

arts and entertainment

CBS's new prime time skin show in for 'crash landing'

By Pete Mason

The CBS television network's motto for the new fall season is "Turn us on, we'll turn you on!" Thus beginneth the Battle of the Jiggles.

The "Jiggles," so-called because they are shows which feature specific areas of the female anatomy in a relatively unfettered state, have been the sole property of ABC for the past two years (*Charlie's Angels*, *Three's Company*).

They were the brainchildren of Fred Silverman, then ABC's programming honcho. Freddie the Phenom is now NBC's honcho of everything. Perhaps CBS is trying to get the jump on Silverman.

The three trainees, who work for a fictional outfit called Sun West Airlines, are played by Kathryn Witt, Pat Klous and Connie Sellecca, three ex-models with little or no acting experience. They are supported by wise-cracking Marcia Wallace (remember Bob Newhart's receptionist) and Howard Platt, who plays a lecherous training pilot.

That seems to be the only support the girls have, pun intended. For the most part the first show looked like an Atlantic City bathing beauty contest. One gets the impression that they wear their string bikinis even under their formal evening attire.

Jiggly war lost

During their six-week training period one girl fails the final weigh-in (she is four pounds overweight) and is sent home. In a tearful farewell scene with the three heroines she announces she is going home to get pregnant. Perhaps

the writers are saying that a woman has one shot to make it in the real world and if she blows it she's only good for keeping house and having babies.

The jiggly war is being waged at the expense of the American public. All too often the ratings have shown not to be a good indicator of the viewers' pulse.

But network programmers are creatures driven by Nielsen's numbers and *Flyin' High* is a perfect example of this enslavement. With Silverman at the helm, NBC undoubtedly will begin charting the jiggly sea this fall.

If you're a viewer who is tickled pink by *Charlie's Angels* and its contemporaries, you're in for a terrific cruise. But if you demand more in television programming, by the end of the upcoming season you're going to begin to hope that the jiggly world is flat and that every ship sails over the edge.

tv review

Flyin' High is meant to be a sort of humorous *Charlie's Angels* at 30,000 feet. After viewing the special two-hour premier Monday evening it would be easy to say that it's more like an unhumorous *Love Boat* at 20,000 leagues under the sea. Perhaps this is an unfair assessment. After all, it's just the first show. But aren't the two-hour special premiers supposed to be the grabbers; the shows that set a precedent for the rest of the season. If so, *Flyin' High* is in for a lot of turbulence and an inevitable crash landing.

Male voyeur audience

If insipidity were a virtue, everyone involved in *Flyin' High* would achieve sainthood on the first ballot. From the contrived plot and embarrassingly bad double-entendre dialogue all the way down to the obligatory skin scenes, the show seems to be reaching for one particular segment of the viewing audience, the red-blooded, American male voyeur.

There is even a voyeuristic scene in which two randy gents ogle the stewardess-trainees with binoculars as they relax after calisthenics. As the girls remove their T-shirts, in unison, to "soak up some rays," one of the peeping Toms groans a loud, adolescent "Oh my Gaaawwd." Oh my God.



Pershing manager recalls bright spots, controversies

By Mike Schmoltdt

Pershing Auditorium manager Ike Hoig has beaten the retirement game for almost a year and a half now. Since he turned 65 in March of last year, city officials have given him two extensions totaling 18 months.

According to Hoig, though, an advertisement has been placed in a trade paper for his replacement. He said chances are that a new man will be in his office before the end of the year.

Hoig became Pershing's manager 17 years ago after 27 years of managing theaters for the Cooper Foundation. He started with the Cooper Foundation as an usher while attending UNL. Hoig said there have been plenty of bright

spots during his 17 years at Pershing, but one particular controversy sticks in his memory as a "really bad time."

When Hoig wanted to bring the rock musical "Hair" to Lincoln, the tumult lasted a month. Most of the members of the mayor's Auditorium Advisory Board opposed "Hair", but Hoig said he and three members of the board were able to convince the rest of the officials of the musical's merits.

Nudity complaints

Nevertheless, Hoig said, crank phone calls about the nude scene, and others accusing him of being an anti-Christian influence made life difficult at the time.

Hoig took the brunt of the criticism in the "Hair" controversy and still gets most of the flak from the public

today, he said.

"After a while, though, it (criticism) rolls off you like water off a duck, or at least that's what I try to tell myself. It still makes my blood boil, though, when it's unfair criticism."

Despite the signs of community disapproval, "Hair" came to Lincoln uncensored.

"It really wasn't that bad," Hoig said. "I went down just to see what the hell it was." He said people see more nudity on television today than they would have if they had seen "Hair."

He is amused by the changes entertainment has undergone in 17 years. He said the Kingston Trio and Peter, Paul, and Mary are a far cry from current groups such as Kiss and Electric Light Orchestra.

There was a time when Hoig would have kicked a group off the stage if the members even looked like they might use profanity. He admits that today the use of even the worst four letter words is common.

Conservative audiences

Hoig says he sees a conservative trend in today's young audiences, however. He said that he fought ten years ago to get Fillmore-style seating at concerts in Pershing, but that now he is hearing more requests for regular seats.

This adaptation to the trends in both audiences and the entertainment industry is what running an auditorium is all about, Hoig said. He said that drug use is one trend that has the potential for creating big problems for a manager, though.

Problems with marijuana at Pershing have been few because family upbringing and values in this part of the country discourage drug abuse, according to Hoig. He said when people are caught with marijuana at a concert, he makes sure they are treated with respect, the way he would want to be treated.

Hoig said this policy results from the need in the auditorium business for good treatment of customers, especially young people.

Hoig said his successor will find his biggest problem that of bringing business to Pershing against the stiff competition from the UNL Sports Complex and local high school auditoriums.

He said his position has become "a selling job," and that it requires someone with contacts who will be able to pull in entertainers and conventions on the strength of his personality.

"Business will be very competitive." The future of Pershing depends on the ability of his successor to bring in business, Hoig said.

As for Hoig, leaving these problems behind him is not a matter of choice, but one that his bosses are deciding for him.

He says he is not sure what he will do after retiring. It is possible Hoig might go to work for his son in newspaper advertising. His hobbies, classic car restoration and toy auto collecting, might take part of his time, too.



Photo by Mark Brinsley

After managing Pershing Auditorium for over 17 years and bringing such acts as The Barnum and Bailey Circus, the musical, HAIR and Elvis Presley, Ike Hoig says he really doesn't feel like retiring.