

## *TV Documentary on the Threshold of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*

Abolhasan Ghasemi, Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting University, Iran

The Asian Conference on Film & Documentary 2014  
Official Conference Proceedings

### **Abstract**

With the advent of television, documentaries became the centre of gravity of TV productions. During the eighty-year-old life of TV, documentaries have undergone changes in the form and content. This paper is aimed at identifying one of the most important developments in TV documentaries which started in the 1990s and is known as “reality TV”. Recognition, emerging fields, generations and types of programmes of “reality TV” have been studied through surveys in this paper.

Key words: TV, TV documentary, reality TV

**iafor**

The International Academic Forum

[www.iafor.org](http://www.iafor.org)

## **Introduction**

In this paper, the developments of TV documentary in the west and the industrial world from the early nineties and on the threshold of the 21<sup>st</sup> century will be studied. TV documentary has faced substantial changes in production, new administrative solutions and technical innovations which have led into the emergence of different types of TV documentaries. Like other innovations, it has somewhat shattered the foundations of formal structures of traditional documentary and has established new foundations and capacity for itself. Recognition, analysis and describing the features of TV documentary in this era include this paper's words.

## **Defining the topic and noting the main questions of the research**

Analytic examination of TV documentary programmes, in form and content, providing a comprehensive picture of the technical procedures, and transforming the content in TV documentary forms, from the early 1990s with emphasis on "reality TV" programmes in order to identify the capacities, facilities and limitation of such programmes, is the main topic of this research.

This paper is meant to answer the following questions:

- 1- Based on what needs did the TV documentary start to change from the beginning of the 90s?
- 2- What TV structures did those needs lead into?
- 3- What is the innovation of such structures and what impacts has it made upon deepening, expansion and development of the language of TV documentary ?

## **The purposes of the research**

- 1- Providing a definition and digestion about form elements and expressive capacities of TV documentaries since the early 90s with emphasis on "reality TV" programmes.
- 2- Typology and Classification of TV documentary structures in form and content.

## **The theoretical framework of the research**

Forming the theoretical framework of the research regarding the subject and its area requires studying and examining the vote of the philosophical, cultural and media scholars. Therefore, the theory that has been invoked in this process is the theory of "Culture industry". Theorist like Max Horkheimer <sup>1</sup>and T.W Adorno <sup>2</sup>mention a

---

<sup>1</sup> Max Horkheimer (1895-1973) German philosopher and sociologist, in the 1930s, in collaboration with Theodor Adorno, he established "Frankfort School" as a social research institute in Frankfort. He immigrated to USA in 1940 he published *The Dialectic of Enlightenment* with Adorno's assistance. He is the creator of "critical theory"

<sup>2</sup> T.W Adorno (1903-1965) German philosopher sociologist musicologist composer and Neo-Marxist, he was one the most important members of "Frankfort School" with Walter Benjamin, Herbert Marcuse, Jürgen Habermas and Max Horkheimer

theory called “culture industry”. And its features include: This industry represents the industrial society and the cultural goods which are the achievement of this industry are produced for the today’s people. Entertainment and Recreation and all the elements of “culture-industry” have existed long before this industry was born. However, these elements are controlled and updated from higher places. “culture-creation industry” can take pride in its achievement for transferring the art into consumption with high energy.

### **The hypotheses of the research**

- 1- Economical and social needs are the main reasons for the structural change of TV documentary since the beginning of the 90s. Such needs have led into the emergence of hybrid structures of TV documentary which did not exist before and is known as “Reality TV”.
- 2- Using the methods of documentary filmmaking and combining them with a fictional expression of issues that are rooted in the realities of everyday life, the “reality TV” programmes have played a key role in expansion and development of TV documentary language. The unique capability and flexibility of “reality TV” in borrowing and cannibalizing different genres of programming in order to create new hybrid structures is the unique feature of the period under discussion.

### **The meaning and significance of the televisual concept “reality”**

Everyone depending on their conception, pictures a special concept of reality in their minds. Most of us consider reality as a world in which everyone exists. A place in which some events are caused by other events and some happen accidentally in every time and place. Reality has no inherent meaning; or perhaps the meaning of reality is so diverse that looks unlimited. Reality never suggests interpretations or never insists on an event more than another. The meaning and significance of the televisual and cultural concept of real events are largely reflected by documentary producers, historians, essayists, and writers. These people represent a global reality. Every one of us lives in a small section of this reality. Since we cannot experience the whole reality directly, we should rely on the television, magazines, newspapers, books and movies. Therefore, the knowledge of the audience about a reality which is beyond their privacy is provided through the media for them. The media choose what is real and what is not real based on their economical, political and cultural taste. They focus on some specific events and ignore some.

