The Ellis Media Report

Miracles Can Happen On TV

By Dwight M. Ellis

A neighborhood community youth center, frequented by members of two rival gangs — one white, one black — is used by a streetwise white counselor to ease hostility between the two groups. During a dance at the center, a fight breaks out and battle plans are made by the warring groups to finish the action at a later time.

Despite efforts of Big Neck to dissuade his younger brother, Billy (member of the black gang) from participating in the rumble, all systems are go. Billy lectures Big Neck on "the law of the streets" and what results is a total turf war ending in violent bloodshed — a black youth is stabbed and a white youth shot and killed.

After the fray, Billy regards the violence as senseless and refuses to be a part of it again. Both gangs suffer heavy casualties, and reluctantly agree to coexistence rather than experience more bloodshed.

It's all here, drama, racial conflict, sensitive character development, contemporary music, comic relief and resolution.

A TV network production, a documentary, feature? None of the above, but one of a series of second season episodes of "The Righteous Apples", the first prime time situation comedy produced for public television by Rainbow TV Works. Rainbow is the only minority supplier of prime time television in the United States.

After blasting "The Righteous Apples" during its first season on PBS, as "infantile" and "simple-minded", James Brown, media critic for the *Los Angeles Times*, recently gave the series a rave review, referring to "Apples" as a "new show that has been tightly written, reasonably well-acted and, importantly, takes on some sensitive issues with a straightforward, no holds barred attitude."

Praise is due to the "Apples'" new veteran directors Ivan Dixon and Stan Lathan, among others. But overall credit for the concept and thrust of the series goes to Rainbow's president and executive producer, Topper Carew.

At a time when both commercial and public television are starved for positive images and meaningful stories pertaining to blacks and other minorities, thank God for a Topper Carew.

Carew, a black communications professional with demonstrated social consciousness, has devoted most of his professional life contributing to building and expanding opportunities for minorities in television and film. His many achievements include founding The Communications Institute of New England, (CINE) where minority students are trained by media professionals for entry-level positions in film and TV production; production of "Say Brother" for Boston's WGBH-TV and "Rebop" a children's TV series of the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS); and being the recipient of sixty film awards, ten TV awards and fifteen design awards.

"The Righteous Apples", the name of the New Wave high school band composed of two blacks and two whites who serve as central characters of the series, explores interaction between the "Apples", the "Apples" and their parents, and their friends. The setting is a recently desegregated Boston high school and neighborhood. This season's episodes are some of the most poignant and explosive of any dramatic series on PBS.

Actors Gloria "Glo" Benson, Charles "Big Neck" McMorris, Samuel "D.C." Rosencrantz, and Sandy Burns are the finest and most believable artists to be found anywhere. And, oh yes, they actually perform as musicians during each episode. In fact, Rainbow has established a music production company, Golden Groove, for making the "Apples" music available for your listening pleasure. The "Apples" first release was a donation to black music announcers earlier this year, "Walking Happy Martin Luther King", commemorating Dr. King's birthday. At that time Carew said, "We're not interested in exploiting Dr. King in any way. This record is an act of appreciation for all he gave us."

Rainbow TV Works moves forward in its quest to make its mark in television programming. Production has been completed on "Rainbow Movies of the Week", a group of ten one-hour, family-oriented dramatic specials. In July of next year, "Tales In A Golden Groove" will be completed, seven one-hour dramatic musical specials for family viewing. "Tales", which will present contemporary problems, was conceived with such films in mind as "Saturday Night Fever" and "Fame".

You can watch the "Righteous Apples" by checking the local listing of your public TV station. But in the near future, you may be able to watch a Rainbow production on network television. Carew is currently negotiating with one of the major nets to produce a pilot series.

In the words of L.A. critic, Brown, the "Apples" is ". . . a show that proves that miracles can happen on television — that you can start out with a disaster and end up with something good." As for Topper Carew — not too bad for a kid who grew up in the projects of Boston.

Tuesday Evening

November 24, 1981

	WFMY CH. 2 Cable 2	WPTF CH. 28 Cable 3	WTVD CH. 11 Cable 6	WUNC CH. 4 Cable 9	WTTG CH. 5 Cable 10	WRAL CH. 5 Cable 12	WTBS CH. 17 Cable 13	WGHP CH. 8
7 00	CBS News	Laverne & Shirley	Jeffersons	MacNeil/ Lehrer	Welcomeback Kotter	Good Times	Carol Burnett	Joker's Wild
15	"	Muppet Show	"	Woodwright Shop	M.A.S.H.	"	Sanford & Son	Tic Tac Dough
30	P.M.		M.A.S.H.		"	P.M. Magazine		
45	Magazine		"					
8 00	Simon & Simon	Father Murphy	Simon & Simon	Cosmos	The Waltons	Happy Days	Atlanta Hawks vs. Cleveland	Happy Days
15	"	"	"	"	"	"		"
30	"	"	"	"	"	Laverne & Shirley		Laverne & Shirley
45								
9 00	CBS Movie: "A Small Killing"	First All-American Ultra Quiz, Pt. 2	CBS Movie: "A Small Killing"	Odyssey	Merv Griffin	Three's Company Too Close For Comfort	"	Three's Company Too Close For Comfort
15	"		"	"	"		"	
30				"	"			
45								
10 00	"	Flamingo Road	"	Casanova	News	Hart To Hart	"	Hart To Hart
15	"	"	"	"	"	"	TBS News	"
30	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
45	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
11 00	News	"	News	Twilight Zone	M.A.S.H.	News	All In The Family	News
15	"	"	"	Dick Cavett	"	"	TBS Theatre: "The Righteous Apples"	"
30	Alice	News	Charlie's Angels	"	Odd Couple	Nightline		Nightline
45	Movie/	"			"	"		"
12 00	"	Tonight	"		Perry Mason	Love Boat	Hustler"	Sanford & Son Entertain Tonight
15	"	"	"		"	"	"	
30	"	"	Rockford Files		"	"	"	
45	"	"						

