

REALITY SHOW AS A CONTROVERSIAL FORMAT OF SOCIALISATION

Zora HUDÍKOVÁ – Hana PRAVDOVÁ

ABSTRACT:

The media fulfil various functions in society. For the audience and for society, the priority of these functions may be different. In terms of importance for society, their socialisation function is also important. Socialisation through the media assumes its dominance when there is a dysfunction of primary socialisation or at certain stages of human development. From a societal perspective, their influence as a potential shaper of society's culture in the context of secondary socialisation is relevant. At present, audio-visual production in particular is dominant. It is attractive to all generations, as it provides both information and entertainment in a way that is convenient for the audience. Television offers different types of programmes with higher or lower value and quality of media content. Reality shows have a relatively significant presence in the programming structure. This television format on the border of non-fiction and fiction brings in different values, formulas and elements. The authors of the study analyse the various positive and controversial elements of reality shows. They focus on trash reality shows, which are more prominently represented in the autumn programming structure. In their interpretation, they not only draw on current findings, but also use their years of experience and knowledge from research in this field. The emphasis is on the potential impact on the socialisation of sensitive audience groups as well as on the culture of society as a whole.

KEY WORDS:

controversy, ethics, extremity, reality shows, socialisation, television

1 Introduction: Television Production and Socioculture

Since its beginnings, television production has presented models of behaviour that have become a relevant factor in shaping the models of culture of a given society. It has thus built on film and documentary production. On the one hand, it has captured an authentic image of reality in a compacted form; on the other hand, it has presented stories from history, the present, and the future, inspired by reality or absolutely fantasised. Jiráček and Köpplová define the media as an institutional mediator of socially accepted knowledge and cultural values to the audience. They state that it is both the mediation of testimonies about reality with the goal being to offer the uninformed the opportunity to be present, and the presentation of something fictitious, created by a person



Assoc. Prof. PhDr. Zora Hudíková, PhD.
Faculty of Mass Media Communication
University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava
Nám. J. Herdu 2
917 01 Trnava
Slovak Republic
zora.hudikova@ucm.sk

Zora Hudíková is an Associate Professor at the Faculty of Mass Media Communication at the University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava, Slovakia and head of the Department of Artistic Communication. She specialises in media psychology and media and communication studies. Her research and teaching activities include topics such as media psychology, the personality of the creator and the personality of the percipient, cognitive processing of media content, creativity in media and artistic production, the effects of media production, management of creative teams, radio and television journalism, sociocultural aspects of the market environment and media performance.



Prof. PhDr. Hana Pravdová, PhD.
Faculty of Mass Media Communication
University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava
Nám. J. Herdu 2
917 01 Trnava
Slovak Republic
hana.pravdova@ucm.sk

Hana Pravdová is a Professor at the Faculty of Mass Media Communication at the University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava, Slovakia and head of the Department of Language Communication. She specialises in media, communication and cultural studies. Her research and teaching activities focus on the areas of media culture, digital games and gaming principles in cultural history, the media and cultural industries, globalisation and media localisation, journalistic genres, multiplatform journalism and editorial systems in the media.

or people.¹ The media products created showed and show patterns of behaviour of individuals and/or groups in different relationships and in different situations. Television, with its more diverse media production, has brought about additional media products, thus expanding the range of publicly presented social roles, behaviour patterns and models. These have reached a large number of media recipients – viewers – thanks to the wide reach of television. In this context, Štroblová emphasises that television is “*not only a source of information, but also provides the viewer with excitement and the illusion of happiness (...) It can therefore also become a habit or a necessity over time. It also creates a sense of immediacy and reality, so that some viewers even believe that the events or stories they see happened to them and because they saw them on television*”.² We add that such a phenomenon occurs especially among young television viewers who do not yet have sufficient experience, completed social development and sufficiently developed critical thinking.

Television has been an important agent of socialisation since its beginnings and has sometimes even replaced its essential stage – primary socialisation. Jiráček and Köppllová state that the media significantly contribute to the socialisation of late modern man, i.e., to the process by which an individual integrates into their society.³ Rosengren expresses the opinion that the importance of mass media as agents of socialisation is growing, not only in the process of secondary socialisation, of which we are all subjects.⁴ Therefore, the media content produced and presented by the mass media is very important,⁵ as is their social responsibility in this context. Urban, Dubský and Mudza draw attention to documents defining the social responsibility of the media. They further state that the media have a social responsibility and it is a public matter that they should protect public interests (not only pursue their economic profit), be free, self-regulating and unquestioningly regulated by ethical rules in their work.⁶ Sámellová states that accountability is the relationship of a public actor to the public good, to public service, and thus to the public interest, and concerns all those who intervene in public discourse.⁷ The significance of the action of television and its power is multiplied by the combination of all three means of mass communication – static and dynamic image, sound and writing into one whole, which most closely reflects the real perception in everyday life.⁸ At the same time, it offers a wide range of situations and relationships that can prepare the viewer for different life situations, create a certain, albeit modified, image of the world and life in it, and generally educate and develop the viewer. Sometimes the media even substitute or correct a poorly stimulating home environment, broadening their horizons in various areas that the family alone cannot provide. Hradiská states that “*the media have a vast potential for influencing the behaviour, opinions and attitudes of the audience*”.⁹ And since television offers both nonfiction and fiction productions, it presents realistic models, but also ideally positive examples or unwanted negative models, with the consequences of such behaviour (in fiction, for example, good triumphs over evil, the antagonist is defeated, dies or transforms their behaviour).

Television, like other media, has several functions: informational, socialising, establishment of continuity in terms of preserving cultural heritage, entertaining and persuasive.¹⁰ According to Jiráček and Köppllová, “*the content of media production undoubtedly reflects various aspects of the cultural environment in which the media operate – they are part of it – they are influenced by it and influence it themselves*”.¹¹ Despite the growing influence of social media,¹² television still maintains its prominent position and influence within both

traditional and digital media. Therefore, it can be said that its reach is still the most significant. Given the effect that the media have, television should also have a social responsibility, as it shapes the culture of a given society. However, the primary aim of commercial television is to make a profit, mainly by selling advertising space. This requires sufficient viewership. Today, the entertainment function of television is predominant, possibly still in conjunction with information. The programme structure is dominated by infotainment programming to a large extent. According to Postman, television offers its viewers a wide range of topics, has minimal demands on comprehension and is mostly aimed at satisfying.¹³ Radošinská, in the context of selecting specific media production and at the same time based on media theories, states that the hedonistic search for entertainment in media production results from the need for subjective or physiological well-being, while eudaimonic preferences for entertainment are related to the need to search for the meaning of life, personal growth and are connected to self-expression and self-reflection.¹⁴ In this context, in the programming line-up of contemporary Slovak television we can find a large number of different knowledge competitions where actors and showbiz persons compete. On the one hand, these are types of reality shows which can present positive examples of behavioural patterns. On the other hand, they stand on the edge of dishonesty, may disrupt human dignity or offer unwanted role models without correct commentary. We are referring to several types of TV content of domestic and foreign origin, or to a number of TV news reports which in their form carry elements of a video clip and in their content are superficial.

The aim of the present study is to point out the positive and negative elements of trash reality shows, which currently occupy a relatively large range of the programming structure of the Slovak commercial broadcasters *TV Markíza* and *TV JOJ*, both during prime time and during the evening broadcast time of the autumn 2022 broadcasting structure, and are replayed in the afternoon, when they are freely available to any audience. The authors analyse the above issues in the context of potential threats to young viewers in the context of media socialisation. The findings presented are the result of their years of quantitative and qualitative research on the topic, as well as close monitoring of currently broadcast episodes up to the submission date of the study in the autumn of 2022. Specifically, they focus, for example, on analysis of the interactions between the contestants and the values presented in them, verbal and non-verbal support, forms of expressing affection, responsibility in completing the assigned tasks, mutual aid, intrigue and slander, appreciation and respect, congruence in expressing oneself, slander and intrigue, phlegmatism and ignorance, dereliction of duty, among others. The authors perceive the potentially vulnerable target group to be children in the second stage of primary school and teenagers (and, of course, younger age groups), because children and young people at this age reject parental authority that might have a corrective influence, are prone to try things that belong to the ‘adult world’, are resistant to adults, place an emphasis on success in their peer group coupled with uncritical self-presentation, have underdeveloped critical thinking and are not yet socially mature. At the same time, the analysed trash reality shows are attractive to the aforementioned audience.

2 Media as a Relevant Socialising Agent

Humans are social creatures and not only their survival but also their success depends on how they can learn and master various social roles.¹⁵ Throughout psychological development, a person acquires important social roles at different stages, but they also acquire knowledge of various other patterns and models that equip them for the potential opportunities that different life situations may bring. At the same time, they learn and adopt the norms and values of the culture in which they live. According to Rokeach, two kinds of values are important for the life of an individual, their interaction with other people and the quality functioning of the whole society – instrumental and terminal values. Instrumental values are related to a certain way of

1 JIRÁK, J., KÖPPLLOVÁ, B.: *Masová média*. Prague : Portál, 2015, p. 82.

2 ŠTROBLOVÁ, S.: *Film a televízie jako audiovizuální sprostředkování světa*. Prague : Jan Amos Komenský University, 2009, p. 92.

3 JIRÁK, J., KÖPPLLOVÁ, B.: *Masová média*. Prague : Portál, 2015, p. 21.

4 ROSENGREN, K. E.: *Communication: An Introduction*. Thousand Oaks : Sage Publications, 2000, p. 144.

5 See also: SOLÍK, M.: *Semiotické univerzum: Komunikáty ako mapy každodenných významov*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2018.

6 Compare to: URBAN, L., DUBSKÝ, J., MUDZA, K.: *Masová komunikace a veřejné mínění*. Prague : Grada Publishing, 2011;

CROTEAU, D., HOYNES, W., CHILDRESS, C. C.: *Media/Society – Technology, Industries, Content, and Users*. Thousand Oaks : Sage Publications, 2021.

7 SÁMELOVÁ, A., KRISTOF, P., BELIANSKÁ, M.: *Osobná zodpovednosť v postmodernej verejnej komunikácii*. Bratislava : Comenius University, 2021, p. 8.

