

100!

This is my **100th** blog post! What a long way I've come from my first blog post, aptly and boringly titled, "First Post" – it was a description of me learning to blog! And what a variety of subjects I've covered, from retractable sharpie pens, to kids' blankies... from movies and tv shows to animals, trips, and family life... It seems like forever ago that I was taking you all through the 11, 572 snow days we had, and it's been fun to share all these aspects of my life on the internet while learning things about my friends and family who read and/or comment on my posts. So thanks to all my readers, even if you just read because I make you, thanks anyway... I truly appreciate each and every comment I receive – written and spoken, keep it up! And might I add that I'm the first tangents.org blogger to achieve this milestone... hope to have others join me soon!

Game Days Past

For some reason, the old game show ["Sale of the Century"](#) from the 1980's crossed my mind the other day. I enjoyed this show tremendously as a kid, so I looked on youtube to see if I could find any episodes because I don't really remember what it was all about. They didn't have any full episodes, but I did see enough bits and pieces to enjoy the nostalgia. And I came across this clip of Simon Cowell's first tv appearance as a contestant on the British version of this show:

Watching vintage game shows on youtube got my husband thinking about the movie [Quiz Show](#), which is about the game show scandal of the late 1950's. It was a time when quiz shows were very popular, and one of the most popular shows of the time called "[Twenty-One](#)" was exposed for being rigged – in other words, the producers would tell the contestants the correct answers, and when to answer correctly or incorrectly to guarantee or fix the outcome of the show. On youtube, we were able to find the actual episode of "Twenty-One" that was chronicled in the movie and where the scandal broke. [Click here](#) to see it – it's in 3 parts, so you can find parts 2 and 3 off to the side where it says 'related videos'. We also watched a "Time and Again" documentary about the scandal, which included interviews with the contestants involved and was very interesting – [click here](#) to see part 1 of 5 of that show; again, the remaining parts can be linked from the right side of youtube. Surprisingly, the movie "Quiz Show" is very true to the real story of the scandal. When watching the episode of "Twenty-One" that started it all, my husband noted that it was very close to how the movie portrayed it. It's been awhile since I've seen the movie, so I will have to see it again because I didn't remember whether it was close or not.

After watching the interesting "Twenty-One" videos, we moved onto the game show "[Press Your Luck](#)" from the 1980's. It's the one where people get spins on a big game board, and they yell, "No Whammys, no whammys, STOP!" A whammy was like a 'lose-your-turn'. When a contestant spun one, a cartoon character (the whammy) would come out and do something different on the tv screen, like a dance or something silly, but it meant no money and the end of the contestant's turn. If you were like me and a kid watching the show when it was on, then you were waiting for people to get the whammys so you could see the little cartoons. For this reason, I would NOT have liked the episodes that aired with a contestant named Michael Larson, an unemployed ice cream truck driver who

memorized the pattern of the board, and spun a whopping 47 times! He won the following prizes:

1. \$104,950 in cash
2. 1 sailboat worth \$1015
3. 1 trip to Kauai worth \$1636
4. 1 trip to the Bahamas worth \$2636

This amount of cash was unheard of for this show, and the host kept making dumb jokes about how the contestant could now *buy* the Bahamas or CBS. After the show, they gave Michael Larson a hard time about collecting his winnings, but in the end, it was found that his memorizing the board's patterns was not cheating. They reconfigured the game show board, of course, but sadly, Michael Larson's story did not have a happy ending. He had some struggles over the years, and ended up dying of throat cancer in 1999. His life during and after the "Press Your Luck" appearances makes for a very interesting story though; perhaps they should make a movie about that – [read it here](#). They pulled those episodes of "Press Your Luck" in syndication, but they have shown them in multiple specials that aired on tv, most notably the game show network. They even invited Larson's brother to compete against the newly configured Press Your Luck whammy board to see if he could beat it, and he could not. Below are Larson's appearances on "Press Your Luck". Note the reactions of his fellow contestants as well as those of the host. A few interesting notes: While waiting to be on the show, Larson met Ed Long, a Baptist preacher booked for his fourth taping. They struck up a conversation. When it was Ed's turn to go on, Michael said to him, "I hope we don't have to face each other on the show." His wish wouldn't come true, as Ed had won his previous game with \$11,516. Watch for Ed on the clip. Also note the host of the show, Peter Tomarken, who was killed in a plane crash in 2006. He was a private pilot who volunteered for an organization that flew low-income patients for medical needs. His airplane had engine trouble, and he and his wife were killed when their plane crashed into the Santa Monica Bay.

The Office – Night Out

Just reading the synopsis of last night's episode even before I saw it made me laugh out loud:

Michael and Dwight decide a trip to the Big Apple is in order. There, they hope to mingle with bigwig Ryan and his colleagues at the nightclubs. Back in Scranton, the staffers must work on Ryan's pet website project – on a Saturday, no less.

