

# PRESS OVER THE YEARS

## DAILY NEWS

# MEDIAWEEK

NEW YORK'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER

### How Much Is That Newsmen In the Movies?



Bill Boggs, 53, is a former news anchor and now a producer. He is known for his work on 'The Daily Show' and 'The Daily News'.



### Discriminating Taste



Sometimes Food Network host and producer Bill Boggs takes his own... Discriminating Taste

## The New York Times

### Boggs Corners Dad Award

That's why Devere has developed a pretty sophisticated palate, and it's one reason Boggs has been named among the outstanding dads being honored this year by the National Father's Day Committee.



## THE REPORTER

### BOGGS AND BAKER ON 'COMEDY TONIGHT'

BOGGS AND BAKER ON 'COMEDY TONIGHT'

## NEW YORK



### BILL BOGGS: SUCCESS IS EASY... IF YOU PUT IN A 25-HOUR DAY!

#### LIZ SMITH

Bill's going place!

#### Triple threat

Bill Boggs is a triple threat: a producer, a host, and a dad.

## VANITY FAIR

### GOOD HOUSEKEEPING

### Bill Boggs—Man About Town



### Conspicuous Coffee Table



### Parlaying a Gift Into a Gag: Hooring of Blue Eyes

Bill Boggs

## NEW YORK POST

### Cindy Adams

## TV GUIDE



## BOGGS CONFIDENTIAL

### Who Are New York's Most Eligible Bachelors?

Bill Boggs, Bruce Neville, John Tread

Who Are New York's Most Eligible Bachelors?

PDF Edition  
www.billboggs.com

# Who Are New York's Most Eligible Bachelors?

By JUDY KLEMESRUD

You hear it all the time in New York, the single woman's lament: "The only interesting men I meet are either married or gay." But even though the United States Census Bureau says there are 500,000 more women than men in New York City, New York still has a few of those rare commodities — interesting, women-oriented bachelors.

The major problem is finding them.

And so, as a service to the New York woman who doesn't believe they really exist, here is a guide to 10 of New York's most sought-after bachelors. They were selected after conversations with several dozen New York hostesses, press agents who plan major parties, columnists who observe the social scene, women who have dated them, ex-wives who have been married to them and club owners who have seen them in action.

The bachelors chosen range in age from 25 to 78. Most of them are wealthy, good looking and in excellent physical condition.

Here are the 10, in alphabetical order:

## Woody Allen

Although not conventionally handsome, this 44-year-old comedian-writer-director is the dream man for many single women who are drawn to his vulnerability. "He's got that little-boy-lost look that women find so appealing," one woman commented. The 5-foot 6-inch Mr. Allen has been married twice, to Harlene Rosen, a teacher, and Louise Lasser, the actress of "Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman" fame. Although he often acts like a recluse, Mr. Allen is a regular at Elaine's, and plays the clarinet with a New Orleans-style jazz band on Monday nights at Michael's Pub. He can also frequently be found at New York Knicks games. He

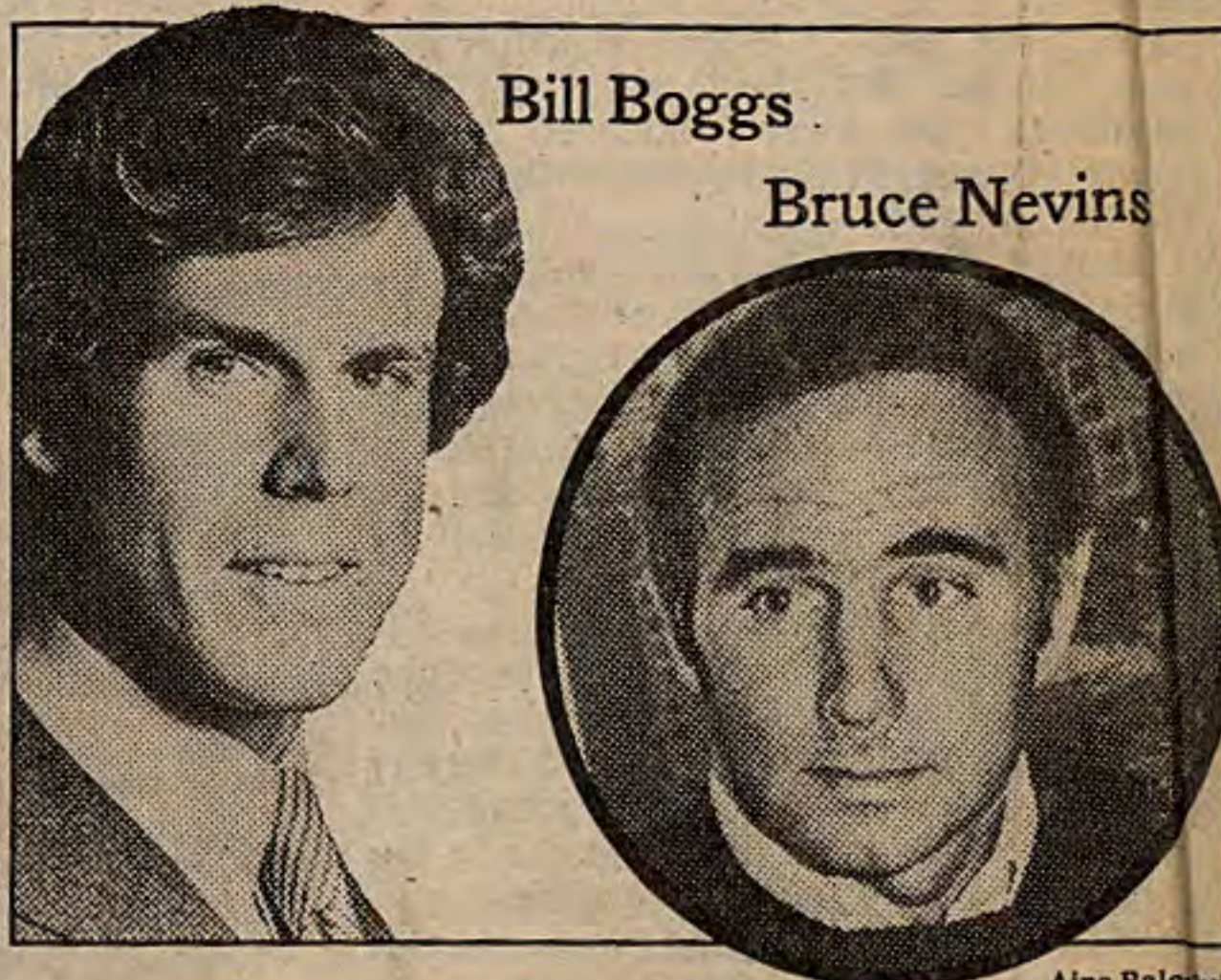


John Tesh



Woody Allen

does not drink or smoke and abhors drugs. He lives in a duplex penthouse on Fifth Avenue.



Bill Boggs

Bruce Nevins

Aina Balgervis

## Bill Boggs

The handsome 38-year-old host of WNEW-TV's daily "Midday" show is a regular at charity balls and Broadway openings. He can also be found jogging in Central Park, schmoozing at Elaine's and discoing at Sybil's, where he throws an annual Thanksgiving party at which guests are requested to wear feathers. Last year he made his stage debut starring in "Come Blow Your Horn" at New Jersey's Meadowbrook Theater. His first novel, a love story about a bachelor called "At First Sight," will be published in April. He likes to sing old rock songs around the piano in his Central Park South apartment. Divorced, he prefers women who are "blond, really built, smart and funny."

## Bruce Nevins

This 42-year-old West Point graduate is president of Perrier and is responsible for much of the mineral water's current popularity in the United States. After West Point, he served four years in the Special Forces, including seven months in Laos. Today, his most adventurous activities are running three miles every day, skiing, and flying private planes. Mr. Nevins was a cofounder of Pony Sporting Goods, which markets the Pony athletic shoe. In his spare time he likes to listen to country music at City Limits and jazz at Mikkell's, and to eat at the Museum Cafe and Dobson's. He also enjoys inviting friends over for Chinese food on the terrace of his East 75th Street apartment. He spends about 20 percent of his time in Los Angeles, where he owns a house on Mulholland Drive. He likes women who are "independent, adventurous and in good physical condition."

## William S. Paley

## John Tesh

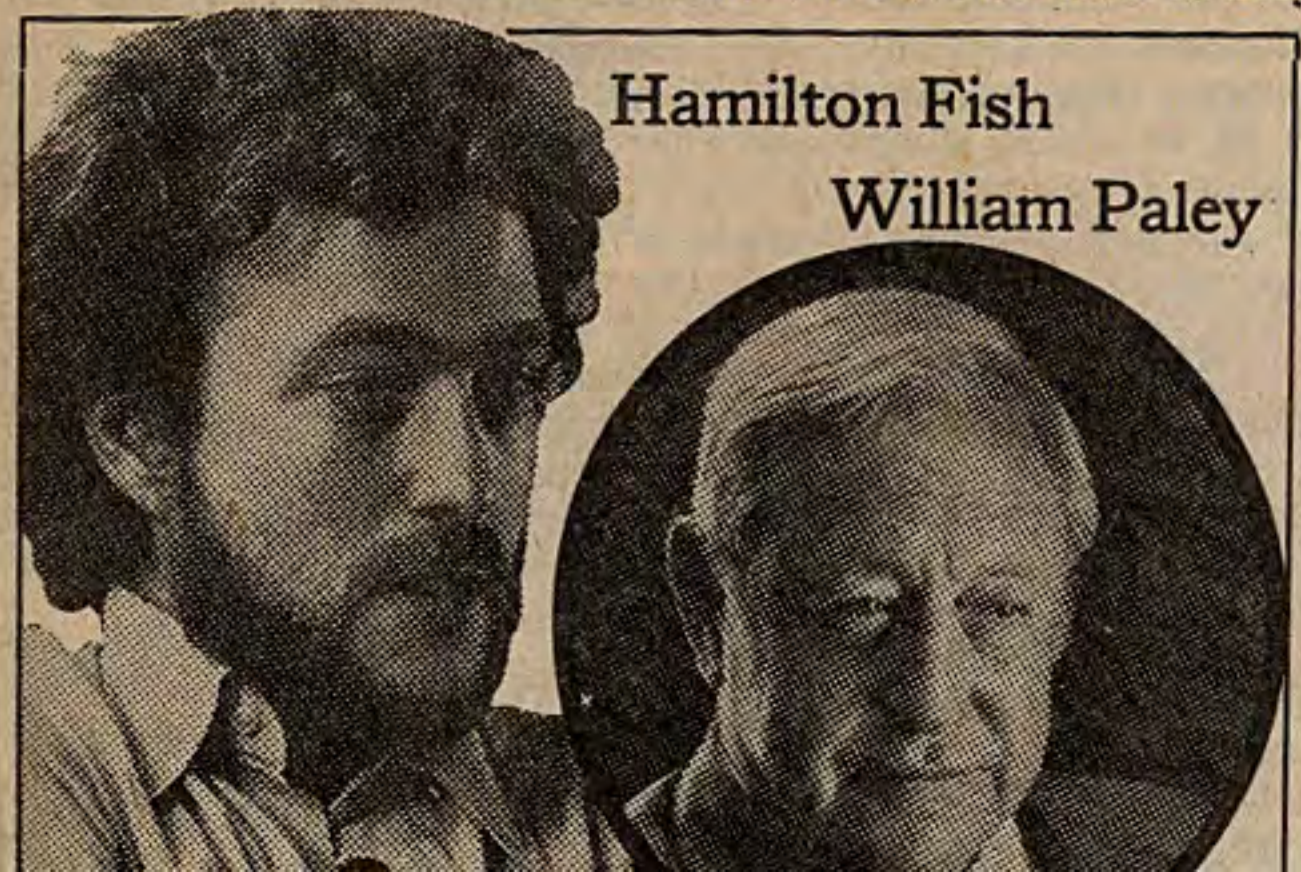
When this handsome blond Adonis, who is a news correspondent for Channel 2, mentioned on the air that he hadn't received any Valentines on Valentines Day, 1978, he was flooded with 90 letters and four dozen roses. He recently disguised himself as a Bowery bum to do a television report on New York's homeless men. Mr. Tesh keeps his 28-year-old, 6-foot 6-inch, 200-pound body in shape by jogging 10 miles a week, and he has run in two New York Marathons. He is a native of Garden City, L. I., and graduated from North Carolina State University, where he played lacrosse and soccer. He is an avid jazz-rock pianist and has several pianos in a music studio in his Upper West Side apartment. He also likes to play racquet ball and go to roller discos with "athletic women, especially dancers."

