

READER

SAN DIEGO'S FREE WEEKLY

June 14, 1973

Saturday Review

AN EDUCATION

How the Del Mar Whiz Kids Blew 16 Million Bucks

Saturday Review's newly transplanted editorial staff of 75 had scarcely unpacked in San Francisco last October when the first of several financial tremors struck. Only after Charney and Veronis had gone back to the original investors for an additional \$5 million did word filter down that the magazine had nearly folded while the staff was out apartment hunting.

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BY BOBKUTTNER

One afternoon last winter, Nicholas H. Charney, editor-in-chief and chairman of the board of Saturday Review Industries, invited his staff to a slide show. The topic was not the charms of San Francisco, though most present were certainly new to the area. "Nick decided we should learn something about the look and feel of magazines," one senior editor recalls, "so he produced a sixth-grade audio-visual show. Don Wright, the art director, was at the back of the conference room running the projector. Nick was on a folding metal chair providing the voice-over."

Charney went on for nearly three hours, discoursing on good graphics and bad graphics, contrasting "old" magazines with new. *Look* had died because it was not with-it graphically, Charney told the audience, which included several former *Look* staffers. Other examples of yesterday's magazines were ordered up: *Harper's*, *Atlantic* and *The New Yorker*, which would last perhaps another five years. The *Newsweek* alumni in the room, all imposed at high salaries, were surprised to see a *Newsweek* cover flash on the screen. "Is that supposed to be there?" Charney inquired. Then some examples of "new magazines" that with hot graphics: *Man*, *Play*, *Rolling Stone*, *Ms.* and *Clear Creek*. Somebody observed that *Clear Creek* had folded.

Charney next discussed the distinction between "linear" publications, those that use primarily words, and non-linear ones, which make heavy use of graphics. A magazine must be able to pass a "flip-test" on a newsstand, said Charney, explaining that the back of the book is key, because many flippers flip from back to front. "Never mind if we have anything to say," an editor remembers thinking. "Can we stand up under the rigorous demands of flipper-ship?" Executive editor Ron Kriss, just hired from *Time*, was shredding a napkin, absolutely silent.

It has been just over a year since Nick Charney descended on New York flashing charts and projections over lunches at Lucece, offering five-and six-hundred dollar weekly salaries and the good life in San Francisco. Charney and his partner, John Veronis, had sold *Psychology Today* and acquired *Saturday Review*. Norman Cousins was out; Charney was remaking the turgid weekly into four flashy monthlies—*SR/Education*, *SR/Society*, *SR/Science* and *SR/Arts*. And Charney was hiring. For editors who had reached the heights of corporate publishing while still in their thirties, here was a heady opportunity: a chance to drop out without dropping out, to launch a fresh national magazine without having to bootstrap it, long-term contracts, moving expenses, and for the higher echelons, stock options. "We were told," one emigre recalls, "don't worry about advertising, we're going to do it from house industries. You just put out the best magazine you know how."

SR's newly transplanted editorial staff of 75 had scarcely unpacked in San Francisco last October when the first of several financial tremors struck. Only after Charney and Veronis had gone back to the original investors for an additional \$5 million did word filter down that the magazine had nearly folded while the staff was out apartment hunting. At one point, *SR* was over a million dollars in debt to the printer, who was

Bob Kuttner recently returned to Washington as national editor of *The Village Voice* after six months in San Francisco as a reporter with public television station KQED.

refusing to publish until the debt was paid. On Nov. 9, a memo assured the staff that the cash crisis was over, and urged everybody to "help us save money, large and small, where each of you can. We want to be sure that our resources go into people and editorial content, and not into avoidable delays, wastes, frills, and expenditures not central to our purpose..."

The authors of these sobering words had just dropped several hundred thousand dollars moving the editorial offices from New York to San Francisco, and were well into a second outline converting first a firehouse, then a warehouse, into a suitable funky-mod headquarters for the new *Saturday Review*. The memo went on to explain, in case there were any doubts, that "Profit is an important, not a nasty, word. We are a very special business, a business with a highly public calling, and one about which we feel strongly. But we are a business..."

