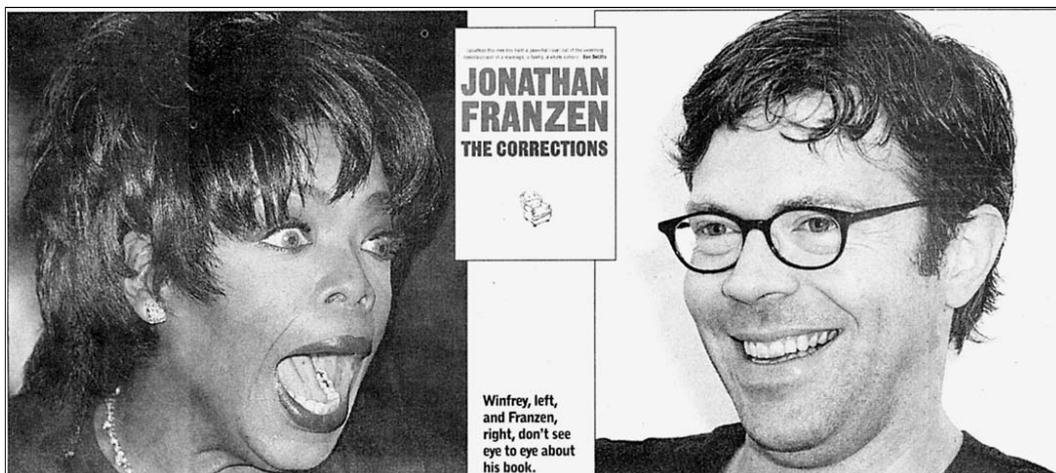


## Tekst 6



## Oprah's logo is a no go for novelist

by Lawrence Donegan  
San Francisco

1 NOT SINCE Tom Wolfe  
called fellow author John  
Updike a pile of old bones  
has the American literary  
5 scene witnessed such a cat-  
fight. In one corner sits  
Jonathan Franzen, author of  
the most critically acclaimed  
novel of the year; in the  
10 other is the country's most  
powerful talk show host  
Oprah Winfrey; and dividing  
them is the age-old argu-  
ment that high art and pop-  
15 ular culture are mutually ex-  
clusive.

2 It all began when Oprah  
chose Franzen's *The Correc-  
tions*, a wonderful, sweeping  
20 account of a dysfunctional  
American family, as her book  
club's selection for October.  
A perk of being chosen is  
that the publisher is entitled  
25 to put her orange 'Oprah's  
Book Club' logo on the front  
cover – a recommendation  
that guarantees a guest spot

on her syndicated television  
30 show, widespread exposure  
and sales in excess of  
500,000 copies.

3 For most authors, such  
recognition is the literary  
35 equivalent of winning the  
lottery but for Franzen his  
selection brought only  
anguish and indecision. 'The  
first weekend after I heard, I  
40 considered turning it down,'  
he told one interviewer. In  
another interview, he sug-  
gested his book would be a  
success regardless of  
45 Oprah's opinion of it. He  
spoke of the 'sense of split'  
he felt at becoming one of  
'her' authors. 'She's picked  
5 some good books,' said  
50 Franzen, 'but she's picked  
enough sentimental, one-di-  
mensional ones as well. I  
feel like I'm solidly in the  
high-art literary tradition. I  
55 like reading entertaining  
books and this maybe helps  
bridge the gap, but it also  
heightens these feelings of  
being misunderstood.'

4 Winfrey responded by  
withdrawing her support for  
*The Corrections* – cancelling  
Franzen's appearance on her  
show, a literary dinner and  
65 any discussion of his book.  
A statement issued by her  
publicist said: 'Jonathan  
Franzen will not be on the  
show because he is seeming-  
70 ly uncomfortable and con-  
flicted about being chosen as  
a book club selection. It is  
never my intention to make  
anyone feel uncomfortable  
75 or cause anyone conflict. We  
have decided to skip the  
dinner and we're moving on  
to the next book.'

Any embarrassment will  
80 be somewhat eased by the  
success of *The Corrections*.  
Propelled by stunning re-  
views, it reached number  
five on the *New York Times*  
85 bestsellers list. Over  
600,000 copies – most  
bearing Oprah's stamp of  
approval – have been print-  
ed.

'The Observer'

# Eindexamen Engels havo 2004-I

## ■ Tekst 6 Oprah's logo is a no go for novelist

- 1p **16** ■ How does the writer introduce the conflict between Oprah Winfrey and Jonathan Franzen in the first paragraph?
- A By describing its historical background in detail.
  - B By giving a rough outline of its nature and subject matter.
  - C By highlighting the relation between artists and their public.
- “for Franzen his selection brought only anguish and indecision” (lines 36-38)
- 1p **17** ■ Why did Jonathan Franzen have doubts about his selection?
- A He believed that his book would sell better without Oprah Winfrey's interference.
  - B He did not agree with any nominations made by Oprah Winfrey's book club before.
  - C He feared that the quality of his book would be underrated as a result.
  - D He hated the idea of his book being treated as a commercial product.
- 1p **18** ■ Which of the following could Jonathan Franzen have said before “I like reading entertaining books” (lines 54-56) to stress his point?
- A Don't get me wrong!
  - B Don't think me old-fashioned!
  - C Don't underestimate me!
- 1p **19** ■ Which of the following would fit before “most bearing Oprah's stamp of approval” (lines 86-88)?
- A discouragingly,
  - B fortunately,
  - C hopefully,
  - D ironically,
- 1p **20** □ Geeft de schrijver van dit artikel aan wat hij zelf vindt van *The Corrections*, het boek van Jonathan Franzen? Zo ja, citeer de woorden waarmee hij dit doet. Zo nee, schrijf op “Nee”.
- 1p **21** ■ How can this article be characterised best?
- A As a critical discussion of the influence of TV on literature.
  - B As a personal reaction to a much-discussed news item.
  - C As an attempt to discredit Jonathan Franzen.
  - D As an indirect way of promoting Oprah Winfrey's book club.
  - E As an objective report on a literary news topic.