

'The dirty little secret' of TV newsmagazines

By John Cook
Tribune staff reporter

Network news producers toil in anonymity almost by definition, their tireless grunt work in pursuing a story invariably overshadowed by the blow-dried personalities who "report" it on television.

When "60 Minutes II" (now known simply as the Wednesday edition of "60 Minutes") broke the story of the Abu Ghraib prisoner abuse in April, it was Dan Rather, correspondent, not Mary Mapes — the producer who actually reported the story — who got credit in the minds of millions of viewers.

But these days, Mapes is getting plenty of attention as the producer who obtained now-discredited documents purporting to show that President Bush benefited from favoritism during his Texas Air National Guard service in the 1970s.

The scrutiny she is under — CBS News announced Wednesday that former attorney general Dick Thornburgh and former Associated Press



Mary Mapes

chief executive Louis Boccardi will lead an independent investigation into the story and allegations that Mapes put a source in touch with an aide to the Kerry campaign — has put the often shadowy role of news producers in the spotlight. (Mapes did not return a message left at her home in Dallas.)

"Producer" is one of the most ambiguous terms in television news," said Mark Feldstein, a professor of media and public affairs at George Washington University and former investigative producer for NBC News and on-air reporter for CNN. "The dirty little secret of television newsmagazines such as '60 Minutes' is that the producer is really the journalist who does all of the important editorial

work. The on-air correspondents at these prime-time newsmagazines are largely front people. They parachute into the story."

"It's really a misnomer," said Tom Yellin, a former ABC News producer who now heads up Peter Jennings' production company. "You're really talking about producer-director-reporter-writer-researcher."

Feldstein said that, although some correspondents — called, often derisively, "talent" in the business — are more involved than others, the producer generally comes up with the idea for the story, reports it, persuades sources to come forward, and scouts locations for shooting before the correspondent even becomes involved.

And in complicated stories with multiple on-air sources, it's not always the star who's on the other side of the camera.

"The producer does as many interviews on camera as possible," Feldstein said, "and then saves one or two of the crucial ones for the talent

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THEATER REVIEW



John Mahoney (front) and Tracy Letts in Steppenwolf Theatre's production of Ronald Harwood's 1980 play "The Dresser."

Steppenwolf's 'The Dresser' finds its heart

By Michael Phillips
Tribune theater critic

There is dramatization and then there is self-dramatization. If a playwright wants both, a playwright writes a play about actors.

Here's another one: If Steppenwolf Theatre Company ensemble member John Mahoney wants to play the role of Sir in Ronald Harwood's 1980 play "The Dresser," a pleasantly bittersweet backstage, well, why not. Nobody loves plays about actors more than actors do. And the love can be catching.

Harwood's play depicts the final hours of a 16-year theatrical relationship: That of an aging, addled headliner, "Sir," who is touring "King Lear" and other Shakespearean offerings across bomb-blasted England in 1942, and Norman, his dresser, confidante and protector.

As an apprentice actor Harwood worked with Donald Wolfitt and his traveling Shakespearean company. "The Dresser" comes out of Harwood's experiences. The play is a much larger one than people tend to remember, in terms of its speaking roles. But in Steppenwolf's handsome, often affecting revival its heart belongs to Sir and Norman.

Mahoney plays the vainglorious star opposite Tracy Letts' itchy talkative dresser. Neither are quite what you'd expect. With Mahoney the distinguishing surprise is vocal. Harwood's play tends to attract the interest of strong actors of a certain age proffering a plummy, overcured ham's Shakespearean delivery. Albert Finney had it big-time in the 1983 film.

Mahoney's Sir is very different. The raspy edge to his panic attacks, the icy despair (which comes on too fully in his first scene) and cold glares lend director Amy Morton's production a rougher, more bullish quality.

Letts may be the most physically imposing Norman in the history of "The Dresser." The actor uses his considerable height as a kind of internal struggle for the character, scrunching

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POP MUSIC REVIEW

Devo-tion

Are they not retro? Band seems as fresh and novel as ever.



Photo for the Tribune by Yvette Marie Dostatni

Mark Mothersbaugh leads Devo, looking like a nerdy hazmat team, at the Riviera Friday night.

