

[AD]

Dr. Gene Scott has passed

February 22, 2005 11:16 AM

Televangelist Dies. <<http://cnn.netscape.cnn.com/ns/news/story.jsp?id=2005022204560001486815&dt=20050222045600&w=APO&coview=>> Cult TV Preacher **Dr. Gene Scott** <<http://www.drgenescott.com/home.htm>> was always a **treat to watch** <<http://www.rotten.com/library/bio/religion/dr-gene-scott/>> . His **Festivals of Faith** <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gene_Scott> sometimes featured cursing, demands for payment and readings from texts on pyramids and UFOs. And, he was often honest about the money sent in--**I spend it** <http://www.boarsheadtaVERN.com/cgi-bin/comm.cgi?entry_id=27014> .

posted by **Duck_Lips** (29 comments total)

[AD]

Scott on his ex-wife: "I hate her. If I go to heaven and she's there, I'm going to another planet."

There was an extensive article in the LA Times Sunday Magazine several years back, **The Shock Jock of Televangelism** <<http://www.ex-cult.org/Groups/Gene-Scott/gene-scott>> :

At my request, Scott furnished five references for me to interview. All were certifiable big shots who used superlatives to describe Scott while glossing over his idiosyncrasies. A "brilliant fellow," raved Lodwick Cook, the ARCO chairman. "Extraordinarily bright," glowed Mark Pisano, executive director of the Southern California Association of Governments. "He is a very, very bright, intelligent man," lauded Los Angeles City Councilman Joel Wachs. "He is caring. He is committed to the city. He is honest," praised Alatorre.

None could top the gushing of California Assembly Speaker Willie Brown: "I think he is one of the most interesting public figures in California. He is an extraordinarily brilliant person. His skills at communicating are probably equal to anybody that we currently know and may ever know."

posted by **Guy Smiley** at **11:35 AM** on February 22, 2005

Gee, I hope Heaven's nice.

posted by **borkingchikapa** at **11:36 AM** on February 22, 2005

I just caught the Dr. on tv this past weekend after not having seen him for years. I thought he looked pretty frail compared to the last time I'd seen him. Oh well, good riddance.

If there were a God, **this guy** <<http://www.discernment.org/wordfaith/tilton.htm>> would have been struck down a long time ago.

posted by **2sheets** at **11:38 AM** on February 22, 2005

I used to watch this guy as a kid in on southern california TV. he always had 4-7 hats on

his head and 3-4 pairs of glasses around his neck. He was always jabbering about something --religion, politics, hats, sex with hats, etc. His laughs were very eerie, almost to the point of where you thought he would kill you in your sleep.

posted by **lsd4all** at **11:41 AM** on February 22, 2005

Oh my god, this guy was the funniest. What a treat to see him froth & foam...used to really scare me as a kid. Particularly when he'd just brood silently, and you could feel the tension in the recording studio.

I've never actually watched **this documentary** <<http://www.5minutesonline.com/1D/GODSANGYMAN.htm>> , but with Werner Herzog directing, how can you go wrong?

posted by **stinkycheese** at **11:54 AM** on February 22, 2005

I remember finding Scott while flipping channels about 25 years ago. It was mesmerizing in a bizarre way. I credit him with putting me on the path to other televangelists for entertainment value, including Jim and Tammy Fae and their ilk. If you like bad TV, and I mean REALLY bad TV, you would love to watch Scott ply his trade.

This also rekindles fond memories of Sam Kinison. I recall him talking about how he **got his start** <<http://www.kinison.com/about.php>> as a preacher, and though I never saw him preach, I could see how he'd be good at it.

posted by **SteveInMaine** at **11:58 AM** on February 22, 2005

Scott was something like the Hunter S. Thompson of televangelism -- ranting, barely coherent, brilliantly tangential -- another American original. (Though I think he secretly modeled himself after Fidel Castro, with those cigar-chomping monologues.) Scott once condemned my hometown to Hell because we weren't sending him enough money and then segued into one of those unexplained 20-minute horse-drawn carriage montages. What any of it had to do with Christianity is beyond me, but it was a terrific example of the art of bad television.

