

# BEST QUOTES ON MEDIA

My mom should make eye contact with me when she talks to me. I used to watch TV with my dad, but now he has his iPad, and I watch by myself.

—Child Interviewed by  
Linda Stone

Books are no more threatened by Kindle than stairs by elevators.

—Stephen Fry

The day is coming, and it ain't going to be long, when you ain't even gonna have to leave your living room. No more schools, nor more bodegas, no more tabernacles, no more cineplexes. You're going to snuggle up to your fiber optics baby and bliss out.

—Andrew Schneider

When Sherry Turkle, the MIT clinical psychologist and author, interviewed college students, they said texting was causing friction in their face-to-face interactions. While hanging out with friends they'd be texting surreptitiously at the same time, pretending to maintain eye contact but mentally somewhere else. The new form of communication was fun, sure, but it was colliding with—and eroding—the old one.

—Clive Thompson

Television is chewing gum for the eyes.

--Frank Lloyd Wright

I find television very educating. Every time somebody turns on the set I go into the other room and read a book.

--Groucho Marx

What the mass media offer is not popular art, but entertainment which is intended to be consumed like food, forgotten, and replaced by a new dish.

--W. H. Auden

Television is not the truth. Television is a god-damned amusement park. Television is a circus, a carnival, a traveling troupe of acrobats, storytellers, dancers, singers, jugglers, sideshow freaks, lion tamers and football players. We're in the boredom-killing business.

--Paddy Chayefsky

Television is the first truly democratic culture—the first culture available to everybody and entirely governed by what the people want. The most terrifying thing is what people do want.

--Clive Barnes

Asking someone ‘where are you’ is a recent thing. Before we had mobile phones, the only way we could talk to people is if we knew where they were.

—Unknown

Facebook makes me feel bad. No matter how satisfied I am with my life, career, family, social life, house, etc., as soon as I log on to Facebook and peek into other’s lives, I immediately feel that unease caused by comparison....A little kernel of doubt settles into my gut, and it feels really bad.

--Glennon Doyle Melton

Kids today don’t know how easy they have it. When I was young I had to walk 9 feet through shag carpet to change the TV channel.

—Kent Graham

[On the time-sucking quagmire that is social media] It reminds me of a stinky old pub. In the corner would be this slightly disgusting old man who sits there all day, every day. If you went up and talked to him, you’d get the kind of grumpy, horrible, moldy, old meaningless crap that you read on Twitter.

--Helen Mirren

On the one hand, parents want their children to swim expertly in the digital stream that they will have to navigate all their lives; on the other hand, they fear that too much digital media, too early, will sink them. Parents end up treating tablets like precision surgical instruments, gadgets that might perform miracles for their child’s IQ and help him win some nifty robotics competition—but only if they are used just so. Otherwise, their child could end up one of those sad, pale creatures who can’t make eye contact and has an avatar for a girlfriend.

--Hanna Rosin

It has become appallingly obvious that our technology has exceeded our humanity.

--Albert Einstein

When vaudeville died, television was the box they put it in.

--Bob Hope

If you read a lot of books, you're considered well-read. But if you watch a lot of TV, you're not considered well-viewed.

--Lily Tomlin

There's so much comedy on television. Does that cause comedy in the streets?

--Dick Cavett, mocking  
the TV violence  
debate

TV takes our kids across the globe before parents give them permission to cross the street.

—Joshua Meyrowitz

Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic.

--Arthur C. Clarke

People are rendered passive as truth is drowned in a sea of amusing irrelevance. People become entertained slaves of technologies that destroy their ability to think.

--Neil Postman

The momentum of technology is outstripping our ability to manage it .

--Daniel Boorstin

The phone improved our social behavior because it forced a listener to pay closer attention to a speaker.

—Clive Thompson

The experience of reading a fine, old book cannot be duplicated by any electronic media today. A fine, old book appeals to all the senses as one carefully turns and fingers the fragile, yellowed pages; as one unites with the distant past with each whiff of the musty tome and as the book virtually whispers to the reader with each stiff, crinkly turn of the delicate page.

--Dan L. Miller

To condemn technology in toto is to forget gardens made green by desalinization of sea water, while to idealize technology is to forget Hiroshima.

--Stuart Chase

Television has changed the American child from an irresistible force into an immovable object.

--Laurence J. Peter

Children will watch anything, and when a broadcaster uses crime and violence and other shoddy devices to monopolize a child's attention it's worse than taking candy from a baby. It is taking precious time from the process of growing up.

--Newton Minow

Our lifetime may be the last that will be lived out in a technological society.

--Isaac Asimov

Advertising is designed to create, and does create, dissatisfaction...Advertising intended for an audience that can afford what it offers also works...on those who cannot afford it; it inflames the desires of the poor without offering them any satisfaction at all. Perhaps the poor are 'better off than ever before,' as some say, but they can hardly be expected to be satisfied with this after watching television...Television might justly be called a riot box.

--Charles A. Reich

Television is the literature of the illiterate, the culture of the low-brow, the wealth of the poor, the privilege of the underprivileged, the exclusive club of the excluded masses.

--Lee Loevinger

Television has proved that people will look at anything rather than each other.

--Ann Landers

In the age of television, image becomes more important than substance.

--S. I. Hayakawa

I hate television. I hate it as much as peanuts. But I can't stop eating peanuts.

--Orson Welles

A nation...has permitted a communications system of such potential to develop into so miserable and dangerous a contraption.

--Eric F. Goldman

What this generation was bred to at television's knee was not wisdom but cynicism.

Pauline Kael

The family has been re-structured into a miniature audience, and the home into a miniature theater, modeled on the movie house.

--Gunther Anders

Television creates its own events, something even the most imaginative newspaper reporter cannot do. The newspaperman can only create words, and however powerful they may be, words do not happen over the breakfast table as television happens in a living room.

--Henry Fairlie

The influence exerted by the television screen is centrifugal. The seats in front of the screen are so arranged that the members of the family no longer face each other....They are no longer together, they are merely placed one beside the other, as mere spectators.

--Gunther Anders

Technology—the application of science and knowledge for practical purposes—does not just happen. It is a response to the needs of a changing society and economy.

--Robert J. Samuelson

Technological change feeds on previous technological change, and the rate of change increases steadily.

--Isaac Asimov

Technology is the most tremendous and far-reaching engine of social change which has ever either blessed or cursed mankind.

--Charles Francis Adams

I hear the iron horse make the hills echo with his snort like thunder, shaking the earth with his feet and it seems as if the earth had got a race now worthy to inhabit it.

--Henry David Thoreau

Technology will continue at the center of the American imagination, but perhaps more as a force for humility than a source of national pride.

--Peter McBrath

Television and print cannot coexist: books are doomed. Television will always overwhelm words with pictures, and will debase such language as it uses.

--George F. Will

Television does not ban books, it simply displaces them.

--Neil Postman

Children who have been taught, or conditioned, to listen passively most of the day to the warm verbal communications coming from the TV screen, to the deep emotional appeal of the so-called TV personality, are often unable to respond to real persons because they arouse so much less feeling than the skilled actor.

--Bruno Bettelheim

Television is a medium of entertainment which permits millions of people to listen to the same joke at the same time, and yet remain lonesome.

--T. S. Eliot

The hand that rules the press, the radio, the screen and the far-spread magazine, rules the country.

--Learned Hand

In an automobile civilization, which was one of constant motion and activity, there was almost no time to think; in a television one, there is small desire.

--Louis Kronenberger

When distant and unfamiliar and complex things are communicated to great masses of people, the truth suffers a considerable and often a radical distortion. The complex is made over into the simple, the hypothetical into the dogmatic, and the relative into an absolute.

--Walter Lippmann

It is not enough to show people how to live better: there is a mandate for any group with enormous powers of communication to show people how to be better.

--Marya Mannes

It is television's primary damage that it provides ten million children with the same fantasy, ready-made and on a platter.

--Marya Mannes

Television was not intended to make human beings vacuous, but it is an emanation of their vacuity.

--Malcolm Muggeridge

Already we Viewers, when not viewing, have begun to whisper to one another that the more we elaborate our means of communication, the less we communicate.

--J. B. Priestley

There are days when any electrical appliance in the house, including the vacuum cleaner, seems to offer more entertainment possibilities than the TV set.

--Harriet Van Horne

One machine can do the work of fifty ordinary men. No machine can do the work of one extraordinary man.

--Elbert Hubbard

You probably won't hear opportunity knock if the television set is always on.

--Unknown

To some people television is just a sleeping pill plugged in.

--Unknown

Children who watch television every night will go down in history—not to mention arithmetic, geography, and science.

--Unknown

Literature has taken a back seat to television.

--Tennessee Williams

Television, the scorned stepchild of drama, may well be the basic theater of our century.

--Paddy Chayefsky

To truly understand television, you must first unlearn a popular misconception. Except in the strictest technological sense, television is not primarily a communications medium. It is primarily a sales medium. In an interesting reversal of the normal box office concept, it sells its audience to the actual and only customers, the advertisers.

--Stewart Bronfeld

Commercial television makes so much money doing its worst that it cannot afford to do its best.

--Fred Friendly

Technology...the knack of so arranging the world that we don't have to experience it.

--Max Frisch

The medium is the message.

—Marshall McLuhan

If the human race wants to go to hell in a basket, technology can help it get there by jet. It won't change the desire or the direction, but it can greatly speed the passage.

--Charles M. Allen

If there is technological advance without social advance, there is, almost automatically, an increase in human misery.

--Michael Harrington

The fantastic advances in the field of electronic communication constitute a greater danger to the privacy of the individual.

--Earl Warren

A claim, whether true or untrue, must be made in language. More precisely, it must take the form of a proposition, for that is the universe of discourse from where such words as true and false come. If that universe is discarded, an advertisement is immune to the rigors of logical analysis or empirical tests. Such questions do not apply in the world of visual images. Through television the visual image, embedded in a variety of dramatic forms, has now emerged as our basic unit of political conversation.

--Neil Postman

The media, sometimes intentionally, but often unintentionally, have the function of providing models for behavior. In some instances, propaganda is used in a deliberate attempt to influence values and beliefs. In other instances, the content of the ads and entertainment functions to convey particular norms of society.

--John W. Kinch

No mighty king, no ambitious emperor, no pope, or prophet ever dreamt of such an awesome pulpit, so potent a magic wand (television).

--Fred. W. Friendly

We live in a world where media are omnipresent: an increasing number of people spend a great deal of time watching television, reading newspapers and magazines, playing records and listening to the radio...The role of communication and media in the process of development should not be underestimated, nor the function of media as instruments for the citizen's active participation in society. Political and educational systems need to recognise their obligations to promote in their citizens a critical understanding of the phenomena of communication.

--*UNESCO Declaration of  
Media Education*



Children today live in a multimedia world. It is a world composed of media forms that are now part of the total culture in which a child is born, grows, and develops into an adult. It is also a world in which the United States is well on its way to being truly universal in its cultural diversity. Against the backdrop of the media explosion and changing cultural landscape in the country, television and other electronic media are becoming more important than ever as a type of noncertified teacher of children.

--Gordon L. Berry and  
Joy Keiko Asamen

All television is education television. The only question is, What is it teaching?

--Nicholas Johnson

I believe that one reason why it is hard to interest some children in school today is that their minds have been filled and their imagination thrilled with too vivid motion pictures, and, when these children come to school, they are disappointed because the teacher cannot make the subject as interesting as a motion picture.

--Peter Olesen, School  
Superintendent,  
addressing the  
*National  
Education  
Association*, 1914

Television is much more than mere entertainment; it is also a major source of observational learning experiences, a setter of norms. It determined what people judge to be appropriate behavior in a variety of situations. Indeed it might be that television has become one of the most important agencies of socialization that our society possesses.

--J. Philippe Rushton

Through the electronic media, young children are witnesses to 'facts' that contradict social myths and ideals even before they learn about the myths and ideals in school. Children see politicians disgraced, police officers and teachers on strike for higher pay, parents accused of battering their children. Through television news and entertainment, children learn too much about the nature of the 'real' life to believe the ideals their teachers try to teach them. The result is not only that they grow up fast, but that they grow up having an image of society and roles that differs markedly from that held by children of earlier generations.

--Joshua Meyrowitz

Television and the newer electronic media, if used wisely, have great positive potential for learning and development. They give children different mental skills from those developed by reading and writing.

--Patricia M. Greenfield

The growing influence of the mass media—particularly television and popular music—raises troubling moral questions. Through simplistic coverage of issues, many television programs project a ‘quick fix’ mentality that discourages thoughtfulness and encourages violence and questionable social mores. Television programs and commercials encourage such values as materialism, overconsumption, superficiality, and casual sexual behavior, and reinforce racial, ethnic, and sex-role stereotypes. How can school encourage more responsible attention to the values content of the mass media or, failing that, counteract this influence?

--*Moral Education in the  
Life of the School*

Television retards the development of the brain, blunts the senses and encourages mental laziness. It impairs children’s sense of their own identity, their linguistic abilities and their attention span. Furthermore, because of their addiction to television, children are deprived of play and of the opportunity to participate in the interpersonal rituals of family life.

--Neil Postman

One problem with the marvelous technology that is emerging to empower our minds and science is that it so often neglects music, art, poetry and drama—that is, the spiritual. Our problems are not just scientific and intellectual. We can know what must be done and how to do it...and still not do it.

--Parker Rossman

There is a monster of citizenly discontent running amok in the land, and it is time for each of us to ask what our responsibility may be for the damage it is doing to our country...What we are witnessing is not simply a war against the government, but a war against kindness. Marshall McLuhan once characterized radio as ‘the tribal drum,’ best used to arouse primitive emotions. Judging from what I hear on the airwaves these days, I would say he is right. Talk show hosts are quick to defend their broadcasts as the *vox populi*. If that is so, how I wish that voice still knew how to sing.

--Theodore Roszak

Technology is so much fun we can drown in technology. But the fog of information can drive out knowledge.

--Daniel Boorstin

Television is made hard to listen to. The attention given the graphics and the quality of the picture far exceeds that given the script and the sound. Since these things are done on the basis of research by the manufacturer, there was probably a test given somewhere that proved that most people couldn't answer a simple question about something that was said on TV, but could tell you what they saw. People are more likely to say 'We got a great picture last night' than 'We saw a great picture.'

--Dick Cavett

People want TV to be a visual Muzak, a mind deadener. More of the masses are in search of an opiate than in search of a stimulant.

--Dick Cavett

A talking machine is company; the house is disturbingly quiet with it off. If you add to this the sound of people talking there is even more of an illusion of company. There is also, if you are going to listen to what they are saying—by no means a safe assumption—there is also the possibility that they will say something unexpected, startling, shocking. So there is company plus suspense. If they are saying something interesting, informative, entertaining, you have a third element. You now have a companionable, stimulating, arresting entity; that is, if you buy this idea that TV can be any or all of those things.

--Dick Cavett

Our official culture is trying to force the new media to do the work of the old.

--Marshall McLuhan

Gains in (technology) are never registered automatically in society; they require equally adroit inventions and adaptations in politics...Lacking a cooperative social intelligence and good-will, our most refined technics promise no more for society's improvement than an electric bulb would promise to a monkey in the midst of a jungle.

--Lewis Mumford

The average kindergartner is coming to school with 6,000 hours of television experience.

--Dr. Nancy Richardson

Educational television should be absolutely forbidden. It can only lead to unreasonable expectations and eventual disappointment when your child discovers that the letters of the alphabet do not leap out of books and dance around the room with royal-blue chickens.

--Fran Leibowitz

Commercial TV teaches people to scorn complexity and to feel, not think. It has come to present society as a pagan circus of freaks, pseudo heroes and wild morons. It helps immeasurably to worsen the defects of American public education and of tabloid news in print.

--Robert Hughes

You don't laugh with me;  
I don't laugh with you.  
All the wit comes pouring out of the tube.  
And we laugh at it together.  
The more we avoid talking  
the more passive the relationship becomes.  
Television permits us to walk through life  
with minor speaking parts.  
And the more we fail to speak,  
the more difficult speaking becomes.

--Lois Wyse

There is no medical proof that television causes brain damage—at least from over five feet away. In fact, TV is probably the least physically harmful of all the narcotics known to man.

--Christopher  
Lehmann-Haupt

If we were to do the Second Coming of Christ in color for a full hour, there would be a considerable number of stations which would decline to carry it on the grounds that a Western or a quiz show would be more profitable.

--Edward R. Murrow

Our schools may be educating our children, but for better or worse; it's television that's teaching them.

--Peter Herrndorf

The programs that we see on TV do not 'reflect our society,' as the industry likes to claim, but a distorted vision based on the tastes of a relative few.

--Sen. Joseph Lieberman

Television enables you to be entertained in your home by people you wouldn't have in your home.

--David Frost

Television is democracy at its ugliest.

--Paddy Chayefsky

All television is educational television. The question is: what is it teaching?

--Nicholas Johnson

Of all the dramatic media, radio is the most visual.

--John Reeves

Television's compelling power is its immediacy...this immediacy feeds the politics of emotions, gut reactions and impressions rather than the politics of logic, facts and reason; it emphasizes personality rather than issues.

--Hedrick Smith

The television commercial is the most efficient power-packed capsule of education that appears anywhere on TV.

--C. L. Gray

Dictum on television scripts: we don't want it good—we want it Tuesday.

--Dennis Norden

The new electronic interdependence recreates the world in the image of a global village.

--Marshall McLuhan

The electronic environment makes an information level outside the schoolroom that is far higher than the information level inside the schoolroom....The child knows that in going to school he is in a sense interrupting his education.

--H. Marshall McLuhan

The most powerful social force in the world's most powerful nation—this is what broadcasting, and television broadcasting in particular, has been called with increasing frequency during the past two decades.

--*DuPont-Columbia  
Survey and  
Awards Jurors*

TV is addictive. It's a drug.

--Marshall McLuhan

This instrument can teach, it can illuminate, it can even inspire, but only if human beings are willing to use it to those ends. Otherwise it is only wires and lights in a box.

--Edward R. Murrow

American journalists today...have been forced and lured out of their normal and proper role in our society. They are becoming not just the critics in the aisle but actors in the play.

--Eric Sevareid

Today's reporter is forced to become an educator more concerned with explaining the news than with being the first on the scene.

--Fred Friendly

When television is bad, nothing is worse. I invite you to sit down in front of your television set when your station goes on the air and stay there without a book, magazine, newspaper, profit and loss sheet, or rating book to distract you—and keep your eyes glued to that set until the station signs off. I can assure you that you will observe a vast wasteland.

--Newton Minow

Broadcasting is writing for the mind through the ear.

--Edward Weeks

People today unfortunately place importance on media experience, not life experience.

--Woody Allen

Time has convinced me of one thing: Television is for appearing on—not for looking at.

--Noel Coward

We are an emotional medium. The impact of the tube is not on the mind. It's on other senses—the eyes and the spleen and all that. That's where we're good, and that's what makes it so powerful—and so dangerous.

--Roger Mudd

How and when issues are resolved in this country...depend...on how (and whether) they're treated by the television networks in 'entertainment' as well as news and public affairs programming.

--Nicholas Johnson

Woe is me...because less than 3 percent of you people read books! Because less than 15 percent of you read newspapers! Because the only truth you know is what you get over this tube.

--Peter Finch as Howard  
Beale, in *Network*

I believe television is going to be the test of the modern world, and that in this new opportunity to see beyond the range of our vision we shall discover either a new and unbearable disturbance of the general peace or a saving radiance in the sky. We shall stand or fall by television—of that I am quite sure.

--E. B. White (1938)

Television has lifted the manufacture of banality out of the sphere of handicraft and placed it in that of a major industry.

--Nathalie Sarraute

There is a young and impressionable mind out there that is hungry for information. It has latched on to an electronic tube as its main source of nourishment.

--Joan Ganz Cooney

The bigger the information media, the less courage and freedom they allow. Bigness means weakness.

--Eric Sevareid

There is no greater impact made on our present society than the images seen, the sounds heard, and the drama brought daily by the media.

--Harry Belafonte

Why should people go out and pay to see bad movies when they can stay at home and see bad television for nothing.

--*The Observer*, 9/9/56

Home is where the television is.

—Internet Meme

Television has brought murder back into the home—where it belongs.

--Alfred Hitchcock

Television thus illustrates the mixed blessings of technological change in American society. It is a new medium, promising extraordinary benefits: great educational potential, a broadening of experience, enrichment of daily life, entertainment for all. But it teaches children the uses of violence, offers material consumption as the answer to life's problems, sells harmful products, habituates viewers to constant stimulation, and undermines family interaction and other forms of learning such as play and reading.

--Kenneth Keniston

Isn't it odd that networks accept billions of dollars from advertisers to teach people to use products and then proclaim that children aren't learning about violence from their steady diet of it on television!

--Toni Liebman

Not too many years ago, a child's experience was limited by how far he or she could ride a bicycle or by the physical boundaries that parents set. Today...the real boundaries of a child's life are set more by the number of available cable channels and videotapes, by the simulated reality of video games, by the number of megabytes of memory in the home computer. Now kids can go anywhere, as long as they stay inside the electronic bubble.

--Richard Louv

Never before has a generation of parents faced such awesome competition with the mass media for their children's attention. While parents tout the virtues of premarital virginity, drug-free living, nonviolent resolution of social conflict, or character over physical appearance, their values are daily challenged by television soaps, rock music lyrics, tabloid headlines, and movie scenes extolling the importance of physical appearance and conformity.

--Marianne E. Neifert

It is among the ranks of school-age children, those six-to twelve-year-olds who once avidly filled their free moments with childhood play, that the greatest change is evident. In the place of traditional, sometimes ancient childhood games that were still popular a generation ago, in the place of fantasy and make-believe play...today's children have substituted television viewing and, most recently, video games.

--Marie Winn

With the high cost of living, all the poor man has left is his imagination, and television has taken that away from him.

--Fred Allen



Throughout history man's inventions have been timesavers—then came television.  
--Unknown

Unless and until there is unmistakable proof to the contrary, the presumption must be that television is and will be a main factor in influencing the values and moral standards of our society....Television does not, and cannot, merely reflect the moral standards of society. It must affect them, either by changing or by reinforcing them.  
--*Pilkington Report*,  
Great Britain,  
1960

Those who say they give the public what it wants begin by underestimating public taste, and end by debauching it.  
--*Pilkington Report*,  
Great Britain,  
1960

Radio is a creative theater of the mind.  
—'Wolfman Jack' Smith

TV just feeds you. Radio involves you.  
--Himan Brown

Television is simply automated day-dreaming.  
--Lee Lovinger

TV—The Plug-In Drug.  
--Marie Winn

I have come to feel about television the way I do about hamburgers: I eat a lot of hamburgers and I don't remember a single one of them.  
--John Barrow

People who deny themselves television deny themselves participation in life today. They are self-exiled from the world.  
--John Mason Brown

Television is the business of gathering you and selling you like cattle to the advertisers.  
--Nicholas Johnson

How do you put on a meaningful drama or documentary that is adult, incisive, probing, when every fifteen minutes the proceedings are interrupted by twelve dancing rabbits with toilet paper?

--Rod Serling

The average 16-year-old has clocked more time watching television than he has spent in school. TV Guide outsells every other magazine on the nation's newsstands. That's more serious than venereal disease.

--John Leonard

One reason that children are inclined to learn from television is that it...is never too busy to talk to them, and it never has to brush them aside while it does household chores....Television seems to want their attention at any time, and goes to considerable lengths to attract it.

--*National Commission  
on Causes and  
Prevention of  
Violence, 9/25/69*

Television—The Third Parent.

--R. Buckminster Fuller

Television rots the senses in the head!  
It kills imagination dead!  
It clogs and clutters up the mind!  
It makes a child so dull and blind  
He can no longer understand  
A fantasy, a fairyland!  
His brain becomes as soft as cheese!  
His powers of thinking rust and freeze!  
He cannot think—he only sees!

--Roald Dahl

Television had a chance to become the greatest social force for good in this country...but it failed.

--Vladimir Zworykin

Why should people go out and pay money to see bad films when they can stay at home and see bad television for nothing?

