

Jury inherits 13th juror

by Craig Eckert

There were three performances of "Inherit the Wind," the first was exciting, the second according to some of the cast members was a little down. But the third was unusual . . . for at least one person.

Temporarily he will be referred to as the thirteenth juror.

He arrived with the rest of the cast about 90 minutes before the performance, full of vim, vigor, and butterflies.

Before long he had shown the make-shift costume to the director who okayed it and told him to get dressed.

The make-up room was getting increasingly congested and this was the closest he'd been to the stage, "It still isn't too late to back out."

It wasn't that it was such a big part or anything like that, but "The Kid" hadn't given a dramatic performance of any kind since he told his sixth grade teacher that he really had lost his arithmetic assignment.

Putting on the make-up was a bit strange to him, he felt like some type of social outcast. Somewhat insecure in what he was doing, he continually asked the lead in the play if he was doing this or that correctly . . . he was.

Next came a very megalomaniacal problem: Even though there was plenty of talking going on in the dressing room, it was apparent no one really knew what this alien was doing in their midst.

On at least eight separate occasions some individual would confront him and a conversation, something like the following, would ensue;

"What are ya puttin that make up on for?"

"I'm in the show tonight."

"Oh. . . Who's not here?"

"No one, I'm just sitting on the jury."

"That makes thirteen jurors."

"Yup"

"Oh. . ." at which point they'd walk away mumbling something perhaps, about screwy newspaper people.

He had his make-up and costume on and was ready to whoo the audience in the greatest thirteenth juror performance in the history of modern theatre.

All was not finished yet however. Most of the cast had now seen the new kid with the funny make-up and started a game. It had to be called something to the effect of "jangle the new guy's nerve,"

who again, were just putting the kid at ease?

As opposed to the thirteenth juror, it was decided he would be known as Mr. Herbie Krebs.

The show was going fine, and then they had to go and call in the jury.

It looked sooo simple at the rehearsals he had attended as a more or less certified observer. He saw in the jury box. But wait, now he had to react. HOW IN THE HELL WAS HE TO REACT?

Evolution never bothered him before why should it now? Finally the answer hit him, he would pretend. . . er. . . act like it

"Sit in the back row will ya,

If I'm up there and I look over there and see you,

I'll break up."

If that is a standard theatre game, an observation can be made about dramatics. It must increase the incidence of paranoia in rookie actors and it really is no surprise then, that several of America's dramatic artists are neurotic.

One of the more cutting remarks was made by one of the leads, Pat McGuigan, when he said "Sit in the back row will ya, if I'm up there and I look over there and see you I'll break up."

Thanks, Just What the kid needs, assurance from a guy who's been through it all.

"You look just like Babbit!" That profanity was uttered by countless numbers,

did, ya that's it ACT! Whew.

Now he was with it, he reacted like everyone else, except for a few times when he forgot.

Anyway it generally went over pretty well. And when it was over and he was in the shower he was assured that not many had portrayed juror numero 13 much better. Also that the jury didn't have such a small part after all.

He left for the cast party later, secure in the hope that perhaps he, like Aristophanes, and Shakespeare before him, had added something to the theatre.

Only in this case the major contribution was leaving it to the actors.

Cavett habit not a bad one

by Mark Johnson

The insomniac with a craving for old William Powell movies will probably find himself out of luck these days.

With all three networks running late-night talk shows, the viewer is left with little alternative other than crusty old "Son of Hercules" flicks on channel 11 and even

crustie cultural programs on channel 2.

On the other hand, this may not be as bad as it may seem for one talk show stands out as far superior to all the others. It is "The Dick Cavett Show."

As a host, Cavett deftly extracts form his guests that mysterious element that eludes the other late-night hosts: intelligent conversation. Whether it be discussing more serious subjects as

theology or Senate procedures or simply exchanging light anecdote, Cavett keeps his show on a far more intelligent level than either Johnny Carson or Merv Griffin.

