

It Must Be the Weather: The Image of Broadcaster Nancy Hicks-Gribble

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Abstract

This article examines the image of the journalist in popular culture by using Nancy Hicks-Gribble's weather girl character in the cartoon series *King of the Hill*. This article examines Hicks-Gribble's life both inside and outside the newsroom.

The hypothesis this paper seeks to prove is that the public sees weather girls- through the inherent inaccuracies of weather forecasts and tight skimpy clothing-as mindless sex objects in front of a television camera.

Weather girls relay important information about the weather. If they are not viewed as professionals, that attitude could cause serious consequences for the public if they are not listening or discount what a weather person says about dangerous weather approaching.

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Secret rendezvous, backstabbing, grand theft auto, and drunken altercations: These are all topics normally seen on the news. But what happens when all these issues involve just one female journalist? Fox's animated series *King of the Hill* explored all of these situations and more in its 13 seasons on the air before the network canceled the series in September 2009. This series shows the good, bad, and the ugly in the life of the female broadcaster in rural Texas. The focus of this article will be to examine how the image of this female journalist is portrayed throughout this cartoon series.

It is first important to understand what the show is about and how it was created. This series was created by *Beavis and Butt-Head's* Mike Judge and *The Simpsons's* Greg Daniels. The weekly, half-hour animated series *King of the Hill* was a genial redneck comedy set in the fictional suburb of Arlen, Texas. The central character is Hank Rutherford Hill, a 40-year-old salesman for the Strickland Propane Co. Staunchly conservative and fiercely macho, Hank might have been described as the head of the Hill household were it not for his iron-willed wife Peggy, a substitute teacher.

Also living under Hank Hill's roof is his 12-year-old son Bobby, an overweight underachiever who was never quite able to live up to Hank's lofty standards of manhood, and Hank and Peggy's niece Luane Platter, who'd been living with the Hills since her trailer-park mom killed her dad during an argument over "that last beer." Hank spends most of his spare time hanging out with his good ol' boy buddies, among them rabid conspiracy theorist Dale Gribble (whose wife Nancy was cheating on her husband with a Native American masseuse named John Redcorn, who in turn is the real father of the Gribble's son Joseph); Bill Dauterive, a divorced barber who worked on a nearby military

post, and self-styled Lothario Boomhauer who never spoke when muttering incomprehensibly would do. Also in the neighborhood is a Laotian couple, Kahn and Minh Souphanosuinphone, whose daughter Connie is Bobby's best friend.

Debuting January 12, 1997, the Emmy-winning *King of the Hill* was second only to *The Simpsons* as the Fox network's most successful and longest-running animated series.¹ The series's popularity led to syndication around the world, including every night on Cartoon Network's late night programming bloc called Adult Swim.

The show became one of Fox's longest-running series, and, at the time of its cancellation the second longest-running American animated series. In 2007, it was named by *Time* magazine as one of the top 100 greatest television shows of all time.² The title theme was written and performed by The Refreshments. *King of the Hill* won two Emmy Awards and was nominated for seven.

Fox canceled *King of the Hill* and aired its series finale on September 13, 2009, with four episodes from season 13 unaired. The remaining last four episodes aired in syndication on local stations from May 3 to 6, 2010, and on Adult Swim from May 17 to 20, 2010.

During 13 seasons and 259 half-hour shows, Nancy Hicks-Gribble, voiced by Ashley Gardner, appears in 110 episodes. There are 17 *King of the Hill* episodes involving Hicks-Gribble's professional life. They are the "Pilot"³ episode which introduces Hicks-Gribble as a future weatherwoman; "Meet the Manger Babies"⁴ where weather girl Nancy Hicks-Gribble introduces *Manger Babies* TV show, which is Luanne's televised puppet show; "Next of Shin"⁵ which shows Hicks-Gribble exposing a newsroom secret regarding what equipment the station uses in predicting Arlen's

weather; “Spin the Choice,”⁶ which shows Hicks-Gribble in her morning ritual before she goes to work at the station; “The Trouble With Gribbles,”⁷ which is the episode where weatherwoman Nancy Hicks-Gribble of Channel 84 News decides she needs a facelift after losing her job to a younger woman; “Get Your Freak Off”⁸ has Hicks-Gribble discussing who is sexy on the block with neighbors Peggy and Minh.

“Torch Song Hillogy”⁹ is the episode where reporter Hicks-Gribble of News 84 covers a story about Hank carrying the Olympic torch through Arlen; “Board of the Hill”¹⁰ is an episode where Hicks-Gribble is shown at the station forecasting the weather; “Gone With the Windstorm”¹¹ has Hicks-Gribble replaced on Channel 84 News by ambitious meteorologist Irv Bennett and shows how she goes to extreme lengths to prove her worth. Other episodes featuring Hicks-Gribble in her weather girl role is “Smoking and the Bandit,”¹² “Earthy Girls are Easy,”¹³ “Texas City Twister,”¹⁴ and “Nancy Does Dallas.”¹⁵

The 93 remaining episodes show Nancy Hicks-Gribble’s personal life. In “Nancy’s Boys”¹⁶ she and her husband, Dale, go to a romantic restaurant and fall in love all over again. Other episodes include “Luanne’s Saga,”¹⁷ “King of the Ant Hill,”¹⁸ “Arrowhead,”¹⁹ “Sug Night,”²⁰ “When Joseph Met Lori and Made Out With Her in the Janitor’s Closet,”²¹ “Portrait of an Artist as a Young Clown,”²² and in “Board Games,”²³ weather girl Hicks-Gribble gets involved in school board politics and helps Peggy run for a position on the school board.

Nancy Hicks-Gribble is a 43-year-old Southern broadcaster, wife of 47-year-old Dale Gribble and the mother of 12-year-old Joseph Gribble. She is friends with neighbor Peggy Hill and began working as the weather girl for the local television station, Channel

84 News (a subtle joke, as the highest channel on the UHF band in North America was 83) after winning the Ms. Heimlich County beauty pageant. She was later replaced by a meteorologist, and now works as a co-anchor for the station (from the episode "Gone With the Windstorm" and "Nancy Does Dallas"). It's also implied that she unsuccessfully pursued an acting career. Her on-air name is Nancy Hicks-Gribble, which is the same as in her personal life.

Nancy Hicks-Gribble is a small-market broadcaster. The fact that she is also Southern, a Texan, adds another dimension to her character. Her personal life is riddled with secret- rendezvous, migraine treatments and neighborhood barbecues.

Hicks-Gribble's professional life, on the other hand, is composed of weather forecasts, backstabbing and seductive head-turns.

The way Hicks-Gribble handles both of these elements sheds a light into the unseen lives of female broadcasters. The fact that she is not the typical Southern woman adds an interesting dynamic to her overall life as well.

However, Hicks-Gribble's family outside of her husband Dale and son Joseph are not seen and only casually referenced. Hicks-Gribble's father remains unknown and unnamed. While her mother, Bunny Hicks, who the audience learns in the episode "Hair Today, Gone Tomorrow" lives in a retirement home, is only seen once in that episode.

In the episode "Hair Today, Gone Tomorrow,"²⁴ Hicks-Gribble turns to her mother for help when unresolved feelings for John Redcorn cause her hair to fall out. Her mother Bunny was also unfaithful to Hicks-Gribble's father, but did not reveal her own long-term affair until Hicks-Gribble began suffering from stress-induced hair loss. Rue McClanahan voices Bunny's character.

Hicks-Gribble is portrayed as a glamorous and sexy woman who is also quite competitive. When a 20-something meteorologist threatens her job as a TV anchor, in "Gone With the Windstorm," Peggy Hill encourages her to gossip and spread false rumors to make things difficult for him just as Hicks-Gribble did in high school. In "Nancy Does Dallas," she does this independently and with another co-worker. This revelation proves Hicks-Gribble's character is a vindictive and manipulative person. She stabs people around her in the back by spreading rumors about them that manipulates situations to be in her favor.

Hicks-Gribble and Dale are an odd couple; she is a moderately attractive blonde. Dale is scrawny, balding man who is rarely seen without a cigarette or his baseball cap. Hicks-Gribble is successful in her job, whereas Dale is a high-strung conspiracy theorist who could not keep a job, and finally starts his own pest control business. Dale admits that Hicks-Gribble earns more money than he does, and she keeps a tight rein on their household expenses.

In the Season Four episode "Nancy's Boys," Hicks-Gribble admits she had a 15-year-long affair with John Redcorn, a Native American medicine man who frequently spent long hours with her, ostensibly to heal her "headaches." Hicks-Gribble's son, Joseph, is the result of her affair.

In the episode "Untitled Blake McCormick Project,"²⁵ Dale discovers a neighbor's child is Joseph's half-sister (John Redcorn's daughter through a brief affair with the girl's mother, around the time Hicks-Gribble became pregnant with Joseph). This revelation makes Hicks-Gribble jealous of Redcorn, even though their relationship is over. Dale believes he fathered both children because he thinks aliens stole his sperm.

Hicks-Gribble tends to call everyone "sug" (pronounced "shug," a shortened form of "sugar"), including God in the episode "My Own Private Rodeo."²⁶

As a television personality, her hair and appearance are important to her. They are also at least somewhat artificial, as it is revealed in the episode "Peggy's Pageant Fever,"²⁷ Hicks-Gribble bleaches her hair. In the episode "Gone With the Windstorm," she exclaims, "I don't want to go to heaven with brown roots!" proving she is actually a brunette.

Nancy's Professional Life

The episode "Nancy Does Dallas" is an excellent example of a typical day in the life of female broadcasters.²⁸

At the beginning of the day, even before Hicks-Gribble has left for work her news director, Tom Chick, calls her at home about a story he got a "hot tip" about.²⁹

Chick says to Hicks-Gribble, "I got a hot tip about a breaking story, and I want you to cover it."

Hicks-Gribble is up to the challenge and she tells him to give her the details. The story is about a student at Durndle Elementary who took an opossum to school that day.

She asks, "...and? What, did it bite somebody?"

Chick says, "No, it's a baby and it's cute. Now, go cover it."

Nancy sighs, clearly disappointed in the "breaking story."³⁰

She gets off the phone and says, "Dangit, I am sick of doing these animal stories."

Joseph says, "But that's the cutest part of the news!"

To this she responds, "I am tired of cute. Cute doesn't win you a local Emmy! I am bigger than opossums, sug!"

Dale tells Nancy, "But this could be big! C'mon, you're a genius at making something out of nothing! You made Joseph." Joseph nods in agreement.