8 See more: MINÁRIKOVÁ, J., BLAHÚT, D., VIŠŇOVSKÝ, J.: *Hi-Tech and Eye-Catching Alike: Information in the Multiplatform Era*. In *European Journal of Media, Art & Photography*, 2020, Vol. 8, No. 2, p. 118-126.

9 HRADISKÁ, E.: *Vplyv médií*. In KOLLÁRIK, T. (ed.): *Sociálna psychológia*. Bratislava : Comenius University, 2008, p. 482.

10 JIRÁK, J., KÖPPLLOVÁ, B.: *Masová média*. Prague : Portál, 2015, p. 83.

11 JIRÁK, J., KÖPPLLOVÁ, B.: *Masová média*. Prague : Portál, 2015, p. 83.

12 See: GÁLIK, S., GÁLIKOVÁ TOLNAIOVÁ, S.: *Cyberspace as a New Existential Dimension of Man*. In ABU-TAIEH, E., EL MOUATASIM, A., AL HADID, I. H. (eds.): *Cyberspace*. London : InTech Open, 2020, p. 13-25.

13 POSTMAN, N.: *Ubažiť sa k smrti*. Prague : Mladá fronta, 2010, p. 105.

14 RADOŠINSKÁ, J.: *Mediálna zábava v 21. storočí*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2016, p. 34.

15 Remark by authors: The issue of media socialisation of children, teenagers and adolescents is currently addressed by many authors. See, for example: VÁGNEROVÁ, M.: *Vývojová psychologie: Dětství a dospívání*. Prague : Karolinum, 2012; VÁGNEROVÁ, M.: *Vývojová psychologie*. Prague : Portál, 2000; SOMMER, P.: *Developmental Psychology*. Oklahoma City : Draft2digital, 2022.

behaviour, terminal values are connected to the final state of an individual. Instrumental values help us to achieve goal values. Among instrumental values Rokeach ranks: ambition (diligence, aspiration); tolerance (open-mindedness); competence (ability, efficiency); joy (cheerfulness); purity (orderliness); courage (standing up for one's convictions); forbearance (being ready to forgive others); helping (caring for the welfare of others); honesty (sincerity, truthfulness); imagination (boldness, creativity); independence (self-sufficiency, self-reliance); intellect (intelligence, reflectiveness); logicity (consistency, rationality); love (tenderness, devotion); obedience (consciousness of duty, respect); courtesy (good manners); responsibility (reliability) and self-control (restraint, discipline).¹⁶ Terminal values guide and influence the behaviour of persons, being related to: a comfortable life (a prosperous life); an exciting life (an active life); a sense of having achieved something (a lasting contribution); a world at peace (free from wars and conflicts); equality (brotherhood, equal chances for everyone); security for the family (taking care of loved ones); freedom (independence, freedom to make decisions); happiness (contentment); inner harmony (harmony with self); mature love (spiritual-sexual intimacy); national security (security from attacks); pleasantness (pleasant, pleasure-filled life); self-esteem (respect for self); social recognition (respect, admiration); true friendship (close camaraderie); wisdom (deep understanding of life).¹⁷ According to Vágnerová, the development and formation of the human psyche is gradual and there are some differences between women and men. Women's cerebral hemispheres are less specialised and the maturation of brain structures in the early stages of development is faster in them. They also have a greater density of connections between the left and right hemispheres. These characteristics enable them to acquire skills requiring coordination of different brain areas more quickly and easily. Therefore, women in the early stages of development learn and acquire different knowledge and skills more quickly. In contrast, the male brain is more asymmetrically arranged and matures more slowly in the early stages. At the same time, they experience earlier functional differentiation, so it is more difficult for males in the early stages of their development to achieve the necessary interplay of functions of both hemispheres. This may be the reason for slower and more difficult learning even at the beginning of schooling.¹⁸

The human psyche develops continuously. Different psychological characteristics and processes are gradually formed. Consequently, the person's interaction with the environment changes, which stimulates further development. Conversely, the behaviour of an individual during the transition from one developmental phase to another changes mostly by leaps and bounds, i.e., there is a visible, more significant and more fundamental change.¹⁹ The psychological development of a person is divided into differently long periods, so-called developmental phases, which follow each other. For each person, the individual stages may be influenced by hereditary dispositions and the conditions in which they live. The development of some abilities and skills is most disposed to occur in some of the developmental stages. If a person had not acquired these experiences at a given period, they would have found it more difficult to develop the abilities in question and they might have been distorted. This also applies to the development of social skills, the basis of which is the integration of the norms and values of the society (socialisation) in which one lives, as well as the mastery of the social roles necessary for functioning in society or fulfilling the individual's personal ambitions. In the past, the only providers of role models were the family and the communities in which the individual moved.

Today, the media world, especially television and social media, plays a very important role. The media provide information and models of behaviour that encourage imitation, and, in this respect, they are also a means of socialisation. Mass media and their effects are always part of the cultural context of a given society. By introducing and encouraging the portrayal of certain themes, by treating them in a concrete and specific way, they give children and adolescents the impression that they are expressing a common cultural norm. The child understands them as a standard and does not question their validity at all. For them, the story presented in the media is reality because it resembles reality. Children at a young age often do not distinguish the difference between fiction and reality. And certain patterns of behaviour are also adopted subconsciously. In the framework of socialisation, television has an important position already from preschool age. By school age in

the third grade, children can read so well that reading can be a source of both information and entertainment. Naturally, however, there is a significant preference for watching television, film and video, and this is because these are visual media.²⁰ Although sound in the form of speech, music or autonomous sounds is also part of this media content, it is the visual content that naturally dominates people's perception. Visual stimuli are processed by the right hemisphere of the brain (and to a lesser extent, in relation to the spoken word, by the left). The perception of visual content is also very comfortable because the initial visual perception is mostly holistic and instinctive, its comprehension is usually not a problem (one understands what is going on quite quickly even if one does not understand the words), and one does not have to think much about the eventual verbal content unless the viewer wants to.²¹

Since younger children have more difficulty in understanding linguistic symbols and meanings, it is easier for them to perceive fictional stories, presented only visually, using adequate authentic sounds and only a minimal number of words. Such stories are relatively closer to a child's world. Older children are better able to decode and understand the content of a story presented only verbally. On the negative side, researchers have found that many children who frequently watch television or video do not listen to the accompanying words at all.²² For them, the visually perceived story resembles reality and children perceive it as real. They consider the information they receive in it to be equivalent to other information and experiences. What is only 'as if' they consider to be part of reality and often/occasionally behave accordingly. Since children do not have to exert themselves when watching audio-visual stories, watching them encourages a passive receptive approach to media and is a source of so-called passive entertainment.²³ At this age, spontaneous learning by imitation is still used quite strongly. The behaviour that happens in the family is also a model for the behaviour of the younger pupil. If the family does not function well, the child at younger school age becomes fixated on the behaviour of their media heroines and heroes, who give them security and replace real-world authority figures. At the same time, children also imitate very intensely what their classmates do. Media programmes model the child's personality by showing them stories where specific ways of behaviour are presented, resulting from specific norms, roles or different ways of communicating. The most easily influenced group is school children around the age of 9.²⁴ The reason is that children at that age are already intellectually mature enough to understand and remember the plot and the characteristics of the main actors in standard television programmes. On the other hand, they are not yet at a level of intellectual or emotional maturity that is sufficiently critical and able to differentiate the meanings of the stories more accurately. The persistent tendency of children to empathise with characters they like may also be a block to the use and development of critical thinking when watching media content. Indeed, the suggestibility of schoolchildren is still quite high. The child viewer perceives a story intensely and especially perceives what is attractive and significant about it. In addition, they project their own personal experiences, current interests or problems, as well as their own personality traits into the plot.

The choice of a particular programme or medium tends to be socially conditioned. Identification with peers and a strong need to share the same experiences with them is a major influence in the choice of a programme. Watching, for example, a television programme that is popular with classmates is an activity in which the child must participate in order not to remain isolated. The need for conformity to a community of peers leads to the consumption of particular and community-specific television programmes, films, books, etc.; the group pressure is very strong. In order to gain a relevant position, it is necessary to not only know the priority media contents but also to interpret them in the spirit of the community (tendency towards

16 See: ROKEACH, M.: *Understanding Human Values*. New York : The Free Press, 2000.

17 See: ROKEACH, M.: *Understanding Human Values*. New York : The Free Press, 2000.

18 VÁGNEROVÁ, M.: *Vývojová psychologie: Děství a dospívání*. Prague : Karolinum, 2012, p. 29.

19 VÁGNEROVÁ, M.: *Vývojová psychologie: Děství a dospívání*. Prague : Karolinum, 2012, p. 30-31.

20 Remark by authors: It is perfectly natural for the youngest alpha generation to watch videos online from a young age; they operate the devices intuitively, and they know how to upload, edit, and post photos and videos on different platforms at the first level. The alpha generation is also known by some as the children of glass – the children of mobile device screens.

21 Remark by authors: We have already mentioned that a story can often be understood without sound, the recipient does not even need to perceive it.

22 See: TEINBERG, L., BELSKY, J.: *Infancy, Childhood and Adolescence*. New York : McGraw Hill, 1991.

23 Remark by authors: There is a difference in media perception between watching audio-visual stories and actively reading stories on one's own. When reading, the child processes verbal information; the left hemisphere is involved. At the same time, they must be active not only in reception but also in relation to the understanding of the story – together there is something that is given and something that has to be imagined on the basis of experience or made up according to one's own ideas.