Quite so. The editor-in-chief and chairman of the board of Saturday Review Industries habitually referred to his quadrumvirate of magazines as "the business," pronounced in three measured syllables, biz-ness, as if it might be a family dry-goods store. At thirty-one, Nick Charney was still the wunderkind, breezily confident in the mystique of California living and his computers to solve all ills, volunteering charts, eager to share the secret of how he does it. In an interview before the four magazines collapsed, Charney, with no particular prompting, sketched a graph to demonstrate precisely how *SR*'s pre-tax profit would have increased to nearly \$10 million by 1976, presto. "We have tried to take the unpredictability out of starting magazines," said Charney. "We are a group of young bright individuals. We've got one foot into tomorrow..."

Like the fellow down the hall in the dorm who made a small fortune on the laundry concession and wants to borrow a hundred dollars so he can move on to charter flights, Charney looks to the future. Charney's boyish insecurity sometimes leads him to lean on weak or incompatible advisors and to dress up his talk and lifestyle with financial hyperbole. His is part owner of a ranch in Bolinas and is still trying to unload a \$750,000 white elephant complete with grottos and artificial boulders left over from his days in Del Mar. "Nick is basically a promoter, and a brilliant one," says an associate. "But he doesn't know anything about managing a magazine."

Charney and Veronis' formula for remaking *Saturday Review* was an embellishment on several currently fashionable publishing axioms. First, this is the age of the specialty magazine. Second, monthlies produce a higher per-copy revenue than weeklies. Third, the subscriber should be a major source of direct income, not just a customer to attract advertisers. The new *SR* was to combine all three axioms (and others) into a neat equation: the general interest 11c weekly reborn as four specialized 50c-and-up monthlies. The cost, Charney explained, was a mere fraction of the expense for starting such a venture from scratch, because they were building on an established magazine and a base of existing subscribers. *Psychology Today*, with its slick graphics and aggressive marketing, was a rough model. With *PT* and its merchandising spin-off, Communications/Research/Machines (CRM), Charney and Veronis had shown it was possible to use a magazine as a vehicle to sell not only advertising, but mailing lists and a whole array of ancillary products, like lab kits, film strips, games, travel packages and textbooks. As Veronis put it to Robert Stein for an article in *New York* early last year: "We don't consider the reader as a \$12-a-year subscriber to a magazine, but as a potential \$100-a-year customer in the magazine's field of interest for books, records, games, posters, video cassettes, conferences, school courses and other products and services." Partner Charney insisted, however, that these spin-offs were never uppermost in his thoughts. The game plan was to put out four specialty magazines.

In short, Charney and Veronis were publishing a marketing formula. All that remained was to fill in some editorial content to accompany it. "This is the age of the specialty magazine, all right," says Alfred Meyer, who recently quit as managing editor of *SR/Science*. "But successful specialty magazines usually bubble up because of some real interest. They are difficult to impose from above." As long as the financial equation seemed to be working, Charney and Veronis let their newly acquired editors edit. The honeymoon ended with the emergency \$5 million capital infusion last October.

Actually, most of the money was used up almost as soon as it came in: over a million to pay the printer, most of the rest on a massive, 18-million-piece mailing. Less than a million dollars was set aside to operate the magazines until this summer, when Charney and Veronis hoped the renewal cycle would revive the cash flow. By February, *SR* was out of cash again.

NEXT WEEK IN PART TWO: The ultimate demise of the Del Mar Whiz Kids.

events

Actors' Quarter 4801 Elm 234-9376
 California State Univ. 236-5254
 San Diego 236-5254
 Babco Park 236-7854
 14th & C Sts. 236-7854
 Community Concourse 306 & 5th 433-8556
 Coronado Playhouse 3785 Ocean Front Walk 488-8001
 Crystal Palace Theatre 232-7931
 Fine Arts Gallery 31243 17th Ave 291-1786
 Fox Ave 4079 14th 583-3300
 Jewish Community Center 7917 Grand Ave 459-3001
 La Jolla Museum 700 Prospect St 454-0193
 Mission Playhouse 3960 Mason, Old Town 236-6453
 Old Globe Theatre 239-2255
 Palmer College 144-1150
 Pacific Playhouse 373 Hale Ave, Escondido 746-6669
 Pacific Playhouse 373 Hale Ave, Escondido 746-6669
 San Diego Art Institute Babco Park 239-5480
 San Diego Public Library 820 E Street 204-4171
 Sports Arena 3500 Sports Arena Blvd 239-5480
 Trunkan Art Gallery Babco Park 453-0000
 USSJ 204-3211
 USSJ 239-0391
 USSJ 150 Cedar Street 442-0473
 USSJ Performing Arts 1340 Broadway, El Cajon

dance
 SUMMER DANCE FESTIVAL, San Diego Civic Center, San Diego City College Theatre, Friday, June 8, 8 P.M.
 I published dancer will be ballerina Maria Tancher, daughter of a chef and an actress of the Chicago Indians.

