A Compilation of Writings to Commemorate the 20th Anniversary of the Premiere Episode of ...
This publication is a compilation of news stories related to Northern Exposure. I arranged it all in chronological order just to see what kind of narrative would fall out. As it is, it tells more of the story behind the scenes of the show than the episode guides do. I tried to make sure every article had complete original author citations ... but I’m not a pro writer & some of the stories lacked complete info.

There are articles here that were only available through online archives such as Moosechick’s Notes. I’ve borrowed from there & many other places just to put as much in one place as I could ... I want to make sure to acknowledge Moosechick, Randy Cole, the news services, & anyone I forgot. I know that I didn’t write any of the content in this publication. I just put it together as a fan who wanted to share it with other fans. I’m not trying to earn a single cent for it, but would encourage donations to Moosechick’s Notes, or the Moosefest causes, or something of the like.

All articles in this compilation are provided as completely as was reasonable. Some were slightly edited to correct egregious grammar & spelling mistakes. A few articles were snipped to only show the parts that reference NX. I tried to indicate which articles I did that to with an [Edit] or [Snipped] tag ... but I didn’t have enough steam to be consistent with that standard. So if it becomes a point to anyone to make sure the referential integrity, or context, is exact ... I’d recommend checking the original publication.

As it is, I think there’s quite a bit more that could be done with this compilation. I simply don’t have enough time to do more at the moment. If anyone would like the original word document, or would like to contribute articles in word document form for a second edition update in the future, then feel free to contact me.

Bottom line ... I hope you enjoy this.

Regards,

Mike Maxwell

...
NY Doctor Arrives in Cicely

NETWORKS WISE UP TO SUMMER

Date: May 30, 1990
Publication: The Boston Globe (Boston, MA)
Author: Deborah Hastings, Associated Press

LOS ANGELES - It's mid-August. You're too hot to go out. Grab a glass of something cool, park in front of the tube and consider the choices:

A third repeat of "I Married Dora." The second showing of that fabulous "Manimal" episode in which the lead character turns into a tiger. Or, wait, hold onto your sun visor, what about the fourth special encore presentation of that "Moonlighting" episode where Maddie sleeps with Mark Harmon?

There's been a cure for the summertime rerun blues. It's called flipping the dial to a network where there are myriad first-run programs to choose from. And that means not flipping to ABC, CBS or NBC.

It took the Big Three a couple of years to swallow this little pill. It went down only after Fox Broadcasting Co. stole significant numbers of viewers last year while the big boys over at the mondo-networks took their usual summer naps.

The alternative Fox network, not asleep at the wheel, has taken to calling last year's coup "The Summer of Opportunity."

This year, the folks at Fox plan to maintain year-round original programming. Two new shows have been announced for the summer, as well as more fresh episodes and specials of shows such as "Cops," "America's Most Wanted" and the critically acclaimed "In Living Color."

Cable networks such as Home Box Office like to take credit, too, for increasing their viewership by running original programming during the summer.

"The networks are definitely reacting to cable television," said HBO spokesman Richard Licata. "Cable is definitely eroding their shares" in the ratings.

The sleeping giants have stirred, and this summer ABC, CBS and NBC are pumping more money into summer programming than ever before.

But it's not a whole lot. And even though the Big Three are making a big deal out of their summer programming, with few exceptions, it's still pretty meager fare.

ABC will show unseen episodes of the recently canceled "Breaster Place," starring Oprah Winfrey, and "Capital News," starring Lloyd Bridges. Its few new summer shows include "New Attitude," about a beauty salon, and the game shows "Super Jeopardy!" and "Monopoly."

Rather than produce a large slate of fresh shows, ABC instead has spent "between $10 and $20 million increasing episode orders of existing shows," said network spokesman Jim Brochu.

Over at the No. 1 peacock network, which barely held on to its top-rated status during May sweeps, NBC programming gurus have some interesting ideas for summer.

Entertainment President Brandon Tartikoff announced this week that repeats of "Quantum Leap," one of his favorite shows, would be shown at 10 p.m. for five consecutive nights beginning June 25. New programs include "Singer and Sons" starring Esther Rolle and "The Seinfeld Chronicles" starring comedian Jerry Seinfeld.

"Because there are so many choices, no longer can you just simply go away and not come back until the fall," said NBC spokeswoman Sue Binford. "Putting that into practice is very, very tough. We're not going to get there completely this summer."

At bottom-rated CBS, executives have little to say about the summer season. They're too busy trying to figure out their fall schedule and how to get out of last place.

But the battered eye is the only broadcast network to have an executive in charge of nothing but summer programs. So far, CBS has announced three new programs for the hot months to come.

One is "War Room," about White House speech writers. Another is "Northern Exposure," about a New York doctor forced to work in Alaska to pay off his medical education. "Manhattan Nights," which still is in production, summer viewers will peek at the lives of residents in a fictional New York apartment building.

"By having original programming on in the summer, we're trying to attract viewers back to CBS," said Mike Eisenberg, network vice president of research. "We're trying to reduce viewer erosion."
"Northern Exposure" sounds promising.

The new CBS one-hour drama series, from the creators of "St. Elsewhere," premieres on Channels 6 and 7 for a summer run Thursday at 10 p.m.

It's the first of several original summer series which will be broadcast on the network. "His & Hers," the comedy series starring Martin Mull and Stephanie Faracy, returned to the 10:30-11 p.m. slot on July 2.

"Northern Exposure" is about a young New York doctor, a recent graduate of Columbia University Medical School, who goes into deep culture shock.

Somewhat like an organ, he's transplanted to a remote Alaskan village which he's required to do to repay the state that financed his medical education.

Protagonist Joel Fleischman, played by Rob Morrow, finds that he must, without getting into a state, learn to adjust to a new state of mind as well as a new state of the union.

He's the sole physician in Cicely, Alaska, which is described as a "thriving hamlet of 500 located on the New Alaskan Riviera, halfway between the end of the line and the middle of nowhere."

Fleischman's new neighbors look like the proverbial cast of thousands.

They include Maurice Minnifield (Barry Corbin), an ex-astronaut and gun-ho president of the Cicely Chamber of Commerce; his assistant, Ed (Darren E. Burrows), a Native American; Maggie O'Connell (Janine Turner), a self-reliant pilot and Joel's new landlady; Holling Vincouer (John Cullum), a 62-year old naturalist/adventurer who forswore big-game hunting for photography and now owns the local tavern; Shelly (Cynthia Geary), Holling's 18-year old girlfriend; and Chris Stevens (John Corbett), Cicely's disc jockey, whose broadcasts capture the pulse of Arrowhead County and the surrounding Alaskan wilderness.

After he graduates from medical school, Fleischman honors his commitment to the state of Alaska and prepares himself for a more rugged life practicing medicine in Anchorage. But, upon his arrival in Alaska, he learns that he has been reassigned to a remote area far from the city.

Reluctantly trying to accommodate himself to his less than exotic surroundings and lifestyle, Fleischman frantically looks for a loophole in his contract that might help save him from four years of Cicely and some of its more feverish inhabitants.

Joshua Brand and John Falsey, who created not only "St. Elsewhere" but also "A Year in the Life," are the creators and executive producers of "Northern Exposure." They wrote the script, with Brand directing.

THE MEDIA BUSINESS:
TELEVISION: WHAT'S NEW THIS SUMMER? 'GUERRILLAS' OF THE AIRWAVES

Date: July 9, 1990
Publication: The New York Times
Author: Bill Carter

PRODUCERS from two of the five series CBS will broadcast this summer call what they are doing "guerrilla" television.

The description fits. There are more new shows scheduled to play on CBS this summer than in any summer season of recent memory, but they are not a well-scrubbed, well-financed band of warriors. They are more a ragtag, scrappy assemblage, compelled to stretch resources.

One of this summer's programs on CBS, "Northern Exposure," had its music scored in a garage; another, "Wish You Were Here," was shot almost entirely with a hand-held video camera. And "Prime Time Pets" will not need to spend a lot on guest stars: It features videos of dogs and cats.

The summer shows are also guerrillas of the airwaves in the sense that they are venturing into a sparsely populated area, determined to succeed against long odds.

Summer series have rarely survived the change of season. It's hard to make a splash in the arid climate of summer television. People tend not to watch a lot of television in summer.

Summer used to be cash-in time. Prime time was filled with repeats, the entire cost of which had been covered by the first-run license fee.

Now, with a multitude of options available, like rented videocassettes and dozens of cable channels, viewers rarely tolerate repeats. The now-familiar erosion of network audiences becomes a landslide in summer.

For some time the networks have acknowledged that they have to do more in the summer to keep viewers from drifting away. They have also recognized that it might be the ideal time to try out experimental programs.

But a fundamental problem remained: little or no budget for original programming.

This summer, NBC has tried a strategy of creating "events" all summer, using several original television movies and bringing back some older series with big-name stars (James Garner in "Bret Maverick," Cybill Shepherd in "The Yellow Rose"). And in a first-of-its-kind summer stopgap, NBC has also purchased a Canadian mini-series called "Love and Hate."

This summer, NBC has tried a strategy of creating "events" all summer, using several original television movies and bringing back some older series with big-name stars (James Garner in "Bret Maverick," Cybill Shepherd in "The Yellow Rose"). And in a first-of-its-kind summer stopgap, NBC has also purchased a Canadian mini-series called "Love and Hate."

ABC will introduce two comedies in August. The network also filled some prime-time holes with the cheapest programming available: game shows. "Super Jeopardy" and "Monopoly" have been on since mid-June.

But it is CBS, the third-place network, that has tried to make the most of this summer. "Let's face it, our needs are a little greater than anyone else's," said Peter Tortorici, the senior vice president of program planning for CBS.

Without giving any specific figures, Mr. Tortorici said CBS had doubled its budget for summer programs this year. That budget has generated five series, but all of them have employed strategies for making smaller license fees cover the cost of making network-quality programs.

The average license fee - the amount a network pays a production company for the right to carry a program - is between $400,000 and $500,000 an episode for a half-hour series and about double that for an hour long show.

Joshua Brand, one of the executive producers of "Northern Exposure," has tried a similar strategy with a young New York doctor compelled to work in Alaska, said his program had to find ways to produce network-level quality on a budget two-thirds the average size. Kathie Berlin, an executive producer of
"Wish You Were Here," a half-hour comedy about a Wall Street dropout who roams Europe with a video camera, said her license fee was only half what standard comedies receive.

Mr. Brand said the challenge of turning less into more "became a major headache." Among the strategies: using fishing boat workers as grips on the crew, shortening the shooting schedule from eight days to seven and hiring a director with experience only in commercials.

For Ms. Berlin, whose six-part program required outdoor shooting all over Europe from Budapest to Barcelona, costs were held down by hiring untried writers, foreign actors and "letting only our star stay in a room with a toilet."

"Prime Time Pets" will use videos of cute animals culled from, among other places, CBS stations around the country. A CBS executive said that ABC's experience with "America's Funniest Home Videos" had taught the industry that "the lower-budget forms of programs can sometimes produce very good ratings."

Mr. Tortorici called several of the shows strong contenders for future spots on CBS's regular schedule, especially "Northern Exposure." Once on that schedule, all the shows would get regular-size budgets, Mr. Tortorici said.

Mr. Brand said he had agreed to make "Northern Exposure" for the summer season because he believed it was untraditional and might have a better chance to get established.

"If we succeed, you'll see ABC and NBC doing more of this next year," Mr. Brand said. But he added: "Because of the budget situation, this has been an experience with a capital 'E.' I don't know that I'd want to do anything like this ever again."

Thursday, July 12, 1990 1-01
Pilot 78701 1
She’s doing it her way

Actress Janine Turner has common bond with her series alter ego

By DIANE JOY MOCA
Daily News Staff Writer

When Janine Turner was 23 years old and already earning roles in television, she moved to New York to study acting despite arguments from her agent, who fired her.

When Maggie O’Connell was a young woman with roots in Michigan, she moved to a small town in Alaska and built her own business as a pilot.

These two women — Turner, the actress, and O’Connell, the character she portrays — are both strong, independent types who create their own challenges. Turner’s character can be seen in the new CBS series “Northern Exposure,” which has its premiere Thursday.

In certain aspects, we’re a lot alike,” said Turner. “I stick to my own mind, and Maggie is the same. She has been around and has her own spirit.”

“Northern Exposure” marks Turner’s first lead in a series. She began her television career performing in a few episodes of “Dallas” while still living in her native Texas. After a taste of the small screen, she left the Lone Star State for Los Angeles at the suggestion of a protege at the nighttime soap.

She went on to appear in several television series, including “Family Ties,” “The Love Boat,” “The A-Team,” and “Mike Hammer.” Turner also established recurring roles in “Dallas”; “Behind the Screen,” a short-lived late-night soap; and “General Hospital,” a popular daytime soap.

“When I moved to New York, it was to get away from parts that were superficial and characters that had no depth,” she explained. “I had to go to New York and break away from the industry. Soap opera is not the route I wanted to take in my career. I wanted to do film and TV roles that were challenging. I planned to do theater in New York.”

While she was fine-tuning her craft on the East Coast, she had many temptations to return to Hollywood.

“I turned other series down in the past,” she said. “I had to really think about what character I took, because of the power of TV. I’ve done films and theater and different TV roles, but “General Hospital” is the role that people come up to me for most often. I was very choosy about the role I took for my first prime-time series.”

“The creators of this series had such a great track record (“St. Elsewhere”), and it was appetizing to me that this girl was a pilot and a landlord. It went against the stereotype. I did an audition on tape in New York.”

She soon found herself moving to Bellevue, Wash., where the eight episodes are being taped on location just outside of Seattle.

The drama series pilot follows Joel Fleischman, (played by Rob Morrow) a recent graduate of Columbia University Medical School. The big-city doctor is required to work in Alaska for four years in exchange for the scholarship that financed his education. Although he has been told he will repay the state by practicing medicine in Anchorage, he is instead reassigned to a remote Alaskan village that sends his East Coast sensibilities into culture shock.

The town welcomes its first doctor with open arms, but his landlord O’Connell doesn’t give him quite the same reception. She has no pity for his heartbreaking story of being trapped in the middle of nowhere.

“The role of Maggie is a gift from God because it’s what I’ve been working toward for the last four years,” Turner said. “The show itself writes the way I think and speak. Maggie doesn’t deal with people with her sexuality. She doesn’t manipulate people using it. She’s her own woman. If Rob (who plays Fleischman) picks up on her beauty, it (angers her). She wants to leave it behind. I think that’s like me.”

“I got into modeling when I was 3 years old. My mom had me doing beauty pageants at age 6. I was raised to look good, to care about my appearance. As I grew older, I was accepted as a performer. I didn’t put the same amount of time and effort into modeling as I did acting. My move to New York was symbolic of her move to Alaska,” Turner said in her slight Texas accent, which she learned to control during her first stay in New York City at age 15, when she became the youngest model at the Wilhelmina Modeling Agency.

“They told me to get rid of the accent. I’ve learned how to turn it on and off, but it comes back naturally when I’m Janine.”

Her small-town, Southern heritage is also revealed in the content of her conversations, like when she explains how “you gravitate back to your past. The older I get, the more I can’t wait to buy a ranch in Texas. It definitely helps (with this particular role) that I was from a small town. In an instinctual way, that’s just part of me.”

NORTHERN EXPOSURE

When: 10 p.m. Thursday
Network: CBS
Starring: Rob Morrow, Janine Turner, Barry Corbin and Darren E. Burrows

ON THE COVER

Janine Turner plays Maggie O’Connell, a self-reliant pilot in rural Alaska in the new series “Northern Exposure.”

4/DAILY NEWS TV BOOK/C

JLY 8-JLY 14, 1990

Cicely News & World Telegram
REVIEW/TELEVISION: NEW DOCTOR ADrift in ALASKA

Date: July 12, 1990

Publication: The New York Times

Author: John J. O’Connor

On a plane to Alaska, Joel Fleischman, fresh out of Columbia University medical school, is compulsively telling a complete stranger, "I'm not kidding myself; Anchorage isn't New York." But he adds, "It isn't Cambodia, and it has five Chinese restaurants." Then, for no particular reason, he declares, "Let's face it, Jewish doctors are not exactly an endangered species."

Played deftly by Rob Morrow, Joel is the brash, sometimes obnoxious 27-year-old hero of "Northern Exposure," a new series that begins a limited run on CBS tonight at 10. It seems that Joel got his medical degree with the help of a loan from the State of Alaska. Now he must return the favor by spending at least four years of practice not in Anchorage, as he thought, but in a small hamlet called Cicely. The place doesn't have a single takeout restaurant. Joel desperately wants out, but his contract has no loopholes. Actually the series is being filmed in Washington State, within range of "Twin Peaks" territory, and the scenery is spectacular. What's to worry? "Northern Exposure" is not throwaway summer fare. The series was created by Joshua Brand and John Falsey, who are also the executive producers. Their past credits include "St. Elsewhere" and "A Year in the Life." They have carefully explained that "Northern Exposure" is "a fish-out-of-water show, not a disease-of-the-week show." Clearly Joel the city slicker will end up being softened and perhaps even enlightened by his new country cousins, who are certainly an appealingly odd lot.

Running Cicely is Maurice Minnifield (Barry Corbin), a former astronaut who warmly assures Joel that the town is "delighted to have a Jew doctor from New York - you guys have an outstanding reputation." Maurice is not speaking to his old friend Holling Vincente (John Cullum), who swiped his young girlfriend Shelly (Cynthia Geary), the former Miss Northwest Passage.

Maggie O'Connell (Janine Turner) hails from Grosse Pointe, Mich., and now owns her own plane and a shuttle service. Young Chris Stevens (John Corbett) is the local disk jockey who lives in a mobile home with a Boston woman he found wandering around the forest. And young Ed (Darren E. Burrows) is an American Indian with a keen interest in rhythm-and-blues and the films of Woody Allen.

Will Joel take readily to eating mooseburgers at the local Summer Wonderland Festival? Will he get used to the giant rats running around his log cabin? Can he cope with wholly inadequate plumbing? Well, not right away. But by the end of next week's episode, he has learned how to do an Indian dance and is beginning take second and third looks at Maggie. That's after Maurice fires Chris the disk jockey for some comments he made over the air about Walt Whitman. But when Maurice takes over the radio show to play nothing but show tunes, the entire village rebels.

The show can get overly cute. It's hard to believe that anyone these days, even in remote Alaska, hasn't heard of a bagel, frozen or otherwise. And at one point, a passing reference is made to "St. Elsewhere." Not necessary. But, like Joel, a good many viewers may discover that the characters kind of grow on you. A first-rate cast makes it all the more easy. As Ed says to Joel about the gamey moose burgers, you'll get used to it.

NORTHERN EXPOSURE

Created by Joshua Brand and John Falsey; premiere directed by Mr. Brand; premiere written by Mr. Brand and Mr. Falsey; produced by Robert T. Skodis for Cine-Nevada Inc., in association with Procter and Gamble Productions Inc.; Mr. Brand and Mr. Falsey, executive producers. Tonight on CBS at 10 P.M.

Joel Fleischman...Rob Morrow
Maggie O'Connell...Janine Turner
Maurice Minnifield...Barry Corbin
Chris Stevens...John Corbett
Ed...Darren E. Burrows
Holling Vincente...John Cullum
Shelly...Cynthia Geary

SMUG DOCTOR CAN'T CURE AILING PREMIERE

Date: July 12, 1990

Publication: Chicago Sun-Times

Author: Lynn Voedisch

CBS presents a new dramatic series. The premiere episode, directed by Joshua Brand and written by Brand and John Falsey, will air from 9 to 10 tonight on WBBM-Channel 2.

If there's a doctor in the house, perhaps he can heal what's ailing "Northern Exposure," a CBS dramatic series premiering from 9 to 10 tonight on WBBM-Channel 2. There are so many problems with this summer stand-in that it ought to be put in the intensive-care unit.

"Northern Exposure" stars Rob Morrow as New Yorker Joel Fleischman who, upon completing medical school and his residency, must practice medicine in a remote town in the wilds of Alaska. It seems when he entered medical school, Fleischman signed a contract that guaranteed his services to the state of Alaska in exchange for tuition aid.

Fleischman was counting on practicing in Anchorage. What he gets is the hole-in-the-wall town of Cicely. The usual fish-out-of-water routines fill the rest of the first "Northern Exposure" episode. The snooty punk of a doctor manages to insult everyone in town within hours of his arrival. He makes a scene everywhere he goes. His big-city manner merits him only uncomprehending stares from the startled Alaskans.

After his temper tantrums are through, Fleischman actually starts treating some ragtag patients, most of whom have silly complaints that frustrate the doctor even more. When one patient shows up with two dangerous wounds inflicted by his violent wife, the exasperated Fleischman tries some smug psychotherapy.

"Start talking!" he barks at the couple as he storms out of the office. Only on television could this tender, caring approach work.

Well, who can blame the good doctor when everyone in town is a yahoo? He insults a woman he has just met by insinuating that she's a hooker. (She's his landlord.) He tells a big man with a huge gun that he's seen greater dangers on the subway at night. He gets drunk and sick in the local bar on his first full day in town. He's just a cute kid having a bad week.

Baby-faced Morrow plays the doctor role with such a supercilious air that's impossible to like him. The other actors, burdened with leaden dialogue, plod through their roles like bison migrating south.

While the scenery gives viewers an idea that Alaska is a jewel box of natural beauties, the
acting suggests that this lovely environment is filled with ignorant clods.

Maybe the doctor is right. Perhaps the residents of Cicely are a motley crew of subhuman yokels. If they had an ounce of gumption, they would take to arms and run spoiled Dr. Fleischman out of town and straight into bear country.

2 TELEFILMS, FANTASY TO LEAD OFF FOR CBS

Date: July 17, 1990
Publication: Albany Times Union
Byline: Steve Bornfeld Staff writer

Two fact-based telefilms and a hit fantasy feature will open CBS' movie lineup this fall, says the network's entertainment president, Jeff Sagansky.

"Field of Dreams," the Kevin Costner vehicle about a magical ball field in the middle of an Iowa cornfield, will strategically bow Tuesday, Oct. 3, two days before the scheduled start of the National League Championship Series.

The film is the first from CBS' pre-pay package deal with Universal Pictures.

"The Charles Stuart Story," about the bizarre Boston murder case, will kick off the "CBS Tuesday Night Movie" on Sept. 18. Ken Olin of "thirtysomething" has the title role.

"The CBS Sunday Night Movie" will debut with "The Queen of Mean," based on the book of the same name, with Suzanne Pleshette and Lloyd Bridges as Leona and Harry Helmsley.

On the series front, Sagansky said the eight-episode summer drama "Northern Exposure," which debuted to both good ratings and reviews, will "absolutely" return to the lineup during the season if it continues to perform well.

"The reason it's on the summer schedule (instead of the fall) was because I wanted to put some quality things on in the summer," Sagansky said. "I didn't want it to be just rejects of things that we wouldn't put on in the fall because then there's no point to the experiment at all."

"If it does well during the summer, where there's less competition, where it's running against repeat competition, then there's a good shot at making the schedule during the year," he said.

In addition to "Northern Exposure," CBS has announced several midseason replacement shows that are ready to start production, including "The Trials of Rosie O'Neill," which reteams "Cagney and Lucy" star Sharon Gless and producer Barney Rosenzweig. Another 10 pilots are planned in the next couple of months.

"One of the big mistakes that has happened at CBS in the past is, they put (shows) on the fall schedule and then just sort of sat with it," said Sagansky, who took over the top entertainment post six months ago.

"If the stuff didn't work, like this past year, there was nothing to put on until January," he said.

He added that the early order for backup shows did not signal a "quick-hook" mentality regarding the fall performers.

"If a show shows glimmers of life and it's well-received and the quality is up to the pilot, we're going to hang with something," he said.

In other series news, Sagansky said "Wiseguy" star Ken Wahl, who was originally announced as starring in the first few episodes of the crime drama whenever it returned to the lineup, would not return at all as agent Vinnie Terranova. Actor Stephen Bauer will play a new agent, if and when the show returns with new prime-time episodes.

"I spoke to him myself, and he said he had it with the show," Sagansky said. "I felt there was some life in the show and that (producer) Steve Cannell and the whole company still had a lot of things to say with the show, and we went on without him."