--Samuel Goldwyn

Once I thought the most important political statement we could make about television was to turn it off. But television can instruct, inform, and inspire, as well as distract, distort, and demean. And turning it off rejects the good with the bad. My family wants its voice added to the summons for quality, and I urge you to speak up, too, in every way possible. This marvelous medium, with all its potential for laughter and lights, is worth fighting for.

--Bill Moyers

The trouble is not that there is violence in television. There is violence in *Oedipus*, too, and *Lear* and *Hedda Gabler*. The trouble is that in television the violence is only violence. What speaks in the great tragedies speaks through the Word, speaks to the imagination, speaks for the understanding of human life—its misery—its wonder. But in television the Word is void and the violence is there as violence—like raw sewage in a river.

--Archibald MacLeish

Commercial broadcasting seeks instantly to capture audiences and to hold their attention without flagging. To allow the magnet of attention to grow weak for an instant is to risk the falling away of millions of human iron filings—a disaster immediately translated into severe economic loss. 'Hold that audience!' is the first commandment of the lords of broadcasting to their faithful priests who shepherd their anonymous multitude to the green pastures of high Nielsen ratings.

--Robert Lewis Shayon

When 'Starsky & Hutch' was on the air, there was one scene when they got in the car and used their seat belts....Within the next six days maybe 100,000 people bought seat belts. When Fonz on 'Happy Days' went in and got a library card, something like 500,000 people went in and got library cards. Television is very powerful. I hope we can use it constructively.

--Norman Lear

Highly compressed TV learning modules, especially those of ten-to thirty-second commercials, are affecting attention span. Many teachers have commented on the fact that students of all ages 'turn off' when some lesson or lecture takes longer than, say, eight to ten minutes. TV conditioning leads to the expectation that there will be a new point of view or focus of interest or even subject matter every few minutes.

--Neil Postman

Imitation is the sincerest form of television.

--Fred Allen

We are living in the machine age. For the first time in history the comedian has been compelled to supply himself with jokes and comedy material to compete with the machine. Whether he knows it or not, the comedian is on a treadmill to oblivion.

--Fred A. Allen

Radio has wings. It has no stage to keep it within the limits of a proscenium arch, no camera to confine to things that may be seen. The imagination of the listener is our most ardent and helpful collaborator.

—Jerome Lawrence, 1944

The thing that you were able to achieve in radio was involvement. Participation. Because you didn't have all the pieces to the puzzle. The person coming to the radio set had to bring some of the pieces and fill in. Even if there were forty people working in the studio, they were all concentrating on one ear.

-- Robert E. Lee

Life is what happens when you're not watching television.

--Jason Love

In California, they don't throw their garbage away—they make it into TV shows.

--Woody Allen

Television is a device that permits people who haven't anything to do to watch people who can't do anything.

--Fred Allen

The world could use more vision and less television.

--Unknown

All of the books in the world contain no more information than is broadcast as video in a single large American city in a single year. Not all bits have equal value.

--Carl Sagan

Television is a medium because anything well done is rare.

--Fred Allen

Television is the triumph of machine over people.

--Fred Allen

As long as people will accept crap, it will be financially profitable to dispense it.  
--Dick Cavett

Thanks to television, for the first time the young are seeing history made before it is censored by their elders.

--Margaret Mead

With the advent of television, the nature of concentration was altered.

--Norman Mailer

What bothers me about TV is that it tends to take our minds off our minds.

--Robert Orben

He watched a very great deal of TV, always had done, years and year of it, eons of TV. Boy, did Keith burn that tube. And that tube burnt him, nuked him, its cathodes crackling like cancer. 'TV,' he thought, or 'Modern reality' or 'the world.' It was the world of TV that told him what the world was. How does all the TV time work on a modern person, a person like Keith?...TV came at Keith like it came at everybody else; and he had nothing whatever to keep it out. He couldn't grade or filter it. So he thought TV was real.

--Martin Amis

The nuclear generator of brain sludge is television.

--Dave Barry

In television, everything is gone with the speed of light, literally. It is no field for anybody with intimations of immortality.

--Charles Kuralt

Of all of our inventions for mass communication, pictures still speak the most universally understood language.

--Walt Disney

TV out-Hitlers anything Hitler ever did: it tells you what to do, what to buy.

--Jack Dunphy

Whoever controls the media, controls the mind.

--Jim Morrison

The television is to news as the bumper sticker is to philosophy.

--Jack Monahan

The dirty little secret of the media industry is that content aggregators, not content creators, have long been the overwhelming source of value creation.

--Jonathan A. Knee

Talk shows are becoming amateur hours for professionals.

--Pauline Kael

Wherever we are, we are always available, and everybody knows it. The media tells us how lucky we are to live in the Information Age. I believe we have created a hell on Earth for ourselves.

--Robert D. Kaplan

Information overload is not the issue. If it were, you'd walk into the library and die. As soon as you connected to the Web, you'd just explode. In fact, the most information rich place in the world is the most relaxing: it's called nature. It has more varied horizons, more detail, more input of all sorts. As a matter of fact, if you want to go crazy, get rid of all your information: it's called sensory deprivation. The thing about nature is, it's information rich, but the meaningful things in nature are relatively few—berries, bears and snakes, thunderstorms, maybe poison oak.

--David Allen

The only valid censorship of ideas is the right of people not to listen

--Tom Smothers

In the early days of the Internet, the primary danger to kids seemed to be from predatory adults. But it turns out that the perils adults pose, although they can be devastating, are rare. The far more common problem kids face when they go online comes from other kids: the hum of low-grade hostility, punctuated by truly damaging explosions, that is called cyberbullying.

--Emily Bazelon

In 2001...Marc Prensky popularized the term digital natives to describe the first generations of children growing up fluent in the language of computers, video games, and other technologies. (The rest of us are digital immigrants, struggling to understand.

--Hanna Rosin

A TV can insult your intelligence, but nothing rubs it in like a computer.

--Unknown

Most parents can sympathize with the disturbing sight of a toddler, who five minutes earlier had been jumping off the couch, now subdued and staring at a screen, seemingly hypnotized....Jane Healy even gives the phenomenon a name, the ‘zombie effect,’ and raises the possibility that television might ‘suppress mental activity by putting viewers in a trance.’

--Hanna Rosin

I still believe there was something to be said, in cultural terms, for the idea of everyone gathered around the radio or the television, waiting to hear the latest from a trusted voice like Murrow or Cronkite. A kind of civic glue was applied there that we don’t have today.

--Michael Tomasky

TV is bigger than any story it reports. It’s the greatest teaching tool since the printing press.

--Fred W. Friendly

The shift from print to digital reading has reduced the pursuit of work in the humanities. Digital reading does not allow for so-called ‘deep reading’ that print reading does. This deep reading can only come from a sustained and lengthy period with the assigned text; not by skimming or speed reading.

--Naomi Baron

All television is educational television. The question is: what is it teaching?

—Nicholas Johnson

Television and film are our libraries now. Our history books.

—David Strathairn

It is commonly agreed that children spend more hours per year watching television than in the classroom, and far less in actual conversation with their parents.

—Paul Weyrich

Every new medium of communication has in its time aroused anxiety—the cinema, radio, and at one time (a chastening thought) even reading. Now it is the turn of television.

—H. Himmelweit, S. N. Oppenheim, and P. Price (1958)

Some of our major sources of information about sex come from the media. Everything from the mildest innuendo on a network sitcom to the rawest pornography on X-rated video is contributing to our perceived reality of what sex is all about. We're continually learning about sex and modifying our constructed reality of its nature. How we act on that information may have serious consequences on our lives and the lives of others.

—Richard J. Harris

The role for the mass media in the manipulation of public opinion has received a great deal of anguished but misguided attention. Much of this commentary assumes that the problem is to prevent the circulation of obvious untruths; whereas it is evident, as the more penetrating critics of mass culture have pointed out, that the rise of mass media makes the categories of truth and falsehood irrelevant to the evaluation of their influence. Truth has given way to credibility, facts to statements that sound authoritative with conveying any authoritative information.

—C. Lasch

In the logic of television news, the world is a certain and simple place in which to live. Unpleasant to be sure, but nonetheless filled with certainties. There are good guys and bad, either this alternative or that one, a right way to do things and a wrong way. Put another way, television encourages us to think deductively in a largely inductive world by its systematic reliance on stereotyping and its deference to established austerity, conventional wisdom, and the existing social, political, and economic arrangements.

—W. A. Dorman

Whether it be the treacle that passes for conversation among news anchors or the sentimentalized presentation of community charity as a solution to hopelessness, what matters is the feeling an image produces. Whether it be commentators who said of newly-elected President Bill Clinton's economic summit that it was a success because he looked presidential, or the Gulf War, which was presented on American television as a mini-series, a kind of 'Lonesome Dove with Smart Bombs,' television news sets viewers adrift in a sea of images and an ocean of sensation. What is not important is a line of argument that can be analyzed, thought about, tested, accepted or rejected.

—W. A. Dorman

Television and the newer electronic media, if used wisely, have great positive potential on learning and development. They give children different mental skills from those developed by reading and writing.

—Patricia M. Greenfield



The entertainment industry sees youth as a prime market—a distinct, ever-renewing demographic group posed of ample leisure and money to make sales soar. Further, adolescents have shown themselves, because of their particular state of life, to be especially susceptible to the marketing wiles of the entertainment industry. This industry is adept at perpetually recycling timeless adolescent anxieties and hopes into easily adaptable formulaic fads and fashions.

—Q. J. Schultze

Television's basic communications technique—the transmission of information by a rapid succession of coded images is neither discursive nor reflective. Although television can, of course, project ideas, it may be incapable of matching the capacity of print to present complex ideas and arguments. Free of the restraints of syntax and linear discussion, television conveys a 'sense of authenticity' through the intrinsic superiority of the visual image, giving the viewer the impression that he or she has grasped a matter intellectually, when in fact only the absorption of definite visual images that suggest ideas and conclusions has occurred. It is simply easier for television to give the viewer the feeling that the images are accurately reflective of a complex reality that it is to achieve the same effect with print.

—M. R. Winston

Given what we know about media content and the proclivity for stereotyping, we must begin to explore the way in which these media message cumulatively construct a world view. We must also consider the way in which these messages can contribute to social attitudes. While a single media message seldom causes anyone to do anything, the repetitive nature of these messages can be influential particularly on impressional young people whose identities and attitudes are still forming.

—D. M. Considine

Television: A medium. So called because it's neither rare nor well done.

—Ernie Kovacs

TV as we knew it is absolutely dead. There are still shows in production, still ad buys being made, but the numbers these shows get are a small fraction of the ratings these same type of shows used to command. The amount of TV shows produced annually decreases every year. The amount of people employed by TV shows is far less than it used to be. All these decreases are steady from year to year. Traditional TV is not 'in a slump;' it has been steadily declining.

—Justine Bateman

Television is more interesting than people. If it were not we should have people standing in the corner of our room.

—Alan Coren

When you're young, you look at television and think, There's a conspiracy. The networks have conspired to dumb us down. But when you get a little older, you realize that's not true. The networks are in business to give people exactly what they want. That's a far more depressing thought. Conspiracy is optimistic! You can shoot the bastards!

—Steve Jobs

For hundreds of years, that was the major form of entertainment: The grown-ups sat around and watched the kids play. Now they sit around and watch the television. The actors are the kids.

—David Duchovny

Jenna Birch, a young journalist, recently argued that texting is inferior to talking face to face because it's too easy to misinterpret—over-overinterpret—tone. Worse, texting makes it more likely for her generation to dodge difficult emotional conversations, the 'hard stuff.' If we don't shape up, she warned, 'we'll all end up on interconnected islands, together in our aloneness.'

—Clive Thompson

Modern surveys by the Pew Research Center have found that teenagers who text the most are also those who spend the most time face to face with friends. Communication, it seems, begets more communication, and—as Peters [John Durham] argues—just because talk happens in text doesn't mean it's not meaningful. 'Media scholars,' he notes, 'have this long romance with 'conversation' as the cure to the disease of media.'

—Clive Thompson

The main thing that gives me hope is the media. We have radio, TV, magazines, and books, so we have the possibility of learning from societies that are remote from us, like Somalia. We turn on the TV and see what blew up in Iraq or we see conditions in Afghanistan.

—Jared Diamond

Internet went down and I had to spend time with the family. They seem like good people.

—Unknown

Privacy was in sufficient danger before TV appeared, and TV has given it its death blow.

—Louis Kronenberger

One thing that the internet has taught me...is that stupidity is international.

—Unknown

Men still control the news, both on and off camera.

—Jessica Savitch

One of the problems the internet has introduced is that in this electronic village, all the village idiots have internet access.

—Peter Nelson

The TV business is uglier than most things. It is normally perceived as some kind of cruel and shallow money trench through the heart of the journalism industry, a long plastic hallway where thieves and pimps run free and good men die like dogs, for no good reason.

—Hunter S. Thompson

Virtually every magazine, newspaper, TV station and cable channel is owned by a big corporation, and they've squashed stories that they don't want the public to know about.

—Tom Scholz

We are perpetuating ignorance by making TV news so easily assimilated that people do not go to print any longer. This is dangerous.

--Walter Cronkite

It's just hard not to listen to TV: it's spent so much more time raising us than parents have.

—Matt Groening

Pictures will not do; they will never do. Television is fun to watch, but it is utterly and entirely dependent on the spoken and written word. The proof is this: darken the image into invisibility but leave the sound on, and you will still have a crude sense of what is going on. Turn off the sound, however, and exclude the appearance of written words, and though you leave the image as bright as ever, you will find you understand nothing of what is going on unless you are watching the most mindless slapstick. To put it even more simply: radio had no images at all and managed, but the silent movies found subtitles essential.

--Isaac Asimov

Recent studies show that kids spend at least four hours a day on social and recreational media, distracted and disengaged from the world and each other.

--Lee Siegel

We may think that kids have a natural fascination with phones. Really, children have a fascination with whatever Mom and Dad find fascinating. If they are fascinated by the flowers coming up in the yard, that's what the children are going to find fascinating. And if Mom and Dad can't put down the device with the screen, that child is going to think, That's where it's all at; that's where I need to be!

--Linda Stone

Every television program must be a complete package in itself. No previous knowledge is to be required. There must not be even a hint that learning is hierarchical, that it is an edifice constructed on a foundation. The learner must be allowed to enter at any point without prejudice. This is why you shall never hear or see a television program begin with the caution that if the viewer has not seen the previous programs, this one will be meaningless. Television is a nongraded curriculum and excludes no viewer for any reason, at any time. In other words, in doing away with the idea of sequence and continuity in education, television undermines the idea that sequence and continuity have anything to do with thought itself.

—Neil Postman

Drama on television and the big screen has always leaned heavily on the existence of an Other, a generic foe or foil that can be presented without concern for inner life or ultimate fate: African American or American Indian, German or Japanese, Latin American drug lord or Muslim terrorist. But as the circle of empathy has expanded, reliance on such 'types' has radically waned. (The 1970s-era decline of the Western—once a Hollywood staple—reflected in no small part the overdue revelation that American Indian roles could no longer plausibly be limited to murderous braves and semi-comic sidekicks)

—Christopher Orr

Television, radio, and all the sources of amusement and information that surround us in our daily lives are also artificial props. They can give us the impression that our minds are active, because we are required to react to stimuli from the outside. But the power of those external stimuli to keep us going is limited. They are like drugs. We grow used to them, and we continuously need more and more of them. Eventually, they have little or no effect. Then, if we lack resources within ourselves, we cease to grow intellectually, morally, and spiritually. And we we cease to grow, we begin to die.

—Mortimer J. Adler

The technique is wonderful. I didn't even dream it would be so good. But I would never let my children come close to the thing.

—Vladimir Zworykin,  
Developer of  
Television

At times it seems that the media have become the mainstream culture in children's lives. Parents have become the alternative. Americans once expected parents to raise their children in accordance with the dominant cultural messages. Today they are expected to raise their children in opposition to it.

--Ellen Goodman

She remembered one of her boyfriends asking, offhandedly, how many books she read in a year. 'A few hundred,' she said.

'How do you have the time?' he asked, gobsmacked.

She narrowed her eyes and considered the array of potential answers in front of her. Because I don't spend hours flipping through cable complaining there's nothing on? Because my entire Sunday is not eaten up with pre-game, in-game, and post-game talking heads? Because I do not spend every night drinking overpriced beer and engaging in dick-swinging contests with the other financirati? Because when I am waiting in line, at the gym, on the train, eating lunch, I am not complaining about the wait/staring into space/admiring myself in reflective surfaces? I am reading! 'I don't know,' she said, shrugging.

—Eleanor Brown

Unlike television, reading does not swallow the senses or dictate thought. Reading stimulates the ecology of the imagination. Can you remember the wonder you felt when first reading *The Jungle Book* or *Tom Sawyer* or *Huckleberry Finn*? Kipling's world within a world; Twain's slow river, the feel of freedom and sand on the secret island, and in the depths of the cave?

—Richard Louv

The smallest bookstore still contains more ideas of worth than have been presented in the entire history of television.

—Andrew Ross

There are still a few of us booklovers around despite the awful warnings of Marshall McLuhan with his TV era and his pending farewell to Gutenberg.

--Frank Davies

I believe in books; I don't think they're finished....It may be that reading will always be limited to a minority, in the face of media which are more superficially attractive, more compulsive, less demanding.

--John Rowe Townsend

As we move into an age of mass communication, we move also into an age of mass-produced minds—look-alike mentalities. People are processed by television programs carpentered for the lowest common denominator, and television's estimate of the lowest common denominator is low indeed....

It is here that the reading of books—the library as the place in which books are read--becomes important as it has never been before. It is in books and by means of books that an escape from the sameness and suffocation of television and the other mass media is possible. In a book you touch not a generalized, universalized opinion which is standardized orthodoxy for the moment, but a man at the most living moment of his life—the moment when he is struggling with those aspects of his human experience which have moved him most, puzzled him most—those aspects which define him as a man, as a self different from other selves.

--Archibald MacLeish

Books haven't been made obsolete by the computer or television, or movies, or any other competitive medium. They offer active rather than passive experience, an opportunity for imagination to enter an alliance with that of the writer.

--Robert Kirsch

The biggest best seller in modern times was probably *Gone With The Wind*. People who never read a book in their lives had to read that--and what was the sale? Maybe 20 million copies, the absolute saturation point. Put that against the total population! Compare it with the television audience!

--Robert Giroux

The people who do not have time to read books because they are watching television would, in the pre-TV era, not have had time to read books because they were driving over to see Cousin Nellie or were going to the movies or were building a model railroad.

--Granville Hicks

We live in a screen age, and to say to a kid, 'I'd love for you to look at a book but I hate it when you look at the screen' is just bizarre. It reflects our own prejudices and comfort zone. It's nothing but fear of change, of being left out.

--Marc Prensky

Some people may contend that there is no image more charming than a child holding a puppy or a kitten. But for me that's a distant second. When I see a child clutching a book...to his or her tiny bosom, I'm moved. Children can possess a book in a way they can never possess a video game, a TV show, or a Darth Vader doll. A book comes alive when they read it. They give it life themselves by understanding it.

--Chris Van Allsburg

Maybe you believe that you need a computer so your children can get smarter faster....No, if you want your kids to get smarter, encourage them to read books. Books cost less and they will not crash, conk out and freeze on the screen. They can also be read in the kitchen, the living room, the bathroom, the bedroom, sitting up or lying down. Amazingly versatile product, the book.

--Mike Royko

Book—what they make a movie out of for television.

--Leonard Louis Levinson

Though I have little knowledge of the business of books, I can see that reading is far from the defunct or declining art as some have claimed. The endless, bland repetition emanating from the 'tube' is driving people back to the more personal experience found in books.

--Margaret Atwood

For a medium of communication to become integrated into our lives, it has to be usable in the four B's: bed, bath, beach, and bus. You can order books online and download them in seconds. But I can't imagine the day when readers would rather curl up with a flat screen of any size to read *War and Peace*.

--Michael Larsen

There is something sublime about print that has nothing to do with content. Hard copy is a full-on sensory experience. Yes, the words are the same, whether perceived on paper or on a small, illuminated screen. But the experience is not. One can read 'One Hundred Years of Solitude' on a Kindle or an iPad, but one cannot see, hear, feel and smell the story in the same way. I'm unlikely to race to the sofa, there to nuzzle an electronic gizmo, with the same anticipation as with a book. Or to the hammock with the same relish I would with a new magazine....Paper, because it is real, provides an organic connection to our natural world: The tree from whence the paper came; the sun, water and soil that nourished the tree. By contrast, a digital device is alien, man-made, hard and cold to human flesh.

--Kathleen Parker

Imagine back. With no television to watch, no radio or MP3 player to listen to, no phones, no websites, no video games, no movies, no texting, books were the chief form of entertainment of the day. People wrote letters, and people read books. And in the process, they found peace and relaxation, charms seemingly lost in our multi-tasking, hyperactive age.

--*Daily Herald Editorial*

So please, oh please, we beg, we pray, go throw your TV set away, and in its place you can install, a lovely bookshelf on the wall.

—Roald Dahl

Books should be a part of every child's life. They should occupy a central place in home and classroom alike. Children should have at their fingertips books like *Where the Wild Things Are*, *Charlotte's Web*, and *Winnie the Pooh*. This is the only way they will really grasp the idea that reading is a joy rather than a burden. Yet in a recent study of fifth graders' reading habits, 90 percent of the children were found to read books only four minutes a day or less. The same children may watch television an average of three and a half hours a day.

—William J. Bennett

I still love books. Nothing a computer can do can compare to a book. You can't really put a book on the Internet. Three companies have offered to put books by me on the Net, and I said, 'If you can make something that has a nice jacket, nice paper with that nice smell, then we'll talk.' All the computer can give you is a manuscript. People don't want to read manuscripts. They want to read books. Books smell good. They look good. You can press it to your bosom. You can carry it in your pocket.

—Ray Bradbury

Books have survived television, radio, talking pictures, circulars (early magazines), dailies (early newspapers), Punch and Judy shows, and Shakespeare's plays. They have survived World War II, the Hundred Years' War, the Black Death, and the fall of the Roman Empire. They even survived the Dark Ages, when almost no one could read and each book had to be copied by hand. They aren't going to be killed off by the Internet.

—Vicki Myron

The e-reading revolution may have reached our shores this year but it has yet to reckon with Australia's summer holidays. Intense sunlight plays havoc with screens and the sand invades every nook and cranny, so as convenient and sexy as your new iPad may be, the battered paperback, its pages pocked and swollen from contact with briny hands, will likely remain the beach format of choice for a few years yet.

—Geordie Williamson



I do not believe that all books will or should migrate onto screens: as Douglas Adams once pointed out to me, more than 20 years before the Kindle showed up, a physical book is like a shark. Sharks are old: there were sharks in the ocean before the dinosaurs. And the reason there are still sharks around is that sharks are better at being sharks than anything else is. Physical books are tough, hard to destroy, bath-resistant, solar-operated, feel good in your hand: they are good at being books, and there will always be a place for them.

—Neil Gaiman

I guess if there's one thing I can say about the 21st century, it's that the 21st century is all flash and no substance... everything is digital, nothing but files of invisible electronic data on computers and mindless zombies on their cellular phones... it's sad how because of the digital age, society is ultimately doomed. Nothing in the digital age is real anymore, and you know, they say celluloid film and ray tube televisions and maybe even paper might become obsolete in this century? ...What's most annoying is that nobody cares, they've just learned to accept the digital age and get addicted to it... none of them are ever going to step up and say to the world, 'you're all a bunch of sheep!' and even if they did say anything, I doubt anyone would listen... they're all too obsessed and attached to their cellular phones and overly big televisions and whatever other moronic things they've got these days... it almost makes me want an apocalypse to happen, to erase digital technology and force the world to start over again.

—Rebecca McNutt

TV stars are cool. Even if their characters are less than admirable, they come across as somehow sympathetic, maybe even neighborly. They are, after all, people you invite into your home every week. If you don't like them, you won't watch them.