film
 SUDDENLY LAST SUMMER, Tennessee Williams Film Series, Fine Arts, Recital Hall, Grossmont College, Tuesday, June 12, 8 P.M.

museums and galleries
 NAVAJO ARTS AND CRAFTS — jewelry and exhibits of Navajo rug weaving, silver casting, turquoise jewelry arts, by Navajo Arts and Crafts Guild of Window Rock, Arizona, Museum of Man, Babco Park, June 9 through June 17, 10 A.M.-4:30 P.M.

GALLERY 8, traditional and contemporary African art, as well as other hand-made crafts (jewelry, ceramics, baskets, weavings) from U.S. and abroad, International Center, Matthews Campus, UCSD Tuesday, through Sunday, 11 A.M.-3 P.M.

HU CHI-CHUNG, paintings by contemporary artist of Fifth Moon group, representative of Chinese modern painting movement, Fine Arts Gallery, June 15.

THE HANDS OF THE PEOPLE WHO ARE BUILDING ISRAEL, graphics by Martin Wiener. Also paintings, drawings and lithographs by Fritz Scholder, graphics by Francisco Zurbarán and Rufina Tamayo. Introducing paintings by Virginia Newcomb. Orr's Gallery, 2200 Fourth Ave., San Diego June 15.

TEMPURA and watercolor paintings by Robert Vickers, leading American realist, through July 8. Fine Arts Gallery, Babco Park.

INDIANS OF THE WEST COAST. Rare items of 19th-century photographs and artifacts depicting life of the Indians. San Diego Public Library.

MIXED MEDIA by Valerie Harrison and Roberta Clements Corridor Gallery, San Diego Public Library.

music
 TOE JAM Thursday, June 7, Toe Jam and Everyday, Thursday, Friday, June 8, Glory, Pinnacle, Tilman, Thomas, Saturday, June 9, Glory, Tuesday, June 12, The Palace, 4025 Pacific Highway, San Diego.
 EXCERPTS FROM "THE FANTASTICS" and "Archy and Mehitabel," Young Actors Workshop, May, Star of the Sea Auditions, 7727 Grand, La Jolla, Thursday and Friday, June 7 and 8, 7:30 P.M.
 MUSIC OF THE 70's, UCSD Music Department, Matthews Campus, Recital Hall, Friday, June 8, 7:30 P.M.
 ALL BACH PROGRAM, St Paul's Episcopal Church, 2728 Sixth, San Diego, Friday, June 8, 8 P.M.
 TIM WEISBERG, Neutral Ground, 4693 University Avenue, San Diego, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, June 7, 8, and 9, 8:00 and 11:00 P.M.
 GROSS JUNCTION, Folks Arts, Friday and Saturday, June 8 and 9, 8 P.M.
 ORGANIST JIM HANSEN, Southland Music Center, 3459 Imperial Ave, Lemon Grove, Saturday, June 9, 8 P.M.
 SAN DIEGO CIVIC YOUTH ORCHESTRA and Yale Glee Club, Civic Theatre, Saturday, June 9, 8 P.M.
 ITS GETTING LATE, a folk-rock musical and jazz oratorio by Cam Flora, First Presbyterian Church, 320 Dale Street, San Diego, Sunday, June 10, 7:30 P.M.
 LARRY CORYELL, Neutral Ground, 4693 University Avenue, San Diego, Monday, June 11, 8:00 and 11:00 P.M.

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 Lyrics by **BYRON BARRY**
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ONCE A HEAD ALWAYS AHEAD

—Jane Weisman Stein—
 There is a certain kind of San Diego business which is licensed to operate as a "retail-wholesale variety store," but which doesn't carry any ready-made dresses, or plastic housewares, or Sunset gardening books. This kind of variety store is better known as a head shop. And it sells items of interest to people who enjoy posters, underground comic books, and assorted paraphernalia needed for the consumption of marijuana.

"A head shop sells items that are on the border of acceptability by society," said one owner who left his job as an oceanographer to become a partner in a head shop. "Anything that is trippy, we sell it, if offered another owner."
 Head shops are a fairly recent phenomenon. They seemed to appear first in the mid-sixties around the Greenwich Village area in New York City, and near the bigger college campuses. When the "flower children" invaded the Haight-Asbury district of San Francisco, scores of shops selling posters, black lights, incense, and cigarette papers filled the streets.

