

### TV LWS 3

Hate-watching is not the same thing as reveling in a guilty pleasure.  
Let's read excerpts from the BBC Culture article and try to find out why so.

Have you watched the show *Vinyl*? Do you know who the people in the pictures are? Look through the first excerpt and try to find the names and type them below the photos



#### 1. Go through the left column. Are the words and collocations familiar to you?

rapturous anticipation

enthusiastic expectation

intermingling with

mixing with

was primed

was preconditioned

mob ties

when two large groups, gangs etc. come together as one

indulge in

revel in

bolstered

supported

picking apart

taking apart

exhibiting symptoms of

showing the signs of

abhorring

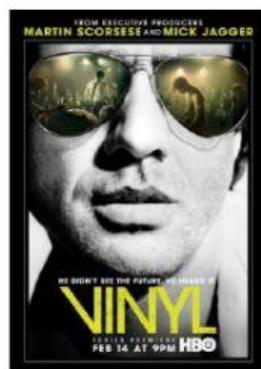
hating

spawned

begat

falls far short

fails badly to meet an expectation or standard



Go through the first excerpt again (you can look up meanings of some unfamiliar words either above or in a dictionary)

When I first heard about HBO's series *Vinyl* last year, my head nearly exploded with

rapturous anticipation. A drama about the music industry in the 1970s, created by Mick



Jagger and Martin Scorsese? And starring three of my favorite actors, Bobby Cannavale, Olivia Wilde, and Ray Romano? And intermingling its fictional musicians with actors playing real historical figures, like

Robert Plant, Andy Warhol, and Karen Carpenter? It was an Almost Famous fan's dream come true.

Then, I watched.

I liked the pilot episode, but then again, I was primed to like it, Scorsese directed it, and I'd had some wine.



As the series continued, however, the dread set in. How did we end up with yet another plot about murder and mob ties? And, good lord how could a murder be this boring?

And yet, I watched. Every minute, through its 10 episodes, to the bitter end.

**2. Unjumble the questions, then read the text and answer them.**

A. / revel in/ what / regularly/do viewers now/?

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B. / become a/when/ cult hit/ movie Mystery Science Theatre 3000/ did the/?

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C. / the concept of/what/ the movie/ was/?

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D. / exhibit /what/ do hate-watchers/ symptoms/?

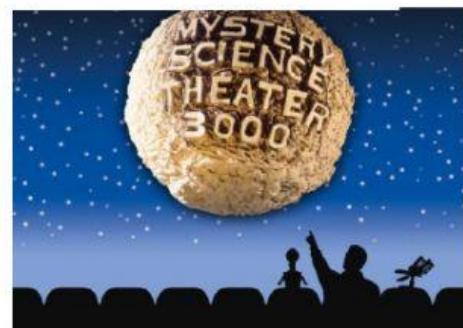
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E. /what/“the worst movie of all time”/ movie is/ known as/?

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F. / the movie/ what/ spawn eventually / did/?

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Despite the embarrassment of rich, beautiful storytelling on TV, many of us indulge in exactly this sort of time-wasting habit: hate-watching has reached new heights. Fed by almost endless options for shows to watch, bolstered by the snark contest that social media has become, viewers now regularly revel in finding plot holes and analysing awfulness just as much as they delight in quality programming. Mystery Science Theater 3000 became a cult hit in the 1990s with what seemed like a bizarre concept at the time: showing characters watching terrible sci-fi movies and picking them apart with acid commentary.

Hate-watchers exhibit the symptoms of fandom – watching every episode, micro-analysing it with other viewers – while still abhorring their targets on a rational level. This behaviour parallels haters in other genres as well: the ones who, for instance, love to point out Taylor Swift's most annoying lyrics or post



audio of Britney Spears' worst vocal performances and the ones who pick apart Fifty Shades of Grey (the book or the movie will do). Such cynics made the obscure film The Room, known as “the worst movie of all time,” into a cult hit, which eventually spawned a behind-the-scenes book, The Disaster Artist. Welcome to the Hate Age.

*You're getting pleasure from figuring out why it's not giving you pleasure – Joli Jensen*

3. Look at the nouns can you explain their meanings in your own words?

a hate-watcher

love-watchers

pleasure

fandom

schadenfreude

consumption

expertise

To be clear, hate-watching differs from other types of less-than-loving \_\_\_\_\_.

It's not enjoying a 'guilty pleasure' – a piece of work the viewer knows isn't high art, but likes anyway. It's not watching for sheer \_\_\_\_\_ or voyeurism, like one might when tuning into Keeping Up with the Kardashians or any number of trashy reality shows.

\_\_\_\_\_ is picking apart a show she thinks she should like, and trying to figure out

why she doesn't; a genre or a creator she normally respects, and trying to figure out what went wrong this time; or a piece of work that seems intended to be great but falls far short. Hate-watching is, therefore, an advanced form of \_\_\_\_\_ in an era defined by the power of fandom. “It's a form of \_\_\_\_\_, just like fandom is a form of expertise,” says

Joli Jensen, a media studies professor at the University of Tulsa.