## Franklin A. Thomas

When the 45-year-old Mr. Thomas was appointed president of the Ford Foundation last year, Vernon E. Jordan Jr., head of the National Urban League, said: "This is the most significant black appointment in my time." Mr. Thomas, a lawyer, headed the Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation from its founding in 1967 to 1977. He was born in Bedford-Stuyvesant, and he still lives in the neighborhood, in a restored brownstone. The 6-foot 4-inch Mr. Thomas was a basketball star at Columbia University — captain and All Ivy League — and he still holds the Columbia rebounding record. He is divorced, with four children, and is frequently seen at parties and charity events around town. He likes opera, tennis, and social dancing, and he has a summer house in Dutchess County that he built himself.

## Peter Tufo

Mr. Tufo is a dark-haired, 41-year-old lawyer who moves in two disparate worlds. As the unsalaried chairman of the



Hamilton Fish

William Paley

# BOGGS CONFIDENTIAL

BY ALLAN KREDA

Ask Friar Bill Boggs to distill his calling-interviewer, storyteller, humanist-and the answer emerges straight from his Philadelphia youth. "I was interested in show business since I was a child, and I've always been a student of performers," Boggs said over lunch at the Monastery. "I'm good at telling stories, and I get audiences to pay attention. That's been the fuel in my tank."

Boggs takes a visual spin around the Frank Sinatra Dining Room and, picture-by-picture, person-by-person, recounts a vignette about everyone, except maybe George M. Cohan and Victor Herbert.

"Henny Youngman, I still have the diamond pin he gave me. Hugh Hefner, I interviewed him for an NBC special. Jerry Lewis has always been a marvel because he appealed to children and high rollers at the same time. LeRoy Neiman, Joey Adams, Whoopi Goldberg. I could just keep going and going."

That's what happens when you've conducted more than eight thousand interviews, from John Belushi to Elizabeth Taylor, Barbra Streisand to Muhammad Ali. The fun continues for the effervescent Boggs, who is drawing on those myriad conversations in his Off-Broadway show, *Talk Show Confidential*, at the Triad.

The show is a heartfelt and creative trip through the tapestry of Boggs' life on stage and before the camera. He tells his stories with pathos; from his first brush with Frank Sinatra to the way he learned-from his father-to treat people with dignity. The catalyst, he will explain, was a slice of blueberry pie.

There are tales from his early television days in High Point, North Carolina, memorable moments from *Midday Live With Bill Boggs* in New York from 1975-87, and snippets from roles during the past two decades on outlets including the Travel Channel and Food Network. Sheer enjoyment permeates the performance as Boggs is joined by Friar Steven Scott for several skits.

"To me, interviewing is an intimate experience," he explains. "And listening is the key.



Friar Bill Boggs

This show is a chance to bring out the love of what I've been doing for the past 30 years."

Boggs has two major projects slated for 2007. He will host a wine program, "By The Glass," on PBS, and his book-*Got What it Takes? Successful People Explain How They Made It To The Top*-will be released next April by publisher HarperCollins. The book emphasizes the discipline and mindset required to succeed. Those interviewed include achievers from the business, entertainment, and sports realms such as Donald Trump, Renée Zellweger, and Joe Torre. "I see this book as opening a new chapter professionally." According to Boggs, "I want to talk to people about how important it is to believe in your talent. If one thought or piece of advice from the book makes someone's life better, I will have achieved my goal."

Boggs isn't afraid to admit he's experienced the inevitable ups and downs that mark any creative career. "Sinatra taught me to never give up," says Boggs, who saw the great crooner perform live about a hundred and twenty-five times and did the longest television interview ever with the legendary singer. "There's a guy who was fantastically ambitious, yet he spoke of having to scrape bottom to realize how great life can be."

In addition to his work before the camera, there's been plenty behind it. Boggs developed several successful television series including a role as the first executive producer for Court TV and the same job for *The Morton Downey, Jr. Show*.

Former colleagues and current friends are quick with the plaudits. Richard Baker, partner of Messina Baker Entertainment-Talent Management & Production, whose clients include Tim Allen and Friar Drew Carey, has known Boggs since their North Carolina days. "Bill is the best producer I've ever worked with," Baker says. Bill got me into the television production business, the program packaging business, and talent management. I don't know where I'd be right now without Bill's vision and guidance."

Andy Regal, who worked with Boggs at Court TV and the Downey show and currently is a producer for *The Dr. Keith Ablow Show*, on Fox, says, "Bill is an unusually good listener. He cares and he connects with people in a very human way."

Boggs' love of show business extends to his deep appreciation for the Friars. He's even married to a Friar, Carol Campbell Boggs, publisher of the new *Hallmark Magazine*. "I really love this Club. The instant I walk in, I feel a welcoming and embracing feeling. To be part of this tradition means a great deal to me," he says.

Boggs is happy to share with fellow Friars that boundless energy and plethora of positive thinking. It may have started with Dad and continued with Sinatra, but Boggs is quick to emphasize that it must derive from within. "At the end of the day, it's self-belief," he says. "Your self-image always has to stay strong."

Such a theory is echoed by longtime Boggs friend, Friar Chuck Barris, the former *Gong Show* host with a colorful career path of his own. "Bill has staying power, and I admire his staying power," Barris said in an e-mail. "He's always up."

For information about *Talk Show Confidential*, email Jordan at jagnyc21@yahoo.com.

DAILY  NEWS<http://www.mostnewyork.com>

NEW YORK'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER

## Television 3

*Ray has the hots for a spicy pizza waitress — 'Everybody Loves Ra*

## INNER TUBE

**'TABLE' TALK:** Bill Boggs & Matt Lauer, Sunday night, TV Food Net

One day, he tells Boggs, "I had to do an hour-and-a-half on women who fake orgasm. Do I look like the kind of guy who'd be comfortable doing that for half-a-minute, much less an hour-and-a-half? That's how low it got. I couldn't wait to get off that program. . . . We'd do that half-hour, and then we'd go over to interviewing **Jesse Jackson**. I mean, that's how screwed up the show was."

But wait, the story doesn't stop there.

"One day they bring me into an office and say, 'Matt, we have a great idea for this program. We're going to start doing live commercials. So, in-between your interview with Jesse Jackson and **Mario Cuomo**, we want you to do a 1-800-DIAL-A-M-A-T-T-R-E-S commercial. You are literally [going] to be in the studio, we are going to wheel a bed in, in a commercial break, and you're going to say, 'Do you need a mattress? Well, call 1-

800 . . . ' I was waiting for them to laugh. I said, 'You've got to be kidding me.' They said, 'We're not kidding you. We just signed DIAL-A-M-A-T-T-R-E-S.' I said, 'Well, that's it.' Three months later, they fired me."

Actually, things have all worked out quite nicely, haven't they?

— Christy Slewinski

**Going to the Matt**

**Matt Lauer**, newly crowned "Today" co-anchor, talks about one of his more painful work experiences Sunday night at 9 in the premiere of "**Bill Boggs' Corner Table**," which will run monthly on cable's TV Food Network.

Boggs got Lauer to talk about his stint as the host of the now-defunct WWOR/Ch. 9 show "9 Broadcast Plaza," which ran three hours daily.

