

# Showtime has success with 'Dexter'

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By day Dexter Morgan works as a forensic blood spatter expert in the Homicide division of the Miami Police Department, but by night he practices his hobby of serial killing.

Morgan, the main character of Showtime's series "Dexter", which is currently in its third season, is played eerily well by Michael C. Hall. Hall has mastered the ability to act happy and normal while his character truly feels hollow and void of emotion.

To marvel at Hall's talent, look no further than "Dexter's" opening credits. Many new series simply flash their name across the screen for a few seconds like in "Lost", but "Dexter" uses two minutes of credits to establish Dexter's character without saying a word.

The opening credits begin as Morgan wakes up and crushes a spider on his arm. Next, Morgan shaves, cuts himself and lets blood drip into the sink. Then,

he makes and eats a breakfast of raw steak and fried eggs. He grinds coffee beans, cuts pomegranates and squeezes fresh juice from them, flosses,

now, Morgan has kept secret his evening ventures from his sister, girlfriend and co-workers. Jennifer Carpenter plays Deborah Morgan, Dexter's

Bennett initially has no interest in sex, which works for Dexter, since every girl he sleeps with can see him for who he is: a man who doesn't feel. Bennett has

live by.

Dexter Morgan satisfies his need to kill by targeting other killers who have not been served their justice by the police and court systems.

While watching the show, viewers are conflicted between liking Dexter Morgan and being scared by him. The way he interacts with others makes him likable. However, the way he enjoys killing people by severing their aorta, the largest artery in the human body, chopping their bodies into small pieces and disposing of them by shoving their remains into black garbage bags and dumping them into the ocean certainly makes Dexter Morgan less appealing to viewers.

Although playing an unconventional role, Michael C. Hall plays Dexter Morgan extremely well. The actors of "Dexter" work well together and make the show realistic despite its outrageous plot. In fact, watching "Dexter" may make viewers suspicious of their loved ones, hoping they are not hiding a serial killing secret as large as Dexter's.



Photo courtesy of Zdistrict.com

ties his shoes, puts on his shirt, locks his door, and walks away.

This simple sequence conveys the underlying theme of "Dexter", which is simply that despite however normal someone seems, it's impossible to know what lies underneath.

For two and a half seasons

adoptive sister. Carpenter acts well as a foul-mouthed, tough and yet vulnerable cop who is working her way to her detective shield.

Rita Bennett (Julie Benz), Dexter Morgan's girlfriend, has been broken by her violent and drug-addicted ex-husband.

victim.

Morgan's foster father, Harry Morgan, played by James Remar, was a homicide detective before his death, and he noticed the traits that define a sociopath in Dexter when he was young. Harry Morgan developed the code that Dexter Morgan was to

## Kevin and Judd make a hit

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There are a lot of great things in this world that are made that much better when they are combined: chocolate and peanut butter, beer and sports, and Kevin Smith and Judd Apatow. "Zach and Miri Make a Porno" is a great example of

two comedy styles combined to great effect.

Zach (Seth Rogen) and Miri (Elizabeth Banks) are two down on their luck, longtime friends/roommates living in the frozen wasteland that is Pittsburg. In addition to the obvious sexual tension between them, they are living in a house with no water or electricity (paying the bills would have helped) and

homelessness is on the horizon. After a chance meeting with a gay porn star (Justin Long) Zach gets the bright idea to make a porno to pay off their mountain of debt. What ensues is a raunchy journey to create the next amateur porn sensation and all of the pitfalls that will trip them up along the way.

First and foremost, do not walk into this movie expecting

it to be purely Kevin Smith. Seth Rogen brought a lot of the Apatow talent pool with him as well as the comedy style. "Zach and Miri" feels like a Judd Apatow movie with a Kevin Smith sensibility. The humor never seems as outlandish as Smith's previous movies (the donkey show from Clerks 2 comes to mind) but it is still a few notches crazier than typical Apatow fare. Aside from excessive profanity and some nudity, this movie never feels like it is going over the top the way you would expect it to. This does not stop it from having one of the best fecal jokes in cinema history though; a testament to Kevin Smith's ability to set up and execute his comedy (even if you see it coming you will still be slack jawed). This movie will definitely have you laughing throughout, but it might be disappointing to fans who will be expecting comedy that is a little more envelope pushing.

Where this film benefits the

most from Smith's presence is the area where Apatow's films suffer the worst. Almost every Apatow film feels like it is about ten to twenty minutes too long; the story runs out of steam but continues to chug along anyway. "Zach and Miri" suffers from this ever-so-slightly to the point where you might not even notice it. Smith also gives the story a big heart; a film that could have been a stupid "make a porno or die" movie turns into a surprisingly sincere story. The audience really feels for the characters in their struggle to have sex for money to pay rent and there is a real sense of strong friendship between all the characters.

"Zach and Miri" will only disappoint those fans expecting a movie that should have been banned (though it was boycotted in some Utah theaters). While it never gets as raunchy as the title implies, you would be hard pressed to find a funnier movie in theaters right now.

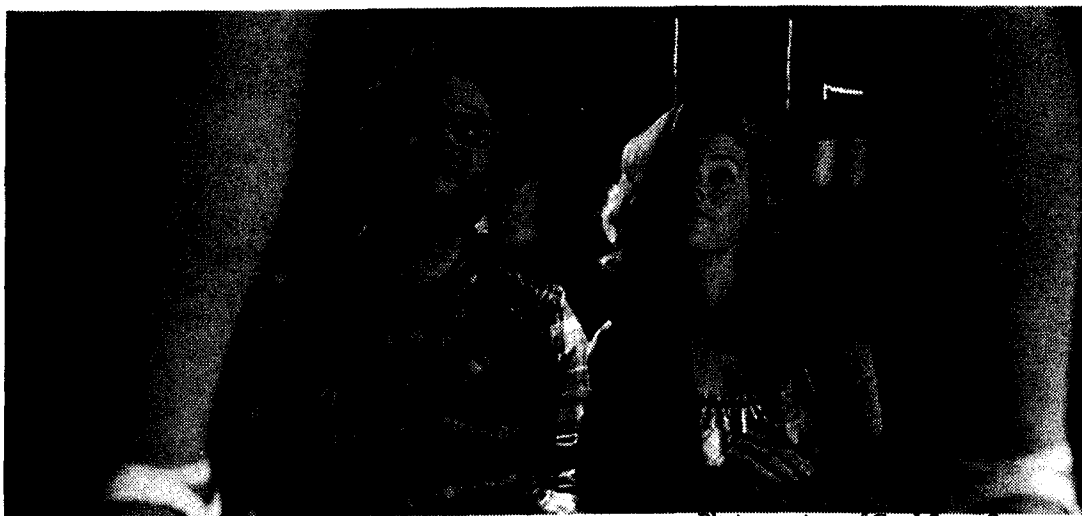


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