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BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING: There will be a board meeting in June 1993.								
ALL MEMBERS are welcome and invited to attend and participate at the Board of Directors Meeting.								
The June 3rd meeting ia at the home of John Adams at 7:30 PM.								
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CLUB MEETING:								
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## Tony LaMonica will be our guest Thursday, June 17th, at 7:30 PM.

The June 1993 R.H.A.C. meeting will be Thursday, June 17th at 7:30 PM at The Church of The Master, located at 17th Avenue and Filbert Court (Filbert Court is between Forest and Fairfax Streets).

Tony LaMonica has been very much a part of the Denver radio scene for the past 28 years! His work has been so varied that we can only touch upon it here:

KIMN-AM, Denver, 1965-1972; KFMB-AM/FM, San Diego, CA, 1974-1976; KDEN-AM, Denver, 1976-1979: ABC Radio Sports Network, NY, NY, 1979-Present; K-HOW-FM/AM, Denver, 1979 - Present.

Tony LaMonica has had many jobs including Announcer, Interviewer, Assistant News Director, News Director, News and Sports Director, game day coverage and all levels as Media Coordinator. Awards: U.P. Intnt'l, Best Spot News three times; A.P., Sportscaster of the Year, three times.

Come, meet and enjoy the colorful background of a career radio man!

You should attend to learn more about old time radio!

#### From the

## King's Roost

Bob Hastings visited R.H.A.C. in Denver May 14 and May 15. During that visit John Rayburn was able to interview Bob. This proved to be a bit of good fortune for John because, soon after the interview, both John and Bob left town going in different directions.

John will eventually use the interview as part of John Rayburn's Old Time Radio show on KNUS Radio, 710 AM, Sundays 12:30 to 4 P.M.

When John was able to arrange that interview before leaving town on other business it served to remind him that he is sometimes busier after retirement than before! We have also found this very true and we love it! It's a great way to be!

John Rayburn's Old Time Radio has frequently mentioned R.H.A.C. on the air in answer to inquiries from people who call in to his show. Yes, he accepts phone calls during parts of his show...well, that is, during those Sundays when he is in the KNUS studios during the broadcast. But, then, you'll just have to tune in to learn the sequence of events that occur!

Anyway, Many people have listened to **John Rayburn** and the end result has been that they have joined R.H.A.C. AND WE DO CERTAINLY WECOME THEM ALL!!.

Denver has moved into the Spring season with lots of great blossoms and wonderful scents to go along with it. We have seen lots of Great Blue Herron that nest at Chatfield reservoir and have had a few close encounters to spook the horses while we were out riding. Several pairs of Canada Geese with their new broods have been seen on the smaller lakes. Soon we will also see many of the various types of ducks with their new families.

We were saddened to learn of the passing of Carlton E. Morse on May 24th, 1993 at age 91. We will never again have new stories written by this man who was able to write the family story of "One Man's Family." "One Man's Family" was for many years MUST listening each evening for as long as we can remember radio in the home. Carlton E. Morse was also able to create and write mystery and adventure thrillers that held listeners spellbound and satisfy the lust for adventure in all of us. We will miss him.

We took a flying trip to Lander, Wyoming one recent Sunday, bought a new horse, and returned home the same day, without the horse. All the way to Lander we the lookout were on for Pronghorn antelope and saw many very pregnant does. But no young ones were yet in sight. The antelope are native to this area and, so, have their internal calendars set to allow for the fact that we sometimes have late Spring snows. In Spring every open space puts on it's best show, just to remind us that there is more to life than concrete and asphalt.

We are still trying to find a way to get our new horse down from Lander, some 370 miles away. He would certainly be trail broke if ridden down, but I doubt that either of us could stand the trip. Guess we will just have to resort to wheels.

We have a <u>REQUEST FOR</u>
<u>HELP</u> from:
Alexandra Fitzgerald
135 W 23rd St

New York, NY 10011

Alexandra would like to obtain a copy of any cassette containing ANY program on which the British actor Leslie Howard appears. Write her with info.

The Kings will be leaving for the Seattle convention soon after the appearance of **Tony LaMonica** at the June 17th R.H.A.C. meeting. We shall hope to see you at that meeting!

#### PLEASE NOTE!

Each of the next three newletters will contain an additional 10 pages of indexes to the R.H.A.C. Library, beginning with this issue:

**June:** R.H.A.C. Library Index, shows alphabetically A - V, pages 1 - 10.

July: R.H.A.C. Library Index, shows alphabetically W, pages 11 - 12.

R.H.A.C. Reference Library of books, 3 pages.

Same books listed by subject, 1 page.

List of logs and scripts available, 4 pages.

August: R.H.A.C. Reference Library of magazine articles from a wide assortment of sources, 10 pages

### Thud

#### and

### Blunder

By CAROL H. WEISS

It has been estimated that some 1,500 take place each week on the radio. This, according to Gilbert Seldes, does not include murders meditated or suspected on daytime serials, but does include murders specifically arranged for children's programs.