# The East Hampton INDEPENDENT

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FREE

## Out & About ON THE EAST END

### Reliving TV With Bill Boggs

By Debbie Tuma

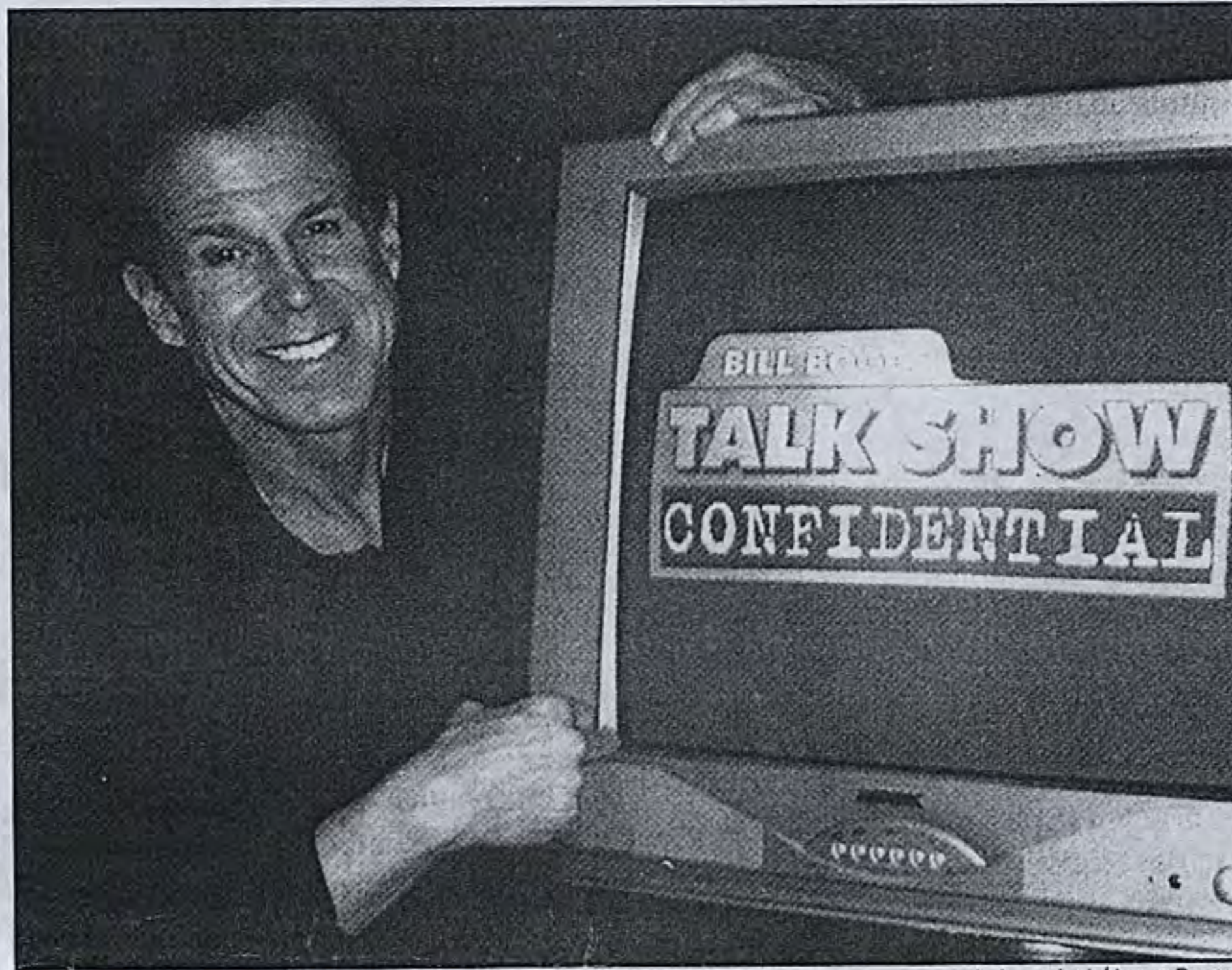
After a fascinating career spanning 30 years interviewing over 8000 celebrities, talk show host Bill Boggs has now brought his stories and memories to the stage.

His production, "Talk Show Confidential," opened in January, and has been appearing every Monday at 7 p.m. at the Triad Theater at 158 West 72nd Street between Columbus and Amsterdam Avenues. As he was getting ready to go on stage, Boggs said, "Talk Show" is the first theatrical production dealing with the phenomenon of television talk shows, created and performed by a talk show host.

"For several years, I'd been thinking of going on stage to share some of the amazing experiences I've had over the past decades, interviewing everyone from Mohammed Ali, to Sophia Loren, to Frank Sinatra," he said. "I thought people would be interested in hearing some of the funniest bloopers, the behind the scenes stories, and the outrageous things that have happened on live TV."

And apparently, Boggs was right, considering his many sold-out performances. His one-man show consists of stories, video clips, and music, which includes his most embarrassing moments on air, inappropriate propositions, and celebrity tirades. On the stage, was a large-screen TV set, where he would show his interview clips, and a piano, where he was accompanied by Anna Dagmar, and also by Mike Lee on bass. When asked if he was nervous doing a one-man show for almost 75 minutes Boggs replied, "Nothing can happen to me on this stage that hasn't happened to me already!"

At show time, with a packed house in the small theater, Boggs came out holding a piece of blueberry pie. "I owe my whole television career to a piece of blueberry pie," he told the audience. "If my father hadn't sat on a piece of blueberry pie, I wouldn't be here, telling you these stories today." Boggs then explained that as a teenager, he and



Bill Boggs shares memories and poignant moments from his 30 years of hosting talk shows across the networks, in his new production, "Talk Show Confidential," at the Triad Theater in Manhattan.

his parents were vacationing at the Lincoln Hotel in Ocean City, New Jersey, when a waiter had accidentally left a piece of pie on a seat, which his father sat on.

"My father was an immaculate dresser, and although his pants were a mess, he did not make a big fuss about it. He acted like a gentleman, and was gracious to the staff at the hotel." The next summer, when Boggs was looking for a job, his father suggested he go back and ask this hotel staff for a job.

"The people at the hotel remembered my family, and I got hired as a bell hop," he said. "At this job, I met people who eventually led me into show business, which led me to television."

#### Four Emmys

This also led to four Emmy Awards, as he journeyed across the networks, hosting shows such as "Midday Live With Bill Boggs," from 1975 to 1986,

for Metromedia; he was executive producer for the syndicated, "Morton Downey Jr. Show" and the "Court TV" network; he created "Bill Boggs Corner Table" on Food Network, "Saturday Morning Live," for Metromedia, and anchored the news for WNBC-TV. He has also acted in numerous productions and written a novel, *At First Sight*.

Boggs energetically recounted numerous highlights: there was Dustin Hoffman, Dan Rather, Miles Davis, Martha Stewart, John Belushi, John Travolta, as they looked 20 years ago. There was Boggs, working out with a much younger Arnold Schwarzenegger and asking him on camera, "What is your favorite muscle?" The former body builder laughed, hesitated, and replied, "My shoulders."

In some of his most embarrassing moments, Boggs talked about how he has had guests fall asleep on his show, and in one instance, even he fell asleep. "I had been partying really late one night at Studio 54, and the next morn-

ing, after two hours sleep, I had to host a 90-minute show on the latest medical advances," he recalled. "I had this doctor talking in such a monotone voice, that I drifted right off to sleep and fell off my chair on live TV."

#### Party Animal

But sometimes, his late-night partying at Studio 54, during its peak years (1978-1980), resulted in great guest appearances. "I saw everyone there, from Liza Minelli to Andy Warhol, and one night, John Belushi said he wanted to come on my show because his favorite person, Steve Allen, was coming on."

One of Boggs's most embarrassing moments was when he interviewed a Russian family live and found out after the cameras started rolling that they spoke no English. "Not knowing what to do, I started doing ballet, and asked them to join me, which they did, and then I switched to a commercial," he recalled.

Boggs said his favorite interview was with Sinatra, who he admired. "He never did talk shows as a rule, but he came on as a favor to me, and we talked for practically the whole show," he said. "He was a wonderful guest and a great friend."

I made a New Year's resolution that I'd go anywhere in America to have my own talk show," he said. His luck turned, and he landed his dream job hosting a show called, "Southern Exposure," near Greensboro, North Carolina. Although he had total control and a "great lifestyle there," Boggs sought more money, and when he returned to Philadelphia one weekend during the early 1970s to see Frank Sinatra, he accidentally ran into Channel 5 newswoman Judy Licht in the street.

"I knew her from appearing as a guest at Channel 5, and she told me they were looking for someone to replace Lee Leonard on the Midday show," he said. "She told me to apply for the job, so I did, and that was the begin-

— Continued on page B-6.

### Bill Boggs

Continued from page B-1. —

ning of 12 great years interviewing all these celebrities."

Boggs is still friends with Licht, of East Hampton, and has been visiting the Hamptons since 1975. "For seven years, I had a house in Sagaponack, and I still visit people in the Hamptons so I can go to the beach," he said.

Boggs is looking to take "Talk Show Confidential" to a theater in the Hamptons this summer. "I think the audience is right out there, since so many of the celebrities I've interviewed also have homes there," he said.

Tickets to "Talk Show Confidential," which range from \$10 to \$28.50, are available at [www.TheaterMania.com](http://www.TheaterMania.com) or at the box office at the Triad Theater.

## Lincoln grad enters the funny business

By **RICH BRADLEY**  
*Times Staff Writer*

All too often, television actors get stereotyped.

Think of Carroll O'Connor and an image of Archie Bunker plopped into an easy chair as part of 'All in the Family' quickly comes to mind. No matter what Mary Tyler Moore does, she will probably best be remembered as Mary Richards, working at a Minneapolis television station with Murray, Ted, and Mr. Grant.

Bill Boggs was facing a similar problem. As host of the popular New York-based 'Midday with Bill Boggs,' he said, people constantly treated him as the person that they saw on their television screens.

His solution — another show. His new show is the nationally syndicated 'Comedy Tonight.' In addition to hosting the new show, Boggs is co-producer, along with his partner, Richard Baker. The show airs locally on Channel 17 at 10:30 p.m. on week-nights. Channel 17 is one of the 110 stations across the station that air the show.

'I've been with one 10 years and the other 10 weeks,' Boggs, a Mayfair native, said



Former Mayfair resident Bill Boggs (plaid shirt) on the set of 'Comedy Tonight' with Philadelphia comedian The Amazing Wid (holding the box of Tide).

of his two shows. "It's no mystery to do one thing differently than another. People think ['Midday'] is the only thing I can do. I like to do different things. It keeps you refreshed. It gives you a new way to look at the other job."

After nearly a decade on "Midday," Boggs said, it was time for a new challenge.

"We tried to get a new series launched and we saw that there was a need for late-night comedy," the Lincoln High School graduate said. "It started with an idea, then it becomes a business challenge, then a producing challenge. Then it's a challenge to not go crazy working seven nights a week."

Boggs said that 160 comedians have appeared on 46 episodes of the show that have been taped so far. While most of the talent is lesser-known, there have been some "name" acts, such as Rich Little, George Burns, Steve Allen and Henny Youngman on 'Comedy Tonight.'

"It's basically talent that has had some TV exposure but not big names," Boggs said. "Some have done TV work but not much for a mass audience."

