



As a rule, I think it would be unwise to accuse television programmers of having creative vision. So after developing my concept for a one-hour, weekly, prime-time T.V. series, I was confused as hell about how to pitch it to those powers that be. Over the past couple of years, it appeared that network programming had become reality everything—but in actuality, it had become reality ANYTHING! Well, anything but reality if you ask me. Because it's all bullshit.

Take those four monogamously-challenged couples on Temptation Island, separated and in Jacuzzis with hot, available, camera-ready singles. Even if you like the concept, and I do because I am a reality whore, ultimately, it simply translates into a bi-weekly dramatic kiss with some Speedo or string bikini-clad guilt-ridden, camera-aware let down. In short, reality would allow these sweaty and intoxicated cast members on this hedonistic island to explore their mutual nakedness and sexual fantasies—but the sponsors and networks won't.

Fortunately, as a filmmaker, my broadcast home has never been the networks. My last two movies have been HBO premieres, and the viewing audience pays their bills—not the sponsors. And I think that viewing audiences are ready for my concept—a concept that would explore how far six people would go for fame and fortune in America's most uninhibited game!

Being nude makes many of us feel somewhat vulnerable; but being emotionally nude makes most of us feel naked. And I hoped to exploit that vulnerability with people who truly wanted to challenge themselves—and did I mention that one of them would earn \$10,000.00 in the process? For the record, I never ask people to do something that I wouldn't do myself, and I had already gone down the road of emotional nakedness in my first film, "Just, Melvin." Besides, tragedy is a fact of life, and since this would be a game of life, tragedy would be part of the game.

I also hoped that if in the midst of this weekly game, sexy and attractive people talked about some of life's more hushed realities—murder, eating disorders, promiscuity, Tourette's Syndrome, insanity, suicide, date rape, etc.—maybe pop culture would eventually redefine the boundaries of taboo altogether. But I wondered how emotionally and physically uninhibited these people would ultimately be in pursuit of their dream.

I also wondered how my concept could all be explained in a passionate 3-minute run-on sentence to those television programmers. I know how to make a movie, not a T.V. series. Suddenly, it all became perfectly clear. I would make a movie about making this reality-game pilot. Then I wouldn't have to pitch those programmers at all. They could simply sit their asses down and finally watch what I hoped would be unadulterated reality at its... Well, I didn't know what they'd be watching, exactly, because I hadn't started filming. But now I know.

by James Ronald Whitney

# PRODUCTION NOTES