This mass blood letting requires a horde of detectives to bring the criminals to justice and to prove that crime does not pay. The size and shape of these fearless champions of the law varies from the petite giddiness of Pamela North to the hulk of the Fat Man. But the pattern of the programs is despairingly monotonous.

The rules of these relentless crime sagas are evidently:

- 1. The crime involved must be murder. Theft, burglary, arson, narcotics, smuggling, and blackmail may crop in the script, but only to provide the motive for the ensuing murder. The theory behind this is evidently that modern audiences are impervious to lesser thrills.
- 2. The story must involve at least one seductive female. Theory: if the plot doesn't tingle any spines, the low-pitched sultriness might.
- 3. Violence is essential. A few good brawls, even a flesh wound in the hero's shoulder, keep the

story moving from one commercial to the next. Theory: detectives must have guts, even if these have to be strewn over the barroom floor. Alternate theory: If things move fast enough, the audience will lose sight of the fatuity of the story.

- 4. Liquor never hurts. Particularly if connected with No. 2. Theory: beer will do for sissies, but a he-man needs his double Bourbon.
- 5. Sound motivation is a dispensable. luxury. Radio supposedly murderers, even normal individuals in respectable positions. kill upper-class because of jealousy over a friend's prosperity, desire for amazingly paltry sums of money, discovery of a ten-year-old flirtation, or fear of revelation of a misdemeanor on which the statutory period of limitation has long expired.
- 6. The marksmanship of all would-be murderers is perfect, except when gunning for the detective. Victims are rarely wounded; they are either stone cold dead on the spot, or else they die in the hospital without regaining consciousness. No regularly employed script writer would have any truck with a myopic killer.
- 7. Clues must be kept simple. The three perennials are color-blindness (the corpse was dressed after the murder; was found with one red sock and one green sock; there is the color-blind suspect skulking in the script; ergo---), left-handedness (a partly used matchbook is found on the scene

of the crime with all the remaining matches on the right side; this probably sends more left-handed radio murderers to join their forefathers than any other single clue), and knowing more than the police revealed ("We only told you he was killed! How did you know he was shot? Take him down to headquarters!").

- 8. The sketchiest evidence will do. Since most of it would not stand up in a court of law. must be severely criminals the detectives shocked by indisputable logic into such a state of trauma that they yearn to spew up confessions. Or else, on being shown the left-handed matchbook, the criminal grabs a handy gun lying nearby and snarls, "So I did it! But you'll never get me!" They inevitably do. A further common variation is the cathartic confession. The murderer has the hero trapped and is about to finish him off. but he takes five minutes out to explain in vivid detail how he managed his last three murders. This monologue enables the pursuing posse to catch up and overpower him.
- 9. Crime labs, fingerprints, dictaphones, laundry marks, and ballistics are useful paraphernalia, but nothing will ever replace the two-fisted he-man. Theory: this is The American Way.

Fortunately, there are a few programs on the air that spurn some or all of these fundamental tenets. One is "Dragnet" (Thursday, 9:00 PM EST, NBC). "Dragnet" is

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introduced as a documentary --- "authentic stories of your police force in action...transscribed from the official files" of Los Angeles Police the Department. Improbable as it audiences may seem to constantly swindled by "true stories," "true confessions," and similar pap tricked out as "Dragnet" real-life drama, actually sounds like a police force in action. No attempt is made to inject synthetic glamour into the proceedings. Cases are handled capably and quietly, as though they were part of a regular job. and not the jazzed-up tales of a Sunday detective. The work is often tedious and routine. It is announced that the program receives technical advice from the office of W. H. Parker, Chief of Police of Los Angeles. Chief Parker's office is evidently fed to the teeth on Perry Mason-type sleuthing.

The police on the program are quiet, hard working fellows. The dialog sounds like people talking not like soap opera hacks or gag-writers trading left-over lines. There is an air of about casualness the conversation that is completely convincing. Excellent writing and fine performances by the cast, headed by Jack Webb as Joe Friday, are great assets, but the most important factor is the knowledge that the dialogue is not mined with hidden leads or give-away blunders. No one is trying to slip any greased clues by you; no twists are going to be rung.

Most mystery programs begin with a corpse and three suspects. The detective's job is to prove the guilt of one of the suspects or, on rare occasions, of an obscure butler who has standing in the corner looking like a clothestree. "Dragnet" on the other hand is a classic chase. It starts with a crime, and no ready-made gallery of suspects, and it moves with workmanlike thoroughness to a solution.

The evidence collected must be conclusive enough to convince a jury. On a recent program, Friday went to dangerous lengths to ensure capture of a group of narcotics dealers in the act of transferring possession of the heroin. He knew that conviction. otherwise, would have been extremely improbable. In another case, although the police had amassed technically convincing evidence of a burglar's guilt -shreds of clothing, a shoe print, tufts of hair -- he was not convicted. The work had to begin all over again.