Movie stars, by contrast, are hot. They have to blaze so fiercely that they fill a screen forty feet high and demand the attention of a crowded theater.

That's why very few TV stars have graduated successfully to features. It requires not only different skills but a different personality. You have to go from amiable to commanding.

Likewise, some movie stars are simply too big for television. Jack Nicholson is riveting on-screen, but you wouldn't want him in your living room week after week. The television simply couldn't contain his personality.

—Walter Jon Williams

We make, see, and love films, not digitals. To convert all of our movies, home videos, theaters, photographs and television to digital would be like telling a painter to throw away his brushes and canvas for an I-Pad. Celluloid isn't just nostalgic, it's an art form and, like it or not, it's superior to digital. It lasts much longer, it provides grain and brighter colors, and it takes more effort so that it produces something wonderful. With the inferior binary codes, pixels and untested shelf-life of digital files, plus the fact that these days anyone with a digital camera, even a two-year-old, can make a video and pollute the world with self-photography and cat pictures, film has a lot more integrity and worth than digital.

—Rebecca McNutt

Open George Eliot's *Middlemarch* or William Makepeace Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*, two hefty examples of 19th Century literature at its finest....You can't read the book. Your mind, earnest and dutiful, will stick with the task for a clause or two, but somewhere after the fourth semicolon, just shy of the sixth 'moreover' or 'henceforth,' it will happen: Your mind, like a friendly pup, will bolt from the path and go nosing off to those interesting places in the distance where there's light and noise and fun, tripping over its paws, deliriously happy at having slipped the surly bonds of a long, long, long sentence....We don't read like we used to—and we probably can't. No matter how much we try, we can't seem to bring the necessary level of concentration to bear upon printed matter of any depth or complexity. Because of MTV or VH1, because of the Internet, because of cell phones or satellite pagers—pick your favorite hectoring doodad, since any or all may be responsible—we are no longer able to clear out the physical, psychological or intellectual space to grapple with sophisticated printed matter....

We may be reaching a critical point in human history: the moment after which no one is actually able to read anything written before 1900....There seems to be, simmering within us like various ingredients interacting in a witch's cauldron, an inability to focus long and hard....those big, grand 19th Century novels...might as well be written in a foreign language, so inaccessibly remote have they become to 21st Century sensibilities.

--Julia Keller

We hear a lot these days of our being at the cultural mercy of the movies, radio and TV; that we are in a mind-bath of evanescent, visual-aural influences; and that the studied, Gutenberg reading line is passing from the scene. From the variety of expressions of experience and the individuation of language and style, it could be argued that these writers are less affected by mass electronic media than Marshall McLuhan might imagine. Writing and reading are still going on, especially in the colleges, and it looks as if such activities will continue.

--Whit and Hallie  
Burnett

I do like books, real paper books. I have shelves full to prove it. But reading Proust on my cellphone was, I have to say, like no other reading experience I've had before or since. It was magical....Here are my instructions. Make sure no one else is awake. Turn off the lights. Your windows can stay open. Now tun on your phone and begin reading. Repeat as necessary each night. Do not stop until the very last word of the very last volume, Time Regained. Soon you will see that the smallness of your cellphone (my screen was about two by three inches) and the length of Proust's sentences are not the shocking mismatch you might think. Your cellphone screen is like a tiny glass-bottomed boat moving slowly over a vast and glowing ocean of words in the night. There is no shore. There is nothing beyond the words in front of you. It's a voyage for one in the nighttime. Pure romance.

—Sarah Boxer

People cannot become truly knowledgeable without being excellent readers. While multimedia systems can use video and sound to deliver information in compelling ways, text is still one of the very best ways to convey details.

--Bill Gates

The process of reading encourages rationality. A printed page, containing a narrative or argument that unfolds line by line, encourages a more coherent view of the world than does a slam-bang broadcast of quickly changing, high impact images—floods, fire, terrorism, a congressional hearing, now off to a denture-adhesive commercial, now back to war, the stock market, etc. Reading is active; it requires the discipline of bodily stillness and mental attention. Absorbing television is an essentially passive experience. Were broadcasting to supplant rather than just supplement print, much—civilization in fact—would be lost. But were television to vanish, the people who today read almost nothing would still read almost nothing.

--George Will

Reading skills are very important. That's how you find out what's going to be on T.V.

--Unknown

The state of literacy in the United States today is declining so precipitously, while video and computer technologies are becoming so powerful that the act of reading itself may well be on the way to obsolescence.

--Janet E. Healy

Children, in new research, gain much less from reading (or, in the new word, accessing) books on a screen than they do reading actual books. Perhaps adults do too.

—Michael Wolff

We are in a time, because of the proliferation of online media and a hundred channels on cable, where teenagers and young adults and eight- and nine-year-olds do not read enough. And the SAT is very unforgiving for students who do not read.

—Jonathan Grayer

You are more likely to find three TVs inside a randomly selected house than you are to find a single book that is or was not read to pass an exam, to please God, or to be a better cook.

—Mokokoma  
Mokhonoana

Is it possible that libraries will become ‘book museums,’ and that the specimens on display under glass will be curious examples of an archaic medium that educated, informed and enlightened so much of the world for so many hundreds of years?

--Ben Jacobs & Helena  
Hjalmarsson

It seems to me that anyone whose library consists of a Kindle lying on a table is some sort of bloodless nerd.

—Penelope Lively

The ultimate censorship is the flick of the dial.

--Tom Smothers

The wonderful thing about libraries and bookstores—even the television or the radio—is that no one is forcing you to read anything, or to go to any particular movie, or to watch something on television or listen to something on the radio. You have free choice.

--Judith Krug

There is censorship in this country, all right, make no mistake about that, but also make no mistake about its source....While the government will not censor, apparently the networks will. The irreparable damage to the public is all the same.

--Nicholas Johnson

Well before Facebook, digital technology was enabling our tendency for isolation, to an unprecedented degree. Back in the 1990s, scholars started calling the contradiction between an increased opportunity to connect and a lack of human contact the ‘Internet paradox.’

--Stephen Marche

Could the United States government, under great duress in some future conflict or catastrophe, censor or nationalize the social-media industry? Extreme as it may sound, there is ample precedent. During the Civil War, Abraham Lincoln ordered the censorship of telegrams. Twelve days after Pearl Harbor, Franklin Roosevelt formally established the U.S. Office of Censorship—its official motto was ‘Silence Speeds Victory.’ Would such control of social media be advisable? Would it even be possible?

—Emerson T. Brooking  
and P. W. Singer

My unhappy reactions to Facebook may be more universal than I had realized. When I scroll through page after page of my friends’ descriptions of how accidentally eloquent their kids are, and how their husbands are endearingly bumbling, and how they’re all about to eat a home-cooked meal prepared with fresh local organic produce bought at the farmers’ market and then go for a jog and maybe check in at the office because they’re so busy getting ready to hop on a plane for a week of luxury dogsledding in Lapland, I do grow slightly more miserable. A lot of other people doing the same thing feel a little bit worse, too.

--Stephen Marche

Facebook’s isolation is a grind. What’s truly staggering about Facebook usage is not its volume...but the constancy of the performance it demands. More than half its users...log on every day. Among 18-to-34-year-olds, nearly half check Facebook minutes after waking up, and 28 percent do so before getting out of bed. The relentlessness is what is so new, so potentially transformative. Facebook never takes a break. We never take a break. Human beings have always created elaborate acts of self-presentation. But not all the time, not every morning, before we even pour a cup of coffee.

--Stephen Marche

What Facebook has revealed about human nature—and this is not a minor revelation—is that a connection is not the same thing as a bond, and that instant and total connection is no salvation, no ticket to a happier, better world or a more liberated version of humanity. Solitude used to be good for self-reflection and self-reinvention. But now we are left thinking about who we are all the time, without ever really thinking about who we are. Facebook denies us a pleasure whose profundity we had underestimated: the chance to forget about ourselves for a while, the chance to disconnect.

--Stephen Marche

If there were any medium that should not be concerned with censorship, it should be TV. You have a dial.

--Burt Reynolds

I wish I were a technoptimist. It must be heart-warming to believe that Facebook is ushering in a happy-clappy world where everybody 'friends' everybody else and we all surf the net in peace (insert smiley face). But I'm afraid history makes me a depressimist. And no, there's not an app—or a gene—that can cure that.

--Niall Ferguson

Social networks like Facebook haven't changed the way people respond to bragging; they've changed how much people brag. The ability to publicize so much has blurred the line between sharing and boasting. When you brag in a group, you notice when they wander away. When you brag on Facebook, it's harder to tell who you're alienating.

--Dr. Pamela Rutledge

I can't, in restaurants, not watch families not talking to each other. In parks, I can't not watch mothers not talking to their children. In streets, I can't not watch mothers texting while they're pushing their children.

--Sherry Turkle

It's a beautiful day, and we walk past boutiques, restaurants, and packed sidewalk cafés....The pair of high-school-age girls walking down Boylston Street, silent, typing. The table of brunchers ignoring their mimosas (and one another) in favor of their screens. The kid in the stroller playing with an iPad. The sea of humans who...on this sparkling Saturday...seem to be, indeed, alone together.

--Megan Garber

We're not talking to each other. We're talking all the time, in person as well as in texts, in e-mails, over the phone, on Facebook and Twitter. The world is more talkative now, in many ways, than it's ever been. The problem...is that all of this talk can come at the expense of conversation. We're talking at each other rather than with each other.

--Megan Garber

There are 3 trillion pieces of technology—smartphones, iPads, tablets etc....and on the other end of each one is a person. We will never lose the connection to each other. We are simply finding new ways to get together.

--Gary Kovacs

There's all these ways to instantly communicate - cars, computers, telephone and transportation - and even with all that, it's so hard to find people and have an honest communication with them.

--Jason Schwartzman

Women tend to be more expressive than men. This tendency plays out in a number of contexts. Studies have found that women do more diary-style blogging, while men's blogs tend to feature more informational content; and that women are inclined to write with more personal pronouns, more emotive words, more abbreviations like *lol*, more emoticons, and more expressions such as *ahhh*, *ugh*, and *grrr*.

—Jessica Bennett

Cell phones bring you closer to the person far away from you, but take you away from the ones sitting next to you.

—*ThinkingHumanity.com*

Handwritten notes are a lost art. I'm sorry, but no one ever swooned over an email.

—Mary-Louis Parker

Rather than bringing me closer to others, the time that I spend online isolates me from the most important people in my life, my family, my friends, my neighbourhood, my community.

--Clifford Stoll

The Internet is causing the disappearance of retrospection and reminiscence. Our lives are increasingly lived in the present, completely detached even from the most recent of the pasts...Our ability to look back and engage with the past is one unfortunate victim.

--Evgeny Morozov

The Internet is the most important single development in the history of human communication since the invention of call waiting.

--Dave Barry

The Internet: transforming society and shaping the future through chat.

--Dave Barry

Most college students are not just unwilling, but functionally unable, to be without their media links to the world.

--*University of Maryland  
Study*

Within this world of instant and absolute communication, unbounded by limits of time or space, we suffer from unprecedented alienation. We have never been more detached from one another, or lonelier. In a world consumed by ever more novel modes of socializing, we have less and less actual society. We live in an accelerating contradiction: the more connected we become, the lonelier we are. We were promised a global village: instead we inhabit the drab cul-de-sacs and endless free-ways of a vast suburb of information.

--Stephen Marche

The gap between an 'Internet addict' and John Q. Public is thin to nonexistent. One of the early flags for addiction was spending more than 38 hours a week online. By that definition, we are all addicts now, many of us by Wednesday afternoon, Tuesday if it's a busy week.

--Tony Dokoupil

The more a person hangs out in the global village, the worse they are likely to feel. Web use often displaces sleep, exercise, and face-to-face exchanges, all of which can upset even the chirpiest soul.

--Tony Dokoupil

She now reveals a sad, stressed-out world of people coated in Dorito dust and locked in a dystopian relationship with their machines.

--Sherry Turkle

If you had bought the computing power found inside an iPhone 5S in 1991, it would have cost you \$3.56 million.

—Bret Swanson

Since nothing really gets removed from it, in about 15 years, the Internet will be full of pictures of cats that are dead.

—Unknown

Your cell phone has already replaced your camera, your calendar, your alarm clock...Don't let it replace your family.

—*truthinsideofyou.org*

When that camera hits you, it's not about how good you look. People look for honesty. You sell yourself; the product almost is secondary.

—George Foreman



In day-to-day commerce, television is not so much interested in the business of communications as in the business of delivering audiences to advertisers. People are the merchandise, not the shows. The shows are merely the bait.

—Les Brown

Most women's magazines simply try to mold women into bigger and better consumers.

—Gloria Steinem

A viewer who skips the advertising is the moral equivalent of a shoplifter.

—Nicholas Johnson

The fact is that surveys which media people openly admit to show that fewer than twelve percent of their customers believe they're doing a good job, while the average profit margin in television is in the neighborhood of eighty percent.

—L. Neil Smith

The impact of immediacy created by TV has placed a premium not on reflection and reason but on the glib answer and the bland statement. The politician is concerned with public relations, not with public principles.

--Richard B. Morris

When the politicians complain that TV turns the proceedings into a circus, it should be made clear that the circus was already there, and that TV has merely demonstrated that not all the performers are well trained.

—Edward R. Murrow

Turn on the television during election season, and the role that fear plays in contemporary political life couldn't be more obvious: the ominous music, the clips of shadowy masked figures, the deep-voiced narrator making alarming claims about our vulnerability to any number of deadly menaces. Sometimes political ads seem to boil down to a simple message: be very afraid.

—David A. Bell

My request of the tobacco, alcohol, and media industries would be not that [you] start developing educational programs for the schools, but that [you] take your own monkey and keep it on your back and shape up your advertising—do what you ought to be doing. We would rather have you use your expertise to advertise to young people not to drink at all, and why they shouldn't drink—not that they shouldn't drive drunk, because that isn't even a message for kids.

—Anne Meyer

The most famous story about modern presidential campaigning now has a quaint old-world tone. It's about the showdown between Richard Nixon and John F. Kennedy in the first debate of their 1960 campaign, which was also the very first nationally televised general-election debate in the United States. The story is that Kennedy looked great, which is true, and Nixon looked terrible, which is also true—and that this visual difference has an unexpected electoral effect. As Theodore H. White described it in his hugely influential book *The Making of the President 1960*, which has set the model for campaign coverage ever since, 'sample surveys' after the debate found that people who had only heard Kennedy and Nixon talking, over the radio, thought that the debate had been a tie. But those who saw the two men on television were much more likely to think that Kennedy—handsome, tanned, non-sweaty, poised—had won. Historians who have followed up on this story haven't found data to back up White's sight-versus sound discovery. But from a modern perspective, the only surprising thing about his findings is that they came as a surprise. Today's electorate has decades of televised politics behind it, from which one assumption is that of course images, and their emotional power, usually matter more than words and whatever logic they might try to convey.

—James Fallows

The rule is that the way candidates react, immediately and usually involuntarily, while caught by the camera, dominates impressions of who has 'won' or 'lost' an encounter. This is why the most accurate way to predict reaction to a debate is to watch it with the sound turned off.

When Lloyd Bentsen, as Michael Dukakis's running mate in 1988, dressed down the undergrad-looking Dan Quayle with 'You're no Jack Kennedy!' in their vice-presidential debate, Quayle stood like a scolded child, which became a dominant image of him in the campaign.

—James Fallows

Life doesn't imitate art, it imitates bad television.

—Woody Allen

Men who have a thirty-six-televised-football-games-a-week-habit should be declared legally dead and their estates probated.

—Erma Bombeck

Jogging is for people who aren't intelligent enough to watch television.

--Victoria Wood

It's in our biology to trust what we see with our eyes. This makes living in a carefully edited, overproduced and photoshopped world very dangerous.

—Brené Brown

I always hear parents talking about how outraged they are because their kid saw a boob or something like that on TV. I never hear anyone say that they're outraged because a cartoon character in a commercial that aired during a children's television program told them it was healthy to eat a bowl of chocolate and marshmallows for breakfast. If I had kids, I'd be outraged about that.

—Ian McClellan

Smoking shortens your life by eight years. I love watching pro football on television. If I smoke, I'll miss 350 games.

--Tony Curtis on Why He  
Quit

These commercials (TV beer and wine cooler ads) which typically portray drinking in a highly-attractive fashion, often employing generic lifestyle appeals and themes, can stimulate increased drinking by underage youth through a number of mechanisms. The basic effects gradually accumulate over hundreds of exposures to these ads, as the images and the beliefs that young people acquire gradually form and develop into favorable attitudes and increases in drinking practices.

—Dr. Charles Atkin

These days, insecure in our relationships and anxious about intimacy, we look to technology for ways to be in relationships and protect ourselves from them at the same time.

--Sherry Turkle

People are prisoners of their phones. That's why they are called cell phones!

—Internet Meme

Most laugh tracks were recorded in the 1950s, so we are listening to the laughs of dead people when we watch sitcoms.

—Unknown

[A] new finding shows that while in the 1940s, three-quarters of those surveyed claimed to dream in black and white, today, three-quarters say the opposite, that they dream in color. This reversal is attributed to a change in the number of people who grew up watching color rather than black and white television... another hint that our private dreams are intimately linked to our collective mediated experiences.

—Katherine A. Fowkes

If the alcohol industry is so concerned with our young people, why don't they just come out and once and for all tell young people under the age of 21, because we care about you, we don't want your business.

—Bobby Heard

This is the lesson of all great television commercials: They provide a slogan, a symbol or a focus that creates for viewers a comprehensive and compelling image of themselves. In the shift from party politics to television politics, the same goal is sought. We are not permitted to know who is best at being President or Governor or Senator, but whose image is best in touching and soothing the deep reaches of our discontent. We look at the television screen and ask, in the same voracious way as the Queen in *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, 'Mirror, mirror on the wall, who is the fairest one of all?' We are inclined to vote for those whose personality, family life, and style, as imaged on the screen, give back a better answer than the Queen received. As Xenophanes remarked twenty-five centuries ago, men always make their gods in their own image. But to this, television politics has added a new wrinkle: Those who would be gods refashion themselves into images the viewers would have them be.

—Neil Postman

It's getting harder and harder to differentiate between schizophrenics and people talking on a cell phone. It still brings me up short to walk by somebody who appears to be talking to themselves.

—Bob Newhart

[On being a TV news star] We all think [it's] the movie version, that it's all glory and glamour. That might be 1 percent. The rest is the hard slog: doing an enormous amount of research, sweating out scripts, arguing with producers about how best to frame a story. I think that what people might perceive as the glamorous part of our job is the tiniest part of the job, and the least fun.

—Elizabeth Vargas

Child psychologists have demonstrated that our minds are actually constructed by these thousands of tiny interactions during the first few years of life. We aren't just what we're taught. It's what we experience during those early years—a smile here, a jarring sound there—that creates the pathways and connections of the brain. We put our kids through fifteen years of quick-cut advertising, passive television watching, and sadistic video games, and we expect to see emerge a new generation of calm, compassionate, and engaged human beings?

—Sidney Poitier

The desperate need to belong is perhaps never as great as during adolescence. Advertisers seek to communicate with teenagers by frequently using that powerful appeal.

—Gad Saad

There are few things ever dreamed of, smoked or injected that have as addictive an effect on our brains as technology. This is how our devices keep us captive and always coming back for more. The definitive Internet act of our times is a perfect metaphor for the promise of reward: we search. And we search. And we search some more, clicking that mouse like – well, like a rat in a cage seeking another ‘hit’, looking for the elusive reward that will finally feel like enough.

—Kelly McGonigal

I fear the day that technology will surpass our human interaction. The world will have a generation of idiots.

—Unknown

What was a more important invention than the first telephone?  
The second one.

—Unknown

Why would a person take pleasure in using a telephone as a telegraph machine?  
We’re going backwards.

—Christopher Knight

We are more advanced technologically than ever before. However, technology, in many respects, is leading to the decline of conversation.

—Cindy Ann Peterson

In previous centuries, the Church was the great controller, dictating morality, stifling free expression and posing as conservator of all great art and music. Instead we have TV, doing just as good a job at dictating fashions, thoughts, attitudes, objectives as did the Church, using many of the same techniques but doing it so palatably that no one notices. Instead of ‘sins’ to keep people in line, we have fears of being judged unacceptable by our peers (by not wearing the right shoes, not drinking the right kind of beer, or wearing the wrong kind of deodorant). Coupled with that fear is imposed insecurity concerning our own identities. All answers and solutions to these fears come through the television, and only through television. Only through exposure to TV can the new sins of alienation and ostracism be absolved.

—Anton Szandor LaVey

Consider the recent impact of slow-motion video technology on professional dance. In 2015, Wired argued that ‘for dancers, it’s become an incredibly useful tool for honing their craft. The newfound affordability of slow motion has enabled them to improve their technique, spruce up their audition reel, and isolate aspects of their performance that were once intangible.’

—Tony Rousmaniere

Not only all of our emails and Google searches, but also the sensors in the water system, in medical implants, in stoplight cameras and sound-activated street gunshot detectors—there’s so much of it...that the Internet is a surveillance state.

--Bruce Schneier

The great growling engine of change—technology.

—Alvin Toffler

All of us somehow felt that the next battleground was going to be culture. We all felt somehow that our culture had been stolen from us – by commercial forces, by advertising agencies, by TV broadcasters. It felt like we were no longer singing our songs and telling stories, and generating our culture from the bottom up, but now we were somehow being spoon-fed this commercial culture top down.

—Kalle Lasn

I’m just an actor. My performance is not more important than your life. Stop watching. We’re false images designed to sell you products by exploiting your insecurities. To make you spectators in life, not participants.

—Grant Morrison

You bombard them with images of what they ought to be, and you make them feel grotty for being the way they are. You're working with the gap between reality and perception. That’s why you have to hit them with something new, something they’ve never seen before, something they aren’t. Nothing sells like anxiety.

—Margaret Atwood

What makes friendships different for young people today: the nefarious Fear of Missing Out. It’s because of FOMO that 20-somethings are so focused on their smartphone screens, so preoccupied with potential friends that they forget to be with the friends they already have. The FOMO mentality is leading millennials to become smartphone-addled cyber-sluts, constantly texting and emailing, always on the prowl for the next better thing.

--Robin Marantz Henig

Humanity is becoming hopeless, everyone is looking to something with internet capability for everything, heck some people have gone as far as finding someone to love through the internet, if we were to lose electricity forever, I doubt that many people would survive, because people would just be helpless, because they can't look up how to survive on their phone, and they don't even know what a book is, so they can't go and find one about survival, and if they do know, they wouldn't know how to use it because they are used to touching their screens and the book turning the pages, and when the food in stores would go bad, they wouldn't know how to fend for themselves, or how to skin animals, or find good edible plants, so we must pray that we will never lose our electronics, or humanity is doomed.

—Satuin Segi

Texting: It has, in one fell swoop, removed face-to-face conversations between humans and transformed them into letters, digits, and mindless emoticons.

—Wayne Johnson

Television has transcended its instant fad status, leaving a lasting impression upon the way societies receive and understand news, culture, and entertainment.

—Brett Kucharski

We can put television in its proper light by supposing that Gutenberg's great invention had been directed at printing only comic books.

—Robert M. Hutchins

Television brought the brutality of war into the comfort of the living room. Vietnam was lost in the living rooms of America—not on the battlefields of Vietnam.

--Marshall McLuhan

I think human relationships are going to hell. Young people don't know how to relate to one another. Technology is a wonderful thing for its purpose, but for human relations, it's a horror. It's made everybody into a mini-machine. All people know how to do is press buttons.

—Iris Apfel

While theoretically and technically television may be feasible, commercially and financially it is an impossibility.

—Lee De Forest  
(1873-1961)

Mass communication, radio, and especially television, have attempted, not without success, to annihilate every possibility of solitude and reflection.

—Eugenio Montale

A study conducted in 2009 for *The Economist* found that people with 500 Facebook friends had actual interaction—such as leaving comments on people’s walls or ‘liking’ their links or photos—with an average of just 17 friends for men, 26 for women.

