

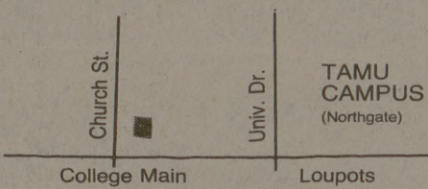
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Video market expands

United Press International

NEW YORK — After a long career in the record business, Cy Leslie says he has a feeling of déjà vu in his new job as head of MGM-UA Home Video.

"The parallels with the record business are uncanny," he said. "The new rules for home video are the record rules."

With 14,000 retailers selling home video cassettes these days, home video is now where the record business was after World War II, Leslie said.

"It was a modest start-up world," he said. "You had entrepreneurs, mom and pop stores."

The parallels will continue as home video experiences an eventual shakeout that will eliminate marginal retailers and "those less able to merchandise wisely," he predicted.

"You can't sustain everyone who wants to be in the business," Leslie said.

MGM-UA Home Video is a subsidiary of MGM-UA Entertainment Co. But in 1982, the parent company offered 15 percent of its stock in the business for sale in order to help reduce its debt.

Leslie's firm has all rights to MGM-UA material for sale to pay television, home video cassettes and non-theatrical rentals, such as schools and libraries. Its character licensing business includes the famous "Pink Panther" character.

In his earlier career, Leslie saw record sales jump from an initial \$200 million a year right after the war to \$4 billion a year in 1977.

"But this business is growing at a much faster clip," he said.

At the end of 1983, there were 9 million videocassette recorders in use in the nation. That is expected to jump to 16 million by the end 1984, and to as many as 24 million in 1985.

"You're creating a totally new audience every year," he said. Initially, he added, people bought VCRs to record television programs for later viewing.

"Now, the major interest is movies," he claimed.

Movies generally become available for cassette sales after a 6-month run in theaters. Then the cassettes have a 6-month exclusive "window" before the films begin to run on pay television. After another year and a half, the films are available for network television release.

"Then they syndicate it, then it comes back to us," Leslie said.

The public is ten times more likely to rent a video for one night or a weekend than to buy it for permanent use, Leslie said. While prices probably will come down on films that have a large potential sales audience, he said, "when you expect a greater universe of renters, that's not likely to happen."

Both "2001, A Space Odyssey"

and "Brainstorm," for instance, at \$79.95. But "Brainstorm" rental movie while "Space Odyssey" has become something of a collector's item.

Many movies like "Brainstorm" the science fiction film starring late Natalie Wood, do well at rentals after an undistinguished run at the movie houses, Leslie said. There are apparently many people that are not tempting enough to people out of their homes, but enough appeal to merit the investment of a few dollars in rental.

When MGM-UA issued its estimate of the value of its large film library at \$200 million, the log of older films has been a attraction, Leslie said, with movies ranging from "The Ard of Oz" to "Soylent Green."

But the real biggie in the MGM-UA library is yet to make its home video market.

"Gone With the Wind" — what you could do with that," Leslie said. "We've got a brand new, never used," he said. "It's an excellent color film, and to the most expensive color production."

Discussions about what to do with the film, however, are still in early stages. Leslie said it is "early" to predict when "Gone with the Wind" will be on sale at the VCR store.

Scientists investigate drug to help emphysema victims

United Press International

WASHINGTON — A persistent cough, labored or quick breathing and the feeling of never getting enough air are the hallmarks of emphysema, a disease for which there is no treatment and no cure.

Smoking is considered a major cause of the disease, which afflicts more than 2.4 million Americans.

For inherited emphysema sufferers, the relatively small number who develop the disease early in life regardless of whether they smoke, a drug under investigation by several groups may be effective in halting the progressive lung damage that causes the symptoms.

For now, however, patients are stuck with treatments that help clear their lungs and help them breathe. They must minimize exposure to irritants which may accelerate lung damage.

Emphysema is the gradual destruction of elasticity in air sacs in the lungs so that they are less and less able to expel stale air. Patients must breathe harder or faster with remaining healthy air sacs to get enough oxygen.

The disorder, which shortens life

by 10 to 20 years, afflicts mostly those over age 50 who smoke. About 20,000 to 40,000 develop emphysema at age 30 or 40 because of genetic factors.

Two factors are important in the development of emphysema. One is an enzyme secreted by a white blood cell that is part of the body's defense system, and the other is a protein that protects tissues against the enzyme.

The white blood cell, called a neutrophil, is not normally found in the lungs in very great numbers. It secretes enzymes called elastases, which break down the support tissue of air sacs. Large numbers of neutrophils have been found in smokers' lower lungs and in the lungs of emphysema victims.

Normally, lung tissue is protected against elastase by a protein called alpha-1 antitrypsin.

People can develop emphysema if they inherit a gene for antitrypsin deficiency from both parents and somehow get neutrophil elastase into their lower respiratory tract, said Dr. Ronald G. Crystal, chief of the pulmonary branch at the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute.

It is not clear how the human protein system works in emphysema victims who do not have an antitrypsin deficiency, but it is believed a similar mechanism is involved, Crystal said.

Various groups have developed alpha-1 antitrypsin from human plasma in hopes of giving it to emphysema patients daily to replace their depleted supply.

Crystal said the NHLBI will give alpha-1 antitrypsin intravenously to a small group of human patients six months to see if it has effects.

One major problem, however, is that four to nine tons of the substance would be needed annually to treat all genetic emphysema victims, too much to be manufactured from plasma.

Some organizations, including drug companies, are using genetic engineering to induce yeast cells to produce the substance in large amounts.

"It's very important to point out there is no proof that replacement of alpha-1 antitrypsin in individuals may cure the disease," Crystal said.

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