



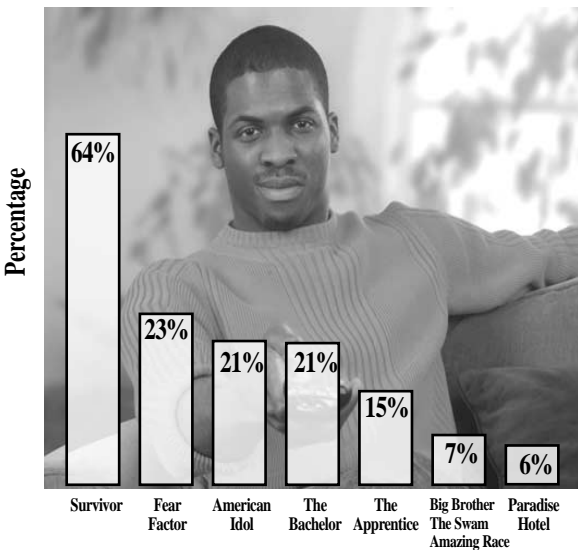
Edmontonians' poll station

By Linda Banister

When 16 average people were plucked from their average lives in America and dropped off on a deserted island in the South

Pacific during the summer of 2001, a new era of television programming began. Whether eating something bizarre, trying to find the man or woman of their dreams or jumping off a 10-storey building, reality television has become all the rage and just about every network now has some form of the programming. This month, the *Poll Station* asked Edmontonians for their views on their favourite reality television programs and why they have become so popular.

WHICH TV REALITY PROGRAMS DO YOU WATCH?



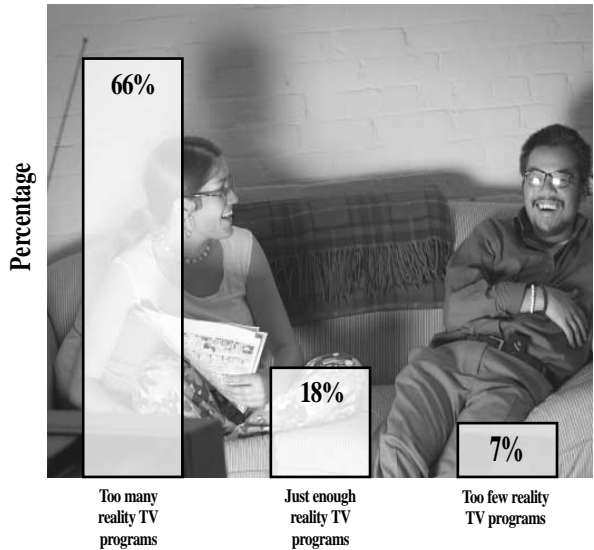
About half (52 percent) of all respondents indicated they watch reality programs on television. Of those respondents, 64 percent identified *Survivor* as the most watched reality show. *Fear Factor* was the second-most popular show with 23 percent of the respondents stating that they watch it. *American Idol* and *The Bachelor* both had 21 percent viewership and *The Apprentice* rounded out the top five shows with 15 percent indicating they watch the show. Other popular programs included *Big Brother*, *The Swan* and the *Amazing Race*, each at seven percent; *Paradise Hotel* at six percent.

WHY DO PEOPLE WATCH REALITY TV?

Next, respondents were asked why they believe people are so drawn to reality programming. Almost a third (29 percent) felt people watch reality programming because they enjoy watching normal people who have real problems and emotions, while 21 percent felt people are drawn to it purely for the entertainment value. Other

reasons included a lack of quality, alternative programming (14 percent), the desire to see how other people live (10 percent), and living vicariously through other people (10 percent).

IS THERE ENOUGH REALITY PROGRAMMING?



Respondents were then asked, in their opinion, if there are too many, too few or just enough reality programs on television. Sixty-six percent of respondents felt there are too many reality shows, while 18 percent felt there is just enough. Only seven percent felt there were too few; nine percent were unsure.

ARE THERE OTHER AREAS OF REALITY YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE?

Lastly, respondents were asked if there are any other reality programs they would like to see on television. The majority (80 percent) felt there were no other reality-based programs needed on television. Of those who would like to see other forms of reality programming, sports-focused and family-related reality shows were the most frequently mentioned (14 percent each). Other responses included science, political and travel shows, all at six percent each. ✓

Linda Banister is a certified management consultant and the owner of Banister Research & Consulting Inc., a full service provider of market research and program evaluation services. If you have a question you would like included in the Edmontonians Poll, contact Linda at 780.451.4444 or e-mail at research@banister.ab.ca. For further information on the firm visit banister.ab.ca.