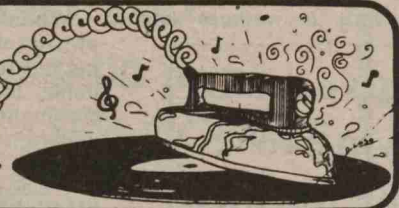


# In Focus



**freshly  
pressed**



by Brent Siewert

"Remote Control," The Tubes (A&M SP-4571) The precision-play-acting of the Tubes, America's ultimate theatrical rock band, backed them into a corner after the release of their live album last year.

Because of their concerts, which looked more like Carol Burnett-on-acid than a rock concert, replete with dancers, props and elaborate costume changes for each song, most persons think of the Tubes as a novelty, something along the lines of Kiss or the Village People.

And while earlier Tubes albums contain some of their best work, the first three Tubes albums are all uneven and rather eccentric (from Captain Beefheart to disco to Frank Sinatra to the Ramones and beyond in the space of 40 minutes?).

It was clear that the Tubes needed a new direction; they had done about all they could with their original format.

Enter Todd Rundgren, everyone's producer (he's also doing the new Patti Smiff and the new Tom Robinson Band album, which was released Monday).

For "Remote Control," the scatter-shot blasts at several subjects per album is focused down to one, carefully dissected target: what else for a band named the Tubes, but television?

The opiate of the masses, delicately sliced into 11 well-crafted, diamond-hard cuts, features the double-synthesizer, double-guitar, Tubes-patented musical attack.

The album works, not only because television is a subject that deserves attack — several others spring to mind like rock — but because we see what television is doing to the viewer.

The conditioning of the boob tube, which has the viewer asking someone to "Turn Me On," ushers the listener into the nightmarish work of television-dominated life. Emotions become muted, as in "I Want It All Now," where the squeaky clean TV world offers everything, from birth to redemption, in 26 antiseptic and unreal minutes. How can one argue with the words of "TV is King:"

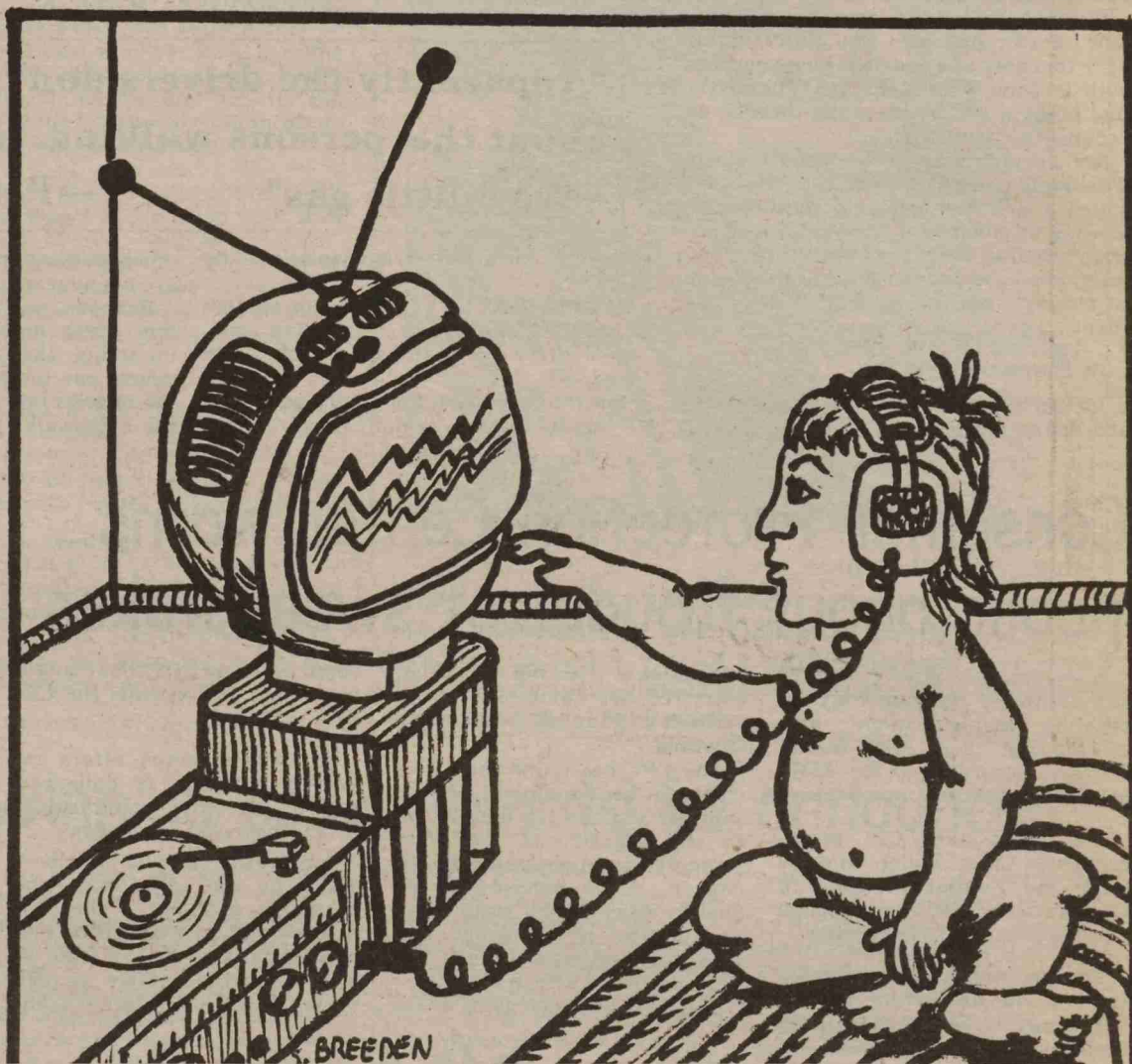
"You got your works-in-a-drawer and your color's on-track,