In San Diego, the first head shops appeared around 1966. Most of the original shops are now defunct, or have evolved into record shops, boutiques, or book stores. But a number of legitimate head shops still thrive, and cigarette papers are their best sellers. All the owners of local head shops are optimistic about the future, and believe head shops are here to stay.
 Synthetic Trips, Inc., on University Avenue, is the oldest continuously operating head shop in the San Diego area. The shop's corporation's president and vice-president, Vin and Steve McCully, work in Levin's instead of suits. The corporation not only owns the head shop, but also produces the shop's own leather goods, stationery, flyers, carborundum (glass tubes used for cooling marijuana smoke), and a series of black light posters that has sold over 300,000 copies in the past five years.

Vin McCully, wearing a black leather cap and chain smoking Marlboros, explains how he invented a "Spin-Out" machine to produce his line of copyrighted "Sunburn" posters. Behind the store's glowing black light poster shop, his assistant demonstrates McCully's invention, placing a big blue sheet with a white circle on to an easel. With special black light paint, and centrifugal force, the "Spin-Out" machine creates the unique poster that sells about 25,000 copies every six months, all over the nation.

"I'd say our success has to do with several things," said McCully. "We have proper management, a poster and our own products that sell, and we don't wheel and deal in dope."
 McCully said he has seen about twenty or thirty shops open and close in the past five years. A lot of them were fronts for dope dealers and the owners were eventually arrested and run out of town. He said that when Synthetic Trips first opened in 1967, they encountered some harassment from the police, until "the police found out what we

"The shop was in downtown Long Beach, and like many downtown areas, it died, and so did the shop." He looks a bit nervous behind his gold-rimmed glasses. John said they decided to move to San Diego, "because we hated L.A. and loved San Diego."

The Convention had the most creative selection of pipes and other paraphernalia. One pipe was decorated like a toilet, and executed in glazed ceramic. Another roach holder was a hand-painted ceramic, surfer, complete with printed goggles. The surfer held the roach in his open mouth, as he sat astride his surfboard.
 "Now that paraphernalia is gaining acceptability, we want to carry new and interesting things," said John. He looks for items other stores won't or don't carry and encourages people to come in with new products.

Marty, one of the two full-time employees, showed me their most expensive pipe. For \$32 you can own a two-foot-long bamboo pipe from Hawaii, complete with cooled leather decorations and deer horn pipe bowl. For more plebian tastes, they offer a clay pipe for fifty cents.
 People in Chula Vista can purchase what they want at Different Strokes. The owner, a friendly, attractive woman named Jean, was once in the plumbing business, selling the other kind of pipes.

"I bought the store for my son," (continued on page 7, col. 3)

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NOTICES

THE SACRAMENTS without the...
THE SACRAMENTS without the...
THE SACRAMENTS without the...

CELEBRATE WEDNESDAYS with...
CELEBRATE WEDNESDAYS with...
CELEBRATE WEDNESDAYS with...

SEMINAR on philosophical and...
SEMINAR on philosophical and...
SEMINAR on philosophical and...

THE NATURAL HEALTH SOCIETY is...
THE NATURAL HEALTH SOCIETY is...
THE NATURAL HEALTH SOCIETY is...

COMING SOON... which for at Grand...
COMING SOON... which for at Grand...
COMING SOON... which for at Grand...

HELP de-criminalize marijuana...
HELP de-criminalize marijuana...
HELP de-criminalize marijuana...

FOR RENT large studio apartment...
FOR RENT large studio apartment...
FOR RENT large studio apartment...

HOUSE FOR RENT June 20-27...
HOUSE FOR RENT June 20-27...
HOUSE FOR RENT June 20-27...

FOR RENT apt. two-bedroom, fur...
FOR RENT apt. two-bedroom, fur...
FOR RENT apt. two-bedroom, fur...

FOR RENT... new furnished hideaway...
FOR RENT... new furnished hideaway...
FOR RENT... new furnished hideaway...

I NEED A PLACE to live in July...
I NEED A PLACE to live in July...
I NEED A PLACE to live in July...

NEED A PLACE to live until the end...
NEED A PLACE to live until the end...
NEED A PLACE to live until the end...

