

Monty Python's Flying Circus --

a Soufflé of
Lunacy

First, let's clear up the most obvious question — no, there is no person (or animal) known as "Monty Python," and the show does not deal with any form of flying or any kind of circus. **Monty Python** is the name used collectively by six of Britain's brightest young comedy writer-actors. **Python** comedy defies description. It's sophisticated, zany, fresh, irreverent. The sketches weave in and out of each other without beginning or end — a kaleidoscope of skits, sight gags, preposterous animations, and just sheer zaniness.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart hosts a sort of "Ted Mack Amateur Hour." Genghis Khan gets 28.1 votes.

Hailed as the "cream of British comedy," by *Newsweek* magazine, **Monty Python** began on the BBC in October, 1969. It soon became so popular that promoters were reluctant to book rock concerts on nights that **Python** was on the air! The *New York Post* says: "Funnier than Harold Wilson, yet less filling than

fish and chips. **Python**, as it is invariably called by close friends, probably is the first sample of unretouched, undiluted British zaniness to offend a large American TV audience. And, unlike such previously successful British imports as **Upstairs, Downstairs**, the **Python** show will not have Alistair Cooke around to explain each episode.

A milkman is dropping off the morning milk when a housewife appears at the door in a see-through negligee. She opens her robe and beckons him into the house. He looks furtively around before following her up the stairs to the second floor bedroom — he eagerly enters. The lady locks the door behind him. The milkman finds himself in a room filled with six other milkmen.

Newsday said — An American TV viewer is supposed to get only a few of the jokes. It's not Lucille Ball. It is British Humour. The premiere episode was disappointing in one sense: I got 72 percent of the



jokes. Perhaps future episodes will be more obscure. What I did get of **Monty Python** was hilarious. This may have been the most outrageous insane half hour on American TV since Ernie Kovacs. The premiere proved that you don't have to be British to love **Monty Python**.

Sit in on an interview with a lizard, a duck, a cat, and the man in the street.

Monty Python consists of a random succession of skits by six insane minds that were put out of work when "That Was The Week That Was" got too political and too cut and dried for them to stomach. It's filmed both in the studio and on location and uses bizarre animated sequences. There are no hosts, narrators, or name-stars. The *Daily News* says **Python** is a must for anyone with a twisted, irreverent sense of humor. You will either flip your wig over it or hate it. The *New York Times* says **Python** might be called Grandson of Dada. It might.

It might also be called silly or insane or uneven or tasteless or inspired or, heaven help us, completely without redeeming value.

TV/12 begins the 13-episode series of **Monty Python's Flying Circus** on March 8 as our gift to you during membership week.

Earnest Scribbler writes the funniest joke in the world, and as a consequence, dies laughing. His joke becomes a lethal weapon. Everyone who reads it dies with laughter — literally . . . Sudden, violent comedy has struck England. Police are called in. The Ministry of War becomes interested in the military potential of the killer joke, which mushrooms into a weapon of war . . .