--Robin Marantz Henig

By showing us live coverage of every bad thing happening everywhere in the world, cable news makes life seem like it’s just an endless string of disasters —when, for most people in most places today, life is fairly good.

—Gregg Easterbrook

Women are constantly being given double messages: society preaches purity and the media portrays women as nothing but sex objects.

--Ellen Frankfort

The tragedy of our time is not that we are so eye centered, so appearance besotted. The tragedy is that we do not know what we like until we are told by our advertisers and entertainers.

--Jessamyn West

She told me she’d spent most of the summer hanging out alone in her room with her phone. That’s just the way her generation is, she said. ‘We didn’t have a choice to know any life without iPads or iPhones. I think we like our phones more than we like actual people.’

—Jean M. Twenge

...a generation shaped by the smartphone and by the concomitant rise of social media. I call them iGen. Born between 1995 in 2012, members of this generation are growing up with smart phones, have an Instagram account before they start high school, and do not remember a time before the Internet. The Millennials grew up with the web as well, but it wasn’t ever-present in their lives, at hand at all times, day and night. iGen’s oldest members were early adolescents when the iPhone was introduced, in 2007, and high school students when the iPad entered the scene, in 2010. A 2017 survey of more than 5,000 American teens found that three out of four owned an iPhone.

—Jean M. Twenge



The arrival of the smartphone has radically changed every aspect of teenagers' lives, from the nature of their social interactions to their mental health. These changes have affected young people in every corner of the nation and in every type of household. The trends appear among teens poor and rich; of every ethnic background; in cities, suburbs, and small towns. Where there are cell towers, there are teens living their lives on their smartphone.

—Jean M. Twenge

More comfortable in their bedrooms than in a car or at a party, today's teens are physically safer than teens have ever been. They're markedly less likely to get into a car accident and, having less of a taste for alcohol than their predecessors, less susceptible to drinking's attendant ills.

Psychologically, however, they are more vulnerable than Millennials were; rates of teen depression and suicide have skyrocketed since 2011. It's not an exaggeration to describe iGen as being on the brink of the worst mental health crisis in decades. Much of this deterioration can be traced to their phones.

—Jean M. Twenge

Parenting styles continue to change, as do school curricula and culture, and these things matter. But the twin rise of the smart phone and social media has caused an earthquake of a magnitude we've not seen in a very long time, if ever. There is compelling evidence that the devices we've placed in young people's hands are having profound effects on their lives—and making them seriously unhappy.

—Jean M. Twenge

I asked my undergraduate students at San Diego State University what they do with their phones while they sleep. Their answers were a profile in obsession. Nearly all slept with their phone, putting it under their pillow, on the mattress, or at the very least within an arm's reach of the bed. They checked social media right before they went to sleep, and reached for their phone as soon as they woke up in the morning (they had to — all of them used it as their alarm clock). Their phone was the last thing they saw before they went to sleep and the first thing they saw when they woke up. If they woke in the middle of the night, they often ended up looking at their phone. Some used the language of addiction. 'I know I shouldn't, but I just can't help it,' one said about looking at her phone while in bed. Others saw their phone as an extension of their body — or even like a lover: having my phone close to me while I'm sleeping is a comfort.

—Jean M. Twenge

Prying the phone out of our kids' hands will be difficult, even more so than the quixotic efforts of my parents' generation to get their kids to turn off MTV and get some fresh air. But more seems to be at stake in urging teens to use their phones responsibly, and there are benefits to be gained even if all we instill in our children is the importance of moderation. Significant effects on both mental health and sleep time appear after two or more hours a day on electronic devices. The average teen spends about two and a half hours a day on electronic devices. Some mild boundary setting could be keep kids from falling into harmful habits.

—Jean M. Twenge

Athena told me that when she does spend time with her friends in person, they are often looking at their device instead of at her. 'I'm trying to talk to them about something, and they don't actually look at my face,' she said. 'They're looking at their phone, or they're looking at their Apple Watch.' 'What does it feel like, when you're trying to talk to somebody face-to-face and they're not looking at you?' I asked. 'It kind of hurts,' she said. 'It hurts. I know my parents' generation didn't do that. I could be talking about something super important to me, and they wouldn't even be listening.'

Once, she told me, she was hanging out with a friend who was texting her boyfriend. 'I was trying to talk to her about my family, and what was going on, and she was like, 'Uh-huh, yeah, whatever.' So I took her phone out of her hands and threw it at my wall.'

—Jean M. Twenge

Today's teens are...less likely to date. The initial stage of courtship, which Gen Xers called 'liking' (as in 'Ooh, he likes you!'), kids and now call 'talking'—an ironic choice for a generation that prefers texting to actual conversation. After two teens have talked for a while, they might start dating. But only about 56% of high school seniors in 2015 went out on dates; for boomers and Gen Xers, the number was about 85%.

—Jean M. Twenge

Television was supposed to be a national park. Instead it has become a money machine. It's a commodity now, just like pork bellies.

—Fred W. Friendly

After the '60s and the '70s happened as they happened, the internet may have broken America's dynamic balance between rational thinking and magical thinking for good.

—Kurt Andersen

Before the web, it really wasn't easy to stumble across false or crazy information convincingly passing itself off as true. Today, however... such subject specific areas as crank science, conspiracist politics, and occultism are not isolated from one another.

—Kurt Andersen

I grew up without a television. It meant that I read lots of books.

—Emily Watson

Teens who spend three hours a day or more on electronic devices are 35 percent more likely to have a risk factor for suicide, such as making a suicide plan. (That's much more than the risk related to, say, watching TV.) One piece of data that indirectly but stunningly captures kids' growing isolation, for good and for bad: since 2007, the homicide rate among teens has declined, but the suicide rate has increased. As teens have started spending less time together, they have become less likely to kill one another, and more likely to kill themselves. In 2011, for the first time in 24 years, the teen suicide rate was higher than the teen homicide rate.

—Jean M. Twenge

The amount of educational programming on television today is simply desensitizing. The only reason left to go to school is to see gun violence.

--Bauvard

Commercials capture your attention, that's all.

—Calvin Klein

One searches the magazines in vain for women past their first youth. The middle-aged face apparently sells neither perfume nor floor wax. The role of the mature woman in the media is almost entirely negative.

--Janet Harris

No matter how much 'citizenship' young people may study, or how much they may learn about democratic processes, the fundamentally antidemocratic attitude of protection which surrounds them from infancy nullifies all this, and throws them on the world expecting more protection. This issue, which has always been serious, has reached a crisis with the coming of television. In an age of electronic media it is no use going on with the pretense that young people in their teens can be kept in the world by themselves. As we have already seen...people have who have no social function quickly get bored, and boredom leads to smashing things.

—Northrop Frye

A CD. How quaint. We have these in museums.

--Eoin Colfer

We can't jump off bridges anymore because our iPhones will get ruined. We can't take skinny dips in the ocean because there's no service on the beach and adventures aren't real unless they're on Instagram. Technology has doomed the spontaneity of adventure and we're helping destroy it every time we Google, check-in, and hashtag.

--Jeremy Glass

In the age of technology there is constant access to vast amounts of information. The basket overflows; people get overwhelmed; the eye of the storm is not so much what goes on in the world, it is the confusion of how to think, feel, digest, and react to what goes on.

--Criss Jami

The Internet is like alcohol in some sense. It accentuates what you would do anyway. If you want to be a loner, you can be more alone. If you want to connect, it makes it easier to connect.

--Esther Dyson

TELEPHONE n. An invention of the devil which abrogates some of the advantages of making a disagreeable person keep his distance.

--Ambrose Bierce

I hate technology. It provides so many different channels of loneliness. Every time you check your email and don't see a new message, you know that, even though people have the ability to contact you at any time of the day from anywhere on the planet, no one is interested in doing so. Phones are constant reminders that 160 people you know fairly well have nothing to say to you most of the time.

--Adi Alsaid

I hate all electronic toys: cell phones, e-mail, PalmPilots, handheld Global Positioning System equipment, and the whole raft of gadgets that intrude on solitude.

When I was a kid I used to disappear into the woods all day. Now I can walk in the wilderness without wasting my valuable time. As I hike along I can call anyone in the world, schedule an appointment, take a picture of me standing next to a tree and then send the person a map so he or she can join me there. Solitude has been snuffed out.

--David Skibbins

Here though, there are no oppressors. No one's forcing you to do this. You willingly tie yourself to these leashes. And you willingly become utterly socially autistic. You no longer pick up on basic human communication clues. You're at a table with three humans, all of whom are looking at you and trying to talk to you, and you're staring at a screen! Searching for strangers in... Dubai!

--Dave Eggers

The arrival of the smartphone has radically changed every aspect of teenagers' lives, from the nature of their social interactions to their mental health. These changes have affected young people in every corner of the nation and in every type of household. The trends appear among teens poor and rich; of every ethnic background; in cities, suburbs, and small towns. Where there our cell towers, there are teens living their lives on their smartphone.

—Jean M. Twenge

Intelligence nowadays is all about application: it is the ability 'to take in a complex system and learn its rules on the fly'. For young people, this ability is second nature. Any fool knows that, if you need a new and unfamiliar VCR programmed in a hurry, you commandeer any small passing child to do it.

--Lynne Truss

A citizen at his home in Rockford, Illinois, or Boulder, Colorado, could read a newspaper, listen to a radio, or watch the round-the-clock coverage on television, but he had no way of connecting with those who shared his views. Nor was there a quick, readily available tool for an ordinary citizen to gather information on his own. In 1960, communication was a one-way street, and information was fundamentally inaccessible. The whole idea of summoning up data or reaching thousands of individuals with the touch of a finger was a science-fiction fantasy.

--Jeff Greenfield

[The modern age] knows nothing about isolation and nothing about silence. In our quietest and loneliest hour the automatic ice-maker in the refrigerator will cluck and drop an ice cube, the automatic dishwasher will sigh through its changes, a plane will drone over, the nearest freeway will vibrate the air. Red and white lights will pass in the sky, lights will shine along highways and glance off windows. There is always a radio that can be turned to some all-night station, or a television set to turn artificial moonlight into the flickering images of the late show. We can put on a turntable whatever consolation we most respond to, Mozart or Copland or the Grateful Dead.

--Wallace Stegner

Twittering just seemed to be people telling other people what they were doing—getting in the shower, making coffee. Who on earth wanted to know these things?...Babble and twitter. Full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.

--Kate Atkinson

A photograph is a universe of dots. The grain, the halide, the little silver things clumped in the emulsion. Once you get inside a dot, you gain access to hidden information, you slide into the smallest event. This is what technology does. It peels back the shadows and redeems the dazed and rumbling past. It makes reality come true.

--Don DeLillo

It's easier for a rich man to ride that camel through the eye of a needle directly into the Kingdom of Heaven, than for some of us to give up our cell phone.

--Vera Nazarian

Phones with numerical keypads worked best for dialing phone calls. Incidentally, phone calls tend to be the primary function of a phone. 'Smartphones' completely ignore these basic facts, resulting in some of the least intelligent devices I've seen yet. Oh the irony.

--Ashly Lorenzana

There are no restrictions or barriers for preventing someone from becoming an addict to a technological device. Unlike alcohol, cigarettes and other vices; technology knows no age limits

--Asa Don Brown

I have to resort to email, and email is not enough. I am starting to get tired of relying on words. They are full of meaning, yes, but they lack sensation. Writing to her is not the same as seeing her face as she listens. Hearing back from her is not the same as hearing her voice. I have always been grateful for technology, but now it feels as if there's a little hitch of separation woven into any digital interaction. I want to be there, and this scares me. All my usual disconnected comforts are being taken away, now that I see the greater comfort of presence.

--David Levithan

More than 80% of Millennials sleep with their cell phones (as compared to only a third of Boomers); More than half check them in the middle of the night. A third send over 35 text messages after having gone to bed. For digital natives, life is lived mediated.

--Julie Albright

Einstein and Bergson held an extremely low opinion of technology—especially when compared to science. They were skeptical about its alleged benefits. ‘What comes to the mind of a sensible person when hearing the word technology?’ asked Einstein. ‘Avarice, exploitation, social divisions amongst people, class hatred,’ he responded. Technology, in his view, could easily be considered the wayward son of our era.

--Jimena Canales

For digital natives, ubiquitous connectivity means untethering from traditional expectations about work and career: Why be in an office when you can work from Starbucks on your laptop? Why even come in at all?

--Julie Albright

With text messaging and e-mails buzzing in our pockets, our constant availability for phone calls, and hot new apps and social media on our phones, we are more distracted, more unfocused and more enmeshed in sweating the small stuff than ever before. And this leads to many of us feeling like we’re sprinting every day but really not getting anywhere.

--Dean Graziosi

Technology has solved old economic problems by giving us new psychological problems. The internet has not just open-sourced information, it has also open-sourced insecurity, self-doubt, and shame.

--Mark Manson

Tweet others the way you want to be tweeted.

--Germany Kent

This extraordinary technology that makes it possible for us to connect with someone on the other side of the world also disconnects us from the person on the other side of the table. Be intentional about what you’re doing and when you’re doing it. If you’re with a person, be with them.

--Rob Bell

It’s become clear that our gadgets give us ever more freedom to do anything our socially isolated little hearts desire—except stop using them.

--Steve Thorngate

Necessity used to be the mother of invention, but then we ran out of things that were necessary.

--Chuck Klosterman

Walter Isaacson, who ate dinner with the Jobs family while researching his biography of Steve Jobs, told Bilton that, 'No one ever pulled out an iPad or computer. The kids did not seem addicted at all to devices.' It seemed as if the people producing tech products were following the cardinal rule of drug dealing: never get high on your own supply.

--Adam Alter

We now expect more from technology and less from each other.

--Sherry Turkle

In the kitchen, I turn on a TV set that has hundreds of channels devoted to every conceivable subject including celebrity bunion removal (This week: David Hasselhoff). I tune in to one of the literally dozens of news shows, all of which feature a format of 55 percent celebrities promoting things, 30 percent emails from viewers, and 15 percent YouTube videos showing bears jumping on trampolines. While I'm catching up on these developments, I turn on the programmable coffeemaker, which I hope that someday, perhaps by attending community college, I will learn to program.

--Dave Barry

All digital music listeners are equal. Acquisition is painless. Taste is irrelevant. It is pointless to boast about your iTunes collection, or the quality of your playlists on a streaming service. Music became data, one more set of 1's and 0's lurking in your hard drive, invisible to see and impossible to touch. Nothing is less cool than data.

--David Sax

Wow. Whoops. Sorry. ... I just lost two hours inside a YouTube kitten warp.

--Douglas Coupland

Cell phones are certainly not necessary, and 'but I'm from the digital age, this is what everyone in my generation is doing!' isn't a very good excuse for being hooked on a glowing screen 24/7. In the 1960's every teen of the times was tripping on acid and running off to find themselves in communes and love buses. It was a fad, there was no excuse for it and it passed, just like I think that this generation's 'cell phones are necessary for socialization' fad will eventually pass. What will it bring afterwards? I don't even want to know, but I'll keep my fingers crossed and hope that it isn't anything else digital.

--Rebecca McNutt

People who smile while they are alone used to be called insane, until we invented smartphones and social media.

--Mokokoma Mokhonoana



People always say that digital cameras are much more stable than film cameras, but the truth is that digital cameras, or any kind of digital technology, is one of the most unstable things in the world. A film camera can last decades if you know how to look after it, but digital things can break down instantly. A violent storm, a nuclear bomb, even something as minor as a cracked screen or the releasing of newer models, can make a digital product just a block of useless metal.

--Rebecca McNutt

There's a basic principle about consumer electronics: it gets more powerful all the time and it gets cheaper all the time. That's true of all types of consumer electronics.

--Trip Hawkins

It used to be the proverbial question: 'It's 10 o'clock, do you know where your children are?' Now your kid can be sitting a few feet away from you in the living room with a laptop, being damaged.

--Jamie Wasserman

Every technology will alienate you from some part of your life. That is its job. Your job is to notice. First notice the difference. And then, every time, choose.

— Michael Harris

I hate how it's so much easier to be open and straightforward to a computer screen than to an actual person.

— Daria Snadowsky

Now we have so many methods of communication: Land phone, Fax, Pager, Mobile phone, Texting, E mail, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram...and the list keeps growing.....But Communication itself has not improved!

—Ankala V. Subbarao

We live in an age of miracles so commonplace that it can be difficult to see them as anything other than part of the daily texture of living.

--Tom Chatfield

In spite of the phenomenal growth of the Internet and mobile devices, I still believe television will continue to be an incredibly important medium.... After all, over the last century, radio never killed movies, and TV never killed radio. Everything finds its level in the media universe.

--Phil Cooke

The resource of generational history is accorded little attention our society, which seems ever more obsessed with making 'new' and 'better' synonymous. From my family I became aware of the importance of passing along wisdom from one generation to the next. Yet despite the increasing proliferation of digital recording and other communication technologies, we're passing on less knowledge today than our parents did through the oral tradition alone. We're drowning in photographs and videos, capturing every mundane moment of our birthdays, holidays, and vacations. Yet these can be no more than pleasant distraction, only scratching the surface of our real relationships.

--Ralph Nader

Technology has bridged the gap of distant communication, bringing friends and family closely together but no matter the number of 'likes', tweets, chats, comments, posts and shares, none can compare to a sincere smile, a kind kiss and a warm hug.

--Bernard Kelvin Clive

The simple truth is that technology is still a poor substitute for human interaction.

--Robert G. Thompson

The very definition of what it means to be alone has changed. To be physically alone is still relatively easy, but many of us struggle daily to turn off e-mail, computers, or cell phones.

--José Antonio Bowen

Technology makes people equal, it gives them a fair advantage.

--Samer Chidiac

As we watch, in fascination, the arresting replicas of reality on our television screen, there may sit, in the same room, a telephone and a phonograph. On our bedside table stands a radio; another accompanies us in our car. These strange machines never move unless we move them; they come alive only at our touch. But give them their due: they serve us well. They provide the far-flung, trillion-nerved ganglia of commerce, of news, of our mighty military forces. And down through the days and nights of our lives, they ward off our loneliness and bring us nearer together. Perhaps someday they will make us brothers.

—Robert O'Brien

The once plentiful herds of magazine writers would continue to be culled—by the Internet, by the recession, by the American public, who would rather watch TV or play video games or electronically inform friends that, like, 'rain sucks!'

--Gillian Flynn

Seemed to me a phone was an impersonal instrument. If it felt like it, it let your personality go through its wires. If it didn't want to, it just drained your personality away until what slipped through at the other end was some cold fish of a voice, all steel, copper, plastic, no warmth, no reality. It's easy to say the wrong thing on telephones; the telephone changes your meaning on you. First thing you know, you've made an enemy. Then, of course, the telephone's such a convenient thing; it just sits there and demands you call someone who doesn't want to be called. Friends were always calling, calling, calling me. Hell, I hadn't any time of my own.

--Ray Bradbury

There is a world out there, so new, so random and disassociated that it puts us all in danger. We talk online, we 'friend' each other when we don't know who we are really talking to.... We mistake almost anything for a relationship, a community of sorts, and yet, when we are with our families, in our communities, we are clueless, we short-circuit and immediately dive back into the digitized version—it is easier, because we can be both our truer selves and our fantasy selves all at once, with each carrying equal weight.

—A. M. Homes

Of course, in television's presentation of the 'news of the day,' we may see the 'Now...this' mode of discourse in it's boldest and most embarrassing form. For there, we are presented not only with fragmented news but news without context, without consequences, without value, and therefore without essential seriousness; that is to say, news as pure entertainment.

--Neil Postman

The most valuable commodity of the 21st century will be undivided attention.

--Phil Cooke

Human relationships are rich and they're messy and they're demanding. And we clean them up with technology. Texting, email, posting, all of these things let us present the self as we want to be. We get to edit, and that means we get to delete, and that means we get to retouch, the face, the voice, the flesh, the body—not too little, not too much, just right.

--Sherry Turkle

For good or for bad, we define ourselves in many ways by the gadgets we use and the clothes we wear. We don't want to surround ourselves with cheap products. Nobody really aspires to that. We also don't want to pay for a diamond-encrusted e-reader. We don't need bling; we just need to feel like the design speaks to us.

--Jason Merkoski

Life without a phone is riskier, lonelier, more vivid.

--Eloisa James

We need to embrace gaming in school to embrace a population of students we often leave out when it comes to after school activities. Some schools are starting to explore esports—professional video game playing—as a thing.

—Chris Aviles

We bring in technology thinking it will add the next-level skills to our classrooms. That technology will help our teaching come alive, our curriculum have a deeper meaning. That it may ‘hook’ the kids, as if they are fish, keep them engaged, get them ready for the future.

And yes, those are valid reasons.

But the true power in technology is not just the readiness. The skills. The playing around with tools to create something impossible.

It is the power to be seen. To not be alone. To feel that in the world, someone values you. That someone out there gets you.

Our oldest daughter cemented her best friendship through Minecraft. They play together, side by side, and it drew them tighter together as Thea faced the bullies at her school.

When I think of technology, I don’t just see it as a tool. I see it as a way for kids to be seen. For kids to be found. For kids to not be alone. And for adults too.

Someone out there values us. Someone out there, who wonders whether they have worth, is waiting for all of us. Technology means we don’t have to be alone anymore.

—Pernille Ripp

Everywhere he went he saw this same phenomenon—parents unmindful of their children, their attention fixed on little glass windows in the palms of their hands, mesmerized like drug addicts, longing for some artificial connection while their own flesh and blood careened wildly through a chaotic and violent world behind their backs. The writer was even worse. He invented false worlds and peopled them with ghosts while his motherless son scanned the horizon for a human connection. It was shameful. What did a man need to lose to be shaken from his immersion in a dream? What terminal force could liberate him from the pursuit of phantoms and engage him in the living world around him?

--Douglas Wynne

Technology can be our best friend, and technology can also be the biggest party pooper of our lives. It interrupts our own story, interrupts our ability to have a thought or a daydream, to imagine something wonderful because we’re too busy bridging the walk from the cafeteria back to the office on the cell phone.

--Steven Spielberg

The information age is so psychotic—without the cell phone and Internet, I would be drama free right now.

--Lauren Barnholdt

We need to re-create boundaries. When you carry a digital gadget that creates a virtual link to the office, you need to create a virtual boundary that didn't exist before.

—Daniel Goleman

If you believe that your thoughts originate inside your brain, do you also believe that television shows are made inside your television set?

--Warren Ellis

I like to watch the news, because I don't like people very much and when you watch the news ... if you ever had an idea that people were really terrible, you could watch the news and know that you're right.

--Frank Zappa

The average TV commercial of sixty seconds has one hundred and twenty half-second clips in it, or one-third of a second. We bombard people with sensation. That substitutes for thinking.

--Ray Bradbury

People are sheep. TV is the shepherd.

--Jess C. Scott

The television is 'real'. It is immediate, it has dimension. It tells you what to think and blasts it in. It must be right. It seems so right. It rushes you on so quickly to its own conclusions your mind hasn't time to protest, 'What nonsense!'

--Ray Bradbury

In the age of technology there is constant access to vast amounts of information. The basket overflows; people get overwhelmed; the eye of the storm is not so much what goes on in the world, it is the confusion of how to think, feel, digest, and react to what goes on.

--Criss Jami

The biases the media has are much bigger than conservative or liberal. They're about getting ratings, about making money, about doing stories that are easy to cover.

--Al Franken

The COUNTRY is controlled by LAWS>  
LAWS are controlled by POLITICIANS>  
POLITICIANS are controlled by VOTERS>  
VOTERS are controlled by PUBLIC OPINION>  
PUBLIC OPINION is controlled by the MEDIA (News, Hollywood, Internet...) &  
EDUCATION

so—whoever controls MEDIA & EDUCATION, controls the COUNTRY.

--William J. Federer

In our postmodern culture which is TV dominated, image sensitive, and morally vacuous, personality is everything and character is increasingly irrelevant.

