

Prof. Evans Sugar-Coats His Lessons

By CENITHA LOWRY
NEW YORK, April 20 (AP) — Ben Evans, B. A., M. A., B. Litt., Ph. D., is a pedagogue who has turned to use his own words, in bootlegging.

Fortunately, Dr. Evans' commodity is knowledge, not distilled spirits. His territory is television. For the last two years he has been selling the nation's television audiences on the entertainment value of erudition.

Evans is chief wrangler of posters for the \$64,000 Question, father of the big money quiz show, and its offspring, the \$64,000 Challenge. He is moderator of the Last Word, a Sunday afternoon discussion panel about our language and grammar, which "everybody" — including Evans — surprise is a hit.

These jobs are providing a magnificent proving ground for Evans' theory about sugar-coating mass education which worked out nicely with his students at Northwestern University.

Evans believes that wit, humor and occasional fierce disagreement are the factors covering up the high educational content of The Last Word.

Was Oxford, Harvard Degrees
"I knew it would generate heat," he reflected, "but I am surprised by the amount of light. You can turn any living room discussion into an argument just by bringing up the subject of language — but a television program. Would you predict much success? If someone said, 'we're going to do a show about grammar?'"

Accused of using a sneaky approach to teaching, Evans shook his head.

"I prefer the words 'stimulating' or 'subtle,'" he said. "Sneaky" sounds dishonest, but I will confess I do enjoy bootlegging knowledge."

A former Rhodes scholar with degrees from Oxford, Harvard and Miami (Ohio) University, Evans confesses his extra work has quadrupled his professor's income. A good guess would put it between \$60,000 and \$80,000 a year.

Moderated "Down You Go"
Evans first tried television as moderator of a game called Down You Go, which achieved modest success. Producer Louis G. Cowan, called on Evans when starting the \$64,000 Question.

The show's present producer, Steven R. Carlin, says Evans, through thousands of questions, has yet to blow one. Evans, however, says that "an error crept in to one answer because of a mistake or a typographical error in an encyclopedia."

This year, a concession to his schedule, Evans' \$2, is teaching only three days a week on two-thirds pay at Northwestern. His classes on world literature, contemporary American literature and advanced writing are carefully bunched through Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.

No Gimmecks, No Prizes
Friday morning he flies to New York for two days of conferences with the producers of the three shows. He does his own show Sunday afternoon, sticks around to watch Challenge that night and flies back immediately afterwards.

Monday is devoted to problems of the week's lectures and working on a dictionary. At some point, he also records a radio show used on a number of stations around the country.

Evans will go along happily with many of the uses which turn purists white: "It's me," "I feel badly," "split infinitives."

With Evans in command, The Last Word goes merrily along, fracturing every sacred law of television survival: no gimmick, no huge monetary rewards, no boy singer, no visiting movie star with picture to plug, and, alas, no sponsor. It costs only about \$5,000 to produce but in these short months has swamped the opposition with its rating and has a larger audience than a popular week-day soap opera or an evening comedy show with big name star. Sponsors are showing an interest, too.

Dog Drags Hurt Woman To Telephone
BOISE, Idaho, April 20 (AP) — A powerful Labrador dog named Mike was credited with saving the life of his mistress after she fell and broke her back at her home recently.

Mrs. Walter Davis, 48, said the dog dragged her up a flight of stairs, into her house and to a telephone so she could summon aid.

It was raining the night of the accident, said Mrs. Davis, whose return home from the hospital prompted her to tell the story Thursday.

She said she tripped while running up the steps to her house, fell off a porch to the lawn and then about six feet to the driveway.

Her husband was in Portland, Ore., the night of the accident. March 29, Mrs. Davis says she has "no close neighbors."

The 70-pound dog dragged the 120-pound woman into the house. Before losing consciousness, she was able to call a physician, who brought her to the hospital, and said later that her back was broken at the waistline.

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