

Network: hilarious, disturbing satire

By GLENN WHITLEY
Paddy Chayefsky's screenplay is the brilliance behind the movie "Network." Liting, and almost lyrical, his script is a hilarious satire on the television industry.
But the movie is disturbing as well. It aims at the heart of the now TV generation.
"Less than three per cent of you read books," shouts Peter Finch in an impeccable performance as Howard Beale, the Mad Prophet of the Airways. And the accusation hits home.
Finch plays an aging, alcoholic anchorman who is fired because his news show has low ratings. In a desperate attempt to regain attention, he announces that he'll commit suicide on the air. The network executives are aghast. The ratings go up 15 per cent.
In order to save face, Beale is given a chance to apologize on the air. Instead, he begins to shout about what "bullshit" life

is. The audience response is tremendous.
The network begins to promote Beale as an "angry man, articulating the public's anger at the hypocrisy of our times."
Behind the camera Faye Dunaway, William Holden, Robert Duvall and Ned Beatty vie for power trying to survive in the volatile broadcasting industry.
Dunaway is Diana Christensen, a coolly ambitious woman in the network's programming department with the instincts of a barracuda.
She comes up with an idea for a new hit show — "The Mao Tse-Tung Hour. The network pays the Ecumenical Liberation Army for home movies of their bank rip-offs and kidnappings. Any resemblance to the Symbionese Liberation Army is purely intentional.
One of the funniest scenes in the film shows the complications that arise when a terrorist gang,

a kidnaped heiress, a female black communist militant and contract problems and distribution rights in the gang's hide-out.
Meanwhile, Beale suffers a breakdown and begins to rant about a vision he had. He appears to be insane. Christensen capitalizes on this and turns his ravings into the No. 4 show on TV. It's surpassed only by Six Million Dollar Man, All in the Family, and Phyllis.
William Holden is excellent as the craggy, middle-aged newsman from the early days of television. He's lost in the new corporate world of broadcasting and seeks to regain his manhood in an affair with Christensen.
She's beautiful, but cold and heartless. In bed with Holden, she maintains a running conversation on her network problems.
Holden, as Schumacher, describes Diana as "TV incarnate, indifferent to joy, oblivious to

suffering, reducing war, pain, love and death to the level of TV banality.
Robert Duvall is perfect as the corporate man. He lives only for approval from the chairman of the board.
Ned Beatty, who has been excellent in his recent movies, gives still another outstanding performance as Jensen, the president of CCA, the corporation that owns the network. He uses Howard Beale to spread the gospel of corporate religion.
"Network" is outrageously funny. The characterizations are superb. Chayefsky's dialogue is too wordy at times, but the overall effect is successful.
Chayefsky blasts the institution of television with his satire. But the parody is too close to the truth for comfort. The hard-hitting ending makes a person wonder exactly to what lengths television would go for good ratings.

Low ratings don't threaten CBS 'Who's Who' series

United Press International
NEW YORK — A series of events has stirred some questions about what's what with "Who's Who," but a spokesperson for CBS said neither low ratings, pre-emption, nor executive shuffles pose a threat for the news magazine format program.
"Who's Who," or "Son of 60 Minutes" as it was called by some, went on the air earlier this year with Dan Rather, Charles Kuralt and Barbara Howard emphasizing the "people" aspect of the news. Executive producer was Don Hewitt, who also is executive producer of "60 Minutes."
Now Hewitt has decided that the double chores are more than he can handle and that he has neglected "60 Minutes." He will drop "Who's Who" to concentrate on "60 Minutes."
John Sharnik, CBS vice president for public affairs broadcasting, who has been the vice presidential-rank overseer for both "60 Minutes" and "Who's Who," also will become acting executive producer for "Who's

Who." Because he will be spending a lot of time with the new show, another news department vice president, Bob Chandler, will handle the VP chores for "60 Minutes."
What that means in terms of corporate ladder climbing is uncertain, but it won't effect the future of "Who's Who."
In the meantime, "Who's Who" also was pre-empted this week by Bill Moyers' CBS Reports on "Arizona, Here We Come!" That, CBS explains, is because the network only allows the news division a limited amount of time. It must pre-empt one of its own shows to allow time for a special. And "Arizona" bumped "Who's Who."
There wouldn't be any question about "Who's Who" if it scored as high in the Nielsen ratings as "60 Minutes," which consistently ranks in the top 20 and often hits the top 10.
The week ending Feb. 20, "Who's Who" ranked 65th on a list of 69.
CBS says it will go along with


"Who's Who" — after all "60 Minutes" took several years to take off and it didn't have to compete with "Happy Days" and "Laverne & Shirley."
The Fonz and friends were in the top two spots in the Nielsen ratings, and ABC dominated the top ten, with only CBS' "M-A-S-H" and "One Day At A Time" keeping ABC from a clean sweep.
For those who think ABC can do no wrong, the last show on the list also was an ABC entry — "Most Wanted," 69th on a list of 69.
The 10 top network television programs for the week ending Feb. 20, according to the A.C. Nielsen Co., were:
1. "Happy Days," 2. "Laverne & Shirley," 3. "How The West Was Won" ABC Monday Movie, 4. "M-A-S-H," 5. "Charlie's Angels," 6. "Secrets" ABC Sunday movie, 7. (tie) "One Day At A Time" and "Six Million Dollar Man," 9. "Dirty Mary, Crazy Larry" ABC Friday movie, 10. "Welcome Back, Kotter."
CBS says it will go along with

TV network stars compete

United Press International
HOLLYWOOD — The athletes among network television series battle one another again Feb. 28 for supremacy in a variety of events. Volleyball, rowing, swimming, golf and a tug-of-war will be included.
Last year the ABC team won in a close finish against the NBC hotshots with CBS dragging home a poor third.
All three captains returned for this year's clash — Telly Savalas of "Kojak" CBS, Bob Conrad of "Baa Baa Black Sheep" NBC and Gabe Kaplan of "Welcome Back, Kotter" ABC.
Conrad claimed his squad lost on a disputed call in the relay race.
"Nobody is going to win on a fluke," he claimed. To decide the winner, a foot race was arranged between Conrad and Kaplan. Kaplan, a nightclub comic, easily outdistanced his stubby legged challenger.


\$100 billion in oil can be drilled, researcher says

A Texas A&M University petroleum researcher told an Abilene group perhaps as much as \$100 billion in "unrecoverable" oil could be added to the state's economy by using high pressure air.
"High pressure air may be used to increase the oil recovery for some oil reservoirs," said Dr. Paul B. Crawford at the Monday meeting of the West Central Texas Section of the Society of Petroleum Engineers.
Crawford is the assistant director of the Texas Petroleum Research Committee and a professor of petroleum engineering at A&M. The pioneering work on oil recovery by high pressure air injection has been conducted by the committee.
"Texans now have 100 billion barrels of oil underground classified as unrecoverable," Crawford said. "If through research we can get only 10 per cent of this oil it will mean 10 billion barrels of extra oil."
At \$10 per barrel that will add \$100 billion to the economy of Texas," he said. "This is sufficient money to provide six million man years of employment at an average pay of \$15,000 per year. It is vitally important that the required research be continued to win a part of the unrecoverable oil."
Until now natural gas has been injected to increase the oil recovery and it has done a good job, but natural gas is scarce and is now selling for two dollars per thousand cubic feet," Crawford pointed out. "New and less expensive oil recovery methods must be developed to provide the energy we need to warm our homes and run our businesses."



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