

TUNING IN

Can Dolly Parton Survive Season?

by Sell Groves

A PART OF THE WAY? The disappointing status of "The Dolly Parton Show" has a lot of people wondering what happened. The program started well. However, its ratings began slipping with the second show and continued to slide steadily. One can't help asking: How could a variety series starting the popular Ms. Parton do so badly?

But then, maybe that's what the problem with Dolly's show is: that it's all Dolly. If you look at the variety and situation comedy shows that scored high ratings marks, the common thread is the strength of their respective supporting casts. If you like, second bananas such as Harvey Korman, Tim Conway and Vicki Lawrence, "The Carol Burnett Show."

If you had to name, quickly, any of Dolly's second bananas, could you do it?

Some powerful TV viewing lies ahead on December 7. NBC will air a World Premiere Movie, "Eye on the Sparrow" starring Emmy winner Marc Wainwright. "Amber Waves" and Keith Carradine as a blind couple determined to challenge their state's laws which bar disabled persons from adopting children. The production is based on a true story.

In "Cagney & Lacey" December 7, the storyline is not based on one true event, per se. But its theme is all too common: acquaintance rape.

The segment deals with Cagney (Sharon Gless) coming home from a date with a man she knows and trusts, only to find her trust betrayed when he rapes her. Kathy Ford, the series' editor, and the script writer of this episode says, "Cagney's rape is typical of many instances of acquaintance rape where the intimidation is more verbal than violent. And Cagney is just as much a victim as the woman who is beaten, but because she doesn't show bruises, the reaction to her ordeal is different. The rape is perpetuated, why didn't she fight back? Did she bring it on herself?"

Ms. Ford, who is a therapist in a mental health facility for 12 years, makes another strong point: "One of the issues survivors of date rape must deal with is questioning their judgment. How, they think, could they have been so wrong when they trusted this person? The story makes for riveting drama."

DIAL TONES: After years as the devilishly caddish Tad on "All My Children," Michael E. Knight makes his major film debut as a good guy who winds up nursing a celestial creature with a broken wing in the movie, "Date with an Angel." Just for the record, a SHOWTIME Spotlight Feature taped at Montreal's St. Denis Theatre, debuts December 10. (Repeats 12/27 and 12/29, with added dates in January.) Canada's David Steinberg hosts the international lineup of comedies from 10 countries including Canadians Mike McDonald and Steele Ray Fromentin, and the USA's Richard Belzer and Henry Youngman making his first trip to Montreal in 74 years!

TV Test

1. What was the name of the village back in the hills which the Clametts considered their real home on "The Beverly Hillsbillies"?
2. What was the name of the



Clametta's hound dog?

3. What was the name of the 1962 ill-fated series that starred Gene Kelly?
4. What was the name of the 1963-65 series that starred William Windom and Inger Stevens?
5. What was the name of the hotel on "Petticoat Junction"?
6. What was the name of the boarding school the girls attended on "The Facts of Life" in its debut season of 1979?
7. What state did Flo (Polly Holiday) move to in the left "Alice" and Arizona for her own series?
8. What was the name of the series M*A*S*H star Wayne Rogers took over after he left that series and who was his co-star?

Answers: 1. Sibby; 2. Duke; 3. "Going My Way"; 4. "The Farmer's Daughter"; 5. The Shady Rest; 6. Eastland School; 7. Texas; 8. Rogers' new series was "House Calls" with Lynn Redgrave.

CONVERSATION Preview

HERE'S WHAT'S GOOD THIS WEEK ON T.V.

WEDNESDAY

8:00 PM - PBS: CHRISTMAS EVE ON SESAME STREET The spirit of the Christmas season comes over Sesame Street as Big Bird attempts to uncover the secret of how Santa Claus gets down the chimney. (60 min.)

9:00 PM - ABC: HOOPERMAN (CC) An AIDS victim takes hostages. Stern confronts the other woman in her husband's life. (In Stereo)

9:30 PM - CBS: ALL-STAR PARTY FOR JOAN COLLINS Variety Clubs International presents its 12th annual celebration which honors actress Joan Collins. Scheduled appearances by Clint Eastwood, James Stewart, Lynn Redgrave, Robin Leach, Beatrice Arthur and others. (60 min.)

9:00 PM - PBS: NUTCRACKER Mikhail Baryshnikov choreographed and stars in this acclaimed 1977 production of the Tchaikovsky holiday classic, performed by the American Ballet Theatre with Gelsey Kirkland in the role of Clara. (3 hrs.)

