

Chapter 13

**FROM REALITY TV TO COACHING TV:
ELEMENTS OF THEORY AND EMPIRICAL FINDINGS
TOWARDS UNDERSTANDING THE GENRE**

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This chapter ¹ has a twofold goal: theoretical clarification of the reality TV genre and testing the theoretical essentials by empirical findings referring to the *Supernanny* formats in five countries. Part I tries to define a basic framework of reality TV and aims at answering the questions which social developments add to the popularity of this truly global television genre and which criteria form its smallest common denominator. Based on Alfred Schutz' sociological phenomenology of everyday life (called "*lifeworld*" theory)², reality TV is analyzed with regards to its specific contributions to the recipient's everyday living environment. Especially the latest trends towards coaching TV (lifestyle, upbringing) show clearer than before what makes up reality TV's extra-medial reference and what lines of development its sub-genres follow. The second part presents results of a comparative international study of *Supernanny* programs in England, Germany, Austria, Spain and Brazil gained by a research project at the University of Vienna. Together with the survival and celebrity shows, the *Supernanny* format marks the most dynamic area of development in the post-*Big Brother*-era. The interpretation of results on British edutainment television is governed by the question whether and if so, to what degree global marketing and stable formats work well with the adaptation to the respective countries' parenting traditions and which different upbringing problems on the one hand are visible and what different parenting recommendations are being given on the other hand in the various countries. The data of the content analysis are supplemented by results from a survey of 1611 *Supernanny* viewers in Germany and Austria that allow to double-check some of the theoretical essentials on reality

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² On the use and spelling of the term "lifeworld", cf. Ihde (1990).

TV concerning the audience's motives. Finally, I rely on the findings to evaluate and forecast the future perspectives of reality TV.

PART ONE: TOWARDS A THEORY OF REALITY TV

"The cinema can be defined as a medium particularly equipped to promote the redemption of physical reality. Its imagery permits us, for the first time, to take away with us the objects and occurrences that comprise the flow of material life." (Kracauer, 1960, p.300)

Redemption of Reality?

50 years ago, the sociologist and culture theorist Siegfried Kracauer emphatically saluted the era of the cinema as the "redemption of physical reality". In an adaption to an abstraction caused by ideologies, science and literature he saw the main reason for the alienation from the basic facts of life. Cinema was supposed to change that because unlike paintings, novels or theatre it works directly with reality particles, or more exactly with "the material world with its psychophysical correspondence" (Kracauer, 1960, p.300). Though this did not create perfect naturalism, it created a special form of art that's able to teach the perception of reality 'bottom up'. Today, the situation has changed drastically: We are surrounded by moving pictures that have long since lost their innocence as "psychophysical correspondence" because their orchestrated character is all too clear. Therefore, there is no reason to hope for pseudo-religious redemption – on the contrary: the media images seem to rather blot out than to reveal "reality". Media users react to the loss of cognitive unambiguousness by searching for remains of objectivity lost in the quicksand of ephemeral media choices. That is the hour of birth of "reality TV" that has been motivating program innovations time and again since the 1980s – and that, in a sort of double frontline position, protests against the ideological top-down techniques of educationalization and against the naïve equalization of appearance and reality.

The problem with exact definitions of reality TV is almost proverbial (Kilborn, 1994; Andrejevic, 2004; Hill, 2006; Krakowiak et al., 2008; Ouellette and Hay, 2008). Program experiments span from formats focusing on catastrophes and crime to dating and talent shows and hybrid programs like *Big Brother* and *Survivor*. The phenomenon is heterogeneous and global: *Big Brother* is broadcast in dozens of countries (Mathijs and Jones, 2004; Frau-Meigs, 2006). Even in China (Keane et al., 2007) and the Arabic countries (Kraidy, 2008), reality TV formats are immensely popular. Diffusion and change happen so quickly that the theorists are hard-pressed to adapt their attempts on definition and ascription of cultural functions in time. Hill compares reality TV research to a *moving target*: "Just as you get your bearing on the latest reality format, another format steps in, and you have to change direction." (Hill 2006, p.192). Still, there is a lowest common denominator shared by all reality TV programs that is schematically as follows:

Reality TV programs show

- 1) ordinary people on the screen
- 2) in positive and negative everyday situations

- 3) with an appeal of authenticity (lay actors, clumsy show-offs, members of the lower classes etc.)
- 4) in a way that interacts with the show participants' everyday life.

Reality programs are centered

- 5) around crucial events in life that destroy the ordinary everyday routine and mark a challenge.

The participants' efforts

- 6) aim at solving a problem (e. g. relationship conflicts) or are part of an attempt to upgrade social positions (e.g. gain fame).

The viewer

- 7) can draw conclusions from the participants' success or failure.

These seven basic elements of the reality TV definition apply to various implementations of the genre. They are tied together by a *culture of announcement* in which the private life becomes available to the general public for watching, noticing and assessing, be it out of an existential or everyday emergency or for reasons of culmination of attention (Franck, 1998). In a neutral, proto-moral sense, it is all about confessions of everyday people who hope to gain something by presenting themselves to the general public. The publication of the private is often fueled by a personal problem and offers the audience a chance to optimize their own crisis management by comparing their own everyday situations and coping strategies to the ones featured on the screen. The confrontation with others' reality experiences helps working on one's own model of reality.

My thesis postulates that reality TV-reacts to the reality crisis of the electronic media whose founding in reality has become brittle. It is at the same time an embodiment of this crisis and an attempt at solving it. Reality TV doesn't bring the redemption of the physical reality as a whole, but it restitutes everyday life as a basic reality and thus offers to each individual a shelter from systemic affronts by the economy, politics and pedagogics. Earlier educational TV programs saw the audience as "a gullible mass that needed guidance in the liberal art to participate in the rituals of public democracy. Today's popular reality TV addresses the viewer differently. The citizen is now conceived as an individual whose most pressing obligation to society is to empower her or himself privately." (Ouellette and Hay, 2008, p.3).

Characteristic for this is the "savvy viewer" (Andrejevic, 2004; 2008), who responds to the strategies of deception with equally strategic unveiling techniques by trying to see through the media orchestration (Hill, 2000; 2004; 2006). For the British *Big Brother* viewers, Hill shows clearly that they perceive the "true' self" of the show participants behind their performing techniques and thus get a satisfying light bulb moment. The participants' mutually thwarting profiling attempts, especially failed razzle-dazzles, allow conclusions regarding the characters behind them (Grimm, 2001). Thus, the "savvy viewers'" distance from the depicted media reality is a built-in fact of reality TV.

The Voyeur's Change

Alternately, the viewer can unveil her or himself and change – as Mark Andrejevic puts it – from "voyeur" to "exhibitionist". Indeed, one of reality TV's defining characteristics is the flexible role permeability between the shows' viewers and participants. But it seems arguable

if the connection of voyeurism and exhibitionism must actually be interpreted with what Andrejevic (2008, p.333) – following Sigmund Freud - calls *scopophilia*. In a fit of ardor, this alludes to St. Augustine's "concupiscentia oculorum" (397 A. D.). St. Augustine generally suspects all forms of lust of the eyes in the late Roman Empire (theatre, fine arts and of course gladiatorial fights) of being sinful. The problem is the lack of specificity in his judgment. In an era of ubiquitous optical media, voyeurism becomes ever-present and thus meaningless. It does not explain the affinity to any particular program, as it – in for a penny, in for a pound – concerns all forms of reception of audio-visual media. Kracauer is very modern with regards to that, stating neutrally: "However, the supreme virtue of the camera consists precisely in acting the voyeur." (Kracauer, 1960, p.44) As the goal of 'voyeurism', he regards the "change of the agitated viewer", be it by seeing the Medusa's head in Achilles' shield and confronting his or her fears or by everyday's banality showing itself in full detail and vacuity. Thus, we are not talking sheer lust of the eyes; rather, the viewing is functionally embedded into working on oneself and one's own life.

Here, Kracauer comes very close to the reality TV phenomenon. For *Big Brother* with its principle of observation is not the ultimate reality TV (and neither is it the habituation to a surveillance society), but the performative presentation of everyday situations in the media to make them controllable by the everyday lifeworld subjects. Reality TV is "everyday life in a state of emergency" (Grimm, 1995) by and for ordinary people. The man on the street's self-empowerment of course does not stop the agents of the media system from using and exploiting the mass audience's needs to raise the quota and/or pedagogic or political elites from superimposing their own goals to the new forms of media communication. But – and that is the core thesis – basically, reality TV is a form of reality affirmation *operationally included into everyone's everyday life*. The viewer's sense of reality (and thus, reality TV's global popularity) does stem neither from the immediate form of watching nor from its functionality for political and economical goals, but from the connection of everyday experiences to the media events and the consequences for the viewers' lives that can be derived from them. This is the "practical value" of the commodity reality TV without which no "exchange value" (and no media economical gain) can be realized – and without which no political campaigns brokered by reality TV will work. It is interesting that American attempts at reality TV from Iraq showing heroic soldiers flopped, while reality programs on the consequences of the war in Iraq broadcast by the station Al-Sharqiya (The Eastern) run by Saddam Hussein's former secretary of propaganda, Saad al-Bazzaz, amongst them the format *Labor Pulse Material* showing debris clearings after bombings, were extremely popular (McMurrie, 2008, p.194). In the former case, there is no everyday surplus value for the Iraqi audience (that feels abused by the occupation), while in the latter the scenario coincides with the urge to not only survive, but to cope with an extremely violent everyday life.

The "world of everyday life", marked by routines (repeating actions, situations and interactions) and crucial changes (birth, marriage, sickness, death) is, according to Alfred Schutz (Schutz and Luckmann, 1973; 1983) paramount reality that we take for granted, within which our routines develop, where we communicate with others, meet with resistance and with which we interact actively. Schutz opines an acentric world view centered on the everyday lifeworld subject. "The knowledge about the world is in two ways, socially and biographically based on experience; i. e. the subject is affected by its predecessors' and teachers' interpretations of the world as well as by its own experiences which in the form of 'knowledge at hand' function as a scheme of reference". (Schutz, 1945, p.533).

Intersubjectivity with others ensures that the worlds of socially close contemporaries converge to a certain degree, even if they constantly need to be compared anew and, if necessary, renegotiated. The *world of everyday life* forms the master pattern from which other worlds or related "finite provinces of meaning" like e. g. religion, art and science, but also dreams, are created and is the measure for all of them.

In the *world of everyday life*, we are players and voyeurs at once. Our environment is kept under surveillance for dangers or problems that could endanger our routines. The automatic chain of actions and experiences is broken once the unexpected happens. Enter the voyeur who is driven by either curiosity or fear. Psychologists call this a dissonance of cognitive patterns (Berlyne, 1960; Schank and Abelson, 1977; Anderson, 1995), which disrupts ongoing actions and triggers *orientation reactions* (Sokolov, 1965). The exploration of our field of vision helps us identify potential dangers and look for possible solutions. If watching is pleasant on top, all the better.

In any case, the voyeur's change while watching reality TV marks a learning process. A heated public discussion in Germany accused the watchers of the reality format *Notruf* (German version of *Rescue 911*) showing accidents and rescue missions of "catastrophe voyeurism". However, an experimental study showed that people were more ready to help others after watching the show. It is also proven that the *Red Cross* received more applications for first aid courses, when this show was on the air. Watching catastrophes in *Notruf* turned a lot of people into dedicated rescue helpers, and even those that did not develop any interest in professional knowledge showed a certain interest in catastrophes while watching *Notruf*, but only if fire brigades and police could effectively quell them (Grimm, 1995). It seems telling that the test resulted in under-average values for "sensation seeking" for heavy viewers of *Notruf*. There was no trace of sensationalist motives for their interest. The satisfaction does not primarily spring from watching, but from gaining a better orientation regarding a problematic situation. Watching reality TV can be fun, but the intentional reference to the everyday living environment remains the main motivating variable endowing the watching with meaning. At least, this is true for regular viewers of reality formats. "Better living through reality TV" is Ouellette's and Hay's (2008) short formula. The goal is to better control one's own living conditions, something which Rotter (1966) calls "locus of control" and Bandura (1994) terms "self-efficacy".

Everyday Life and Reality TV

Media scholars like Tamar Liebes and Sonja Livingstone (1994, 1998) show through the example of Daily Soaps how viewers relate fictional stories to their everyday situation by relating the complications on screen to their own experiences and state similarities or differences. Analogically, reality TV users do not simply transfer the situations and actions one-to-one into their own world view or repertoire of practical activities, but critically question the media scenario. Errors when checking for everyday suitability inevitably lead to a loss of reality that can become pathological in extreme cases (e. g. daydreaming, social isolation). The controlled shifting between "areas of meaning", though, is part of a "normal" media use in which the suitability check of fictional scenarios (minimum condition is the understanding that everything is fictional) protects from uncritical transfers from the

symbolical world of entertainment into our everyday living environment and from unwanted shocks when switching worlds.

The necessity for reality checks using earlier or recent experiences goes beyond media reception into the immediate experiences in our living environment. In the "natural attitude" of everyday life, individuals according to Schutz (1945) tend to "idealized assumptions" to be able to continue their routine forever (*I can do it again and again*); also, experiences are basically automatically projected into the future (*everything remains as is*). This tendency, highly functional for automatized processes in everyday life, becomes a problem when the unexpected happens or a changed situation demands re-orientation. For example, a recent experience in a partnership conflict cannot be transferred to all potential future partnerships. If we disregard this, we risk practical failures in life. The lifeworld subject thus is forced to check recent and past experiences for reality suitability and compare them with "new" information from the social environment and from the media world. To understand reality TV's inner logic, one must consider the ubiquity of the reality check and the permanent nature of experience-related comparisons, both postulated not only by the lifeworld concept, but also by more recent memory theories.

According to Markowitsch and Welzer, a twofold adjustment process between a person and their concrete lifeworld environment on one hand and between the person and various concepts of meaning and action on the other hand forms the "autobiographical memory" that keeps clearly self-related early memories with an emotional index "autonoetically available" (Markowitsch and Welzer 2005, p.11). By remembering the "good-old-days" (e. g. past happy partnership situations), mechanisms of stimulus and reaction in the current perceived to be problematic everyday routine (e.g. the long-term partnership is in a crisis) are put in a reflective context, also with regards to the input of external information (e. g. Internet makes it possible to choose partners or to develop sexual promiscuity). This "mental time travel" helps avoiding *dysfunctional lifeworld idealization*, "governing all conduct in the natural sphere, namely, that I may continue to act as I have acted so far and that I may again and again recommence the same action under the same conditions." (Schutz, 1945, p.547). To remain sustainable, the "explicit" and the "implicit" memories (Schacter, 1987) are constantly checked and rearranged in some aspects, modified in others with regards to their place within the structure of relevance and activity routines (Schutz and Luckmann, 1973, p.186). This memory rearrangement is embedded into a continuous *cognition and emotion management* (Grimm, 1999b) by individuals and groups that creates the relevant definitions of situations, motivations and readiness to act in the reference frame of changing lifeworld conditions. If one soccer team scores a goal, the opponent must re-motivate themselves for a counter attack; they will look for a chance to regain lost confidence (e. g. safe short passing game in the own half of the field) and will if necessary knock the tactical concept on the head. A stressed employee may watch an action movie on TV after work to forget abasements by his boss and to notify his tired body that there are also encouraging examples of individual strength and assertiveness. In both cases, the lifeworld subject creates a specific "informational environment" (by acting accordingly or through symbolic communication) that enables the subject to mobilize resources for problem solving and everyday coping. Brenda Dervin (1976; 1980; 1986) calls this "gap bridging" in the reference frame of her "sense making" idea. The "gaps" resulting from everyday problems lead to information seeking within and without media submissions whereas the information sought for bridges the gap to problem solving.

