

ites from the start. He was one that the audiences applauded when his name was mentioned. As for the dancers present, he says, "Choreographically, with all my new pieces, I was a gold mine. The dancers from all the countries crowded the wings as I danced Robbins or Walker or the others, and they whispered 'Amerikanski!' There were other whispers, too. The audiences were very knowledgeable. If anyone hopped at the end of a *pirouette*, you could almost hear a mass whisper, 'He missed a point.' But they were marvelous."

Except for "Black Swan," Tomasson had planned a non-Russian repertory. "I felt I couldn't compete with the Russians in *their* repertory, so I brought something of an American repertory to show them *our* way of doing classical ballet." Using this approach, he won a silver medal from a board of twenty judges that included ten Russians (Mme. Ulanova, Pliset-skaya, Chabukiani, Khachaturian, Sergueff among them), and Chauviré (French), Flindt (Danish), Haskell (British), De Mille (American) among the rest.

Tomasson's award was not only the silver medal but also 2,000 rubles, equal officially to \$2,200. But aside from being taxed on it (300 rubles), he was not allowed to change it into other currency or take it out of the country. He had one day in which to spend it, so he and his wife settled on sable skins (on which he had to pay U.S. duty). "It's enough for part of a stole," he says.

But the rewards were in his medal, in the competition itself, and, most of all, in the prestige that the Russians bestowed upon the four-day (three days of contest and the concluding gala) affair. "They felt it was as important as the Tchaikovsky Competition," says Tomasson. "You've probably read that Londoners were incensed when the Bolshoi Ballet arrived there without the new *Swan Lake* that had been promised to them. But I can tell that to the Russians the competition was far more important than getting a new *Swan Lake* ready for export. The next competition will be held in three years, instead of four, that's how successful it was."

Competition winners were: Duos, Nina Sorokina and Yuri Vladimirov of the Soviet Union and Francesca Zumbo and Patrice Bart of France, gold medals; SOLOISTS, Malika Sabirova, Mikhail Baryshnikov of the Soviet Union; silver medals for soloists Tomasson, U.S.A., Loipa Araujo, Cuba, and Hideo Fukagawa, Japan. (Bronze medals were won by contestants from Japan and the Soviet Union.)

TV-Radio

Robert Lewis Shayon

Cosmic Nielsens

UP THERE at Tranquillity Base, *Eagle's* television camera could afford us, from its fixed position, only a limited view of the astronauts' activities as they danced man's first lunar choreography. No one could quarrel with that particular barrier to our vision: to creatures on spaceship Earth it was manna from the moon. Down here at the TV receiver's end, network reporters and commentators deployed their cameras along a rather narrow intellectual range; their rigidity was a matter of institutional policy—and disappointing. The moon landing was fraught with deep currents of ambivalence—rip-tides of incredible and even thrilling technological achievements crossing sluggish drifts and backwaters of Earth's poisoned psychic as well as physical environment. Television's encoding of that multidimensional event was depressingly one-dimensional.

It was all sunshine and public relations and hurrah for our side. From the Sea of Tranquillity, where the flag was planted and the plaque enshrined (nationalist prestige in a collectively explosive world), to the White House, Disneyland, the Vatican, and the man in the street, there was no area of darkness or even earth-shine—just progress, mechanistically defined, laden with the attitude that today is no time for critics and cynics. Walter Cronkite, for CBS, who seemed unflaggingly exhilarated despite his wearying task, illustrated the dominant mood when he exclaimed, shortly after the *Eagle* had touched down on the surface of the moon: "People have the audacity to say nothing new is going on these days. I'd like to know what those kids are saying who pooh-poohed this. How can one turn off from a world like this?" Later he held up a copy of the next morning's *New York Times* to show the camera the historic record-

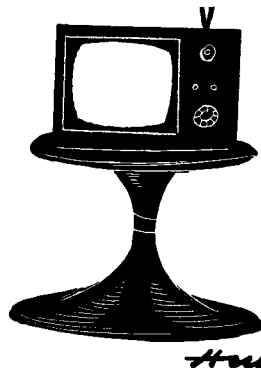
sized headline: MEN WALK ON THE MOON. It was the same edition that ran two full pages of comments from public figures under the heading: REACTIONS TO MAN'S LANDING ON THE MOON SHOW BROAD VARIATIONS IN OPINIONS.

