Osher Lectures:  
A Return to Television’s Promise  

By Henry DeVries

The critics of television have always been harsh. In the words of comedian Groucho Marx: “I find television to be very educational. Whenever someone turns on the set, I go into the other room and read a book.”

Stanley Faer, however, is someone who appreciates the power of television.

Before he retired to San Diego, Faer was an associate director at CBS Television and recipient of the Directors Guild of America Lifetime Achievement Award.

Faer’s career in television began when he was hired in 1958 to work in the CBS mailroom and deliver letters to the likes of Edward R. Murrow and Ed Sullivan. By 1969 he climbed the career ladder to associate director, where he would work on countless variety specials and sporting events including NFL football, PGA golf and NBA basketball.

During the 1970s he was on the Emmy Award-winning team for NFL football broadcasts with famed CBS announcer Brent Musberger. He directed segments of the Mike Douglas talk show and Dick Clark’s TV’s Bloopers and Practical Jokes. Plus he was the associate director on a number of Miss USA and Miss Universe beauty pageants and 15 New Year’s Eve specials with such entertainers as Gladys Knight, Andy Williams and Donna Mills.

As president of UC San Diego Extension’s Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, Faer is once again capitalizing on the power of television. He is helping to significantly strengthen lecture programs at the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, which in turn are televised by UCSD-TV.

“At a time when citizens are hungry for high quality programming, the Osher Institute is helping us return to the promise of television,” says Faer.

The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute and UCSD-TV already combine to offer campus speakers to the public.

A recent Osher program broadcast on UCSD-TV featured former White House Counsel John Dean, the man who served and then testified against President Nixon during the Watergate hearings. Dean spoke on his new book, Broken Government: How Republican Rule Destroyed the Legislative, Executive and Judicial Branches. Another lecture featured longtime film and television director Gene Reynolds offering a peak behind the Hollywood curtain as he recalled his life on the sets on My Three Sons, Room 222, "Lou Grant" and his hit TV show M*A*S*H.

The televised Osher lectures are not afraid of controversy. Like when retired United States Marine Corps General Joseph Hoar gave a blistering critique of the Bush Administration’s policies in Iraq and warned of potential disaster if the U.S. conducts military operations against neighboring Iran.

The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute plans to broadcast additional prominent speakers on UCSD-TV, a station that reaches one million homes in San Diego County. Programs are archived on both the UCSD-TV (www.ucsd.tv) and Osher institute (www.olli.ucsd.edu) websites for on-demand viewing and podcasting.

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Osher created The Bernard Osher Foundation in 1977. The Foundation supports university programs nationwide that offer intellectually stimulating learning for seasoned adults.

For more information please visit the website at www.olli.ucsd.edu.