The episode was hilarious, as usual. I won't give too much away, except that I almost fell off my couch laughing when Earl or Hank (or whatever the security guard's name ended up being) made a cameo – priceless!

For my friends who have just started watching the show, I don't know about you, but I really like to read tvguide's blog about the show the day after I watch it. Go to tvguide.com, find the tab at the top that says "What's on TV", and then go to Tv Show Blogs under that and find The Office. Here is a quick link to the tvguide write-up of this week's episode.

I agree with the tvguide writer – I caught on to Ryan's drug use pretty early in the episode, just before he ran for the bathroom sniffing, which only confirmed my suspicion. But I think the writer of the episode ([BJ Novak](#), aka "Ryan" himself) meant for it to be obvious that Ryan was experimenting with the nose candy. And to answer the tvguide blogger's question, yes, I think it will spell problems for him with corporate in the future. He's really been on my nerves lately, but in a good way, he is fun to watch and be annoyed with. Now with his drug problem and the fact that his 'perfect life' facade is starting to crack, I feel badly for him. It's been fun to

watch his transformation from temp to corporate bigwig, and along the way, he's always been kind of a jerk, not a very likable person at all. But that's what is so great about the Office – as the tvguide blogger says, “The Office is a terrific show because most of its comedy is rooted in real human behavior (no matter how exaggerated)...” – I couldn't agree more!

Back in the Office

Well, friends, our favorite show The Office is back on tv after the awful hiatus that was the Hollywood writer's strike. The first new episode in months actually aired last Thursday, but since it was our anniversary, I was busy and also had other things to write about. Last week's episode was funny as usual, but probably the least funny Office episode in my opinion. But put it in perspective; I'm such a huge fan of the show that that is not really a put-down, more of a note, really. Either the writers were a bit rusty last week, or maybe moving the action from the office and into Michael's home subtracted some hilarity. Either way, have no fear, after last night's uproarious episode, our favorite show is back on track!

First things first – addressing the rumors. I had heard that Michael and Jan's relationship was going to get rocky, but I was surprised to hear that they had already broken up by last night's episode. No long, drawn-out sit-com drama, barely a word about it... which is something I really like about this show. It's less of a soap opera than many sit-coms let themselves evolve into. Even with its continuing plot story lines from week to week, The Office is still all about the comedy, of which it has plenty. So, if the rumors of an

Office spin-off are true, is it possible it will revolve around GodZillary herself – the ice-queen Jan Levinson Gould? I would rather see it involve someone who is not on the regular show since I can't think of anyone I'd like to see leave Dunder Mifflin. Jan will be missed, but if she is leaving the show anyway because she and Michael broke up, then they might as well make the spin-off about her. And on to rumor #2 – something 'big' was going to happen between Pam and Jim; one of four things – they would get engaged, start sleeping together, break-up, or elope. Well, the big thing (as predicted from the beginning of the episode by my hubby – way to go honey!) was none of the above, but let's just say it is a positive step in their relationship, and for that we are glad. No one wants to see these 2 break-up. They are the cutest tv couple since Ross and Rachael of Friends fame, and the writers beat that relationship into the ground with all the back and forth nonsense, so thank goodness that isn't happening to Pam and Jim.

Now on to the plot synopsis of last night's episode. After finding out that the catalog model who was supposed to be Michael's soulmate met an untimely demise, Michael demands and makes it a work order that everyone in the office suggests a woman for him to date. Pam sets him up with her landlord, and in pure Michael Scott fashion, he is obviously (and hilariously) rude to her on their date. Meanwhile, Kevin and Andy spear-head a meeting with the CEOs of the Scranton Office Park in order to get their parking spots back, which have been stolen by the construction crew. I hope you caught one of the best lines of the show, delivered so quickly by Andy it might have been easy to miss: when asked where Michael was at the office park meeting, Andy replies, "He had an unforeseen prior commitment." Such is an example of the subtle yet sidesplitting humor that has come to be the backbone of the show.

Last night's episode did not disappoint – the show is back,

and I have my Office fix... at least until May when we have to deal with the summer tv hiatus ☐
Until next week...

Ernie the Klepto Take II

A couple of quick updates I have to post:

1. After just one episode, your favorite new show and mine, “Secret Talents of the Stars” was CANCELLED!!! Just kidding. At least about the favorite show part – this awful show was actually cancelled after airing just one episode, and we will never find out who wins. Boo-hoo. Probably would have been a bigger disappointment to waste more time watching it than it will be not knowing which celebrity won.

2. I did some research, and didn’t find anything about the Starburst commercial (see my Mediocrity post) and whether or not it stars Steve Buscemi – just LOTS of speculation on the internet, no definite answers – but I watched the commercial again, and I no longer think it’s him. Unless he’s found a way to age in reverse, that is. But the actor in question definitely seems to be imitating him, and should probably look into getting a paid gig as a Buscemi impersonator, if he hasn’t already. Sorry for the misinformation.