After graduating from Lincoln, the former  
See Comedy on Page 45

# THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER

## BOGGS AND BAKER ON "COMEDY TONIGHT"

**BY CHRISTOPHER VAUGHN** Bill Boggs and Richard Baker are two of the happiest guys in New York. Their locally-produced late-night syndicated show "Comedy Tonight" has been picked up by more than 105 stations across the country. Their new boss, Fox Television, is setting up a TV network and is talking to the Baker/Boggs duo about new projects. In addition to all his late night work, Boggs continues to host the Emmy-award winning, "Midday Live" every afternoon, while co-developing a two-part ABC special for children based on Christopher Fleming's "Champion Kids"; and Baker is developing projects for home video and cable. The two have a lot to smile about, but they really come out grinning when talking "Comedy Tonight."

The show, a nightly half-hour series that showcases new and established stand-up comedy talent, is "the only outfit giving young stand-up comedians good exposure," says Boggs. "Letterman and Carson do about two a week; during our first 13 weeks, we used over 200 comedians, many who

had never been on television before."

To keep "Comedy Tonight" fresh, Boggs and Baker do things like theme shows, where a whole night will be devoted to political humor, Catskills comedians, etc. "There are also shows that feature some of our more-rounded performers and they can demonstrate more than just their stand-up ability," says Baker. Among the multifaceted comedians who have used the show as a stepping stone are John Mulroney, Bob Nelson, Taylor Negron and Andrew "Dice" Clay.

Clay had done a two-minute routine based on a Fonzie-like character, and got a role in the feature "Pretty in Pink." Mulroney says that, since his "Comedy Tonight" exposure, he has done more work in the past eight months than during his whole career. Even the show's former announcer, Mark McEwen has moved on to HBO, hosting the 60-second spot "Box Office Biz."

In fact, McEwen's departure led to the mock on-air search for a new announcer that started the show's second season in April. "What started as a joke took on a unique life of its own," said Boggs. "As a result of the search, those 'in the running' included actors Arnold Stang and Frank Gorshin, Second Avenue Kosher Deli owner Abe Lebewohl, 'Mayflower Madam' Sydney Biddle Barrows, author Rita Jenrette, singer Leon Redbone, 'Penthouse Pet' Devina Celeste, musical group Kid Creole & The Coconuts, and rap duo 'The



Bill Boggs with guest Harvey Korman

Fat Boys."

Another recent segment of "Comedy Tonight" featured the "Win A Date With Jenny Jones" contest. Jones, a Star Search '86 grand prize winner who has been called a modern-day Mae West, agreed to tape the date, then appear on the show to talk about it.

Since "Comedy Tonight" is in constant need of new and fresh talent, both Boggs and Baker haunt the comedy clubs. The two also set up showcases and check out the hundreds of tapes that come into their East 67th Street offices from all over the country. Their booking agent, Rick Messina, visits clubs up and down the East Coast and says he realizes how much "Comedy" has opened up the television medium to young comics. "The show really belongs to the comics — they set the pace," he says. "Each one is given 3-5 minutes, and they write their own material and use their own ideas. We're even planning future shows with the best comics of Boston, Toronto, Pittsburgh, etc."

Boggs says although some people say late night has a problem in attracting viewers, "Comedy Tonight" is doing just fine. The normal time slot is midnight or 12:30 a.m., but in Boston and some other markets, it's on early. "Los Angeles and Washington even hold one

show for Saturday nights at 11:00 p.m.," he adds. He sees no real threat in the upcoming late-night syndicated "Nightlife With David Brenner," scheduled to debut this September, and will no doubt welcome the potential lead-in provided by Fox Television's upcoming Joan Rivers show.

No matter what, the Baker/Boggs duo plans to keep on laughing. With the battle for late night viewers heating up every day, a little humor will surely go a very long way. ★

# GOOD HOUSEKEEPING®

THE MAGAZINE AMERICA LIVES BY

## Bill Boggs—Man About Town



Talk-show host Bill Boggs has found his place at the top, among the celebrities—on and off camera  
By Melba Tolliver



1. In the studio Bill talks with Gregory Hines, 2. Superman Christopher Reeve, 3. Brooke Shields. 4. In the running for the Bill Boggs Marathon for the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation (left to right): Grace Jones, Mason Reese, Dina Merrill, Gordon Parks, and Andy Warhol.



5. On the show's fifth anniversary (left to right): Victor Gil De La Madrid, Claudia Cohen, Gregory Hines, Leslie Bennetts, Dr. Alfred W. McKinley holding Bill's cat, Mr. Nice. 6. On Father's Day Lou Brenner (far left) and son, comedian David Brenner, lunched with Bill and his late father, William Boggs, Jr.

In 25 weeks, 20 personalities auditioned for the job of host on Channel 5's *Midday Live*. Then along came Bill Boggs, who captured the show with his first broadcast. And in the seven years since, he has also managed to capture a large audience of New Yorkers, including many celebrities, who are devoted to him and his talk show in the middle of the day.

"I never wanted to come to New

York and have my nose pressed against the window," he says.

Not long after Bill Boggs graduated from the University of Pennsylvania, NBC offered him a job in New York City—as a page. It would have meant running around in a red jacket, spending most of his time shepherding out-of-towners on tours of the RCA building—a job any other young person bent on a career in television would have leaped

at. But Bill Boggs had other ideas. He said no thanks to NBC.

The three of us are sitting in Bill's apartment with its breathtaking view of Central Park—Bill, Mr. Nice (a chubby gray cat bought in a North Carolina pet shop who pads about the apartment as if he paid the rent), and me. Casually dressed, and not hiding his enjoyment about being interviewed, Bill is obviously pleased with himself—and for



more reasons than that he managed to leap to the top of broadcasting's ladder of success and to avoid the lower rungs populated by pages and mailroom boys.

Bill Boggs is best known as the host of New York's only 90-minute, daily talk show (WNEW Channel 5, 12-1:30 P.M.). But he can also list lots of other credits on his résumé including his first novel, *At First Sight*, a love story whose hero reads very much like our hero—with love scenes that are believably steamy and tender.

He sings well enough to be heard in public, and acts well enough to have been cast in Neil Simon's *Come Blow Your Horn* in a theater in New Jersey.

He hosts a weekly supper-club showcase for aspiring entertainers. And last year, with veteran PBS producer and good friend, Richard Baker, he became a partner in a video production company. So far it has completed four productions including *Bobby Short at the Café Carlyle*, the first TV special featuring the famous singer-pianist.

When I called his press agent for some background material a fat envelope full of clippings, representing a dozen different magazines and newspapers, arrived at my door. Everything from the *Hollywood Reporter* to *Thoma* (a college newspaper) to the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. He, in fact, appears in the gossip columns and show-biz media with such regularity that one begins to suspect a plot to turn Bill Boggs into a household name.

Is not all this publicity the fallout of a massive ego? A man driven to see himself in print as often as possible? Not if you believe those who say that the steady stream of publicity is merely Boggs's way of watering and nurturing his various projects—among them raising money for juvenile diabetes.

"To become a media celebrity in New York, you've got to work at it," says gossip columnist James Brady, with characteristic bluntness. "He works at it relentlessly—and does it intelligently."

Boggs's *Midday* producer, Gwen Barrett, credits all his publicity with boosting audience interest in the low-budget, unpublicized show. "It's a tremendous help; people know who he is."

If you were type-casting Bill Boggs, he would be perfect as a star of a family TV series in the 1950s. Maybe a younger Ozzie Nelson—or perhaps Wally Cleaver, the older brother in *Leave It to Beaver*. Steady, stable, reliable, loyal heroes.

"He is not a driven show-biz performer type," says Richard Baker of his friend, who rises early every morning—especially after a night spent discoing—to jog four miles around Central Park.

And he looks the television hero's part. "Before he was on the air, people turned to look at him," says a close female friend. "He looked like a star before he became one."

Where does the man with this natural star quality hail from? Philadelphia—a city he considers the perfect place to grow up in. There William Boggs III lived a typical all-American boy's life, in a close family that included a younger sister, a mom with a reputation for baking good cakes, and a dad who was a teacher and swimming coach. "If you are lucky like I am, you have a very loving mother and father."

He says he discovered when he was only about three that he liked being in front of an audience. He was in all the school plays and later, acted in university and community theaters.

After college, Boggs did publicity writing, managed a comedy team, worked as a talent coordinator and writer for a Philadelphia talk show, and then had his own Saturday and Sunday show, called *Mr. Weekend*. (During this period he also got married—and divorced.) Eventually a bigger talk show, *Southern Exposure*, in North Carolina,

got him the audition for *Midday*. (Back then *Midday* was live; now it's on tape.)

Later at the studio, Bill is seated on the small stage of a set which looks like cardboard in real life and like a million dollars on the screens of several television monitors. Boggs completes the taping of some short promos for the show, kibitzes with the crew, peers into the semidarkness of the studio and says, "Sheila, come on up." A pleasant-faced woman joins Boggs on the little stage under the hot lights. She looks nervous but manages an occasional tight grin.

Sheila has come on the show to let people know how she has been helped by the intervention of a crisis nursery. When she was four, her mother abandoned her, and she talks about her fear that she might abuse and abandon her own baby, repeating the pattern of her mother, but for the help of the nursery. She is now very relaxed. She and Bill talk to each other as comfortably as they would in one of their own living rooms—not what you would expect from a talk-show host and his guest on a stage in front of an audience.

"Relaxing guests—that's my specialty," Boggs had told me earlier. . . . "I talk to them, maybe touch them—it depends on what I think they need. . . . I can walk into the green room (where guests wait their turn to go on stage) and tell whether a guest is nervous . . . what they need."

What does he do for relaxation? He goes to, and gives, parties. Generally, any excuse will do to give a party in New York. Bill's is: the leaves changing colors on the trees in Central Park. Every November he fills his apartment with some of the city's prettiest and most successful people.

Invitations to parties, film previews, Broadway openings, and other star-studded events go with the territory when one is a television personality, and the good-looking *Midday* host gets plenty of them.

"If you're a single man in New York and can wear a dark suit, you are invited. And if you're as attractive as Bill is—and articulate too—no way you're not invited," is the wry observation of Bobby Short, no slouch himself at showing up on the smart guests lists. "Bill is a very serious person; he does what he needs to do to get along in New York."

Anyone who lasts seven years on New York television and whose work wins an Emmy must be doing something right. And yet it is hard to pin down the precise reason for Boggs's undeniable success.

Unrelenting publicity can't be totally responsible for his success, however. Others have captured the gossip-col-

umn headlines and have still gone down the tubes. And it can't be *Midday's* ratings. "They are okay—not bad for the time period," admits the producer.

Richard Baker says, "He uses his skills to draw out the person he is interviewing—rather than to just expose his own personality."

