

CALL FOR PAPERS

Reality TV

Southwest/Texas Popular Culture & American Culture Association 33rd Annual Conference

February 8-11, 2012 • Albuquerque, NM
Hyatt Regency Hotel & Conference Center

The Southwest/Texas Popular Culture and American Culture Association will hold its 33rd Annual Conference in Albuquerque, NM on February 8-11, 2012. Proposals are now being accepted for panels on **Reality TV**.

Over the past decade, the global proliferation of reality TV programming has exploded. It is hard to flip through television stations at any given hour of the day without coming across some sort of reality programming that is reflecting another niche in the ever-evolving cultural landscape of the modern world. At the moment, reality TV is a field of study that has enormous potential because it touches such a wide range of subjects—from media studies to business, regional studies to education, social sciences to the humanities.

The SWTX PCA/ACA Area of Reality TV welcomes presentations from established scholars as well as students at this year's conference that will explore the place of reality TV in modern culture from many angles, including but not limited to the following:

- ~ Motivations for shows' participants: fantasy fulfillment, lifestyle change, fame?
- ~ Changes in programing with the onset of the recession
- ~ The hyper-reality of celeb-reality
- ~ Conventions of narrative: character development, story arch, conflict, the development of genres with predictable features, spinoffs, sequels
- ~ Reality TV's relationship with the internet and other interactive media
- ~ Psychological and physical spaces in reality TV
- ~ Professional activity shows and vocational training through reality TV (Edutainment)
- ~ Pedagogy – using reality television in the classroom
- ~ The altered appearance: body, clothing, housing
- ~ Controversy over how regions are portrayed in region-focused shows
- ~ Reality TV as a site of identity (re)construction and/or gender performance
- ~ Using reality TV as a season-long advertisement (*American Pickers*, *American Idol*, *The Ultimate Fighter*, *Miami Ink*, etc.)
- ~ Whether reality TV brings attention to special issues (*Intervention* and *Horders*) or exploits people (*Toddlers and Tiaras*)
- ~ Comparison of global formats for reality shows with similar themes
- ~ How reality TV shapes consumer attitudes
- ~ The influence of reality TV on other cultural productions (drama, fiction, cinema, etc.)
- ~ Participation of children
- ~ Reality TV's role in redefining dating and relationships
- ~ Group dynamics in competition shows
- ~ Reality shows that counter the "reality" of other shows (*Blind Date* countering *Friends*, *Teen Mom* countering *Gilmore Girls*, etc.)

This list of ideas is limited, so if you have an idea that is not listed, please suggest the new topic. If you have an idea, but you are not sure whether your topic fits, just ask. Again, this field has room for a broad range of perspectives.

Each individual paper presentation should be designed to last approximately fifteen minutes (there will be four presentations per session with time for Q&A). By December 1, 2011, please send an abstract of 100-300 words or a completed paper to Reality TV Area Chair, Josh Grant (jgrantuwg@gmail.com). At the top of your proposal, please include the title of the paper and contact information (your name, affiliation, mailing address, and e-mail address). Along with the abstract and contact information, also include a CV or a 50-word bio. If you wish to make a complete panel submission (four presenters), the organizer of the panel should submit all of the above information for each panelist as well as a title for the panel.

Details regarding the conference (listing of all areas, hotel, registration, audio/visual support, tours, etc.) can be found at <http://swtxpca.org/>.

Josh Grant
Department of English
University of West Georgia
Carrollton, GA 30118
678.839.4157
jgrantuwg@gmail.com