

House and Republicans into the Senate, and brings his family to Ponderosa for a family dinner every Saturday night. Oh yeah he drinks Pabst Blue Ribbon beer. The real heroes, you know, were real Americans. Real people.

Well, that's a show!

In 1979 NBC and *Laugh-In* creator George Schlatter debuted a show about real people doing real things and being sometimes really funny. They called it *Real People*. It got Skip Stephenson, the most unreal human being on the planet at that time, to host. Apparently they passed over a young David Letterman for Skip. Imagine what the world would be like today?

Real People ran from 1979 until 1984. They dressed Skip Stephenson in a lot of bright crew-necked sweaters.

So, basically, *Real People* was a bit like *60 Minutes* but about people who offered the world nothing. Hence their heroism, facing their blight-filled daily lives with such stoic resolve. There were a number of video segments, designed to be amusing and heartwarming. Segments included things like:

- ❖ A man in Des Moines, Iowa who can walk backwards.
- ❖ An American martial art called Belly Busting, which is basically fat men bashing their beer bellies into each other.
- ❖ A grandfather and his middle-aged son who spend their day on their porch and wave at traffic passing along I40 East.
- ❖ Various subcultures in America where getting naked is a primary focus.
- ❖ And more Mark "I can sing anything political to the same rag-time piano tune" Russell than you could ever stomach.

Along side golden boy Skip Stephenson were co-hosts Sarah Purcell, Bill Rafferty, Fred Willard, and Byron Allen. In spite of Skip Stephenson's best efforts, the show had some great success for a couple years, likely due to the presence of the beautiful Sarah Purcell

who shamelessly paraded about the *Real People* stage in high heels and slit skirts. Despite the racy outfits, Purcell was cast as a feminist foil to Skip Stephenson's role as the resident male chauvinist pig.



The show proved so popular in its initial couple years that it spawned imitators like *That's Incredible*. It was Reality TV in a nebulous form. However, after a couple years the format began to get a bit old. Trying the "Cousin Oliver" gambit, *Real People* added *A Christmas Story* demi-god child Peter Billingsley (who apparently is an adult porn star now).

Alas, Peter Billingsley's cute, sassy self could not save the show. It was cancelled after his sophomore season. *Real People* briefly tried to make a post-NBC go of it in syndication as *More Real People*.



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La Petite Lesson en Français

Lesson Numerux 13

Franglais pour Hoggy!



By
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La Intro

Hello my friends (*Bonjour mez amis*)! This is a small French lesson (*ca c'est une petite lesson en francais*). In this lesson (*dans cette lesson*) you will learn conversational French (*vous will prendre la knowledge de sortie a la bouche la langage francais de quelle volume*) you can use if you accompany your child's pee wee hockey team to Quebec for national championships (*vos can use si vos escortez road trip ton too-young-to-understand-the-pressure pee wee reflection de vos failures a la province hoggy crèche pour la Armageddon playoffs*).

Good, let's begin (*Bein, let's allez*).

La Lesson

English: I'm glad hockey season only lasts from September to June!

French: Ma skills de parenting questionable est tested stretched thin quand c'est "winter sport" lastez tout well into Juinvrier. Mais gets me out of the la maison shack d'wife hag.

* * *

English: Remember kids, it's not whether you win or lose it's how you play the game.

French: Bein keep in mind mon pee wee stormtrooper n'est pas c'est un matter da vos triumph ou vos tombez sur déshonneur si vos don't make the play offs, ca est un matter de la numerux de players d'opposition body count vos leavez de coagulating sur la plage d'ice brr wet spots.

* * *

English: I'm trying to teach my boy the fundamentals of the game. That's why I have him read a few pages from *Helter Skelter* every night.

French: Mon son de pee wee serial killer est n'est pas grow up to be une hoggy player pansy d'Wayne Gretskidoo garçon pretty boy mais je will Probert c'est pee wee goon de

fillez la grande strap de jock cup de Charles "Pocket Rocket" Manson.

* * *

English: Hey boy, way to get back into the game! Don't shy away from a guy body checking you!

French: Tabarnak! Pas fait be un fag! Allez back dans la jeux jihad hoggy et trip c'est hostie faggot and then skate over his neck!

* * *

English: That's okay son, there is still one more period to make up a 12-goal deficit. Get the other kids to do those breathing exercises I taught you and find your inner Hanson brother.

French: Tabernak si vos n'est pas make un effort vrais before la buzzer vos will suffer la justice lockerroom kangaroo court avec la towels wet snapping sodomization!

* * *

English: I can't believe those parents from Vermont are booing our national anthem!

French: Arrêtez c'est display couchon boorish! No one est allowed de boo-ez disgrace la Oh Say Can You See Anthem Canada except mais la Quebecois!

* * *

English: I'm going to fucking kill that ref!

French: La seulement raison nos l'est lost c'est jeux one sided est quand la refing partisan de la linesmen Quebecois! Dit ma une rule de preventez nos petite Tretiak goalie de surroudez nos crease avec la punji sticks dung-covered!

Fin!

Real People

The year was 1979. America had no more heroes. Jimmy Carter was in the White House. The "anti-hero" reigned supreme in movies. We worshiped, as a nation, screen idols like Michael Corleone, Howard Beale (*Who? Sheesh, dude, Peter Finch's character in Network*), and Randle Patrick McMurphy (*Who? Oh for the love of Christ, that's Jack's character in One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*).

America's traditional heroes, men at arms, were proven by the Vietnam war to be nothing more than ugly killers who would not think twice about herding women and children into a grass hut and then tossing in a few frag grenades.



You couldn't even buy a G.I. Joe at Kresges anymore, not even for ready money. Any chance the public had at finding some real America sports heroes in the upcoming 1980 Moscow Olympics were quashed when the Commies over ran Afghanistan and civilized people everywhere boycotted the Red Games.

So, sing, with me. Sing with me people,
All the children say / We don't need another hero / We don't need to know the way home / All we want is life beyond / Thunderdome

But baby, you couldn't be more wrong. We do, or did, need another hero. But where to find such a hero? Where to find a hero in America circa 1979?

It occurred to NBC that *Americans* themselves were the heroes. The every day schmuck that buys American, curses Saudi oil princes every time it costs him an extra two bucks to fill up the Dodge Charger, drives to his honest day job at US Steel on pot-holed Allentown streets, votes Democrats into the