Chuck Ashman
Clown prince of ‘news’

River Pitchford

It is 7:59 a.m. in Los Angeles and Chuck Ashman is awake. The freeways are clear. It promises to be another smoggy day. Car radios are blaring and more people are listening to Chuck Ashman on KABC Radio than any other radio show on any other station at any other time.

The perpetual motion machine is grinding up.

Twelve times between 5 A.M. and 9 A.M. over the last ten years—every day, the Ashman File tackles corrupt politicians, absurd consumer ripoffs, show business oddities and any insane thing that happens to catch Ashman’s fancy. It is typical Ashman, irreverent, abrasive, dour slapping news designed to keep the natives, who are turned off by “upscale, between news” interested.

One hour he may be interviewing Lee Harvey Oswald’s mother about why she thinks her son was a patsy for the C.I.A., the next we’ll find him extolling the advantages of three dollar haircuts in small town America, the barbershops filled with life in the big city. It’s a kind of Jack Anderson/Larry Lewis “skidiphilosophizing” approach that keeps the listeners guessing, critics baying and the ratings up.

Back at Ashman’s mission control, a team of secretaries and researchers are sorting through hundreds of fan letters, speaking invitations and most important—news tips. When the peripatetic Ashman arrives he’ll look at them all, grab the phone and start checking a network of sources that include a Deputy Attorney General, several Congressmen, contacts in City Hall (rumored to include one cop, who as all investigative reporters know, knows more than anyone about the dirt swept under the political rug), one gangster, numerous cops and even his own competition. “I’m not proud.”

Sometimes he’s hit paydirt. When Richard Nixon flew to China with his Secret Service armada it cost the taxpayers $250,000. Ashman broke the story and the next night “Dean” Walter Cronkite, the official newsguy, repeated it and credited Ashman and KTTV as the local CBS affiliate groused.

In Washington D.C. Ashman got Attorney General Henry Goldwater—all of them—who admitted that Nelson Rockefeller was making a “damn good president.”

Ashman flew back to L.A. with the film still in his hop. When it aired, Cronkite again together with the N.Y. Times, New York Magazine and others credited Ashman as the old, old Ashman with the scoop.

It’s all fun and games with Ashman as a slapstick investigative reporter. “People want all kinds of stories. They are interested in what other people are doing, whether it is serious or fun.”

Also, they like a sense of humor. There’s too much uptightness in the world. Ashman says: “I’ve explained my philosophy of news: ‘We don’t have the right to shine it (news) down people’s throats.’”

As of this writing Ashman is researching the most controversial and successful news show in the country: Metro News, Metro News, Newspaper and TV show...

It’s a freak situation. What is fun and right is also commercial. I think I do on television what the Village Voice, Rolling Stone, the Vanguard and others are trying to do. Good solid investigative reporting coupled with some style and an awareness that society is changing and will not tolerate yesterday’s mediocrity.

Ashman shrugs aside criticism of his style: “Look, people want all kinds of news. When we come on at 11:30, viewers have probably had a drink, smoked a pot, made love or whatever. Their shoes legs kicked off and they simply don’t want something upright, starchy...
The ice-woman cometh

The PEOPLE — NEEDS AN ACT OF
CONSITUTIONAL ICE SCULPTURE.

The Joint Committee on the Historical
Preservation suggested that the United
States Capitol be decorated with 33
ice sculptures, each representing a
century of American history. However,
 neither the House nor the Senate
considered the proposal. The
ice sculptures were eventually
installed in the Capitol, but only
after great public outcry.

CHIANG KAI-SHEK
1926-1975

OFF SHORE ISLAND

What’s a hostage here or there?

A few days ago, Los Angeles police
officers shot and killed an elderly woman
who was being held hostage in an
automobile driven by fleeing bank robbers.
The LAPD reported that she was struck in
the head by a police bullet that ricocheted
inside the car.

Police Chief Ed Davis, commenting on
the incident, said, “This is a difficult
decision for a policeman to make,
because he doesn’t want to get shot.”
That statement was aired on radio and TV.

Chief Davis obviously did not have
his public relations flak leaf in place.
Evidently neither he nor his PR staff had thought
the situation through because this rare feat
of valor actually revealed the official
testing of the chief and the LAPD as to the
relative status of hostages in any police
action: that hostages will be sacrificed in
order to apprehend lawbreakers.

