

IS IDIOCRACY COMING TRUE?

*There's only one way to stop it—keep reading
Uncle John's Bathroom Reader!*

BACKGROUND

Based on a 1951 short story by Cyril M. Kornbluth called “The Marching Morons,” *Idiocracy* is a 2006 dystopian satire written and directed by Mike Judge. Initially, the movie was a box-office flop, but it has since achieved cult status and is seen by many as a cautionary tale about the dumbing down of society.

The plot: In 2005 an “average Joe” (Luke Wilson) is recruited by the U.S. Army to be frozen for one year. But he is forgotten. When he wakes up in the year 2505, America is on the brink of collapse. “With no natural predators to thin the herd,” explains the narrator, “evolution began to simply reward those who reproduced the most and left the intelligent to become an endangered species.” *Idiocracy's* surviving humans have become so stupid, in fact, that Joe is now the smartest man alive. He's ordered by President Dwayne Elizondo Mountain Dew Herbert Camacho (Terry Crewes) to solve the nation's problems in one week or he will be “rehabilitated” in a gladiator-style monster-truck demolition derby.

Can Joe save himself, much less save the country? You'll have to watch the movie to find out. But to see the future that *Idiocracy* predicts, you only need to go shopping, watch TV, surf the Internet....

IN IDIOCRACY: The number-one TV show is *Ow My Balls!* It features a man getting hit in the groin...a lot.

IN REAL LIFE: In March 2012, the number-one app in Apple's iTunes Store was *Ow My Balls!*, a real game based on the fake show.

IN IDIOCRACY: Disoriented after waking up, Joe goes to the hospital. As Joe describes his symptoms, a dimwitted staffer stares at a screen full of big, colorful buttons. Each button has a simple graphic that represents a malady—a broken arm, a frowny face with a knife in its head, a baby dropping from between two legs, etc.

...to death. More than 20% of hypothermia victims do it. No one knows exactly why.

IN REAL LIFE: A popular new line of over-the-counter medicines comes in sparse packaging with labels in large type that read “Help! I have a headache,” “Help! I can’t sleep,” “Help! I have an aching body,” “Help! I’m nauseous,” “Help! I have allergies,” and “Help! I’m horny,” and so on. Viewed side by side, the packages look eerily similar to *Idiocracy*’s medical screen.

IN IDIOCRACY: When Joe asks for some water, he gets laughed at. Water has been replaced by a sports drink called Brawndo.

IN REAL LIFE: In 2012 Gatorade released a video game called *Bolt!* To maintain his speed, sprinter Usain Bolt must keep drinking Gatorade. And he must avoid droplets of water because, according to Gatorade, “Water is the enemy of performance!” The app had two million downloads and has won numerous advertising awards.

IN IDIOCRACY: Joe gets laughed at for using “big words.” He says, “Smart people used to be cool,” and gets laughed at some more.

IN REAL LIFE: During a 2012 campaign rally, Senator Rick Santorum drew cheers when he said, “President Obama said he wants everybody in America to go to college. What a snob!”

IN IDIOCRACY: The world is overrun by garbage. Trash has piled up so high that it causes “the Great Garbage Avalanche of 2505.”

IN REAL LIFE: In 2008 Reuters reported: “At least four people died and 20 were missing in a Guatemalan garbage dump when a mountain of trash collapsed on people foraging there.”

IN IDIOCRACY: The taboo against profanity has all but vanished. Fast-food restaurant Carl’s Jr.’s slogan is “F*ck you, I’m eating!”

IN REAL LIFE: In 2011 Frank’s Red Hot Sauce ran a successful ad campaign with the slogan, “I put that sh*t on everything!”

IN IDIOCRACY: The number-one movie in America (and the winner of the 2505 Oscar for Best Screenplay) is called *Ass*. It is literally 90 minutes of a close-up of a butt.

IN REAL LIFE: In 2013 a Chilean band called Astro released a popular music video that consists of 2 minutes, 47 seconds of people’s naked rear ends. That’s it.