"We have to break away, but we keep coming back,

"You make a thousand changes but it's always the same,

"You make me so excited and you make me so lame."

The scope of the music is far more astonishing. If you thought lead singer Fee Waybill was only capable of spitting beer on the audience as he lurches about the stage on 15-inch "Quaylude"



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highheels, you are in for a pleasant shock: his voice is stronger than ever, especially on side two, where he has to jump from dumb-heavy metal ("Only The Strong Survive") to fast pop ("Be Mine Tonight") surprisingly to an uncharacteristic ballad ("Love's A Mystery (I Don't Understand)") to a rapid-fire recitation of the faults and mumbo-jumbo of TV, leading to "another case of Telecide."

The end of the album does not resolve the question of our

viewer's addiction; in fact, "Telecide" starts off with the huge rush of a long-unused drug and ends in a kind of dull stupor as tempo changes and musical interludes pull the listener into the incoherent state of the TV addict.

Perhaps that is the most unsettling thing about "Remote Control." Unlike the medium it parodies, television wins in the end. Although the bad guys do not wear black, it is clear what side of the cathode ray tube the vil-

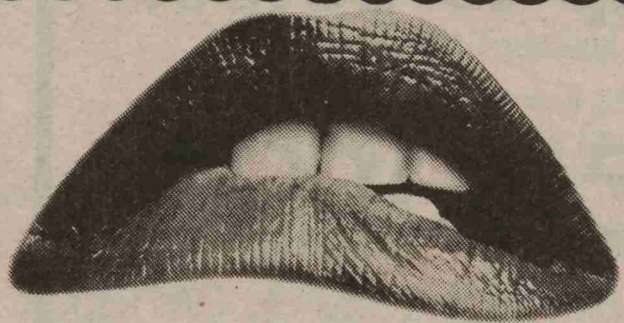
lains come from.

In fact, this album could find a track or two of itself being played in the discos. After all, if a New York 60s doo-wop band can get a top-ten disco single with "Heart of Glass," that path is not closed to the Tubes.

Those 13-year-olds that buy most of the albums sold in this country do not know what they are missing. As a Rolling Stone concert critic so aptly put it: "When I grow up, I want to join the Tubes."

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## Sex fantasies traded

by Daniel Q. Haney  
Associated Press

BOSTON (AP) — In their most private daydreams, straight men and women often fantasize about homosexual encounters, while gays have arousing thoughts about trysts with the opposite sex, says a new Masters and Johnson study.

What the sex-researchers

called "cross-preference fantasies" were the third most common sexual daydreams among homosexual men and women. They ranked fourth among heterosexual men and fifth among straight women.

However, they noted that people often visualize sex frolics that they have no desire to act out in real life.

"The fact that homosexual

men and women had fantasies about heterosexual activity did not necessarily indicate the presence of a latent or unrealized commitment to heterosexuality," they wrote, "nor did cross-preference fantasies enjoyed by heterosexual men and women necessarily indicate a latent demand for overt homosexual experience."

The husband and wife team of William Masters and Virginia Johnson report on the sexual preferences of straights and gays in their new book, "Homosexuality in Perspective," which will be published Monday.

The researchers said most people were reluctant at first to admit their cross-preference fantasies and often detailed them only during their third in-depth interview.

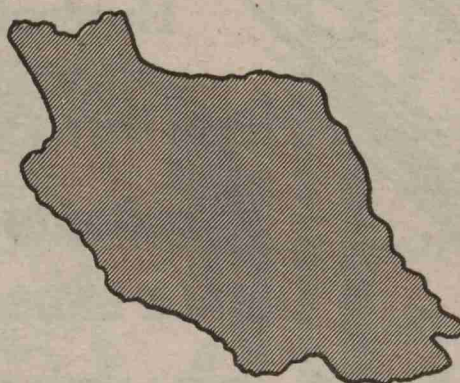
They said that in their St. Louis clinic they are treating for the first time homosexual men who are impotent and lesbians who cannot reach climax.

As other psychotherapists have done for several decades, the researchers also treated gay men and women who want to become heterosexual. Of 67 people counseled, 28 percent failed to attain their goal of switching.

"The positive results can be attributed to the rigorous selection procedures for clients, the vital use of opposite-sex partners in therapy and the multiple advantages inherent in the use of dual-sex therapy terms in treatment of human sexual inadequacy," they wrote.

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