

Moral perspectives

Is there subtle censorship in the TV news?

In the spring of 1968, I was in Prague Czechoslovakia witnessing the first thaw in censorship of the press in more than 25 years. People were hungry for the news of the world from which they had been shut off for a generation. Western newspapers and news magazines were in great demand. Tragically, this freedom to know the uncensored news was cut short when Soviet troops invaded in August of that year. Americans have become more aware recently of this treasured freedom of the press. People have fought and died to preserve this freedom which is one of the foundation stones of our nation.



By **REV. DAVID T. STRONG**
Fellowship United Methodist Church

A RECENT SURVEY of television news programs, however, reveals a subtle means of censorship of our news. The average half hour "news" program on TV across our country contains seven minutes of news and 23 minutes of jokes, weather, commercials and sports. The 23 minutes are not of use for developing an informed citizenry. This means that TV "news" programs are actual entertainment.

Other factors of the visual presentation transforms news into entertainment. The media is really hair style, clothes and the team performance.

I BELIEVE such a presentation of the news subtly but effectively censors our sources of information.

Major fires, strikes and auto crashes are often featured in the 25 per cent portion of the program that has anything to do with news. These kinds of events are entertaining. They often emphasize violence or conflict on a person-to-person basis.

The larger issues which affect our nation and our lives are seldom reported. These are such issues as political viewpoints, money hunger, inflation, religion, the arms race, pollution, employment.

WHEN ENTERTAINMENT is called news, we are led into a subtle form of deception which amounts to censorship.

We are fortunate in the Detroit area to be able to receive televised news from Canada. The Canadian station often gives a more complete coverage of American news simply because more time is given to news than to entertainment.

Soviet tanks have not rolled into our cities. The newspapers and TV stations have not been seized. Yet we must be more aware of the subtle ways in which we are led to believe that being informed on the major issues of the day is less important than being entertained by some smiling faces on the tube.

It is our moral and religious right and responsibility to guard such sources of our freedom.

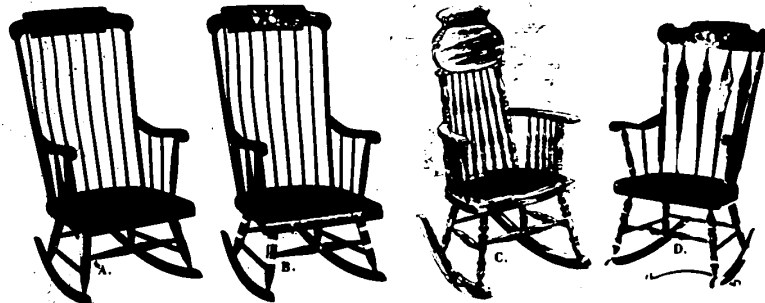
Reading help planned again at Madonna

Applications are now being received by the psychoeducational Center at Madonna College, Livonia, for summer classes in reading and related areas for children of elementary and high school levels. Classes will be held daily from June 29 to Aug. 4.

Admission to the summer program is contingent upon an evaluation of the student's learning potential and diagnostic analysis of his present difficulties in learning. The instructional program is geared to the identified needs of the student. Since time is an important factor in the evaluation process, an early registration is strongly recommended.

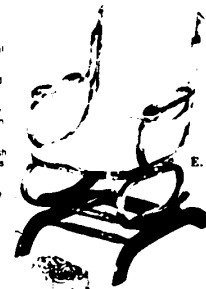
For further information, write or call Sister Mary Martina, director, Madonna College Psychoeducational Center, 36600 Schoolcraft, Livonia, 48150.

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