

Photos showed national image

WASHINGTON — The process was invented in France by a Frenchman, Louis J.M. Daguerre, but Americans fell in love with it, improved it and embraced it. For a time — from 1840 to 1860 — almost every American with a quarter to spare posed for Daguerre's marvelous portrait machine.

The faces of distant kin popped up in fancy frame on every parlor table. Even the dead were photographed; many stories were told of the weeping widow at the bedside sending a child for the daguerreotypist.

The daguerreotype democratized portrait-making.

"This was really something new under the sun," says art historian Harold Pfister, who in the last three years has become an expert.

"Heretofore, to possess one's own image, someone had to draw it or engrave it or paint it or sculpt it. Now with a couple hours' training he could make your picture."

Mark Twain commented on how "dim children, parents, cousins, aunts and friends" showed up "in all attitudes but customary ones, all of them too much combed, too much fixed up."

(An uncombed youthful Samuel Clemens posed, too, wearing a belt buckle that said "Sam.")

Between 1840 and 1860, when other forms of picture making came along, uncounted millions of daguerrotypes were made, some by daguerreans who roved from farm to farm.

The process produced a picture on a polished silverplated copper sheet.

Much like the original Polaroid, only one image was made — there was no photographic negative from which any number of prints could be produced, though a daguerrotype picture could be redaguerrotyped.

Pfister, an administrator at the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gal-

lery, was assigned in 1975 to look into the prospects of a daguerrotype show. No major museums had ever mounted one, because the images are small and mirrorlike: they demand to be held in the hand, mounted.

Pfister, 30, became intrigued, and he travelled the country, tracking down 110 evocative daguerrotypes. They are on display in Washington until Feb. 4, a gallery of haunting images.

Every family on American soil at the time of the daguerreotype probably posed. Millions of daguerrotypes remain, tucked away.

Often they are on sale at antique shows for a few dollars.

But, he advises, never try to clean the silver plate. If it is hopelessly tarnished, get professional help. If you think your daguerrotype is of someone famous or of value, consult a museum photography department.

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Jewish goups protested airing of PLO documentary, ABC says

WASHINGTON — Jewish groups conducted an organized campaign to keep an ABC-TV documentary about the Palestine Liberation Organization off the air, a network spokeswoman charged today.

She said most of the callers, when questioned, turned out to be young and Jewish, occasionally read prepared statements, and said they were told to make the calls by their rabbis or teachers.

The program in advance of its broadcast. The documentary was produced and followed by disclaimers that did not imply support or sympathy for the PLO.

The hour-long program, broadcast in most American cities Monday night, was "Terror in the Promised Land," part of the ABC News "Close-up" series. It gave a frank and occasionally sympathetic look at the PLO and some of the "suicide squads" of terrorists who attack Israeli civilian targets.

The narrator of the program, anchorman Frank Reynolds, closed it with a personal commentary explaining that he participated only because he believed the program would increase American public understanding of a complex problem.

The program was not commercially sponsored. The spokesman said it was felt that "Close-up" commercial sponsors should have been given more notice of the controversial nature of the program; the network decided to remain uncommitted.

Network spokeswoman Mary Fifield told UPI the program triggered about 3,000 protest telephone calls to ABC stations around the nation, about half of them before the program started.

He told UPI the commentary "was there at my insistence."

Reynolds and other ABC correspondents were unhappy about the content of the program as it originally prepared by producer Malcolm Clark.

The calls apparently were the result of "what we can only call a campaign" by the Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith, Ms. Fifield said.

The ADL, in keeping with ABC policy, had not been able to see the

As a result of their objections, several script changes were made in an interview, giving an Israeli point of view, was added shortly before the broadcast.

Reading aloud can aid students

BLOOMINGTON, Ind. — A high school teacher who reads aloud to her classes every day says it helps poor readers and improves their capabilities.

Kathy Schrier of Martinsville, Ind., told a recent reading conference on the Indiana University Bloomington campus that her daily reading deliberately has no strings attached.