--David F. Wells

Television screens saturated with commercials promote the utopian and childish idea that all problems have fast, simple, and technological solutions. You must banish from your mind the naive but commonplace notion that commercials are about products. They are about products in the same sense that the story of Jonah is about the anatomy of whales.

--Neil Postman

If we were to do the Second Coming of Christ in color for a full hour, there would be a considerable number of stations which would decline to carry it on the grounds that a Western or a quiz show would be more profitable.

--Edward R. Murrow

Our society on a whole is trained to see young women. There are proportionally far more of them on magazine covers, on TV, and in films than in the actual population. As a result, we have a citizenry taught to see the young and ignore the not-so-young. It isn't conscious; it's Pavlovian.

--Victoria Moran

The first and greatest sin of the deception of television is that it simplifies; it diminishes, great complex ideas, stretches of time; whole careers become reduced to a single snapshot.

--Peter Morgan

Cinema, radio, television, magazines are a school of inattention: people look without seeing, listen in without hearing.

--Robert Bresson

How often does it occur that information provided you on morning radio or television, or in the morning newspaper, causes you to alter your plans for the day, or to take some action you would not otherwise have taken, or provides insight into some problem you are required to solve? For most of us, news of the weather will sometimes have consequences; for investors, news of the stock market; perhaps an occasional story about crime will do it, if by chance it occurred near where you live or involved someone you know. But most of our daily news is inert, consisting of information that gives us something to talk about but cannot lead to any meaningful action...You may get a sense of what this means by asking yourself another series of questions: What steps do you plan to take to reduce the conflict in the Middle East? Or the rates of inflation, crime and unemployment? What are your plans for preserving the environment or reducing the risk of nuclear war? What do you plan to do about NATO, OPEC, the CIA, affirmative action, and the monstrous treatment of the Baha's in Iran? I shall take the liberty of answering for you: You plan to do nothing about them. You may, of course, cast a ballot for someone who claims to have some plans, as well as the power to act. But this you can do only once every two or four years by giving one hour of your time, hardly a satisfying means of expressing the broad range of opinions you hold. Voting, we might even say, is the next to last refuge of the politically impotent. The last refuge is, of course, giving your opinion to a pollster, who will get a version of it through a desiccated question, and then will submerge it in a Niagara of similar opinions, and convert them into—what else?—another piece of news. Thus, we have here a great loop of impotence: The news elicits from you a variety of opinions about which you can do nothing except to offer them as more news, about which you can do nothing.

--Neil Postman

New media don't succeed because they're like the old media, only better: they succeed because they're worse than the old media at the stuff the old media is good at, and better at the stuff the old media are bad at. Books are good at being paper-white, high-resolution, low-infrastructure, cheap and disposable. Ebooks are good at being everywhere in the world at the same time for free in a form that is so malleable that you can just pastebomb it into your IM session or turn it into a page-a-day mailing list.

--Cory Doctorow

The real problem here is a massive elephant in the room: our own culture. Our social values, our media—so influential on impressionable young girls—that have been allowed, for millenia, to send out this powerful, alienating message about girls and sport: that sport is unfeminine, that sport makes you sweaty and muscular, that sport is swearing and violence, that sport is ugliness in a world where women's sole priority, value and focus should be beauty and becoming an object of desire.

--Anna Kessel

Most of the time, we see only what we want to see, or what others tell us to see, instead of really investigating to see what is really there. We embrace illusions only because we are presented with the illusions that are embraced by the majority. When in truth, they only become popular because they are pounded at us by the media with such an intensity and high level of repetition that its mere force disguises lies and truths. And like obedient schoolchildren, we do not question their validity and swallow everything up like medicine. Why? Because since the earliest days of our youth, we have been conditioned to accept that the direction of the herd, and authority anywhere—is always right.

--Suzy Kassem

The media's job is not to inform you; it is to get eyeballs. Eyeballs lead to advertising revenue. That means they need people to read stuff and view stuff. Telling everyone things are going to work out just fine doesn't get eyeballs the way feeding into fear does. That doesn't just explain financial news; it explains most of the news.

--Peter Mallouk

Even the media has a twisted image of reality. Magazines have photoshopped images of men and women models and celebrities on their covers. We are flooded with images of perfection and material things. Those influences can take over your mind, causing you to want to keep up with those celebrities on television and in magazines in any way possible. You cannot be happy if you constantly compete with others for public approval.

--Tisha Marie Payton

You're a Black educated fool, son. These white folk have newspapers, magazines, radios, spokesmen to get their ideas across. If they want to tell the world a lie, they can tell it so well that it becomes the truth; and if I tell them you're lying, they'll tell the world even if you prove you're telling the truth. Because it's the kind of lie they want to hear.

--Ralph Ellison

Much of our media now are so image-rich and content-poor that they just serve to capture the eye, manipulate our emotions, and short-circuit our impulses. The propaganda and advertising industries therefore function increasingly like adult obedience industries. They instruct their audiences in how to feel and what to think, and increasing numbers of people seem to accept and follow the cues without question.

--Nancy Snow

The Internet has brought communities across the globe closer together through instant communication.

—Mike Fitzpatrick



A great body of research shows that children can learn from viewing and interacting with video and television. Viewing video was once thought to be a passive process. Now, cognitive research has shown that viewers observe, interpret, and coordinate all the information in the video to make their own personal sense of what is being communicated.

—John Bransford, Ann  
Brown, and  
Rodney Cocking

The power of television and video for learning lies in the use of multimedia to engage students visually, cognitively, emotionally, socially, and civically in facets of the academic content. Visual learning can result in increased engagement as well as increased complexity, depth, and breadth of experience to improve student academic performances. Results depend on the inclusion of high-quality content and sound pedagogy.

—*Cisco Systems*

Television news is akin to audible wallpaper.

--George F. Will

The FAKE NEWS media (failing @nytimes, @NBCNews, @ABC, @CBS, @CNN) is not my enemy, it is the enemy of the American People!

—President Donald  
Trump (2017)

There's an old story about the person who wished his computer were as easy to use as his telephone. That wish has come true, since I no longer know how to use my telephone.

—Bjarne Stroustrup

All of a sudden, we've lost a lot of control. We can't turn off our internet; we can't turn off our smartphones; we can't turn off our computers. You used to ask a smart person a question. Now, who do you ask? It starts with g-o, and it's not God.

--Steve Wozniak

Adults always bitch about millennials being glued to their phones, but if we miss one call or text they scream at us for not being diligent and having our phone with us?

—Internet Meme

The media represents a world that is more real than reality that we can experience. People lose the ability to distinguish between reality and fantasy. They also begin to engage with the fantasy without realizing what it really is.

They seek happiness and fulfillment through the simulacra of reality, e.g. media and avoid the contact/interaction with the real world.

--Jean Baudrillard

Today, reports of the day's events are conveyed to the viewing public by way of alternate universes, The Fox News cable channel conveys its version of reality, while at the other end of the ideological spectrum MSNBC presents its version. They and their many counterparts on radio are more the result of an economic dynamic than a political one. Dispatching journalists into the field to gather information costs money; hiring a glib bloviator is relatively cheap, and inviting opinionated guests to vent on the air is entirely cost-free. It wouldn't work if it weren't popular, and audiences, it turns out, are endlessly absorbed by hearing amplified echoes of their own biases. It's divisive and damaging to the healthy functioning of our political system, but it's also indisputably inexpensive and, therefore, good business.

--Ted Koppel

One of the illnesses that has become an epidemic in the Western world is an addiction to news. Newspapers, Internet news, 24-hour news channels. And what is news? News is history in the making. So the addiction to news is the addiction to the outcome of history....In the past couple of decades, news has been produced as entertainment. So people's addiction to news is the addiction to its function as entertainment. If you combine the power of thought with this addiction to entertaining news, then the part of the hundreds of millions of people, the viewing public, that wishes peace on earth is overshadowed by the part of them that wants the next chapter in the story. Every person who turns on the news and finds there's no developments is disappointed. They're checking the news two or three times a day—they want drama, and drama means not only death but death by the thousands, so in the secrets parts of themselves, every news-addicted person is hoping for greater calamity, more bodies, more spectacular wars, more hideous enemy attacks, and these wishes are going out every day into the world. Don't you see? Right now, more than at any other time in history, the universal wish is a black one.

--Steve Toltz

Newspapers might have as much to do in shaping the course of public events as politicians.

--David Halberstam

Bobby Kennedy said that when he had been a boy there were three major influences on children—the home, the church, and the school—and now there was a fourth—television.

--David Halberstam

Teddy White lamented that TV might spell the death of serious politics: to give a thoughtful response to serious questions, politician needed a good thirty seconds to ponder, but television allowed only five seconds of silence at best. DDB (ad men) found nothing to lament and the fact. They were convinced you could learn everything you needed to KNOW about a product, which in this case happens to be a human being, in half a minute—the speed not of thought but of emotion.

--Rick Perlstein

One of the greatest tools you cannot do without is the media. These various means for mass communication and those involved in them must be your partners and not your enemies; you must not be afraid of them but befriend and love them. If you are going to be significant and relevant then you are going to need someone to help broadcast your voice and channel your substance to the world.

--Archibald Marwizi

Interfaces are assumed to be synonymous with media itself. But what would it mean to say that ‘interface’ and ‘media’ are two names for the same thing? The answer is found in the remediation or layer model of media, broached already in the introduction, wherein media are essentially nothing but formal containers housing other pieces of media. This is a claim most clearly elaborated on the opening pages of Marshall McLuhan’s *Understanding Media*. McLuhan liked to articulate this claim in terms of media history: a new medium is invented, and as such its role is as a container for a previous media format. So, film is invented at the tail end of the nineteenth century as a container for photography, music, and various theatrical formats like vaudeville. What is video but a container for film. What is the Web but a container for text, image, video clips, and so on. Like the layers of an onion, one format encircles another, and it is media all the way down. This definition is well-established today, and it is a very short leap from there to the idea of interface, for the interface becomes the point of transition between different mediatic layers within any nested system. The interface is an ‘agitation’ or generative friction between different formats. In computer science, this happens very literally; an ‘interface’ is the name given to the way in which one glob of code can interact with another. Since any given format finds its identity merely in the fact that it is a container for another format, the concept of interface and medium quickly collapse into one and the same thing.

--Alexander R. Galloway

In a society where dirt sells, for every good story told as it is, you will hear the whole of that day's 10 bad stories sensationalized; although in reality, it could be that 100 good deeds happened that day which went unsung.

--Criss Jami

Perhaps the media may not always be telling what to think, but it is always telling you what to think about.

--James Rozoff

...in the case of newspapers. Any rich, unprogressive old party with that particularly grasping, acquisitive form of mentality known as financial genius can own a paper that is the intellectual meat and drink of thousands of tired, hurried men, men too involved in the business of modern living to swallow anything but predigested food. For two cents the voter buys his politics, prejudices, and philosophy. A year later there is a new political ring or a change in the paper's ownership, consequence: more confusion, more contradiction, a sudden inrush of new ideas, their tempering, their distillation, the reaction against them.

--F. Scott Fitzgerald

The media's job is to serve as society's referee, throwing down truth flags when uninformed bigots are shouting their opinions into the wind.

—Allison Kilkenny and  
Jamie Kilstein

All the media of modern consciousness—from the printing press to radio and the movies—were used just as readily by authoritarian reactionaries, and then by modern totalitarians, to reduce liberty and enforce conformity as they ever were by libertarians to expand it.

--Adam Gopnik

If people in the media cannot decide whether they are in the business of reporting news or manufacturing propaganda, it is all the more important that the public understand that difference, and choose their news sources accordingly.

--Thomas Sowell

The daily press and the telegraph, which in a moment spreads inventions over the whole earth, fabricate more myths (and the bourgeois cattle believe and enlarge upon them) in one day than could have formerly been done in a century.

--Karl Marx

People only tune in to news they know they're going to agree with.

— Barbara Kingsolver

You could have done something with newspapers. We didn't do it. No nation did, because we were all too silly. We liked our newspapers with pictures of beach girls and headlines about cases of indecent assault, and no Government was wise enough to stop us having them that way. But something might have been done with newspapers, if we'd been wise enough.

--Nevil Shute

It's becoming obvious to most that mainstream media is nothing but a megaphone for the global elite to present biased news that's designed to align the masses with their agenda.

--James Morcan

Unfortunately, mainstream news has become infotainment, sharing more in common with the entertainment industry than with traditional journalism. Gossip, characterizations and injections of drama are subtly infused with facts, altering the truth in a similar way to how dramatists twist true stories to create greater excitement.

--Lance Morcan

Traditional journalism, where reporters deliver information in a balanced and unbiased fashion, is rapidly fading into obscurity. This is especially evident on television where high profile reporters become bigger than the story, delivering news with large dollops of personality and wit—almost as if they are actors.

--Lance Morcan

Subjective storytelling is now almost as common in the news media as it is in feature films, TV dramas, novels or theater shows. Journalists at their worst are self-centered storytellers who either knowingly or unknowingly bend truths into stories that match their personal beliefs or those of their employers.

--Lance Morcan

Media consumers in the 0s, 10s, 20s, and 30s have no such print alliances. To them, the idea of printing on a dead tree and then trucking it to houses and newsstands seems ludicrous, old-fashioned, inconvenient, and wasteful. To these folks, paper-based publications are a pain to carry and search, easy to misplace, and hard to share, and the information in them is outdated the moment it appears. For those who weren't raised on paper, digital is superior in almost every way.

--Bill bloodgett

A primary reason that people believe that life is getting worse is because our information about the problems of the world has steadily improved. If there is a battle today somewhere on the planet, we experience it almost as if we were there. During World War II, tens of thousands of people might perish in a battle, and if the public could see it at all it was in a grainy newsreel in a movie theater weeks later. During World War I a small elite could read about the progress of the conflict in the newspaper (without pictures). During the nineteenth century there was almost no access to news in a timely fashion for anyone.

--Ray Kurzweil

When there is no news, we will give it to you with the same emphasis as if there were.

--David Brinkley

We might think we know how we are being affected by the media—a book, a movie, a TV series. Ironically, this so-called awareness, the ‘third person effect,’ is most common with those with higher education. We think we know how the media affects us, but in truth, it controls us more than we know.

— Anthony Gierzynski

The owners and top managers of most news media organizations tend to be conservative and Republican. This is hardly surprising. The shareholders and executives of multi-billion-dollar corporations are not very interested in undermining the free enterprise system, for example, income from offended advertisers. These owners and managers ultimately decide which reporters, newscasters, and editors to hire or fire, promote or discourage. Journalists who want to get a head, therefore, may have to come to terms with the policies of the people who own and run media businesses.

— Edward S. Greenberg

The mass communications that could enable our politics for good have instead turned it into a bland conglomeration of stunted opinion cloaked in the occasional media frenzy of blame or denial.

--Sara Sheridan

In spite of the phenomenal growth of the Internet and mobile devices, I still believe television will continue to be an incredibly important medium... After all, over the last century, radio never killed movies, and TV never killed radio. Everything finds its level in the media universe.

— Phil Cooke

Whoever controls the media, the images, controls the culture.

—Allen Ginsberg

Not long ago, I interviewed a woman whose twenty-two-year-old daughter had just been murdered by her boyfriend, and she gave me a line straight from a legal drama I happened to catch the night before: I'd like to say that I pity him, but now I fear I'll never be able to pity again.

--Gillian Flynn

The main problem with mass media is that it makes it impossible to fall in love with any acumen of normalcy. There is no 'normal' because everybody is being twisted by the same sources simultaneously.

--Chuck Klosterman

People are tired of this mainstream shit; television and radio is ghastly and the public can smell the corporate meeting. When you watch a show with Simon Cowell, you know no human touch has been near it, that they've carefully engineered the outcome and picked those they're going to humiliate. We live in an age of information glut, but so many people don't question what they're spoon-fed or bother to search for themselves.

--Greg Proops

The media's the most powerful entity on earth. They have the power to make the innocent guilty and to make the guilty innocent, and that's power. Because they control the minds of the masses.

—Malcom X

I spent my time drinking and staring at a television in the airport bar. More death and destruction. Crime. Pollution. All the news stories were telling me to be frightened. All the commercials were telling me to buy things I didn't need. The message was that people could only be passive victims or consumers.

—John Twelve Hawks

Celebrity culture has gone crazy, and I think the reason is that real news is just not bearable, and it also seems impossible to change anything.

—Chris Martin

I have very strong theories about magazine publishing. And I think that it is the most personal form of journalism. And I think that a magazine is an old friend.

—Hugh Hefner

Television saved the movies. The Internet is going to save the news business.

—Matt Drudge

Today intimidation of the press is a standard item on the agenda of the organized political right. There are self-appointed monitors who circulate denunciations of articles and television programs that depart from their ideology.

—Anthony Lewis

You don't realize how little accuracy there is in network TV reporting until they cover a story in your hometown.

—Robert Brault

The faculty of attention has utterly vanished from the Anglo-Saxon mind, extinguished at its source by the big bayadère of journalism, of the newspaper and the picture magazine which keeps screaming, 'Look at me.' Illustrations, loud simplifications... bill poster advertising—only these stand a chance.

—Henry James

I do not mean to be the slightest bit critical of TV newspeople, who do a superb job, considering that they operate under severe time constraints and have the intellectual depth of hamsters. But TV news can only present the 'bare bones' of a story; it takes a newspaper, with its capability to present vast amounts of information, to render the story truly boring.

—Dave Barry

Few, if any, of our citizens—in the real world—will be exposed to the levels of violence comparable to those which appear on television almost every week.

—Richard E. Wiley

TV news manipulates, though all too many people fail to recognize that they are being manipulated, not necessarily or always intentionally. What viewers may fail to recognize is that TV news footage has a beginning and an end: Presumably there must have been potential footage before the camera began recording just as there was footage available after the camera stopped. More than that, TV editors necessarily had to step in to decide what is most newsworthy or dramatic or effective, and they may have chopped out considerable footage at any point. Just as important, viewers need to remember that cameramen had to be allowed in an area to take shots, and clearly they may have been forbidden, temporarily or permanently, from shooting footage at certain places or times. The press of time or any news show forces newsmen to use short segments of films, again a way of focusing which is another way of manipulating, though whether deliberate or inadvertent or unintentional may be difficult to determine.

—Ken Donelson



Media literacy is just what it sounds like—the ability to create personal meaning from the verbal and visual symbols we take in every day through television, radio, computers, newspapers and magazines, and, of course, advertising. It's the ability to choose and select, the ability to challenge and question, the ability to be conscious about what's going on around us—and not be passive and vulnerable.

Television and other mass media have become so ingrained in our culture that we should no longer view the task of media education as providing 'protection' against unwanted messages. Our goal must be to help learners become competent, critical, and literate in all media forms so that they control the interpretation of what they see or hear, rather than let the interpretation control them.

Media literacy is not so much a finite body of knowledge as a skill, a process, a way of thinking that, like reading comprehension, is always evolving. To become media literate is not to memorize facts or statistics about the media, but rather to raise the right questions about what we are watching, reading, or listening to.

At the heart of media literacy is the principle of inquiry.

—Elizabeth Thoman

Concern around such issues as alcohol and tobacco abuse, body image and eating disorders, teen sexual behavior, and the proliferation of violence has prompted teachers and families to examine the role that media messages play in shaping the cultural environment in which our children are growing up.

Educating young people to select their media choices, teaching people of all ages to evaluate media's underlying values, and, in general, promoting a media consciousness are the challenges for educators who recognize that for our society to flourish... we must turn the closed, one-way system of commercial mass media into a two-way process of discussion, reflection, and action with one another and with the media themselves.

—Elizabeth Thoman

The positive values in today's mass media are...significant. Young people today, without leaving home, can hear the world's best music and witness superb musical performances, see outstanding drama and dance programs, hear political and governmental leaders of the nation and the world analyze major issues of the day, and learn of scientific advances and problems. Mass media bring information, inspiration, and enrichment that potentially improve the quality of our living.

—Sara Krentzman  
Srygley

I have always wished for a computer that would be as easy to use as my telephone. My wish came true. I no longer know how to use my telephone.

--Bjarne Stroustrup

The phone is an instrument of intrusion into order. It is a threat to control. Just when you think you are alone and safe, the call could come that changes your life. Or someone else's. It makes the same flat, mechanical noise for everyone and gives no clues what's waiting there on the other end of the line. You can never be too careful.

--Janice Galloway

We are now in the third stage of the industrial revolution. The first involved machines which extended human muscle; the second used machines to extend the human nervous system (radio, television, telephones); the third is now utilizing machines which extend the human mind-computers. About half of all service workers (43 percent of the labor force...) will be involved in collecting, analyzing, synthesizing, structuring, storing, or retrieving information...80 percent of all management will be knowledge workers.

--Owen Davies

The telephone was not his favorite object, and more than once he had considered getting rid of his. What he disliked most of all was its tyranny. Not only did it have the power to interrupt him against his will, but inevitably he would give in to its command.

--Paul Auster

We shall one day navigate the air as the sea—rain will be made to pour on the desert, and it will be cultivated and blossom as the rose—bread shall yet be made of stones in the street—the man of a hundred years shall yet be in his prime—men will yet take a little instrument from their waistcoat pocket and communicate with a friend a hundred miles away without wires, as if they spoke face to face.

—James Gillingham  
(1838–1924)

The bathtub was invented in 1850 and the telephone in 1875. In other words, if you had been living in 1850, you could have sat in the bathtub for 25 years without having to answer the phone.

—Bill DeWitt

Cell phones are not a sign of power, they're a sign of subservience.

—Doug Pappas

Somebody just gave me a shower radio. Thanks a lot. Do you really want music in the shower? I guess there's no better place to dance than a slick surface next to a glass door.

--Jerry Seinfeld

Even when it is not used with malice aforethought or for the purpose of elevating the breeze in your vicinity it is an exhausting instrument. If you pass a friend in the street you can say, 'How do you do?' and let it go at that without being expected to stop and thrash the matter out to the last symptom. But if you have an impulse to swap a fleeting greeting per telephone you can't say 'How do you do?' and hang up. The telephone tradition demands that you lean with one elbow on the wall or both on the table and strain every nerve to be bright. Face to face with the other party you would merely be yourself and, however painful that might be, no offence would be taken. But there is something about the telephone for social purposes which causes you to behave in a manner which would brand you as 'nuts' in normal circumstances. To add to the pain of social telephonetics, neither party to the ordeal is ever willing to ring off. Both keep on saying, 'Yes—oh, yes,' 'True, true,' 'That is so,' 'Quite,' while both vainly try to think up some remark that will close the song and dance without leaving a wound that the years will fail to heal.

—Kenneth Alfred Evelyn  
Alexander  
(1890–1953)

I like my new telephone, my computer works just fine, my calculator is perfect, but Lord, I miss my mind!

—Unknown

A woman is a person who reaches for a chair when she answers the telephone.

—Milton Wright

As early as 1930 Schoenberg wrote: 'Radio is an enemy, a ruthless enemy marching irresistibly forward, and any resistance is hopeless'; it 'force-feeds us music . . . regardless of whether we want to hear it, or whether we can grasp it,' with the result that music becomes just noise, a noise among other noises. Radio was the tiny stream it all began with. Then came other technical means for reproducing, proliferating, amplifying sound, and the stream became an enormous river. If in the past people would listen to music out of love for music, nowadays it roars everywhere and all the time, 'regardless whether we want to hear it,' it roars from loudspeakers, in cars, in restaurants, in elevators, in the streets, in waiting rooms, in gyms, in the earpieces of Walkmans, music rewritten, reorchestrated, abridged, and stretched out, fragments of rock, of jazz, of opera, a flood of everything jumbled together so that we don't know who composed it (music become noise is anonymous), so that we can't tell beginning from end (music become noise has no form): sewage-water music in which music is dying.

--Milan Kundera

Everybody in society these days just walks around with their heads down, staring at their phones. Chiropractors must be making a fortune!

—Keith Wynn

Media: the tongue of a nation!

—Ernest Agyemang  
Yeboah

Television is all right, I've nothing against it, but I don't like how it turns you away from the rest of the world and toward nothing but its own glassy self. In that one way, at least, radio was better.