Nancy says, "You're right. If I am going to get ahead, I'm going to have to do this myself."³¹

Since Hicks-Gribble still must cover the opossum story, she turns the story about an elementary school boy named Billy bringing his baby opossum named "Oranges" to school for show-and-tell, into a story about how schools are lacking the proper security equipment. She asks Billy, how did you get your pet past security?

Billy asks her, "What security?"

Hicks-Gribble then gets very serious, looks into the camera and says, "This is the very question that too many schools are asking themselves these days." She continues to say that this situation could have turned into a tragedy and likens the opossum to a gun and the little boy to an intruder. She concludes her story with "This is Nancy Hicks-Gribble reporting from this dark day in Durndle."³²

The Hicks-Gribble story makes Bobby "on-edge" on going to school. Peggy comments, "That poor school."

Hank says, "That wasn't even a story. It was a bunch of what ifs."

Peggy tells Hank, "Sometimes the what could have happened is more important than what actually happened."³³

At Bobby's school, the physical education teachers are so alarmed because of Hicks-Gribble's story they have all the kids working on their self-defense skills.³⁴

Hicks-Gribble's story is so popular that it is picked up by 12 affiliates. Dale comments that this is great because that means that Hicks-Gribble's picture will be posted all over Texas. Dale tells Hicks-Gribble that now her prison mail will double. Hicks-Gribble says to this, "It's not about the glory. I am just glad I can make as many markets safer as I can."³⁵

This scene shows that Hicks-Gribble is a sob sister in that she always is trying to outwit her male counterparts. Stated another way, her news director sends her out to do an animal story, she comes back with an example of how relaxed security has become in elementary schools. This also shows how vain she is as well. She brags about how many affiliates picked up her story and relishes in the fact that her picture will be posted all over Texas and that her prison mail will double because of her story.

With the popularity of her elementary school story she receives a call from Bret Wilson, the general manager from a station in Dallas called KUMT-TV, the "News Mountain." He tells her he is impressed by her opossum report. Wilson offers her a job. Dale and Joseph are listening in on the line and tell Hicks-Gribble to take the job. Dale tells Hicks-Gribble they will make her new job in Dallas work with her family life. After accepting the job and ending the conversation, Dale calls her back and asks her to let him out of the basement; he's locked himself in.³⁶

After her first newscast in Dallas, the anchors invite Hicks-Gribble for "happy hour." The female co-anchor says "we are think tank by day, drunk tank by night."

As the night progresses, the entire news team ends up in the station's news chopper intoxicated, with drinks in hand as Nancy screams nonsense into the two-way walkie-talkie.³⁷

Co-anchor Wendy and Hicks-Gribble become close friends. They conspire to get the main anchor Wade fired so that they may both anchor the Dallas news. At a formal event in Dallas, both women are bashing Wade to the general manager.

Wendy says, "I respect Wade, but sometimes I worry about him. A man his age sneaking off to Mexico."

Hicks-Gribble adds, "bringing back black market pharmaceuticals."

Wendy says to the general manager, "I know he is a local legend, but maybe it would be better if Nancy and I anchored the news instead."

Bret Wilson responds, "Well, I am getting tired of that little giggle. I will give it some thought."³⁸

When Peggy and Minh show up to the Dallas formal, Hicks-Gribble tells them to not be intimidated by "all the beautiful people. Inside, we are all the same as you." Peggy and Minh just look at each other confused and Peggy simply thanks Hicks-Gribble for the invitation. "We bring greetings from Arlen!" Hicks-Gribble, excited by this says, "Are they watching me on TV? It must be exciting to see someone they know get so famous." Minh, irritated by Hicks-Gribble's cocky attitude says, "Oh yea. Real treat."³⁹

A few minutes later, at the Alibi Bar in Dallas, Hicks-Gribble sits with Wilson, showing him some incriminating evidence of Wendy who is currently co-anchor on

the news. This scene points out that Hicks-Gribble is secretly double-crossing Wendy to get a shot at anchoring the news solo.

After seeing the incriminating but unidentified evidence about Wendy, Wilson tells Hicks-Gribble he wants her to anchor the news solo. Her mission is accomplished. From across the bar the two anchors give Hicks-Gribble evil glares as they realize that she has just replaced them on the station's float for the city's parade.⁴⁰

"Looks like I will be on top of the mountain, sug. Enjoy the view from the cheap seats."⁴¹

As the parade is about to begin, Hicks-Gribble arrives late for her debut atop the News Mountain float in Dallas. When she finally shows up, a parade coordinator is clearly annoyed.

A visibly drunk Hicks-Gribble says, "Hey lady, I'm ready to ride the mountain."

The parade coordinator says, "Have you been drinking? You look terrible. We need to get you into makeup, STAT."

Hicks-Gribble menacingly replies, "I could have you killed."⁴²

All of Hicks-Gribble's neighbors from Arlen line the streets of Dallas to see her at the peak of the News Mountain.

Finally, Dale says, "There's my Nancy! Wave to me Nancy." Hicks-Gribble is sitting in a chair at the peak of the News Mountain float is slumped to the side with a dazed look on her face. She is barely able to wave to the parade goers. When she sees her friends she stands up uneasily and yells, "Hello, Dallas!" She is so drunk

she ends up falling off of the moving float onto the road. The crowd is horrified. She sits up to tell the crowd she is “OK” and then lies down in the street and passes out drunk.⁴³

This scene portrays journalists as drunks who manipulate everyone around them. It also communicates to the public that journalists cannot be trusted as it showed Hicks-Gribble spreading lies about both anchors.

The next day, the general manager shows a replay of Hicks-Gribble’s accident. He tells her that she is fired because of her conduct. She pleads that she thought all the drinks were orange juice and what happened was an accident. The general manager doesn’t buy it. Neither do her anchors. Wendy says, “Some people just weren’t made out for metro news. Way to climb your way to the bottom.” Wade tells Nancy he is disgusted with her.⁴⁴

Hicks-Gribble goes back to Arlen humiliated. She is out by her trashcan in the alley when Peggy and Hank notice her. She is depressed about being back at her “crappy” job at Channel 84. Peggy reassures her that maybe a smaller market with fewer temptations is better for her.

Hicks-Gribble says, “You’re right, a smaller market is where I shine. I will catch the eye of another big station when I annihilate my competition. Oh, Miguel has plenty of skeletons. I will systematically destroy him. Or anyone else who gets in my way! Houston is mine!” she screams.⁴⁵

Then you hear Dale off camera yelling to Hicks-Gribble to hurry and get him a fire extinguisher; he needs it right away.

When she hears this, she just sighs, "Oh forget it, I'm too tired for Houston."

Peggy says, "That's it. It's Dale. His nonsense makes Nancy so busy she doesn't have the time or energy to be like she was in Dallas. Hank says, "So Nancy needs Dale more than Dale needs Nancy? Huh. Weird."⁴⁶

The revelation at this part of the episode shows another way that Hicks-Gribble is a sob sister. She is a sob sister in that she will always choose love over her career in the end. Here she picks taking care of Dale over climbing to a better market such as Houston.

By the end of the episode, you get a clear picture of the life of a female broadcaster and the many complexities that present themselves in their daily lives. Using Hicks-Gribble as an example, the female broadcasters must balance work and family issues every day. Even as difficult as the issues females must balance daily, Hicks-Gribble is still able to enjoy her life by the end of the episode. This is proven after Hicks-Gribble extinguishes the fire Dale started in that particular episode. Dale tells Hicks-Gribble, "I am so happy to have you back Nancy, I missed you. And not just for fire retardant purposes. I am sure Channel 84 is excited to have a big Dallas reporter at their anchor desk. They are going to have you all over that one billboard they have." Hicks-Gribble smiles when Dale tells her this.⁴⁷

The episode "Gone With the Windstorm"⁴⁸ shows some of the challenges Hicks-Gribble deals with on an everyday basis as a middle-aged female broadcaster. When Channel 84 hires gung-ho meteorologist Irv Bennett, Hicks-Gribble and her less-than-accurate weather reports are left out in the cold. Determined to remain an

integral member of the news team, Hicks-Gribble drives a stolen news van into a raging wildfire, aiming to scoop the competition.

To provide context to Hicks-Gribble stealing a news van, the episode begins with all of the male neighbors, Dale, Bill, Hank, and Boomhauer gathered in their usual spot in the alley drinking Alamo beer behind their homes.

Holding a handheld TV, Dale says, "Hey, it's seven after the hour; let's see what kind of weather my Nancy is predicting." All of the men gather around the portable black and white television. "Even at one inch tall and ashen grey, she's beautiful."

Viewers hear Hicks-Gribble saying on the TV, "it's going to be sunny and mild with no chance of drizzle, so come on down to watch the pigs sizzle. I will be down there to sign autographs by the Hall of Ham Presidents."⁴⁹

When Hicks-Gribble is preparing for the 93rd Annual Pork Festival, she asks Peggy to help her get started signing her name to her headshot photos. Hicks-Gribble tells Peggy to be careful to not sign her name over her face or cleavage or as one of her fans calls them, her "warm fronts."⁵⁰

Hicks-Gribble attends the Pork Festival (which is deserted and delayed due to a severe windstorm she didn't forecast) and waits to sign autographs to anyone who is brave enough to weather the high winds blowing through Arlen. An angry couple sees Hicks-Gribble and walks up to her booth. She gets ready to sign an autograph for them when they snap at her about her not being able to accurately forecast the weather. "Can you predict what my finger is going to do?" The angry woman asks Hicks-Gribble. She is surprised with the couple's remarks. She cries to Peggy Hill, "It's not my fault I got the weather wrong. I just read it from the teleprompter. It's my job to pronounce the

weather! Not predict it.”⁵¹

This statement is a perfect example of how the show feels that weather girls are not on the news to accurately predict the weather, but to be oogled and as Hicks-Gribble puts it, “pronounce it.”

After the festival fiasco, Hicks-Gribble returns to the station to deliver the weather forecast. Male Anchor Miguel Hernandez comes up to Hicks-Gribble when she arrives back at the station from the Pork Festival. He tells her, “Nice boots.” Nancy says to him, “Thanks, sug. Can you ask me where they are from on air so they can be free?”

Hernandez agrees.

A second later, news director Tom Chick stomps up to Hernandez and Hicks-Gribble, and tells her, “People are really ticked off at your weather predictions. The phones are ringing off the hook.”

Hicks-Gribble replies shrilly, “Well, what am I supposed to do? The only equipment I have is the thermometer, and a glass skunk whose tail turns blue when it’s humid.”⁵²

Chick agrees with Hicks-Gribble, “I know, I know.”

Hernandez asks, “what about the mega Doppler we always advertise?”

The news director says to him, “We don’t have one; we just wrote mega Doppler on the air conditioning on the roof.”