Another clue to his success on camera is probably due to something most people outside the business don't know, and insiders won't admit—that being a talk-show host or anchorperson requires acting ability. Interviewers almost always know what their guests are going to say before the show. Nobody really appreciates surprises on television. So the interviewer must make his questions and answers sound fresh and new, as though he were hearing them for the first time. Not an easy task. But one Boggs does superbly.

Also, there's a kind of family relationship between Bill and his audience, report the people who watch the show regularly. "He thinks of viewers as his friends," says Boggs's producer. "And they feel he's 'their Bill.'"

Certainly Boggs lets his viewers in on his life. His ex-wife has been a guest several times. And she and Bill have talked about how their divorce led to their deep friendship.

Bill's father has also appeared on *Midday*. When his father was hospitalized and had a leg amputated earlier this year, Bill shared his sad feelings with his audience. And four weeks later, he told them his father had lost his battle with diabetes. "My father at age 80 became a hero for me because of the guts—true grit—he showed in the hospital," Boggs told me.

"I was planning his eightieth birthday party—in New York with a photographic *This Is Your Life*. The shock of his dying ripped this open," he said indicating his chest. "My grief poured out; love for my father came in."

Bill will be half his father's age this year. I asked what being 40 felt like. He smiled and quoted one of America's late, great philosophers, Satchel Paige, "How old would you be if you didn't know how old you wuz?"

And Boggs ticked off his schedule for the day. He was being interviewed for a magazine article. After that he would do a television show, talking with three very different and interesting people. And "tonight a party at Xenon. I have a rich, great life. It's like life at the top. Every day, every single day is filled with adventures."

Bill Boggs's nose is definitely not pressed against the window of New York City. He's on the inside and enjoying every moment. ★

# MEDIAWEEK

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## Boggs Corners Dad Award

Sometimes Food Network host and producer Bill Boggs takes his son, Trevor, with him to the restaurants he visits for his show, *Corner Table*.

That's why Trevor has developed a pretty sophisticated palate, and it's one reason Boggs has been named among the outstanding dads being honored this year by the National Father's Day Committee.

"I can think of no higher honor than to be given an award that recognizes parenthood," says Boggs. "On a day-to-day basis, the single biggest priority in your life has got to be parenthood."

One way Boggs makes his 13-year-

old son a priority is by sharing his passion for food with him. The host, who is divorced, this summer will take his

son to Scotland and Italy, sampling regional delicacies along the way.

Bogg says: "I've always looked at every moment you spend with a child is like putting something into the bank. The more you put into it, the more you're going to get out of it."

As such, Boggs makes sure that

the food that goes into his son is healthy, true to his advocacy of a good diet as the primary building block for children.

Says Boggs, "If you wouldn't eat it, why should they?" —LL

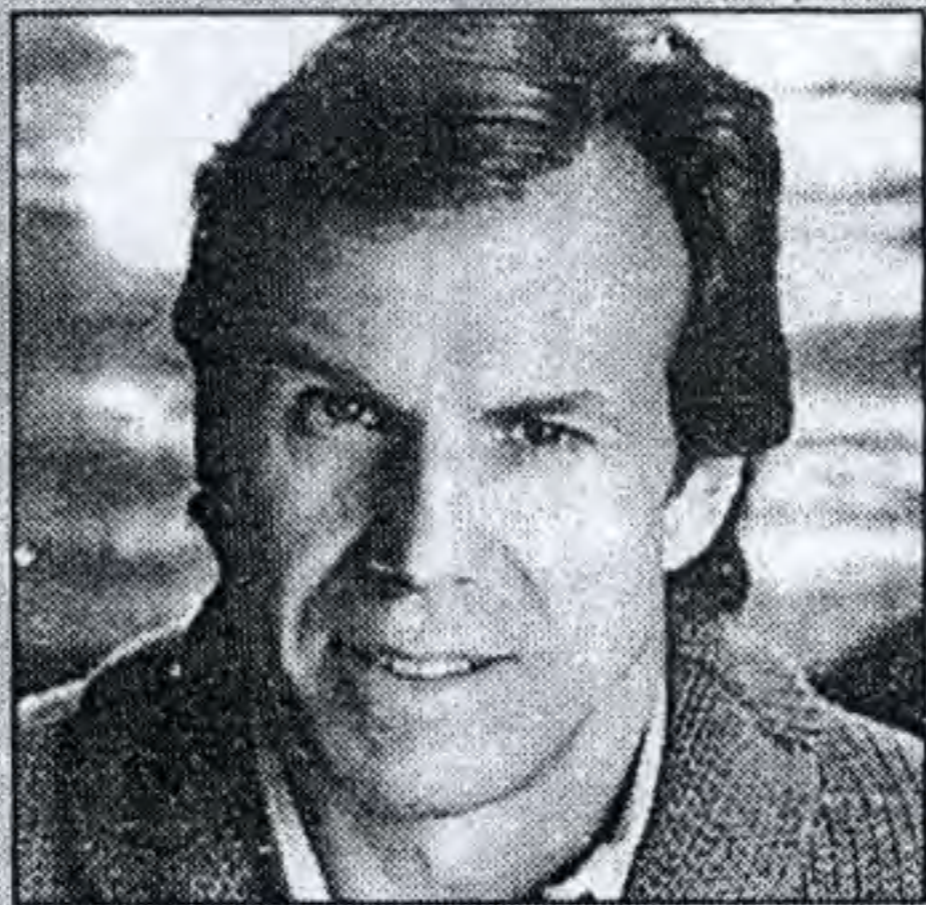


Boggs (l.) with his "top priority"

# How Much Is That Newsman In the Movies?

**I**F VETERAN TV reporter/anchor/talk-show host Bill Boggs ever tires of covering real life, he just might have a highly specialized acting career, playing — what else? — reporters, anchors and talk-show hosts.

Boggs, currently of the Television Food Network, is slated to have small roles covering the news in two upcoming movies, both based in New York City. Director Sidney Lumet's "Manhattan at Midnight," a drama to star Andy Garcia, is scheduled to start filming this month. "I have no idea what it's about," confesses Boggs, who signed on to play a reporter after meeting with Lumet and without seeing the script.



**Reel-life reporter Bill Boggs**

Before emoting for Lumet, Boggs will do his newsmen bit in the low-budget film "Suddenly Manhattan," which he calls "a black comedy" in which he'll be "reporting on some dreadful events

in New York City."

This won't be a first for Boggs, who's already played talk-show hosts, game-show hosts and reporters in TV series and movies from "Miami Vice" to "The Eyes of Laura Mars."

"It's not the money," Boggs says of his film forays, which usually take up a day or two. "It's just such a kick seeing yourself up on the silver screen."

Would he ever really contemplate an acting career? "I'd love to do that for a couple of years, but I think people would not take me seriously. So this is just for fun — as long as they let me go to the premiere."

—Karin Lipson

## Nightlife

### Our Sinatra

With Bill Boggs

The New York TV figure joins this popular revue, singing and recalling his association with the Chairman himself (pictured, in a moment from their extraordinary 1975 one-on-one). Order yourself a Jack Daniels and water, three ice cubes, baby—the way Frank liked it. (See listing, page 88.)



### Bill Boggs in “Our Sinatra”

Showtimes: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday at 8:00 and Friday-Saturday at 8:00; Sunday at 7:30 with Wednesday matinees at 2:30 and Sunday matinees at 3. There are no performances on Thursday. • Dillions, 245 W. 54th St. (212-239-6200). \$50-\$55.

BILL BOGGS

**TALK SHOW  
CONFIDENTIAL**

**NEW YORK POST**

**Cindy  
Adams**

*December 4, 2003 – ‘TIS the season for one-man shows. Next, the Food Network’s **Bill Boggs**. He tested the thing already for 10 minutes at Off-Broadway’s John Houseman. He’ll now shake it up every Monday night beginning Dec. 15 on an open-ended engagement at the Triad. He wrote it himself. Runs 70 minutes. It’s a verbal anecdotal autobio, a behind-the-scenes of the pips he’s known and talked to, like Schwarzenegger, Martha Stewart, the time he interviewed me at high noon when he was on Fox and the person next to me fell asleep while Bill was interviewing him. The thing’s got videos, songs, musicians. Title? “Talk Show Confidential.”*

## PUBLIC LIVES

## Parlaying a Gift Into a Gig Honoring Ol' Blue Eyes

By ROBIN FINN

THE show, an homage to Frank Sinatra, must go on tonight, and tomorrow is matinee day, a doubleheader, so the humidifiers are hissing away at full throttle in Bill Boggs's one-bedroom aerie on Central Park South. In the midst of a giddy, three-week, Mitzyesque stint as a replacement vocalist-raconteur in "Our Sinatra," the Eric Comstock invention now running in the Reprise Room at Dillon's, Mr. Boggs has an instrument to protect, and we're not talking about his grand piano.

Mr. Boggs doesn't actually play the piano; he installed it when he moved here in 1976 just in case interviewees-turned-acquaintances like Marvin Hamlisch, Burt Bacharach and Luci Arnaz stopped by in the mood to make music — and hurrah, they did, and let him sing along among friends. Or in front of his pampered roommate, Pip, a dachshund currently reclining on the leopard-print chaise longue that matches the other upholstery, piano bench included, in this rugless room facing the green canopy that is Central Park in summer.

He sums up his interest in interior decoration with a shrug. The leafy painting above the fireplace was done by an ex-girlfriend (he's got lots, and a few ex-wives; the song "Love and Marriage" is not, he says, applicable to him). The "furniture" that dominates his bedroom, besides the obligatory bed, is a set of barbells he's had since ninth grade in Philadelphia; he still goes home to visit mom and sleep in his old room when he's feeling down. The barbells never wore out, so why toss them?

The same goes for his tuneful nature. Singing is something that Mr. Boggs, a moving target on the metropolitan region talk show menu since WNYW-TV imported him from High Point, N.C., in 1975 for "Midday Live With Bill Boggs," has long aspired to do — in the spotlight, not the shower. His gift of gab makes him an easy if occasionally unctuous speaker: he's now the host and producer of "Bill Boggs's Corner Table" on the Food Network (sybaritic about food, he gyrates like Elvis, another musical hero, at the mere mention of fiddlehead ferns).

His gift from above, he says, is public speaking (he planned to be an actor until his parents ran interference and demanded he attend college). But his gift to himself — aside from languorous luncheons at Le Cirque and trips to St. Bart's with his son, Trevor — is the singing lessons that, along with his encyclopedic knowledge of the Sinatra oeuvre, make it possible for



Chester Higgins Jr./The New York Times

*"It's not about doing the songs like Frank Sinatra; it's about inhabiting the material like Frank Sinatra did."*

BILL BOGGS

him to take the stage at Dillon's without feeling like a fan in over his head. Or a karaoke variant.

