

the village Voice

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WHAT'S INSIDE.....

"Night People-ism," says Jean Shepherd, "is like creeping meatball-ism; it's a state of mind rather than a time of day." Shepherd's newest column, "The Night People," written exclusively for The Village Voice, is on page 5 this week. . . . On page 4 you'll find the first published work of a new poet, 25-year-old Bernice Smart of Brooklyn. We like her poetry and think you will, too. . . . What's Mau-Mau-ism in art? Nobody here knew before reading an explanatory letter by its originator, Ted Joans. You'll find the letter on page 4. . . . Finally, if you're a visitor to the Village you'll find a very useful map on page 10.



Voice: Dauber

SHEP

the village square

WILCOCK IN HOLLYWOOD

Beverly Hills, August 31

If you're seen riding a bus in this town—assuming that you have the patience to wait for one—you're indisputably a tourist. After studying the price of bus tickets (17 cents for a ten-block ride) my personal theory is that Angelinos have to buy cars to save money.

At any rate, riding on buses has the one big advantage that you see things; the hapless California motorist, harassed by a law that allows fellow drivers to pass to each side of him, is too busy keeping his eyes on the road.

Some of the things I saw, not necessarily in order of significance were

- A crew-cut sharpie reclining beneath a sun umbrella, just outside Beverly Hills city limits, displaying a sign: "Low-price movie tours—see the stars' homes."
- A Bank of America branch on plushy Sunset Strip with a concrete ramp and an eye-catching sign: "PARK ON THE ROOF."
- A pedestrian-crossing on Hollywood Boulevard outlined with neatly painted stars instead of plain white lines.
- A car lot called Honest Abe Autos—"We split prices, not rails."
- An elderly woman whose flamboyant pink pedal-pushers and blue hair rated not even a glance from blasé passersby.
- Miles of operating oil wells and derricks lining the roads and beaches for 20 miles south of Los Angeles.

The West Coast is a parcel of paradoxes, chiefly financial. Most goods and services are more expensive (i.e., shoe shines cost 25 cents, taxi fares begin at 50 cents), yet the papers abound in credit offers ("See Dr. Beauchamp, your friendly dentist—wait six weeks before making first credit payment"); the service in restaurants is gimmicky and of a high standard (steaks are served, in some restaurants, with a wooden flag stating how well cooked), and yet nobody, but nobody, seems to drink fresh orange juice. Always canned. In California yet.

My main purpose out here is to do some magazine stories (Rock Hudson, Elizabeth Taylor, Kim Novak), and so I've spent a certain amount of time at the studios, being treated with the amiable hospitality accorded to out-of-town newsmen. One studio, being helpful, suggested I



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Apartment Rush Begins



Voice: Gene Dauber

CURBSIDE ART received its semi-annual blessing last week when the Washington Square Outdoor Art Exhibit presented its 50th show. Picture, taken on the north side of the Square, shows passers-by admiring the work of one of the 500 artists exhibiting. For story see page 3.

Scramble Two on 4th St.

Mr. David Ross and His Long Voyage Home

by Jerry Tallmer

They say he looks and sounds like Kurt Kasznar, and so he does. But the actors to which there is an even closer link, it seems to me, are Lee J. Cobb and Morris Carnovsky. There's something about the deep base growl, the hesitancy, the slow stammering build-up into violent release, the huge heavy head of a sleepy lion, the heavy-lidded eyes, the essential assuredness of intention, stature, and Destiny. "What's with this David Ross?" an actress acquaintance asked me earlier this summer. "I remember a couple of years ago some friends said I'd better hook on with him if I could. That's the boy, they said. That's the boy who's going to get there—you wait and see. I laughed at them. I said: Oy, David Ross? But now . . . now . . . well, what about this David Ross?"

Later in the summer, and in fact only a few days ago, Ross was taking a lunch break in a bakery-restaurant around the corner from his Fourth Street Theatre. Morning and afternoon he would be listening to people read for parts in "The Seagull," the next Chekhov play to open (on October 9) at his theatre. As we had walked into the lunchroom, the countermen had very nearly snapped to attention. "Yes, Mr. Ross," one of them said, coming round. I ordered schav and blintzes, Ross ordered scrambled eggs. "Oh God," he groaned, underlining the difference be-

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Furriers over half a century
Lewis & Lewis, 19 E. 9th St.—Adv.

NYU Is Also In the Search

With some divisions of New York University starting up the new school-year yesterday, the annual rush for apartments in Greenwich Village is under way in full force again this week.

Other "NYU" divisions reopen classes later this month, but altogether the university's Student Placement Bureau will have to find "homes" for more than 2000 students from out of town. As usual, the search is in competition with non-student apartment-hunters.

"Of course, even a single room in a private home will do for many of the students," says the bureau's head, Mrs. Camille Strum. "But our problems look like they'll be even tougher this year, because for some reason or other there's a big increase in married students with families, and of course they need apartments."