24 KUNCZIK, M.: *Základy masové komunikace*. Prague : Karolinum, 1995, p. 174.

mainstream),²⁵ thus creating the same vision of the world under the influence of the media. Media programmes can strongly influence children's self-esteem, can serve to relieve their emotional tension or compensate for the lack of real social contacts (e.g., in long-term sick children). Children may perceive and interpret stories in different ways:

1. The child identifies with characters that resemble themselves in some way and remind them of their own life, ideally in a positive way. In this way, they relate to their own role, which they develop in an attractive way through the media story.
2. The child identifies with the ideal, which allows them to achieve, at least symbolically, something that is not available to them in reality, or to satisfy a need that is important to them and is not satisfied in real life (e.g., the unpopular child identifies with leaders and experiences power or popularity through them).
3. The child may also have a need to identify with a negatively evaluated figure who transgresses norms and does things that are generally forbidden, but which are attractive to the child. Through this identification, the child can thus experience, at least symbolically, something that would be impossible in reality, and the child is aware of this.²⁶

The second and third identification options are, in a way, risky for children, as often such identification does not remain only on a symbolic level but translates into real behaviour. However, without the media stimulus, the negative behaviour would probably not have occurred. The portrayal of violence and violent behaviour in the media therefore appears particularly problematic in this respect. Two expert approaches to such programmes can be noted. The first group emphasises that violence presented in a media story can act as an incentive for similar behaviour.²⁷ The second group of experts, on the other hand, argues that it is appropriate for children to be aware of such negative stimuli and to learn to cope with them.²⁸ Programmes containing violence, like all programmes with negative messages, are most dangerous in relation to children under the age of 12 because they are not yet able to distinguish well between the real and the symbolic, especially in stories that look real. They may become emotionally aroused by watching and act on impulse, in the same way as the aggressor in the story. At the same time, however, they are unaware of the consequences of their negative behaviour, which can be dangerous for others and for the actor themselves.²⁹ This is evidenced by many real-life stories/examples. Boys are more influenced by the aggression presented in media programmes because violence in films is usually associated with a masculine role and the aggressive individual has high prestige in society (power and self-confidence attract imitation). Violence in the media is often presented as a natural part of life. On the one hand, this is true. On the other hand, the increased frequency of such scenes leads to the misconception that it is a normal, ordinary part of life. The frequency with which a negative phenomenon is shown influences the perception of the phenomenon as normal according to the principle that what is frequent appears normal. The problem, however, is that violence is presented as a 'normal' behavioural and coping strategy that can be used as much by positive role-players as by negative ones. However, the consequences of such actions, which are associated with pain, suffering and sometimes the irreversible death of the victim, are rarely shown. It is only the one-sided portrayal of violence without consequences that makes it appear positive and not reprehensible to younger, less critical children. Parents are a major influence in such situations – whether they watch such programmes and their attitudes to aggressive scenes can be crucial.

Media socialisation is also important during adolescence. Adolescence³⁰ consists of the period of puberty, when biological transformation is more dominant and an intense psychosocial transformation begins, and the period of adolescence, when psychosocial transformation peaks. Adolescence is also marked by more mature partner relationships, with sexual intercourse being considered a normal part of such relationships. Adolescence is characterised by the search for and formation of one's own identity. It is therefore very important what role

25 See: KUNCZIK, M.: *Základy masové komunikace*. Prague : Karolinum, 1995.

26 VÁGNEROVÁ, M.: *Vývojová psychologie*. Prague : Portál, 2000, p. 139-140.

27 See: BANDURA, A.: *Principles of Behavior Modification*. New York : Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1969.

28 See also: BETTELHEIM, B.: *Pour être des parents acceptables*. Paris : Laffont, 1988.

29 KUNCZIK, M.: *Základy masové komunikace*. Prague : Karolinum, 1995, p. 215-234.

30 Remark by authors: The section on adolescence is based on: VÁGNEROVÁ, M.: *Vývojová psychologie*. Prague : Portál, 2000.

models a teenager is subject to and what behavioural patterns they consider ideal. They are hypercritical of the environment and sometimes of themselves, they tend to be controversial, and focus primarily on themselves, being egocentric. By polemicising against others, a person fulfils their unconscious need to exercise their own intellectual abilities and to get a picture of the quality of their reasoning. An individual often gets the feeling that their arguments are so clear and self-evident that everyone must understand them. They see a different opinion from their own as the result of the limitations of the communication partner, whether it be a parent or a peer. The process of adolescence takes place at different times for boys and girls. Physical attractiveness and body image play a major role because, in addition to higher self-esteem, they bring easier acceptance and higher status in the peer group. The ideal of beauty is often inaccessible to adolescents because of the physical transformation in the first stage of this change. In the later period, the body is of great importance, which is why adolescents pay great attention to it. Appearance and image become both the goal of their actions and a means to achieve status and recognition. Adolescents need to please themselves as well as others. The reason for this is to reassure themselves of their worth and to achieve social acceptance and prestige. The existence of a social norm, which is presented extensively in the media, severely limits greater individualisation in this area. The socially dictated ideal of beauty is perceived as a task to be fulfilled during adolescence, otherwise there is a risk of non-acceptance and exclusion from society. Girls, in particular, are able to engage in intense activities in the area of fulfilling sociocultural stereotypes in order to come closer to the presented and required ideal (e.g., to be very thin, to have beautiful long hair, to get a tattoo, etc.). The male ideal of beauty is not so socially binding. The tendency towards uniformity is considerable at the moment and is very strongly promoted by the media. Adolescents show their emotions more strongly than before, often cannot control them, have mood swings and do not like to show their feelings outwardly. Thinking about the future, about what the world could/should be like, is very typical of adolescence. This involves thinking about different alternatives, both real and imaginary. Adolescents tend to overestimate this way of thinking. They feel that all problems can be easily solved. However, their solutions tend to be one-sided and to emphasise the subjectively most important or significant aspect. On the other hand, the adolescents feel a great deal of insecurity, which, paradoxically, they display outwardly by radicalism towards everything that has gone before and intolerance of adults. Competition with authority and the demonstration of rejection of authority are typical features of adolescence. Such behaviour occurs in order for the adolescent to become an authority figure themselves. At the same time, there is a rejection of the existing identity and a search for and construction of a new identity. The discovery of one's own psyche is considered to be the most significant contribution of adolescence.³¹

However, this process is even more complicated and individually more significant than the evaluation of one's own appearance. To develop self-knowledge, the adolescent needs to define themselves in relation to other people, so they compare themselves intensively with them in this period. They reject the original identification patterns and seek other, more currently attractive ones. This is one of the main reasons why the social responsibility of the media is important in media socialisation. The adolescent understands that different characteristics may be displayed in different situations, that other people may judge them in different ways, that they themselves may have a different opinion, i.e., that different opinions have only relative importance. But during adolescence a person's sense of self-esteem fluctuates. This depends very much on their current state – what is the extent of their hypersensitivity, relationality and self-doubt. In the case of negative evaluation, all this leads to the belief that others do not take them seriously. And although this fear is very often unjustified, it is very difficult for a teenager to talk themselves out of it. Self-confidence, which is closely related to self-esteem, is very much socially influenced in this period, depending on acceptance and appreciation by other people, especially peers. Their opinion becomes the most important. The so-called group identity has great power. Peers serve as reference models against which to compare. At the beginning of adolescence, groups are still mostly composed of individuals of the same sex. Over time, the groups expand to larger ones with both boys and girls. The more intense the identification with the group, the greater the need for conformity to its values and norms, as well as the desire to visibly express membership in the reference group. In addition to establishing one's own norms, the group is also defined by determining the desired communication style.

31 KON, I. S.: *Hledání vlastního já*. Prague : Sloboda, 1988, p. 168.

Decoding the precise meaning of the statements with all the nuances only a member of a given society can manage, this increases the adolescent's sense of self-confidence. Thus, the peer group sets its own values, norms and ideals. It defines so-called generational standards of ideals by which it is guided. Their acceptance alone can contribute to the prestige of an individual. Nowadays, the role model is usually a popular influencer, youtuber, podcaster, actress/actor, presenter, stand-up comedian, singer, but it can also be a slightly older popular individual who impresses with their actions or behaviour. The peer group serves as a support for the identity being created. However, if the individual is insecure in the group, they cannot critically evaluate individual reactions and therefore may interpret all reactions of those around them to their detriment, they may react suspiciously and hyper sensitively. The discrepancy between ideal and reality can become a source of frustration, but on the other hand, contact with reality gradually corrects the adolescent's perception. The norms set by peers take precedence over those of the family in adolescence. The pressure to conform to them tends to be enormous and transgressing them is punished. The worst-case scenario is exclusion from the group and isolation. The choice of a role model is influenced by intelligence and sociocultural experience, which is conditioned by the overall level of the family. Towards the end of the adolescent period, more intelligent and balanced individuals already have their own style and no longer need to copy the model, even if it would be highly socially valued. This is where the completion of the adolescence process and the maturity of the personality is manifested. The individual is already able to select and critically evaluate the media programmes presented.

3 Reality Shows as an Attractive Product on the Border between Non-Fiction and Fiction

Reality shows are a popular television format that can significantly influence society's perception of expected or tolerated behaviour.³² Its essence is based on capturing participants with a hidden camera. It was first implemented by *CBS* in the United States as early as in 1948 (the TV show *Candid Camera*). Reality shows can be defined as a television genre that depicts segments of real life (e.g., in the case of a person's transformation of their appearance or housing) or quasi-real life (various trash-type reality shows, e.g., programmes in which a purposely selected group of strangers are locked up and allowed to interact). Reality shows are divided into many categories: reality shows with documentary elements, with an appointment theme, changes in appearance, changes in life, with celebrities in the lead roles, etc. Several types of reality shows include a profit for the actresses and actors or the winner. It can be a prize in kind – a change of appearance or housing or a financial benefit. The amount can sometimes be very high and thus very tempting for the participants, which can lead them to unethical tactics and behaviour, even though they are under the scrutiny of the cameras. Participants in reality shows are always purposely selected to ensure that their confrontation provides attractive and tense situations and/or because it attracts a large audience that will be willing to invest money (sometimes a lot of money) in voting at the last stage. Some reality shows feature only celebrities, others ordinary people who have decided to sell part of their privacy or personality for money. Reality shows can be enriched by additional interactions: other contestants, guests, experts, celebrities, etc. can enter the action. The contest always has precise rules defined in the licensing manuals. They also characterise specific, predetermined tasks that are designed to initiate the activity of the participants and to stir up their reactions. Often a presenter is part of the programme – they can influence the plot by their presence or the presenter can only comment on the plot from the outside (the role of a storyteller). Sometimes it just takes the form of a voice-over. Reality shows often take the form of a live broadcast; to speed up and make the action more attractive, only a montage of the most attractive scenes from a large amount of filmed material reaches the

32 See more: PAHAD, A., KARKARE, N., BHATT, M.: Influence of Reality Television Shows on Society. In *Social Science*, 2015, Vol. 5, No. 4, p. 703-705.

recipient. Different types of reality shows attract different types of viewers. For example, talent-based reality shows are watched by recipients because they like something like that (e.g., dancing, singing), they would also like to do something like that, but they do not have the talent and/or the conditions for it. When watching, they identify at least for a while with the actresses and actors. Others, in turn, like to compare their evaluation with the jury's opinions. Alternatively, they are curious to see how a particular person works out, what they can do, how far they will go, who they will overcome, etc. Trash reality shows are about observing how the participants behave, what they can handle and what emotions and relationships are revealed. According to one of the basic media rules of attraction, a topic becomes interesting to the audience when there is conflict involved – both in content and in image (e.g., when they fight or start swearing at each other). In the case of trash reality shows, the audience often demarcates itself from the participants – “*I don't behave like that, I wouldn't do that, I'm smarter, more principled, better...*” And some viewers only watch them because they are entertained by them. Creative producers, when choosing new types of reality shows or conceiving the next series of an already broadcast format, try to guess what audiences will respond positively to, what will be successful.³³ At the same time, however, through the selection of both reality shows and participants, they send strong messages to society and strongly influence what values and norms will be reflected by society as important and whether they will be perceived as characteristic of society (e.g., by foreigners who follow the media content of the country in which they are located). Thus, cheap and simple entertainment (in our case trash reality shows) is often pitted against an inspiring challenge (e.g., in a talent show or one of the relationships shows).