ROOM FOR RENT One or two mello...
ROOM FOR RENT One or two mello...
ROOM FOR RENT One or two mello...

FEMALE ROOMMATE needed to share...
FEMALE ROOMMATE needed to share...
FEMALE ROOMMATE needed to share...

ROOMMATE WANTED Girl looking...
ROOMMATE WANTED Girl looking...
ROOMMATE WANTED Girl looking...

CHEAP RENT Two roommates...
CHEAP RENT Two roommates...
CHEAP RENT Two roommates...

COMMUNE We believe in love...
COMMUNE We believe in love...
COMMUNE We believe in love...

UCSD GRAD STUDENT couple want...
UCSD GRAD STUDENT couple want...
UCSD GRAD STUDENT couple want...

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FOR RENT South Mission luxury...

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FREE WOMAN'S SELF-DEFENCE...
FREE WOMAN'S SELF-DEFENCE...

FLUTE AND PICCOLO lessons from...
FLUTE AND PICCOLO lessons from...
FLUTE AND PICCOLO lessons from...

rides
I AM LEAVING for Alaska around June...
I AM LEAVING for Alaska around June...

NEED RIDE to Wisconsin Appleton or...
NEED RIDE to Wisconsin Appleton or...
NEED RIDE to Wisconsin Appleton or...

SPARKS WASH Driving 12-100...
SPARKS WASH Driving 12-100...
SPARKS WASH Driving 12-100...

pregnant and troubled? Consider...
pregnant and troubled? Consider...
pregnant and troubled? Consider...

ALL CLOCKS REPAIRED very...
ALL CLOCKS REPAIRED very...
ALL CLOCKS REPAIRED very...

FOR A NATAL CART, personality...
FOR A NATAL CART, personality...
FOR A NATAL CART, personality...

WANTED good natured Sagittarius...
WANTED good natured Sagittarius...
WANTED good natured Sagittarius...

YOGA a four-week course covering...
YOGA a four-week course covering...
YOGA a four-week course covering...

NON-SMOKER NON-DOPPER 23...
NON-SMOKER NON-DOPPER 23...
NON-SMOKER NON-DOPPER 23...

amazing but true
You can sell the most amazing things...
amazing but true

personals
A J... I wanted you to know that I...
A J... I wanted you to know that I...

FREE KITTENS, long and short hair...
FREE KITTENS, long and short hair...
FREE KITTENS, long and short hair...

THANK YOU, St. Jude, for the prayer...
THANK YOU, St. Jude, for the prayer...
THANK YOU, St. Jude, for the prayer...

SCOTT: Just one last good-bye...
SCOTT: Just one last good-bye...
SCOTT: Just one last good-bye...

LOVING, affectionate kitten Puddles...
LOVING, affectionate kitten Puddles...
LOVING, affectionate kitten Puddles...

DIANA... it is really 4:30:37...
DIANA... it is really 4:30:37...
DIANA... it is really 4:30:37...

HALF-SIBBIEMSE kitten, silver grey...
HALF-SIBBIEMSE kitten, silver grey...
HALF-SIBBIEMSE kitten, silver grey...

TO THE BEAUTY with blonde hair...
TO THE BEAUTY with blonde hair...
TO THE BEAUTY with blonde hair...

MICHAEL T. of UCSD—Dragon Slayer...
MICHAEL T. of UCSD—Dragon Slayer...
MICHAEL T. of UCSD—Dragon Slayer...

JAMCO—If you think last summer...
JAMCO—If you think last summer...
JAMCO—If you think last summer...

CUSTOM ORTHO MATTRESS...
CUSTOM ORTHO MATTRESS...
CUSTOM ORTHO MATTRESS...

YARD SALE Saturday and Sunday...
YARD SALE Saturday and Sunday...
YARD SALE Saturday and Sunday...

FOUR NEW TIRES, wheels and caps...
FOUR NEW TIRES, wheels and caps...
FOUR NEW TIRES, wheels and caps...

TWO BIG BOOKCASES \$15, six foot...
TWO BIG BOOKCASES \$15, six foot...
TWO BIG BOOKCASES \$15, six foot...

REGISTERED QUARTER HORSE...
REGISTERED QUARTER HORSE...
REGISTERED QUARTER HORSE...

REGISTERED ARABIAN Mare...
REGISTERED ARABIAN Mare...
REGISTERED ARABIAN Mare...

