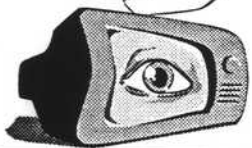


ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

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the glassy eye



Mark Baldrige

Watchin' on a television wonderland

Some people considered television a fad, back in its early days — and maybe a time will come that will prove that sentiment belatedly true. You can never be too sure about these things.

But TV shows a remarkable adaptivity that seems to ensure its continued fitness; it's come a long way from the days of live shows and three channels.

Cable television and the appearance of the affordable video recorder have fundamentally remade TV in just the last 20 years.

This most recent evolution makes the transition from black and white to color look like a shave and a haircut.

We no longer watch TV — we create TV.

Try this simple experiment:

Mix and match, using two VCRs, favorite scenes from a favorite series into one big complicated episode. Watch that. Show it to your friends.

When you're good enough at that you can try taking shots from one show and mixing them with another — Frasier cracks wise with Bundy.

Stick in a tape, program the VCR (if you've figured out how) and by the time you curl up in front of the TV you have an entire programming day, cooked up according to your own recipe and ready to eat.

Busy people watch a month's worth of "Seinfeld" on Saturday afternoon between lunch and taking the kids to soccer practice.

Fans of "Star Trek" compose personal libraries of episodes, carefully excising all the ads, which they can replay at leisure.

Some shows you can see every day in syndication, and some you can see twice a day, on different channels — if you can take that kind of repetition.

When I was a kid a show called "Battlestar Galactica" made news when a young fan, despondent over its cancellation, leapt to his death from a bridge.

Today he might have lived, endlessly fast-forwarding through videos worn almost brittle through use — or the show might have been picked up on the Sci-Fi Channel to run endlessly in rotation with "The Prisoner" and "The Bionic Woman."

The new TV is more user-friendly — it caters to special interests.

I imagine that if you decided you were never going to watch anything without Jimmy Stewart in it you could still watch a good deal of television — if you could afford the dish antenna.

And someday, so we're told, we'll get 500 channels, 24 hours a day.

So you can see how things have changed.

Just a few years ago you watched what they gave you when they gave it to you and the devil take the hindmost.

