WELCOME TO THE REVOLUTION

1970s
WEEK 2: REALISM
(OUR) PIECES OF A PRIME-TIME REVOLUTION based on the book

Realism
Feminism
Individualism
Commercialism
Escapism

FYI: a word about the 1 to 70 numberings to come...
REALISM

• “the attitude or practice of accepting a situation as it is and being prepared to deal with it accordingly”
• "the quality or fact of representing a person, thing, or situation accurately or in a way that is true to life”
THE UNITED STATES IN 1970

• racial unrest post-Civil Rights Act and post-Watts Riots
• Vietnam and counterculture protest; growing distrust of establishment (Kent State)
• feminist movement spurred by 1960s Second Wave Feminism picking up speed
• the American family: changing roles, changing rules
• an awareness of and appreciation for the planet and our roles in keeping it alive (”Ecology” movement)
• “a time of new aspirations for women, gays, and people of color”
THE FIRST TV SEASON OF THE NEW DECADE (SEP 1970)
ALL IN THE FAMILY arrives mid-way through (Jan ‘71) CBS (1)
“The program you are about to see is *All In The Family*. It seeks to throw a humorous spotlight on our frailties, prejudices, and concerns. By making them a source of laughter, we hope to show – in a mature fashion – just how absurd they are.”

-- CBS on-air disclaimer before the premiere of *ALL IN THE FAMILY*  
(Jan 12 1971)
ALL IN THE FAMILY

• https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x5v0ysl
Gloria 22:10

• https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x6u7doq
Change
• 21:00
NORMAN LEAR (2)
Norman Lear series
SEP 72

The New TV Season: Toppling Old Taboos

Fred Sanford  Cousin Maude  Archie Bunker
IT’S HAPPENING IN SITCOMS, EPISODIC DRAMA AND IN MADE-FOR TV FILMS

• sitcoms are less gimmicky and more character-based
• conventions being upended: comedy can trigger tears and drama can trigger laughs
• settings and situations are more reality-based, city-based
• “issues” are being explored all over, and as a result TV is “about” more than just entertainment

(Those who follow feature films can see this happening in the cinema too...)
CHIEFLY, TWO SERIES PAVE THE WAY
(because they’re getting the ratings and awards)
MTM PRODUCTIONS
M*A*S*H (1972-83) CBS
• https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E_RWAc1uvUQ&list=RDOarzpWNkwgc&index=17
  (blake)
• https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hZTgtgbVpc0
  (bullet)
BARNEY MILLER (1975-82) ABC
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DuOJ4UstJEM
(Harris) 7:30
Gregory Sierra (1937-2021)

"I think Barney Miller is much more real than any other cop show," Sierra said in an interview for the 1976 book TV Talk 2: Exploring TV Territory. "The people in the show have real problems. Kojak never worries. He knows he's got it made. Everything is always under control on that show. You never see the frustrations of police work or the kind of joking that goes on among real policemen. Those are the kinds of things we show on Barney Miller."
TAXI (1978-82)

ABC
standards are set for ensemble writing that will influence sitcoms for decades to come

• https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uNmnroyJSzo
DRAMA
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Network</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><em>Rowan &amp; Martin's Laugh-In</em></td>
<td>NBC</td>
<td>31.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><em>Gomer Pyle, U.S.M.C.</em></td>
<td>CBS</td>
<td>27.2</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td><em>Bonanza</em></td>
<td>NBC</td>
<td>26.6</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td><em>Mayberry R.F.D.</em></td>
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<td>25.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td><em>Family Affair</em></td>
<td>CBS</td>
<td>25.2</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td><em>Gunsmoke</em></td>
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<td>24.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td><em>Julia</em></td>
<td>NBC</td>
<td>24.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td><em>The Dean Martin Show</em></td>
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<td>24.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td><em>Here's Lucy</em></td>
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<td>23.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td><em>The Beverly Hillbillies</em></td>
<td>CBS</td>
<td>23.5</td>
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POLICE STORY (1973-78) NBC
THE EFFECT

• law-and-order on TV became less “Dragnet” black-and-white and more gray, with anti-heroes and unresolved storylines

• as Joseph Wambaugh did with his novels, the life of the ordinary cop is explored and the concept of the all-knowing do-good right-angled police officer is rounded and softened (and hardened)

• less a case of us & them, especially since as it turns out they are us

• Emmy Award for Best Drama
• https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x3p2rvo

• 22:00
Kate

If I got rid of a baby every time I thought I didn’t want it, we wouldn’t have much of a family.

Doug

You don’t mean that.

Kate

Don’t presume to tell me what I mean. I’m 46 years old and I’ve borne three children. Some of the time of those pregnancies, I wanted out. It’s the body that makes the baby and hangs on to it for nine months. Why can’t men understand sometimes women just want out! My god, when I found out I was pregnant with Buddy, I even got as far as tracking down an abortionist.