Sagansky also noted that the veteran soap "Dallas," which will convert from its serial format to "Wiseguy"-style story "arcs" in the fall, was not in danger of cancellation last year.

"We had a number of other, bigger problems on our schedule than a 22 share," said Sagansky. He added that this year's guest casting - including Susan Lucci and Larry Hagman's former "I Dream of Jeannie" co-star, Barbara Eden - along with the lead-in from the new "Over My Dead Body" - should improve its performance over last season.

Regarding the upset, part-time Fox Broadcasting Network - the only network that third-place CBS does not trail - Sagansky said he didn't expect it to dislodge any of the traditional networks in the foreseeable future.

However, Sagansky said he did not agree with comments made by NBC's Brandon Tartikoff, who criticized the quality of several Fox shows.

"My opinion is that I wish I had a few of (the Fox shows)," Sagansky said. "I'd take 'The Simpsons,' and you probably wouldn't have to twist my arm too much to take 'Married... With Children,' either."

ALL-STAR GAME BOOSTS CBS'S RATINGS

Date: July 18, 1990
Publication: The Washington Post

The American League's soggy 2-0 victory over the National League in Major League Baseball's 61st All-Star Game helped lift CBS to a close, second-place finish for the week.

The National League was held to two hits in a game that the rain delayed for 68 minutes during the seventh inning. The All-Star showcase averaged an 18.5 rating and a 33 share, and was the first event in CBS's $1.1 billion deal with Major League Baseball. Its rating was slightly higher than the 18.2 the game averaged on NBC last year.

NBC narrowly won the week of July 9-its ninth consecutive prime-time ratings victory and its 40th in 43 weeks-with a 9.8 rating and a 19 share; CBS followed one-tenth of a ratings point behind, at 9.7/19; and ABC came in third, with a 9.1/18.

The premiere of CBS's "Northern Exposure" Thursday night had a 9.2/17, tying for 46th with Part I of NBC's repeat miniseries "Poor Little Rich Girl."

NBC's special telecast Friday night of "Bret Maverick" earned a 7.3/16 in a three-way tie for 57th place, while "Yellow Rose" earned only a 6.3/13 in a tie for 64th with "Super Jeopardy!"

TV RATINGZZZZ
Following are the top 20 network prime-time shows last week, ranked according to the percentage of the nation’s 92.1 million TV households that watched, as measured by the A.C. Nielsen Co. A share represents the percentage of actual sets-in-use tuned to a particular program when it aired.

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"This isn't a medical show. This isn’t about the disease of the week," said Brand, who also created “St. Elsewhere” with Falsey. "This is about a fish out of water. It’s a show about people."

Brand and Falsey became partners as writers for "The White Shadow." They also guided "St. Elsewhere" as producers in its first year. Later, they created and produced "A Year in the Life." They also helped Steven Spielberg create and produce the "Amazing Stories" series.

"Northern Exposure" had its origin in several sources, including Brand's doctor friend, who suggested the original idea for "St. Elsewhere."

"We'd read about the state of Maine paying for medical school to get doctors to practice in small towns," Brand said. "The genesis of this series was the movie 'Cry Wolf,' which was about a city man going into the northern woods to study wolves, and a script we'd written about a friend of mine who was a doctor and joined the New York Police Department. He now practices in rural New York."

The show is being filmed on location in Roslyn, Wash., a small town about 60 miles east of Seattle, just off Interstate 90 east of the Cascade Mountains."

"It's a one-street town, a little farther out than we wanted, but it's great," Brand said. "The mountains and the lakes are magnificent. The skies can be dark and filled with billowing clouds. It's very clear you're not in Los Angeles."

"Northern Exposure" is one of a several summer shows the networks, particularly CBS, are mounting this year in hopes of retaining viewers until the fall season premieres, Brand said.

Thursday, July 19, 1990 1-02
Brains, Know How and Native Intelligence 78702 2

DOCTOR INSPIRES PRODUCER TO CREATE 'EXPOSURE' SERIES

Date: July 19, 1990
Publication: Chicago Sun-Times
Author: Jerry Buck

LOS ANGELES So what’s a nice young Jewish doctor doing in the wilds of Alaska?

That's the premise of the CBS summer series "Northern Exposure," in which Dr. Joel Fleishman, who financed medical school by promising to practice in the Far North for four years, arrives in Alaska and starts paying his dues.

"He's stuck in this little town in Alaska," said Josh Brand, co-writer and producer with John Falsey. "He doesn't like the place. He doesn't feel comfortable. He feels he's been tricked, because they had promised him Anchorage."

In the first episode, Fleishman, played by Rob Morrow, learned he was being sent into the wilderness. Other regulars in the eight-episode run, airing from 9 to 10 tonight on WBBM-Channel 2, are Barry Corbin, John Cullum, Janine Turner, John Corbett and Cynthia Geary.

The show is being filmed on location in east of Seattle, just off Interstate 90 east of the Cascade Mountains.

The skies can be dark and filled with billowing clouds. It's very clear you're not in Los Angeles."

The second installment of Canada's top-rated miniseries, "Love & Hate: A Marriage Made in Hell," put NBC back in the top spot of the weekly primetime ratings race and helped it snatch an overall win with a 10.2 rating and a 20 share. CBS followed with 8.7/17, and ABC came in third with 8.4/16.

Part I of "Love & Hate" ranked sixth for the Nielsen week ending July 15. The Canadian Broadcasting Co.'s four-hour docudrama about one of Canada's most sensational murder cases starred Kenneth Welsh and Kate Nelligan.

The Tuesday night debut of NBC's limited-run series "Real Life With Jane Pauley," a magazine-style format featuring profiles by the former "Today" co-host, tied for fifth.

On Sunday night, CBS's rebroadcast of "A Gathering of Old Men" earned a 10.6/19, tying with NBC's "In the Heat of the Night" for 25th place. NBC's "Nasty Boys" pilot, renamed "Kill or Be Killed," ranked 32nd with a 10.0/18. ABC's rerun of the movie " Tonight's the Night" came in 58th with a 7.1/13, tying with its own " Anything but Love."

Among new shows and specials, CBS's Thursday "Northern Exposure" ranked 38th with a 9.6/19. The Wednesday night "ABC News Special: The Perfect Baby" earned a 9.0/18 for 41st place, slightly better than its competition-the premiere of CBS's "Top Cops," which ranked 43rd with an 8.8/17.
CBS's Friday night kickoff show "Primetime Pets" earned a 7.9/18 for 49th place, but the premiere of "Wish You Were Here" at 9:30 ranked 83rd with a 4.6/9. The night closed with the network's drama pilot "The Bakery" ranking 69th with a 5.8/12.

In the network evening news battle, "ABC World News Tonight With Peter Jennings" won by averaging an 8.9/20 last week, compared with an 8.0/18 for "CBS Evening News With Dan Rather" and a 7.4/17 for "NBC Nightly News With Tom Brokaw."

TV RATINGZZZZ

Following are the top 20 network prime-time shows last week, ranked according to the percentage of the nation's 92.1 million TV households that watched, as measured by the A.C. Nielsen Co. A share represents the percentage of actual sets-in-use tuned to a particular program when it aired.

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THE NETWORKS' NEW ADVERTISING DANCE

Date: July 29, 1990
Publication: The New York Times
Author: N. R. Kleinfield

Viewers of the new television series "Northern Exposure" on CBS Thursday evening could hardly miss the striking scenery and the quirky mooseburger meals depicted in the saga of a young New York doctor acclimating to a rugged Alaskan town.

Only a brand-name whiz, though, would have realized that half the parade of commercials - Crest, Downy, Head & Shoulders, Folgers, Pringle's Potato Chips, Tide, Oil of Olay, Pepto-Bismol - came from one source: the Procter & Gamble Company. That was no coincidence.

In a deal struck with CBS, Procter & Gamble had agreed to foot part of the production expenses and buy half the commercials in exchange for a minority ownership stake in the program. This unusual experiment is one of the latest signs of the partnerships being forged between advertisers and major networks, arrangements that vaguely harken back to the early "Golden Age" of television, when the advertising community was virtually indistinguishable from the networks.

Clearly, the romance is back. After years of agitated relations in the marriage between the networks and advertisers, the beleaguered networks are increasingly courting advertisers by flashing inventive themes of keen interest to sponsors and joint sweepstakes with retailers and fast-food chains doling out millions in prizes. In rare instances, they are agreeing to plant products in episodes of prime-time shows, and considering having stars of shows plug merchandise. Cognizant of the shifting sands, large sponsors are pushing the networks to accept more programs produced - or co-produced - by advertisers. Can the return of the "Goodyear TV Playhouse" be far behind?

[EDIT]

Photo: Jerry Dominus, head of sales at CBS, with "Northern Exposure," a new network show partly owned by Procter & Gamble (Fred R. Conrad/The New York Times) (pg. 1);

Thursday, August 09, 1990 1-05
Russian Flu 78706 5
Thursday, August 16, 1990 1-06
Sex, Lies and Ed's Tapes 78707 6
Thursday, August 23, 1990 1-07
A Kodiak Moment 78708 7
Thursday, August 30, 1990 1-08
Aurora Borealis- A Fairy Tale for Big People 78705 8

ON STAGE, AND OFF

Date: November 9, 1990
Publication: The New York Times
Author: Alex Witchel

[EDIT]

The Brat Pack at "Carnal Knowledge" -- Judd Nelson, Justine Bateman, Jon Cryer -- is apparently living up to the name and then some, resulting in the dismissal last week of Janine Turner, a star of the television series "Northern Exposure." A company member says Ms. Turner was relieved of her duties by advertisers. Can the return of the "Goodyear TV Playhouse" be far behind?

Beset by dwindling audiences and brutal competition, the networks have been transforming themselves from lackadasical order bookers to panting salesmen. They are doing things like mall tours in connection with advertisers, special segments on regular shows keyed to themes of keen interest to sponsors and joint sweepstakes with retailers and fast-food chains doling out millions in prizes. In rare instances, they are agreeing to plant products in episodes of prime-time shows, and considering having stars of shows plug merchandise. Cognizant of the shifting sands, large sponsors are pushing the networks to accept more programs produced - or co-produced - by advertisers. Can the return of the "Goodyear TV Playhouse" be far behind?

Photo: Jerry Dominus, head of sales at CBS, with "Northern Exposure," a new network show partly owned by Procter & Gamble (Fred R. Conrad/The New York Times) (pg. 1);

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Thursday, August 30, 1990 1-08
Aurora Borealis- A Fairy Tale for Big People 78705 8

The producer Martin Kaufman says: "Janine is a lovely person, but she had a different approach toward acting than the others. They weren't cruel to her face, but they did complain about her. It bothered me that there was so much friction between them because everyone is working for cheap, and I want..."
them to be happy. With a cast of seven, I would rather see one person leave than see six people unhappy."

Mr. Charnin says: "'Northern Exposure' was starting up again, and I didn't want her to split on me. And never in 20 million years would I allow a production assistant to let someone go. We were in agreement that she go because she couldn't stay for the run like everybody else."

A spokeswoman for Ms. Turner says: "Janine's approach was a highly emotional one; that character does attempt suicide. To change her interpretation because of another actor would have compromised her instincts as an actress." Crawford Returning to Los Angeles

The quirky series focuses on the trials and tribulations of Dr. Joel Fleishman (Rob Morrow), an inveterate New Yorker who has been reluctantly transplanted to a remote Alaskan town. After making a deal with the state of Alaska to finance his Columbia University Medical School education, Fleishman owns up upon graduation and relocates to Cicely for four years of medical practice. Once there, this "fish out of water" is in constant anguish trying to adjust to his new rustic environment.

"Northern Exposure" stars Rob Morrow as Dr. Joel Fleishman; Janine Turner and Maggie O’Connell and Barry Corbin as Maurice Minnifield. Also starring are Darren E. Burrows as Ed; John Cullum as Holling Vincouer; Cynthia Geary as Shelly Tambo; John Corbett as Chris Stevens and Elaine Miles as Marilyn.

"Northern Exposure" is produced by the Finnegan-Pinchuk Co. in association with Falahay/Austin Street Productions distributed by MCA-TV.

On TV, the best thing about this time of year are its surprises.

FLYING HIGH INTO A NEW SEASON

Date: April 1, 1991
Publication: The Record (Bergen County, NJ)
Author: Bill Ervolino, Record Television Editor

NBC has announced that "Wings" has been picked up for the 1991-92 season. The comedy series, which follows the network's superhit "Cheers" on Thursday nights, has consistently won its time period since moving there Jan. 3. With a 15.9 rating and a 25 share, it ranks 17th among all prime-time shows. According to NBC, in the demographic category of adults 18-54, the series ranks ninth and has more viewers in its time period than the combined competition of CBS and ABC.

"Wings" completed its season run last Thursday. It is slated to return to the schedule with repeat telecasts in June.

"STAT," the new, half-hour comedy series from Danny Arnold ("Barney Miller"), set in the trauma center of a New York City hospital, will join ABC's prime-time lineup at 9:30 p.m. April 16. "Coach," now occupying that post--"Roseanne" Tuesday time slot, will complete its season episode order with its April 9 telecast. "Coach," another renewal for the '91-'92 season, will return to the schedule later this year.
Good news for Rick Dees fans; bad news for the rest of us. “Into the Night Starring Rick Dees,” ABC’s late-night variety series, has been renewed through October.

The James Earl Jones series “Gabriel’s Fire,” formerly on Thursday nights, returns to ABC’s prime-time schedule April 17 in the 10 p.m. slot. “Equal Justice,” now in that spot, goes on hiatus following its April 10 broadcast. “Justice” will return to the schedule later this year with original episodes.

The April 17 episode of “Gabriel’s Fire,” titled “One Flew Over the Bird’s Nest,” guest stars Caitlin Clarke and George Hearn.

Floyd Red Crow Westerman, who played the chief of the Lakota tribe in “Dances With Wolves,” makes a guest appearance next Monday on the CBS series “Northern Exposure.”

Westerman will play an Indian spirit known as One Who Waits.

ABC’s long-awaited “Dinosaurs” project is anything but extinct. The comedy series will finally show its big ugly face 8:30 p.m. April 26. To accommodate the big fellas Fridays, ABC is moving “Family Matters” to 9 p.m. and “Perfect Strangers” to 9:30. Surprise hit “Baby Talk,” now seen at 9:30 p.m., will resurface Tuesdays in place of “Davis Rules,” which completes its run of new episodes April 9.

Patrick Stewart, the commanding actor who helms the Starship Enterprise in “Star Trek: The Next Generation,” will direct that series’ 100th episode, set to air in May.

SECOND ‘EXPOSURE’

Date: April 7, 1991
Publication: The Record (Bergen County, NJ)
Author: Virginia Mann

THE RISE OF “NORTHERN EXPOSURE” is the TV equivalent of one of those Horatio Alger rags-to-riches tales.

In July 1990, CBS presented the hour-long drama, conceived by “St. Elsewhere” creators Joshua Brand and John Falsey, as a summer experiment.

Despite the impressive track records of its creators, “Northern Exposure” wasn’t expected to attract much attention. It had no big-name stars -- or budgets. In fact, because of the series’ experimental nature, CBS convinced Brand and Falsey to shoot eight episodes on two-thirds the usual budget, an arrangement that translated into grueling six-day work weeks for the cast and crew.

Then, too, during its limited summer run, “Northern Exposure” grew increasingly, well, spiritual. The finale, “Aurora Borealis,” was so weirdly mystical it might well have driven away mainstream America.

And yet, this intriguing, unexpectedly funny drama managed to make a mark, winning both critical raves and solid ratings. “We’ve had tremendous response from people,” says Brand. “I think it surprised even the network.”

And so, “Northern Exposure” is back for another eight episodes, the first of which airs at 10 p.m. Monday.

According to the series’ creators, this return engagement never would have come about if CBS had not agreed to pay more for the series. “What was initially a challenge to overcome [the limited budget] became a pain. We started to think, ‘Why do I want to keep my hand over the flame just to prove I can do it?’” Brand said during a telephone interview from his Santa Monica office.

Fortunately, after a few months of negotiations, CBS -- which has been heavily promoting the series for the past few weeks -- upped the ante. Nowadays, “Northern Exposure” has the usual five-day shooting schedule, a “drastic” improvement, according to actor Rob Morrow.

“A five-day schedule makes you feel like a person again. You have a day off, and the money is there, in terms of costumes and the production, and certain amenities, even things like the quality of food service,” says Morrow. He plays Dr. Joel Fleischman, a New York City doctor contractually bound to the people of Alaska, who financed his medical education.

Last season, Morrow’s desperately homesick character came across as the show’s real protagonist. “Originally, Joel was our point of view into this town. He was every urban man,” notes Brand. “But we really view the show as more of an ensemble.”

And so, this season, you can expect to see some fleshing out of the citizens of the remote (fictional) town of Cicely, Alaska. Viewers will learn more about the past life of town founder Maurice Minnfield (Barry Corbin), a former astronaut, and will see more of Marilyn, the doctor’s enigmatic Indian assistant, played by Elaine Miles. (“It’s her first acting job, and everyone has sparked to her,” notes Brand.)

Likewise “explored” will be the relationship between Holling Vincour (John Cullum), a 62-year-old saloon keeper and naturalist, and Shelley (Cynthia Geary), his 18-year-old girlfriend. Their union will be a continual source of humor. (In the first episode, for example, after Holling buys Shelley a satellite dish, she becomes addicted to television.)

And still very much on hand will be Chris Stevens (John Corbett), the local radio disc jockey, Maggie (Janine Turner), the self-reliant pilot, and Ed (Darren E. Burrows), the gentle Indian who’ll take a number of spiritual journeys -- and become a real buddy to Joel. “You can become very close to someone because of circumstance,” says Brand.

As for Joel, in the first episode, he’ll get dumped, via mail, by his New York-based fiancée. This development paves the way for him and Maggie to pursue their flirtatious, love-hate relationship.

“There’s an undeniable attraction between them. By the same token, they both realize they’re not for each other. In their own heads, there’s no future in it,” says Brand.

And while Joel may seem a little less obnoxious than before, in order to preserve the series’ fish-out-of-water premise, Brand says the writers will not allow him to become too mellow.

“’M*A*S*H,” the war never ends. In our show, Joel never does become comfortable
with his surroundings," says Brand, noting that the good doctor still hasn't unpacked or decorated his rented cabin. As Morrow puts it, "Nature is still his enemy."

Though "Northern Exposure" is shot in Roslyn and Bellevue, Wash. -- and Brand and Falsey spend most of their time in Santa Monica -- the producers review all footage the day after it's shot. "If they don't like it, we'll redo it, which happens occasionally," says Morrow.

The actor believes that the commitment and unique vision of the producing team, who met in 1979, when both were working on "The White Shadow," is the primary reason for the series' appeal.

"I think because of the nature of television, a lot of shows are created in a pure way, but then they're somehow bastardized along the route to airing, because of the nature of the medium, and the need to appeal to millions of people," says Morrow. "But these guys don't compromise. And they give [the show] heart, and compassion."

One important element of the show is its non-religious spirituality, which Brand explains in almost metaphysical terms. "We made this leap that Alaska was a state of mind, rather than a spot on a physical map. It's a little closer to the stars."

Ever so subtly, "Northern Exposure" emphasizes that there's more to life than the traditional American obsession with money. In one memorable episode last season, when a flu epidemic hit, "nurse" Marilyn came to the clinic with a foul-smelling salve that miraculously cured the town. Initially skeptical, Dr. Joel wound up hounding his assistant to tell him the ingredients of this tribal remedy, which, he stressed, could make them very rich. Unimpressed, Marilyn just smiled her enigmatic smile, and walked away.

But perhaps what viewers find most intriguing about "Northern Exposure" is its incidental humor. The series is a lot funnier than many a sitcom, a point that Brand concedes.

"We do see ourselves as a one-hour comedy, though I don't know if the network sees us that way."

Illustrations/Photos: COLOR PHOTO - The cast of "Northern Exposure," clockwise from top left: John Corbett, Rob Morrow, Barry Corbin, Cynthia Geary, John Cullum, Elaine Miles, and Darren E. Burrows.

**THREE CHEERS!**

*Date: April 7, 1991*

*Publication: The Record (Bergen County, NJ)*

*Section: TELEVISION*

*Edition: All Editions -- Sunday*

*Notes: TELEVISION FRONT*

Three Cheers!

CBS brings back 'Northern Exposure'

Illustrations/Photos: COLOR PHOTO - Janine Turner, Rob Morrow, and Elaine Miles

**QUALITY RETURNS TO THE NETWORKS**

*Date: April 8, 1991*

*Publication: The Boston Globe*

*Author: Ed Siegel, Globe Staff*

It was only weeks ago that people were complaining about the dearth of quality dramatic series on network television. "L.A. Law" was holding forth on Thursday nights and that was it. ABC had taken "Twin Peaks" and "thirtysomething" off for a while and the hourlong series seemed to be the exclusive hangout for any number of interchangeable Jakes and their Fat Men buddies. The networks were in an obvious down-market mode, symbolized by "thirtysomething" giving way to "Eddie Dodd."

But faster than you can say "Matlock," things change. Two of last year's most refreshing series return this week, "Northern Exposure" tonight and "Shannon's Deal" tomorrow. "Eddie Dodd" failed so badly that ABC had to rush "thirtysomething" back onto the air tonight. ABC also decided to give "Twin Peaks" a final chance last week. The same network is hyping this week's "Equal Justice," about black-Korean tensions, and next week's "thirtysomething," an episode dealing with AIDS, as uncommonly good.

Quality, of course, is a term impossible to define. Doesn't the person watching "True Detectives" believe he or she is watching something of value as much as the viewer of "L.A. Law"? But we can't leave it at that, simply say that quality is in the eye of the beholder. Otherwise I'd be out of a job.

What we can say is that a quality show, at a minimum, is something you can talk about the next day, that it isn't so ephemeral that it evaporates upon collision with whatever comes on next. Quality television makes life seem richer; the other stuff makes it seem more tolerable.

In tonight's "Northern Exposure," Shelly the barmaid is presented with a satellite dish by her boyfriend and she quickly becomes an addict. Finally, after watching "Magnum, P.I." dubbed in Japanese, she admits, "I can't stop. When I'm with Holling, I'm thinking of television . . . . When I'm with my friends I wish I was watching television. I don't even like it so much. I get this icy feeling inside and the only thing that will make it go away is television. It doesn't matter what program it is . . . 'Oprah,' "Hogan's Heroes . . ."

These are programs that do matter. Whether they're any good or not is something else again. * * * Northern Exposure 10 p.m. Mondays, Channel 7

A yuppified Woody Allen in Alaska is this show's premise. From the elk walking down Main Street in the opening credits to the local DJ speculating about Jung's connection to the blues, this is foreign territory to network television. It's also foreign territory to Joel Fleischman, the fish out of Perrier who is perpetually lusting for New York City, his girlfriend Elaine and "sixth-row center seats for 'Les Miz.' "

Fleischman's whining and his inability to deal with the natural beauty around him, not the least of which is his landlady Maggie O'Connell, is the central concern of the show. Their intriguing approach-avoidance relationship turned into a grating shouting match as the show developed last year. It picks up like that in the first half of tonight's program before softening midway through. Unfortunately, this week's approach is next week's avoidance.

What's most becoming about the program is its eccentric sense of community. If Anne Tyler ("Accidental Tourist") had written...
"Newhart" and set it in Alaska, this might be what she'd have come up with.

Except that it doesn't have Tyler's sure hand. The eccentricity is often too forced; people act much smarter or much dumber than they actually are, enough so that the producers are constantly in danger of breaking the spell, the surrender of disbelief so necessary to make a show like this work.

But when the writing does work, it works like a charm, as when Shelly forces the disc jockey to hear her confession even though he's not a Catholic and his claim as a clergyman is tangential. Is it OK to give her a Buddhist chant instead of Hail Marys? "That's cool."

This show is cool. It's good to have it back. * *

* 1/2 Shannon's Deal 10 p.m. Tuesdays, Channel 4

But this is the coolest show on TV. This very un-lawyerlike lawyer series created by John Sayles and Stan Rogow is the best and it only gets better with increased viewing. We can't discuss tomorrow night's program, which wasn't available for review, but based on the preview from two weeks ago and the two-hour special next week, it would be a tragedy if this show doesn't make it.