Today's popularity of reality shows was kick-started in 1992 by *The Real World*. The programme was based on hidden cameras recording the behaviour and interactions of strangers who had been living together for some time. The popularity of the programme was also due to the fact that the participants included prominent people who brought taboo topics to the screen. In Slovakia, the reality show era began with a dating show for young people – *Bzzz*, broadcast by *TV Markíza* in 1997 – 1998. The advent of the so-called trash reality shows dates back to 2005.³⁴ Gradually, television broadcasted more and more reality show format programmes of various kinds – trash, talent, dating, educational, transformation, etc. In 2011-2017, for example, they formed a substantial part of the programming of commercial TV channels *TV JOJ* and *TV Markíza*.

In Western cultures, from a formal point of view, there are three types of reality shows:

1. reality shows with a passive TV camera and viewers who just watch other people in their daily personal and professional activities,
2. reality shows based on hidden camera rules – random bystanders are put into pre-arranged situations,
3. competitive reality shows – contestants compete in a closed environment in a variety of disciplines. They differ from other TV competitions in that the audience participates in the results.³⁵

The following reality shows can be found in the Slovak media environment:³⁶

- trash – protagonists are isolated from the outside world, follow set rules and perform set tasks (e.g., *Farma* – in English *The Farm*, *Big Brother*, *Vyvolení* – in English *The Chosen Ones*, *Hotel Paradise*, *Love Island*, *Celebrity Camp*, *Mojsejovci*),
- casting – contestants demonstrate their talent, are first evaluated by an expert jury, later they may or may not compete for the audience's favour (*The Voice of Czechoslovakia*, *X-Factor*, *SuperStar*, *Talent*,

33 See: DAS, S., SARKAR, P., ALFARID HUSSAIN, S. M.: Perception Analysis of TV Reality Shows: Perspective of Viewers' and Entertainment Industry Professionals. In *International Journal of Media, Journalism and Mass Communications*, 2021, Vol. 7, No. 2, p. 22-31; ARULCHELVAN, S.: Understanding Reality Television: A Study of Tamil Television Reality Shows Impact on Audience. In *Antropological Researches and Studies*, 2019, Vol. 9, No. 1, p. 79-86.

34 Compare to: *Všetko sa začalo kolesom štastia*. [online]. [2022-09-09]. Available at: <<http://medialne.etrend.sk/televizia/vsetko-sa-to-zacalo-kolesom-stastia.html>>; AUGUSTÍN, R.: *Big Brother a Vyvolení – hra na vojnu*. Released on 23rd August 2005. [online]. [2022-09-09]. Available at: <<http://medialne.etrend.sk/televizia/big-brother-a-vyvoleni-hra-na-voynu.html>>.

35 VOJTENYIOVÁ, D.: *Starou mamou reality show je skrytá kamera*. Released on 10th February 2005. [online]. [2022-09-09]. Available at: <<https://honline.sk/dennik/servisne-prilohy/190316-starou-mamou-reality-show-je-skryta-kamera>>.

36 Remark by authors: The division is based on Štroblová's typology; characteristics and examples from the Slovak media environment have been added by the authors. In some cases, locally used titles of the mentioned franchised reality TV products are used. See: ŠTROBLOVÁ, S.: *Film a televízie jako audiovizuální sprostředkování světa*. Prague : Jan Amos Komenský University, 2009, p. 104.

Czechia and Slovakia's Got Talent, MasterChef, Recipe for Riches, Move Up, Million Dollar Dance, Girl for a Million, Recipe for Riches, The Boss, The Best Slovak Cakes, My Mother Cooks Better than Yours, All Slovaks Bake),

- relationship – two people looking for love, a bride is chosen, or a mirror is held up to the relationships in the family and a corrective experience or guidance is provided (*Affairs of the Heart, Bride for a Millionaire, Wife Swap, Foster Mother, Mother-in-Law, Farmer Seeks a Wife, Married by Mom, Love for Life, Bučkovci, Wedding at First Sight, Love in the Cottage*),
- makeover – built on change (*Yes, Boss, The Changing Room, New Living, New Design, New Garden, Sunshine, Hay and Bacon, 10 Years Younger, Shopping Maniacs*),
- adventurous – participants are exposed to an adventurous situation under the supervision of cameras (*Fortress Boyard, Celebrity Camp, Goodbye Slovakia*),
- emotional – sensitive powerful stories of people's fates told by its actors (*Blue from the Sky/In the Seventh Heaven* – in English *On Cloud Nine, Bailando, Mail for You*),
- 'stellar' – stars performing roles (*Let's Dance, Stars on Ice*),
- extreme – extreme settings, extreme situations, extreme actors – depicting the fringes of society (*Extreme Families*).

The most extreme situations so far in the Slovak media space have been presented by *TV JOJ* in the reality show *Extreme Families*. It depicted the life of two non-traditional families – one financially struggling, living in poverty, with a son with developmental disability and the other showing the life of four homosexual partners living in a shared household. Their stories were accompanied by mocking commentary degrading the participants' human dignity.

Among other criteria, the positivity and negativity of reality shows can also be assessed in terms of the patterns of behaviour and values they present. These are directly (perceived as behavioural patterns) or indirectly, unconsciously, potentially integrated into the behaviour of the viewers of the reality show in the context of socialisation (both primary and secondary). At the same time, the media image presented on-screen may be perceived by the audience as characteristic of a given culture/nation/society, and also as behaviour that is tolerated or sometimes even welcomed in society. This interpretation often occurs when the content presented lacks a relevant interpretation, clarifying the intent, atmosphere and interpretation of the broadcast messages. However, there is a particular danger when reality shows with potentially negative behavioural patterns are watched without regulation by immature personalities. They cannot evaluate the inappropriateness and risks of the consequences of the behaviour presented, as they do not yet have firmly fixed moral and ethical standards and sufficiently developed critical thinking and rational decision-making. There are two groups at risk: older schoolchildren and teenagers.³⁷

Both groups, who, despite declaring that they do not watch 'linear' television, access reality shows or parts of them, or special accompanying programmes, through streaming and Internet audio-visual channels (*YouTube, Voyo*) and social media (*Facebook, Instagram* or *TikTok*). The likely impact of the choice and level of reality shows broadcast can also be seen in a significant reduction in the sophistication of communication and debate in society, an increase in tolerance for expressive or even vulgar language, intense hating, and an increase in society's tolerance for drinking in general, youth drinking and drinking and driving under influence. We have long been aware of media production lowering the level of society's culture, and we have written about this several times in our scientific studies. In the following examples, we will point out particular elements of reality shows that devalue the culture of Slovak society. In case there are positive examples, we will touch upon them in our comments as well. The most controversial, with the lowest number of positive examples, are the trash reality shows. They are built on the principle of experimentation – a group of people are locked into a confined, limited space, people are purposely selected to create interesting interactions. They are given prepared tasks, and selected footage of their most interesting reactions from a 24/7 time period is offered

37 See: CHARAN, S.: *Negative Impact of Reality Shows on Children*. [online]. [2022-10-10]. Available at: <<https://www.parentcircle.com/negative-effects-and-impacts-of-reality-tv-shows-on-children/article>>.

to the audience as entertainment. In the autumn programming structure of 2022, both *TV Markíza* and *TV JOJ* Television broadcast trash reality shows. They form a significant part of *TV Markíza*'s evening broadcasts on the main channel. This family television channel currently offers two reality shows – *The Farm* and *Love Island*,³⁸ which are broadcast on the same day but also on different days during the week. *TV JOJ* broadcasts a combined relationship-trash show *Love in the Cottage*.

*The Farm*³⁹

The Farm is the reality show with the highest number of aired seasons; this year is its fourteenth year on air. The contestants' task is to survive in difficult conditions, to build dwellings for the animals and for themselves, to learn how to take care of the animals and themselves in harsh conditions in a closed environment, and, in addition, to fight in the most diverse disciplines for an interesting financial prize (currently 75,000 €). The isolation on the farm and the diversity of the characters bring to the show just mediated reality, that is, a reality show. The individual seasons have evolved over time, the dramaturgy, in consultation with the foreign license holders, have shaped the themes of each season to maintain the attractiveness of the format each year. It was first broadcast in 2011 and regularly every year since then, mostly in the autumn broadcast structure. The first to ninth seasons were along the lines of "It's going to be gritty/cool/wild". Conditions on the farm gradually loosened up, the tasks were less demanding, the contestants were shown by the production more in the position of having fun than doing, which had consequences for the declining viewing figures. The production thus came up with a radically different concept in 10th season, which was also applied in the two subsequent seasons – 11th and 12th. The main presenter changed as well – Kvetoslava Horváthová was replaced by comedian and actress Eva Kramerová, better known as Evelyn. The new concept was based on the rivalry of two sides, namely between the groups of the poor and the rich (season 10), the East and the West (season 11) and the city and the village (season 12).

By choosing the contestants, the production confirmed and reinforced stereotypes, thus amplifying the conflict between the two different sides, which was attractive to the audience. Approximately halfway through each season, the opposing groups were brought together, presenting the senselessness of division and promoting a model of opposing groups coming together leading to the elimination of prejudice. Rather than the goal of appreciating ancestral life and learning to build and care for animals (shepherd's hut, mill, fields, etc.), the goal in these episodes was to kick-start a new life for the contestants on the farm. The contestants were to start a new phase of their lives and get rid of what was preventing them from personal progress.