By Joshua Klein
Special to the Tribune

With their silly costumes and their high-concept pokes at pop culture, Devo might appear nothing more than a big goof.

But behind the group's antics, there's a principle: de-evolution, the theory that mankind is moving backward, getting dumber and more infantile as the years go by. So what does that say about the hundreds of rabid fans who sold out the Riviera Friday night, all gathered to catch Devo long after its heyday and, one must assume, after several more years of de-evolution have taken its toll?

Society's collective regressive state could be why the band affectionately calls its supporters "spuds" — likening its fans to an army of potato heads. Then again, such unlikely com-

pliments may simply be another facet of Devo's surrealist streak. Though nominally punk, Devo excelled at putting the pieces together differently than its peers, and the band's set at the Riviera felt as fresh and novel as ever.

Standards of strangeness apparently haven't changed that much over the past two decades.

Devo took the stage in bright yellow jumpsuits and its trademark upside-down red flower pot hats, looking like a nerdy hazmat team. Lurching into such frenetic classics as "Girl U Want," "Uncontrollable Urge" and their deconstructionist robot rendition of the Rolling Stones' "Satisfaction," the group inspired a wave of spastic dancing, even though much of the crowd matched the group in the gray hair and paunch department.

Devo's not harboring any illusions of a comeback, though. The set consisted of songs largely from its 1978 debut "Q: Are We Not Men? A: We Are Devo!" (the title's a call-and-response exchange from the manic track "Jocko

Homo"), plus several great subsequent hits and near-hits such as "Freedom of Choice," "Whip It" and "Gates of Steel." In fact, beat for beat, right down to the tearaway costumes that revealed even sillier tight black outfits, the night was virtually identical to the show-stealing set Devo played at Lollapalooza back in '97.

Given the amount of fun Devo seemed to be having, the group could be forgiven for its strictly retro performance. This wasn't nostalgia at work. It was a declaration of pride, a place and time for Devo and its devoted fans to demonstrate that, no, the band's brief reign was not a dream. Sure, it was over in a blink, lasting not much longer than an hour, and singer Mark Mothersbaugh's nightmarish masked and muumuu-clad appearance as the bizarre, baby-faced Booji Boy to sing "Beautiful World" felt like concert padding, especially as it stretched into a largely incomprehensible political rant. But when the lights came up, the hundreds of spuds were still there, cheering for more Devo.

POP MUSIC REVIEW

Jill Scott: Casual and commanding

By Greg Kot
Tribune music critic

Divas assault audiences with their extravagance. They close their eyes, tilt their heads back and wail. Their every movement screams, "Look at me, peasants! Check out this incredibly difficult note I am about to reduce to rubble!"

Then there's Jill Scott. Hands in pockets of her blue and brown urban-Earth Mother outfit, Scott casually commanded a full house at the Congress Theatre over the weekend. Though her voice ran the octaves the way a pool hustler puts away another mark in a game of eight ball, she didn't so much draw attention to her prodigious technical

skills as fold them into her conversational songs. And converse with her audience is just what Scott does. She bantered with her fans as if they were neighbors and sang to them as if she were exchanging recipes. In "Family Reunion," she made them ponder the potato salad at a barbecue — was it the celery or the scallions that made it turn green? — and allowed them to glimpse Cousin Ruby shaking her one good hip to a Frankie Beverly record in the back yard.

A six-piece band left plenty of room for Scott to coax and tease notes, to ruminate and reminisce, to improvise and digress, as she flipped lines with two harmony singers. The music floated across a landscape that included hard-rock blues and



Jill Scott

rock-steady hip-hop before settling into the kind of silky, more open-ended orchestrations of mid-'70s R&B juggernauts such as Earth Wind and Fire.

Many of the songs from her two studio albums were rearranged or modified. "Bedda at Home" stretched like a feline in the afternoon sun, its looped drum beat supplanted by syncopated handclaps as Scott sang about the toe-curling pleasures of monogamy. Horns darted in and out, the drums roughed up the tempo mo-

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INSIDE TEMPO

ASK AMY

Dating woes



A 26-year-old is fed up with the cheating epidemic infecting the dating scene. She gets hit on by at least one married man per month. Amy's advice: **A.** Get over it by going on "The Bachelor," and watching *your man* date

24 other women. **B.** Next time a married man approaches, ask: "How's the wife and kids?" **C.** Strive to live your life with intention and integrity. **PAGE 2**

SOCIAL PAGE

'Can we smile?'

