

Just A Little Reality In Fall TV Lineup, Please!

The fall season faces us, and you know what that means. Surely there is uppermost in the minds of most thinking people that burning question, "What's the new TV lineup?"

In the television ratings game there are casualties every year at this time, and fledgling shows that hope to win us over.

But, as this occurs, what I hope for is something with just a smattering of substance and a mere hint of believability. I would buy a freight-car full of any product that sponsored 30 minutes of meaningful realism.

Oh, I know the tube is supposed to be an escape mechanism, and most folks want fantasy and froth. But what about those of us who hanker for intelligent entertainment?

The problem is, I just can't spend even 30 minutes with people like that wide-eyed, overdressed Crystal on "Dynasty," or that muscle-bound duo on "Miami Vice," or the moronic children on any show you can mention.

Characters in situation comedies are barely a cut above the real people who portray themselves on game shows, and I don't know any more embarrassing situation than sharing my living room with "Newlywed. Game" dimwits.

Such 30-minute ordeals clutter the airwaves every night, with little respite, and I begin to think the writers and sponsors have forgotten what real, ordinary, sensible people are like.

Do you personally know anyone like the Joan Collins creature? Do you want to? How about that goofy family with the animal called Alf? And poor Jane Wyman, what a repulsive role she's stuck with on "Falcon Crest!" Nobody is so evil, so beautifully gowned at all times, and so much a pillar of strength.

Even my one-time favorite, the Cosby family, has become too, too cloying. Having raised four children, I guarantee no six family members ever behaved with such sweetness and cooperation.

Come on, now! These people are not to be believed.

The picture is not all black, however, which proves television can be different. There are a handful of dramatic shows that feature people who look and act like genuine human



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beings.

The most remarkably authentic one, "Hill Street Blues," was, of course, terminated this year, sug-

gesting that intelligent fare may not be in demand. Although a police drama, it managed to avoid violence, while spinning convincing stories of crime and criminals.

A similar show, "Cagney and Lacey," continues to thrive, and its likeable stars win awards. These gals, you see, aren't radiantly glamorous at all times, and they aren't forever involved in either being seductive or plotting evil. Neither are they plaster saints, but decent, bright women you could imagine inviting over for coffee.

So, it has been done, the crafting of television programs that make sense. More often these are "specials," but why can't that be our daily fare?

My wish for the new TV season is the following situation shows:

- A family whose kids fight with each other and complain about chores and sometimes flunk algebra;
- A working woman with colitis, greying hair and roaches in her kitchen;
- Teenagers who are scared of puherty, but love their parents, enjoy

school, and are quietly growing up;
•Businessmen who are having a bad year but are too high-principled to cheat on their income tax;
•Americans of ethnic origin who are not funny;

I know there's nothing interesting about people like these, but clever writers could find interesting situations for them and show us for a change a real slice of life.

But then, such a show would lose out in the ratings, I'm sure, to a sitcom about a talking dog who has a man for a pet.

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