

The Mail Ego

By Terrence O'Flaherty

Take any three people watching the same TV show and they'll often come up with three different impressions. That's what makes the mail-bag a constant surprise. The following three letters were reactions to an interview of Mia Farrow by Ryan O'Neal on ABC's "The Now Generation," a projected series devoted to butterfly children who are emerging (rather late) from the Great American Cocoon.

"Personally, I was appalled," writes an 18-year-old high school senior. "Early in the show O'Neal implied that Mia Farrow actually embodies the Now Generation and that she carries it along on her shoulders. If I may be considered a member of that generation, I most certainly hope that Miss Farrow does not represent my friends and me, for if she does, I might just drop out of life itself. As the questions centered around Miss Farrow's Hippiness-at-Heart, I thought to myself, 'This show is really a joke. It must be intended as a satire.' Later I realized that the basic incongruity of it all was in Mia's attempt to be a 'beautiful person' when she is, simply, a fabricated Hollywood image."

A GRANDFATHER writes:

"I saw Mia Farrow not as a grown person — which perhaps she could be by some standards — but as a young aspirant just beginning to grasp some of the intangibles of life and willing, although inexperienced, to talk about her new wonderment. As one of those who grow older and realizes that true sophistication is a return to the simplicity of the child, I felt a warm envy."

"Was she for real?" asked a housewife. "I mean, was that the real Mia? If so, I really think Frank Sinatra has lost his mables. I always thought theirs was a lovely May-December marriage before I witnessed her as an insecure, immature flower. We all acted like that when we were pre-schoolers. Thank heaven for that time in life but we also outgrew our fantasy world. Not all of it, but certainly the amount she displayed on 'The Now Generation.' The sad part for me was that it changed my opinion of Sinatra more than it did of her."

The careers of both Mr. and Mrs. Sinatra seem unaffected by these proceedings but ABC has no plans to continue the series at this time.

"Even after sitting through the entire hour of something called 'The Junior Miss Pageant' I'm not quite sure what this show was intended to do. Is Miss Junior Miss any relation to Miss Teen-Age America or Miss America?"

Only as a merchandising venture. Otherwise I doubt if the girls even know each other. Inasmuch as last fall's second highest rate "special" was "Miss Teen-Age America," we can expect a population explosion in the hoopskirt- and -swimsuit category.

"I was shocked at the funeral skit on 'The Rowan and Martin Laugh-In.' It was not only tasteless but cruel. Is there no one with compassion and imagination on this show's staff? When has death ever been amusing to anyone who mourns?"

"Rowan and Martin's Laugh-In" isn't designed to appeal to the compassionate. It is the 1968 version of "Hellzapoppin'" and reflects an age which finds humor in everything. With 1,000 gags on every show it guarantees to offend every viewer at least once every evening with the hope that he may laugh the rest of the time. It is now rated as the fifth most popular program on the air and has been renewed by NBC for next season.

"We have watched the Beatles' favorite yogi on several TV interview shows recently and think he's awfully cute but is he in show business or religion?"

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