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“Produced Reality”: Whose Story Is It?

This paper, based on sixteen qualitative interviews with the producers of reality television program *The Biggest Loser Series 4 2009*, looks at the casting process and the situations created by the producers and the post-production process which ultimately create the narrative for the program. Before reality TV, programs were totally scripted; but with reality TV it is the environment/structure of the show which is scripted in order to create reactions/catharses in/among contestants, who become creative resources for the producers. The objective of this scripting is to produce “must watch” high rating television, thereby increasing advertising revenue and format sales. In this process the contestant’s private feelings, emotions and reactions are implicitly directed and we witness an erosion between the private and public lives of contestants as a new biographical narrative is effectively created for them.