

DEI Council Conversation Topic: Big Brother: DOES REALITY TV REFLECT SOCIAL REALITY (I.E. MICROAGGRESSION BULLYISM, FAMILIAR TRIBALISM, INSTITUTIONAL RACISM, GENDER INEQUITY, AND INHERIT BIAS)

Let's "Chat it Up" Introduced from Miriam S. Stevens



Please note I used the following articles to pique my interest in bringing a conversation on the above themes that appear ingrained in our society, inherent in our actions, and infused in our bias/interpretations.

Sources: [WHY TRIBALISM MATTERS IN REALITY SHOW 'BIG BROTHER'](#) By James A. Cosby / 27 September 2022

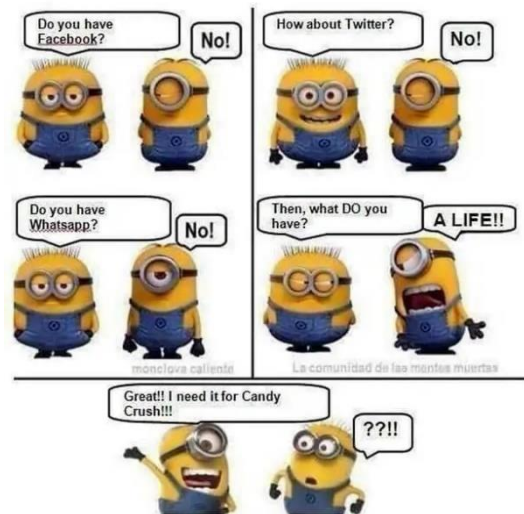
["Big Brother" Still Has Major Problems!](#) By LaDale Anderson - Jul 12, 2022

I do not purport to be an expert on reality television, I am a fan of a few shows that albeit scripted are produced to reflect real lives of people in society. One show that has really taken to my fancy is [Big Brother](#). Some will equate the premise of this show relating to George Orwell's 1949 novel [Nineteen Eighty-Four](#). Contextually, Big Brother television show applies some of the principles of a 24-7 surveillance of our daily lives that occurs by ["The Man/Government"](#) who is always out to get us.

It is hard to nullify the noise often displayed in every media outlet whether you obtain information via the television, computer, radio, or newspaper the shouting, disagreements, and rude behaviors are flooding our senses. Divisions on whose side is right versus wrong or whose way is better or worse is constantly being elevated in our minds. All sectors of society are being touched with these types of rants and raves. It seems the two steps forward in progress for racial equality, women's rights, and gender equity continually get bashed down in another policy or movement to halt progress. So, one would hope that type of condition would not seep into a reality shows complexion as each person in the Big Brother House should be able to be on the same level playing field. OH, but how the last two seasons have pulled the blinders off and exposed the discrepancies of fair play and decency that we ought to live in our daily "real lives." Let's explore...



As I reflected on the past 2 seasons of the Big Brother television series, certain blaring themes started to emerge and take flight especially around the [virtual water cooler](#) I call YouTube, Twitter, Face Book, Instagram, Tik Tok, etc. (So basically, any online outlet where conversations are done). 😊 To get caught up I challenge one to explore the past two seasons' hashtags on Twitter. Season 23 alliance [The Cookout](#) #TheCookout and Season 24 alliance [The Leftovers](#) #TheLeftovers. Once can get some backstory on both season's alliances and formulations; then can appreciate the controversies that spun from allegations of racism or even reverse racism from one player in season 24.



Let's shed some contextual history (Information to explore):

RE: Season 23 - ['Big Brother' Fans React to Most Diverse Cast in Show's History](#)

#THECOOKOUT - Twitter Search / Twitter – learn about Season 23 all people of color alliance.

[Everything to Know About Big Brother 23 \(Including Who Won\)](#)

[A 'Big Brother' alliance could make history. Not everyone is thrilled](#)

RE: Season 24 - [Big Brother Recap: Season 24's Racism Controversy Takes Center Stage in Tense Pre-Eviction Episode](#)

[What Did Kyle Capener Say About Race on 'Big Brother'? 'Big Brother's' Kyle Capener Gets Exposed for Comments "Rooted in Race"](#)

['Big Brother' alumni, fans call out 'reprehensible' treatment of cast member Taylor Hale](#)

['Big Brother' History Is Made with a Powerful Speech and a Resilient Winner](#)

[Taylor Hale makes history as the 1st Black woman to win 'Big Brother'](#)





There are many layers to unpack from watching this show past two seasons. Hot Topics have sprung into conversations that often draw lines in the sands. There is a wide spectrum of opinions, observations, and beliefs that eerily mirror society's undercurrent. #bb23 #bigbrother23 #bb24 #BigBrother24

So, here are some food-for-thought to set on the table and invite whosoever will to sit down for an open, unhindered, non-judgmental, transparent, and most likely passionate" could get [hot up in here](#) – heated" discourse.

We truly need to examine the past and current landscape of tribes, race, gender, and opportunities to flush out the truth in the matter and then provide solutions to any shortcomings identified.



1. Season 24 illuminated several misgivings that are often covered-up or not talked about in our daily lives:
 - Women of Color stereotype "Angry Black Woman" diminished through Taylor Hales experience and actions.
 - Segregation is still prominent and can breed ignorance (i.e., Kyle's comments and lack of interactions with people of color).
 - Do Tribal allegiance form because of commonalities built around race, religion, and gender?
 - Bullyism often becomes the preferred method of interacting with someone different or misunderstood.
 - Is there such a thing as Reverse Racism?
 - Why people are often ostracized for their appearance (i.e., darker hue, physically challenged, different race, body size, etc.)
 - Expose on color bias, ethnic disparities, and gender gaps
2. Season 23 of Big Brother produced a historic all people of color alliance that set a precedence for elevating a person of color into the winner's circle. Why was this necessary for The Cookout to form? Does this solid alliance start to diminish a stereotype that people of color (black people) can not work together for a greater good and prosperous outcome in America?
3. Big Brother over the past 24 season recently began to integrate more people of color storylines to the forefront; do you think that with the emergence of social media and upheaval of social unrest the producers began to realize an unconscious bias when selecting participants and portraying this show's image/branding?





As a woman of color of a certain age, it was nice to have a visible portrait of another woman of color's journey in maneuvering society's preconceived bias. Her viewpoint was passionately and eloquently shared in her eventual [winner's speech](#) (the speech given before the jury votes) where she emphasized being resilient and a victor through her experiences, "I am not a victim, I am a victor. If there is one word that is going to describe the season, it is resiliency. And if you were to ask yourself who was the most resilient person of the season, it was me."

Social media outlets are blazing with commentary that looks at the subjects brought out in the past two seasons of Big Brother. It is heartwarming that discussions are happening and perhaps amnesia (unconscious bias) is awakening and being addressed. Society still operates with divisions as evident especially in political arenas; but it can not be discounted for how the media portrays "reality" and "realism" as synonymous. There have been great strides to break down barriers, distinguish unflattering stereotypes, and repair breaches of gender and racial equity. Big Brother has at a minimum opened a space for conversations and maybe even conversions from narrowminded thinking, actions, and mindsets.



[Taylor Hale \(#HaleRaisers\)](#), the Big Brother Season 24 winner has truly broken down the "all males club and traditionally all white male's club" for others to be inspired and hopeful that they too could do the same. Her journey was tough but change often comes through adversity and friction. Let's continue to not sweep hard discussions, observations, and ideologies under the rug of we have fixed things already in 2022. The true reality is we are a work in progress with much more bridges

to build and gaps to fill to truly get to a resemblance of gender equity, racial equality, and diversity acceptance (regardless of the intersection one represents). Yes, let us continue to give Taylor her flowers and acknowledge she has set the stage for others to dispel the notion well "this is how it's always been done mindset" into an open, honest, and progressive action that change should happen. Let that change start with me!

QOTD (Question of the Day):

Are we recoiling back to the days of old where separate but equal and misogynistic agendas rule the day in policy enactments and societal actions?

Perhaps Big Brother is a current exposé on how we must continue to aggressively destroy the insidious messaging that previously stagnated our country's progress for a more perfect union that does adhere to liberty and justice for all! Let's talk about it and then be about it as agents of change!

ADDITIONAL NOTES:

Big Brother (2000-) Source: 10 Best Social Experiment Reality TV Shows <https://screenrant.com/best-social-experiment-reality-tv-shows/>BY

ALYSSA COSME PUBLISHED MAR 26, 2022



This series is wildly popular and one of the most known social experiment shows on tv right now. *Big Brother* centers around 16 people from different states with different backgrounds that must adapt to living together. They must fight for safety and power, while also building strategic allies in order to win the cash prize. Each week the power shifts and the "Head of Household" has to nominate people to be evicted from the house. With each season, there are many twists and turns. And sometimes returning players play again.

Orwellian Voyeurism or Social Experiment? How Big Brother Changed Everything Link: <https://elephant.art/orwellian-voyeurism-social-experiment-or-viewing-figure-baiting-exploitation-how-big-brother-changed-everything-18062020/>

Racism Issue, "There are a lot of things wrong with such shows of course. It's hard to forget the blatant racism in 2007's Celebrity Big Brother, when a number of contestants continually made remarks around contestant Shilpa Shetty—most notably the late Jade Goody's reference to the Indian actress and former model as "Shilpa Poppadom" and Danielle Lloyd's "fuck off home" remark. By the end of the series, Ofcom had received "just over" 44,500 complaints about racism on the show."

The Show That Changed TV Forever: Big Brother, 20 Years On

Jul 14, 2020 — "It became less of a social experiment and more of a reality show," says Moriarty. It had lost what had made it Big Brother. Advertisement - ...

Source: <https://www.esquire.com/uk/culture/a33057976/big-brother-20-years-on/>

Big Brother is coming back – the reality TV landscape today will demand a more caring show

Published: August 9, 2022 1.17pm EDT

Source: <https://theconversation.com/big-brother-is-coming-back-the-reality-tv-landscape-today-will-demand-a-more-caring-show-188313>

'Big Brother' and why I love trashy television by Ava Seaman August 12, 2022

Source: <https://www.michigandaily.com/arts/b-side/big-brother-and-why-i-love-trashy-television/>

The show is known for its lack of diversity and mistreatment of people of Color, especially Black houseguests. Whether intentional or not, people of Color are usually targeted first in the game. This is why, in season 23, having a final six consisting of all Black houseguests, a.k.a. the Cookout Alliance, was so monumental. Excluding the Celebrity version of the game, in 22 years with 23 seasons, there have been only four winners of Color: Jun Song in season 4, Josh Martinez in season 19, Kaycee Clark in season 20 and Xavier Prather in season 23. Of the 23 winners, seven have been women, two have been part of the LGBTQ+ community and one has been over the age of 40. Statistically speaking, if you're a young, white, straight male, you're *still* favored to win the game.

Cody Calafiore explains how social media is hurting Big Brother

The season 22 champ also calls bringing Derrick to the end in season 16 his proudest *Big Brother* moment.



By [Dalton Ross](#) June 29, 2022 at 11:30 AM EDT

Source: <https://ew.com/tv/big-brother-cody-calafiore-winner-season-22-interview/>

Big Brother 24: 10 Best Twitter Reactions To The Season Premiere

BY MATTHEW RUDOY PUBLISHED JUL 07, 2022

Source: <https://screenrant.com/big-brother-24-best-season-premiere-twitter-reactions/>

ALL THE 'BIG BROTHER' ALUMNI REACTIONS TO TAYLOR HALE'S HISTORIC WIN



MCKINLEY FRANKLIN 9.27.22

Source: <https://www.hercampus.com/culture/taylor-hale-big-brother-season-24-reactions/>

"Fans, previous Big Brother players, and Taylor's houseguests have taken to social media to express their reactions to the monumental season that was Big Brother 24. In her eight-to-one jury vote win, fans correlated the number eight as a significant part of her time on Big Brother, as she also became the eighth woman to ever win the show. Not to mention, the angel number 888 represents success and financial wealth, and her total monetary winnings from the season amounted to \$800,000. Coincidence? I think not."

The impact of TV and Reality TV on our culture



Juhi Prakash @Soul Muse MAY 13, 2022, 16:49 IST

SOURCE: [HTTPS://TIMESOFINDIA.INDIATIMES.COM/READERSBLOG/SOUL-MUSE/THE-IMPACT-OF-TV-AND-REALITY-TV-ON-OUR-CULTURE-42960/](https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/readersblog/soul-muse/the-impact-of-tv-and-reality-tv-on-our-culture-42960/)

Reality TV Has Reshaped Our World, Whether We Like It or Not by Judy Berman

Source: <https://time.com/collection/reality-tv-most-influential-seasons/6199108/reality-tv-influence-on-world/>

Television's Impact On American Society And Culture Source:

<https://www.encyclopedia.com/arts/news-wires-white-papers-and-books/televisions-impact-american-society-and-culture>

Reality Television Shows Popularity and Audience Interest: Focus on Big Brother Naija 2021

September 2022 Source:

<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/363687600> Reality Television Shows Popularity and Audience Interest Focus on Big Brother Naija 2021

Culture Pick: Reality TV gauntlet "Big Brother" is a television gem, but isn't exempt from ignorant pitfalls



[Courtesy of Paramount Plus / CBS Maddy Reda | @maddyreda1](#), Assistant Culture Editor

August 31, 2022 Source: <https://thecrimsonwhite.com/99859/culture/big-brother-diversity/>

Reality TV Casting Sucks. Here's How to Improve It. By Susan L. Hornik

Sep 29, 2022 Source: <https://www.indiewire.com/2022/09/how-to-improve-reality-tv-casting-big-brother-1234767020/>

FORMER HOUSEGUESTS Big Brother USA winners list: Where are they now?

Jennifer Roback | Nikki Main

8:37 ET, Sep 26 2022 Updated: 8:45 ET, Sep 26 2022

Source: <https://www.the-sun.com/entertainment/5717395/big-brother-winners-now/#>

‘Big Brother’ Season 24 Has Been Watched for More Than 8 Billion Minutes in 2 Months on CBS and Paramount+ By Jennifer Maas Sep 7, 2022 Source: <https://variety.com/2022/tv/ratings/big-brother-season-24-ratings-cbs-paramount-plus-1235363018/>

27 Reality TV Statistics That Might Surprise You (2022) Source: <https://www.social.com/reality-tv-statistics/> © 2022 Copyright Soocial

Top Stats And Facts About Reality TV (Editor’s Choice)

Nearly four in ten people watch some form of reality TV.

34% of Australians who watch reality TV lie about it.

14% of adult males compared their life to the life of a reality TV star.

27% of Americans aged 18 to 29 felt inspired by a reality TV celebrity.

The key demographic for reality TV shows are women aged between 18 and 34.

50% of survey respondents aged 16 to 24 with different levels of reality TV consumption reported that reality TV shows affected their body image.

38 people have committed suicide after becoming reality TV celebrities.

18% of survey respondents think such shows are mostly unscripted.

Only 7% of adults claim reality TV shows represent American society well.

Reality TV Viewer Demographics

36% of those aged 30 to 49 watched reality TV shows in 2021.

(Statista)

Negative Effects Of Reality TV Statistics

50% of survey respondents aged 16 to 24 with different levels of reality TV consumption admitted that reality shows affected their body image.

(SWLondoner)

Reality TV shows can influence the way young people (especially girls) [perceive their bodies](#). Apart from that, more than 55% of respondents of the same age admitted that they weren’t aware of the potential psychological effects of reality TV programs.

60% of survey respondents said that other viewers are more aggressive, argumentative, irritable, self-centered, and anxious.

(SWLondoner)

61% of ‘Big Brother’ viewers say Taylor deserved to win, but what about Monte and Turner? [POLL RESULTS] Source: <https://www.goldderby.com/article/2022/big-brother-taylor-deserved-to-win-poll-results/>



[Marcus James Dixon @marcusdixon](#)

Big Brother: Season 24 Ratings

Published: September 27, 2022

Source: <https://tvseriesfinale.com/tv-show/big-brother-season-24-ratings/>

This venerable reality series continues to be one of the [CBS](#) network's most popular shows each summer, is relatively inexpensive to produce, and it fills three timeslots each week. It's a programmer's dream. Is there any possibility that *Big Brother* will be cancelled or is it essentially guaranteed to be renewed for season 25? Stay tuned.

A reality competition series, the [Big Brother](#) TV show is hosted by Julie Chen Moonves and typically airs three nights a week — Wednesdays (veto), Thursdays (eviction), and Sundays. The 24th season will find the Houseguests moving into the mid-century Palm Springs-inspired “BB Motel”. Players include an attorney, a Vegas performer, a hypnotherapist, a private chef, a chemical processing engineer, an interior designer, and a personal stylist, among others. The Houseguests this time around are Alyssa Snider (24), Ameerah Jones (31), Brittany Hoopes (32), Daniel Durston (35), Indy Santos (31), Jasmine Davis (29), Joe “Pooch” Pucciarelli (24), Joseph Abdin (24), Kyle Capener (29), Matt “Turner” Turner (23), Michael Bruner (28), Monte Taylor (27), Nicole Layog (41), Paloma Aguilar (22), Taylor Hale (27), and Terrance Higgins (47). *Big Brother* follows a group of people living together in a house outfitted with 94 HD cameras and 113 microphones, recording their every move 24 hours a day. Each week someone is voted out of the house. The last remaining Houseguest wins the grand prize of \$750,000.

