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Total Television: Revised Edition



Synopsis

A TV guide includes more than 5,400 series, prime-time fall schedules for every season, more than one thousand noteworthy specials, more cable series than ever before, Nielsen's top twenty season by season, Emmy and Peabody award winners, and more.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Like author/critics from Roger Ebert and Pauline Kael to Joel Whitburn and Fred Bronson, TV historian Alex McNeil has a fun but never-ending job. He charts the myriad of programs that have appeared on broadcast networks (including those, like Dumont, which no longer exist), cable, and in syndication. His fun comes in praising the praiseworthy, trashing the deserving, goreing sacred Hollywood cows and keeping a critical expert's eye on important pop culture strands and shifts. "Total Television" is exhaustive, enjoyable, fun and fact-filled reading from any page it's read. McNeil generously shares facts, transporting you to time, channel, cast (sometimes literally in hundreds) and summaries of thousands of familiar and long-forgotten TV shows. TV's giants (from Walt Disney and Captain Kangaroo to Oprah Winfrey and "Monday Night Football") receive their fair space, while McNeil also chronicles changes in TV daytime dramas, game, talk, and sports shows. McNeil's consistent irreverence and historical perspective is remarkable. He salutes Walt Disney for creating TV's first mini-series (the wildly popular "Davy Crockett") while also creating TV's first "synergy" (TV show promotes park and films, which promote movies and TV show). McNeil also gives long-running, non-cult classics like "Gunsmoke," "Knots Landing," and "Wagon Train" their

proper respect while chronicling the knotty, behind-the-scenes problems plaguing stars from Nat Cole to Judy Garland to Jerry Lewis to Sammy Davis, Jr., and the respective failures of their 50s-60s variety shows. (He recalls failed sitcoms like "Family Dog" and "The Waverly Wonders" with especially sweet relish).

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