In short, hostages have as much if not
more to fear from the police than they do
from their abductors.

Although no official guideline may be
written down anywhere, it nevertheless
exists in the documented actions of police
agencies and military units.

The decision to make hostages sacrificial
lambs is something the public needs to know.

The Citizen Intelligence
Burt Wilson

Very little hit the newspapers at that
time about who made the decision to storm
the plane with guns blazing. The FBI was asked
if this action, in fact, was a product of
official guidelines on how such situations
would be handled in the future. The bureau
claimed up.

Since that action in 1970, numerous other
incidents have indicated that an official
policy does exist:

—A number of other hijacked planes in all
parts of the world have been similarly
stormed and innocent hostages killed.

—The aircraft that strafed the boats
carrying the USS Mayaguez hostages knew
they were endangering the US crewmen.

—Buildings containing both abductors and
hostages have been shot up by SWAT
squadrons.

—The daring Israeli raid on Uganda’s
Entebbe airport managed to free over 100
hostages, but also caused the deaths of
several.

In all of the above cases, including the
recent incident with the LAPD officers, the
killing of hostages by the “rescuing” police
agencies was played down in the press.
Ofﬁcial reports focused on capturing or
killing the terrorists or abductors and the
cost of innocent victims was minimized.

Obviously, a pattern exists. Precedents
have been set. And by emphasizing the
killing of innocent hostages, the public mind
is being conditioned to accept such
slaughter as routine. As a necessary evil. As
a built-in price that must be paid.

There is a growing suspicion that hostages
are being killed in order to avoid police
embarrassment at not being able to deal
with the particular situation. Rather than
think creatively, somebody, somewhere has
made a decision that the sacrifice of
hostages in police actions will be
acceptable in order to stop terrorists,
abductors or kidnappers.

This decision, which evidence indicates is
in force, was made quite arbitrarily by the
police agencies. The public, the people who
end up being police victims, have not been
asked whether or not they are willing to
accept this fate. They have not been given
any choice in the matter. No one has
consulted with the people’s representatives
as to whether official sanction should be
given with impunity to police agencies to
make that decision for the people.

Chief Davis and his PR person Lt. Dan
Cook did admit that the police officers who
shot up the fleeing car with the elderly
woman as hostage didn’t really have to —
that it was being followed by a helicopter
from above. The police knew a hostage was in
the car. What guideline — what training bulletin
led to the decision to fire, killing the
hostage?

Granted, these situations seem difficult
decisions, but the public is not served by an
unwritten arrangement designed to protect
the police department’s reputation first and
the lives of people second. That is the kind
of decision that one expects from a Fascist
state, not a republic such as ours. We have
a Police Commission that is supposed to
oversee police actions. This subject should
be given a good public airing.

The motto of the LAPD is “to protect and
to serve.” But protect and serve whom?

July 25 Los Angeles Vanguard page Fifteen

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‘Consenting Adults’: growing up gay

Consenting Adults by Laura Z. Hobson (Warner Books)

Laura Z. Hobson is best known for her novel, “Gentleman’s Agreement,” which was a sensation in 1955 when it was made into a movie starring anti-semitism in contemporary United States. The novel is a semi-autobiographical story about male homosexuality in contemporary America.

While neither book really broke new ground as to subject matter, both are important for popular discussion by evoking sympathy and interest in the lives of understandable protagonists. Both books do by portraying almost flawless gay men and women who are, unfortunately caught in a Vise, not of their own making. In

The best traditions of novel writing, Mrs. Hobson manages to bridge the empathy gap so that the reader feels with the central characters as well as for them. This is a story mainly about two people, a mother and a son, and about an era of changing social standards. The era is 1966 through 1973 and during this time homosexuality changed from being known as an aberrant vice into a public movement. In 1968, the son, Jeff, is an anguished seventeen year old senior in a private high school. He is the ideal all American boy: tall, handsome and brilliant. A student athlete, the youngest and well-loved son of a loving and loving parents. His anguish is caused by his conviction that he is homosexual. He fears the consequences of this becoming known, and in his attempts to keep it hidden, he gets increasingly scared and isolated. Verging on what he feels is the edge of suicide, he finally writes home to his mother begging for her support and psychiatric help.

