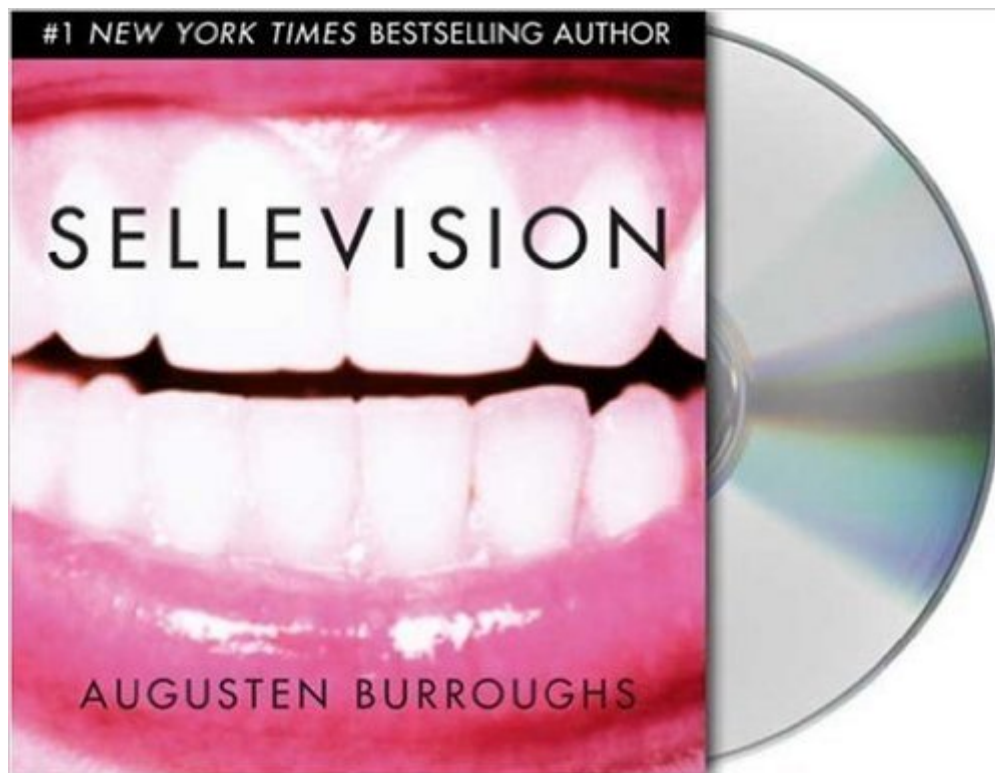


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# Sellelevision: A Novel



## Synopsis

Darkly funny and gleefully mean-spirited, *Sellelevision* explores greed, obsession and third tier celebrity, in the world of a fictional home shopping network. Welcome to the troubled world of *Sellelevision*, America's premier retail broadcasting network. When Max Andrews, the much-loved and handsome (lonely and gay) host of "Slumber Sunday Sundown" accidentally exposes himself in front of twenty million kids and their parents during a "Toys for Tots" segment, *Sellelevision* faces its first big scandal. As Max fails to find a job in television, another host, the popular and perky Peggy Jean Smythe is receiving sinister emails about her appearance from a stalker. Popping pills and drinking heavily, she fails to notice that her husband is spending a lot of time with the very young babysitter who lives next door. Then there's Leigh, whose affair with *Sellelevision* boss Howard Toast is going nowhere, until she exposes him on air; and Bebe, *Sellelevision*'s star host, who finds Mr. Right through the Internet--if she can just stop her shopping addiction from taking over.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I'm a big Augusten Burroughs fan, so it's no surprise that I really enjoyed this book. "Sellelevision" is the first book that Burroughs ever wrote, and it's his only novel. The story revolves around the backstage antics at *Sellelevision*, America's top retail shopping network. "Sellelevision" is a satire, and it reminded me a lot of the Sally Field movie "Soapdish," in a good way. There are many colorful characters working at the station, and each one is involved in their own over-the-top crisis. The book opens with *Sellelevision*'s young homosexual host, Max, getting fired from the network because he

accidentally displayed his penis on live television. Then there's Peggy Jane, one of the top female hosts at the station who's more than a little neurotic in her personal life. When Peggy Jane is harassed by a nasty e-mail stalker, she begins abusing drugs and alcohol until she plummets over the edge. Bebe, another top host at the network, always manages to sell out of her products on the air, but has a bit of a spending problem on the side. She's also been single for her entire life and finally meets the man of her dreams, but is he too good to be true? Several other Sellelevision hosts pepper this colorful novel, which is full of Burroughs' sarcasm and quick wit. This book is hilarious and completely exaggerated on so many levels, which is what makes it so much fun. I didn't feel a personal connection with this book the way I did with all of Burroughs' memoirs, but considering the frightening characters depicted in the story, that's probably a very good thing.

