

Journalism 101
Professor T. Jackson
Chapter 9 - Television
Due: November 22

Show choice - Arrested Development

This show focuses around an extended family (The Bluth Family) that is coping with their patriarch of the having just been arrested for fraud and treason. The dutiful middle son, Michael is forced to take over the family business, while his mother, siblings and their spouses want to continue taking money from the business's coffers.

What attracts you to this television program?

I think that the writing and acting are the two main things that draw me to this show. The writing is top-notch. It's consistently hilarious on multiple levels - often times there are jokes that are so subtle that I don't get them until the second or third time I watch an episode. Additionally, I think that this is one of the few shows that has (for me) a lot of re-watchability. I've watched the entire show run at least 3 times. The characters are quirky, and are portrayed wonderfully.

Which characters do you most enjoy and why?

The character that I enjoy most in this family are Michael Bluth (portrayed by Jason Bateman) - the 'straight man' of the show. He is invested in making a better life for he and his son, and tries honestly to keep the family together and the family business running, despite the interference of the rest of his family. He is an honest, good-hearted character that continually tries to better his standing in life, whilst living amongst a group of corrupt, greedy, mildly insane family members. In addition, I like the character of Gob Bluth, the magician older-brother. He has some of the best dialogue and recurring issues, and is portrayed extremely well.

What is the normal conflict for this program?

The conflict in this show almost entirely revolves around the struggle of Michael Bluth trying to do the right thing, and being stopped, either overtly or subversively by another member

of his family. He is constantly struggling to keep the business afloat, get his father out of jail, and keep up a relationship with his son.

Is this show already converging with the Internet? If so, how? If not, what are ways in which it could?

Yes, this show has converged with the internet in a way that most shows have not. The show was originally aired on Fox for three seasons, starting in 2003. It was critically acclaimed, but wasn't overly popular when it aired. It was cancelled in 2006. By 2011, it had gained a massive cult following, as well as making several "Top XXX Television Shows Of All Time" lists. It gained a huge following once it was released on the Netflix streaming website, and in 2011, Netflix bought the rights and filmed an entire season of the show which was released entirely online. It was enormously popular.

What are your predictions about the future of this television program?

This show is popular enough that I think that Netflix will invest in one or two more seasons of the show, or possibly a full length movie. Given that it struggled and was off air for 7 years, and yet the producers managed to get the entire cast to return for another season, I feel that they would be able to reconstruct the cast and fund more episodes.

For what reasons do you watch television (referring to page 224 – 225 of your text) to be entertained, to learn or gain information, or for social reasons? Please explain.

I watch television almost exclusively for entertainment, and a huge percentage (almost 100%) is watched online. I tend to find a show that I like, but doesn't require too much concentration, and watch it while I am doing other tasks. The only time I ever use the actual TV to watch is for live sports, 1-2 times a week. This has changed slightly in the last few months - I have been using the television as more of a social tool - to bond with my son. He has specific shows that he likes to watch (such as Thomas The Tank Engine), and I will use that time to snuggle on the couch with him, although I don't care about the actual content of the show.