

## Ask A Genius 1 – Genius in Pop Culture

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**You've noted a lot of geniuses in popular media, movies, and television. Recently, what's the deal?**

There have always been the kids that wore tennis shoes. Garry Coleman had the 200 IQ. There was *Encyclopedia Brown*. Now, there's a flood of geniuses. I would guess that's because the world is a fast-moving and fast-changing place. Geniuses somehow offer the possibility of making sense of the world, which makes sense in terms of who is selling us the genius.

On TV, it's CBS, which, over the last 2 or 3 TV seasons, has had about 15 shows dealing with genius. You've got *Limitless*, where a guy takes a pill and becomes a genius. You've got *Elementary*. You've got *Scorpion*, which is a crew of geniuses. CBS used to be, and to a large extent still is, the murder network.

There are many shows about people getting killed. Every murder show has one genius detective or forensic expert. *The Mentalist* was a genius in his own genius way. CBS is also known for being the network that skews the oldest among viewers. If my theory's right that people are nervous about how confusing the world is, old people would be even more confused.

They might welcome geniuses more. You have a TV genius explaining what's going on. And it can be clearly explained by them, which can make older people feel smarter about the world.

Also, geniuses have a hipster aspect to them.

Geniuses were nerds. Geniuses had no cachet. They were bullied. For the past 30 years, you've had growing numbers of software billionaire geniuses like Bill Gates, Zuckerberg, and others. Now, geniuses are cool. Maybe, CBS is thinking that they can hold the old people and grab the new people with the hipster geniuses.

Some other places include Ron Howard. He is making an Einstein biopic. If you look at the last two Oscar seasons, something like 6 out of 20 best actor or actress nominees portray geniuses. Cumberbatch being in Turing. Redmayne being Hawking. Keira Knightley being a girl genius who wanted to get with Hawking.

They're all over the place.