9:30 PM - ABC: SLAP MAXWELL STORY (CC) Slap feels depressed after allowing a rival publication to uncover the story of a plutonium theft. (In Stereo)

10:00 PM - ABC: DYNASTY (CC) Alexis blames Blake for their children's problems; Steven asks Job to clean up the drug problem on the football team. (60 min.)

10:00 PM - CBS: EQUALIZER Mickey Mouse appears as Bob Cratchit in addition, Goofy, Donald Duck and Jiminy Glick are seen in separate Disney features. (60 min.) (In Stereo)

10:00 PM - NBC: ST. ELSEWHERE (CC) Craig tries to recapture his youth while Ficus deals with turning 30. (60 min.)

THURSDAY

8:00 PM - CBS: LIFE AND ADVENTURES OF SANTA CLAUS Animated. Raised by the Immortals from boyhood, Santa Claus chooses to return to the mortal world to minister to children. (60 min.)

8:30 PM - NBC: COBBY SHOW (CC) Theo and Cockroach plan on appearing on a TV dance show. Cliff learns "new math." (In Stereo)

9:00 PM - PBS: STORIES OF CHRISTMAS LOVE WITH LEO BUS-CAGLIA Warm and wonderful legends are shared of past Christmas. (60 min.)

9:30 PM - USA: MR. MAGOO'S CHRISTMAS CAROL Animated. Charles Dickens' classic is brought to life through the voices of Jim Backus, Morey Amsterdam and Jack Cassidy. (60 min.)

9:00 PM - ABC: PLAZA SUITE (CC) Thoughts of romantic weekends, bitter-sweet reunions and dealing with a reluctant husband occupy the minds of three women in this adaptation of Neil Simon's play. With Carol Burnett and Dabney Coleman. (2 hrs.) (In Stereo)

FRIDAY

8:00 PM - ABC: MOVIE: "Hoover Vs. the Kennedy's" The Second World War fact-based account of the adversarial relationship between F.B.I. Director J. Edgar Hoover and the Kennedy administration. Jack Warden, Robert Pine, Nicholas Campbell. 1987. Part 2 of 2.

8:30 PM - CBS: BEAUTY AND THE BEAST Tipped off by Vincent, Catherine investigates a reputable foster home which may be mistreating its children. (60 min.)

9:00 PM - NBC: MIAMI VICE (CC) Castillo discovers that a group of Japanese mercenaries have begun to establish a foothold in Miami. (60 min.) (In Stereo)

10:00 PM - ABC: 20/20 (CC) Scheduled: a report on teen-agers who die and experience instances of violence. (60 min.)

SATURDAY

8:30 PM - PBS: MOVIE: "That's Dancin'" The history of dance in the movies is traced. Fred Astaire, Shirley MacLaine, John Travolta. 1985.

9:00 PM - ABC: SABLE (CC) Sable becomes romantically involved with a beautiful woman who is being stalked by a serial killer. (Postponed from an earlier date). (60 min.)

9:30 PM - NBC: GOLDEN GIRLS (CC) Dorothy, Rose and Blanche seek professional help when living with each other becomes unbearable. (In Stereo)

10:00 PM - ABC: HOTEL (CC) A man wants his evangelist wife to become a top TV religious personality; romance is threatened as a couple who met in San Francisco 35 years ago. (60 min.)

SUNDAY

8:00 PM - CBS: MURDER, SHE WROTE (CC) Harry Morgan, Martha Scott and Jeffrey Lynn reprise their roles from the 1949 film "Strategic Bargain" as Jessica helps solve a decades-old murder case. (60 min.) (R)

8:30 PM - NBC: FAMILY TIES (CC) With the relationship between Steven's brother and niece deteriorating, the Keatons find themselves in the middle of a family feud. (In Stereo)

8:00 PM - PBS: NATURE (CC) A mother tiger and her three cubs are filmed over the course of a year in India's Kham National Park. (60 min.) (In Stereo)

9:00 PM - CBS: MOVIE: "A Hobo's Christmas" (CC) Hopes of reconciliation persuade a hobo at winter's end to surprise Christmas visitors to his long-stranded son's Salt Lake City home. Bernard Hughes, Gerald McRaney. 1987.

9:30 PM - NBC: MOVIE: "Downpayment on Murder" (CC) Enraged when his young wife disappears, a man seeks revenge on a murderer her. Connie Sellecca, Ben Gazzara, David Morse. 1987. (In Stereo)

10:00 PM - ABC: JENNINGS/KOPPEL REPORT: THE SUMMIT IN AMERICA (CC) Reports include: perceptions of the people of the United States and Soviet Union have of each other; concessions that may be made at the summit; how this meeting will affect the Reagan legacy. (60 min.)

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