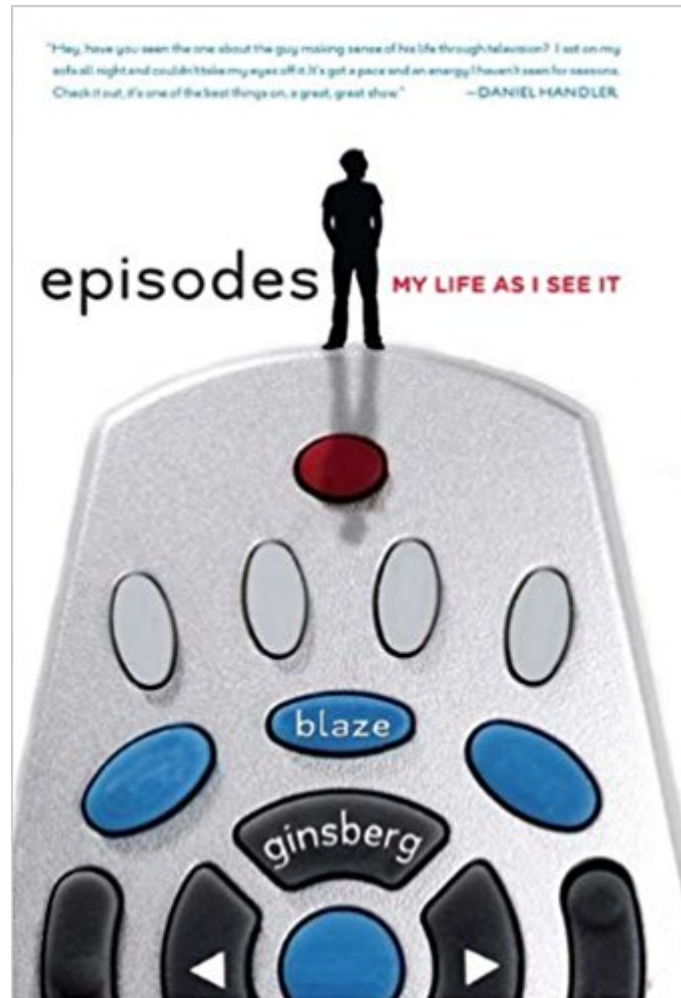




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# Episodes: My Life As I See It



## Synopsis

EPISODES is a memoir like no other. Debut writer, Blaze Ginsberg, offers a unique perspective on his life as a highly-functioning autistic 21 year old. Inspired by the format of the Internet Movie Database, Blaze organizes his life events as a collection of episodes. Some episodes are still running, some are in syndication, and some have sadly come to an end. With an innovative style and approach that is all its own, EPISODES reinvents the traditional memoir; and it will inspire young readers to see the world as they've never seen it before.

## Book Information

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Age Range: 12 - 17 years

Grade Level: 7 and up

## Customer Reviews

Grade 9 Up  
In her introduction to this book, Debra Ginsberg, Blaze's mother, explains how her son once verbalized what he thought was the solution to his autism; this solution involved a verbal picture of a missing wire that could not be replaced. In writing this book, Blaze has organized the activities around him into an understandable format so he is now able to make sense of and function within the world. He has found the replacement for his missing wire by portraying the important events within his high school years as episodes of a television show. They are not always from the same show and do not necessarily contain the same cast of characters; however, there are a number of shows that have several episodes and characters that have continuous roles. While the premise of this book is intriguing, and the idea that the author could have an outlet for

self-expression is appealing, the writing itself is often redundant and tedious in the same way that episodes of anyone's everyday life would become tedious if they were written out in a similar format. While Ginsberg is to be commended for "telling it like it is," it's probably more than most readers want or need to know.

Wendy Smith-D'Arezzo, Loyola College, Baltimore, MD Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

"This memoir is like nothing else you've ever read. . . Blaze gives readers and writers of all ages an innovative approach to memoir . . . and, for those who live or work with students with diverse learning strategies, he gives us a privileged passport to a dynamic and complex inner life.

Shelf Awareness "Hey, have you seen the one about the guy making sense of his life through television? I sat on my sofa all night and couldn't take my eyes off it. It's got a pace and an energy I haven't seen for seasons. Check it out, it's one of the best things on, a great, great show.

Daniel Handler "This book provides memorable insight into the author's distinctive mind and spirit.

Booklist "The format for Blaze's tale is unique and suits the story.

VOYA "A singular reading experience that gives insight into an equally singular way of processing and reflecting on life.

Publishers Weekly "Blaze is brave. Blaze is bold. Blaze blazes his own literary path with humor and pathos. Blaze has a capacity to translate the often untranslatable differences of human beings . . . A triumph!

Jamie Lee Curtis "Each passage functions as a minimalist gateway into his passions, dreams, fears and desires.

Kirkus Reviews "Most importantly, Ginsberg give readers a unique glimpse into an adolescent mind that is simply wired differently.