It is equally important to the media to process and manipulate the events they select for their audience. The reality is presented based on the capabilities of technology (cameras cannot film in the dark) and Economic and political necessities based on the ideological and organized criteria. Telling apart the true events from the processed ones by the audience in front of the TV screen if not impossible is so difficult. TV producers neither can show a piece of the reality (a car accident, a soccer match, an earthquake) nor intend to. Except when they translate it into TV language and this way they adjust it or fictionalize it. They will necessarily display the event from a certain camera angle in a particular structure of various shots. They also mix it with

---

sound effects, special music or even an unusual narration. Sounds and images are processed, manipulated and put in new containers in their transmission from reality to TV. They transform into television material and are televised in a televisual grammar.

### **The history of “reality TV”**

“Reality TV” follows its history largely in programmes that are filmed live such as: hidden camera or different narrations of shows related to funny jokes, programmes on natural disasters, and shows in which special talents are looked for and also in amateur video shows. Such shows which were observed in the 80s and 90s in different forms, each have a combination of reality and citation. For instance, they use ordinary people, hidden or portable cameras, moving, funny or exciting pieces of movies or they look for ordinary people’s reaction in public situations or their privacy. Despite this history, some other social elements affected “reality TV”. For example, tendencies to violate people’s privacy (Van Zoonen 2001:136) or noting wider reflection of minority’s beliefs on TV media (Holland 2001:144)

Yet, “reality TV” has received academic, analytic and critical attention concurrent with formation, growth and development of its expressive forms. As an example, Jermin and Holmes (2003), Kilborn (2003), Brenton and Cohen (2003), Corner (2001), Roscoe (2001), and Hill (2005) have examined such TV documentary shows analytically.

Nichols comments on “reality TV” as follows:

Using various forms and styles like “observational documentary” and in combination with psychological, cultural and social discussions, reality TV “has opened a new window to the world” while it takes part in changing the culture, without doubt has presented a drastic change from the interests and behaviours of the contemporary society. (Nichols 1994:46-48)

Yet the success and flexibility of “reality TV” have caused a continuous exploration to design new conditions. Conditions which besides innovations, have established a combination between citing, exaggeration and being made-up. As Brenton and Cohen believe:

Generally, by being ahead from the historical context and intense focus on individuality, “reality TV” is a sign of postmodern and anti-political culture. (Brenton and Cohen: 2003).

Nevertheless, one of the differences between such shows and traditional documentary structures is the viewer’s role in “voting” and participation in determining the “efficiency” of the show consistently. Therefore, not only “reality TV” cares about filming particular people involved in an event, but also it directly contacts a reality beyond the show.

### **The main elements in the growth of “reality TV”**

Generally, three elements are involved in the development of “reality TV”. These three elements relate to three areas of distinct and yet overlapping popular media

production, production of programmes with superficial and controversial contents such as the content of tabloid journalism and production of popular entertainment during the 80s. This growth was partly a result of deregulation and marketization of media industries in advanced industrial states such as American, European and Australian countries. And partly a result of a commercial media environment in which the confronting point between telecommunications, computers and the media ensured competition amongst network, cable and satellite channels for revenue. (Hesmondhagh 2002:34)

Not only TV documentary was dependant on this environment to survive but also had to adapt itself with It.—Hill 2005:17— these three areas which are important to clarify the emergence of “reality TV” in different countries and their media industries, are:

- A- Tabloid journalism
- B- Combining news and gossips by the modern TV technology
- C- Production of populist factual programmes

### **A- Tabloid journalism**

“Reality TV” shows have particular elements which draw on the staple ingredients of tabloid journalism. These elements rely on fluidity and hybridity in form and content. John Fiske describes tabloid news as follows: ‘its subject matter is that produced at the intersection between public and private life; its style is sensational ... its tone is populist; its modality fluidly denies any stylistic difference between fiction and documentary’ (Frisk 1992: 48).

The intersections between the public and the private, fact and fiction, highlight how tabloid journalism relies on personal and sensational stories to create informative and entertaining news.(Bird 2000:23) Elizabeth Bird points out: ‘journalism’s emphasis on the personal, the sensational, and the dramatic is nothing new. Street literature, ballads, and oral gossip and rumor all contribute to the development of news’

Therefore, there is no wonder why we can observe a desire to move towards tabloid journalism’s superficial and controversial point of view in popular news and popular “reality TV”. In fact, the readers of tabloid journalism and viewers of “reality TV” merge and equate the consumption of news and reality programmes by turning to superficial news of tabloid journalism in order to learn more about “reality TV” programmes.