The Farm 10 contestants (the rich and the poor) had the most difficult conditions in the new concept. Tension and hostility were fostered by the conditions the contestants had prepared for on the farm – the townspeople comfort with modern conveniences, the villagers simple and limited conditions that were typical of Slovakia in the middle of the last century. The plot and relationships were muddled by the creators by moving the participants to opposite conditions (in the first episode the representatives of the groups had to swap their places of living). In the 11th season, also based on the conflict of opposing sides (the West – the East), the production took advantage of the long-standing feuds and skirmishes between the inhabitants of the Eastern and Western parts of Slovakia. These were personified through statements made by the representatives of one side about the other side – their generalised characteristics (not about specific performers). The aim of the 11th season was to 'unite' the West and the East and to show that all Slovaks can live together in one place. Therefore, also in this season, the contestants, with the intention to understand the other side better and to experience their life, switched sides; this happened about halfway through the season.

38 Monday: *TV Markíza*: 10 p.m. – *The Farm*, 11:10 p.m. – *Love Island*, *TV JOJ*: 11:50 p.m. – *Love in the Cottage*. Tuesday: *TV Markíza*: 9:50 p.m. – *The Farm*. Wednesday: *TV Markíza*: 12:00 a.m. – *Love Island*, 1:10 a.m. – *Love Island*, *TV JOJ*: 10:40 p.m. – *Love in the Cottage*. Thursday: *TV Markíza*: 9:50 p.m. – *The Farm*. Friday: *TV Markíza*: 8:30 p.m. – *The Farm*, 10:20 p.m. – *Love Island*, 11:30 p.m. – *Love Island*, *TV JOJ*: 11:55 p.m. – *Love in the Cottage*. Saturday: *TV Markíza*: 8:30 p.m. – *The Farm – Duel*. Sunday: *TV Markíza*: 11:00 p.m. – *Love Island*. Reruns: *The Farm* – in the afternoon at approx. 2:15 p.m., *Love Island* – is not re-run during the day, *Love in the Cottage* – 3:20 p.m. The edited programme, excluding the Saturday slot, lasts about 90 minutes. See: *Program.sk*. [online]. [2022-10-03]. Available at: <<https://www.program.sk/tv-program/>>.

39 *Farma 14*. [online]. [2022-09-09]. Available at: <<https://videoarchiv.markiza.sk/video/farma-14/epizoda/101686-seria-14>>.

In the 12th *Farm* (the Town vs. the Village), the opposition parties no longer experienced any differences in the comfort in which they lived compared to the previous seasons. Although the farm area was divided in half in the middle by a wooden fence, the farmers of both groups had the same facilities, privileges and hierarchy. The contestants slept in a house already built for all of them in traditional beds with mattresses, pillows and pillowcases. They also had a modern flushing toilet, for example. By the middle of the season, they were battling it out for a relaxation area, equipped with a hot tub. This season, however, was initially the most elaborately constructed. The tension and provocation had already begun with the trailers for the programme, which consisted of people making unflattering, even controversial statements in a poll about representatives of one society or another (Town or Village). The production reinforced this conflict and rivalry through the selection of contestants whose opinions and behaviour confirmed and reinforced stereotypes of the opposite group, as well as through the different rules applicable to each side – the Village was subject to the traditional rules applicable on the farm – farmer, servants, etc. As proponents of a more liberal way of life, the competitors from the City were free to make up their own rules. The differences were highlighted by the furnishings of the various halves belonging to so-and-so side. The City had everything modern with a minimum of restrictions – modern appliances, refrigerator, beds, mattresses, even a swimming pool. The Village side had only basic groceries, a flour mill, an almanac, and a Bible. Unlike the townspeople, they had to use a latrine.

Because of the many prejudices shown on both sides, the townspeople and villagers switched, right at the beginning of the season, the sides where they subsequently lived. Also, in this season the rules were changed more often. Even dropped contestants were allowed to return to the game. After dropping out, they watched the broadcast of the show in a separate cottage for some time, so they also saw conversations about the tactics of the farmers and heard contradictory statements towards some of the contestants, which contradicted what the farmers were telling them in direct communication. The insights and opinions gained from watching the broadcast could have been told to the participants on the farm when they returned to the farm and before fighting for the opportunity to stay on the farm. Around the first third of the season, the fence was lifted, and the two groups were brought together as both sides demonstrated that they had overcome their prejudices. The production prepared several contests for the participants to humanise the opposing sides, for example with the ritual of a wedding, which is a symbol of the union of two different family cultures.

An interesting feature of this season, serving to make the programme more attractive to the audience, was the more frequent changing and updating of the rules during the broadcast of the season. The aim of the 12th season of *The Farm* was therefore to help overcome prejudices and bring the whole of Slovakia together. The contestants came from different backgrounds, life situations, some were born in the countryside and lived in the city, others were born in the city and lived in the countryside. Among the farmers there were also Slovaks who came back home after years spent abroad because of the pandemic. On the farm there was a clash of values and beliefs of two different worlds that are next to each other, but at the same time are so far away. And the coming together of these two worlds succeeded on *Farm 12*.

So, all three seasons were built not on returning to our roots through farming and ranching, but on returning to the essence of humanity and equality between people, no matter what geographic or social background they come from. The following 13th season of *The Farm*, in turn, returned to its essence built on the rule *'thou shalt not do, thou shalt not eat'*. The motto *"Wait for the Unexpected"* not only brought harsher challenges from the way the participants arrived at the farm, but also harshness in other challenges and rules. All transgressions were severely punished. Taking care of the animals and the farm was again a priority. At the same time, a new goal was added to the tasks – care for the soul – building a bell tower. Currently, *TV Markíza* broadcasts the 14th season of *The Farm*. Again, it comes with more significant changes. It has bet on a significant diversity of human abilities and moods, as well as innovations in the field of building and tasks. The host is also new – the main communicator is an artificial intelligence – Alice, and the host of the duels is a man – actor Marek Fašiang. Artificial intelligence has no feelings and knows no mercy. It watches the farmers closely and intervenes when it deems it is necessary. This season, the farmers faced Spartan conditions and new obstacles and challenges – from bringing water to their house, ensuring its heating, constructing a bicycle-powered washing machine to using a solar panel to run electrical appliances in the kitchen or protecting the pheasants (electric fence). 'Innovation' was also found in selecting the contestants – people with above

average IQs were included in this season and their intellectual potential was revealed to the other contestants. However, not all of this special group were able to cope with the demanding physical and mental conditions of the competition; two of them dropped out early on. Also, in this year's season there are various competitions for the contestants to win prizes.

The reality show *The Farm* has been on *TV Markíza's* screens for fourteen years. The fact that it is still attractive to viewers proves its continuation.⁴⁰ *The Farm*, as the corresponding format of a trash reality show, carries elements of both entertainment and controversy. It potentially reaches all age groups of the audience – from the child viewer to the oldest age group. Although during the week it airs after 10 p.m., on Fridays and Saturdays it has a stable place in the broadcasting structure (*TV Markíza* airs it during the strong prime time after 8 p.m., when air time is usually dedicated to family programmes). The reruns are broadcast in the afternoon and are easily accessible to any target group. Although social media communication is attractive for the younger generation, children and teenagers still represent a big portion of the viewership of 'linear' television. All episodes are also easily accessible at any time in the *TV Markíza's* archive.

The basic concept of the reality show *The Farm* in terms of the message it has to convey to its viewers is not set negatively. The contestants' task is to cope with the harsh conditions in which their ancestors lived, to obtain their own food, to build buildings and, above all, to take care of the animals, from which they themselves ultimately benefit. Values such as responsibility, diligence, hard work, cooperation, the willingness to get involved and help, respect and the need for tradition, respect and consideration for others, patience and fairness, but also what the consequences can be if commitments are not kept and obligations are not met, are presented. From the social values, how to get along and communicate with different types of people, how to respect authority and equal team members, how to be tolerant, as well as other values such as honesty, truthfulness, courage, self-control, friendship, and true love, as well as independence and self-confidence are promoted and shown. In particular, Martin, the farm owner, valued responsibility, diligence and the meticulous fulfilment of all duties, as well as open communication and truthfulness. He also rewarded these qualities with a number of coins for completed tasks and bonuses in the form of food or other rewards.

However, we could observe a variety of reactions and communication patterns in the farmers' behaviour towards each other and towards the tasks and animals. They were conditioned by the personality traits of the contestants, their moral values and the strategy they chose to get to the prize. Among the positive qualities promoting positive values in society, values such as strong friendship, trust, openness in communication, tolerance, honesty or courage appeared in the programme. However, in each series we could also observe negative or even undesirable behaviours, which in some cases went unpunished and often without comment that this was inappropriate behaviour. The biggest transgression of the Slovak concept of *The Farm* – all its parts – is the high tolerance for drinking alcohol. In Slovakia, the problem of managing personal regulation of drinking is a serious society-wide problem that has very negative consequences in society, and especially on the younger generation. This benevolence has resulted in serious events in society in recent years – from the increasingly frequent incidents involving drunken young teenagers and their nightly disturbances, to the humiliation of human dignity.⁴¹ In other seasons, alcohol has always been welcomed by *The Farm's* contestants,

40 Compare to: MICHALKO, R.: *Víkendová sledovanosť: V piatok a sobotu vyhrala Farma, Talent v nedelu valcoval*. Released on 12th September 2022. [online]. [2022-10-10]. Available at: <<https://strategie.hnonline.sk/news/media/96040823-vikendova-sledovanost-v-piatok-a-sobotu-vyhrala-farma-talent-v-nedelu-valcoval>>; *Napínavý duel na Farme si v sobotu vyslúžil rekordnú sledovanosť*. Released on 7th November 2022. [online]. [2022-10-10]. Available at: <<https://farma.markiza.sk/aktualne/2062125-napinavy-duel-na-farme-si-v-sobotu-vysluzil-rekordnu-sledovanost>>.

