

new programs will probably have little effect on anyone, for, as Jackie Gleason aptly put it, television reviewers report accidents to eye witnesses.

## A Closer Look

By Ernest Kreiling

HOLLYWOOD — The voice of the critic is being heard in the land. It's the season for television reviewers to dust their dictionaries and polish their prose for their annual joust with the new programs.

Even the august New York Times, which generally deigns to deal largely with the noble issues of television, has unwrapped its occasional Jack Gould for THE authoritative and pontifical decision on last

night's programs. In other papers across the land those hard working but anonymous people who diligently compile the television logs each day are bursting into by-lines as reviewers, enjoying one of their infrequent forays from proof-reading into public view.

Yes, it's open season on television and few can resist taking a pot shot at the lumbering giant. But the millions of words being written about the

ROBERT SARNOFF of NBC once said he thinks unfavorable reviews probably help subsequent programs in a series, because "it makes people want to see for themselves."

Sarnoff's thought may be valid, but it doesn't seem to jibe with the findings of one research project reported in the Southern Speech Journal. The results of this experiment indicate that unfavorable criticism of a program has a stronger effect on viewers' attitudes toward the series than

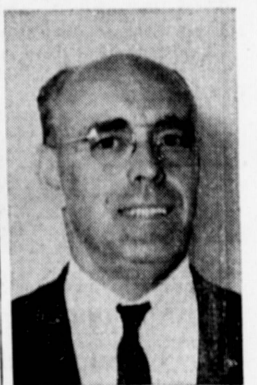
does a favorable review. All criticism, but especially the unfavorable, has a somewhat greater effect on men than on women, incidentally.

ACCORDING TO Robert Albert of Skidmore College in an article in the Journal of Social Psychology, critics themselves are not overly impressed with their own influence. A survey of 90 critics of the mass media indicated they "believe they are moderately effective in influencing public opinion concerning artistic mass communications, performing somewhat as a conscience for the producers rather than the audiences."

any given program depends almost entirely on which paper you read, so varied are the reviews. Criticism of individual programs are essentially subjective reactions. The critic differs from other viewers primarily in the way he must approach a program. He can't simply sit back, relax, and give himself to the entertainment. Instead he examines it minutely. He can't ask himself only, was it good or bad? He must ask how was it similar to or different from other programs? Why wasn't it better? What was the best feature of it? How was the writing, directing, acting? And in addition to such evaluations he must seek clever ways of reporting his conclusions.

CONSEQUENTLY such detailed concern with the separate facets of a program precludes his becoming emotionally involved with the program and his being swept up in its movement as the participating viewer can be. He refuses to surrender to the program, he resists any emotional commitment.

In his *The Summing Up*, Somerset Maugham describes some limitations of the dramatic critic which apply in essence to the television reviewer also: "Now, the critics are of necessity the worst judge of plays. For consider, the play appeals to the audience as a unity, the current that passes infectiously from one person to another is essential to the dramatist. . . . But the critic is not there to feel but to judge. He must hold aloof from the contagion that has captured the group and keep his self possession. . . . He must take care not to become part of the audience. He is not there to play his part in the play, but to watch it from the outside. . . . Plays are not written for critics."



NORMAN BISWANGER  
President

### Toastmasters Will Install Board Panel

The Torrance-Lomita Board of Realtors Toastmasters Club will install Norman Biswanger, charter member of the club and a salesman with Sands Realty, as president at the installation dinner to be held today, at 7:30 p.m., at the Hunting Horn Restaurant in Palos Verdes.

Other officers to be installed are: Rodney Lewis, educational vice president; Walter Boden, administrative vice president; Robert Westerfield, secretary; Daniel Ingram, treasurer; and Donald Taylor, sergeant-at-arms.

Biswanger, a native of Canada is a naturalized American citizen and came to California in 1948. He has been active in real estate the past six years in Torrance and Santa Monica. He resides with his wife at 4931 Towers St. Their daughter, Dr. Lorraine T. Biswanger, a surgeon, is presently practicing in India.

### Swim Classes

#### Set Locally

The Torrance Recreation Department is offering a housewives' swim class three times a week, Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings at 9:30, 10:30 and 11:30. Approximately 100 women are enrolled.

Registrations are open also, for the women's life-saving class starting Sept. 30.

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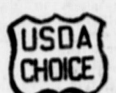
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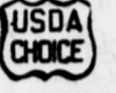
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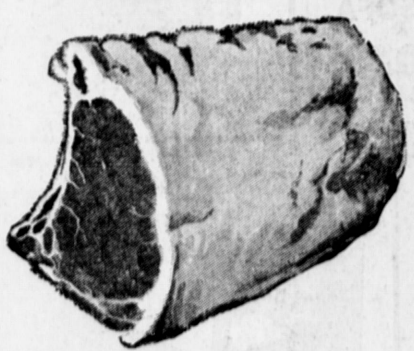
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