



The Rod Serling Memorial Foundation

SPECIAL HOLIDAY ISSUE—December 2010



SERLING'S "THE MAN" GETS THREE SCREENINGS IN THE NATION'S CAPITAL

Rod Serling's "The Man" (based on Irving Wallace's 1964 novel) has never been available commercially since it was broadcast on ABC television in 1972. In November, this obscure picture about the first Black American President was given new exposure in a series of three screenings in Washington, D.C. It took nearly a year of research, planning, and negotiations with the owner of rights to the film (Disney).

Actor Clayton LeBouef ("Something the Lord Made," "Homicide-Life on the Streets," "The Wire") contacted RSMF Board member Gordon Webb following Ithaca College's October 2009 "Rod Serling Conference" regarding rights to "Noon on Doomsday" — Serling's controversial script based on the lynching of 14-year-old Emmet Till in Mississippi (see "Beyond the Zone," below). As they discussed racial themes in Serling's work — Webb suggested a Serling script he had been researching — "The Man." Baffled at why this film hasn't received more attention with an African-American in the White House... LeBouef suggested trying to arrange a screening in Washington.

"In Sept of 1970 I took on the assignment to write a two hour television motion picture to be based on the Irving Wallace novel, The Man. I had access to a previous adaptation.... but I retained nothing at all from this beyond character names. From the novel itself I retained only the most fundamental premise....that of a black man fortuitously chosen to serve as President of the US. Beyond this premise, I submit that the script, its plot line and its dramatic incidents are all my own creation."
- Rod Serling

(from a letter to the Writers Guild regarding the film's credits; source: Carol Serling)

With the help of producer/event organizer Michon Boston the team caught the interest of Andy Shallal who agreed to a series of screenings at his restaurants "Busboys and Poets." Webb — a retired Professor of Television-Radio — participated in the first screening on 11/14 — which was attended by a SRO crowd of nearly 100 people. There were two other screenings (on 11/21 and 11/28) and all events left participants wondering why this film had received virtually no attention since the election of Barack Obama.



Gordon Webb and Clayton LeBouef at 11/14 Screening of "The Man"

The screenings received some good press coverage — including:

- "The DCist" promoted the screenings — referring to Serling as "the man who had for years been getting the American public used to seeing socially progressive ideas in the guise of science fiction on *The Twilight Zone*."
- "Yelp.com" suggested that in 1972, the first Black American President "might have been science fiction — especially with a script by Rod Serling, but not anymore! In the Obama era, was Serling ahead of his time?"
- Movie website "justplay.com" suggests that Serling may have been chosen to adapt the novel because "the idea of an African-American President sounded like something out of *The Twilight Zone*."

According to Clayton LeBouef, these screenings are a reflection of Rod Serling's quest, as a writer, to "menace the public conscience." The organizers envision the screenings of "The Man" as just the beginning of a project aimed at increasing public awareness about the large body of Serling's work dealing with social and political issues.

TZ READINGS AT SERLING HIGH SCHOOL OF THE PERFORMING ARTS



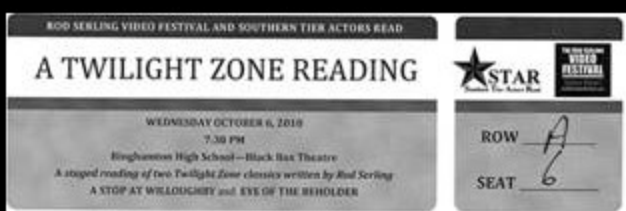
(l to r) Doug Sutton, Anne Serling-Sutton, Andy Polak (far right)



Narrator Larry Kassan with Actors (Photos: Kate Murray-Studio 271)

RSMF President Andy Polak was lucky enough to attend readings of two scripts from *The Twilight Zone* in Binghamton recently. Here's an excerpt of his longer article on this event — which may be found on the [RSMF website](#):

(Binghamton, NY) "I never imagined Rod Serling's *The Twilight Zone* would have the same impact minus the spectacularly moody and dramatic photography that is so closely associated with this classic television show. What I failed to imagine was how the simple spoken word of something so well written as these two episodes would translate. How these well written words would make you think. How these well written words would make you ponder. How these well written words would make you consider. How these well written words would make you understand."



COMING SOON!
"AS TIMELESS AS INFINITY" — VOL. 8

Our own Tony Albarella (RSMF Board member and official "archivist") has just completed the next installment in this coveted series.

