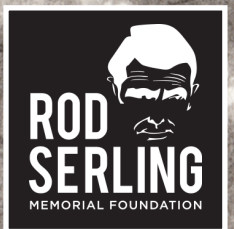


# DIMENSIONS OF IMAGINATION

The Official Newsletter of the Rod Serling Memorial Foundation



FALL 2023/WINTER 2024





## NOTES FROM NICK

### An Update from RSMF President Nick Parisi

Hello, everyone, and welcome to the Fall/Winter 2024 edition of *Dimensions of Imagination*. This issue marks the beginning of what we hope will be a long and exciting run of issues under our new editor, Paul Gallagher. And while we wish Paul the best in his new role, let's first acknowledge the fantastic job done by our outgoing editor, Gordon Webb! Gordon's editing and Gail Flug's layout helped turn *Dimensions of Imagination* into a first-class publication that we're all proud to be a part of.

In our corner of the Serling-verse, the big news continues to be our work on installing a statue of Rod Serling in Binghamton's Recreation Park. For now, we can announce that are planning two separate

events centered around Rod's statue.

The first will be the unveiling of the statue in its place in Rec Park, sometime in the early summer. Next, we plan to hold a statue dedication ceremony during SerlingFest, which will take place in the fall. This ceremony will include the unveiling of the groundwork around the statue, made up largely of the personalized bricks that were made possible by donations from so many of you who are reading this.

To be clear: the bricks will not be in place at the unveiling. They will not be placed until sometime later, likely shortly before the dedication ceremony during SerlingFest. So, if you have not yet submitted the

text for your brick's inscription, you still have time. But don't take too long! Please send your inscription to me at [pr@rodserling.com](mailto:pr@rodserling.com) ASAP!

Confirmation and additional details about SerlingFest will be announced as soon as possible.

Our statue unveiling, statue dedication, and SerlingFest 2024 are just a few of the events that we are planning in celebration of Rod Serling's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday year. As always, stay tuned!

Nick Parisi, President,  
The Rod Serling Memorial  
Foundation



#### OUR PLEDGE

Rod Serling's achievements in playwriting, speech making and broadcasting are considerable and important. As members of the Rod Serling Memorial Foundation, we dedicate ourselves to promote and preserve this great man's contributions to the Arts and Humanities.

We pledge to educate the public about Rod Serling's genius and his passion, hoping that they will understand and appreciate his mastery of the creative arts, his unique understanding of human relationships, his esteem as a writer, his generosity as a speaker in and around Binghamton, and his uncompromising commitment to quality.

Rod Serling Memorial Foundation  
Box 2101, Binghamton, New York USA 13902-2101

[www.RodSerling.com](http://www.RodSerling.com)

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## NEWSDESK

### The Brand-New, 40-Year-Old Statue

by Tony Albarella

Less than a decade after Rod Serling's passing, the Rod Serling Memorial Foundation was formed to honor the writer, promote his works, and celebrate his unique connections to his hometown of Binghamton, New York.

A primary goal from the organization's inception was to place markers in and around the town to commemorate Serling. Several memorials resulted from these early efforts, including a downtown Walk-of-Fame star, a historical sign in front of Binghamton High School, and a plaque mounted in the bandstand at Recreation Park.

Another lofty objective, unrealized at the time, was creation and placement of the ultimate physical memorial: a statue. The realization of such a project, as it turned out, required more than mere local fundraising, phone calls, and elbow grease. Facing political headwinds, town ordinances, and the daunting need for significant financial backing, the RSMF's band of

founders and supporters had to shelve this particular dream for nearly four decades.

Flash-forward to 2020, when current RSMF President Nick Parisi first decided to pull that dream down from the shelf, blow off the dust, and present it to the board of directors. Nick and the board began to investigate options, make connections, and intensify efforts to resurrect the project. The first tangible result manifested in August 2021, during our annual SerlingFest celebration, when we launched our initial Kickstarter campaign: *As Timeless as Infinity - a Rod Serling Monument*.

Based on research and cost projections, we set a goal of \$90,000 to cover the undertaking. While interest and investment was high among the Serling faithful, we seemed to run into a bit of a headwind ourselves; with the world still shifting and clawing its way back from the COVID-19 Pandemic, funding a statue was not at the top of the personal to-do list for most people.

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## RSMF PROFILE

### Carolyn Price, Member, Board of Directors

Carolyn Price has been a Board Member of the Rod Serling Memorial Foundation (RSMF) for 30 years. She has served as secretary and also as treasurer for the board.

Carolyn was nominated to serve by Helen Foley, who had been Rod Serling’s teacher at Binghamton High School. Carolyn and Helen worked with Binghamton High School students to coach them with their speeches for the annual Distinguished Graduates Dinner. The rehearsing was on the stage where Rod Serling had performed as a student. Through this association, Helen believed in

Carolyn and wanted her to help carry on the Rod Serling legacy.

Carolyn graduated magna cum laude from Florida Southern College with a Bachelor of Science degree in elementary education. She earned her Master of Science degree in reading at the University of Scranton. Carolyn also did postgraduate study at the State University of New York at Cortland to achieve certification as a school administrator and supervisor. She is enrolled in Baylor University’s EdD Learning and Organizational Change program online and hopes to be awarded the EdD in December 2024.

Carolyn is dedicated to a life of service. She served as a teacher and central office administrator for over 40 years. She also has served her community as an elected official. Most important to her is her service in the community, having served on boards for the Division of Youth, the Urban League, Windsor Partnership, and the Office for Aging. Her board membership for the RSMF is the longest.

According to Carolyn, “I hope my service on the Board for the Rod Serling Foundation has helped to honor Rod Serling and his favorite teacher, Helen Foley.”



#### NEWSDESK: FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

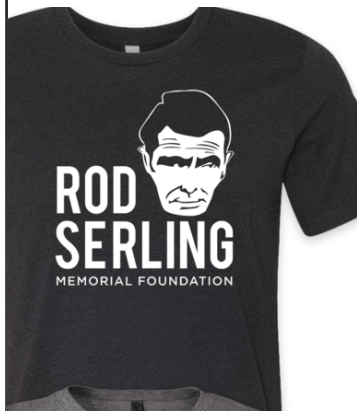
By the end of the campaign, 225 people had pledged just over \$45,000 – a respectable figure but one that, while providing a great gauge of interest and support, fell well short of our goal. And since Kickstarter is an all-or-nothing proposition, we received none of those pledged donations. With

regret, we hoisted the Serling statue dream back up on the shelf.

Thankfully, it didn’t remain there for long. Assemblywoman Donna Lupardo, long a proponent of Foundation endeavors, noted the unsuccessful campaign and became actively involved in our project. With her help we secured

a \$50,000 New York State grant, and with that as our new “startup fund,” we ran a second Kickstarter campaign in 2023, this time with a much more manageable goal of \$35,000. Interest and backing proved even higher than our first attempt. More than 270 people supported the project, surpassing our goal and raising a total of \$47,765.

## RSMF MERCHANDISE



The RSMF has teamed up with Muckles Ink - a retail & commercial screen-printed apparel company owned and operated by Binghamton University Alumni - to print and distribute our official shirt! Proceeds will benefit the Rod Serling Memorial Foundation. It’s a great conversation starter to meet fellow fans and a rewarding way to show your support for Rod’s legacy!

#### Details:

- 52/48 Airlume combed and ring-spun cotton/polyester
- Unisex sizing
- Coverstitched collar and sleeves
- Shoulder-to-shoulder taping
- Retail fit, side seams
- Tear-away label

Available in black, blackberry, brown heather royal and grey. Sizes S to 4X - \$22.00 plus shipping.

Muckles also offers a wide range of Binghamton and Binghamton University shirts and tote bags.

Muckles website: [tinyurl.com/RSMFTEES](https://tinyurl.com/RSMFTEES)

The statue was created by Statues.com, based out of Utah. The Foundation’s board was closely involved in every step of its design and creation. Anne Serling visited the facility during the process to see and approve the likeness of her father in person.

