

# The trouble with television analysis essay sample



What is the trouble with television? In MacNeil's article, "The Trouble with Television," he states that television discourages concentration. MacNeil wrote this article around thirty years ago, so one may ask of the article's validity today. The claim that television discourages concentration still contains its prior validity today. The variety of different shows becomes somewhat of a narcotic (280, 1, 1). People constantly have a guide through the many wonders of this world in 30 minute to one hour programs. People hold the inability to focus on an actual tour in this generation, so they resolve to go to cartoons and whatnot to take a subconscious tour of the world. People watch things such as American Dad, where the main character works for the CIA; the main character takes you on an un-educational tour throughout his world. We have about ten minutes of the program, and then we receive a break so our tiny attention spans can recover during commercials. We don't concentrate because programs give us no reason to do so. Commercials crave your attention with small details, but they don't need to keep it for very long. Commercials are short, colorful, and made for simple minded creatures; they don't provoke your thoughts.

The HP commercial that plays "Too Close" by Alex Clare provides a fine example. Techno music gives the commercial a catchy tune and the flashing colorful pictures makes people not think, just want to buy. The makers of the commercials add an appeal, whether it's sexual appeal or the bandwagon effect. People don't face a challenge in any way with commercials when it comes to focus. Television has become a mindless habit. If one were to observe a child watching television, they could see the child's blank expression and distant stare. Their minds constantly switch gears to match

the program's constant change of action. One sees this very often in children, especially as a babysitter. Working with children provides the ability to observe their behavior as they watch programs such as Spongebob Squarepants or Fairly Odd Parents. These fifteen minute episodes constantly introduce something new, which discourages children from concentrating on one particular thing. Literacy has become quite scarce in America. MacNeil raises the case of the crisis of literacy in the country.

Yes, education programs do exist, but they were created for either the simple-minded child or the person with an above average attention span willing to focus on a three hour documentary about pie crusts. While watching television, it seems as though our attention spans decrease. While in school, a short attention span decreases the amount of information that we absorb. Humans begin our path to illiteracy because of a great lack of concentration. (<http://www.talkingpage.org/NIAP2007.pdf>) According to The National Illiteracy Action Project, 22 million Americans are added to the illiteracy list every year. Television is a very large source of our illiteracy because it doesn't challenge our minds. We would rather watch a program than read a book.

The lack of mature material suppresses intelligent thoughts. Our focus doesn't receive a challenge. Before television existed, there were brilliant people such as Albert Einstein, Thomas Edison, Benjamin Franklin, the Orville brothers, Meriwether Lewis and William Clark who all accomplished great things and were literate. Just think, what if television had never been invented? What would the human race have accomplished in the last 87 years? In conclusion, television pulls the human mind out of its proper zone.

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We need to take a stand against television so the future generations do not become consumed by its many colorful pictures. Intelligent as humans were created, they should all take a stand and tell their children or other family members that they should read a book instead of watch television or even completely rid television in their households. One day, everyone will see the trouble with television.