### **B- Combining gossips and news by modern technologies**

During the1960s ‘local news emerged as a potentially profitable product, evolving into a popular hybrid of traditional hard news and gossipy chat that was often preferred by viewers’ (Bird 2000: 214). Developments in technology, such as satellites and Mini cameras, ensured that local news bulletins could “transport” their audiences to the scenes of crimes in progress, unfolding hostage situations, urban shooting sprees, raging fires, and the like’ (Glynn 2000: 23). This reliance on raw footage would become a staple ingredient of reality programming. When Rupert

Murdoch<sup>3</sup> took advantage of deregulation policies during the Reagan administration and launched the Fox Television Network in the late 1980s, the channel featured programmes, such as *America's Most Wanted* or *Cops*, which took advantage of the growth of popular journalism, especially in local news.

The rise of reality TV was connected with the success of American tabloid TV and the demise of documentary television. In the 1960s and 1970s, early magazine-style series, such as *Tonight* (BBC 1957–1965) or *Nationwide* (BBC, 1969–1984), provided a mixture of news and humorous or eccentric stories. These magazine-style programmes were forerunners for much contemporary popular factual television (Brunsdon et al. 2001: 51). But it was the introduction of British versions of American reality programming in the early 1990s that began a trend in what was commonly referred to at the time as 'infotainment'. For example, *999* (BBC, 1992–) was modelled on *Rescue 911* (CBS).

### **C- Production of populist factual programmes**

TV documentary producers, in the early 90s started producing such programmes to appeal the public and with the purpose of public popular service. This move from being public to being popular posed a major threat to the traditional relationship between documentary and public service broadcasting:

Public service broadcasting traditionally assumed that a responsibility to the audience was of more importance than, say, a commercial duty to shareholders. In this context, documentary, as a quality genre flourished even though it did not achieve mass appeal anywhere until the later 1990s. It became clear, as the ratings became more paramount, that documentary presence in the schedules was a real mark of public service commitment.

The emergence of reality programming in the early 90s coincided with the time when documentary, along with news and current affairs, was already under performing in the ratings. "Reality TV" filled a gap in the schedules, but at the expense of sacrificing the more traditional and the controversial types of documentary. (Kilborn 2003:48) Another way of looking at the popularity of "reality TV" is to argue that its success is possibly the price of survival for contemporary documentary (Winston 2000: 55)

In diagram 1, the economical and social conditions causing "reality TV" and also televisual and press background have been illustrated.

---

<sup>3</sup> Rupert Murdoch born in 1932 Australian journalist, who is also known as the media tycoon. He is the main shareholder of more than 175 publications around the world. He founded Sky News TV channel in 1989. He has turned into one of the main satellite TV, film industry and the internet investors during the recent years. According to *Forbes'* list of the richest people, he is the 132<sup>nd</sup> wealthiest man in the world with \$4 billion of net capital.

