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Mr Rogers' Neighbourhood

US TV chat show : 1968-74 : dir. : PBS ? : ? x ? min
prod: : scr: : dir.ph.:
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Presenter: Fred Rogers

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Halliwell's Television Companion review:

"American public TV chat show for and about children and their attitudes to the serious matters of life and death. Fred Rogers, the host, was a Presbyterian minister. It ran from 1968 to 1974."

[no listing in "The Golden Age of Children's Television", "History of Television", "How Sweet It Was", "Into the Box of Delights - a History of Children's Television", "Television's Greatest Hits" or "25 Years of ITV - 1955-1980"]

Which seems a long way around saying this was a religious slot aimed at young audiences. A Presbyterian minister and a 10-year old might not actually agree very often about what constitutes the "serious matters of life and death", so by my own reckoning the programme's validity would be measured by its responsiveness to the authentic concerns and interests of its audience. Disguised sermons pitched at children are a disreputable misuse of the medium, especially since there is no guarantee of equivalent airtime to alternative religious credos, or to atheistic ones. Nevertheless, any programme that invites children to express a serious viewpoint without adults patronising them is to be applauded. Children are conspicuous by their absence from 90% of TV studio discussions, even when it is their own civil and legal rights that are being discussed.

See subject index under **RELIGION** and **TALK SHOWS / STUDIO DISCUSSIONS**.