Buddy storms off and doesn’t hear Kate finish:

Kate

Why can’t you understand? Eventually I wanted all of them. Now, I can’t imagine life without them. But sometimes, sometimes, just for a minute, I didn’t.
"Rites of Friendship"
(DEC 28 1976)

- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BEPFEnuWONM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BEPFEnuWONM)
- (40:20)
THE EFFECT

• family storytelling comes out of the sitcom and into the one-hour drama with what’s essentially the first contemporary one-hour family drama

• no safe that-was-then “remove” of the past found in period dramas “The Waltons” and “Little House on the Prairie”... This is today and now

• used its considerable auspices to explore previously unexplored contemporary issues in a realistic way

• Multiple Emmys for acting
LOU GRANT
(1977-82) CBS

WEEKLY EXPLORATION
OF HOT-BUTTON TOPICS

• Police corruption
• Dementia on the bench
• Nazi movement
• Birth defects from pharmaceuticals

AND A WOMAN IN CHARGE....
THE EFFECT

• award-winning writing-based drama opened the door to more explorations of issues affecting American lives

• Emmy for Best Drama
JAMES AT 15 (1977-78) NBC
THE EFFECT

• young people are people, too...
• more important, they’re TV watchers and they want to see accurate representations of themselves and their lives
THE WHITE SHADOW (1978-81) CBS
THE EFFECT

“From race relations to drugs to urban violence—the TV show that got there first.”
MOVIES AND MINISERIES
DUEL (NOV 13 1971) ABC

- directed by Steven Spielberg
THE EFFECT

• The made-for-television movie becomes an art form and not just a time filler
A CASE OF RAPE (FEB 20 1974) NBC
THE EFFECT

• a new victim-focused depiction of an often unspoken-about crime
• introduced a new sub-genre in movie storytelling

And in the real world:

• changed how the crime is prosecuted and the victim is treated
HELTER SKELTER (APR 1-2 1976) CBS

Innovates in brutality and reality of heinous crime as it smashed ratings records
SYBIL  
(NOV 14-15 1976)  
NBC

- another taboo falls as an unspeakable offense is recounted in stark reality ways;
- reinforced by "based on a true story" label (later proved false)
- whole new level of small-screen acting
- opens doors to stories about (mis)treatment of children
HOLOCAUST (APR 16-19 1978) NBC

Holocaust: How a US TV series changed Germany

By Damien McGuinness
BBC News, Berlin
NON-FICTION PROGRAMMING

NEWS
UNSCRIPTED
DOCUMENTARY
KID-BASED
AN AMERICAN FAMILY
(JAN 11 – MAR 29 1973)
PBS

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0U942OZ2104

The Loud family

The Loud Family, 1973

The Broken Family

The Lounds
Pat Loud, ‘American Family’ mother of reality TV, dead at 94

By Rob Bailey-Millado

January 11, 2021 | 8:19am | Updated
MUNICH OLYMPICS MASSACRE (SEP 5-6 1972) ABC

https://www.realclearhistory.com/video/2016/09/06/jim_mckay_theyre_all_gone.html

“They’re all gone.”
ABC AFTER SCHOOL SPECIAL (1972-97)
THE WATCHWORD OF THE FRANCHISE AND THE DECADE

• “It had to be real,” he said. “If kids watched any of my three specials dealing with alcoholic parents, they were never given a fairy tale ending. I saw to that, because I came from an alcoholic father and knew all the tricks and I wanted the kids who watched—many dealing with the same problem or having friends who had alcoholic parents—to know how it really is.”

• “The only rule of storytelling that ABC required we follow was ... the kid always had to figure out what to do and do it,” he said. “No finger-waving by parents, no lectures by parents. It was a kid who was in a situation and found, through his or her own efforts, a solution.”
THE BODY HUMAN (1977-84) CBS

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RSowY0htNNM
SCARED STRAIGHT (MAY 1979) SYN

real people real problems real life – in your living room
• https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AgjhT234m0Y
REAL PEOPLE (1979-84) NBC
THE EFFECT
TOPICS among various series in the 1970s

- sexuality, divorce, feminism, race, spousal abuse, teen pregnancy, prostitution, PTSD and Vietnam
- a realistic approach to situations and characters and dialogue (“Don’t presume to tell me what I mean!”)
IN THE ZEITGEIST ... REFLECTING THE WORLD AROUND US...
BROADCAST NEWS DOCUMENTATIONS

- “ECOLOGY”
- THE “GENERATION GAP”
- THE NEW SOUTH
- RACE RELATIONS
- THE ENERGY CRISIS
- THE GAY EXPERIENCE
- SENIOR CITIZENS
- CHANGING FACE OF TELEVISION
END OF WEEK 2

WEEK 3 - FEMINSIM