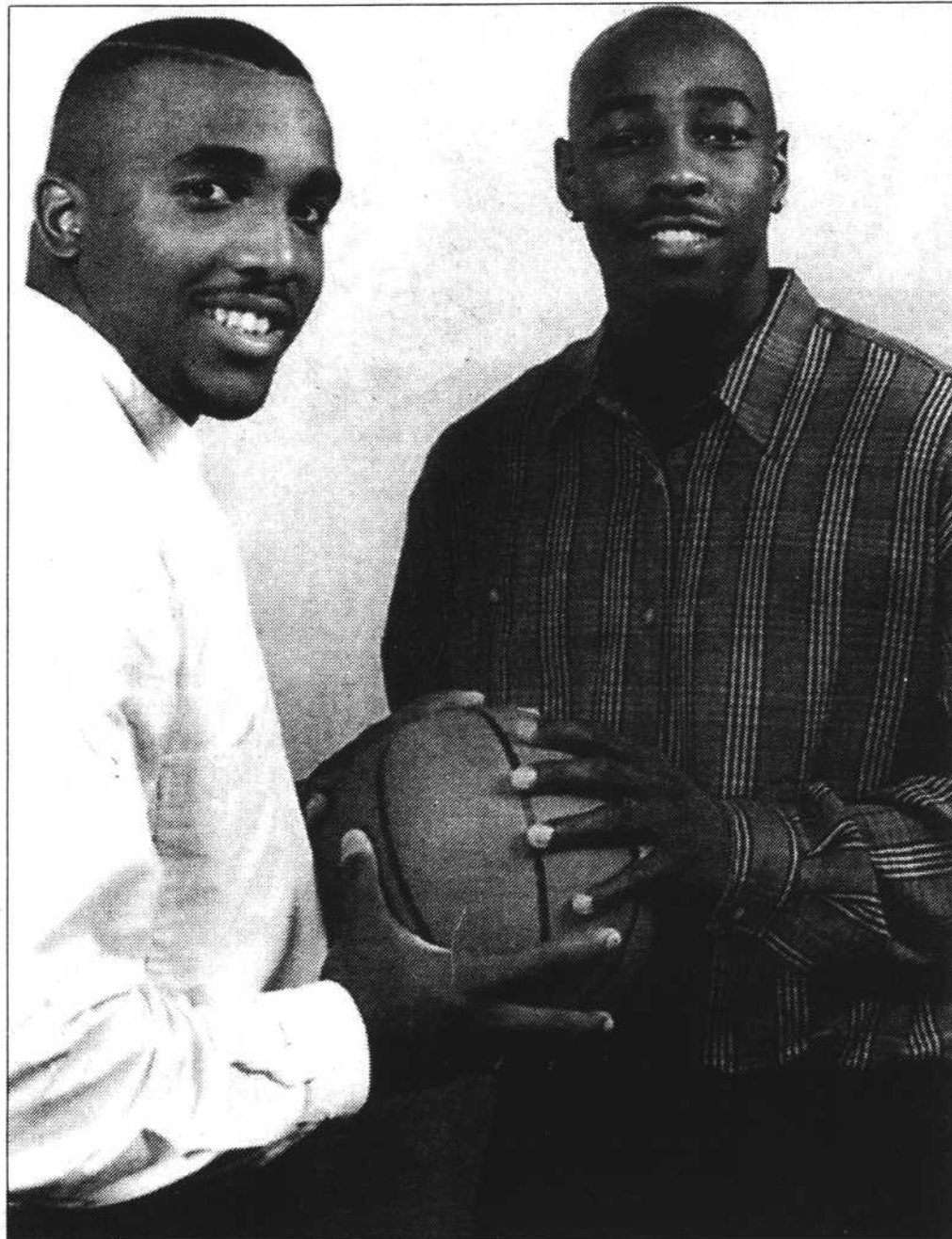
It was an ugly time, no day workers ever got to see their "The Young and the Restless" — no second shift workers got to see "Mannix."

When a show was canceled it was pretty much sayonara.

We are living in the science fiction era our parents dreamed of. It's a TV wonderland, a new golden age.

And discontents had better damned well get used to it.

Baldrige is a senior English major and the Daily Nebraskan Opinion Page editor.



Arthur Agee, 22, and William Gates, 23, share a goal of aspiring to play professional basketball in "Hoop Dreams." Courtesy of Nebraska ETV

Hoop-la

Acclaimed film takes air tonight

By Gerry Beltz
Senior Reporter

"Hoop Dreams" — one of the year's most talked about films — will be broadcast tonight at 7, on the Nebraska ETV network.

The film — a three-hour documentary following the lives of two young men who hope to one day play for the National Basketball Association — has received great amounts of praise and numerous awards, despite being virtually overlooked at the Academy Awards.

Jack Huttig, a publicist for Nebraska ETV, said the broadcast of this film is a major production nationwide.

"It originally started as a 30-minute piece for public television on street basketball in Chicago," Huttig said, "but it grew beyond the filmmakers' wildest expectations."

Since "Hoop Dreams" was originally intended for public television broadcast, Nebraska ETV

received the initial opportunity to air it before the pay-per-view and movie channels, he said.

"We've got first crack at it."

"Hoop Dreams" condenses years into minutes and shows what these two young men faced both on and off the court, such as crime, drugs and other problems in their inner city Chicago neighborhood.

The film deals with some real issues, and is an important film to see, he said.

"There's no sex or violence, and there might be an off-color word or two," he said, "but certainly nothing excessive."

"If anything, it talks about the importance and need for strong family ties, paying attention to education and the value of hard work."