Chicago society dames glide across the runway at the Annual Fashion Show of the Woman's Board for Rush University Medical Center. **PAGE 3**



HEALTHCARE

Belligerent docs

Every profession has its share of jerks, but the problem can be more troublesome — even dangerous — in a hospital or large clinic, a new study shows. **PAGE 6**



Cox News photo by Barry Williams

The ScentAir 20 emits the smell of flowers in a flower shop at a Kroger store in Atlanta.

Retailers smell dollars with synthetic scents

By Elizabeth Lee
Cox News Service

ATLANTA — The aroma of a warm apple pie spiced with cinnamon drifts through the stainless steel kitchen at a Smyrna, Ga., appliance store.

Across town, at a Kroger near Tucker, the bakery smells of fresh cookies and the floral department, of flowers. Just what you'd expect. Or is it?

The nose, it turns out, doesn't know anymore. These scents don't come from flowers or goodies in the oven. They're created in a lab and dispersed by machines to encourage customers to linger and spend more money.

From Las Vegas casinos to upscale hotels and retailers, some businesses are tapping into smell to set a mood, establish their brand and cut through the clutter of traditional advertisements. They're moving beyond air fresheners, perfume spritzes and scented candles to sophisticated machines that emit remarkably realistic scents.

Whether scent actually turns browsers into buyers is up for debate. Yet one thing is clear: The world is getting smellier.

Roses. Birthday cake. Buttered popcorn. Fresh linen. Dinosaur dung. Rotting corpse. With the right aroma chemist, anything is possible.

Variety of uses

ScentAir Technologies of Santa Barbara, Calif., supplies scents for purposes as diverse as military training, museum exhibits and scene-setting for a swimsuit shop.

At a recent supermarket trade show, the company had scents ranging from oranges to laundry detergent. Director of operations Pamela Knock walked around the booth, looking for a scent stick of rotting corpse (used for virtual reality military training).

"I hope we don't have it here because it stinks," she says. "You can't get rid of the smell."

She's in luck. Traditional food-and-drink scents such as Jack Daniel's, chocolate and baking bread are what's on display at this show as ScentAir tries to woo supermarkets into trying their machines.

Amusement parks are working artificial scents into movies and gift shops. Even the Hershey's store in New York's Times Square greets

visitors with a blast of faux chocolate at the doorway, to supplement the aroma of hundreds of wrapped candy bars that line its shelves.

Here's how it works: Machines heat scent in liquid or gel form and disperse it into the environment, either through stand-alone devices that cover a few thousand square feet or equipment that attaches to the heating and air conditioning system and can scent tens of thousands of square feet.

Naturally, ScentAir and EnvironDine Studios contend scents increase sales.

'Try and ignore your nose'

"It's a great impulse thing with foods," says Knock, of ScentAir. "You can zone out and walk past a lot of products, but just try and ignore your nose. It's a sale."

AromaSys of St. Paul, which supplies the citrus garden aroma floating around the Bellagio casino in Las Vegas, says it just makes the air smell better and pleases guests.

In the early '90s, Alan Hirsch, neurological director of the Smell and Taste Treatment and Research Foundation in Chicago, conducted research in a Las Vegas casino. He contends using the right kind of scent induced customers to spend 45 percent more in slot machines. AromaSys President Mark Peltier put together the scents for that experiment. He disputes the findings.

"There are not aromas that make people gamble," Peltier says. "It's got enormous appeal for sensationalism, but it's not true."

Kroger has been testing two ScentAir machines at the bakery and floral counters in its Embury Hills store in Atlanta for almost two years. The bakery wraps up its breadmaking by 10 a.m. and doesn't start cookies until the afternoon. That leaves a few scent-free hours. Yet depending on what bakery manager Susan Jones has selected for the ScentAir machine, customers may smell apple pies, chocolate chip cookies, sugar cookies or cake, even when the oven is empty and all the baked goods are wrapped in plastic or refrigerated.

A white machine about the size of a birdhouse sits on the counter, dispersing aromas. Shoppers ask what's cooking, and bakery workers tell them the name of the scent. They don't volunteer that it's coming from a machine.

