Speaker 1:

The Missouri State Journal, a weekly program keeping you in touch with Missouri State University.

Nicki Donnelson:

Watching a familiar television show can feel like visiting an old friend, likewise taste testing or binge watching new shows can give you an icebreaker or help you share a cultural experience with people around you. I'm Nikki Donaldson. Today on the Missouri State Journal, I have Dr. Holly Holiday. She's an associate professor of media, journalism, and film at Missouri State University. She says, although we might all have been watching more television or media in the last couple of years, it's not a bad thing. She tells us more.

Holly Holladay:

I don't know that there's necessarily anything different about over consuming media versus somebody who's a veracious reader or who is really obsessed with tennis and wants to play tennis all the time. Other than that is great physical activity. When we aren't, especially at the beginning of COVID, when we weren't able to get out into the world and be social in the same ways or enjoy the same activities, or travel in the same way that we were pre-COVID we turned to something. We turned to something, and media is a great answer to that, because for the most part, something we're already used to, and we're really narrative creatures. And in the same way, you would pick up a book, it's nice to have a film or a television series in particular that you can spend some time with and really invest your time in.

Nicki Donnelson:

Holiday says throughout history, media has been feared and demonized, but it's not the boogeyman it is often portrayed to be.

Holly Holladay:

There were moral panics associated with media from the very beginning, whether that's newspaper or film. And especially when we were growing up, obviously it was video games. And you're going to sit on the couch and never leave the house. And what I think is so interesting about it too, especially I remember very specifically at the beginning of COVID, before I tired of all of the Zoom happy hours, I linked up with some of my former students and we did a Netflix watch party. So you could engage socially with people. And I think that the idea of social TV is not new to COVID either, people have been talking about television and film on Twitter, in different social media spaces for a long, long time.

Holly Holladay:

Nielsen, I think it was around 2013 or so, even came up with a special rating for social TV and how people were talking about television on Twitter. And so, the idea of engaging socially with media is not a new thing, obviously at all. But even with video games too, my students talk about this all of the time, how they have friends all over the world that they play video games with. So I don't necessarily think that even the quote unquote, over consumption we were doing was isolating. I think a lot of it was, even in thinking directly from my experiences, social.

Nicki Donnelson:

Just as she doesn't believe in over consumption of media, Holiday also doesn't believe in the idea of guilty pleasure television. She explains.

Holly Holladay:

On the first day of class, I love to be sneaky, and in the first day of my media analysis class, when I'm getting to know them and I'm calling roll, I'll ask them a question. And in my media analysis class, it is often what is your guilty pleasure media? And it is a lot of pop music, rom-coms, reality TV, things that we often associate with women. And so, part of my resistance to calling something guilty pleasures is a lot of things that we're guilty about are things that are made for and by women. Soap operas is the classic example of that, right? And then I come back at the end of the semester and I have a very dramatic monologue about how you should just unapologetically and enthusiastically enjoy whatever it is you enjoy. Life is hard enough.

Nicki Donnelson:

Instead of feeling guilty for what you like or don't like, Holiday encourages people to lean into choices that make you happy.

Holly Holladay:

As somebody who studies media there's particular quote unquote quality television that I'm supposed to be well versed in. But here's the thing, I am literally never going to watch Game of Thrones. I have no interest. I'm sure it's great. I can appreciate it for what it is for you, but it does not speak to me in any capacity. Rather than watching something I think because I should, and it feeling like a chore, watch things that truly make me happy and give me joy inside.

Nicki Donnelson:

That was Dr. Holly Holiday. I'm Nikki Donaldson for the Missouri State Journal.

Speaker 1:

For more information, contact the Office of Strategic Communication at (417) 836-6397. The Missouri State Journal is available online at ksmu.org.