

Police Story police drama (1973–77) NBC

This series was noteworthy for its realistic portrayal of police work and its guest stars that included Tony Lo Bianco, Don Meredith, Lloyd Bridges, and David Cassidy. This was due to Joseph Wambaugh, the creator, former police officer, and author of such classic books as *The Onion Field* and *The Choir Boys*. It also gave rise to the spin-off program of *Police Woman* with Angie Dickinson as Sergeant Pepper Anderson.

Rhoda sitcom (1974–78) CBS

Valerie Harper had played Rhoda Morgenstern on *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*. However, when she returned home to New York City from Minneapolis, Rhoda (and the writers) decided she should stay. Rhoda fell in love with Joe Gerard (David Groh), a rocky romance that led to marriage. (Upon seeing Rhoda in her wedding dress, a blasé neighbor asked, “What’s new?”) The focus of the show then switched to the angst of her sister, Brenda (Julie Kavner). Rhoda’s marriage ultimately crashed on the rocks to emphasize the humor of being single in the big city.

Roots dramatic special (1977) ABC

Based on the book by Alex Haley and shown on eight consecutive nights, this 12-hour ABC special followed the story of Kunta Kinte in West Africa in the 1750s through his enslavement and arrival in America. The special went on to cover the plight of his family to the freeing of his great-grandson after the Civil War. LeVar Burton was featured as the young Kunta Kinte and James Amos portrayed the adult Kinte known as Toby. The large cast included Louis Gossett Jr., Leslie Uggams, Ben Vereen, Cicily Tyson, and Edward Asner. This series had the highest Nielsen rating of any miniseries; the final installment was seen by more than 100 million people in the United States.

Saturday Night Live comedy variety (1975–) NBC

Developed by Dick Ebersol and produced by Lorne Mi-



Actor-singer-songwriter David Cassidy, former star of The Partridge Family.

Carson later hosted the game show—Who Do You Trust? In 1977, he was named the Man of the Year by Harvard University's Hasty Pudding Club.

Cassidy, David (1950–). Cassidy won enormous popularity from 1970 to 1974 as Keith Partridge on *The Partridge Family*. He also had a music career that garnered several gold records, beginning with “I Think I Love You” in 1970. In 1978 he was nominated for an Emmy Award

for his portrayal of a detective on *Police Story*. Cassidy composed and sang the theme song for *The John Larroquette Show*.

Dick Clark, Dick Clark, Dick Clark, Dick Clark, Dick Clark, and Dick Clark

Dick Clark has had his name in the title of six series: *Dick Clark Presents the Rock and Roll Years*, *The Dick Clark Show*, *Dick Clark's Golden Greats*, *Dick Clark's Live Wednesday*, *Dick Clark's Nighttime*, and *Dick Clark's World of Talent*.

Chamberlain, Richard (1935–). Born George Richard Chamberlain, “the king of the miniseries” once told the *Los Angeles Times* that “The fun of acting is playing different parts, being different people. If you’re just going to play one part all your life, you might as well sell insurance.” Chamberlain’s first television role was a bit part in a *Gunsmoke* episode—but his big break came when he was cast to play James Kildare in the *Dr. Kildare* TV series. The part catapulted him to stardom. In 1963, for example, an audience survey by *TV Guide* voted him the favorite male performer of the year (that same year he also recorded an album of songs—*Richard Chamberlain Sings*). He went on to play *Hamlet*, both on stage (where he received fine reviews) and for a 1970 production by the Hallmark Hall of Fame. He has played the leads in numerous miniseries, including the role of Jack Blackthorne in *Shogun* and Father Ralph de Bricassart in *The Thorn Birds*.

Cosby, Bill (1938–). The first black actor to co-star in a weekly dramatic series, *I Spy*, Cosby played Alex Scott, a CIA undercover agent. A *Fame* magazine poll in 1966 hailed him as “the most promising new male star,” a promise that he more than fulfilled. His situation comedy shows have made him one of the most popular and highly paid entertainers in America. In 1993, he headed up a group that tried to buy NBC.