"I assumed it was whatever they're baking," says Becky Hoover. "I loved the baked smell. I wish it were real."

Belligerent doctors put patients at risk, in danger

By Valerie Reitman
Tribune Newspapers

Almost any hospital or large clinic has a physician who forgets bedside manner when it comes to dealing with staff. He yells and screams. She makes condescending remarks — "When did you graduate from medical school?" — when suggestions are made. He blames others for problems beyond their control.

But few of these rude physicians are disciplined or punished — particularly if they are big moneymakers, bringing the institution prestige and lots of patients.

About 95 percent of physicians who manage hospitals, group practices and clinics said they have to deal with such disruptive physician behavior on a regular basis, according to a survey by the American College of Physician Executives. Most of the incidents, they noted, involve the same few doctors.

"We have a horrible track record in our own profession of even recognizing physicians with difficult personalities, much less dealing effectively with them," one administrator wrote.

The survey, which was answered by 1,600 of the 7,000 medical administrators to whom it was given, was designed and administered by two professors who teach management skills to physicians.

Every profession has its share of jerks and folks not well versed in simple etiquette, but the problem can be more troublesome — even dangerous — in a hospital or large clinic, distracting staff members from patient care, the researchers said. "Although it is only a small number of doctors who do this, the impact is much greater than the numbers," said Tim Keogh, associate professor at Tulane University and a co-author of the study. "It tears at the fabric of a floor or unit. . . . People go around the troublesome doctors or avoid them — and teamwork falls. It's behavior that shouldn't be tolerated."

Staff burnout and turnover

Because members of these medical teams often work closely together and depend on each other, that meanness or condescension can increase stress and contribute to staff burnout and turnover, added co-author Marty Martin, associate professor at DePaul University.

"If you work in an environment where there's ill will or disrespect, then you are distracted and not focused," he said, and thus more likely to make mistakes.

The bulk of the bad behavior is vented on nurses or physician assistants, the survey revealed, rather than on other physicians, patients or administrators. Disrespect was by far

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— Marty Martin, co-author of the study and an associate professor at DePaul University

the most frequent problem cited.

Doctors who repeatedly commit such acts should be disciplined or punished and have their pay docked, the researchers maintain. Hospitals and large clinics should have formal policies laying out codes of conduct for physicians. Specific instances should be noted when the physician in question is being asked to improve.

But even when such policies are in place, there is often hesitance to intervene; action typically occurs only after repeated complaints from the staff or in egregious cases when a physician is completely out of control.

Stress plays role

Abusive incidents are more likely to occur in stress-filled units such as the emergency room, the oncology wards or the operating rooms, the researchers said, where procedures must be done immediately.

"There are more life-and-death issues, and the way care is delivered is more team-based and there's more interaction," Martin says.

Disciplinary measures are easier if the doctor is on the staff of the hospital, although even so, about two-thirds of the administrators said physicians were treated more leniently than other employees because of their professional stature.

But most physicians who admit patients to a hospital or perform surgery are private practitioners who contract their services to the hospital. Hence, disciplinary measures become even more difficult, particularly with high-profile doctors.

About 40 percent of respondents said physicians in the organization who generate more revenue (by bringing in more patients or performing more operations) are treated more leniently than those who bring in less.

Such disciplinary matters generally require review by a hospital medical board.

Researcher Martin, who is also a psychologist, now counsels three abusive physicians. "Their attitude is, 'Why is everybody making such a big deal about it?'" So one of the first things we have to do is help them understand their impact on others."

Los Angeles Times

Long-lost 'Love Letter' found in 'The Honeyymooners' archive

Associated Press

ATHENS, Ga. — It's news that would make Jackie Gleason shout out his trademark "And away we go!"

A new "lost" episode of the classic 1950s TV comedy "The Honeyymooners" has been uncovered in the Peabody Awards archive at the University of Georgia.

The episode, titled "Love Letter," originally aired Oct. 16, 1954, on "The Jackie Gleason Show," said Ruta Abolins, director of the Peabody Awards Collection and Media Archives at UGA.

"It does not exist in another archive and is a unique 'lost' episode in 'The Honeyymooners' history," Abolins said in a statement Thursday.