Schutz points out the importance of the fear of death within the individual relevance system. "I know that I shall die and I fear to die. This basic experience we suggest calling the fundamental anxiety. It is the primordial anticipation from which all the others originate. From the fundamental anxiety spring the many interrelated systems of hopes and fears, of wants and satisfactions, of chances and risks which incite man with the natural attitude to attempt the mastery of the world, to overcome obstacles, to draft projects, and to realize them." (Schutz, 1945, p.550). Ernest Becker (1973) thinks along similar lines, when he defines conquering the fear of death as the everyday human core task. Following Paul Tillich's theory of existential anxiety (see Weems et al., 2004), existential and social psychology have long since opened up an own field of research "terror management" which goes well with Schutz' *lifeworld* theory. Terror management can explain techniques of coping with fear that heighten the self-worth (Greenberg et al., 1986; Hart et al., 2005), at the same time empowering individuals to act in their everyday life ("Yes, I can") and cater to the interior of the lifeworld subject as a reference for *emotion management* ("I'm controlling myself"). The goal of *terror management* as part of *emotion management* (regulation of affects like fear, sorrow and anger, cf. Grimm, 2006b) is not primarily to be happy but to be able to act adequately in a given situation. Too much existential anxiety or too much fear in everyday life situations undermine the individuals' competence for social behavior and problem solving. Thus, *terror management* is linked to self-efficacy as well as to the need for safety which forms a firm reference parameter for shaping everyday life, be it with regards to parental attachments that guarantee safety (Cox et al., 2008), be it via religious ideas promising an afterlife (Jonas and Fischer, 2006). The two sides of *terror management* correspond with two varieties of coping with fear that media in general support immensely (Vitouch, 1993): The coping strategy of "sensitizers" is aimed at confronting provocative situations (bungee jumping, dangerous sports, horror movies) to experience the success of survival and to increase the feeling of controlling and power. On the contrary, "repressers" prefer harmonic environments (candle light dinner, romantic movies) which give them a kind of tranquillizer and satisfy their need for safety.

Fear-mitigating motives of increased self-efficacy have, by the way, also been proven for the identification with heroic characters in movies and for computer game use, especially first-person games with weapons (Geyer, 2006). The media users partially transfer the assertiveness experienced in fiction and virtual reality into the world of everyday life. It is clear to see that reality shows like "Survivor" directly cater to claims of coping with fear, self-empowerment and self-efficacy. Reality TV's everyday roots obviously do not stem from a similarity to everyday situations only, but are also and primarily operative – by brokering situational options of intervention and by enabling the lifeworld subject to act.

Now, what makes reality TV special is the fact that the story's inner logic and probability are not the only criteria in the evaluation of everyday suitability (that would be true for fictional entertainment), but that it additionally aims at strategies of revealing realities beyond the performers' scenical intentions. As "savvy viewer", the reality TV watcher knows that we all "act" as we have to present ourselves in social interactions (Goffman, 1959; Perinbanayagam, 2000). Nevertheless – and because of this – we try to see behind the others' curtains and see through each other. That is a pretty rational behavior that can (but not necessarily will) strengthen the foundation of social behavior by balancing it from a critical distance. This does not stop anti-deception maneuvers from becoming a sort of control mania (e. g. checking the partner's e-mail account or the mobile numbers he has saved) that step by

step undermines social trust. That is what suitability check techniques within and without the media are for that are not restricted to unmasking and unveiling alone, but must prove their potential in the reference frame of a critical and reflected – and, if you want to put it that way, "phenomenologically enlightened" everyday pragmatism.

The "savvy viewer" of reality TV adds to his love for unveiling strategies a critical attitude towards the sort of pedagogical or propaganda communication intentions (Hill, 2006; Biressi and Nunn, 2005) attributed to political statements by party functionaries in the media as well as expert-guided advisory broadcasts and sometimes fictional entertainment if they are overly obtrusive geared to deliver a specific moral or political message or political/pedagogical indoctrination. That is also part of the rationality of a mediatized everyday living environment to resist recognized persuasive intentions. The living environment subject's only problem, therefore, is that the authorities cannot simply be trusted as they are unfamiliar with the subject's personal situation. Insofar, skepticism towards authorities in everyday matters is necessary to keep the individual sovereign and adaptable to changing situations. The lack of direct pedagogical intentions in many reality TV programs gives viewers a chance to get their own picture of things and exactly thus is regarded as a gain in "realism" offering an ambiguous set of positive and – to a higher degree – negative role models without exaggerated guidance and patronizing. The price for realistic gain and openness for free interpretation, however, is paid by embarrassed show participants, the celebrity wannabes who are very publicly duped or explicitly serve as a dissuasive example right from the beginning.

Neutrally speaking, reality TV implicates for its viewers a dominance of *negative learning* ("I see how it does not work"; "I realize what I shouldn't do", cf. Grimm, 1999b) as opposed to didactics via positive models and exemplary action. The communication's credibility is in so far strengthened through negative examples as the recipients' freedom in interpreting the media scenarios is respected and thus, a possible "reactance" (resistance against persuasion attempts, cf. Brehm, 1966; McGuire, 1999) can be avoided. The feeling of sublimity towards the failed reality TV "stars" is doubly gratifying: It can diminish the recipients' existential fears in the sense of *terror management* and at the same time heighten the belief in *self-efficacy* in practical living conditions. The situation of the embarrassed show participants on the other hand is precarious. While they are publicly noticed, this attention is diminished by a certain degree of contempt. This is the most seductive aspect of reality TV promising attention to average people (who miss exactly this attention in their "normal" lives) and at the same time offering to the audience Mr Nobody's currying for prominence as a chance for contempt that increases the feeling of self-worth. The viewers' *negative learning* corresponds to the negative attention for the viewed.

Reliability of Orientation

The appearance of participants that call for differentiation and hyper-critical downward comparisons, which is typical of casting shows, daily talks and *Big Brother*, strengthens the "voyeur's" position as a moral judge and creates orientation, especially with regards to avoidance. Pfau and colleagues have found in the frame of their "inoculation approach" that negative imagery of smokers can become effective in an anti-smoking campaign as arguments against addictive habits can provoke a protest behavior of the forcefully indoctrinated

smokers (Pfau et al., 2003; Yin and Pfau, 2003; Pfau, van Bockern and Kang, 1992). Since within entertainment settings, there is no resistance against persuasion attempts (if the viewers do not assume such intents on the producers' part), all resistance focuses on the negatively portrayed personnel on screen. The public embarrassment of semi-stars in talent and casting shows surely offers a certain protection against the "addiction" to publicity that many reality TV formats fuel. But reality TV producers try to defuse the participants' depreciation by humor (sarcastic off comments, parodist exaggeration, self-irony of the participants) to keep the "exhibitionists" from the ranks of the "voyeurs" coming. Under the aspect of everyday orientation, the discredited (and often ridiculed) reality TV participants "inoculate" the viewers against an adoption of models of action into their lives. Thus, the "savvy viewers" of a docu-soap that shows teenage mothers despairing from everyday problems know exactly that after the show, the monotony of changing diapers starts anew, not to mention the sadness of impossible trips to the disco. They mainly remember their aversion against this lifestyle.

One problem of *negative learning* consists in the fact that the criticized or humorously depreciated models are uncertain with regards to what ways of action promise success. Additionally, the repeated, sort of ritual self-empowerment of reality TV viewers with regards to effective orientation remains incomplete if it is only based on gloating or laughing about those already weak and society's socially disadvantaged groups (the unemployed, alcoholics, the mentally ill). It stimulates dissociation attitudes and a critical mindset, but it does not tell the viewers what to do and how. The gain of sovereign judgment and error awareness is balanced by a loss of authoritative orientation. Especially intense reality TV users could thus be faced with new problems for their everyday orientation, because if you concern yourself too much with foolish or weird characters, damaged people and problematic behavior on TV, this abets a relativist "all the same" attitude. In other words, a chaotic situation with many or too many dubious options the viewers try to dissociate themselves from, potentially leads to a state of negation of orientation – something which Paul Virilio (1999) calls "polar inertia": the state of clueless torpor or a morally acquitted voluntarism in which any behavior can be justified or aggressively judged. The negation of orientation is best represented by the motto "each to his own!" that is repeated indefinitely in daily talks. That is definitely progressive in a dogmatically highly regularized, repressive culture. It constitutes reality TV's explosive force in autocratic systems like China and Saudi Arabia (Keane et al., 2007; Khatib, 2005; Kraidy, 2008). But the same principle becomes a liability when the mutual relativization of lifeworld orientation leads to a general arbitrariness in the end.

Developments of the Genre

Not all media researchers count daytime talk shows explicitly as reality TV: Neither Hill (2006) nor Murray and Ouellette (2008) mention them in their lists of subgenres. But they are definitely pioneers (Tally, 2008) that feature elements that are typically found in reality TV like helping *ordinary people* to screen presence and establish *problems of everyday life* (e. g. partnership conflicts, unemployment and alcoholism, outfit and body, lifestyle) and use these problems as topics for social media communication. Daily talks present *everyday life in a state of emergency* (s. definition at the beginning of this chapter), as they focus on and scandalize crisis and deviant people and behavior (e. g. promiscuous sexuality, violent

hooligans). There are also moments of *intervention* when the talk show presents everyday problems as "live life drama" (Grimm, 1999a). Should the confession talk or the shouting contest not be enough to recognize the "truth" and untie knots of interaction, lie detectors or paternity tests bring additional light to the darkness of private conflict and deceit.

The daily talks' strength is *pluralism of situation* with a wide range of everyday life's trouble, their weakness is *relativism of orientation* caused by contradictory experiences of the show participants, the arbitrariness of audience comments and the multiplicity of possible consequences for viewers. In addition, the number of washed-up people and action models boost the uncertainty to judge. In the multi-optional scenarios of daily talks with their focus on *negative learning*, there is uncertainty with regards to

- (a) positive behavioral alternatives,
- (b) successful coping strategies and
- (c) reliable co-judges who intersubjectively collateralize the own ability to judge.

Newer developments within reality TV programs contain answers to all three problems. The daily talks' success that dominated the daytime program of many European private networks in the 1990s (e. g. in Germany, Italy and France) was followed by more affirmative formats that signal a return of authorities into reality TV. For reasons of everyday rationality, the self-relativizing relativism enforces a limited recourse to people who have, by office or by education, superior knowledge and definite power of judgment. The comprehensive launch of court TV in Germany ended the daily talk boom. The first show in that genre was the format *Richterin Barbara Salesch* (after the US format *Judge Judy*) where a "real" judge heard first real and after October 2000 fictional cases, played by lay actors. It is remarkable that attempts to replace talk show participants by actors to revive the declining genre have failed before. The non-professional talk guests guaranteed the degree of unpredictability and surprise that the *Big Brother* audience digs as well and that adds a more "realistic" sincerity to the comparison to one's own everyday experiences. Viewers disliked actors in talk shows because their opinions seemed planned, artificial and manipulative. Here, the reality accent lays in the authenticity of everyday people's experiences and opinions that cannot be fictionalized without losing quota. In court TV, on the other hand, actors and scripts were no problem. The question of guilt first remains unanswered which heightens the viewers' suspense (and is thus a challenge to the "savvy viewer"), but was scripted beforehand just like in a regular court motion picture. Here, the definition criteria of Ouellette and Murray (2008, p.3) who deem the "non-scripted access to 'real' people in ordinary and extraordinary situations" as constituent for reality TV fail. Court TV can still be construed as reality TV, though, since the moment of authenticity switches from ordinary people to the judge as a person of authority who guarantees the quality of orientation (her decisions are based on written law and follow acknowledged principles of justice). Additionally, the orderly game of accusation and defense brings structure and rationality into the unveiling technique that for example Andrejevic (2004) criticizes in the MTV format *One Bad Trip* because it practices and propagates the unregulated spying on interaction partners within the family or a circle of friends which causes a "climate for conspiracy" in private relationships and does enormous damage. Those who want to avoid such extremities of the unveiling mania but do not want to completely stop looking for reality behind the facades of self-presentation need a reliable compass like court TV that establishes the unveiling techniques on a constitutional level and certifies them via a professional judge.

A similar shift in the reality focus happens in the format *Zwei bei Kallwass* (a German format with a professional psychologist counseling clients with relationship problems played by lay actors on coping with their problems and conflicts in a sort of systemic family therapy in front of a live audience). Again, it is no problem here that the cases are fictional and scripted: what counts is that the psychologist is "real"! The proof of authenticity is situated right where it is needed for an orientation in the world of everyday life: with the authority and credibility of the recommended solution that had become brittle in other reality TV formats. In a way, the program development reacts twofold, to a changed need of the everyday lifeworld (psychological counseling is a mega trend) and to dynamical needs that the development of reality TV itself has caused.

Along this line comes the latest trend in coaching TV. The prototype here is the British edutainment format *Supernanny* in which hobby pedagogue Jo Frost has been visiting families with parent-child-conflicts in need of counseling at home since 2004 to heighten the lifeworld subjects' ability to control their immediate life situation by direct intervention (admonishing the children, counseling the parents) and via recommendations on restructuring their everyday life (time schedules, systems of gratification/punishment, restructuring of the living area). The motive of control has a triple relevance here: *First*, the format is about the control of children avoiding parental influences. *Second*, the parents' precarious self-control that adds to the "family chaos" due to social factors (double stress of job and household, unemployment etc.) and own negative childhood experiences (biographical "wounds") is to be restituted. *Third*, the intervention aims at helping the children to largely control themselves so that direct parental intervention becomes less and less necessary. The program has meanwhile been licensed to more than a dozen countries, among them Germany, Austria, the US, Brazil, Spain, France, Israel and China. Symptomatically, in Germany hobby pedagogue Jo Frost's role is taken by the certified social pedagogue Katja Saalfrank and in Austria by the couple Sabine Eder (social pedagogue) and Sandra Velásquez (psychologist), both also professionals. Like in court TV and psycho coaching, the orientation achievement is "authoritatively" certified in edutainment TV. While Frost refers back to her past experiences as a "real" nanny in British families, in Germany and Austria (also in Spain and Brazil), the counseling claim is academically backed by university degrees. The supernannies' tips are published in parenting guidebooks (e. g. Frost, 2005a; Saalfrank, 2005) outside the show and discussed in Internet forums. The professionalized TV discourse thus interacts with everyday life discourses. As opposed to court TV and psycho coaching shows, the *Supernanny* format's participants are "real". This increases the authentic parts and heightens the sincerity with which viewers spread the recommendations, which in turn intensifies the mandatory critical everyday suitability check (s. above), but also increases the probability of a transfer to the viewers' life.

The *Supernanny* format answers to all three weaknesses of reliability and the concreteness of the everyday orientation mentioned above that daily talks share with the totalitarian surveillance show *Big Brother* (where chance and intrigue rule) and the survival show *Survivor* aiming at abstract self-empowerment. In the *Supernanny* programs, *positive alternatives of acting* are phrased prominently by the protagonist in the form of concrete recommendations, and the *efficiency of problem solving* is guaranteed by direct intervention and counseling for the participating families. For the recipient, that means an impressive demonstration of everyday suitability. Furthermore, the supernanny persona represents a *reliable co-judge* who "authoritatively" accompanies and pre-structures the viewers'

processing of what they saw. *Supernanny* programs definitely know no problem of orientation negation like talk shows (or *Big Brother*). Thus, Hill is wrong when she says: "Whereas in traditional reality formats the relationship between information and entertainment was fairly explicit ..., in contemporary reality formats the relationship is more implicit." (Hill 2006, p.179) While it is true that in an early phase of reality TV focussing on emergency service and crime centred formats the "problem solving" (regarding first aid for accident victims and crime fighting) was more important than in *Big Brother* or *Survivor*, the evolution of the genre has long since passed by the noncommittal attitude and artificiality of game situations in a container or on an adventure island; at least, the reality genre has differentiated itself towards commitment and concreteness of everyday orientation. When it first aired, *Big Brother* could be construed to be an answer to *Rescue 911* and *Top Cops* – in the sense of both liberation from systematic patronizing by police and fire fighters and of opening the setting towards "ordinary" everyday accidents – but the most recent coaching formats offering not only upbringing tips, but for example also cooking recipes and ideas for debt reduction react to the brittleness of the orientation transfer resulting from the artificial situation in the *Big Brother* house (or far-off islands and jungle camps) into the viewers' world of everyday life. Those who are suffering from the relativist dogma should turn to *Supernanny*; the "savvy viewing" of egocentrics and tricksters will not be enough for them in the long run.