22-FOOT WOOD SLOOP Has cabin...
22-FOOT WOOD SLOOP Has cabin...
22-FOOT WOOD SLOOP Has cabin...

STEREO Great deal AM-FM stereo...
STEREO Great deal AM-FM stereo...
STEREO Great deal AM-FM stereo...

for sale
ANOTHER SANDAL SHOP Handcrafted...
ANOTHER SANDAL SHOP Handcrafted...

LAST GARAGE SALE Saturday, June...
LAST GARAGE SALE Saturday, June...
LAST GARAGE SALE Saturday, June...

WILSON 4-20 tennis racket, good...
WILSON 4-20 tennis racket, good...
WILSON 4-20 tennis racket, good...

ENLARGER Dejar, up to 2 1/2 x 3 1/2...
ENLARGER Dejar, up to 2 1/2 x 3 1/2...
ENLARGER Dejar, up to 2 1/2 x 3 1/2...

BACKPACKS Two magnesium...
BACKPACKS Two magnesium...
BACKPACKS Two magnesium...

SURFBODIES CHEAPI New, 8' x 3 1/2...
SURFBODIES CHEAPI New, 8' x 3 1/2...
SURFBODIES CHEAPI New, 8' x 3 1/2...

TURKISH PUZZLE Rings, any size...
TURKISH PUZZLE Rings, any size...
TURKISH PUZZLE Rings, any size...

CS 33 PIONEER SPEAKERS (2), \$30...
CS 33 PIONEER SPEAKERS (2), \$30...
CS 33 PIONEER SPEAKERS (2), \$30...

CONCORD STEREO tape recorder...
CONCORD STEREO tape recorder...
CONCORD STEREO tape recorder...

REFRIGERATOR large, Walnut's Hole...
REFRIGERATOR large, Walnut's Hole...
REFRIGERATOR large, Walnut's Hole...

PORTABLE CASSETTE recorder, \$40...
PORTABLE CASSETTE recorder, \$40...
PORTABLE CASSETTE recorder, \$40...

SONY TC130 cassette recorder...
SONY TC130 cassette recorder...
SONY TC130 cassette recorder...

SIX-FOOT SOFA, folds down to double...
SIX-FOOT SOFA, folds down to double...
SIX-FOOT SOFA, folds down to double...

TOASTER manual lawnmower dish...
TOASTER manual lawnmower dish...
TOASTER manual lawnmower dish...

ELECTRIC HOT PLATE, two burners...
ELECTRIC HOT PLATE, two burners...
ELECTRIC HOT PLATE, two burners...

SEARS air conditioner, for most cars...
SEARS air conditioner, for most cars...
SEARS air conditioner, for most cars...

VACATION PACKAGE—18 foot...
VACATION PACKAGE—18 foot...
VACATION PACKAGE—18 foot...

MOVING, need cash: Polaroid 103...
MOVING, need cash: Polaroid 103...
MOVING, need cash: Polaroid 103...

TELEVISION
Senae Watergate Hearing...
Senae Watergate Hearing...

Thursday
June 7
THE INNOCENTS, Part II, Deborah...
THE INNOCENTS, Part II, Deborah...

Friday,
June 8
THE SHOES OF A FISHERMAN...
THE SHOES OF A FISHERMAN...

Saturday,
June 9
JAZZ IN THE ROUND, a tribute to the...
JAZZ IN THE ROUND, a tribute to the...

Monday,
June 11
THE LEOPARD starring Bill Lancaster...
THE LEOPARD starring Bill Lancaster...

Tuesday,
June 12
INTERLUDE, starring Oscar Werner...
INTERLUDE, starring Oscar Werner...

Wednesday,
June 13
WATERGATE HEARINGS, Complete...
WATERGATE HEARINGS, Complete...

Thursday,
June 14
THE FIREBIRD—Igor Stravinsky...
THE FIREBIRD—Igor Stravinsky...

Friday,
June 15
THE GOLDEN AGE OF THE...
THE GOLDEN AGE OF THE...

Saturday,
June 16
THE FIREBIRD—Igor Stravinsky...
THE FIREBIRD—Igor Stravinsky...

Sunday,
June 17
DARK AS A DUNGEON, Folk singers...
DARK AS A DUNGEON, Folk singers...

HEAD SHOPS
involved and to keep illegal sub...
involved and to keep illegal sub...

paraphernalia was still vague...
paraphernalia was still vague...
paraphernalia was still vague...

