

The Odd Couple: "The Frog"

US TV sitcom : 1970-74 : dir. : ABC / Paramount : 90 x 25 min
 prod: Garry Marshall & Sheldon Keller : scr: : dir.ph.:
[Leif Garrett](#)
 Tony Randall; Jack Klugman; Al Molinaro; Penny Marshall; Janis Hansen; Elinor Donahue

Ref:	Pages	Sources	Stills	Words	Ω	8	≠	M	♀	Copy on VHS	Last Viewed
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Yup, it's Leif Garrett alright, fame some years off as yet, but the camera already loves him

Source: Star Galaxy website

Halliwell's Television Companion review:

"Two divorced men share an apartment and get on each other's nerves. Successful extension of the Neil Simon play; skilful writing and playing keep the laughs flowing free. In the very last episode, Felix moved out to remarry his wife. **"

History of Television background comment:

"The decade of the 1970s opened with the "hick purge". Many shows that appealed to rural and older audiences were cancelled. 12 top-rated programmes in 1970 and 1971 alone. CBS led the pogrom (the network had become identified with these types of shows, even though they were top-rated) and axed "The

Beverly Hillbillies"; "Hee Haw"; "Mayberry R.F.D."; "Gomer Pyle"; "Hogan's Heroes"; "The Wild Wild West"; "Petticoat Junction", "Green Acres"; and even "The Ed Sullivan Show". The corporate pronouncements stated that CBS, the most prosperous and sophisticated of the networks, was concerned about its image. But the real reason was in the footnotes... When the A.C. Nielsen and Abitron companies delivered ratings numbers for shows and time slots, there was now a profile of viewership – and the rural and older viewers weren't the buyers. Already the seeds of an 1980s stereotype were being planted: it was the young, urban professional viewer – and purchaser – about whom the advertisers concerned themselves with reaching and influencing.

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Small boys like frogs. It's a rule, apparently. And who are we to argue with rules?
 Source for this sequence of frame grabs: My Love for Lief website



Along the lifelines of television's growth, the entertainment people attached themselves to the industry (escapist-entertainment-at-all-costs, that is; resulting in quiz-show scandals and the gradual demise of live drama) in the 1950s. In the 1960s the advertising people asserted themselves. In the 1970s it was to be the marketing people who would dictate programming policy. When rural-oriented shows returned to the networks, it was in the form of series like "**The Waltons**", surely a rubber-stamped Madison Avenue executive's proper image of what a country programme should be like.

While relevance and demographic were becoming the name of the game, the decade opened with a varied offering overall, especially in the comedy category. Gary Marshall optioned the rights to Neil Simon's

Broadway smash "**The Odd Couple**" and fashioned a television smash. Clever writing that maintained Simon's verve if not quality combined with a winning premise about two divorced men – one a slob, the other a prig – and superb characterisations in the roles. Tony Randall played photographer Felix Unger the Fastidious, and Jack Klugman played sports writer Oscar Madison the Casual. The series ran from 1970 to 1975 on ABC, and presaged more success for both the network and producer Marshall..."

[no listing in "How Sweet It Was", "Television's Greatest Hits" or "25 Years of ITV - 1955-1980"]

No further information currently available on this particular episode (from 1970). Garrett appears to be guesting as Randall's nephew, or even son, Leonard Unger. He also turned up in single episodes of "**Guns**smoke", "**Cannon**", "**Family Affair**", "**Cade's County**" and "**Doc Elliot**". He was 8 in 1970. The series itself, good, bad or indifferent, holds no interest to the archive.

See subject index under [ANIMALS & BIRDS](#) and **SITCOMS & SOAPS**.



There are 33 frame grabs in this set. See the images section of the archive for the remainder.