Less Apartments

A few hundred students can always be accommodated in property already owned by NYU—Judson Women's Dormitory, Holley Chambers, the new Law School dormitory—but plenty of accommodation is still being sought. "I'd like to appeal to any householders who have spare accommodation to get in touch with us," Mrs. Strum added.

Nor does the fall outlook for ordinary apartment-hunters look any brighter. "For every vacancy in the \$50-\$100 bracket, I'm getting almost as many applicants as the \$64,000 Question," one realtor told The Voice. "With recent demolitions, there are less cheap apartments, but apparently even more people want them."



Lawrence Photo

NOT AN OPTICAL ILLUSION but a flashback to March of this year to remind you what it was like. (P. S. Summer ends on September 22.)

Ideal Woman Needs 'The 3 B's,' Says Fashion Stylist

"The ideal woman," said fashion-designer Byron Le Gip, "should have three B's—a bust, a belly, and a bit of behind." He was speaking professionally, of course. For about eight years, since leaving New York's Leading Academy of Design, 28-year-old Le Gip has maintained a studio in the East Village, on West Broadway. But not until last week did he publicly show his creations downtown.

Now, with a photographic exhibit of models wearing his creations on show at the Rienz through September 22, the young designer is contemplating a live show locally in the near future.

His Rienz exhibit, with pictures taken by Villager Dick Philips, demonstrates what Le Gip calls "the new movement"—an inverted pyramid neck and a simple, almost primitive and yet Parisian hang from the shoulders.

"It's fashioned after a basic style common to most civilizations," he explains. "In some places it's called the burnoose, in others the poncho."

\$5 Starts Your Xmas Fur Club.
Lewis & Lewis, 19 E. 9th St.—Adv.

Furs make lasting gifts . . .
Lewis & Lewis, 19 E. 9th St.—Adv.



books

THE FUNNY MEN

An analysis of 16 comedians by Steve Allen. Simon & Schuster, \$3.95.

A few pat phrases and an air of omniscience has earned many a cocktail-party guest a reputation for erudition, and I once knew a man who did it on one phrase alone. "Of course," he would say, after waiting patiently for the conversation to degenerate—as it invariably did—into jokes:



BOB HOPE

"Of course, as everybody knows, there are only seven basic jokes."

The italics are mine but the error was his. Everybody didn't know any such thing for the simple reason that it wasn't true then, and isn't now. Steve Allen, however, is to the best of my knowledge the first person to explode the myth in print. "At this moment," he writes, "new witticisms are being born all over the world. After all, there are new paintings, new songs, new advances in science, new inventions, new ideas of all kinds. Why not new jokes?"

Not a Listing

This book, in case you should be misled, is not a listing of new jokes, or old ones. In a sense it is not a funny book at all, being, rather, an explanation, or an attempted explanation, of why people are funny. Judged by that yardstick, "The Funny Men," though entertaining enough, isn't a complete success. The reason is somewhat akin to what it's like when you have to have an obscure cartoon explained to you: once you know why something is supposed to be funny, it just isn't. But Allen must have full credit

for taking on insuperable odds. "An all-embracing definition of humor has been attempted by many philosophers," he writes, "but no definition, no formula has been devised that is entirely satisfactory." He is wise enough to refrain from adding a definition of his own.

What makes you laugh? A pleasant shock, says Allen (the George Gobel method); a "negative" approach to jokes (Bob Hope); when a "thing" acts like a person (Sid Caesar); sheer extroverted clowning (Jerry Lewis); smoothness of style (Jack Benny); good ad-libbing (Milton Berle); philosophy (Fred Allen); and even puns. The author has a good word for the oft-maligned pun, and I'm with him all the way. Did you ever hear puns criticized by anyone capable of constructing one himself? Steve Allen, writing for the defense, happens to be a natural punster.

"I have always taken considerable pride," he says, "in a triple pun I once perpetrated telling the story of how the world came to be divided into the various time bands, or zones. The man who set up this plan was a nineteenth-century Norwegian scientist called Andersrag. Alex Andersrag. To this day you will hear people talk about the Alex Andersrag Time Band."

There's one criticism to make of "The Funny Men." I suppose it's inevitable that its author, who is a professional television and movie performer, can't be too hard on his contemporaries—dog doesn't eat dog anywhere. But the book includes one or two phrases like this: "The fans want to read about Tab Hunter and he's a fine young man and I wish him the best of luck."

Well now. Are such sophs really necessary? —John Wilcock

JEAN COCTEAU

A biography by Margaret Crossland. Alfred A. Knopf, \$5.

This is a quiet travelogue about the territory that is Cocteau. Miss Crossland is reverent in her attitude; she quotes Mr. Cocteau frequently and tells us what she thinks he thinks.

However, there is nothing really theoretic here. She is unable to show how Cocteau's personal reaction to things becomes compositionally in his films. We occasionally read an interesting quotation from Cocteau, but we look in vain for Miss Crossland to go below the surface.

