Media Studies Professor Authors Book on Television Program, The O.C.

Lori Bindig

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Dr. Lori Bindig of Bloomfield, assistant professor of Communication at Sacred Heart University, doesn't just teach media — she also readily consumes it. Now, for the second time in her career, she has parlayed the love of a television program into a book.


“I’m really interested in the social impact of a television show,” Bindig says. “What are the messages that people are getting from all of these programs that they don’t even realize they’re getting? How do these shows impact how we think about gender or sexuality or race or class? Or how do they affect what we decide to buy, or how we feel if we consume a certain product or not?”

Bindig says she got the idea for writing the book after finishing her first, Dawson’s Creek: A Critical Understanding (Lexington Books, 2007). She needed to look no further than her TV set, on which she was enjoying what would turn out to be the last season of The O.C. Though the programs were teen dramas, Bindig points out that both were watched by older age groups as well, meaning their influence spread far beyond their targeted demographics.

“These issues that stem from watching the show are really important,” Bindig says. “Though they may seem frivolous, they do impact how people live their lives, even if they’re unaware of it. Looking closely at any sort of television shows or movies that you watch, it’s important to examine their underlying values and how they shape what you think about the world.”

Bindig co-wrote The O.C.: A Critical Understanding with Andrea Bergstrom, an assistant professor of media studies at New Hampshire’s Franklin Pierce University. The two have been friends since attending grad school together at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.