Although the mother, Tessa, is shocked and horrified, she responds with the love she feels for him. Thus begins an odyssey for the various members of the family as well as Tessa and Jeff. It is an odyssey which starts by looking for a ‘cure’ for this illness and ends with a full acceptance of each of them by each other. During the journey, we feel their pain and their fears as they each try to live within a society that, either deliberately or carelessly, condones homosexuality. We feel the frustration of Tessa and Jeff’s attempts to deal with the helplessness of the therapists. We understand the love and patience and perseverance of the medical profession that can hope to cope with as Jeff grows into adulthood.

And having felt and seen and understood, we can think with Tessa, “this is just the beginning of oppressed people everywhere.”

Jeri Starr

Roger Falen

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"Greez": Third world delight

Time for Greez! ("Incalculations from the Third World"); Glide Publications / Third World Communications, 330 Ellis St., San Francisco, CA 94102; 210 pp. ($4.95)

is an exciting anthology of poems by a number of Asian, Black, American Indian and La Raza poets. It is remarkable on two counts. First, it contains many fine poems, poems about oppression and revolt, and survival, love and hate between people and about struggle between classes, poems as well as the mannered little productions which predominate in the literary magazines as the sun and the moon. The second reason the book is so necessary is that it was necessary in the first place! But, consider racism. Which U.S. poets can name you who attack racism in their poems, or even in one poem? Kenneth Patchen did, consistently. Many others? I don’t think so. Certainly the poets, the supposed visionaries of a given community, the leaders in a sense, would understand the need for an antiracist view. But this simply not so. It has probably not even occurred to most that racism is a disease, a crippling disease at that, among the working peoples of the world.

Racism, then, made this book necessary, due to both the special oppression suffered by blacks, as well as these poets as members of minorities, and the particular struggle to gaining print it has posed for them. As the editors put it in their preface, “What we all had in common was our involvement in writing, art, and all our community was our poverty, lack of power and resources in the publishing as a factor in all rebellion of racism, whatever the politics. Poverty is the main tool as well: the most honest foods out of oppression, so have our songs become the most beautiful and deepest sounds in the world. The ‘grees’ a feast — a sharing of our food. This book is a sharing of the spirits and a feast of words, music and symbols. It’s Time for Greez!”

The special discrimination these poets and their friends and families face and their struggle to find their lives yields, in many of these poems, a special force of resistance and experience for heading for revolt. These poems are not based on esthetics or language. They are not philosophical in some ideal void of what a poem ‘should be.’ There is little or nothing of mask or manner to them. At times they have the deepest level about our essence and experience, the authentic and the authentic, the authentic, and the authentic, to create. Among these people there lies the songs of before they were previously published, or even by Gettysburg, or Tessa Johnson, David Po, or Jessica T., who work in brand new, with the comments, the “fresh off the presses” Seraphin Mal Rodriguez.

…refresh off the general produce…”

…six year old alien who could only say hello goodbye thank you my name is terrible…

My grandmother kept her colony of Inrians with together and doab no one...in most of these poems, the language, cropping the poet’s experience, the real world of man and woman ideas which go beyond the fact. In few cases these words were from the real life of me. Here we street and struggle for our intelligent meat, not on a food. We are from the swamps from the real life of a mask.

Luis Syqua, Jr., “Dreams to proletarian poets,” is a new series of questions to put to the political...

Who are the poets? of the popular phrase “there are no worrisome but true cliches we use folks’ words”...

Who are the poets?...remembering that the hate paralelly..."...there is no problem..."...

Who are the poets?...peniless yet rich in spirit..."..."...struggle’s not afraid..."

Who are the poets?...made a viva la libertad..."...remember attentive to the battery..."...aware with the open mass action..."...

Who are the poets?...who do not search for glory or fame or fame..."..."...renowned..."..."...open mass action..."...

There are many of...unabashedly...as he..."...yes, a definite fit..."...
LEROY OUTLINES RHYTHMS OF CRITICISM

James Gibson Hanaker, H.L. Mencken, Edmund Wilson and myself, and the critics have no use for any of them.

