

TV review

'Ned Blessing'

By Rick Sherwood

CBS must have some mighty good shows in the hopper to pass on "Ned Blessing," a backdoor pilot that's quite unique, quite entertaining and quite good.

It's not quite perfect as a stand-alone movie, which is the way the network is airing it, but it is quite a charmer all the way until its non-ending ending. It's a beautifully made project, well-directed, well-shot and featuring some truly wonderful scenery.

The film is from Bill Wittliff, who adapted "Lonesome Dove" for CBS a couple of seasons back. Here he takes on the West again with his tongue planted firmly in cheek. It works.

Daniel Baldwin stars as a mythical legendary Texas lawman bent on finding his father's killer. Unfortunately, the telefilm ends as that hunt begins, because the produc-

NED BLESSING
CBS
 Wittliff-Pangaea Prods.
 in association with Hearst Entertainment
 Executive producer-writer Bill Wittliff
 Producer William P. Scott
 Director Peter Werner
 Associate producer Paul Douglas Goldman
 Director of photography Neil Roach
 Production designer Cary White
 Music Basil Poledouris
 Editor Mark Westmore
 Costume designer Michael Boyd
 Sound mixer Darrell Henke
 Cast: Daniel Baldwin, Chris Cooper, Luis Avalos, Sean Baca, Taylor Fry, Julie Campbell, Rene Auberjonois, Tim Scott, Bob Gunton, Miguel Sandoval, Jeff Kober
Airdate: Tuesday, April 14, 9-11 p.m.

tion itself really is an introduction to the story.

And quite an entertaining story it is — part "The Young Riders," part "The Young Indiana Jones Chronicles," part "Kung Fu," all tied together with a certain left-handed humor. It's a philosophical-

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TV review

'Code 3'

By Miles Beller

More reality ...
 Harder reality ...
 Reality realer than real ...

People, get ready, has FBC got a series for you! With sirens wailing and lives hanging in the balance, "Code 3" careens onto the schedule, a new weekly offering hosted by Gil Gerard ("Remember, everything you will see is real") that means to quicken the pulse and send blood pressure racing.

In a TV world of ever-higher stakes, "danger" and "risk" must come blasting through the small screen with intensifying ferocity,

CODE 3
FBC
 Barbour/Langley Productions Inc.
 in association with
 Fox Television Stations Productions Inc.
 Executive producers John Langley,
 Malcolm Barbour
 Co-producer Gary Gerberg
 Supervising producer Douglas Waterman
 Coordinating producers Susan Mary Carney,
 Ken Koerner
 Associate producer Jan Richards
 Director Chris Baur
 Writer John M. Wilson
 Editors Mary Baurer, Paula Einstein,
 Murray Jordan, Douglas Waterman
 Host: Gil Gerard
Airdate: Tuesday, April 14, 9-9:30 p.m.

causing the viewer to feel as if his or her own existence is threatened.

"Code 3" tries doing this and more. Rendered by the producers of FBC's "Cops," this new "reali-

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Letters

Food for thought

I nearly fell off my chair while reading Robert J. Dowling's insightful and sensitive editorial on the Kennedy assassination (Trade Views, HR 4/6). I was shocked, not by the content (with which I fully agree), but that there was an important political opinion being expressed in a Hollywood trade paper. A carefully articulated, philosophical perspective, no less.

I've long wished there were a forum for thinkers in the entertainment world to express their opinions on the great sociopolitical issues.

With the search for truth so stressful, we could all do with nutritious food for thought. Thank you Mr. Dowling, for serving up a delightful meal.

Jeffrey Abelson
 Los Angeles

Valenti's barrage

In response to your front-page article "Valenti calls 'JFK' a 'hoax'" (HR 4/3), I am appalled but not surprised at Jack Valenti's blistering verbal barrage against Oliver Stone.

What every critic of Stone's film repeatedly ignores is the fact that Stone himself regards his "JFK" as a countermyth. He acknowledges that his film is laced with some fiction and inaccuracies, but it is no less accurate than the conclusions of the Warren Commission.

If such a government-induced group can contribute to evidential suppression and distortion, so can a filmmaker have the right to creative license in an attempt to at least try to broaden the minds of America with a more feasible theory.

Ed Shifres
 West Hollywood

Blind Valenti

Someone should arrange a screening of "JFK" for Jack Valenti. It's obvious he hasn't seen it.

Or maybe it isn't. Someone with such a blind eye that he remains faithful to the memory of LBJ could probably overlook just about anything.

Maybe Oliver Stone didn't make a masterpiece. But to accuse Stone of propaganda and to equate his efforts of free expression to Hitler's propaganda mill is an affront to every

thinking American.

And Valenti is the man who represents our industry? Hang our heads.

David L. Simmons
 Santa Clarita

Remember directors

One of Hollywood's favorite shibboleths is "what I really want to do is direct."

It is a wonder that anyone wants to direct, considering the industry's recent artistic amnesia concerning Barbra Streisand — and even more recently the AFT's well-deserved tribute to Sidney Poitier.

The omission of any reference to director Ralph Nelson, who directed Sidney in three films, was all the more glaring given the various clips from "Lilies of the Field" and the final production number, "Amen," since these came from whence Mr. Poitier got his Oscar. What I really want to do is remember!

Del Roy
 Burbank

The Buchwald case

Regarding the Buchwald vs. Paramount case: It has become obvious that justice exists only in the movies.

How can Superior Court Judge Harvey Schneider find that Paramount ripped off Art Buchwald's idea, that "Coming to America" was "clearly based on Buchwald's concept and (Alan) Bernheim had a significant role" in the film's development, that Paramount earned "tens of millions of gross profits" from the film and then used an "unconscionable" formula to deny Buchwald his royalties, and, finally — when all of Hollywood's creative people were waiting for justice to prevail — make such a pitiful ruling?

I only hope that others who have been wronged will not let this legal blow stand in the way of their persistence to seek what they are owed.

Lawrence Foldes
 Los Angeles

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