Everything about "Shannon's Deal" is impeccable. The acting -- Jamey Sheridan, Elizabeth Pena, Richard Edson and next week, B.D Wong. The music -- next week's score is by Wynton Marsalis, Diane Schuur and Giacomo Puccini. The writing and directing -- the series has gone out of its way to get feature-film qualities into the program and next week Tom Rickman ("Coal Miner's Daughter") shines as both producer and director.

In this series, too, the accent is on eccentricity, but it's a fuller-blooded eccentricity than either "Northern Exposure" or "Twin Peaks." Edson's philosophical bone-breaking debt-collector, Wilmer, shouldn't work, but he's terrific. As when he complains that his mob boss is having emotional problems:

Shannon: "Joey Testa's having a midlife crisis?"

Wilmer: "Don't dismiss his pain with a catchphrase, Shannon. This is serious. It's also made me question what I am doing on this earth. How come I don't break your arm when you don't pay me?" Damon Runyon meets Elmore Leonard, David Mamet and John Sayles. "Shannon's Deal" goes from comedy to drama, darkness to light and melodrama to drama with the adroitness that is impossible to find outside of this show and "L.A. Law." * * * 1/2 L.A. Law 10 p.m. Thursdays, Ch. 4 * Equal Justice 10 p.m. Wednesdays, Ch. 5

It is mind-boggling to hear these two programs mentioned in the same breath. One of the main criteria for judging a program's worth is its complexity and "Equal Justice" has the complexity of a paper clip.

If you were to teach a course in what separates a program of substance from one without it, all you'd have to do is tape this Wednesday's "Equal Justice" -- when an Al Sharpton character foments community hatred of a Korean grocer -- and compare it to Thursday's "L.A. Law" repeat -- when another Sharpton character, played by Paul Winfield, foments outrage against a police officer accused of killing a black kid. In "Equal Justice," Sharpton is nothing more than a hollow, tabloid caricature. In "L.A. Law" he's a multisided character with depth and context. "L.A. Law" earns its accolades with good writing; "Equal Justice" gets its with attitude.

1/2 * thirtysomething 10 p.m. Tuesdays, Channel 5

It would be easy to say that some programs just don't get you on their wavelength. Or that you just can't dance to their rhythm, and good luck to those who can. But that would be a critical copout. Not to mention that it isn't any fun.

This is a program with neither wit nor charm and all the allusions to "Henry V" and "Three Sisters" can't change that. In next week's program it reduces the horror over testing HIV-positive to the level of yuppie angst. (Ellyn gets married tomorrow night. Fortunately that episode wasn't available for preview.)

Gary, who doesn't have the decency to stay dead, is back to haunt Michael into doing the right thing. Or is it into doing something, anything, besides whining about how everybody is expecting him to do the right thing? He ultimately does do right, of course, by his two friends, both dead and alive, but not before we're subjected to the usual pretentious dialogue:

"This woman, very big teeth, asked me if I had a boarding pass, which struck me as this very existential question." The only existential thing about this program is that you feel like a character in Sartre's "No Exit" while you're watching it.

** TV PREVIEW, 'EXPOSURE'S' TASTY ENCORE

Date: April 8, 1991
Publication: The Washington Post
Author: Tom Shales

Joel Fleischman is a frozen fishstick out of water, a young doctor abruptly uprooted from his native Queens to the tiny frigid town of Cicely, Alaska, and not liking it one bit. Well, maybe one bit. Since "Northern Exposure" got its first exposure on CBS last summer, Fleischman has warmed slightly to his new surroundings.

Still, a funny friction remains, or else there wouldn't be a series. Tonight at 10 on Channel 9, "Northern Exposure" returns for another test run, hoping to find an audience. As created and produced by Joshua Brand and John Falsey, "Northern Exposure" is one of network television's tastier frosty delights.

Rob Morrow, who plays Fleischman, has fortunately tempered his whinness, although the plot tonight gives him plenty of reason to whine. Eight months into his stay in Cicely, the doc gets a "Dear Joel" letter from la belle Elaine, his girlfriend back home, and just as he was about to return for a two-week visit. After 12 years of loyal companionship, she has found someone else - someone "very gentle, very Gentile," she tells Joel in the note.

As characters in hour-long TV shows often do, Joel takes refuge in annoying fantasy sequences, at one point conversing with himself as a boy on the screen of the local theater. Finally, thanks to meddlesome interference by well-meaning vocal locals, Joel approaches a heightened state of, well, embittered resignation, which is as close as one can get to peace under the circumstances.

In a recent cover story, Time magazine said America yearns for a return to "The Simple
Life. CBS seems to be ahead of the other networks in exploiting that, first with the bucolic "Evening Shade" and now with "Northern Exposure." At times, the show and its characters become self-consciously quaint and cutesy, but for the most part, this is one of those lighter-than-air vehicles that sails blissfully over the treetops.

The chief subplot tonight involves another stranger in the midst of Cicely, this one from the skies: satellite television. Tavern owner Holling Vincour (John Cullum) buys his almost-wife Shelly Tambo (Cynthia Geary) a backyard dish so that she can access 200 channels of painstakingly crafted shrieking banalities. In no time, Shelly has become helplessly transfixed, dialing up "Magnum, P.I." in Japanese, insipid "Little Lulu" cartoons and a daily Puerto Rican soap opera. She appears to ignore the French thriller "Diabolique," but becomes a slave to the home shopping networks, and even stoops to donning Vanna-like shrink-wraps when watching "Wheel of Fortune."

She doesn't get a headache any more. She gets a "full-grown, adult-size bangaroo."

Obviously, both Shelly and Joel need help, and the point is that in an idyllic small town like Cicely, they get it, though not necessarily the old-fashioned way.

Also notable in the cast are Janine Turner, fresh and frank as Maggie O'Connell, and Darren E. Burrows as the mercurial and laconic Ed.

Former fans of "Twin Peaks" who feel that show has become too ridiculous to bear may find the snowy terrain of "Northern Exposure" a pleasing substitute. The series seems to have struck a happy balance: just ridiculous enough.

Monday, April 08, 1991 2-01
Goodbye to All That 77401 9
Monday, April 15, 1991 2-02
The Big Kiss 77402 10

NORTHERN EXPOSURE WARMS HIS BONES

Date: April 20, 1991
Publication: TV Guide (Vol 39 No. 16 Issue #1966)
Author: Marvin Kitman

I try not to get emotionally involved with new quality series, especially a summer show. My heart has been broken too many times. Still, I fell hopelessly in love with Northern Exposure last summer.

NoExp, as we lovers called it, was too good to be true. It was an hour-long dramcom about a young (27) doctor who, to pay off his debt to the state of Alaska for funding his medical education, goes to Cicely, a mini-opolis of 813 residents, not counting the mosquitoes and moose. The poor wretch, Dr. Joel Fleischman, played by Rob Morrow, is obnoxious. What do you expect? He's from New York.

But something started to happen to Dr. Fleischman in last summer's eight episodes. He was humbled by his surroundings. The nobility and integrity of the small town frustrated him. Ultimately, reluctantly, he changed. It was like watching a picture developing in the darkroom.

Rob Morrow is bemused by signs of the times.

There was remarkable chemistry between the doc and his landlady and town pilot, Maggie O'Connell, played by Janine Turner (previously seen in "Steel Magnolias" and General Hospital). She can fly me to the moon anytime.
I also liked the very unusual people in the town. Marilyn, the nurse played by Native American Elaine Miles, is not awed by the doctor. She gives him no back talk, just does her job. What does the doctor know anyway? She wears him down with that smile.

I loved Ed (Darren E Burrows), self-appointed, teenage assistant to Dr. Fleischman, who someday will be the Woody Allen of Cicely. And Chris Stevens (John Corbett) hippoc dropout and host of "Chris in the Morning," the No. 1 radio show in Arrowhead County. It's fun to watch Chris the intellectual quoting Karl Jung and giving the traffic report, which in downtown Cicely some days seems to consist of one moose.

Miraculously NoExp managed to survive all the excitement of last fall's new programming. It returned to the CBS schedule on April 8 with eight new episodes (Mondays at 10 pm, ET). And Dr. Fleischman is (what else?) miserable.

His fiancée, Elaine, has jilted him - by mail. In the premiere, we learned she ran off and married an ex-judge. The town was depressed. Fortunately Maggie is in the wings, waiting to keep Joel warm.

I'm trying not to get too attached, as I say, because it can't possibly last. But its great having NoExp back taking some of the big chill out of the traditional spring TV deep freeze. It may not be exactly "Nanook of the North." But it's the kind of program that fits the image CBS had in the old days as the Tiffany Network.

**Review/Television; As Networks Go Rural, CBS Goes a Bit Further**

**Date:** April 22, 1991  
**Publication:** New York Times  
**Author:** John J. O’Connor

Television entertainment these days is going out of town, quite literally. Urban America on prime time's plethora of law-enforcement shows is infested with crime and social problems. Suburbia isn't much better. Television does, in its way, reflect reality. Now, more and more, weekly series are fleeing to out-of-the-way towns and villages. The farther away from a big city, it seems, the better.

NBC's "Down Home" (Saturdays at 8:30 P.M.), for instance, takes place down South in a Gulf Coast hamlet. And CBS's "Evening Shade" (Mondays at 8) gets its title from the name of the real Midwestern town that is its setting. And then, also on CBS (Mondays at 10), there is "Northern Exposure," taking us all the way to Cicely, Alaska, population somewhere between 500 and 850, depending on which census you want to believe.

Created by the outstanding team of Joshua Brand and John Falsey ("St. Elsewhere," "A Year in the Life"), "Northern Exposure" had a promising trial run of eight weeks last summer. Back in circulation, it is continuing to prove irresistibly original, offbeat and disarming, at times suggesting a sort of "Twin Peaks" without the condescending perversity. Actually, the series is made not in Alaska but in Pacific Northwest "Twin Peaks" territory -- in this case, not too far from Seattle.

The show's premise derives from the old setup of a big-city rube learning a thing or two from country cousins. Joel Fleischman (Rob Morrow), a graduate of Columbia University Medical School, has had his education financed by the State of Alaska. In return, he must spend four years in remote Cicely as the area's only physician. Joel is the kind of person invariably described as an inveterate New Yorker. He has refined whining into a minor art form. Fortunately, the locals couldn't care less, just as long as he tends to their aches and pains. Then, for the most part, they just walk off with the show.

The cast of rigorously independent characters includes Maurice (Barry Corbin), a former astronaut bent on turning Cicely into the Alaskan Riviera; Holling (John Cullum), a 63-year-old naturalist who owns the local tavern and is having an affair with 18-year-old Shelly (Cynthia Geary), a former Miss Northwest Passage; Maggie (Janine Turner), who has left the comforts of Grosse Pointe, Mich., to express herself forcefully as an independent aircraft pilot; Chris (John Corbett), the radio station's disk jockey, who is free to play anything from Motley Crue to Beethoven, while quoting everybody from Walt Whitman to Carl Jung ("Embrace your grief, for there your soul will grow"); and young Ed (Darren E Burrows), a scrappy, solemn American Indian whose considerable wisdom seems to have been gleaned from old movies and television shows.

Each week, after a moose meanders down Cicely's main street during the opening credits, this oddly lovable collection of characters wanders into improbable but ultimately believable situations. One recent episode found Joel receiving a letter from his New York girlfriend, who, after observing that her mom's pot roast was the equivalent of "food you can floss with," announced she was running off to Kentucky to marry a much older man. The news, of course, spread quickly through town, and the locals immediately decided to see Joel through his crisis. Somehow, Ed made his point cogently by recalling Yves Montand in a scene from "The Wages of Fear." At fade-out, Billie Holiday could be heard singing "Blue Moon." The whole thing did, believe it or not, make perfect sense.

In the same episode, Holling lived to regret getting a giant satellite television dish to keep Shelly amused with 200 channels from throughout the world. Shelly, however, promptly became obsessed, ("Wow, this is totally beyond amusing"), glued to everything from Puerto Rican novelas and the Japanese national anthem to "Fawlty Towers" and "Shogun." The inevitable process of withdrawal turned out to be complicated, complete with Shelly going to Chris, a mail-order minister on the side, to hear her "confession." Tonight, Holling, ever eager to please his beloved, considers circumcision after a comment from Shelly. Obviously, the show is determined to be perfectly in line with the current entertainment buzz word: quirky.

"Northern Exposure" is at its best, though, when doing subtle twists and turns. After watching Spencer Tracy in "Boys Town," Ed last week set out to discover the identity of his own parents, helped by a 200-year-old spirit named One Who Waits (Floyd Red Crow Westerman). At the same time, Chris lost his voice after looking at a beautiful woman. Through Ed, the otherwise invisible One Who Waits had some advice for Chris: "Find the most beautiful girl in town and sleep with her." She could only be Maggie, who seemed more than agreeable after running up against Joel's jealousy and disapproval. Back on the air, Chris offered a quotation from Voltaire and proceeded to play Nat (King) Cole's version of "When I Grow Too Old to Dream." Connections were made nicely.
Tonight’s episode ends with the funeral of a stranger found dead in Joel’s waiting room. The town comes to identify closely with the man who was carrying only Juicy Fruit gum and a nail clipper. The Indians gathered around the funeral pyre offer an ancient chant. Chris says some words (“Sometimes I have trouble following his train of thought,” grouses Maurice). And Maggie recites the Shakespeare sonnet that begins “Let me not to the marriage of true minds admit impediments” (the impressed Shelly whispers, “Boy, she sure can write”). Almost surreptitiously, the scene is deeply affecting.

Move to Alaska? Probably not quite yet. Watch "Northern Exposure"? By all means.


Monday, April 22, 1991 2-03
All is Vanity 77404 11
Monday, April 29, 1991 2-04
What I Did For Love 77403 12

CRITIC’S NOTEBOOK;
NETWORKS MAY REVERT TO CLICHÉS, AFTER ALL

Date: May 2, 1991
Publication: New York Times
Author: John J. O’Connor

The 1990-91 television season is officially over, and the final half, the so-called second season, just couldn’t whip up the breakaway hits desperately needed by the industry.

Hard fact: The combined prime-time audience share of the networks this past season dropped to 62.4 percent from nearly 66 percent last year. If a certain degree of confusion and trepidation can be sensed in the overall schedule, it is quite understandable.

Clearly in a tizzy, network television has for several months been rushing off in haphazard directions. On ABC, “My Life and Times” offers a retired hero living in the year 2035, while the animatronic creatures on "Dinosaurs" do their cavorting in 60,000,003 B.C. CBS’s "Northern Exposure" makes weekly trips to what is supposed to be Alaska but is actually a Pacific Northwest site just outside Seattle. And NBC’s "Dark Shadows" conjures up the coast of New England for a remake of a cult soap opera that was popular a couple of decades ago.

On one level, it’s as if television entertainment is determined to escape the nation’s cities with their crime and homelessness and the familiar litany of problems. The urban landscape is increasingly being left to prime-time lawyers and cops as “normal” families -- on CBS’s "Evening Shade,” for instance, or NBC’s "Down Home” -- retreat to distant and presumably safe small towns.

On another level, the present is often avoided altogether. Pressing environmental issues are more palatable, it seems, when filtered through the concerns of a dinosaur family. Avoiding unpleasant realities becomes almost compulsive. Astute commentators have pointed out how the nation’s politicians seem much more willing and able to do something about the plight of the Kurds in Iraq than about the shame of the homeless in their own backyards. Television entertainment is, in this sense, quite accurately reflecting the broader American picture.

Barely a year has passed since one top network executive declared, with ringing certainty, that “tried and true is dead and buried.” That was on the heels of surprising "second season" successes scored by such offbeat series as ABC’s "Twin Peaks" and Fox’s "Simpsons." Innovation became the buzzword in network corridors. But as it turned out, the ratings for "Twin Peaks" soon dwindled and the series recently finished the 1990-91 season tied for No. 100 on a list of 134 shows. Meanwhile, the potential of "The Simpsons" was hobbled when a grandstanding Fox decided to go head-to-head with NBC’s "Cosby Show,” doing neither series much good. Innovation has its limits.

In fact, the tried and true did remarkably well this year. After nearly 10 years on the air, NBC’s "Cheers" climbed to the top of the ratings lists. And CBS’s surprise winning of the February sweeps period was credited in good
part to separate tribute specials for past megahits: "All in the Family," "The Mary Tyler Moore Show" and "The Ed Sullivan Show."

On the other hand, Fox Broadcasting, which fancies itself as being anything but tried and true as it pursues younger audiences, chalked up a disastrous year. Made by some of the same people who concocted "Married... With Children," the new "Top of the Heap" only underlined the network's tendency to laugh at, not with, blue-collar workers. Expanding its schedule to Thursday and Friday nights last season, the under-prepared Fox quickly ran out of adventursome steam.

Some of this year's more impressive results were registered by series that had had earlier trial runs. On CBS, "Northern Exposure" was created, on a relatively skimpy budget, by the team of Joshua Brand and John Falyse ("St. Elsewhere" and "A Year in the Life"), for a summer tryout last year that evidently exceeded network expectations. Returning several weeks ago, the series, about a New Yorker transplanted to Alaska as a rural town's only doctor, is an offbeat original.

Also coming back and delivering consistently have been ABC's "Equal Justice," a kind of "L.A. Law" showcase for the gittier world of public prosecutors; NBC's "Seinfeld," with Jerry Seinfeld capturing in a sitcom the quietly goofy spin of his stand-up comedy act; and NBC's "Shannon's Deal," a private-eye format created by John Sayles and continuing to expand with contributions from top writers and directors, not to mention the fine jazz tracks contributed by such musicians as Wynton Marsalis.

Some big names failed to impress viewers. In CBS's "Good Sports," Farrah Fawcett and Ryan O'Neal, playing squabbling sportscasters, demonstrated that being a gorgeous couple is no guarantee against being unbearably irritating. An episode with Jim Brown, the former football star, as guest star may have set a record in cringe-making moments. Mark Tinker, one of the more gifted producers in the business, returned with "WIOU," a sporadically hilarious close-up of a local television news station trying to stay solvent with any and all audience-wooing gimmicks. The show was yanked. It deserved more time to find its proper niche. But it is the very lack of such time these days that adds to network headaches.

There were, of course, the inevitable bombs. Topping the list was ABC's "Sunday Best," a melange of television trivia-bits and self-promotion, overseen by Carl Reiner, seemingly determined to transform himself into the kind of grinning host he would have skewed wickedly on the old "Your Show of Shows."

Also affording momentary pause was ABC's "Under Cover" and its husband and wife who worked for an intelligence agency bearing calculated resemblance to the Central Intelligence Agency. Taking care of the children became an understandably sticky problem. And the short-lived "Eddie Dodd," also on ABC, offered Treat Williams in a wan copy of the William M. Kunstler-like lawyer that James Woods originally played in the film "True Believer." Series inspired by movies proved decidedly uninspiring. Witness ABC's insipid "Baby Talk," cadged from "Look Who's Talking." The baby's voice, in this instance, is supplied by eternally cutesie Tony Danza.

Where does television go from here? One study of prime-time programming development, compiled by FCB/Telecom, has already dubbed 1991-92 "the season of numbing excitement," noting that breakthrough ideas are noticeably scarce. Still trying to get a handle on the increasingly active new world of channel selectors and VCR's, the commercial networks could very well end up taking refuge in, yes, the tried and true.

Photos: Network offerings during the last half of the season included ABC's "Dinosaurs," above left, and CBS's "Northern Exposure," with Rob Morrow. ABC had "Eddie Dodd," starring Treat Williams, bottom left, and "Baby Talk," with, alternately, Paul and Ryan Jessup. (ABC/NBC) (pg. C24)

"They don't even know that I'm a star," laughs Cullum, his voice still carrying the cadences of his native Tennessee. Even on the set of "Northern Exposure," (airing Mondays on CBS), which premiered last summer and has returned for a limited run, people seem unaware that they have a Broadway luminary in their midst. Cullum plays Holling Vindiceur, the 63-year-old owner of the local tavern, in the off-beat series about an urban doctor (Rob Morrow) stuck in isolated Cicely, Alaska.

"In one of the episodes (last summer), Maurice (Barry Corbin), the character who owns everything - he took over the radio station because the guy was playing stuff he didn't like," says Cullum. "So he started playing Broadway musicals. And the last one they use is the title song for 'On a Clear Day.' I read that in the script and thought, 'These guys don't realize that if they use that record, it's me.' Sure enough. They didn't know."

But Cullum is thoroughly enjoying his role. "It relates to the kind of people I know down in Tennessee," he says. "They're laconic, they're easygoing, and they're broadminded in strangely biased ways. This is a character I understand and enjoy. At least I do most of the time. Sometimes he gets out of hand."

When he does, it usually has something to do with his 19-year-old girlfriend, Shelly (Cynthia Geary). "They think of Holling as an older Gary Cooper who's living with Madonna," says Cullum. "They're getting pretty raunchy. I'm not particularly fond of those things, but we do them with as much charm as possible. And it seems to work."

Monday, May 06, 1991 2-05
Spring Break 77405 13

"EXPOSURE" TAKES LAD-BACK ROUTE

Date: May 11, 1991
Publication: Albany Times Union
Author: Nicholas K. Geranios Associated Press

Although they were shot just 50 miles apart amid the towering evergreens of Washington's Cascade Range, TV's "Northern Exposure" (Monday, 10 p.m., WRGB, Channel 6) and "Twin Peaks" (currently in limbo) offer radically different slices of life.
“Twin Peaks” presents a surreal and dark society, filled with criminals, evil spirits and flakes. “Northern Exposure,” set in a village in Alaska, is gentler, with good spirits and a more benevolent view of man’s nature.

Audiences apparently like nice over nasty, as “Northern Exposure” ranked 32nd of 134 television shows for the last season, compared with 100th for “Twin Peaks.”

“We’re real and they are not,” joked “Northern Exposure” producer Matthew Nodella. “We’re not as eclectic as ‘Twin Peaks’ is, but I hope we have the same audience, I appreciate their audience as well.”

Another difference is: “We don’t kill anybody,” said Elaine Miles, a Umatilla Indian who plays Marilyn Whirlwind on “Northern Exposure.”

“I don’t watch ‘Twin Peaks.’ I never understood it,” she said.

This former mining town of 900 people that stands in for the Alaskan village of Cicely has avoided discovery by fans. Some residents are even tired of the disruption the “Northern Exposure” crew brings to their lives.

“Once in a while they can block the whole entire street,” complained Tony Atela, an employee of a hardware store. “It’s an inconvenience.”

“Maybe we’re getting a little tired of them,” said Nicole Berner, a waitress at the Roslyn Cafe, renamed “Roslyn’s Cafe” in the show. “This used to be a quiet town.”

About the only signs of the series one recent day were locked-up buildings used as locations for the show, such as the fictional offices of Dr. Joel Fleischman (Rob Morrow) and fake radio station KBHR - the voice of the last frontier.

The series concerns a New York doctor who must pay back a medical school loan by serving a village in Alaska.

Like its own fish-out-of-water story, “Northern Exposure” is a bit out of its element during the three days each episode in the series is filmed in Roslyn. Interiors for the $1 million per show series are shot in Bellevue, east of Seattle.

Locals worry that the exposure might bring more residents, ruining the rustic setting, Berner said. Roslyn is a funky town, long on environmental activists, urban dropouts and loggers. A couple of totem poles line Pennsylvania Avenue, the main street.

There was also a period of adjustment for the Hollywood folks, who were initially thought to be snotty to the locals. Relations are much better now.

The $50-per-day jobs as extras and the new business brought to the stagnant timber and outdoor recreation town helped win the acceptance.

“They’re a pain in the butt but they do help business, I would say,” said Jim Luster, owner of the Brick Tavern that also serves as an outside location for the show.

Gaining plenty of exposure on “Northern Exposure” are Indians. Two cast members are Indians, and members of the Yakima and Umatilla tribes are regularly used as extras.

“We try to stay away from stereotypical things, like Tonto or something,” said Darren E. Burroughs, who plays the naive but creative Ed. Burroughs has to dye it darker naturally light, Burroughs has to dye it darker for his role.

The Kansas native is one-quarter Cherokee and one-quarter Apache. Because his hair is naturally light, Burroughs has to dye it darker for his role.

