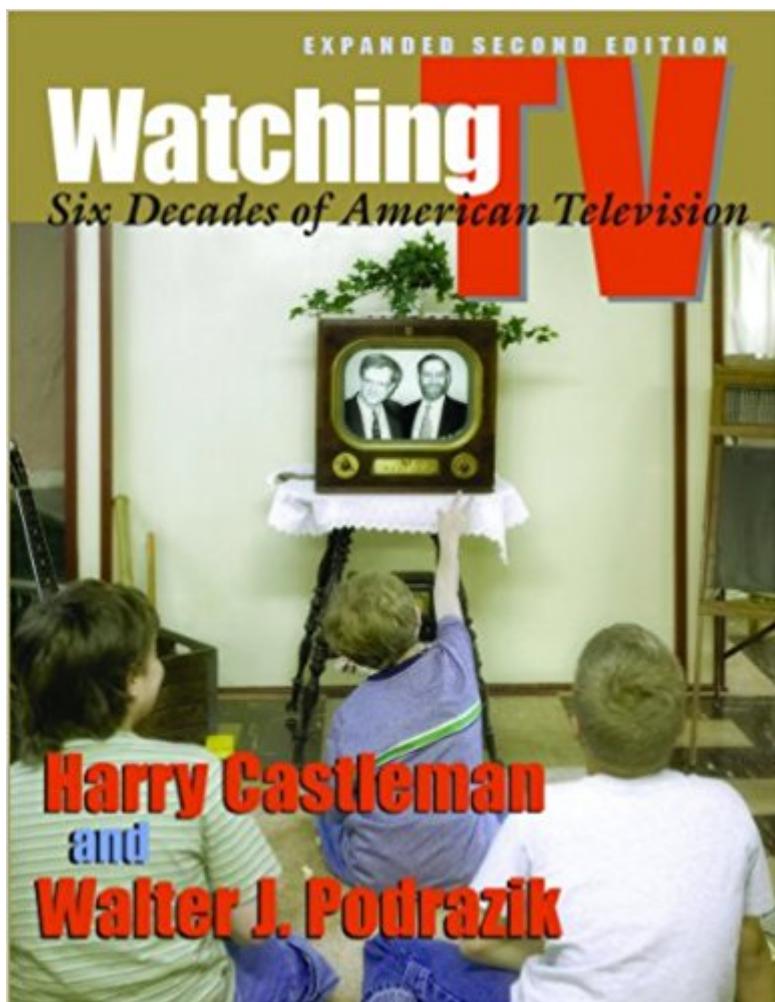


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# Watching TV: Six Decades Of American Television, Second Edition (Television And Popular Culture)



## **Synopsis**

Castleman and Podrazik present a sweeping season-by-season survey, capturing the essence of television from its inception to the present. The authors have dug through mounds of obscure facts, offbeat anecdotes, and the complicated network strategies that have made television a multibillion-dollar industry. By presenting every prime-time schedule, season by season, from the fall of 1944, *Watching TV* provides a fascinating history of how the personalities, popular shows, and coverage of key events have evolved during the past six decades. Full of facts, firsts, insights, and exploits, as well as rare and memorable photographs, *Watching TV* is the standard history of American television. This expanded edition includes thorough coverage up to the 2009-10 television season.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

The great risk in doing a book like "Watching TV," which both takes television history seriously and has fun with it, is that it may prove to be neither fish nor fowl -- too scholarly for those that want mere nostalgia, and with too much affection for its subject to please those who just want the facts. Happily, "Watching TV" avoids this pitfall. In the end, the book leans more to the scholarly side than the trivial, but given the vital role the medium plays in our society, the balance feels right. In this second edition of their 1982 book, Harry Castleman and Wally Podrazik take us up to the 2002-03 season, covering, in the updated material: NBC's return to respectability; cable's steady march to power, the emergence of Fox, the WB and UPN's debuts as broadcast networks, the regulatory shift

that has concentrated ownership in a way not seen in decades; the beginnings of the reality show phenomenon, the launch of new technology that promises to change the medium forever, and more. One of the remarkable aspects of the book remains its refusal to traffic in simple answers. If you're sure that Castleman and Podrazik are making a quick, easy generalization, keep reading: You'll soon see that they will articulate the issue's complexity. The easiest temptation for two Baby Boomer authors would have been to write a lament for "the good old days" of television. But Castleman and Podrazik point out the good and the bad in every season, in artistic, commercial and social terms. The season-by-season structure has several advantages. One is that you get the sense, moreso than in any other book about TV history, of how the networks have competed with one another.

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