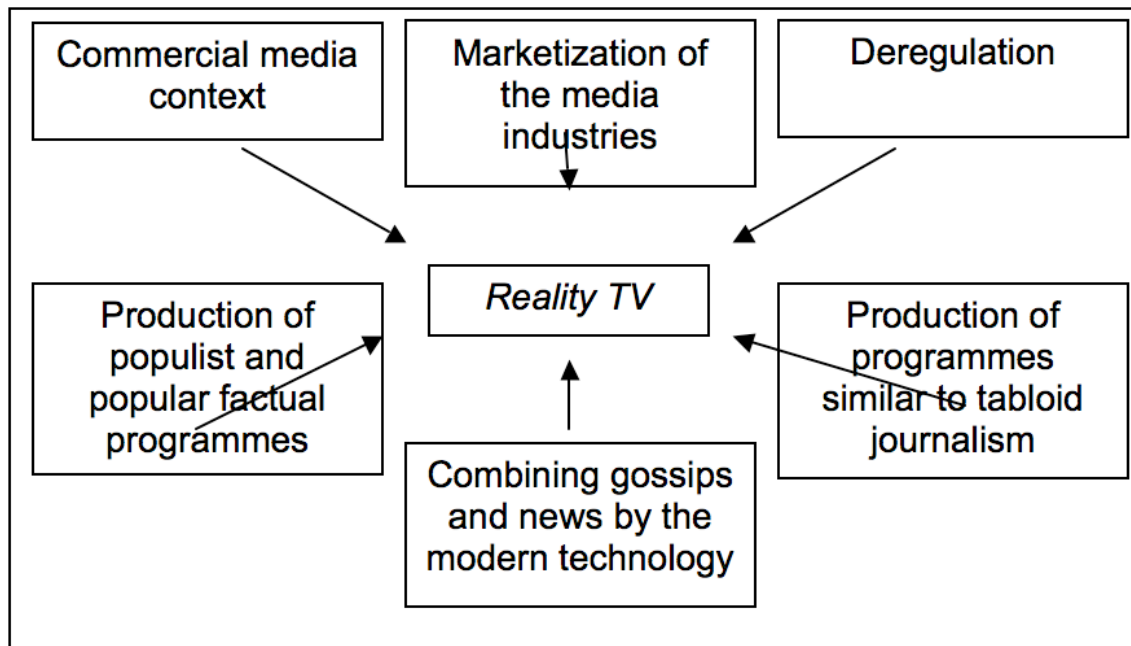


Diagram 1: The emergence of reality TV

### **The relationship between TV documentary and factual programming in form and content**

How does the form and content of documentary television connect with factual programming? What relationship exists between the development of TV documentary and the development of factual programming? Although this may be an uneasy relationship, nevertheless, we cannot understand “reality TV” without considering its place within the context of other types of TV programmes as both categories defy simple definitions. Just as “reality TV” is a broad category that is difficult to define, the category of documentary also escapes any tight generic definition, and what we understand by “documentary” is always dependent on the broader context of the kinds of audiovisual documentation currently in circulation’ (Corner 2002: 125).

The types of documentary television directly relevant to reality programming include documentary journalism, documentary realism, and, in particular, observational documentary. Documentary journalism addresses topical subjects in a series format, using journalistic conventions, and usually involving the quest of a presenter/reporter delving behind the headlines (Corner 1995: 84).

Observational realism, which is a ‘set of formal markers that confirm to us that what we are watching is a record of an ongoing, and at least partly media-independent and expository realism, which is a ‘ “rhetoric of accuracy and truth” that many television documentaries variously draw on’. Both types of realism ask the audience to register the techniques used to observe real life (for example, hand-held cameras), or the way in which an argument is presented to us (for example, the interpretation of evidence)

The issues of realism, accuracy and truth in documentary are complex, in terms of both production and theory; and key books, such as *Representing Reality* (Nichols 1991) or *Claiming the Real* (Winston 1995) discuss it. Reality TV’s conflicting relationship with documentary is especially apparent when we consider observational

documentary. This type of documentary emerged from “direct cinema” in the 1960s America, ‘Cinema verite’ in the 1960s France, and TV documentary in the 1970s Britain. Stella Bruzzi comments that observational documentary relies on the use of lightweight, portable cameras and tends to deal with current events; events that are unfolding in front of the camera (Bruzzi 2001: 130). This technique clearly influenced the ‘fly-on-the-wall’ feel of docu-soaps. Documentaries like *An American Family* (Craig Gilbert, USA, 1972) or *Police* (Roger Graef, UK, 1982) are antecedents to docu-soaps such as *The Real World* (USA, MTV, 1991–), or *The Cruise* (UK, BBC, 1998). As Winston remarks: the docu-soaps focus on bastardization of reality. There are even traces of observational documentary in reality game shows such as *Big Brother*, although its claims to observe real life are heavily subsumed within the game show format (Winston 2000:45).

### **“Reality TV” Category**

The category of reality TV is commonly used to describe a range of popular factual programming which has a variety of styles and techniques associated with reality TV, such as non-professional actors, unscripted dialogue, hand-held cameras, seeing events unfold as they are happening in front of the camera. However, the treatment of “reality” in reality programming has changed as the genre has developed over the past decade. Jason Mittell argues for an examination of television genres as ‘cultural categories, unpacking the processes of definition, interpretation, and evaluation that constitute these categories’ in order to better understand ‘how genres work to shape our media experiences’. The process of categorizing reality TV highlights the inherent problems for the television industry, scholars and audiences in defining a genre that by its very nature is concerned with multiple generic participation, and constant regeneration. (Mittell 2001: 19–20)

Television usually cannibalizes itself feeding off successful genres and formats in order to create new hybrid programmes. As Brunsdon remarks: It is the hybridization of successful genres that gives reality TV such strong market value. The soap opera and observational documentary came together to create docu-soaps. The game show and observational documentary came together to create reality game programmes that in turn dominated primetime schedules. (Brunsdon 2001:55)

Perhaps the most traditional industry term for “reality TV” is “factual entertainment”. The term usefully merges factual programming with entertainment-based television; and highlights hybridization, a common generic feature of most reality programmes. Another term is that of popular factual, a term that links popular audiences with a variety of factual television genres and formats. The industry terms of “factual entertainment” and “popular factual television” are umbrella categories for a range programmes.

