

# Old movies getting 'scared off' Lincoln airwaves

## The Glassy Eye By Dave Meile

Local TV, including cable channels, has grown progressively worse as of late. The USA network (channel 17) shows the same menu of films that they ran last year, and WOWT (channel 6) in Omaha is discontinuing its Friday and Saturday late-night schedule of old movies (beware of the "Dukes of Hazzard" invading!). At this point the only real forum for your zany, wacky, "psychotronic" films appears to be video. Here's a sampling.

**"Attack of the 50-Foot Woman" (1958) Allison Hayes.**

This landmark feminist/gigantic alcoholic flick is a real crowd-pleaser. Allison Hayes is just a

typical run-of-the-mill, soused millionaire until a giant alien lands in an enlarged-Christmas-ornament spaceship and with a mere touch of his gargantuan inflatable hand prop . . . makes her drink more. Her two-timing, no-good husband Harry won't believe her frightening tale, so she guzzles several more stiff martinis. The local TV newscaster teases her (broadcasting was wacky back then!), so she does an Elvis imitation and trashes the Motorola. Pretty soon she's a 50-foot woman who goes on a rampage through town. She reaches through the roof of the local watering hole and wrings her husband's neck before trying unsuccessfully to limbo with the obligatory high-voltage telephone wires. Rotten special effects, classic dialogue. Fans of the horror genre remember the incomparable Hayes for her work in other fun junk like "Zombies of Mora Tau," "The Disembodied" and "The Crawling Hand."

**"Film House Fever" (1986)**

Written and directed by Dominic Paris.

Yet another compilation purporting to be a collection of the best of the worst films ever made, and like its predecessors "It Came From Hollywood" and television's "Canned Film Festival" from the summer of '86, the viewer must wade through rather trying comedy sketches before getting to the point. In addition, a less hyper editor and a broader base of films would have been nice, as Paris relies heavily on the catalog of gore godfather Herschel Gordon Lewis ("2,000 Maniacs," "Color Me Blood Red") and trash king Al Adamson ("Dracula vs. Frankenstein," "Vampire Men of the Lost Planet," "Man with the Synthetic Brain"). Only the truly obsessed will be interested in clips from hilarious early nudie films and assorted juvenile delinquent junk. At a scant 60 minutes running time, it's hardly a good deal. Rent at your own risk. Available at Audio-Visual at 33rd Street and Leighton

Avenue.

**"The Toxic Avenger" (1986) Andree Maranda, Mitchell Cohen.**

In the town of Tromaville, New York ("Tromaville — The Toxic Waste Capital of America" reads the welcome sign) lives Melvin, a little tweek who earns his greenbacks mopping up sweat and spit at the Tromaville Health Club. Little Melvin is constantly tormented by all the hunks and babes, and Julie, the resident bimbo, offers Melvin a tryst in the club pool if he just dons a pink tutu. But it's all a cruel joke. Everyone at the club is there to humiliate poor Melvin. Mortified, he runs screaming out of the club and swan-dives into a barrel of toxic waste. Whammo, America's latest crime fighter — The Toxic Avenger. Amateurish acting and moronic humor highlight this gore comedy, which would easily achieve drive-in immortality if there were any drive-ins left in America. Available at Audio-Visual, 33rd Street and Leighton

Avenue. It airs on Showtime (channel 27) Thursday at 2:10 a.m.

**"Stranger on the Third Floor" (1940) Peter Lorre, John McGuire.**

Film noir, a school or style of filmmaking which gained prominence in the '40s, is difficult to describe in specific terms. But Tom Flinn in "King of the B's" says film noir, like shoulder pads, wedgies and zoot suits, was an essential part of the '40s outlook. A cinematic style forged in the fires of war, exile and disillusion; a melodramatic reflection for a world gone mad. Think of paranoia, pessimism and fate, and you've got an idea of what film noir is all about.

The proprietor of an all-night beanery is found with his throat cut. The eye-witness testimony of hot-shot reporter Michael Ward (John McGuire) convicts lowly ex-con Elisha Cook Jr. in a circus of a trial. Later, the reporter's nose neighbor is killed in similar fashion.

See GLASSY on 11

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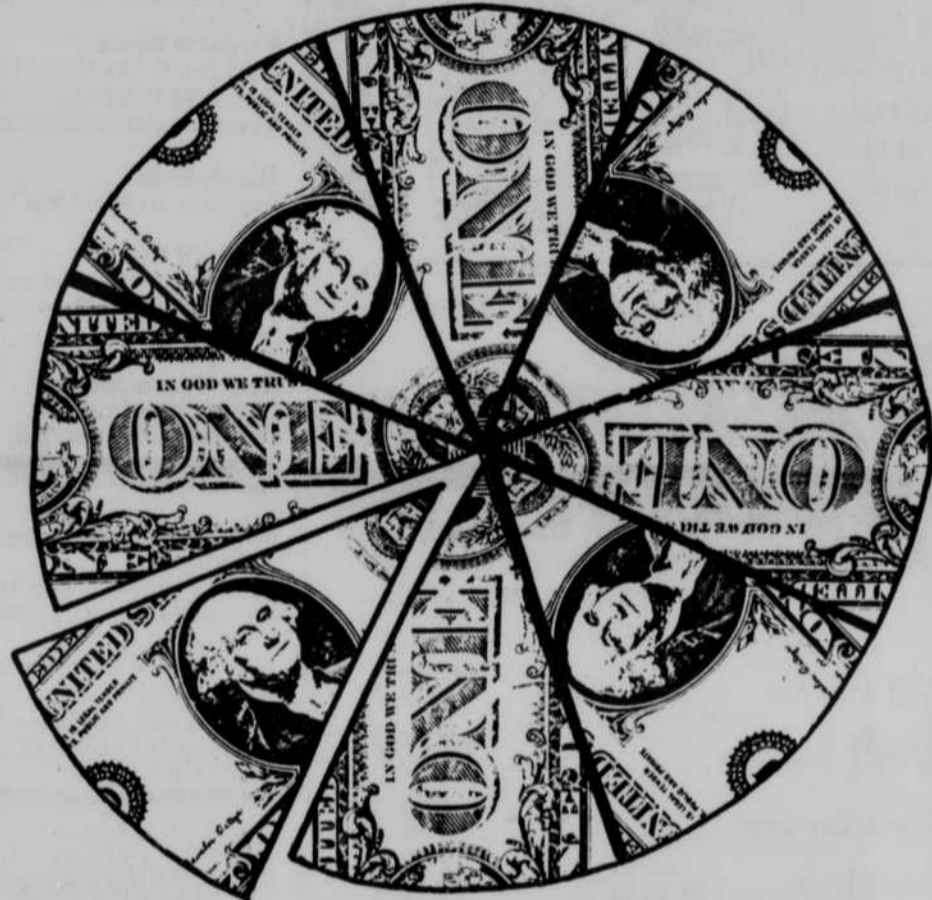
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