

The Twilight Zone Companion Study Guide

The Twilight Zone Companion by Marc Scott Zicree

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Plot Summary

"The Twilight Zone" is by far one of the most innovative and iconic television series of all time. Its creator and narrator, Rod Serling, managed to do what had never been done before when he combined wild imagination and horror, fantasy and science fiction to create a serial featuring the era's most illustrious guest stars involved in outrageous scenarios.

"The Twilight Zone Companion" is just what the name implies: a companion guide to the five seasons of the show, from inception to legacy. Marc Scott Zicree is a well known expert on the topic and the extent of knowledge and hard work shows in the outcome. Zicree not only offers synopses of each episode but also refers to comments by Serling via news clips, interviews, and the memories of colleagues, friends, and family. The addition of outside material makes the book sing and the insight offered by those working on the show is invaluable. The most notable resources include Carolyn Serling, Rod's wife; Bob Serling, Rod's older brother; producers Buck Houghton and Bill Self; Bert Granet, the show's original backer; writers Charles Beaumont and Richard Matheson; and George T. Clemens, long time Director of Photography.

Each episode is detailed in such a way that all of the major players are identified - director, writer, producer, crew, and stars - as well as a synopsis of the show. There are often accompanying stories or comments made by Serling or one of the other people involved in the creation of that particular episode.

"The Twilight Zone Companion" also details Serling's early years as an Army paratrooper and boxer before turning to writing in college. Although many people remember Serling only for "The Twilight Zone" and perhaps "Night Gallery," Zicree shows that Serling had a substantial career both before and after the show's five year run.

The book provides a glimpse into the relationships Serling maintained outside the show, including those with his wife and children. Zicree also manages to detail many aspects of Serling's persona. Serling was known as a man so enthusiastic and full of energy that by today's standards, the creative genius might be considered hyperactive. Serling was a die hard chain smoker which most likely led to his untimely demise at age 50 from a heart attack after a grueling ten hour coronary bypass surgery. Buck Houghton recalls that Serling had no patience. The man was not impatient; he simply had no patience for long meetings or debates. Serling simply wanted to get it done and move on to the next thing. The same behaviors applied to his writing. Serling was able to create flawless scripts at the speed of light, often writing while the show was being shot.

As one might expect, the frenzied pace caused Serling to burn out after three seasons. The show's fourth season began to show wear and tear as well as the absence of Serling on a daily basis. The fifth season convinced Serling that it was time to put the show to bed.

Although Rod Serling would go on to other successful projects, none quite matched the brilliance and innovative quality found in "The Twilight Zone."

Part One: Rod Serling

Part One: Rod Serling Summary and Analysis

Rod Serling was born on Christmas Day 1924 to Samuel Serling, a wholesale meat salesman, and Esther Cooper Serling. The Serlings had one other son, Robert, who was born seven years previous. The Serlings moved to Binghamton, New York shortly after Rod's birth. Rod resided in Binghamton, until he joined the Army age 18. Although Bob and Rod were seven years apart, the two were very close and spent a great deal of time together, including reading and acting out science fiction pulps such as "Amazing Stories."

By all accounts, Rod Serling was considered to be an attractive and articulate kid. Although Serling was only 5'4" he seemed to possess a great deal of confidence. Sterling was also known as outspoken and enthusiastic, often craving the spotlight. Serling's older brother Bob often jokes that the family could not get Rod to shut up.

The day after Rod graduated from high school, he enlisted in the U.S. Army 11th Airborne Division as a paratrooper. While in the service Serling trained as a boxer, and was very successful, winning 17 out of 18 bouts. After completing basic training, Sterling was sent in to combat in the Pacific where he was eventually injured and hospitalized. Some surmise that the experience was the beginning to Serling's lifelong battle with nightmares and depression.

After being discharged from the Army, Serling used the GI Bill to continue his education at Antioch College in Ohio, where he studied physical education. After the first year, Serling changed from physical education to literature and language. Serling used the opportunity to expand on the writings he had created in high school and the military, and eventually became involved in writing scripts for the radio.

In 1946, Serling met Carolyn Louise Kramer, a 17-year-old articulate college student majoring in psychology and education. Kramer recalls that Serling had a reputation of being a ladies man, a fact that made her more than a little wary of her new suitor. Serling and Kramer were married in 1948 and remained married until Rod's death in 1975.

After graduation, the Serlings moved to Cincinnati where Rod went to work as a staff writer on WLW Radio. The writing duties were varied and not challenging for Serling, a writer who longed to express himself in a more meaningful way. Serling went into freelance writing, an occupation that was unsteady at best. Serling had written a number of scripts before and during college and had hopes of seeing one or more of those works come to fruition. TO date, Serling had little success in selling his works.

Fortunately for Serling, television was still of relatively new medium and therefore it was easier to break into than into major motion pictures or even radio. In 1953 Serling

realized his dream when one of his scripts made it onto television. The critics raved over Serling's work and the writer was on his way.

In 1955, Kraft Television Theater presented Serling's work titled "Patterns." The show was extremely successful.

"One minute after the show went off the air, my phone started to ring," Serling said seven years later. "It's been ringing ever since."

In 1956, Serling eventually landed a script writing position for the drama series "Playhouse 90." The position enabled Serling to spread his creative wings and to gain a reputation as a solid and talented scriptwriter. "Playhouse 90" was a 90 minute weekly series intended to bring the best available drama to the television screen. One way in which producers accomplished this was by hiring major stars such as Charles Laughton, Cliff Robertson, Shirley Booth, Boris Karloff, Sterling Hayden, Vincent Price, Ethel Barrymore, and Geraldine Page.

"Playhouse 90" was very successful and critically acclaimed, elevating Serling's career. However, over the next several years, executives from the networks heavily censored the show's scripts in order to placate sponsors. For example, one of the episodes sponsored by the Ford Motor Company required that the Chrysler Building had to be blacked out of the New York skyline because the two companies or competitors. Script changes attacked even minute conflicting references, not allowing actors to say "lucky" during the show sponsored by a cigarette company; or one of the characters to commit suicide because the show was being sponsored by an insurance company. As the censorship increased, Serling became even more frustrated and wanted to do a television series that would allow him more creative freedom.

Additionally, the 1950s was a time in which live television drama began to wane in popularity. The production was difficult and in the end the show could only be broadcast one time, presenting little opportunity for the network to recoup the cost of production. If the shows were taped instead of performed live, shows could be broadcast over and over again.

In the wake of the success of "Patterns" and "Playhouse 90," Serling decided to present another script to television executives, a teleplay titled "The Time Element."