### **“Reality TV” definition from televisual scholars**

Most television scholars who discuss “reality TV” tend to include a variety of television genres in their definitions of the ‘reality genre’ Precisely because reality TV borrows from so many different existing genres. Dovey (2000: 28), for example, in his book *Freakshow: First Person Media and Factual Television*, considers the proliferation of “subjective, autobiographical and confessional modes of expression”



within infotainment, docu-soaps and talk shows. Humm (1998: 34) is also interested in first-person media, but charts the trend in 'real people shows' to light entertainment, lifestyle and game shows, as well as documentary.

Brunsdon (2001: 66) discuss popular factual television in relation to two main strands – docu-soap and lifestyle programmes. For some scholars, even the subgenres within reality TV are the result of a complex borrowing from other television genres. Turner (2001: 7) describes lifestyle programmes as containing 'the following television genres: game shows, soap opera, "reality TV", observational documentary, confessional talk shows, talk shows, cooking and gardening advice programmes'

Hartley defines "infotainment" as a combination of lifestyle, "reality TV", tabloid news, investigative journalism, talk shows and animal series. He believes the television industry pushes the boundaries of popular factual television to create new hybrid formats. (Hartley 2001: 77) Corner touched on one of the core issues in the definition of "reality TV": by its very nature popular factual entertainment sits in the spaces between fact and fiction (Corner 2000:158). Jane Roscoe and Craig Hight (2001), have identified the flexible, self-reflexive, and limitless appeal of fact/fiction formats assert that: "... rather than thinking about a 'fact/fiction dichotomy', they think about documentary as existing along a fact-fictional continuum, this way each text constructs relationships with both factual and fictional discourses' (Roscoe 2001: 7).

Their perspective on documentary draws on existing arguments within documentary studies about the evidential status of documentary as a record of reality, and/or a creative treatment of reality:

"Documentary does not provide an unmediated view of the world, nor can it live up to its claims to be a mirror on society. Rather, like any fictional text, it is constructed with a view to producing certain versions of the social world ... Even though we may agree that documentary representations are as constructed as fictional ones, the stance that documentary takes toward the social world is one that is grounded on a belief that it can access the real." (Roscoe 2001: 8)

On the whole, the common ground between most theories is the connection between fiction and fact in programmes which are grounded on fact reflection and at the same time intend to make a connection between documentary aspects and contemporary TV documentary programmes like the vast set of "reality TV".

### **"Reality TV" generations**

The production of the first reality TV generation started in the early 1990s and was mostly influenced by police incidents and rescue services. As examples, we can mention *Rescue 911*, *American detective*, *Top cops*, *Code 3* in America and *999* and *Police camera* in England.

The second generation of "reality TV" began with the production of *Big brother* series in the Netherlands in 1999. The distinctive characteristic of this generation was placing people in challenging conditions and testing them in unpredictable situations. Ian Aitken comments as follows:

The reason of this phase's emergence is featuring *The real world* on MTV channel and also *Expedition Robinson* which was produced in style of *The survivor* on Switzerland's TV. As well as competitions about perseverance and entanglement on Japan's TV that compelled the participant to do dangerous things. ( Aitken 2006: 1105)

The third generation of "reality TV" started in 2001. Aitken comments as follows:

"While media scholars were predicting the downfall of "reality TV" the third season of *Big Brother* on BBC channel 4 was unprecedentedly successful. It seems "reality TV" is not joining the history peacefully but is still developing, is still producing new subcategories and influences other media culture's genres." (Aitken 2006: 1106)

Unlike the primary and traditional documentary which considers education, training and expressing social problems as its fundamental duties, it insists on meticulous reflection of historical backgrounds and considers informing people as a priority. Under mentioned circumstances, it sets providing serious thinkable thought-provoking insights as its primary goal; reality TV insists on integrating the following aspects in sequence: entertainment, notifying and training.