Miles, in her first acting job as the doctor’s assistant, said she was relieved that her character is portrayed as a normal person.

“Stereotyping is if they are making you show up in buckskins and braids,” said Miles, a member of the Cayuse and Nez Perce band of Umatillas. “We don’t always have braided hair.”

Basically, what we are is mugs,” said Bill Yallup Jr., an extra who owns a smoked salmon business. "They say, ‘background,’ and they are talking about us."

“It doesn’t require any acting classes to be Indian,” added Martina Gone, a Umatilla from Pendleton, Ore., who is also an extra.

Monday, May 13, 1991 2-06

War and Peace 77406 14

FANATICS WANT THEIR TV SHOWS

Date: May 14, 1991
Publication: Albany Times Union
Author: Steve Bornfeld Television/radio writer

I love television.

I admit it.

But do I love it enough to send doughnuts, logs and cherry pies to ABC in an effort to save "Twin Peaks" from the same fate that befell Laura Palmer?

Or dress up in a vampire suit to convince those bloodsuckers over at NBC to return "Dark Shadows" to the light of prime time?

Even if such actions weren’t considered bad form for someone who writes and reports about television, I seriously doubt it.

Just like Barnabas Collins himself, the notion of fan fanaticism rose again last week, when "Dark Shadows" devotees declared "Dark Shadows Day" across the country to coax NBC to give the “on hiatus” series another try (a planned rally in front of local affiliate WNYT never materialized).

With the announcement of fall schedules due later this month, it’s nail-biting time for serious television fans.

“The protests have been phenomenal and it’s just amazing to me, coming from England, where fans write letters but they’re not quite this supportive,” said "Dark Shadows" co-star Lysette Anthony.

Anthony plays Angelique, the seductive and spiteful witch who put the vampire whammy on Barnabas a few centuries back and gave him that toothy grin.

“There have been over 50,000 letters, which is among the highest ever for a show on NBC,” Anthony said.
However, when you consider that it takes 921,000 viewing homes to comprise one national ratings point, the letter-writing campaign isn’t quite so impressive.

More to the point - why bother anyway?

I keep thinking of an oft-repeated expression a TV writer friend of mine told me to remember whenever I got carried away with this job.

"Relax," he said, echoing Linda Ellerbee. "It's only television."

But it's obviously more than that to the aforementioned "Twin Peaks" and "Dark Shadows" groupies, and to the loyalists who labored through pen and telephone to successfully resuscitate "Cagney and Lacey," "Beauty and the Beast" and "Star Trek," among others.

You might think of them as a fringe element, but there's even an organization - Viewers For Quality Television in Fairfax, Va. - that campaigns and cajoles the networks on behalf of favorite television shows and assembles lists of shows it endorses. VQT even puts out newsletters and holds conventions.

The issue goes to the heart of television's positive and negative effects. Television can be justifiably proud of the interest and loyalty some of its better programs inspire.

Just like a favorite novelist, filmmaker, musician or playwright, one television show can become an oasis, an hour or half-hour of pure joy that carries you away and rejuvenates you.

My current pick in that category is CBS' delightful "Northern Exposure." I certainly hope the network gives it the pickup it deserves. But if it doesn't, you won't catch me mailing frozen snowballs and moose antlers to CBS honcho Jeff Sagansky.

It's only television.

Fans getting that carried away with a television show scare me. They reveal the medium's addictive side and its disturbing knack for hijacking chunks of our attention that are disproportionate to the rest of our lives.

Where are the priorities of protesting fans and why are fictional television shows at the top of their list? Wouldn't their time and energy be better spent prodding our state legislators to pass a budget? Or volunteering for a charity? Or getting involved in any number of activities with real-life implications?

Also keep in mind the overwhelming futility of these save-a-show efforts. Yes, they have occasionally worked in the past, but the winning percentage is minuscule, and the victories, like everything in television, are very temporary.

Television is a business that lives and dies by the ratings, which is rarely challenged by a small band of zealots. It's a David-vs.-Goliath battle in which David nearly always gets slaughtered.

Nonetheless, I suspect that this fanaticism will grow louder and stronger as the fall contenders are announced and personal favorites are banished.

I do love television, but I always remember that it's only television.

TOWN ISN'T SAME AFTER 'NORTHERN EXPOSURE'

Date: May 14, 1991
Publication: Chicago Sun-Times
Author: Nicholas K. Geranios

ROSLYN, Wash. Although they were shot just 50 miles apart amid the towering evergreens of Washington's Cascade Range, TV's "Northern Exposure" and "Twin Peaks" offer radically different slices of life.

"Twin Peaks" presents a surreal and dark society, filled with criminals, evil spirits and flakes. "Northern Exposure," a CBS Monday night series set in a village in Alaska, is gentler, with good spirits and a more benevolent view of man's nature.

In former mining town of 900 people that stands in for the Alaskan village of Cicely, some residents are even tired of the disruption the "Northern Exposure" crew brings to their lives.

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Locals worry that the exposure might bring more residents, ruining the rustic setting. Roslyn is a funky town, long on environmental activists, urban dropouts and loggers. A couple of totem poles line Pennsylvania Avenue, the main street. There was also a period of adjustment for the Hollywood folks, who were initially thought to be snotty to the locals. Relations are much better now.

The $50 per day jobs as extras and the new business brought to the stagnant timber and outdoor recreation town helped win the acceptance.

"They're a pain in the butt but they do help business, I would say," said Jim Luster, owner of The Brick Tavern that also serves as an outside location for the show.

The Brick, built in 1889, describes itself as the state's oldest continuously operating saloon.

"Here it is a movie star," Luster said, relishing the millions of potential customers who see his place on television.

Also gaining plenty of exposure on "Northern Exposure" are Indians. Two cast members are Indians, and members of the Yakima and Umatilla tribes are regularly used as extras.

"We try to stay away from stereotypical things, like Tonto or something," said Darren E. Burroughs, who plays the naive but creative Ed.

"I like the way it was written, and it wasn't with a bad accent or stupid or anything like that," said Burroughs, who off-screen has the same laid-back style as his character.
WHAT IS "NORTHERN EXPOSURE" LIKE? FUNNY? QUIRKY? OR JUST WEIRD?

Date: May 19, 1991
Publication: The Washington Post
Author: Michael E. Hill

It's funny, but it isn't your average sitcom. It can be poignant, but don't mistake it for one of TV's hour-long dramas. And yes, it is strange, reminiscent in some ways of "Twin Peaks," but surely less obscure.

And whatever else it is, CBS's "Northern Exposure" is a show that has had more than its share of ups and downs in its quest for exposure on the network.

For the past month or so it has occupied one of the best timeslots CBS has to offer - 10 p.m. Mondays - and as that run was winding down, the show's hardy band of viewers awaited word on whether their show would return in the fall. There were positive signs to point to.

First, and probably most important, "Northern Exposure" has been holding on to much of the audience it inherits from two of CBS's biggest hits, "Murphy Brown" and "Designing Women."

"The first three weeks of the current run, not only were we ecstatic about the ratings, but CBS was as well," said John Falsey, one of the show's two executive producers. "We held 79 percent of the audience the first week, then 84 percent and 86 percent." Then, as expected, "Exposure" got derailed along with much of CBS's Monday night schedule when part two of NBC's "Switched at Birth" was aired. "It's interesting," said Falsey, "how network researchers know beforehand, like presidential pollsters, how you're going to do. They told Jimmy Carter before the election that it was over. They told us weeks before that NBC would come at CBS's Monday night lineup very hard. When I heard the title 'Switched at Birth,' I said forget it."

That show took away much of "Exposure's" key audience - women on the young side of 50. "They went en masse to that show," said Falsey. "If I were a woman, I would too."

But he would also come back. And probably much of the rest of the audience will too, drawn by an attractive ensemble cast, an unusual setting, an engaging, quirky storyline, delightful theme music and, of course, Morty.

Rob Morrow, much of whose work has been on the stage, plays Dr. Joel Fleischman, a transplanted New York doctor, sentenced to serve a four-year term of medical practice in far-off fictitious Cicely, Alaska, in return for the state's paying his way through medical school.

"It's definitely a fish-out-of-water story," said Falsey, who's fellow executive producer is Joshua Brand. "The idea of urban versus rural is where it started. Then we began to hone it and get more specific. What's the most contrast we can get between urban and rural? New York City is the most urban, the most nonurban area in the country is Alaska."

They had read of a similar situation in which residents in a part of Maine that needed a doctor raised tax money to put a fellow through school with the stipulation that he serve them for five years after graduation. "It validated our idea," said Falsey.

The contrast theme continues in the relationship between Dr. Fleischman and Maggie O'Connell, a pilot and the doctor's landlord. Janine Turner plays Maggie, possibly TV's most attractive tomboy ever, a woman who wonders why Fleischman is always whining and why all her boyfriends keep dying.

Playing the ruggedly independent Maggie has had an impact on Turner. "She's strong and knows what she wants," said Turner. "She's not a typical TV character. She's bringing the athlete out in me."

Turner recalled locking herself out of her New York apartment and asking the doorman for help. When he declined to jimmy the door for her, she took out a credit card and did it herself. "I thought, Maggie could do it." She's also riding horses, and playing softball.

While awaiting word on the future of the series, Turner was taking it easy with her family in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, where she was raised. A Texas accent she hides on the "Northern Exposure" poured through the phone. Her parents were already noticing changes in their daughter who they felt had become fairly urbanized. "I've already bought a cowboy hat," said Turner. "If we're picked up, I'm going to get a horse and a pickup truck."

Barry Corbett already has a horse. He keeps it in California's Simi Valley and rides when he can. And he accommodates his city-loving family - wife and two sons - with a place in Los Angeles.

Corbin, whose face is the most familiar on in the "Northern Exposure" cast, plays Maurice Minnifield, former astronaut and Cicely's patriarch. "I wanted to do the pilot for the series because I didn't know where the part was going to go," said Corbin. "Usually you read a script and you know what the part's going to be like from week to week. With this one, they haven't let me down."

There have been a couple of episodes, for instance, in which Maurice's sex life gets very active. "I was a little surprised," said Corbin. "It was interesting to play for me and I hope for the audience. My original reading of the character was that he was a repressed man. I was surprised that he was as forthcoming as he is."

In the episode scheduled to air this week, Maurice faces another kind of sexual challenge when he has to deal with two gay men - who suspect that he's gay too. "It was an interesting acting problem," said Corbin, "to play this fear, this concern that Maurice has without making him a homophobic bigot. You don't want to do that. Once you cross that line, you've crossed the line."

Falsey and Brand, whose past collaborations include "St. Elsewhere" and "A Year in the Life," have indeed done a laudable job of keeping their characters diverse, strange, but always likable.

John Corbett plays Chris Stevens, the town disc jockey, given to quoting Walt Whitman and providing a running commentary for the show.

John Cullum is Holling Vincoeur, a 62-year-old naturalist and adventurer who has given up big-game hunting. "He's our Gary Cooper type. He saw things through the eyes of the elk once," said Falsey, "and put his rifle down."

Holling's love interest is Shelly Tambo, age 18, former Miss Northwest Passage. She's played
by Cynthia Geary. Their relationship has been a source of some of the show’s most sensitive material, as when she glanced at him in bed and noted that he wasn’t circumcised. There was a bit of advertiser-executive stir over that episode, Falsey understands, but "CBS went to the mat for us, they backed us." This week’s episode has a bit of language in it that is not customary prime-time network fare either. "CBS is giving us a lot of latitude," said Falsey.

Dareen E. Burrows plays Ed Chigliak, a Native American charged in the show with the job of helping Dr. Fleischman adjust to it all. He has a naive view of the world, by Fleischman standards, and it’s backed by an I.Q. of 180.

Elaine Miles, a member of the Umatilla tribe, plays the doctor’s very quiet assistant. Her observations are always short and to the point: Paying tribute to the doctor during what amounted to his funeral, she observed, "He taught me how to use the hold button."

Falsey and Brand had to sell the show to two different CBS programming regimes. It ran as a summer series last year. By August, the ratings and reviews indicated they might have something, Falsey recalled. There wasn’t time to get the show on the fall schedule, but the producers’ patience was rewarded with a timeslot behind two of CBS’s strongest shows.

The show has drawn media attention - People magazine recently featured Turner, discussing her romances with Alec Baldwin (they were engaged in 1984) and Mikhail Baryshnikov (they’re still friends).

Falsey, whose father is assistant general counsel for the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation in Washington, said he felt the show hit its stride last summer with an episode that featured a hermit and the appearance in Cicely of Chris’s half-brother - who was black. "From that point, we felt we could push the show as far as we wanted within the bounds of good taste."

The show has been compared to "Twin Peaks" - they are both offbeat and filmed in the same area (Bellevue and Roslyn in Washington state are "Exposure’s" home base). And Falsey concedes that skewed characters and a rural setting are common to both series. "But our show is far more accessible and sunny. We don’t deal with darkness in character or plot."

And "Twin Peaks" doesn’t have anything like Morty. That’s the moose who prowls the streets of Cicely/Roslyn behind the opening credits. Morty was trucked in from the eastern part of Washington, leaving behind his mate Minnie. The "Exposure" producers were cautioned that Morty would not be a happy camper.

The streets were cordoned off to contain Morty. "We were warned," said Falsey, "that he was ornery, skittish and huge. Don’t get near him, they said. By the end of the shoot, we were hugging him and rubbing his nose."

Monday, May 20, 1991 2:07
Slow Dance 77407 15

A LITTLE TOO FLAKY IN ALASKA

Date: May 20, 1991
Publication: Time
Author: Richard Zoglin; Sally B. Donnelly/Los Angeles

NORTHERN EXPOSURE; CBS; Mondays; 10 p.m. EDT

It’s a little town up north, out west. Everybody knows everybody else - and everybody else’s business. Remoteness has given the community a touch of spirituality, not to say weirdness. Several residents have a propensity for prophetic dreams, and ghosts have been known to walk down Main Street. So has the occasional moose.

Twin Peaks? No, that was last year’s quirky small town that gained a cult following. The latest destination for fans of the outlandish and the In-jokish on TV is the village of Cicely, hard by the Arctic Circle in the state of Alaska. Among the town’s 500 inhabitants is one reluctant interloper: Joel Fleischman (Rob Morrow), a New York City native who has been forced to move there as the sole doctor in order to fulfill his medical-school scholarship.

Northern Exposure, which debuted last summer and has returned to CBS for a late-season run, is this spring’s hottest conversation piece. Fans in big cities from New York to San Francisco are entranced by the backwoods whimsy; so are Sunbelt viewers like Bonnie Mintz, a court clerk from Winter Park, Fla., who started the first Northern Exposure fan club. In Alaska the series has prompted some grumpy newspaper stories (THIS MAN THINKS WE’RE A BUNCH OF PSYCHOTIC RED-NECKS, blared one headline next to a picture of star Morrow), but viewers are warming to it. Says Tom Tatka, an Anchorage attorney who moved to Alaska 20 years ago: "It gives a good sense of this isolated state." For creators Joshua Brand and John Falsey (St. Elsewhere), it’s really a state of mind. "We used Alaska more for what it represents than what it is," says Brand. "It is disconnected both physically and mentally from the lower 48, and it has an attractive mystery."

The show’s popularity is no mystery. Northern Exposure is less a realistic picture of Alaskan life than a big-city yuppie’s romantic small-town fantasy. There is no bigotry or narrow-mindedness in this small town; the residents are all closet highbrows. The townspeople read D.H. Lawrence and quote Voltaire; the local tavern plays Louis Armstrong and Mildred Bailey on the jukebox. For Joel there’s a cute, available brunette (Janine Turner) and a philosophical Native American pal (Darren E. Burrows) who is conversant with movies like The Wages of Fear. Gosh, it’s not even that cold; the characters may be bundled up in parkas, but we never see their breath. That’s what shooting near Seattle will do.

The show has some nice touches. Joel’s Jewishness is refreshingly up-front, and it’s good to see a few Native Americans on TV for a change. But this domesticated Twin Peaks is too precious by half. In one episode, Joel’s friend conjures up an Indian spirit to help locate his father; the town deejay, meanwhile, has his voice stolen by a beautiful girl. One whimsical fantasy per episode, please. The show’s patronizing attitude toward small towners is more subtle but just as annoying. One episode makes snide fun of the tavern owner’s 19-year-old girlfriend, who gets a satellite dish and becomes addicted to tacky TV fare like Wheel of Fortune and the Home Shopping Network. God forbid somebody in a remote Alaskan town should actually pass the time watching TV. What would Voltaire think?

MAYDAY! MAYDAY!

Date: May 26, 1991
Publication: The Record
Author: Virginia Mann
By the time you read this, the May sweeps will be over. As I write this, there's still a week left, but I've already compiled a long list of peaks and valleys.

The lowest point was the finale of "Dallas." The producers obviously felt they owed nothing to the faithful -- or erstwhile -- fans who tuned in May 3. CBS' nighttime soap went out not with the bang it had promised but with a whimper, from Bobby Ewing, uttering: "Oh, my God." We never found out if the bullet struck J.R., so there's room for a reunion movie, through which the cast could once again sleepwalk. (Let's call it "Night of the Living Dead Texans.")

Likewise despicable are those entertainment tie-ins that overrun local news programs. And there was one very inappropriate exchange I observed recently at the end of WNBC-TV's 6 p.m. newscast. While chatting, co-anchors Chuck Scarborough and Dawn Fratangelo promoted his new novel, "Aftershock." During this blatant plug, they noted that Scarborough's book was based on a (memorably alarmist) sweeps piece he'd done about earthquakes hitting Manhattan.

Also appalling was ABC's decision to yank the promising "My Life and Times" after two outings, then reschedule it against NBC's invincible Thursday night lineup. There's a kamikaze mission.

Among the few high points was Madonna's appearance on "Saturday Night Live's" ever-excellent "Wayne's World." I'm not a fan of Madonna, but she proved to be a good sport. Kudos, too, to the consistently fine "STAT" and "Northern Exposure," though the latter loses a few points for breaking through the fourth wall on a recent episode. The device, overused on "Moonlighting," seemed a bit cheap.

There's already too much skimping on quality during the sweeps.

A TOWN GOES ALASKAN FOR 'NORTHERN EXPOSURE'

Date: June 16, 1991
Publication: The New York Times
Author: Unknown

SEATTLE, June 16— On a chilly day a few weeks ago, Pat Reed, a clerk at Central Sundries in the tiny mountain city of Roslyn, raced to the window, adjusted her trifocals and watched a dozen or so naked men run down Main Street. They ran smack into the mayor and police chief, who were livid.

"I could have died!" bellowed Mrs. Reed, who is 59 years old. "My goodness, I've been married 40 years, and I've never seen anything like that!"

The men, cast members of the hit CBS series "Northern Exposure," were later reprimanded by the Roslyn City Council for shedding the flesh-colored Lycra briefs they had been wearing for a scene that called for a group dip in an icy river. Indecent exposure is criminal activity in the state of Washington, they were told, and the men each face possible fines of $250.

The charges are pending but they're not likely to stick. "Northern Exposure," which is set in Alaska, has brought money and fame to tiny Roslyn, population 875, tucked away in the Cascade Mountains 85 miles east of Seattle. Besides, the residents are so amused by Hollywood's idea of the Northwest that many are glued to their television sets each week to poke fun at the show.

Since CBS took a chance on "Northern Exposure" last summer for an eight-week run, the show has gained the faithful audience that eluded ABC's "Twin Peaks" (which was filmed about 45 miles from Roslyn in the Snoqualmie Valley). The network brought the show back in early April for seven more episodes in the coveted slot at 10 P.M. Monday, and by late May, the series had landed among the top 10 shows in the Nielsen ratings. It has survived as one of a dwindling number of hourlong series and will be a starter in CBS's new season. Tonight viewers who caught on to the series late can see the show's pilot episode.

Created by Joshua Brand and John Falsey ("A Year in the Life" and "St. Elsewhere"), "Northern Exposure" focuses on Dr. Joel Fleischman (Rob Morrow), a recent graduate of Columbia University Medical School, who must repay the state of Alaska for financing his education. The big catch? He must spend four years in remote Cicely as the area's only physician.

But even a New Yorker can adapt. In this country's last great frontier, there is room for free spirits, and Fleischman, the show's skeptic, gradually warms up to them. The quirky characters include Maurice Minnifield (Barry Corbin), a former astronaut; Chris Stevens (John Corbett), the local radio disk jockey, who quotes Voltaire and Walt Whitman; Shelley Tambo (Cynthia Geary), an 18-year-old former beauty queen who is in love with Holling Vincoeur (John Cullum), a 62-year-old tavern owner, and Ed Chigliak, (Darren E. Burrows), a young American Indian whose judgment is often formed by what he has seen in old movies.

Marilyn Whirlwind (Elaine Miles) is the doctor's assistant who calls her patients by numbers issued to them in the waiting room. And finally, Maggie O'Connell (Janine Turner), Fleischman's sometime love interest, is a bush pilot who escaped from well-heeled Grosse Pointe, Mich.

Northwesterners are fascinated by the show even though they are being asked, at times, to delve into a world created by writers who live in Los Angeles and New York.

Consider the episode in which Chris Stevens, the disk jockey, loses his voice after seeing "the most beautiful woman I've ever seen." An Indian spirit named One Who Waits appears and says his problem can be remedied if he can seduce an intriguing woman. Like spectators at a wrestling match, the whole town shows up to cheer Stevens on as he tries to get Maggie O'Connell into bed. In another episode, a black motorcyclist who drifts into Cicely discovers that he shares the same truck-driver father as Stevens, who is white. In the season's final episode, Maggie O'Connell, having outlived several boyfriends, loses another one after he is killed by a falling satellite. Strange?

"At least we didn't get 'Twin Peaks,' " said Cindy Schmitt, a 41-year-old native of Detroit who runs a gift shop in Roslyn. "That was too moody and sinister."

Mr. Brand said "Northern Exposure" was meant to capture the independent spirit of the rural Northwest more than to document real events or people. "This is a nonjudgmental universe," he said. "If you want to believe God is a man or woman or the world is flat, it's O.K. here. Your opinion is not formed by politically correct thinking but,
rather, independent thinking." A Town Transformed

Filming in Alaska was immediately ruled out as too costly. Producers discovered Roslyn and were quickly sold on its mountainous backdrop and its proximity to Seattle. Roslyn, about 1,000 miles from Alaska, was settled by coal miners around the turn of the century. The Brick Tavern, which doubles as Holling's Bar in the series, dates back to 1889 and is the oldest continuously operating tavern in Washington.

"We didn't want a yuppified town with a Ben & Jerry's store," Mr. Brand said.

Retired people and loggers make up most of Roslyn's population. The town's new celebrity has its drawbacks. During filming, the city's main street, Pennsylvania Avenue, is blocked to traffic as television crews bark for silence through bullhorns. The facades of some stores have been transformed into fictional businesses, which confuses customers. Totem poles have been erected throughout town, and deer antlers have been nailed to buildings to create a rustic Alaskan feel. A moose was trucked in from Washington State University in Pullman for the show's opening credits, and producers spent about $10,000 an episode to have snow hauled into town.

Still, dozens of residents have become extras in the series, from Roslyn's city clerk to vegetable farmers. And American Indians flocked to Roslyn after word spread that extras were needed from tribes in the Northwest. Extras are paid $50 a day. Two of the police department's three members were cast as state troopers.

"It's the best thing that ever happened to me," said John (Yomie) Rothlisberger, 71, an extra in the show and local farmer who raises cattle and grows hay and potatoes.

Which is not exactly the feeling Roslynites have toward Dr. Fleischman, the whiny New Yorker. Margaret Heide, Roslyn's city clerk, who has never been east of the Dakotas, said she believed the character had grown more sensitive to rural people, although he still has that New York edge.

"I don't know how New Yorkers view us in the West," she said. "They probably think we're not as civilized out here. But when I try to imagine New York, I think of delis and potholes that swallow up Volkswagens."

Photo: Rob Morrow as Dr. Joel Fleischman in "Northern Exposure." (Tony Esparza/CBS)

NORTHERN EXPOSURE" CHARMS MORROW

Date: June 23, 1991
Publication: Albany Times Union
Author: John N. Goudas King Features

"Northern Exposure" is one of those series that came on unheralded and with a cast of non-stars. Its charm was apparent right from the start when CBS introduced the show as a replacement series last year.

