

# Face-Off: What is the worth of TV?

TV is the foundation upon which this nation stands

Television is cause of the discombobulation of America

## Jess Sheppard

The Clackamas Print

Mention TV and there's always someone in the room who groans and spouts an anti-TV sentiment.

Obviously, that anti-TV person has conveniently forgotten all the good things that television has done for him or her.

What happened to the entire family watching classic shows like *Perry Mason*, *Murder, She Wrote* and *The Twilight Zone*? Those were hours when everyone could be engaged something as a whole.

And what about those very educational channels that unfortunately can only be found on cable, such as the Discovery Channel and Animal Planet? If nothing interesting is happening on either of those stations, then it must be because it's a re-run.

On the other hand, there is always the History Channel. Whether it's a tour of Frank-amen's tomb, or a documentary on serial killers, or even a special on the life cycle of squid, there is always something to learn.

Consider, also, how often teachers will suggest watching a particular program. And isn't just history teachers; instructors in biology, religious studies and theatre arts do too.

Even movies have something to teach us. We see examples, both good and bad, of the techniques they are being taught. A student studying religion could spend hours analyzing the ways of the Jedi.

Instructors in Clackamas' Criminal Justice department even have their students watch movies about serial killers and have them file the murderers.

At the very least, in the event of a zombie uprising, there are those among us who would know exactly what to do. You know you are.

Let us also not overlook video games, for they are often played on the TV and sit right at it in the category of things on which blame is placed. Games encourage problem-solving, strategy and planning ahead.

Even *God of War* fans are getting a subliminal lesson in mythology as they hack

and slash through the monsters of legend. On the reverse, those who watched that History Channel documentary on Greek Mythology already know that to kill a hydra, you must kill the primary head. You will know it because it's the one that has the same roar as the Spinosaurus in *Jurassic Park 3*.

Which brings up another point: Who doesn't admire the person at the lunch table who can name that sound effect? Or the one guy with whom you go to see an animated movie because he can recognize the voice of James Earl Jones, even if he is a cartoon lion or in a huge, black suit. That person gains respect in the geek community and always has an interesting bit of information to brighten your day.

And of course, we have the news. It keeps us in the know on the status of diplomatic relations and warns us of dangerous happenings in our area of residence.

It even tracks our sports teams and stocks for us. Certainly, everyone can appreciate the usefulness of the news, even if it isn't always educational.

But if it's education you're set on, there is always OPB. While their cartoons may be overly childish, their documentaries give Discovery Channel a run for its money. Even during the Winter Olympics, when all the other channels are only covering the sports, OPB would rather play a program on the Nuremberg Trials or the plight of women forced into prostitution.

So, the next time that TV-Nazi at the next table opens his or her mouth against the tube, challenge him or her to admit how much of his or her knowledge was learned from a TV screen.

## Ben Caldwell

The Clackamas Print

TV is the worst thing ever invented.

Its flashing lights keep people drawn in. That is why I don't understand people who say it is educational - it's not.

The attention-span that most modern people have is so short that it is hard for them to have a regular conversation with someone. The constantly-changing, flashing light that the television puts off causes this, because people have sat in front of a TV ever since infancy.

When our parents' generation started watching TV, it was a miracle invention designed to bring the world into your living room. Television

programming was geared towards adults and contained generally good information.

TV in today's world is aimed at the younger generation. Producers figure, "Hey we already got some 300 million people hooked; let's get their kids, too."

The thing that gets to me most is that parents put their children in front of the damned thing just to keep them quiet. That is not parenting.

Parents just plop the kids down and leave them to their own devices. They have no idea what their kids are watching. Then, they wonder why little Johnny is running around the house beating the cat.

That sort of behavior is why the American populous is so freaking fat - oh, I am sorry - "morbidly obese." It's not just the constantly-changing lights and scenes that make TV bad; it is also the stupid people who are broadcast directly into your living room.

However, not all television is bad. There are some rather interesting documentaries, but the consistency of bad programming is just making people dumber. It is a self-perpetuating problem because the TV makes such a wonderful babysitter and a great companion for the elderly.

Television is taking our ability to think for ourselves from us and replacing it with a hive mind. TV is the Borg; it assimilates you, then destroys the individual in you and replaces it with a sheep that will do as it's told. Tune in at 6 p.m. for all new episodes.

The hive mind in today's society is brought about by one thing and one thing only: TV. People tune in to get the most up-to-date opinion that everybody needs to share.

TV ... educational - yeah, that's some B.S. If television was educational, it would be restricted to PBS and the History Channel.

Media corporations won't do that. They can't do that. If they did, they would lose money. Everyone knows money is the root of all evil, and TV is a very evil thing.

Families who watch television together aren't really spending any real time together; they just happen to be occupying the same room at the same time. TV breaks down family ties and degrades the moral fiber of our country.

To say TV is educational is to say Hitler had the right idea - it is just plain wrong.



Illustration by Andrea Simpson Clackamas Print

## Mingo makes more movie magic

### Jess Sheppard

The Clackamas Print

Instructor Andy Mingo is very excited about his upcoming film, *The Iconographer*.

It is his first feature-length film.

Mingo not only wrote the script; he is also producer and director.

*The Iconographer* tells the story of two brothers, and is set primarily in their father's liquor shop. One brother has just lost his job as an icon-broker, and the other is deeply distraught over his recent divorce. The first brother then takes it upon himself to "fix" his flawed sibling.

Essentially, he turns his brother into a replica of himself.

His attempts, however, do not go as planned, and in a cruel twist of irony, he ends up permanently destroying his brother's life. The movie is very much about identity, with delicious tones of irony laced into it.

The film is still in preproduction. Most of the parts have been cast, and several of the

locations have been selected, though the role of one of the brothers is unfilled and a location for the film's liquor store is still being scouted. Mingo and his crew plan to rent a shop space and turn it into a temporary liquor store. They are already hard at work saving up bottles.

The actual filming is estimated to be finished by this September, anticipating time for major delays. Mingo is shooting for completion by spring of next year.

In addition to Mingo, sev-



MINGO

eral Clackamas students are involved in the film. Heather Jacobs is assistant director, and Jake Johnson is the director of photography. Many other local actors and technicians are also involved.

Mingo was initially inspired by a liquor store in Reno in which he worked during his younger years. The store was owned by his best friend's parents, who were "absolutely crazy."

"I wanted to tell a grand story on a small scale," he said, and a liquor store seemed like an ideal place to set it. A good liquor store is "commonplace on a grand scale."

Before *The Iconographer*, Mingo worked on six individual short films. These short films can all be accessed on [www.chiasmusmedia.net](http://www.chiasmusmedia.net), a Web site that publishes, distributes and produces films by thought-provoking artists who like to be outside-the-box.

Mingo's first films were experimental in nature. Then, he switched to a more dramatic style, particularly with his latest short, titled *Bravo America*. "Each one was a step toward *Iconographer*," he said.

"The materials and exercises have immediate application - and the discussions help put those principles into practice."

**Matthew Conser**  
Vice President, Conser Design and Construction

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