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Timely TV Tools

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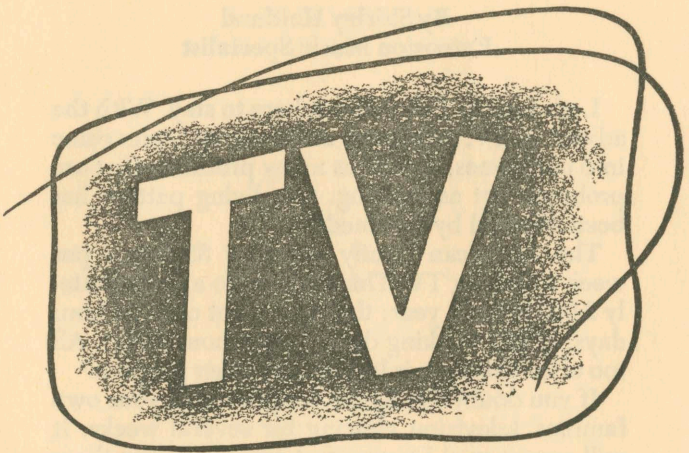
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EXTENSION LEAFLET 200

SEPTEMBER

1959

Timely



Tools

AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE
SOUTH DAKOTA STATE COLLEGE
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Timely TV Tools

By Shirley Heitland
Extension Music Specialist

Let's face it! Television is here to stay. With the advent of TV, many new and exciting topics came into our homes, as well as many problems that are probably not as exciting. Our living pattern has been affected by this media.

The American family averages 38 hours per week watching TV. This adds up to approximately 2,000 hours a year: the equivalent of 83 24 hour days, or 250 working days, (eight hour days). All too often this time is lost for any other purpose.¹

If you doubt this figure, keep track of your own families' television viewing for several weeks. It will amaze you! Do you feel you are losing those hours, that they could be spent to better advantage, that you should be getting more out of watching television?

We Blame Television

When television came into your home, many family problems arose. The set has become an excuse, or a scapegoat for our own shortcomings.

We often hear these problems:

1. "It is hard to get people to attend meetings.
2. We have lost contact with many friends, because we don't go visiting anymore.
3. I don't find time to read, sew, or hobby.

¹"Changing Times"—March, 1957.

4. It's hard to get the children to meals or bed on time.

5. It is hard to get children to do their homework and household chores.

6. We don't like to leave home for entertainment, and miss many activities.

7. We have family disagreements on what programs to watch.

8. Our family activities have become so limited.

9. We don't spend enough time out-doors."

Perhaps you can add to the list. Do we too often use television to keep the youngsters from being loud and messy? Is it a substitute for real situations?

The Advantages

Television has many advantages too. Knowing what they are is important, but how we use them will pay the dividends.

Outstanding artists and productions come into our own living rooms. Several decades ago only a small segment of the population could enjoy these performances, because of location and finances.

Surveys have found TV increases our interest in, and liking for music. Children's vocabularies have increased; there is more interest in travel, geography, and current events. Reading and discussion have grown. People still read books! The book business has rarely been better. Sales have risen over the last five years. Children are asking for the classics that had been gathering dust on library shelves.

You can witness many once in a lifetime events, such as parades, sporting events, government, religious, and educational programs.

Better Use of TV

The "habit" doesn't wear off—the American Research Bureau found the first set owners now watch TV the most.

"In a world in which the average person finds himself with more and more leisure on his hands,

the continuous flow of television entertainment represents to most people an innocuous way of passing the time. But television is not merely a diversion; it is an endless source of ideas and information and a powerful influence on values."²

It is common to blame the youngsters for the TV habit. Women spent the most time watching—eight hours per week more than children, and 10 hours more than father. The problem is a family one—how can we cut down on viewing time, and find time for other activities?

1. Count up the hours per week that your family watches television, and figure out the yearly total. With the family, list projects and activities you would like to do—then decide what your choices will be.

2. If you have chosen to limit your viewing, determine the amount of time the family finds reasonable. Make your plan flexible, try it and make changes as you see necessary. Plan other family activities.

3. Set up a reasonable list of rules about use of the set through family decision. "Do you want the set left on when company visits? Do you have meal and bedtime problems?"

4. Rate programs with the family after they are over. Discuss the pros and cons, and let the family decide which programs are worthy of their time. Thought provoking discussions will grow out of this method. Use your preference list.

5. Watch your newspaper or a guide to see what is coming that is exceptional viewing. Don't hesitate to write or phone your station or sponsor to praise programs you like. That's the best assurance of keeping them on the air.

6. Help youngsters appreciate and enjoy valuable programs. Encourage them to "look up" terms and information. A music dictionary is a wise investment.

Common Musical Terms

Historians will one day look upon the medium of television as a decisive influence in our musical growth. To fully appreciate the musical arts we

²"The Age of Television"—Leo Bogart.

must make an effort to understand the language of music. What about the musical terms used in introducing numbers and artists? Let's examine a few of them.

Classical music is a serious or "good" music that has been written according to strict rules. Any classic—art, literature, music or drama—is considered of top quality.

A **symphony** is a musical work having from one to five movements. The usual number is four. We hear a **Virtuoso** introduced. He is a "performer of marked skill."

What is Opera? Why aren't they all sung in English so we can understand them? Opera comes from the word "opus," meaning work. It is one of the most interesting forms of art, because it combines drama, singing skills, acting ability, knowledge of foreign language, full symphony orchestra, and often times dancing. Operas were being written in Europe long before our country was developed. Many early operas are still widely used. Translating into English often means losing the beauty of the words as set to music. To fully enjoy opera, read the story first. **Librettos** give word for word translation. **Arias** are songs or melodies from opera, often used as separate numbers.

Choreography is the arrangement of dances, usually ballet.

Vocal Terms

A **capella** means unaccompanied singing. Voices are classified according to their range and quality.

A **Soprano** is able to reach the highest notes. **Lyric** sopranos have light, melodic voices: **Coloratura** sopranos have high, flexible voices suited for difficult operatic singing: **Mezzo** sopranos are medium or "middle" sopranos, with a range between soprano and alto.

Alto is the lower range of women's or boy's voices, and **Contralto** is the lowest women's voice.

Tenor is the highest adult male voice, **Baritone** is high bass, or the range between tenor and bass. The lowest male voice being **Bass**.

These terms and many others are easily found in your dictionary—not only will you appreciate the performance more, you will be broadening your interest and knowledge.

The Future of Television

As rapidly as we are living, it is hard to imagine what television will be like twenty-five years from now. There will be radical changes: screens will be larger and three-dimensional. Sound will be stereophonic, or three dimensional. Color programs will dominate the circuits, and there will be hundreds of new stations in smaller communities. Live programs will be available from other countries.

Educational television is growing rapidly. It will be possible to take short courses or college classes via television. It is being done in some areas now.

You'll be shopping via television. If you want a new lamp, you'll call the furniture store, they will display lamps in 3-D and color, that you'll see on your own set at home. The sales talk will reach you at the same time. If you see a product you like on a commercial, you will be able to push a button and your order will be taken from home. Store shopping won't vanish, but TV shopping will be an everyday event.

Fantastic? Impossible? So was electricity, the airplane, and shooting to the moon.

Your television set can open new worlds of interest and knowledge, or it can be a nuisance.

What television does for you depends on whether you run your set or whether your set runs you.

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