School Library Journal "Major props to Blaze Ginsberg for his tour de force memoir, EPISODES. The creative format, combined with the author's total honesty, allows easy access to his differently wired brain. Thank you, Blaze, for letting us in.

Ellen Hopkins, bestselling author of Crank and Tweak "I'm always happy to see examples of courage, intelligence, wit, and talent, but to find all these qualities in a single book is amazing. Blaze Ginsberg is my new hero. I don't know any other writer more brave or honest, and how can you say anything better about a guy and his work than that?"

Terry Trueman, author of the Printz Honor book, Stuck in Neutral "The categories 'autobiography' and 'memoir' don't fully express what this book is all about. EPISODES has all of the deep and human mystery of a novel. Here is a map to a

strange and wonderful world. — Ron Koertge, author of Stoner and Spaz

— “It’s a privilege and a delight to be able to see the world through the eyes of Blaze Ginsberg. EPISODES is fascinating, funny, poignant, frustrating, enlightening, unique. — A. M. Jenkins, Printz Honor recipient for Repossessed

— “Blaze Ginsberg’s memoir, EPISODES, is a deep, brilliant, unapologetic, and unbelievably fascinating tour through the mind of a young so-called “special needs” student, told with heartbreaking honesty and the kind of humor for which no adjectives currently exist. However the teenage author has been labeled by his local school system, what makes him special on the page are the gripping and absolutely original details of his own condition, and by extension, the human condition. — I cannot think of a recent book I loved more than this one. EPISODES is like nothing you will ever read. It is truly an inspiring, beautiful, life-changing, and life-affirming work of art. — Jerry Stahl, author of Permanent Midnight

— “Refreshing.” — Jenny, age 16

I first saw Blaze Ginsberg read from 'Episodes' in 2011, and am re-reading the book today. This is a must-read for anyone who wants to know what it's like to be autistic. He is unabashed about it. Consequently, we receive an unabashed collection of stories as life passes through his world ... in episodes. Funny, poignant, charming, sometimes difficult ... a fantastic piece of work by a truly extraordinary young man.

Yes, Episodes is organized differently in just about every way, but it is more than just about how the author's mind works. You grow to know and understand Blaze as he navigates through life. I really enjoyed this book--especially the goofs and quotes! Thank you Blaze, for letting us get to know you and helping us see the world as you see it.

EPISODES is a unique memoir. It chronicles the life of Blaze Ginsberg from his freshman year in high school through his first two years in college, and it does so as a sequence of television episodes starring the author, his family, and the people most influential in his life. We see the world through the eyes of a teenager on the autism spectrum: how he relates to school, friends, romantic crushes, and the harsh realities of a first job. All to the tune of episode "soundtracks," the ubiquitous background music that scores every teenager's life. Blaze's mother Debra Ginsberg, herself an accomplished author, wrote in her sensitive introduction to the book: "Like all of us, Blaze has favorite episodes in his life and some that he wishes he could forget. To an extent, I believe this is

something we all do. We're all the stars of our own shows."EPISODES will undoubtedly be classified as part of the literature on autism. Blaze's fascination with dates, bus numbers, chronological sequences, and even the whereabouts of the garbage truck all speak to the quiet genius that is apparently characteristic of "high functioning" children who adapt poorly in traditional classrooms. But I think the book goes beyond that. It illustrates the day-to-day challenges every teenager faces, with emphasis on the nuances that govern personal relationships. Blaze is refreshingly honest when describing losing his temper, misbehaving in class, and being in tears because he doesn't have a girlfriend. He evaluates his own conduct matter-of-factly and provides unique insight into the mind of a developing adolescent. Parents and other students of psychology would do well to read this book closely. My favorite quote (during a pretend wedding): "I now pronounce you husband and wife. You may hug." Does EPISODES represent a new genre? Maybe. I'd like to see other young people follow suit with their own interpretations.

Blaze Ginsberg is a unique individual. In his book, he discusses his life as a high-functioning autistic teenager. Blaze's novel is also unique in the way that it is formatted. He views his life as a group of episodes, much like a television series. Different things are important to Blaze - who he talked to during the day, trying to find a girlfriend, going to his college classes. Some of the episodes are in syndication, some have ended, and others are on-going. The Thanksgiving episode appears once a year. The characters (Blaze's family) remain the same, but the story is always a little different. Guest stars will occasionally make an appearance, and Blaze is quick to give them credit. To some, it might seem that the episodes are disjointed, but to Blaze, it all makes sense. I will be honest, it was difficult for me to start this book. I was one of those readers who felt Blaze's plot was disjointed, but now I understand the workings of his mind. A typical book has chapters, a continuous plot, a definitive ending. Blaze's novel has all of these things, but they are developed and executed differently. Once I realized this, I was able to enjoy the novel that much more. I'm glad I read Blaze's book, and I congratulate him for having the courage to write it in the first place. Reviewed by: LadyJay

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