Gleason starred as Ralph Kramden, a blustery New York City bus driver. Audrey Meadows played his sharp-tongued wife, Alice. Art Carney was his goofy neighbor, Ed Norton, a sewer worker, and Joyce Randolph played Ed's wife, Trixie.

Archivist Margaret Compton discovered the "Love Letter" episode during a preservation re-

view of the archives' kinescopes and videotapes. She said plans are being made by Gleason Enterprises to release the never-rebroadcast episode on home video.

"The Honeyymooners" was introduced Oct. 5, 1951, during Gleason's first variety series, "Cavalcade of Stars," broadcast live on the DuMont Television Network. From 1952 to 1955, "The Jackie Gleason Show" ran on CBS where the live sketches grew from 10 minutes to 30 minutes in length. "The Honeyymooners" also ran as a CBS sitcom in the 1955-56 season, and "The Jackie Gleason Show" returned as a variety program in the 1956-57 season.

A re-performance of "Love Letter" aired during Gleason's 1956-57 series, but the Peabody Awards archive holds the only known copy of the original.

The episode deals with Kramden's discovery of a love letter that he mistakenly believes is meant for his wife.

Some 70-odd "lost" episodes of "The Honeyymooners" emerged from Gleason's vault in the 1980s.

PRODUCERS: 'It's really their baby'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

to shoot. And even then, they usually present the talent with the questions to ask."

The producers also generally write the scripts spoken by the talent in voice-overs and stand-up shots.

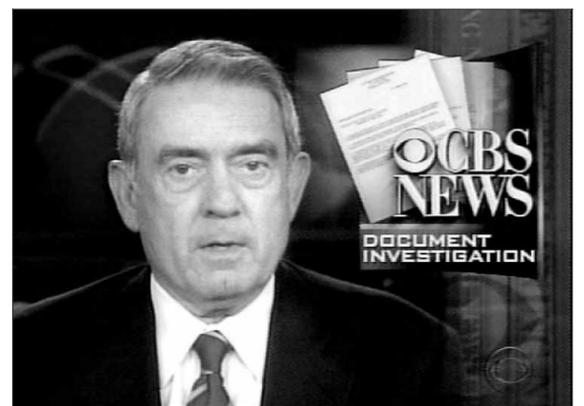
"It's really the producer's baby," Feldstein said. "It's an arrangement that makes economic sense. Even when correspondents are talented reporters, as Dan Rather is, he physically doesn't have time to do all that reporting and make all those phone calls."

It sounds like a one-way street, with producers doing the work and the correspondent getting the glory. But there is a trade-off — the correspondent takes all the risk.

"At CNN, they would try to have me front stories that other people produced," said Feldstein. "And I was always uncomfortable with that because I couldn't vouch for the reporting. One bad story and you're dead meat, and I just didn't want to rely on somebody else."

To minimize that risk, producers generally face a rigorous questioning process that subjects their one-man-band reporting to a multitiered review.

"There has to be a basic element of trust" between producer and correspondent, Yellin said. "But good reporters



CBS' Dan Rather apologized last week for a "mistake in judgment" in a story about President Bush's National Guard service.

ask their producers very difficult questions."

At "60 Minutes," according to several producers familiar with the newsmagazine's editorial process, that questioning is intense.

"An awful lot of tough questions get asked," said one producer who has worked for "60 Minutes." "These are very smart, professional journalists."

Producers familiar with the show said the correspondent serves as the initial editor on the story, which is then screened by a senior producer, an executive producer — in this case, Josh Howard, who runs the Wednesday edition of "60 Minutes" — CBS News senior vice president Betsy West, and finally, in contentious stories, by network lawyers.

As for how the network pro-

cess could have resulted in such a potential catastrophe for such well-respected journalists, no producer contacted for this story would hazard a guess on the record — "those memos are radioactive," said one.

But Yellin, whose wife is a producer for "60 Minutes," said he is sure of one thing.

"I have no doubt that the people on that story thought they were right," he said. And in an age when prime-time newsmagazines are more likely to produce profiles of pop stars than serious investigative journalism, Yellin said critics should remember that at least CBS was trying to get at the truth.

"This doesn't happen to you unless you're attempting serious journalism," he said. "It doesn't excuse the mistakes, but CBS deserves credit for that."