Part Two: Entering The Twilight Zone

Part Two: Entering The Twilight Zone Summary and Analysis

Executives were dead set against buying "The Twilight Zone" as a serial and were eventually convinced to take on the series by producer Bert Granet and legendary comedian and Desilu Studios owner Desi Arnaz. The main objection of television executives was that "The Time Element" and similar scripts were left open ended, not resolved, as was most common for television serials at the time. Although Serling admitted that "The Time Element" was certainly not a masterpiece, the show received more mail than any other show that premiered on the "Desilu Playhouse." Serling was encouraged to write more scripts. Eventually, "The Time Element" would end up as a precursor for the pilot episode of "The Twilight Zone."

"The Twilight Zone Companion" details the first episodes of the show, including a basic synopsis, actors, producers, and directors.

The first show to be addressed is "The Time Element." Serling presents a story of a man who attempts to warn the Army before the attack on Pearl Harbor. As with "Playhouse 90" television executives would not allow the character to warn the Army, because Westinghouse had several government contracts, and the company was afraid of offending the Pentagon.

The final script, which appeared on November 24, 1958 on CBS, featured Pete Jenson, a "part-time unsuccessful bookie" and bartender who visits a psychiatrist to discuss a recurring dream. Jenson's dream places him in Honolulu on December 6, 1941, one day before the attack on Pearl Harbor. In the dream, Jenson attempts to warn people about the impending attack by the Japanese. Naturally, no one believes the premonition. Jenson explains to the psychiatrist that he has never been in Honolulu and as a test records the name of an ensign that appears in the dream. When Jenson awakes, he calls a phone number attached to the name of the ensign. A woman answers the phone and tells Jenson that her son, the ensign, and his wife had been killed in Honolulu at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941.

Jenson falls asleep in the psychiatrist's office and the dream resumes on December 7, 1941. As Japanese planes are flying toward Honolulu, Jenson wants to know why nobody would believe him when he issued the warning. One of the bombs is dropped onto Jenson's hotel and there is an explosion. The psychiatrist is startled awake and knows that something is amiss. The doctor checks his appointment book and finds that no patients have been scheduled for the day. In order to gain his bearings, the psychiatrist walks into a local bar and orders a drink. Above the bar is a photograph of Pete Jenson. The psychiatrist experiences vague recognition while looking at the photograph. The bartender explains that Pete Jenson was a former bartender at the bar who had been killed at Pearl Harbor.



Although "The Time Element" was not a masterpiece by any standard, the show received more fan mail than any other show presented on the "Desilu Playhouse" that year. The positive response convinced CBS executives to give "The Twilight Zone" a chance. Bill Self, a new executive at CBS, was put in charge of the new series. Since "The Time Element" had already appeared on the "Desilu Playhouse," Serling was required to write a new hour-long script. The new script detailed a futuristic totalitarian society in which anyone over the age of 60 was sent to a thinly veiled concentration camp to be exterminated. The main character is Dr. Harris, a 58-year-old surgeon, who objects to sending people to "The Happy Place." Because of Dr. Harris's outspoken objections, the government alters the doctor's age to 60 years old, the age of legal extermination. The doctor goes into hiding, but is eventually given up by his grandson.

Executives referred to the new script as depressing and requested that Serling write another. The new script was titled, "Where is Everybody?" The script told the story of an amnesiac who is unable to find another living person in a small town. It turns out that the amnesiac was part of an isolation experiment gone wrong. "Where is Everybody?" aired on October 2, 1959 and served as the premiere episode of the new series.

CBS executives were finally on board with Serling's work and a contract was signed. Serling would be required to write 80% of the scripts for the show's first season. Serling would maintain 50% ownership of the series, plus the original films. CBS would own the remaining 50% of the show.

Now that the series was on its way, Serling was given the task of writing the opening narration which would eventually be delivered by the writer himself. The original opening narration read: "There is a sixth dimension beyond that which is known to man. It is a dimension as vast as space and as timeless as infinity. It is a middle ground between light and shadow, and it lies between the pit of man's fear and the sunlight of his knowledge. This is the dimension of imagination. It is an area that might be called "The Twilight Zone.'"



Part Three: The First Season 1959-1960

Part Three: The First Season 1959-1960 Summary and Analysis

Now that the series was underway, Rod Serling requested that Bill Self continue to work as the show's producer. Self preferred his executive status at CBS and suggested a new producer on the form of Buck Houghton, a former script editor turned producer. Houghton was enthusiastic about joining Serling's team. For the first three years of the series, Houghton was the major force behind translating Serling's words onto film. Serling and Houghton shared final approval on every aspect of the show. Some refer to as Houghton as one of the best producers around.

One of the first jobs assigned to Houghton was to find a studio in which to shoot the series. The pilot for the show had been filmed at Universal, but because Universal did not rent out its facilities, Houghton chose Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer because of the vast number of sets the studio owned. Houghton also went on to hire the cast, crew and directors for the new series.

Over the next nine months Serling wrote 28 scripts, each falling into one of three basic categories: fantasy, science fiction, and horror. Each script would embrace a surprise ending, which would eventually become synonymous with "The Twilight Zone."

"The Lonely" aired on 11/13/59 and starred Jack Warden, Jean Marsh, and Ted Knight.. The story revolves around a man serving a 50-year sentence for murder on an isolated asteroid. The man's only company is that of a robot designed to look and behave like a human woman. Eventually, the man receives a full pardon, but is unable to take the robot with him. The man has fallen in love, refuses to leave the robot and is devastated. An officer shoots the robot in the face and reveals her wiring, telling the man that the only thing being left behind is loneliness.

One of Houghton's biggest concerns was where to find the place to film the events on the asteroid. Eventually, Houghton decided to film the show in Death Valley. The extreme heat of Death Valley caused many complications, from people keeling over from heat stroke to various technical issues. Eventually, the cast and crew returned to MGM, where the setting was reconstructed and the filming of "The Lonely" was completed.

"Escape Clause" aired on 11/6/59 and starred Joe Flynn, Wendell Holmes, David Wayne and Virginia Christine. The story revolves around Mr. Walter Bedeker, a 44-year-old hypochondriac. Along with being a hypochondriac, Bedeker is also extremely phobic and narcissistic and often wonders what would become of the world if he no longer existed in it. Bedeker meets a man who turns out to be the Devil. Bedeker strikes a deal with the Devil, trading his soul for immortality. Bedeker becomes fascinated by his inability to die and makes many futile attempts to commit suicide. During one such



incident, Bedeker's wife attempts to save him and falls off the top of the building. Bedeker confesses to murdering his wife so that he may get to experience the electric chair. Bedeker is shocked when the judge does not impose the death penalty, but rather sentences the man to life in prison without parole. Bedeker begs the Devil to rescind the contract and the hypochondriac dies of a fatal heart attack.