Many viewers liked what they saw and CBS decided to go beyond their original commitment and order eight more episodes. Reruns air Mondays at 10 p.m. on WRGB, Channel 6.

The premise of "Northern Exposure" for those who may not yet have sampled the delightful show, finds Dr. Joel Fleischman putting in four years as the town's medic in a remote Alaskan town known as Cicely. The four years are in payment for the Alaskan government's financing Fleischman's medical education at Columbia University Medical School in New York. Highly original for a TV series but not without its basis in truth: Actually, there are many such arrangements with young doctors throughout the United States.

Of course, the producers, Joshua Brand and John Falsey (who were at the helm of "St. Elsewhere"), have made the town of Cicely, Alaska, a haven for eccentrics. The supporting cast is comprised of townspeople who irritate, confound and delight Dr. Joel, not necessarily in that order.

The casting of Rob Morrow in the pivotal role of Dr. Fleischman is a stroke of good fortune on the part of the producers. Morrow has that rare quality of total believability and a charm that is never forced. You absolutely buy this rare quality of total believability and a charm that is never forced. You absolutely buy this

In a recent phone conversation, Morrow indicated that in the current batch of shows, all the characters have been fleshed out. "We definitely have made more of a move towards comedy rather than comedy-drama. It's actually a very good balance."

Morrow knew he wanted to be an actor early on and began pursuing acting jobs right out of high school. His first break came when he worked as an assistant to Michael Bennett on the Broadway show "Dreamgirls." Bennett gave Morrow a good part in an off-Broadway play titled "Third Street." This was just the first of more than 35 other plays and a whole slew of TV commercials.

"Northern Exposure" is his first starring role in a TV series and, so far, he says it's been a good experience. He likes the cast with whom he works and thinks the producers are trying for quality work within the framework of TV series. When asked how he is coping with being recognized by devotees of the show, Morrow admitted that he hasn't encountered much of it.

"I suppose it might have something to do with the way I look when I'm not playing Joel Fleischman. I almost always wear a baseball cap, seldom shave and I wear an earring."

"The location in the towns of Bellevue and Roslyn, near Seattle, Wash., really add a great deal" to the mood on the show, said Morrow.

"Actually, our fictional town of Cicely is not unlike Roslyn. There's a bar called "The Brick" which doubles for Holling's tavern in Cicely. The mining town of Roslyn was founded by two lesbians, as the story goes. It's inhabited by ex-miners and ex-hippies. The great part of working on location is that you can really get into it when you have a line about the great snow-capped mountains and you look up and there they are."

TV VIEWERS WARM UP TO "NORTHERN EXPOSURE"

Date: June 28, 1991
Publication: Albany Times Union
Author: Noel Holston Minneapolis-St. Paul Star Tribune

Geographically speaking, Cicely, the little town in the CBS series "Northern Exposure," is way up north in Alaska.
On the video-cultural map of the United States, however, it sits roughly halfway between Twin Peaks and Mayberry.

Mayberry's jittery deputy Barney Fife wouldn't be out of place in Cicely. Neither would the Log Lady of "Twin Peaks," who claimed to communicate telepathically with a chunk of wood she carried around in her arms like a baby.

"Northern Exposure" has almost as many eccentric characters as "Twin Peaks," the stylishly cryptic serial about a Washington resort town besieged by a demonic presence. Yet the flaky and free spirits of Cicely are a benign bunch, and the town is inviting, not disquieting. It's a place you would like to get away to, rather than away from.

Viewers often have been captivated by series with a warm sense of community, whether it be "Cheers," set in a bar where "everybody knows your name," or "The Waltons," with its extended mountain family. It's this quality in "Northern Exposure," more than anything else, that explains why the show has amassed a small but intensely appreciative following over the course of an eight-week trial run last summer.

CBS was so surprised it didn't quite know what to do, so "Northern Exposure" waited in the wings for almost a year before the network finally found a place for it in April (Mondays at 10 p.m. WRGB, Channel 6). It has since gained new fans with every installment and has been renewed for next season.

For those who haven't yet had the pleasure, "Northern Exposure" is a comedy-drama about a young physician, Dr. Joel Fleischman (Rob Morrow), who agreed to let the State of Alaska pay his way through Columbia University medical school in return for four years' service.

Fleischman is smugly citified as only a lifelong New Yorker can be, so he was horrified when he discovered he wouldn't be practicing at a big hospital in Anchorage but rather in Cicely, an isolated hamlet where there are no delis, no theaters and no museums - a place where plumbing can never be taken for granted and moose walk the streets.

Fleischman's new neighbors include Maurice Minnifield (Barry Corbin), a bossy, barrel-chested former astronaut who is determined to develop Cicely into the "new Alaskan Riviera"; Holling Vincour (John Cullum), a 62-year naturalist- turned-tavern keeper with an adoring 18-year-old girlfriend; Chris Stevens, the philosophical DJ on Cicely's lone radio station, and Maggie O'Connell, a charter pilot and resourceful Ms. Fixit.

Except for O'Connell (Janine Turner), an elfin beauty, Fleischman couldn't care less about getting to know the townsfolk. But, faced with the choice of staying in Cicely or paying a stiff legal penalty, he stays.

What we have here is one of the most cliched concepts in the book, the old "fish out of water" gimmick. "The Beverly Hillbillies" used it, and so does NBC's current "Fresh Prince of Bel Air," about a Philadelphia street kid living with rich, up-tight relatives in the ritziest area of Los Angeles.

"Northern Exposure" offers a slightly different twist in that the "fish," Fleischman, learns from the people in his new environment rather than the other way around.

Exposure to Cicely's unhurried pace and unpretentious people already has started to make a nicer guy of him.

Cicely is a sweet, comforting fantasy of a town - a community removed from the workaday hurly-burly, from crime and drugs, sexual abuse and racism. It's not unlike Mayberry or Hooterville of "Green Acres" in that regard.

"Northern Exposure" is at once old-fashioned and contemporary, bucolic and sophisticated. Its humor is reminiscent of the irreverent hospital series "St. Elsewhere" (with which it shares creators Josh Brand and John Falsey). It also acknowledges that the world has become, as Marshall McLuhan predicted, a "global village."

In Cicely, they may not have a quadruplex or even a shopping mall to put one in, but they have TVs and VCRs and satellite dishes and Time and People magazines. They see just about everything everybody everywhere in the United States and Canada sees.

Minnifield seems to know every Broadway show tune ever written. His assistant, a young American Indian named Ed Chiliak, waxes authoritative about Woody Allen movies and rap music, and Ed's uncle, an Indian healer, opines to Fleischman about the pressure CBS anchorman Dan Rather must be facing.

"Northern Exposure" breaks with the TV tradition of treating rural people as cultural illiterates.

The one nagging flaw of "Northern Exposure" is its writers' tendency to have characters explain at length things already evident on the screen, as if viewers wouldn't otherwise get it. The expository dialogue is patronizing, and it undercuts the conversational tone that characterizes the show.

The powers behind "Northern Exposure" should trust the viewers a little more. The show is in no danger of becoming too obscure. What viewers get from the show is beyond words anyway. It's the good feeling engendered by a community whose people make the most of simple pleasures.

**Alaska on a Shoestring: The Cold Facts About Shooting a Low-Budget Summer Series**

**Date:** July 21, 1991  
**Publication:** TV Guide  
**Author:** Susan Littwin

"Alaska is a state of mind." That notion, uttered by an elderly hermit named Soapy Sanderson on CBS's Northern Exposure, gets to the very heart of what this new Thursday night summer series is all about. As Joshua Brand, the show's co-executive producer, explains, the 49th state is the final frontier for a nation that has paved over every place else. "Alaska represents wilderness. It's the last unspoiled place, larger than life."
Cicely must make do without a lot of the creature comforts they left behind: reliable plumbing, condos and decaf espresso.

The cast and crew of Northern Exposure know something about hardships. Early network promos for the series showed a sign that read, "Cicely, Alaska, pop. 839." The number was an inside joke. It referred to the $839,000 allotted each episode, an amount about 30 percent lower than the usual budget for an hour drama in the regular season. "Production-wise, this has been a miserable experience for everyone," says Falsey "It's really hard and really tough."

A month into filming, you can feel the weariness on the set. A small airplane is rigged up on a platform behind the studio, a converted tool warehouse in a suburb of Seattle. For the past hour and a half, crew members have been fiddling with expensive giant fans, trying to get them to blow ashes back into the cockpit - an important story point. Maybe it's the weather or the fans or just the karma of the underfunded, but the ashes stubbornly keep blowing back out at the crew. They are already working 16-hour days and six-day weeks. Most of their exteriors are shot in a small town in the Cascades - an hour-and-a-half bus ride away.

The crew is inexperienced by Hollywood standards. "The analogy," says Brand, "is that you're building a house and you pick up your tools off the job site. You're a carpenter, you're an electrician, you're a plumber."

Often, the penny-pinching has backfired. Locals hired for nonspeaking roles celebrated their good luck by going off on a three-day bender. Some of the camera work in the pilot was amateurish, and some wide shots of a festival finale couldn't be used because the extras hadn't been positioned correctly. There were hasty firings and replacement hires. By the end of the third episode, the producers think the worst is over - but the ashes still won't blow into the cockpit.

And, of course, they have no big names, no stars. "We like to go with people the audience doesn't associate with a particular role," says Brand, putting a brave face on a big risk and pointing out that many of the stars of St. Elsewhere started out as unknowns. "Ed Begley and Howie Mandel are people who first broke out." But he candidly admits, "There are also budgetary reasons for [the casting]."

Meanwhile, the young new faces huddle in their tiny half-trailer dressing rooms. In a rare quiet moment, leading man Rob Morrow, who plays Dr. Joel Fleischman, twangs out sad songs on a guitar. He isn't very good, but it soothes him after long workdays. Most of his experience has been on stage - except for a role in the short-lived Tattinger's - but the producers say, with an audible sigh of relief, that they are amazed at his rapid adjustment to TV.

They are more worried about the emotional intensity of Morrow's costar, Janine Turner, who plays Maggie O'Connell, Joel's landlady and the owner and pilot of the town's air-taxi service. Heart-stoppingly pretty, Turner began her career as a model and went on to stints on Dallas and General Hospital. At some point, she soured on being a Hollywood "face" and went to New York to become a serious actress.

This is, of course, a mythic Alaska. In fact, the show's creators have yet to set foot in the real state - their series is shot in Washington - but they have read two authoritative books about their subject: Joe McGinnis's Going to Extremes and John McPhee's Coming into the Country. They also dispatched a staffer on a research expedition. But the geographical and sociological accuracy of the series seems to matter less to them than the fantasy of freedom that Alaska represents. As Brand explains: "Alaska collects everything that's loose in the world. Anyone who wants to be different, to change who they are, can go to Alaska and become who they want to become." In exchange, however, newcomers must make do without a lot of the creature comforts they left behind.
She now works with all the earnest gravity of the convert. An elderly friend dies in this episode, so Turner dredges up all the emotions she felt at her own grandfather's death. At the end, she doesn't know what to do with these intense feelings because "Maggie doesn't wear her heart on her sleeve as much as I do. So sometimes after a scene I cry real tears that Maggie wouldn't have. Josh [Brand] will say, 'Are you okay?'"

But eccentricity and quirky creativity may befit a low-budget show about offbeat characters in a mythic place. Bored by the Long Day of the Ashes, Morrow tires of his guitar and puts a record on. Turner comes over, and the two of them dance and giggle in his trailer. Other members of the cast drop by. The actors in this series hang around even when they aren't working. Maybe it's the isolation of being away from home. Maybe it helps with the next scene. And maybe this is a show that just collects everything loose in the world and lets it become what it wants to become.

The show's producers have a reputation for risky, unconventional television. And Northern Exposure lives up to it. The scripts are imaginative, full of surprises and half-turns. One has the quality of a fairy tale, another sparring humor of Moonlighting. And despite the hardships and frugality – or perhaps because of them – the production is refreshingly unslick, understated. For those who have yet to discover this series, which premiered July 12, don't expect belly laughs or dramatic blows to the solar plexus. Northern Exposure flutters, tickles, like a child's hand. Or maybe a cool breeze on a summer night.

**TOTAL EXPOSURE**

From Entertainment Weekly, July 26, 1991
by Mark Harris & Kelli Pryor
Photographs by Primoz

**Behind the scenes with the cast of TV's hottest, coolest show JANINE TURNER stars as Alaskan bush pilot Maggie O'Connell**

TV's most enchanting show is also its most surprising hit. The cast and creators of "Northern Exposure" heard the call of the wild -- and grinned. A report from the set.


In the old coal-mining hamlet of Roslyn, Wash. (population 869), a TV crew is creating springtime: One guy is spray-painting a pine tree a more youthful green, the prop assistants are bringing in potted plants, and an animal handler is wrangling a skittish squirrel onto a stump to eat a scenically placed nut. The producers of CBS’ year-old series Northern Exposure scouted more than five states and Canada in search of a town to stand in for fictional Cicely, Alaska. Finally they settled on Roslyn and rolled in to capture its natural beauty -- and to touch it up just a bit.

If you happen into the Roslyn Cafe (famous from the show's credits) when a few locals are warming their hands around mugs of coffee, the cook might tell about the time he woke up in the still-murky morning and heard a voice calling, "Here, boy. Here, boy." When he looked out the window, he saw the Exposure crew cajoiling an impassive moose into taking a stroll on camera. Since last summer, Roslyn's citizens have learned to expect anything. But they haven't spotted anything stranger than what viewers see on Monday nights.
Since it turned up with little fanfare as a 1990 summer replacement, Exposure has explored a terrain like no other on television—somewhere between sitcom and drama, fact and fable, a dramatic crossroads where medicine meets magic and where a single story can teeter teasingly between tall tale and outright fantasy. It's a complicated balance, but creators Joshua Brand and John Falsey have kept the show's tone precisely calibrated.

Now, at a time when style setters from thirtysomething to Twin Peaks have been canceled and the hour-long quality drama is an endangered species, Exposure is, amazingly, flourishing. After modest success last summer, followed by a six-month absence, the show returned this spring and the audience grew to match its reputation. The season finale reached Nielsen's top 10, and this summer, as more viewers discover the show before new episodes air in September, Northern Exposure has become the season's least likely and most delightful new hit.

The premise sounds TV-traditional: A young doctor, Joel Fleischman (Rob Morrow), who thrives on the cranky urbanneurotic hyperactivity of New York City, is transplanted to a tiny Alaskan village to work off his medical-school scholarship. He's schooled in science; the locals are steeped in folklore and custom. He cures with Medicare; they prefer mud packs. But thousands of miles away from Hollywood's assembly line, Brand, Falsey, and their talented ensemble of writers and actors work wonders, transforming real-life Roslyn into a town that's far too sophisticated for TV's standard culture-clash stereotypes. Cicely's locals aren't yokels—every week, their inner lives are revealed in surprising and hilarious ways.

MAGGIE O'CONNELL
Bush pilot and Dr. Fleischman's landlord; to know her is to love her (although the men who do are usually killed in freak accidents.)

"Maggie's an outdoorsy, can-do-everything, jill-of-all-trades. Yet she has all these Boyfriends who can't keep up with her, who fall off mountains. I think Maggie has a vulnerability underneath there. She is from Grosse Pointe, Mich., this really rich place. Her dad says she never used to go to a place without linen tablecloths, and she was a Little Miss Whatever. And now she's out in the boonies of Alaska fixing toilets and flying bush planes with the men. So I think there's an aspect of Maggie that she's out to prove to herself that she can do this."

Hair: Bryn E. Leech; Makeup: Joni Meers

MARILYN WHIRLWIND
Dr. Fleischman's unfappably sage receptionist of few words.

"I think Marilyn should have a boyfriend."

On the set, Northern Exposure is just as charming. Falsey and Brand, the producing-writing duo who also created the critical favorites "St. Elsewhere" and "A Year in the Life," have imported a cast and crew of 80 to the mountains of Washington to make a series about America's ultimate backwoods—Alaska. Knowing they were going to spend most of the year posted in Roslyn, the company brought the trappings of Hollywood-- overstuffed Filofaxes, red convertibles, and crew members sporting blond dreadlocks. Though there is the occasional grumble about L.A. tans lost to the mists of the Pacific Northwest, and though Morrow ached to have New York bagels overnight-mailed to him, most everyone has found something to love among Roslyn's pine trees and tin-peaked rooftops. Corbin stabilizes his horse nearby and sneaks off for some cow roping when he's not ranting as Maurice. Turner, relocated from New York, adores the mocha coffee that comes with a smile at the Roslyn Cafe, where Corbett stops in for the vegetarian burger. "When we get to Roslyn, the metabolism has to slow down a little bit," he says, as he leans back in his chair.

This spring, CBS flirted with cutting costs by moving the show to Hollywood. Everyone protested. "Those mountains, the snow when we get snow—you can't recreate that in Los Angeles," says Brand. It's clear that being in a place where Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid are reputed to have robbed the bank in 1892 lends something to the rawness of the

Cicely News & World Telegram
fictional Cicely. "Roslyn is great," Geary says. "It looks like a movie set, but it's real."

"He has a real curiosity, and I think that's part of the reason he became a doctor. It wasn't so much to fulfill the status quo and the parents. He was interested in how human beings work. I think that is the conflict in himself—his kind of social, materialistic background is in conflict with that curiosity. And that's where he sort of gets on people's nerves. I hope that for every two or three scenes where he may be a little acrimonious or whatever, he redeems himself."

Like Morty the Moose, the knobby-kneed mascot thatambles around Roslyn in Exposure's credits, the show itself wandered onto the schedule unassumingly. Brand and Falsey had been toying with ideas for a show about a displaced urbanite practicing medicine in a small town. "Jeff Sagansky [CBS entertainment president] said he loved it," recalls Brand, "and that CBS would do it as a summer replacement."

But if CBS expected a standard medical drama, Brand and Falsey had a more eccentric creative agenda. "From St. Elsewhere, we were kind of doctored out," says Brand. "Both John and I could hang up a shingle at this point." The producers instead looked to European films for inspiration, and saw, in Bill Forsyth's "Local Hero" and Lasse Hallstrom's "My Life as a Dog," in Giuseppe Tornatore's "Cinema Paradiso" and Federico Fellini's "Amarcord," shades of the series they wanted. "America," says Brand, "tends not to make those gentle, warm, offbeat character comedies. We always say that we wanted to create Alaska as a state of mind, a place where people could recreate themselves in a nonjudgmental universe."

"For the first time, we heard 400 people responding. It was incredibly refreshing."

"Ed has an IQ of 180. Some people think he's dumb, others that he's just off. I think he's just seeing things from a different perspective, living moment to moment, each day noticing the sun come up with a childlike innocence. Ed's only 17. And he doesn't drink or smoke."

CBS executives heard the buzz as well—from people on the street, from people with kids at my kids' school, from people I had dinner with," says senior vice president Peter Tortorici. The loyalty the show excites even reached into network offices. "Of course it will be back next September," said one senior CBS executive long before the series was renewed. "My God, there are people here who would start a hanging party if it weren't." When CBS, thirsting for younger viewers, brought Exposure back this spring, it became a top 10 hit among the coveted audience of 18 to 49-year-olds. In the 10 p.m. Monday time slot following Designing Women, the show is drawing its best ratings ever.

Exposure seems to have tapped into a rich vein of American longing. As Turner says: "I think we all yearn for this. We're all becoming very metropolitan and franchised ... and Alaska symbolizes something that has kept its individuality."

Certainly, something of a pioneer spirit fuels the cast and crew, who shoot for as long as 20 hours straight in rain, sleet, snow, and rainbows. Most of the actors have uprooted...

**DR. JOEL FLEISCHMAN**

New York doctor imported by the good people of Alaska, whose taxes paid his way through Columbia medical school.

**SHELLY TAMBO**

Wide-eyed and cuddly Miss Northwest Passage who inspired Holling Vincour's desire to get circumcised—or, as she put it, to exchange his turtleneck for a crewneck.

"Shelly is very energetic and off-the-wall, and things come tumbling out. She's 19 and from no family life. She moved to Alaska by herself with no college education. In a weird way, she's very innocent and Lolita-ish."

Northern Exposure's run last summer drew sturdy if not quite hit-level ratings. Nonetheless, after eight weeks, the town of Cicely vanished from the television map while Brand and Falsey spent last fall and winter trying to get CBS to bring the show's small budget up to industry standards. They finally won more money, but only after a half-year hiatus—a lifetime for a fledgling show trying to build audience loyalty.

But even during its season-long hibernation, Exposure saw its reputation grow. "When negotiations were finally completed," says Falsey, "Jeff [Sagansky] said to us, 'What you did on the first eight shows? Just do it again.'"

In March, a screening of an already-aired episode at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art attracted hundreds of viewers who laughed appreciatively at the surreal hour's revisionist take of everyone from bigfoot to Carl Jung. "It gave us a real jolt," says Falsey.

**Actor Darren E. Burrows**

**ED CHIGLIAK**

Film-obsessed teenager who plagues Dr. Joel like a guilty conscience.

"Ed has a real curiosity, and I think that's part of the reason he became a doctor. It wasn't so much to fulfill the status quo and the parents. He was interested in how human beings work. I think that is the conflict in himself—his kind of social, materialistic background is in conflict with that curiosity. And that's where he sort of gets on people's nerves. I hope that for every two or three scenes where he may be a little acrimonious or whatever, he redeems himself."

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themselves from New York or L.A. to live in Seattle and commute two-plus hours to Roslyn twice a week. Morrow has even had to endure a separation from his girlfriend, Leslie Urdang, a New York theatrical producer, that has offered eerie parallels to Joel's on-screen long-distance relationship with his fiancée, Elaine. "When I got the first script for this season," Morrow says, "I told her, 'Elaine's written off [in an episode in which she dumps Dr. Fleischman with a 'Dear Joel' letter]. She was like 'Oh, GAAAAAWD!' Not to worry: Morrow's real-life relationship is still intact.

Whatever the risks, the rewards are obvious. "Working is the great part," Turner says. "Even if I'm out here 18 hours in the freezing cold, or I have to do a real intense scene and it's exhausting, that still is the great part of it."

Settling into their newfound working world, the other actors are fond of recalling the trails that led them to Cicely. Before his stint as Chris "In the Morning" Stevens, Corbett spent six years working in a steel factory and attended junior college, where he discovered the drama department; eventually he made his way into TV commercials. Burrows, who dyed his blond hair black to play the half-Native American teen Ed, grew up in Kansas before making his bloody way through L.A. "In 'Casualties of War,' I got bamboo stakes through me. In '976-Evil,' half my face got ripped off," Burrows says. "I've been mutilated pretty bad."

Not that the physical demands of Exposure have been any less intimidating: This season, Ed lost his virginity. "It was my first love scene," Burrows says. "There are 20 people who have to be there, and I have to pretend they're not and do things you don't do when there are 20 people watching."

The actors have spurred one another on with a lot of mutual cheerleading. Geary says Cullum, who has won two Tonys (for "Shenandoah" and "On the Twentieth Century"), encourages her. Everybody hails Corbin, an ex-Marine whose credits range from "Macbeth" on stage to "The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas" on screen, as a mentor. And Morrow rescued soft-spoken Miles from a bad case of stage fright. Miles, who lives in Seattle with her parents and used to dance at powsows across the country, never pursued an acting career; she won her job when she drove her mother to the casting session for Marilyn. "I auditioned on Saturday, got called back on Sunday, auditioned again on Monday, and started working on Wednesday. I felt like Cinderella," Miles says. But on her first day before the cameras, her knees wouldn't stop shaking. Morrow, who is at 28 a veteran of 35 New York plays, took her aside, rubbed her shoulders, peppeled her up, and started teasing her that her name wasn't Indian enough. "I'm gonna call you Elaine One-Take," he told her after she breezed through her scene.

Off duty, the cast hangs out at the Brick, the bar that inspired Holling's tavern. There, they have their choice of soda water or double-proof Roslyn-brewed beer. "It's the oldest bar in Washington," effuses Geary. "There's a trough of water running under the bar, and when it used to be a men's-only bar, men would just urinate in it." Men who might be man enough for such sport are still there and ready to mix -- or mix it up -- with the actors. "You're so convincing in that show," one beer-swilling guy told Corbin genially, "that I want you to know I'd like to bust your f--in' nose." Corbin, who is as affable as his one character is irascible, escaped without harm.
Cicely created the Paris of the North."