No book has made me laugh so much since Terry Southern's *Candy*. *Sellelevision*, like *Candy*, is a clever and disarming satire that borders toward a parody. This novel has the sort of lowbrow humor that will make you roar with laughter and loathe the characters and situations at the same time. *Sellelevision* is a more upscale version of QVC. The hosts are third-tier celebrities who would backstab their way to the top. During the course of the year, the channel and its hosts undergo various changes. Max, the sweet and handsome gay host of "Toys for Tots," a children's segment, loses his job when he accidentally exposes himself during the aforementioned program. He hadn't anticipated the struggle to regain his career and reputation that he ends up enduring. On the other hand, Peggy Jean Smythe, one of the channel's most popular hosts, has the perfect life. That is until she receives sinister E-mails from an obsessed fan. The other hosts have skeletons in their dressing rooms as well. Will Leigh be able to end the courtship with her married boss? Will Bebe's shopaholism stand in the way of true love? Will Trish Mission finally become *Sellelevision*'s diva? Will Peggy Jean's husband be able to resist his desire for the beautiful - not to mention jailbait - babysitter? There are some hilarious twists throughout the novel. As mentioned earlier, some of the goofball situations that occur in *Sellelevision* are more of a parody about the ubiquitous home shopping networks that have become so popular over the years. This is one of the cleverest satirical novels out there. If you're in the bargain for a laugh-a-minute farce, I suggest that you give this dark comedy a whirl.

If there ever was a gleefully mean-spirited book, this is it. It explores commercial avarice and obsession with sham celebrity in the world of a fictional home shopping network. Welcome to the troubled world of "Sellelevision", America's premier retail broadcasting network. When Max Andrews,

the much-loved and handsome (lonely and gay) host of Slumber Sunday Sundown accidentally exposes himself in front of sixty million kids and their parents during a "Toys for Tots" segment, Sellelevision faces its first big scandal. As Max fails to find a job in television, another host, the popular and perky Peggy Jean Smythe, is receiving sinister emails about her appearance from a stalker. Popping pills and drinking heavily, she fails to notice that her husband is spending a lot of time with the very young babysitter who lives next door. Then there's Leigh, whose affair with Sellelevision boss Howard Toast is going nowhere, until she exposes him on air; and Bebe, Sellelevision's star host, who finds Mr. Right through the Internet ? if she can just stop her shopping addiction from taking over. It is not merely the dysfunctional family of anchors that is subject to the author's satire, but perhaps the whole priming 15-minute culture of television as we know it in our world. Truly hilarious, and a fast paced read. If this book's laconic humor works for you, try "Running with Scissors" as well, which is clearly an ever more mature and twice as hilarious Burroughs in top form.

This marvelously wicked and well written novel was a definite treat to read. Augusten Burroughs will hook you with the very first sentence! What follows is a riotous behind-the-scenes romp through the world of the Sellelevision Retail Broadcasting Network. Witness egos clashing on a regular basis! Laugh as the on air talent creatively try to back-stab one another! This entertaining cast of characters are constantly jockeying for a better and more lucrative spot in the limelight, all the while trying to sell you and your family a Princess Diana key fob. It's a devilish mix of "Soapdish" and "American Beauty"! This novel is a delight! Each and every character is well crafted. I still can't find one I like over another. Readers get a look at each of their personal lives, as well as their on-air ones. All of which are screwed up to various degrees! Hilariously so! Of all the cast, Bebe Friedman is the proverbial rat in charge of the cheese. Not only is she one of Sellelevision's most popular hosts; but, she also has an obsessive compulsive thing for shopping. Her \$19,287.64 American Express bill is a testament to that fact. Plus, as she surmises, she knows that there will be someone somewhere in her life that will love a roulette wheel for a Christmas gift. "Sellelevision" is fast, sharp and funny. For his first novel, Augusten Burroughs does a fantastic job of entertaining the reader! I look forward to his next work!

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