

## Body image and the new reality show

Kimber Sikes

There is little doubt that the new line of reality shows gracing our television screens are entertaining, and it seems like no matter whom you ask, everyone has watched at least one. But, a question remains to be answered. Just how well do these shows promote an accurate body image, or a healthy one, for that matter?

Several shows have come under scrutiny for the remarks made to contestants. In a recent episode of *American Idol*, Simon told a young girl who chose a somewhat unflattering outfit that she needed to lose weight. Of course, the outfit did not suit her very well, but does this justify implying that she was fat? And having asked several people who had seen that particular show, I am under the impression that the contestant wasn't a very large person. Of course, it is obvious that to make it as a singer, you do have to have that certain look. But shouldn't the basis of the judging be on singing? And, if size is a big factor, is there not a way that comments could be said in a less harmful way?

Another new television show that is in its first season is *Are You Hot?*, where contestants walk out onto a stage in nothing but a skimpy bathing suit. Then, a panel of three judges critiques the contenders according to face, body, and sex appeal. This show is, in my opinion, absolutely appalling. On one episode, a judge took off .5 points because a lady's knees were a little pudgy.

Of course, on *Are you Hot?*, a major fixation is weight. In the same episode previously mentioned, a full figured woman nicknamed "Butter" was a contestant. She, of course, was picked on quite a bit. What does this convey to the average woman? That they are fat. According to statistics, the average woman wears a size 11 to a size 14. But, when watching the shows on television, one would get the picture that the average woman should be a size 6, if not smaller than that.

Size can go both ways, however. Not only are individuals being criticized for being 'overweight', but they are being told they are underweight as well. While the larger person may, for a while, find pleasure

in the fact that a skinny person is 'too skinny', this can be bad news for the smaller person. What happens when they begin to binge, trying to gain weight to fit that perfect body image?

It is not only women who are hurt by the stereotypes suggested by the new shows. Men are victims of the abuse as well. If you don't believe me, just take a look at *Are you Hot?* or other reality shows. Most, if not all, of the men pictured are handsome and perfectly sculpted. If they are lacking in some way, you can trust that the judge will let it be known. And, while most men will never let on that they are bothered by other's opinions, eventually they break down as well.

Another show that everyone is rather familiar with is *Survivor*. While *Survivor* has always been a show that featured more 'pretty people' than normal people, as of late it is much more evident. In this season's shows, the "cute group" includes a gym teacher and a swimsuit model. In a recent episode, they were bathing together and bragging about their bodies. Now, couldn't this scene have been edited out so as to not aggravate over half of the female population?

Another show that many have seen the previews for is *Married by America*. The show is set up to that America chooses the perfect mate for the contestant who is either a male or female who is fed up with meeting 'losers'. So, by mostly physical appearance, America is going to decide who is right for the participant to marry. One can imagine the type of people chosen to be on this show. The local Fox affiliate has recently canceled *Married by America* for 'demeaning marriage'.

It stands to reason that even though the new reality shows are interesting and entertaining, the population needs to be cautious about listening very seriously to the judgments handed down. Remember that if everyone looked the same, the world would be a very boring place.

Disclaimer: This article is the sole opinion of the writer and does not necessarily reflect the views or opinions of The Gryphon or Rocky Mount Senior High.

## The Grammy's

Sharita Battle

On February 23, one of music's most anticipated awards shows hit television: The Grammy's. One of the biggest winners was newcomer Norah Jones. Jones won all of the Grammy's that she was nominated for. She won Grammy's for **Record of the Year, Album of the Year, Song of the Year, Best New Artist, Best Female Pop Vocal Performance, and Best Pop Vocal Album.**

Other Grammy winners included:

**Best Male Pop Vocal Performance**

John Mayer- "Your Body Is A Wonderland"

**Best Pop Performance By A Duo Or Group With Vocal**

No Doubt- "Hey Baby"

**Best Pop Collaborations With Vocals**

Santana & Michelle Branch- "The Game Of Love"

**Best Pop Instrumental Performance**

B.B. King- "Auld Lang Syne"

**Best Dance Recording**

Dirty Vegas- "Days Go By"

**Best Female Rock Vocal Performance**

Sheryl Crow- "Steve McQueen"

**Best Male Rock Vocal Performance**

Bruce Springsteen- "The Rising"

**Best Rock Performance By A Duo Or Group With Vocal**

Coldplay- "In My Place"

**Best Hard Rock Performance**

Foo Fighters- "All My Life"

**Best Rock Song**

Bruce Springsteen- "The Rising"

**Best Alternative Rock Music Album**

Coldplay- "A Rush Of Blood To The Head"

**Best Female R&B Vocal Performance**

Mary J. Blige- "He Think I Don't Know"

**Best Male R&B Vocal Performance**

Usher- "U Don't Have To Call"

**Best R&B Urban/ Alternative Performance**

India.Arie- "Little Things"

**Best R&B Song**

Erykah Badu Featuring Common- "Love Of My Life"

**Best R&B Album**

India.Arie- "Voyage To India"

**Best Contemporary R&B Album**

Ashanti- "Ashanti"

**Best Female Rap Solo Performance**

Missy Elliot- "Scream a.k.a. Itchin"

**Best Male Rap Solo Performance**

Nelly- "Hot In Herre"

**Best Rap Performance By Duo Or Group**

OutKast Featuring Killer Mike- "The Whole World"

**Best Rap/ Song Collaboration**

Nelly Featuring Kelly Rowland- "Dilemma"

**Best Rap Album**

Eminem- "The Eminem Show"

**Best Female Country Vocal Performance**

Faith Hill- "Cry"

**Best Country Performance By A Duo Or Group With Vocal**

Dixie Chicks- "Long Time Gone"

**Best Country Instrumental Performance**

Dixie Chicks- "Lil' Jack Slade"

**Best Country Album**

Dixie Chicks- "Home"

Eventhough CBS had requested the no political statements be made regarding the pending war, a few remarks were made. Sheryl Crow, however, did have "No War" in glittering letters on her guitar strap. An astonishment to most viewers: no one was dressed provocatively.

Congratulations to the winners, and to the losers, there's always next year.

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