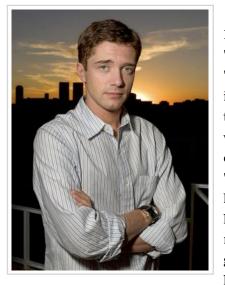
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SURFING THE WAVES OF POPULAR CULTURE BY MICHAEL GILTZ & FRIENDS

TUESDAY, JANUARY 17, 2006 Bye-Bye "Malcolm" and the "70s"



In sad news to no one, both "Malcolm in the Middle" and "That 70s Show" end their runs in mid-May. (Cancelled seems too strong a word for shows that will hit 150 episodes and 200 episodes respectively.) "Malcolm" began brilliantly and has an excellent cast. But it listened to the wrong-headed reviews and morphed from a genuine, realistic comedy into a live-action "Simpsons." "That

70s Show" was disposable fluff but will be remembered by the tabloids for launching Ashton Kutcher and by the rest of us for launching Topher Grace, a very good actor. When someone can maintain their dignity on something like "That 70s Show," you know they've got something and Topher has proved it in films like "Traffic," "PS" and "In Good Company." The Jack Lemmon of his generation? He'd like to be and he's that versatile.

POSTED BY MICHAEL IN NEW YORK AT 12:45 PM

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