Hicks-Gribble is horrified by this revelation, “Televisa’s got one, Channel 4’s got one.”

Chick cannot disagree with her on that point. “We’ll have got to do something. The FCC is cracking down on everyone. We can’t keep calling it accu-weather if you

keep getting it wrong.”

Hicks-Gribble is angered and says, “Well then, get me a Doppler or get me something where I don’t look like a jackass again, sug.”⁵³

Even Hicks-Gribble knows that she does not know how to forecast the weather or use the proper equipment. She makes it obvious to her colleagues when she begins asking them obvious questions about clouds and by speaking into the Doppler plug.

The scene showing the aforementioned examples opens with Hicks-Gribble asking a producer if puffy clouds are bad or good. Just then, Chick walks over to Hicks-Gribble wheeling in a new Doppler radar. “Oh, thank God,” Hicks-Gribble says. She starts pressing buttons on an unplugged machine and then speaks into the power cord’s plug. It is obvious that Hicks-Gribble does not know how to use this new technology. As Hicks-Gribble attempts to “work” the machine, the news director assures her that she won’t have to worry about how to work the machine. Then he introduces Irv Bennett, her replacement.⁵⁴

Hicks-Gribble is confused by what just occurred. Chick tries to explain. “People don’t want to be entertained by a weather girl anymore. They want meteorologists who understand the weather and can update them immediately. We’ll find something for you to do,” says Chick, the news director. “Here, why don’t you do the weather phone?” Hicks-Gribble is visibly upset. “But wait?! Everyone knows that the weather phone is really just a fax machine!”⁵⁵

This scene explains how the show sees the weather girl as more of an entertainer rather than a legitimate weather forecaster. The news director thinks so little of Hicks-Gribble’s intellect that he doesn’t think she will notice that the weather phone is really a

fax machine.

Upon hearing the rumor of Hicks-Gribble's demotion, her friend Peggy reminds her about all the times in high school she ruined people's lives with her mean rumors. This is meant to inspire Hicks-Gribble to action to fight for her job and to get Bennett fired. Putting her feelings into actions, she tries to flirt with Bennett in order to get him to admit to behavior in college that might get him terminated from the station.

"Ever have a couple of drinks and start rough housing with a couple of your frat brothers and things got a little out of hand? Maybe in the shower?" Bennett shrugs and changes the subject. Hicks-Gribble's plan is failing. Bennett says, "Remember when that arctic air blew through [Arlen]?"⁵⁶

Throughout this episode Hicks-Gribble is perceived to be a sex symbol by her audience. As Hicks-Gribble watches the opening of the news program on her couch, it starts with the announcer introducing the broadcasters. Hicks-Gribble says, "Ugh, you call that a turn-a-round! Tell me, can that compare to this?" She turns her head seductively as though it were she on the TV being introduced for the evening news. Her ever-supportive friend Peggy says excitedly, "Wow that is almost too powerful in person."⁵⁷

They continue to watch Hicks-Gribble's replacement, Bennett, predict the weather. She comments to Peggy, "I think I'm finished with being a weather girl. I don't know if I want to be in a business where they value brains over beauty."⁵⁸

Hicks-Gribble's last statement about not wanting to be in an industry that values brains over beauty, shows a superficial side to her personality while also proving the role of a weather girl was to be pretty, not smart.

Peggy is angered by Hicks-Gribble's statement that she's giving up on getting her job back. Peggy says to her that she must fight for her job, and that the wildfire currently raging is the perfect opportunity to show the station what an asset she is to them.

"Dale, get out of the hot tub," Hicks-Gribble yells to Dale who is out on the back porch soaking in the hot tub. "We are stealing the news van."⁵⁹

Dale, Peggy and Hicks-Gribble steal the news van and arrive at the scene of the wildfire where at least four other stations are already set up to report. Hicks-Gribble appears defeated, "Oh, forget it, sugs. Everyone's already here and Lucy Murphy from Channel 7 is wearing the same jacket I am! What am I gonna get that they won't?"⁶⁰

Just then, Dale breaks through a police barrier to where there is increased fire danger. The trio park right in front of the fire despite the obvious danger she puts herself in. Hicks-Gribble continues to broadcast live from the wildfire's front line, as her husband films her. She eventually tries to sign off as a burning leaf leaps onto Hicks-Gribble's shoulder. Peggy keeps egging on Hicks-Gribble to continue reporting. Peggy says Hicks-Gribble needs a "money shot." However, the news van blows up before they can get the shot.

When the news van bursts through the police barrier so that Hicks-Gribble may get a closer shot of the action, that is another example of how Hicks-Gribble is a sob sister by outwitting her male counter parts. She will go above and beyond the call of duty for a story.

Unbeknownst to the trio, Channel 84 has been streaming Hicks-Gribble's live shot from a nearby Channel 84 news van. The station starts getting the broadcast feed just as Hicks-Gribble begins to cry about not wanting to die. She says, "I don't want to go to

heaven with brown roots!”⁶¹The station sees the whole broadcast, including the news van blowing up and Nancy’s tearful babbling about not wanting to die with brown roots. The whole time the production team in the control room watching Hicks-Gribble’s meltdown is cheering because they are streaming this action live. This shows broadcasters as shallow individuals that will do anything for ratings, even at the expense of one of their own.

When the trio is finally airlifted out of the fire in the same fashion as horses, the news director calls Hicks-Gribble into his office. He tells her he “wants to make her an integral part of the Channel 84 news team.” He tells her that her live report from the front lines of the wildfire “put the station on the map” and they get more requests for her “blubbing than of the baby panda.” Chick, the news director, offers her the news co-anchor position, despite the fact she stole a news van and destroyed all the expensive equipment inside it.⁶²

The fact that the viewing audience requests watching the clip of Hicks-Gribble “blubbing” rather than a baby panda or any real news reflects poorly upon the public. In this scene, the show is basically saying that the public doesn’t want to see real news. The public would rather see a “blubbing” weather girl.

The final scene of the episode is of Bennett, Hicks-Gribble’s former rival, introducing her as the new co-anchor. Hicks-Gribble, with renewed confidence and in her usually seductive way says, “Thanks, Irv. It’s great to be a part of the team, sug. Have you been feeling itchy lately? We may have the reason why.”⁶³

This episode shows that many broadcasters, including Hicks-Gribble, will go to great lengths to get the inside scoop on a story. They will put themselves and their

teams in danger or they will even lie to get what they want. Both of these examples are present in *King of the Hill's* episode "Gone With the Windstorm." This episode shows how vain and unethical broadcasters can be as well.

An example of her vanity is shown toward the beginning of the episode as Hicks-Gribble and Peggy sign stacks of her headshots to hand out to the "demolition derby-size crowds" attending the 93rd Pork Festival.

Another example of Hicks-Gribble's vanity occurs when she criticizes Bennett for his head turn at the opening of the newscast. Hicks-Gribble does her head turn for Peggy, and inspires a "wow" out of her.

The last example in this episode of Hicks-Gribble's vanity is when she is crying at the wildfire about not wanting to die with brown roots. If she wasn't vain, it is probable that she wouldn't mind going to heaven with brown roots.

The episode "Texas City Twister,"⁷⁰ shows how broadcasters can be drama queens and make a bigger deal about situations than need be. In this episode, Luanne is faced with the possibility of moving into her old tipped-over trailer in Shiny Pines trailer park. Hank asks Dale to help him turn the trailer right side up. Dale obliges and calls to Nancy about going with Hank to turn over Luanne's trailer and that he'd see her for dinner. Hicks-Gribble says to Dale that she can't do dinner because she has to anchor "eyewitness weather."

"There are high-winds blowing, might be a tornado. This could be the disaster I've been waiting for, so keep your fingers crossed," Hicks-Gribble says enthusiastically.⁷¹ The entire time she is speaking to Dale as she is brushing her long blonde hair and making sure it looks perfect. In this scene, we see Hicks-Gribble in

her typical weather anchor outfit- a blue skirt-suit with a light blue top underneath her blazer. She replies, "I left a carton of cigarettes on the table."⁷²

In this episode, Hicks-Gribble shows both her dedication to her job and her family. Not only will she be the Arlen's weather anchor to help predict the tornado coming through the town, but also she makes sure her husband has his needs met before she even leaves the house.

On the downside, this shows Hicks-Gribble is hoping that there will be a storm, a storm that might help her get a promotion. She is a negative view of broadcasters as this makes it look like they thrive off disaster and want something bad to happen so she will get a promotion at the station.

Roughly 10 minutes into the episode, Hicks-Gribble is on scene at the National Guard Armory in Arlen in the middle of a possible tornado. There is so much wind her hair is blown horizontal by the persistent gusts. She interrupts regular programming for her "special report." She tells Arlen that the "National Weather Service has issued a tornado warning for the Tri-County area." She stresses that this report, "is not a test, Channel 84 doesn't play those games. Residents should be on the lookout for a tornado especially if they live in a trailer park." Before signing off on her live weather report, she urges people living in trailer homes to be safe in the storm and says, "We all know trailers can be hell in tornadoes."⁷³

Hicks-Gribble's comment is especially important as Hank and Peggy just got into a fight about Luanne's moving back into her trailer and Hank telling Peggy to go to hell. This fight occurred just before Hicks-Gribble issued the tornado warning, and told all trailer park residents to take refuge, as trailer parks are hell in tornados.

About midway through the episode, the show demonstrates a classic move by broadcasters. When there is a big story where there is a need for updates for the community throughout the day or on multiple days. The station gives a title to the series of story updates. Since Hicks-Gribble is a weather anchor giving updates about the approaching tornado, she calls this story "Tornado Watch 1997." She adds that her weather update is sponsored by local merchant Mega-lo Mart, "and if you mention that your home was destroyed in the tornado, you will receive a 5-pound bag of onions."⁷⁴ She immediately becomes very serious as she tells her audience; "A series of tornado's has touched down in Arlen city at this time. We have no reports of injuries or any injury footage, but if you know of someone who is injured or is likely to become injured, please call the station."⁷⁵

Hicks-Gribble interrupts regular programming once again for a tornado update, which is now being called "Death Watch '97." As the camera opens on Hicks-Gribble at the weather anchor desk, she is fixing her hair, which is a mess from the high winds outside.

"Nancy Hicks-Gribble here for 'Death Watch '97' a level 5 tornado is headed right for Shiney Pines trailer park .⁷⁶ Shiney Pine's residents, we urge you to remain calm. However, if there are any personal issues that you have been waiting to resolve or if you've never experienced the miracle of love-making: now might be the time [to do that]."⁷⁷

The way that Hicks-Gribble speaks to her audience is very personal, almost as if she knows what is going on in her community's lives. Case in point, while she is broadcasting these words of advice to her audience, four of her friends are out in the

tornado weather headed for the very trailer park she warns people to essentially stay away from.