### **Factual television programmes**

This category is consisted of programmes which in the following forms show non-professional actors in different contexts and filming situations:

- Factual programming
- Docudramas
- Docu-soaps
- Talk shows
- Lifestyle programming
- Law and order programming

The objectives of the mentioned programmes are showing the reality, narrating events that have happened before or showing people who work or live in narrative series. It seems like TV technology and programming techniques in such examples, as an impartial media are used to show the characters and situations which currently exist or even would exist if such programmes were not produced.

### **Factual programming**

*Big Brother* is the most famous example of such TV programmes. A "reality TV" show in which selected people from the society appear in a house which is built particularly for this show and are aware that they are filmed around the clock. The first series of *Big brother* was featured in the Netherlands in the spring 1999 and was produced by Endemol television Production Company owned by John de Mol<sup>4</sup>. Such programmes were sold successfully around the globe and its value to appeal to audience was unfolded after CBS channel offered Endemol \$ 20 million to buy the show's rights. Generally, this show combines different genres ingredients:

---

<sup>4</sup> Jon de Mol born in 1955 is a media tycoon in the Netherlands, Europe and America. He is the founder of two companies: *Endemol* and *Talpa*. He is also an economic tycoon in Germany

- 1- It is a contest which has a big prize.
- 2- It is a narrative series which emphasizes on expressing emotions and forming minor groups in the society.
- 3- It is a documentary featuring social experience and its objective is examining the interaction patterns between people who are under “natural” or “artificial” pressure.

This latter form of realism was emphasized by the prominence of inserted sequences featuring the program’s two resident psychologists analyzing and discussing the behaviours of particular participants.

The title “Big Brother” is originated from George Orwell’s <sup>5</sup>novel “nineteen eighty four” In this novel the plot takes place in future. The citizens of an autocratic society are controlled by cameras. “Big brother is watching you” the show discusses trapping, limitation and controlling. *Big brother* was initially piloted under the title the way the society works. With participants that were trapped like mice in an experimental maze. Like a psychological egoistic ambitious test, the grand prize was in contrast with the needs of participants to gain loyalty from their opponents. The rules were imposed by the production team, and everything were arranged in a way that participants were granted the prize based on the needs, the same way that lab animals are treated to do things in return for receiving food.

### **Documentary Drama “(docudrama)**

Docudrama has been made by combining the realities and events of the contemporary society or historical incidents with the element of fiction and dramatic narration. Therefore, as we understand from the name of such shows, it is a combination of two separate categories which are always considered seperately: documentary and drama. We face various terms to describe a genre in which a historic event is presented in form of a dramatic entertainment. Docudrama is variously known as drama documentary, documentary drama, dramatized documentary and faction (a blend of “fact” and “fiction”). In other words, we are not facing a consistent genre but a group of similar genres. Nevertheless, we should use “docudrama” to include all of them. Without considering the characters, the events are rooted in reality. For example, *death of a princess* (ITV 1980) which is about the true assassination of a Hungarian-Austrian princess, revelation of more new details about the First World War are reconstructed, however, based on what principles are docu-soaps produced?

Such shows generically seek bringing up real or historic characters.

### **Docu-soap**

Docu-soap combines observation and interpretation of reality, used in documentary, with continuous narration focused on a group of characters in soap opera. Docu-soap observes ordinary people and places this observation in dramatic narration structure and this way points out people’s everyday lifestyle and also focuses on game and narration.

---

<sup>5</sup> George Orwell (1903-1950) English journalist and writer , he is most famous for his two novels: *Animal Farm* (1945) and *nineteen eighty-four* (1949) Orwell’s works are about criticizing communist government model

Docu-soap is a genre between documentary and drama. The subjects of docu-soap are drawn from the core of the society. These are neither powerful elites nor powerless social outcasts. They are typically employed in service sectors jobs, hotel staff, marketers, drivers or sales assistants who deal with the public. They are like “us”, like their audience they are ordinary; however, their presence in TV distinguishes them from us and they occupy a middle position between being ordinary and being a celebrity. Docu-soap focuses on another kind of middle class by documenting the subject’s private and business lives and this way crosses the line between both experiences. For Graeme Burton: docu-soap “stands for a growing use of viewers to entertain the viewers; an approach familiar from the game-show genre and the use of studio audience. It creates the illusion that television recognizes its audience and works for its audience” (Burton 2000: 159)

### **Talk show**

Such shows are TV production innovations in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Such programming became a constituent of America’s evening shows in the 1950s. And gradually, talk shows became a fundamental part of TV documentary in the 1980s. Such shows which are mostly organized through conversations and focus on representing various types of live and unscripted dialogues. Talk-shows are commonly run by a host.

