

# NOW

• **Voiceless?**  
Some speech disorders have a neurological basis; a radical new technique can help thousands. Page B3.

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MARK IN LOS ANGELES

## Ahh, that sweet smell of success

• Cable TV's Lifetime service loves its soaring ratings, and says, no, it's not bashing men

(Beacon Journal television writer Mark Dawidziak is in Los Angeles for three weeks to preview the fall schedule.)

At Fall, Lifetime's senior vice president for programming and production, came out swinging during her Monday morning meeting with television critics. Just a few short years ago, she said, Lifetime and other cable services were the "television wannabes" treated like "poor cousins" by ABC, CBS and NBC.

According to the haughty networks, Fall told critics, cable merely "programmed the networks' hand-me-downs" and experimented with "quaint notions of original programming." Cable got no respect.

Mark Dawidziak



"But have you noticed that every time it's the networks who are assuming that role?" Fill asked with a smile that suggested field position was right for a quick game of payback. "Some of their newest programming strategies came to them courtesy of cable — strategies like 12 months of production, clustered replays of season premieres, and the (use of such) words as quirky and unconventional to describe their programming."

And Fill couldn't help gloating over ABC's plans for a summer airing of *Stop at Nothing*, a TV movie that Lifetime premiered in March.

Yes, with the networks' share of the viewing audience gradually eroding, Lifetime has a tremendous advantage in the ratings game. The 8-year-old cable service's primary audience — adult women — is the demographic most prized by advertisers.

Critic's choices

Beacon Journal television writer Mark Dawidziak's suggestions for today.

• **Biography:** Where have you gone, Joe DiMaggio? Find out in this hour documentary that marks the 50th anniversary of the Yankee Clipper's 56-game hitting streak, still the longest in baseball history. (8 p.m., Arts & Entertainment Network)

• **Ball of Fire:** Howard Hawks (*Banging Up Baby*, *His Girl Friday*) directed this 1941 comedy about a shy professor (Gary Cooper) falling for a buxom queen (Barbara Stanwyck). (8 p.m., Turner Network Television)

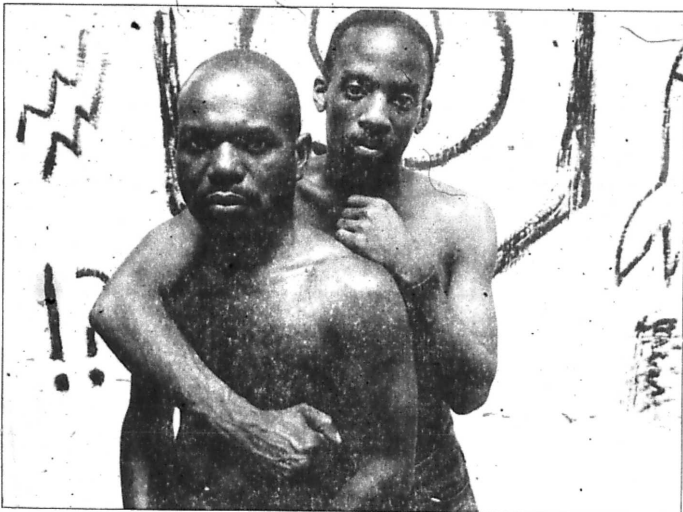
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caring, three-dimensional men in short supply on the cable service.

"I don't agree with the statement that in every movie we've done a man is 'portrayed in a negative light,'" Fill said. "I take issue with that... That isn't our current philosophy. The philosophy is to portray women in positive roles."

Asked to name one original production without a male villain, Fill immediately

Marlon Riggs (front) and poet Essex Hemphill are in tonight's 'Tongues Untied,' which explores gay, black male identity.



## 'Tongues Untied' is not for the faint of heart

BY MARK DAWIDZIAK

The clouds of controversy surrounding *Tongues Untied* may make clear viewing of this documentary a trifle difficult. Few PBS programs have kicked up so much ideological dust.

You've heard something, right? OK, then, take your pick — offensive, innovative, shocking, brilliant, crude, sensitive, disturbing, hypnotic, explicit, daring, vulgar, provocative, raw, powerful, defiant, sad, hostile, insightful.

At times, each of these adjectives applies to *Tongues Untied*, which the PBS series *P.O.V.* will present tonight. If you are easily offended, stay as far

• The controversial documentary offers an oft-disquieting look at the lifestyle of gay black men

away as possible.

In fact, let's get the warning label out of the way. *Tongues Untied*, a searing examination of what it means to be black and homosexual in the United States, is not for children, not for the callow or consciousness, not for the glib, not for those who view AIDS as a plague from God.

There are many other channels for you. The answer is simple — don't watch.

Who should watch? Well, that list includes anyone willing and wishing to

understand, anyone who truly enjoys hearing what other voices have to say, anyone who believes that different doesn't mean dangerous, anyone who needs to learn that Eddie Murphy's gay-bashing routines are just another form of ignorance, anyone who takes seriously the New Testament's prohibition on judging (lest ye be judged, of course), anyone looking to make up her or his mind.

This is not about acceptance or denial. That determination is to be made in the individual heart.

This is about a voice that should be heard.

This is about loving and

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Tell us what you thought about show

If you watch *Tongues Untied* and want to air your opinion on the film, give us a call at 906-3771 on Wednesday between 8 a.m. and midnight. Leave your name, phone number and where you live in case we need to call you back. Your name will not be published.

## WKDD again No. 1 in ratings book

• After a disastrous four-songs-in-a-row promotion, station decides to go back to its rock 'n' roll roots

BY BOB DYER

Although the new radio ratings book is more than 200 pages long, all those columns of numbers can be summed up nicely in one line: Akron listeners do not want generic radio.