Nancy Hicks-Gribble's Personal Life

In the pilot episode of *King of the Hill*, Hicks-Gribble is not yet portrayed as a newscaster. This episode introduces the entire cast as neighbors in suburban Arlen where everyone knows one another.⁶⁴

The viewing audience meets Hicks-Gribble when her husband Dale is being interrogated by a Child Protective Services representative because Hank Hill is being investigated for child abuse.⁶⁵ Dale yells to Hicks-Gribble off screen, "Hey baby! How about a couple of beers!"⁶⁶ She walks into the room in clothes that become her signature outfit in her personal life- a pair of form-fitting blue jeans, lavender high heels, and a bright pink top.

This is also the first time the audience learns of her romance with new-age healer Redcorn. As she walks toward the front door reapplying her lipstick, she tells Dale, "No, sug, I got another migraine treatment with John Redcorn."⁶⁷

To this Dale complains, "Nancy you been going to that healer for 12 years and you still get headaches every night."⁶⁸ Nonchalantly Hicks-Gribble explains to Dale, "[the] healing process takes time, Honey." She closes the door behind her and runs out to Redcorn's jeep which is blasting Foreigner's song "Hot Blooded" on his speakers.⁶⁹

The episode "Arrowhead"⁷⁸ is one that addresses Hicks-Gribble's personal life as well. The episode begins as Hank is trying out a new rototiller. He runs over an

Indian artifact in the yard, and finds it to be an arrowhead. Upon finding the artifact, he realizes he needs to speak with Redcorn about it. He also knows that the best place to find him is at the Gribble household.

When Hank gets to the Gribble household to see if Redcorn is indeed there, Hicks-Gribble opens the door and tells Hank that Dale isn't there. Her hair is messy and she only has a towel wrapped around her. She says to Hank, "Sorry, sug, Dale's at work."⁷⁹ Slightly uncomfortable with the misunderstanding, Hank tells Hicks-Gribble that he is there for Redcorn. She pauses, and then yells for Redcorn who comes to the door a moment later, who is also in a towel. He tells Hank, "Nancy has a therapeutic massage today for her migraines." Ignoring Redcorn's explanation, Hank asks Redcorn about the artifact he found in his yard. He shows it to him, and he identifies it as an arrowhead sharpener.

The two men discuss the artifact for a few moments before you hear Hicks-Gribble call for Redcorn seductively to come to her. Redcorn blushes and then closes the front door in Hank's face.

Hank decides to sell the artifact to the university. He meets Professor John Lerner, an archaeologist, who gives Hank ten dollars and sends him on his way.

The professor decides to head over to the Hill house, appealing to Peggy for permission to dig for more artifacts. Peggy explains to Hank that there will be a dig, and Hank is outraged, worried about his beloved lawn. The next morning, the Hills are awakened by a loud noise in the yard; it is the professor and his crew, tearing the lawn out. Hank screams.

Dale walks over to Hank who is now watching Peggy and Professor Lerner dig in the hole in the backyard that separates the Gribble's and his house. Dale says to Hank, "I know what you're thinking and it's not true. Every once in a while a man suspects his wife has a thing for another man."

Hank, immediately defensive over Dale's comment tells him, "That's not what I'm thinking about at all. I'm thinking about...cheese logs."

Dale is clearly not convinced by Hank's explanation, but decides to change the subject. "My Nancy is going to Corpus Christi for some migraine workshop. I'm suspicious as hell." Just as Dale says this, Hicks-Gribble walks out the back door of their home with a suitcase. Hicks-Gribble blows Dale a kiss, and says, "Bye, sug." Dale waves and asks her to bring home a shot glass. Redcorn pulls up seconds later with Bad Company's song "Feel Like Making Love" blaring in his Jeep.⁸⁰

Hank, like everyone in the neighborhood, except Dale, knows that Hicks-Gribble isn't really going to a "migraine workshop" but merely on vacation with Redcorn. Dale comments that he is glad that Redcorn is going with Hicks-Gribble to the migraine workshop in Corpus Christi. Dale says that Redcorn will be able to "keep an eye on things." Hank grunts at Dale's ignorance.

This episode is an example of Hicks-Gribble's double life with Redcorn. She doesn't try hard to conceal her double life with Redcorn and everyone but her husband knows about her affair. Hank expresses disbelief at how Dale cannot know, but no one feels it is his or her place to tell him.

Hicks-Gribble's actions of sneaking out the back door to meet Redcorn for the migraine treatment says a lot about how the popular culture views female

journalists. This demonstrates how female broadcasters are not trustworthy and will lie to get what they want.

The episode "Luanne's Saga"⁸¹ shows more of Hicks-Gribble's life with Dale as a couple. The episode is primarily about Luanne after her boyfriend Buckley dumps her. Peggy warns Hank not to interfere with Luanne's grieving process, but Hank decides to find a new boyfriend for Luanne anyway. Hank, Boomhauer, Dale, and Bill go to a country-western bar to look for another guy for Luanne. Dale brings his wife.

Shortly after arriving at the bar, Redcorn walks up to Hicks-Gribble who is standing next to Dale. Redcorn says to Dale, "Dale, I bought you a beer. Can I dance with your wife?" Dale does not give it a second thought before he tells him, "Go ahead." Then, Hicks-Gribble and Redcorn walk off to dance in each other's arms. Dale takes a sip of his beer and mumbles, "Sucker."⁸² This action demonstrates that Dale feels his wife is a burden and is happier drinking a beer than dancing with his wife.

Later in the episode, Dale hears Hank yelling at Luanne to not to go home with Boomhauer. As Dale walks into his house through the back door he says, "Dammit this neighborhood is turning into *Melrose Place*." After Dale closes the sliding back door, Redcorn is seen diving out the back window of Hicks-Gribble's room.⁸³ Hicks-Gribble and Redcorn sneak around right underneath Dale's nose and he never seems to suspect it.

The fact that Hicks-Gribble has Redcorn sneaking in and out of her bedroom window shows what a sneaky character Hicks-Gribble is, in addition to the other negative characteristics associated with her.

A Comparison to Other Female Journalists

The TV show *Married... With Children* features an episode called “Raingirl” where Kelly Bundy (Christina Applegate) gets a job as a weather girl at a local news station.

In this episode, Bundy plays a sexy intern who lands a job as the local Station 83’s weather girl after impressing the news director with her nice figure and tight-fitting clothes. Hicks-Gribble also wears form-fitting clothes, on and off the job that contribute to her weather girl sex appeal.⁸⁴

Bundy and Hicks-Gribble are both very upbeat and friendly characters. They try to make their broadcasts personal. When Bundy is on air, she will talk to her audience, as if they are her best friends. In one of her first broadcasts, Bundy begins to tell her audience how one of the news anchors won a company football pool. Hicks-Gribble does the same thing in her weathercasts. In “Gone With the Windstorm,” Hicks-Gribble forecasts a nice, sunny day for the Pork Festival and invites her audience to “come on down, and watch those pigs sizzle! I will be there in my own booth to sign autographs right by the Pork Hall of Presidents.”⁸⁵

Also, Bundy and Hicks-Gribble are similar because they are perceived as unintelligent. Shortly after being hired, the news director fires Bundy for not being able to read the teleprompter. She also mispronounces words like the abbreviation for m.p.h., instead she calls it “muffs” and “strom” when she means to say “storm.” The news director is heard off-stage saying, “Get this girl off the air. She’s an idiot.”⁸⁶ Hicks-Gribble is actually significantly smarter than Bundy, because she can both read and pronounce words about the weather.

After Hicks-Gribble inaccurately predicts Arlen's weather for the 93rd Annual Pork Festival, the news director reprimands her for not doing a better job. He cites the multitude of "pissed-off people" who were upset with her never predicting the weather accurately. "We have to stop calling it [the weathercast] "Accuweather," if you cannot accurately predict the weather," he added.⁸⁷

Bundy and Hicks-Gribble are not alike in the way of career longevity. Bundy's weather girl career lasts only a few days while Hicks-Gribble's career lasts more than 10 years and is going strong until the end of the series.

The movie *Weather Girl's*⁸⁸ main character, weather girl Sylvia Miller played by Tricia O'Kelley, possesses similarities and differences to animated weather girl Hicks-Gribble.

The "sassy weathergirl" on a Seattle morning show on KHCN-TV has an on-air meltdown when she learns the show's anchor, who is also her boyfriend, has been cheating on her with his co-anchor.

After her career suicide, she ends up living in her brother's apartment and coming to grips with some harsh realities – she has no job, no savings, no boyfriends, and does not have good-quality friends.

Miller is a pessimistic, seemingly competent, 35-year-old woman, who is immature. Before her meltdown and very public break-up with the morning show anchor Dale, she didn't consider the consequences.

Miller portrays a weather girl as witty and cynical while simultaneously likable. This is very different from Hicks-Gribble who is not seen as cynical or witty, yet she is also very likable.

The image Miller battles in the movie is not being taken seriously as a real journalist. Even her friends do not feel her role as a weather girl warrants credibility as a broadcast journalist. This statement is proven in the restaurant scene after Miller's on-air meltdown when her friends act confused as how she could find a job at another local station with a mere weather girl resume.⁸⁹

Miller's character is similar to Hicks-Gribble's in that she is not viewed as a "real broadcast journalist."

Both Miller and Hicks-Gribble are also alike in how they are both perceived to be sex symbols by their audience. In *King of the Hills*'s episode "Gone With the Windstorm," Hicks-Gribble sits on her couch with Peggy as they watch her replacement Irv predict the weather. Hicks-Gribble comments to Peggy, "I think I'm finished with being a weather girl. I don't know if I want to be in a business where they value brains over beauty."⁹⁰

At the conclusion of the movie *Weather Girl*, Miller is rehired as co-anchor to her ex-boyfriend, who is named Dale. At the opening of her first show as co-anchor she says to Dale, "returning to *Seattle Morning* is rather bittersweet, I mean, on the one hand I get to return to a demeaning position where my job is to giggle and look attractive and trivialize the day's news."⁹¹

With this statement, Miller publically acknowledges that she is a sex symbol. She knows that all she is supposed to do is sit there look cute and act like she cares about the news of the day.

