



WHAT IS THE FASCINATION WITH CASEY ANTHONY?

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What is the fascination with Casey Anthony? One 96-year-old grandmother in Alabama was so fixated; she knew the names of Casey's entire family, the defense team, the witnesses and prosecutors. The Nielsen ratings demonstrated clearly that millions of Americans spent hour upon hour of their own precious lives watching this tragic scenario unfold. But why?

Some say it's because Caylee Anthony was a pretty little girl...her mom slightly sexy...and white. An ugly child or an ugly mother or a minority would not get the same attention, they argue. Maybe so. It probably did contribute to media coverage. Visual and sexy are two important criteria for television. Storms are perfect as are accidents and people moving about in all sorts of ways. Thinking doesn't play well on TV. Neither does nobility or thoughtfulness. Rash, erratic behavior...boorish rudeness...aggression....overt sexuality. These look good on camera.

It certainly was the common denominator with the media obsession over Natalee Holloway, La Crosse beauty Yeardeley Love...Nicole Smith and Scott & Laci Peterson. It might explain why they got media attention, but it doesn't explain why we watched it. Why did we watch it? Why did we devote hours of our own lives...hours we can never reclaim on the OJ trial?

Is it uplifting to the soul? Does it make us smile? Do we come back into our own reality feeling better? Does it challenge the intellect? Does it make us grateful? Does it encourage us to achieve? Does it energize or motivate?

It does none of these. Watching the Casey Anthony saga or any other tabloid tail is a squandering of your life. It is a misdirection of your mental energies. Gambling drains precious financial resources causing you to neglect paying your bills. Inordinate amounts of time spent watching this kind of coverage drains other precious resources; your time and your attention. The amount you have of that is finite. It can never be reclaimed. While children or spouses or friends or needy neighbors or responsible citizenship or just plain hard work clamor for us, we blithely turn to the screen, seemingly paying no price, or at least, none we can feel in the moment.

One has only to visit the homes of America's Founding Fathers to be amazed at their accomplishments. Thomas Jefferson was an inventor....Benjamin Franklin, the Ambassador to France, developed a printing press, founded the U.S. Post Office, invented electricity, the kite, and the Franklin Stove. In his spare time he helped write the Constitution and found the United States of America. George Washington was a surveyor and horticulturalist. Many wrote books, learned astronomy, French, Latin, and Greek while they were already busy adults.

What will future generations say of us? Will they remember all we accomplished or the hours we spent motionless, living vicariously thru the tawdry lives of others?

Did the great men of our past write noble things and think noble thoughts by accident? No. It is undeniable that we become what we surround and saturate our minds with. Advertising executives know this well. So do Leftist educators who have given us a generation of people who reflect the propaganda of their textbooks. Long time hostages can come to think and act like their captors. Imbibing pornographic images can cause men to act upon and think thoughts they would not otherwise have entertained. Romance novels find their power in stirring up female fantasies, destroying marriages that in other generations might have been saved. It matters what we read and see and listen to.

We are not forced to absorb such banality. We choose to absorb it. And we can choose not to. Americans are obsessed with diet. They understand that processed foods, carbohydrates and sugars make them fat. They don't seem to understand that taking things into the mind without discipline produces fat, sluggish minds. Bad content produces bad results. And we can change both. We know how to discipline our bodies so how about our minds?

Ben Franklin actually formed a "Young Men's Society" for the purpose of achieving character. Members worked toward obtaining one attribute at a time; honesty...generosity...humility. You can imagine it was an uphill battle, but it was, at least, up hill.

Casey Anthony's story is tragic, but it is not important to all of us who are strangers. Turn the television off realizing that each moment that remains is precious.