

the glassy eye



Cliff A. Hicks

V-chip not considered censorship

Tele(vision) + electronic/parental-guidance = V-chip.

Yes, I, who am diametrically opposed to censorship in all forms, believe the V-chip is a good idea because it's not censorship.

Here's your boarding pass, your luggage is loaded on board; follow my train of thought on this one.

What the V-chip does, as I understand it, is this. It allows parents to program their television to not allow their children to see specific television programs.

Each show will be rated (though it's still pretty fuzzy as to who will do that), and parents can choose a specific rating for their children to be able to see and then override it themselves.

There's nothing wrong with that. A parent does have the right to object to what a child watches, listens to or does. That's because they're adults, and until the child is 18, the child isn't.

One fear I have, however, is that parents won't use this V-chip. Similar locks are available for programs that allow you to gain access to the Internet and look at the Telecommunications Bill that Congress tried pushing through earlier this year (Congress passed it, but the courts have temporarily overturned it).

Despite how simple and easy everyone's making this sound, the parents still have to use it, and that may be beyond the attention spans of the parents at whom this type of measure is aimed.

Second, will everyone who has had to help their parents program a VCR please raise their hands? Yeah, I thought so. My parents, dear folks that they are, ask me for computer help all the time.

Technology gets more and more complex the faster and faster it progresses. By the time the next generation is my age, I may have troubles following it all too.

So, the government honestly expects parents to program their TV to tell children what they can and can't watch. More than half of these people think the Information Superhighway is the Interstate up to M.I.T.

If, however, parents CAN get the chip to work, they'll make television a lot more interesting. It could be the end of overdubbed movies! After all, children can't watch it if their parents don't want them to.

Also, shows can get more aggressive and realistic (or unrealistic as the case may be). No more cut-away shots in soap operas, no more reworked angles in crime shows. All of these things don't HAVE to stay any more.

They aren't going to be dropped out immediately, of course. This probably will be a slow and cautious ordeal, but it all comes down to the fact that the TV now has a lock on it, just as the old liquor cabinets used to.

Don't call the V-chip censorship because quite simply it isn't. Not any more than a parent throwing away a child's 2 Live Crew compact disc or Playboy magazine is.

It's simply another form of parental guidance, and quite frankly, the world can use a little more of that.

Hicks is a freshman news-editorial and English major and a Daily Nebraskan staff reporter.

Band member off to Seattle after concert

By Patrick Hambrecht
Senior Reporter

When Garth Johnson's band Plastik Trumpet finishes playing at the Saturday Silk Cafe benefit concert for Bosnian rape victims, don't expect him to hang around for long. He's leaving on April 12 to attend Sup Pop Records' Anniversary Party in Seattle.

Concert Preview



Johnson won the trip to grunge rock headquarters by winning Sub Pop's store display contest for a new

album by Eric Matthews, a solo trumpeter from the band Cardinal.

"He's an excellent trumpeter," Johnson said of Matthews. "His album is kind of a '60s-flavored, orchestral pop sound."

To compete, Johnson filled Zero Street Records, 1411 O Street, with Matthews-related paraphernalia, including an old pulp novel called "The Cardinal," a smoking jacket and hip-swinging Elvis clocks with pictures of Matthews' head glued on.

"It all took up about a quarter of my store," Johnson said. "So great is my devotion to Sub Pop Records."

Though Johnson admits his Matthews display was motivated entirely by his desire to travel, he says

his store is always crammed with colorful kitschy objects anyway, many of them not for sale.

Elvis shampoo bottles, a "Joanie Loves Chachi" paperback adaptation of the television show, a mod orange broken television set, a Devo poster and scores of other trashy cultural artifacts fill his small store.

"I'm just an object magnet," Johnson said. "I'm not a collector. I enjoy the humor of outdated objects for psychic cultural reasons. Things that perhaps have some sort of cultural relevance."

Instant kitsch has become Johnson's favorite, he said.