41 Remark by authors: Up to "sixty percent of 15-year-old Slovak teenagers have experience with alcohol. Most often they get alcohol in a party with friends, but also at home". See: *Alarmujúce štatistiky požívania alkoholu u mladistvých. Riziká, z ktorých až zamrzá*. Released on 4th January 2020. [online]. [2022-10-11]. Available at: <<https://www.noviny.sk/krimi/500458-alarmujuce-statistiky-pozivania-alkoholu-u-mladistvych-rizika-z-ktorych-az-zamrazi>>. In her study *Alcohol Drinking in Children and Adolescents – Risks and Possibilities for Prevention*, Emmerová concludes on the basis of a comparative study that "in children and adolescents, a persistent negative trend in drinking can be observed, both in boys and girls". See: EMMEROVÁ, I.: *Pitie alkoholu u detí a mládeže – Riziká a možnosti prevencie*. In *Pediatric pro praxi*, 2020, Vol. 21, No. 2, p. 104-106. [online]. [2022-10-11]. Available at: <https://www.solen.cz/artkey/ped-202002-0007_pitie_alkoholu_u_deti_a_mladeze_-_rizika_a_moznosti_prevencie.php>. See also: *Polícia vykonala najväčšiu kontrolu konzumácie alkoholu mladistvými a maloleťmi*. Released on 20th March 2022. [online]. [2022-10-11]. Available at: <<https://bratislava.sme.sk/c/22865496-policia-vykonala-najvacsiu-kontrolu-konzumacie-alkoholu-mladistvymi-a-maloletymi.html>>; *Kontrola v Námestove odhalila 14 mladistvých pod vplyvom alkoholu*. Released on 25th June 2022. [online]. [2022-10-11]. Available at: <<https://www.teraz.sk/najnovsie/kontrola-v-namestove-odhalila-14-mladis/643484-clanok.html>>; *Viete, čo robia vaše deti? Deväť mladistvých pri policajnej kontrole bolo opitých*. Released on

appearing as a reward after a job well done, after a duel that was the culmination of the week.⁴² And it was appearing in quantities several times greater than the need for a solid chug and toast to celebrate after a job well done and a victory. Often the competitors were left with copious amounts of alcohol to sip liberally over the following days, free to drink without restriction, starting in the morning. This malady was most pronounced during *Farm 13*.

Alcohol and its effects on personality are a grateful aid to production. For people under the influence of alcohol lose control of their actions, lose their inhibitions and shyness, speak more expressively, show emotions more quickly, which they find harder to control, become more sensitive to their person, have no estimate of the consequences of their actions, and often do not remember their behaviour and communication the next day. The effects of alcohol are compounded if a person is hungry or does not have enough food for a prolonged period of time. This was also exploited by the productions of the individual seasons. The amount of alcohol, especially in the last season, was increased, which provided unrestrained entertainment, which in several cases crossed the boundaries of ethical behaviour. Television viewers could see, for example, the aggressive treatment of a live animal – a turkey (Mesut, *Farm 13*) or the urination of drunken farmers on a sleeping servant or in the bedroom (Giuliana, Simon, Fifo, *Farm 14*), or various sexual acts (sex in a shared bedroom or servant's house in the presence of another servant), striptease or ordinaire scenes (licking a contestant/competitor lying on a table).

Such scenes always attract the viewer's attention, are a ratings enhancer and create advertising that spreads by communicating the above situations.⁴³ On the other hand, due to the availability of broadcasting in the afternoon or via archive (media or Internet operator), they are even more attractive to immature audiences and become a potential guide or role model for behaviour. The second behaviour which, without corrective commentary, is a potential threat to immature personalities, is sex scenes. These are equally valuable material for the production, boosting viewing figures. The participants on *The Farm* are out of contact with the outside world for long periods of time, experiencing sometimes emotionally fraught situations, and are often young people, so mutual sympathies and more intense close encounters are not uncommon. The problem can be sex too early after starting a relationship without closer acquaintance under the influence of alcohol, or the immediate change of partners immediately after the previous one has left. Although such behaviour does occur in real life, without corrective commentary, it can again act as attractive media content and a model for relationship formation for the immature percipient. There is also the issue of the frequency of these scenes in broadcasting, which has been objected to by television viewers in previous seasons. During the fourteen years at the farm, there have been many different people and moods with different communication styles. They expressed their views differently, used a diverse vocabulary, and used the language of different regions and dialects in their speeches. This reinforced the model that different people can get along, cooperate and agree. But there were also individuals whose vocabulary was very crude, vulgar and they overused expressive terms, using them at every minor setback in their work. The directors bleeped out such expressions, but this did not detract from the picture of the extent to which these inappropriate expressions were used. During the last, 13th season, the viewers objected that despite the hint of a return to roots and harsh conditions, the contestants still had plenty of food, less demanding work and conditions compared to the farmers of the first season, and that there was too much sex and vulgarity on the farm. Similar objections are raised about the current 14th season.

In the current version, the creators bet on innovations related to modern technology and on super-brains – participants with higher IQs. Among the fourteen participants, five have above-average IQ. They were expected to bring interesting technical solutions to make life easier for animals and farmers. But it

turned out that they did not fit in very well and were not such an asset to the farm. One of them had to resign because of a recurring health problem. Another participant, on whom the farmer had pinned his hopes for environmental innovation, could not function in the group and gave up. Of the remaining three, the talented youngest participant spent quite a long time looking for a place on the farm and in the group. Her insolent and selfish behaviour also had consequences for the farmers' rewards, which eventually acted as a corrective and her gradual change of behaviour can be seen. Another super-brain, a different participant in image, by his behaviour – openness, willingness to learn, good heart, humility and combativeness in the duels, gradually changed the others' view of him and won great sympathy and respect from all the contestants. Meanwhile, the third contestant with an above-average IQ emerged as unobtrusive, yet cementing the contest at crucial moments. The atmosphere so far on the farm is one of respect for the farmer, a great willingness to build and leave behind something of value. However, it is disrupted by the brash behaviour of one participant who displays arrogance towards the main employer, farmer Martin, and verbal passive aggression towards the animals. His feigned phlegmatism and over-played self-presentation provoke resentment from the audience, as well as the participants themselves. On the one hand, they express their acceptance of his personality, on the other hand, they condemn his behaviour in their comments. In the spectators' comments, there is also indignation at the mild punishments against inappropriate behaviour, which also had consequences for the animals (“*on previous farms, such a thing would not have gone through*”). It is also evident the owner is shocked and angered by the cheeky contestant's behaviour, that he is very controlled but still remains tolerant and accepting. It will be interesting to see how the dramaturgy will work with this character and what developments will occur.

Love Island⁴⁴

Love Island is a dating reality show based on the principles of a trash reality show. The rules of the game are tempting – to be locked up in a beautiful house, in a beautiful environment, in warm weather, so that bodies can be exposed as much as possible, to have absolute comfort, to enjoy the sun, the sea, to perform common tasks and games, and most importantly, under the watchful eye of the TV cameras, to look for the ‘love of your life’ and to win a financial prize of 75,000 €. The only concern is to stay in the game until the end. Therefore, it is important for the contestant to find a partner and seduce them, to show them their feelings and to make sure that when the competition comes, they are not exchanged for another one. But at the same time to ensure survival in such a way that when other persons enter the game, it is tactically necessary to arouse sympathy in them as well, so much so that if there are compulsory exchanges, the person or persons concerned should stay in the game. Originally, the British show *Love Island* put together single celebrities. Twelve single celebrities got together in a house in Fiji for five weeks. The show aired between 2005 and 2006. It then had an extended hiatus. The creators decided to ‘revive’ the concept a decade later, but the show's participants were ordinary people. By now, 22 countries have presented their own version of the show. The first version of this reality show in the Czech and Slovak space was broadcast by *TV JOJ* in 2012 under the name *Hotel Paradise*. The format was based on the original *Paradise Hotel* format from the British production company *Mentorn*. It was first shown on the screens of the American Television *Fox*, which broadcast it from June to October 2003. Since then, a number of local versions have been produced in England, Denmark, the Netherlands, Israel, Hungary, Norway and Sweden.⁴⁵ There were 41 contestants competing for 50,000 €.⁴⁶

On the one hand, the show aroused great interest among the young audience, on the other hand, it brought controversial models of young people's behaviour in courting and gaining the favour of a partner. The competition was based on games and deliberate exchanges of partners linked to the arrival of a new man in an exclusive villa in the Dominican Republic. There were always 5 couples in the villa, housed in separate

9th August 2022. [online]. [2022-10-11]. Available at: <<https://regiony.zoznam.sk/viete-co-robia-vase-deti-devat-mladistvych-pri-policialnej-kontrolе-bolo-opitych/>>. In 2021, a case involving teenagers drinking and bullying each other boiled over. Such cases are not isolated in Slovakia. See: RICHTEROVÁ, N.: *Pripad zbitého 11-ročného dievčata nie je jediný. Objavili sa ďalšie skutky tinedžerov*. Released on 6th January 2022. [online]. [2022-10-11]. Available at: <<https://www.noviny.sk/krimi/653626-pripad-zbitcho-11-rocneho-dievcata-nie-je-jediny-objavili-sa-dalsie-skutky-tinedzerov>>.

42 *Markíza ukáže ďalší sex na Farme! V minulosti ho z vysielania narychlo vybrhla*. Released on 17th October 2022. [online]. [2022-10-11]. Available at: <<https://mediaboom.sk/markiza-ukaze-dalsi-sex-na-farme-v-minulosti-ho-z-vysielania-narychlo-vybrhla>>.

43 VÁVRA, R.: *Markíza avizuje drsné zmeny! Farma bude poriadne iná, táto vec sa však nezmení*. Released on 10th August 2021. [online]. [2022-10-13]. Available at: <<http://www.mediaklik.sk/televizia/clanok/597114-markiza-avizuje-drsne-zmeny-farma-bude-poriadne-ina-tato-vec-sa-sak-nezmeni/>>.

44 *Love Island*. [online]. [2022-10-13]. Available at: <<https://loveisland.markiza.sk/>>.

45 KOČÍŠEK, L.: *JOJ a Prima chystajú novú reality šou – Hotel Paradise*. Released on 11th November 2011. [online]. [2022-10-16]. Available at: <<https://medialne.trend.sk/televizia/joj-prima-chystaju-novu-reality-sou-hotel-paradise>>.