The Herzog documentary is definitely worth seeking out - one of his best.

posted by **eatitlive** at **12:17 PM** on February 22, 2005

I remember Dr. Scott--I first saw him about twenty years ago, wearing an Indiana Jones fedora and a leather jacket, smoking a cigar. I remember the silent brooding and the occasional outbursts--anyone else remember the interludes with the pushpin-studded map and the horseback riding? I recently found him again while flipping channels about a six months ago. He was onstage in a huge auditorium, flanked by three or four whiteboards with Plexiglas overlays so he could write on *separate layers with different colored pens*. Presumably when the program aired the boards were clean but by the time I tuned in they were an incomprehensible mess of colored scribbles and he was droning on about hieroglyphs, cave paintings, Hebrew, Aramaic, and Jesus.

My relatives lived next door to people who give him money and follow his "teachings"--when my relatives asked what the core of his philosophy was, the neighbor said "it's too complex to put in a sentence."

He was entertaining, I guess. Godspeed, you freak.

posted by **fandango_matt** at **12:33 PM** on February 22, 2005

I forgot to add when I first saw **Dr. Bronner's labels** <<http://www.drbronner.com/story.html#labels>> , my first thought was, "Hey, Dr. Scott's making soap!"

posted by **fandango_matt** at **12:42 PM** on February 22, 2005

I'll never forget watching this guy some 20 years ago, amazed that this stuff was on TV. He went through a long phase where he had his band play "Dirty Laundry" over and over.

"Get on the telephone!"

posted by **space2k** at **12:42 PM** on February 22, 2005

Anyone remember Ernest Angley?

One of those "lay hands on, devil come OUTTTAH!" kind of guys.

Looked like Bilbo if he were an evangelist.

I would stumble upon both him and Dr.(?) Scott around the same time.

/ah life before cable.

posted by **exparrot** at **12:57 PM** on February 22, 2005

i don't believe any of what he was selling (after watching him for years not sure what he was selling)

but i'm crying on the inside for this crazy genius. a bully , a mad man, charisma , no shame.

"Scott was something like the Hunter S. Thompson of televangelism " - eatitive

i couldn't agree more, weird and wonderful. rest in peace.

posted by **nola** at **12:57 PM** on February 22, 2005

When I first saw him he was scolding the audience for not donating enough. So he withheld his sermon. He sat there quietly smoking, with an occasional outburst like: "Role that tape from last Christmas!" I thought it was the greatest thing on TV.

posted by **pepcorn** at **1:04 PM** on February 22, 2005

Does anyone else remember him playing the saxophone during his show?

posted by **ZenMasterThis** at **1:42 PM** on February 22, 2005

Yeah, I remember Ernest: "Demons COME OU-UWTT!!!"

posted by **crunchburger** at **2:58 PM** on February 22, 2005

Damn - I have been trying to remember Gene Scott's name for 15 years. I used to watch him in college and after I graduated I could not remember his name. He's was my favorite of the televangelists because he was so god damn crazy. Out of his skull crazy. You really can't get an idea of how bizarre he was and how different he was from the rest of the boob tube preachers without seeing some of his show with your own eyes.

My favorite Gene Scott moment was him telling the women viewers to leave the room because he needed to talk about money, which was a man's business, not a woman's. Then he proceeded to spend a few minutes explaining how women weren't smart or brave enough to get out the checkbook and write a giant check and mail it to him. He ended by saying that he wasn't even challenging the women, because it would do no good. "You're just not capable of doing something so important." I thought it was an angle that was below even the most despicable tv scammers. We had a video with that segment (he was on 24 hours and they repeated frequently so it was easy to trap) and anybody we played would stare at the screen in disbelief and then usually follow it up with "that's not real, is it?".

If he's in heaven I hope it's a cash bar and everything costs a fortune.

posted by **Slack-a-gogo** at **3:09 PM** on February 22, 2005

With only Mr. Pibb for a mixer.

posted by **crunchburger** at **3:38 PM** on February 22, 2005

He was interesting, but he was given waaay too much bandwidth all over the shortwave bands, drowning out weak signals from far away. I am going to get some fresh batteries for my radio.

posted by **hortense** at **3:54 PM** on February 22, 2005

I saw the Herzog documentary referenced above only a couple of months ago; before that, I'd never heard of him. In that, Scott was dogmatic to say the least, but not the cardboard cut-out figure that so many televangelists aspire to.

