

Trash Reality Programming

Like any American child, I was partly raised by television. Not just any television programming, 80's television. It didn't get any swankier than the decade of acid-washed jeans. Never mind that my mother had other things to attend to – I had all the motherly love I needed – from the picture tube. All I had to do was turn it on to find my favorite mothers of all: Judith Light as the hard working Angela Bower, Isabel Sanford as the better half to George Jefferson, Carol Burnett as the many women you'd like to shake silly, Lucille Ball as the desperate-for-attention housewife, and Joan Collins as the head-bitch-in-charge of everything she damn well wanted. And before what many today refer to as “trash reality programming,” there was the delightful portrayal of the trash talking Erica Kane, by Susan Lucci.

These by far, are just to name a few. There's no way of knowing just how much of an impact these beautiful women had on my upbringing.

Growing up in the slums of Brooklyn, during a decade that was soured by the crack epidemic, I found myself fatherless, with a single mother who herself, was swallowed by her addiction to the drug. It was as if I had no parents at all. Television, evidently, became a means of escape. It provided me a sneak peek into the windows of contrasting families, and introduced me to other mothers, I would have otherwise had no exposure to. Some of my favorite fictional moms included Maggie Seaver from *Growing Pains*, Peggy Bundy of *Married with Children*, and NBC's own Claire Huxtable from *The Cosby Show*.

What others consider to have been a tragic childhood, has turned out to be an opportunity to grow, to learn, and in hindsight, discover the humor in life. In time, the sharing of these experiences have brought my family closer together, coming out the other end, with mom being clean and sober now for over 18 years. Even with other technology avail, watching our favorite shows as a family, continues to be a staple.

Trash Reality Programming

Not only has television been an entertaining way to bond with others, but it's been instrumental in the development of my own personality, ideals and opinions. (Don't tell my favorite books that, please and thank you). Many of these shows that I still hold near and dear have been contributed by NBC: Friends, Saturday Night Live, 30 Rock, Law and Order, The Golden Girls, 227, A Different World, Fresh Prince of Bel-Air and yes, even Alf.

As an adult I have finally found my voice, and though it's married to humor, it also cohabits with empathy and social awareness. Other than surviving, its perhaps being of Puerto Rican descent, as well as recently marrying my same-sex partner of over 10 years, that further adds to my distinctive writing perspective and attributes.

Television has without a doubt been a chief platform for many to project their voices, and I would be incredibly honored for that same opportunity to inspire.