

Time Warp

-Alex Stein

In the last year we have seen a growing trend of television shows and movies that take place in previous decades or time periods. Take a look at some of the new and returning shows this fall. ABC's *Pam Am*, HBO's *Boardwalk Empire*, AMC's *Mad Men*, and my favorite NBC's *Playboy Club* (if you haven't watched this show yet, I suggest starting now because it is one of the best shows that have aired in a long time.) All of these shows take place between the 1930's and the 1960's. While others may not enjoy this recent trend, I welcome it. Even though I didn't live during this time period I really enjoy taking a step back in time and living in a period full of three piece suits and black and white Tv's. It's a welcome hour that removes us from the chaotic days of Facebook and Xbox. It's funny how even though we have all these technological inventions like 3D television and iPhones we still revert back to the times when we had none of these.

The quality of these shows are not being shortchanged in the slightest. *Mad Men* and *Boardwalk Empire* are winning in ratings and consistently winning Emmy and Golden Globe Awards. Some critics may say that we are producing shows in previous time periods because we are simply running out of ideas. I don't agree. A creative and interesting story showcasing life in the 50's attracts my attention much more than a procedural cop show, a genre that is certainly shooting it's way off the airwaves. How many people can get shot, stabbed, or run over by trucks in one week?

On another note, shows like *Hawaii Five-0* and *Charlie's Angels* are making a comeback by reinventing their characters in today's era. The same is being done in the movie industry in the 2011, in the year that is being hailed as "the year of the remake" almost every week a movie

comes out that is a remake of an old movie. In just one week The Thing is being remade as a prequel to John Carpenters own movie in the 70's. Recently we were treated to a remake of the The Smurfs, Straw Dogs, True Grit, Fright Night, among many others. The film industry is focusing on producing remakes right now instead of original ideas. Personally, I don't see a problem with that as long as it's unique. While this trend may be because with the current economy, remakes are a safety with the mantra " if it worked in the 80's then it should still work today." Remakes are a safety to ensure companies can make a quick buck (see the Lion King, classic example of a Cash cow) This has both worked and backfired. Fright Night, a successful cult horror film in the 80's barely held it's weight when it was released in August. It has worked immensely for Rise of the Planet of the Apes, an original prequel using the name of a classic scifi film in the 60's. This has guaranteed a sequel (possibly planet of the apes, considering the monkeys already rose?) due to it's 130 million dollar intake. Regardless though, wheather the tv show is a smash hit or taken off the air in 2 weeks or the movie is a blockbuster or a flop. Any outlet that takes us back to a previous decade that removes us from our hectic lives is a win in my book.