Many people see weathercasters as incompetent and sub-human. The movie *Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy*, portrays weathercasters as useless and less

than human than the rest of the population. Brick Tamland (Steve Carrell) plays the dumb, very simple weather guy on the Channel Four News team.⁹²

Tamland introduces himself as a likable guy because he is polite and rarely late. Appearing simple-minded, allegedly with an IQ of 48, for fun, he uses a knife to put mayo in the toaster,⁹³ sits in trees eating a banana and laughing to himself,⁹⁴ and ditches his sack in a sack race and runs to the finish line, his arms spread wide open and a huge grin on his face knowing he will win.⁹⁵

When the news team is threatened with termination for speaking with Burgundy, the anchorman calls to Tamland, “Brick, my sweet Brick. Come hug me, I know you want to.” Smiling, Tamland walks toward Burgundy. When Brian Fantana, the field reporter, snaps his finger and pats his leg as if he is calling a dog and gets Tamland’s attention. Tamland obeys and continues to follow whoever is calling him.⁹⁶ He calls the Midwest the Middle East⁹⁷ and gets lost trying to show the team to the suit store.⁹⁸ All of the above examples of Tamland’s behavior shows that he is not portrayed as being intelligent or respectable.

Ed Harken, the news director, admits that unless Tamland is tracking a storm, he is completely worthless.⁹⁹

Another time, when the news team is walking together they run into Wes Mantooth and his crew. Mantooth asks if they got their suits from the Salvation Army. Tamland tries a comeback: “Hey, where did you get those clothes, at the toilet store?” It is followed by an uncomfortable silence from both news teams. When they leave, Mantooth says to his team, “You can’t say, you can’t say one word? Even the guy who can’t think says something; you guys just stand there?”¹⁰⁰

All of the aforementioned examples from the movie prove the assumption that weathercasters are incompetent.

The ideology that female broadcasters sleep their way to the top presented in this movie uses Veronica Corningstone as the example. This movie attempts to prove that women journalists sleep their way to the top and are otherwise “dimwitted.” Veronica Corningstone (Christina Applegate) plays a female anchor who came from Ashville, North Carolina.¹⁰¹

Corningstone’s appearance has a lot to do with the reason why her male counterparts try to portray her as a journalist that sleeps her way to the top. She has blonde hair, wears red lipstick, is usually dressed in high heels and suit dresses, and constantly has a cigarette in her hand.¹⁰² To her male counterparts, since she is attractive and well-dressed, she couldn’t have earned her job based on her intellect because being attractive is not equated with being smart.

However, in reality, like other newspaperwomen, Corningstone is not only young and attractive but also sophisticated and bright.¹⁰³ Corningstone demonstrates historian Donna Born’s portrait of the female journalist at the turn of the 21st century: single, young, attractive, independent, reliable, courageous, competent, curious, determined, economically self-supporting, professional, and compassionate.¹⁰⁴

Hicks-Gribble demonstrates all of Donna Born’s characteristics of the female journalist at the turn of the 21st century except for several-she is not single or competent. Hicks-Gribble shows the viewing audience that she is still relatively young, attractive, independent, reliable, courageous, curious, determined, economically self-supporting, professional, and compassionate.

Hicks-Gribble has been married for several decades and is portrayed repeatedly as being incompetent. Although, she is portrayed as incompetent, the series does show her as being a determined journalist, dedicated to serving her community. Also, between her and her husband Dale, she is also the main source of income for the family.

Corningstone's male counterparts continuously try to make her look "loose" to save face around Burgundy, even though it is clear that they know otherwise.

A tough-minded woman working in an all-male environment, Corningstone tries to prove her worth as a reporter and not be seen as a sex object.¹⁰⁵

Like fictional '40s female journalists, Corningstone is initially relegated to following orders from men because she is a female.¹⁰⁶ She is sent to cover a cat fashion show as her first story¹⁰⁷ and while she is not happy about it¹⁰⁸ she maintains her professionalism and does the best she can. When she feels she has proven herself as a journalist, she asks the news director for more challenging stories, but instead, he gives her a story about the best meatloaf recipe.¹⁰⁹

Similar situations repeatedly occur to Hicks-Gribble as well. A prime example of this is in the episode, "Nancy Does Dallas," when the story Hicks-Gribble's news director gave her turned out to be a story about an elementary school child bringing a baby opossum for his school's show-n-tell.

Like most female reporters, Corningstone eventually needs rescuing by the most available male.¹¹⁰ For example, when she is pushed into the bear pit, Burgundy comes to her rescue.

This is similar to Hicks-Gribble's experience with her husband Dale. It was recently indicated, in "Nancy Does Dallas," that Hicks-Gribble also "needs Dale more than Dale needs her" because of her competitive side that softens with his antics.¹¹¹

A television show that shows how women are portrayed in popular culture is *Married...With Children*. This show depicts women as those who sleep their way to the top and are otherwise "dimwitted."

In the episode "Raingirl," Kelly Bundy is the ultimate bimbo. She is the stereotypical blonde, who is also slutty and unintelligent. In every episode, Bundy and other women are portrayed as being dimwitted in some way. So in true *Married...With Children* fashion, she is the one who becomes a weather anchor on a local Chicago TV station.¹¹² Once she gets to the anchor desk and it is discovered that she is illiterate, she hikes up her skirt in one last attempt to save her job.¹¹³ Bundy is ultimately fired for her illiteracy. Being able to read must come in at some point. Not the highest standard for one of America's most glamorous professions.¹¹⁴

If anything, giving Bundy the on-air weather girl job supports the notion that the weather girl's looks are more important than the ability to predict weather.

In the HBO series *Big Love*'s third season, a weather girl appears in the episode "Block Party,"¹¹⁵ the season's premiere episode. Bill, the show's patriarch, tries to attract partners for his casino business plan. Barb considers the possibility of a fourth wife, Ana. Meanwhile, the neighborhood arranges a big block party -- but the Henricksons are not invited.

Almost fifteen minutes into the hour-long show, Bill and his second wife Nicolette are watching Channel 6 news. The male anchor, John, introduces a story about how state

and federal agencies are cracking down on polygamist practices in both Canada and the United States. A female broadcaster is “tossed” the story and she continues to speak about the international crackdown on polygamy. She is a very attractive broadcaster with long luxurious brown curly hair and asymmetrical features.

As good-looking as the female broadcaster is on Channel 6, the TV show does not exploit her good looks by dressing her in clothes that portray her as a sex object. She wears a lavender-colored blazer and a coral-colored blouse, which is completely buttoned.¹¹⁶ This episode also portrays the female journalist as someone who can handle serious stories as opposed to fluff pieces many other female journalists are given.

All of the above-mentioned characters prove the notions relating to the female journalist and Nancy Hicks-Gribble as a sex object and sub-human weathercaster in *King of the Hill*.

Other News Anchors Who Started As Weather Girls

Many female TV journalists in the 1950s and 1960s started out as weather girls and went on to become anchors and reporters.

The most famous example of this rise to fame from humble beginnings is Diane Sawyer.¹¹⁷ Today she’s the revered anchor of ABC World News. However, in the late 1960s, she began her career as the “weather girl” for WLKY-TV in Louisville. Although, prior to her position as a weather girl in 1963, she won the "America's Junior Miss" scholarship pageant as a representative from the State of Kentucky. In 1967, she received a bachelor of arts degree with a major in English from Wellesley College in Wellesley, Massachusetts.

Shortly after graduating, Sawyer worked at WLKY-TV news as a reporter and weather girl from 1967–1970. However, she wasn't a weather girl for long. In 1970, Sawyer began her professional career in Republican Party politics as White House Press Secretary Ron Ziegler hired her to serve in the administration of U.S. President Richard Nixon. She has gone on to work for CBS and ABC news among other ambitious titles. Sawyer is the epitome of how high up the career ladder a woman can get who starts off as weather girl.

Both Hicks-Gribble and Sawyer do have similar career paths. They both won beauty pageants; after that, they began their careers as weather girls and then ended up as news anchors. Unfortunately, Hicks-Gribble did not make it to Sawyer's level. Not because she isn't smart enough, but because her husband Dale keeps her so busy, she doesn't have time to climb the corporate ladder.

Another example is Kelly Lange.¹¹⁸ Lange is a radio and TV news reporter, talk show host, former Tournament of Roses parade co-host, longtime southern California local news anchor, and a best-selling mystery author. In 1967, Lange, who was a model at the time, got into a line at a Buena Park shopping mall, because it appeared "they were giving something away." The something they were giving away turned out to be applications for two positions as "Ladybirds" on KABC (790) radio.

In the end, duo became the first female traffic/weather reporters in the Los Angeles area to patrol in helicopters. Lange was one of two chosen. She got the 6 a.m.-to-9 a.m. segment and she was re-named Dawn O' Day. The other applicant was named Eve O'Day. "The two women in their tight-fitting, silver-lame jumpsuits paved the way for today's less-exploited women deejays and announcers," the Los Angeles Times later

wrote. After a few years, Lange began co-anchoring the news at KNBC-TV Channel 4 -- as Lange, not O'Day.

Lange seems the most like Hicks-Gribble in the fact that they both started off as sex object types. The difference between the two is that Hicks-Gribble hangs on to the sex object role; while Lange left that image behind along with the tight-fitting, silver-lame outfits she wore at the beginning of her career.

The final example is not a beauty pageant contestant but of a reality television show star who is also a weather girl for Sky News in Ireland. Her name is Lisa Burke.¹¹⁹

Burke was born and lived in Killeslin, near the town of Carlow in County Carlow, Ireland. She graduated with a Masters Degree (MSci) in Natural Sciences from Cambridge University in 1999 and was ranked second in the university.

Burke joined Sky News in October 2000. Along with weather forecasting, Burke has presented a show called *Technofile* and on SkyNews.com. In 2007, she spent most of the year working as the first science reporter for Sky News, even reporting live from Iceland on one assignment.

As for her reality television career, Burke appeared on the RTE reality television show *The Restaurant* in 2008 and she also cooked on *Ready Steady Cook*. Additionally, Burke presented a documentary for Sky One called *Inside a Lightning Bolt*.

In October 2001, she was voted “sexiest weather girl of all time” by a Powergen poll of 1000 men - beating Ulrika Jonsson and Denise Van Outen. Lastly, Burke appeared on *The Big Breakfast* early in her career after being voted “sexiest weathergirl.”

Burke's career appears to have started off opposite to that of Hicks-Gribble. Burke's career began with being a reputable weather forecaster and reporter and then transitioned into a reality television star and "sexiest weather girl of all time." Whereas, Hicks-Gribble started off as a pageant winner and later became a news anchor.

Burke is a unique example, as the regression from being second in your Masters Degree in Natural Sciences class to becoming known instead by your looks, is not the norm when compared to the other aforementioned examples.