With regards to the evolution of the genre we see that the current development is towards differentiated functions for various areas of the everyday lifeworld. In a way, post-modern reality TV stressing pluralism and openness has moved on into a post-post-modern phase reducing the arbitrariness of orientation. Of course, that does not exclude that the genre will recur again to more open and relativist formats when the authoritative recommendations and professional solution approaches are less trusted again. Obviously, there are two ideal forms of reality TV: *Variety A* is geared towards unveiling reality and acknowledges a high degree of freedom when it comes to everyday orientation; *variety B* is more tied to an operative coping with concrete everyday situations and combines addressing problems with their potential solution (that should be as authoritative as possible). In both cases, we find a predominance of everyday life that reality virtually raises a monument to by claiming public attention for the lifeworld subjects' sorrows and hardships beyond political systems of relevance. Reality TV is situated in the "political antechamber" but it remains open to connectable political appropriations that are compatible with everyday life. In casting ordinary people in a stark bright light that catches the most remote corner of their private existence, the camera's eye can potentially increase not only the individual reflexivity in the world of everyday life, but also the chance for governance and social control by institutions of the political and economic system.

In the next – and last – paragraph of theoretical approaches to reality TV, I will analyze more thoroughly the conditions of popularity and the socio-political implications of the *Supernanny* format and include findings of the Vienna research project that will be more thoroughly and more systematically described in the chapter's second part to empirically support theoretical essentials. With the *Supernanny* format, the evolution of reality TV as a genre reaches an interlocutory climax by strongly altering the question for a "real" reality on behalf of the intervention in the everyday lifeworld. What does the operative focusing of coaching TV mean for the genre's popularity and worldwide marketing? What consequences do surveillance cameras, interventionism and globalization have with regards to the self-efficacy claims of the lifeworld subjects?

Glocalization of the Supernanny

Austrian Supernanny: "Of course it is strange at first when there's a camera present. But because it is there for so long, parents and children get used to it quickly. I even have the impression that the camera makes one aware of certain things even more ... One must not forget that the families we had are not used to reflecting on themselves at great length. They also don't have the social environment to give them feedback on their social behavior. This means that they really see themselves for the first time on film: "OK, this is how I really am!" Or, they see themselves for the first time in the video analysis and are taken aback. This has always been a strong experience for the family." (Edinger, own interview 2005)

The camera in the kids' room radicalizes the watching eye's authority far beyond normal "voyeurism". It does not deliver simple eye candy but offers a powerful instrument of intervention to the lifeworld subject. It aims at holding the mirror to stressed out parents allowing them to perceive their interaction with their children from a distanced watcher's position. This opportunity of self-watching opens the parents for the nanny's intervention and recommendations. This media-brokered connection between self-reflection and indoctrination is highly effective: the majority of cases are "successfully" solved within the intervention phase of about a week. While more than half of the Austrian participating families we questioned showed to be in need of counseling even after participating in the *Supernanny* experiment, their progress consists of understanding and more readily accepting counseling offers. A problem of professional governmental institutions offering help (Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth; Youth Welfare Office) is that their clients – especially those from lower classes – mistrust them because the help is linked to governmental power that uses the forceful removal of children (e. g. commitment to a youth institution) as an ultimate means. Those who mistreat their children and let them become "problem kids" are in danger of losing them to governmental institutions. The reality format *Supernanny* easily conquers the barriers this erects between the system's agents and the lifeworld subjects because TV not only has no sanctioning function, but also promises public attention as gratification. While there is the risk of public embarrassment, the public attention offers an additional incentive for the participants to solve their own family problems. As opposed to casting shows operating by a competitive system of exclusion and willingly accepting the defeat of the many to create one "star", the participants of *Supernanny* programs decide upon their success themselves. Their practical test does not consist in eliminating competitors, but is only assessed by their everyday life. In the context of home and family that forms the inner core of it, the lifeworld subject potentially becomes a "star among stars" if it can master the practical challenges of upbringing by reflective techniques (camera, talking, therapeutic games), guided by the nanny.

A central factor of successfully globally marketing reality TV formats (Moran, 1998; Moran and Malbon, 2006) is their focus on the world of everyday life that has similar basic structures and is experienced similarly in all countries and cultures: "impact zones" and "zones of potential accessibility" (Schutz & Luckmann, 1973; 1983) do exist in every society; all lifeworld subjects share lifeworld idealizations of "I can do this again and again" and schematic everyday routines. The individuals' reflexivity also belongs to the general consequences of modern times (Giddens, 1990; 1991; Archer, 2007) that create a need for reflective support. Finally, the double structure of society as system and lifeworld that

Juergen Habermas (1985a; 1985b) calls "uncoupled" is a universal thing. Indeed, the dictum of "colonization of the lifeworld by the system" is dubious when it comes to reality TV since here, systemic resources (e. g. police and fire fighters or psychologists and pedagogues as agents of the welfare state) usually serve the lifeworld subjects. In any case, the relative independence of lifeworld structures that the uncoupling thesis correctly describes means a connection point for globalized formats that the everyday life primacy is programmatically inscribed to and that the systemic level only incorporates according to the principle of subsidiarity. Finally, the similarity of parenting problems around the world gives Jo Frost's tips and recipes a worldwide popularity. Equally surprised and proud, the British edutainment pioneer stated in an interview with the Australian newspaper *The Sun-Herald*:

"It's universal. You could put every nationality in a room, and it's the same thing going on. I've got parents with children who have taken control, who don't want to eat, who rule the roost, purely because they have been given too much choice." (cited by Teutsch and Browne, 2005)

Frost sees the emotional involvement into the parents-child-conflict as a reason for business myopia and adds: "Objectively, I'm able to observe. For parents, it's difficult to see when they are so emotionally involved." (Frost, *ibid*)

Optimistically speaking, for the participating parents the *Supernanny* programs mean "self-therapy" which Rachel Dubrofsky (2007) calls a basic trait of reality TV, exemplified by dating shows like *The Bachelor* and *The Bachelorette*. The author sees reality TV as part of a "culture of therapy", whereas "therapy" does not really refer to pathological states, but signifies a sort of identity work aiming at personality changes and heightening the control ability. The description of the camera situation within the family by the Austrian supernanny Edinger (cf. the opening quote of this paragraph) hints at the potential for self-change within self-adulation. This effect is further enhanced by the awareness of being watched by many people, provided the proof motive is stronger than the fear of embarrassment. The participant can trust the supernanny's power to, as Melissa Lenos (cit. in Tally, 2006) ironically remarks, ride in like a "gunslinger" in a wild west movie and help the parents in distress – happy ending of course guaranteed. In continuation of George Herbert Mead (1934), the authoritatively accompanying camera could be seen to represent the "generalized other" that first of all represents a moral instance for the child that it keeps internalizing more and more during the socialization process. In adults, recursions to what "the people" think make the self-control of the impulsive "I" by the reflective "Me" more effective. The "Me" stores outside expectations that the subject uses to control maladjusted parts of his personality. In religious terms, this could be described as a public stimulation of conscience in order to gain moral self-discipline. Is *Supernanny* thus aiding our reflective and moral maturation like the spiritual exercises once were that Michel Foucault (2009) sees as a specifically Christian tradition of individualization and self-evidence?

Seen as a whole, admittedly, Foucault's analysis of power conveys a critical understanding of self-control that he analyzes as an alternative or rather an add-on to classical forms of ruling with power and punishment, i.e. as a part of modern "gouvernementality" where control from without and from within are fundamentally interlocking. The term sounds like the French word "*gouvernante*" (a distant relative to the British nanny model, responsible for etiquette and good behavior). As a stereotype, the "*gouvernante*", famous for her patronizing style of upbringing that tries to indoctrinate the pupil's self-control by rigid forms

of morality – is basically condescending. In that sense, the parents' self-empowerment through *Supernanny* could mean the children's incapacitation that is linked to punishment and force according to Foucault (1995). But "gouvernementality" goes deeper and incorporates the parents' position. Even if it does not look like heteronomy of the parenting role, strengthening the parents' position by the supernanny's recommendations could in the end mean an illusion of freedom that only implements the rationality of systemic governance coming from the political sphere of society. In that case, the receivers of *Supernanny* counseling would not have become more competent in handling their everyday challenges, but had only reproduced the state's job, be it governing its citizens, be it with regards to the social services' help, on an individual basis. Tally (2006) complains that *Supernanny* programs have a surrogate function: Instead of providing nurseries and full-time schools, the upbringing responsibility is completely left to the parents whose problems caused by the lack of pedagogical institutions and resources can hardly be solved via *Supernanny*. According to Ouellette and Hay (2008), reality TV with its claim to help manage everyday life matches well the political "outsourcing" common in the UK since Thatcher. Nikolas Rose (1999) thinks similarly in his critical impetus, when he perpetuates Foucault's theory and does not see more freedom in neo-liberal politicians' call for self-responsibility and self-control but rather a change in the form of control that only provides a better mask for governance and political domination.

Now, in the face of the worldwide financial and economical crisis, one can doubt the success of self-regulation in the sense of neo-liberal politics, but a growth in affect control and a shift of control functions towards the individual is incontestable these days. Already in the 1930s, Norbert Elias (1939) diagnosed the decrease of direct governmental power and the increasing importance of self-regulating individuals throughout the civilization process. The individuals' ability for self-control may sometimes include suffering from freedom, but is definitely to be preferred to a dictatorship's lack of freedom. Those who tend to see liberal systems close to fascist ones cannot appreciate the freedom of the lifeworld with family and home at its core: there and only there, anti-dictatorial resistance systems can form. Bakardjieva uses Afro-Americans as an example of people who saw their homeplace as a place to fall back to, to regenerate and to develop solidarity "in the context of the black liberation struggle" (Bakardjieva, 2005, p.73). Robert Silverstone (1994) ascribes a more ambiguous role to the "domestic sphere" that generally gains more importance through TV and Internet. Also, the neo-Marxist everyday theorist Henri Lefebvre (1947) stresses the family everyday world's "dual potential" because it can be used for the individuals' authoritarian domestication as well as for their emancipation.

Thus, we need to ask precisely and decide empirically how much the British *Supernanny* format tends towards authoritarian control or prefers emancipatory and democratic styles of controlling and parenting children within the process of global diffusion. Following Roland Robertson (1994) we act on the assumption that globalization really means "glocalization" because the successful implementation of the original form in other countries as a rule needs cultural modifications. In the interest of global marketing, the "identity" of the brand should be kept, though. Therefore, we will compare the original British program with the adaptations produced in Germany, Austria, Spain and Brazil and recognize the amount of *glocalization* by the format's differentiation of the authoritarian and democratic potential.

PART TWO: INTERNATIONAL COMPARISON OF EDUTAINMENT PROGRAMS

Parenting Styles and Cultural Diversity

The image of British parenting in continental Europe is authoritarian. Victorian pedagogic principles are seen as strict, rules-oriented and set on obedience. At least in the past British upbringing included corporal punishment as well. While it has long since been officially banished in UK schools, the term "English education" still connotes to values like consequence and discipline. The nanny system practiced in English middle to upper class families adds to this (a third person next to father and mother is responsible for supervision and educational duties within the family's house for a certain period of time), for it formalizes the pedagogic relationship to a certain degree and helps the parents. The ideal nanny sets up authoritative rules (e. g. for doing homework or going to bed) to avoid long discussions with the pupil. Of course, the nanny enforces the rule, if necessary, with the authority of something like a "constitutional entity". The advantage is clear: Fraught arguments between "stressed-out" parents and "contumacious" kids about homework and bedtimes do not take place as there is no effective way of protesting against a "higher jurisdiction". Also, the motive of negative attention that a neglected child could count as a personal benefit has no grounds anymore. On the other hand, socially deprived parents (e. g. single mothers, unemployed people) have no chance to compensate the frustration they suffer from in a personal power struggle against the child. This could constitute a first factor for the popularity of British *edutainment TV*: It makes a former socially exclusive right to get help and relief for the parents accessible to poorer classes (directly for the participants, for the viewers by taking part in a symbolic form of order).

The TV supernanny is a symbol of domestic order, of aiding parents and of strengthening pedagogical assertiveness that for various reasons have become precarious in our society where the individualization of lifestyles and the relativization of traditional norms and values in the permanent process of modernization (Giddens, 1990) add to parental uncertainty: Which adaptations do children have to manage in an enormously fast world? Which parenting style is correct? Some parents that are faced with this situation abdicate the arduous business of upbringing and leave the children to their own devices or to electronic "baby sitters" like TV and play station.

In the 1960s, the US education expert Diana Baumrind defined three parenting styles: "permissive" (compliance with all the child's impulses, imposing no rules and no punishments), "authoritarian" (operating sanctions to break the child's will; setting rules which are mostly theologically motivated) or "authoritative" (employing justified rules, both demanding and responsive to the child) (Baumrind, 1966). Later, the "uninvolved" parenting style was added, describing "rejecting" and "neglecting" parental ways of conduct. Of course, Baumrind had advocated the "authoritative style" and latter studies showed indeed that this style strengthens success at school and minimizes drug abuse (Baumrind, 1991). Baumrind sees an upbringing crisis in the US that, according to her, started in the 1940s and has to do with the influence of psycho-analysis (especially with Sigmund Freud's positive take on child sexuality) and the German neo-Marxist "Frankfurt School" or was at least intensified by both. Together with US colleagues, the emigrants from the "Frankfurt Institute for Social Research"

had done the famous study "The Authoritarian Personality" (Adorno et al., 1950) in the 1940s on behalf of the US government in which Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer attributed part of the responsibility for the NS rule in Germany and the readiness of many of their compatriots to contribute to the hunt for the Jews to the "authoritarian personality" (repressive control of urges, fixation on scapegoats, uncritical slavish obedience). In the eyes of the anti-fascist US public, this discredited authoritarian parenting methods for all times. Except for notorious fascists, no one wants to be responsible for educating future concentration camp guards or to lay the groundwork for anti-Semitic pogroms. In the late 1960s, this idea was re-actualized in the US and even more in Germany and became popular throughout the world. Freud and Adorno gained the support of the British educational reformist Alexander S. Neill (founder of Summerhill) as warrantor for the "anti-authoritarian" student protests against fascist relics in their societies and against the war in Vietnam. The Summerhill project (Neill, 1960), practicing optional school attendance and to this day based on the pupils' democratic autonomy and "self-regulation", aims to be an alternative to the UK's classical authoritarian upbringing model. For Baumrind, Neill is expression and catalyzer of a "philosophy of permissive and child-centered attitudes" (Baumrind, 1966, p.888) that falls prey to the illusion of the children's "self-regulation" and opens the floodgate to a "permissive" parenting. Baumrind – and many other critics of the 68ers' ideals – see the concept of "anti-authoritarian" (or in the original calling by Neill "anti-coercive") parenting as an overreaction to a misguided authority that disavows any form of parental control. The results are maladjusted children: without frontiers, without discipline, easily gullible, tending to addictions and without societal success.

