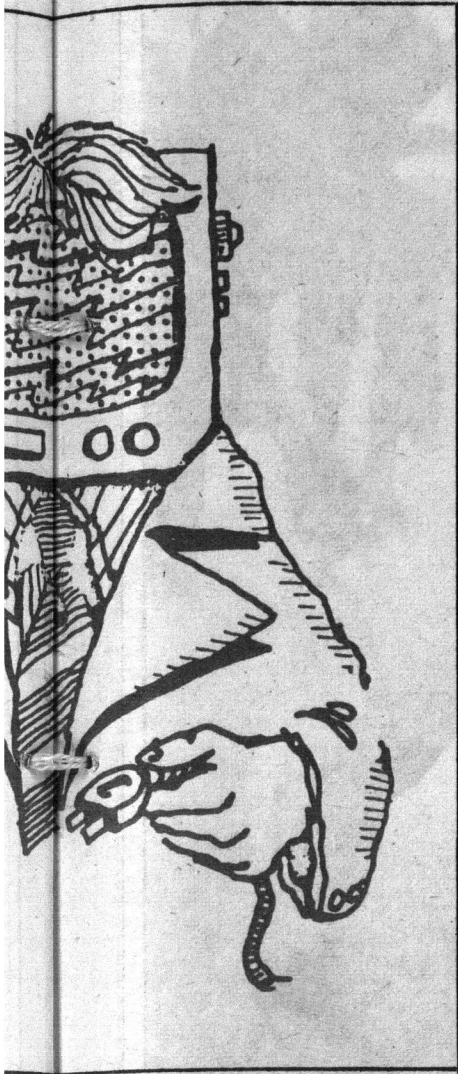


S. dumps media trash in Canada.



waiting impatiently for the ending. If we compare the number of commercials with those shown on European private stations, the conclusion can only be that the U.S. stations are obsessed with making profits. In short, TV is a business, not a public service.

Saturday morning is apparently reserved for children's viewing, which is natural. Yet the young mind is assaulted at once with fantasy figures. Superman is perhaps forgivable since the figure has withstood the test of time, but Superwoman, Superbat, Super whatever? The phrases are trite, meaningless ones such as "holy mackerel," etc, and subsequently captured by the villain and then rescued by one of the super crew, whose powers are increasingly unrealistic. The story is always the same with a few minor variations. They require no imagination or thought on the part of the child and the entertainment value is minimal. Yet the same squad is at work every Saturday, so presumably they must have an audience.

The adult viewer is regarded as an imbecile, who comes in from

work, exhausted, with his brain temporarily dead, at least until the next work day. In this frame of mind, he can be expected to sit in his favourite chair as the never-ending repetition of sitcoms appears in front of him. *Mary Tyler Moore, Lou Grant, Mash*

dumb blonde and male cook. Only *Barney Miller* shows a few new ideas, and, I understand, this programme is being taken off the air, no doubt because it has committed the prime folly of causing the viewer to use up a brain cell.

carried the headline *Who Shot J.R.?* The beliefs, values, outlook of a few money-seeking American TV magnates are being transmitted to the Canadian population, which is thereby denied a media voice that it can call its own. Even the CBC shows mainly U.S. programmes.

One argument runs that the U.S. provides programmes for Canadian viewers since there is no distinct Canadian media culture. This is nonsense. The few plays that CBC has run have been of a much higher quality than their American counterparts. The Canadian news services are among the most impartial in the world. It is to be hoped that the U.S. TV networks pay more attention to quality programming in the future, although no evidence of this has been forthcoming to date. In the meantime, the Canadian channels could help by giving time to domestic talent, instead of following Big Brother in sheep-like fashion, and presenting us with the moronic drivel that passes for entertainment south of the border.

"...Big Brother is watching you

(now a travesty of a good movie), *Three's Company* (arguably the worst show on TV), *Taxi, Mork and Mindy, Happy Days*. Many began brightly enough, Robin Williams as Mork, for example, was for a time one of the funniest characters on the screen. But there are limits to an original idea and even a being from another planet adjusts to earth after so long. *Three's Company*, like *All in the Family* was extracted almost wholesale from the original British show even down to the

Despite the low level of most programmes, there is, nevertheless, a perverse influence at work in many of them. The fifties era is portrayed in *Happy Days* - but the fifties in the United States. There is continental viewing, but the attitude is not continental. Who would expect to find Canadian programmes being shown in the United States? Evidence of this influence was revealed last year in the U.K. when the leader column in the prestigious *Manchester Guardian*

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