As to the location for permanent placement of the statue, this is a given and was never in doubt. If there’s anywhere on the planet that this eternal effigy of Rod Serling truly belongs, it’s nestled within Binghamton’s Recreation Park. A fixture of Serling’s beloved childhood, Recreation Park is the setting that inspired *Twilight Zone*’s “Walking Distance” and so much more of his nostalgia-tinged work.

At long last, we are nearly there. The statue has been sculpted and cast and welded and bronzed. The base on which the statue will be mounted is being created, and we are currently working with the City of Binghamton and the Parks Department to arrange for installation. Once these tasks are locked down, we will be able to announce the date of unveiling. We hope you can be there to enjoy it with us.



This summer, a dream nearly four decades in the making comes to fruition. This summer, our larger-than-life replica of Rod Serling begins a sentinel watch over Recreation Park. This summer, the afternoon sun brings a reflected glint into bronze eyes and the sounds of laughing children blend with calliope music and drift over bronze ears.

It all starts this summer.



# FOUNDATION

## From The Archives: Items Donated By Carol Serling

By Andrew Polak

Back in 1987, in the early days of the Rod Serling Memorial Foundation, then-President Michael Pipher organized a "Celebrity Auction" as a fundraiser. Celebrities were generous in their donations, as was Carol Serling, who donated this group of personal items.

It was wisely decided to keep

these items in our archive rather than offer them at the auction.

These items include:

Top left to right: an inscribed desk set with two pens by W. A. Scheaffer Pen Company; a lighter owned by Rod celebrating the success of his multiple award-winning Playhouse 90 program "Requiem for a Heavyweight:"

a silver box inscribed "Rod Serling, The National Academy of Television Arts and Science, Hollywood, September 1963," of which Rod was President from 1965-66.

Bottom left to right: a gold-and-black tie clip with Rod's initials displayed on a Twilight Zone-themed tie; a billfold with Rod's signature done in metal from 1965-66; an embosser used for Interlaken

Productions, which produced The Loner

I have featured some of these items in past columns, but thought it would be nice to list them together as a group. We cherish these items and look forward to having them on display at SerlingFest 2024, celebrating what would have been Rod Serling's 100th year!



## WINNERS OF NARRATE YOUR OWN TWILIGHT ZONE CONTEST

By Steve Schlich

After five years and declining entries, I didn't run the contest for 2022—partly because I feared that it was getting old. I'm delighted to admit how wrong I was. We got a record 72 entries this year! And they included some of the best narrations that I've ever read. At the Winners page (see link at right) you can bask in the fruit of much honest labor: 74 stories (72+2, see below) that will take you on some surprising flights of fancy. You can also enjoy a video of the contest winners, narrated by Stephen Dexter performing as Rod Serling. This is Stephen's sixth turn for us, pausing his busy schedule of acting, voicing, writing, and producing, to make these prizes such a treat.

Stephen's Broadway debut in *The Shark is Broken* (about the filming of "Jaws") consumed a large portion of his year, but didn't slow him from reaching a big milestone in his audiobook narration career. The man is versatile! A tie in judging gave us four winners—again! I love that. It's an opportunity to honor more work.

One winner is a familiar face, by the way: 2020 first-place winner Matthew Hawes tied for second this year with "A Measure of Victory."

As I noted, we got some really good stuff, and not just the top four. Foundation Board member Gail Flug, for example, wrote two narrations—ineligible to win, of course, but quite worthy

and included here. Plus, we got a remarkably short entry that contained no definitive plot, but is a fair surrogate for nearly every Twilight Zone episode ever

broadcast. I'll let you find those Easter Eggs on your own. A big "thank you" to everyone who submitted an entry!

### FIRST PLACE:

"The Lesson"  
by Susan Rosenzweig

### SECOND PLACE (TIE):

"A Measure of Victory"  
by Matthew Hawes

### SECOND PLACE (TIE):

"We Always Go To Coney Island"  
by Lea McCall

### THIRD PLACE:

"I am Not a Robot"  
by Jay P. Maille

## "THE LESSON"

Written by  
Susan Rosenzweig

READ ALL THE ENTRIES  
[RODSERLING.COM/  
WINNERS-NYOTZ](https://rodserling.com/winners-nyotz)

WATCH THE VIDEO FEATURING  
STEPHEN DEXTER  
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# BEYOND THE ZONE

## Reviews of Obscure Productions from Rod Serling's Career

By Tony Albarella

"In the Presence of Mine Enemies"  
 Playhouse 90  
 Aired: May 18, 1960  
 Directed by Fielder Cook  
 Starring Charles Laughton, Arthur Kennedy, Susan Kohner, Oscar Homolka, George Macready, Sam Jaffe, Robert Redford, Otto Waldis and Bernard Kates

*Playhouse 90* was a prestigious 1956-60 CBS anthology that aired live, 90-minute teleplays on a weekly basis. Utilizing the top talent in the television field, 90's producers relied on Rod Serling to spearhead the writing corps.

Serling wrote the premiere episode and a total of 10 teleplays for the show, winning Best Teleplay Writing Emmys for both "Requiem for a Heavyweight" and "The Comedian," while the series itself garnered 43 Emmy nominations and 11 wins. Serling also penned the final episode, and with the airing of 1960's "In the Presence of Mine Enemies," he closed the curtain on an experimental series that was as grand and ambitious as the dramas it had produced.

Serling's harrowing tale, set in Poland just prior to the uprising in the Warsaw ghetto, focuses on Rabbi Adam Heller (Charles Laughton), his daughter Rachel (Susan Kohner) and his son Paul (Arthur Kennedy) as they navigate the Nazi occupation. Having recently escaped from a prison camp, Paul is hungry for payback for the atrocities he witnessed. He eschews his father's pleas to "turn the other cheek" as well as his father's entire belief system. When Rachel is raped by Nazi Captain Richter (George Macready) - and comforted by a horrified younger Nazi soldier, Sergeant Lott (Robert Redford) - Paul seeks out Richter and kills him.

A family friend, Josef Chinik (Oscar Homolka), protects the Hellers by confessing to the murder, and is executed. These events shake but do not shatter the rabbi's faith. Months later, as Paul gears up for the imminent extermination of the ghetto, Lott arrives to proclaim his love for the now-pregnant Rachel and offers to lead her to safety.




**TV CLOSE-UP GUIDE** 8:30 (3)(7)(10)(11) **PLAYHOUSE 90—Drama**

**Charles Laughton in**  
**'In the Presence of Mine Enemies'**  
 by Rod Serling

**SPECIAL** Within a hundred city blocks, surrounded by an eight-foot wall, half-a-million human beings are confined. Each morning the trucks come and people are carted away to be tortured and killed. Those who manage to avoid or survive this ordeal wage a day-by-day struggle against starvation and disease and against the poverty of spirit that comes with total subjugation.

This is the Warsaw Ghetto in Nazi-occupied Poland during the Second World War. In the midst of this all-too-real nightmare, Rabbi Adam Heller, the gentle leader of an Orthodox Jewish congregation, strives to hold his flock together and communicate to them his own idealism, strength, courage and faith.

The taped 90-minute drama was directed by Fielder Cook.



**Cast**

Rabbi Adam Heller	.....	Charles Laughton
Paul Heller	.....	Arthur Kennedy
Rachel Heller	.....	Susan Kohner
Josef Chinik	.....	Oscar Homolka
Captain Richter	.....	George Macready
Emmanuel	.....	Sam Jaffe
Sergeant Lott	.....	Robert Redford
Kohn	.....	Otto Waldis
Israel	.....	Bernard Kates

As fighting breaks out, Rabbi Heller forgives Lott and the young couple escape as Paul and his father join the resistance, each in their own way. (This resolution was reworked from the more formidable denouncement Serling originally planned, in which Paul, resentful of Rachel's rescue by a Nazi, confronts Lott, forcing Adam Heller to shoot Paul - sacrificing his son to save his daughter, and siding with love over hatred.)