"These days, I'm really into Urkel, 'Saved By the Bell,' '90210,' 'Melrose,'" he said. "I have a great

'Saved By the Bell' backpack I picked up in Rochester, New York.

"The thing about '90s kitsch is, people don't see it as kitsch yet."

Johnson's relative loneliness in his pursuit of '90s trash sometimes irks him.

"I find it somewhat annoying how our generation has embraced a cutesy '70s kitsch nostalgia, but don't see how kitschy things in the '90s are.

The Silk Cafe show, 227 N. Ninth St., also will feature Pavlov's Triangles, Pitchfork, Broken Spindles, Think and Project Mercury. Admission is \$2, and the show begins at 6 p.m.

Film plays on viewers' primal fear

By Cliff Hicks
Film Critic

If you don't like the courtroom drama style of "A Few Good Men" or the psychological play in "Silence Of The Lambs," skip "Primal Fear."

Movie Review



If you want to see a performance that will haunt you for a good long while, go see this film.

"Primal Fear" is the story of a young man named Aaron Stampler (Edward Norton), who stands accused of murdering one of Chicago's well-respected dignitaries.

Hotshot defense attorney Martin Vail (Richard Gere) takes his case pro bono, mainly to get more publicity.

Vail honestly doesn't care if Stampler did it or not. He only takes the job to make Stampler appear innocent.

Prosecutor Janet Venable (Laura Linney) had, as she calls it, "a one-night stand" with Vail and is driven to win this case.

To Venable, it seems like an open and shut case. Vail has to prove her wrong. Then things start turning up, including the political connections of the deceased and a mysterious tape.

Based on the novel by William Diehl, "Primal Fear" is a story that is designed to make you squirm in your seat, unable to take your eyes off the screen.

The performances, however, make the film.

Linney scores about average as the prosecutor driven by the office and the fact that she's working against her ex-lover. Overall, how-