The ratings are typically the best indication of a show's chances of staying on the air. The higher the ratings, the better the chances of survival. This chart will be updated as new ratings data becomes available.

9/15 update: [You can see the latest night's ratings in context.](#)

Note: If you're not seeing the updated charts, please try reloading the page or view them [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#).

For comparisons: On Wednesdays, [season 23 of Big Brother](#) on CBS averaged a 0.90 rating in the 18-49 demographic and 3.76 million viewers. On Thursdays, season 23 averaged a 0.88 demo with 3.78 million and, on Sundays, the 23rd season averaged a 0.89 demo with 3.70 million.

Note: These are the final national ratings, including all live+same day viewing and DVR playback (through 3:00 AM). Early fast affiliate ratings (estimates) are indicated with an “*”. While these numbers don't include further delayed or streaming viewing, they are a very good indicator of how a show is performing, especially when compared to others on the same channel. There can be other economic factors involved in a show's fate, but typically the higher-rated series are renewed and the lower-rated ones are cancelled.

Big Brother: Season 25; CBS Renews Reality Competition Series for Summer 2023

by Trevor Kimball, September 26, 2022

Source: <https://tvseriesfinale.com/tv-show/big-brother-season-25-cbs-renews-reality-competition-series-for-summer-2023/>

Here's Moonves' announcement about the Summer 2023 renewal:

We're so excited to announce Season 25 of [#BigBrother](#) will come to your screens next summer. Stay tuned. [@CBSBigBrother pic.twitter.com/FqqPoInTLw](#)

— Julie Chen Moonves (@JCMoonves) [September 26, 2022](#)

[What do you think?](#) Are you a regular viewer of the *Big Brother* TV series? Are you glad that this summer series has been renewed for a 25th season?

Check out our [CBS status sheet](#) to track the Tiffany net

Big Brother: 10 Fakest Things About The Show, According To Cast And Crew

BY [KALLIE ATKINS](#)

PUBLISHED AUG 08, 2022

Source: <https://screenrant.com/big-brother-fakest-things-show-cast-crew/>

WHY TRIBALISM MATTERS IN REALITY SHOW 'BIG BROTHER'

Reality television show *Big Brother* has a traceable racial bias, but its contestants and fans often mistake their tribalism for racism. Source: <https://www.popmatters.com/big-brother-reality-television-tribalism>
By James A. Cosby / 27 September 2022

The juiciest and best reality shows coming back in fall 2022: 'Survivor,' 'The Voice' and more BY DANICA CREAHAN SEPTEMBER 21, 2022 / 10:48 AM / ESSENTIALS Source: [The juiciest and best reality shows coming back in fall 2022: 'Survivor,' 'The Voice' and more - CBS News](#)

Different perceptions of reality television [Microsoft Word - 8. Spotlight on Popular Culture - Part 4.docx \(sca.nsw.edu.au\)](#) by K Thompson — The key series of reality TV do reflect society and the fact they are talked about so much highlights the relevance to culture¹.

Does Reality TV Encourage Cultural And Gender Stereotypes?

TED speaker [Chimamanda Ngozi](#) gave a [TED talk](#) on the danger of a single story, where she discussed the dangers of partial portrayals of a culture. “The single story creates stereotypes, and the problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but that they are incomplete,” she said. “They make one story become the only story.” Source: [Does reality TV encourage cultural and gender stereotypes? > CULTURS — lifestyle media for cross-cultural identity \(cultursmag.com\)](#)

The Impact Of Reality TV On Our Teens: What Can Parents Do? By [Holly Peek, MD, MPH](#)

Source: <https://www.mghclaycenter.org/parenting-concerns/teenagers/impact-reality-tv-teens-can-parents/>

How To Talk With Your Children And Adolescents About Reality TV

It’s important to know how to talk to your kids about the blurred line between reality and reality TV. Since reality TV has such a strong foothold in American pop culture, it is likely not going anywhere or changing its content any time soon. However, parents can learn how to help their children critically appraise what they see in the media.

