

Reality tv and the effects on youth

[Media](#), [Television](#)



Reality television has come to dominate the television industry. There are educational reality shows and noneducational reality shows. They both have their entertainment values. The difference? One is productive television, and one is counterproductive. There is good and bad in everything, and everything is good in moderation, but counterproductive TV is taking over productive TV.

The time slots to watch educational reality shows are generally later in the evening. It is almost as if TV is trying to "dumb down" America.

Non-educational Reality Television "Noneducational" reality TV includes shows like Keeping Up With The Kardashians, Teen Pregnancy, and My Sweet Sixteen. These prime time shows target youth, but they do not teach lessons. In fact, they do the opposite, since many young people think it okay to emulate these reality show stars.

All these shows are scripted. For instance, Jersey Shore is actually filmed on a set 80% of the time. Yet these shows are passed off as reality. These shows promote drinking and heavy sexual content. Nonetheless they air in the time slot that targets youth. Kids seem to be growing up faster than just 20 years ago; perhaps disrespect and aggression can be blamed on the influence of the shows they are watching.

Instead of fighting and being rude to each other, it would be nice if the characters in these shows could, for example, reflect how ten ordinary people come into a house and work together to make the quality of life better for everyone. They could show the reality of working together to pay

the bills and keep food on the table. They could teach how to step in when something bad happens to someone else and help them get back on their feet in one way or another.

Instead they have gone in the direction of survival of the fittest. Is this really the image that should be shown and taught to our future leaders? If where America has been heading in the past 20 years, it is apparent that survival of the fittest is not working. Perhaps if prime time television were to promote working together, it might help ensure a productive future.

Educational Reality Television Reality TV does have positive things to offer. Some educational reality shows are Dirty Jobs, Cake Boss, and Do You Know Who You Are. These types of shows depict the reality of America. They show what truly makes America run, and teach true morals and genuine respect towards others.

True, these shows are scripted as well, but they are geared towards education and not violence, or the promotion of teen pregnancy, and spousal abuse. These shows do not promote alcohol abuse or speculate who is having sex with whom. However, these shows are targeted toward adults, as they are on at a later time slot, and much of our youth is not interested in watching real life.

Prime Time Television Prime time television is aiming for ratings rather than the promotion of morals. But I think they could produce productive TV and get better ratings. Viewers must take some responsibility, though, since we can control what our kids watch. If most people ban shows that deliver

negative messages from our homes, ratings will plummet and I would imagine TV executives would completely restructure their programming very quickly.