

**Broadway Is My Beat**

**Brown Berates Black TV Situation Comedies**

By Joey Sasso  
Special to the Post  
Observations In Covering  
The Night Beat: George Stanford Brown has just wrapped up work on his segment of "Roots: The Next Generations," and is holding high hopes that the 12-hour ABC production will do more for the future of blacks in the business than the original "Roots" did. He makes the point that, though, the first installments of Alex Haley's ancestral story were so successful, "they were more of a national event than just a TV show - it didn't change a thing.

The only black series are still those awful situation comedies. And a lot of the "Roots" cast is still looking for work. It's a damn shame."

His disgust toward such series as "Good Times" and "The Jeffersons" runs deep. "I sure don't want my kids to grow up like J.J.," he says of the part Jimmie Walker plays on "Good Times." "He is a despicable character. And What's-His-Name Jefferson, our example of black middle-class-horrible.

But what choice do black actors have? And what choices are open to such fine performers as James Earl Jones, LeVar Burton and Cicely Tyson? None of them are working as often as they should be."

"When are you going to stop smoking?" asked a reporter at Sammy Davis Jr.'s press conference in Chicago recently as the singer lit up another cigarette. "Hey, baby, don't do that to me," wailed Sammy. "I gave up so much in the last five years, I ain't giving up anything else. Cigarettes is of the few mundane pleasures left in life."

Davis, who is touring in "Stop the World, I Want to Get Off," has given up hard liquor ("I'm down to weak wine"), too much partying, overwork-



**J.J. Walker**  
...Good Times star  
ing, and flamboyant jewelry. "I owe all the good changes to Altovise (his wife of seven years), who'll join him in Chicago in three weeks. She's touring for her wig line, but is managing to fit me in then," he added with a grin...

It may come as a surprise to Johnny Mathis fans, but his "Too Much, Too Little, Too Late" single with Deniece Williams is his first number one single on the charts. "Chances Are," even though they were million-plus sellers. Mathis and Miss Williams now have collaborated on an entire album that will be released next month: "That's What Friends Are For."...

The Atlanta Rhythm Section is coming to the Tavern on the Green to celebrate after their concert at the Wohlman in Central Park. Rumors are that Elton John will stop in to say hello...Natalie Cole takes her 9-month-old son Robbie with her whenever she's on the road. "He's adjusted to the pace. In fact, he gets bored when I have a day off," says the late Nat King Cole's singer daughter. "And he loves music already. At rehearsals he doesn't get upset by the loudness of the music. He gets upset when the music stops. While it's going, he's really quiet, checking it out. And he starts humming."...

That's Show Biz: By the time the four lithe figures,



**Johnny Mathis**  
...Popular singer  
dressed in silver lame, glided off the Tomorrowland stage at Disneyland, their sounds and movements, like a forceful magnet, had drawn a throng of people away from the rides and amusements to the amphitheater, leaving hardly any room for standing. Their head-swimming feet and body movements - high leaping and kicking, smooth swirling and swaying-combined perfectly with the strength of their harmonious vocals to make High Inergy's performance a resounding success. Unlike most female groups, Motown's High Inergy is fortified by singers who are dancers and dancers who are singers. The blending makes the group one of the most refreshing, entertaining attractions in pop music...

You and I and all the rest have a healthy respect for Muhammad Ali, who at 36, is

still chopping 'em down in the heavyweight game. At least a couple of people love him, too. One of these-it may come as no surprise - is Muhammad Ali. "Yeah, I love myself," he told me. "Cause if you don't like yourself, nobody else is gonna like you." For this incisive insight into the philosophy of psychology, we were talking in his hotel room, high in the breezy hills above the blue Mediterranean.

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