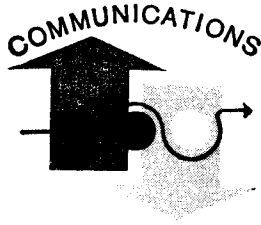
In some of the press handling of the moon landing there were context, a search for meaning, a sense of relatedness. On the networks there were tension, suspense, bits of information, marvelous pictures, impressive simulations, and artful animations—but one would be pressed hard to say the coverage was not a full-blown commercial for the government, NASA, the space industry, and the broadcasters.

Wherever explorers go in the future accompanied by television cameras, they will be actors, making their nebulous exits and entrances for the benefit of multi-planetary audiences. Nowhere will there again be pure events (if ever there were); everything hereafter will be stage-managed for cosmic Nielsens, in the interests of national or universal establishments. Vision filters, however, ought to be more than one-focus affairs. One of the sharpest contrasts in television's coverage of the moon landing was that which distinguished the language of numbers—used almost exclusively by the astronauts and their earth command—from the often inadequate verbalizations of the network commentators. The spacemen, making computer talk, spoke a kind of quantitative poetry—eloquent, pellucid, terse.

The reporters, at moments of highest tension, were admittedly speechless, or remarkably colloquial. One, when the lunar module successfully fired the engine that lifted it from the moon's surface, cried out, "Oh boy! Hot diggity dog! Yes, sir!" The emotion was genuine and understandable, but one can spin an implication off his remark: Man talking numbers and commanding things is master of sophisticated communications; man relating to other men is sadly tongue-tied. This is the state of the world and this is television, alas! But is despair in order?

Perhaps when space ships are shuttling between Earth and moon and crews in controlled environments will be readying for farther reaches into space, television will have winged its way over its public relations barrier and will give us a deeper representation of such events, as well as a poetry of qualitative experience to match the brilliance of the quantitative mode in the realm of science and technology.





Communications Editor:

RICHARD L. TOBIN

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The impact of television on the people of America—heightened by more frequent color coverage and twenty-one million color sets now in use—appears to be intensifying. A recently released Roper study of ten-year trends in television and other media proves once again that television is the people's choice as well as the public's main source of news, and that its credibility is higher than ever. The research also shows that more Americans are spending more and more time with TV, as they have each year since these studies were first undertaken a decade ago.

The first question in the 1959 Roper study asked where people got their news, and in each subsequent questionnaire this has been the first question asked. Back then, more people learned about what was going on in the world from newspapers than from TV or radio. TV soon began to climb as a source of news, and by 1963 it was the most common news origin, though just barely, with newspapers a close second. By 1967, TV had gone well ahead of newspapers, and remains so in this recent survey. Radio has stayed about the same in recent years, though it was a more popular news source ten years ago.

Television is also the most believable news medium. Up from 41 per cent most believable in 1967, TV now leads newspapers 2 to 1 in response to the question of which news version an individual would be most inclined to believe. In the initial year of the survey newspapers were the most believable medium.

The average number of hours of viewing also has increased dramatically since the end of the Eisenhower era. This steady expansion rises to just a few minutes short of three hours' TV for each day per person in the most recent study.

Oddly enough, a distressingly large percentage of Americans seems to feel

that the government should have some control over television news; though almost 20 per cent with a grade-school education or less favor government-managed news, only 5 per cent with a college education are in favor of governmental news control. In any case, it's rather shocking to find that only 61 per cent with a grade-school education or less believe that the government should keep its paws off TV news.

More people in this country get their local and state news from newspapers than they do from television and radio combined. For example, asked from what sources they became best acquainted with candidates for local office and with the results thereof, responders said newspapers were just as important this year as they were ten years ago. In other words, TV and radio can adequately cover great national, international, and interplanetary events but the newspaper will probably be ever pre-eminent in local-regional news. Since all news is essentially local in the final analysis, this divides the market precisely in the commercial news business.

When early Roper news surveys first startled the journalistic fraternity by casting doubt on newspaper credibility, publishers accused the surveyors of outright lying. But as the years have unfolded and even the inner sanctums of the daily press have acquired TV sets (mostly color TV), the average American newspaper publisher has conceded privately, if not in public, that TV and radio are now first in news, though the "first in credibility" still sticks in his craw. Just the same, one's own family habits are too similar to the Roper survey's results to doubt the statistics any more; newspapers will simply have to be content to be big frogs in little puddles and leave the big news puddles to electronic frogs.

The average American of whatever