Carson, when he's not on vacations, is more interested in making faces at the camera of chiding Ed McMahon about his drinking problem than his is in interviewing his guest. He wastes time making silly jokes about the Jolly Green Giant and by letting his mindless guests prattle on about how cute their kids are or some other equally ridiculous subject.

Griffin on the other hand doesn't even attempt to pull a joke and merely sits in unrequited awe of the talents of such guests as Zsa Zsa Gabor and Milt Kamen. To all outward appearances, the world astounds Griffin. Poor Merv grins a great deal. Dull host, dull guests, dull show.

Cavett, however, comes on in a very casual but deliberate manner.

Also, he makes a concerted effort to find different and unusual guests for his show; guests with a little more on their minds than merely plugging their latest book or movie.

Cavett never fears controversy either. Unlike Carson who shies from it and Griffin who is probably unaware of it, Cavett meets it head on—many times with surprising results.

In the past, guests like the Archbishop of Canterbury, Black Panther Donald code, Noel Coward Peter and Jane Fonda, Salvador Dali, Groucho Marx and many others have discussed abortion, nudity in the theatre, militancy, generation conflicts and a score of other controversial topics. And the most refreshing thing is that Cavett really DOES know something about what he's talking about and doesn't just speak in vague, gushy liberal cliches.

"The Dick Cavett Show" is perhaps the best late-night talk show to come along since Jack Paar. In some ways, it may even be a little bit better. One cannot give it a stronger recommendation or pay it a greater compliment than that. It could be the best thing for America's insomniacs since crossword puzzles.

mcj

by Mark Johnson



no place like home

Family reunions are fun. Or at least that's the rational that our particular family uses as an excuse to call all the relatives in for a get together.

In the past, our family has, in addition to celebrating Christmas, Thanksgiving, Easter, New Years, and the other traditional holidays, celebrated such holidays as Halloween, Ground Hog's Day, the first day of the walrus' mating season and the day my little cousin Rudolph got a planter's wart removed from his thumb. Anyway, my family seems to get a kick out of having reunions two or three times a week . . . at least.

The fun usually begins about 2 p.m. when my uncle, Leo "Brigadier" Johnson, arrives in his Rambler American and announces that try though they may, "those commies in their foreign bugs on the highways" didn't get him today. At grace, he asks God to "keep an eye on those Russians" and assures him that if he needed any help, he was sure that the government would be happy to offer him a limited military force for a police action. Uncle Leo eventually concludes his prayer with the usual "God bless mother, father, Dick, Pat, Spiro, David & Julie . . ."

Also at these family bashes is my cousin Miriam, Miriam is "young, hip and 'tells it like it is - she's a member of the Jesus Revolution." Miriam usually sits placidly in a corner at the reunions saying things like "Wow, Billy Graham's right! I've turned on and gotten high on God!"

Outwardly she looks pretty mild. Still, I wouldn't want to cross her. I have a good healthy fear for that girl. Once I sarcastically called a member of the "God Squad" and she stared at me menacingly and answered "They used to burn people like you at the stake."

I almost answered that people like her were once thrown to the lions, but I decided against it.

Between Uncle Leo and Cousin Miriam, it's hard to determine the greater threat: Kosygin or Satan. (Although my Uncle maintains that the two are synonymous).

Eventually the two get into a roaring argument which usually culminates with Uncle Leo attributing the crucifixion of Christ to the communist party. After this, Miriam usually calls Leo a "heretic" and he usually calls her a socialist and they go to their respective corners, waiting for Round Three.

As Leo starts gulping pickled herring and Swedish meatballs he usually begins giving me sour looks and making nasty comments about our "communist-sympathetic news media." I don't usually reply because I believe that Leo's always been a little down on the media since they cancelled "Gilligan's Island" and quit running "Mutt and Jeff" in the funny papers.

Well, the whole thing is usually over about 7 p.m. and everyone gets ready to leave. But before we go, Grandmother's got to line up all of her grandchildren and give them all a big kiss and tell them how much they've grown . . . in two weeks.

I've just looked at my calendar and saw that next Saturday is the anniversary of the invention of "Whip n' Chill." That should be a REALLY big get-together!

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