

HOW TV MAKES PEOPLE HATE THE SPORT OF GOLF

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[Assignment: Write a cause and effect essay modeled on "How Teachers Make Students Hate Reading" in our text. Attempt to incorporate an affirmation or repudiation of a common saying, a rhetorical question, or a mini-story to illustrate your point.]

(1) I awoke one Saturday morning at about 11:30 a.m., much as many teenagers do after partying the night before. I went downstairs in hopes of finding something entertaining to watch on TV and started to flip through the channels. Channel after channel after channel--they were showing some part of a golf tournament. For about fifteen minutes, I watched a celebrity golf match and then I fell back asleep. Now, I had only been up for half an hour and I had fallen back to sleep again. What could have caused that? When I woke up, I started thinking about why I had felt so tired. Had I been still tired when I woke up or was it watching golf that had made me feel tired and sleepy? I came to the conclusion that it was the golf.

(2) A lot of people in a lot of places love to play golf. Indeed, I am one of those people. But I am also one of those people who cannot watch golf on TV. Why? There is a good reason why most people cannot abide watching golf on TV: when viewed on the box, golf lacks any vital or lively action.

(3) What do golfers *do*? They just use a long metal rod to hit a small ball across an open grassy field. In football, on the other hand, there is rousing action. Here are men throwing themselves at other men in order to tackle a lone man carrying an oval ball. In golf, people are made to follow the ball down the fairway with the help of a television camera. The camera follows the ball from the time the golfer hits it until the ball settles somewhere down the course. I defy anyone to show me the ball when it is hit into the air. How can you see a one and a half inch diameter ball travel a full two hundred yards--the length of two football fields? What pleasure is there for spectators when they cannot even see the ball? And if the zoom lens of the TV camera can show you the ball, what pleasure is there in watching this little sphere in itself when you cannot see any people or much else until the ball lands?

(4) If you want to hear the commentator, you will have to turn the volume on your TV to the maximum output. This is because the commentators whisper when they talk. I don't want to strain myself just to hear these people. Not only do these commentators whisper, they actually do not even comment. When a golfer is either studying his shot or hitting the ball, the announcers are dead silent. A hushed aura has descended on the course and on your TV set. But while the awed silence may be appropriate in church, it fails to engage one on TV. Believe me, sitting in silence while watching a person on TV measure where to hit the ball lacks any entertainment value.

(5) Having noticed the effect watching golf on TV has on "normal" people like me, I have begun to wonder what strange disease has swept our world that every Saturday and Sunday channel after channel after channel

offers golf matches to their viewers and people actually sit watching it. As far as I am concerned, golf is a sport meant for playing, not watching. Here's my advice to you: next time you sit down to watch a golf match, make sure your pillow and blanket are close by.