--Stephen King

You know, who tells the stories of a culture really governs human behaviour. It used to be the parent, the school, the church, the community. Now it's a handful of global conglomerates that have nothing to tell, but a great deal to sell.

--George Gerbner

Movies, vaudeville, burlesque, the local stock companies—all survived together. Then radio came in. For the first time people didn't have to leave their homes to be entertained.

--Kliph Nesteroff

When you listen to radio you are a witness of the everlasting war between idea and appearance, between time and eternity, between the human and the divine. Exactly, my dear sir, as the radio for ten minutes together projects the most lovely music without regard into the most impossible places, into respectable drawing rooms and attics and into the midst of chattering, guzzling, yawning and sleeping listeners, and exactly as it strips this music of its sensuous beauty, spoils and scratches and beslims it and yet cannot altogether destroy its spirit, just so does life, the so-called reality, deal with the sublime picture-play of the world and make a hurley-burley of it.

--Hermann Hesse

A world without radio is a deaf world. A world without television is a blind world. A world without telephone is a dumb world. A world without communication is indeed a crippled world.

—Ernest Agyemang  
Yeboah

Six men control almost all the media in the United States—book publishing, magazines, television, movie studios, newspapers, and radio. They are not friendly toward feminism, which has almost disappeared from the surface of our society. You will almost never see a feminist column on an op-ed page, a feminist article in a magazine, or newspaper, actual (not satirized) feminist ideas on television or in the movies. Only magazines & radio controlled by feminists--and these are few and not well-funded--offer information on the feminist perspective.

This might be understandable if feminism were a wild-eyed manic philosophy. But it is a belief, a politics, based on one simple fact: women are human beings who matter as much as men. That is all that feminism claims. As human beings, women have the right to control their own bodies, to walk freely in the world, to train their minds and bodies, and to love and hate at will. Only those who wish to continue to coerce women into a servant/slave class for men cannot accept this principle.

--Marilyn French

So many people have the TV or radio constantly turned on 'for company,' or spend their time reading trashy novels, aimlessly surfing the Net, and so on. Then suddenly one day you are old or sick and you realize you have done nothing with your life. All your thoughts are other people's thoughts and you have no idea who you really are or what the purpose of your life might be.

--Karen Kingston

TV gives everyone an image, but radio gives birth to a million images in a million brains.

--Peggy Noonan

Radio was supposed to die in 1945, when TV came along. It turns out that radio grew and grew, and it's a bigger business today than it has ever been.

--Alex Blumberg

Radio...that wonderful invention by which I can reach millions of people...who fortunately can't reach me.

--Milton Berle

The most important thing in all human relationships is conversation, but people don't talk anymore, they don't sit down to talk and listen. They go to the theater, the cinema, watch television, listen to the radio, read books, but they almost never talk. If we want to change the world, we have to go back to a time when warriors would gather around a fire and tell stories.

—Paulo Coelho

If you want to touch the hearts of people you can't do that with newspapers or with radio, you have to do it with TV.

--Gerhard Zeiler

You see, wire telegraph is a kind of a very, very long cat. You pull his tail in New York and his head is meowing in Los Angeles. Do you understand this? And radio operates exactly the same way: you send signals here, they receive them there. The only difference is that there is no cat.

--Albert Einstein

Radio listeners are voyeurs: lurking, invisible, eavesdropping.

--Paul Fleischman

The urge to miniaturize electronics did not exist before the space program. I mean our grandparents had radios that was furniture in the living room. Nobody at the time was saying, 'Gee, I want to carry that in my pocket.' Which is a non-thought.

--Neil deGrasse Tyson

The fear of the never-ending onslaught of gizmos and gadgets is nothing new. The radio, the telephone, Facebook—each of these inventions changed the world. Each of them scared the heck out of an older generation. And each of them was invented by people who were in their 20s.

--Daniel H. Wilson

There are still people who keep wanting technology and the future to keep going. They dream of flying cars, or humanoid robots, of populated cities on Mars. But do we really NEED this stuff? Maybe before we try to keep turning our world into an episode of The Jetsons, we should focus more on the problems that are surprisingly being overlooked now more than ever. Before we design another stupid cell phone or build a flying car, let's put a stop to racism, to sexism, to homophobia, to war. Let's stop buying all our 'American' products from sweat shops overseas and let's end poverty in third-world countries. Let's let film photography never go obsolete, let's let print books continue to be printed. Let's stop domestic violence and child abuse and prostitution and this world's heavy reliance on prescription drugs. Let's stop terrorism, let's stop animal cruelty, let's stop overpopulation and urbanization, let's stop the manufacture of nuclear weapons...

...I mean come on, we have all these problems to solve, but digital tech enthusiasts are more concerned that we don't have flying cars or robotic maids yet? That's pathetic.

--Rebecca McNutt

Increasingly, the balance between living in the world and not being of the world is becoming more delicate. Publications, radio, television, and the Internet have surrounded us with worldliness. . . . We are fortunate to have been blessed with a special power to direct us in making important decisions between right and wrong.

--L. Tom Perry

Through radio I look forward to a United States of the World. Radio is standardizing the peoples of the Earth, English will become the universal language because it is predominantly the language of the ether. The most important aspect of radio is its sociological influence.

--Arthur E. Kennelly  
(1926)

I thought *A Prairie Home Companion* would be an interesting thing to do for a summer or so. Public radio was just seven years old in 1974. It was a tiny organization in which a lot of things got started simply because there was all this time to fill. If you wanted to do an hour on Lithuanian folk dancing, you probably could have done it.

--Garrison Keillor

I bought a new Japanese car. I turned on the radio...I don't understand a word they're saying.

--Rodney Dangerfield

The media didn't hand it to Obama; after all, the Number One cable news channel, Fox, is right-wing. The Number One newspaper, the Wall Street Journal, also has a right-wing editorial slant (and is owned by the same guy who owns Fox News). The Number One talk radio show is Rush Limbaugh, and Sean Hannity is Number Two, and Glenn Beck is Number Three. When you control all the largest media outlets, it's time to stop grousing about liberal media bias.

--Paul Begala

Hitler's dictatorship was the first of an industrial estate in this age of modern technology, a dictatorship which employed to perfection the instruments of technology to dominate its own people. By means of such instruments of technology, eighty million persons could be made subject to the will of one individual. Telephone, teletype, radio, made it possible to transmit the commands of the highest levels directly to the lowest organs where they were executed uncritically

--Albert Speer

Clear Channel owns all the major radio stations and venues. Most musicians aren't aware that a few people control so much of what we hear.

--Susan Tedeschi

It took thirty-eight years before 50 million people gained access to radios. It took television thirteen years to earn an audience that size. It took Instagram a year and a half.

--Gary Vaynerchuk

But the thought leaders on talk radio and Fox do more than shape opinion. Backed by their own wing of the book-publishing industry and supported by think tanks that increasingly function as public-relations agencies, conservatives have built a whole alternative knowledge system, with its own facts, its own history, its own laws of economics.

--David Frum

There's no set designer like your own self; you furnish the mise-en-scène, the wardrobe, the physical proportions of the actor, and the setting. Then radio is doing something that television very rarely achieves.

--Norman Corwin

Conservative talk radio works because there are lots of conservatives who are convinced that they are not getting the whole story from the regular media.

--Paul Weyrich

There is danger in the concentration of control in the television and radio networks, especially in the large television and radio stations; danger in the concentration of ownership in the press...and danger in the increasing concentration of selection by book publishers and reviewers and by the producers of radio and television programs.

--Eugene McCarthy

Records, radio, television, movies, magazines-all are monopolized by the money managers who are guided by one ethic, the words wealth and power.

--Ezra Taft Benson

In relations with many domestically weak countries, a radio transmitter can be a more effective form of pressure than a squadron B-52s.

--Henry A. Kissinger



Television contracts the imagination and radio expands it.

--Terry Wogan

Words, isolated in the velvet of radio, took on a jeweled particularity. Television has quite the opposite effect: words are drowned in the visual soup in which they are obliged to be served.

--Frederic Raphael

On the eve of the election last month my wife Judith and I were driving home late in the afternoon and turned on the radio for the traffic and weather. What we instantly got was a freak show of political pornography: lies, distortions, and half-truths half-truths being perhaps the blackest of all lies. They paraded before us as informed opinion.

--Bill Moyers

American radio is the reverse of the Shakespearean stage. In Shakespeare's time the world's greatest dramas were acted with the most primitive technical arrangements; on the American air the world's most primitive writing is performed under perfect technical conditions.

--George Mikes

To live sanely in Los Angeles ... you have to cultivate the art of staying awake. You must learn to resist (firmly but not tensely) the unceasing hypnotic suggestions of the radio, the billboards, the movies and the newspapers; those demon voices which are forever whispering in your ear what you should desire, what you should fear, what you should wear and eat and drink and enjoy, what you should think and do and be.

--Christopher Isherwood

This instrument [radio] can teach. It can illuminate, yes, and it can even inspire. But it can do so only to the extent that humans are determined to use it to those ends. Otherwise it's nothing but wires and lights in a box.

--Edward R. Murrow

Television, radio, social media. The 24/7 news cycle plows forward mercilessly on our desks, in our cars and in our pockets. Thousands and thousands of messages and voices bombard us from the moment we wake, fighting for our attention. All we see and hear, all day long, is news. And most of it is bad.

--Joseph Prince

The polemics of right-wing radio are putting nothing less than hate onto the airwaves, into the marketplace, electing it to office, teaching it in schools, and exalting it as freedom.

--Patricia J. Williams

The power of radio is not that it speaks to millions, but that it speaks intimately and privately to each one of those millions.

--Hallie Flanagan

I think radio plays are my favourite medium, as they make the listener work and create and contribute in a way that TV and film can never do, and they have an immediacy that written prose often lacks.

--Neil Gaiman

Radio is the theater of the mind; television is the theater of the mindless.

--Steve Allen

Scandal is great entertainment because it allows people to feel contempt, a moral emotion that gives feelings of moral superiority while asking nothing in return. With contempt you don't need to right the wrong (as with anger) or flee the scene (as with fear or disgust). And the best of all, contempt is made to share. Stories about the moral failings of others are among the most common kinds of gossip, they are a staple of talk radio, and they offer a ready way for people to show that they share a common moral orientation.

--Jonathan Haidt

There are more people with cell phones in the world than any other thing on the planet. There are billions of cell phones. There's not not billions of radios.

--Spencer Pratt

Television and radio are what I call sequential media; they're not simultaneous media. With simultaneous media, you can scan your eye down an electronic or print page and pick among six or seven stories you might like and want to read. With television and radio, you have to wait until the guy's finished talking about the balloon boy, which I don't have the slightest interest in, to find out that all hell's broken loose in Baghdad. Because they've chosen that day to start with the balloon boy. If they want to start with that, it's fine. But it delays the really important story. In a newspaper, you'd have 50 people blown up in Baghdad in the lead position, and the balloon boy would be put somewhere where it's relevance is appropriately signaled, which is minimal.

--Harold Evans

Radio did not kill books and television did not kill radio or movies—what television did kill was cinema newsreel. TV does it much better because it can deliver it instantly. Who wants last week's news?

--Douglas Adams

If television's a babysitter, the Internet is a drunk librarian who won't shut up.

--Dorothy Gambrell

Reading requires actual concentration. If you skipped a paragraph, or even an important sentence, you could lose the entire story. With most TV shows, though, you didn't have to concentrate at all. You could space out for a good ten minutes, then come back and still figure out what was going on.

--Daniel Ehrenhaft

In America, everyone is entitled to an opinion, and it is certainly useful to have a few when a pollster shows up. But these are opinions of a quite different order from eighteenth- or nineteenth-century opinions. It is probably more accurate to call them emotions rather than opinions, which would account for the fact that they change from week to week, as the pollsters tell us. What is happening here is that television is altering the meaning of 'being informed' by creating a species of information that might properly be called disinformation. I am using this word almost in the precise sense in which it is used by spies in the CIA or KGB. Disinformation does not mean false information. It means misleading information--misplaced, irrelevant, fragmented or superficial information—information that creates the illusion of knowing something but which in fact leads one away from knowing. In saying this, I do not mean to imply that television news deliberately aims to deprive Americans of a coherent, contextual understanding of their world. I mean to say that when news is packaged as entertainment, that is the inevitable result. And in saying that the television news show entertains but does not inform, I am saying something far more serious than that we are being deprived of authentic information. I am saying we are losing our sense of what it means to be well informed. Ignorance is always correctable. But what shall we do if we take ignorance to be knowledge?

--Neil Postman

I'm the idiot box. I'm the TV. I'm the all-seeing eye and the world of the cathode ray. I'm the boob tube. I'm the little shrine the family gathers to adore.'

'You're the television? Or someone in the television?'

'The TV's the altar. I'm what people are sacrificing to.'

'What do they sacrifice?' asked Shadow.

'Their time, mostly,' said Lucy. 'Sometimes each other.'

--Neil Gaiman

Whether it is television, radio, newspapers, magazines, books or the Internet, a few giant conglomerates are determining what we see, hear and read.

--Bernie Sanders

If you want to use television to teach somebody, you must first teach them how to use television.

--Umberto Eco

Television's perfect. You turn a few knobs, a few of those mechanical adjustments at which the higher apes are so proficient, and lean back and drain your mind of all thought. And there you are watching the bubbles in the primeval ooze. You don't have to concentrate. You don't have to react. You don't have to remember. You don't miss your brain because you don't need it. Your heart and liver and lungs continue to function normally. Apart from that, all is peace and quiet. You are in the man's nirvana. And if some poor nasty minded person comes along and says you look like a fly on a can of garbage, pay him no mind. He probably hasn't got the price of a television set.

--Raymond Chandler

Television characters live inside our minds as though they're actual people. In fact, we know more about them than we do about most people in our physical lives.

--Neal Pollack

We would not deem life too short if we always remembered that we do not have to watch TV.

--Mokokoma Mokhonoana

Artists are the architects of our future. The messages they deliver through music, film and television are what guides popular culture. If we want to see more love, peace and prosperity in the world, artists must take responsibility and lead.

—Tammy McCrary

I am, when you stop to think of it, a member of a fairly select group: the final handful of American novelists who learned to read and write before they learned to eat a daily helping of video bullshit.

--Stephen King

No matter what it is, if you don't move your eyes and set the pace yourself, your intellect is sentenced to death. The mind, you see, is like a muscle. For it to remain agile and strong, it must work. Television rules that out.

--Mark Helprin

A properly functioning system of indoctrination has a variety of tasks, some rather delicate. One of its targets is the stupid and ignorant masses. They must be kept that way, diverted with emotionally potent oversimplifications, marginalized, and isolated. Ideally, each person should be alone in front of the TV screen watching sports, soap operas, or comedies, deprived of organizational structures that permit individuals lacking resources to discover what they think and believe in interaction with others, to formulate their own concerns and programs, and to act to realize them. They can then be permitted, even encouraged, to ratify the decisions made by their betters in periodic elections. The 'rascal multitude' are the proper targets of the mass media and a public education system geared to obedience and training in needed skills, including the skill of repeating patriotic slogans on timely occasions.

--Noam Chomsky

A word about TV: If a television is on, an infant will stare at it. This is not a sign of advanced development. TV entertains at a cost. Young children easily become dependent on the TV for stimulation and lose some of their natural drive to explore. A child with a plastic cup and spoon, a few wooden blocks, and a board book can think up fifty creative ways to use those objects; a child in front of a TV can only do one thing.

--Benjamin Spock

American culture has regressed because of contemporary society's glorification of making a good living and spending free time in media activities rather than constantly devoting themselves to a learning and self-improvement. The combination of grooming youngsters to fit into a commercial workplace and Americans willingness to submit themselves to endless hours of watching television shows filled with murders, violence, sex, and replete with advertisements that promote the goods of commercial giants has eroded the American spirit and contributed to lack of an intellectually sophisticated populous.

--Kilroy J. Oldster

However little television you watch, watch less.

--David McCullough

You are more likely to find three TVs inside a randomly selected house than you are to find a single book that is or was not read to pass an exam, to please God, or to be a better cook.

--Mokokoma Mokhonoana

Modern broadcast television, with its digital boxes and fiber optics and orbiting geosynchronous satellites, has become a perfectly engineered slaughterhouse of time.

--Daniel R. Thorne

Even though some individual scholars try to tell us there is no direct connection between images of violence and the violence confronting us in our lives, the common-sense truth remains—we are affected by the images we consume and by the states of mind we are in when watching them. If consumers want to be entertained, and the images shown us as entertaining are images of violent dehumanization, it makes sense that these acts become more acceptable in our daily lives and that we become less likely to respond to them with moral outrage or concern. Were we all seeing more images of loving human interaction, it would undoubtedly have a positive impact on our lives.

—Bell Hooks

A picture is worth 1,000 megapixels. High-definition (HD) TV images are used to camouflage some writers' low-definition (LD) vocabulary.

--John R. Dallas Jr.

I devised a test.

I turned off the TV and instantly the snoring stopped. She began to move. When I felt her eyes about to open, I turned the TV back on and back to sleep she went. Then I'd turn it off and on—sometimes for millisecond—and she never failed me. Each time it was off, she's move and mutter—each time it was on, she'd sleep. By the time the headlights from Amy's Nova turned into our driveway, my suspicion had been confirmed. My mother has a more intimate, connected relationship with this television than she has ever had with me.

--Peter Hedges

TV pollutes our minds and dulls our senses. It is a babysitter that molests children. And yet those who are on the television scream 'first amendment' and 'freedom of speech'. How is corporate control freedom of speech? And what rights did our forefathers grant corporations, anyway?

--James Rozoff

The worst part of it has been, I think, the adverse effect on family life. It kills off family conversation. And it's harder to get your children to read books. I became a confirmed reader when I was growing up in Glendale. I've loved reading all my life. Now I've got this daughter, Aissa, a very bright young lady—but it is a hard job to get her to read. Television's just too easy.

--John Wayne

We rarely talk about television, only about what's on television.

--Neil Postman

The chief problem with television is that, for those who watch it consistently, it undermines and eventually destroys the ability to think. This is because it communicates primarily images, not by words, and words are necessary if we are to perceive logical connections and make judgments as to what is right and wrong.

—James Montgomery  
Boice

Reading is different, reading is something you do. With TV, and cinema for that matter, everything's handed to you on a plate, nothing has to be worked at, they just spoon-feed you. The picture, the sound, the scenery, the atmospheric music in case you haven't understood what the director's on about... The creaking door that tells you to be stiff. You have to imagine it all when you're reading.

--Daniel Pennac

Watching TV becomes a full-time job when you can scan 200 channels all day and all night and still have the option of punching Night Dreams into the video machine, if the rest of the world seems dull.

--Hunter S. Thompson

Many decisions about the form and content of news programs are made on the basis of information about the viewer, the purpose of which is to keep the viewers watching so that they will be exposed to the commercials.

--Neil Postman

There is nothing wrong with entertainment. As some psychiatrist once put it, we all build castles in the air. The problems come when we try to live in them. The communications media of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, with telegraphy and photography at their center, called the peek-a-boo world into existence, but we did not come to live there until television. Television gave the epistemological biases of the telegraph and the photograph their most potent expression, raising the interplay of image and instancy to an exquisite and dangerous perfection. And it brought them into the home. We are by now well into a second generation of children for whom television has been their first and most accessible teacher and, for many, their most reliable companion and friend. To put it plainly, television is the command center of the new epistemology. There is no audience so young that it is barred from television. There is no poverty so abject that it must forgo television. There is no education so exalted that it is not modified by television. And most important of all, there is no subject of public interest—politics, news, education, religion, science, sports—that does not find its way to television. Which means that all public understanding of these subjects is shaped by the biases of television.

--Neil Postman

Too many vacations that last too long, too many movies, too much TV, too much video game playing—too much undisciplined leisure time in which a person continually takes the course of least resistance gradually wastes a life. It ensures that a person's capacities stay dormant, that talents remain undeveloped, that the mind and spirit become lethargic and that the heart is unfulfilled. Where is the security, the guidance, the wisdom, and the power? At the low end of the continuum, in the pleasure of a fleeting moment.

—Stephen Covey

Increasingly, the picture of our society as rendered in our media is illusionary and delusionary: disfigured, unreal, out of touch with reality, disconnected from the true context of our life. It is disfigured by celebrity, by celebrity worship, by gossip, by sensationalism, by denial of our societies.

—Carl Bernstein

In previous centuries, the Church was the great controller, dictating morality, stifling free expression and posing as conservator of all great art and music. Instead we have TV, doing just as good a job at dictating fashions, thoughts, attitudes, objectives as did the Church, using many of the same techniques but doing it so palatably that no one notices. Instead of 'sins' to keep people in line, we have fears of being judged unacceptable by our peers (by not wearing the right shoes, not drinking the right kind of beer, or wearing the wrong kind of deodorant). Coupled with that fear is imposed insecurity concerning our own identities. All answers and solutions to these fears come through the television, and only through television. Only through exposure to TV can the new sins of alienation and ostracism be absolved.

--Anton Szandor LaVey

Every television program must be a complete package in itself. No previous knowledge is to be required. There must not be even a hint that learning is hierarchical, that it is an edifice constructed on a foundation. The learner must be allowed to enter at any point without prejudice. This is why you shall never hear or see a television program begin with the caution that if the viewer has not seen the previous programs, this one will be meaningless. Television is a nongraded curriculum and excludes no viewer for any reason, at any time. In other words, in doing away with the idea of sequence and continuity in education, television undermines the idea that sequence and continuity have anything to do with thought itself.

--Neil Postman

Good film, television, or music keeps you awake, anxious for the next movement or act, and wanting more when it is finished.

--John Grooters



In a very real way, television is the new mythos. It defines the world, reinterprets it. The seasons do not change because Persephone goes underground. They change because new episodes air, because sweeps week demands conflagrations and ritual deaths. The television series rises slowly, arcs, descends into hiatus, and rises again with the bright, burning autumn.

--Catherynne M. Valente

The greatest felony in the news business today is to be behind, or to miss a big story. So speed and quantity substitute for thoroughness and quality, for accuracy and context.

—Carl Bernstein

The futility of everything that comes to us from the media is the inescapable consequence of the absolute inability of that particular stage to remain silent. Music, commercial breaks, news flashes, adverts, news broadcasts, movies, presenters -- there is no alternative but to fill the screen; otherwise there would be an irremediable void. That's why the slightest technical hitch, the slightest slip on the part of the presenter becomes so exciting, for it reveals the depth of the emptiness squinting out at us through this little window.

—Jean Baudrillard

Cinema, radio, television, magazines are a school of inattention: people look without seeing, listen in without hearing.

—Robert Bresson

The most important service rendered by the press and the magazines is that of educating people to approach printed matter with distrust.

--Samuel Butler

The say video games make u violent, but hundreds of years ago we burned people alive for being witches so probably humans are just garbage.

—Internet Meme

Heavy social media users are sadder. It's not only that online life seems to heighten painful comparisons and both inflate and threaten the ego. It's that heavy internet users are much less likely to have contact with their proximate neighbors to exchange favors and extend care. There's something big happening to the social structure of neighborhoods.

—David Brooks

In the past few decades, the fortunate among us have recognised the hazards of living with an overabundance of food (obesity, diabetes) and have started to change our diets. But most of us do not yet understand that news is to the mind what sugar is to the body. News is easy to digest. The media feeds us small bites of trivial matter, tidbits that don't really concern our lives and don't require thinking. That's why we experience almost no saturation. Unlike reading books and long magazine articles (which require thinking), we can swallow limitless quantities of news flashes, which are bright-coloured candies for the mind. Today, we have reached the same point in relation to information that we faced 20 years ago in regard to food. We are beginning to recognise how toxic news can be.

—Rolf Dobelli  
(2013)

Most of what you have read or watched in the media is true and 100% accurate. But HOW you are told the stories, and When—there lies the manipulation!

--Waseem Kanjo

The media are less a window on reality, than a stage on which officials and journalists perform self-scripted, self-serving fictions.

