

Gimme gimme always get

T.V.'s most offensive game show

Marshall Golden
 "Let's Make a Deal is the seat of greed in America." So said George Carlin over 10 years ago and really, he wasn't far from wrong. On a weekly basis, North Americans could turn on their televisions and watch ordinary people wear ridiculous costumes, answer intimate questions about their personal lives and generally, make complete fools of themselves. All for the sake of a car they couldn't afford to drive, 80,000 cans of floor wax and occasionally, the proverbial goat in a rocking chair.

On other channels we, the ever-increasing -sadistically-voyeuristic-cultures, could watch *Beat the Clock*, where grown men and women would see who could throw more shaving cream pies and water

balloons at their partners in 30 seconds. And all for the sake of 50 dollars. Wow.

Of course, let us not forget that small screen wonder, *The Newlywed Game*, where, with glee, we could witness marriages dissolving amid questions about breast size and fantasies concerning exotic animals.

"...for the sake of a car they couldn't afford to drive or 80,000 cans of floor wax..."

The big prize here was a trip to San Francisco and seven nights at the Cockroach Arms. A wonderful prize until you realize that the show was taped in Los Angeles, a mere 80 miles away. Just like winning a trip to Sudbury.

One began to wonder what new stunts and feats of embarrassment the producers could devise to justify giving away millions of dollars worth of promo merchandise each season. Was there a gimmick that hadn't been tried?

With the advent of the 80's, the

best gimmick of all was created: no gimmick. That's right, no catch-22, no humiliation. Just give it away. Whatever people ask for they'll get: rags to riches in one hour. From this idea, *Fantasy* was born.

Fantasy may very well be the most offensive T.V. show ever made. For 60 minutes every weekday at 3 p.m. on channel 2 (NBC), a nauseatingly happy Peter Marshall and a revoltingly gushy Leslie Uggams give things to people. Thousands and thousands of dollars worth of things. What must these people do to qualify for this excessive and almost criminal generosity? It's simple--they just have to ask. No headstands, no cream pies, and no inquisition--ask and ye shall receive.

As fast as Peter and Leslie can open the letters detailing what people want, the Fantasy Truck (which "may be in your neighbourhood soon") is at homes and offices supplying it. Of course, there is a camera along for the ride, ready to record the shock and the greedy delight.

On a recent show, a church member wrote in complaining that her church had no baptismal--they had to use the river. Peter and Leslie, personally overwhelmed by this misfortune, ordered the Fantasy Truck out to the church, and, while the priest was away, they had a California hot tub installed in the chapel. The priest returned to find a television and installation crew in his church. As soon as he'd recovered from the shock, he said, "Boy, am I going to have fun with this--for the baptisms, I mean." Judging from his grin, that church will have some pretty exciting hot baptisms in the very near future.



It's easy to pinpoint what makes *Fantasy* so offensive. With today's economic recession, where unemployment's rampant and those with jobs must work harder than ever to achieve, the thought of something for absolutely nothing is almost too much to bear. What completes the outrage is the exuberant glee with which it is done. "Gee, isn't that

great," gurgled Leslie on a recent show. "I'll bet that janitor will really enjoy those limousine rides to work every day." This kind of decadence is outrageous.

Actually, this writer has a fantasy, but it would probably upset Peter and Leslie. After all, they need their teeth to earn their living.

Feminist play from past

Barb Taylor

In 1905, Latvian poetess Aspazija fed the fires of revolution when she showed *The Silver Veil* to thousands of people. The play was banned, and Aspazija was forced into exile. Revitalized, and placed in a modern context, the play is now being presented by the 1982 Theatre Company, a young group of four men and four women from London, England.

The company has skillfully combined the romance, suffering, and political upheaval of 1904 with their personal politics and the politics of the world they live in. For example, *The Silver Veil* is dominated by a strong mystical woman with powers from a goddess; and the theatre group is committed to feminism and overcoming the traditional stereotypes of women in art. The play

speaks to the peasants of Latvia and calls on them to work together for the collective good; the company is also a collective--all eight act, administer, and work on the play's props. And Aspazija's main character calls upon the people to bring down the evil King, the actors recall significant historical and personal events between 1982 and 1905. The play, therefore, is relevant to both the actors and the audience.

With *The Silver Veil*, the 1982 Theatre Company simultaneously provides entertainment and demonstrates that politics are not separate from art or private life.

The Silver Veil is now showing at The Theatre Centre, 666 King St. W. until December 5. The company will also be producing Brecht's *In the Jungle of Cities* at Harbourfront, Jan. 5 to 9.

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