



MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD

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FRED ROGERS COMMENTS ON HIS TWENTY YEARS OF CHILDREN'S BROADCASTING

There is no scientific or technological advance that is either good or bad in itself. Just because we hear sad news over the telephone doesn't mean that the invention of the telephone was a bad thing. It's only as we human beings give meaning to science or technology that they will have a positive or negative thrust.

A good friend of mine is using the splitting of the atom for medical diagnosis. Others we know have used it for destruction.

Television to me was a challenging new instrument. I wanted to use it the way I had used the piano and drama as a child to communicate some things that I felt were positive-- and important-- in our world. Since one can't be a communicator with equal impact on all segments of society my early decision was clearly one to communicate with children. I wanted to help as many as I could to feel good about themselves and what they could become. I wanted to show them a wide range of artistry and feeling that make up a varied culture like ours. I wanted to help children learn to discover worth in little things, in things that had no price tag-- in people who might have outer handicaps and great inner strengths. I wanted every child to know that he or she had something lovable and worth expressing, that everyone has limits as well as possibilities. I wanted to engender feelings of responsibility

toward the care of oneself as well as others.

Public television has given me the sustained opportunity to work at these goals for twenty years. Any one year of planning and creating would have been simple frustrating if there had not been the confidence of succeeding years to work out the creation. We must not waste money on short-term investments. Television programs, like everything else, need time to grow and mature.

Public television has been an instrument for me to be a professional worker for families with young children. It must always be an expression of our highest idealism as well as an instrument for our positive creative powers.