"Escape Clause" received rave reviews and set the tone for what would be a remarkable season.

"Walking Distance" aired on 10/30/59 and starred Dick Young, Ronny Howard, and Irene Tedrow. The story revolves around Martin Sloan, a 36-year-old vice president of an ad agency. Sloan is very successful in many areas of his life, but fails when he attempts to go home again. Although Sloan does manage to return to his childhood, the man discovers that he has effectively altered history.

Houghton refers to "Walking Distance" as one of the best shows created in "The Twilight Zone." Many say that Serling was struck by a set at MGM and decided to take viewers on a ride back to his hometown of Binghamton, New York. This particular show was pure fantasy and therefore required a more nostalgic tone than previous episodes. Overall "Walking Distance" was the most personal and well-crafted piece Serling had written to date.

After reading the show's script, CBS executives were still confused by the premise of "The Twilight Zone" and were concerned that the show was not believable. Serling continued to stress that the unbelievability factor was in fact, the point.

"Mr. Denton on Doomsday" aired on 10/16/59 and starred Martin Landau, Dan Duryea, Jeanne Cooper, and Doug McClure. The story details the life of Al Denton, a feared gunslinger turned town drunk. On the day Denton is required to draw down against a town bully, Henry J. Fate rides his horse into town. One look from Fate grants Denton miraculous abilities and Denton wins the gunfight. Through this act of heroism, Denton regains his former notoriety as a skilled gunslinger. Denton swears off alcohol and attempts to return to his former life. As Fate would have it, Denton is challenged to a duel but soon learns that the magical abilities granted by Fate have disappeared. Denton purchases a magic potion from Fate that will give him 10 seconds to shoot with deadly accuracy. Unfortunately, Denton learns that Fate has sold the same potion to his opponent. The men duel and both are shot in their gun hands, preventing them from dueling ever again. Denton believes that he has been blessed.

The story of Al Denton revolves around a common theme of a character being granted a second chance. However in "The Twilight Zone," the second chance does not always grant the initial wish of the recipient.

"One for the Angels" aired on 10/9/59 and starred Ed Wynn, Murray Hamilton, and Dana Dillaway. Ed Wynn plays Lew Bookman, a pitchman, who works on street during the summer. Bookman is approached by Mr. Death, who is paying a courtesy call to the pitchman to tell him to expect to die at midnight. Naturally, Bookman does not want to



die and convinces Mr. Death to let him live until he is able to make one big pitch, the One for the Angels. Mr. Death agrees. Bookman has no intention of ever making the big pitch. Mr. Death realizes that someone must be taken in Bookman's place and chooses a small girl named Maggie. Bookman realizes that he cannot allow Mr. Death to kill Maggie and ends up making the one big pitch to save the girl's life.

During the first season of "The Twilight Zone," Serling acted as the show's narrator. Originally, Serling's narrations were recorded off camera, and the only appearance the writer was required to make was at the end of the show, at which time Serling would announce the episode for the following week. The second season found Serling appearing before the camera, a position with which the writer was extremely uncomfortable. There were times when the directors would trick Serling and film the rehearsal to save the boss the grief of going through an official shoot. Over the years, directors and crew attempted to use various tricks to make Serling feel comfortable in front of the camera, but nothing seemed to work. Eventually, people stopped offering Serling suggestions and let him speak in the most natural way, exuding a presence that would eventually become Serling's trademark.

In addition to appearing on camera, Serling was also in charge of hiring writers to pen the 20% of the scripts left in each season. Serling remembered what it was like to be a struggling writer and was always attempting to give new talent a chance. Serling announced that he would be accepting unsolicited manuscripts for the show. In the first five days, Serling received 14,000 manuscripts. Serling and the staff read approximately 500 of the submissions. According to Serling, 498 of the chosen scripts were "absolute trash." The two scripts that stood out belonged to Richard Matheson and Charles Beaumont.

The first season of "The Twilight Zone" ended in April 1960. In total, 36 episodes had been created and produced. By May 1960, CBS had picked up "The Twilight Zone" for a second season. Part of the renewal was surely due to the accolades the show had received from critics and fans. The year ended on a high note when Rod Serling won his fourth Emmy.



Part Four: The Second Season 1960-1961

Part Four: The Second Season 1960-1961 Summary and Analysis

As the second season of "The Twilight Zone" prepared for its debut, it was clear that the show had found a loyal audience. Not only was the audience enthralled by the concepts presented by Serling, but they were also happy to shell out their hard earned money on "Twilight Zone" related products. These items included things like a comic book, a record album, a board game, and "More Stories From the Twilight Zone," a book written by Serling that went into its second printing a mere two weeks after its initial release. Some fans even invented products and began to name establishments after the new series.

A major bonus for the producers of the show was that major stars were eager to appear in one of Serling's bizarre tales. Previously, a famous actor may have been considered for a specific role, but it was often the case that the actor was too expensive and would not fit into the show's budget. As the second season debuted, many actors offered to appear on the show at half price in order to get the exposure and to have fun with the unusual storylines. Although the show is meeting with great success, Houghton notes that the CBS executives were becoming increasingly concerned with the cost of the budget, and were looking for ways to cut corners.

The first show of the second season was "King Nine Will Not Return," which aired on 9/30/60 and starred Bob Cummings, Paul Lambert, Gene Lyons, and Jenna McMahon. The premise of the story is that a B-25 bomber named King Nine falls out of the sky to land in Africa in 1943. When the captain awakes after the crash, he finds that the crew is nowhere to be found and, stranger still, jet aircraft are flying through the skies overhead. The captain begins to see mirages and has a nervous breakdown. When the captain wakes up in the hospital, it is 1960. 17 years previous, the captain had fallen ill and missed taking the last flight on the bomber, thereby avoiding the crash that killed the captain and crew. While the entire episode seems to be nothing more than a hallucination or a bad dream, and no one can explain how the captain got sand in his shoes.

"King Nine Will Not Return" is similar to previous shows in that a character finds himself alone facing bizarre circumstances, with no memory or idea where he is or how he got there. The story of the bomber is based on true fact. In 1959 British geologists uncovered an American B-24 bomber in the Libyan desert. The plane was completely intact, but there was no trace of the nine man crew. The Air Force was unable to offer any viable explanation, and eventually labeled the geologists find as "one of the greatest mysteries in aviation history."