The episode has an origin that befits the writer's history with network censorship. Serling worked out the story idea in 1958 and wrote the teleplay in 1959. As reported by *Variety* magazine, the script was purchased, Joseph Schildkraut was contracted for the role of Rabbi Heller, and production was approved by CBS Editing.

Then representatives for the

American Gas Association, a *Playhouse 90* sponsor, objected, deeming the play too "depressing," and CBS promptly shelved it. The reps claimed their interference had nothing to do with events a year prior - one of the most notorious examples of TV censorship - when references to gas chambers were removed from the audio track of *Playhouse 90*'s "Judgment at Nuremberg" because the American Gas Association feared the public would associate their product with the Nazi method of mass execution.

Due primarily to a writer's strike in 1960 (and, perhaps, a newly-developed backbone by the producers of *Playhouse 90* in light of the show's pending cancellation), the episode was produced in May as the final installment of the series. In spite of the modified ending, "In the Presence of Mine Enemies" was every bit the type of potent and moving teleplay that viewers had come to expect from Rod Serling. It replaced caricature with complexity, pitting not only German against Jew but father against son, pacifist against militarist, and characters who embrace faith against those who renounce it.

Perhaps the most lasting imprint of the teleplay is the controversy it ignited. Serling's grim depiction of daily life and death in the Warsaw ghetto vehemently disturbed some viewers, as did his treatment of some of the characters. Paul and Lott are the audience's emotional surrogates, our way to be personally drawn into a story painted on the impossibly broad canvas of worldwide war. But Serling created them as intricate human beings who embody individual thought and action. As in the writer's 1957 *Playhouse 90* "The Dark Side of the Earth" (a similarly-themed wartime drama and father/son conflict), the lead characters of "In the Presence of Mine Enemies" defy their preordained stereotypes...and therein lies the rub.

Lott is a soldier who questions his orders, the autocracy from which they issue and the horror they

**CONTINUED ON FOLLOWING PAGE**



# TWILIGHT ZONE

## BEYOND/ZONE: FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

have wrought. Paul turns away from his faith and is desperate for retribution. The older-generation characters of the tale clearly fit their respective molds (Captain Richter an animalistic aggressor and Rabbi Heller the submissive victim), but the youths do not; Lott is a sympathetic German and Paul a militant Jew. To an audience raised on the “proper” good guy/bad guy character assignments of World War II movies and early television, an audience little over a decade removed from the war itself and still feeling its effects, this was a step too far.

In the wake of the episode’s airing, CBS fielded calls and telegrams from outraged viewers, one of which was writer Leon Uris. As chronicled in Nick Parisi’s book *Rod Serling: His Life, Work, and Imagination*, Uris sent a telegram to CBS President Frank Stanton, labeling the story “the most disgusting presentation in the history of American

television” and suggesting that CBS “burn the negative of this film and publically apologize for this outrage.” Stanton replied, “I am amazed by your extreme reaction to ‘In the Presence of Mine Enemies’ and I disagree with you completely. I believe that (it) was an eloquent and moving drama about the nobility of the human spirit and of the victims of the Warsaw ghetto...Moreover, I cannot restrain myself from expressing shock that an eminent author would demand an action tantamount to a book burning.”

Ultimately, the episode rose above this initial contention as it received praise from letter-writing viewers and the majority of critics. In his *New York Times* review, Jack Gould lauded Serling’s “brilliant characterizations” and remarked that “...the drama captured not only the degradation and despair in the ghetto, but in its conclusion there was also a moving affirmation of the dignity and indestructibility of the human being. ‘In the Presence

of Mine Enemies’ attests to the continuing growth of Mr. Serling as a playwright.”

In 1997, the cable network Showtime produced a fine remake with standout performances by Armin Mueller-Stahl as Rabbi Adam Hiller and Charles Dance as Captain Richter. The complexity of the characters was more readily digestible to contemporary audiences and the controversy surrounding its 37-year-old predecessor never surfaced. Notably, this remake also restored the ending originally devised in Serling’s 1958 outline.

As evidenced by the current Russo-Ukrainian and Israel-Hamas conflicts, Serling’s frequent go-to subjects of racism, genocide and war are, unfortunately, timeless. *Playhouse 90*, and the era in which it flourished, is long gone. But the topics Serling addressed on the series are both universal and omnipresent.



## In Memoriam: Passings 2023

By Gail Flug

**Kevin O’Neal** (March 26, 1945 - January 28, 2023) portrayed Butler, one of the students seated in the classroom in *Twilight Zone*’s “The Changing Of The Guard.”

From 1964–1965, he portrayed Private Ben Whittedge, a leading character in the series *No Time for Sergeants*, his only notable role. He went on to have bit parts and uncredited appearances in various TV shows, including *Mod Squad*, *Perry Mason*, *Room 222*, *Bonanza*, and *The Fugitive*. He re-entered the Serling realm by appearing in one episode of *The New People*, the long-forgotten ABC series Rod created with Aaron Spelling in 1970. (Rod distanced himself from the project and used the pseudonym “John Phillips” as his credit for writing the pilot episode.)

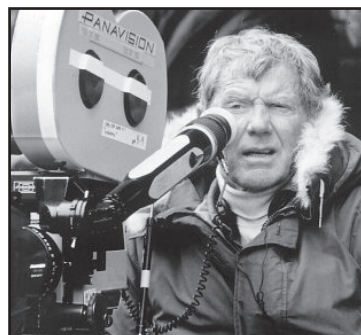
It is likely the actor had retired from acting professionally by the time he had cameo roles in movies including *Love Story*, *The Thief Who Came to Dinner*, and *What’s Up Doc*, which starred his older brother, Ryan O’Neal,



who passed away on December 8, 2023.

**Robert Butler** (November 16, 1927 - November 3, 2023) kicked off his career directing two episodes of *TZ*’s fifth season, “Caesar and Me” and “The Encounter.”

His directorial breakthrough came with his work on the first episode of *Batman*, which led to other pilots for iconic television series, including the original *Star Trek*, *Hogan’s Heroes*, *Remington Steele* (a show which he also co-created), *Sisters*, *Lois & Clark: The New Adventures of Superman*, and *Moonlighting*. His credits stretched over a diversity of television shows, TV movies,



and film genres over four decades: *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, *The X-Files*, *I Spy*, *Mission: Impossible*, *Hawaii Five-O*, *The Dick Van Dyke Show*, *The Waltons*, *St. Elsewhere*, *Magnum, P.I.*, *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*, *The Incredible Hulk*, and *The Love Boat*.

Butler won Emmy Awards for *The Blue Knight* pilot (1973) and for *Hill Street Blues* in 1981. In 2014, Butler’s work was the subject of a career retrospective at the UCLA Film and Television Archive. He was honored by the Directors Guild of America (DGA) with a Lifetime Achievement Award for Distinguished Achievement in Television Direction in 2015.



**Nan Peterson** (July 7, 1931 - August 15, 2023) appeared in four *TZ* episodes with either unnamed or uncredited roles: as the woman in the park in “Walking Distance,” a woman seated at the bar in “Night of the Meek,” one-half of the couple buying a car in “The Whole Truth,” and a secretary in “From Agnes—With Love.” Her other roles included bit parts in shows such as *Perry Mason*, *Sea Hunt*, *Rawhide*, and *Gunsmoke*, yet fans of ‘50s sci-fi movies will know her as the busty blonde in the 1958 film *The Hideous Sun Demon*, her first role. She appeared in the movie *Shotgun Wedding* before retiring from acting in 1963 to focus on family.