Some special "extras" — for which this series is known — will be found in this volume, including: Rod Serling correspondence, *Twilight Zone* cue and call sheets, and rare photos. Three modern genre authors, all heavily inspired by Serling's work, contributed essays for Volume Eight: Gary A. Braunbeck, Thomas F. Monteleone, and Joe R. Lansdale. Commentaries include interviews with directors Richard Donner, Lamont Johnson and James Sheldon, and actors Don Keefer, Bill Mummy, Martin Landau, Read Morgan, Arlene Martel, Dean Stockwell, and Leonard Nimoy.

Scripts in Volume Eight:

- "What You Need"
- "Nightmare as a Child"
- "The Rip Van Winkle Caper"
- "The Shelter"
- "It's a Good Life"
- "A Quality of Mercy"
- "One More Pallbearer"
- "The Thirty Fathom Grave"
- "Sounds and Silences"
- "The Jeopardy Room"



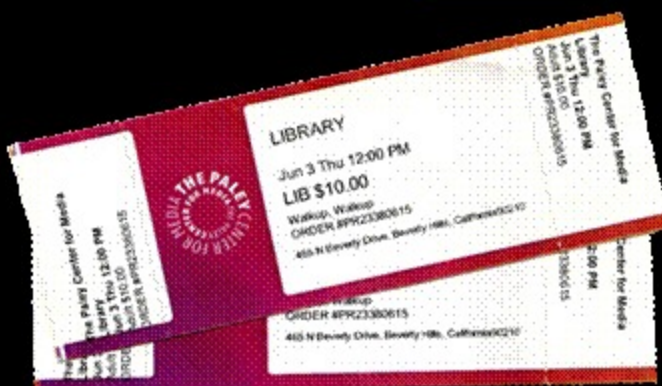
Volume 8 is coming Spring 2011... available for pre-order on January 1

EDITOR'S NOTE: Any of the first seven books in this series — published by [Gauntlet Press](#) — would make a great holiday gift for your favorite fan of *The Twilight Zone*.



The city bus wrapped with "Rod Serling imagery" is still cruising the streets of Binghamton — more than a year after the 50th anniversary celebration on October 2009 (shown here with I-C Prof. John Keshishoglou).

YOUR TICKET TO "THE ZONE" — AND MORE



RSMF Board Member Steve Schlich takes us on a trip back to the early days of television — via *The Paley Center for Media* — in his web article "Seeking Rod Serling: Adventures in Beverly Hills." Reading his fascinating article is like touring with a professional guide... with just the right amount of nostalgia thrown in. Steve includes a link to the Paley Center catalog and a listing of several dozen Serling gems that are available nowhere else. There are even some tourist tips on where to eat and stay — without spending a fortune. As Steve says: "The important thing is: Go!" But if you can't...reading this article will make you feel as if you're there.

SERLING'S VOICE

Millicent Barnes, age 25, young woman waiting for a bus on a rainy November night...



The introduction to Rod Serling's 1960 TWZ script "Mirror Image" depicts a lonely bus station much like the Binghamton Greyhound terminal shown above. [Read](#) how this classic "Streamline Moderne" building — which is said to have inspired Serling's script — is being given a new lease on life as the new *Greater Binghamton Transportation Center*.

Beyond the Zone

The second installment in Tony Albarella's reviews of obscure Serling productions examines "Noon on Doomsday" (The United States Steel Hour—April 25, 1956). Part of this script's significance is the degree to which sponsors — and others — exerted their control over the writer's work. Albarella says "That significant alterations were made to *Noon on Doomsday* is the stuff of Serling lore; the incident is one of the more high-profile examples of the kind of censorship that drove the writer to create the fantasy realm of *The Twilight Zone*." This series of reviews is one powerful reason to check out the RSMF website.

HELP!

Webmaster Steve Schlich would like some help coding the home page to detect a mobile or handheld device, so people can hold a readable version of the Foundation in their hand. If you can help — [email the webmaster](#) to volunteer. Thanks!

UPCOMING SERLING EVENTS

ROD SERLING CONFERENCE (Ithaca College): a two-day event is planned for early fall, 2011... watch for more details in the newsletter & website

25TH ANNIVERSARY: your RSMF celebrates 25 years in 2011... and special events are planned... stay tuned here

THE RSMF NEWSLETTER

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The caricature of Rod Serling on our masthead is by the late Johnny Hart — internationally-known cartoonist ("B.C." and "The Wizard of Id")... another creative genius who called the Binghamton area "home."