Mediocrity

Two things I was looking forward to watching today turned out to be disappointing. The first, a new horror movie in theaters called "[The Ruins](#)", I wouldn't classify as a bad movie. It was entertaining, at least... I say that a lot about movies, I know. But if they hold my attention, aren't boring (like [The Night Listener](#)), and don't disgust me too much (like [Doomsday](#)), then I generally don't consider the movie a waste of my time because I really like watching movies, spending time with my husband, and I just overall enjoy the movie theater going experience.

But as far as horror movies go, "The Ruins" is not my idea of a good one. I won't even go into the acting skills; it's so unimportant when talking about this kind of movie. No one stood out as horrible or unwatchable, and that's all that matters in a movie like this. I did lose a side bet with Hubby about whether or not one of the actors was also in the [Texas Chainsaw](#) remake – he was – but no matter, I really wasn't too sure about it anyway. The premise was interesting; 4 twentysters (people in their early twenties. Hey, I just made that up because as far as I'm concerned, many of them still act like teens, might as well give them a goofy name to go with their attitudes. Maybe it'll catch on...) on vacation in Mexico follow this German guy (actor with a fake accent. Why they couldn't just find a German actor is beyond me, but whatever) they just met on a trek miles into the jungle to see some ancient ruins. When they get there, they end up trapped on top of the pyramid thing by the natives who believe the ruins are cursed. That's basically it. The movie was pretty fast-paced, however, once I realized that the "monster" of this horror movie was plant life, somehow it wasn't very scary... Also, everything creepy was already shown in the previews – I HATE when they do that to movies! None of the characters were very likable, so when some met their demise,

it wasn't all that shocking nor disappointing. I don't know why the movie was rated R – I've seen much scarier PG13 movies, they could have cut out the nude scene, and the gore in this movie was all (POTENTIAL SPOILER ALERT – IF YOU CARE) mercy limb cutting. I was thinking the movie could redeem itself with a good resolution, but that was not to be. I can't see any replay value of this movie. Worth seeing once but not again. One good thing though, it didn't have you leaving the theater feeling like crap about humanity, like *Doomsday* or some other movies I've seen – that's always a plus.

On to disappointment #2 – *Secret Talents of the Stars*. A show about “celebrities” – and some people who call themselves celebrities who I've never heard of – who try their hand at other talents than what they've become famous doing. What was I thinking you ask? What would *this* shameless attempt at yet another celebrity reality show have that made me want to watch it? The answer – hype. It was hyped so much that I actually fell for it. And I really wanted to see [Clint Black](#) (I'll forgive you this once if you don't know he's a major country music star) attempt stand-up comedy. That was until I actually saw Clint Black attempt stand-up comedy. Not very funny. And the show seems fixed too... ok, what show like this isn't, but still... the “judges” all *loved* Clint Black's comedy... probably because he was the most hyped star of the show, and they wanted to make sure he'd be in the semi-finals. And then there was [George Takei](#), of former [Star Trek](#) fame, now most famous for coming out of the closet, sad to say that has overshadowed his years on *Star Trek*, but I for one had never heard of him before he came out... So, in between several obvious and Clint Black-ish (meaning not very good) type gay jokes, George sang “On the Road Again”, originally by Willie Nelson. And if you don't know who that is, you're on your own, I'm not going to spell it out for you! Needless to say, he butchered it and got kicked out of the show – big surprise. The other 2 contestants tonight –

Sasha Cohen and a singer called just Mya, were trying for talents that were somewhat related to their profession anyway – something I did not think was fair. Figure skater Cohen was being an acrobat, while singer/entertainer Mya was tap-dancing! The show is stupid, the format is obvious, the judges lines are scripted... but why will I be watching next week? Another country music star, [Jo dee Mesina](#) will be trying her hand at something other than country music and rehab. Low blow there, and I apologize... it's late, and I seem a wee bit crabby, maybe I should have gone to bed instead of staying up until 11 to watch this dumb show...

Ellen's Friend Gladys

I used to really enjoy watching The Ellen DeGeneres Show. It's on tv in my area at 4pm, so I used to watch it all the time while I was feeding my youngest daughter. Since that is no longer a job that requires sitting down for a good 30-60 minutes – quite the opposite nowadays actually! – I haven't caught Ellen in ages. But the other day, I was reminded of a viewer of Ellen's who she made a few phone calls to on the show... An 88-year-old named Gladys who was as matter-of-fact as can be and just hysterical. Check out the clip from her first sound byte on the show below. Gladys first calls Ellen's show and leaves a message, which is funny enough by itself, but when Ellen calls her back, hilarity ensues! Check it out: