

Review of several shows from the Coast Telecourses catalog

From Understanding Human Behavior

Operant Conditioning

varied examples, from various sources so production values covered quite a range
covers a lot of territory
glosses over a lot of science, but does try to give pluses and minuses of various theories (particularly Skinner)
segments don't seem that well organized, ie. they don't lead from A to B

Memory

better organized than above,
longer sequences (although still not meaty enough to really draw out conclusions from subject matter)
more cohesive, not so jumbled, orderly progression

From Introducing Biology

Brain

often poor match between graphics and voice over, or poor graphics which are a backdrop for voice over
I miss a broad overview, I miss the question of evolutionary development
somewhat oversimplified
problem - how to focus in on key elements without oversimplifying

Heart

nice beginning - gives clear context for whole show
do I like this because it is linear, ie it has such a clear line of development?

From Project Universe

Jupiter

high production values - thanks NASA and JPL
much higher level of science
good relationship of visuals and audio
uneven abilities of interviewees, they each use different terminology etc. better to have one or two so there could be more consistency
could have used some animation to illustrate various principals eg. causes of motion of Jupiter's clouds

Black Holes

still frame graphics really don't do the job a lot of the time, animation would have helped explain many of the concepts a lot better

From Oceanus

Plate Tectonics

just three or four interviewees- they work well together, relatively good animation
clear point which is developed throughout, perhaps that is because the topic is so clearly delineated (perhaps "The Brain" or "Operant Conditioning" are
? too big to do in a half hour, or so complex that
they have to be done much better to be effective)
too much talking heads

* (with a disc you could have an active glossary for defining concepts - very valuable)

Mammals: Whales

a lot of the visuals are really just background for the audio - animals swimming around
* (this is really a talking head once removed)

From Humanities Through the Arts

Film - 20th Century Legacy

wonderful collection of clips which illustrate the points being made in the audio
not much talking head, what there is was well done and to the point

Music - Tales of the Unexpected

seemingly all dry interviews with no music

Elements of Painting

turgid music - fair music
shows problems of poor quality and/or tape
nice exploration of painter's effects

From Beginning Piano: An Adult Approach

Course consists of Text + TV Programs + Student Study Guide to integrate the first two
intended for "follow along", ie you copy on your piano at home or wherever what is happening on screen

From Freehand Sketching

Six Levels of Drawing

couldn't really follow along, too fast, shows real value of disc for a subject like this