"extraordinary lesbians [Cicely and Roslyn] who history of the town and let us meet those two rivalry. Falsey promises a played by Morrow), to renew a strange sibling dog, and for Joel's twin brother, Jules (also late boyfriend Rick to return in the body of a and skewed spiritualism: Look for Maggie's show's careful balance of character comedy are several stories that will advance say they'll make it work, and indeed, their many TV insiders are calling the dramatic Away, their new drama series about a suddenly hot Brand and Falsey will have to One possible complication is that the historically hot Brand and Falsey will have to divide their time between Exposure and I'll Fly Away, their new drama series about a Southern family during the civil light era that many TV insiders are calling the dramatic jewel of the fall schedule. But the producers say they'll make it work, and indeed, their attention to Northern Exposure seems unwavering. Already planned for next season are several stories that will advance the show's careful balance of character comedy and skewed spiritualism: Look for Maggie's late boyfriend Rick to return in the body of a dog, and for Joel's twin brother, Jules (also played by Morrow), to renew a strange sibling rivalry. Falsey promises a furthering of Joel and Maggie's almost-romance, and Brand plans "an episode that's going to reveal the history of the town and let us meet those two extraordinary lesbians [Cicely and Roslyn] who created the Paris of the North."

"Maurice is only happy on the edge of civilization-happy in space, happy in the wild. He has a Ph.D. in aerospace engineering. He's the best-traveled person in the world because he's been out of this world. He's very literal-minded, but he would love to be instinctive. That's the part that's missing. He's in anguish over the fact that it's missing."

And apparently there's little worry that sponsors will quail at the adult humor (one episode dealt gently but thoroughly with circumcision). "Shows with that quality are allowed to take greater chances," Sagansky said recently. Does that mean he'll let the writers go further? "They've gotten plenty of latitude," he answered, laughing. "They don't need any more." What may be hardest to maintain is the fragile combination of sly humor and faith in the inexplicable, the deflating: The same show that's the talk of bucolic Shropshire, 140 miles northwest of London. In ancient times, such war machines were dreaded implements of destruction, flinging huge missiles, including plague-ridden horses, over the walls of besieged castles. Only one full-sized one exists today, designed and built by Mr. Kennedy, a wealthy landowner, inventor, military historian and -- need it be said? -- full-blown eccentric.

At Acton Round Hall, Mr. Kennedy's handsome Georgian manor house here, one enters the bizarre world of a P.G. Wodehouse novel. A stuffed baboon hangs from the dining room chandelier ("Shot it in Africa. Nowhere else to put it," Mr. Kennedy explains). Lining the walls are dozens of halberds and suits of armor. A full suit of Indian elephant armor, rebuilt by Mr. Kennedy, shimmers resplendently on an elephant-size frame. In the garden outside stands a 50-foot-high Chinese pagoda.

Capping this scene, atop a hill on the other side of the 620-acre Kennedy estate, is the siege engine, punctuating the skyline like an oil derrick. Known by its 14th-century French name, trebuchet (pronounced tray-boo-shay), it's not to be confused with a catapult, a much smaller device that throws rocks with a
Mr. Kennedy, a burly, energetic 52-year-old, and Richard Barr, his 46-year-old neighbor and partner, have spent a year and $10,000 ($17,000) assembling the trebuchet. They have worked from ancient texts, some in Latin, and crude wood-block engravings of siege weaponry. The big question is why.

Mr. Kennedy looks puzzled, as if the thought hadn't occurred to him before. "Well, why not? It's bloody good fun!" he finally exclaims. When pressed, he adds that for several hundred years military technicians have been trying fruitlessly to reconstruct a working trebuchet. Cortez built one for the siege of Mexico City. On its first shot, it flung a huge boulder straight up -- and then straight down, demolishing the machine. In 1851, Napoleon III had a go at it, as an academic exercise. His trebuchet was poorly balanced and barely managed to hurl the missiles backward. "Ours works a hell of a lot better than the Frogs", which is a satisfaction," Mr. Kennedy says with relish.

How it works seems simple enough. The heart of the siege engine is a three-ton, 60-foot tapered beam made from laminated wood. It's pivoted near the heavy end, to which is attached a weight box filled with 5 ½ tons of steel bar. Two huge A-frames made from lashed-together tree trunks support a steel axle, around which the beam pivots. When the machine is at rest, the beam is vertical, slender end at the top and weight box just clearing the ground.

When launch time comes, a farm tractor cocks the trebuchet, slowing the slender end of the beam down and the weighted end up. Several dozen nervous shepherds, hearing the tractor and knowing what comes next, make a break for the far side of the pasture. A crowd of 60 friends and neighbors buzzes with anticipation as a 30-foot, steel-cable sling is attached -- one end to the slender end of the beam and the other to the projectile, in this case a grand piano (purchased by the truckload from a junk dealer).

"If you see the missile coming toward you, simply step aside," Mr. Kennedy shouts to the onlookers. Then, with a great groaning, the beam is let go. As the counterweight plummets, the piano in its sling whips through an enormous arc, up and over the top of the trebuchet and down the pasture, a flight of 125 yards. The record for pianos is 151 yards (an upright model, with less wind resistance). A 112-pound iron weight made it 235 yards.

Dead hogs go for about 175 yards, and horses 100 yards; the field is cratered with the graves of the beasts, buried by a backhoe where they landed.

Mr. Kennedy has been studying and writing about ancient engines of war since his days at Sandhurst, Britain's military academy, some 30 years ago. But what spurred him to build one was, as he puts it, "my nutter cousin" in Northumberland, who put together a pint-sized trebuchet for a county fair. The device hurled porcelain toilets soaked in gasoline and set afire. A local paper described the event under the headline "Those Magnificent Men and Their Flaming Latrines."

Building a full-sized siege engine is a more daunting task. Mr. Kennedy believes that dead horses are the key. That's because engravings usually depict the trebuchets hurling boulders, and there is no way to determine what the rocks weigh, or the counterweight necessary to fling them. But a few drawings show dead horses being loaded onto trebuchets, putrid animals being an early form of biological warfare. Since horses weigh now what they did in the 1300s, the engineering calculations followed easily.

One thing has frustrated Mr. Kennedy and his partner: They haven't found any commercial value for the trebuchet. Says a neighbor helping to carry the piano to the trebuchet, "Too bad Hew can't make the transition between building this marvelous machine and making any money out of it."

It's not for lack of trying. Last year Mr. Kennedy walked onto the English set of the Kevin Costner Robin Hood movie, volunteering his trebuchet for the scene where Robin and his sidekick are catapulted over a wall. "The directors insisted on something made out of plastic and cardboard," he recalls with distaste. "Nobody cares about correctness these days." More recently, he has been approached by an entrepreneur who wants to bus tourists up from London to see cars and pigs fly through the air. So far, that's come to naught.

Mr. Kennedy looks to the U.S. as his best chance of getting part of his investment back: A theme park could commission him to build an even bigger trebuchet that could throw U.S.-sized cars into the sky. "It's an amusement in America to smash up motor cars, isn't it?" he inquires hopefully.

Finally, there's the prospect of flinging a man into space -- a living man, that is. This isn't a new idea, Mr. Kennedy points out: Trebuchets were often used to fling ambassadors and prisoners of war back over castle walls, a sure way to demoralize the opposition.

Some English sports parachutists think they can throw a man in the air and bring him down alive. In a series of experiments on Mr. Kennedy's siege machine, they've thrown several man-size logs and two quarter-ton dead pigs into the air; one of the pigs parachuted gently back to earth, the other landed rather more forcefully.

Trouble is, an accelerometer carried inside the logs recorded a centrifugal force during the launch of as much as 20 Gs (the actual acceleration was zero to 90 miles per hour in 1.5 seconds). Scientists are divided over whether a man can stand that many Gs for more than a second or two before his blood vessels burst.

The parachutists are nonetheless enthusiastic. But Mr. Kennedy thinks the idea may only be pie in the sky. "It would be splendid to throw a bloke, really splendid," he says wistfully. "He'd float down fine. But he'd float down dead."

A NICE SURPRISE FOR 'EXPOSURE' ACTOR

Entertainment & the Arts: Wednesday, July 31, 1991
Nancy Costello
AP

Shannon Ross loved the farmer in the Birdseye broccoli commercial long before she found out he was her father.

As for actor Barry Corbin, he couldn't have been happier when he learned he had a cowgirl for a daughter in his home state of Texas.

Reality can be quirkier than a script of "Northern Exposure," the TV hit that features the 50-year-old Corbin as Maurice, a wealthy landowner in rural Alaska.

"Our case is kind of a rare one," said Corbin, a resident of Redmond. "When we talk, it's like talking to a mirror image. We are constantly reaching out and touching each other's faces. We hold hands. It's kind of disconcerting to her husband and my wife."

The actor discovered in late June he had a 26-year-old daughter when Ross, who was adopted as an infant, tracked down her
biological parents. Ross’ mother gave her baby up for adoption at San Antonio’s Methodist Mission Home in February 1965 without telling Corbin she was pregnant with his child.

Ross, a resident of Arlington, Texas, contacted her natural parents to check on possible genetic problems affecting her 18-month-old son. Ross’ mother, who asked that her name not be used, initially wouldn’t tell Ross who her real father was for fear of disrupting his life. Then she softened.

“She told me he was an actor, then she told me his name and it didn’t ring a bell,” Ross said from Arlington. “She said, ‘He’s on a TV show called ‘Northwest Territory’ - or something.’ I said, ‘Could it be ‘Northern Exposure’? ’ The CBS sitcom is one of Ross’ favorite programs. It is filmed in Roslyn, in Kittitas County, and Bellevue.

“I went through everybody on the show. I thought the doctor is too young, I thought of Holling (the bartender-mayor), but then thought, ‘No, he’s got blond hair,’ ” Ross said. “When I thought of Maurice, I felt something really strange in my stomach.”

Ross had been admiring Corbin long before she realized there was any connection.

“He’s on a broccoli commercial and everybody knew I loved that broccoli commercial,” Ross confided. “It’s about Birdseye broccoli with the dog next to him. I loved the way he talked and he seemed like a real nice guy.”

Originally from Lubbock, Texas, Corbin said he dated Ross’ mother in the spring of 1964. She phoned him in June of that year when he was playing summer stock theater in Colorado to announce she was pregnant. But a few weeks later she called back to say it was a false alarm.

Ross said her mother did not tell Corbin about the baby because he would have felt compelled to get married and possibly cut short his acting career. Ross, a graduate student who plans to get a Ph.D. in psychology, was adopted by a doctor and his wife from Arlington shortly after birth. She grew up riding and showing horses, a passion no one else in her adoptive family shared.

But Corbin, who dresses in a cowboy hat, boots, Wrangler jeans and a big, silver rodeo belt buckle, understands just how she feels. Strangers for 26 years, the father and daughter share the same favorites in country music and cowboy Western movies. Corbin borrowed Ross’ spurs on a recent visit to Texas and won first place for cutting cattle at a Fort Worth rodeo.

Relatives say the two look, walk and talk alike. When Ross learned about Corbin, she rented home videos of his movies - “Urban Cowboy,” “War Games,” “Who’s Harry Crumb?” and “Critters 2; The Main Course.” Her husband, Jim, stopped the videotape and had Ross pose nearby to observe facial similarities.

“Shannon looks so much like me, it’s spooky,” Corbin said. “It’s a very strong genetic tie.”

The discovery gives Corbin, married for 15 years, a third child along with two sons, ages 12 and 8. And it gives him fodder for his acting career. “Northern Exposure” has just begun to tape programs for its fall season.

“The script we’re doing now is a love story,” Corbin said. “When I played it, I got giddy - I wouldn’t have done that a month ago.” Shannon changes my outlook - how I act and how I write. When you find a daughter, you fall in love.”

Barry Corbin, who portrays a wealthy Alaska landowner in the quirky TV hit “Northern Exposure,” couldn’t have been happier when he learned he had a daughter in Texas.

He learned about 26-year-old Shannon Ross in late June after Ross, who was adopted as an infant, tracked down her biological parents.

“When we talk, it’s like talking to a mirror image,” said Corbin, who lives in a Seattle suburb. “We are constantly reaching out and touching each other’s faces. We hold hands. It’s kind of disconcerting to her husband and my wife.”

Ross’ mother gave up her baby for adoption at San Antonio’s Methodist Mission Home in February, 1965, without telling Corbin she was pregnant with his child.

Ross, who lives in Arlington, Texas, contacted his biological parents to check on possible genetic problems affecting her 18-month-old son. Ross’s biological mother, who asked that her name not be used, initially wouldn’t tell Ross who her real father was for fear of disrupting his life.

“When she told me he was an actor, then she told me his name and it didn’t ring a bell,” Ross said. “She said, ‘He’s on a TV show called ‘Northwest Territory’ - or something.’ I said, ‘Could it be ‘Northern Exposure’? ’”

The CBS sitcom that features a young doctor from New York City working in rural Alaska is one of Ross’ favorites. And Ross had been admiring Corbin, 50, before that.

“He’s on a broccoli commercial and everybody knew I loved that broccoli commercial,” Ross said. “It’s about Birdseye broccoli with the dog next to him. I loved the way he talked and he seemed like a real nice guy.”

Strangers for 26 years, the father and daughter share the same favorites in country music and cowboy movies.

Corbin, married for 15 years, has two sons, 12 and 8.
Q. I'd like to know about the girl who plays Clarissa on "Clarissa Explains It All." Where can I write her? - J.F. Jr., Gary.

A. Melissa Joan Hart, 15, is Clarissa. She's a veteran of stage and TV ("Saturday Night Live" and commercials). She lives and attends junior high in Sayville, N.Y., but films "Clarissa" at Nickelodeon's Florida studios. Write: Nickelodeon, 1775 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10019.

Q. Tell me about the actor who plays Ed in "Northern Exposure."

A. Darren E. Burrows is a Kansan, part Cherokee and part Apache. He started acting after working with his brother Billy Drago, who runs an actors' workshop in Los Angeles. Burrows' movie credits include "976-Evil," "Casualties of War," "Class of 1999" and "Crybaby." He's been seen on TV in "TV 101," "Hard Time on Planet Earth" and "Dragnet." He's single and lives in Bellevue, Wash.

Q. Tell me about Crystal Bernard, of "Wings." Where was she born, how did she become interested in acting, what other shows has she starred in?

A. Bernard was born in Dallas, daughter of evangelist Jerry Wayne Bernard. As youngsters, she and her sisters (Robin played Terry on "General Hospital"); Scarlet was in the feature ("Jack in the Box") song and performed with their brother. They recorded gospel songs. Later, Crystal worked in Las Vegas. She graduated from Baylor University. She was a regular in "Happy Days," "My 2 Dads" and "It's a Living," among other TV roles.

Q. A few years back, British TV aired "Reilly: Ace of Spies." Confirm that Kevin Costner played Reilly.

A. It was New Zealand actor Sam Neill who played Reilly in the British series, seen in the U.S. on PBS. Neill's also been seen on TV in "Ivanhoe," "Kane & Abel," "Amerika," "Leap of Faith" and in the features "My Brilliant Career," "The Final Conflict" and "Plenty."

Q. Settle an argument so my family can be harmonious again. My wife and son insist Alex Trebek was once married to Madonna.

A. Great kidders, your wife and son.

Q. Tell us about the actor who plays Ed in "Northern Exposure."

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whoops that, when she got her first check, it was for so much money “I could not believe it - I thought there was a typo or something.”

An expert Women's Northern Buckskin traditional dancer at powwows for her Umitilla tribe, Miles was discovered when she took her mother, Armenia, to audition for the role of receptionist Marilyn Whirlwind and “I was just sitting there waiting for my mother when they talked me into auditioning.”

The story has a happy ending: Mom wound up in "Northern Exposure," too, in a recurring role as Mrs. Anku, wife of a medicine man. "The first day on the set it was, like, ‘Gasp! I've seen that guy! He's on TV! And I've seen that other guy, he's in movies! There's the guy who played Uncle Bud in "Urban Cowboy" (Corbin)! He walked into the makeup trailer and shook my hand and I thought, ‘Oh, God, Mommy! He shook my hand!'"

“TNT’s 20/20” ranked 19th and its “Northern Exposure” tied for second with a 7.8/18.

Fox's "Totally Hidden Video" and "Comic Strip Primetime" ranked 83rd and 84th, respectively. NBC's "Where's Rodney?" came in 85th and its "Turner and Hooch" tied with Fox’s "Babes" for 86th and final place.

ABC clinches top spot again

ABC won its third consecutive week in the network Nielsen ratings contest, this time aided by Roseanne Barr and a resurrection of Elvis. A repeat of "Elvis and Me," the 1988 TV movie based on Priscilla Presley's autobiography, helped ABC finish first with an 8.8 average rating and a 17 percent audience share. CBS finished second with an 8.6/17, and NBC, usually in first place, came in third with an 8.5/17. Fox ended the week with a 6.4/13.

NBC won Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday nights; CBS, Monday and Sunday; and ABC, Tuesday and Friday.

Summer reruns were in full force during the week ending Aug. 4. Of 86 prime-time entertainment broadcasts, only 18 contained original programming.

"ABC World News Tonight With Peter Jennings" led the network news race with an 8.1/18. "CBS Evening News With Dan Rather" and "NBC Nightly News With Tom Brokaw" tied for second with a 7.8/18.

ABC's "Northern Exposure" ratings lead last week with 18.7 and 23 percent audience share. That program was the most-watched show on television during the week ending Aug. 11, pushing CBS into first place with a 9.2 average rating and an 18 percent audience share.
### TV Ratings

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**TV Guide**

### Talk About Exposure ...

**Janine Turner is the Breakout Star of an Amiable Ensemble**

**Date:** September 7, 1991  
**Publication:** TV Guide  
**Author:** Timothy Carlson

Janine Turner knew she’d made it when several guys came up to her, feigning they’d lost their voices, expecting her to kiss them. Turner’s character, Maggie, you see, kissed the town’s disc jockey and restored his voice when it was “stolen” by a beautiful woman in one episode of *Northern Exposure* this summer -- which makes about as much sense as any of the plots on the show.

“Only five percent of it seems bad,” says Turner of the exposure. “People come up because they love the show, and I have no privacy at times. But now my agent gets calls and I don’t have to audition!” Clearly delighted with her newfound fame, she lets out a whooping siren of a laugh that she must have had since she was a kid.

She has a good reason to laugh. The 28-year-old model turned actress was walking the streets of New York trying to hock an engagement ring from actor Alec Baldwin, with whom she’d broken up, to pay her rent when the audition for *Northern Exposure* came along. “[Being that broke] was weird and awful, like out of a horror story,” says Turner. After the audition, she went home and cried, convinced that she wouldn’t get the role of no-nonsense bush pilot Maggie O’Connell. When producers Joshua Brand and John False offered her the part, she cried even more. “Now that I’m getting all this attention,” she says, “I try to remain humble, because I know what it’s like to be broke and hungry.”

Always determined and independent, Turner left her Fort Worth, Texas home at 15 and joined the Wilhelmina modeling agency. Two year later she was off to Los Angeles to appear in Dallas. That part led to a string of steady, thorough undemanding, series roles, which she ultimately gave up to return to New York to study acting seriously. “I had no respect for what I was doing when I left. None,” Turner says.

That independent streak helped win her the role of Maggie. “We were looking for an attractive female lead,” says Brand. “But she also had to be credible as someone who is very self-reliant – who could succeed in Cicely, Alaska. Someone who had a natural beauty, Janine’s first concern was always to be protective of Maggie. She never wanted her to look like she had stepped out of a fashion magazine.”

**Above:** Maggie O’Connell (Janine Turner) and Dr. Fleischman (Morrow) chat -- and shiver -- over drinks.

### Cicely News & World Telegram

ABC was second at 8.9/17 and NBC was a close third with 8.8/17. Fox finished with a 6.4/12.

CBS's No. 1 finish followed three weeks of ABC wins. Before that, CBS had been on top for a month. CBS took Monday, Tuesday and Sunday nights; NBC won Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday nights; and ABC got Friday.

In the network news wars, "ABC World News Tonight With Peter Jennings" won again, this time with an 8.5/20. "CBS Evening News With Dan Rather" made its closest showing in nearly a year, finishing just two-tenths of a ratings point behind ABC with an 8.3/19. NBC's "Ferris Bueller" and "Parenthood" and Tom Brokaw were last with 7.4/17.

NBC's "Ferris Bueller" and "Parenthood" ranked 89th and 92nd, respectively, with Fox's "Totally Hidden Video" in a tie for 89th. CBS's new primetime entries, "Claws" and "Vidiots," came in 91st and 93rd.

**TV Ratings**

Following are the top 20 network prime-time shows last week, ranked according to the percentage of the nation's 93.1 million TV households that watched, as measured by the A.C. Nielsen Co. A share represents the percentage of actual sets-in-use tuned to a particular program when it aired.

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Cicely News & World Telegram 34
Turner has her fill of those glossy fashion rags during her brief time as a model. These days you can find her on the covers of magazines, as well as in the guest seat on talk shows. But it’s her acting talent and intelligence that have gotten her that exposure, not her looks. “I am aware as everyone of the enormous response to her,” says Brand. “She has a very bright future. But as her boss, I hope she keeps her head on straight.”

Brand, no doubt, would approve of how his star spent her summer hiatus. In the midst of her exploding fame, Turner decided to take some time off to visit her family in Texas. While there, she ended up buying a horse and falling in love with a cowboy. “I think this cowgirl phase is me going back and owning the good part of my childhood—the things I had to give up during the years it took me to get here,” explains Turner.

That’s what brought her, one hot summer night, to Fort Worth’s Cowtown Coliseum to attend a small team-roping event. “I was fascinated!” says Turner. “It’s a lot of fun. It’s real and it’s earthy—and it’s so romantic.” Turner, whose previous romantic attachments included not only actor Baldwin, but also Mikhail Baryshnikov, took one look at cowboy roper Jay Palmer, 37, and got roped herself. She got his phone number and asked him to help her find a horse, which he did—a beautiful, smooth-tempered palomino names, coincidentally enough, Maggie. Perfect! And off they went. “We bought a saddle, went country-and-western dancing, attended Texas Rangers baseball games, swam at my mother’s pool, rode the horses.”

She also bought a pickup truck and a horse trailer. By July, it was time to report back to Turner on a four-day, 2100-mile odyssey back to Washington state, where the series is shot.

Every night on their cross-country journey, Palmer found the palomino another corral to bed down in while he and Turner “stayed in hotels where the doorknobs didn’t work very good, so you put a chair in front of them.” Police stopped them in Wyoming to inform them their taillights were stuck on, and the officers happily accepted autographed pictures of Turner. The next night, Palmer had Maggie slated to stay at a top-ranked rodeo cowboy’s ranch—“in a pen with a steer. ‘I was very upset,’ recalls Turner. ‘I was afraid the horns would pierce her. Jay said, she’ll be fine.’ Then he pleaded with me: ‘Please, when we get around real horse people, don’t talk to your horse that way.’ Because every night I tell Maggie: ‘I loove you!’” Then she would bid Maggie adieu with a kiss.

While Palmer showed Turner the ropes on horse ownership, Turner treated her cowboy to a taste of Hollywood. He was called on stage with her on The Arsenio Hall Show. “He was a fish out of water!” says the star of this fish-out-of-water series, letting loose another startling laugh.

“Janine has said she wants to flex other [dramatic] muscles on the show,” admits Brand. “Some she will, and others she will [have to wait to] use in other jobs.”

One job that would give her all the dramatic range she dreams of is the lead in HBO’s “The Jean Seberg Story.” Although it is not a done deal yet, she is being considered for the part. Actress Seberg committed suicide in 1979, after undergoing years of FBI scrutiny for her political sympathies. “I cried when I read the script,” says Turner. “It’s a role that you relish and at the same time you go, ‘Oh God’, because it will be really emotionally draining. But that is what I love. Besides, you don’t gain anything unless you risk yourself.”

