

TIME ON MY HANDS

"Punctuality is the virtue of the bored." That's what a guy named Evelyn Waugh said, and I'm not even sure I know what he meant. It's one of those aphorisms that sounds good, but means nothing. What else would you expect from a guy named Evelyn? Perhaps what he meant was that being on time is a virtue only for those whose life is tedious, but for those with places to go, things to do, punctuality is not a virtue. Well, not true my dear Evelyn, punctuality is a virtue for everyone, *especially* if you're busy, but even if you're not. It is also said that "a prompt man is a lonely man." I'm sure a prompt woman is also lonely, but that's the quotation. It's by a guy named Andrew Donahue, so I have to quote it exactly as it's in the forward of a book by Elmore Leonard.

Have you noticed that live theatre performances invariably start late? I've been to performances by artists like Neil Diamond, Kenny Rogers and Bob Seegar and they started as much as twenty minutes late! These people give innumerable polished performances, year in and year out, and they must have the routine down so that they can start on time. Emulating this, performances at Mount Tabor and the Regent rarely begin on time, though they are not stacked with artists of the notoriety of major metropolitan venues. Why do they do this when it's not necessary? What if church started twenty minutes late? Would we put up with it?

I haven't asked anyone, and maybe I should have before I began this rant, but I surmise this occurs for two reasons: First, by making the audience wait, the masses become so anxious and grateful when the performer finally appears that they burst into spontaneous applause, providing the performer with an immediate shot of gratification. Second, the performers get satisfaction from the power they wield. "They're waiting for me! Ha! Let's make the buggers suffer a little more."

At a recent event at the Regent, I was squirming, fretting, grousing and whining about the timeliness of the performance start and it was suggested by the lady in front of me that I remove my watch. Could it be that my expostulations were a little loud? She claimed being unaware of the time would make the late start transparent to me. Driving on the grass would make me unaware of potholes in the road, too, but it shouldn't be necessary.

"On average, Americans watch 2 hours and 34 minutes of television a day, compared with 20 minutes a day exercising and 8 minutes a day volunteering or participating in religious or spiritual activities", says John Robertson, Director of the Time/Use Project at the University of Maryland. So what? TV is only a problem to him because he thinks we should spend more time on something else. Why should we? What's wrong with television? An expert like Mr. Robertson may have an opinion that we don't spend enough time devoted to his

special interest, but it's just that. An opinion. I don't think his opinion is any more valid than yours or even mine. If we devoted the time for the things that all the special interest groups desired, we wouldn't have enough time to sleep, which incidentally, experts say we don't spend enough time doing. Some say we don't sleep enough, some say we don't exercise enough. I'll just rely on restless legs when asleep, maybe that will count for both.

Movies start promptly, but only after innumerable advertisements for coming attractions. Finally, when you get to the "feature attraction" most of them start out with the credits. You, a paying member of the audience, sit in utter boredom while the credits scroll by. Like we care who the hairdresser was, the second grip, and the caterer for gosh sake. Do we watch with bated breath to see "Transportation provided by..." They don't always do this, but most of the time they do. I think a "producer" is a person who provides some of the money to make the film. OK, but what's an "Associate Producer" and an "Executive Producer"? It wouldn't be hard to find out, but I hate them all because they waste my time spreading their names across the movie screen, so I refuse to ask. It's sheer indulgence on the part of the person who made the picture. My daughter says they are setting the mood for the film with the actions occurring behind the credits. I'll tell you I would get the "mood" a lot better if there were not names scrolling in front of the activities. Sometimes they

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