The Term 'Weather Girl' as a Derogatory Word

The exact origination of the term "weather girl" as a derogatory word is not certain. Although, it is possible that the general term of "weather girl" can be traced back to WRGB-TV, one of the nations first television stations.

With WRGB's heritage of being the first station in the Capital Region of New York, the station has had several firsts in the weather field given the unpredictable weather of the Northeast. In February 1996, it became the first Capital District station to put forecasts on the World Wide Web with the launch of a website. WRGB won an Emmy award for Chief Meteorologist Steve Lapointe's near-nonstop work over two days, which made sure there were no fatalities in the otherwise devastating tornadoes.

In May 1999, the station started "WeatherNet 6" which allows viewers to submit weather observations around the area. The public is allowed to report anything from current conditions to snowfall totals. In 2000, the station became the first in the market to offer station-owned weather radar known as "Instant Doppler 6" that was installed next to their studios.

After hearing the accomplishments of the first television station with their Emmy winning Chief Meteorologist, modern weather forecasting equipment and “WeatherNet 6” program, it appears that they have reputable weather personnel.

Another example of a seemingly reputable weather girl from WRGB is Kelly Boland. She was the weekend meteorologist, and later promoted to mornings from 1993–2000. She originally started out as a "Weathergirl" at WRGB before becoming a full-fledged meteorologist while at the station. Boland is now a key weekend meteorologist on The Weather Channel.¹²⁰

Despite the aforementioned facts pointing toward the term “weather girl” as a positive set of words, the opinion of the public appears to be drastically different. The opinion of the public regarding the term weather girl and all other words associated with weathercasters can be found on the Urban Dictionary website.¹²¹ This online dictionary functions similar to Wikipedia, in that regular citizens are able to input their own way of defining a variety of terms.

According to an Urban Dictionary contributor named Eapert McDangles, a weatherman is “one who is in the business of distributing cocaine.” In a slightly less risqué view of the weatherman, a contributor named Shizzlefull says that the weatherman is “a man who reads the weather on the news; usually a liar and never gets it right.”¹²²

For the weather girl, Urban Dictionary contributor Jamie Douglas says that the weather girl is “the yummiest of all the Z-list celebrities. To be a weather girl you must be either blonde or brunette or redhead, and you must be very pretty and have a great body. If you see a weather girl, steer clear of them as they will have an IQ of roughly 3.”¹²³

The first description of the weather forecasting field and the people who work in it makes it sound like it is a reliable and respectable field and full of the same type of people.

In the second set of descriptions from Urban Dictionary paint an entirely different picture. The definitions from Eapert McDangles, Shizzlefull, and Jamie Douglas portray the weatherman and weathergirl as sex objects, liars, unreliable people, and even liken weather forecasters to drug-dealers. According to the aforementioned contributors, all descriptions of the male and female weathercaster are negative.

It also seems as though there is a disconnection between the weather forecasting profession and its audience. The audience appears to distrust the weatherman and weather girl and then uses their looks or occasional inaccuracies due inconsistent weather patterns against them.

Despite this disconnect, these days the viewing audience hears more about Meteorologists, than weather girls or weathermen. But where did the word Meteorology or Meteorologist come from? The derivations of many words in the English language can be traced to the languages and literature of ancient cultures, and such is the case with "meteorology." It dates back to early Greece, when anything that was suspended in the air or fell from the sky (clouds, rain, rainbows, meteorites, etc.) was referred to as a "meteor." Aristotle (384-322 B.C.) presented a series of papers on natural phenomena in 340 B.C. Entitled "Meteorologica," they covered that era's knowledge of weather, astronomy and related subjects. Because much of "Meteorologica" dealt with weather, the term meteorology became linked with weather and atmospheric studies.

The term Meteorologist has come to mean someone trained in weather forecasting

where a weather girl or weatherman is not. Thus a modern day weather girl or weather man would not have the training in forecasting that would warrant getting the same respect from their viewing audience than that of a trained Meteorologist.¹²⁴

Conclusion

Hicks-Gribble is a complicated journalist. She starts her career as the Mrs. Heimlich County pageant winner, but with no training or a Doppler weather machine to assist her in accurately forecasting the weather, she is not adequately prepared for the task of predicting the weather for Heimlich County. That is not necessarily her fault, but more of the stations fault, as the station knew she had no background in meteorology and did not provide her the necessary equipment to assist her in weather forecasting. However, over time Hicks-Gribble gains respect from her co-workers and community. She makes more of an effort to cover stories that are of a more serious nature, such as school board elections and wildfires.

What matters most regarding Hicks-Gribble's weather forecasts, is that they are accurate when it is a matter of safety. For example, when she gives updates and accurate predictions for the tornado that rips through Arlen and the Shiney Pines trailer park, her weather predictions plays an integral role in saving lives.

As a weather girl, Hicks-Gribble possesses the power to save lives; female weather forecasters like her should be taken seriously and not viewed as solely sex objects. However, even though Hicks-Gribble demonstrates that she can report hard news, she continues to play to the sex-object role as co-anchor. Since she still to act seductively as the co-anchor of Channel 84 news, the audience will continue to think of her as a sex

object in this new position.

The examples presented in this article by Bundy, Miller and Hicks-Gribble prove the hypothesis that the public sees weather girls, through the inaccurate weather forecasts and tight skimpy clothing, as mindless, inaccurate sex objects in popular culture. A news director can take the sexy female broadcaster out of the weather girl position and into a more serious journalist role, but that doesn't mean that her personality will change to reflect this promotion. As stated another way, the viewers may forgive their inaccurate forecasts and give them a certain degree of respect, but they will always be viewed as sex objects as their personalities rarely change in their new roles. These former weather girls' sultry attitudes in their new respectable roles as news anchors or reporters keep the viewing audiences perception of their sex object persona in full effect.

Lastly, *King of the Hill's* characters were extreme yet accurate examples of Texan-Americans. Nancy Hicks-Gribble being the main journalist featured in *King of the Hill* did not appear in her journalistic role very often. However, as still the main representative of journalists in *King of the Hill*, Nancy Hicks-Gribble is portrayed as an attractive, female reporter given mostly fluff stories. She is also portrayed as a journalist not interested in the facts, but only in the sensationalist aspects of the story that would help improve ratings and thinks only beautiful people should be broadcasters. Despite the occasionally comedic nature of Hicks-Gribble's depiction, the abovementioned proof suggests that the *King of the Hill's* jokes about weather girls, demonstrate similar situations that take place in television stations across the nation.

Endnotes

- ¹ "King of the Hill." Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia.
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/King_of_the_Hill (accessed February 26, 2011).
- ² Poniewozik, James. "The 100 Greatest Television Shows of All-TIME." *Time 100 Special Edition*. February 1, 2007.
- ³ Season 1, Episode 1: "Pilot," *King of the Hill*. First aired on 12 January 1997. Written by Greg Daniels and Mike Judge. Directed by Wesley Archer.
- ⁴ Season 2, Episode 12: "Meet the Manger Babies," *King of the Hill*. First aired on 11 January 1998. Written by Glenn Berger and Jonathan Aibel and directed by Jeff Myers.
- ⁵ Season 3, Episode 5: "Next of Shin," *King of the Hill*. First aired on 3 November 1998. Written by Alan Freeland and Alan R. Cohan and directed by Jeff Myers.
- ⁶ Season 5, Episode 4: "Spin the Choice," *King of the Hill*. First aired on 19 November 2000. Written by Paul Lieberstein and directed by Allan Jacobsen.
- ⁷ Season 5, Episode 18: "The Trouble with Gribbles," *King of the Hill*. First aired on 22 April 2001. Written by Jim Dauterive and directed by Shaun Cashman.
- ⁸ Season 7, Episode 7: "Get your Freak Off." *King of the Hill*. First aired on 3 November 2002. Written by Garland Testa and directed by Tricia Garcia.
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- ¹⁴ Season 2, Episode 2: "Texas City Twister." *King of the Hill*. First aired on 26 September 1997. Written by Cheryl Holliday and directed by Jeff Myers.
- ¹⁵ Season 13, Episode 13: "Nancy Does Dallas." *King of the Hill*. First aired on 22 March 2009. Written by Mike Judge and Greg Daniels, and directed by Michael Loya.
- ¹⁶ Seasons 4, Episode 21: "Nancy's Boys." *King of the Hill*. First aired on 30 April 2000. Written by Glenn Berger and directed by Tricia Garcia.
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- ¹⁸ Seasons 1, Episode 11: "King of the Ant Hill." *King of the Hill*. First aired on 4 May 1997. Written by Paul Lieberstein and directed by Gary McCarver.
- ¹⁹ Seasons 2, Episode 3: "Arrowhead." *King of the Hill*. First aired on 19 October 1997. Written by Glenn Berger and directed by Klay Hall.
- ²⁰ Seasons 6, Episode 19: "Sug Night." *King of the Hill*. First aired on 5 May 2002. Written by Alex Gregory and directed by Adam Kuhlman.
- ²¹ Season 13, Episode 23: "When Joseph Met Lori and Made Out With Her in the Janitor's Closet." *King of the Hill*. First aired on 6 May 2010. Written by Sanjay Shah and directed by Ken Wong.
- ²² Seasons 10, Episode 5: "Portrait of an Artist as a Young Clown." *King of the Hill*. First aired on 4 December 2005. Written by Christy Stratton and directed by Kyounghee Lim.
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- ²⁴ Season 11, Episode 7: "Hair Today, Gone Tomorrow." *King of the Hill*. First aired on 13 May 2007. Written by Christie Stratton and directed by Kyounghee Lim.
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- ²⁶ Seasons 6, Episode 18: "My Own Private Rodeo," *King of the Hill*. First aired on 28 April 2002. Written by Peter Huyck and Alex Gregory and directed by Cyndi Tang.
- ²⁷ Seasons 3, Episode 6: "Peggy's Pageant Fever," *King of the Hill*. First aired on 10 November 1998. Written by Norm Hiscock and directed by Tricia Garcia.

²⁸ Seasons 13, Episode 13: "Nancy Does Dallas." *King of the Hill*. First aired on 22 March 2009. Written by Mike Judge and Greg Daniels, and directed by Michael Loya.

