

4/3/ 72

Dear Bill,

I have not yet gotten the Frank book.

If you can ask them again, please, I'd appreciate it. I would like to read it with care and there are other things occupying my time.

I'd hate to get it when I might be tied up with something else and have to give it a superficial reading.

Or not get it at all and not be able to address particulars.

The ticket has arrived. Thanks.

Best regards,

Harold Weisberg

3/20/72

Mr. Bill Fields
KPLR TV 11
4935 Lindell Blvd.
St. Louis, Mo. 63108

Dear Mr. Fields,

Thanks for your letter of the 16th. If you've made it since 1949, that is a pretty good track record and I'm looking forward to the May 7 show even more. As I hope was clear, my only question was about racism (anti-black rather than anti-Semitic), that has been resolved, and I'll be there. I do appreciate your making it possible for me to get there a day early because there are some things I'd like very much to take up with Rev. Bevel off the air, things that can't be aired without the danger of innocents being killed. There is elliptical reference to this in FRAME-UP.

You were going to send me his address but you forgot. I'd appreciate it. I'd like to write and arrange this with him.

I understand from Jerry that you have asked Doubleday to send me Frank's book so I can read it prior to the show. I do appreciate that. (We met when I confronted Bill Huie and Judge Dwyer in New York. He was with them.)

The literature accompanying your letter indicates you'd have no possibility of putting something in the can for the future, but if there is any other show at the station that would like to do this, please feel free while I'm there. Aside from my work on the JFK assassination, I've had a fair amount of experience with the Freedom of Information Act. I believe I am the first writer to have sued under it.

It should be an interesting program. Like you, I'm looking forward to it.

Best regards,

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Harold Weisberg



4935 Lindell Blvd.
St. Louis, Mo. 63108
314-367-7211

March 16, 1972

Mr. Harold D. Weisberg
Route #8
Fredrick, Maryland 21701

Dear Mr. Weisberg:

Pursuant to our telephone conversation of March 14, 1972, please be advised that we have scheduled you for a appearance on THE BILL FIELDS SHOW from 10:30 pm. to midnight, Sunday, May 7, 1972.

As agreed THE BILL FIELDS SHOW will pay travel costs which include food and hotel accomadations. In connection with the latter, we will reserve a room in your name at the Chase Park Plaza Hotel, which is within minutes of our studio. A pre-paid air travel ticket will arrive for you one week prior to your departure.

The logistics of the program consist of a short interview in the studio, after which we take listeners' telephone questions.


It might be advantageous to bring along any visual material that you deem pertinent for there will be no restrictions except, naturally, where the code of good taste is violated.

Meantime, I would appreciate a letter confirming your intent to appear so we might get the wheels in motion i.e. promotion etc.

I look forward to seeing you on the 7th of May. It should be a most exciting and interesting program.

Sincerely,

THE BILL FIELDS SHOW


Bill Fields
Producer, and host

BF/lmh

TV Comment

A Four-Letter Word Spells Success On TV

By John J. Archibald
Of the Post-Dispatch Staff

BILL FIELDS THINKS THE BEST THING that ever happened to his show was the saying of a few words by a priest on one of the early programs. They were four-letter words that caused an uproar among some viewers, but nevertheless they were a blessing.



Bill Fields

"I was talking to Father James Groppi, a militant priest from Milwaukee, and he happened to quote some obscenities used by a policeman who had arrested him," Fields said. "We operate on a 7-second delay basis, so there was time to prevent the words from going on the air, but the engineer — like me — was dumfounded."

"We're prepared to cut off someone phoning in, but it never occurred to us that a

guest might say something objectionable.

"The controversy about Father Groppi brought a lot of attention to our show, however, and we've had pretty good success since."

On Saturday the "Bill Fields Show" will start its fifth year on KPLR-TV, Fields is producer and host on the 90-minute program.

He brings in guests from many walks of life, holds a preliminary discussion with them, then lets viewers phone in questions or comments. Sometimes he has one guest, but he frequently has as many as three.

Fields has found it is difficult to predict which guests will bring the most response. He had Harry Caray on soon after Caray was fired as the baseball Cardinals' broadcaster and the phone lines were clogged as expected. Some of the most popular visitors, however, have been relatively little known, such as William Howes, an organic food authority, and Dr. Wilfrid Shute, a cardiologist and vitamin E enthusiast.

"I almost decided not to invite Fred Sparks, the author of 'The \$200,000,000 Honeymoon,' about Aristotle and Jackie Onassis," Fields recalled. "I wondered if anybody really cared."

"But we had a tremendous response. People love to snoop in the lives of famous people, I suppose."

Fields was on radio and television for many years in Cincinnati before coming to St. Louis in 1967. He believes he had the world's first all-night disk jockey show in television, in 1949.

What in the world occupies the screen on a program like that?

"Oh, I had guests drop in, or I'd answer phone calls," Fields said. "Sometimes we'd just show the turntable going around."

Fields twice has had former movie actor Richard Ney, author of "The Wall Street Jungle," and his guest list has also included Yippie leader Abbie Hoffman, civil rights activist Percy Green, comedian Milton Berle, Juvenile Court Judge Noah Weinstein, teamster boss Harold Gibbons, State Senator Earl Blackwell, artist Siegfried Reinhardt and cartoonist Al Capp.