Also, following the film, Nebraska ETV will air the half-hour special "A Hoop Dreams Reunion" at 10 p.m. The special reunites the two aspiring basketball stars from the first film and they discuss how it has affected their lives.

Connick gets intimate with Lied crowd

By Brian Sharp
Music Critic

Ain't nobody like Harry. The Lied Center was stomping and dancing Tuesday night as Harry Connick Jr. and his funk band jazzed, rocked, dixied and partied with the sellout crowd for more than two and a half hours.

And they left 'em dancing on the stage.

Literally.

It was music for the soul — and they played it in ways that music ain't never been played before.

At times it seemed more like a jam session than a concert. The four-man band, plus Connick, played off one another, joked and told



stories.

"I just don't wanna get off this stage," Connick said, his No. 15 Tommie Frazier Cornhusker football jersey drenched in sweat.

He sang a cappella. He sang the blues. He sang the old songs from New Orleans and Mardi Gras tunes that shook and rattled the Lied like nothing before.

The Lied seats were never unfolded once the show began, as the floor crowd stood and fans rushed the stage, filling the aisles and spilling out near the towers of speakers.

Halfway into the concert, Connick warned those who hadn't come to rock 'n' roll that it was time to leave. He then introduced the crowd to yet another musical style few fans had ever heard from him before — head-bangin' Harry.

The song? He called it "I am Tommie Frazier."

"I can out-throw him," Connick said later in the show. Then he laughed. "That guy is gonna kick my ass."

Connick showed off not only his talent to perform anything from spirituals to New Orleans funk, but his ability to play any instrument placed before him. Aside from his normal seat behind the piano, Connick took his turn at drums, trumpet, guitar — basically every instrument on stage.

He talked aimlessly throughout the night — "Istphus," so to speak. The crowd was introduced to Connick's dog, Samantha. It was a concert, yet it wasn't. It was more like an intimate night with Harry.

As the show drew to a close, Connick played one last Mardi Gras tune for the crowd.

One fan jumped to the stage and started dancing in the far corner, as Connick had done so many times throughout the night.

"Yeah, he's got the right idea," Connick said. He then began helping people to the stage.

As the band finished its final number, the bars trailing away off stage, more than 100 fans were left dancing under the hazy, colored stage lights to the thunderous echo of applause.

Concert to follow rap censorship debate

By Jeff Randall
Senior Reporter

Censorship, racism, violence and sexism are all issues that are virtually guaranteed to stir up a heated debate.

And if that's the case, tonight's event in the Nebraska Union ballroom should reach the boiling point relatively quickly.

A rap censorship debate will be held there, followed by a rap concert. The University Program Council sponsors the event, which will feature Professor Griff and Curtis

Sliwa in the debate, and Heather B. in the concert.

Griff, a professional lecturer and organizer of several rap-oriented educational presentations, will speak in opposition of censorship. A former member of the Nation of Islam, Griff now speaks throughout the country on the values of racism, family, social responsibility and related subjects.

His argument against censorship will center on the racist slant present in many of rap's would-be censors. Griff believes the censorship of rap music has been more vigorously

pursued than that of music usually performed by white artists.

Sliwa, founder of the Guardian Angels, will speak in favor of censorship in some cases.

Sliwa's argument will center on rap's less savory subject matters, including the glorification of violence, sexism and drugs.

The concert will follow the debate and discussion. Heather B., who many may remember from MTV's "The Real World," promises to bring a considerable amount of energy to the stage.

Since leaving the "Real World"

behind, Heather B. has made a name for herself as a strong and outspoken hip-hop artist in a vein similar to more established artists such as Queen Latifah and Salt 'n' Pepa.

The concert's opening acts include New Jersey's Rowdy Pack, The No Good Hoods, 54th Regiment, The Balix and Gridlock.

The debate will begin at 7 p.m., followed by music at 9 p.m.

Tickets for the debate are \$3, tickets for the concert are \$6 and tickets for both are \$8. Students with valid identification receive \$1 off all ticket prices.