# ROD SERLING

## Restoring Serling's Earliest Works and Other "Golden Age" TV Dramas

by Gordon C. Webb

Much of writer Rod Serling's best work was produced during a period in the 1950s called "The Golden Age of Television," known for its powerful dramatic stories crafted especially for what was then a brand-new medium of mass communication. Unfortunately, it's been difficult for fans to enjoy the art and creativity of early television programming due to the poor quality of old TV recordings.

However, that may be about to change. New advances in digital technology are unlocking programs from the "Golden Age" in a way that allows the writer's story to come through – even more clearly than in the original format.

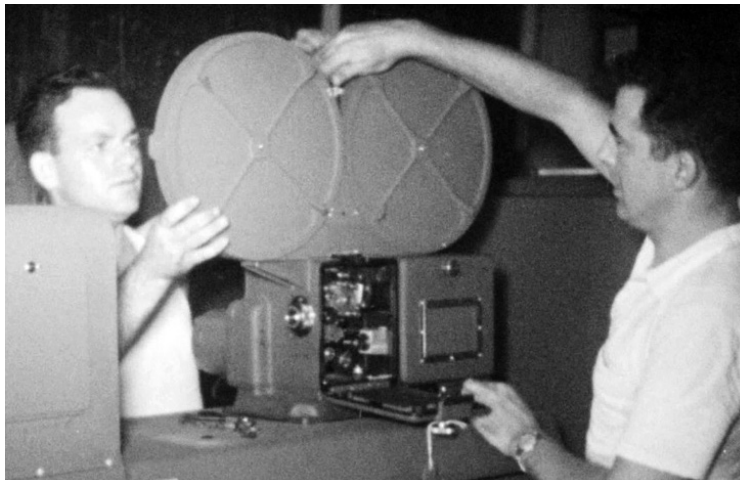
To make a fair comparison between dramatic television programs from the 1950s and theatrical movies of the period, it helps to understand some basic differences between these two competing media.

### A LITTLE HISTORY

Movie production goes back to the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, becoming "big business" in the 1920s. By the time regular television programming as we know it began in the early 1950s (the era of *I Love Lucy*), the motion picture industry was celebrating its own "golden age." But delivering high-quality dramas to movie-goers had evolved into a very expensive process, with production of theatrical motion pictures often taking months, or even years to complete.

Hollywood-style movie production is a unique craft, and has changed little over the years. Each scene in the writer's story is filmed from multiple angles, using a single camera. After shooting is finished, hundreds of "shots" are combined, through the laborious process of editing and post-production, into a finished movie.

By comparison, in the early days of television drama, the writer's script was produced live – like a stage play – using multiple video



cameras to view various angles of the performance. The TV director selected which camera would be "on-the-air" – essentially editing the program as it was transmitted to the TV audience. Like any live performance, the audience experienced it as it happened, with no chance to do it over... no "retakes." If an actor flubbed a line or experienced a wardrobe mishap, that's what the TV audience saw.

Another major difference between movies and early television programs involves the relatively primitive technical quality of early black-and-white programs -- a far cry from the beautiful, color images projected on huge movie theater screens. In addition, videotape recording was still years away and preserving these broadcasts involved a process known as "kinescope," where a movie camera – pointed at a video

monitor – filmed the program.

Not all programs were able to be filmed, and if they were, the resulting kinescope copies had a "flickering, choppy" look. Until this technology was perfected and was in regular use, many early TV dramas were never recorded at all. Sadly, without a way to preserve them, all that remains of many early productions, including some of Serling's work, are the scripts from which they were produced.

Rod Serling was a prolific writer and churned out more than a hundred scripts that were broadcast on network television shows during the 1950s. Three of his six Emmy Awards were earned during this early period, including "Patterns" for *Kraft Television Theater*, which was judged as "Best Original Teleplay Writing" at the 1956 Emmy Awards. Aired on January 12, 1955 on the

NBC television network, this live production was NOT filmed, but following rave reviews as "one of the high points in the TV medium's evolution" (*New York Times*) it was restaged on February 12, 1955. A kinescope was made of the second performance – becoming the first-ever TV "rerun."

"Requiem for a Heavyweight," broadcast on *Playhouse 90* on October 11, 1956, won a second Emmy for Serling, and a Peabody Award – the first-ever given for a television script. This broadcast is considered to be one of the best examples of American live TV drama, and also exists as a kinescope recording. Serling won his third Emmy a year later for *Playhouse 90*'s "The Comedian," which was also preserved on kinescope.

These are just three examples of Serling's contributions to "The Golden Age." He wrote for highly-acclaimed programs like *Hallmark Hall of Fame*, *Lux Video Theater*, *Suspense*, *The U.S. Steel Hour*, and many more. This was also the early days of television advertising, and large corporations hoped to earn "prestige" by sponsoring quality drama for television's new "mass audience." But at least half of Serling's shows – particularly from the early 1950s – are either lost, or are on recordings held in private collections.<sup>1</sup> And while some recordings of these productions have been commercially released, they're made from the same "scratchy, jerky" kinescopes mentioned earlier. Even collectors who are adept at finding "bootleg" VHS tapes or DVD copies of hard-to-get videos online have been viewing copies of the same, low-quality recordings.

### TECHNOLOGY TO THE RESCUE

Thanks to recent advancements in digital technology, brand-new recordings of some early TV programs written by Rod Serling and others are being released, and the improvement in quality is often nothing short of astonishing!

**CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE**

1 Parisi, Nicholas. *Rod Serling: His Life, His Work, His Imagination* (University Press of Missouri, 2018). Written by RSMF's president – this book is available through Amazon – and includes an extensive listing of Serling's complete body of work.



# ROD SERLING

## KINESCOPES: FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

Thanks to techniques similar to that used to preserve old theatrical films, old kinescopes are first thoroughly cleaned with special chemicals to remove years of accumulated dust and grime. Then the films are scanned, frame-by-frame at high resolution, and finally, special proprietary software magically removes scratches and other defects.

Digital preservation is also able to improve issues unique to kinescope films, such as removing "scanlines" – an artifact created by filming the image from a TV monitor. The choppy, "flickering" appearance of old kinescopes – caused by the different frame rates utilized in film and television – is also corrected. Finally, digital audio processing is able to improve the "scratchy" optical soundtrack used in films, resulting in crisp, clean audio for these new, restored TV programs.

Newly-restored Serling videos include several of the classic programs mentioned earlier – now available in high-definition video on YouTube:

"Patterns": This restored recording presents the program as it was performed for the second production on February 12, 1955. Included are commercials for the sponsor – Kraft Foods, a "Fight Polio" public service announcement and promo for the next week's program.

This video also contains a demonstration of the restoration process, showing a side-by-side comparison of shots before and after restoration.

## [TINYURL.COM/PATTERNS-RESTORED](http://TINYURL.COM/PATTERNS-RESTORED)

"Requiem for a Heavyweight": The restored version is exactly as originally broadcast on October 11, 1956, including vintage commercials. A different segment on early television production includes shots of the program before and after restoration.

## [TINYURL.COM/REQUIEM-RESTORED](http://TINYURL.COM/REQUIEM-RESTORED)

## CONCLUSION

It's an unavoidable fact of life that dramatic stories – whether produced as "blockbuster" Hollywood movies or small-screen TV programs – are linked to and *shaped by* the medium through which they're communicated. This is unavoidable, and yet audiences do make quality judgements based on the medium itself... even avoiding certain films because they're "old fashioned" or "only in black-and-white."

Hopefully, other examples of early television programs written by Serling will be restored in the future, allowing viewers – including a new generation of young media consumers – to enjoy classic, award-winning television drama... unaffected by limitations of early technology.



## SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON FILM & TV RESTORATION:

SCANNING AND RESTORING A 16MM KINESCOPE FILM: a three-minute video showing the digital restoration process for kinescopes.  
[TINYURL.COM/RESTORING-A-16MM-KINESCOPE](http://TINYURL.COM/RESTORING-A-16MM-KINESCOPE)

RESTORING "EXTINCT" FILMS: restoring films that are so badly damaged they can no longer be played or copied  
[TINYURL.COM/EXTINCT-FILMS](http://TINYURL.COM/EXTINCT-FILMS)

THE ART OF RESTORATION: six-minute video about efforts at Warner Brothers studios to restore their film "catalog" on their 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary.  
[TINYURL.COM/ART-OF-RESTORATION](http://TINYURL.COM/ART-OF-RESTORATION)

HOW OLD MOVIES ARE PROFESSIONALLY RESTORED: nine-minute video exploring how the George Eastman Museum in Rochester, NY is restoring "lost works."  
[TINYURL.COM/OLD-MOVIES-RESTORED](http://TINYURL.COM/OLD-MOVIES-RESTORED)



# TWILIGHT ZONE

## Finding The "Lost" Serling

By Nick Parisi

I began writing my book, *Rod Serling: His Life, Work, and Imagination*, with a simple desire to compile a complete list of Rod Serling's produced teleplays, screenplays, and radio plays, and to determine the preservation status of each of these works. Collecting copies of these productions, first privately and later to help expand the inventory of the Rod Serling Memorial Foundation's archives, I wanted a better idea of which productions exist, which productions *might* exist, and which are hopelessly lost.

In one of my book's indexes, I indicate the preservation status of each title, with several titles listed as "unknown" or "lost." Could any of these "lost" or "unknown" titles still surface? Well, let's just say that some of these titles are more lost and unknown than others.

The biggest portion of Rod Serling's lost catalogue consists of scripts written for *The Storm*, a series that aired on WKRC in Cincinnati, Ohio from 1951 to 1952. These productions are not so much "lost" as having never existed - the series was performed and broadcast live and only one (or maybe two; it's complicated) episodes were preserved via kinescope. These shows are absolutely never going to turn up in a warehouse somewhere.

The second most significant segment of Serling's lost catalogue is his eight contributions to the series that really established Serling as a professional writer, *Lux Video Theatre*. A necessary digression: Serling once wrote that *Lux* had produced 11 of his scripts, and this number has been frequently repeated. I researched this very carefully, and I can definitively state that Serling misremembered that number - the correct number is eight.

*Lux Video Theatre* was another series that was performed live. If it was ever captured on kinescope, it was a rare occurrence - only a few episodes of the series (which aired more than 300 episodes) have made their way online or to the collectors' market. And so, although I list the preservation status of these shows as "unknown," they are almost all certainly lost.

But who knows? Just a few days



before my manuscript was to be sent to the printer, a Serling-written show that I had confidently listed as "lost" actually turned up and was released commercially. That show is "The Last Performance," which was produced on *Shadow of the Cloak*, a series on the DuMont network. DuMont famously discarded most of its films (many of which were allegedly dumped in New York's East River) and so, it seemed a very safe bet that Serling's one contribution to any of the network's series was lost forever. But someone found it and released it, and I was able to correct its status before my book was published.

While I never would have imagined that "The Last Performance" would turn up, there are several "unknown" shows that I am hopeful of seeing.

Serling wrote five scripts for the 1950s' incarnation of *Hallmark Hall of Fame*, four of which have surfaced in private collections and which can be found at public television archives. The fifth,

"Yankee Roadblock: The Story of John Paulding," has not turned up. *Hallmark Hall of Fame* was a prestigious series in its day, and most of its installments still exist. It seems unlikely that a copy of "Yankee Roadblock" is not out there somewhere.

While Serling would earn his

fame writing live dramas, his first script to air on national television, "Grady Everett for the People," was done for a filmed series called *Stars Over Hollywood*. This show, as well as Serling's subsequent contribution to the series, "Christmas for Sweeney," still exists.

Serling wrote a third show for the series, however, which has not yet surfaced. "Tails for Jeb Mulcahy" first aired on April 11, 1951. The films that initially aired on *Stars Over Hollywood* were subsequently included in several other film packages under multiple series titles, and television listings reveal repeat airings of "Jeb Mulcahy" all the way into the 1970s. A film of "Jeb Mulcahy" may very well still surface.

Serling's "A Man with a Vengeance" was produced on *General Electric Theater* twice. Hundreds of episodes of the series (hosted by Ronald Reagan) are readily available among private collectors, so one of these two productions might exist as well.

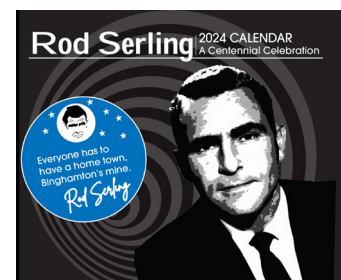
Perhaps the most surprising title in the "unknown" category is *Playhouse 90*'s "Panic Button." Serling wrote 10 excellent scripts for *Playhouse 90*, and nine of these productions are readily available. I remain hopeful that a copy of "Panic Button" will eventually see the light of day.

So, if you happen to attend a nostalgia convention, or if you know any good film-preservation clubs, or even if you're just scrolling through eBay listings, keep these titles in mind! You just might uncover a treasure that was not as lost as it had seemed.

**LIMITED COPIES  
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Add \$10 for  
international orders

This calendar was created as a premium for sponsors of the Rod Serling statue, to be unveiled in Binghamton's Recreation Park in 2024. Each month features exclusive photos of Rod from the Serling Estate and a comprehensive timeline of his life and will be a collector's piece to enjoy beyond 2024!



The calendar is now available for you to buy! But don't wait—supplies are limited.

Order through the RSMF website:  
[tinyurl.com/RSMF-2024-CALENDAR](http://tinyurl.com/RSMF-2024-CALENDAR)



# SUBMITTED FOR YOUR APPROVAL

The Rod Serling Memorial Foundation is proud to have nearly 400 members and friends from around the world who receive our quarterly newsletter, and donate to our mission -- promoting and preserving this great man's contributions to the Arts and Humanities. We invited a few members to share their personal thoughts on Rod Serling and his work... in this space - we're pleased to share some of their contributions.

If you're one of our members and would like to contribute, please contact the Editor: [PaulGallagher@rodserling.com](mailto:PaulGallagher@rodserling.com).

## How Rod Serling Changed My Life—and Yours

By Steve Schlich

I met Rod Serling during my freshman year at the University of Colorado in Boulder, when he gave a lecture there. October 1969. I shook his hand—and didn't wash mine for days afterward!

In 1982, I had a short story published in "Rod Serling's Twilight Zone Magazine". And now I'm webmaster of [RodSerling.com](http://RodSerling.com).

Needless to say, I'm a fan of the man and his work.

My father was puzzled when I told him about my job on the website. "Why Rod Serling?" People who have never watched "The Twilight Zone", or his work in the Golden Age of TV, just don't get it. Six Emmys, folks. Six! I don't recall what I told my dad, but I know that it was inadequate.

I should have said that "The Twilight Zone" was an exotic getaway from the comfortable suburbia where I grew up. Or that I rejoiced watching bullies get their comeuppance on the show. Or that Serling's strong sense of social justice helped me construct my own. Or that he gave me permission to try my own hand at writing fiction.

There is all of that, and more, about how he affected me.

[RodSerling.com](http://RodSerling.com) has a collection



of testimonials like mine. Our page for that is my favorite place on the website, because Rod Serling affected so many people's lives, and they've written about it for publication there.

Click on NEWS in the menu near the top of any page on [RodSerling.com](http://RodSerling.com), and select SPEAK YOUR MIND from the drop-down menu.

What follows is a small sampling of the articles that you will find there...

In "Steve Kloves Knows He Owes Rod Serling", the screenwriter of most Harry Potter films explains that "He made being a writer real for me."

In "What Is Needed", Scott Talbot Evans admits to always carrying keychain scissors after watching "What You Need."

In "Rod The Influencer", Denise

Butler thanks "The Twilight Zone" and "Night Gallery" for helping her develop a social justice consciousness—which led to a rewarding lifetime career in civil rights support.

