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**PRESS & TELEVISION**

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*What's News?*

"The News" by Michael J. Arlen, in *The New Yorker* (Oct. 31, 1977), 25 W. 43rd St., New York, N.Y. 10036.

There should—and could—be room on television for all kinds of news programs, says Arlen, the *New Yorker's* TV critic, but that is not the way television seems to work. "There are trends," he notes, "and the trends point to dollars." The dollars right now point to more "soft" news broadcasts.

Soft news—the "informational entertainment" that has largely replaced "hard" news of critical world and national issues—dominates network broadcasts for two reasons: (1) the current success of CBS's magazine-format "Sixty Minutes," with its mixture of features and prosecutorial interviews; and (2) the popularity of "news consultants" who have boosted ratings by "personalizing" the newsroom. Network executives claim they have not lost perspective on what is and is not news. The fact remains, writes Arlen, that even a "dramatic early-morning rapprochement of the U.S. and Israel" can get lost in the "treacle jar" of human interest news—as it recently did.

The viewing public enjoys the latest news formula, with its flavorful vignettes of lions in Africa and the devouring of underwater grass by Maryland swans. But the same kind of slick coverage has been extended to world events.

Television is moving away from the traditions of print journalism and toward its own special strengths: portraiture, anecdote, and intimacy. That in itself is not bad. The flaw lies in television's one-dimensional style: "Everything" may be news, says Arlen, but everything is not news of the same kind.

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**RESOURCES & ENVIRONMENT**

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*Flexible Controls  
for Cleaner Air*

"Air Pollution Control Technology—State of the Art and Outlook" by Alan B. Brownstein, Alan S. Cohen *et al.*, in *Journal of the Air Pollution Control Association* (Sept. 1977), 4400 Fifth Avenue, Pittsburgh, Pa. 15213.

Environmentalists, who pressed Congress for more stringent air pollution curbs in last year's amendments to the 1970 Clean Air Act, must pursue a flexible, reasoned approach to pollution control or risk sacrificing future progress, warns Penn State environmental specialist Brownstein.

In a *Journal* panel discussion, he contends that if the growth rate of the U.S. economy slows much further, tradeoffs between energy, eco-