

Down the Tube/ The Best and Worst Of....

Why do good TV shows go bad?

8 x 40min for BB



Some people would have you believe that every single episode of *Only Fools and Horses* is a classic. They're wrong. Over the last few years something wasn't quite right about the show. Sure, umpteen million viewers tuned in for the Christmas specials but we all knew in our heart of hearts it was a pale retread of what it once was. But why was that? Bad storylines? Tired characters? Cast changes?

In America they call it "jumping the shark" after the moment during a 1977 episode of *Happy Days* where The Fonz water-skis over the top of a shark— a moment which came to signify when a once great show became a shadow of its former self - **the defining moment when a show lost its credibility.**



Down The Tube is a show which dissects these tipping points in the shows we love: the moment where a show goes from becoming 'must-see-TV' to 'what's-on-the-other-channel?' The tone is light-hearted: acknowledging the beloved status of many of the shows covered but able to poke fun at the same time.

THE FORMAT

Presented via voiceover, expert talking heads, and archive clips *Down the Tube* is inspired by the likes of *Comedy Connections*, *Top 100s* and the *I Love* series, but with a more humorously critical eye – **sure to spark debate** both online during the voting process and after broadcast.

Prior to broadcast there will be an **online poll** to determine the results presented in each show. A panel of experts will draw up a list of possible moments when a programme might have started to go down the tube, and the public will vote on this shortlist, as well the option of 'Never Went Down the Tube'.

Each episode of 'Down the Tube' will look at a collection of 5 to 7 classic shows within a genre and analyse when, if at all, it went down the tube and why. **Before that though equal footing is given to why each show became a classic in the first place** – the bright initial spark of an idea, the talented producers and performers who went to make it a great show, the classic clips that kept a nation enthralled.



As well as clips of the show in its prime and decline, there will be analysis from those involved in making the show and the opinions on experts and commentators – giving their opinions on when and if a show went down the tube: such as the **decision to bring back Bobby Ewing from the dead in Dallas** by suggesting the whole previous series was a dream.

This leads up to announcing our poll results for each show. If more than 50% of the votes cast say it never went down the tube then it will remain a classic (*Fawlty Towers* is a good bet here) whilst listing the moments that might have almost pushed it over, but never did.

However, if the combined list of 'down the tube' moments top 50% then it will be sent down the tube and the top 3 reasons revealed along with accompanying clips and comments.

DOWN THE TUBE

Many factors can contribute towards when a show stopped being good – **changes of cast member**, uncalled-for 'special appearances', bad special effects, a particularly poor storyline or a decision by the makers to change the dynamic in a show i.e. getting Ross and Rachel together in *Friends*.



Did *Eastenders* go 'Down the Tube' the moment they decided to bring Dirty Den back from the dead, or is it still much-loved telly? Did *Dr Who* go down the tube when Sylvester McCoy took over the Tardis, or has its recent reinvention been enough to get its



Each episode of Down the Tube looks at a different grouping of shows. Possible areas for different episodes are sitcoms, dramas, sci-fi, soaps, dramas, sketch shows, American shows, and entertainment shows

Sure to be a much discussed series *Down the Tube* is above all a sideways look at what makes telly great and what can occasionally ruin it.