Those who see a permissive attitude as responsible for the recent upbringing crisis and include the paternal loss of control in the definition of the problem of delimited difficult children will find secondary virtues like discipline and respect for authorities attractive again. Thus, the second assumption on the popularity of British *edutainment TV* is: *Supernanny* is part of a trend towards restituting authority and the family's controlling ability that have been undermined by modernization and globalization processes and responds to anti-authoritarian *zeitgeist* phenomena and generally to the relativist crisis of values in education and upbringing. In this context, the supernanny's look tells us a lot: The "authoritarian touch" transported by Jo Frost's conservative outfit and strictly coiffed hair reminds us of parenting methods from back in the day. At the same time, the protagonist's ever-present umbrella not only transports the label "British", but also lends her sort of a Mary Poppins charm that glosses over the authoritarian moment congenially. Is this only old "authoritarian" wine in new "entertaining" skins? Does the authoritarian model become acceptable through the backdoor of humor? Or does the British model of edutainment actually mean a new form of parenting by strengthening the clearness of parents' behavior and of parental control without repeating the old mistakes of a repressive authoritarianism?

Baumrind had been forced into a heated public discussion a few years ago, when she declared at the American Psychological Association's conference that certain forms of corporal punishment are not necessarily detrimental in certain situations (Baumrind, 2001). This brought her criticism from colleagues who called it a return to anti-humanist methods (Gershoff, 2002). At Berkeley university, psychologists and pedagogues signed a public statement against Baumrind objecting all forms of corporal sanctions. The debate still goes on and has damaged the differentiation between "authoritarian" and "authoritative" parenting styles. Additionally, international comparative studies showed that the equations

"authoritative parenting means success at school" and "authoritarian parenting means exaggerated submission, lack of self-esteem and failing at school" do not seem to be valid in all cultures. According to Baumrind's criteria catalogue, children from Asian families (China, Japan, Korea) with an "authoritarian" parenting style, e. g., are by far the most successful at secondary schools (Chao, 1995; Chao and Tseng, 2002). They also exhibit less maladjusted behavior like illicit drug use and delinquency. In stark contrast, studies in Spain showed that of all things, children with "indulgent parents" (which conform to Baumrind's permissive category) develop a greater self-esteem than those from families with "authoritative" parents, not to mention those with "authoritarian" parents (Musitu and García, 2005; Martínez and García, 2007). In Spain, indulgence obviously is especially beneficial for the children's development and performance at school – maybe because of the repercussions of the repressive Franco regime that undermine the differentiation between different concepts of authority. In Brazil, surveys on the upbringing situation are ambiguous. Like in Spain, Brazilian kids with indulgent parents on average have a greater self-esteem than those from families with "neglecting" and "authoritarian" parents (Martínez et al., 2007). But in "authoritative" families, children have equally high degrees of self-esteem, and their system of values is much less "conservative" than the one of children with "indulgent" parents.

The findings from international comparisons show the highest variance with regards to the difference between "authoritarian" and "authoritative" – subtle nuances of language in English as well. In a newer survey from the UK, we see the expected relations between "authoritative" parenting and positive outcome for personality development (Chan and Koo, 2008) that partially blur outside the Anglo-Saxon culture. Rudy and Grusec (2001) generally find that authority (in whatever form) has a different basic function in "individualist cultures" than in "collectivist" ones. Among Canadians hailing from Egypt, who are basically seen as more "authoritarian" and "collectivist" than Anglo-Canadians, the degree of collectivist values was the best predictor for authoritarianism. Authoritarian ways of upbringing were best predicted in Anglo-Canadians by collectivist values (on a lower base level), but now connected to a "lack of warmth". In the light of these findings, the positive results of "authoritarian" parenting style in China can be explained by Confucianism that teaches parents to combine a strict supervision and punishment of children with a loving, warm family climate. The positive role of indulgence in the Spanish and Latin American cultures becomes plausible, when we realize that the individual values are ideologically and socially rooted here but are also constantly threatened by structures of violence and power. The execution of power goes along with social cold, while the individual finds attention that embeds his spontaneity socially and emotionally in networks of mutual cooperativeness.

The problems of analyzing authoritarian ways of upbringing in international comparison suggest that we should review the technique of control in relation to the social climate like Kurt Lewin does in his *field theory* of leadership styles. Since moreover, Baumrind's remarks on corporal punishment are likely to associate authority with violence and to neglect the intra-family climate, I will from now on replace Baumrind's categories by Lewin's when analyzing TV parenting styles. In the 1930s and 1940s, Lewin and colleagues (Lewin, Lippitt and White, 1939; Lewin, 1948) conducted a series of experiments with ten-year-old school boys who organized themselves in clubs in which an adult educator varied his leadership style over the course of several weeks either authoritarian-autocratically (condescending, decreeing) or democratically by using explanations, discussions and help for the weak. Lewin's third category is the laissez-faire concept correlating to Baumrind's "permissive" category. The

researchers working with Lewin were especially interested in the consequences of leadership styles on group dynamics, aggression and the acceptance of the leader. They found out that authoritarian-autocratic leadership causes open and/or latent aggression and undermines the leader's popularity. Based on a seemingly strong control, the group's controllability is undermined in the long run. The result is what parents fear most: the "quiet of the grave", sometimes longer, sometimes shorter, followed by unbridled fits of rage by the children and rebellion.

Rudolf Dreikurs and Eva Dreikurs Ferguson (Dreikurs, Cassel and Dreikurs-Ferguson, 2004; Dreikurs-Ferguson et al., 2006) as well as Eva Schenk-Danzinger (1992) developed these theories further which finally led to a pattern of 4 parenting styles that the analysis of *Supernanny* formats in the next paragraph is based on.

Authoritarian/autocratic parenting style:	authoritarian, strict, undemocratic.
Democratic parenting style:	fair, arguing, active.
Permissive/Laissez-faire parenting style:	indulgent, passive, anti-coercive.
Negating parenting style:	passive, lazy, uninterested.

Alexander S. Neill, the figurehead of "anti-coercive upbringing", would not have been placed fully in the laissez-faire category with the attributes "indulgent" and "passive", but at the border to a "democratic parenting style", because Summerhill's organizational norms are namely "fair", "arguing" and "active". Like Lewin, Neill advocates training of various forms of pupils' self-regulation (discussions, votes) which the mainstream of Western school psychologists still celebrates as the pre-school of democracy. So why not also trust the coaching format *Supernanny* to go the way from bottom to top: from democratic control in the small area, the family, to exercising political control on the systemic level? In that case, Jo Frost would, like a good democratic leader should, help people to help themselves to heighten problem families' ability to govern themselves. Or is she still just being dominatrix who as a socially unrelated interventional heroine establishes a "governmental order" at the expense of the lifeworld subjects?

Democratic Ranking of TV Nannies in Five Countries

All examined supernannies categorically refuse violence in upbringing. Here, the TV pedagogues have a clearer position than Baumrind. Their renunciation of violence is remarkable since superheroes in Hollywood movies usually are less picky when it comes to their means of choice (Jewett and Lawrence, 1988; Lawrence and Jewett, 2002) and the critical remark on the "gunslinger" narrative hinted at more tolerance towards violence. The edutainment nannies are completely restricted to non-violent demonstrations of assertiveness – basically, they are *supercalifragi-pacifistic*. Sometimes, though, participating parents can use force but are criticized by the nanny during the rest of the show. Instead of slaps in the face, be it as punishment or out of desperation, the nanny recommends a restructuring of the parent-child-relationship or of behavioral patterns and daily routines that further aggression. In a violent climate, the social trust that is the foundation for interactions between people with a shared lifeworld cannot grow. With the invention of the state's monopoly on violence, private individuals have sworn to renounce violence anyway. Whoever breaks that vow becomes a criminal. But the private home can very well become a place where violence can

bloom and will be used in the dark recesses of seclusion. The TV publication means the end for this sort of privacy. The trite lament over the growing dissolution of privacy in an increasingly mediatized society ignores an important aspect: the gain of control in the face of abuse, rape and death brought on by the publication of private niches of violence. Nanny TV builds efficient dams against destructive forms of inner domestication.

Two weak points of the notorious media chastisement accompanying any form of reality TV are a generalized criticism of its voyeurism and a lack of esthetical differentiation, i.e. the inability to properly abstract effective components of the show and discern them from each other (such as the depiction of "positive" and "negative" action models). The child protection agencies in Germany and Austria have protested against the nanny TV in public because they think it (a) exposes children to the viewers' uninhibited voyeurism and (b) propagates authoritarian means of parenting: obedience drill and repressive oppression.

We have already spoken about the voyeur's change in reality TV, and the argument of exposure does not apply to children and adolescents threatened by abuse. Many of the children participating in Supernanny programs are marked as "out of control" which implies a clear appeal to parents, school and society to regain control. Before the publication of the control problem, the children were alone and under the arbitrary control of their parents who tend to reproduce their suffering from low self-efficacy in a domestic context in endless chains of conflict – at the expense of the family's weakest part. Thus, the children as a rule are already threatened before becoming exposed to the intrusion of public eyes. This contains a certain risk of embarrassment and hurt feelings, but is also a prerequisite for solving the control problem according to therapeutic and morally reflective considerations and thus for surmounting the state of unchecked parental interventions (or the refusal of parental responsibility through neglect) that are dangerous and damaging for the child. The relation between potential damage and gain is thus a question of an actual evaluation of the higher legal interest, not of a general refusal of public attention for the child's privacy zone that is supposedly to be protected always and everywhere. The dungeon of Natascha Kampusch who had been at the mercy of her tormentor for years in a spectacular Austrian case of kidnapping and captivity and the case of Josef Fritzl (continuous sexual abuse of his own children in the family house's basement over a period of 24 years) are eloquent examples for the limits of a dogmatic privacy policy with regards to the interaction with children. Publicity for a house's intimate zones is an essential instrument of democratic control to correct domestic life in certain situations of intensified conflict. Reality TV's focus on these areas replaces or adds to forms of immediate neighborhood control common in village communities but eroding more and more in anonymous cities and even more in the *Internet Society* (Bakardjieva, 2005). In any case, the publication of children's "private problems" in nanny TV does not make the protagonists anti-democratic at all, but heightens the attention for the children's problems.

Of course, that is only advantageous for the children if the focus on the problem also mobilizes resources to solve it. Within the show's dramatic structure, the participating family represents the problem, whereas the nanny represents the solution. Thus, we need to discern exactly between the parents' parenting style (before the nanny's intervention) and the one recommended by the supernannies. The child protection agencies' second accusation quoted above with regards to authoritarian parenting detrimental to the children is only true when the TV pedagogues rate the incriminated methods as exemplary or apply them themselves. In the case of a representation of authoritarianism on the problem description level (e.g. in the form of failed disciplinary attempts by desperate parents), it would become the object of "negative

learning" through which the viewers distance themselves from behaviors that are unsuitable under typical daily circumstances. To check (as opposed to confound) the communication cautionary and appellative structure, the Vienna research project "TV Supernanny" surveyed the nannies' and the parents' behavior separately in a systematic content analysis.

So far, the project group,³ under my supervision, has examined a total of 48 shows of the format in five countries (Austria, Germany, UK, Brazil, Spain) that included 2170 sequences. In the case of Britain, Austria and Germany the sample consisted of 25 random episodes from the show's first season (2004). Additionally, five episodes of the British original from the most recent season (2008) were added to test the format's stability. The Spanish and Brazilian *Supernanny* episodes (16 all in all) were also randomly selected from their first season (2006). The coding unit was the *sequence*, defined as a scene which keeps up a coherence of place and time and /or creates a greater, meaningful frame of interaction, counseling or reflection. *Interactive* sequences focus on the parents' and children's everyday behavior. *Counseling* sequences are dominated by the nanny's or the editorial staff's tips (often provided through voice-over comments and assessments). In *reflection* sequences, the parents consider the biographic modalities of their current behavior, often aided by the nanny through quasi-therapeutic techniques of discourse and autobiographical memory. Within the sequence, we recorded the parents' upbringing practice and the nannies' recommendations in various aspects ("admonish the child", "encourage the child", "order the child to have some downtime", corporal and non-corporal "punishment of the child" etc.) and analyzed the parenting style. Based on synthetic codes, the parenting styles can be allocated to acting groups (father, mother, parents as a couple, grandmother, nanny) and thus yield differentiated parenting profiles, e.g. for the nannies and parents. Additionally, the way of addressing the upbringing practice was analyzed with regards to intentional content; here, the coders searched the scenic context for indicators of expounding the problems of the upbringing practice or its quality of recommendation. Thus, precise differences between positive and negative models, which offer totally different ways of "positive" and "negative" learning to the viewers, can be noted.

Overall, the message system analysis consisted of 249 variables. After an intensive coders training, the inter-coder reliability consistently reached a satisfying level from $R=0.82$ (for *interactive* sequences), through $R=0.88$ (for *reflection* sequences) and up to $R=0.97$ (in sequences with a dominant counseling reference). These figures are in line with what can be expected from a reliable analysis of complex content (see Holsti, 1969; Neuendorf, 2002). The complete method is extensively described in Grimm (2006a).

Table 1 contains the content analysis results with regards to the parenting style before the supernanny's arrival that was rated problematic through its presentation or explicit comments. The focus here is on the parenting style that starts conflicts with the kids and added to the motivation to ask the TV nanny for help. Code 0 was used if in a sequence related to problems, the respective parenting style was not used; the upper extreme of 5 marks the problematic parenting style as "very much applied". The in-between codes were chances for the coder to graduate. Only sequences expounding the problems of some parenting behavior were coded; for sequences unrelated to problems, the respective variables were marked as missing data and excluded from further analysis. This means that the values on the scale show

³ The content analysis was done by Gabriele Tatzl, Nora Sells, Kim Sztrakti, Manuela Brandstaetter and Christiane Grill whom I hereby thank for their research work. I am indebted to Nora Sells who also kindly organized the online survey, see below.

the amount of the respective parenting style being used to define problems in relation to the other parenting styles.

Across the board, the participating parents often show authoritarian techniques when the *Supernanny* program defined the problem, e.g. "shouting at the child" or "condescending behavior towards the child" and sometimes used light forms of corporal punishment. In three countries (Austria, Spain, Germany), authoritarian parenting is the predominant behavior that at the same time calls for the most criticism. The *permissive parenting style*, criticized by pedagogues, adds a lot to domestic problems in dealing with children in nanny TV (especially in Spain and England). Added up, authoritarianism and permissiveness represent the predominant pattern of problematic parenting styles in all countries.

Table 1. Parenting styles expounded on (pre-intervention)

Mean, N=1542, N(Brit)=231 N(Germ)=258 N(Austria)=223 N(Spain)=432 N(Braz)=398							
Parenting Style Practised by Parents	Supernanny Programs					F-Test	Total
	Britain	Germany	Austria	Spain	Brazil		
Authoritarian	1.50	1.71	1.88	1.83	.75	***	1.49
Democratic	.44	.26	.61	1.27	.31	***	.64
Permissive	1.61	.77	.53	1.80	.85	***	1.17
Negating	.60	.82	.58	1.21	.33	***	.74

Scale: 0-5
Sample period: 2004 - 2008. Scale: 0=not practised at all; 5=strongly practised. ***=highly significant difference between Supernanny programs, p<0.01; **=significant difference, p<0.05.