Sometimes visitors are reluctant to give a straight answer, especially politicians.

"One time an elected official wandered for well over a minute in response to a phone call," Fields said. "After he finished, I asked him if that was a yes or no answer."

"He paused a moment, and then said, 'What was the question?'"



Pete Rahn...TV-RADIO

Saturday special probes tv Fields show starts 5th year

Years ago, KPLR-TV's Bill Fields and I got together to chat about a new program he was putting together for that station.

When I learned the "Bill Fields Show" would basically be public service in nature, I chided Fields: "Sounds different, but you know the sorry track record for public affairs series in this town. Have fun, Bill. And be sure to let me know what you are doing next season."

Well, his "live," popular panel-and-phone-up series will mark the start its fifth year on Ch. 11 Saturday night at 10 with a special program exploring recent developments in the field of television.

How about that. A veteran in the tough, knockabout area of public service tv. Score one for Fields. And so much for my ability at picking possible tv winners and losers. My record remains unblemished.

ANYWAY, Fields promises that Saturday night's program will be a lively session about tv, a subject that is of course an odds-on "grabber" for many people.

The panel for that program will be filled by Federal Communications Commissioner Nicholas Johnson (the outspoken, maverick member of the FCC), Robert C. Glazier, executive director of KETC, James R. Herd, general manager of KPLR-TV, and this columnist.

And while we are at it, that show will be repeated by KETC, Ch. 9, at 4 p.m. Sunday.

FIELDS offered to buy lunch

while we talked about his years in the hot seat of the program. I declined the lunch. Hate baked crow.

So tell us, Bill, did you really believe at the start that the series would one day be cutting this milestone birthday cake?

"I really didn't think about it at the time," he replied, laughing. "I had done everything else in broadcasting — radio, a tv disc jockey, documentaries — so I thought I'd give it a whirl. But frankly, I didn't expect it to snowball the way it did. It was pretty tough at first, but we've managed to pickup viewing audience each year."

FIELDS ALSO had some thoughts about the "why?" of the program's popularity.

"The big thing is the telephone call-in setup, the two-way communication. That's the name of the game. We are in the communications business and our show lets the people out there talk back to us. That's what makes it different from the ordinary panel stuff on tv. The audience can talk back. Communicate their thoughts on a subject and give us hell as well as voice agreement."

"What we try to do is home in on subjects that are happening right now," Fields continued. "If Percy Green (ACTION chairman) is in an altercation with somebody, I really think people on the local level ought to know all sides of the story."

"MORE RECENTLY we've been trying to concentrate on happenings on the national level and involve local people in the issues with national experts."

"For instance, we had Major Gen. Thomas A. Lane to express his conservative views on the Vietnam War. And we brought in Jim Garrison, the controversial district attorney

of New Orleans. He's the guy who is still digging and harping on a conspiracy he claims surrounded the assassination of President Kennedy. We find local people are interested in those things."

DOES FIELDS have a favorite type of guest or subject material?

"It doesn't matter anymore, I'm ready to take on anybody or anything — except religion. I like to shy away from that."

"Why? Well, it's just too much. Too many people get so snarled in their own thing that most of them can't deal rationally with the basic concept of religion — 'be a good guy to your neighbor.'"

"We had a program about the rock musical, 'Jesus Christ Superstar,' and afterwards I got many hate letters directed at the people who were on that show. It gets discouraging."

THERE'S ANOTHER thing. When it comes to a black guy doing a show of this sort it gets interesting when we talk about a black issue... the gap between races.

"While I am on the tube I seem to be a neutral color. Many callers will say, 'I don't mean you, Bill. I mean those OTHER people.'"

"But I like to think the program helps change some minds on the race issues... helps break down myths on both sides. I hope it does. I'm idealistic that way."

RADIO NOTE: KSHE-FM will begin broadcasting in the new quadrasonic sound on Saturday from noon to 4 p.m. It is the so-called "double stereo sound."

KSHE is the first St. Louis station equipped for quadrasonic broadcasting, which also requires some special equipment on the receiving end.

Now in its fifth year
THE BILL FIELDS SHOW
is St. Louis's first and
foremost talk and tele-
phone program. Give
Bill a call. He'd like
to hear from you!

SATURDAY NIGHT 10:00 P.M.



The Family Favorite

Mc Kinlay Kantor

Al Capp

Senator Earl Blackwell

Harry Caray

Congressman William Clay

Congressman James Symington

Attorney Gen. John Danforth

Cardinal Footballer Ernie McMillan

YOU CAN'T BLAME BILL FIELDS FOR BEING A NAME DROPPER!

David Schoenbrun

Harold Gibbons

Public Safety Director Ross Randolph

Supervisor Lawrence K. Roos

Judge Noah Weinstein

Mayor A. J. Cervantes

Senator Thomas Eagleton

Illinois Lt. Gov. Paul Simon

THE BILL FIELDS SHOW

THE MOST PROVOCATIVE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION FORUM IN ST. LOUIS

SATURDAYS AT 9 PM