"It's not like I've never sung onstage before," he says, taking swigs from his teacup and water glass. "I'm onstage in the same tuxedo I wore in 1983 when I was in 'This Must Be Love' at the St. Regis, which probably says more about my knowledge of how to take care of clothing than it does about how I've taken care of myself."

BY his count, Mr. Boggs was in the audience for 150 Sinatra concerts from 1960 on. He impersonated a busboy — not a stretch, since he worked as a bellhop at the time — to

sneak into his first Sinatra show, in Atlantic City. Mr. Boggs says it made "worldwide news" when Mr. Sinatra appeared on "Midday" — Mr. Sinatra didn't do daytime television.

Why did he visit Mr. Boggs's show?

"Because he knew I loved him," says Mr. Boggs, without embarrassment. "Frank Sinatra was a supremely confident guy, and that's not a bad thing to see in a man." He says his father, a strapping swim coach and vacuum cleaner salesman, was much the same. Positively macho. "Sinatra had this command of himself, and whatever room he was in. It had a huge effect on me."

When he saw "Our Sinatra" at the Algonquin in 1999, he knew the words to all 72 songs. He isn't intimidated by the music; he's not imitating the icon. "It's not about doing the songs like Frank Sinatra; it's about inhabiting the material like Frank Sinatra did," he explains, sliding into a few rueful bars of "When Your Lover is Gone." So, has Mr. Boggs, 0-for-3 on the matrimonial scoreboard with two divorces and an annulment from his college days at the University of Pennsylvania (B.A. sociology, M.A. communications), been a loser in life and love? Intermittently.

In the 70's, he passionately loved a woman who broke his heart. Between that and his unhappiness on "Midday" (in North Carolina, he benefited from big-fish-in-small-pond syndrome, called all the shots on his show, but here he had a far less Sinatra-like command), he "scraped bottom." It happened again, differently, in the early 90's: "I was broke, I had no job, I could have gotten in my car and driven out of New York, anonymous. I watched my sister die; my father died." Dark times. Group therapy.

"My plan is to tell the truth about everything," Mr. Boggs announces after dodging a query about his age. He is deep into his 50's, and not, if the fact that his snowy linen shirt is whiter than his teeth is any indication, cosmetically preserved. (He even admits that Pip, great-grandson of an Andy Warhol dachshund and offspring of dogs owned by the artist Ross Bleckner, bit him one Christmas in a squabble over gifts. "I guess he didn't like his," he deadpans.) "I'm not age phobic, but I'm in an ageist business. Guys like Chuck Scarborough and Ernie Anastos, I don't think they think of what they do as performance, but I do. To me, it's get up on stage and deliver the goods."

As regards his next stage, he's got a few in mind. Trading places with Charlie Rose, for a start. "I wish I could get him to do 'Our Sinatra' for a month, and I could do his show."

# DMR

Sportswear

Monday

style

# Discriminating Taste

Television personality Bill Boggs feels strongly about dining and dressing well



HUGO HUGO BOSS's wool turtleneck, wool flat-front trousers and shearling coat.

**S**trong convictions and a discerning eye guide the heart of a critic. And veteran broadcaster and food critic Bill Boggs is no exception. His musings on the current state of men's fashion are as well thought out as his commentary on dining and table manners for his cable television show that airs on the Food Network.

In his travels — both as the host of *Bill Boggs' Corner Table* and as a ringside reporter for Showtime's boxing series — he has seen too many men show up at restaurants in the kind of attire best reserved for the gym. Casual wear, without rhyme or reason, he has no patience for.

"I am not passive when it comes to fashion," said Boggs. "How casual are we going to get as a society? Togas and penis shields? Seriously."

That's not to say Boggs, himself, doesn't like to loosen his tie. He does, often, with tastes which range from Giorgio Armani and Ralph Lauren to Hugo Boss, Banana Republic and Eddie Bauer.

For *Corner Table* dinners with Martha Stewart at Jean Georges and with Joan Rivers at Le Cirque, he wore Armani. For a breakfast he recently filmed with Maury Povich at Ernie's in New York City, he wore a cashmere sweater and khakis from Banana Republic.

On May 18, Boggs will be lauded at the National Father of the Year Awards at the Sheraton New York Hotel in New York City. His son, Trevor, is one of his favorite dining companions, he said.

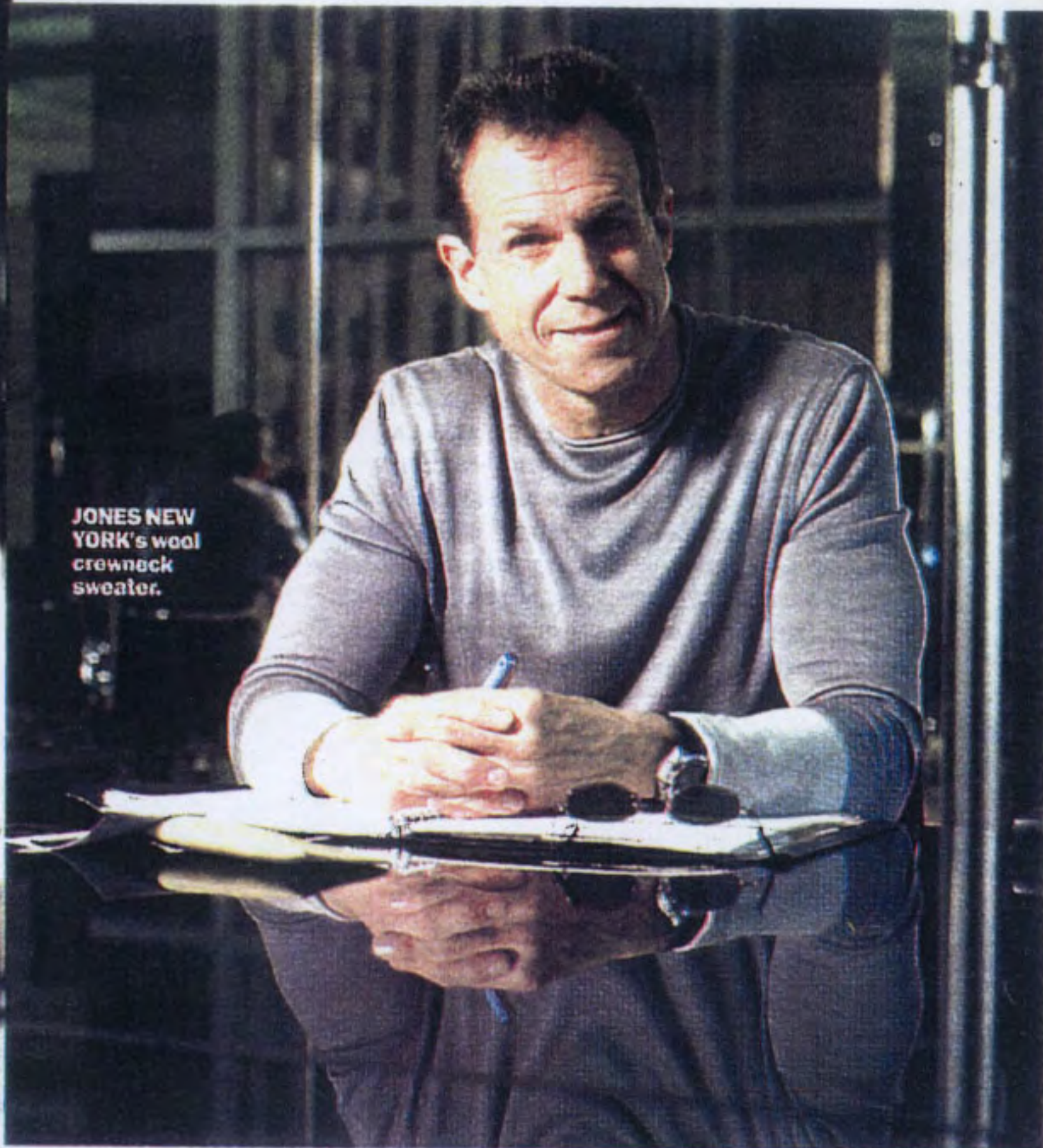
Boggs, who hosted a midday talk show for 13 years and also anchored WNBC's *Weekend Today in New York* show, believes men need serious lessons in appropriate dress for their body type and for business and social situations. With business casual grasping men's attentions, he said, "accessories make all the difference. Who's going to question a great watch and excellent shoes."

"And what ever happened to the sport coat?" Said Boggs. "It's one of the best things a man can add to his wardrobe. Important clothing still equals power. Relinquishing the jacket and tie is relinquishing a certain degree of perceived power. A happy medium is to simply dress well."

A review that should sound so sweet to many in men's fashion. —ANNMARIE DODD



**TOMMY HILFIGER's** cotton dress shirt and wool pleated pants with **TOMMY HILFIGER COLLECTION's** cashmere cardigan sweater.