Authoritarian parenting style: The authoritarian-autocratic parenting style assumes the necessity of exerting authority on children. Therefore, the children's own initiative is suppressed, and their opinion is deemed worthless and they have very few chances to develop freely. *Democratic parenting style:* The democratic parenting style sees children and adolescents as serious dialogic partners who hold their own opinion. The older the offspring, the more independent and self dependent they are expected to act. Still, parental instructions and help are deemed necessary. Democratic parents are open towards their children and give them a feeling of safety and acceptability. *Permissive/laissez-fair parenting style:* Permissive parents are rather reluctant to educate. Therefore, the children and adolescents have to be proactive when it comes to personal decisions. A laissez-faire upbringing knows no firm rules; everyone is left to their own devices. When personal decisions need to be made, children and adolescents are, as a rule, more active than their parents. *Negating parenting style:* In a negating parenting style, the parents do not influence the children's behavior at all. They are not interested in taking part in the child's development.

If you add to that the lack of interest in active parenting in the "negating style" which correlates highly significantly ($r=0.43$) with the "permissive style" and has a negative correlation with the "authoritarian" and "democratic" parenting styles, the *Supernanny* programs reveal a double crisis of upbringing: problems and the need for counseling arise, on one hand, through too heavy-handed parental demonstrations of power barely camouflaging the actual powerlessness. On the other hand, the lack of assertiveness is manifesting as a passive non-interventionist attitude. Thus, authoritarianism within the problem defining sequences of nanny TV, indicates an upbringing practice with parents' bias towards over-controlling. The *Supernanny* problem families suffer from a lack of a "democratic" parenting style, according to which a parental responsibility and a positive attitude towards the child would have to be connected to non-repressive and non-argumentative behavior. This

parenting style is on the last position in all countries with regards to problem definition and – as I am going to show – also with regards to independent problem solving attempts by the parents. Apparently, there is a threefoldly graduated reflection offered to the *Supernanny* audience: 1. A lack of effective and enduring control on the parental behavior level (which is shaped by ineffective authoritarian control attempts or the relinquishing of control); 2. The ease of successfully practiced democratic forms of upbringing; 3. A value assessment of the *Supernanny* producers that ultimately favor a democratic style. Table 2, containing the parenting style recommended by the nannies, shows how wrong the accusation of an anti-democratic concept of the show actually is. The average program is dominated by the "democratic parenting style" most nannies favor. At the same time, "permissive" and "negating" parenting styles basically play no role in their recommendations. Nanny TV's appellative structure thus is directed against laissez-faire and advocates a fair, arguing and active treatment of children.

Table 2. Nannies' recommended parenting style (while intervention)

Mean, N=768, N(Brit)=129 N(Germ)=159 N(Austria)=150 N(Spain)=160 N(Braz)=170							
Parenting Style Propagated by Nanny	Supernanny Programs					F-test	Total
	Britain	Germany	Austria	Spain	Brazil		
Authoritarian	2.74	1.09	.14	1.00	.45	***	1.02
Democratic	1.40	2.57	3.93	3.68	3.72	***	3.13
Permissive	.00	.00	.00	.08	.26	***	.08
Negating	.00	.00	.00	.09	.00	***	.02

Scale: 0-5
Sample period: 2004 - 2008. Scale: 0=not propagated at all; 5=highly propagated. ***=highly significant difference between Supernanny programs, p<0.01; **=significant difference, p<0.05.

Only in the UK, the authoritarian concept is more popular with the nannies than the democratic one. Is the British original format thus at least purposefully "authoritarian" as the English pedagogic cliché suggests? In an international comparison, Jo Frost's authoritarian elements are actually stronger than those of other nannies – for several reasons. In British edutainment, the permissive parents are especially numerous and are deemed the cause of a lot of problems. Of course, considering this, a harder hand seems to promise more effective solutions. On the other hand, the democratic component is especially strong in Austrian supernannies who, as we know, have to deal with exceptionally authoritarian parents. In both cases, we see a logical relation between the definition of the problem and a potential solution. Aside from nation-specific peculiarities regarding the problems of everyday upbringing practices causing a variety in the TV supernannies' recommendations, any interpretation of the findings must take into account the fact that the British nanny's characteristic style is ironically authoritarian and serves as a symbol of strength for all parents after losing control. A common trait of the too-authoritarian and the too-indulgent parents is that their "children get out of control", as the producers point out often in the trailer. Without strength and assertiveness, the crisis can hardly be managed. Now, it is part of the special dialectic of challenge that in the past, authoritarian parental interventions often failed and worsened the conflict. Thus, it is all about a more significant meta-control that includes not only the child,

but also the parents who cause the problems. This form of control is unattainable by "classical" authoritarian parenting. It may be achieved by an ironically transformed variety of British authoritarianism, Jo Frost style, but only if it is adapted to the respective countries' conditions and fulfills the postulate of glocalization.

In Germany, Austria, Spain and Brazil, the supernannies copied Frost's conservative look and wear outfits that suggest strictness and authority. In their recommendations, though, they avoid the air of authoritarianism more than the British original, probably to avoid giving the wrong hints to parents with authoritarian tendencies. The important contrast to England, though, lies in the different traditions of upbringing that ignore the subtle difference between "authoritarian" and "authoritative". If you do not want to be authoritarian outside the Anglo-Saxon territory, you have to show it clearly, e.g. through decidedly democratic actions. In England, there is still the in-between position of a democratically mitigated authority concept. It is not entirely out of the question that even my well-trained Austrian coders sometimes coded the British model as "authoritarian" when a different coding decision in the sense of authoritative-democratic could have been reached. To understand the glocalization process, it is definitely helpful to know that in comparison to the original program, all follow-up formats mitigate the authoritarian components and strengthen the democratic moment that forms the original nucleus of the appellative structure and ranks foremost amongst the nanny's recommendations even in the British format.

The democratic parenting style is most predominant in the Austrian *Supernanny* program that works more than all others with reflective methods of parent counseling and avoids directly intervening with the child. It is part of its self-concept to keep a distance to the English and – especially – German authoritarianism, as the words of the Austrian Nanny Sandra Velásquez (who was born in Mexico) prove: "I see Austria as much more Romanic than Germany; in the sense of a more casual and improvising lifestyle. (...) Germany is rather 'snappy' and looking for structures. Austria doesn't work like that." (Velásquez, own interview 2005). Spain as a "Romanic country" and Brazil as a member of the Romanic language family are pretty close to Romanic Austria with its subjective tendencies when it comes to democratic parenting. Spain (and with some reservations Brazil) show, as reported above, a positive correlation between non-authoritarian parenting styles and success at school as a specialty of their educational culture that is not present in Anglo-Saxon territory. This additionally boosts democratic to permissive parenting recommendations (the latter are much less frequent, though). The Spanish nanny Rocio Ramos-Paul has studied clinical psychology. Authoritarian educational methods are well known to her, but her main interest is the children's welfare that she tries to secure by procuring room for development and democratic coaching. Permissive elements come into play too. This applies even more to Cris Poli, an Argentinean, who is the current Brazilian supernanny and like her Spanish and Austrian colleagues values highly psychological counseling and reflective work with the parents' self.

Additionally, the Brazilian format is the least didactic. In problem definition, as well as in coaching, it focuses on showing educational realities that make a clear allocation to parental styles and direct solutions which are difficult for the parents due to the complexity of everyday situations. Compared to other formats, it gives less interpretational help which certainly is detrimental for a clear orientation. However, this does not diminish the popularity of the show among Brazilian viewers. Brazil is the country where most families apply for participation (over 30.000 according to the producers) with the best prime time quota. Poli and the Brazilian *Supernanny* team rarely assess anything explicitly; an exception is made

when it comes to basic principles of democratic parenting that she advocates almost as often as the Austrian nannies. Thus, she can sharpen her democratic profile without using Jo Frost's directive coaching methods. Extreme fans of unambiguousness may not like this, but Brazil's "savvy viewers" who value their autonomy like Poli all the more for it. A similar concept was much less successful in Austria. Here, the *Supernanny* program was cancelled after only three seasons and was replaced by the coaching format "Bauer sucht Frau" (*Farmer wants a Wife*). Even disregarding the fact that in Austria's rural alpine climate the farmers' relationship problems seem to be better related to a typical national reality (and thus potentially more appealing to Austrian viewers) compared to the everyday problems of domestic upbringing (something which possibly inspired the broadcasters to make that programming switch), *Supernanny's* marketing problems could also have been caused by cultural implementation difficulties. By distancing themselves from Frost and Saalfrank and through their well-developed criticism of the "authoritarian model", the Austrian nannies might have overtaxed the audience doubly: with regards to the wide acceptance of authoritarian parenting methods and to the relatively strongly developed need for guidance and unambiguous orientation. What supports this interpretation hypothesis is the fact that authoritarian parenting is emphasized the most in the Austrian *Supernanny* format. At the same time, the Austrian version of the format reduces the participants' authoritarian parenting more than in all the other countries. What must be assessed as a desirable gain in democratic educational culture from a pedagogical-psychological perspective led in Austria to a loss of viewers whose cognition management was unable to bridge the emerging dissonances only by learning consistently from the nanny.

The German *Supernanny* program with its medium authoritarian and democratic tendencies is (in Velásquez' words) situated in between the "Romanic" and the "Anglo-Saxon" pole. The German nanny Katja Saalfrank phrases a clear "on the one hand – on the other hand" by saying "according to my experiences, especially with the families in the *Supernanny* TV series, children need strong parents with (...) clear points of view." In her guidebook for parents, she writes: "To control children in any way goes against my basic ideas of how to deal with human beings." (Saalfrank, 2006, p.6) The German show that mixes authoritarianism and democracy is among the most successful and most persistent *Supernanny* formats in the world and has a strong standing on the German market. According to our content analysis, the format is editorially more clearly structured and less ambiguous with regards to the orientation performance than the Austrian program. This emphasizes the finding that the relative openness of exchange and the low level of authoritarianism that brings popularity in Brazil cannot be transferred to the German speaking central European area without a loss of attractiveness for the audience.

Different Learning

Table 3 contains the solution oriented parental style that the participating parents practiced after the nanny's arrival under her direct tuition or autonomously. The higher the value, the more the parents used the respective parental style when trying to resolve conflicts or to cope with the child's disciplinary problems and other pedagogical challenges.

Again, the British format shows the highest degree of authoritarianism. When comparing this finding with results reported on Table 1 and Table 2 it becomes clear that the value of

solution oriented parental style lies right between the initial situation posing the problem and the nanny recommendations. Obviously, the parental practice has come closer to the propagated parenting standard through the nanny intervention. To revise this interpretation, Table 4 systematically shows the differences between the old problem defining parenting practices and the new post-intervention parenting style.

Table 3. Solution oriented parenting style (post-intervention)

Mean, N=1096, Chan=218 RTL=222 ATV=207 Cuatro=223 SBT=226							
Parenting Style Practised by Parents	Supernanny Programs					F-Test	Total
	Britain	Germany	Austria	Spain	Brazil		
Authoritarian	2.25	1.74	1.33	1.47	.93	***	1.54
Democratic	.95	1.21	1.92	3.36	3.31	***	2.17
Permissive	.63	.45	.40	.58	.61		.54
Negating	.51	.30	.26	.51	.19	***	.35

Scale: 0-5
Sample period: 2004 - 2008. Scale: 0=not practised at all; 5=strongly practised. ***=highly significant difference between Supernanny programs, $p < 0.01$; **=significant difference, $p < 0.05$.

Table 4. Difference between the new parenting style and the old upbringing practices

Parenting Style Practised by Parents	Supernanny Programs					Gesamt
	Britain	Germany	Austria	Spain	Brazil	
Authoritarian	.75	.03	-.55	-.36	.18	.05
Democratic	.51	.95	1.30	2.08	3.00	1.54
Permissive	-.98	-.32	-.14	-1.23	-.24	-.64
Negating	-.09	-.53	-.32	-.70	-.14	-.38

Scale: -5 - 5
Sample period: 2004 - 2008. Scale: 0=not practised at all; 5=strongly practised. Diff Mean: Problem solving minus trouble making parenting style practised by parents.

The British format, the only one in which, as we know, the nanny recommendations supersede the authoritarian level of the problem definition shows the highest increase of authoritarian parenting styles. In the German format, the authoritarian behavior remains more or less the same, while it decreases the strongest in Austria. This can be interpreted as England and Austria showing effects that are nanny compliant, even if they have different directions. Jo Frost with her relatively authoritarian points of view knows how to successfully convince permissive parents, while the Austrian nannies Velásquez and Edinger who are, in comparison to Frost, more interested in reducing authoritarian parenting prefer democratic recommendations, and are also successful.

On the unchanging authoritarianism level of German nanny TV we can assume that the protagonists do not always apply the counseling advice they receive from the nanny.

Saalfank (like all nannies) recommends a much more democratic parenting style than the participants normally use. Still, the parents' upbringing behavior remains quite stable.

In Brazil, the nanny communication's paradoxical dialectic went so far as to turn the show's democratic, anti-authoritarian intention upside down in a way. Although the parents' authoritarian tendencies are relatively weak and although Cris Poli is even beneath this weak level and massively advertises democracy, the participating parents' readiness to use authoritarian measures increases after the nanny's intervention. This can either be explained by reactance (resistance against persuasive pressure) or as an epi-phenomenon of self-empowerment brought on by participating in the supernanny's "therapy sessions". Remember, the lifeworld subjects' self-empowerment is a central motive of their cognition and emotion management in general. It means that individuals plagued by experiences of powerlessness use any chance for psychic armament and motivational consolidation of their assertiveness (e.g. symbolic offers of TV action heroes). One does not need a lot of imagination to assess the circumstances in Brazil as relatively unstable from a lifeworld point of view: high everyday violence rate, lots of crime, strong differences between the rich and the poor. If you add the relative openness of communication in the *Supernanny* program, reactance as explanation seems highly unlikely. In Brazil's case, a relatively strong need for the bolstering of self-efficacy and internal locus of control in the face of a wide variety of threats rather hints at the increase of the show's participants' authoritarianism levels being due to a spontaneous increase of self-empowerment. In this case, reactance is not to be expected because the slight increase of parental authoritarianism has the highest plausibility. This doesn't mean that the participating Brazilian parents refuse the predominant democratic counseling altogether, but they re-shape the main tendency by authoritarian techniques motivated by self-efficacy.

In general, the parents' "authoritarian" insistence seems to contain a certain degree of symbolic self-empowerment if the country's parenting culture does not especially gratify alternative parenting styles. The latter could explain why participating Spanish parents (just like the Austrians) reduced their authoritarianism the most. On the other hand, permissive practices helping Spanish pupils' success at school according to empirical studies (Musitu and García, 2005; Martínez and García, 2007) were reduced at the same time. A closer look at the difference in values between old and new parenting style separately for the sequences with direct nanny tuition and those with spontaneous parental solution attempts seems useful here. With regards to the authoritarian style, in the case of direct nanny guidance we get Diff = -0.48 in the Spanish example; without Nanny guidance, the difference between parental behavior focused on solutions and the problem definition beforehand is in the positive area: Diff=0.71. The values for the permissive style are: Diff (directly Nanny guided)=-1.71; Diff(without Nanny guidance)=-0.20. My interpretation of these findings suggests that even the Spanish parents feel the well-known insistence against the nanny's anti-authoritarian recommendations; only when she is personally present, do the parents reduce their authoritarianism compliant to the norm. Otherwise, it grows in the course of the general self-empowerment through nanny TV. With regards to the socially successful pattern of indulgence and permissiveness common in the Spanish parenting culture, the decrease in the case of direct nanny guidance is much higher than in the case of spontaneous parental behavior focused on solutions. This, too, can be seen as the participants' tendency to resist learning - obviously, they did not want to give up the successful pattern to the degree the nanny wanted. This can also be phrased in a way that criticizes the media: The Spanish nanny follows the British model in fundamentally criticizing permissive parenting styles without

keeping in mind the Spanish culture's specific conditions; the result is a loss of learning success. At the same time, this finding can be used as proof of the concept of a permanent reality check by the lifeworld subjects checking incoming information for its everyday suitability to adapt their capability of orientation to changing life conditions that I developed in the theory part. Thus, differences between learning demands and actual learning success are generally no surprise.