But Dobson discounted the all-...
But Dobson discounted the all-...
But Dobson discounted the all-...

Dobson said that officers rarely...
Dobson said that officers rarely...
Dobson said that officers rarely...

He explained that the law...
He explained that the law...
He explained that the law...

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WELCOME BACK, AGE OF EXCESS

Historians are fond of applying descriptive phrases to segments of our past. The 17th Century is known to many as the Age of Enlightenment, the 18th Century is often referred to as the Age of Reason, with some of its accompanying accuracy the 20th Century has been identified as the Age of Anxiety. In music, at least, the 19th Century would probably qualify as the Age of Excess.

This was the time of the flamboyant virtuoso, the burgeoning symphony orchestra, the symphonies of "heavenly lightning." Fainting was the fashion, and women dropped like flies at the feet of such powerhouses as Franz Liszt. An extended trill from Liszt's piano was enough to cause flutterings and palpitations. A rush of chords was sure to produce at least a half dozen full-bodied sweats.

Competitions between performers were all the rage, and not even Beethoven found it undignified to do battle with a fellow virtuoso in free improvisation. The "anything you can play I can play louder and faster" syndrome wasn't just confined to the commercial publicity-grubbers. Even Mozart, that paragon of taste, gleefully participated in these musical sparring matches.

One of the more entertaining symptoms of this fever of megalomania were the Monster Concerts arranged by the 19th Century Monster Concert specialist, Louis Moreau Gottschalk. The rationale was: if music played on two pianos sounds good, music played on ten pianos must sound five times better. Actually, Gottschalk didn't operate on such a modest scale. Once he assembled 900 performers on one stage in Havana for a Monster Concert. Impressive? Not when you consider the 22,000 players who were got together for a festival in New Orleans. No one can ever accuse Gottschalk of thinking small.

Though some feebly proclaim that "Nostalgia ain't what it used to be," in music it's very much an "in" thing. The Romantic Revival, one of the more endearing eccentricities of our contemporary musical life, is increasingly regarded as an amiable antidote for those who think that too much contemporary music takes itself too seriously. One of our virtuosos who specializes in the music of an obscure 19th century composer, strides out onto the concert platform in a long cape and top hat. It's fun, and it doesn't hurt the music a bit. Freely, the Monster Concert concept has been given a new lease on life by the Romantic Revival, mostly through the efforts of Gottschalk expert Eugene List. List organized his own "Mini-Minor-Monster Concert" (only 10 pianos and 14 pianists) and offered it to the first seriously beguiled audience that assembled for it at midnight in New York's Philharmonic Hall. On the program were such noise makers as Rossini's "Semiramide" Overture arranged by Henry Wood, the 12 bang-tall Gottschalk's own arrangement of the Rossini "William Tell" Overture and his own "La Gallina."

With this new wave sweeping across its stage, Philharmonic Hall looked like Steinway's 57th Street showplace. The sounds they produced were nothing like New York had ever heard before. Gottschalk would have been ecstatic.

—Ernie Gilbert

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ANTHONY NEWMAN: MAVERICK HARPSICHORDIST

In a recent TIME Magazine review, keyboard wizard Anthony Newman was dubbed "high priest of the harpsichord, a turtlenecked Bachian missionary not seen since the days of the late Wanda Landowska and Albert Schweitzer." Clever copy writing! Yes, but to anyone who has ever seen an Anthony Newman concert, it's almost superfluous. What better way to describe both Newman's zeal and the fervent response of his mostly youthful following? At a recent sold-out Philharmonic Hall concert, Newman invited his audience to "Come on, boys, front so you'll be nearer the music." With hundreds sitting before the stage and in the aisles, Newman's concert took on all the appearances of intense and deeply felt ritual.