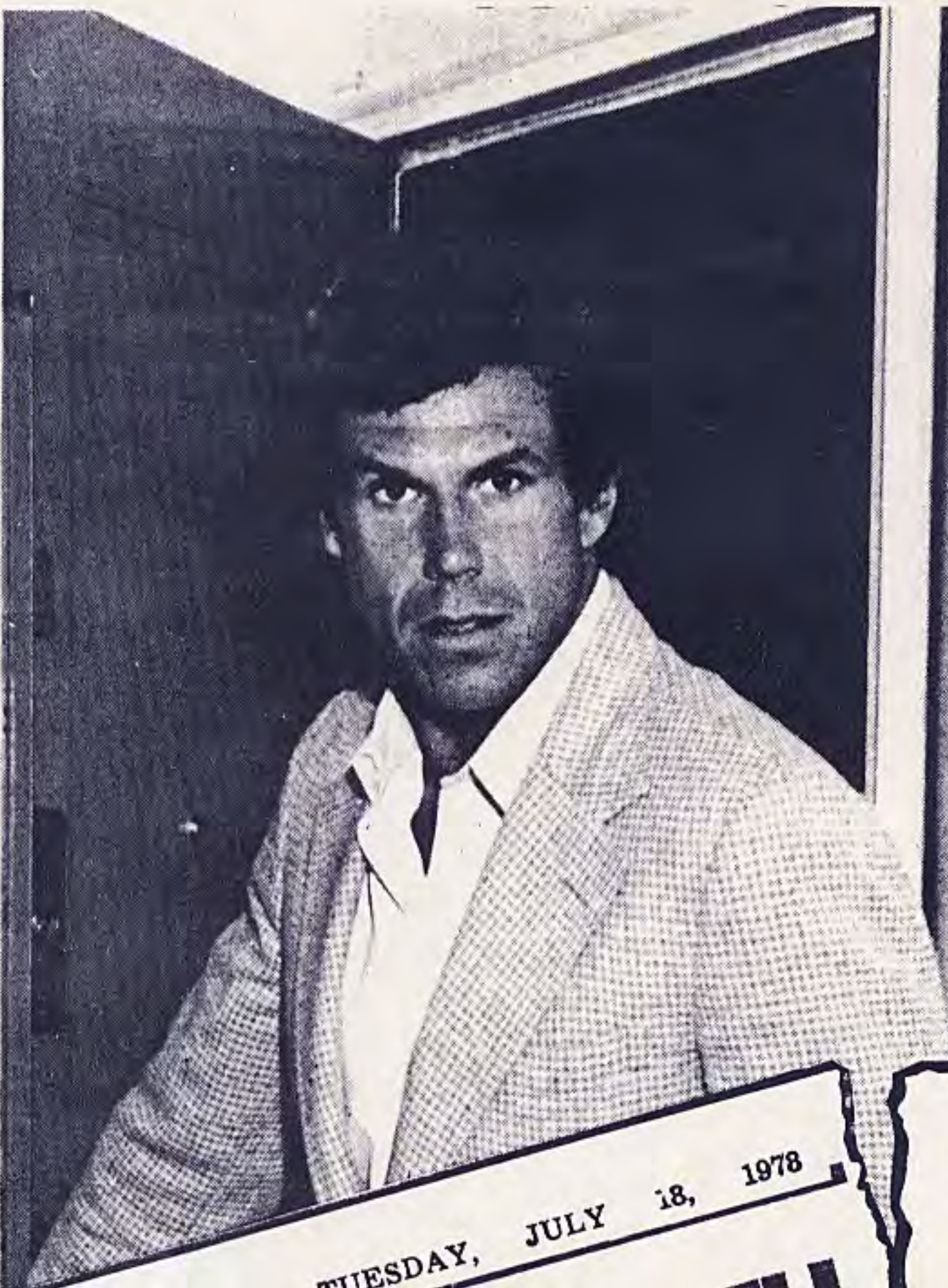
**JONES NEW YORK's** wool crewneck sweater.



**DKNY's** brushed-cotton twill shirt and wool crewneck sweater with **LOUIS RAPHAEL's** wool single-pleat pants.



# BILL BOGGS: SUCCESS IS EASY... IF YOU PUT IN A 25-HOUR DAY!



DAILY NEWS, TUESDAY, JULY 18, 1978

## LIZ SMITH



... Allan Carr has tapped New York's Bill Boggs to play one of the leading men in the remake of "Imitation of Life," and the littlest tycoon says Boggs will definitely be "another Bruce Dern." Can't he just be plain old Bill Boggs?

## Triple threat

HERE he comes, multi-media threat, Bill Boggs, TV star, (aspiring) actor and now (aspiring) author. About a year ago "a story idea came to me in the middle of the night and woke me up." Bill recalls. Well, this love story, packed with intrigue, glamour and show biz types (with perhaps a few recognizable characters) has just been bought by Grosset & Dunlop, for 1979 publication, paying Bill in "the high five figures." Incidentally, Bill reports that even more than always wanting to be movie star, "ever since I was in eighth grade people who saw things I'd done told me I should be a writer."



BILL BOGGS

YOU'D think Gable and Lombard had walked into Tavern-on-the-Green the way the paparazzi wouldn't stop flashing at that hot new multi-media duo, Bill Boggs and Susan Kendall Newman (she's Paul's little girl).

## IT HAPPENED LAST NIGHT



EARL WILSON

## Bill's going places

Bill Boggs believes in UFOs.

"I wouldn't be egotistical enough to think that we're the only planet where life exists," says Bill, who's 35 and 6-1, good-looking, educated, articulate—and divorced. He goes dancing with Francine Lefrak and Lucie Arnaz. As conductor of the Midday Live TV show and syndicated All Star Anything Goes program, he inveigles celebrities into competing with other celebrities. Mark Spitz was induced into a sack race.

His legs were more tired from sack-hopping than from swimming in the Olympics. Barry Williams of the Brady Bunch lost his shorts trying to hold on to a greased pole. He mooned the crowd.

Billy Crystal fell on a pie in a pie-dodging contest and knocked himself out. Rock star Chaka Khan dislocated her shoulder pitching inner tubes over a pole. Billy Carter came on and confessed he was being tax-audited.

\* \* \*

BORN in Philadelphia, Boggs has been a singer, actor, teacher, assistant dean of men at the University of Pennsylvania, and is on his



BILL BOGGS

way to the heights. He has a secret: "Keep your shoes shined."

Seeing "Close Encounters of the Third Kind," about flying saucers recently, he said, "I got an uplifted feeling. I don't think we are alone."

Bill's grandmother died in February at age 100. He took a last look at the casket. Somebody had made a mistake. It should have read "1876 to 1977" but the villain had cut her life by 17 years making it "1893 to 1977." It taught Bill that even in sacred moments you have to watch everything.

## REVIEWS • Theatre

### Talk Show Confidential

Reviewed by Esther Tolkoff

*Presented by Laura Penney at the Triad Theatre, 158 W. 72 St., NYC. Opened Jan. 19 for an open run (Mondays only).*

It stands to reason that after many years as a leading talk-show host, **Bill Boggs** would be a terrific conversationalist. He brings those skills to this almost one-man show (bass player **Mike Lee** sits in during one scene and is on stage with pianist **Tony DeSare**, the musical director, throughout). Boggs recounts entertaining anecdotes about his interactions with the stars he has interviewed. There is another character on stage, the television set itself, broadcasting moments with the likes of Frank Sinatra, Arnold Schwarzenegger, Martha Stewart, and other celebs. It is indeed interesting to hear weightlifter Arnold declare his intention to become a top movie star, among many other moments.

### The White Liars and Black Comedy

Reviewed by Dan Isaac

*Presented by and at Manhattan Theatre Source, 177 MacDougal St.,*

Boggs' delivery is down to earth, as if he's talking one on one at a party. His ongoing love of showbiz and his awe at being with the stars shine through. He admits as much and urges all to follow their dreams. This is fun and inspirational.

The backstage gossip includes bloopers, such as the time Boggs fell asleep while interviewing a boring suburban dentist. Boggs' imitation of the dentist's hypnotic, sleep-inducing voice and comments is one of the show's funniest parts. It's also the best instance of Boggs portraying someone else during the course of his anecdotes. The show's only flaw is almost inevitable: At times there is a bit too much of an "and then I wrote" tone. Boggs is so enamored of talk shows that the peril of something going wrong seems to be equated with life's worst disasters.

But this is minor. After all, the show never claims to seek to solve the world's problems. As directed by **Jeffrey B. Moss**, it moves smoothly from monologue to clips to the distribution of blueberry pies, which played a major role in Boggs' career path. We won't give the story away. The pie was good and the show was fun.

in from Germany that evening to look at Brindsley's work. But just as Brindsley and his live-in fiancée, Carol (**Beth White**), are getting ready to receive guests, the dim lights go up to full brightness, and the devastated Brindsley declares that a fuse has blown. Instantly, one perceives that the play has established a day-for-

Back Stage publishes  
sometimes take a w  
all reviews are posted th



*A New Lion King? M  
"The Frogs."*

### The Frogs

Reviewed by David

*Presented by Lincoln C  
Rubin Casting, at the V  
65 St., NYC, July 22-O*

How do you say  
camp, sentime  
spectacle, and s  
Vivian Beaumont tries  
it can also be funny, tu

Let's Put On a

# TV GUIDE

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think my greatest expertise is in ordering food."

While Boggs is unabashed about the fact that he's no culinary genius ("I can cook, but I like it much better when someone is cooking for me"), he's definitely qualified when it comes to interviewing his guests. In 1964, Boggs graduated from the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School for Communication and has been a working journalist ever since. A four-time Emmy award-winning TV host, Boggs estimates that he's interviewed more than 11,000 guests on his various talk shows. In fact, it was when he was hosting *Midday Live With Bill Boggs* on a local New York City station that the concept for *Corner Table* evolved. The program, which Boggs hosted from 1975 to 1986, featured roundtables where guests participated in studio luncheons.

Ten years after *Midday* ended, while hosting the Food Network's newsmagazine show *In Food Today*, Boggs scheduled an interview with Bill Cosby at one of the comedian's favorite New York restaurants, Ennio & Michael. Four minutes became forty, and before Boggs knew it he had a pilot for *Corner Table*.

Boggs, who is twice divorced, actively books

BY STEF MCDONALD

There's no doubt about it—Bill Boggs has one cool job. As host of the Food Network's *Bill Boggs Corner Table*, he talks one-on-one with celebrities over scrumptious meals at tony restaurants—and, best of all, he never gets stuck with the bill. "For me, it's a sign of the existence of a higher power that I could talk the Food Network into paying me pretty good money [to do this]," says Boggs, who is in his fifties. "It's like a scam."

Since the series premiered two years ago, Boggs—who also serves as the show's producer—has dished and dined with such stars as Sophia Loren, Plácido Domingo and Janeane Garofalo. "I try to have things relaxed," says Boggs, "so the viewer gets the sense that they're eavesdropping and really [learning] something about that person that they didn't know about before." Now, at Le Cirque 2000 (a four-star eatery in New York City), TV GUIDE is turning the tables on Boggs: Between bites of crab cakes and scallops, he must answer all of our questions. And judging from the look on his face as he suggests splitting a second entrée, it's an arrangement he's comfortable with. "I've always loved going to restaurants, even as a kid," says the Philadelphia native. "I

Bill Boggs Corner Table airs Sundays, 6:00 P.M./ET, on the Food Network.