"Nervous Man in a Four Dollar Room" aired on 10/14/60 and starred Joe Mantell and William D. Gordon. The story revolves around 34-year-old Mr. Jackie Rhoades, a nervous two-bit hood. Jackie has often worked for George, a gangster, who was ordered Jackie to kill a man. Jackie is frightened and sees no way out of the predicament. Jackie doesn't have the nerve to refuse George yet the man is certain that he will be caught if he commits murder. Jackie catches a glimpse of his own reflection as he is searching for a match to light a cigarette. The man in the mirror, a Jackie from a parallel universe, is already smoking. Jackie is surprised that the man is self-assured, well-dressed, and confident. The Jackie in the mirror is the man. The two bit hood, could have been had he chosen an alternate path. At the end of the story, Jackie and the man in the mirror have switched places, Georges refused, and the new Mr. Rhoades checks out.

"Mr. Dingle, The Strong" aired on 3/3/61, and starred Burgess Meredith, Don Rickles, and James Westerfield. This particular episode was an attempt by Serling to create "out-and-out boffo comedy" using the talents of legendary actors Burgess Meredith and Don Rickles. A two-headed Martian has decided to give Mr. Dingle, a hapless vacuum cleaner salesman, the strength of 300 men. When Mr. Dingle discovers his newfound strength, he begins to exhibit the power by performing a variety of tricks, and thereby gaining notoriety. When Mr. Dingle decides to perform for a live television audience, the two-headed Martian takes away the additional strength and Mr. Dingle is suddenly a laughingstock in the community. The two-headed Martian leaves, and on the way out he bumps into two Venusians looking for a human on which to perform an intellectual experiment. The two-headed Martian points out Mr. Dingle, and whole cycle begins again.

"Back There" is a compelling story that originally aired on 1/13/61 and starred Russell Johnson, Bartlett Robinson, and Paul Hartman. As with many of Serling's tales, this episode deals with time travel. The story begins with four men at a men's club discussing time travel. The date is April 14, 1961. One of the men, Peter Corrigan, is suddenly overcome by a dizzy spell. When the spell is over, Corrigan realizes that he has been taken back in time to April 14, 1865, the date of Abraham Lincoln's assassination. Corrigan attempts to warn the President and is arrested as a lunatic or a drunk. A man named Mr. Wellington takes Corrigan into custody. Wellington is, in fact, John Wilkes Booth and is determined that the assassination go off as planned. Corrigan is drugged, and by the time he wakes, Lincoln is dead. Corrigan returns to the future to relay the tale to his friends at the men's club. Corrigan is prepared to insist that the past cannot be changed when he notices that William, formerly known as the club's attendant, is now a rich man. William's great-grandfather, a police officer, believed Corrigan's story and attempted to stop the assassination. The police officer developed a political career and became a millionaire. Corrigan realizes that the past can be changed, but perhaps not in the way one intends.

Perhaps the most disturbing episode of the second season is "Long Distance Call" which aired on 3/3/61 and starred Billy Mumy, Lili Darvas, and Philip Abbott. The story is about a small boy who receives a toy telephone from his grandmother for his fifth birthday. The grandmother adores the child and often says that the boy has given her



life again. Shortly after the boy's birthday, the grandmother dies. The boy is devastated, and spends a great deal of time on the toy telephone claiming that the grandmother is on the other end. The little boy says the grandmother is lonely and wants the boy to visit. The parents think the boy is playing make-believe and dismiss the tale until the boy throws himself in front of a speeding car and narrowly avoids being killed. The boy tells his parents that someone told him to do it. The mother suspects that there is something wrong and takes the toy phone away from the little boy. The mother hears breathing on the other end of the line. Billy runs out of the house and attempts to drown himself in a fish pond. The rescue team attempts to revive the boy with no luck. The father gets on the toy telephone and begs the grandmother to return the little boy to his family.

Many people found "Long Distance Call" to be extremely disturbing, with the suggestion that someone beyond the grave could convince a child to commit suicide. The story was not written by Serling, but by William Idolsen, an actor and friend of Charles Beaumont, who would later become a top writer and producer on various TV sitcoms including "The Bob Newhart Show."



Part Five: The Third Season 1961-1962

Part Five: The Third Season 1961-1962 Summary and Analysis

By the beginning of the third season, Rod Serling found that he was suffering from fatigue. In April 1961 Serling stated, "I've never felt quite so drained of ideas as I do at this moment." Having written 47 out of 68 of the show's scripts, Serling was beginning to discover that the ideas did not come as fast as they had before the show began. After a while, Serling noted that one begins to borrow from oneself.

In addition to fatigue from the writing duties, Serling was called upon to play another role. The American Tobacco Company became the new sponsor of the series, replacing General Foods. The American Tobacco Company would alternate sponsorship duties with Colgate-Palmolive. At the end of each show, Serling gave a plug to the sponsoring company, advertising its products.

The first episode of the third season was titled "Two." The episode aired 9/15/61 and starred Charles Bronson and Elizabeth Montgomery. The story entails a young woman who finds herself in an area that has been uninhabited for some time. The woman is in uniform, and when she meets with an enemy soldier. There is immediate distrust between the woman, an aggressive soldier, and the man, a pacifist. Although there is conflict, the two finally come together, having been able to put aside the war in which they fought on opposite sides.

The story was written by a Montgomery Pittman, who had previously directed "Will the Real Martian Please Stand Up?" Although the story takes place at a bleak time in history, Pittman manages to turn a volatile situation into an optimistic tale. The story was made even more interesting by the fact that the two actors were cast against type. Bronson was cast as a pacifist and Montgomery was cast as an aggressive soldier.

"A Game of Pool" aired on 10/13/61 and starred Jack Klugman and Jonathan Winters. The story revolves around winning and losing and being careful what you wish for because you might get it. Klugman plays Jesse Cardiff, a recently deceased pool shark, whose greatest wish is to play a game of pool against Fats Brown, the world's greatest pool player. Cardiff gets his wish and although Brown has the upper hand throughout the entire game, Cardiff manages to sink the final ball and win. Cardiff has beaten the champ, and has now gained the reputation of being the best pool player on earth. It is clear that Brown has allowed Cardiff to win when the former champ says that it is now Cardiff's responsibility to respond to every challenge issued by would-be opponents, while Brown, exhausted from repeated competition, has decided to go fishing.

"Once Upon a Time" aired on 12/15/61 and starred Buster Keaton, Stanley Adams, and Jesse White. The story revolves around Woodrow Mulligan, a janitor who is disgruntled over the high prices of 1890 and decides to utilize a time travel helmet to send himself



forward to 1962. It is clear that Mulligan was mistaken when he assumed that 1962 would be a utopia in comparison to the late 19th century. Along the way, the helmet becomes damaged, and Mulligan is in danger of not being able to return to his own time. Mulligan finds a scientist who is able to fix the helmet, but the scientist decides to use the helmet for himself. There is a struggle and both men end up in 1890. Mulligan is happy, but the scientist finds Mulligan's time to be "hopelessly backward," and is eventually sent back to 1962.