--Thomas Sowell

We have more ways to get our news than ever, which is supposed to be a good thing, because more competition is supposed to challenge you to do better. However, in this social media age, what it has done is allowed the information business to be a free-rein free-for-all. Old rules of journalistic integrity have been thrown out the window. Everyone has been given the conch, and no one knows what to do with it. Instead of using the new-media landscape to spur us to higher quality, we have instead become sloppier than ever: Tweet first, research later. Post first, rescind later. Guess first, confirm later.

--Luvvie Ajayi

How can people trust social media over newspapers today?

--Joel Landau

Then someone cried out, 'Suicide bomber!' The crowd panicked. In the ensuing stampede, terrified pilgrims ran in both directions, many colliding in the middle of the bridge. A side railing collapsed under their weight, and scores leaped into the water whether they could swim or not. Hundreds were trampled to death. More than a thousand died. Hundreds of pairs of sandals were scattered around the bridge, left behind when pilgrims made their desperate dives into the river. I was given all of seventy-five seconds to tell the story on the Nightly News.

--Richard Engel

The rule of thumb for all news operations is that stories are assigned their importance on the basis of what affects or interests the greatest number of one's readers or viewers. Depending on the nature of the newspaper or broadcast, the balance between what 'affects' and what 'interests' is quite different. The first criteria of a responsible newspaper such as The New York Times is going to be that which their readers need to know about their world that day—those developments that in one way or another might affect their health, their pocketbooks, the future of themselves and their children. The first criterion of the tabloid is that which 'interests' its readers—gossip, sex, scandal.

--Walter Cronkite

Media, the plural of mediocrity.

--Jimmy Breslin

Riding an omnibus or street railway was a novel experience. For the first time in human history, people other than the very wealthy could, as a part of their daily life, ride in vehicles they were not responsible for driving. Their eyes and their hands were free; they could read on the bus. George Juergens has suggested that the World's change to a sensational style and layout was adapted to the needs of commuters: reading on the bus was difficult with the small print and large-sized pages of most papers. So the World reduced the size of the page, increased the size of headlines and the use of pictures, and developed the 'lead' paragraph, in which all of the most vital information of a story would be concentrated.

--Michael Schudson

News works like a drug. As stories develop, we want to know how they continue. With hundreds of arbitrary storylines in our heads, this craving is increasingly compelling and hard to ignore. Scientists used to think that the dense connections formed among the 100 billion neurons inside our skulls were largely fixed by the time we reached adulthood. Today we know that this is not the case. Nerve cells routinely break old connections and form new ones. The more news we consume, the more we exercise the neural circuits devoted to skimming and multitasking while ignoring those used for reading deeply and thinking with profound focus. Most news consumers—even if they used to be avid book readers— have lost the ability to absorb lengthy articles or books. After four, five pages they get tired, their concentration vanishes, they become restless. It's not because they got older or their schedules became more onerous. It's because the physical structure of their brains has changed.

—Rolf Dobelli

Television has greater power over the lives of most Americans than any educational system, government, or church.

--R. Kent Hughes

The power of television has nothing to do with its quality.

--Jack W. Germond

According to recent research, Twitter is more addictive than both alcohol and cigarettes.

—*theChive*

A smartphone—they've revolutionized the way we communicate, and made life easier in many ways. But because they have made communicating about news and pop culture easier, we've forgotten how to have civil discussions.

—Mitch Landrieu

Media is just a word that has come to mean bad journalism.

—Graham Greene

It is impossible to read the daily press without being diverted from reality. You are full of enthusiasm for the eternal verities— life is worth living, and then out of sinful curiosity you open a newspaper. You are disillusioned and wrecked.

—Patrick Kavanagh

Commercial jazz, soap opera, pulp fiction, comic strips, the movies set the images, mannerisms, standards, and aims of the urban masses. In one way or another, everyone is equal before these cultural machines; like technology itself, the mass media are nearly universal in their incidence and appeal. They are a kind of common denominator, a kind of scheme for pre-scheduled, mass emotions.

—C. Wright Mills

I wish there was a knob on the TV so you could turn up the intelligence. They got one marked 'brightness' but it don't work, does it?

—Leo Anthony Gallagher

The television, that insidious beast, that Medusa which freezes a billion people to stone every night, staring fixedly, that Siren which called and sang and promised so much and gave, after all, so little.

—Ray Bradbury

Television has proved that people will look at anything rather than each other.

—Ann Landers

If you came and you found a strange man... teaching your kids to punch each other, or trying to sell them all kinds of products, you'd kick him right out of the house, but here you are; you come in and the TV is on, and you don't think twice about it.

—Jerome Singer

Today, watching television often means fighting, violence and foul language—and that's just deciding who gets to hold the remote control.

—Donna Gephart

Every time you think television has hit its lowest ebb, a new type program comes along to make you wonder where you thought the ebb was.

—Art Buchwald

Just because your voice reaches halfway around the world doesn't mean you are wiser than when it reached only to the end of the bar.

—Edward R. Murrow

Seeing a murder on television... can help work off one's antagonisms. And if you haven't any antagonisms, the commercials will give you some.

—Alfred Hitchcock

So long as there's a jingle in your head, television isn't free.

—Jason Love

I could have been a doctor, but there were too many good shows on TV.

—Jason Love

Television's perfect. You turn a few knobs, a few of those mechanical adjustments at which the higher apes are so proficient, and lean back and drain your mind of all thought. And there you are watching the bubbles in the primeval ooze. You don't have to concentrate. You don't have to react. You don't have to remember. You don't miss your brain because you don't need it. Your heart and liver and lungs continue to function normally. Apart from that, all is peace and quiet. You are in the man's nirvana. And if some poor nasty minded person comes along and say you look like a fly on a can of garbage, pay him no mind. He probably hasn't got the price of a television set.

—Raymond Chandler

Television is not the Truth. Television is god-damned amusement park. Television is a circus, a carnival, a traveling troupe of acrobats, storytellers, dancers, singers, jugglers, sideshow freaks, lion tamers and football players. We're in the boredom killing business.

—Paddy Chayevsky

On cable TV they have a weather channel—24 hours of weather. We had something like that where I grew up. We called it a window.

—Dan Spencer

If TV were only an invention to broadcast soccer, it would be justified.

--Roberto Fontanarrosa

Philo began laying out his vision for what television could become. Above all else... television would become the world's greatest teaching tool. Illiteracy would be wiped out. The immediacy of television was the key. As news happened viewers would watch it unfold live; no longer would we have to rely on people interpreting and distorting the news for us. We would be watching sporting events and symphony orchestras. Instead of going to the movies, the movies would come to us. Television would also bring about world peace. If we were able to see people in other countries and learn about our differences, why would there be any misunderstandings? War would be a thing of the past.

—Evan I. Schwartz  
[About  
Philo T.  
Farnsworth,  
inventor of  
television]

Another possible source of guidance for teenagers is television, but television's message has always been that the need for truth, wisdom and world peace pales by comparison with the need for a toothpaste that offers whiter teeth and fresher breath.

—Dave Barry

When television came roaring in after the war (World War II) they did a little school survey asking children which they preferred and why—television or radio. And there was this 7-year-old boy who said he preferred radio 'because the pictures were better.'

—Alistair Cooke

The marvels—of film, radio, and television—are marvels of one-way communication, which is not communication at all.

—Milton Mayer

I haven't had a TV in 10 years, and I really don't miss it. 'Cause it's always so much more fun to be with people than it ever was to be with a television.

--Chuck Palahniuk

Sometimes I look around my living room, and the most real thing in the room is the television. It's bright and vivid, and the rest of my life looks drab. So I turn the damn thing off. That does it every time. Get my life back.

--Michael Crichton

Americans no longer talk to each other, they entertain each other. They do not exchange ideas, they exchange images. They do not argue with propositions; they argue with good looks, celebrities and commercials.

--Neil Postman

Watching too much TV can triple our hunger for more possessions, while reducing our personal contentment by about 5 percent for every hour a day we watch.

--David Niven

TV—A bright, brash place, always well lit, full of fun and jokes that tell you when to laugh so you never miss them. World news carefully edited so that it's not too disturbing, but disturbing enough to make you glad that you weren't born in a foreign country. News with music to tell you who to hate, who to feel sorry for, and who laugh at.

--David Mitchell

I had to start watching [The Real Housewives of New Jersey] every week because, well, my IQ was just too high. I mean seriously up there. What can I tell you? After watching every episode, I am now officially as dumb as that brown, particle-like stuff you find outside and don't want to track inside the house. Rhymes with 'wirt', I think.

--Celia Rivenbark

When a message is squeezed through a twenty-second news spot, so much can be lost that what is left will fail to move anyone enough to make them turn off the set and actually do something. Meanwhile, the viewers will believe that they have learned everything they need to know on that subject and will be bored the next time they hear it.

--Jerry Mander

Television is of great educational value. It teaches you while still really young how to (a) kill, (b) rob, (c) embezzle, (d) shoot, (e) poison, and generally speaking, (f) how to grow up into a Wild West outlaw or gangster by the time you leave school.

--George Mikes

Difference between TV and the internet was how far you sat from the screen. TV was an 8 foot activity, and you were a consumer. The internet was a 16 inch activity, and you participated.

--Seth Godin

Whose job is it in this country to wake up comatose parents? Someone better do it soon because knowing television's potential for harm and keeping that knowledge to ourselves instead of sharing it with parents amounts to covering up a land mine on a busy street.

—Jim Trelease

We have become a more juvenile culture. We have become a childish 'me, me, me' culture with fifteen-second attention spans. The global village that television was supposed to bring is less a village than a playground...

Little attempt is made to pass on our cultural inheritance, and our moral and religious traditions are neglected except in the shallow 'family values' arguments.

--Wes Jackson

We would not deem life too short if we always remembered that we do not have to watch TV.

--Mokokoma Mokhonoana

'What about television?' a young man asked.

'It's an octopus. It's no longer just a little box, it's the Love Machine.'

'Why the Love Machine?' a reporter asked.

'Because it sells love. It creates love. Presidents are chosen by their appeal on that little box. It's turned politicians into movie stars and movie stars into politicians. It can get you engaged if you use a certain mouthwash. It claims you'll have women hanging on your coattails if you use a certain hair cream. It tells the kids to eat their cereal if they want to be like their baseball idol. But like all great lovers, the Love Machine is a fickle bastard. It has great magnetism—but it has no heart. In place of a heart beats a Nielsen rating. And when the Nielsen falters, the program dies. It's the pulse and heart of the twentieth century—The Love Machine.'

--Jacqueline Susann



Audiences see personalities on shows interacting with wild animals as if they were not dangerous or, at the other extreme, provoking them to give viewers an adrenaline rush. Mostly, the animals just want to be left alone, so it's not surprising that these entertainers are seriously hurt or even killed on rare occasions. On one level, it's that very possibility the shows are selling.

--Chris Palmer

Analyzing news media is part of a learning approach known as media literacy, which helps students access, analyze, evaluate, and create messages using media in various forms. Media literacy has been central to the curriculum in the United Kingdom since the 1980s. The move to a national curriculum in England and Wales in the late 1980s expanded opportunities for older high school students to explore media issues. By 2000, more than 18,000 students in the United Kingdom were sitting for 'A' level exams in Media Studies, Film Studies, and Communication Studies, 5,000 students were being tested on media knowledge within the vocational education curriculum. Since 1998, there has been a distinct media literacy component to the language arts curriculum for 14- to 16-year old students.

—Renee Hobbs

Studies have found a surprisingly clear link between violent media and real-world violence. But it's not the link most people expect—for whatever reason, more people playing violent video games is consistently tied to fewer violent acts. 'What we find is pretty much no matter which way you cut it, there always ends up being this inverse relationship where when people are playing these violent video games or at least consuming them, we actually see dips in homicides and aggravated assaults,' said Villanova University professor Patrick Markey....One of the more striking research findings outlined in Markey's book is that school shooters are less likely to play violent video games than their peers, not more.

In 1998, the National Threat Assessment Center studied school shootings to create a profile of the killers. Researchers found only 12% of school shooters showed an interest in violent video games. A more recent analysis of the 10 most violent shootings on school campuses since 1998 by Peter Langman, who studies the psychology of school shooters, found that only 20% of the killers played violent video games with any regularity. This contrasts with about 70% of male high school students who play violent games....There have been studies that showed people who play violent video games experience temporarily elevated feelings of aggression afterward, but that has not been found to lead to an increase in violent acts.

There is also the fact that violent video games are a worldwide phenomenon, yet gun violence, and mass shootings in particular, occur in America at staggeringly high rates not seen in the rest of the world.

—Paul McLeod

Reading should be a major way to teach thinking. I have taken another step to suggest that television be used to teach thinking skills. Television is an excellent medium for this purpose, for several reasons. Television holds children's attention: they are interested. They want to understand the greater meaning of what they watch. Television often provides more substance to work with. Children's literature is limited to a child's reading level, not his thinking level.

Here is a list of comprehension and thinking skills I have taught through the use of television programs. These are skills that can be found in any book on the teaching of thinking and are also among the major comprehension skills mentioned in reading textbooks:

Logical predictions.

Interpreting characters' feelings.

Empathizing with characters.

Drawing conclusions.

Making generalizations.

Solving problems.

Interpreting reactions, motives, moods.

Recalling information to prove a point.

Categorizing.

Determining cause and effect.

Distinguishing between fact and opinion.

Judging the validity and importance of ideas.

Contrasting and evaluating various points of view.

Understanding relationships between characters' actions and social adjustment.

Creating new interests.

Understanding of other cultures and values.

Solving mysteries.

Determining the settings of stories.

Interpreting emotions.

Understanding implied meanings.

Speculating about future events.

Predicting the actions of characters.

Making comparisons.

Identifying changes in characters' behavior and attitudes.

Identifying exaggerations.

Recognizing incongruities and faulty assumptions.

Using and understanding figurative language.

—Marilyn Droz

News media offer a dynamic set of messages that help students see the challenges, delights, controversies, new discoveries, and sheer wonder of the everyday world.

—Paul Folkemer

## PRIMER ON MEDIA LITERACY

Media literacy is an expanded conceptualization of literacy that encompasses the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and create messages in a wide variety of forms.

- Access skills. The ability to decode and comprehend a messages as well as the knowledge of how to find and select messages to meet specific needs.
- Analysis skills. The ability to recognize the author’s purpose, point of view, and strategy for appealing to a target audience using appropriate conventions, genres, and forms.
- Evaluation skills. The ability to judge a message’s quality, authenticity, accuracy, and relevance. Evaluation skills rely on the ability to determine a message’s value and worth in relation to other messages from different sources.
- Creation skills. The ability to brainstorm ideas and compose messages for such purposes as informing, persuading, and entertaining, using a wide range of media tools.

—Renee Hobbs

In our democratic society, citizens are expected to keep abreast of the news—tax reform...nuclear accidents, gun control, etc. The newspapers are, therefore, an important reading demand on the adult American—even though most of us get the ‘headlines’ from TV newscasts.

In several research studies conducted for the College Board, newspapers from a number of cities and states were analyzed for text difficulty....The articles on the front page of the newspapers, concerning national and international news, tended to be the most difficult type of article among those analyzed....Articles from the editorial pages were almost as difficult....Articles from the sports pages were, for all papers, easier to read....The conventional wisdom is that newspapers are written at a level somewhere between sixth and ninth grade....Although ability to comprehend at least the surface meaning of the front page of the newspaper would seem a reasonable definition of what a high school graduate ought to be able to read, it is a standard that most current graduates couldn not meet.

—Lois E. Burrill

Magazines all too frequently lead to books and should be regarded by the prudent as the heavy petting of literature.

--Fran Lebowitz

We frequently read magazine articles about parents who have removed all the TV sets from their homes. They have substituted numerous family activities, including a reading program, for what they feel to be the monumental disruption of TV. Although their intent may be laudable, such a drastic change of regimen seems to be unrealistic for most households.

On the one hand, they are discarding the good programming with the bad; and on the other, they are likely to have little effect on the pervasiveness of the medium in the community. A more effective approach is one that takes into account TV's teaching potential and helps young people develop an awareness of its relation to daily reality and its connection with the learning that takes place in the classroom. Parents can become the allies of the classroom teacher by helping their children understand how closely the impact of TV is related to language and judgmental abilities, and how essential those abilities are to every other activity individuals are likely to undertake throughout their lives.

—*National Education  
Association*

A celebrity is an object that the media manufactures today, just so they have a subject tomorrow.

--Mokokoma Mokhonoana

Anna liked magazines. They were glossy machines. The only technology that she could fold. She read them on a regular basis because they were absorbing. Each one came out on a specific day of the week and was good for an hour of absorption.

--Sarah Schulman

When reading a book, you are sold what some writer thought. When reading a newspaper, you are sold what someone did, and, what some advertiser made.

--Mokokoma Mokhonoana

Why hoard away so many back-issues of *People Magazine*? Fashion magazines are just empty promises. You can go bankrupt blowing all your cash on expensive beauty products, but the only way you'll ever look just like the people on those glossy front covers is if you know how to use computer editing software for photographs. Besides, people who think they are ugly, are never really all that ugly anyway. People who think they are pretty, are rarely ever all that pretty.

--Rebecca McNutt

Beauty magazines make my girlfriend feel ugly.

--James de la Vega

Books have an especially high status on the great chain of media (higher than, say, columns, blogs, TV shows, magazine articles and Twitter tweets.)

—Dick Meyer

In the cosmic sense, the same trends that threaten newspapers threaten books. It isn't just a matter of 'business models' and the proliferation of alternative and cheap forms of amusement—computers, mobile, video games and everything on demand, all the time. There is an aversion to long chunks of sentences.

And there is a literary death spiral. The less we read books, the less we read journalism; the less we read journalism, the less we read books. Reading skills atrophy or, worse, were never properly acquired to their fullest.

The dire problem is that long chunks of sentences are still the best way humans have to express complex thoughts, intricate observations, fleeting emotions—the whole range of what we are. I have some confidence that newspaper (and broadcast) journalism can and will be successfully replaced on new platforms with different technologies and tools. I have no such confidence about replacing what lives in books.

—Dick Meyer

It is unclear whether the American attention span can support book reading for much longer. As children are reared on 'Baby Einstein' and then fertilized by an ever expanding diet of fast-paced electronic stimulation, as our communication gets sliced and diced into instant messages and abbreviated e-mails, it would be unrealistic to expect our synapses to stay the same. We will simply like books less than we did.

In capitalism, value is allocated in the form of money. That less money is being allocated to books and book publicity means that the society values books less. Books must be the most unprofitable form of entertainment and media today. You can probably count the number of authors and publishers who make, say, top lawyer money on your fingers and toes. Celebrity rarely comes to authors just from their books, but instead through movies and television.

This is a cruel virtue in most ways. It is partly because book writing is largely immune from the huge profiteering and wildly promiscuous marketing of, say, the shampoo or video game businesses that so many fabulous, contrarian, angry and wholly unique novels, biographies, histories and political books are written. Big money has homogenized movies and television, for example, and a 'winner take all' economy of culture distributes huge rewards to the most popular few, with less left for the oddballs and dissenters. That isn't true of books yet, though fewer authors can make livings writing and reviewing books.

—Dick Meyer

There's no magazine you open, unless its *AARP*, that shows a woman over the age of 45 in any other light, other than having to buy Depends or Viagra.

--Doris Roberts

Most Sunday magazines, with the *New York Times* as an exception, are kind of sleepy, weekend service vehicles to move living room products.

--David Talbot

We do not talk—we bludgeon one another with facts and theories gleaned from cursory readings of newspapers, magazines and digests.

--Henry Miller

Make reading easy. If your TV is within easy reach, but books are stored on a high shelf, you can probably guess how your child will spend her free time. But if she has her own bookshelf filled with interesting books and TV time must be scheduled in advance, she'll probably pick up a book.

—*The Parent Institute*

Limit the amount of TV your child watches. Studies show that kids who spend more than 10 hours a week watching television do worse in reading than kids whose parents set limits on TV time. Some families give their children 'TV tickets,' each good for 30 minutes of television time. When the tickets are gone, the set is turned off for the week. In some families, kids can redeem unused tickets for money (to buy books, of course). The same idea works for video games and computer time.

—*The Parent Institute*

Try a scavenger hunt through your newspaper. To help your child learn about the different sections of your newspaper, give her a list of things to find. They might include:

- A picture of a famous athlete.
- The temperature in your town yesterday.
- A favorite cartoon.
- The time her favorite television program starts.
- The title of a program at your local library.
- A movie that's playing at your local theater.

Give your child a list, a pair of scissors, some glue and your newspaper. As she finds the items, have her cut them out and paste them to her paper. If more than one child wants to play, make up a separate list and use yesterday's paper as well.

—*The Parent Institute*

News is a story and a newspaper is an assemblage of short fiction: The information we glean during breakfast is an incidental by-product of reading 10 or 20 short stories.

—Victor Nell

Thanks to Obamacare, millions of Americans can visit a doctor's office and see what a print magazine actually looks like.

--Joel McHale

Manipulating the media is akin to poisoning a nation's water supply—it affects all of our lives in unimaginable ways.

--Lance Morcan

Traditional journalism, where reporters deliver information in a balanced and unbiased fashion, is rapidly fading into obscurity. This is especially evident on television where high profile reporters become bigger than the story, delivering news with large dollops of personality and wit—almost as if they are actors.

--Lance Morcan

Subjective storytelling is now almost as common in the news media as it is in feature films, TV dramas, novels or theater shows. Journalists at their worst are self-centered storytellers who either knowingly or unknowingly bend truths into stories that match their personal beliefs or those of their employers.

--Lance Morcan

I endured from June 2000 to July 2001, an era when newspapers began their prolonged, job-killing slide from indispensable daily reference to indispensable daily relic. The publisher's strategy to stay relevant in the internet age involved more projects for an already-overtaxed, ever-dwindling staff.

—Pete Croatto

Three are families that do not have the time or the know-how to integrate reading into their common lives. We can attribute these lacks to insufficient time or to the prevalence of other media, notably television, but here is more to it than that. The child who saw his mother seated with a book in her hand for the first time and who told a neighbor that she was inside 'watching a book' tells a good deal about television and that family's use of time, but, as an enthusiastic television and movie fan myself, I think we create paper tigers about the encroachment of these other media. The greater issue is discipline. We are fond of quoting the biblical statement about having times to live, to die, to sow, to reap. Successful families set times to read, to share, to view, to talk.

—Peggy Sullivan

George Horace Lorimer never permitted an off-color situation, indecent word, or suggestive paragraph to be printed in the Saturday Evening Post. One lapse occurred when Kathryn Brush's Red Headed Woman was serialized in 1931. Installment one ended with the secretary dining tête-à-tête at her boss' apartment. Installment two began with her still there for breakfast. When several straight-laced readers protested, Lorimer stuck by his author. 'The Post,' he answered firmly, 'cannot be responsible for what the characters in its serials do between installments.'

—Bennett Cerf

Propaganda is a soft weapon; hold it in your hands too long, and it will move about like a snake, and strike the other way.

—Jean Anouilh

We are now a culture whose information, ideas and epistemology are given form by television, not by the printed word. To be sure, there are still readers and there are many books published, but the uses of print and reading are not the same as they once were; not even in schools, the last institutions where print was thought to be invincible. They delude themselves who believe that television and print coexist, for coexistence implies parity. There is no parity here. Print is now merely a residual epistemology, and it will remain so, aided to some extent by the computer, and newspapers and magazines that are made to look like television screens. Like the fish who survive a toxic river and the boatmen who sail on it, there still dwell among us those whose sense of things is largely influenced by older and clearer waters.

—Neil Postman

The after-school TV landscape in 1968 was pockmarked with local shows hosted by perky adults dressed as Skipper Sam, Cactus Cal and other 'fun' characters who mostly introduced cartoons and clowned around with their studio audiences. [Fred] Roger's program, airing at lunchtime or after school, didn't cut capers. His set looked like a pediatrician's office. He came in wearing Dad it Work clothes and changed into Dad at Home clothes, replacing his jacket with a cardigan (made by his mom) and his embarrassing navy Keds. He looked steadily into the camera, making it seem as if he saw each child individually. He spoke slowly and quietly, used battered old puppets instead of glitzy made-for-TV ones, and talked about feelings. And at the end of every half hour show for more than 30 years, he promised each viewer, 'You've made this day a special day, by just being you.'