Although such shows seem unscripted, they are not the presentation of an open conversation but the main discussion topics are organized by the crew and script writers of the show based on particular televisual conversation formulas; therefore, they are strongly structured.

Talk-shows are also known as “round-table” shows, are a combination of two groups of TV programmes: news and entertainment shows.

Talk shows are often identified by the host's name in the title. Pointing out the host’s name is of vital importance. Hosts like: Mike Wallace, Phil Donahue, Oprah Winfrey and Barbara Walters are some of the most well-known hosts of such shows.

The importance of such shows has had an exponential and considerable growth, and their hosts have played an influential role in the society. The hosts usually talk about cultural, social, political and artistic ideals with the power of a politician or an expert. They have changed into citizen’s spokesmen and representative in history. In this case, they are authorized as a serious investigator or humorous character to investigate or mock any cases they wish. Of course, this authority exists as long as they play their roles within their own roles.

### **Lifestyle programming**

The primary goal of such shows is providing information and training. However, such programmes influence informing and training by different visual techniques. Therefore, the showmaker tries to focus on developing the aspects which cause more joy. Joy of watching enables the viewers to face the news and documentaries programming as entertainment. The intention of programmes called “lifestyle” is teaching practical skills. Skills such as cooking, decorating homes and gardens or

clothes. Such programmes enable the viewers to ignore the training part if they want to and treat them as entertaining shows. Therefore, the undeniable purpose of such shows is entertainment but in a documentary-like form. In such programmes, various expertise is largely used, for example, to improve the decoration of a house like *Changing rooms* (BBC since 1994) or addresses the techniques to decorate or improve the garden like *Earth: the power of the planet* (BBC since 1994) or discusses the appearance and the way people dress like *What not to wear* (BBC since 1994). In recent years, such programmes have improved in terms of popularity which is related to general life standards and increase of welfare level during the 1980s and 1990s. John Ellis notes:

Lifestyle programming is the reference for consumerism to be added to people's personality. People learn throughout these shows how to find solutions for needs which are caused by the same shows. Solutions which cause providing practical behaviour in the society. Schedulers seek practical behaviour patterns to visualize those solutions. (Ellis 2002: 212)

Most lifestyle programmes have fine features, subtle editing and an intensive rhythm and in recent years they use dramatic elements to increase the attractiveness of the shows.

### **“Law and Order” programming**

Concerns arising from the increase of crime and social unrest caused more control on people's behaviour and public places, in the 1980, to prevent crime and felony. In 1984, such policies were transmitted to TV and the first series of “law and order” programmes named *Crimewatch* was produced. This show provided a chance for watching and also being watched. This show often features crimes which have been reported in the press. To do so, all TV facilities and expressive capacities such as heavy and military music, rapid editing and quarrel and fight scenes are used. Such programmes also receive aid from modelling crimes with narration, emphasizing on particular details of the events and shocking the audience to engage them to solve the cases by dramatic narration.

### **Conclusion**

The rise of reality TV came at a time when networks were looking for a quick fix solution to economic problems within the cultural industries. Increased costs in the production of drama, sitcom with fix characters and comedy, unscripted popular factual programming became a viable economic option during the 1990s. The deregulation and marketization of media industries, especially in America and Europe, also contributed to the rise of reality TV, as it performed well in a competitive, multi-channel environment. Reality TV has its roots in journalism and tabloid journalism, but it owes its greatest debt to documentary television.

“Reality TV” programmes have played a key role in developing the language of documentary by using documentary filmmaking techniques and combining them with narrative expression of the subjects rooted in everyday-life situations. The unique capability and flexibility of “reality TV” to borrow and cannibalize different

production genres to create new hybrid structures, is the unique feature of TV documentary in the period under review.

