

TO BLEEP.. OR NOT TO BLEEP



Michael Parkinson



Michael Barratt



Jimmy Young

Sunday Mirror
TV by TESSA HILTON

IF YOU said * * * * on Michael Parkinson's show, it would probably be edited out. Jimmy Young could cut you off in a split second. But Michael Barratt might ignore it. He did once, anyway.

All chat show interviewers, on TV and radio, know they run the risk of four-letter-word confrontations.

Some had it happen to them long before Bill Grundy met the four-mouthed Sex Pistols rock group on Wednesday's Today programme.

So what's an interviewer to do when the air turns blue? If he doesn't want to be suspended for two weeks, like Mr Grundy, that is?

Ever since Kenneth Tynan said * * * * on live TV back in the Sixties, fingers have hovered nervously over the bleep button.

Delay

Stephanie Norris, a producer with London Broadcasting radio station, explained: "The bleep can be used only when there is a few seconds' delay between something being said and being transmitted."

"For our morning phone-in show, there is a ten-second safety delay."

"We were doing an interview with a woman campaigning about prostitutes' rights in America, and a man phoned with an innocent-sounding question."

"When he got on the air, though, he said, 'You are a big fat * * * *'. We pressed the bleep button

If the air turns blue, what's a chat show host to do?

and all listeners heard was a jingle for LBC."

But not all shows have the bleeper. Michael Barratt, who presents Nationwide live on BBC-1, hasn't.

He told me "Someone once said * * * * during an interview and I simply ignored it and apologised at the end of the programme."

Actor Peter O'Toole said that word on a Michael Parkinson show. "Happily, the show was recorded a couple of hours before it went out," said producer Michael Drewett. "So we bleeped the word."

Parkinson did let Max Bygraves get away with a couple of Anglo-Saxonisms on the show last month. But Max was only quoting a Billy Cotton slip of the tongue. Nobody complained.

Barry Norman, presenter of BBC-1's Tonight, reckons viewers were lucky to get off with only one vulgarity during last week's interview

with film director Sam Peckinpah.

In fact, Peckinpah also used that best-known four-letter word. "But that bit of the interview was edited out because of time," said Barry.

"I thought it was in a legitimate context, though, and if we'd used that part of his talk, the word would probably have been left in."

Checks

Hugh Green, host of Opportunity Knocks, said: "It seems ridiculous for me to check the kind of jokes comedians use on Opportunity Knocks if this kind of thing is allowed."

If anyone should swear on Jimmy Young's show, he can swiftly cut off their mike. "But I've never had to," said Jim.

"But then you wouldn't expect guests like Margaret Thatcher, Denis Healey and Sir Harold Wilson to say that sort of thing."

Even angels strip these days..



Angelic sleuths, from left: Jaclyn Smith as Kelly, Kate Jackson as Sabrina, and Farrah Fawcett-Majors who plays sexy Jill.

lot of good sleuthing, and the girls use their feminine wiles to set up criminals when they have to.

Do they ever have to strip off? "Oh, whenever possible."

Farrah Fawcett-Majors is Jill, the sexiest of the trio. In real life, Farrah is married to Lee Majors, star of Six Million Dollar Man.

Kate Jackson is Sabrina, the thinking man's angel with a high IQ and fluency in five languages.

The deadliest angel is Jaclyn Smith as Kelly, a brunette with a killing karate chop.

Lucky Charlie, to have them all on his side.

AVENGERS girl Joanna Lumley had better watch out—the title of TV's sexiest sleuth will soon be in danger.

ITV is planning to open the New Year with THREE of the slickest private eyes ever to tote guns.

Charlie's Angels is the name of the show aiming to take the TV charts by storm. Charlie is the girls' boss, though they never actually see him. The series is already a huge success in America—which is a comfort to ITV film buyer Leslie Malliwell.

The show's producer, Barry Rosenzweig, says: "The stories involve a



TOP POPS

SPORT ON TV

By Sports Writer KEITH FISHER

Last week's ratings in brackets

OPERATION scum-down gets underway on