At one point, having excoriated his audience for not giving enough, he took them to task for only giving money because they wanted to assuage Scott himself, and because he was hassling them; he then said (I paraphrase) "Give money because you believe in God! Not because I'm haranguing you!" He then spent the next ten minutes or so sitting stock still in his seat, staring directly at the camera, waiting for people to donate. It was a wonderful moment: watching a man truly possessed, who wasn't buying into the bullshit version of televangelism offered up by Pat Robertson and Billy Graham. Many of his views were repugnant, from where I stand politically, but at least he seemed to be (i) interesting and (ii) vaguely consistent.

One of the most poignant moments in the documentary is when Herzog questions him about his leather bag. He won't reveal its contents, saying that, really, it's the only thing he has left which is truly private.

Someone up-thread compared him to HST, and they're not entirely wrong. Scott seemed to be an individual, and one who was keen on taking on the world on his own terms.

posted by **Len** at **4:06 PM** on February 22, 2005

If he's in heaven I hope it's a cash bar and everything costs a fortune.

Heh. IF there is a heaven, con men like this are most assuredly not there. God wouldn't let folks like this pick up after the angelic horses.

posted by **teece** at **6:52 PM** on February 22, 2005

Damn, not even *one* dot? Here, I'll start:

Dr. Scott, may you find yourself on the elevator to the pearly gates with HST.

So, unless I miss my count, there will be one other aggravating iconoclast that runs and *just slips in* that elevator's doors. Anyone care to call it, or does Paris' addressbook count?
 posted by **mwhybark** at **7:26 PM** on February 22, 2005

I remember very long closeups of a cymbal-playing toy monkey, to illustrate some point or other. . . He was a trip.

Oh yes I forgot . . .

posted by **Danf** at **7:52 PM** on February 22, 2005

There is a heaven and Dr. Gene Scott will be told he will not be allowed in until he brings God more money.
 posted by **dances_with_sneetches** at **8:18 PM** on February 22, 2005

It's not that I have no compassion. I am sorry when anyone dies, but it's hard for me to think of anyone who deserves less sympathy than a for profit evangelist. A lot of well meaning people die, people who haven't prostituted their God for a living.
 posted by **gesamtkunstwerk** at **8:25 PM** on February 22, 2005

And....**dances_with_sneetches nails it** <<http://www.metafilter.com/mefi/39837#861656>> !

(PS - the good Dr. Scott is on **KDOC (Comcast Hollywood Digital 19)**
 <http://tv.yahoo.com/tvpdb?d=tvp&id=167540165&cf=0&lineup=us_CA57315d&channels=us_KDOC&chspid=166030480&chname=KDOC+19&progutn=1109138400&.intl=us> *right now!!!*)
 posted by **Guy Smiley** at **10:30 PM** on February 22, 2005

I delivered flowers to Dr. Gene once, about 20 years ago. He was having some sort of party at his mansion in Pasadena (about 4 minutes from where I'm sitting). I showed up a dumb, smiling flower-delivering teen and he basically just scowled at me. His wife was with him. She looked Filipina and about 1/4 his age. He looked pretty unhealthy even then.
 posted by **shoos** at **12:24 AM** on February 23, 2005

I sorta grew up on Scott. He was the late-night double-digit-channel king. At some point when punk rock failed my particular little crowd, at least two of us picked Scott to follow (a couple others picked the krishna community up on Venice Blvd, as they had housing; the rest of us got jobs).

Just last week I was home sick and found him on a double-digit channel again. Made me feel all cozy. He was talking about how the old testament was mistranslated. I

remembered when the FCC was after him and he refused to shave until they backed off, and how he show footage of another preacher singing "Amazing Grace" so badly he'd fall off the chair laughing.

posted by **goofyfoot** at **2:09 AM** on February 23, 2005

The last time I watched Dr. Scott's show (probably a couple of years ago) he had moved from footage his beloved horses to extended clips of women riding bicycles (shot from behind, of course). One could watch for what seemed like hours, just waiting for something to *happen*, which of course never did. The effect was utterly hypnotic.

Shoos, I hadn't realized that Gene was a Pasadenan. We've certainly had our share of religious oddballs, haven't we?

posted by **malocchio** at **7:42 AM** on February 23, 2005

The first time I decided it was worthwhile to watch the Daily Show regularly was back when Craig Kilborn was still lead anchor and they had Jo Bob Briggs do a segment on televangelists called (I think) God Stuff, or something like that. It almost always had a feature on Scott screaming "SEND ME MONEY, YOU HEATHENS!!!" or something like that. priceless.

posted by **shmegegge** at **11:09 AM** on February 23, 2005

[AD]

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