The main formants of reality programming – infotainment, docu-soap, lifestyle, talk show and reality game show – were successful in the 1990s and early 2000s because they drew on existing popular genres, such as soap opera or game shows, to create hybrid programmes. These hybrid formats focused on telling stories about real people and real events in an entertaining style, usually foregrounding visuals, characterization and narrative above all else. The ratings success of infotainment, docu-soaps, lifestyle and reality game shows is testament to the mass appeal of entertainment stories about real people caught on camera. All in all, reality programming is an extraordinary success story, an example of television's capability to cannibalize itself in order to survive in a media environment at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, So that without doing away with traditional factual programming it has led to the growing popularity of TV documentary. The achievements of “reality TV” in two areas of form and content, contains considerable achievements in the realm of TV documentary amongst people. These achievements in terms of form, besides making new expressive forms in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, is the evolution of the process which TV documentary started in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Using documentary films techniques such as impartial observation of the events, hunting moments and recording people's reactions by hidden camera techniques, using non-professional actors and combining them with dramatic narration of fictional TV, “reality TV” has provided a new horizon beyond the route of TV documentary. On the one hand, it indicates the new capacities of documentary TV in combining the fields of fictional documentary; on the other hand, it indicates the interests and needs of the contemporary society in different fields of sociology, psychology and economy. This success is the result of extraordinary flexibility of “reality TV” in the constant search for designing new methods of narration of TV documentary which based on the needs of the society, sometimes combines the foundations of the traditional definitions of TV documentary and fiction TV and sometimes shatters them and provides new foundations for them.

## References:

1. Aitken, Ian (2006) *Realist Film Theory and Cinema*, Manchester: Manchester University Press.
2. Aitken, Ian (2005) *Encyclopedia of the Documentary Film*, London: Routledge.
3. Bird, Elizabeth (2000) *Tabloidization in U.S. Television Market*, London: Rowman and Little Filed.
4. Biressi, Anita (2001) *Crime, Fear and the Law in True Crime Stories*, 4 Hampshire: Palgrave.
5. Brenston, Sam and Cohen, Reuben (2003) *Shooting People :Adventure In Reality TV*, London : Verso Books.
6. Brunson, Charlott (2001) *Screen Taste* , London : Routledge.
7. Bruzzi, Stella (2006) *New Documentry :A critical Introduction* , London: Routledge .
8. Bondebjerg , Ib (2002) *The Mediation of Everyday Life* , Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press.
9. Chapman, Jane. (2009). *Issues in Contemporary Documentary*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
10. Corner , John (1995) *Television Form and Public Address* , London : Edward Arnold .
11. \_\_\_\_\_ (2001) *Performing the Real in Television and New media*, London : sage.
12. \_\_\_\_\_ (2002) *Documentary Value*, Copenhagen: Museum Tsculanum Press.
13. Dovey , John (2001) ‘ Big Brother’ , in G. Creeber, (e.d) *The TelevisionGenre Book* , London : BFI.
14. Ellis, John (2002) *Seeing Thing: Television in the Age of Uncertainty* , London: IB Tauris.
15. Fiske ,John (1992) *Journalism and Popular Culture* ,London : sage.
16. \_\_\_\_\_ (1987) *Television Culture* , London :Methuen Press.
17. Glynn , Kevin (2000 ) *Tabolid Culture : Trash Taste ,Popular Power , and the Transformation of American Television* , London : Duke University Press .
18. Hartley,John (2001) *The Infotainment Debate* ,London : British Film Institute .

19. Hesmondhalgh , David (2002) The Cultural Industries , London : sage.
20. Hill ,Annette (2005) Reality TV , London : Routledge .
21. Jermin , D and Holmes ,S (2004) Understanding Reality Television, London : Routledge.
22. Kilborn ,Richard (2003) Staging the Real , Manchester : Manchester University Press.
23. \_\_\_\_\_ (1994) How Real Can You Get? : Recent Developments in Reality Television , London : Sage .
24. Langer ,John (1998) Tabloid Television :Popular Journalism and the Other News, London : Routledge.
25. Liddiment ,David (2003) Reality Tv,s Ultimate Trick , London : sage .
26. Neale ,Steve (2001) The Television Genre Book , London : British Film Institute .
27. Nichols ,Bill (1991) Representing Reality: Issues and Concept in Documentary , Bloomington and Indianapolis : Indiana University Press .
28. \_\_\_\_\_ (1994) Blurred Boundaries : Question of Meaning in Contemporary Culture , Bloomington and Indianapolis : Indiana University Press.
29. Roscoe ,Jane (2001) Big Brother Australia , London : Wall Flower Press .
30. Tinknell ,Estella and Raghuram ,Pavarti (2004) Big Brother :R econfiguring the Active Audience of Cutural Studies ,London : Routledge .
31. Turner , Graeme (2001) Gener , Format and Live Television , London : British Film Institute .
32. Winston ,Brian (2000) Lies, Damn Lies and Documentary , London : British Film Institute.