For now, she’s playing it safe in Cicely. After a long day on the set of Northern Exposure in suburban Redmond, Wash., outside Seattle, she heads over to the stables where she keeps Maggie. She smiles and sings to Maggie as she curries her golden mane. “Some people dye their horses’ manes a bright white. But I don’t want a Hollywood horse,” she says. Turner wouldn’t mind her share of Hollywood acclaim, however. As she slips the bit deftly into Maggie’s mouth—a recently learned skill—she laughs that whooping laugh of hers and says: “That’s what I won the Oscar for—putting in the bit. I want to thank my mother … my father …”

As she rides off, a small single-engine plane, much like the one Maggie flies on the show, passes overhead. “There goes Maggie, Maggie,” says Turner talking to her horse in a way that real horse people just might understand after all.

**Monday, Monday, Can’t Trust That Day**

**Date:** September 16, 1991  
**Publication:** The Boston Globe  
**Author:** Ed Siegel, Globe Staff

If you didn’t like Mondays last year, you might as well make Monday the bowling night again this year. The networks were happy with their lot, even if you weren’t, so it’s the same-ol’ this year.

Nobody was happier than CBS, whose comedy lineup from 8 to 10 gelled last season and "Northern Exposure" finally connected during the summer.

CBS on Monday night has been compared to NBC’s Thursday night lineup and to a certain extent that’s true. "Murphy Brown" is
certainly one of the best comedies on television and the show was particularly impressive last year in balancing the political and personal aspects of Murphy's life. In fact, "Murphy" might be the only program that still sees a tie between personal and political decisions. Speaking of which, tonight's the night we're supposed to find out if Murph is preggers and who the most happy feller is as the season premiere expands to an hour at 9 on Channel 7.

"Northern Exposure" remains one of network TV's gems. The eccentricity of the characters, albeit forced at times, creates a sense of community unique to television. It would help if Joel and Maggie stopped yelling at each other and got on with their lives, but this lighter side of "Twin Peaks" bizarreness cries for attention.

The rest of the CBS schedule is more problematic. "Evening Shade" and its star, Burt Reynolds, get by on nothing but attitude. The eccentricity on this series is about as endearing as an Alan Simpson speech, and Reynolds is almost as good a comedian as the Wyoming senator. The NBC competition, "Fresh Prince of Bel Air," is a far livelier and more genuine comedy.

The premise of "Major Dad" -- right-wing Marine marries liberal family -- got tired very quickly, but NBC's kids' show at 8:30, "Blossom," is no alternative.

"MacGyver" is a man of science, but he must be using voodoo to be back for a seventh season at 8 on Channel 5. It's one of the few real action-adventure shows left, so all we can say at this point is good luck.

"Monday Night Football" without Howard and Dandy Don has no pop-culture interest, and you don't need anyone to tell you what your interest level is in the game itself. The NBC Monday night movie is usually a snooze, aimed at women who find "Murphy Brown" too sophisticated.

"Designing Women" was never a personal favorite -- it's marked and marred by the same poor writing as the Bloodworth-Thomasons' other show, "Evening Shade" -- and it's gotten more boring over the years. But if Jan Hooks and Julia Duffy can bring some of the wit and charm which they adorned "Saturday Night Live" and "Newhart," there might be reason to keep the TV on CBS between "Murphy" and "Northern Exposure." We'll find out tonight, as they're introduced in an hourlong season premiere at 10 on Channel 7. Next week it moves back to 9:30 and "Northern Exposure" has its season premiere. * * * * Worth staying home for * * * * Worth watching if you're home * * * Worth watching if you're tired * Worth watching if you're sick 8 p.m. * * 1/2 Fresh Prince of Bel Air, NBC * * Fox Night at the Movies (on average) * 1/2 MacGyver, ABC * Evening Shade, CBS 8:30 p.m. * * * Major Dad, CBS * 1/2 Blossom, NBC 9 p.m. * * * * Murphy Brown, CBS * * * American Experience, PBS * * 1/2 Monday Night Football (on average), ABC * * NBC Monday Night Movie (on average) 9:30 p.m. * * Designing Women, CBS 10 p.m. * * * Northern Exposure, CBS

Monday, September 23, 1991

The Bumpy Road to Love

77501  16
For details of premium-channel movies, see the guide following listings.

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<td>NORTHERN EXPOSURE (CC); 60 min. 28439/13507/35743</td>
<td>See the Close-up on p. 114.</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION (CC)—Science Fiction; 60 min. 46439</td>
<td>A time rift alters the Enterprise's history and reunites its crew with Tasha Yar (Denise Crosby) and with a ship thought to have been destroyed more than 20 years ago. Castillo: Christopher McDonald.</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>AWAKENINGS; 60 min. 97101</td>
<td>A 1975 film chronicling neurologist Oliver Sacks' treatment of patients suffering from a sleeping sickness. Included: interviews with Dr. Sacks and some of his patients.</td>
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<td>MacNEIL, LEHRER (CC); 60 min. 37743</td>
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<td>55</td>
<td>HUNTER—Crime Drama; 60 min. 11149</td>
<td>Hunter (Fred Dryer) probes the death of a woman pushed from a high-rise, who was no stranger to him. Allegro: Kim Morgan Greene. Father Michaels: Tony Jay.</td>
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<td>MPT</td>
<td>CAMERA MAGIC: IMAGES OF NATURE (CC)—Documentary; 75 min. 2094781</td>
<td>Showcasing the work of England's Oxford</td>
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### Northern Exposure

**SEASON PREMIERE**

**10PM CBS**

**9, 11, 16**

"...TV's hottest, coolest show."

Entertainment Weekly
THE NEW 'L.A. LAW': SO WHAT'S THE VERDICT?

Date: October 10, 1991
Publication: The Boston Globe
Author: Ed Siegel, Globe Staff

We will now hear closing arguments in the people vs. "L.A. Law," which returns for its sixth season at 10 tonight on Channel 4. Is it still the best regular series on television, or has it run out of gas?

Speaking against the series is Victor Sifuentes, who has left the series along with Michael Kuzak, Abby Perkins and executive producer David E. Kelley.

Mr. Sifuentes:

Judge, it grieves me to say this, but tonight's episode goes against everything that the firm of Bochco-Kelley has stood for the past five years. There can be no defense for a series this good getting off to such a bad start.

We have come to depend on "L.A. Law" for depth that can no longer be found anywhere else on network television, not even on "Northern Exposure," which is rarely anything more than cute, particularly this season.

I am not going to pretend that Mr. Bochco and Mr. Kelley never resorted to shock or melodrama in years past. I think we all remember the secret to a woman's, er, heart, the Venus Butterfly from the first season? Or the litigation over bull sperm?

But, your honor, the people contend that, particularly after the first year or two, such melodramatic devices never detracted from the emotional and intellectual content of the program.

Not only did the series never shy away from issues of the day, but it never resorted to the one-dimensionality of pretenders to the throne like "Law & Order" and "Equal Justice." Like great playwrights of the stage, our writers gave some of the best lines and arguments to those on the other side of the case, constantly keeping the viewer on edge by making the strongest two arguments possible.

[EDIT]

But we accept the argument that "L.A. Law" is still the best and urge the jury to keep watching.

"Anything but Love," for example, has been concentrating too much on the relationship of Hannah and Marty. Last season, these two pals fell in love. Then, in the season opener, they decided to get married because they thought she was pregnant. But she wasn't, so they didn't.

Meanwhile, back at the office, there are good characters going to waste. Ann Magnuson's marvelous Catherine merely flashes by in bizarre outfits. She's basically become a sight gag.

On "Northern Exposure," the flirty-hostile relationship between Dr. Fleischman (whose fiancee jilted him) and Maggie the pilot (whose boyfriend got squashed by a falling satellite dish) is likely to take off. As they soar into new turbulence, so, too, may this fine series.

I'm afraid that even the no-nonsense "Law & Order" may go fuzzy on us. NBC insisted that the producer add two female characters this season. It's probably a matter of time before one falls in love with handsome Detective Logan -- and winds up taking a home-pregnancy test.

TV romance is a no-win situation. Viewers like sexual tension, but that can't be sustained indefinitely. On the other hand, once characters commit, where can a series go?

Perhaps Dr. Nagler should coin a TV corollary: If it's impossible to keep a romance alive, one must be very careful about starting one.

THE LOVE TRAP

Date: October 13, 1991
Publication: The Record (Bergen County, NJ)
Author: Virginia Mann

According to Dr. William Nagler, a fixture on the talk circuit of late, there's just no way to keep romance alive.


Nagler should give a seminar to TV writers. No matter how many series fizzle out when a romance fails, television keeps emphasizing entanglements.

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Perhaps Dr. Nagler should coin a TV corollary: If it's impossible to keep a romance alive, one must be very careful about starting one.
When "Northern Exposure" made its debut last year, Corbin’s was one of the few faces that rang bells. Among his long list of credits, he played Uncle Bob in the film "Urban Cowboy" and a general in "War Games," appeared in a string of TV movies and mini-series, including "Lonesome Dove," and starred in a memorable commercial for Birdseye frozen vegetables.

The son of a Texas county judge who went to the Senate at age 25, Corbin was named for James M. Barrie, who wrote "Peter Pan."

"I never could get my mother to tell me why," Corbin puzzles.

He liked movies, and at age 8 decided to become an actor. His grandfather, who kept horses and helped Corbin learn to ride when most kids are learning to walk, encouraged him.

"Practically everyone said I’d grow out of it," says Corbin, now 50. "I haven’t yet."

Corbin studied acting at Texas Tech, eventually flipping a coin to decide whether to move to New York or Los Angeles. Luck sent him East. He forged a career as a stage actor, playing Shakespeare’s Henry V and Macbeth and other standards.

"Somewhere in the back of my mind I figured I couldn’t compete in films until I was older. At 25, you don’t come out and try to replace Walter Brennan."

He says he has injected a little bit of cowboy into every part he has played, even those where he delivered his lines in Elizabethan English.

In "Northern Exposure," he reins in his cowboy impulse so as not to overlap with the Gary Cooper-esque character of Holling, a reformed big-game hunter who owns the town tavern. Look for an episode later this season, a flashback to the fictional town of Cicely’s pioneer days, when Corbin might get a chance to saddle up.

"They may put me on horseback the whole time," he says. "Which would be fine with me."

**WHY DO MOOSE CROSS THE ROAD?**

Because they’re too big to try bungee jumping.
**Date:** October 21, 1991  
**Publication:** Newsweek

**Dateline:** Moose country

Do you chuckle at the preposterous sight of a moose ambling into town on "Northern Exposure." No one's laughing in New England where moose and man are meeting with dire consequences. Earlier this year in Manchester, N.H., one of the gangly creatures not only came into town but climbed onto a factory roof. As humans rushed to its rescue, it fell off the building and died. In the Boston suburb of Natick, Mass., a startled family recently discovered a moose nibbling on the lawn. State animal wardens were called; while families watched, the officers pulled out their shotguns and blasted the animal. One dark night last month outside Burlington, Vt., David Kemp's Jeep Cherokee smashed into a 1,100-pound bull moose standing in the middle of the road. "There was no chance," Kemp said later. He was unharmed but the moose and the car were a mess.

Why do the moose keep crossing the road? "This time of year they keep wandering, trying to find a mate," says Howard Nowell of New Hampshire's Fish and Game Department. "Too often they wind up finding a car." On the highways of northern New England, the fall foliage season has turned into a time of moose carnage. In their natural habitat, the moose population has been actually booming, so drivers often don't detect them until the last millisecond. Most legs are dusky gray so drivers often don't notice the animal. Color is also a drawback: a moose's white face and white tail are not as likely to reflect headlights as a deer's. Color is also a drawback: a moose's legs are dusky gray so drivers often don't detect them until the last millisecond. Most smaller animals get hit by the grille; the damage is confined to the car's front end. But a typical collision with a lanky moose sweeps the animal over the hood. "What you get is that massive center of gravity coming through the windshield and over the roof," says Vermont state biologist Cedric Alexander.

One solution is good news for taxidermists but bad news for environmentalists. Maine eliminated moose hunting in 1935 but reinstated it on a regular basis in 1982; this year there were 82,000 applicants for the state's 1,000 six-day permits. New Hampshire has just bumped up the number of permits from 75 to 100 and increased the hunting season from three to 10 days. Another approach is to educate drivers to slow down. It's especially critical that motorists drive defensively over the next few weeks: the fall is moose-rutting season.

**Too much 'Northern Exposure' in Roslyn**

**Date:** October 27, 1991  
**Publication:** Chicago Sun-Times  
**Author:** Kristi Turnquist

ROSLYN, Wash. Yesterday, it was an oasis. Today, it's a star. But not everyone in Roslyn thinks stardom is all it's cracked up to be.

A pocket-sized patch of quaint businesses and century-old buildings, Roslyn used to be just another Northwest small town, a quick drive from Seattle, tucked among lakes in a hollow surrounded by forested mountains, Roslyn was nestled peacefully on the way to nowhere in particular.

Then "Northern Exposure" came to town. Just over a year ago, the Los Angeles production company that makes the hit CBS television series adopted Roslyn as the real life stand-in for the imaginary town of Cicely, Alaska (population 839), where the show is set.

"Northern Exposure," (9 p.m. Mondays on Channel 2) chronicles the adventures of a New York-bred doctor forced to practice in a rural community populated by eccentrics and free spirits. It became a surprise hit this past summer and was nominated for an Emmy. And now that "Northern Exposure" is in its second season, Roslyn is due for more exposure yet.

But many of the town's residents are getting sweaty under the spotlight. They look at the crowds and cars and skyrocketing real-estate costs and wonder if it's worth it.

"It's a good show," Keith Donaldson admits a bit grudgingly. "It has a lot of charm, it's real witty, it's pretty intelligent," adds Donaldson, owner of Roslyn's sole movie theater. But then he pauses and smiles, "I just wish it was filmed somewhere else."

**Tourists? Roslyn's citizenry isn't so sure about them.**

"Tourism has increased so much," Donaldson says between shows at his theater, located in what used to be the town mortuary.

During the height of the summer, he recalls, hundreds of people crowded around to watch the crew shoot on Roslyn's streets - which happens for a few days every other week or so. Folks couldn't find places to park for their daily trips to the post office. Stores were closed. Crew members loudly - and rudely, locals say - ordered people to be quiet while the cameras rolled.

And the tourists keep coming. A steady stream of visitors stops in Roslyn. They walk on Pennsylvania Avenue, the three-block main drag, and check out the old-fashioned buildings with window displays featuring T-shirts and flyers for the "Northern Exposure" fan club.

They stop at the Brick, a tavern that serves as the exterior for Cicely's central tavern-restaurant-hangout, and down glasses of Roslyn's rich, dark, locally brewed beer. (Interiors are mainly shot on stages in Redmond, northeast of Seattle.)

Donaldson's theater business has increased, but he looks at the visitors and worries. "We really like our town the way that it is," he says. "We like the messy yards, that it's disorganized, that people don't paint their houses."

First stop for Roslyn tourists looking for magic is usually the Roslyn Cafe. It is hard to miss its human fatalities.

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First stop for Roslyn tourists looking for magic is usually the Roslyn Cafe. It is hard to miss its exterior, which is featured in the "Northern Exposure" credits as a moose ambling past an exotic scene of palm trees and a camel, with the words "An Oasis" painted under it, the mural almost jumps off the wall.

"I guess I'm Joe Tourist here," says Paul Grebstad, of Port Orchard, Wash., as he snaps the obligatory photo. His wife, Peggy, particularly liked the notorious "Spring Fever" episode, in which Cicely's citizens went a bit berserk just before the first spring snow melt. The show culminated in "the running of the bulls," an all-male nude race through the snow.

Adding some verite to the cinema, Rob Morrow, who plays displaced Dr. Joel Fleischman, and other cast members actually did one take without body stockings, running...
With the music writing market a little soft these days, I’ve been thinking about looking around for a real job. The one that appeals to me most is the deejay position at KBHR – K-Bear – in Cicely, Alaska, but there are two problems. First, the job is filled. And second, it’s not real.

I wish it were, because Cicely, the mythical town where the CBS-TV series Northern Exposure is set, seems like a place where someone with my musical sensibility would fit in great. It’s the center of what one of the show’s creators is fond of calling a “totally nonjudgmental universe” that exists for only one hour on Monday nights. And one of the biggest reasons that Northern Exposure has been so successful at establishing a place to which viewers can escape is its use of popular and unpopular music.

There has, to my knowledge, never been a TV show that made such extensive use of “source” music: everything from Dwight Yoakam, k.d. lang and Kitty Wells to Motley Crue, Sinead O’Connor and Robert Palmer to Louis Armstrong, Billie Holiday and Stan Getz to Little Jimmy Dickens singing his immortal “Take an Old Cold Tater (and Wait).” They use many more songs per episode (an average of twelve) in Northern Exposure than in a month of Miami Vices. And, so far, not one by Phil Collins. These guys have good taste.

Or perhaps not. Perhaps the reason the music on Northern Exposure is so compelling is that the show has no definable musical taste at all, no clear biases or blind spots. The music can by anything – show tunes, opera, rap, zydeco, even stuff by street musicians the producers meet on vacation. And the great thing is that almost nobody in Cicely – young or old, white, black, red or redneck – is offended by the songs played by deejay-philosopher-modern man Chris Stevens, who quotes Jung and searches for his soul in the records he spins on America’s most eclectic morning radio show. (Which is so eclectic that it doesn’t necessarily come on in the morning.) And nobody says “Will you turn that damned music off!” no matter what spews forth from the world’s weirdest, most overstocked jukebox (it must go up to ZZZ999), situated in the local tavern.

Cicely is a town full of highly opinionated sorts, like Dr. Joel Fleischman, who was beamed there from Manhattan when his med-school loan from the state of Alaska came due; Maggie O’Connell, the pioneering pilot whose boyfriends are a dying breed; Maurice Minnifield, the retired astronaut who thinks he owns the town (he only owns most of it); young Ed Chigliak, the Native American Steven Wright; Holling Vinceour, senior-citizen barkeep and sexual adventurer; Shelly Tambo, Holling’s MTV babe; and Marilyn Whirlwind, Fleischman’s imperturbable assistant. But even with all these vivid personalities, no one seems to mind if the songs playing are old or new, recognizable or un-, pleasing or shrill. (Although somebody did once ask that the music in the bar be turned down.)

This feeds into my Utopian fantasy about how music could be consumed: by people who are beyond open-mindedness (which ultimately requires some deliberateness) and are simply open to whatever’s playing on the sound track of their lives. Amazingly enough, viewers seem to be taken with this fantasy too. CBS gets so many calls each Tuesday morning asking about the titles of tunes used on the show – some of which play for only five seconds – that the producers have taken to providing a song list for each program. MCA Records is talking to the producers about making a Northern Exposure CD: The show’s music coordinator has already made two cassette-tape compilations of songs from the program, which were distributed to cast members and friends.

I decided to call Northern Exposure’s musical dude to find out how a prime-time TV show has managed to succeed where the music business in general and radio specifically have failed – namely, at exploring music rather than pandering with it. But before talking to the overworked staffer who actually tracks down all the music, I was directed to series co-creator Joshua Brand, he of St. Elsewhere, Amazing Stories and A Year in the Life.

I was, frankly, a little surprised: The big boss actually pays attention to such stuff. But the 41-year-old Brand’s genuine fascination with music became clear immediately. He had a master plan for making Northern Exposure unique by incorporating source music, a plan that had developed from the day CBS programming chief Jeff Sagansky suggested that the character Chris, who was always to be the resident shaman, should work as Cicely’s deejay. This meant that Chris could present his approach to life over the airwaves. “Chris’ philosophical belief is that the uncertainty principle is one on which you can build a life,” Brand says. “In terms of music, that means that when you expect to hear a certain kind of song, that’s exactly when you should hear something else. Sometimes that requires him to play something bad.”

As the Chris character developed and his routines became more routine, Brand came to understand the other value of music in Northern Exposure. “We came to think of music as sort of the sixth man on the show, like our John Havlicek,” he says. “We use music to change the quality of scenes on the show, and we have used it to get us out of situations. It makes things that don’t work work and things that do work, work better. We sometimes have a lot of production problems on the show, which is shot on location and put together in L.A. There are certain episodes that eventually turn out great but, as we like to say, were ‘created mechanically’ in post-production. The music was the sixth man.”
Very little of the music appears in the scripts that are used while shooting in the little towns of Roslyn and Bellevue, outside of Seattle. And Brand says that almost none of the songs the writers propose turn out to work, anyway. "(Take an Old Cold Tater" was the one exception.) The tunes are generally not chosen until a director’s cut of the location footage has literally come down from the mountaintop. It’s then that the research begins. Most of the work falls to a 27-year-old associate producer named Martin Bruestle, who used to toil at thritysomething. It is Bruestle’s job to search his own eclectic music collection and that of postproduction man Steve Turner and to comb through the bins at Tower Records on Sunset Boulevard or the stacks at L.A.’s commercial music libraries.

The last time Bruestle visited his hometown of Bemidji, Minnesota, he went to one of its two radio stations and asked if he could rummage through the basement.

Many times, he is sent to ferret out a song Brand heard while doing something else. Bruestle has called Los Angeles restaurants, trying to determine who was playing at 7:30 on a particular evening when his boss was eating there. ("Jorge? Would he be interested in recording something?") He tracked down an Irish group Brand had heard singing at the L.A. Zoo when he’d taken his kids there, and a steel-drums player Brand had heard on the street playing a killer rendition of "Goodnight Irene." When Brand came back from his vacation in Hawaii, Bruestle was dispatched to find recordings of the native Hawaiian bands his boss had enjoyed with the poi and the pupu. "Josh called me one Saturday morning," Bruestle recalls. "I was still sleeping. He said he heard a song with lyrics something like ‘Don Quixote no esta.’ I wrote it down, and we tracked it through the lyrics. It ended up being ‘Don Quichotte,’ by Magazine 60. It was kind of electronic and dance club-ish. I said ‘Josh couldn’t have picked that!’ But he had. He’ll stop at nothing."

But just as often, the process begins with Brand, Bruestle or someone else involved with Northern Exposure being turned on to an artist he never knew much about — like, say, Etta James — and then figuring out a way to spin that interest into a musical moment on the show. Steve Turner’s liking for k.d. lang ensures that her music will be used frequently (four times so far; she’s tied for the lead with country duo Bud and Travis, but Satchmo, Django Reinhardt, Kitty Wells and Ruth Brown have all been heard a number of times). Bruestle compiles several choices for each place where music might be used: a bar scene, a Chris in the Morning scene or any scene that needs more than the incidental music written by David Schwartz (the staff composer, who did the catchy accordion- harmonica-percussion theme song that the moose saunters around to in the opening credits). Then Brand and Bruestle go to a dubbing stage — or, more often than not, just sit with a boom box in the editing room — and try out each song "to picture." It is, they agree, truly amazing how differently the same scene plays with different music.

Some of Brand’s favorite juxtapositions came in the episode "Spring Break," in which everyone went a little nuts during the first thaw, and Cicely experienced a crime spree. At one point, Chris explained to Ed why he stole — people have to be reminded, he said, that there is wildness out there, and sometimes you have to do something wrong to know you’re alive. It could have been a very trashy or a very dumb scene. But someone was inspired to lay in the aria that dominated the movie Diva (from the obscure Italian opera La Wally, by Catalani, performed by Wilhemmena Wiggins Fernandez). "When you heard that music playing while Chris talks about petty thievery," recalls Brand, "the scene became extremely elegant and moving." In the show’s last sequence, all the men in town stripped off their thermals for the annual nude run through the snowscapes of Cicely. Bruestle suggested a fairly obscure tune by Lindsey Buckingham, "O W. Suite," about Dennis Wilson’s going crazy. It created a lovely moment.

While almost anything can, and has, worked on Northern Exposure (my personal favorite was when they used "New York, New York" by Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five), some internal guidelines are emerging. The producers generally don’t want to use anything too closely associated with some other medium (songs already brought to a larger audience by, say, the sound tracks of The Big Chill or of the Woody Allen oeuvre), except as an inside joke. And the show shies away from tunes that are too popular in their own right — because they are often too expensive to license and arrive with a lot of other associative baggage. "We want the music, like the rest of the show, to be much more of a delightful surprise," says Brand. "There are musicians I love. I love Van Morrison, but a lot of his songs are just too familiar. I don’t want something that draws too much attention to itself. We’re not ‘Hey, look how different we can be, how hip we can be.’ Any element of self-consciousness on the show is bad. We think of this show as a souffle: it can easily collapse. We’re looking for songs that, without knowing them, you know are great. It’s not like olives or beer, where you have to develop a taste for it. Songs you can absorb into your musical lexicon without listening to them over and over."