Houghton was thrilled to be able to work with the legendary Buster Keaton. Houghton found that the Keaton was very serious about his art and was able to offer a great deal of valuable advice to the producer. Unfortunately, the material was not up to par, and even the Keaton's presence could not make it sing.

By the end of the third season, "The Twilight Zone" had become ingrained in the American culture. "The Twilight Zone" became a euphemism for nearly any bizarre situation. Serling joked that when he heard the Secretary of State refer to "the twilight zone in diplomacy," the writer knew that the show had arrived.

At the beginning of 1962, "The Twilight Zone" had been unable to find a sponsor for the fourth season until the last minute. CBS inserted a new show into "The Twilight Zone" time slot and soon the series was off the air. Suddenly, Serling was faced with the struggle to get the show back on the air and Buck Houghton was suddenly unemployed. Houghton eventually took a job with Four Star Productions. Fearing that the show would not be renewed, Serling took a job as an instructor at Antioch College beginning in September 1962 to last through January 1963.

The show was finally renewed, but the format was changed. Although a competent producer was hired to take Houghton's place, it was clear that the series would not be the same. Serling and Houghton had developed a perfect working relationship and created a masterpiece. However, in 1962, Serling also left the show.

By this time Serling was completely burned out and did not back out of the teaching position. Over the next two years, Serling's contributions would be greatly decreased. Although Serling continued to host the show and write scripts, many of the details of the show's production would be left to other people. Serling told the media that his fatigue was extreme and it was time for a change. After working for so many years on the series, Serling felt that his perspective was shot and he was concerned that the work would begin to suffer. Although the series would continue through the next two years, without Serling and Houghton, the flavor of the show would be noticeably different.



Part Six: The Fourth Season 1963

Part Six: The Fourth Season 1963 Summary and Analysis

The fourth season of "The Twilight Zone" brought noticeable changes. First of all, CBS had inadvertently changed the title by removing "The," dubbing the new season as "Twilight Zone." The format was expanded from the original half hour length to a full hour, a move that caused serious concerns for Buck Houghton, as well as the writers. Houghton was concerned that an hour-long show would lose the attention of the audience. A new producer was brought on board. Like Houghton, Herbert Hirschman had served in every aspect of the business from the theater to television. Although there were many changes in the cast and crew, the director of photography, George T. Clemens and production manager Ralph W. Nelson stayed on with Hirschman offering a sense of continuity to the show. The show's extended length made production much more difficult, and required longer hours for the cast and crew. There was also great concern that shows new timeslot would kill the series.

Although Serling intended for the teaching job at Antioch College to give him a break from writing, exactly the opposite proved to be true. In addition to Serling's teaching duties, the show's creator was working on a screenplay adaptation for "Seven Days in May." Hirschman and Serling communicated a great deal by mail and telephone reviewing scripts. It was obvious to Hirschman that Serling was overwhelmed and the scripts he was providing, while adequate, were not up to Serling's standard of excellence. Hirschman says that he nagged Serling to rewrite some of the scripts. Scheduling was also a problem regarding Serling's appearances as the show's narrator. The shows were being shot in LA and Serling's teaching duties kept him on the East Coast.

"Miniature" in art on 2/21/63 and starred Robert Duvall, Pert Kelton, Barbara Barrie, and William Windom. Robert Duvall plays Charley Parkes, a bachelor who goes to a local museum every day to get away from the rest of the world. One day, Charley is shocked to find the cafeteria closed for renovation. Charley accidentally falls in step with a tour group and ends up in a part of the museum unknown to him. Charley is suddenly faced with a 19th century dollhouse, where a beautiful mechanical doll is seated at a miniature harpsichord playing Mozart's Piano Sonata in A Major. Charley is immediately fascinated by the tiny woman and asks a museum guard for information. The guard tells Charley that the doll is carved from solid wood and cannot play the harpsichord.

Charley loses his job and ends up spending every day at the museum watching the doll as she goes through her daily routine in pantomime. Charley has fallen in love with the miniature doll. One day, a drunken gentleman caller at the dollhouse acts violently and carries off Charley's love interest. Charley goes crazy and smashes the glass case surrounding the dollhouse. The incident lands Charley in an asylum. Charley is eventually able to convince the psychiatrist that the doll is real. Charley is released from



the asylum, but instead of going home to his family, Charley goes to the museum, where he finds the doll weeping with loneliness. Charley tells the doll that he understands loneliness and they could be together to help and love one another. The doctor and Charley's family rushed to the museum, only to find that there are now two miniature figures in the dollhouse.

"Miniature" was written by Charles Beaumont and is considered to be a "peculiar and touching the love story." The production of the story was expensive, but proved to be worth it when the hour-long show was finished. Sadly, "Miniature" is the only hour-long episode that was never put into syndication due to a lawsuit filed by a writer who had submitted a script titled "The Thirteenth Mannequin" to Cayuga Productions. This particular story involved an old man's relationship with a store mannequin. Although it was proven that "Miniature" was written before "The Thirteenth Mannequin," the stories bore no more than a passing resemblance to each other, and the show was exonerated, the damage had been done.

At the end of the fourth season, CBS decided to renew the series for one more year. The format had been changed from an hour-long show back to the original half hour format. Serling was pleased at the change, saying that the hour-long shows had the tendency to be padded in order to fill the time. Although the show would run for one more year, it became obvious that by the end of the fourth season "Twilight Zone" had begun to show its age.



Part Seven: The Fifth Season 1963-1964, Part Eight: After The Twilight Zone

Part Seven: The Fifth Season 1963-1964, Part Eight: After The Twilight Zone Summary and Analysis

The transformation back to the half hour format cost "Twilight Zone" to lose some of its appeal. Serling claims that he lost the ability to be objective on what was good and the writing began to slip. Additionally, most of the show's greatest directors were gone. Regardless of the show's impending demise, Bert Granet was determined to put out the best show possible for the fifth and final season. Although the show no longer had the same impact as it did in the first three seasons, critics proclaimed that it was still one of the best shows on television.

In January 1964, CBS released its fall schedule and "Twilight Zone" was not included in the lineup. Serling's agent thought the show might be able to be sold to a rival network. The president of ABC was interested and proposed a new name for the show. The network's ideas for a new variation of "Twilight Zone" did not go over well with Serling and Cayuga Productions closed its doors.

After "Twilight Zone" was canceled, Serling sold his stake to CBS for a lump sum. According to Carol Serling, "The show often went over budget and CBS said they would never recoup the costs." Obviously, CBS made a fortune on "Twilight Zone" after it was put into syndication.