Three things are noteworthy for the analysis:

- 1) Persuasive intention does not necessarily mean persuasive effect on the recipient's side.
- 2) Message recipients prove to be especially resistant when the coaxing persuasive pressure penetrates and does not conform to one's own needs and views.
- 3) Only when the glocalization offer is massively disregarded or when the intended effect conflicts with other effects, the direction of the effect can be reversed (as in the Brazilian example).

In most cases, though, the result of the show's immanent learning success accords to the way shown by the nannies, at least in the direction of effect. The parents' post-interventionist upbringing practices with and without nanny guidance differ gradually, but as a rule not in principle from the recommended basic direction. This is especially true for the main effects of a solution-focused change of parenting style towards an increase of democratic parenting techniques that we found and that promise a double gain of control – for the parents and for the child alike. No other dimension of parental upbringing practice has changed more under the influence of nanny TV (see Diff=1.54, summary column of Table 4). Across all nanny editions that we examined the democracy gain represented the best measure for the capacity for solution with regards to the problems of the twofold upbringing crisis of the parents intervening too much or too little. In the case of direct nanny guidance the democratic success is highest: Diff(directly nanny guided)=3.00. In the case of missing nanny guidance, the gain still remains in the positive range: Diff(without nanny guidance)=0.27. The learning pattern with regards to the permissive parenting style also conforms to the direction the nannies intend across all the nanny editions in our analysis: Diff(directly nanny guided)=-1.13; Diff(without nanny guidance)=-0.21. We also find this pattern of a gradual decrease with regards to the second low control parenting style, the negating one: Diff(directly nanny guided)=-0.68; Diff(without nanny guidance)=-0.11). As I said, the authoritarianism dimension proves to be the exception to the rule, where the difference values vary atypically. All in all, the parent's authoritarianism remains almost unchanged (Diff=0.05). While the authoritarian dimension significantly decreases in the nanny guided upbringing practice (Diff=-0.47), it increases when the parents act outside the nanny's line of sight (Diff=0.53).

We explained this difference above by motives of self-efficacy and self-empowerment of the lifeworld subjects. This difference cannot be ignored, not even if you insinuate a pedagogical intention on the part of the producers in the nanny guided sequences. No one could have stopped the editorial teams from perfectly staging the non-nanny guided sequences for the audience, too. Obviously, a certain reflection of extra-media reality remains in the film analysis data – a reality whose redemption, as we know from Kraeuer, is the most distinguished job of reproduced images and one that we try to filter by means of statistical comparison as "savvy researchers". Otherwise, the participating parents' motive of self-empowerment is compliant to the decrease of permissive and negating parenting that we

found. All in all, the parental learning successes presented in nanny TV can be described as an increase in parental control and, at the same time, a gain in democratic containment of parental control excesses over the child.

Parenting Success

Table 5 shows that the self-assured demonstration of parental educational strength ("Self-confident agency/stand up to the child") represent with N=282 applications the most commonly practiced and in about 50% of all cases immediately successful parenting measure.

Table 5. General parenting measures successfully practiced

Upbringing Action	Supernanny Programs					Sign	Total	N
	Britain	Germany	Austria	Spain	Brazil			
Structuring the daily routine / regular play times	53,8	84,2	100,0	13,3	9,4	***	40,0	85
Reflecting the parenting practice	100,0	100,0	100,0	12,5	12,9	***	24,7	73
Self-confident agency/stand up to the child	25,6	78,5	71,0	65,6	25,0	***	51,8	282
Communication at the child's eyebrow level / eye contact	50,0	73,3	76,9	71,4	38,5		60,5	81
Use of calm deep voice / short clear instructions	43,8	96,6	97,5	63,8	27,3	***	68,2	192
Parents act in concert	44,4	71,4	76,9	10,0	,0	***	38,5	52
Family activities suitable for children	80,0	83,3	77,8	44,4	,0		69,0	42
Play with the child / have fun	100,0	90,5	91,7	57,1	26,3	***	76,0	129
Loving interaction with the child / show the child affection	83,9	94,7	93,7	60,0	36,4	***	81,7	175
Set up rules / draw clear lines	33,3	45,7	69,2	56,5	26,3	**	46,5	170
Mean	61,5	81,8	85,5	45,5	20,2		55,7	128

Sample period: 2004 - 2006. Percentage of successful executed upbringing action measured by the number of execution of respective action. ***=highly significant difference between Supernanny programs, p<0.01; **=significant difference, p<0.05.

The motive of control is also reflected quantitatively in the attempts to solve educational problems in nanny TV. It is remarkable that the success quota is by far the highest in non-autocratic, respectful and loving manners: "Loving interaction with the child", followed by "Play with the child" and "Family activities suitable for children". The attributes of an empathy-based relationship recognizing the children's rights as human rights that are decisive for a democratic upbringing are thus not only preferably advertized by the nannies and accepted by the parents as a learning result, but are also virulent on the level of parenting measures and can be independently deducted from the scenic development beyond persuasive verbal strategies by the viewers.

The most successful loving interaction with children is shown in the German and Austrian *Supernanny* formats. In Austria, though, this upbringing technique is much more frequently on the screen: While here "Loving interaction" and "Show the child affection" form 35% of the general parenting measures, it is only 8% in the German *Supernanny* program (see Table 6). Decisive for the audience's learning success in a sense of role model learning is, of course, the success factor that is even higher in German nanny TV than in the Austrian format. "Self-confident agency" is only successful with 25% in the British *Supernanny* format, but is practiced all the more intensely. More than a third of the general parenting measures in the British *Supernanny* format are part of this central nanny TV component that is so important to the participants' self-empowerment and the identification of the recipients interested in symbolic self-efficacy. The relatively low success quota shows

that the "authoritarianism" in the British *Supernanny* format is not only broken by Jo Frost's tongue-in-cheek attitude, but also by an openly shown defeat of authoritarian parenting actions. What may be detrimental for the audience's role model learning is a gain with regards to *negative learning* because the viewers can make their own decisions based on success and defeat of what is right and has a chance for a differentiated reality check. But the low quantitative share of "Set up rules" in the British *Supernanny* format hints at Jo Frost most often acting as a "gunslinger" or encouraging her clients to intervene directly instead of setting up new rules for all family members to create a better framework for the parent-kid-interactions. Except for their value for the emotion management of the participant feeling strong and the recipient riding along on symbolic horses, interventionist practices do not lead to a lasting success in positive and negative learning.

Table 6. General parenting measures practised⁴

% N=1203, N(Brit)=259 N(Germ)=242 N(Austria)=225 N(Spain)=232 N(Braz)=245							
Upbringing Action	Supernanny Programs					Sign	Total
	Britain	Germany	Austria	Spain	Brazil		
Structuring the daily routine / regular play times	5,0	7,9	2,7	6,5	13,1	***	7,1
Reflecting the parenting practice	1,2	1,2	1,8	13,8	12,7	***	6,1
Self-confident agency/stand up to the child	33,2	26,9	13,8	27,6	14,7	***	23,4
Communication at the child's eyebrow level / eye contact	10,0	6,2	5,8	6,0	5,3		6,7
Use of calm deep voice / short clear instructions	12,4	12,0	17,8	29,7	9,0	***	16,0
Parents act in concert	3,5	2,9	5,8	4,3	5,3		4,3
Family activities suitable for children	3,9	5,0	4,0	3,9	8		3,5
Play with the child / have fun	9,7	8,7	16,0	12,1	7,8	**	10,7
Loving interaction with the child / show the child affection	12,0	7,9	35,1	15,1	4,5	***	14,5
Set up rules / draw clear lines	5,8	14,5	5,8	29,5	15,5	***	14,1

Sample period: 2004 - 2008. Percentage of respective upbringing action measured by the number of sequences with any solution oriented action. ***=highly significant difference between Supernanny programs, $p < 0.01$; **=significant difference, $p < 0.05$.

With approximately 30% of the general parenting measures practiced, "Set up rules" and "Draw clear lines" is especially characteristic for the Spanish nanny TV of which we already know that the decrease of the parents' permissive views counts among the show's greatest learning results. At least, the desired effect of new rules and clear lines actually happens in more than 50% of all cases. Only the Austrian protagonists' success quota is a little higher based on a very small quantitative base of 5.8%. In Brazil, the low success of loving manners (only 4.5% of the cases) and the less than average attainment of "self-confident agency" (25% of the cases) indicate that the Brazilian *Supernanny* program is construed as less strongly pedagogic and not exceptionally clear in aiming at giving orientation. Here, too, it must of course be considered that clearness is only one factor for reality TV's popularity and that it depends on the amount of suffering from the multi-optional society, in a given cultural context. Obviously, the Brazilian audience's readiness to tolerate stronger ambiguities and use this as a gain for their own aplomb of judgment is especially high. In any case, the Brazilian format offers to the viewers relatively open ways of interpretation that have not led to any popularity loss so far. The Austrian and the German format show the strongest success orientation for the general parenting measures practiced: 85.8% resp. 81.8% of the upbringing

⁴ The varying case numbers in Table 5 and Table 6 can be explained by the different percent base: the first case is based on the sequences (all sequences = 100%), the second on parenting measures practised (=100%). Also cf. Table footnotes.

action immediately lead to a success here, while the sample average is just 55.7%. On the other end of the scale, we find the Brazilian nanny TV with 22.2% success. England and Spain are situated right in the middle of the range of successful parenting demonstration.

The cultural diversification of the *Supernanny* formats clearly shows the different ways of coping with parenting problems and the range of linking the relation between open ways of addressing problems to more or less unambiguous forms of problem solving in a culturally specific offer of orientation. The presentation's degrees of unambiguousness vary just like the participants and the supernannies' emphasis on the parents' self-assured demeanor and the loving interaction with the children.

Gender Bias and Parental Divide

Who are the problem solvers in nanny TV? Can their identity assist us in consolidating criteria for the socio-political quality of edutainment? Table 7 lists the family role of the protagonists who act as advice executants and problem solvers in *Supernanny* programs in the five examined countries. We see that across the board mothers are most frequently the ones who fill this position. They are five times more often than men directly guided or indirectly encouraged by the nannies to use new strategies in coping with educational problems. Also, mothers alone are being addressed twice as often as father and mother together, which can be valued as a deficit in joint parental action. On the one hand, this reflects the social reality of upbringing conditions (where women still carry the main load of educational work); on the other hand, nanny TV can preserve or intensify an existing gender bias in the exertion of upbringing tasks. The mothers' nanny guided island position thus contains an element of social inequity since along with the control options, the mothers take on a higher degree of responsibility for the reproduction of the world of everyday life and for society's supply of socialized lifeworld subjects (including potential dysfunctions like deviance and crime). By taking over upbringing tasks, notoriously overstrained mothers lose control in other areas. The price for nanny TV's one-sided addressing of the mothers is an increase of the parental divide that enables fathers to duck their responsibilities or – phrased negatively – excludes them from the upbringing business and thus keeps an important resource of lifeworld happiness and social power out of their reach. Grandmothers and other family members play almost no role in upbringing practice. The gender bias is complemented by a focus on the core family that in the asymptotic perspective leads towards a model where mothers sail the ship of upbringing alone.

With smaller variations between the countries – the most in England, the least in Brazil – the supernannies more or less count on *supermummies* that are even explicitly in the name of a competitor to the *Supernanny* program in Germany (*Supermamas*, RTL2). In Brazil, the coaching of both parents together reaches a considerable value of 41%, but the value for fathers as individual problem solvers drops to a marginal level of 6%. Here, the fathers as individuals disappear almost completely and rarely stand out, being marginal background figures in their sometimes seemingly forced duet with the mothers.

Still, *gender bias* and *parental divide* seem the least grave in Brazilian edutainment TV. Compared to Cris Poli, Jo Frost addresses mothers as competent upbringers much more often, and she rarely addresses the parents together. Even though fathers' inclusion is remarkable, Jo Frost has the overall lowest value of gender equalization and co-parental advice.

Table 7. Problem solvers as advice executants

Column%, N=1165, N(Brit)=133 N(Germ)=230 N(Austria)=215 N(Spain)= N(Braz)=							
Supernanny Programs							
Problem Solver / Advice Executant	Britain	Germany	Austria	Spain	Brazil	Chi ²	Total
Nanny	8.6	3.1	1.9	4.3	7.4	***	5.2
Mother	60.2	59.6	53.0	59.8	45.5		55.6
Father	19.3	18.9	18.1	15.0	6.1		15.4
Parents	11.5	14.9	27.0	20.9	41.0		23.1
Grandmother	.4	3.5	.0	.0	.0		.8

Sample period: 2004-2009. All problem solving persons = 100%. ***=highly significant difference between Supernanny programs, p<0.01; **=significant difference, p<0.05.

Another characteristic of the British original is the relatively high value of direct nanny intervention (cf. Table 7, line 1). Here, the nanny is supervisor and problem solver at once and directly intervenes in the family's upbringing business. More than her colleagues, Jo Frost prefers direct contact with the child she wants to set on the right path by insistent speeches and admonishing – without taking the detour of working with the parents.

On the other side of cultural diversification is the Austrian nanny model with the least direct influence on the child and the most psychological counseling style of the Supernanny using psycho-therapeutic techniques of working with the parents. The fixation on the mother is slightly below average here. The viewing quota significantly dropped when Sandra Velásquez emphasized the need to work with the fathers more in the season's second half after the author's personal critique. The reasons for that are the circumstances of TV as means of mass communication that is in the case of *Supernanny* programs highly affected by a female audience. Of course, female viewers claim the emotional gain of the heightened self-efficacy for themselves after carrying the burden of educational challenges. Here, we face a basic limit of social effectiveness of reality TV programs with a lifeworld focus which we will discuss later on. Without satisfying the need for emotion and cognition management in the context of the viewers' everyday lifeworld, no social transformation can be engineered, no matter how desirable it is. Reality TV in general and especially coaching TV are structurally conservative with regards to this.

What gain does the completely feminized nanny concept offer to women? Table 8 discloses that mothers set the tone, but do not act more successfully as problem solvers than their male counterparts. Their success rate (38.8%) is actually even lower than the success rate of fathers (44.7%). Although men are less often shown throughout the show, they are more successful, when they show up. Whether realistic or not, this success can at least give nanny TV credit for encouraging a more participatory parenting style on the part of fathers.

The values in Table 8 show how often the sequences with problem solving attempts lead to an immediate success, subject to the problem solver types. The balance of success and failure entails general parenting practices reported above and also specific parenting measures such as "Ignore the child for a while", "Admonish the child", "Give the child timeout" and "Hit the child". Because the success rates of specific upbringing measures are lower than of general measures reported in Table 6 the total score in Table 8 is lower too, but more

representative for parenting success in *Supernanny* overall and also more reliable for evaluation of the problem solvers' effectual upbringing. The table proves that the Austrian and Spanish formats feature the largest share of success of nanny action. In these two countries even those mothers who are relatively unsuccessful reach at least an above-average score in international comparison. The best men's balance is again found in the Spanish format, followed by the Austrian one. The least successful men reside in Germany, where the nanny, Katja Saalfrank (a single mother herself), may know about the limitations of male upbringing from her own experience.