In "Rod The Gentleman", Joseph Greeley recalls how, while talking to Greeley's mother at an event honoring Serling, Rod refused to be interrupted by a self-important VIP.

In "Al Rosen Remembers Rod Serling", Rosen recalls how down-to-earth Rod was, and offers commentary on "Twilight Zone" episodes as well as milestones in Serling's career.

In "Guidance And Wonder", Jenna Lee relishes the guidance and comfort that "Twilight Zone" reruns offered a lonely child.

In "Long Live My Twilight Zone Refuge", Suzan Alparslan describes how "The Twilight Zone"

offered her social values and helped her through hard times in her life.

In "TZ, My Father, And Me", Scott Sommer remembers repeatedly watching "One for the Angels" with his dying father. "When he was sick, we would watch the episode while he held me, and we would cry the whole time. As long as I keep the meaning of that episode in my heart, my father's memory will never die."

In "Spare The Rod Serling And Spoil The Child", Patrick Timothy Mullikin hilariously describes the effects of "The Twilight Zone" on his childhood—and his adulthood too. "To this day I like to whisper, 'Marsha? Marsha? It's our turn, Marsha' when I see a blonde mannequin."

In "Tales Told Twice", I remember Saturday mornings during the early 1960s, sitting on my front steps and listening to the neighborhood Big Kids describe last night's "Twilight Zone" episode to us Little Kids. Even mangling by 12-year-olds couldn't weaken the delicious, scary power of those stories.

What's your Rod Serling or "Twilight Zone" memory? Many of these testimonials are no more than a few sentences. Go to NEWS/SPEAK YOUR MIND at [RodSerling.com](http://RodSerling.com) and tell the world!

## Remarkable Use Of Words

By Jay Maille

While I'm not a professional writer, I am a better and more engaged writer because of Rod Serling.

One thing that has always attracted me to Serling's writing, from his early work in live television... to the show that remains his legacy today... to the feature films that came later, is his caring and remarkable use of words. English is not an especially musical language the way some

others are "easy on the ear," even when you don't understand what's being said. English can be very expressive but is often not especially lovely to *listen* to.

But Serling had a way, as did Edgar Allan Poe, of choosing and arranging words that seem to "click and fall" -- like lined-up dominoes -- whose potential energy is released as the first word is tipped... making the rest inevitably fall in a kinetic cascade of sounds and meaning, and all in service to a great story.

The remarkable thing to me about Rod Serling's writing is that it's meant not just to be read but to be *spoken and heard!* Whether in his *Twilight Zone* narrations and scripts, or while being interviewed by Mike Wallace, or while lecturing college students the listener can tell Serling cared about words and how best to use them in service of whatever meaning he was trying to convey.

I never forgot that and even in my most mundane writing in my own

career, I tried to channel some Serling into my work by carefully choosing at least a few words -- just for how they sound.

Jay Maille lives in Pleasanton, California and has been a RSMF member since March 2022.





# SUBMITTED FOR YOUR APPROVAL

## Nightmares to Dreams

By Bob Vishneski

Everyone has an opinion of which *Twilight Zone* episode deserves the title as the most disturbing (or scariest). My vote goes to one lacking the traditional frightening elements such as aliens, robots, nightmares, or ghosts: "A Stop at Willoughby." Gart Williams's real life—one that looks quite normal and respectable—is the nightmare. He has a high-profile, well-paying account executive role in a large advertising agency, a beautiful wife (Janie), a lavish house in a fancy suburban neighborhood, and a prestigious country club membership.

Therein lies the element of Serling's genius and terror of this episode: Within our comfortable, "successful" lives, he suggests unresolved issues lurk that could prove fatal. "A Stop at Willoughby" is his attempt to illustrate—in dramatic fashion—the tragic results of failing to examine our lives and be honest with ourselves.

After a bruising day, including a major account setback and being

berated by his boss, Mr. Misrell (a play on "misery"), Gart realizes what is causing his anxiety and ulcers—he is in a job inconsistent with his nature, chasing material possessions and status symbols prized by his wife. While traveling on the commuter train to his Connecticut home, he dreams of a peaceful, idyllic town of Willoughby set in the year 1888. The kindly train conductor offers a comforting description of the small town as being a place where a man can live his life on his own terms. This is the opposite of the high-pressure "push, push, push" business environment described by Mr. Misrell.

In a humble, moving soliloquy to his wife, Gart explains his dream and how his job and life situation conflict with his personality. Instead of comfort, Janie offers a blistering critique. Sadly, Gart won't understand the full extent of her shallowness until the end of the episode, when it is too late.

After another bad day, Gart smashes a mirror showing Mr. Misrell's taunting face, only to see his own image reflected in

the broken glass. This is one of the many foreboding symbols Serling plants to steer us toward the conclusion. When Gart calls Janie in a desperate plea for help, she hangs up on him. This is the most disturbing and scary moment of the film: he realizes his life-long companion has abandoned him in his most vulnerable moment. This signifies the death of Gart's hope to improve his life.

Gart joyfully leaves his briefcase behind and exits the train for Willoughby. Despite the warm greetings from the inhabitants and the joy on Gart's face, there can be no happy ending to this story. Soon afterwards, we see him sprawled dead in the snow. The sign "Willoughby and Sons" on the door of the hearse is a creative touch to reinforce Gart's final destination.

Serling's selection of an advertising firm as the setting for this episode was not a coincidence. He often voiced strong, negative opinions about advertisers based on what he felt was their undue influence over his content and the banal commercials interrupting the flow

of his stories.

We don't know enough about Gart's background to know how and where his life careened off track. He seems to be a gentle, good-natured, unpretentious soul. Perhaps early on, he enjoyed his work. With additional job responsibilities and pressure from his wife, however, he became someone inconsistent with his nature.

Many of us have likely known people like Gart. Perhaps we have been a variation of Gart Williams ourselves, but without such a tragic end. "A Stop at Willoughby" is a stark warning that material possessions and superficial relationships can never satisfy the needs of the soul.

*Bob Vishneski lives in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and has been an RSMF member since October 2020.*



## Finding My Way Via The Twilight Zone

By Dan Johnson

Growing up as a kid, I was a television addict. Besides reading, my world was television, mainly because where I grew up, there were no neighborhood kids to play with. In fact, our nearest neighbors, a couple my parents age, were a good quarter of a mile from our house. Being a kid with no one to hang around with, and who was often left on his own, I turned to the classics: *Gilligan's Island*, *The Munsters*, *Bonanza*, *The Three Stooges*, *Universal Monsters* and *Looney Tunes* cartoons.

Television was fun and entertaining. It filled my hours with fun and adventure. It was also a comfort in those times I felt lonely and an outsider, in both my family and at school.

When I was 12 years old, though, I discovered a show that changed my life. Our local PBS station began airing reruns of *The Twilight Zone* on the weekends, and I was

immediately hooked on it. It had science fiction and horror, both of which I loved. Right from the start, I could tell these stories were a lot more serious than episodes of even the westerns and police shows that I watched. These stories were meant to make the audience think, and they sure set my mind racing.

Every time I watched *Twilight Zone*, I walked away reflecting on what I had just seen. Episodes like "Eye of the Beholder," "The Changing of the Guard," and "The Monsters Are Due on Maple Street" were stories that spoke to me about being the person on the outside, wondering if I mattered and dealing with my own personal paranoia and doubts. Thanks to these episodes, I learned to deal with a lot of anxiety many teenagers cope with.

Thanks to *The Twilight Zone*, I also discovered that stories could have an impact. Television could be more than a brief escape; it could

be a means to change the minds of viewers and make the voice of the writer heard. It could make my voice heard.

