

Should reality tv be regulated research paper

[Family](#), [Parents](#)



Recently, television has gained monumental changes in ratings as people now are glued to shows and spiels showing real people in real-life situations and not-faked scenarios. In some cases, these shows present the reality of life which is often hidden from the public like the life of the impoverished sector and flaws of the government. Others see people competing for a cash prize of over a million dollars while surviving on a deserted island, losing as much weight as possible, and even to outperform contenders in a race around the world while their lives as the competition began are recorded for the national audience. While many people find these shows amusing, the fact that some of these shows include censored words, actions and scenes that are not suitable for children. While it is noted that reality television is somewhat regulated, reality television shows should have more regulations as the younger generation mimic these shows which causes them to question norms, morals and behaviors while embodying the people they see on television.

Reality television or Reality TV has long been a part of television entertainment as many dramas were unscripted and involved real people. However, it had made an impact when the reality show Survivor was released in 2000 which showcases human drama as it unfolds on the cast members. One of the noted earliest reality television formats were Allen Funt's Candid Camera, which placed unsuspected people into prank situations in 1948; and the talent show Ted Mack's Original Amateur Hour in 1948, which allows ordinary people to showcase their talents and viewers are given the power to vote for their bets. In the 1970s, The Gong Show became popular because of its performer to panel entertainment while the

panel votes or hits the gong if they did not like the performance. Afterwards, the Star Search in 1980 was shown for 15 years, showcasing the traditional format of talent shows. These are just some of the notable shows, which paved the way for contemporary shows to grow such as American Idol, America's Got Talent and So You Think You Can Dance. There were also game shows which used the reality game format such as the 1950s show Beat the Clock and Truth or Consequence. It became the predecessors of modern shows like The Dating Game.

As these reality television shows found its way into the hearts of the public, reality TV producers found a new market in homes. In this end, some viewers get to have their lives featured in TV exactly as how it happens without camera. The pioneer for this show is An American Family, which showcased the life of the Loud family as they underwent the problem of divorce and the coming-out of one of their kin. The show Real People, which ran from 1979 to 1984, showcased people with unique hobbies and jobs and how their lives run throughout the week. Later on, these reality television shows slowly introduced new concepts of reality, which paved to the popularity of Survivor in 2000. It incorporated the concept of real people without scripts, and the game show element by putting in a \$1 million cash prize to the Soul Survivor. The show immediately picked a huge fan page even at the season finale. Shows such as Big Brother, The Amazing Race, and Boot Camp also used this concept, which also proved to have similar effects on their fan base and viewers. While there have been comments and concerns over these shows, reality television now is a mainstay in television programing considering its generated audience average and earnings .

Notably, reality television catches the interest of each type of audiences, given their age group and preferences. Whether they may be young or old, reality television makes viewers want more. As far as their reasons for watching reality TV is concerned, reality TV fills a void inside each person which would then tug their heartstrings and emotions that is sometimes ignored. While being on television or watching shows on television, people tend to dream or see what they wish to become or what they dream to be, which is sometimes not thought by people. It is also a medium for them to get a newer form of entertainment, something fresh and exciting. In some cases, it also breaks the sensational traditional television shows normally seen on TV, and adds an avant-garde controversial flavor for the audience . Some of these reality television viewers watch these shows for the very fact that they relate to the issues featured in these shows. Many viewers would find themselves feeling various emotions while watching reality TV: whether they wish to cry or get mad at the antagonistic cast. They also feel the sense of victory in talent reality shows, and the sense of defeat when their contestant is eliminated.

When it comes to the younger audiences, they find it much easier to enjoy reality television than others as it presents a “ visceral realistic programming” that easily catches the taste of young adults. According to the studies done by MTV and other media outfits, young people tend to find a scripted show to be abnormal. These younger audiences also are people who have more video access capabilities than that of the previous generation, with them transcending from videotaped clips of themselves to a newer thirst for alternative entertainment. Younger viewers, especially kids, now

find themselves wanting to watch high-octane television that can excite, thrill, and affect them emotionally. As such, producers such as the company Endemol made their reality shows, such as Big Brother and Fear Factor, Aside from this, younger people tend to prefer these programs because it is targeted to them by the companies. Networks tend to deliver content that the younger viewers would support to ensure the continuous movement of the country. Younger viewers, like their older counterparts, also prefer to watch reality television since they also feel as if they are a part of the show. They would also feel that being on television could also bring them fame or for the public to know about them .

Since the popularity of these shows tends to play with viewer's feelings as they become enthralled by the shows, it easily could affect every household. First and foremost, as these emotions course into the viewers, they establish a somewhat uneasy relationship as to their control over their emotions and how they see critical judgment. Eventually, since they would tend to argue with their family members as to how the show could have gone through, the viewer's sense of judgment on how they interact with their family. While some of them would believe that reality television is just rubbish, they would eventually find themselves hooked each night to see the next series. It could be noted that this effect reality TV could do to households is similar to the relationship between feminism and the beauty industry. While women find themselves trapped in the industry, they participate to its traps either because they find pleasure and satisfaction on supporting the industry or because they feel they should keep up with the world's demands to perfection .