²⁹ "Nancy Does Dallas." *King of the Hill*. (00:01:46)

³⁰ Ibid (00:01:50)

³¹ Ibid (00:02:00)

³² Ibid (00:02:37)

³³ Ibid (00:03:42)

³⁴ Ibid (00:05:44)

³⁵ Ibid (00:05:12)

³⁶ Ibid (00:06:06)

³⁷ Ibid (00:11:23)

³⁸ Ibid (00:15:03)

³⁹ Ibid (00:15:33)

⁴⁰ Ibid (00:17:52)

⁴¹ Ibid (00:18:07)

⁴² Ibid (00:22:44)

⁴³ Ibid (00:23:27)

⁴⁴ Ibid (00:24:15)

⁴⁵ Ibid (00:25:23)

⁴⁶ Ibid (00:25:54)

⁴⁷ Ibid (00:26:53)

⁴⁸ "Gone With the Windstorm." *King of the Hill*. (00:00:10)

⁴⁹ Ibid (00:00:52)

⁵⁰ Ibid (00:01:20)

⁵¹ Ibid (00:02:39)

⁵² Ibid (00:03:43)

⁵³ Ibid (00:04:05)

⁵⁴ Ibid (00:04:41)

⁵⁵ Ibid (00:06:04)

⁵⁶ Ibid (00:09:00)

⁵⁷ Ibid (00:12:54)

⁵⁸ Ibid (00:13:27)

⁵⁹ Ibid (00:15:03)

⁶⁰ Ibid (00:18:48)

⁶¹ Ibid (00:20:45)

⁶² Ibid (00:21:10)

⁶³ "Pilot." *King of the Hill*. (00:00:30)

⁶⁴ Ibid (00:05:29) Hanks son, Bobby, got a black eye while playing little league baseball. When that happened, Bobby ended up having to go to school with this black eye. The school administration thinks that Bobby is making up his story about how he got the black eye playing little league baseball.

⁶⁵ Ibid (00:15:02)

⁶⁶ Ibid (00:15:09)

⁶⁷ Ibid (00:15:15)

⁶⁸ "Texas City Twister." *King of the Hill*. (00:00:30) This episode was nominated for the 1998 Emmy Award for Outstanding Animated Program (For Programming One Hour or Less).

⁶⁹ Ibid (00:03:59)

⁷⁰ Ibid (00:04:09)

⁷¹ Ibid (00:10:11)

⁷² Ibid (00:13:13)

⁷³ Ibid (00:13:15)

⁷⁴ Shiney Pines is the trailer park where Luanne's old trailer is parked. Peggy is currently on her way (despite the tornado warnings) to Shiney Pines trailer park to leave Luanne there to live now that her trailer is habitable. (00: 13:50)

⁷⁵ Ibid (00:17:44)

⁷⁶ "Arrowhead." *King of the Hill*. (00:00:10)

⁷⁷ Ibid (00:03:30)

⁷⁸ Ibid (00:16:35)

⁷⁹ "Luanne's Saga." *King of the Hill*. (00:00:10)

⁸⁰ Ibid (00:10:50)

⁸¹ Ibid (00:16:45)

⁸² Season 4, Episode 21: "Raingirl," *Married...With Children*. First aired 29 April 1990 by Fox. Directed by Gerry Cohen and written by Kevin Curran.

⁸³ "Gone With the Windstorm." *King of the Hill*. (00:01:30)

⁸⁴ "Raingirl." *Married...With Children*. (00:21:10)

⁸⁵ "Gone with the Windstorm." *King of the Hill*. (00:03:45)

⁸⁶ *Weather Girl*. DVD. Directed by Blayne Weaver. Los Angeles: Screen Identity Productions, 2008.

⁸⁷ *Weather Girl*. (00:09:50)

⁸⁸ "Gone With the Windstorm." *King of the Hill*. (00:03:04)

⁸⁹ "Gone With the Windstorm." *King of the Hill*. (00:15:00)

⁹⁰ *Weather Girl*. (01:23:25)

⁹¹ Scott, "Film review," p. 1

⁹² *Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy*. (00:07:12) Tamland: I'm Brick Tamland. People seem to like me because I'm polite and I'm rarely late. I like to eat ice cream and I really enjoy a nice pair of slacks. Years later a doctor will tell me that I have an IQ of 48 and am what some people call 'mentally retarded.'

⁹³ *Afternoon Delight* music video. (00:19:34)

⁹⁴ Ibid (00:21:16)

⁹⁵ *Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy*. (1:16:25)

⁹⁶ Ibid (00:04:40)

⁹⁸ Ibid (00:00:35) The news team is walking to the suit store and appears to be lost. Fantana asks where the suit store is because they have been walking for 45 minutes. Kind: Brick I thought you said this was a short cut. Tamland: Fantastic. Burgundy: Well is it a short cut or not? Tamland: Okay!

⁹⁹ Ibid (00:50:08)

¹⁰⁰ Ibid (00:18:49)

¹⁰¹ *Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy*. (00:14:52)

¹⁰² *Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy*. (00:08:31)

¹⁰³ "The popularity of this series was mostly due to Farrell's performance as the brassy female reporter. Farrell told one interviewer that the cinematic sob sisters 'were caricatures of newspaperwomen, as I knew them. They were generally young, intelligent, refined, and attractive.'" Joe Saltzman, *Sob Sisters: The Image of the Female Journalist in Popular Culture*, (Image of the Journalist in Popular Culture, a project of the Norman Lear Center, Annenberg School for Communication, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, 2003). p. 3 <<http://www.ijpc.org/sobsmaster.htm>> (accessed February 2008).

¹⁰⁴ "Historian Donna Born writes that the woman journalist in fiction at the turn of the century is 'single and young, attractive, independent, reliable, courageous, competent, curious, determined, economically self-supporting, professional and compassionate.'" Saltzman, *Sob Sisters*, p. 2

¹⁰⁵ "TV anchors and reporters prove irresistible to many writers in fiction, movies and TV – the females are either depicted as gorgeous blond airheads who sometimes sleep their way to the top or tough-minded women working in an all-male environment trying to prove their worth as reporters and not to be seen as sex objects." Saltzman, *Sob Sisters*, p.5

¹⁰⁶ “Female journalists in fiction during the 1940s are either portrayed as isolated super-professional journalists able to do any job perfectly or they are relegated to following orders from men because they are still female and thus unreliable.” Saltzman, *Sob Sisters*, p.4.

¹⁰⁷ *Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy*. (00:20:59)

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid* (00:41:38)

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid* (00:47:53)

¹¹⁰ “Most female reporters eventually need rescuing by the most available male.” Saltzman, *Sob Sisters*, p. 3

¹¹¹ "Nancy Gribble." Wikipedia. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nancy_Gribble. (Accessed February 12, 2011).

¹¹² “Raingirl.” *Married...With Children*. (00:15:00)

¹¹³ “Raingirl.” *Married...With Children*. (00:19:51)

¹¹⁴ Brinkley, David. "On Being an Anchorman." *The New York Times* (New York City), June 13, 2003, sec. Opinion Section.

¹¹⁵ Season 3, Episode 1: “Block Party.” *Big Love*. First aired on 18 January 2009. Written by Mark V. Olson and Will Scheffer. Directed by Daniel Attias.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid* (00:13:45)

¹¹⁷ "Diane Sawyer - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia." Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diane_Sawyer (accessed May 1, 2011).

¹¹⁸ "Kelly Lange - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia." Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kelly_Lange (accessed April 30, 2011).

¹¹⁹ "Lisa Burke - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia." Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lisa_Burke (accessed April 30, 2011).

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¹²¹ "Urban Dictionary, April 28: cold finger." Urban Dictionary, April 28: cold finger. <http://www.urbandictionary.com/> (accessed April 29, 2011).

¹²² McDangles, Eapert, and Shizzelfull. "Urban Dictionary: weather man." Urban

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¹²³ Douglas, Jamie. "Urban Dictionary: weathergirl." Urban Dictionary, April 28: cold finger. <http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=weathergirl> (accessed April 29, 2011).

¹²⁴ Skilling, Tom. "The Origin of the word Meteorology." WGN Weather Center Blog. weblogs.wgntv.com/chicago-weather/tom-skilling-blog/2009/10/the-origin-of-the-word-meteoro.html (accessed April 30, 2011).

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Appendix

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Angeles: DreamWorks, 2004.

Ron Burgundy is San Diego's top rated newsman in the male dominated broadcasting of the 1970's, but that's all about to change when a new female employee with ambition to burn arrives in his office.

Brinkley, David . "On Being an Anchorman." *The New York Times* (New York City),

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This is an opinion piece written by David Brinkley on what it is like to be an anchorman. It also candidly discusses some of the realities of the image of the anchorman and how he does not really feel the role is real journalism.

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The Wikipedia article is the complete history, creation and the characters of the animated television series.

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"Nancy Gribble." Wikipedia. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nancy_Gribble. (Accessed February 12, 2011).

This Wikipedia article about Nancy Hicks-Gribble talks about her personality quirks, her family life, and her professional life.

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Special Edition. February 1, 2007.

On September 7th, 2008, Times journalist James Poniewozik picks "The 100 Best TV Shows of All-Time." Since he picked 100 shows, he picks obvious ones

such as *The Dick Van Dyke Show*, *All in the Family*, *Your Show of Shows*, *60 Minutes*, *Cheers*, *I Love Lucy*, and *M*A*S*H*; the not-quite-so-obvious *Mystery Science Theater 3000*, *The Odd Couple*, *Friends*; and it includes a few surprises too which includes *American Idol*, *King of the Hill*, and *Oprah*.

Saltzman, Joe. "Part Two: The Female Journalists--Hollywood's Sob Sisters." In *Frank Capra and the image of the journalist in American film*. Los Angeles, CA: Norman Lear Center, the Annenberg School for Communication, 2002. 54-82.

This book is an examination of male and female journalists, editors, media tycoons, publishers and other roles of the newspaper in Frank Capra films.

Season 1, Episode 1: "Pilot," *King of the Hill*. First aired on 12 January 1997. Written by Mike Judge and Greg Daniels, and directed by Wesley Archer.

Nancy is first introduced as Dale's wife, who has many suspicious "migraine treatments" with new age healer John Redcorn. She is not yet a weathercaster.

Season 1, Episode 5: "Luanne's Saga." *King of the Hill*. First aired on 16 February 1997. Written by Paul Lieberstein and directed by Pat Shinagawa.

Nancy plays another minor character in this episode when Hank tries to find Luanne a new suitor as she was recently dumped by boyfriend Buckley. Dale passes Nancy off to John Redcorn at the country western bar where they are looking for potential boyfriends for Luanne. This episode shows Dale's ignorance to Hicks-Gribble and Redcorn's affair.

Season 1, Episode 11: "King of the Ant Hill." *King of the Hill*. First aired on 4 May 1997. Written by Paul Lieberstein and directed by Gary McCarver.

Nancy is portrayed as supportive housewife in this episode. She has coffee with her neighbor Peggy and also shows up with the rest of her neighbors to present Hank Hill at the end of the episode with a pile of sod to fix his fire and invested lawn (which was her husband's fault).

