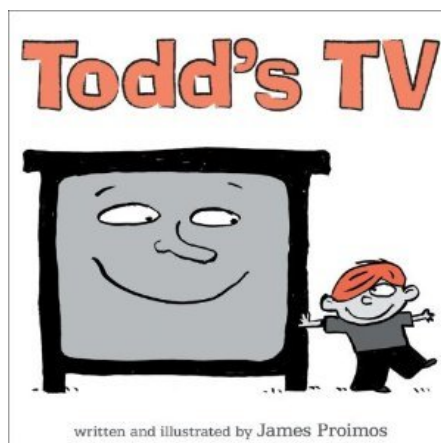




## Todd's TV

*James Proimos*

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# Todd's TV

*James Proimos*

**Todd's TV** James Proimos

This is Todd.

These are Todd's parents.

And this is Todd's TV.

Todd's parents are always busy. But Todd's TV isn't busy. It just sits there. So one day, Todd's TV decides to lend a helping hand. This is the heartwarming story of that day, and what happened afterward. You'll laugh, you'll cry—but most of all, you'll be giving your TV a break. It probably needs it.

## Todd's TV Details

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Author : James Proimos

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## From Reader Review Todd's TV for online ebook

### Kest Schwartzman says

the story's just ok, but the illustrations are SOLID

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### Alexa Mazur says

I really enjoyed this book!! This book is about a boy named Todd, and his parent's are always SO busy. One day, Todd realizes that he wants to help people, and he wants to "lend a helping hand" to people who need it. After you get done reading the book, TV doesn't seem all that important anymore! This book would be great for elementary school students, because they students LOVE to watch TV (for the most part). I think it is a good fit for students to read because it shows them how awesome it is to help people, and how sitting in front of the TV isn't very important, and I think student's should learn that at a young age. I could read this book to my students if we are talking about time management, and why it is important to help other people.

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### Dianna says

Todd's parents use the TV for a babysitter. Soon it becomes sentient, takes him to parent-teacher conferences, and becomes his primary caretaker. His parents don't realize how it's taken over their life until it tries to adopt Todd.

My four-year-old liked this book and thought it was silly. *I* liked it because it reminded me to spend time with my kids. I actually felt some dark overtones with this book—maybe it was the creepy edge to the faces in the illustrations, or that the illustrations were done in reds and grays.

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### Betsy says

You ever have that moment when you find your presumptions so upended that you just want to crawl into a corner somewhere and assume the fetal position? That's a bit extreme, but it's not far off from my relationship to the work of James Proimos. About five minutes prior to writing this review, if you had asked me to name his children's books I would have said something along the lines of, "Oh! He just did Patricia Von Pleasantsquirrel and then Paulie Pastrami Achieves World Peace, right?" Wrong. Wrongdy wrongdy wrong wrong wronggers. James Proimos is a man of range. A man with style. A man who has been illustrating children's books AT LEAST since 2001 when I was a mere slip of a girl, and he has not stopped since. His latest, *Todd's TV* is perhaps my favorite of the batch. It sort of takes the notion of parental controls on television viewing to the logical extreme. I think we may have just found our first book for the holiday now known as TV Turn Off Week. I think we've also found an author/illustrator who's going to become a household name real soon.

Todd loves his TV. What kid doesn't? And Todd's parents love the TV too. Anytime they're busy with work or the phone or the day-to-day business of life, they can just turn on the old telly and Todd is taken care of. But one day, when both parents are too busy to take Todd to a parent/teacher conference, the television opts to take Todd instead. At first, the parents are elated. The TV drives Todd to school, goes on vacations with

him, even tucks him into bed at night Yet when they hear the television confessing to Todd that it's going to try to adopt him legally, that's when the folks realize that sometimes you can have too much of a good thing. Fortunately, for every TV, there is a plug. Now if they could only figure out what to do about Todd's new computer . . .