Aside from these, child viewers of reality television would also be exposed to various issues and concepts that they could not easily understand. According to study, children watch television for almost 3 hours per day, some reaching up to 16 hours depending on their family scheduling. It is notable that adults often underestimate how sharp a child's memory and mindset they have, especially in issues they see on television or in society. Since adults tend to forego this fact, they do not filter the programming or even discuss to their children the concepts and themes shown on television. Children in this period are now open to both local and global television programming, thus their minds would play various scenarios as they see reality television and eventually feel fear, fantasy and even trauma. There are some reality television formats that present violent and almost sexual images which may present to children a deviation to the standard norms set by society. Given these effects to viewers of reality TV, one could wonder as to the nature of these shows and if they are regulated. In the United States, the FCC or the Federal Communications Commission regulates as to what is seen on television, may they be traditional shows or reality TV. Reality TV shows are essentially forbidden to exploit children, rigging questionable content and promote themes such as nudity, language, and sex that are not censored. The FCC also enforces the Prime Time Access Rule and the Financial Interest and Syndication Rules, which mostly influences reality game shows. These two rules provide shows to have a certain time slot in a station for them to use in whatever they desire, while the second rule allows producers limited ownership. Censorship rules are also placed on reality TV shows to ensure that questionable content and language is removed from

these shows. Several states had also imposed their own laws on television which also covers reality television such as the 1996 Telecommunications Act, which orders the use of v-chip technology to ensure that parents could block shows on television which could be violent or explicit for children. The FCC is also posting new laws to ensure that regulations could be placed regarding show formats on television .

However, despite these laws given to reality TV, it is notable that reality TV has gone too far in some of its shows and technically showcases that some of these stunts and scenes in reality TV are dangerous not just for the viewers but also to those who take part in the show. According to experts, many producers tend to cross the line wherein ethics and morals should be placed first before creating scenes that would be dangerous for contestants and the staff creating the scene. Some producers do not take into consideration the stunts and competition they would put their contestants to first before they are placed into dangerous circumstances. The producers must also take into consideration plans to ensure that these contestants are assisted and treated should these contestants get hurt and eventually even scrap the entire episode. Producers and the companies must also be ready to be responsible for the dangers attached to reality TV as some of them are becoming morally questionable throughout the years. It may even cause a stir in the American population, showing them shows wherein the cast are out of control. Not only would these shows raise an alarm over what their children could see, it also puts into question of these companies and distributors know what they are showing. Others may even find these shows offensive as they see people self-destruct on television even if they censor

the language used. Producers, television distributors and the like must be held responsible for these shows contents and must be regulated and fined heavily for the destruction they cause on people just to make money . Since reality TV tends to still find means to overcome the regulations imposed on to them, controlling and educating the children as to how they see and watch reality television would need to be done efficiently and carefully. It is advisable that parents provide time and effort to educate and learn the effects of reality television to their children and explain as to the themes and questions their children may find disturbing or confusing. Careful monitoring is also an advisable means to watch children and teenagers to their television viewing to ensure the reduced possibilities of media exposure that can trigger early encounters to sexual behavior and other questionable habits. Either one of the parents could sit in with their children should there be reality TV shows on air and discuss to them things they see. Parents could also use channel locks on their televisions to ensure that children can only surf on in their viewing hours. Since most reality shows are only shown in late hours, parents could schedule their children's viewing hours to make sure they are asleep before these shows go on air. .

Parents could also speak with their children with regards to what they see on reality TV. In the advice done by Elizabeth Thoman, founder of the Center for Media Literacy; she cites that parents can assist their children understand reality TV by explaining how these shows are created, and how much work is to be done for a single episode. This would then explain to children as to how " Real" reality TV is about. Parents should explain that it is the producers who get to decide what should be used for the show, what they leave out,

and also how do they put in hours and hours of recording before it gets placed in an episode. In addition to this, parents should also explain as to why big networks tend to favor reality shows than other types of programming. Since children nowadays are capable of understanding business behind media and television, parents could easily discuss to their children that these networks tend to favor using reality shows to attract viewers for business. An important element for discussion is the use of ratings. When people watch these shows, ratings go up and the networks can use this to charge companies more fees for the networks to air their commercials. Survivor alone, which kickstarted the modern reality TV craze makes a lot of money for networks and companies alike. For Thoman, while explaining these concepts would be difficult to explain, it is essential for both young and adult viewers to reconcile the fact these shows are selling is the viewing public and not take everything as a reality .

Reality television indeed showcases a more credible and believable side of entertainment that showcases the real side of people in any given instance. It also shows a sense of competition similar to that seen off-camera, and its capacity to transcend feelings to viewers even if they are not directly involved with the show. While there are indeed regulations done for reality TV producers to adhere to, it is visible that reality TV itself remains wild as far as some of its content is concerned. There are shows wherein contestants are placed in danger due to the scenes they are tested or set to compete, while there are others who tend to self-destruct on television. While there are indeed shows that could be educational in some sense, producers of reality TV still find means to find loopholes for them to showcase extreme

content to make money. In this end, it is crucial to regulate further reality TV shows to prevent stances of violence and offensive content in being aired on TV as opens risks to its viewers, especially to children, who may view these types of shows. Parents must strictly keep a close eye on their children and explain to them the tendencies and topics presented on these shows.

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