VANGUARD: Yes, that’s real criticism. I could have pointed and spat the same four. These books are real criticism because they continue to sell. They are continually read. Your book, “Armada,” is a big seller, wherever I go. Edmund Wilson’s book of criticism sells off the shelves like mad. Mencken still sells like hell. These people tried to communicate in the best sense to reach a real audience, not to reach the English.

REXROTH: This is the business about elitism. They were gentlemen. Literature should be judged, as James Gibbons Huneker used to say, fine wine, horses and women. That may be Chauvinist, but it’s true, that touchstone taste is taste and you can’t be a critic unless you know what taste is. Now the one person who used to debunk the critical establishment which in those days was a part of the new critics, was Mandell Rylott. You would walk into a cocktail party, and everybody was talking about Kafka, and everybody would say, “What are you reading?”, and he would say, well, I’m reading “Crime on the Hearth.” He would love to pull the legs of his colleagues, although he wasn’t that kind of guy himself. The kind of appreciative, sensuous life that produces the kind of critic you’re talking about is not easy to live any more unless you live in considerable isolation. Look at Edmund Wilson’s last book about when he was getting very disabled and living in upstate New York, and how they finally put a run off from a freeway across his front yard, motorcycle boys ripped off stuff, you can’t get away from it. So, guy of leisure...

VANGUARD: Sort of gentleman of leisure. Back to Addison and Steel again.

REXROTH: Sure. But I live that way because I’ve always insisted on living that way. It’s amazing how I find these places, buried in the woods on the edge of a city. The house that we lived in, in that house France was the same kind of place. It’s got high rises on all sides up the canyon where we lived.

VANGUARD: I guess that’s what we have to look to. Thank you.

Ben Pleasants

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July 22 Los Angeles Vanguard paper seventeen

PET KENNETH REXROTH, wife Carol Tinker and dog make a "perfect picture" in their pleasant home surroundings. (Photo by Mark James.)


VANGUARD: I mean the ones in their twenties, their late twenties.

REXROTH: Does Black Sparrow publish anyone in their twenties?

VANGUARD: No, I don’t think so. I’m not sure. Why is that?

REXROTH: Well, people publish poets they know about, I guess.

VANGUARD: They don’t take chances on others?

REXROTH: There’s a block against people communicating. My wife Carol Tinker has a great deal of trouble publishing poetry because it’s not in the mainstream of modern verse. It doesn’t sound like stuff you read in American poetry magazines. They publish all kinds of Europeans or Latin Americans who are real far out, but they refuse to send him something like that by an American poet, you get back the schoolmaster’s little essay about what’s wrong with you and how you should straighten up and fly right. And he hates women.

VANGUARD: Why do poets quarrel so much?

REXROTH: Where is there no real power people always fight like rats? That’s why I left the East. I came to San Francisco, so as far away as I could get from the poetry market. I left it again two years after I left San Francisco. Somebody told me there were two hundred fifty poets in the suburb of Boston alone. And people come and tell me the most fantastic stories told by somebody they met in a place like City Lights Book Shop about me, just full of lies invented on a cold coffee unbelievably malicious. So, I came to Santa Barbara. I’ve been here eight years. Poetry readings all over the place, printing presses, every goddam thing — I’m going to have to move — deep in the Snake River.

WILLY BOBE, virtuoso timbal player, led his eight-piece group at Howard freshly’s “Concert by the Sea” through a performance which more closely resembled a Latin Vegas stage act than a jazz concert. Most of the evening, Bobe continued himself with a trumpet synchronized accompaniment on the cowbells and related trimming stories and one-liners between songs. His vocal work on several ballads revealed more feeling than anything he created on timbales. His back-up group, excepting some spirited sax and flute solos by Joel Peskin and a fantastic young drummer named Calvin Galcone, also performed their distinctive renditions of jazz standards like “Mr. Miracle” and “How Much?” were good and unorigi- nal. Willie Bobe seems caught in the rut of one night stands and the charging dollar. It’s sad to see someone with such outstanding musical talent so completely abandon a creative approach of jazz. I can only hope that this is a temporary state of affairs.