Another refreshing feature is that murder is evidently not the only crime committed in Los Angeles. Sergeant Friday has been detailed to everything from kidnapping and threatening letters to bunko and larceny. In none of the cases have the criminals been stereotyped hoodlums with congenital inability to voice the tongue-point dental fricative: no dem's and dose's on "Dragnet." Nor have even the professional crooks been brashly reckless of life. They presumably know the difference in the sentences meted out for bookmaking and for murder. If there is any fairly recurrent trait, it is a tremendous faith in the power of money — although unlike some police forces in action, the Los Angeles force is not to be bought off. In general, the criminals turn out to be as diverse a collection, and far more interesting than quiz show contestants. Some samples:

The kidnapping case involved a new-born infant taken from a hospital nursery. The child was traced step by step to the home of a hard-working Italian family celebrating the baptism of their new baby. The woman insisted that it was her child, and that she had just brought it home from an Arizona hospital. Under Friday's quiet questioning, she finally admitted that it wasn't hers. She explained that she and her husband had been married for eleven years. They wanted a child more than anything in the world. When she had at last become pregnant, they were jubilant. She went to a hospital in Arizona. But her baby died at birth. She flew home, bewildered, unable to face her husband. She wandered around the streets. Suddenly she saw she was in front of a hospital. She went up to the nursery, waited until the nurse had been called away, and then, out of all the babies there, she took just one. "It'll be all right, ma'am," Friday said.

The police were called in by the pastor of a Los Angeles church about a series of threatening letters. One of the parishioners, a woman named Dorothy Wilson,

had been receiving vicious and obscene letters and phone calls for some weeks. Their refrain was "You are a sinner and have led a sinful life. Leave the church or your blood will run in the aisles." The police analyzed the handwriting of the letters, investigated the woman's story, and kept close watch on her activities. They decided the whole thing was a phony; she was sending the letters to herself. Friday questioned Miss Wilson. She rambled on about religion, how much it meant to her, how soothing it was. She told him of the men who had proposed to her, of the pretty clothes she had had, but how even when she was younger and very popular, she had never enjoyed parties or dating. Friday asked her why she had sent the letters. She said she didn't know what he was talking about. He mentioned the evidence they had collected. Suddenly she said, "You know I never did go out on dates much. I made all that up." She admitted sending the letters. "I've always wanted to be noticed. I wanted people to know who I was. I wanted them to say, 'There goes Dorothy Wilson.' Nobody ever paid much attention to me."

Perhaps the most engaging thing about "Dragnet" is its warm understanding of people. If intelligence can be measured as the number of shades visible between black and white, "Dragnet" is an intelligent program. Character is not subordinated to the arbitrary requirements of the action-packed

script. The characters fashion the plot.

I do not intend to imply that this is a great program. The format is stylized. The perpetual low-keyed under-playing may as tedious as the become raucous clamor of its airwave brethren. But in contrast with them, it is a hunk of sanity in a tinsel and bullet-riddled world. In recent weeks, the sponsor, Fatima Cigarettes, has even toned down its more strident commercials. Although relatively genteel by George Washington Hill standards, they were as embarrassing on "Dragnet" as a huckster's spiel in a back-bay drawing room.

Commonwealth, December 22, 1953

#### **Jack Webb**

# TRIPLE -THREAT MAN

As Producer-Director-Star of "Dragnet," he proves great versatility in tackling all jobs in an expert manner.

"Cut, let's try that scene again. I think if I deliver that last line as I'm turning toward the door, it'll be more effective."

This was *Dragnet* producer-director Jack Webb talking about "Dragnet" star Jack Webb during filming of an episode. Webb, the actor, stepped off the set for a moment, became Webb the director, peered through the camera's finder, made a mental note of the change for the re-take, and returned to his position alongside the other actors.

"Okay, I think we can get it this time."

The bell sounded, the camera rolled, and it was a perfect take. Dragnet's triple-threater moved quickly to the next camera set-up and began discussing the upcoming scene with his crew. Observers of this smooth and rapid transition from actor to director to producer and back again say it's one of the unique achievements in the television industry.

Ben Alexander, Webb's side-kick, Officer Frank Smith who took direction from such movie greats as C. B. DeMille and D. W. Griffith as a child star, declares, "Jack's ability to direct himself and others while acting, and still remain objective, never ceases to amaze me. In all my years of motion picture work, I have never seen anyone, no matter how great an actor, be able to direct himself and do it well. Jack knows instinctively whether he has given a good performance or a bad one."

Webb, undoubtedly, is one of the pioneers of realism and authenticity in radio and television. From the beginning of the "Dragnet" series in June of 1949 (it started on television in January 1952) he set the pace for an entirely new trend in dramatic programming.

Speaking of those early days, Webb says, "We were a little uneasy at the time. We were trying something new and were worried about public reaction and acceptance. Fortunately the public accepted us with an enthusiasm that was overwhelming.

"Dragnet" on its fifth year on NBC-TV is one of the top national favorites. It has won just about every award the industry has to offer. This can only be accredited to perfectionist Webb's insistence on complete realism and authenticity in presenting weekly dramatizations of the police force in action.

Unidentified Publication, circa 1956

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