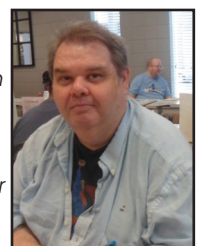
I also had a deep connection to *The Twilight Zone* because it was the first show where I recognized the creator of the series and knew who he was. Thanks to Rod Serling acting as the host, he was much more than just a name in the end credits. He came across as smart, insightful, and cool. Besides being talented, he inspired me with his personality. He grabbed viewers and held their attention. That, to me, was just amazing. Serling gave me something to aspire to: becoming a writer myself.

Over the years, my admiration for Serling has only grown, especially as I discovered other projects he wrote or at least had a hand in, such as *Night Gallery*, the original *Planet of the Apes*, *Patterns*, and *Requiem for a Heavyweight*, to name a few. Diving into his history, and the history of television

and movies as well, helped me begin my journey as a writer as I covered the history of pop culture. That allowed me to write about the things that mattered to me. And through some fortunate opportunities, that path has also led me to write some stories of my own and to see them published. I doubt I will ever be as revered as Serling, but just having my own stories out there is enough for me.

It's been a long, winding journey, and I will never forget that my starting point was always *The Twilight Zone*, and that the man who put me on this road was Rod Serling.

*Daniel Johnson lives in Burlington, North Carolina and has been an RSMF member since December 2022.*





## Re-Zoning Efforts: "It's A Good Life"

By Paul Gallagher

*"It's an adaptation of what has been called one of the most terrifying modern fantasies ever written."* — Rod Serling on "It's a Good Life"

One key to being a good editor is knowing what to change — and what to leave alone. Change for the sake of change is a rookie mistake.

Rod Serling knew that well. When he bought the rights to a story for use on *The Twilight Zone*, he did exactly what was necessary to make it work for television. No more, no less.

Sometimes — as with "And When the Sky Was Opened" and "The Four of Us Are Dying" — that meant making some pretty drastic changes. Other times — with, say, "To Serve Man" — he presented the written story a bit more faithfully.

In the case of Jerome Bixby's "It's a Good Life," it was more than a bit. Bixby had already provided a very visual story, so Serling transferred much of what we find on the page to the screen.

But he did make a few interesting changes.

Both versions begin with Bill Soames delivering groceries to the Fremont household. Aunt Amy is on the porch, her mind "snapped" for a previous transgression. And there's Anthony with an animal. Serling, however, has him playing with a three-headed gopher that he simply wishes dead. In Bixby's story, it's more gruesome: Anthony has a rat that he forces to eat itself until it expires.

Everyone in both versions is looking forward to Dan Hollis's birthday party, and each gathering ends just as lethally for the guest of honor. Anthony "makes television" in both, and everyone acts overly delighted with his programming choices. Bixby, though, provides no description of what they're seeing. For some reason, the *Twilight Zone* version gives us claymation dinosaurs. (Well, he IS a little boy, so I guess that's logical.)

Each version has one wholly unique scene. Serling gives us



a conversation between father and son that provides a horrifying glimpse of how unpredictably homicidal Anthony can be. The bit where he looks out the window and mentally kills Bill Soames's dog? That's all from Serling. That didn't happen in Bixby's version.

What *did* happen was a sort of "Anthony out in nature" scene that Serling wisely omitted. We follow the boy out into a shady grove that he created for the local wildlife:

*Here Anthony liked to rest and watch the birds and insects and small animals that rustled and scampered and chirped about. He liked to lie on the cool ground and look up through the moving greenness overhead, and watch the insects flit in the hazy soft sunbeams that stood like slanting, glowing bars between ground and treetops. Somehow, he liked the thoughts of the little creatures in this place better than the thoughts outside; and while the thoughts he picked up here weren't very strong or very clear, he could get enough out of them to know what the little creatures liked and wanted, and he spent a lot of time making the grove more like what they wanted it to be.*

That last part points to another interesting difference between Bixby's story and Serling's script. Bixby emphasizes how Anthony tries to help everyone, but winds up doing it ineptly in many

instances. He somehow seems a *bit* more innocent in the original story. He's just as destructive, but you get the impression that he actually means well, at least most of the time.

Indeed, he can even be something of an imp. For example, in the episode, Bill Soames delivers the groceries, then simply leaves. His exit in Bixby's story, however, is a bit more comical:

*As Bill Soames pumped the pedals, he was wishing deep down that he could pump twice as fast, to get away from Anthony all the faster, and away from Aunt Amy, who sometimes just forgot how careful you had to be. And he shouldn't have thought that. Because Anthony caught it. He caught the desire to get away from the Fremont house as if it was something bad, and his purple gaze blinked and he snapped a small, sulky thought after Bill Soames — just a small one, because he was in a good mood today, and besides, he liked Bill Soames, or at least didn't dislike him, at least today. Bill Soames wanted to go away—so, petulantly, Anthony helped him.*

*Pedaling with superhuman speed—or rather, appearing to, because in reality the bicycle was pedaling him—Bill Soames vanished down the road in a cloud of dust, his thin, terrified wail drifting back across the heat.*

Bixby also emphasizes how people

take care to mumble when they're around Anthony. Why? As we learn early on during Bill's delivery:

*He always mumbled when he came to the Fremont house, or passed by it, or even thought of it. Everybody did. They thought about silly things, things that didn't mean very much, like two-and-two-is-four-and-twice-is-eight and so on; they tried to jumble up their thoughts to keep them skipping back and forth, so Anthony couldn't read their minds. The mumbling helped. Because if Anthony got anything strong out of your thoughts, he might take a notion to do something about it.*

As for Dan's demise, well, there's nothing about a jack-in-the-box. And no taunting from him either, or pleas for someone to kill Anthony while he's occupied. He's drunk, sure, and slamming around, and he does mutter accusingly at Anthony's parents. ("You had to go and have him.") But other than that, he's just singing "You Are My Sunshine," and then:

*"Bad man," Anthony said, and thought Dan Hollis into something like nothing anyone would have believed possible, and then he thought the thing into a grave deep, deep in the cornfield.*

\*shudder\*

Serling, interesting enough, described a snake-like creature in his initial script: "The shadow of what Dan Hollis is now plays on the wall. It is a wiggly, cobra-like thing that coils and uncoils." But by the time the episode was filmed, it had become a jack-in-the-box — which, paradoxically, is a bit more haunting, perhaps because it's a twisted version of a child's toy.

That was a fine story you wrote, Mr. Bixby. Real fine. And Mr. Serling, I don't believe I've ever read a more perfect adaptation! It was good. Real good.

This article was first published on "Shadow & Substance," Paul Gallagher's blog dedicated to the works of Rod Serling (thenightgallery.org). Paul also runs the "Night Gallery" page on X (formerly known as Twitter) — x.com/thenightgallery — which boasts over 40,000 followers.



# THE BOOKSHELF

## Spotlight: "America's Twilight Zone"

"It feels like we're in the Twilight Zone."

Beginning on the night of November 8, 2016, and continuing for more than four years, this phrase was repeatedly used by journalists, politicians, comedians, cartoonists, on social media, in letters to the editor, and in everyday conversations to describe what Donald Trump had done to America's political and social landscape.

Stephen King compared Donald Trump to Anthony Fremont, the monstrous child of "It's a Good Life." Director Judd Apatow quoted "The Obsolete Man" to describe the Trump Administration's aversion to facts and truth. Journalist Dan Rather repeatedly compared the Trump presidency to *The Twilight Zone*.

Donald Trump's niece (and ardent critic) Mary Trump tweeted "I miss Rod Serling" - wishing that *The Twilight Zone's* creator were

still here to make sense of her uncle's insanity. For millions, "The Twilight Zone" was the only phrase that could begin to describe the deeply surreal election and presidency of Donald Trump.

These ubiquitous references to our favorite television series inspired Nicholas Parisi's new book, *America's Twilight Zone: How Rod Serling Foreshadowed the Age of Trump*.