See PRIMAL on 10

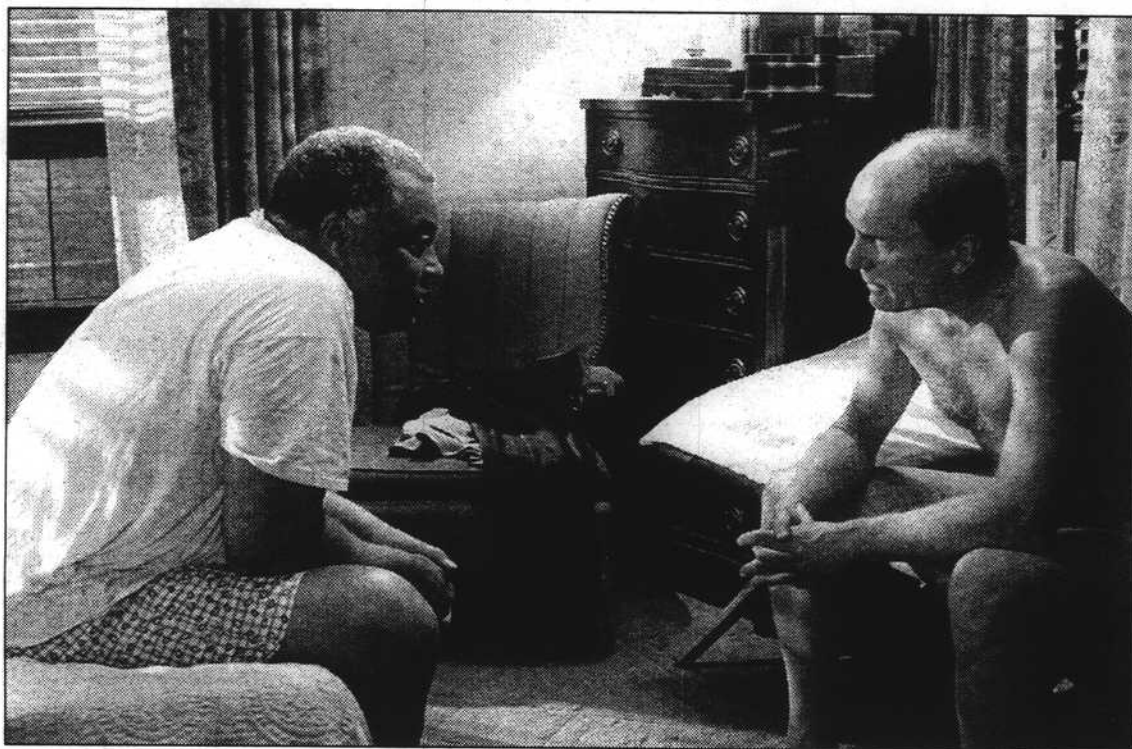


Photo courtesy of United Artists Pictures Inc.

James Earl Jones (left) and Robert Duvall play brothers who meet for the first time in the Richard Pearce film, "A Family Thing."

Identity discovered in 'Family'

By Cherie Krueger
Film Critic

Imagine this. You have lived your entire life as a Southern white man with typical Southern family values. Then one day you receive a letter that changes everything you have known all your life.

Movie Review



You find out you are black. This is what happens to Earl Pilcher Jr. (Robert Duvall) in Richard Pearce's new film "A Family Thing." Before his mother died she wrote a letter explaining a secret she could not take with her to the grave.

A few days after she passed away, Earl received the letter and found out that she was not his real mother.

Earl's father had raped a black woman, and he was the result of that rape.

The woman, who died while giving birth to him, had been close friends with his mother. His mother agreed to raise the baby because he looked white.

The letter also told of a half-brother living in Chicago. His mother's dying wish was for Earl to meet him and to know him as a brother.

Earl leaves the safety of the South to find a policeman named Ray Murdock (James Earl Jones). Earl finds out that he is getting himself into quite an adventure.

Ray has known about Earl all of his life and has held a deep resentment for the entire family, so he is not overly open to the idea of building a relationship with him. But Ray's blind aunt, Aunt T., teaches the men that the bond of family is too

The Facts

Film: "A Family Thing"
Stars: Robert Duvall, James Earl Jones
Director: Richard Pearce
Rating: PG-13 (language)
Grade: A
Five Words: Sniff ... bring plenty of Kleenex

strong to ignore.

The performances in this film are incredible. Robert Duvall was the perfect man to fill the roll of Earl. He looks and sounds like the stereotypical redneck who has never left the confines of the South, but he does a great job of playing the fish out of water when he finds himself

See FAMILY on 10

House members push for educational TV

From the Associated Press

NEW YORK — More than 100 House members signed a letter to federal regulators saying broadcasters should be required to offer at least three hours of programming each week addressing the educational needs of children, The New York Times reported Tuesday.

The Federal Communications Commission has been under pressure to conclude a yearlong debate about whether to put in place new rules requiring more educational

programs for children.

The next round of license renewals for broadcasters is set to begin in June.

A letter initiated by Rep. Edward J. Markey, D-Mass., and signed by 103 other members represents perhaps the largest number of House members to express an opinion on the subject since the Children's Television Act was passed in 1990, the Times reported.

Under the law, license renewals depend on whether broadcasters comply with certain criteria, such as

the requirement for educational and informational programming for children. The question of how compliance should be measured has been a problem.

Few commercial stations now approach three hours of educational programming a week.

The letter appeared aimed primarily at Rachele B. Chong, who is considered a swing vote on the question of a specific minimum. In a recent speech, however, she has de-

clared herself opposed to such a standard.

FCC Chairman Reed F. Hundt has been lobbying for the three-hour minimum standard. The commercial broadcasting industry opposes that, arguing that if Congress wanted a specific amount, it would have passed legislation.

There could be an impasse on the issue that would allow license renewals to go forward without any specific guidelines for the amount of children's programming required for renewal.