Season 2, Episode 2: "Texas City Twister." *King of the Hill*. First aired on 26

September 1997. Written by Cheryl Holliday and directed by Jeff Myers.

Nancy shows off her weather predicting skills in this episode as she begins the episode reporting live in the middle of a developing tornado. She updates Arlen through special updates called "Tornado watch '97" and "Death watch '97" as the storm gets worse. She ultimately saves the lives of the Hank, Peggy and Luanne with her weather updates.

Season 2, Episode 3: "Arrowhead." *King of the Hill*. First aired on 19 October 1997.

Written by Glenn Berger and directed by Klay Hall.

Nancy is portrayed in this episode in her personal life with Dale and John Redcorn. We see Nancy almost sneaking out the back door of the Gribble household to meet John Redcorn. They are going to a migraine convention together. When Hank goes to ask Redcorn about an arrowhead he found in his yard, he went to Nancy's house to find him. Nancy answer's her door in only a towel while Dale is working. Redcorn is at the house with only a towel on as well.

Season 2, Episode 12: "Meet the Manger Babies," *King of the Hill*. First aired on 11

January 1998. Written by Glenn Berger and Jonathan Aibel and directed by Jeff Myers.

Nancy offers to show Luanne's Manger Babies puppet show to her boss at Channel 84. She also interrupts the Super Bowl to tell Arlen residents what the weather is and introduces Luanne's first Manager Babies show on Channel 84.

Season 3, Episode 1: "Block Party." *Big Love*. First aired on 18 January 2009. Written

by Mark V. Olson and Will Scheffer. Directed by Daniel Attias.

The Hendrickson's are unwelcome at the neighborhood block party because they are not active Mormon's and are polygamists. While Bill and his second wife Nicki are discussing the block party, the news comes on and a positive image of the female broadcaster is shown. She is reporting on a story about how the prophet of a polygamist sect of the Mormon religion is being charged with rape.

Season 3, Episode 5: "Next of Shin," *King of the Hill*. First aired on 3 November 1998.

Written by Alan Freeland and Alan R. Cohan and directed by Jeff Myers.

Nancy talks about MRI's with Peggy. Nancy tells her that those are the machines the station uses to predict the weather and that they are the same things as Doppler Weather.

Season 3, Episode 6: "Peggy's Pageant Fever," *King of the Hill*. First aired on 10

November 1998. Written by Norm Hiscock and directed by Tricia Garcia.

Nancy is asked to be a celebrity judge at the Mrs. Heimlich County beauty pageant. She tells Peggy the Mrs. Heimlich County beauty pageant was the way she got her start in the television industry and got her job as a "weather analyst" at Channel 84.

Season 4, Episode 21: "Nancy's Boys." *King of the Hill*. First aired on 30 April 2000.

Written by Glenn Berger and directed by Tricia Garcia.

Nancy is shown with John Redcorn during one of her healing sessions. It comes out in this episode how involved her relationship with Redcorn is, and how he admits to her that he needs a "night off" which sends Hicks-Gribble into a panic. Dale tries to make her feel better any way he can. He congratulates her on her 79% accuracy in predicting the weather. She ends up breaking up with Redcorn in this episode.

Season 4, Episode 21: "Raingirl," *Married...With Children*. First aired 29 April 1990 by

Fox. Directed by Gerry Cohen and written by Kevin Curran.

Kelly chooses to be a weather girl rather than go to school, which makes the Bundy's happy since she'll be making more money than Al. Although, she gets fired on her first day because the news director finds out she is illiterate.

Season 5, Episode 4: "Spin the Choice," *King of the Hill*. First aired on 19 November

2000. Written by Paul Lieberstein and directed by Allan Jacobsen.

Nancy tries to keep John Redcorn from seeing Joseph that Thanksgiving before she heads off to work one morning. She also tries to get Redcorn kicked out of the Hills' Thanksgiving backyard celebration when he shows up uninvited.

However, Nancy comes to her senses and tells Joseph to get to know John Redcorn and his heritage.

Season 5, Episode 18: "The Trouble with Gribbles," *King of the Hill*. First aired on 22

April 2001. Written by Jim Dauterive and directed by Shaun Cashman.

As Nancy finishes her weathercast, a co-anchor wishes Nancy a happy 40th birthday. She is terribly embarrassed as the control room flashes a "Happy 40th Birthday Nancy" on the green screen behind her. As she is on her birthday weekend get-a-way she and Dale start to get hailed on and she decides that is sweeps worthy weather and rushes back to the station. Nancy does not make it back to the station in time before Luanne replaces her. This leads Nancy to look to plastic surgery to make her appeal to a younger audience.

Season 6, Episode 7: "Torch Song Hillogy." *King of the Hill*. First aired on 17 February

2002. Written by Emily Spivey and directed by Anthony Lioi.

Nancy is an announcer for the Olympics as the Olympic torch is run through Arlen on its way to Salt Lake City, Utah. During her weathercasts she tells where Olympic torch runner applicants can drop off their applications. When Hank Hill wins the honor, Hicks-Gribble and the Channel 84 news team show up to interview him. She also shows up to cover the passing of the torch from a disabled man from Durndle to Hank Hill in Arlen.

Season 6, Episode 18: "My Own Private Rodeo," *King of the Hill*. First aired on 28

April 2002. Written by Peter Huyck and Alex Gregory and directed by Cyndi Tang.

Nancy and Dale renew their wedding vows after 20 years marriage, and the one-year anniversary since she stopped cheating on him with John Redcorn. Nancy begs Dale to let his father come to the "re-wedding" while Dale's father's rodeo is in town.

Season 6, Episode 19: "Sug Night." *King of the Hill*. First aired on 5 May 2002.

Written by Alex Gregory and directed by Adam Kuhlman.

This is another episode about Nancy's personal life. Nancy just bought a hot tub for Dale as their first anniversary since she stopped cheating on him with John

Redcorn. She goes to Hank to help her assemble and heat the present. She strips down to a red bikini and seductively gets into the Jacuzzi, which makes Hank uncomfortable.

Season 7, Episode 7: "Get your Freak Off." *King of the Hill*. First aired on 3

November 2002. Written by Garland Testa and directed by Tricia Garcia.

Nancy, Mihn and Peggy compare notes as to who is the most attractive man in their neighborhood while sipping margaritas.

Season 7, Episode 14: "Board of the Hill." *King of the Hill*. First aired on 2 March 2003.

Written by Rebecca May and Tony Gama-Lobo.

Nancy lobby's for Peggy's election to school board president during her weathercast.

Season 9, Episode 12: "Smoking and the Bandit." *King of the Hill*. First aired on 17

April 2005. Written by Dan McGrath and directed by Cyndi Tang.

Nancy is in this episode for only a minute as she is reading the newspaper to Joseph and Dale at the breakfast table about the "Smoking Bandit."

Season 9, Episode 13: "Gone With the Windstorm," *King of the Hill*. First aired on 1

May 2005. Written by Wyatt Cenac and directed by Yvette Kaplan.

Nancy inaccurately predicts the weather for the 93rd Annual Pork festival, which leads to many unhappy Heimlich County residents. Because of this, Nancy is replaced with a real meteorologist and faces losing her job at the station. She ends up putting her life into danger reporting live dangerously close to a raging wildfire. This report lands her a job as the new co-anchor next to Miguel Hernandez.

Season 11, Episode 7: "Hair Today, Gone Tomorrow." *King of the Hill*. First aired on

13 May 2007. Written by Christie Stratton and directed by Kyounghee Lim.

Dale, convinced that he has traveled back in time, believes the world will end if he runs into his former self, and Nancy turns to her mother for help when the stress of home life and unresolved feelings for John Redcorn cause her hair to fall out. This is an important episode because we learn how vain Hicks-Gribble is about her looks because she is on TV.

Season 12, Episode 12: "Untitled Blake McCormick Project," *King of the Hill*. First aired on 18 February 2008. Written by Blake McCormick and directed by Ken Wong.

Bill falls in love after he has a blind date with Charlene, a hot single mother. However, Dale's intuition tells him something is not quite right with Charlene's daughter Kate, and after he secretly performs a DNA test he discovers that Kate is related to his son Joseph. This involves Nancy as when Dale finds out that Kate and Joseph are related, this only means that John Redcorn fathered both kids, which hurts Nancy as they have been having an affair for 15 years.

Season 13, Episode 2: "Earthy Girls Are Easy." *King of the Hill*. First aired on 8 October 2008. Written by Brad Walsh and directed by Matt Engstrom.

Hank helps Strickland Propane go green after a local paper slams the company for dumping old propane tanks into the river. Meanwhile, Mr. Strickland seizes the opportunity to impress some ladies by organizing an earth benefit concert.

Season 13, Episode 13: "Nancy Does Dallas." *King of the Hill*. First aired on 22 March 2009. Written by Mike Judge and Greg Daniels, and directed by Michael Loya.

After Nancy takes a glamorous new job in Dallas and temporarily leaving Dale behind he finds the freedom of the bachelor life too hard to handle. Dale's inability to live life on his own works out all right as Nancy gets fired for falling off a parade float while highly inebriated.

Season 13, Episode 23: "When Joseph Met Lori and Made Out With Her in the Janitor's Closet." *King of the Hill*. First aired on 6 May 2010. Written by Sanjay Shah and directed by Ken Wong.

Dale finds himself in a mental institution after arguing with Joseph about his dating life. Hicks-Gribble is in this episode in her mother role to Joseph and wife to Dale.

Season 4, Episode 21: "Raingirl," *Married...With Children*. First aired 29 April 1990 by Fox. Directed by Gerry Cohen and written by Kevin Curran.

Kelly chooses to be a weather girl rather than go to school, which makes the Bundy's happy since she'll be making more money than Al.

Skilling, Tom. "The Origin of the word Meteorology." WGN Weather Center Blog.

weblogs.wgntv.com/chicago-weather/tom-skilling-30, 2011).

This is a blog where viewers can write in to the WGN Weather Center blog and get their questions and sometimes comments answered in blog format.

"Urban Dictionary, April 28: cold finger." Urban Dictionary, April 28: cold finger.

<http://www.urbandictionary.com/> (accessed April 29, 2011).

The Urban Dictionary is an online dictionary of words and their meanings according to individuals' slang definition. People contribute to this similar to Wikipedia. The website boasts 5,781,075 definitions since 1999.

Weather Girl. DVD. Directed by Blayne Weaver. Los Angeles: Screen Identity Productions, 2008.

A Seattle weather girl freaks out on-air over her cheating boyfriend, the morning show anchor, and moves in with her little brother.

"WRGB - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia." Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/WRGB> (accessed April 28, 2011).