46 *Hotel Paradise predstavuje súťažiacich – Temná minulosť*. Released on 4th March 2012. [online]. [2022-10-16]. Available at: <<https://www.cas.sk/clanok/218497/hotel-paradise-predstavuje-sutaziacich-temna-minulost/>>.

rooms and one single member whose task was to break up the existing couples. Whoever was left alone in the room on Monday's elimination day was out. The communication and relationships between the pairs were full of intrigue and behind-the-scenes fights, there was often unfairness, and the participants were very ambitious young people who had no problem crossing ethical boundaries. After 9 years, in 2021, this type of reality show returned to the screens, this time to the screens of *TV Markíza* and the Czech television channel *TV Nova*. The show appealed strongly to a particularly young audience and secured a significant increase in the number of subscribers to the Internet-distributed television platform *Voyo*.⁴⁷

Based on the success in 2021, the two TV stations launched another joint season the following year.⁴⁸ The other seasons broadcast from 2021 and 2022 are no longer built on intrigue. Couples staying in a house in the Canary Islands try to have fun and couples develop love relationships with each other. Several are also showing each other more intense affection. This can complicate or frustrate their weekly re-couplings and the arrival of new people (so-called bombshells) on the island. Whoever is left alone will have to leave the villa. Interestingly, the couples in the new season do not sleep in separate rooms, but together in the same bedroom. Single games with a more or less erotic background or planned dates with selected 'home' and new partners are meant to cause new experiences reinforcing or challenging real or potential bonds. Within shared spaces, expressions of affection are welcomed, which in the bedroom, with the lights off but in the presence of night cameras, evolve into clear displays of sexual intimacy under the sheets of some couples. The events in the villa are also presented on the web and social media accounts of *TV Markíza*, *Voyo* and the show itself. The creators are also producing two new accompanying online shows for the fans – *Beach Hut*, which focuses on the happenings in the villa and the contestants themselves, and *Hideaway*, providing a behind-the-scenes look into the contestants' personal lives, exclusive interviews with their family members and friends, and discussing current topics and spicy stories. It also covers articles and discussions about *Love Island* in the media and on social media. Viewers can see actual videos, interviews with participants, gossip and behind-the-scenes snippets – unaired footage, or some juicy trivia, which will be aired as part of the show. The reality show also has an *Instagram* account. Viewers can influence the storyline in the villa by voting, which has made the show more interactive.⁴⁹

The reality show *Hotel Paradise/Love Island* is primarily aimed at a young audience, and this is identifiable from both the content and the form of the reality show. Games aimed at having fun and getting to know each other, at the same time combined with a subtle provocative touch and expressions of love, such as kissing, caressing in different places, or hints of the sexual act. The show has become very popular with young people, which has motivated the producers to create new accompanying products to suit this particular target group. The themes – secrets and behaviour of the opposite sex, the visual content – touching and intimacy, the form – exuberance and fun, all impress and are attractive to the generation in their teens and a little younger (second grade of primary school). And it is at that age that it is important what kind of models and role models they get through the media environment. Young people are sensitive to what is going on around them; they eliminate the old models and patterns that the environment has provided so far. They build new rules and norms themselves and within their group. Media role models from the art world, the media world and social media are very attractive at this time. They are interested in and attracted by everything that is beyond the boundaries of what is allowed, what is forbidden and what carries elements of piquancy. Although the premiere of the programme is scheduled around midnight in the 'linear' broadcast, viewers can watch the re-run at around 3:20 p.m. It is therefore accessible without any problems, and can also be accessed via *Voyo* or a mobile app.

The programme in question is likely to be watched by teenage viewers without their parents and their corrective explanations and comments. Especially teenagers are in a stage of resistance to parental authority. For adolescents, the norms and rules of the reference group are crucial at this time, which they prefer to the rules of the family. Primary in adolescence is the community of friends with which they share experiences

47 *Hotel Paradise predstavuje súťažiacich – Temná minulosť*. Released on 4th March 2012. [online]. [2022-10-16]. Available at: <<https://www.cas.sk/clanok/218497/hotel-paradise-predstavuje-sutaziacich-temna-minulost/>>.

48 Remark by authors: Both TV channels – *TV Markíza* and *TV Nova* – share the same owner.

49 *Novinka na Love Islande – fanúšikovia budú nadšení*. Released on 4th September 2022. [online]. [2022-10-16]. Available at: <https://loveisland.markiza.sk/aktualne/2059801_novinka-na-love-islande-fanusikovia-budu-nadseni>.

and gain their first experiences. This attractive show takes two forms – the difference is the environment in which the performers live – one in a hotel, the other in a villa. The series, which was aired back in 2009 by *TV JOJ*, *Hotel Paradise*, based on the licensed model *Paradise Hotel*, was built on the tougher rules of the game. Intrigue and intense tactics were at the heart of almost all the games and conversations. This fierce combat was encouraged by the contest's moderator and voice-over. For the immature generation, the image was set that relationship building was built not on developing affection, curiosity, gradual getting to know each other and support, but on intrigue, slander and exaggerated self-presentation. Some of the participants' behaviour seemed almost aggressive. Such behaviour may inappropriately affect immature individuals in their older school age and younger teenage years, as they are still finding and building their patterns of future behaviour in the area of love and relationship building.

The reality show *Love Island*, based on the licensed show of the same name, which began airing in Slovakia about 10 years later, was built completely differently. The producers went to great lengths to select diverse types with varied characteristics and temperaments. This brings to the show a variety of situations within the development of the relationship, which is reflected not only in behaviour but also in the way they experience and evaluate the situation, their behaviour towards related individuals as well as potential competition, and their expressions about acting and surviving in front of a partner, a group, and alone in front of the camera. A positive aspect for the formation of role model behaviour is the camaraderie shown and the very strong support that was created among the competitors/participants. This was evident in a variety of critical situations, such as when a loved-up couple was forcibly split up, in a re-cupping, when someone's partner left the island, or when, reading the audience feedback, the audience wrote something about someone that came across as unkind. Support, both physical (hugs, distraction with physical activity) and verbal (expressions of sympathy, listening to the unhappy or unhappy, discussing a problem in the relationship, giving advice), was expressed within the group, between the same and opposite sexes, and within love and friendship relationships.

So far in this season, there have been no intrigues and slanders that could complicate not only love relationships but also friendships. On the other hand, this is a game, so one can see some grouping based on sympathy but also on tactics, especially when threatened with being forced to leave. It can be interesting for young people to talk about what is important for forming a relationship, what they experience, how they perceive their feelings and the feelings of others. They compare what they hear with their own experiences, but especially with what they see on the screen and how they perceive particular behaviours and statements. By being able to observe the consequences of said behaviour, they are also learning about relationships in this way. Therefore, it is very important how the reality show presents what is constructed and handled. Condemning dishonesty and lying, e.g., about a previous relationship, or condemning cheating in a game, can also set a positive example for future behaviour. However, it is very important for young people to realise that the group in question is in a closed house and is signed up for by people who do not mind showing off for the camera and sometimes their statements may not be entirely reflective of their inner experience. That what they see is staged both by the production and often by the participants themselves, eager for the audience's votes and to win.

For the audience of the focus group, the sex scenes are very interesting. For them, they are a mystery that they themselves have yet to uncover, or some have only recently uncovered. On the one hand, the producers handle them sensitively – only a few seconds of hints of the sex act under the duvet make it into the main cut, and the rest they learn from the cues of the participants in the house. Even though the bedroom is completely dark, it is questionable to conduct this intimate activity in a shared bedroom with others present. On the one hand, one can understand the utmost desire to get close to a loved one, and the production is allowed such behaviour because it attracts the attention of onlookers. On the other hand, a model is provided that such behaviour in a peer group is natural and acceptable. In a cultural society, however, only such intimate behaviour belongs in private. In this, the licensed format of *Hotel Paradise*, where each couple had their own room, was better set up. The inclusion of a game – imitating and guessing individual positions from the *Kamasutra* – was considered to be of little use for building model behaviour. While from the creators' perspective we understand the choice of this type of game for its attractiveness to the audience, due to the afternoon time of the show's re-run, its inclusion is questionable to say the least.

*Love in the Cottage*⁵⁰

In the autumn of 2022, *TVJOJ* started broadcasting the first season of the new dating reality show *Love in the Cottage*, which has never been broadcast in Slovakia before. It is based on the original licensed format of the Dutch company *John Mol* with the original title *Let Love Rule*. In the Netherlands, its sixth season is already being broadcast. It has also been successfully broadcast in Portugal, Denmark, Sweden, Lithuania and Brazil. The essence of the reality show is to show how in reality, without social media and the various dating apps that people often hide behind, love can arise in people of different ages. In a neutral beautiful environment, their so-called blind date lasts at least 24 hours. In Slovakia, the producers chose the attractive mountain setting of two chalets in Kysuce Region. The story of one couple takes place in each chalet. The chalet is where the couple, who are seeing each other for the first time, meet. Getting to know each other and courting can begin. After 24 hours, each couple must decide whether to stay together one more day or break up. They can stay at the cottage for a maximum of 4 days. Then another couple will replace them. During one episode, the audience watches in flashbacks the development of the two couples' stories. The couples were chosen through casting, their pairing is random. The deciding factor was whether they were serious about finding love.

The project is about the view of love and relationships of people of different ages from 18 to 60. The show builds on the lack of real human interaction, that for many people, life happens predominantly on social media. Therefore, the creators had the intention to show the behavioural dialogues between individuals of the opposite sex who are trying to attract and win over the opposite sex. The viewer sees examples of awkward silences, slow exploration through cautious questions and answers or bold sexual innuendos and dialogues from the first moment potential partners see each other. As the relationships gradually evolve, crazy quirks or tender declarations of love appear on screen. Everything happens in front of the cameras, which the reality show participants are very aware of – some show off more, others a little less. The action is accompanied by a commentary that dramatizes the individual moments or puts them in an entertaining position.