I work in a fairly large children's room and one day, while cleaning some file somewhere, I stumbled across an old Walt Kelly pamphlet from the 1950s. In it, various characters from Kelly's Pogo comic strip showed the downside of constant television watching. It was a clever little piece, eschewing the mindless didacticism of most "TV is evil!" publications out there. *Todd's TV* appears to be the natural successor to that old Pogo piece too. For all that it promotes the idea of unplugging one's television rather than allow it to raise your children, Proimos is a master of tone. In fact, he's a genius at it. The story is light and humorous and jovial. There isn't an ounce of finger wagging or loud obnoxious tsking. You get the point without the author feeling inclined to hammer it into your skull. Amusingly, the TV isn't that bad a substitute parent. In fact, this television is able to be as good a parent, or better, than the ones in Todd's life. Yet it's clear that when all is said and done, kids prefer their real parents to electronic substitutes. That's probably the real moral behind this story. If you absolutely have to have a moral, that is.

Proimos has been compared to James Marshall in terms of his simple storylines and even simpler artistic style. I'd say that, at least with books like *Todd's TV* (as opposed to, say, Johnny Mutton) Proimos reminds me more of a Meghan McCarthy without her thick paints. Speaking of paints, boy is this title an interesting limited palette of colors. You've got your black, your white, your gray, and then that single bright hue that crops up in the book. You can see it in the title and in Todd's hair. I'm hard pressed to give it a name. It seems to straddle both orange and red equally. Most interesting is the fact that Proimos has chosen to use this odd in-between color to fill in his speech balloons. Comfortable with the graphic format, Proimos makes his cartoonish speech its own color with black words inside. In the picture book world I cannot think of an equivalent to this. Normally when an illustrator works in black and white with just a spot of color, the color always ends up highlighting the most important element in any given scene. Proimos seemingly upsets this balance because the television, with only a few minor exceptions, is always illustrated in black and white. The color instead belongs to Todd's father's socks or the soft inner ears of a juggled rhino. And cute as those are, they're not the point of one scene or another. That's when I decided that the key to the book was the colored speech bubbles. If the whole point of this story is to turn off your TV once in a while, maybe you could go a little further and point out that the thing Proimos is highlighting over and over again in this book isn't the technology, but the words upon the page. It's the words that are colorful and important. Nothing, to my mind, could be clearer.

Now, the only way *Todd's TV* works is if the television in question is old-fashioned. I suppose Proimos could have made the television a flat screen, 3-D, plasma doodad, but aside from the fact that such TVs date within seconds, how would it get around? This television is the kind that's set into a thick wooden frame. It has legs and a screen the size of a goalie net. And thanks to those legs it's able to walk around a bit, drive a car, and do a bit of surfing on the side. It's certainly the most dated element of the book (the laptop at the end appears to be quite new and Mom wears a pretty cool pair of contemporary pants with cowboy boots) but that's not a problem. Kid'll just go with the flow.

All in all, this is a great introduction to the world of Proimos. I know that other folks are huge *Paulie Pastrami* fans, but gimme a sentient cable box over a deliciously named protagonist any day of the week. And while certainly his most recent books have been getting a little more attention, Proimos is a man with a sturdy children's literature background. This is a good thing. It means that when you fall in love with his books, just as I have fallen in love with *Todd's TV* you're going to have a whole backlist of his titles to discover and read and enjoy. Hail to the Proimos! And hail to future books of his.

Ages 4-8.

## **Cassandra Gelvin says**

Television is bad. Because television is bad.

I hated this book so much I wrote a YouTube review of it.

Who is this book written for? Kids won't get it, and parents who "need" it would hate it. Is it just preaching to the converted?

Todd's parents (horror of horrors) let their kid watch TV. And then it comes alive and threatens to adopt him. They freak out, and Todd passive-aggressively tells them to turn it off. His life is then magically perfect.

It's just insultingly condescending, and boils down to a circular argument. This book will convince nobody. Don't read this to my kids.

My video review goes into more detail. You can see it at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=synD8...> For more children's book reviews, see my website at <http://www.drttmk.com>.

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## **Lisa says**

The kids loved this book! And it was great! The TV comes alive and takes over all the parental duties. We watch TV very sparingly over here (my kids get excited when I occasionally put Jeopardy on in the evening. No, they don't answer the questions, but I'm convinced their math is getting better because they like to add up everyone's "points" and keep track of their winnings. And they do ask questions, like: "Is that mountain really real?" re: Mt Rushmore, and then we had a little impromptu history lesson. But I digress). This book reinforced that TV is best in small doses. And it was cute and funny. Todd is so tiny. He only comes up to his parents' ankles. Mimi got such a kick out of that :) Me too :) Great book!