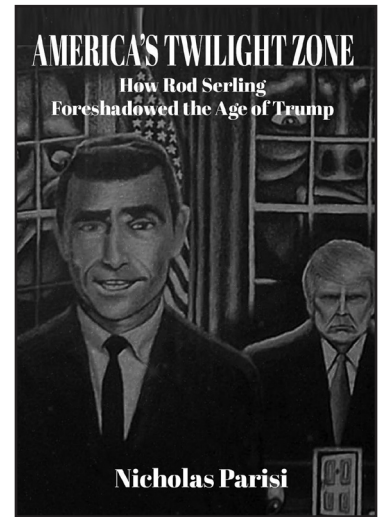
In this book, Nick explores how the series perfectly described the surreal feeling that so many had described during the Trump era, as well as the several instances in which the series seemed to directly address Donald Trump and the daily madness of the Trump presidency.

Using Stephen King's comparison as a springboard, Nick compares Trump to Anthony Fremont, a six-year-old boy with God-like powers and a hair-trigger temperament. In "One More Pallbearer"

Trump is Paul Radin, a "single-minded" tycoon obsessed with exacting revenge for perceived slights. In "He's Alive," Trump is Peter Vollmer, a dangerous demagogue preaching conspiracy theories. And the book culminates just as the Trump presidency ended, with the mob violence of January 6, 2021 - a possibility that Serling had feared and warned of in at least two *Twilight Zone* episodes, including "The Monsters are Due on Maple Street."

While casting Trump in these various roles, Nick casts the sympathetic reader as Marilyn Cuberle, protagonist of "Number Twelve Looks Just Like You."

"In *The Twilight Zone*," Nick writes, "a character may try to explain the strange things that are happening to him, but it is unlikely that he will find a receptive audience. During the Age of Trump, those who 'felt like' characters in a *Twilight*



*Zone* episode likely experienced a similarly maddening inability to explain their predicament, not only to Trump's supporters, but to the vast 'middle,' largely consisting of the politically unengaged."

Available exclusively at amazon.com

## Spotlight: "The Season To Be Wary"

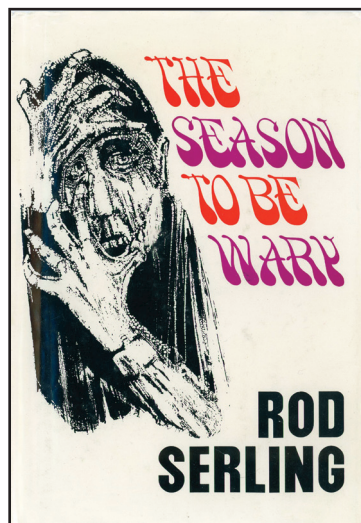
By Paul Gallagher

In his last interview, Rod Serling said he wanted to be remembered simply as a "writer." There's little doubt that he achieved that. Countless authors cite him as one of their primary influences. Many say he's the reason they took up the craft in the first place.

Yet nearly all of his fans experience his words via a TV screen, not the printed page. How many of us have enjoyed a book by Serling?

True, that wasn't his typical medium. He was famous for dictating scripts in a hurry, not fiddling with some florid prose in a quiet study. So perhaps we shouldn't be too surprised that, unlike the work of other famous writers, the few books he *did* author were out of print for years.

That changed in 2014 when Rod Serling Books republished several volumes that fans of the fifth dimension will surely want to check out. Many Serling fans are aware that he adapted some of his famous scripts in paperback books such as "Stories from the *Twilight Zone*," but let's take a look at one that should interest any



*Night Gallery* aficionado: "The Season To Be Wary."

Two of the three stories in this 1967 volume ("Eyes" and "Escape Route") will be familiar to anyone who's watched the 1969 *Night Gallery* pilot movie. But they're still worth reading. Freed from the dictates of a network time schedule, Serling uses his considerable talents to paint more vivid portraits of the key characters, creating a memorable theater of the mind that puts many bestselling authors, past and



present, to shame.

In the movie, Richard Kiley does an excellent job bringing the loathsome Nazi fugitive Joseph Strobe to life. Joan Crawford's turn as Claudia Menlo, who's willing to exploit the downtrodden and blackmail the vulnerable to get her way, is equally chilling. Serling's words, however, add something that can't be captured by a camera.

You know how his *Twilight Zone* introductions make the episodes

more enjoyable? It's kind of like that.

But the main draw for Serling fans is the third story, which was never filmed, "Color Scheme," unlike the other two stories, has its own introduction, which notes that the idea came from Sammy Davis, Jr.

Serling sketches a story about racism in the Jim Crow South, a world in which a white supremacist known as King Connacher preaches undiluted hatred toward people guilty of having a different skin color. Through a *Twilight Zone*-esque twist, he somehow switches bodies with a black man outraged by a deadly act of arson -- a crime inspired by Connacher's poisonous words.

Only then does Connacher understand the pain and suffering his actions have caused. It's "Freaky Friday" meets "To Kill a Mockingbird," ending on a grisly note that punctuates just how unspeakably ugly a world ruled by unreasoning prejudice can be.

"Quick, raw and fiery," notes one of the book's blurb reviews. Indeed it is. If you prefer your tales of vengeance straight, no chaser, "The Season To Be Wary" is the book for you.



Rod Serling  
Creator and  
Writer

# OUR FIRST TIME TO WATCH:

Christopher  
'Dad'  
Age: 47

Rylan  
'Son'  
Age: 14



THIS EPISODE  
IS ABOUT  
MANNEQUINS.

# The TWILIGHT ZONE



OOOHH!  
MANNEQUINS  
ARE CREEPY!



YEP.  
SUPER  
CREEPY.

## Season 1, Episode 34: The After Hours

### EPISODE SYNOPSIS:

Marsha White goes to an eight story department store to buy a gold thimble for her mother. She ends up on the mysterious ninth floor that has no merchandise for sale except for one gold thimble and a sales lady that asks weirdly personal questions. She buys the thimble but later notices that it is damaged. She informs the store manager who tells her to take it back where she got it but there is no ninth floor. From there things get even weirder and it involves living mannequins...

Marsha White



THE STORE  
WAS REALLY  
NEAT.

I BET IT WOULD LOOK  
EVEN BETTER IN COLOR!



It's very odd there is nothing for sale on this entire floor except the one thing I am looking for. Very odd.

I LIKE HOW SHE  
COMMENTS ON HOW  
STRANGE THE SITUATION  
IS AND DOESN'T  
JUST IGNORE IT



The thimble cost \$25, which is \$264 in today's money. Pretty expensive gold thimble!

HEY!  
I'M WORTH IT!

James Millhollin plays the Sales Supervisor Mr. Armbruster and he definitely stands out in this episode. He has a very interesting face and mannerisms.



THE MANNEQUINS GOT ME  
WITH THREE JUMP SCARES!

ME TOO!  
THE MANNEQUINS WERE  
REALLY CREEPY AND SCARY.  
THEY WERE USED VERY  
EFFECTIVELY.



I THOUGHT THE  
SALES LADY WAS  
A VAMPIRE.



I LIKED THIS EPISODE.  
WHAT ABOUT  
YOU POPS?

I...AM...  
A...  
MANNEQUIN.

REALLY  
POPS?



I ENJOYED THIS EPISODE A LOT.

THE MANNEQUINS BEING ALIVE WAS A FUN  
TWIST BUT THE REAL TWIST WAS WHEN  
IT TURNS OUT MARSHA WAS  
A MANNEQUIN!

I THOUGHT IT WITH END  
WITH HER TURNING INTO  
A MANNEQUIN, NOT BEING  
ONE ALL ALONG.

AND I REALLY LIKED THE IDEA  
OF THE MANNEQUINS GETTING  
TO GO OUT INTO THE WORLD  
AS A REAL PERSON  
FOR ONE MONTH.

ALTHOUGH THAT DOES  
POSE IT'S OWN QUESTIONS:  
LIKE WHERE DO THEY LIVE?  
DO THEY NEED FOOD?  
DO THEY NEED MONEY?



Elevator numbers

