

WARNING

This article is based on opinion.

It can contain sarcasm, derision or incongruities. Protective clothing may be necessary when reading.

I don't have cable television; I don't have Dish Network; I'm just a regular television watching person. You read right; I am cable-less. Apparently, we are the last people in the free world to not hook up to the amazing and astounding world of cable TV. This is apparently a shocker according to the people who telephone me to try to persuade me to cough up the bucks to allow them to get me "connected".

Recently it seems that these companies are spending quite a bit of money to entice ME to connect. I'm not sure what the deal is for them, maybe if they get the last holdout in the neighborhood they get a prize or something but there has been an incredible amount of pressure in our household. We've been to free movies (three), received offers of free dinners (two), so much mail offers I cannot begin to count them and now the calls have begun.

I didn't mind going to the movies quite frankly. I saw Wild Hogs, which I thought was funny and another one I probably would not have gone to at all and turned out to be hilarious.

There's nothing wrong with free

food either. Mail I can toss, so it's not a bother. However, I have to draw the line with the calls. I refuse to be treated like an imbecile because I choose not to bow to peer pressure and spend my hard-earned dough on watching television. I believe that is my freedom of choice. If you wish to connect to something that allows you more television, then so be it. However, when some kid calls me to berate me for not having cable – I have to at least enjoy the conversation. The last one went something very much like this:

Good Morning, is this Deborah (my first name thereby establishing this is a sales call) Ja-you-k (butchers last name – definitely not a relative)?



At this point, I usually make a decision – am I home or am I out? It's really a toss up according to how busy I am and my mood. This time I was home.

"Yes."

"Hi, I'm calling you today to talk to you about [insert company name here]."

around the bend...

"I'm really not interested. Thank you."

"Have you heard of [company]?"

"Yes."

"The service we offer will be less expensive than what you currently have and much superior service... yadda blah yadda blah. (I am promised this effusively for about 30 seconds in many different ways.)

"I don't have anything now. How can it be less expensive than zero?" I ask a legitimate question not truly expecting an answer.

An incredulous gasp is heard. "You don't have cable?"

"That's correct."

"You have dish then." Notice this is said as a statement since OBVIOUSLY you must have one or the other.

"No. I have some lovely china though." No laugh – joke is lost in space between the ears.

"You mean, you don't have any channels except the ones that come automatically with the television?"

"Well, I never heard it put quite that way but yes, the ones that

come out of the electrical plug and travel into the television where the little people live." Again, joke flies into outer space.

"But there's nothing on those channels!" In other words, *HOW* can you survive? Where are you from?!

"Humm, well now, there seems to be a picture on every channel when I flip through them."

"NO, I mean there's *NOTHING* on to watch!"

"I think I just explained that there is something on each channel. I hear an exasperated sigh at this point. No, I am not this dense I just enjoy being difficult.

"You need to sign up for cable. You're missing SOOOO much." Notice this is a "need" not a "want". I am not clear when cable went from an extravagance to an essential.

"Like what am I missing that is so important?"

"Well, MTV, HBO, ESPN, HGTV, [lots of initials here that I believe must be channels I have never heard of, some of which I fear include sports] ... plenty of things!"

"I have 'plenty of things', thank so much for offering but I really think I can live without more television in my life. As it is, I don't really watch too much on the channels I have now..."

"That's because you don't have anything to watch!"

"Well, you may have a point but, certainly, I have done pretty well so far without having it. And quite frankly I don't really care to spend that kind of money."

"It doesn't cost *that* much!"

"It does over time. If I take the \$65 - \$75 a month you charge, which would be about your very basic minimum charge, then add taxes and multiply that by 1 year it would be about \$1,000. If I invest this money, I might easily about triple it in as little as 10 years. That means I would have somewhere around \$25,000. I just don't see where watching more television can possibly be worth that kind of money."

"You can have your monthly payments put on a credit card automatically and earn points. Everyone does it." Now, I don't know about you, but putting something on credit cards *STILL* requires you to pay the bill. So, I am unclear on what the point was here except to get me to think of it as a bonus to get these "points".

"So, let me get this straight. What you are telling me is that I should use credit and pay interest thereby increasing what it costs me to purchase something I don't really want, to get "points" for stuff I can buy right now with the money I am not spending on cable and that I probably don't want either?"

Finally, I hear the total frustration in the voice on the line. "You just don't get it!"

"No, I think actually, you don't get it. Would you care for me to explain it again?"

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We all have our priorities. AND, any real biker knows that extra cash goes for chrome, leathers and riding. And that always takes precedence over things like cable!

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