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SURFING THE WAVES OF POPULAR CULTURE  
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## The NYTimes Looks Lost On "Lost"

I'm probably just jealous, but the NYTimes coverage of TV is just downright odd. They can't really take TV seriously because it's beneath them. But so many of the reviews and articles they write treat TV with absurdly high-falutin' analysis. Recently, they decided reality shows like "American Idol" were an example of generational warfare. (The truth is that "Idol" is wildly popular in part because it is one of the few shows entire extended families from grandparents to grandchildren can watch and enjoy together.) [Now they're dissecting "Lost"](#) and the NYTimes seems as lost as ever.

"Lost" is at heart a science-fiction thriller, while "Heroes" is more of a comic book, but both genres have a similar appeal: they provide an alternative society for those who don't fit comfortably into their own. (That is to say, smart, socially awkward adults and all 12-year-old boys.)

No matter how far-fetched and complicated that imaginary world may be, it is bound by its own intricate set of rules and customs, be it Quidditch regulations at Hogwarts; etiquette on Superman's native planet, Krypton; or military rank in "Battlestar Galactica."

"Lost" and "Heroes" appeal to smart, socially awkward adults? Meaning socially well-adjusted adults can't be bothered with them? I think they're confusing the feelings of some of the characters with the audience. Surely, "Heroes" appeals to anyone who enjoys fun, well-written TV shows. Does "24" appeal only to hawkish people with a taste for torture?

And whatever could they mean by the intricate set of rules and customs when they refer to the etiquette on Superman's native planet, Krypton? I haven't devoured ALL of Superman's many forms, but I've seen many of the movies and TV shows and read years of the strip and haven't a clue as to what she might be talking about. And the military protocol on "Battlestar Galactica" is so loose an entire storvline was built around

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