Tips for critical appraisal of the media:¹

Watch one or more reality TV shows with your teenager: First, ask what shows your teen is watching, and then determine which shows are appropriate for the age and maturity of your child. It might be that you decide that a young teen, like a 13-year-old, should not watch certain shows that a 16-year-old teen would be permitted. If you introduce “TV rules” such as these in your home, you might consider viewing the shows alone first before determining which are appropriate for your child. When watching a show with your child, feel free to make the statements or ask the questions posed in the tips below.

Make a clear statement about the *reality* of reality TV shows: This is important, since kids need to know that while reality TV appears to be “reality,” it is a sensationalized reality of the television world. Nevertheless, it has an impact, and like many TV shows, can serve as a foundation for imitation. *Example:* “You know these shows are NOT REAL. They look like real life but are written just like other shows.”

Find out what your child thinks is real: Start a conversation to gauge how your child views reality TV. There is no way of knowing what she thinks unless you ask. You can pose these questions about reality TV in general, or about a specific show that your child is watching. *Examples:* Ask her to describe what is going on in the show to get a sense for how she thinks people look and act. What is good or bad about some of the behavior you are watching together? Does she think people act in real life as they do on reality TV? If so, what has she seen among her peers or adults that resembles what she is seeing on reality TV?

Find out if TV images affect your child's self image and values: Reality TV and popular culture can dictate what is "cool," and what it means to be accepted. Find out if your child is emulating values portrayed on reality TV. *Examples:* Does she envy the lifestyle of the characters? Is there anything she would change about herself or wish she could do after seeing a particular show? What values are being displayed in the show? What are her values?

Talk to your child about why she likes certain characters: It may be enlightening to find out why your child likes or dislikes certain characters. This can indicate what values your child may or may not be reflecting. *Examples:* What connections is she making between herself and the reality TV characters? Why does your child find certain characters appealing? Explore if that character is truly admirable, or is there something else that makes her or him seem cool. Does that character make a good role model? Would she like to behave similarly to that character? Who does make a good role model?

Ask your teenager about what her friends are watching: Most kids watch the same shows, as it gives them common ground for conversation. Ask about her friends' reactions to certain shows, episodes and/or behaviors. *Examples:* What do her friends think is cool? Would her friends want her to act like the characters in the show? Would she want her friends to act in certain ways?

Help your child develop critical responses to what she observes on reality TV: Talking to the television and commenting when something seems unreal or scripted can help your child develop these critical skills. Use commercial breaks to discuss these elements or pause the show when you want to take a break and talk. *Examples:* Ask your child, "What is going on here? What is the message in this part of the show?" If your child cannot come up with answers, you can say, "I see people being really self-centered and vain, or nasty to a friend." Your commentary may help initiate a conversation about the content of the show at any given point.

Reality TV: What's Really Real?

By [Steven Schlozman, MD](#)

Source: [Reality TV: What's Really Real? - MGH Clay Center for Young Healthy Minds](#)

Did you know that an early term for reality TV was [docu-soaps](#) (documentary-soap opera)? This term was an attempt to capture the entertainment aspects, rather than educational goals, of a specific kind of programming. In fact, we could even draw a direct line from these early docu-soap programs to the current YouTube content. Literally millions of viewers go online daily to watch "regular people" blow up watermelons, or open *Happy Meal* Presents, or play pranks on one another. Does this all fall under the same category of reality TV? Honestly, kids are confused about these questions.

A Few Parent Tips

Ask your kids whether they remember when they watch reality programming that a camera is present? Ask them if the presence of the camera changes the way people behave?

These kinds of questions inevitably lead to a more fundamental quandary: ***Does reality TV truly depict reality?***

You can even tell your teens about the studies suggesting that they're more likely to imitate behaviors that they see on reality TV, than what they see in openly fictionalized TV shows and movies. They'll probably scoff at these findings, but they'll also think about what you've said later on, and then more mindfully check their own behavior.

Reality TV is definitely entertaining, but the genre itself is fraught with the potential for gross and probably less-than-conscious misunderstandings. There's nothing "true" or "real" about reality television. This doesn't make reality programming necessarily bad for our culture, but we have to put these programs into perspective. That's something that parents, clinicians, teachers, and coaches have been doing for a long time. In this sense, reality TV might feel new, but how we deal with it is old stuff. It's as old as parenting itself. And I'm pretty sure that raising children is done best off camera.

