

Why watching tv is bad



Here is a question that comes to mind, but is it ever really thought about? Does television make people smarter? According to Steven Johnson's "watching TV makes you smarter" he states, "The relationship between the explicit violence and the post 9/11 terrorist attack anxiety is not the only element of 24 that would have been unthinkable on prime time network twenty years ago"(278).

Personally I don't believe that television makes you gain knowledge. I have never heard of anyone stating that until now. All my life I have heard that knowledge is earned not learned, meaning that you can't just gain knowledge by pressing a button but rather picking up a book or newspaper. Yes, there are educational programs on PBS and National Geographic, but it is overshadowed by the shows that show us a false reality.

Dana Stevens supports my argument with a statement from her article "Thinking Outside of the Idiot Box" saying "as far as I can tell his thesis is that television shows have slowly grown more and more complicated over the last two decades, so that now, like rats in a behaviorist maze, trained viewers can differentiate among up to twelve distinct plot lines in shows like The Sopranos (295). Reality TV is one of the most viewed TV programs watched by Americans. It shows how "real" life is portrayed following a person or certain group.

Steven Johnson stated that "reality programming borrowed another key ingredient from games: the intellectual labor of probing the system's rules for weak spots and opportunities" (290). Reality TV shows are quick to show the weakness of a social group and exploit it causing the people to watch it

view that person as a figurehead of this social group in the wrong way. If they don't only have the wrong view of a person some misinterpret a show, like in Teen Mom. Instead of seeing the hardships of a 15-16 year old having a kid, that 15 or 16 year old was praised for having that child.

Or possibly that its ok to get drunk all the time, get in fights or even have many sexual encounters as shown in Jersey Shore. Not only are the reality TV shows deteriorating the public viewing of a social group but the dramas and soaps of the TV world also hinders the TV viewers thought of way things work in real world. Many have viewed CSI, Law and Order, and 24. The show 24 in particular is what Johnson calls a “ real-time thriller known for its cliffhanger tension and often gruesome violence. Dana Stevens some what mocks Johnson when he talks about 24 saying that he stated, “[He] breezily dismisses recent controversies about the programs’ representation of Muslim terrorists or its implicit endorsement of torture” (296). If not 24, Law and Order or CSI, show that men and women of the law can take shortcuts and break jurisdictions to bring down the bad guys. I remember as a kid watching my father, which worked for DHS/ICE, getmad when any cop related TV show, would show the FBI come in and take over. I can still hear him yelling at the TV saying “ that’s not your jurisdiction! Although I disagree that TV makes you smarter, there are educational programs out there that do educate the mind. PBS, National Geographic, and the History Channel, all show and have educational programs, many of which are used in classrooms today. Like I said before they are all horribly overshadowed by the TVs entertainment shows. Those small few of educational and even witty shows do teach us a few things that can possibly use from day to day life, but what

is the use of information when you are a zoned out couch potato. To reiterate on the question of “ Does TV make You Smarter? the answer is no. The only big thing that stands out is that TV does is waste time and consume peoples mind with unnecessary ignorance, even with the educational programs out there a kid is more likely to turn on the Disney channel over the History channel. If not a kid a college student is less likely to flip to the news, then to see who slept with Snooki on Jersey Shore. The point of TV is to draw you in with bait and have you hooked so that they can accomplish getting more viewer ratings, it doesn't matter if educational or not. So when you turn on a TV what channel do you click to?