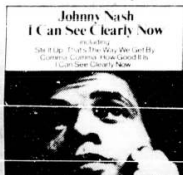
To some critics the traditionalists of the music establishment, Newman is something of a maverick. He plays Bach with the sort of gutsy approach that can surprise and even outrage the conservatives. Some reviewers have accused him of trying to break all existing sacred cows. But among aficionados, there is pretty general agreement that Newman has technique to burn and that his Bach, no matter how unorthodox, "works." When the New YORK TIMES critic described Newman as "a keyboard technician of staggering facility, on the scale of Horowitz," he gave a pretty good indication of his incredible skill. "Dazzling," "fanciful," "impetuous," "reletrifying," "stunning," "extraordinary," "stimulating," "astonishing," "extraordinary" are a few of the other adjectives used to describe Newman's harpsichord and organ playing. But they only provide a clue to the sort of driving excitement he brings to his work. The man has to be heard. Newman's decision to amplify the naturally small sound of the harpsichord also raised a few eyebrows, even though one writer noted that amplification merely raised the level of the instrument "from a whisper to, say a murmur." But Newman couldn't care less. As he moves closer to fill off his harpsichord to Town Hall, for one of his concerts, he turned to a nearby interviewer and said, "I'm going to amplify the hell out of this. I don't care what they think." But don't be misled into thinking that Newman is a complete iconoclast. For his new recording of Bach's Brandenburg Concertos he used original baroque instruments for most of the key parts. And he certainly seemed to get through to the scholarly critic of High Fidelity Magazine who called the set "one of the most important baroque records of the decade." Away from music, Newman is a serious and thoughtful man. Many of his views are well known to readers of ROLLING STONE which devoted a couple of articles to him recently. The publication embraced him as an unshakable and hip contemporary artist, but didn't scribble on his purely musical achievements. The Stone's reviews of two of Newman's Columbia Bach records are extraordinarily perceptive.

Newman is deeply committed to Zen and practices meditation an average of three hours a day which, incidentally, he considers much tougher than practicing Bach for the same period of time. He is also a firm believer in Astrology. He casts his own horoscope, and halts all creative activities if the planets aren't in favorable position. His family, teaching schedule and ritual and a ledger dates don't leave Newman too much time for himself. But that's something to be rectified in the future. Right now, there are a lot of things to be taken care of.

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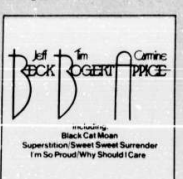
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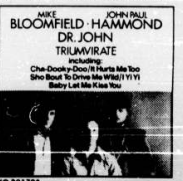
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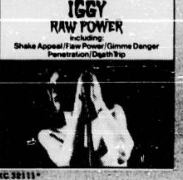
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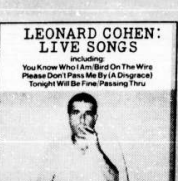
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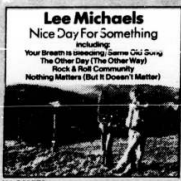
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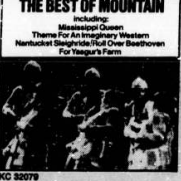
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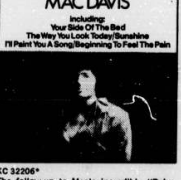
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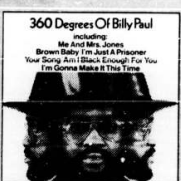


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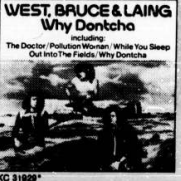


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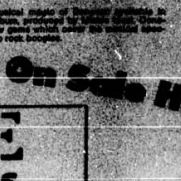
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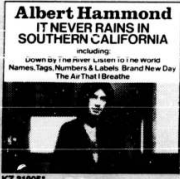
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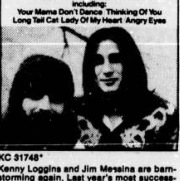
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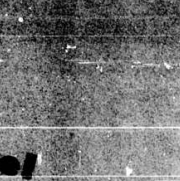
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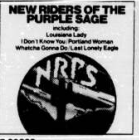
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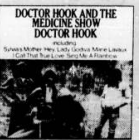
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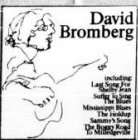
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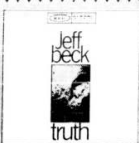
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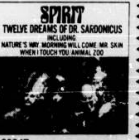
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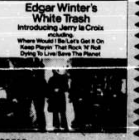
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RIVERSIDE 1000 E. 17th St 714-483-9079	ANAHIM 1000 E. 17th St 714-533-9220	SANTA MONICA 1000 E. 17th St 394-7908	WHITTIER 1000 E. 17th St 943-9049	PASADENA 1000 E. 17th St 449-9988	WOODLAND HILLS 1000 E. 17th St 255-9984	PACIFIC BEACH 1000 E. 17th St 714-275-9552	SAN DIEGO 1000 E. 17th St 714-287-3064	CHULA VISTA 1000 E. 17th St 714-472-9314	EL CAJON 1000 E. 17th St 714-444-9773