The treatment of Serling's work in syndication was abhorrent. It was common for entire scenes be deleted, which ultimately ruined the show's intricate storylines.

Rod Serling chose not to dwell on the show and continued to work in the industry for the next 11 years. In 1964, Serling won his sixth Emmy. In 1965, Serling went to work on another series titled "The Loner" starring Lloyd Bridges. The focus of the show was on Bridges' character rather than traditional gunplay. Critics liked the show and Serling's innovative take on the typical Western. CBS executives were not so pleased, however, and demanded that Serling add more violence to the scripts. Serling balked and eventually went to the press. The network countered that by "violence" they actually meant "action," such as chases and runaway stagecoaches. Serling began to hate the series and was grateful when it was canceled halfway through the season.

Serling spent the next decade with his hands in a large number of diverse projects from acting as the President of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences to appearing as a spokesman for various products on radio and television,. The writer also penned many scripts, including an adaptation of "Planet of the Apes." However, Serling became increasingly despondent and over the lack of quality material he had developed since the cancellation of "Twilight Zone."

An interesting opportunity arose in 1969 when NBC showed "Night Gallery," a TV movie based on a trio of stories written by Serling. One of those stories, "Eyes," was the directorial debut of Steven Spielberg. Serling won a special Edgar Allan Poe award for the show which prompted NBC to put "Rod Serling's Night Gallery" on the air. At this point, Serling made a huge mistake. Serling declared that he would no longer be in charge of production of his work. As a result, producers continually sacrificed the show's quality in order to interject shock value. "Night Gallery" developed into the exact thing Serling had spent his career avoiding and although the writer had no part in the actual production, his name and face were on the product.

There were some high points to "Night Gallery" and the show garnered two Emmy nominations for two original pieces written by Serling. Despite Serling's misgivings about the show, he was bound by contract and remained on as the show's host until it was canceled.

Serling continued to teach writing in New York and LA and also give lectures at colleges throughout the country. In May 1975, Serling had a mild heart attack and was hospitalized. After one month, the writer was scheduled for a coronary bypass operation. During the 10 hour surgery, doctors encountered complications, and Serling died shortly thereafter.

Characters

Rod Serling

Rod Serling (1924-1975) is best known for his role as writer and star of "The Twilight Zone," a science fiction serial the likes of which no one had ever seen. "The Twilight Zone" ran for five years during the 1960s and '70s. Serling's work is considered to be revolutionary and well done even if the television studios had to be co-airers to take on the project. The result of Serling's work is a legendary series that has never been matched in either content or quality.

Rod Serling was born on Christmas Day 1924 to Samuel Serling, a wholesale meat salesman, and Esther Cooper Serling. The Serlings had one other son, Bob, who was born seven years previous. The Serlings moved to Binghamton, New York shortly after Rod's birth. Although Bob and Rod were seven years apart, the two were very close and spent a great deal of time together, including reading and acting out science fiction pulps such as "Amazing Stories." That early exposure, along with Rod's adventures personality, certainly aimed the writer toward success. After a stint as an Army paratrooper and boxer, Rod Serling enrolled in college where he met Carolyn Kramer, who would become his wife. Serling went into freelance writing, an occupation that was unsteady, at best. Serling had written a number of scripts before and during college and had hopes of seeing one or more of those works come to fruition.

Serling landed a writing position for the drama series "Playhouse 90." The position enabled Serling to spread his creative wings and to gain a reputation as a solid and talented scriptwriter. One of Serling's earlier works, titled "Patterns," was a project that was destined to become available to the public. The show was produced, telecast on CBS and was well received. In the wake of the success of "Patterns" Serling decided to present another script to television executives, titled "The Time Element." "The Time Element" would end up as the pilot episode of "The Twilight Zone." Executives were not keen on "The Twilight Zone" as a serial and were eventually convinced to take on the series by Desi Arnaz.

"The Twilight Zone" allowed Serling to further expand his creative abilities over the next five years. The writer would pen 92 of the 156 episodes that aired on CBS. The work was rewarding yet exhausting for Serling, who eventually allowed the television network to cancel the series after a successful five year run on the air.

Serling went on to create many other works of fiction including a series titled "The Night Gallery," another type of serial television program, although this one was darker and more gothic.

Serling never could have imagined the longevity and ongoing success of his pet project known as "The Twilight Zone." Rod Serling died in 1975 of a heart attack.



Bert Granet

Bert Granet (1910-2002) was a writer and television producer beginning in the 1950s. Granet had a reputation as being an aggressive man that would not be dissuaded from any project he thought was worthy of attention from the executives at the television studios, particularly CBS. Granet had spent years working with Desi Arnaz and Lucille Ball at Desilu Studios and had developed a good relationship with the star couple. Granet routinely wrote episodes that would appear on the Desilu Playhouse, a series that would feature "pedestrian dramas" three weeks of the month and save the fourth week for situation comedies. Granet had also written and produced major productions for the silver screen but often had difficulty in completing the tasks. When Granet decided that he wanted to do something important for the small screen, the writer/producer wanted to make sure that he had the right writers, directors, and star power.

Bert Granet is often credited with the initial appearance of "The Twilight Zone" on CBS. Granet met Serling and knew that the man had talent. Serling had sold The Time Element to CBS but the script was sitting on a shelf. Granet bought the script for \$10,000 and scheduled it for the 1958-1959 series on the Desilu Playhouse. CBS executives fought against the show but Granet, along with Desi Arnaz, backed Serling's work.

Granet was responsible for getting some of the biggest names on and off the big screen to participate in what would become "The Twilight Zone." Granet also served as a producer on "The Twilight Zone" during its fourth and fifth years on the air.

Carolyn Serling

Carolyn Kramer Serling - Rod Serling's wife.

Charles Beaumont

Charles Beaumont - Writer that took over some of the script writing duties from Serling starting with the thirteenth episode. Colleagues often joked that Beaumont lived in "The Twilight Zone." Beaumont was also close friends with Dick Matheson.

Richard Matheson

Richard Matheson - Writer that took over some of the script writing duties from Serling during the show's first season. Matheson was the first writer to pen an episode of the show besides Serling. Matheson and Chuck Beaumont, another writer on the show, were close friends and Matheson's sense of realism complemented Beaumont's more fantastic style.



Bob Serling

Bob Serling - Rod Serling's older brother and successful novelist.

Buck Houghton

Buck Houghton - Movie industry heavyweight and influential force on "The Twilight Zone." Houghton took over the role of producer from Bill Self.

Bill Self

Bill Self - Original producer and adviser to Serling on "The Twilight Zone."

