commercial interests by capturing you with their varieties of bait, such as *All in the Family*, *Let's Make a Deal* or the weekend pro golf tourney. Landing you with that bait, TV sells you to Lever Brothers, Pepsi or Preparation H.

Nielsen promise

In the TV game, it is this promise-of-delivery system which makes a god of Mr. Nielsen and his ratings. These ratings, 1,100 pieces of slow-moving recording tape or 2,250 diaries scattered across the country, do not record viewer satisfaction or response. They merely indicate how well the bait is working and how many bodies can be delivered at any specific time.

ron wylie

eye of the beholder

If CBS, in conjunction with Nielsen's polling, says it can hand over 40 per cent of the television audience (44 million viewers) Mondays at 7:30 p.m. (EST) for *All in the Family*, then Crest and MacDonalds don't buy time, they buy bodies. And prime time rates vary according to Nielsen's weekly and monthly charts.

Once they've got you, commercials do sell you something.

Even the most inane ones, the ones with birds flying into kitchens and hands coming up out of the floor, sell their products. The ones with women reaching orgasm because they've gotten their husbands' shirts clean, or the reestablishment of domestic bliss through use of mountain grown coffee get the job done.

It works

Advertising works. No matter how stupid it is sometimes, advertising works.

Alka Seltzer, which traditionally uses some of the best TV commercials, so captured the market in the 1960s with its saturation advertising that marketing personnel estimated that in order for Alka Seltzer to sell more of its product, Americans would have to start having more headaches and upset stomachs.

Another way to see how well advertising works is to notice what happens when a product stops putting its spots over the airwaves. Where, oh where are Pepsodent and Bon Ami these days?

TV advertising works even when the bodies

Jazzmen's reunion 'sweet'

Review by Dave Ware

Musical reunions are events fraught with peril. When greats who were once allied get together for a reprise of their partnership, it often becomes painfully obvious to the audience, as it must to the musicians, that whatever the reasons for the initial breakup, they have usually grown no closer in the ensuing years.

Happily, this tendency does not always hold true. There are certain musicians who seem to be able to immediately mesh and sound as close together as they had been before. When these sort-of people meet, the result is a sweet triumph of communication and harmony, and an audience for such a happening knows that it has been present at the re-creation of something quite special.

Such a special occurrence took place the evening of November 24th, 1974 in New York's Carnegie Hall. Assembled were three of the all-time jazz masters: Chet Baker on trumpet, Gerry Mulligan on baritone sax and Stan Getz on tenor sax. Getz played as magnificently as ever, but the real raison d'être for the evening was the reunion of Mulligan and Baker, one-half of the famed Gerry Mulligan Quartet that established the sound of West Coast jazz some twenty years ago.

In the years that followed the dissolution of that monument of modern jazz, Mulligan and Baker went their separate ways. Mulligan fronted

clustered around the TV set know what it is the marketing hotshots are trying to do to them. And in the use of sex in advertising, Madison Avenue is at its most obvious. But it still works.

Remember Joe Namath and "Let Noxzema cream your face...?"

TV for commercials

When seen as a means to deliver the masses to a mass distributor, TV is not *Saturday Night at the Movies* or even *Face the Nation*. The most significant part of television broadcasting, the reason for its existence, consists of all those 30 and 60 second spots.

The commercials are sold for a mass audience, the greater the mass the more the advertising rate. As such, the commercials dictate the common denominator approach to television programming. TV is selling bodies and to get the greatest amount of bodies collected in any specific time, the bait must appeal to the widest possible spectrum of the population.

Commercials are also a greater reflection of the culture as they run over the channels than the bait used to set them up. They tell America what's new, what's available, what's acceptable. They create desire and they illustrate the patterns and contents of the good life.

And in the marketplace of the TV medium, commercials are nondiscriminatory; they offer the fruits of the American culture to all—educated, illiterate, prosperous and destitute alike.

Gets you young

After some of the ghetto riots of the 1960s, it was suggested that this marketplace of the air had helped create discontent among the poor by constantly showing them things which the TV said were desirable to possess, even when they had no means to obtain them, short of violence.

And they get us young. Saturday mornings during kidhood, Mattel and General Mills condition us for that whole prime-time scene that awaits us. Consider what an effective societal trainer and consumer model we have in the form of a Barbie doll.

It might be considered, inasmuch as TV is selling us, that we could at least demand a little more quality in the programming used as bait.

It is hardly the fault of the networks and/or the advertisers if the selections are so tasteless or nauseous.

TV is playing a numbers game and if they can sell you in lots of 44 million by presenting *King Lear* or debates from the United Nations, they'll jump at it.

The Hallmark Card Company, which for 20 years has periodically sponsored some of the best moments on television, is an advertiser with class.

But mostly, the high ratings (the most bodies) cluster around the limited imaginations of Lucille Ball, Tony Orlando and Dawn, or the Partridge Family. And so, the real moments in TV viewing, the brief word from our sponsor, will continue to support the kinds of bait which will attract the greatest number.

several small ensembles, at least one big band, and in recent years collaborated with pianist Dave Brubeck. Baker, since splitting with Mulligan, encountered a series of drug busts in almost every country he worked in. Only in the past few years has he been able to shake the habit and gradually rebuild his musical reputation.

The evening produced a lot of memorable music, with a fine exhibition by Baker and a performance by Mulligan that critics hailed as being his best in years. Now, CTI Records has released two discs taken from that amazing night. Entitled *Carnegie Hall Concert (Vols. 1 and 2)*, the records are well-recorded, finely mixed, and impressively packaged. What's more, they do justice to the masterful work of Mulligan, Baker and their fine backup band.

Favorite tracks are hard to isolate when there isn't a clinker in the lot, but standouts are "Line for Lyons" on the first disc, and "There Can Never Be Another You" on the second. The latter selection features a shaky vocal, uncredited, but oddly keeps the wistful tone of the piece.

I am honestly at a loss of words to say in connection with these exemplary discs except to suggest that they feature two great musicians at the height of their collaborative powers, and as such, they deserve a hearing.

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