

Karl Eduard von Schnitzler had the soft western toilet paper! What a lucky Ass!.

Of course being born in the US means I had TV all my life. I wasn't as hooked on TV as many people I know were. I had more fun running around outside or hanging out in my room rather than being in the "family" room where the TV was. Also in typical 50s style my father dominated the TV so you had to watch what he was watching when he was home. I wasn't interested in the news, light music shows and war movies which were the domain of my father's taste. There was one comedy about the war that I liked - Hogan's Heroes, about a bunch of American prisoners during the war who of course manipulated and used their stupid captors. I watched some Japanese cartoons - especially Astro Boy and Ultra-Man. I also watched Godzilla and all those crazy Japanese films, but my favorite show was called LOST IN SPACE. It was about a typical family that travels through the galaxy on a space ship finding all kinds of planets and getting into all kinds of trouble. I used to pretend that I was traveling through space too. I had a little play house in the yard that was my spaceship and I drew all kinds of fake knobs and buttons on the inside. I also imagined that my bicycle was a space ship. There was a robot onboard LOST IN SPACE that I loved. One of my favorite toys was a small robot from that show which had blinking lights. (Batteries NOT included). So show product marketing was in full swing. The strange thing about this show was that there was a cranky nervous man on board the ship named Dr. Smith. He was always causing problems. I grew up thinking Dr. Smith was just a crazy man and never knew why he was traveling with the family. He was kind of shady but they all had to live together. I had never seen the first episode of the show as a kid but a few years ago, thanks to DVD technology and retro merchandising, I was able to see the first episode when the space ship first left earth. Dr. Smith was a Russian spy! He had programmed the robot to destroy the ship. He had to make a last minute adjustment and accidentally got stuck on board at take off. So he had to re-program the robot to keep himself alive. The family was into exploring space and he was always trying to get them to bring the spaceship back to earth. Throughout the show he had a certain control over the robot that I didn't really understand. Its incredible how politics are embedded in entertainment, even in FREE societies! Ha!

My first impressions of German TV was in the early 80s. I appreciated watching movies WITHOUT commercials. I also loved that test-Card when the stations went off the air. In the states only a few small stations ever went off the air - and then only in the middle of the night. As a kid it was a thrill to stay up so late to see the station go off the air. It always ended with the national anthem but we didn't get those great graphic test-cards that were in Germany. I have seen some of those great bands on TV via UTube. Like the Monks! I was amazed to see bands like Kraftwerk and Can on German TV. At that time you would never have seen anything that far out musically on American TV. I remember seeing the Beatles on the Ed Sullivan Show - mostly because I had an older sister who was part of the record industry demographic.

Commercials before, after and during the news is one of the most annoying things about US TV. I wasn't aware of how strange that is until a friend of mine from Berlin visited me in New York City. I was at work and she called me up to say she couldn't find

the news. Actually she had found the news but because of all the commercials she thought it was some action entertainment show. She was right. That's what the news is now. Stay Tuned!!