Wednesday Evening

November 25, 1981

	WFMY CH. 2 Cable 2	WPTF CH. 28 Cable 3	WTVD CH. 11 Cable 6	WUNC CH. 4 Cable 9	WTTG CH. 5 Cable 10	WRAL CH. 5 Cable 12	WTBS CH. 17 Cable 13	WGHP CH. 8
7 00	CBS News	Laverne & Shirley	Jeffersons	MacNeil/ Lehrer	Welcomeback Kotter	Good Times	Carol Burnett	Joker's Wild
15	"	Muppet Show	"	Town Meeting	M.A.S.H.	"	Sanford & Hawks	Tic Tac Dough
30	P.M.		M.A.S.H.		"	P.M. Magazine		
45	Magazine		"					
8 00	CBS Movie: "The Muppets Movie"	Real People	CBS Movie: "The Muppets Movie"	Survival Special	The Waltons	Greatest American Hero	TBS Movie: "Robinson Crusoe On Mars"	Greatest American Hero
15		"		"	"			
30		"		"	"			
45								
9 00	"	Facts Of Life	"	Invitation To Dance	Merv Griffin	The Fall Guy	"	The Fall Guy
15	"	Love Sidney	"	"	"	"	"	
30	"	"	"	"	"		"	
45	"		"					
10 00	"	Quincy	"	"	News	Dynasty	"	Dynasty
15	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
30	"	"	"	C'est Si Bon	"	"	"	"
45	"	"	"		"	"	"	"
11 00	News 2	News	News	Twilight Zone	M.A.S.H.	News	All In The Family	News
15	"	"	"	Dick Cavett	"	"	TBS Theatre: "Good,	"
30	WKRP/	Tonight	Charlie's Angels	"	Odd Couple	Nightline		Nightline
45	Movie:	"			"	"		"
12 00	"	"	"		Perry Mason	Love Boat	Neighbor Sam"	Sanford & Son Entertain Tonight
15	"	"	"		"	"	"	
30	"	Tomorrow Files	Rockford		"	"	"	
45	"		"					

Thursday Evening

November 26, 1981

	WFMY CH. 2 Cable 2	WPTF CH. 28 Cable 3	WTVD CH. 11 Cable 6	WUNC CH. 4 Cable 9	WTTG CH. 5 Cable 10	WRAL CH. 5 Cable 12	WTBS CH. 17 Cable 13	WGHP CH. 8
7 00	CBS News	Laverne & Shirley	Jeffersons	MacNeil/ Lehrer	Welcomeback Kotter	Good Times	Carol Burnett	Joker's Wild
15	"	Muppet Show	"	Almanac	M.A.S.H.	"	Sanford & Son	Tic Tac Dough
30	P. M.		M.A.S.H.		"	P.M. Magazine		
45	Magazine		"					
8 00	Magnum, PI	Harper Valley	Magnum, PI	Undersea World Of Jacques Cousteau	Metromedia: "The Sound And The	Mork & Mindy	TBS Movie: "How Green Was My	Mork & Mindy
15	"	Lewis & Clark	"			Best Of The West		Best Of The West
30	"		"					
45	"		"					
9 00	Knot's Landing	Diff'rent Strokes	Knot's Landing	Sneak Previews	Fury"	Barney Miller	Valley"	Barney Miller
15	"	Gimme A Break	"	Fawlty Towers	"	Taxi	"	Taxi
30			"		"		"	
45	"		"		"	"	"	"
10 00	Jessica Novak	Hill Street Blues	Jessica Novak	Dr. In The House	News	Ronald Reagan: At Home On Ranch	"	Ronald Reagan: At Home On Ranch
15	"	"	"	Dave Allen At Large	"		"	
30	"	"	"		"		"	
45	"	"	"		"		"	
11 00	News	News	News	Twilight Zone	M.A.S.H.	News	All In The Family	News
15	"	"	"	Dick Cavett	"	"	TBS Theatre: "Magic	"
30	Quincy/	Tonight	Charlie's	"	Odd Couple	Nightline		Viewpoint
45	The Saint	"	"		"	"		"
12 00	"	"	"		Perry Mason	Vega$	Town	Sanford & Son Entertain Tonight
15	"	"	"		"	"	"	
30	"	Tomorrow Files	Rockford		"	"	"	
45	"		"					