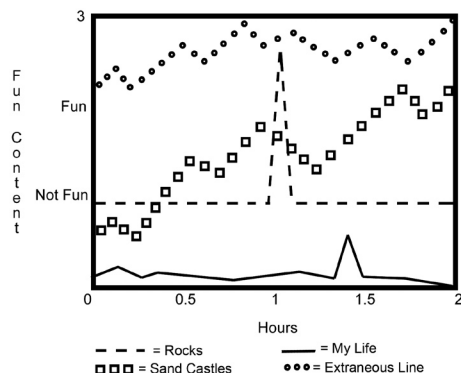


My Life is Disappointing

People often say to me, “Michael, you’ve got a great life! If I were to kidnap someone, then assume their identity, first I’d pick Jodie Foster, but you’re next!” “Thanks!” I respond, “but, in fact my life is considerably disappointing!” “What!?” they blurt in surprise, “but you go to Yale University! I heard they have candy-cane trees and everyone rides to class in a magick spaceship!” In response to this, I heave a series of comically exaggerated sighs, tossing the upper half of my body about in an unnecessarily emotional manner for several minutes. I then irrefutably prove my point by showing them this chart that plots the fun content of my life versus poorly constructed sand castles that inadvertently resemble Margaret Thatcher, and time lapsed video footage of rocks.



As you can see, my life is considerably less entertaining than both time lapsed footage of rocks, and Margaret Sand-Thatchles, which prove to be surprisingly entertaining. Which may prompt you to ask, why is my life so disappointing? You see, television has poisoned my brain with unrealistic expectations, giving me a psychological need for witty banter and snappy, memorable catch phrases. I crave them like Pooh Bear craves honey. Just imagine him: “I am Pooh Bear! Give me your honey or I will continue to refuse to wear pants!” Well folks, that’s me, but with catch phrases. However, much to my dismay, real life conversations are painfully devoid of such zingers. Take this example of a standard real life conversation:

FRIEND: Hey.
 ME: Hi.
 FRIEND: So. You hear that Chris and Sarah are dating?
 ME: Yeah. Isn’t she a little tall?
 FRIEND: I have lost interest in this conversation.
 ME: Me too. Let’s not talk and instead stare vacantly at each other, but not making eye contact.

Now, witness how unfavorably this conversation compares with its ideal TV counterpart:

FRIEND: Hey! I just flew in from Vegas, and boy, are my arms tired!
 ME: Oh, were you lifting weights on the airplane?
 FRIEND: Yup, fifty-pounders! Say, you hear that Chris and Sarah were going to date, but instead got into a series of hilarious shenanigans and ended up having sex with other people, and then marrying *the same person* but not knowing it?
 ME: Hot-cha-cha-cha! That’s what I call *sheeow-biz!*
 FRIEND: A-hahaha! You are hilarious and memorable!
 ME: Team Rocket blasts off again!

In addition to the deficiency of my discourse with my acquaintances, my problems are compounded by the fact that my friends are not uniformly attractive, and aged 23. What’s more, I don’t even get my own laugh track or theme song. The result is that, having been exposed to the ludicrous standards of televised entertainment, I am like someone who has been given a magical lamp, but the genie within is severely retarded, and thus responds to every request by summoning a pocket-sized Chinese to Swahili dictionary.

The question then becomes, “what can be done about my media-induced disappointment with life?” Since there is no possibility that either the media will cease their filthy pollution of my brain, or that I will come to grips with reality, I have made a list of things that would greatly improve the quality of my life:



If my life were less disappointing, this picture would make sense.

- 1) That strategic “jumps” be placed in my path when driving, and that my personal speed limit be increased to 175 miles per hour. In addition to this, it would be acceptable for everywhere I drive to be made into a hospital or school zone, or both. Furthermore, my car will at all times be on fire.
- 2) That on Tuesdays it would rain kittens. And everyone would listen to “Peter And Wolf” while dancing like the dickens. Charles Dickens.
- 3) That whenever I am required to attend an unfavorable function such as class or funerals, I could send in lieu of myself a cleverly disguised lamp.
- 4) That all people with first names A-F be required to use large *American Gladiator*-esque gerbil spheres for transportation.
- 5) And that, all else failing, hardcore drugs would become legalized and distributed via breakfast cereals.

There you are, gentle readers. Until the government creates a huge, shadowy organization to meet my ADHD-addled demands, my quality of life will be discouraging. Am I being unrealistic? Patently. Does reality matter at all to a weird kid raised on TV and video games? Not at all. ☹

The DVD release of the movie *Open Water* has the tagline "You may never go in the water again!" Finally, Hollywood has realized that millions can be made with films that ruin the simple pleasures of life. Other new movies in the works:

Title: *Satan's Bark*

Synopsis: After the ghost of an executed serial killer possesses their new dog, the Henderson family must fight for their very survival.

Tagline: "You may never snuggle with a puppy again!"

Title: *The Deadliest Surprise*

Synopsis: Terrorists infiltrate the postal system and plant explosives inside wrapped packages.

Tagline: "You may never unwrap a birthday present from Grandma again!"

