

Reality shows are not educational media essay

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Edmond Sinani Professor Jessica Groper. English 104 Reality shows are not educational Reality television shows cannot be educational programs. I have been working in " IRIB" which was Iran's main broadcasting center for 5 years. We would make many entertaining TV programs like reality shows. The main goal of producers was increasing the revenue of IRIB. As a result, we had to attract the attention of major companies to advertise their products in our programs, and including their products in our scenarios was an important factor for us. In 2009, when I came to US and watched reality shows, I found out that the rule was the same, and big companies like Nike and Addidas had deep influence in reality shows because the producers had put banners of their colorful products in reality shows. In other words, I realized that the producers of reality shows try to include more products of big companies in their programs to make more money. If we take a look at history, we may see that public media has had a profound impact on people's life. Public media has various formats, and television is the strongest public media because it is a pervasive and easy access media which people around the world can watch easily. As a result, the programs of television have important role in TV Chanel's schedules. In other words, each TV program has its own audiences, and grabbing their attention is very important because it brings more money for TV Chanel. For example, entertaining programs in general and Reality television shows are in specific are very popular, thus, big companies to advertise their products in these programs. Even though Reality television shows have various attractive subjects, they cannot be educational programs because they try to attract major companies to make more money, and the scenarios which they write for these shows introduce a fake (unreal) characteristic of actors to the <https://assignbuster.com/reality-shows-are-not-educational-media-essay/>

audience. Increasing the revenue of TV channel is the first goal of producers of reality shows. As a result, having more audience means making more money for them. Moreover, they have to pay too much money to TV channel owners to broadcast their programs. For example, in the schedule of a TV channel, each TV program has its own broadcasting time, and each hour has its own price. From 8pm to 11pm, which is the broadcast peak time, is the most expensive time because it has the most audience. As a result, producer who want their programs be broadcasted at these hours, have to pay more money. Also, in order to become eligible for being broadcasted at peak times, programs like reality shows have to attract more audience. As a result, producers of reality shows try to choose a subject which is a daily concern of ordinary people and can bring more audience and more money for them to pay off the broadcasting expenses, stay alive in peak time broadcasting time table and increase revenue of the TV Chanel. I will never forget, when I was working in IRIB in Iran, we had a reality show called "Smoking Harms" In that program we had to show the dangers of smoking. At that time, the heart attack was high, and we had to make reality shows to encourage people not to smoke cigarette. One night, when I started to write the scenario of my first episode, somebody called me. He was the owner of "Azadi" Cigarette Company. He asked me about "Smoking Harms" program, and when he heard that "Smoking Harms" reality show may destroy the cigarette market, he invited me to his office. Next day, when I met him in his office, he said that he wanted to become the sponsor of "Smoking Harms" reality show, and handed me a scenario in which the "Azadi". cabaret was not harmful for people. I did not accept, but next week when I was in recording location, the owner of "Chanerl 3", which was the sponsor of "

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"Smoking Harms" reality show, gave me the same scenario and asked me to change the scene elements of the program and add a number of "banners about good points of "Azadi" cigarette. That was like an order. The owner of "Azadi" cigarette had become the main sponsor of "Smoking Harms" program and we have to follow his policies. As a result, new banners were added to the scene and the scenario was changed in a way that the "Azadi" cigarette was not a harmful cigarette for heart. . If we take a close look to reality shows here in US, we may see the same method. Reality shows try to insert irrelevant elements in their programs in order to advertise that product. For example, in a reality show about losing weight, the shoes of all participants and reporter are Nike. As a result, the reality shows are money making programs. The revenue of the programs is the most important subject of producers and cannot be educational programs. Producers try to direct their audience in way which owners of big companies want. The influence of big companies has to be eliminated from reality shows in order to make reality shows educational programs. Second important point is the producers of Reality shows use professional actors, and do whatever is needed to make their programs attractive. Moreover, the participant of reality shows are actors who follow the order of director in a way that has been written in scenario. In other words, they may be completely different people out of program. but try to change their appearance or behavior to fit in program. For example, if we take a closer look at Barbara A. Spellman's article "Could Reality shows become reality experiments?" she confirms that "In Joe Millionaire, dozens of women compete for the hand of supposed millionaire. When it turns out at the end that he's a minimum wage worker."(Spelman, 117) In this program, the producer only wants to make

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attractive shots, and attract more audience. Having an educational program is not important at all because the producer of reality shows knew that the people, who are watching reality shows late at night, are tired audience who wants to enjoy their times and forget about passed boring day. Here is an important point. Using fake people in reality shows is dangerous. From one hand, there are many audiences who only follow the reality show's subjects. They believe in reality shows, and using fake people and unreal scenarios may fool this audience. On the other hand, it is harmful for actors who are the main character of reality shows because they have to change their physical appearance and their behavior in order to become a suitable actor in a reality show. For example, as Barbara A. Spellman confirms in her article " Could Reality shows become reality experiments?" that " On the Swan, women who believe themselves unattractive are offered complete plastic surgeries...There are not only physical risks in all of medical procedure...." (Spelman, 116) we see that actors of reality shows wants to stay in a suitable shape because participating in a reality show is their carrier, and they do not want to lose their job. As a result, actors try to take any risk to keep their body in a good shape and keep their job. In my opinion, if we want to make a reality show educational, it is better to use real people who have really experienced the subject of the reality show and have no reason to play a fake role. In conclusion, it is not possible for reality television shows to be educational because Reality Shows are not real. They choose attractive subjects to attract more people and make more money. They write fake scenarios to make interesting programs for ordinary people and those fake scenarios oblige actors to change their appearance and play a fake role. As a result, fake programs reality shows with unreal actors cannot be educational

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programs. In my opinion, it is better to mix Reality Shows like documentary movies to show real difficulties of life. For example, Reality shows may be created based on real events and real people; therefor, people who experienced those real events can attract more audience by emotions and feelings