In other words, they know exactly what they want but have no idea what they want. Or, as Brand readily admits, "I don’t know music, but I know what I like." Bruestle is a little more specific: "I just say ‘Does the song make you smile? Does it make you feel good?’ Although, what makes people smile is very subjective."

Hmm, let me get this straight. A salaried position — paid in L.A. money, which, as we all know, is dispensed like Monopoly dollars — in which you spend your day searching for songs people don’t know but will immediately take to? Maybe the deejay’s job at KBHR isn’t the gig I should be coveting after all.

Monday, November 04, 1991 3-06
The Body in Question
77504 21

Monday, November 11, 1991 3-07
Roots
77508 22

Monday, November 18, 1991 3-08
A-Hunting We Will Go
77509 23

FAKED ALASKA

CBS’s offbeat Northern Exposure has captivated viewers — and taken over the little town of Roslyn, Washington.  

Date: November 18, 1991
Publication: People Magazine
Author: Tom Giatto, Tom Cunneff, and Nick Gallo ... in Roslyn

A lot of people are looking for a place like Roslyn,” says Jerry Morris, who runs the only barbershop in this Washington town (pop.986) in the piney foothills of the Cascade Mountains. “We’ve got lakes and clean air and Bambi.”

The 46-year-old Morris, who charges $6 per cut ($5 for kids and senior citizens), has never had to go looking. He was born and raised here. He was here when the last operating coal mine — it was coal that put the town on the map in 1886 — shut down for good in 1963. He witnessed the decline of the lumber industry. And he has seen the coming of Northern Exposure.

Roslyn, Wash., plays Cicely, Alaska, in the hit CBS comedy about an edgy New York City doctor, Joel Fleischman (Rob Morrow), transplanted to a northwestern community
Cicely Morris, for one, thinks having a show on producers publicly post filming schedules. For now, Denning has started the petition. For now, Denning has.
Hunters receive favorable exposure

Date: November 24, 1991
Publication: The Record (Bergen County, NJ)
Author: DON ECKER

Hunters were up in arms several years ago when the CBS Television Network aired its notorious "Guns of Autumn" show. The anti-hunting production, using the audio and visual tricks of the trade, stressed the most negative aspects of hunting and by association, tried to cast all hunters in the most unfavorable light. Not so the most recently aired episode of CBS's Northern Exposure Monday night.

The show portrayed the various aspects of hunting, as a tradition, a harvest, a way of life, and as a symbolic recognition of the inescapable fact that life and death are part of the same continuum. The show began with Maggie, the Alaskan bush pilot, bringing in a deer she has bagged.

Having been raised close to nature, harvesting the animal is as natural an act for her as going to the meat counter of the supermarket is for a city dweller like Joel, the show's hero. Her helper, Ed, is concerned about her aging, "My hunting license." Joel decides to learn, first-hand, what hunting is all about. He joins Chris and Holing on a grous hunt. The three men typify the stages in the life of a hunter. Holing has hunted for many years and killed lots of game. He still enjoys the adventure, but by "personal choice" now totes a camera instead of a shotgun. After a couple of birds are taken, he's ready to return to the comforts of hearth and home.

Chris is a skilled sportsman in the middle stage of a hunting career. He's confident in his ability, and happy to introduce a newcomer to the sport. He gives Joel a basic safety drill, before the actual hunt begins -- control of the gun muzzle at all times, proper use of the safety, and never pointing a gun at anything not intended to be killed. Though somewhat abbreviated, the safety lecture incorporated the basic spirit of firearm safety, a landmark for network TV.

Joel portrays the eager novice. Exhilarated by his first hunting experience, and a near miss on his first shot, he presses his companions to camp out overnight, extending the adventure for a second day. He enjoys the companionship of the campfire, and the anticipation of the next day afield, philosophizing about the motivation to hunt, and the role of the hunt in human history.

When Joel finally bags his first grousse, he experiences the ambivalence about the killing, common to many who hunt and have a profound respect, even love, for the game they pursue. He only wings the grousse, but the bird eventually dies. Maggie suggests that the bird succumbed at about its average life expectancy in nature, but in this case with man as the predator, not a wolf or eagle. He admits to Maggie that he really enjoyed the hunt, and at a party, enjoys eating the results of the harvest.

As a parallel to the hunting theme is a secondary plot about the active but aging Ruth Anne, who has been "winged" with a broken foot. She tells Joel that she used to enjoy hunting, particularly the gutting and skinning of the game -- a utilitarian and basic part of the ancient hunting tradition that, in primitive times, was often the role of women.

Her helper, Ed, is concerned about her aging, and as a gift for her 75th birthday, gives her a grave site with a magnificent view of the valley below -- a return of the death-as-part-of-life realization. In a poignant final scene, Ruth Anne and Ed dance on her grave site.

Aired on the evening of the opening day of the New York deer season, the show may have been missed by many hunters. From their viewpoint, it was likely more important for it to be seen by non-hunters, particularly those undecided about the propriety of hunting.

The show was so engrossing; I forgot to watch another favorite American blood sport -- Monday Night Football.

Animal protection big on TV

Date: November 25, 1991
Publication: Albany Times Union
Author: Howard Rosenberg Los Angeles Times

The hunting season is here and Maggie O'Connell has proudly bagged "a beauty."

"Yesterday he was a beauty," Joel Fleischman snaps self-righteously about the deer that O'Connell has shot. "Today he's a dead animal strapped to the back of a truck.

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Later, Fleischman himself will load shells into a shotgun and take aim in the Alaskan wild, bringing down a grouse.

The series is "Northern Exposure," the episode "A Hunting We Will Go." And its recent airing on CBS is evidence anew of how the animal-protection debate - from hunting to vivisection to fur wearing - is increasingly surfacing in mainstream television.

The climate is such that one Los Angeles company, Eagle-Horowitz Productions, is circulating a proposal in TV circles for a weekly reality series that would feature stories concerning animals and animal-rights issues.

Interest in animals, beyond the usual pet stories, does seem to be broadening via TV.

It was only a couple of weeks ago that the volatile issue of scientific research on animals was the theme of NBC’s “Quantum Leap,” with time-traveling Sam Beckett inhabiting the body of a seemingly doomed research chimp named Bobo at Cape Canaveral.

Although executive producer Don Bellisario had adamantly vowed that the controversial episode would take no sides, the hour appeared pro-Bobo and arguably a statement on behalf of animals.

"It was really a sort of chimp's- eye view," said Shirley McGreal, chairwoman of the Summerville, S.C.-based International Primate Protection League. "So anyone who saw it was going to be rooting for the chimp."

The same principle applied to this season’s premiere of the usually benign ABC sitcom “Family Matters,” which featured a character rescuing an orangutan from a science laboratory. In addition, testing on animals was rigorously debated on a recent episode of Ron Reagan’s syndicated talk show.

On the news and documentary front, meanwhile:

Sunday, the "World of Audubon" on cable’s TBS, aired "Mysterious Elephants of the Congo," a documentary calling attention to the continuing plight of the African elephant. Wildlife documentaries abound; in contrast to others, though, this one had on display an 800 number through which viewers can lobby President Bush and others to retain an international moratorium on ivory trade scheduled for renewal in March.

Shortly before being canceled, NBC’s "Expose" aired a devastating report on so-called safaris organized in the Southwest for the benefit of so-called hunters who find sport in slaughtering declawed, relatively tame big cats that have been sold off by zoos and circuses.

On the celebrity front, Peter Falk and Alec Baldwin have recently taped public-service messages for animal-rights groups. Baldwin narrates a video cataloguing alleged animal mistreatment by circuses and traveling acts. It is being used to protest a special titled "The All New Circus of the Stars & Side Show," set to air Friday, Nov. 29 on CBS.

On another front, it was a couple of seasons ago that "Designing Women" on CBS presented an episode grabbing the coattails of the anti-fur-wearing movement. But it was only last summer that a columnist for Fur Age Weekly affirmed that movement’s inroads when she complained that TV commercials for the re-release of the children’s movie "101 Dalmatians," by featuring the story’s fur-wearing villain, left the impression that "people who wear fur are heartless."

"We’re not trying to sell someone a bill of goods," said co-executive producer Joshua Brand. "I expect to get a call from the NRA (National Rifle Association) saying it (the episode) endorses hunting. I don’t think it does."

Nor does it oppose it. Written by Craig Volk, it instead shows the characters of "Northern Exposure" in most ways being true to themselves, as always, with the debate over hunting as their stage.

Fleischman initially lectures, but the episode doesn’t. It offers, as Brand notes, a statement that "things are complicated." If not things, people.

Fleischman (Rob Morrow), the miserably transplanted New York doctor, is initially appalled by the love of hunting displayed by his friends O’Connell (Janine Turner), Holling Vincoeur (John Collum) and Chris Stevens (John Corbett).

**CITY DOCTORS GET ’NORTHERN EXPOSURE’, WORKING OFF MEDICAL SCHOOL DEBT, THEY TREAT ESKIMOS IN THE ALASKA BUSH**

**Date:** November 26, 1991  
**Publication:** The Washington Post  
**Author:** Nancy Costello

It’s not a fancy Fifth Avenue practice, but then that’s not what Daryl Graves had in mind when he signed on for four years in the bush in exchange for medical school.

Unlike the actor who plays the role of New York City physician Joel Fleischman of CBS’s hit television show "Northern Exposure," Graves is enjoying his stint in the Last Frontier.

He doesn’t whine about the lack of a good deli, the latest films or Big Apple glitz in this southwest Alaska village of 290 people.

He looks downright cheerful as he jumps from the twin-engine plane onto a gravel runway where orange traffic cones draw the line between airstrip and tundra. In this outback village, Graves treats Yup’ik Eskimos for fox bites, snowmobile injuries and "fish finger" infections.

Graves is 4,700 miles and a time warp away from medical school at Georgetown University. When the National Public Health Service Corps paid his $100,000 tuition, he agreed to a four-year tour in the Far North. "It was advertised as an adventure to see a different area of the United States," Graves said.

Call it truth in advertising.

If you’re a doctor in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta region, you become accustomed to temperatures of 70 degrees below zero, dinners of moose meat and caribou, and anxious moments in a tundra whiteout.

The tribulations of TV’s Dr. Fleischman as he works to pay back tuition to Columbia University medical school are quirky but not authentic, said Graves, 35, originally from White Plains, N.Y.
The show doesn’t reflect the medical and social problems of Eskimos trying to hold onto an ancient culture, he said.

New York City native Gina Buono and her pediatrician husband, Dave Sherman, each signed up with the Indian Health Service for two years to pay back $50,000 in tuition loans.

"It was either a cushy job in Mystic, Conn., or it was Bethel, Alaska - 76,000 square miles of flat, treeless tundra," Buono said. "I could have made $125,000 in Florida, but who wants to live in thousands of miles of flat, treeless hot places?

"They got mosquitoes there, we got mosquitoes here - and there’s a lot of fishing."

Graves, Buono and Sherman are among 14 doctors working for the Indian Health Service at Bethel Hospital, the medical hub for 19,000 Yup’ik Eskimos in a region larger than New England.

Established in 1955, the IHS has 156 doctors serving Alaska Natives at nine medical centers around the state.

For some, $25,000 worth of medical school loans are paid for each year of employment. Doctors also sign on as National Public Health Service obligees - the federal government pays full medical school tuition in exchange for a number of post-residency years.

In addition, Bethel doctors are paid an average salary of $65,000, including housing differentials. Physicians fly to village health clinics at least twice a year.

In Lower Kalskag, Graves waved hello to Eskimos chugging through dirt streets on four-wheel, all-terrain vehicles. The doctor is black, a rarity in the bush, especially to Eskimo children who ask to feel his hair.

Graves examined patients at a plywood building outfitted with two examination rooms, a hot plate, refrigerator and small bed in the rear. A citizens band radio is used to let villagers know the doctor is "in."

Doris Kameroff, 12, held out her left hand. She had caught a finger on a fish tooth while eating salmon heads. Her hand was swollen and her elbow and shoulder joints hurt. "It was a little poke," she said. "Now, it aches when I move it."

"Fish finger," or cellulitis, is a bacterial infection usually contracted from scraping hands on the teeth or the bones of fish. It’s a common ailment in Eskimo villages when salmon run in summer.

"”Everything is kind of seasonal," the doctor said. "In the fall when salmon berries bloom, I treat backaches and knee pains from walking on the tundra. It’s like walking on sponge."

Pneumonia, diabetes, heart disease, ear infections, meningitis, hepatitis A and B, botulism and occasional fox bites and dog maulings are common problems in the Y-K Delta. At Bethel Hospital, physicians help deliver 500 babies to Yup’ik Eskimo women every year.

Patients who require a doctor’s check-up must make the trip to Bethel, a dusty settlement of 4,700 people where sewer pipes run above ground because the earth stays too frozen to dig. Travel is mostly by airplane and boat May through September. In winter, residents drive on the frozen Kuskokwim River.

When temperatures dip to an average 40 below and automobile tires freeze into a flattened half-circle, doctors ski, walk or take a snowmobile to the hospital.

"I always know I’m in trouble when I wake up to a radio saying, ‘Extreme temperature warning. Any exposed skin will freeze in less than a minute,’" said Giulia Tortora, 29, of New York’s Long Island. "When it gets up to zero, it’s almost balmy."

Buono dressed in a rubber suit last winter to cross roads coated with glassy ice. Falling flat, she managed to get across on her belly doing a frog-like slither, only to fall into an iced basin.

After a half hour of struggle, an Eskimo man pulled up on a snowmobile. He told Buono he and friends had been watching from up the road for about 20 minutes and thought she may need assistance. "It was very undignified for a grownup," she said.

Yup’ik Eskimos are a culture in transition, but they hold fast to a history of subsistence hunting and fishing. After a long day at the clinic, Graves joined three Eskimos to driftnet for salmon in the Kuskokwim.

The doctor helped haul in more than a dozen fish, some three feet long, in an expedition that lasted until 5 a.m. The sun set at midnight, turning the river pink. It rose again about 4 a.m. Between castings, the fishermen roasted a snack over a beach campfire - charred Spam rolled in Wonder Bread never tasted so good.

One fisherman, John Kameroff, shoved off for another round of fishing. He tossed a .357-caliber handgun to a 12-year-old Eskimo boy left onshore with Graves. Black bears could be dangerous.

"Don’t miss," Kameroff said to the boy. "It only has three shells."

Graves was unfazed. He turned a chunk of blistering Spam over the flames.

Cicely’s Quirky Christmas List

Date: November 21, 1991
Publication: TV Guide (Vol. 39 No. 51 Issue #2021)

Like everything else in TV’s most eccentric town, gift-giving is a challenge to the citizenry’s resourcefulness. The show’s writers offer these holiday tips.

Film buff Ed will buy videos: for former astronaut Maurice, "The Right Stuff;" for love kitten Shelly, "Lolita;" for New Yorker Joel, "Manhattan, who also gets Statue of Liberty coasters.

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Maurice, the wheeler-dealer, gets the same thing for everyone: NASA key rings, and a copy of the coffee-table book "Historic Bridges of England and the Wales," both items ordered in bulk at discount.

Understanding the need for fiber up here on the tundra, Marilyn gives a dried-fruit selection to Maurice. For girlfriends, Shelly, Maggie and Ruth-Anne, handmade, dyed-ostrich-feather earrings from her ostrich farm.

For his steadfast and stone-faced receptionist, Marilyn, Joel buys a daily appointment book; for the rest of his Cicelian clientele, free flu shots to get them through the long, cold winter nights ahead.

Airplane jockey and engine afficionado Maggie wants to reward klutzy Dr. Joel (her boyfriend wannabe) for saving their lives by fixing her stalled prop with a set of crescent wrenches of his own.

Ruth-Anne congratulated Maurice on his brood, but clearly doesn’t approve of the illegitimate family he spawned during his assignment in Korea. Her gift: a Planned Parenthood donation.

Shelly, who once had a beautician friend make-over Ruth-Anne, would like to send Maggie to Juneau for a similar overhaul. For her lover Holling, a Shower Massage. For all else, home-made potholders.

After taking baby-doll girlfriend Shelly up on her Shower Massager offer, saloon-owner Holling will feel generous enough to offer Ed 50 free plays on his favorite pinball machine.

DJ Chris, the hinterland’s hippest gift-giver, has the town’s most eclectic list. For mystical Ed, "The Power of Myth" by Joseph Campbell; for rock-hungry Shelly, the latest Metallica LP.

**John Corbett: Putting the Sizzle in Cicely, Alaska**

*Date:* November 21, 1991
*Publication:* TV Guide (Vol. 39 No. 51 Issue #2021)
*Author:* Amy Paulsen Nalle

*Cover:* Northern Exposure’s John Corbett and Moose (Rudolph was busy).

John Corbett works in a town only slightly more populated than Northern Exposure’s Cicely. He might as well be on Mars.
Sure, he knows he’s the dishiest DJ north of the 49th parallel, but he has yet to experience the full assault of Sex Symbol Syndrome. "I'm getting the same vibes I always get," he says.

Maybe so, but that's just on the streets of Roslyn, Wash. (pop. 869). Corbett should try heading from the hinterland to the heartland for an education in the hassles of hunkdom.

"It's really strange," says Corbett. "I've been doing the exact same thing for the last three seasons, playing Chris the exact same way and only in this last season has this sex symbol thing come up, you know?"

He sounds puzzled. "Why is that?" he demands.

Well, remember that episode (to be re-aired Dec. 30) where Chris, Cicely's resident DJ, emits pheromones - the human musk that makes him irresistible to women - and finds himself surrounded by fawning females? Maybe Corbett's own magnetism is chemical.

John Corbett says parts of dishy DJ Chris are just like him.


So it's a dumb theory. Still, there is this perception of him as an Alaskan Adonis.

"I'm whatever anybody wants me to be," says the affable actor. A lot of people would like him to be Chris, Exposure's spiritual leader and chief advice-giver.

"That part of Chris is just like me," says Corbett. "I find myself dishing out advice on an hourly basis to people, even if they don't request it."

What Corbett does not share with Chris is the DJ's encyclopedic knowledge of the great philosophers - and his ability to quote them at will. "If I quote from anything," he says. "I quote from the movies. I live my life pretty much through the movies - I'm more like Ed [the show's movie buff, who runs on instinct rather than intellect]."

And, like most Cicelyans, Corbett is unabashedly single. "I'm a total bachelor," he says, "and I've been a bachelor now for ... for ... forever." He does allow that being a bachelor during the holiday season has its downside. For one thing, there's no Ms. Right to buy him the present he's been fantasizing about: "a pair of black cowboy boots with red leather flames coming up from the point. Where the heels are I'd like a ballpeen joint, so when I go dancing I can really show 'em some moves."

Swivel heels? Does Corbett cut a rug on a regular basis? "I would if I had boots like that."

And for all the women out there who would like the actor's alter ego to park his cowboy boots by their hearth on Christmas Day. Corbett offers: "There's enough love in Chris for everybody. For all the women in the world. Chris likes sharing the wealth, too. He enjoys passing it around." Corbett lets loose a merry hoot. "Sharing. Isn't that what it's all about?"

Monday, December 09, 1991  3-09  Get Real  77514  24
Monday, December 16, 1991  3-10  Seoul Mates  77511  25

OUR TOWN
Date: December 21, 1991
Publication: TV Guide (Vol 39 No. 51 Issue #2021)
Author: Ron Powers

If it's not on Santa's route, it should be: Northern Exposure's Cicely, Alaska, is both 'magical' and 'real,' and it's carved out a place in the American imagination

Some strange spell falls over reviewers when they tackle the wonderfully woolly Northern Exposure on CBS: They always make a reference to Twin Peaks. Oops. Look at that: I've gone and done it too. Keeping the record perfect.


The lockstep wisdom seems to be that Exposure is Peaks' younger, smarter, nicer brother. Or that if David Lynch hadn't
invented earflap-chic, viewers might not be able to make sense out of the more recent Joshua Brand-John Falsey creation without an interpreter’s guide. Or a Native American guide. Or at least an L.L. Bean catalogue.

Cicely, Roslyn’s main street. A canine resident takes in some sun on imaginations. The beguiling series has made with Americans and celebrate the deeper connections this Alaska, from the bog those sublimely seedy citizens of Cicely, mought. It is time to do the right thing: Unhitch watched 13 straight hours of the Home To all that, I sa... moose patty. Or, after she’s Holling might say to Shelly after she’s watched 13 straight hours of the Home Shopping Channel, enough is e-gol-dang-nough. It is time to do the right thing: Unhitch those sublimely seedy citizens of Cicely, Alaska, from the bogus yoke of Twin Peaks, and celebrate the deeper connections this beguiling series has made with Americans imaginations.

Surely the show has earned its right to stand apart. Two seasons into its run, Northern Exposure is gaining texture, self-assurance - and devoted followers - almost with each new episode. Two seasons into its run, the late and un lamented Twin Peaks on ABC was headed in the opposite direction, an interesting blind date that had gone sour.

The murky, mood-drenched series had opened to a cascade of welcoming reviews. This was TV’s long-awaited union of art and mass-appeal entertainment - remember? The critics were thrilled by Lynch’s menagerie of offbeat characters, his avant-garde cinematic techniques (dreamlike pacing; lingering, shadowy camera shots), and most of all, his sense of place. Remember that term, place. Like Laura Palmer’s body, we’ll meet it again soon.

It didn’t take long (although it seemed like forever) before Peaks’ cultish cachet started to curdle. Lynch became an absentee director: it showed as the stylish elements turned as stale as day-old cherry pie. Those endearing offbeat characters, got more and more grotesque: they became nothing more than the sum of their eyepatches and the logs they talked to. And, of course, it grew apparent that Lynch neither knew nor gave a damn who killed Laura Palmer, any more than he cared about the fictional town of Twin Peaks, Washington. So much for sense of place. Twin Peaks was not an ongoing tale about anything. It was an ongoing sophisticated smirk. In June 1991 it joined Laura in the sweet hereafter.

By contrast, Northern Exposure crept onto the CBS airwaves almost unnoticed: It was a limited-run summer series. It did not have a designer name attached to its credits: Brand and Falsey had done St. Elsewhere, but that wasn’t as hip as Lynch’s movie -Blue Velvet.- And finally, it did not titillate with the seductive whiff of chic evil: There is the occasional corpse on the series, but no sinister presences lurk out there in the pines: no psychotic glow lights the eyes of secondary characters.

So why is it, then, that Northern Exposure increases its exposure long after Twin Peaks peaked?

I think the secret lies in the fact that Brand and Falsey have managed to create, gently and patiently, what David Lynch promised to create, and what for a brief, entrancing interval it seemed that he had created, until the archness and falsity of his vision self-destructed:

... A place. A radiant, many-layered, slightly magical place, as achingly real and yet just-out-of-reach as a dream you start to forget as soon as you wake up. A place set off in glorious isolation from the rest of the world, but urgently alive with its own rules. Its own memories, its own secrets. And most of all, its own community of characters: flinty, scruffy, silly, often bickersome and self-deluding characters who collide and scheme and get their feelings hurt.

But who ultimately work things out. Who grow from experiences. Who survive. Who prevail. As a community.

Think of that town, Cicely. Think of Dr. Joel Fleischman’s threadbare office with its porcelain sink: you can almost smell the cold seeping through the cracks. “A few curtains, a couple heads on the wall - you’re in business, draws the ex-astronaut Maurice. (And you can almost hear Rob Morrow as Fleischman, our surrogate outsider, doing one of his shameless Woody Allen riffs on that exchange to his skeletal nemesis/love interest Maggie.)

Think of Chris, the mail-order minister and storefront disc jockey, gazing out the window as he broadcasts the world’s dopiest local gossip and quotes from a Great Book or two. Who hasn’t ventured inside that jerry-built studio, or wanted to? Think of the neon reds and blues that shimmer through Hollings’ disheveled bar like honkey-tonk halos, against the click of billiard balls. as Shelly, tray of beers in hand, pauses to nurse the beginnings of an idea. Think of Morty the moose, ambling along a street as empty of traffic as never a