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Films

'Bingo Long'

Jim Crow strikes out

The Bingo Long Traveling All-Stars and Motor Kings, in high gear, are driving around the country heading for the Negro World Series. But right now they face two problems. First, the bus has been hijacked by a group of hoodlums who are demanding money. Second, they have to get their act together and win the big game. The players are not in sync, the coaches are not ready, and the fans are not sure what to expect. But the team, led by the determined coach, is determined to pull off the win and bring glory to their community.

Music

High on Harris

Beverly Harris has rapidly become a star in the world of jazz. Her unique style and technical skill have earned her a devoted following. Despite her success, she remains humble and dedicated to her craft. Her approach to jazz is pure passion, and her music is a reflection of the joy and excitement she feels when she plays. With each performance, she shares her love for the music and inspires those who listen. Her passion is infectious, and her music has the power to move people and bring them together.
EDITORIAL

Give blood-and-guts sports the boot

The recent Olympic gymnastic extravaganza at Montreal, devoid of violence and fecund with the beauty of human motion, is in direct contrast to the sadism of American sports exemplified by football and hockey.

The audience, swed by the performances of Nadia Comaneci, Olga Korbut and Nelli Kim, came away from their television sets in a kind of reverse that has not been equalled since Lindberg crossed the Atlantic in "The Spirit of St. Louis." Shun Fujimoto of Japan broke his leg in the middle of his routine; yet, contrived with pain, he finished dramatically and brilliantly.

Olga Korbut, no longer the darling of the Olympics, continued her career as an Olympic athlete with a dazzling routine on the balance beam, a routine she revolutionized. The audience rose to its feet in appreciation.

Unfortunately this fall the same network who sponsored such moving exhibitions of human courage and endurance will be priming the blood pump for football. The fans will go back to the old screams of "murder the game," "kick them into the ground," and the players will train for injuries and mayhem.

And what is the affect on the audience? Is violent sport a catharsis, or is it merely a celebration of Roman games, moving men and women toward primitive, bellicose instincts?

In football there are only winners and losers. Both have been known to tear up bar rooms, demolish quarters of a city and brawl in the streets.

That is, in effect, an American tradition. Sports in America, at least in part, assuages our desire for violence.

It is no accident that football is not a part of the Greek-inspired Olympic pattern. This kind of ice hockey played in the pro ranks would not be tolerated either.

The Greeks celebrated man an individuality and the beauty of form. It was left to the mass to turn sport into a mockery, a diversion for the mob.

We do not suggest the abandonment of football or ice hockey. We too enjoy the grace and beauty of an O.J. Simpson run, or a long bomb from Plunkett to Heron. We merely wonder if fans might get off their weekly fix of violence and cops by buying a leaf from the book of Rumania.

Why not have a weekly gymnastics exhibition spotlighting various performers, male and female? It could be done in the winter months when sports fans might prefer watching or reading about Olga Korbut and Nadia Comaneci in their quest for perfection, than being scared by football rookies hoping to be millionnaires.

The East Europeans, by supporting the grace and beauty of refined sport, uplift their people, while we, at the other end, wallow in the mire of ancient Rome.

Don’t Watch What We Say

Defoliants: stripping off the big leaf

Remember all those claims by manufacturers, the U.S. military and every administration involved in continuing the Vietnam War that the use of defoliants in Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam was harmless to humans?

While the enemy may be troops in Southeast Asia (though considerable much-needed crop acreage is still useless thanks to U.S. defoliants), that big lie should give us cause to examine other claims by the same parties.

And it was a lie. If anyone should have any doubts about this, they should ask the Italian Army, which has sent troops to the town of Sevasso, just outside Milan, to fence off an area contaminated by TDCD, one of the major defoliants used by the U.S. in Southeast Asia.

The L.A. Times reports that more than 30 people in Sevasso have been treated for "skin burns and other ailments," while dozens of pets and other animals are reported to have died, after a factory explosion sent 4-4 pounds of TDCD into the air.

During the Vietnam conflict, though countless anti-war groups documented the poisonous nature of the defoliants being used by the U.S. military, Americans were constantly assured by all official sources that the chemicals were harmless to humans. Now, since the contamination is in Italy and the manufacturer is a Swiss firm, we learn that it is a dangerous substance.