Dick Berg

Dick Berg - Producer and close friend to Serling.

Burgess Meredith

Burgess Meredith - Famous actor who held many roles throughout the five year run of "The Twilight Zone" series.

Desi Arnaz

Desi Arnaz - Legendary icon of comedy in the 1950s and '60s. Head of Desilu Studios and husband to icon Lucille Ball.

Objects/Places

The Twilight Zone

"The Twilight Zone" was a television show created by writer Rod Serling. The show aired on CBS from 1959-1964 and was considered to be the most innovative and well written show in the history of television. Although "The Twilight Zone" has run in syndication ever since its cancellation, the recreation of Serling's masterpiece cannot compare to the original. Serling was devastated when the show was syndicated and producers butchered the format by deleting scenes that held the story together.

The premise of the "The Twilight Zone" is that there is another dimension beyond what man can see, hear, and touch. In this place, anything can happen, from contact with aliens to time travel. The main characters in the story is always an unsuspecting participant in a trip to "The Twilight Zone," making the experience even more surreal than if one was expecting it.

There are often morals to the story which may or may not be evident to the viewer. Two common threads made the show like no other - the presence of creator Rod Serling as narrator and the surprising and sometimes shocking ending to each show. Each show was a separate entity, a vignette with no set ending. Although this premise disturbed CBS executives, the audience loved the endless possibilities.

"The Twilight Zone" was so successful that major movie and television stars clamored to be a part of this alternate universe.

Night Gallery

"Night Gallery" was the impetus for Rod Serling's hit show after the cancellation of "The Twilight Zone." The show came five years after Serling's masterpiece and after the writer had taken the opportunity to explore other avenues. During the hiatus from mainstream television, Serling taught at Antioch College and continued to write many significant works, including the screen adaptation of "Planet of the Apes."

The original foray into the "Night Gallery" was created when CBS aired a trio of bizarre stories written by Serling, two of which were adapted from the writer's 1967 novel "Season of the Wary." The show included adaptations of "Escape Route," and "Eyes," the latter marking the directorial debut of film making legend Steven Spielberg. Three stories were laced together and formed into a television special.

"Night Gallery" aired in November 1969 and received rave reviews. The show was the impetus of "Rod Serling's Night Gallery," an hour-long show that began its run during the 1970-1971 season. Like "The Twilight Zone," "Rod Serling's Night Gallery," consisted of a series of stories, all with a supernatural twist. The major difference between the shows was that Serling gave up a great deal of creative control on the new



series, a mistake that would haunt the writer as his intricate story lines were changed to interject horror and shock value while sacrificing the show's quality. "Rod Serling's Night Gallery" was eventually cut to a half hour show before it was canceled in 1972.

Ithaca, NY

Ithaca, NY - City where Serling lived and later taught at a local college.

Binghamton, NY

Binghamton, NY - Location of Serling's childhood home.

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer - The studio used for shooting "The Twilight Zone."

Los Angeles, California

Los Angeles, California - Site of Universal Studios and Metro-Goldwyn-Meyer. MGM was the studio used for shooting "The Twilight Zone".

Universal Studios

Universal Studios - Original studio used to shoot "Patterns," the pilot for "The Twilight Zone."

Playhouse 90

Playhouse 90 - Serling's first production on television, in which he made a name as a scriptwriter.

Cayuga Lake, NY

Cayuga Lake, NY - The Serling family owned a summer home on Cayuga Lake, located in the Finger Lakes in New York. Serling used the name for his company, titled Cayuga Productions.

CBS

CBS - Network that aired "The Twilight Zone" and "Rod Serling's Night Gallery."

Themes

Innovation

Rod Serling was one of the most innovative writers of his time. Serling had always been fascinated by tales of the supernatural, dating back to his childhood when he and older brother Bob would devour the stories featured in magazines such as "Amazing Stories," "Weird Tales," and "Astounding Stories." The brothers also loved pulp fiction and saw every movie available, often acting out the parts when they got home. This love of the supernatural and Serling's propensity to having nightmares surely led to the writer's ability to create both shocking and innovative stories. These stories would eventually lead into the creation of several books as well as two different television series, "The Twilight Zone" and "Rod Serling's Night Gallery." The ability to create innovative story lines also led Serling into the adaptation of the novel "Planet of the Apes" as well as a career as a teacher and lecturer.

Serling's innovative bent went far beyond writing as "The Twilight Zone" progressed. The story lines, while creative and often brilliant by all standards, presented many technical difficulties. Serling came to rely on industry experts such as Buck Houghton and Bill Self to take the vision and turn it into reality.

As with most creative geniuses, Serling often had to fight for his vision and while not always successful, the effort turned into reality for many of Serling's works, creating a legacy that would never be surpassed.

Creative Control

From the beginning of the concept of "The Twilight Zone," Rod Serling required complete creative control over the scripts, sets, actors, crew, directors, producers, and finished product. Serling was not a control freak, per se, it was simply smart business to make sure that the vision in the writer's head was put together in the best possible way. "Patterns" was the impetus for "The Time Element," which became the impetus for "The Twilight Zone." The only way to make sure that the concepts and storylines were executed properly was to assume creative control.

Serling realized quickly that exercising creative control meant that the creator worked longer hours than anyone else on the set. In addition to overseeing the production, Serling also created 80% of the scripts for the show, the only way a writer could ensure that there was continuity and quality in the series, and that there was a common thread between the show's vignettes.

Having creative control also meant that Serling was in danger of burning out. No one could keep up with Serling's pace, not even the writer who was naturally energetic to the point of being frenetic. Wear and tear started to show on Serling at the end of season two. By the time season three rolled around, Serling had no more to give. Although



Serling would maintain a great deal of creative control on the show, many aspects of the series' production fell to various producers and directors. By season four, Serling had all but left the show, only making script contributions.

In later years, Serling would realize that giving up creative control on "The Twilight Zone," and later on "Night Gallery," was a huge mistake that caused the work to suffer in both content in execution.

Perseverance

History has proven that there is no sure way to success and that being "discovered" after a single effort is a myth. Many creative people and philosophers have said time and again that the only way to accomplish one's goals is through perseverance. Making efforts, even small ones, will garner more success than a single Herculean effort. Rod Serling is an excellent example of how perseverance can make one's dreams come true.

When Serling got out of college, he and his wife, Carolyn, moved to Cincinnati, Ohio where Serling began to write dramas for the radio. Serling had written for radio before and was bitten by the creative bug. In the 1950s, television was much easier to break into than it is today, simply because there were fewer writers and actors pursuing the dream. Also, the industry was still in its infancy.