The purpose of such a book is never clear. In the final analysis, it is simply a book by a woman about Cocteau.

J. B. H.

The Night People

by JEAN SHEPHERD



Voice: Gene Dauber

Jazz It Up, Charlie . . .

"YOU got a pretty fair script, Charlie, but you got to jazz it up and make it tighter. Pull it together. Make it sing. It's got to move, man, if you really want a decent rating." Poor Charlie. His rating is down. But it isn't hopeless yet. A few more visits to the Life-Programming Clinic and a couple more profiles by the Life Creative Idea

Department, and Charlie's rating is bound to go up. The year is 1974 and Charlie is worried. His Life-Trendex Rating has been dropping slowly for some time now. At first he ignored it. Then he began to explain it away with the usual drivel about "normal summer-audience drop-off," but he couldn't fool himself for long. Damn those ratings!! Charlie remembered a story or two his father was always telling about how there was a time when nobody had a rating except TV shows, but Charlie didn't see how people could live that way. How could you know what people were thinking about you if there was no rating system? You can't just go on bumbling along without some sort of guide. Sure, everyone knows that the Life-Trendex Rating are full of holes, but after all, they are some indication, and that's better than nothing. Any-

way, the Personnel boys use the damn things to sell a guy, so we have to go along with it. Charlie, alone with his thoughts, swung aboard the Perso-Conveyor and headed home carrying in his brief case the latest Life-Programming ideas from the Creative Head at the Life Institute. It was expensive but necessary.

TRENDEXISM is with us now and will be here for some time.



Anyone who spent much time watching the recent political conventions is very much aware of the constant fumbling efforts that were made by both parties to boost the ratings among the TV watchers. There was a headline in one of the trade papers to the effect that the nets were getting together for a series of meetings in order to do something about boosting the appeal of the conventions for the TV audience. This is only a very small straw in the wind as regards Trendexism. Wait till it spreads to all activities and areas of life. Take the Charlies of today, for instance. All of us. We fumble. Hope for the best. Figure it will all turn out OK in the end. But fear that it damn well won't. The sale of "How-to-Live"-type books is good evidence that a lot of people are looking for some kind of blueprint. What an opportunity for some guy with a plausible-sounding rating system that can be applied to the life of every Charlie everywhere!

Under this system, every subscriber would have a rating, just as the radio and TV shows do today. Life would then be Show Biz. Acquaintances both friendly and business would become The Audience, and Charlie could tell by a glance at his latest rating sheet just how he was doing. And then, as a natural extension of the rating system, a series of Life Clinics would be set up to help Charlie program his life so that he could hold the attention of his audience and even build up a larger one.

JEAN SHEPHERD, radio's controversial conversationalist and a man increasingly seen in high places, surveying the Village for Night People yesterday from the offices of The Village Voice.

Ratings would become the criteria for job applicants. Creative-Life program-directors would supplant the analyst and the clergy. They would use all the techniques of modern advertising as well as the services of the finest scripts that could be turned out by ex-soap-opera-writers, to add Zest and Action, not to mention Pathos, to the life of every subscriber.

I HAD THE UNCOMFORTABLE

FEELING that just such a system of Life-Programming was actually in operation the day the celebrated Joe Smith incident was staged in San Francisco. It was as though someone in an ad-agency smoke-filled room had decided that what was needed to jazz up the rating on TV as well as stir up the press a bit was a spot of good old-fashioned Conflict. Conflict is a necessary element in every good theatrical effort, so let's have some, boys. The script as it had been played up to that point was as smooth and sweet as a can of Karo Syrup. And as dull. The ratings were falling. Sponsors were growing restive. The agency boys were muttering. Viewers were yawning. Let's have some Conflict, boys, but make it harmless—because we're really playing for laughs, not fist-fights here. So up came Joe Smith. It could have been legit, but from the standpoint of a good stage director, Joe was good Conflict and harmless at that. Just the thing to jazz up a falling rating and bad notices. Joe could have been born in an ad agency. And quite possibly was.

Now that Trendexism is with us, how are you going to treat Conflict in your life, O Charlie? Throw in a marimba band, a couple of quick one-liners, some homely philosophy (nothing deep, but good grass-roots stuff, Charlie), some nice lighting and a decent list of credits, and your rating will be in fine shape. Life is Show Biz, Charlie, and there's no biz like Show Biz.

RISSA AGAIN PRESENTS

The unimmaculate Rissa, Impresario last season of literary evenings at the Café Demitasse, has transferred her soirees this fall to the Last Chance Caffe, 20 Cornelia Street. The events will again be scheduled for Sunday evenings. All interested actors, writers, singers, chamber musicians, pianists, or gamblers are urged by Rissa to call her at UL 4-6594.

the iceman, he don't cometh . . .
but who cares, when there's

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