What is reality TV's influence on culture?

By: [John Perritano](#)

Source: [Effects of Reality TV: The Good - Positive Effects of Reality TV | HowStuffWorks](#)

While reality shows are mainly produced as entertainment, many convey important information about diet, weight loss, health and fitness [source: [Kaiser Family Foundation](#)]. For example, although many say TV's most controversial reality shows, MTV's "Teen Mom" and "16 and Pregnant," glamorize teen [pregnancy](#), some believe the shows act as a form of high-tech birth control [source: [McMahon](#)]. Reality shows also reflect a more diverse nation. A 2008 report released by the NAACP said non-whites are underrepresented in almost every aspect of the television industry -- except for reality programming. It's not that reality shows are more racially or culturally sensitive. Frankly, mixing people of different races, genders, sexual orientation and cultures creates conflict, and conflict sells [source: [Braxton](#)].

And, at the end of the day, isn't making money what reality TV is really all about?

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REPRESENTATION: CULTURE & PERCEPTION

Source: Representation: Culture & Perception | Perception Institute

<https://perception.org/representation/>



"Media, entertainment, and other forms of popular culture play a significant role in shaping our perceptions of others. For many of us, popular culture is the primary way we learn about people who are different from us. The problem, though, is that many representations are based on cultural stereotypes, which tend to marginalize and caricature members of nondominant groups. Through these representations, we see a limited, and distorted, view of others. Both entertainment and news media are powerful forces in creating and perpetuating negative cultural stereotypes, especially about racial and ethnic groups. In television and film, characters from nondominant racial and ethnic groups often fall into formulaic tropes, and their storylines easily follow cliché narratives. The consistency of these representations reinforces stereotypes and makes them more readily available in our minds. In order to transform perceptions, we must transform our cultural landscape into one that puts forward people of color in all of their complicated humanity, rather than relying on tired stereotypes. Popular culture is a critical vehicle in this work, as it can be used to promote more nuanced and varied representations"

Learn more by exploring some of our events and products relating to narrative and culture change:

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Reality TV Has Reshaped Our World, Whether We Like It or Not

by Judy Berman Source: <https://time.com/collection/reality-tv-most-influential-seasons/6199108/reality-tv-influence-on-world/>

*Once dismissed as a noxious fad, reality TV has now hardened into an entertainment-industry institution. When social scientists study the effects of this entrenchment, the conclusions they reach are rarely encouraging. Reality shows have been found to **exacerbate body anxiety, increase physical aggression, and mess with our expectations for romantic relationships.** Unless you're fully off the grid, there's no isolating yourself from these shows' influence.* But taking reality TV seriously also means holding it accountable for its frequent awfulness. Shows are still edited to reinforce stereotypes, from the vapid blonde to the angry Black person to the sassy gay man. Docusoaps thrive on the notion that women are vain, petty gossips. Conspicuous consumption is celebrated and obscene wealth is portrayed as an end in itself. While practically every heterosexual dating show traffics in gender essentialism, reality romances featuring LGBTQ casts remain few and far between (which explains why the lone sexually fluid season of *Are You the One?*, which aired in 2019, was a revelation). People with disabilities are treated like freak-show fodder. Asian and Latinx Americans remain underrepresented; recent attempts to compensate for this erasure, like *Indian Matchmaking*, have arguably hurt as much as they've helped. You can't even watch *The Masked Singer* without worrying about humming along with an insurrection enabler.



Teyhou Smyth Ph.D., LMFT

Living with Finesse

How Reality Shows Affect Our Lives and Society

What are the negative and positive effects of reality TV?

Posted April 12, 2022 | Reviewed by Abigail Fagan Source:

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/living-finesse/202204/how-reality-shows-affect-our-lives-and-society>

Often reality shows cause us to reflect on what we might do in a similar situation, which can be a good exercise in values exploration. The basic question of self-interest versus self-sacrifice is a theme that runs through most reality shows. These themes of good and bad behaviors, betrayal, competition, and connection are familiar to us; we make similar decisions every day, minus the cameras, artificial scenarios, and publicity. It calls to us because on a very basic level, we love human drama, and we relate to tough decisions.