"I'll just say, 'Here's something neat I want to share with you,' and they can relax and enjoy the story because they know I'm not going to test them on it later today, tomorrow or next week."

She said she also devotes one class period a week to reading materials the students choose for themselves.

"It's like playing the piano or making free throws in basketball. It takes practice. And, since they are poor readers, it isn't very likely they're going to practice at home."

She also recommends that teachers make reading materials such as paperbacks, newspapers and magazines easily available to students in their high schools.

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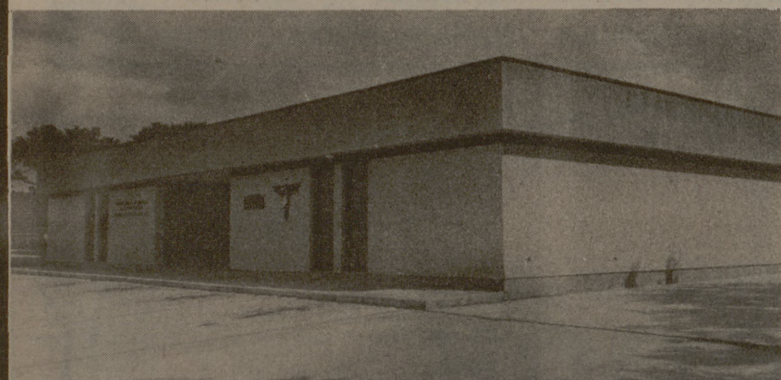
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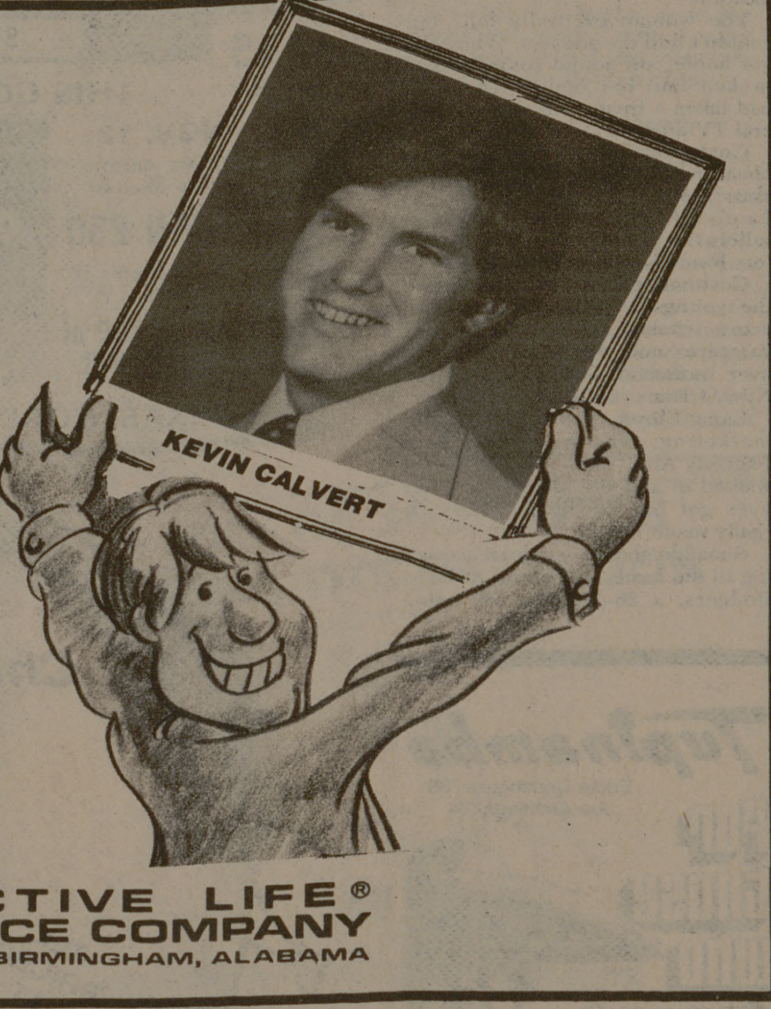
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