# THE MEAL

WE CHEW THE FAT (AND SOME EXCELLENT SEAFOOD)

# WORLD

WITH THE HOST OF *BILL BOGGS CORNER TABLE*

many guests himself—to enlist Whoopi Goldberg, he met her backstage after her Broadway appearance in "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum"—and has a running list of people he'd like to chat and chew with, among them Marlon Brando ("I haven't even tried to get him") and news correspondents Chris Matthews and Tim Russert ("It would be like two gunfighters, and I'd be there throwing out questions at them"). But has he ever considered a fantasy *Corner Table* meal? "If I could put together a dinner party of people who aren't with us, I'll take a private dining room with the entire Rat Pack and Marilyn [Monroe]," he says. "That's my choice. And Joey Bishop is still here, so he could be a waiter." ■

# VANITY FAIR

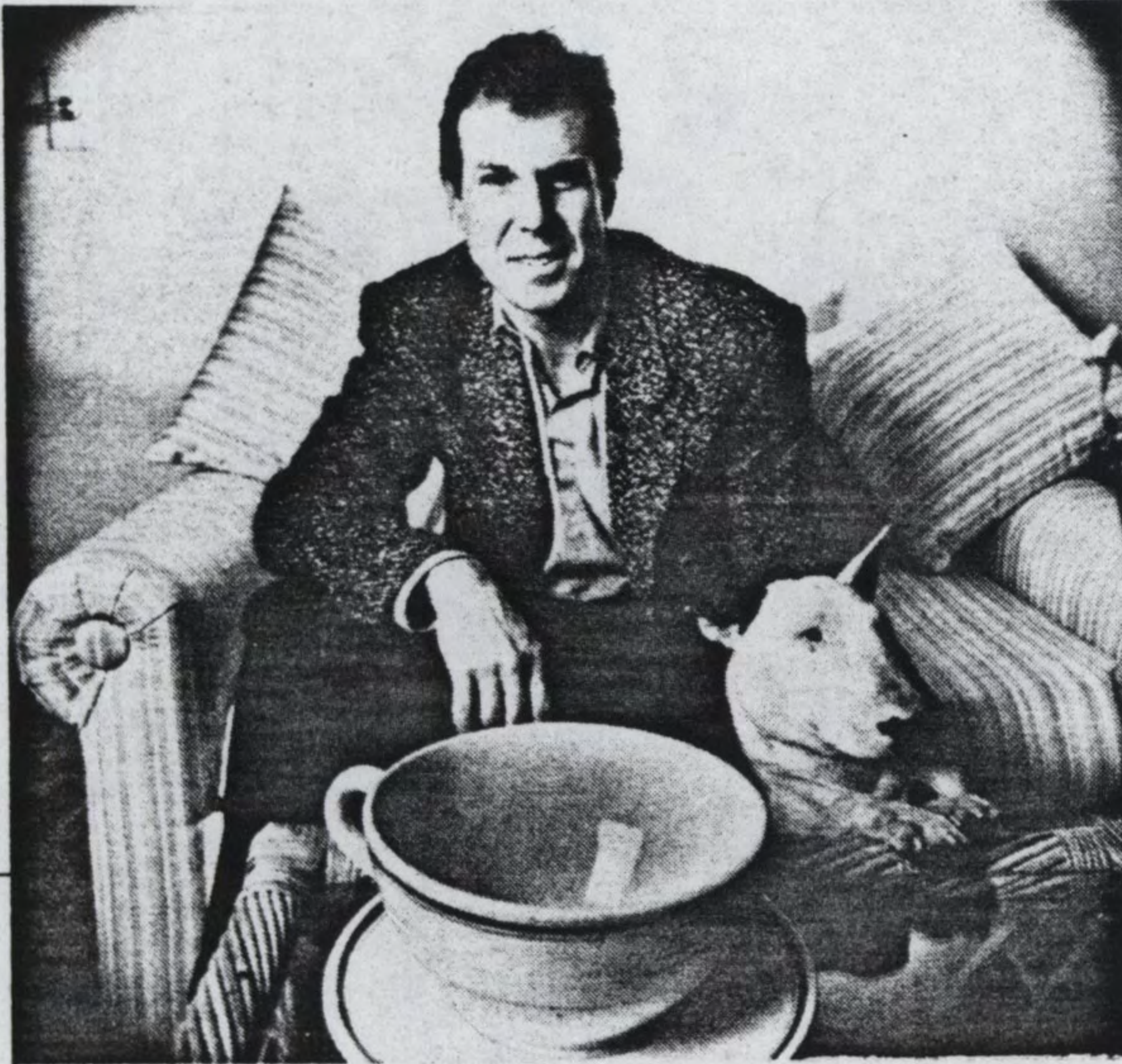
\$2.00

**B**ill Boggs, host and co-producer of the syndicated TV show *Comedy Tonight* (now in its second season), can turn anything into a practical joke—even the coffee table in his room-with-a-stunning-view on Central Park South. “My previous coffee table was *so big*...” he exclaims. How big was it? “It was as big as a double bed. Every time I had a party I’d take the table to my ninety-four-year-old next-door neighbor and leave it there for days. I’d think up all sorts of excuses so I wouldn’t have to bring that monstrosity back into the apartment.”

Bill cleaned up his act after marrying actress Linda Thorson. His new rattan coffee table is the perfect size for Little LuLu, a bullterrier, and Trevor, his one-year-old son. A jock-of-all-trades (teacher, jogger, photographer, swimmer,

## Conspicuous Coffee Table

*Bill Boggs*



writer, tennis player), Boggs made his mark hosting Metromedia’s Emmy-award-winning *Midday Live*. Now he’s refashioned himself as an entrepreneur—hence the swanky Hugo Boss attire. Over dinner at Elaine’s, he and a pal, Richard Baker, formed their own entertainment company. They’ve produced concert videos of such disparate

stars as Bobby Short and Lou Reed, as well as *Comedy Tonight*, which has been stealing late-night viewers from Letterman et al.

“I think you produce your own life,” Bill says, sounding like a guest on his talk show. Yet he knows the bottom line. “You can be the most creative person in the world, but ultimately your destiny is controlled by little numbers on a Xerox page.” As for *Comedy Tonight*, Bill smiles and says, “Our numbers added up.”

—Brooks Peters

DAILY

# VARIETY

DAILY

## BOOK REVIEW

### At First Sight

*(How much will a man sacrifice to follow his feelings? How honest will he be if he has to choose between love and success and money? — From the dust jacket)*

George S. Kaufman once said, "One man's Medea is another man's Persian," and for the answer to the love vs. money riddle one must go to "At First Sight," by Bill Boggs (*Grosset & Dunlap*, 277 p., \$10.95), a first novel billed as a love story. Only this one is different.

It has a funny streak running through it which, in some ways, is an artful, and often entertaining, device since most current love stories are either overladen with sex and drugs or overwrought with heavy emotions.

In truth there are no knights in armor, shining or otherwise, running around loose these days, nor do young Lochlavors come riding out of the west to captivate lady loves.

Boggs, a television talk show host in New York ("Midday With Bill Boggs") tries to come up with the answer to the love or money question in this his first novel.

Since his counterpart in the story seems to parallel Boggs' profession, although not his life style, comparisons are unavoidable; although the milieu in which the narrative is set is probably a good deal autobiographical.

Boggs writes with a clear sense of humor, creating characters that run from the humorous to the hilarious. Boggs' protagonist is handsome, talented

and completely realistic as well as romantic. So when he suddenly spots a charming, voluptuous French girl on a visit at the New York Marathon, they are irresistibly drawn together and he forgets about everything else including a turned-off love affair which was withering on the vine anyway.

But complications arise, as they inevitably do in these cases, when money (lots of it) and success show up in the shape of a predatory female from Hollywood, who not only has what it takes to enter the love marathon but she has a father who is a film mogul and who can and does make the wheels turn — seemingly a hard parlay to defeat — but our boy gives it the college try. In the end, of course, love, as it must, conquers.

According to current standards, this looks like a likely candidate for a feature film or tv special. It certainly has the ingredients. Any good, young light comedian would dote upon the leading male role. It's the kind of part Jack Lemmon used to do so well and maybe could still do. Or

Alan Alda would be a good prospect.

There is also a fat part for the frequently frenetic and hilarious press agent. As for the femme roles (there are three) the two most prominent are the French bombshell and the pursuing, clutching Hollywood heiress. There's just enough sex shenanigans, words and action, to make this good, if not clean, fun.

*Carol Campbell,  
Bill Boggs*



Carol Edmunds Campbell, a publishing executive, and Bill Boggs, a television host, were married yesterday by the Rev. James L. Burns at the Episcopal Church of the Heavenly Rest in New York.

The bride, who is 43 and is taking her husband's name, works in New York as the director of event and sponsorship sales for the Meredith Publishing Group. She was until May of last year the publisher of *More* magazine. She graduated from Drew University.

She is a daughter of Virginia Campbell of Glen Cove, N.Y., and the late David A. Campbell. The bride's father was a partner in Campbell & Watson, a law firm that was in Manhasset, N.Y., after which he was of counsel to Farrell, Fritz, a law firm in Uniondale, N.Y.

The bridegroom is the creator and host of "Home Cooked Classics," a series he is developing for public television that will feature noncelebrity cooks from around the country; its pilot episode was broadcast on WLIW-TV earlier this month.

He was the host of "Bill Boggs Corner Table," which was broadcast on the Food Network from 1996 to 2002, and was the host from 1975 to 1986 of "Midday Live With Bill Boggs" on WNYW-TV. He graduated from the University of Pennsylvania, where he also received a master's degree in communications.

He is the son of Helene Boggs of Philadelphia and the late William Boggs Jr. His mother retired as a purchasing agent in the Navy's aviation supply depot in Philadelphia. His father sold vacuum cleaners in Philadelphia and was a swimming coach for the University of Pennsylvania.

The bridegroom's two previous marriages ended in divorce, as did the bride's previous marriage.

Ms. Campbell and Mr. Boggs met in February last year at a food and wine event at the Rainbow Room in New York. Both were there with others, but neither knew if the other was on a date or not. (He was; she wasn't.)

Ms. Campbell and Mr. Boggs happened to be seated next to each other. "Within about 10 seconds we realized we had the same dry, irreverent sense of humor and a shared passion for food," Ms. Campbell recalled.

Mr. Boggs gave all 10 people sitting at their table his business card and invited them to see his Off Broadway show, "Talk Show Confidential." But it was all a ruse for him to get Ms. Campbell's business card.

"At 10:01 the next morning, I called Carol, who thought I was continuing a business-related conversation from the night before," Mr. Boggs said. She found out in the first few moments that it was a personal call, when he asked in rapid succession if she was married, engaged or involved with someone. When she answered no to all his questions, he invited her to dinner. Six days later they met at Le Cirque, where they found, Mr. Boggs said, that they had "an amazing sense of comfort."

But what sealed the deal, they both agree, was a culinary tour of Italy they took together about two months later.

"I knew that I was going to come back ready to kill him or marry him," she said.