



Hi There, Boys and Girls! America's Local Children's TV Programs

Tim Hollis

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Whatever happened to Bozo the Clown, to Aunt Norma, to Solomon C. Whiskers, those television celebrities who hammed it up between cartoons and contests during local kids' shows?

In *Hi There, Boys and Girls! America's Local Children's TV Programs*, Tim Hollis tracks down the story of every known local children's TV show from markets across the United States.

There have been many books about children's television on the networks, and such shows as *Captain Kangaroo*, *Howdy Doody*, and *Sesame Street* are legends in broadcasting.

However, the local branch of children's programming has received much less attention. For every performer on the scale of a Captain Kangaroo or a Buffalo Bob, there were five or six local personalities who were just as beloved by their viewers--and sometimes even more so--since these local stars could be counted on for appearances at stores, children's hospitals, and shopping centers, where kids could meet them face-to-face.

Anyone over the age of thirty who grew up with a TV set will remember at least one or two of these productions. Whether it was hosted by a cowboy character, a clown such as the one on the many-franchised Bozo shows, a policeman, a sea captain who showed Popeye cartoons, or one of the gentle and lovely ladies who presided over *Romper Room*, these hometown stars were some of the Baby Boomers' first friends. Although children loved them, these hard-working performers garnered less respect from the rest of the TV industry.

Hi There, Boys and Girls! includes a capsule history of this programming from the earliest days of radio to the early 1970s, when a combination of social changes and broadcast regulations sent most of the hosts into retirement.

Walt Disney once observed that while there is very little adult in a child, there is a lot of child in every adult. This book will bring back a flood of long-submerged memories for anyone who was a child during this golden era.

Tim Hollis lives in Birmingham, Alabama. His previous books include *Dixie Before Disney: 100 Years of Roadside Fun* (University Press of Mississippi) and *Cousin Cliff: 40 Magical Years in Television*.

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