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## **David says**

When Todd's parents are too busy to take care of him, his television steps in to handle the parenting. (Goodreads Summary)

A very funny, tongue in cheek story about watching too much TV. The hilarious illustrations by James Proimos are simple and effective with very few colors used. Todd's TV certainly could be used for TV Turn Off Week. It has a positive message about spending quality time with kids that is delivered in a humorous way. Some may see it as too didactic, but I view it as just too funny! For ages 5 to 9.

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## **Sarah says**

I don't know if kids will "get" the message of this story, in which a TV smoothly takes over the parental roles in a child's life, but I think they'll find it funny. As for parents, I have a feeling that the target audience isn't likely to read the book.

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### **Bev Ethington says**

Found this book at the library today and I had to stop myself from immediately ordering it online. I so want to have my daughter read this though I know she would be offended because this is exactly what she does. I don't want to read it to her 3 year old because it 'hits too close to home', not that he would completely understand the moral of the story but would understand it just enough to be confused by it.

For anyone who is offended by this book perhaps you know deep down inside it's time to make a change. As for my home we have decided to go without a TV. We still use our computers but not while our grandson is here (and he's here about 50 hours a week). We don't miss it at all, especially the commercials : D

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### **Laura says**

Todd's parents are busy people so when they have things to do, they send Todd to spend some time with the TV. The TV loves Todd, taking him to parent-teacher conferences and later on vacation. When the TV talks of adopting Todd, his parents clue in that they need to put more effort and time into being a family. I personally liked the message and thought that it was done in an effective and humorous way.

I also wish that this book had versions to address different types of technology. I think my own mother might need to iPad version.

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### **Amianne Bailey says**

Read Aloud--3rd & 4th; This is one I wish all parents would read. FANTASTIC message about the importance of turning off the TV and spending time with your child. We talked about limiting television/video/computer games and eating dinner as a family WITHOUT the TV on. I polled each class about how many of them ate dinner at least three times a week as a family WITHOUT the television. Less than a handful of kids raised their hands in each class. So very sad.

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### **Dawn says**

As soon as I pulled this book out, one of my students said, "TV's bad."

I asked him what he meant. He said that, "If you watch too much TV you lose your skills. You can't read as good or learn as good."

Ha!! Good programming!

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We got a chuckle out of how he becomes attached to the TV.

We also had an interesting discussion about what "....threw his parents for a loop" meant.

When we got to this page, I stopped and we discussed why he might be turning the light off and on.

Our predictions were:

Maybe he's trying to waste electricity so the TV will die.

Maybe he's trying to run away in the dark.

Finally, someone said, "Oh wait!! Maybe he's trying to suggest they should turn off the TV!"

It was a silly story, but pretty fun and it makes a good point.

It was funny that it ended with him getting a computer. We had commented in the beginning that some of us don't watch a lot of TV but we waste time other ways, like on the iPad or on YouTube. Ha!

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### **Carolyn says**

I refuse to acknowledge that this book is one of my favorites, but it really is! Yes, it's a picture book meant for children, but it's phenomenal satire. This book explores and sweetly exposes the nature of television and its use as a babysitter for children, as well as the lion's share of time we give over to it. Regardless of what media outlet choice used, Todd's TV helps the reader to examine one's own relationship with media usage. Besides, it's funny.

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### **Douglas says**

Gah. This book. I'd enjoy it but really hits parents on the head with a sledgehammer. Yeah yeah, we get it, don't let the television be the babysitter. Over and over this theme is presented. What makes it worse for me is the sheer cluelessness of the parents. Oh gee, you mean you can turn T.V.s *off*? What sorcery is this?! We're actually very careful of how much screen time our kids get, so the patronizing is even worse.

The only reason I don't give one star is that the illustration and narrative are actually amusing and absurd. A point for that. Other than that, I don't recommend it.

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### **James Moore says**

While browsing through my local library I came across this book, "Todd's TV" and it caught my attention quite easily. It's a charming little story of a boy being raised by his TV, which is rather ironic in the sense that the same thing can be said of my own generation and the generation before mine. I found the story and illustrations cute and appropriate for a young age group. I think the moral of the story is a good one that not only children, but parents can take to heart in that sometimes it's better to just turn the TV off and turn your attention to those around you. I feel this story could easily spark quite a few discussions in the classroom about hobbies and how much time is spent daily watching TV.

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