

Osama tape should've stayed in cave

It's been six years, and he's still recycling the same tired 9/11 terror message



JONN KMECH

There really are no new ideas in television, or in terrorism.

Six years after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, most Americans will take time today to reflect, pray, and change the channel after watching the major networks' annual coverage. But why? We've seen it all before: the low-budget, made-for-TV movies; the excruciatingly detailed breakdowns of that day's events; the heartfelt remembrance for lost loved ones.

This is why I find it odd that Osama Bin Laden has decided to release his new video now. The tape—which features Bin Laden urging Americans to embrace Islam or face increased hostility in Iraq—was clearly released right at the anniversary to stir up controversy and provoke fear.

However, just as with 9/11 coverage, early reviews suggest that it's a stale retread of previous episodes, and that the tape will quickly be forgotten by the American public. Luckily, with the Fall TV season here and sweeps just around the corner, there's plenty else to watch besides wreath ceremonies at Ground Zero or that whimsical ragamuffin's wacky antics.

I mean, Osama's scriptwriters aren't even trying anymore. Sure, they'll throw in the necessary "infidel" and "escalate the killing" tidbits, pepper the dialogue with references to current events in pop culture so viewers know when the episode was produced, and set up a finger-wagging punch-line right before they cut to commercial, but the plot is always the same, and there's minimal character

development. It's just lazy. I mean, they had three years to work on the material since his last video, and this is what we get? Some nonsense about the United States' global prestige being destroyed and its economy spiraling downwards? Cue the laugh track.

More crucially, Bin Laden was wearing a fine beige cloak and white turban, and looked much younger due to his now jet-black beard—which is also trimmed shorter and sexier. Maybe he uses Grecian 5.

Perhaps if Bin Laden was ballroom dancing with Mario Lopez or auditioning to be the next Pussycat Doll, we might notice him.

A lot has changed in the US and the world since 9/11. We witnessed the end of *Friends* and the subsequent failure of *Joey*. The country's housewives have been upgraded to threat level Desperate, and no less than six of its residents have been chosen to be idolized by the American public, going on to the level of superstardom associated with singing at store openings.

With all this excitement, another Bin Laden repeat isn't going anywhere in the Nielsen ratings. Perhaps if Bin Laden was ballroom dancing with Mario Lopez or auditioning to be the next Pussycat Doll, we might notice him.

But until that time, North Americans will continue to ignore a C-lister like Osama much like they rightfully ignore the rest of the news cycle, which has also been on auto playback since 9/11. God help us if

the Iraq war reaches syndication and is on every channel, all day.

I can't stand it when shows drag on forever with no finale in sight even after they've jumped the shark. But, to be fair, it's tough to maintain freshness and continuity if over 100 000 cast members have been written out of the script.

To make it easier for people, the world today can be described like the standard lazy-guy-with-hot-wife comedy. The North American public is the fat, inept protagonist and breadwinner, who, despite having good intentions, always screws things up and is, ironically, usually found asleep in front of the television.

His stunningly attractive (and therefore unrealistic) wife, constantly nagging for our attention, is our perceived reality—but unfortunately, the truth is that her ugly bastard of a father lives in your basement and will never leave you alone.

The rest of the world is like the neighbours who marvel at how this debacle we call a household manages to soldier on, but who usually have their own dysfunctions to deal with.

Westerners like our history like they like their sitcoms: fresh, yet predictable. If that sitcom ends up repeating itself, we'll probably start watching something else until the next shocking moment. After that happens, we'll never forget, until something else catches our attention.

Sorry to burst your bubble Bin Laden, but if we've already tuned out tear-soaked interviews with firefighters' families, what chance have you got?

We'll start listening to you again when some new apocalyptic event hits our screens with fresh footage of pain and suffering. But if you're any kind of a man, you'll still have to work hard to top *Two and a Half Men*.

Sure there's a downside to rabies, but for every cloud there's a salivary lining



CONAL PIERSE

We all know the symptoms: shaky walking, angry growling, and foaming at the mouth all add up to a classic case of rabies. This loveable rapsallion of a disease has been a staple of our infectious repertoire for decades, but now in light of new research, it may very well become a thing of the past.

