

Trials & Tribulations of a twentysomething

Yesterday I had actually resigned myself to the idea that I would not be able to print my column this week simply because my busy life as a student did not allow for such a luxury as free time. O.K., so that's a blatant lie. I would have had plenty of time to write an article had I not spent the weekend in the depths of procrastination. I could have blamed my troubles on writer's block, but that is such a cliché, and besides, I am not afraid to admit that I, thus demonstrating the basis of our generation's existence, am a hopeless slacker.

Now that I have satisfied your undying curiosity with one more piece of my personal strife I can move on to a discussion of children's television: number two in a series. You may remember the first part of this ongoing series for it was a discussion of that all-time favorite-Mr. Dressup, and the horrific effects it has had on our social awareness. With this instalment, I plan to answer, and indeed ask, the many questions we on the verge of adulthood have pondered since childhood concerning Sesame Street.

I do not know of anyone who was not permitted to be raised partly by this television programme. We all watched Sesame Street in the late seventies and into the eighties, an era when quality time meant sitting one metre away from a television airing quality children's programming.

The effects of Sesame Street are readily evident within the X generation. How sad it is that we have become a generation of sharing, co-operation and tolerance rather than greedy, money-wise, suburbanites. The world must hang its head in shame for a generation concerned more with "them" than "me". One of my colleagues from the architecturally challenged Kelley building shared with me some of her thoughts on the presentation of Sesame Street: the fact that there are no commercials and the show contains very short pieces concerning everything from the french alphabet to the life of a letter at Canada Post-how intense. Thanks to this presentational style, we have become a group lacking in attentiveness. We must be captivated every minute or we drift off. We go from Sesame Street to MuchMusic in a logical transition.

Sesame Street, like Mr. Dressup, has done more than simply change the face of twentysomething society, it has also consumed so many thoughts as we wonder about the truth behind this show which takes place on a fictitious street in a large city with an unwelcome absence of cars. Questions are bound to arise concerning those children who were constantly running and playing without a care in the world. Where was Sesame Street Elementary School? I also have questions concerning the relationship between Ernie and Bert. Brothers? Perhaps, but where were their parents? I suppose they had an apartment together and lived on their own. Did they work? Who knows? Bert collected paper clips and called pigeons his best friends. Is this a healthy role model for our children? Oh, and let us not forget Bert had but one far reaching eyebrow rather than the standard two. Was Bert a full-blown freak? Only the Children's Television Workshop has the answers and they aren't talking.

There are other questions of course surrounding the frustration created in our knowing minds when Sesame Street adults refused to believe in the Snuffalupagus. Children across North America sighed collectively in relief when Big Bird's friend was finally exposed as being real. The pressure off my young mind was so pleasing. I realize you too have many questions for which answers seem all but non-existent. Someday, however, the government of the world will realize that Sesame Street

has been nothing more than a vehicle for the propagation of happiness. How long will the CTW go in its attempt to take over the world!

Just as you are about to relax knowing that the Street's effects have already taken place and there is nothing we can do, I think I should warn you that the show is already forcing its way into our generation's pop culture. A techno bond from the UK that was obviously deeply affected and disturbed by Sesame Street in the 1970's has released a song called "Sesame's Street" and sampled the show's theme song. We have gone from getting high on Froot-Loops while watching Sesame Street to getting high on ecstasy while dancing to a distorted version of its theme song. I am sure we will all agree that the time has come for the wrecking ball to come down on this street representing all that is wrong in our lives. ●

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