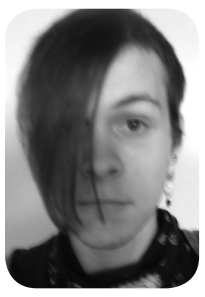
Put Down the Money and Pick Up a Paintbrush

Sean Sotto
A&E Editor



I've been feeling increasingly dissatisfied with the society I live in. As cliché and angst-ridden as that may sound, I am actually quite distressed with what our main function as people has become. This main function deprives us of all individuality, creativity, self-awareness, and humanity. This main function leaves us at the mental, and oftentimes emotional, state of what is commonly known as a zombie.

We as Americans exist solely to consume. We consume goods, services, commodities, anything that is advertised at us. It isn't like we can help it. We are raised this way. Our parents teach us, our schools teach us, and it's reinforced in popular media.

As a citizen of the United States, you are hardly considered successful unless you make large sums of money. Examples of such citizens include Donald Trump, Bill Gates, Conrad Hilton, and any popular mainstream rapper. They are known more for their money than they are for their empirical corporations or corporate backing. They are known for being able to consume more than the average citizen.

Money is the motivation for many people to attend college and graduate school. Society dictates that if we don't get a higher education, we'll be poor and on the streets, without any money to buy the things we supposedly need. Not that gaining an education is problematic, but it's tragic that it is used as merely an obstacle to obtain a fortune. We've lost the will to learn for the sake of self-betterment. We've lost the desire to read. We've become so balled up in our own desire for so-called worldly goods that we have lost sight of why we really exist as human beings.

Public schooling is partially responsible for this. Even Dr. Michael Rice, Kalamazoo Public Schools' new superintendent, stated that high school should merely be a stepping stool to the college world. I find some flaw in that. Public schooling should enforce individuality and creativity. There should be more focus on art classes than economic classes, more focus on creative writing classes than Education for Employment classes.

I don't want to be educated as to how to work in the dreary business world; I want to learn how to paint it!

The responsibility shouldn't fall squarely on public schools, however. Also culpable is the overall outlook of poetry and art in modern society. Artists are all too commonly though of as good-for-nothings who don't contribute to society or our democracy. If it comes down to that, then bollocks to our democracy! I'd much rather our culture be one of beauty and open-mindedness than be one where our decisions don't matter and every puppet we vote for is the same.

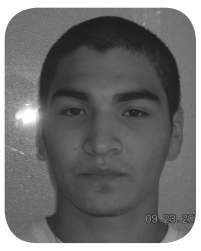
> We've lost the will to learn for the sake of self-betterment. We've lost the desire to read for the absolute hell of it.

This is all a dream, though. I know, of course, that an entire culture of artists isn't possible. A more forceful culture would undoubtedly take over, and we'd be back to square one.

The only real mid-range solution I can see to this social quandary is to have our schools educate more in the arts. We have enough people living standard lives, where they school throughout half their life, get a job, and retire to the day home. If more artists existed in our country and more people accepted art as a meaningful entity then we'd live in a much freer nation.

Why Watch Television When...

Mateo Hernandez
Guest Writer



TV is a waste of time. Back when I was little there were good shows that were worth waking up at six in morning on a Saturday to watch, but these days the shows are just getting stupider by the minute. There are too many lame reality shows to even count.

Most drama shows are not very good either. Personally the only show I go out of my way to watch is "House" since it is a compelling and unpredictable show, other than that I do not turn on the TV to watch anything.

Some shows like "Prison Break" I used to watch but then it just got to be lame because it was just disaster after disaster, which just got boring. Some shows are not that bad, but they are not good enough for me to waste half an hour of my life. The things our kids are watching these days! It's rotting our children's minds.

Kids' shows disappoint me, all the remakes of certain shows like "Power Rangers" and "Pokemon." I remember watching good shows when I was a toddler like "Little Bear," and "Arthur." Then when I was a little older I would watch "Digimon," and "Gundam Wing." Those were good shows. But shows like "Spongebob" just deplete our children's intelligence with its characters like Patrick Star, and its meaningless humor.

The only other reason I will turn the TV on for (if not "House") is to watch the History or the Discovery channel, because not only do I learn new things, most the stuff they show is really interesting, like all the special documentaries on World War II, and ancient Greece.

> But shows like 'Spongebob' just deplete our children's intelligence with its characters like Patrick Star, and its meaningless humor.

So instead of wasting hours of your life watching pointless, un-educational television, get up and play a video game, exercise your mind that way, or read a book. There are plenty of great books out there that are more interesting than a show. Or you could even take a walk, I know it sounds crazy, but it can actually be fun.

Downloading Music

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difficult to bypass. Although he has enough excitement about vinyl records to share with 10 people, he is in the minority. A recent poll at Loy Norrix shows that about 81% of students primarily download their music online. Most of these students cannot remember the last time they bought music in a store. Instant-gratification has eliminated the thrill of the hunt, and the social factor so many other Americans enjoy.

So has the seclusion inherent in downloading music ruined the experience for today's music lover? Although many people argue that iPods are more convenient and a trendier form of music in our instant-gratification society, maybe some don't want their music instant and small. Some people like lugging their boom-box above their head to lure the girl of their dreams. Some people like the "inconvenience" of walking to the record store with their friends to see if the latest album is in stock. Some people like their music Flat, Black and Circular. If you still want all of your music to fit in the palm of your hand, I suggest you take a trip to an independent music store- - you may just become a regular.

How To: Decrease Stress

Rachel Stuut
Copy Editor

Freaking out because of a grade? Worried about college? Just plain stressed out? Do not worry, you are not alone. There are thousands of teens feeling the same anxiety and stress, but they do not know how to handle it. Here are a few quick and easy steps to help decrease stress.

Step 1

RAVENRICHMOND/GUEST

Exercise! It will make you look and feel great.

Step 2

RACHEL STUUT/KNIGHTLIFE

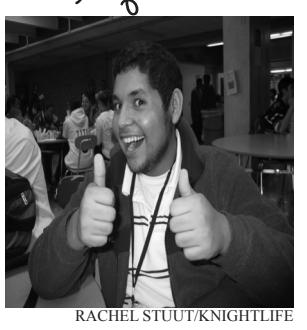
Avoid overdoing the soda intake. You might feel the effects of the caffiene, but it won't last forever.

Step 3

RACHEL STUUT/KNIGHTLIFE

Eat a healthy meal regularly. Your body will thank you.

Step 4



RACHEL STUUT/KNIGHTLIFE

Think positively. No one likes a party pooper.

Step 5

RACHEL STUUT/KNIGHTLIFE

Have a group of friends you can talk to. Do not keep things bottled up.