



Allen Funt re-enacts one of his experiences for actress Dorothy Collins, a coconspirator who stars in many a "Candid Camera" plot, and Arthur Godfrey, host of the TV program.

She flew at him with her handbag, but the agile Funt revealed the hoax in time to escape injury.

At best, the cost and sweat of these bold ventures is enormous. "Sometimes we have to shoot for days before we get what we want—and even then we don't always get it," says Funt.

On rare occasions, the cameramen themselves goof. Max Glenn, a cameraman who has worked with Funt for seven years, recalls the time Funt posed as a bank vice president bent on getting new customers to open accounts. Annoyed by the confusion among the technicians as the scene was being readied, Funt barked: "All right, everybody out!" Everyone left, including Glenn, who thought the injunction was meant for him, too.

"There was a wonderful bit where Allen got a woman angry by telling her she didn't look like a reliable depositor," Glenn said. "When it was over, he asked me, 'Did you get all of that?' 'Get it?' I said. 'I wasn't shooting. You told everybody to get out.'"

THE AVERAGE TV viewer of the program is mystified, too, by the readiness of innocent people to permit themselves to be subjected to ridicule before a wide audience.

"First of all," Funt explains, "it's rare when anyone suspects what we're up to. People are not quick to realize they're being taken in. Then, when you tell them they're going to be on television, the ham in them comes out."

"Of course, it can be the greatest piece of film in the world, but we won't use it unless we get the person's permission," says Funt. "But I don't think there have been more than three in a thousand that we had to throw away because we didn't get a release."

Funt contends that almost any gag will work. He once approached an electrician to install an electric chair in his home. "The guy asked no questions. As an electrician, he was interested only in the electrical problems the job presented."

More recently, he approached a cleaning and dyeing establishment with the an-

nouncement that he had "a lot of old money that needs cleaning and pressing." The proprietor's chief concern was: (a) whether the cleaning process would fade the bills, and (b) how many bills he could get on the pressing machine at one time.

Evidence of the charmed life Funt and his coconspirators have led is the fact that they have been sued only twice in 13 years, and both cases were settled out of court for less than \$1,000.

FOR ALL the corrosiveness he invokes in luring people into his traps, Funt has suffered reprisal only twice—once when a woman slapped his face; again when a woman hit him over the head with an umbrella. He has never been arrested, either—although he came close last fall when a service-station attendant spotted him casing the place with binoculars and called the police.

"We had arranged to have Dorothy Collins drive a motorless car into the gas station and ask the attendant to check the oil. But before we could go ahead with it, we had to find several stations at the bottom of hills, so that the car could roll in under its own power. Also, we had to drive our panel truck with its cameras into the station first, to get it into proper position for the filming."

"Well, this sort of thing takes a lot of planning and perfect timing. So we stood on a bluff overlooking the station with our binoculars. This one guy saw us and thought we were getting ready to pull a stick-up."

"We had to tell him who we were. We had to look for another station, too!"

The stunt worked beautifully elsewhere and produced some of "Candid Camera's" funniest footage.

Most of Funt's ideas come to him while driving to and from work, which is why his car is fitted with a telephone and a dictating machine. "The ideas are no problem," he says. "When you're dealing with ordinary people, you're dealing with the best kind of material."

The audience bears him out. "Candid Camera" is one of the top television shows of the season.

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