Table 8. Problem Solvers' Balance of Success

% , N=1111, N(Brit)=243 N(Germ)=223 N(Austria)=210 N(Spain)=219 N(Braz)=216								
Supernanny Programs								
Specific and General Upbringing Action	Britain	Germany	Austria	Spain	Brazil	Sign	Total	
Success rate: Nanny	53,9	51,8	75,0	77,8	40,0	***	55,4	
Success rate: Mother	28,7	37,6	48,1	46,5	34,9		**	38,8
Success rate: Father	36,7	33,0	50,0	67,2	36,4		***	44,7
Success rate: Parents	51,9	50,6	58,9	26,7	15,6		***	35,5
Success rate: All	34,2	40,4	52,9	47,1	26,3		***	40,0

Sample period: 2004 - 2008. Success rate (%): percentage of successful action measured to all action for solution. ***=highly sign. difference between Supernanny programs, p<0.01; **=sign. difference, p<0.05.

The most noticeable finding in Table 8 is the failure of the joint parental action. As far as success is concerned, it is ranked lower than that of fathers and mothers and fails exceptionally in Brazil. While the Brazilian format is by far leading, when it comes to the instances of parents as a couple being addressed, the success rate of joint parental action in this South American country is very low (barely 16%). In the other Latin country, Spain, the discrepancy between the frequency of couple addressing and the success at solving is not as high as in Brazil, but a success rate of 26% is weak enough to suggest that the Spanish viewers take the failure of joint parental action in the *Supernanny* program as a reason for their own avoidance of engaging in this activity. In Austria, on the other hand, the tradition of joint parental responsibility is very strong. Reflecting that, the Austrian programs contain the highest share of successful joint parental problem solving (just a bit less than 60% of the cases). This is especially meaningful as it is joint parental action where problem solvers use the democratic parenting style the most often. On a scale of 0-5, the average practicing intensity of the "democratic parenting style" for couples' upbringing action focusing on solutions is 3.41. Even the nanny's score (M=3.30) is lower than that. The least democratic are the completely overstrained mothers whose average score is 1.62; but in this case, not only the women, but also the democratically-pedagogically undernourished society pays for the unjust assignment of educational tasks. Of course, the men's corresponding democracy value is only slightly higher (M=1.92). The mothers may as well find solace in the fact that in the gender competition, the men clearly take the buck of leading in the category of authoritarianism (M=1.95). The mothers' average score (M=1.62) is still higher than the nannies'

($M=1.30$) on the authoritarianism scale and far ahead the one of the married couples who are well situated with regards to this, too ($M=1.05$).

To sum up, partners as double heads of the family are underrepresented in the nanny TV families and show a great variety of success and failure. Socio-politically and pedagogically these underrepresented couples represent the most desirable educational model, for only under these circumstances, the families' democratic potential will be stimulated at maximum level to conquer educational crises effectively and permanently.

Viewers' Motives in Germany and Austria

Now, I finally turn to the viewers' motives which are founded in their concrete everyday lifeworlds, just like those of the shows' participants. The lifeworld subjects are faced with numerous everyday problems and emergencies that need to be quickly resolved. The solutions need not conform to the demands on the systemic level (i.e. in the interest of developing the parenting culture as a whole) nor must they set a public example. The participating families' interest is focused on solving their very personal parenting problems; the viewers' interest is a paradigmatic TV demonstration of how to use their own everyday experiences as free and as effectively as possible for their own orientation. The gain from watching *Supernanny* thus is not a direct solution for a specific everyday problem, but lies in the symbolic confrontation with certain situations. It is very much part of the logical comparison process to ask if the TV situation or a similar one took place in the recipient's past or could take place in his future. The foundation of the para-social interaction between participants and recipients is the congruency of their thematic interests to think and talk about.

Thus, it is no wonder that the online survey of 1611 TV viewers in Germany and Austria, which took place between Oct. 17th and Dec. 29th 2005 showed a specific socio-demographic profile with matching results for both countries.⁵ The probability to become a *Supernanny* viewer or even heavy viewer increases, if the person is female and has no higher education. Having a child and feeling involved in the situation increases the reception. Less relevant are retrospective biographic influences (such as one's own problems during childhood) and the wish to have a child in the future. One certainly cannot assume that the findings would hold in any country, but a certain generalizability can be justified by the fact that the pattern found is compatible with the basic structures of the world of everyday life according to Alfred Schutz that we deem universal. Schutz assumes that the lifeworld subjects develop specific *thematic and motivational relevancies* based on their everyday experiences that guide their attention and determine the orientation towards certain informational milieus of the social environment and – as we add – the media world. As long as women are more or less the only ones entrusted with the upbringing business, their upbringing relevancies are stronger than men's – especially when they have children themselves. Then, the probability of an orientation towards *Supernanny* programs rises highly significantly according to the survey results, no matter what subjective motives are crucial in detail. The moment relevant for the orientation is a so-called "because motive" (Schutz and Luckmann, 1983, p.215f) "objectively" embedded in the individuals' biographical and lifeworld context and "causing" the individuals' behavior.

⁵ On the procedures of the online survey and the various questions asked cf. Grimm (2006a).

The "uses and gratifications" approach can also be used to check the viewers' needs and conscious motives for having a strong orientation towards the program. These are called intentional "in-order-to motives" in the terminology of lifeworld theory. The most common *in-order-to motives* according to the survey were "Learn about things that might be important for me", "See how others deal with their problems" and "Can see people like you and me". When assembling the single motives into four groups, "cognitive-reflective" motives (with an element of comparing one's own everyday reality to the media scenario) ranked first, followed by "cognitive-stimulating" motives that are based on curiosity and expecting something extraordinary. Ranked third and fourth respectively are "para-social" (sort of intimate link to TV personas like the supernanny) and "emotional-reflective" motives (working with emotions in the sense of emotion management). Last but not least ranked "emotional-stimulating" motives referring to intense emotions and states of arousal. On a scale from 1 (when the motive does not exist) to 5 (when the motive strongly exists), we find the following mean values in the survey of *Supernanny* viewers:

Motives of Cognitive Reflexion	3.0
Motives of Cognitive Stimulation	2.7
Motives of Para-social Interaction	2.3
Motives of Emotional Reflexion	2.1
Motives of Emotional Stimulation	2.1

Obviously, the interest in the shows' sensationalism that would be expressed by high values in the motives of emotional stimulation is limited; those values are low. Rather, the possibilities of social comparison that nanny TV brings are important to the viewers because they cater best to their predominant reflexive needs. Here, the motives oriented towards everyday life clearly outweigh escapist attitudes. Motives rooted in the everyday life reach an average of $m=2.7$, while escapist motives with $m=1.9$ are far beneath this level. This means that the majority of nanny TV viewers do not want to forget their own sorrows; rather, the *Supernanny* viewers want to position themselves in relation to behavioral models of the participating families. This result conforms to what Hill (2000; 2004) detected about the British *Big Brother* audience and to Ouellette's and Hay's (2008) generalized thesis on coping with some everyday life problems through viewing reality TV.

When asked why they watch *Supernanny*, Mrs A (1 child, aged 2 ½ years old) who took part in one of our group discussions with *Supernanny* viewers, answered:

"To see that other parents' problems are bigger than mine." (All laughing.)

Supervisor: "Is that a motive for watching?"

Mrs A: "Well, this experience is sort of satisfying." (All laughing.)

Supervisor: "What do you think when you see a raging child completely going wild?"

Mrs A: "Well, you react kind of amused because you know that from your own child as well. Maybe not in that way, but that simply amuses. It is actually entertainment then."

Mrs A associates the "raging child" on the screen to her own offspring who is of course not as bad as the one on TV. This satisfies her which she directly links to "entertainment". This example shows how the comparison processes related to everyday life work when dealing with entertainment. In this case, the gratifying amusement is clearly at the cost of the show's participants the "savvy viewer" can laugh about heartily without considering the consequences for those laughed about. The coaching format *Supernanny* poses the same problem as *Big Brother* and the casting shows, namely that show participants and viewers do

not act in concert in the zero sum game of reality TV. The more the viewers can feel strong and sublime, the more the participants lose their added gratification in the realm of public attention. Instead, they become infamous as negative paradigm in the public area. The viewers' orientation gain remains untouched by that. The more dramatically the participants fail (or the more dramatic their problems are at least), the more effective the audience's *negative learning* becomes. So while the participants try to solve their everyday problems, the viewers wait for mistakes and failure. Safe in their TV armchairs, watching others' problems doesn't only transmit a feeling of safety and superiority but also clarifies the difference between their own behavior and that of the problem families on nanny TV. Obviously, *negative learning* is not only an aspect often neglected when analyzing media effect processes, but also a rather underestimated dimension of fun with regards to the attractiveness of reality TV programs, where amusement, increase of self-worth and affirmative orientation mix inseparably with regards to precarious behavioral routines. That can in extreme cases lead to denying the learning aspect altogether.

We do have fundamental doubts as to how much the actual impetus of *Supernanny* use can be measured by motive catalogues that refer only to the conscious aspect of program use, are prone to social desirability, and can easily miss subconscious parts. Seeing reality TV use as a substitute for an adult education center and outing oneself as an information oriented user thus may seem socially captious and potentially reputation-damaging to some test persons because no one wants to be seen as an "idiot" or "naïve person". To overcome these shortcomings, we measured the psycho-social attributes of *Supernanny* viewers and non-viewers with the help of standardized personality tests – similar to the ones used by Reiss and Wiltz (2004) (only with a different test procedure) to discover relevant personality structures. The personality tests measured "locus of control" (Rotter, 1966; Rost-Schaude, 1978), "empathy" (Davis, 1980; 1983), "sensation seeking" (Zuckerman, 1979), "disaster sensitivity" (Grimm, 1999b) and "conflict behavior" (Grimm, 2006a). In Table 9, psycho-social dispositions were sorted by groups defined by the intensity of *Supernanny* program use. The higher the value, the more the attribute in question is true for the group. All the test values were projected to a scale ranging from 1 to 100, so that the acceptance percentage of the test items can be interpreted in relation to the highest possible acceptance. The asterisks in the table show that in the personality dimension in question, there is a significant difference between the groups hinting at a hidden *because motive* of nanny TV attraction in the sense of Alfred Schutz. If the highest value is in the heavy viewer group, the personality dimension has a non-accidental connection to the program use.

Supernanny viewers have significantly more external locus of control in politics than non-viewers. This means that the viewers feel heteronomous in the social and political area. What, then, makes more sense than to vie for the control missing in the social and political area within the family by all means? *Supernanny* viewers are, to the highest degree, interested in harmonic intra-family relations. Their family tolerance (readiness to cut back on one's own interests in family conflicts) is highly developed, just as the focus on solutions in arguments. The participating families' upbringing problems are thus seen as a threat demanding crisis intervention and conquering the loss of control. Thus, they prefer the show's participants facing a happy ending. Then, everyone is satisfied, and the potential conflict between participants and recipients remains within a dramaturgy that guarantees solutions – assuming the producers know this audience disposition and do not take their viewers as negativists keen on sensations by mistake.

Table 9. Psycho-social dispositions of *Supernanny* viewers

Affirmation%, N=1611, N(G1)=78 N(G2)=288 N(G3)=939 N(G4)=299						
Psycho-Social Traits	<i>Supernanny</i> -Viewing Groups ¹					Total
	Not at All (0)	Rarely (1)	Regular (2-4)	A Lot (5+)		
Locus of Control for Everyday Life	56,4	59,7	56,4	57,7		57,2
Locus of Control for Politics/Society	50,9	48,6	37,8	34,2	***	39,7
Thrill and Adventure	54,9	49,1	44,3	38,5	***	44,6
Experience	41,7	36,3	29,4	26,7	***	30,6
Disinhibition	26,8	24,4	20,0	17,4	**	20,6
Boredom Susceptibility	36,8	36,6	34,2	32,0		34,3
<i>Sensation Seeking (total)</i>	40,2	36,4	32,1	29,0	***	32,7
Empathic Concern	70,6	71,6	73,0	72,9		72,6
Personal Distress	44,9	48,5	50,2	52,1	***	50,0
Disaster Affinity	64,3	64,7	76,2	76,8	***	73,7
Negative Realism	53,8	42,6	46,5	54,3	**	47,6
Negativity Intolerance	58,0	57,6	52,0	49,3		52,8
Conflict Avoidance	35,5	36,1	38,0	39,2		37,8
Problem-Solving	57,6	57,2	59,3	61,9	**	59,3
Readiness to Fight	24,3	23,8	25,1	27,2		25,2

Online survey in Austria and Germany (10/17-12/29/2005). ¹ In brackets see the number of shows watched by viewing groups per month. Given are percentages of affirmative answers to trait constructs, scales: 0-100. ***=highly significant difference between groups, p<0.01; **=significant Difference, p<0.05

Supernanny viewers are the opposite of "High Sensation Seekers". They are neither interested in risks nor in adding to their experience or in losing inhibitions. Nanny fans avoid intense experiences: they exhibit no trace of sensationalism. Their empathy and sensitivity are above average. Pain and wounds of victims cause them physical stress. Thus, it is implausible to assume that joy in others' suffering was the main reason for watching *Supernanny*.

Still, disaster sensitivity (the attitude of considering disaster news as more important than other news) and negative realism (the opinion that negative media reports reflect reality) are stronger among *Supernanny* viewers than they are among non-viewers. We know from earlier studies (Grimm and Sells, 2006) that disaster sensitive viewers are also sensitive "Low Sensation Seekers" who turn to bad and negative things primarily out of emotional distress to make their emotion management more efficient. Thus, the nanny audience's disaster sensitivity is no proof for a perverted lust for disasters as the voyeurism critics keep insinuating. In both cases it is not about a general fascination of the horrible, but about fear of the bad things that you face via TV. The goal of this confrontation is to heighten the own ability to control emotions and to train coping with difficult situations.

Kracauer recommended standing firm under the Medusa's gaze in the era of film. We need to keep standing firm under the gaze of reality TV that already in the early days

presented itself as disaster TV with redemptionist perspectives. In the more advanced state of genre evolution, the basic motive for attending to this form of mass communication remains the continuous battle for control of many emergencies that everyday life is full of.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The British pediatrician Edward Christophersen praised the *Supernanny* program and the publication of Jo Frost's parenting guidebook euphorically in the renowned trade journal *Pediatrics*.

"Her book and her television show may be one of the best resources available today for dealing with common behavior problems in children. Her suggestions for dealing with temper tantrums, sibling rivalry, mealtime problems, sleep problems, and toilet training are probably as good as anything currently available. Her television show does a good job of demonstrating the manner in which she recommends dealing with compliance issues in children." (Christophersen, 2005, p.1768).

The parents that I have talked with found Frost to be practical and down to earth, giving recommendations that they feel they can implement. Not all the pedagogues reacted quite so positively. A very critically minded nursery pedagogue from Vienna, who took part in one of our group discussions with upbringing experts, made no secret of her dislike of the *Supernanny* program. She regarded the concepts of upbringing the *supernannies* stand for as "outdated and antiquated", their outfit alone reminded her of "the good old authoritarian days" when it was still common to oppress and to hit kids. This is why she bluntly disapproved of edutainment TV and opposed it in general.

The programs' content analysis showed clearly that the *supernannies* are far from exculpating parental violence. The claim that they oppress and deal repressively with kids hardly corresponds with our data. Rather, stressed-out parents with a tendency towards extreme control and towards a loss of control at the same time act that way and turn to the *Supernanny* team in their distress. Then, the counseling aims to change the show participants' parenting style. This usually happens towards democratic principles of parenting as described by Kurt Lewin and advocated by a majority of pedagogues. Thus, it is surprising how excited and radical in her judgment the aforementioned nursery pedagogue was. Maybe the job-related need to discern herself from the "disdainful" taste of the masses that Pierre Bourdieu (1986) described as a general trait of intellectuals played a role here. What everyone likes cannot be used to construe special identities or job-related claims of supremacy. Against this backdrop, Christophersen's remarks actually seem heroic, as he risks ostracism by his colleagues. But his extremely positive judgment is also only partially compatible with the various empirical findings.

