

'Barney Miller', about a New York police squad room. It went on to become one of the top shows across North America.

As a profitable sideline, he set up a production company, Dible Dash Productions, with his next-door neighbour, working from a garage, where they made documentaries at weekends and sold them. Their speciality was 'motivational' films with titles like 'How To Get A Job', aimed at minority groups. This was at a time when unemployment was, especially for poor blacks, a fact of life rather than the social choice of 'dropping out'.

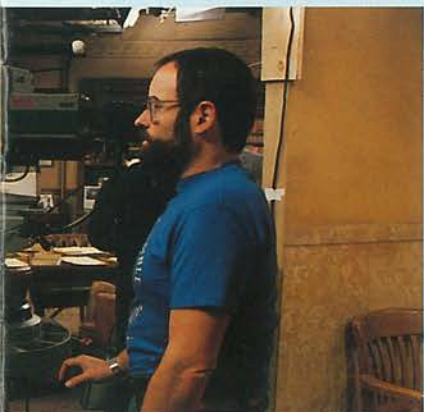
The Emmy awards he has collected over the years were for 'Mr Belvedere' (pilot), 'Growing Pains', the 'FYI' series, and 'Highway to Heaven', part of the 'Ten of Us' series.

In addition, he has picked up a Gold Award from Houston International Film Festival and many other awards from Columbus Film Festival for documentaries.

His hectic lifestyle is plainly not for the workshy.

'Hey, I love this business!' he explained. 'I tell everybody that if they want to be in films they have to love it. I love it and I get such a lot out of it. I also like to put a little back - that's why I am active with all these societies.'

'A lot of people try to get on my crews but places are severely limited. New people come onto the crew because we do very big shows and we take on extra people. If someone works hard, we notice, and they are in.'



'I hate to say it but some of the younger generation get tired half way through the day. Yet if someone is a hustler, works hard and has a good attitude, we say "why don't we hire him?"'

What of the future of movie lighting? He said, 'We are going through a revolution at the moment, especially with Kodak EXR film. It is fast film and is becoming much faster. We are going through the natural light revolution.'

'A lot of people panicked and said, 'that means we don't use lights'. We have proved to everybody that they are wrong. Most of the Emmy's I got were awards for creative lighting. To do creative lighting you need more equipment to paint with.'

'In the industry today, with the fast film, we need smaller units - maybe more powerful - to give us a better spread.'

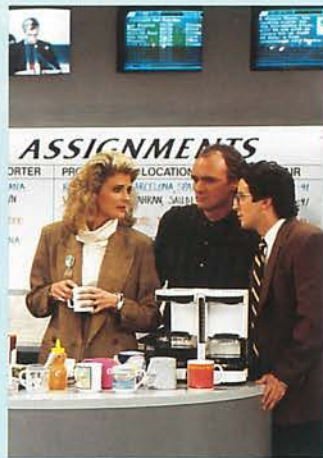
'I use juniors mostly, babies and sometimes, seniors. That's for film, because the film is fast. In video they have the CCD camera. I have done a show called 'Halloween' where I went from five to ten, then fifteen footcandles. I used Strand's HMI units - three Sirio 12K's. These were the biggest I used. After that I jumped down to juniors.'

'We used the Strand 12K HMI for a huge scene in a cemetery with a lot of smoke. I used them like a triangle. At each angle I put a Condor and the light was 68 feet high, covering the whole backlight. In one area we shot high and there were two backlights and when we moved to the other side it always worked the same way. But the rest was smaller units. You don't need heavy equipment today.'

'The other area where we worry today in the States is High Def. Japan has a system, the UK and Europe have the Eureka system, with 1250 lines. In the States we don't have it, but five systems are being tested, although they are digital, not high def.'

'At Warner Brothers we came to a decision. We have a star called Linda Laven and we did a pilot show with her, which was picked up by ABC as a series. We said: what happens if this show runs for five or six years? To protect the investment of Warner Brothers we have originated on 35mm film. You can transfer that to any system in the world. I advise everybody to go to that. No matter what they do with high definition it is still 1100 lines versus the film's 2200 lines.'

'In the future I see film lighting equipment becoming smaller. At the end of



Candice Bergen in 'Murphy Brown'

April we held a two-day workshop on Stage 9, with ten cinematographers, when we all showed how we lit a particular scene. None of us used big equipment. It was all small equipment and going for creative work to control the light.

'I use dimmers to control the light but we don't have dimmers on our stages. We have rented them in the past. Very few motion picture studios have dimmer systems, although eventually they will go to that.'

How did he view the new technology in lighting control systems? He said, 'In the motion picture industry, computers mean nothing. What we need is something to get hold of at the last minute. For instance, when someone comes in through the door, the sun is hot and I want to make a last-minute adjustment. Now I could not do this with a computer.'

'The other problem in the industry is that we don't have enough qualified people to run these computerised systems. The rule is: the simpler, the better. Why? Because it is daily hire. We don't hire somebody who works there for 52 weeks.'

◉ I see film lighting equipment becoming smaller ◉

'When you have a show you hire someone for the week and they don't have time to learn something complicated. That is the biggest problem in the motion picture industry.'

Of his own method of working he said, 'When I do multi-camera, next to my chair I have four small dimmers - they are about 50 years old - to correct myself. I also use the Multi Cue. It is very old but useful for correction

at the last minute. We do plan on getting new equipment, however. Maybe next year.'

One section of the movie world has particular cause to thank George. The word amongst the Hollywood ladies is that there is no one who knows better than George Spiro Dible how to show them at their most flattering on screen.

Candice Bergen was once advised to insist on having George brought in to light her for one show, the pilot for 'Murphy Brown', because 'He knows how to light a woman.'

But there is more to this than just flattering the female ego. It is a matter of practicality.

He said, 'One female star wanted to wear very pale make-up but I said 'No. You must have a California tan. We want to sell this show and make a lot of money and there's one hundred people here in this crew depending for their living on your face.' She saw sense.'

'If a star trusts your judgement and knows that you are working hard to show them at their best, then they are happy and they don't create problems for the studio.'



Markie Post, star of 'Night Court'

'Hi, Sexy!' is so well known in movie circles as the Dible catchphrase that George even has it printed onto promotional 'handout' ballpoint pens. So how did it come about?

'It came from Barbra Streisand,' he explained. 'When I am taking a reading next to a star's face I have my hands up close to them. Now, if you have been handling sardines at lunch it would not be too good for the actor or actress, so what I do is to splash a little cologne on my hands.'

'Barbra noticed this straight away. Each time I went near her she would say 'Hi, sexy!'. It became a joke between us and then I started using it all the time, to everyone. If nothing else, it puts people at their ease and makes them smile!'