—Ann Hodgman



The television drama became the signature American art form of the first decade of the twenty-first century.

—Brett Martin

Today television news is watched more often than people read newspapers, than people listen to the radio, than people read or gather any other form of communication. The reason: People are lazy. With television you just sit—watch—listen. The thinking is done for you.

—Roger Ailes

No one in the history of show business has had a career of the magnitude and scope of Cher's. She has been a teenage pop star, a television hostess, a fashion magazine model, a rock star, a pop singer, a Broadway actress, an Academy Award-winning movie star, a disco sensation, and the subject of a mountain of press coverage.

—Mark Bego

Email, instant messaging, and cell phones give us fabulous communication ability, but because we live and work in our own little worlds, that communication is totally disorganized.

—Marilyn vos Savant

There is so much we can learn from TV. It's a window on the world.

—Stephen Fry

Parents now have more face time with their children than did almost any parents in history. Despite a dramatic increase in the percentage of women in the workforce, mothers today astoundingly spend more time caring for their children than mothers did in the 1960s. But the engagement between parent and child is increasingly low-quality, even ersatz. Parents are constantly present in their children's lives physically, but they are less emotionally attuned. To be clear, I'm not unsympathetic to parents in this predicament. My own adult children like to joke that they wouldn't have survived infancy if I'd had a smartphone in my clutches 25 years ago.

—Erika Christakis

No one really disputes the tremendous opportunity costs to young children who are plugged in to a screen: time spent on devices is time not spent actively exploring the world and relating to other human beings.

—Erika Christakis

Toddlers cannot learn when we break the flow of conversations by picking up our cellphones or looking at the text that whizzes by our screens.

—Kathy Hirsh-Pasek

Distracted adults grow irritable when their phone use is interrupted; they not only miss emotional cues but actually misread them. A tuned-out parent may be quicker to anger than an engaged one, assuming that a child is trying to be manipulative when, in reality, she just wants attention. Short, deliberate separations can of course be harmless, even healthy, for parent and child alike (especially as children get older and require more independence). But that sort of separation is different from the inattention that occurs when a parent is with a child but communicating through his or her non-engagement that the child is less valuable than a email....What's going on today, however, is the rise of unpredictable care, governed by the beeps and enticements of smartphones. We seem to have stumbled into the worst model of parenting imaginable—always present physically, thereby blocking children's autonomy, yet only fitfully present emotionally.

—Erika Christakis

Parents should give themselves permission to back off from the suffocating pressure to be all things to all people. Put your kid in a playpen, already! Ditch that soccer-game appearance if you feel like it. Your kid will be fine. But when you are with your child, put down your damned phone.

—Erika Christakis

Reading requires actual concentration. If you skipped a paragraph, or even an important sentence, you could lose the entire story. With most TV shows, though, you didn't have to concentrate at all. You could space out for a good ten minutes, then come back and still figure out what was going on.

--Daniel Ehrenhaft

They sit and stare and stare and sit  
Until they're hypnotized by it,  
Until they're absolutely drunk  
With all that shocking ghastly junk.  
Oh yes, we know it keep them still,  
They don't climb out the window sill,  
They never fight or kick or punch,  
They leave you free to cook the lunch  
And wash the dishes in the sink—  
But did you ever stop to think,  
To wonder just exactly what  
This does to your beloved tot?  
It rots the senses in the head!  
It kills imagination dead!

It clogs and clutters up the mind!  
It makes a child so dull and blind  
He can no longer understand  
A fantasy, a fairyland!  
His brain becomes as soft as cheese!  
His powers of thinking rust and freeze!  
He cannot think—he only sees!  
'All right' you'll cry. 'All right' you'll say,  
'But if we take the set away,  
What shall we do to entertain  
Our darling children? Please explain!'  
We'll answer this by asking you,  
'How used they keep themselves contented  
Before this monster was invented?'  
Have you forgotten? Don't you know?  
We'll say it very loud and slow:  
They... used ... to... read! They'd read and read,  
And read and read, and then proceed  
To read some more, Great Scott! Gadzooks!  
One half their lives was reading books!...  
Oh books, what books they used to know,  
Those children living long ago!  
So please, oh please, we beg, we pray,  
Go throw your TV set away,  
And in its place you can install  
A lovely bookshelf on the wall...  
...They'll now begin to feel the need  
Of having something good to read.  
And once they start—oh boy, oh boy!  
You watch the slowly growing joy  
That fills their hearts. They'll grow so keen  
They'll wonder what they'd ever seen  
In that ridiculous machine,  
That nauseating, foul, unclean,  
Repulsive television screen!  
And later, each and every kid  
Will love you more for what you did.

—Roald Dahl

The age of the pulp magazine was the last in which youngsters, to get their primitive material, were forced to be literate. Now that is gone, and the youngsters have their glazed eyes fixed on the television tube. The result is clear. True literacy is becoming an arcane art, and the nation is steadily ‘dumbing down’.

—Isaac Asimov

Smartphones disrupt every aspect of our society. We pay an enormous price for distracted driving, distracted marriage, distracted friendship, distracted colleagues. More significant, we are distracted from ourselves. The average person looks at a smartphone approximately 80 times a day. What is it that we are looking away from?

What are we going to do to teach ourselves, our children, our drivers, our partners, our friends, and our colleagues how to self-regulate when they have a portable dopamine pump in their pocket? The cost is clear. This issue is literally killing us.

—Alexis E. Menken,  
Ph.D.

In the 1950s we used to feel that television was taking away our comic readership; with today’s exciting, powerfully visual movies I have to wonder about their effect on the kids’ loyalty to the comic book medium all over again.

—Joe Simon

**Browsing the Internet:** That search engine you’re using to find websites or information tracks your browsing activity. It then analyzes this behavior to target ads to you.

**Shopping Online:** Amazon and other online retailers have made it an art form to track not only your purchasing patterns but also what items you viewed so they can recommend more products that align with your interest and needs.

**Listening to Music:** When you activate an Amazon Echo or Google Home speaker by voice, those companies record what you utter. Doc Searls, editor in chief at Linux Journal, calls smart speakers ‘a personal data fire hose squirting from your house.’

**Watching TV:** Some smart TVs can collect your viewing data and other information. New models typically ask your permission first, but it’s not always easy to understand what you’re agreeing to. If you have an older set, it may be tracking you by default—you’d have to opt out.

**Cooking a Meal:** Many new models of kitchen appliances, thermostats, light bulbs, light switches, door locks and more can be controlled from a phone or remote device. ‘The fact that everyday household products are now connected to the internet presents new privacy and data security challenges,’ says Sam Lester, consumer privacy fellow for the electronic Privacy Information Center. Transmitted data can indicate whether you are home.

—Lance Whitney

Do you realize if it weren't for Edison we'd be watching TV by candlelight?

—Al Boliska

Phone down. Eyes up. Breathe deep.

—Bianca Bosker

Little kids have watched less and less television; as of last spring, ratings in 2018 were down a full 20 percent from just last year. As analysts like to put it, the industry is in free fall. The cause is obvious: More and more kids are watching videos online.

—Alexis C. Madrigal

At first, pretty much everybody agrees, television for kids was bad—dumb cartoons, cowboy shows, locally produced slop. There also wasn't much of it, so kids often watched whatever adult programming was on TV. In the early 1950s, one teacher enumerated the changes she'd seen in her pupils since they had 'got television': 'They have no sense of values, no feeling of wonder, no sustained interest. Their shallowness of thought and feeling is markedly apparent, and they display a lack of cooperation and inability to finish a task.' There were calls for action.

—Alexis C. Madrigal

Basic scientific research on how children attend to and comprehend television has evolved into sophisticated studies of how children can learn from electronic media. This, in turn, has led to the design and production of a number of effective educational television programs, starting with Sesame Street, which many experts regard as one of the most important educational innovations of recent decades.

—*Kaiser Family  
Foundation*

Viewing educational programs as preschoolers was associated with higher grades, reading more books, placing more value on achievement, greater creativity, and less aggression.

—Alexis C. Madrigal

Teens are on social media for much of the day. Seventy percent of teens use social media multiple times a day (up from 34 percent in 2012) with 16 percent saying they use it 'almost constantly' and a total of 38 percent saying they use it multiple times an hour.

Social media distracts them from some important stuff. Fifty-seven percent agree that social media often distracts them when they should be doing homework,

and 54 percent of teens say that using social media ‘often distracts me when I should be paying attention to the people I’m with.’

Exposure to hate speech is on the rise, while cyberbullying is less common. All told, nearly two-thirds (64 percent) of teen social media users in 2018 say they ‘often’ or ‘sometimes’ come across racist, sexist, homophobic, or religious-based hate content in social media. Thirteen percent of teens report ‘ever’ being cyberbullied, and more than one in five teens (23 percent) has tried to help someone who has been cyberbullied.

—*www.techlearning.com* (2018)

Mobile Phone: It may bring you closer to those who are far away, but it will also take you away from those sitting next to you.

—Internet Meme

An 1897 article in *The American Electrician* worried that a growing dependence on the telephone would turn us all into ‘transparent heaps of jelly.’ But while the notion of addiction to our smartphones (the most usual suspects in the current attention crisis) is contested, numerous studies have found that compulsive phone use can lead to separation anxiety, chronic fear of missing out, and a painful thumb condition known as de Quervain’s tenosynovitis—signs worrying enough that we can’t rule out the eventual jellification of humanity.

—José De-Sola Gutiérrez,  
Fernando  
Rodríguez de  
Fonseca,  
and Gabriel Rubio

A large and growing body of research reports that for both men and women, social-media use is correlated with body dissatisfaction.

—Kate Julian

I remember watching reruns of the original Star Trek as a teenager and seeing Bones or Captain Kirk use a Tricorder to analyze and communicate on away missions. The device looked and seemed to function like a very large flip phone. In the 1960s, when the show first aired, this tech must have looked incredibly New Age, but as the decades progressed that big flip phone started to seem out of date. Later, when I went back to those Star Trek reruns as an adult, I remember asking myself why Kirk couldn’t have a smartphone or an iPad, at the very least. This show took place in the future, right?

—Jessica Stilling

A British firm that processes divorce filings discovered a startling fact. Of the 4,665 petitions for divorce they'd received in 2018, two hundred of them claimed the marriage had been destroyed because one of the partners had become addicted to video games like Fortnite. Or to put it another way, Fortnite and its ilk were responsible for fully 5 percent of all divorces the firm was seeing.

—Clive Thompson

Sharing false information on Facebook is old. People over 65 and ultra conservatives shared about seven times more fake information masquerading as news on the social media sites than younger adults, moderates and super liberals during the 2016 election season.

—Seth Borenstein

Facebook and Twitter don't create content; they've outsourced that work to their users, who have quickly noticed that extreme statements attract more attention. On social media, the old rewards of anger—recognition of our unhappiness, resolution of our complaints—are replaced with new ones: retweets, likes, more followers, more influence. The targets of our rage, meanwhile, tend to be strangers less inclined to hear us out than to fire back. It's a vicious cycle of users, though a virtuous one for the social-media companies, which profit from our engagement.

—Charles Duhigg

About 4,000 years ago someone scrawled a smiling face on a clay pitcher. When it was unearthed in Turkey in 2017, an archaeologist called it 'the oldest smiley emoji,' reminding us that silly cartoon symbols were around long before their first pixelated appearance on a cellphone screen 20 years ago. Today 90 percent of people online speak emoji—with curious local dialects....Could emojis become our universal language? Probably not. Studies show that men and women use this limited 2,823-symbol vocabulary differently, as do people of different ages and cultures.

—April White

In today's fast-paced world of fake news, not every story on Facebook holds up to scrutiny. 'Facts' aren't always what they seem. In the hands of those with an agenda, they can be molded to suit a mission, and dangerous indeed.

—Sharon McDonnell

Women were better than men at scamming over the phone. 'We don't know why, but one possibility is people don't expect women to be the scammers, [Chris] Hadnagy says. Criminals have figured this out. 'You see tons of IRS and tech-support scammers using women to do the calling. That's not an accident.'

—Doug Shadel

Give a person a fish and you feed them for a day. Teach a person to use the Internet and they won't bother you for weeks, months, maybe years.

—Internet Meme

Young people who play video games, including violent titles, display more developed moral reasoning skills than their non-gaming peers, a study has found. Researchers from Bournemouth University asked 166 adolescents aged between 11 and 18-years old about their video game habits and questions designed to measure their moral development—the thought process behind determining what is right or wrong. The children and teenagers who said they played more video games from a wide variety of genres had increased moral reasoning scores, including titles containing violent content. Violent games were found to have a positive relationship with moral reasoning while mature content was more likely to produce a negative one, the report published in journal *Frontiers in Psychology* found. The Grand Theft Auto and Call of Duty franchises were highlighted as examples of titles related to lower moral scores, alongside variables including the length of time spent playing games, how many years they've been playing games, the level of engagement and moral narrative within a game. Male participants displayed significantly higher moral reasoning scores than their female counterparts, which contradicted previous findings, the researchers claimed.

—Rhiannon Williams

I know this doesn't exactly make me unique, but I love the internet. I love it. I think the way I feel about the internet is the way some people feel about the ocean. It's so huge and unknowable, but also totally predictable. You type a line of symbols and click enter, and everything you want to happen, happens.

Not like real life, where all the wanting in the world can't make something exist

—Becky Albertalli

As a teenager you are at the last stage in your life when you will be happy to hear that the phone is for you.

—Fran Lebowitz

Increasingly, Americans are pursuing a selfish individualism that is inconsistent with strong families and strong communities. This movement is fueled by the media...which suggests that personal happiness is the highest good and that it can be achieved by pursuing pleasure and material goods. This message stands in stark contrast to the traditional Judeo-Christian values of community and self-sacrifice for the welfare of others.

—Peter Uhlenberg and  
David Eggebeen



Cyber bullying occurs online daily. Most don't consider their actions or words to be bullying. Here's a few clues that you're a cyber bully.

- (1) You post information about someone in order to ruin their character.
- (2) You post threats to someone.
- (3) You tag someone in vulgar degrading posts.
- (4) You post any information intended to harm or shame another individual seeking to gain attention.

Then, you are a cyber bully and need to get some help.

—Amaka Imani  
Nkosazana

This was 1991, remember. We didn't have the Internet. So, as teenagers, we lived on the phone. There was no webcamming, no social networking. We dreamt simply of having our own personal phone lines one day, along with uninterrupted hours to talk, and we rarely got that. No matter who we were talking to, no matter how private the conversation, parents picked up the phone accidentally, siblings demanded their time. The introduction of call waiting made all of this even worse, as it allowed aunts and uncles and people you didn't even know to butt in. This is part of why we talked so late in the night, Lindy and I, all of us teens. This is why we looked so pale in our grunge clothes. These night hours were the only times we felt we could tell the truth without danger, the only times we could live separately from our parents while still inside of their homes. There were no cell phones. No private text messages. It was simple one on one conversation and, if it was any good at all, you had to whisper.

—M. O. Walsh

Little girls think it's necessary to put all their business on MySpace and Facebook, and I think it's a shame...I'm all about mystery.

—Stevie Nicks

Today's children and teens are constantly connected to social media. It's not surprising that their self-esteem—and worldview—becomes connected to responses to social media posts. It's hard for them not to compare their life and social connections to what they see others posting on social media.

There are also some children who have unexpected and disproportionate reactions to normal developmental experiences like going to school, going to a party, doing a sleepover or going to camp; children who worry excessively about everyday life activities. This often starts in the years right before puberty.

—Dr. Claire McCarthy

Poets and arts administrators should use radio to expand the art's audience. Poetry is an aural medium, and thus ideally suited to radio. A little imaginative programming at the hundreds of college and public-support radio stations could bring poetry to millions of listeners. Some programming exists, but it is stuck mostly in the standard subculture format of living poets' reading their own work. Mixing poetry with music on classical and jazz stations or creating innovative talk-radio formats could re-establish a direct relationship between poetry and the general audience.

—Mark Edmundson

Wireless coverage can even be found on the summit of Mount Everest, the highest-elevated and arguably one of the most hostile surfaces on the planet. Wherever there is a wireless connection, you will inevitably find someone using a mobile device.

—Karen L. Yacobucci

It [the Walkman] was the first mass mobile device. It changed how people inherited public space in a pretty profound way.

—Rebecca Tuhus-Dubrow

Personal stereos are visual 'do not disturb' signs.

—Michael Bull

## **ESPORTS:**

Future ready skills improvements in:

- Attention
- Problem solving
- Digital literacy
- Technology fluency
- Math achievement

School Success:

- Improved attendance
- Improved participation in school activities
- Decreased at-home game play
- Improved GPAs.

[As well as] College Scholarship Opportunities, STEM Interest, There is a Curriculum, Career Readiness, Accessibility and Inclusion (All students can participate in esports (unlike traditional sports)), Social Connections.

—Lisa Nielsen

The 1960 Kennedy-Nixon debate confirmed the power of television to influence political opinion. Kennedy won among TV viewers polled, while people who listened on the radio gave the edge to Nixon.

—Ed Kelley

Let me tell you a story. The day after Columbine, I was interviewed for the Tom Brokaw news program. The reporter had been assigned a theory and was seeking sound bites to support it. ‘Wouldn’t you say,’ she asked, ‘that killings like this are influenced by violent movies?’ No, I said, I wouldn’t say that. ‘But what about ‘Basketball Diaries?’ she asked. “Doesn’t that have a scene of a boy walking into a school with a machine gun?” The obscure 1995 Leonardo Di Caprio movie did indeed have a brief fantasy scene of that nature, I said, but the movie failed at the box office (it grossed only \$2.5 million), and it’s unlikely the Columbine killers saw it. The reporter looked disappointed, so I offered her my theory. ‘Events like this,’ I said, ‘if they are influenced by anything, are influenced by news programs like your own. When an unbalanced kid walks into a school and starts shooting, it becomes a major media event. Cable news drops ordinary programming and goes around the clock with it. The story is assigned a logo and a theme song; these two kids were packaged as the Trench Coat Mafia. The message is clear to other disturbed kids around the country: If I shoot up my school, I can be famous. The TV will talk about nothing else but me. Experts will try to figure out what I was thinking. The kids and teachers at school will see they shouldn’t have messed with me. I’ll go out in a blaze of glory.’

In short, I said, events like Columbine are influenced far less by violent movies than by CNN, the NBC Nightly News and all the other news media, who glorify the killers in the guise of “explaining” them. I commended the policy at the Sun-Times, where our editor said the paper would no longer feature school killings on Page 1. The reporter thanked me and turned off the camera. Of course the interview was never used. They found plenty of talking heads to condemn violent movies, and everybody was happy.

—Roger Ebert

Ellipses... These are now a staple of passive aggression. ‘Karen, did you set up that meeting...’ serves as an impatient foot tap. Or an ellipsis can be threatening: ‘Out of office until Sept. 30, see you soon...’ conveys ‘I’m planning your murder, which will happen on Sept. 30.’

Periods. In response to a question in a text message, send a simple ‘Yes’ or ‘No’; forgo punctuation. The period with a ‘Yes’ says ‘OBVIOUSLY, yes. I’m annoyed.’ ALL CAPS This is not effective unless you REALLY WANT TO SHOUT AT SOMEONE.

—Charlotte Barnett

I'm glad that we're together Dad. I can't wait to talk and play. I'll tell you about my hopes and dreams and you'll tell me about your day. I can't wait to spend some time with you, yet I sit here all alone. So close that you can see me, Dad, if I was only inside your phone.

—Internet Meme

Facebook's early mission was 'to make the world more open and connected'—and in the first days of social media, many people assumed that a huge global increase in connectivity would be good for democracy. As social media has aged, however, optimism has faded and the list of known or suspected harms has grown: Online political discussions (often among anonymous strangers) are experienced as angrier and less civil than those in real life; networks of partisans co-create worldviews that can become more and more extreme; disinformation campaigns flourish; violent ideologies lure recruits.

—Jonathan Haidt and  
Tobias Rose-  
Stockwell

The social psychologist Mark Leary coined the term sociometer to describe the inner mental gauge that tells us, moment by moment, how we're doing in the eyes of others. We don't really need self-esteem, Leary argued; rather, the evolutionary imperative is to get others to see us as desirable partners for various kinds of relationships. Social media, with its displays of likes, friends followers, and retweets, has pulled our sociometers out of our private thoughts and posted them for all to see.

—Jonathan Haidt and  
Tobias Rose-  
Stockwell

If you constantly express anger in your private conversations, your friends will likely find you tiresome, but when there's an audience, the payoffs, are different—outrage can boost your status. A 2017 study by William J. Brady and other researchers at NYU measured the reach of half a million tweets and found that each moral or emotional word used in a tweet increased its virality by 20 percent, on average. Another 2017 study, by the *Pew Research Center*, showed that posts exhibiting 'indignant disagreement' received nearly twice as much engagement—including likes and shares—as other types of content on Facebook.

—Jonathan Haidt and  
Tobias Rose-  
Stockwell

Social media has changed the lives of millions of Americans with a suddenness and force that few expected. The question is whether those changes might invalidate assumptions made by Madison and the other Founders as they designed a system of self-governance. Compared with Americans in the 18th century—and even late 20th century—citizens are now more connected to one another, in ways that increase public performance and foster moral grandstanding, on platforms that have been designed to make outrage contagious, all while focusing people’s minds on immediate conflicts and untested ideas, untethered from traditions, knowledge, and values that previously exerted a stabilizing effect. This, we believe is why many Americans—and citizens of many other countries, too—experience democracies as a place where everything is going haywire.

—Jonathan Haidt and  
Tobias Rose-  
Stockwell

Think once before you act, twice before you speak, and three times before you post on Facebook.

—Paul Carrick Brunson

Technology doesn’t have a Hippocratic oath.

—Edward Snowden

Social media has made too many of you comfortable with disrespecting people and not getting punched in the mouth for it.

—Internet Meme

The most common thing people brought up this year was a fear of not being who they think they are supposed to be, and the imposter syndrome. Because people are so used to seeing ‘the success of others’ on social media, they perceive others to be the real deal and question their own skills. It really revolves around our feeling of inadequacy; social media has made comparison and contrast the new norm.

—Karla Ivankovich

This year, many of my clients were dealing with impostor syndrome and perfectionism. I think a huge factor is why these concerns are predominating in people’s lives is the amount of exposure we have to everyone’s ‘highlight reel’ through social media and the web. By highlight reel, I mean the peak moments with none of the difficulties or failures shown. Impostor syndrome and perfectionism come up a lot for people who are high-functioning and were used to being at the top of their class or group but now find themselves not measuring up to what they see online.

—Heidi Cox

Studies have shown that it takes us 20 minutes to return to our task with full concentration after checking email one time.

—Dana Shavin

Women and people of color are highly underrepresented in the media industry. Their stories are not being told, which results in further underrepresentation in all forms of media. Change the storytellers, change the story.

—Villy Wang

...a strategy that has been deployed by illiberal political leaders around the world. Rather than shutting down dissenting voices, these leaders have learned to harness the democratizing power of social media for their own purposes—jamming the signals, sowing confusion. They no longer need to silence the dissident shouting in the streets; they can use a megaphone to drown him out. Scholars have a name for this: censorship through noise.

—McKay Coppins

In my childhood you'd gather around the grandparents and they would tell the family stories...Now individuals sit around the TV, watching other families' stories.

—Barry Levinson

In a 2019 *Common Sense Media* survey of 500 parents, 45 percent confessed to feeling at least somewhat addicted to their phone. Among parents whose children had their own phone, 47 percent said they believed that their kids were addicted too.

—Maya MacGuineas

Science and technology multiply around us. To an increasing extent they dictate the languages in which we speak and think. Either we use those languages, or we remain mute.

—J. G. Ballard