For the younger generation, this type of reality show can act mainly as entertainment on the television screen. As several of the couples are older, their behaviour and dialogue are distant for the young and they act more as an entertaining attraction from another world than as a role model. In addition, the dialogue and behaviour come across as very artificial, rather like anti-examples, often even embarrassing. Very often it is a replayed and violent conversation about the past, about the future, about ideas about a partner or getting information about what the other party likes, not only in life but also in sex. In order to get the activities and getting to know each other among the participants going, the creators have included a question jar and a whirlpool in the chat, in addition to the board games. There are two types of questions in the cup – on the white paper are questions less personal, more neutral, on the coloured paper are questions about intimate topics. The whirlpool is indirectly to force partners to undress, which can speed up the rapprochement. In several cases, sexual rapprochement occurs during the stay, in some couples as early as the first night. Such artificially staged courtship in front of the cameras is contingent on the setting of the format and the choice of participants. As it is presented, it is a programme for entertainment rather than a model for building ideas about positive relationship formation and partner acquisition. At some points it may even scare the immature with the image that this is what it looks like between partners looking for love. Based on the analysis, it is very important that it is absolutely clear to the viewers that this reality show is a staged format and that the reality of relationship building can look different. Given that the show is also available in the afternoon, there is a risk that immature audiences, who may form distorted views of gender relations on the basis of the show, may watch it without a proper explanation.

50 Compare to: *Producent lásky na chate: Zoznamovanie je lotéria, niečo ako zinscenovaný Tinder*. Released on 6th September 2022. [online]. [2022-10-16]. Available at: <<https://strategie.honline.sk/news/media/96039540-producent-lasky-na-chate-zoznamovanie-je-loteria-nieco-ako-zinscenovany-tinder>>; *Sex pred kamerami: Päťdesiatnici z lásky na chate odhodili zábrany. Rozdali si to v sprche*. Released on 15th September 2022. [online]. [2022-10-16]. Available at: <<https://www.topky.sk/cl/100313/2380771/SEX-pred-kamerami-Patdesiatnici-z-Lasky-na-chate-odhodili-zabrany-Rozdali-si-to-v-sprche>>.

4 Instead of Conclusion: Reality Shows as a Controversial Format of Socialisation

Television and its products presented through the on-demand service bring viewers a variety of shows – news, magazines, talk shows, discussion shows, music shows, competitions, reality shows, episodic dramas, documentaries or films, domestic or foreign production. Individual programmes meet the expectations and needs of varying target groups and individuals. Of the original functions of television from the point of view of the audience, the most preferred is its entertainment/relaxation and information function. However, in the context of society as a whole and the shaping of its culture, its educational and upbringing function is very important. There is also secondary socialisation through the media. And not only in relation to children and adolescents, but also adults.⁵¹ The media, through their programmes, create a media reality that combines two worlds – the real and the fantasy. Through the selection of facts and information and the form of their processing, they create a media reality which the viewer perceives, evaluates, but also accepts in a critical or uncritical way.

The persons and personalities presented in the media and their behaviour or communication become potential imitation models, but they also serve as non-imitation models, i.e., they fulfil a warning function. On the part of the audience, this may be a deliberate or unintentional imitation of them in a conscious or unconscious form. Children, adolescents and immature adults are potentially the most susceptible to imitation.⁵² The problem is when they consciously or unconsciously adopt negative forms of behaviour and communication. Children are susceptible to media influence because they do not yet have a sufficiently developed ability to distinguish non-fiction from fiction. The two worlds are intertwined, merging into one. At the same time, they are still at a stage of cognitive development and social development. It is natural for them to imitate what they like, what is attractive to them. For them, television is like that, with its rapidly changing stimuli, which represents a completely different stimulation of brain activity than they know from the ordinary world. The heroes for them are the media characters they want to be friends with and like. They dress up as their favourite characters when the opportunity arises, imitate their behaviour and communication, and want to be them. They do not distinguish whether a character is good or bad, they cannot evaluate the consequences of their, and therefore their own, behaviour.

Television and its programmes are also attractive to adolescents. They are particularly attracted by those which provide entertainment and/or forbidden themes. Young people are in resistance to authority; the role models of their reference group and successful media personalities are important. They want to resemble these – because to resemble someone from this society is to experience their success. Imitation often means not only having their image, but also adopting their behaviour and communication. Often, they adopt it uncritically and possibly even exaggerate it, sometimes to the extreme. The primary concern for them is to gain attention and attract attention, sometimes at any cost, without thinking through the consequences. Even though this group watches very little 'linear' television anymore, because it is the medium of their parents, against which they rebel, and is dominated by another form of media channel, they have no problem accessing media content.

Adults are also subject to imitation. Immature adults perceive media role models absolutely and uncritically. In the case of deliberate imitation, they may devote excessive effort to imitating an inappropriate or negative role model, which may jeopardise their personal integrity or finances. Media agendas also have an impact on society as a whole. This impact happens unconsciously and unintentionally, but can have serious consequences if the presentation of programmes with undesirable behaviour and communication is prevalent. The consequence can be a higher tolerance for aggression and violence, a decrease in mutual respect and esteem, a hardening of people's behaviour towards each other, a decrease in the level of communication and an

51 See: LANGMEIER, J., KREČÍŘOVÁ, D.: *Vývojová psychologie*. Prague : Grada Publishing, 2013.

52 See: NORDSTRÖM, K. A., RIDDERSTRÅLE, J.: *Karaoke kapitalismu*. Prague : Grada Publishing, 2005.

increase in expressive language. For these reasons, it is important that the media, despite the understandable desire to maximise viewership, also accept and exercise social responsibility towards the audience and society⁵³ as a whole in the creation of media content and the purchase of programming.

In addition to news and journalistic magazines, other types of programmes – episodic dramas, films, competitions – are also on offer for viewers with the current individualisation of the audience. Reality shows occupy a relatively large share of the programme structure in the evening. On Slovak television, one can see the most frequent repetition of the talent reality shows *Czech and Slovak SuperStar (TV Markíza)* and *Czechia and Slovakia's Got Talent (TV JOJ)* and the trash reality show *The Farm*. In addition, this year viewers can also watch two dating reality shows in the later hours – *Love Island (TV Markíza)*, where young people locked in an exclusive villa in the Canary Islands compete, and *Love in the Cottage (TV JOJ)*, where people of different ages meet and spend a maximum of 4 days together in a cottage in Slovakia (each day they both decide on the continuation), during which they have to arouse sympathy in their partner and 'kick-start' their love.

The reality show is a television format on the border between non-fiction and fiction. It takes place in a real-life setting; the contestants are ordinary people. The production is staged by the selection of specific people, development, games, roles, etc. However, a viewer drawn into the action and/or unfamiliar with the background of the production may not realise this. Then what is happening on the screen may be perceived as real. It is the perception of a reality show as real life that may cause an increased possibility of unconscious or conscious imitation. A potentially positive effect of talent reality shows is where viewers can see the skill of the contestants. Compared to the early days of the competition, the judges are less harsh in their comments and successful presentations outweigh mindless showmanship. This type of programme can have a motivating effect on the viewer towards developing talent, working on oneself and reducing the fear of showing one's talent. Trash reality shows have a different concept. They are based on the unnatural confinement of a group of people to a defined space with no contact with the outside world (except for the production crew and exceptional cases – injuries, guests). Intentionally selected people with the potential for specific relationships are allowed to interact in the confined space for a sufficiently long period of time.⁵⁴ These experimental conditions bring about an acceleration of the dropping of personal defences and the triggering of more extreme emotions – great love and sympathy or hatred. In the observed trash reality shows, we observed both positive and negative examples for socialisation. Positive examples included responsibility at work, initiative, willingness to help, sacrifice, caring (for both animals and people), cohesiveness and support, combativeness coupled with a desire to achieve a goal (set by the farmer or one's own), courting behaviours, and displays of affection. Among the negative examples we could observe ignorance and arrogance, disorder, indifference, neglect of duties, violent behaviour towards animals, intrigues, expressive vulgar language, excessive self-presentation, acting at the expense of others, too early intimate contact. We consider the greatest problem to be the maximum tolerance of excessive drinking on all days and its open encouragement. The production deliberately supplied the performers with large amounts of alcohol. This, in conjunction with the lack of food, affected the behaviour of the reality show participants and brought about various extreme to bizarre situations. Some went well beyond the boundaries of ethics. Behaviour with reduced self-control is welcomed by the production as it brings situations that attract the viewer's attention and are the basis for tabloid articles highlighting the reality show. But they also show a pattern of behaviour that, without clear corrective commentary, can give the impression that day-to-day drinking is normal and that it is part of everyday activities. Moreover, it puts the contestants in uncomfortable situations that can cause them more serious psychological problems as their behaviour is seen by the public.

For commercial television, reality shows are currently the preferred format. Thanks to their audience appeal, they bring them viewership and are less costly to produce than other in-house productions such as episodic dramas and films. Extreme and controversial situations in reality shows increase their advertising

53 See: MCCHESENEY, R. W.: *Problém médií: Jak uvažovat o dnešních médiích*. Všeň : Grimus, 2009; LIPOVETSKY, G.: *Paradoxní štěstí*. Prague : Prostor, 2007.

54 Remark by authors: U. Eco says of reality shows that trash reality shows "undoubtedly irritate the voyeuristic tendencies of the television viewer, who delights in watching several individuals placed in an unnatural situation in which they have to pretend to be cordial with each other, when in reality they are at each other's throats. ... and the participants risk only some psychological derangement, at any rate no worse than that which brought them into the program." See: ECO, U.: *O televizi. Práce z let 1956-2015*. Prague : Argo, 2020, p. 438.

value. Even at a time when corporate social responsibility is sensitively perceived in society, financial interest understandably dominates the programming on commercial television.⁵⁵ Several factors are involved in creating a social environment. The family, the community in which one grows up and lives, and the school are of great importance. The school as an institution has a system of tools that can shape and promote both the healthy development of a person and their successful socialisation. It also has the tools to correct some undesirable influences. In the field of media influence, such a tool is media education. This subject is so far included only as a cross-curricular subject, it does not have a separate place in the curriculum. The need for it has been discussed in society for several years, today especially in the context of identifying deceptive content, hoaxes and conspiracies. Media education⁵⁶ and its more intensive application in school education could contribute to reducing the undesirable effects of media content on individuals and society as a whole.

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55 Remark by authors: Corporate social responsibility is not understood only in the narrow context of environmental protection (water, forests, soil, air, etc.). The environment in society is also formed by the atmosphere in society, the quality of relations between people and the quality of communication at different levels of the macro and micro environment. This is what influences and shapes the presented media production. See: ČÁBYOVÁ, L.: *Marketing a marketingová komunikácia v médiách*. Lódž : Księży Młyn Dom Wydawniczy Michał Koliński, 2012.

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