WKDD (96.5-FM), declared the most popular station in Akron by Arbitron on Monday afternoon, found that out the hard way last winter.

After winning seven of the previous nine Arbitron ratings races, the station unleashed a relentless promotional campaign based on the slogan "4-in-a-row with no talk." You

saw the phrase on cabs and billboards. You heard it on the air — over and over and over.

If that's the best thing a station can offer, listeners seemed to say, we can do that with a jukebox. Or by channel-hopping. Nearly half of the station's audience tuned out, plunging WKDD into a previously unimaginable 12th place in the winter book.

Arbitron is the more widely accepted of two ratings companies (the other is Birch/Scarborough) that survey area listeners.

The "4-in-a-row" gambit came about, says WKDD General Manager Dick Lunello, because "re-

search was showing that we, as with all Top 40 stations, talk too much. That's the perception. So we beat to death the '4-in-a-row with no talk,' trying to drill it home. And we got our lurch."

That they did: an ugly 4 percent of the Summit and Portage county listeners. This time, WKDD literally doubled its audience.

There's a subtitle to WKDD's lesson: You can't be all things to all people.

In keeping with its generic approach, WKDD had broadened its playlist to try to attract a broader (read it: older) audience. The result was musical schizophrenia. Not until halfway through the spring did

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SPRING ARBITRON RATINGS

These numbers, compiled by the Arbitron ratings company, represent each station's percentage of listeners age 12 and older between 6 a.m. and midnight. The figures were collected via listener diaries kept from March 28 through June 19. The final column reflects the station's change from its winter rating.

STATION	SHARE	CHANGE
1. WKDD (96.5-FM)	8.0%	Up 4.0
2. WJMR (100.1-FM)	7.5%	Up 0.1
3. WOOL (102.1-FM)	6.9%	Same
4. WPHR (107.9-FM)	6.4%	Up 2.3
5. WQAR (99.5-FM)	6.0%	Up 1.5
6. WJMI (105.7-FM)	5.5%	Up 0.9
7. WONE (97.5-FM)	5.2%	Down 1.1
8. WAKR (115.0-AM)	4.8%	Down 2.6
9. WLTV (108.5-FM)	4.4%	Down 0.3
10. WMM5 (100.7-FM)	4.2%	Down 1.5

PORTER'S PEOPLE

SOMETHING'S AFOOT IN THE WHITE HOUSE

George and Barbara Bush's shared autoimmune condition is Graves' disease, *Six* magazine reports. First dog Millie has an autoimmune disease called Lupus. Peter Guber and Peter Lupus were on Mission: Impossible just before Bush was director of the CIA.

Briefly noted

• Gloria Estefan's fans of the male persuasion are seizing the moment on Gloria's *Into The Light* tour and fingering their underwear at the Miami singer at the rate of about a dozen pair per night.

• Noting the upscale nature of

her audiences, Estefan said "Calvin Klein is the No. 1 brand." She declined, however, to embroil herself in a dispute that has raged since the epoch of Genghis Khan, and left the jockeys vs. boxers question unanswered.

Quote du jour

"The Democrats are taking a close look at him."  
—Humorist Mark Hassell, on recently euthanized former president Zachary Taylor, quoted in *Newsweek*

Striking while the iron is hot

Denal Moore's nude pregnant pause on the cover of August's *Vanity Fair* has inspired *High Society* mag to reprise in its October issue photos of the nude, pregnant actress first run in its December 1988 issue and taken long before she was struck by fame.



Calvin Klein: His briefs filling Gloria's hope chest



Bruno Sarmantino: The Italian Superman scorns the Hulkster



Dick Gregory: Still a rich man despite foreclosure

Meanwhile, Health mag chimes in with word that it had its first nude pregnant woman on its cover — in April.

Of rasslin' and 'roids

Bruno Sarmantino, pro wrestling's biggest star in the '60s and '70s, is spreading out against the sport's steroid heroes.

"I despise the World Wrestling Federation for what it has become," he said. "(It) promotes these unnatural muscle freaks to

R & R & more

Of the 360 women serving aboard the U.S. Navy destroyer tender *Acadica* in the gulf, 22 became pregnant at sea.

Down, but not out

• A Gregory bank has foreclosed on Dick Gregory's 48-acre waterfront farm in Plymouth, Mass.

However, under an agreement with Citizens Trust Bank, the comedian-social activist, his wife and their 10 kids will continue to live in the 12-room farmhouse.

Gregory, 59, said he's been unable to pay a \$165,000 second mortgage the last two years because his money has been frozen by a three-year-old lawsuit with his partners in his Slim-Safe Bahamian Diet business. The case goes to trial in September.

"I'm far from homeless," said Gregory. "I have millions of dollars. I don't want to declare bankruptcy. And... (the bank has) gone along with me."

This day in music

1981 — Harry Chapin dies in auto accident in Jericho, N.Y.

while on his way to play a benefit. 1976 — The Allman Brothers Band splits up.

Mondo bizarro

In Romania, an angry vampire has filed a \$50 million lawsuit against the dentist who pulled his fangs during a routine dental checkup, according to the *Sun*, that upright supermarket tabloid.

"Without these teeth, I could starve to death," complained bloodsucker Boris Vasilin in his lawsuit. "As far as I know," he added, "this has never happened to any other vampire."

The final word

"I think the recession may be ending. My friend got his tax refund check in the mail and it cleared."  
— Jay Leno

Edited by Mickyey Porter from Beacon Journal wire services.