If all this tells us we should not trust our government, it also suggests that our newspapers are not to be believed either. Every paper during the war carried official denial as when reporting any of the anti-war movement’s charges about the defoliants. This was all in the interest of "objectivity."

But look at the Times—Reuter story July 26. Not only was the official standard official denial of missing. Nobody bothered to contact the Swiss firm where the mishap occurred.

We are left with only two possible conclusions: either our newspapers, and the L.A. Times in particular, go out of their way to avoid embarrassing the government, or they go out of their way to make a small story in a foreign country more juicy. Maybe it’s a combination of the two...
Liberals’ bugger's ouster

By Terry Bihn

When he was taken to court, Brinkman invoked the fifth amendment more than 90 times...Finally, Brinkman was granted immunity and admitted to a massive program of political spying he had set up at the College.

The College Board, which he was impropriety on his resignation because he was again using strong criticism from the Los Angeles community, due to the improper use of the only black in the social sciences (see story in L.A. June 7, page 9), Brown says that Brinkman’s resignation came before the Board of Trustees and the vote was disappointing, the right-wing extremists on the Board voted against accepting Brinkman’s resignation. Three points were also made.

"Then Brinkman instituted illegal electronic eavesdropping and wiretapping at the central areas college where he had been put in charge of the administration. When this was discovered, Brinkman at first denied that any wiretapping was going on at the college. Later when he was taken to court, Brinkman is reported to have said that he was involved in this more than 90 times. Finally, in July 1973, before a special California legislature in the then-mayorship of Los Angeles. Brinkman was granted immunity from criminal prosecution and then admitted to a massive program of political spying that he had set up at the college.

"Under his direction, political spying on students, teachers, and community spokespersons was conducted. Secret files on students and teachers were sent to the sheriff’s office, the LAPD and the FBI.

"In 1972, the Reverend Jesse Byrd, a pastor of a Black church and a leader in the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, called for the resignation of Fred Brinkman because of Brinkman’s illegal electronic eavesdropping and wiretapping," says Pastor Brown.

"In 1974, the former State Assemblyman, Bill Greene (now a State Senator) called upon the Board of Trustees to dismiss Brinkman and two other administrators at Trade Tech.

In a press release, Bill Greene stated, “The testimony I have bore witness to these individuals and all persons engaged in illegal wiretapping have no place in our educational system.”

President Brinkman is currently on vacation until July 21 and has stated that “many leaders in the Black community are hoping that Brinkman will go back to his so-called vacation. We are hoping that his retirement will be made effective on July 31.”

Reverend Carl Brown is an active member of two Baptist ministerial associations and is now heading a “campaign for responsible administration” to help Trade Tech better serve the educational needs of the people who live and work in the metropolitan area of Los Angeles. He is meeting with and mailing letters to other Pastors and ministers in the central Los Angeles area.

Rev. Brown stated that “Members of the Black community at churches and businesses are really surprised that their friend, the testimony, could be abdicated on this vote which is so crucial to the future administration needs and interests.”

Brown says, “The Black community’s voters have already rallied to the support of Ralph Richardson whenever he ran for election. Even when he did not have the support of labor unions, the Black community’s voters still supported our friend, Ralph Richardson. This is why I am afraid that it will be a good faith effort, that it will be a white wash job, covering up the out-and-out criminal acts of administrators against members of the community.”

When the Reverend Carl Brown and other administrators in the central community will be working to get Ralph Richardson to reconsider and to vote to accept Brinkman’s resignation now.

Brown suggests that community members send telegrams or letters to Ralph Richardson, urging him to vote for accepting Brinkman’s resignation to: Ralph Richardson, 12043 Dewey, West Los Angeles and to send copies of the letters to Reverend Carl Brown, Tabernacle Community Baptist Church, 7915 S. Broadway, Los Angeles.

Brown concludes, “We have got to let Ralph Richardson and the other responsible members of the Board of Trustees know that we found out about Ralph Richardson’s resignation...and that we will not be swayed by a white wash job, covering up the out-and-out criminal acts of the administrators against members of the community.”

While waiting for the promised report, the Reverend Carl Brown and other pastors in the central community will be working to get Ralph Richardson to reconsider and to vote to accept Brinkman’s resignation now.

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