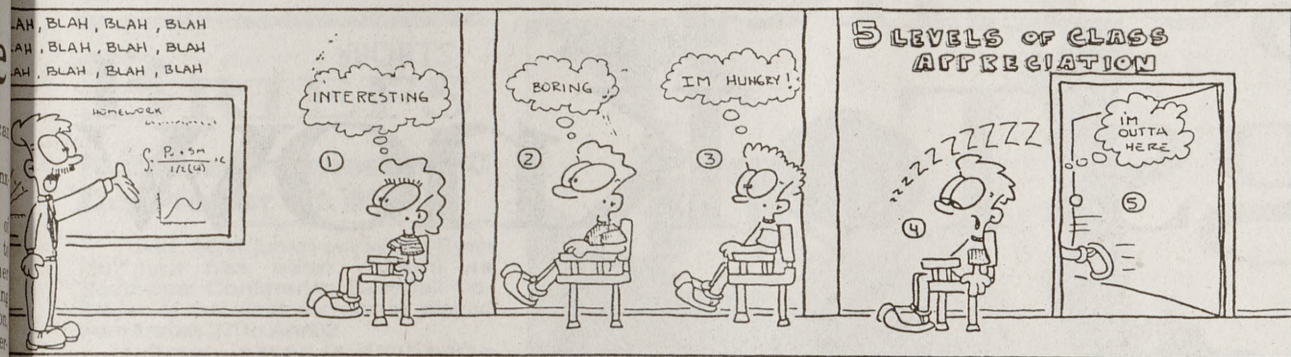


Stick



By Alvaro

FCC Chairman wants to toughen rules on educational programming

WASHINGTON (AP) — Calling TV "the third parent" in many homes, the nation's top broadcast regulator is pushing an innovative plan to make stations air a minimum amount of educational programming for children.

If the plan is adopted, the government would for the first time order stations to provide a certain number of hours of such shows. Broadcasters could choose to pay other stations to produce and air the programs.

The plan, opposed by the TV industry and at least two of the five commissioners, will be unveiled by Federal Communications Commission Chairman Reed Hundt at the agency's meeting Wednesday.

Hundt failed to persuade his fellow commissioners to consider only his plan and it is expected to be included in a group of less restrictive proposals, including having the FCC do nothing.

"The TV is the third parent in most households," Hundt said.

People involved in the process say stations initially would have to air three hours a week of educational programming, increasing a half hour each year to a maximum of five hours. Cable television would not be affected.

Here's how it would work: A station would have to air a minimum amount — one hour a week — itself. Then it could make a deal with another station, commercial or public, to broadcast the remaining required hours, Hundt explained.

The FCC would leave the terms of such agreements to the stations.

"We're trying to privatize the system," Hundt said.

So parents would know where to find the educational shows, the station trading its programming obligations would be responsible for promoting them.

"What's important to the parent is getting a quantity of this programming and knowing where to find it," Hundt said.

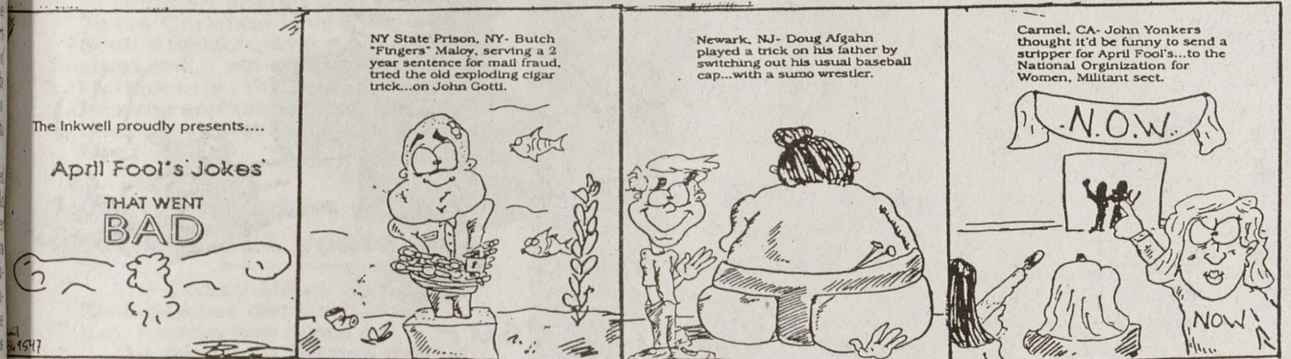
"I'm just worried it won't work," said Kathryn Montgomery, president of the Center for Media Education. "It's kind of wishful thinking that stations would want to take this on."

Montgomery said she doubted a station could pay another enough money to produce a quality educational children's program.

Commissioners Andrew Barrett and James Quello are opposed to the scheme, saying it treads on broadcasters' First Amendment rights. Commissioners Rachelle Chong and Susan Ness, who have expressed concerns, are undecided.

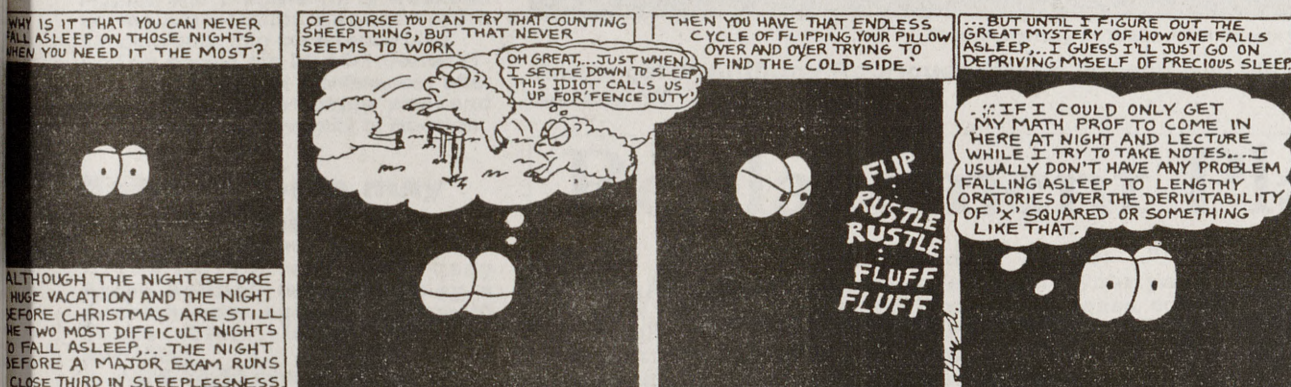
THE INKWELL

By Brad



ADVENTURES IN AGGIELAND

By Greg



Sketch

By Quatro



WEATHER

Today: Cloudy with numerous showers and thunderstorms. High of 68. W winds 10-15 mph.
Thursday: Becoming partly cloudy. High near 75. NW winds 5-10 mph.
Friday: Mostly sunny. High around 75.
Tonight: Cloudy with scattered showers and thunderstorms. Low of 55. W winds 10-15 mph.

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