According to Edinburgh University's Royal Dick Vet School, if enough domesticated dogs are vaccinated against rabies, it can potentially be eliminated worldwide within a decade. And while I'm all for eliminating diseases—because nobody likes smallpox-coated blankets—I think we're forgetting all that rabies has done for us in the past.

I know what you're thinking: how could a disease that kills 50 000 people a year possibly be helpful? Well, have you ever stopped to consider that some of those people might have been evil? Yes some of them may have been children, but remember, the likes of Stalin and Lex Luthor also started out as kids.

"I know what you're thinking: how could a disease that kills 50 000 people a year possibly be helpful? Well, have you ever stopped to consider that some of those people might have been evil? Yes some of them may have been children, but remember, the likes of Stalin and Lex Luthor also started out as kids."

Rabies has also been immensely important for pop culture. Were it not for rabies, we never would have discovered what a stone-cold, dead-eye hard-ass Atticus Finch was.

If it weren't for that infected hound, we never would've had this insight into his character—unless he *actually* decided to kill some mockingbirds or something. And *Old Yeller* wouldn't be a memorable film if at the end he simply took his dog out back to play fetch.

Sure, these events are still relevant to us, but future generations who grow up in a world that's forgotten rabies will be at a disadvantage.

These children will simply think that Atticus was being a dick for shooting a neighbourhood dog who had managed to get his paws on some whipped cream. *Old Yeller* will be no longer be thought of as a tale of friendship, but rather as a sordid tale of a serial killer's beginnings. And Cujo's now-inexplicable murderous rampage—considering the St Bernards' well-known

ability to track down a person trapped in a snow-drift—will result in that particular breed being regarded as the polar bears of the future, seeing how that slot will need filling soon.

They'll also be incapable of understanding early-'90s comedies about down-on-their-luck peewee football team. When the Little Giants take Alka-Seltzers in order to give the appearance that they're foaming at the mouth, these kids will be left behind.

Or worse, they might fall under the unfortunate assumption that little white pills are the key to athletic success, and then we'll end up with Little Leaguers who are consistently breaking Barry Bonds' hard-earned home run record.

So before you jump on this "disease eradication" bandwagon, I urge you to please think of the children. The children of the future that is, not all the ones in Asia and Africa who are dying from rabies infections.

That's just tragic.

Merchandising & Store Renovation
\$14-\$16/hour



- Weekend & evening shifts
- Ideal for students
- Jobs in Westend & St. Albert
- Ask about our referral bonus program!

Apply today, work tomorrow!
Email your resume to: ranbir.virk@adecco.ca

Adecco Adecco Edmonton, 10279 Jasper Avenue
T 780.428.1266 / F 780.426.0031 / adecco.ca

FREE POOL
in September
for U of A 1st Year Students*



STUDENTS' UNION BUILDING, Lower Level of SUB
Free Pool Hours: Daily between 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM

Hours: Mon. - Fri. 9:30 AM - 8 PM & Sat. 10 AM - 6 PM
Phone: 492-9468 | games@su.ualberta.ca



*Please bring in first year timetable and photo i.d. for proof of first year status.

Students' Union Print Centre



FAST and AFFORDABLE service on campus!

full service | no disk fees | free hole punching at time of printing | binding services available

Black & White Copying Standard Sheetfed			Black & White Digital Printing			Full Colour Digital Printing or Copying		
PAPER SIZE	SINGLE SIDED	DOUBLE SIDED	PAPER SIZE	SINGLE SIDED	DOUBLE SIDED	PAPER SIZE	SINGLE SIDED (60 LOW RES)	DOUBLE SIDED (60 LOW RES)
8.5x11	5¢	9¢	8.5x11	8¢	15¢	8.5x11	49¢*	90¢*
8.5x14	7¢	12¢	8.5x14	10¢	19¢	8.5x14	69¢*	\$1.30*
11x17	10¢	15¢	11x17	12¢	23¢	11x17	79¢*	\$1.50*

Over 99 digital copies are charged at copying prices *Quantity discounts apply

We're right where you need us.

Students' Union Building, 021 Lower Level

Monday to Friday 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
492-9113 | email print jobs to printcentre@su.ualberta.ca