Title: *Don't Close Your Eyes*

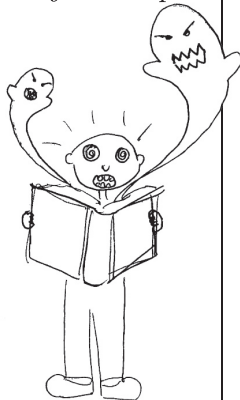
Synopsis: A deranged scientist releases an airborne virus that first lulls people into a light sleep, then causes the victims' internal organs to liquefy, leading to a long and violent death.

Tagline: "You may never take an afternoon nap again!"

Title: *Turning Pages*

Synopsis: A malevolent spirit haunts the pages of mass-market novels, causing readers to plunge into madness and eventual suicide.

Tagline: "You may never enjoy a good book again!"



Ukraine is Soo Over.

These days, you can't get halfway through an episode of World News Tonight or a twelve-pack before some bleeding heart starts talking about Ukraine. Ukraine is destitute, Ukraine is corrupt, Ukraine has a donkey as minister of defense. Ukraine may be a pretty crappy place, and these newscaster types may have lots of free time on their hands, but I got problems of my own. So fuck off, Ukraine.

You know who Ukraine reminds me of? My cousin Jed. Just last month, Jed spent half an hour complaining - something about some guy named Vinny, and two-hundred dollars, and losing his thumbs. It's like he didn't even notice that I was trying to get the child-proof cap off my vitamins. The next time I saw him, I told him "Jed, it's okay, it turns out you have to push and twist at the same time, and even though I could have figured that out a lot faster if you hadn't been yapping and yammering and pleading, I forgive you." I thought that would be the end of it. Then, when he held up his hand, and I thought he was gonna give me an "I'm sorry" high four, he showed me his middle finger! Well, actually, one of his two middle fingers. Isn't that just like Ukraine?

First of all, both candidates were named Viktor. Viktor with a K! How pretentious is that?

Besides, what has Ukraine ever done for me? I don't sit down at a restaurant and order a Kievburger with Ukrainian fries. When I'm on a long road trip, I don't shout "Ukrainian fire drill" at a traffic light. When I have a big date coming up and I'm in a hurry, I don't take a Ukrainian shower. Until Ukraine starts pulling its weight, I say take a hike.

All this brouhaha just because some Ukrainian presidential candidate poisoned some other Ukrainian presidential can-

didate. First of all, both candidates were named Viktor. Viktor with a K! How pretentious is that? And it's not like this poison worked. It didn't kill anybody. Say what you will about Sudan or North Korea, but they do their poisoning right. All this so called "toxin" did was make one of these guys break out in hives. You'd think someone covered in pustules might try to stay off the air for a little while, but sure enough, there he is, every night on the news. Sure, "authorities" might claim that this is a tragedy, but I say U-G-L-Y, Viktor, you ain't got no alibi. Except for the poisoning.

And do you know how Viktor got poisoned in the first place? He ate some toxic cream soup. How can he possibly complain about his complexion? There are billions of starving people who would give their right arm for a bowl of cream soup. Like me, last Thursday. But when the people at the so-called "trendy" Japanese restaurant only had miso, did I bitch and moan until my Supreme Court overturned the menu? Did I need ten thousand international observers to monitor the waitress? Hell no. I just ordered my food, sucked it up, and skipped out on the check.

Ukraine, I've got one thing to say to you, and it rhymes with "Truck Zoo Hand the Course Zoo Bode Kin Don." I've had enough of your shenanigans. It's not like I'm a bad guy, it's just that I'm already worrying myself sick about college tuition, summer jobs, and the new season of *General Hospital*, so I just don't want to hear it. Unless it's about Ned and Monica calling it off, in which case, tell me right now before I explode.

If you absolutely have to whine about something, go bother Belarus. I bet Belarus would love to hear all about your problems. You could chat about the fall of communism and the vodka harvest, provided anyone in your part of the world has teeth left. So go play with your impoverished neighbors, Ukraine - or go to hell!

Now if you'll excuse me, there are some Kosovars who need a talking-to. ☹

Things that would be better if you ~~were~~ were a fish...

escaping murderers, if you were near the ocean.

laying eggs.

water!

Swimming!

PLANKTON!

MARINE PORNOGRAPHY.

SCHOOLS

fish basketball.

drowning.

kelp.

winter.

love.

being tied to a cement block & thrown into the sea.

The English channel

Things that would be WORSE if you were a fish

CONVERSATION.

Jackets!

fishing.

larger, hungrier fish.

braised monkfish in mango-rhubarb emulsion. served w/ celery root puree & warm black olive vinaigrette on a bed of bread-and-icecream-encrusted sapphires. ~ 1p26

air.

fish sticks.

hang gliding

bioluminescence.

estimos.

non-soluble materials. The Hoover Dam. holding things.

Shorkaling? Yes.

and sleeping in trays of ice at fish markets

and shark parties. and licorice.

underwater ethnic cleansing.

Things that would be neither BETTER nor WORSE if you were a fish.....

evil.