Serling had sold "Patterns" to CBS but didn't follow up on the broadcast of the show that would truly launch his career. It was Bert Granet, a writer/producer, who pushed Serling into moving forward with his television career.

Once "The Twilight Zone" was on the air, there was no one who exuded perseverance more than Serling. Every aspect of the show was controlled and Serling's perseverance in putting out the best possible series was what made the show a smashing success.



Style

Perspective

"The Twilight Zone Companion" is a non-fiction work written by Marc Scott Zicree. Zicree is a successful writer and editor. Among Zicree's short stories, books, screenplays and teleplays, of which there are many, Zicree also served as a contributing editor to "Twilight Zone Magazine." Zicree has also appeared on over a hundred television and radio shows. Zicree was nominated for an American Book Award for his work on this book.

Zicree holds a B.A. in graphic arts, sculpture and painting from UCLA, is an alumnus of the Clarion Writers Workshop, and possesses an M.F.A. from Lowell Darling's Fat City School of Finds Art.

The perspective used in "The Twilight Zone Companion" is obviously that of a fan. However, Zicree manages to remain objective and thorough in his work, presenting the life of Rod Serling and "The Twilight Zone" almost as one might find in an academic work. The history of the show and its episodes are written so that anyone might be able to see and understand the concepts and hard work put into the series. "The Twilight Zone Companion" is not a book that was simply created for fans but for anyone who has an interest in the history of television or science fiction.

Tone

The tone used in Marc Scott Zicree's book, "The Twilight Zone Companion" is objective, allowing the author to present information in an unbiased way. Although it is clear that Zicree is a fan of Serling and "The Twilight Zone," the author's appreciation for the man and his work do not cloud the information presented throughout the work.

"The Twilight Zone Companion" is written in third person, as is common for this type of work. The point of view used allows the reader to experience and understand the history and intricacies involved in the creation, production, and legacy of Serling's work.

Zicree's tone remains objective and does not gloss over the issues Serling faced during his career. One example of this can be seen at the end of "The Twilight Zone Companion" as well as the post series years. Serling was burned out by the end of season three and Zicree is able to relay the reasons for the decline of the show as well as Serling's unhappiness with the show that followed, "Rod Serling's Night Gallery." Serling himself would admit that he made grave errors in judgment when it came to giving up creative control of the shows and Zicree is able to relay what happened and the repercussions of those actions.

In the end the overall tone of "The Twilight Zone Companion" offers a thorough look at every aspect of the work, good and bad, allowing readers a complete experience.



Structure

"The Twilight Zone Companion" is a non-fiction book written by Marc Scott Zicree. The book is 459 pages in length and is comprised of 8 chapters. The longest chapter is 104 pages in length; the shortest chapter is 12 pages in length. The average length of the chapters is 54 pages.

The first chapter revolves around the life of writer and creator of "The Twilight Zone," Rod Serling. The chapter is a mini biography, spanning the 50 years of Serling's life, from his birth in 1924 throughout his illustrious career up until his death in 1975, at age 50.

The second chapter, "Entering the Twilight Zone," details the creation and production of "The Twilight Zone," beginning with Serling's early successes and struggles to get the unusual series on the air.

The third, fourth, fifth, six and seventh chapters detail each of the five seasons of "The Twilight Zone" series. Included in these chapters is the history behind each season, as well as a synopsis of each episode as it originally aired on network television.

The eighth chapter, "After The Twilight Zone," follows the series from network television into syndication. Chapter eight addresses Serling's later works from "Planet of the Apes" to "Rod Serling's Night Gallery." This section also details Serling's life from the end of the series in 1964 to the writer's death in 1975.



Quotes

"I was a Christmas present that was delivered unwrapped," he later said.

- Rod Serling

Page 3

"Up there, up there in the vastness of space, and a void that is sky, up there is an enemy known as isolation. It sits there in the stars waiting, waiting with the patience of eons, forever waiting... in The Twilight Zone."

Page 23

"A year ago, when the first publicity came out on the series, I was inundated by submissions from agents offering six foot nine actors with long necks to which electrodes could easily be attached. One agent told me that he had an actor so versed in horror movies that he'd taken to sleeping in a box in the basement."

Page 30

"Serling had more problems in adjusting to his on-camera role than just stumbling over the occasional word. His last acting had been in college, and it hadn't been to an audience of 20 million."

Page 52

"Mild-mannered and myopic, bank teller Henry Bemis loves to read, but neither his shrewish wife nor efficiency-minded boss give him much chance."

Pages 66-67

"You're looking at Mr. Fred Renard, who carries on his shoulder a chip the size of the national debt. This is a sour man, a friendless man, a lonely man, a grasping, compulsive, nervous man."

Page 99

"One of the high points of first season was Serling's bizarre and frightening "The After Hours.""

Page 127

"A year before, Serling had stepped onto a tight rope that no one had ever tested before. Had he fallen, it would've been a long drop, both in terms of prestige and money."

Page 132



"Sitting in a stuffy, dingy, unbearably hot little room, Jackie finds himself in a terrible predicament."

Page 138

"As with "Mr. Bevis," Serling once again threw all sensitivity for his characters out the window in an effort to achieve out-and-out boffo comedy."

Page 143

"Considering his background, it's remarkable that George Clayton Johnson was able to emerge as a writer at all, and absolutely astounding that he was able to produce works of such sensitivity and merit."

Page 164

"I would prefer not to write or talk much about Twilight Zone or my stories. The series is over and done, my work for it stands on its own."

- Ray Bradbury

Page 275

"In its transformation from half-hour to hour to half-hour again, Twilight Zone had lost a great deal of its vitality."

Page 362

"Serling's work was in evidence on big screens and little screens. His face and voice were everywhere. But he was far from satisfied."

Page 430

"The Twilight Zone has endured. And like all lasting art eventually must, it has outlived its creator."

Page 441



Topics for Discussion

Do you think that Rod Serling's childhood science fiction interests inspired or formed his future as the creator of "The Twilight Zone?"

What might have happened to "The Twilight Zone" if it had not been picked up by television?

Rod Serling was contracted to write 80% of the first season of the show. Do you think that the excessive amount of work helped or hindered the show's success?

Rod Serling was well known for being able to write scripts at the speed of light without losing any of the quality. Do you think this ability was derived from skill and experience or from an innate gift?

After the series ended, Rod Serling gave up his portion of ownership in the show to offset unmet expenses. Do you think that this was a wise move?

"The Twilight Zone" is well known for its many guest stars. Is there any particular star that seemed to have the most impact on the series?

"The Twilight Zone" made little money in its first run. How much money do you think the show has made in syndication?

Rod Serling died fairly young. What do you think his next big project would have been if he had lived to be 70? 80?