

Activity 20 - Value of Life

1. What details in the first two paragraphs convey a sense of the ordinary, behind-the-scenes routines of film critics? What words or phrases suggest the longevity of Ebert's career as a movie reviewer?
2. How does Chris Jones distinguish Ebert from his fellow reviewers? Why is this contrast important?
3. How does Jones' description of Ebert's reaction to *Broken Embraces* help us understand Ebert's character? What words or phrases reveal Ebert's attitude toward the experience of watching this film?
4. What are the connotations of "kid joy"?
5. Jones writes that, at the end of the film, "it looks as though [Ebert's] sitting on top of a cloud of paper." Jones then describes how Ebert "kicks his notes into a small pile with his feet." Why are these images important? What side of Ebert's personality do they reveal?
6. Why does Jones use the word "savoring" to describe Ebert's quiet pause after the film ends?
7. What does Jones mean when he says that the moment Ebert said his last words before losing the ability to talk to cancer "wasn't cinematic"? Why is this significant?
8. What details are important in Jones' description of Ebert's second-floor library? What do the objects in this room suggest about Ebert's current life?
9. What does Jones say reading Ebert's post-cancer online journal is like "watching an Aztec pyramid being built"?
10. What words and phrases suggest the post-cancer, post-voice surge of productivity Ebert experiences in his writing?

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