



This is gonna be a fun blog, because I get to talk about movies, books, and forms of entertainment. I'm a very emotional person, so movies, books, and music really speak to my soul. I love a good story.

My husband and I have three kiddos. Years ago, we turned off the TV and walked away from it, because, well, most of it is mindless trash. We have one TV in our house and it is reserved for football games and movies. I know this is a foreign concept in the world of technology, but it got to the point where even commercials were inappropriate. I mean, do you really need to use sex to sell everything out there?

So, what to do with all this non-TV time? Well, we really don't have that much down time anyway since we homeschool and my kids participate in sports. When we do have down time we read together. I started reading to my kids as babies and haven't stopped. Even my 16-year old curls up to listen to me read to the whole family. I love reading to my kids. There are so many life topics to discuss and expand upon.

When we do watch movies, we are very selective. I remember one time, my husband and I sat down to watch a movie together that everyone was just gushing over. Not even one minute into the movie there were like 1000 cuss words and maybe two actual words. The TV was turned off. There is no point. I'm over the glorifying of violence, the incessant cuss words, the degradation of the sexual act. So many movies don't even try anymore to have a message or a plot. It's just like they sit around and say, "Ah, just fill it will cool special effects, lots of sex, and cuss words! People don't care anymore! The more shocking the better!"

So, does that mean we only let our kids watch CareBear cartoon reruns? Nah. If the violence has a purpose like in "Saving Private Ryan" or the "Gladiator," I'm not opposed to it—age appropriate, of course. If there is some mild cussing, but the overall message of the story is great than I'm not opposed to it.

A few people asked me to give my thoughts on books and movies that I think kids need to see or read. I think all of these need to be consumed as a family and then talked

about. These suggestions are for teens, because you get more substantive forms of entertainment as they grow older.

MOVIES

- To Kill a Mockingbird
- Count of Monte Cristo
- Radio
- It's a Wonderful Life
- The Way
- Forrest Gump—older teens. There is sooooo much to talk about with this one.
- The Passion of the Christ—older kids. The violence can be too much for younger ones.
- Spitfire Grill—trust me. Not a thriller, but the message is profound. Older teens.
- Musicals—pick pretty much anyone of them, but for me, it's King and I, Oliver, and Sound of Music. The originals, not the more modern knock-offs.
- The Lord of the Rings Series

Every girl should watch “Anne of Green Gables” and “Anne of Avonlea,” though I haven't met a guy who doesn't like it. My dad, uncles, and husband all really like these two movies. “Rudy” is a runner up. I love Rudy.

Books

- To Kill a Mockingbird. Hands down my favorite book.
- The Hobbit
- The Lord of the Rings series
- The Chronicles of Narnia. If you at least read the first one that's good, but the whole set is awesome.
- The Hunger Games series. This must be read with your kid. There is so much symbolism that they will miss. You have to talk through it with them.
- The Giver
- Tuck Everlasting
- Where the Red Fern Grows
- A Girl Named Disaster
- A Christmas Carol

For older teens:

- Scarlett Letter
- Tale of Two Cities
- The Help
- Unbroken
- Roll of Thunder, Hear my Cry

Some of these books are written in a style that we don't see today. Don't let that discourage you. If you start reading with your kids when they are babies and continue all through their youth, you can help them appreciate these older classics.

Magazines

- Radiant Magazine—A Catholic magazine that is for teen girls and young women. It's beautifully put together.
- Popular Mechanics—my husband loves it and my oldest daughter enjoys some of the articles, too.
- Smithsonian Magazine—very cool stories from around the world. This one gives us lots to discuss at the dinner table.

Comedians

Too many comedians today are just filthy and disgusting. If you want a comedian that your family can watch and who is hilarious, watch Brian Regan. He is clean (he does say the word "hell" every once in awhile) and he never disappoints.

Most importantly, know what your kids are consuming. Don't be afraid to tell them no. What we consume in the forms of entertainment, shapes our thoughts and behaviors. Have courage to stand against the culture who wants to spoon feed your kids immoral, disgusting, and evil forms of entertainment. You'll get made fun of, but so what? These are your kids and their souls are in your care.

So, do you have any suggestions for books or movies that should be on the list?

<https://catholicpilgrim.net/2017/10/17/my-list-of-things-that-teens-need-to-read-and-see/>