While there is a predominant democratic tendency in nanny TV, the international comparison of the programs also showed a certain range of representation and of limited approval for authoritarian-autocratic ways of upbringing. This was partly due to the parents' motives of self-empowerment, but it is also in parts supported by some of the *supernannies*. The British show, the only format where the nanny gave more authoritarian recommendations than democratic ones, proved to be the most "authoritarian". When assessing this, one must keep in mind that Jo Frost is faced with "permissive" parents more often than other nannies

and tries more or less successfully to teach them self-assured action towards the child. Furthermore, her "authoritarianism" has a funny British touch which defuses the repressive parts. The Austrian format has the strongest democratic profile which of course had a tendency to overstrain the audience and suffered from popularity losses. The Spanish *Supernanny* program is also very democratically inclined and even more successful than the Austrian one in teaching the respective parenting attitudes to parents. The latter is also true for the Brazilian example where the democratic intention has the highest impact on parents. All in all, Brazilian nanny TV is very open and little didactic in presentation. This show leaves a lot to the audience's interpretation. This should be considered a hint that the need for authoritative guidance depends on the respective culture.

In most cases, the parents that appeared on the shows have followed the direction of the nanny's recommendations, but not to the intended degree. In some cases, the change in parenting style can even reverse itself like in the Brazilian nanny TV edition with regards to the authoritarian parenting style. Although the Brazilian *supernanny* avoids authoritarian practices like no other and although the parents, who seek guidance, exhibit a low level of authoritarian concepts, during the show the authoritarian trend in the parental actions increases. This can be celebrated as democratic resistance against the *supernanny's* "dictatorial" intentions or can be criticized as democratic deficiency of orientation aid; from the parents' point of view, all of this is not about a systemic quality of democratic culture, but about action in a concrete situation of their everyday life. In this context, self-assured, assertive action means a gain of freedom for the lifeworld subject.

All participating parents more or less suffer from a deficiency of control related to their interaction with their children *and* to their own helplessness, frustration and anger. Those who cannot control their emotions in the heat of battle with unwilling kids will be unable to convince a child: neither to do homework nor to go to bed in the evening. A minimum of emotion management thus is a prerequisite for constructively shaping the parent-child-relationship and at the same time for a liberal form of social interaction that is free from emotional pressure and in that sense, controlled. Recently, psychological approaches of "self-regulation" emphasizing the importance of emotion management and other techniques of control over one's own mind and body have become more important (Forgas, Baumeister and Tice, 2009). This leads to a shift of the problem perspective in many areas, e.g. with regard to addictions and aggression management, that are not seen any longer primarily under the aspect of model learning, but under the aspect of control over impulsive behavior. When the individual's ability to choose from various options of acting is restricted due to manic and uncontrollable behavioral tendencies, the lifeworld subject's sovereignty is damaged in exactly this sense. Now, the participants of *Supernanny* programs try to avoid the threatening loss of control, guided by the nanny. Camera and audience additionally support this quasi-therapeutic process because the attention of others at the same time heightens the ability for self-regulation. The TV performance generates a supportive climate of critical self-reflection and of wanting to prove oneself that heightens the chances for change and development of control abilities.

Thus, control in the world of everyday life means something totally different than at the systemic level. In the world of everyday life, the lifeworld subject's freedom, whose only limit is the freedom of others in the social environment, grows along with its control abilities. Systemically, control means domination over the mass of the populace which thus loses degrees of freedom. It seems barely plausible to construe a fundamental equation between

self-control and governmental rule and generally accuse the individuals' freedom of "gouvernementality" like Rose (1999) suggests based on Foucault's power analysis; Ouellette and Hay (2008) assume this as reality TV's fundamental tendency. In the double perspective of system and lifeworld, simple equations are not justifiable, not even Habermas' thesis of a "colonization of the lifeworld" by systemic powers. Rather, reality TV tries to configure the system to lifeworld concerns, to appoint it a subsidiary, supporting role. This is not easy; to a certain degree, indissoluble frictions between system and lifeworld are to be expected. Thus, dubious nanny interventions that do not take into consideration the local conditions have counter-productive effects. For example, the Spanish format noncritically adopts the British criticism of liberal parenting without considering the positive role of "permissive" parent attitudes for success at school among Spanish children.

The globalization of the *Supernanny* format is a source of systemic lifeworld dysfunctions, when the format does not adapt well enough to local conditions. Roger Silverstone felicitously phrases the ambivalence of interventions into the world of everyday life by media as a part of the socio-system: "... the media are players, shifting expectations, both tools and troubles in the management of lifeworld." (Silverstone, 2007, p.111). The *Supernanny* programs are not systemically neutral at all, nor do they automatically lead to democratic conditions, only because the mother communicates with her child on eye level. The analysis of the parents' solution attempts showed a marked gender bias that was increased by the fact that the nanny preferred to address mothers and consolidates the uneven allocation of parenting responsibility between the sexes. One of the paradox results of nanny TV is that the men – mostly having no part in the upbringing business – act more successfully than the quantitatively predominant women when they appear on TV. The mothers get more public attention, but their parenting style is portrayed less positively. For mothers who take part in the show, the risk of public embarrassment adds to the affirmation of uneven allocation.

There is a tension between reality TV participants and viewers as the viewers obtain their orientation gains in the sense of *negative learning* at the cost of publicly stigmatized people and behaviors. This is basically also true for the *Supernanny* programs that minimize the conflict by adding a dramatic happy ending. In general, *Supernanny* viewers are not interested in failure, but just like the show's participants they try to enhance their everyday control ability. *Supernanny* viewers feel an above-the-average social and political external locus of control and thus want to prove their control ability within the close area of their family. This can be construed as a special quality of reality TV: to keep the frictions between system and lifeworld bearable by emphasizing the everyday control ability. The image of the sensationalist or social voyeur watching nanny TV out of sheer curiosity does not go together well with this study's data. The majority of the *Supernanny* audience is anti-sensationalist and is only interested in disasters because of the expected rescue. Already in the 1990s, reality TV audience at the heyday of *Rescue 911* proved to be "Low-Sensation-Seekers" (Grimm, 1999). Reality TV viewers thus are not "classical voyeurs" but at best "socially changed voyeurs". The observing of the lifeworlds of others does not take place for its own sake, but is functionally embedded in the viewers' social environmental conditions and their attempts to solve problems. The *Supernanny* audience is highly empathetic, interested in harmony and to a high degree interested in the solution of intra-family conflicts. The "average", ideally constructed *Supernanny* fan is female, under 30, has a relatively low income, no secondary school diploma and at least one child. The low social barriers and the lack of educational

prerequisites must be seen as a social profit for watching *Supernanny* since they tear down barriers that could make the use of official counseling recommendations more difficult.

Even the very critically minded nursery pedagogue (mentioned earlier in this section) regards the principle of assistance on site as a plus of nanny TV. She thinks, though, that it can be barely adapted to the job practice. She also sees the principle of mobile family counseling as a failure.

"At the risk of becoming a doomsayer, up until now I was always against it (against the mobile intensive care for families, - J.G.). I've worked a lot with difficult kids and difficult parents. The intensive care for families was poorly received here. I think that there is a fundamental difference: we were forced onto people and there – with the supernanny – the family calls the person. When I say 'help please' I listen, but when someone comes and says 'this is the way it should be done' I close my ears. That is my experience."

Perhaps without intention, our great worrier brings up a strong pro-nanny argument. The voluntariness of attention that the client families of edutainment TV exhibit opens them up for the nanny's interventions. Why not, then, acknowledge the motivational work in the run-up to professional counseling and use nanny TV to further own professional intention? After the *Supernanny* program had been caught in the crossfire of criticism of pedagogical experts in the beginning, there seems to be a mood swing now. The federal congress of the professional association of German social pedagogues called its closing event in 2009 "Parenting Help from TV?" Even as a question, that would not have been thinkable a few years ago, when the protests of the pedagogues ruled the public discussion on parenting TV. Finally, the Austrian example shows that *transcendences of reality TV* can bring surprising results in the extra-media world. The former supernanny Velásquez was hired by Vienna's magistrate department 11 that is responsible for educational issues and psychological services to fight the crisis in the youth welfare office's mobile family counseling and the communal social pedagogy. The idea was to heighten the clients' counseling readiness and get better intervention results through reflective techniques (amongst others, via cameras and other means borrowed from the TV *Supernanny* repertoire). With the aid of this concept (FIT) it was possible to reduce the institutionalization of children by 30%. Meanwhile, FIT is being discussed as a possible addition to traditional ideas of social services and professional family consulting on a European level.

Such a positive transformation of reality TV within and for society cannot hide the fact that coaching TV has its basic limits, e.g. in the monotony of unchanging recipes. The success of FIT in Vienna followed the cancelling of the *Supernanny* program on TV. Here, we find hints that the culture of announcement that spends itself in the media and makes the publication of the private a topic of social learning can contradict the intentions of the public confession. The sheer intention of a quasi-therapy via the general public does not even begin to guarantee success, neither for the participants nor for the viewers. Maybe the side-effects are even graver than the benefit of a gained change. Thus, FIT's clients are purposefully not delivered to a mass of viewers; the camera is only there for the participants to watch themselves reflectively and for a qualified professional audience to watch them. Like on the Internet (cf. e. g. the Facebook debate), in the area of coaching TV, the insight grows that unchecked publication frenzy may cause uncontrollable damage. Obviously, even a media saturated society needs reservations of unwatchedness to engage fully in reflexion.

The question now is what is about to come after coaching TV? I have four assumptions on that.

- 1) The desire for a constantly increasing approximation of media programs to the lifeworld - one could say: "lifeworldization" - in the end creates a lust for "real" reality not limited to this or that simulation of reality. The development of reality TV tends to transcend into the extra-media world supporting a consciousness of media deficits.
- 2) In the program segment of coaching TV, this trend manifests in the fact that the authoritative monitoring of everyday problems promotes the restitution of the "private" in professional areas that the audience cannot reach. This does not implicate a complete retreat into the private life or even a monadic seclusion that would be neither desirable nor possible, but the relativization of an unchecked and uncritical variety of public profiling, no matter what the cost.
- 3) On the other hand, professional life counselling needs an exonerating, preparing and motivating addition by media orientation the way reality and coaching TV perform under the conditions of a gratified voluntary attention of a huge public every day without overtaxing the limited capacities for professional counselling. In developing optimized interfaces and accepting the mutual performance limits lies the future of professional counselling and of a higher quality coaching TV.
- 4) The suffering from the relativism of orientation that marked the development from reality TV to coaching TV will boost a re-popularization of reality formats to the same degree to which the doubts against authoritative counseling concepts grow. In a situation of dogmatic torpor the relativism of orientation will be necessary for managing every day life just as increasing reliance is in demand if plural agency options produce decision uncertainty.

In general perspective the conclusive presumption seems plausible that the development of reality TV is being determined by balancing between openness and reliability of orientation functions referring to the changing audiences' needs. Thus, after a period of preference of authoritative counseling the "savvy viewers" will probably return to where they feel best: to fishing for various authentic reality particles beyond orchestration and forgery, be it in the media world or beyond, in the social world. In both areas, though, the reality particles are no reality cores that keep the innermost reaches of reality together, but fractal resistors in the social area - metaphorically speaking "reality splints" or "reality fragments" that the subjects are confronted with on their journey through everyday and media worlds whenever orchestrated appearance and reality are drifting too far apart. They bring a light bulb moment to the "savvy viewer" that challenges him to check behavioral routines and assessment schemata. In the best case, this prisms open worn-out thought patterns and creates an incentive to optimize and readjust everyday action. But the duality of simulation and reality is eternal. That is why this is not about exposing reality in the light of the 'naked truth', but about the reflexive potential of *simulacra* that only operate without becoming pathological as long as they prove themselves in the framework of the world of everyday life.

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Chapter 14

REALITY NATIONS: AN INTERNATIONAL COMPARISON OF THE HISTORICAL REALITY GENRE

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When 1900 House (Hoppe, 2000) premiered in the UK in 2000, a hybrid television form was born that would spawn spin-offs and imitators over the next several years in several other countries. These series place people in historical settings, asking them to leave their 21st century lives behind, and live within the material and social constraints of the past for a period of three or four months. Part historical documentary, part re-enactment, part gamedoc - like Survivor, and part observational reality show or docusoap - like The Real World, the new historical reality genre drew upon a number of formulae. From the historical documentary tradition it inherited the pedagogical mission of addressing historical ignorance and shoring up national collective memory; from reality genres it drew emphases on entertainment and putting "real people" in visually and emotionally interesting situations.

Historical reality programs have been border-crossers not only in terms of genre, but literally, across national boundaries. One of the prominent features of reality television in general is the part it plays in the increasingly global flows of television concepts (Bignell, 2005). The success of 1900 House led to spin-off House series not only in the UK but in the USA, Australia, New Zealand, and Spain, and closely related imitator series in Canada, Australia, and Germany (Gardam, 2003; Outright Distribution, N.D.). Many of these series also aired across national boundaries, such as when the US-UK co-productions aired in both countries, and when Australia and New Zealand broadcasters imported the American, British, and Canadian reality series.

An international comparison of the historical reality genre provides a new case study of the global circulation of a reality format. However, it also allows an international comparison of discourse about national identity and its perceived reality, taking the programs themselves as sites for that discourse as well as the discourse (highly mediated of course) of the people who volunteer to take part in them. This chapter takes national sentiment and identity as its primary analytic focus. The historical reality genre might be somewhat globalized, but its orientation is resolutely national, something it has in common with most other genres of

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**REALITY TELEVISION - MERGING THE
GLOBAL AND THE LOCAL**

**AMIR HETSRONI
EDITOR**

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PREFACE

Reality television has become a worldwide phenomenon which has the capability to crossover cultural boundaries and appeal to distinctly different markets. Drawing theories from media studies, economics, cultural studies and social science, this new book reviews how reality TV has conquered the world and has the potential to remove successful dramatic genres from the prime-time lineup.

Chapter 1 - There has been a boom in the popularity of reality television programming among the large U.S. networks because it is a cost-efficient way to produce popular programming without the need to employ writers to develop scripts or pay actors to portray fictional characters (Poniewozik, 2009). In reality shows like *Survivor*, drama is created by putting interesting people into unique situations so the audience can then imagine themselves in those situations. *Survivor*, created by Mark Burnett and currently in its twentieth season, has become the model for many other reality television shows where contestants are isolated and are eliminated competitively each week until there is a single winner remaining. Shows such as *The Amazing Race*, *Big Brother*, and even *Project Runway* or *HGTV's Design Star* have been modeled after the *Survivor* formula. By studying the behavior of the contestants in the show, our goal is to examine the reasons for the show's success and discuss the impact that the decisions made by the contestants have on the audience.

Chapter 2 - Life on the screen makes it very easy to present oneself as other than one is in real life. And although some people think that representing oneself as other than one is always a deception, many people turn to online life with the intention of playing it in precisely this way. (Turkle, 1995, p. 228.)

In her now-classic work *Life on the Screen*, sociologist Sherry Turkle (1995) effectively captured the radical zeitgeist of the early public internet: absent physical cues in the text-based medium, individuals were free to construct and deconstruct identity as they saw fit. Gender, race, and ability only became a component of social exchange to the degree that individuals chose to introduce it. "We are creating a world that all may enter without privilege or prejudice accorded by race, economic power, military force, or station of birth," optimistically declared another early commentator (Barlow, 1996). Significant amounts of subsequent research energy have been devoted to exploring how computer mediation affects personal identity construction and social interaction (e.g. Donath, 1999; Ellison, Heino, and Gibbs, 2006; Walther, 2007).

Chapter 3 - Until recently, Bulgarians thought of *Big Brother* as the embodiment of a totalitarian government capable of subjecting everybody to an uninterrupted surveillance