“You're getting \_\_\_\_\_ from trying to figure out why it's not giving you pleasure.”

And because hate-watchers are counted the same as \_\_\_\_\_ in ratings, shows can become hits if enough people hate them enough.

Watch the scene from The Room. Is it clear why people hate-watch the movie?



*Back to TV, to reality TV actually.*

4. Listen to the clip from an Australian podcast *Quicky* once. How did Axle Whitehead ruin his career at the event of Australian Recording Industry Association (ARIA)? \_\_\_\_\_  
Listen again and fill each gap with one word.

Like it, love it or hate it, reality television is now well and truly embedded into Australian cultural \_\_\_\_\_.

We have shows about singing, dancing, cooking, \_\_\_\_\_ ; some are in the \_\_\_\_\_, some are \_\_\_\_\_ in a house.

Often someone from the show either on or off screen becomes the \_\_\_\_\_ one. Like Axle Whitehead. After a short \_\_\_\_\_ on *The Australian Idol*, he went on to launch a career in music TV, but an incident in the ARIAs where he \_\_\_\_\_ himself to the \_\_\_\_\_, left him with no job and no career-options.

Formal Idol judge and now host of the new podcast *Our Idol Archives*, with his daughter Katy, Mark Holden catches up with Axle on a further episode and says the guy was hit so hard after that incident, he had to leave the country.

*"I just thought it would be funny on stage to do a little cock trick... I mean, it's a rock-and-roll show. What's a bit of skin?"*



5. Listen to the clip about Axle and decide whether the statements are true or false \_\_\_\_\_

- 1) That night Axle Whitehead had LSD and then did some other psychoactive drugs. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) Next morning Channel 10 wanted to fire Axle. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) He was sober as a judge in Channel 10's office. \_\_\_\_\_
  
- 4) He suddenly realized that he didn't have real friends. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) He lost every single contract he had. \_\_\_\_\_
- 6) He managed to get over to America. \_\_\_\_\_
- 7) He couldn't find any good agent or a good manager. \_\_\_\_\_
- 8) The show *Shameless* was an amazing comeback for Axle. \_\_\_\_\_
- 9) He says that he has the part of him that has no sense of self-control. \_\_\_\_\_
- 10) He seems like a country boy with dyslexia but he actually is a very sophisticated young man. \_\_\_\_\_



6. Read the excerpt and fill the gaps with appropriate forms of words in brackets



As a reality show \_\_\_\_\_ (fold), from its glittering debut, we often see the \_\_\_\_\_ (establish) of certain roles. Someone will be cast as the nice one, someone – the \_\_\_\_\_ (agitation), someone – the \_\_\_\_\_ (balance) one, one – the \_\_\_\_\_ (manipulate). Sometimes we see the \_\_\_\_\_ (bad) \_\_\_\_\_ (sex) and misogyny from men looking to win a woman's heart. Sometimes women tear each other down just to get closer to the prize.

In a lot of these shows like The Bachelor and The Bachelorette there's alcohol involved and what looks like one party that goes for a couple of hours, in \_\_\_\_\_ (real) is two days worth of shooting after not too much sleep which results in \_\_\_\_\_ (mentality) and \_\_\_\_\_ (emotion) exhausted people who had been given a drink or two to \_\_\_\_\_ (loose) up. Other times they're placed into positions that make it easy for them to compromise themselves – like \_\_\_\_\_ (marriage) someone they've just met, and then swapping them around with other partners. Plenty of opportunity to \_\_\_\_\_ (exposure) someone's dark side.



**Robert Evans** is an American author, journalist and podcast host who has reported on global conflicts and online extremism.



7. In this clip from Behind the Bastards podcast the presenters are watching a trailer for a reality show. One of the speakers describes what they can see on the screen. Listen to the clip and number the things in order you hear them \_\_\_\_\_. Can you get the show they are about to talk about?

\_\_\_\_\_ bunch of white people riding a boat  
\_\_\_\_\_ more boats  
\_\_\_\_\_ a bird                    \_\_\_\_\_ beach                    \_\_\_\_\_ waves  
\_\_\_\_\_ riding a boat            \_\_\_\_\_ boat, boat            \_\_\_\_\_ water  
\_\_\_\_\_ oh, god, damn, just the worst people...            \_\_\_\_\_ cheering on a boat  
    \_\_\_\_\_ still white people riding a boat

8. Listen to the clip and answer the questions \_\_\_\_\_ :

- 1) What is The Sun?
- 2) When did The Sun conduct a study?
- 3) How many suspected suicides had been linked to reality television since 1986?
- 4) Why do the hosts say that this is not really a big deal?



*Sophie Gradon appeared on the 2017 series of Love Island.  
Image: Instagram*

**9. Read the chunks first. Listen to the snippet**  
\_\_\_\_\_ and take your notes – what things in  
the clip each chunk links to:

evidence of epidemic

a series of terrible suicides

over a three-year period

zero-ish

*"Mike went from being a normal guy, to a celebrity, to a 'guy that was on that show' - within the space of six months to a year. That's a lot to deal with".*



*Mike Thallassitis*

Read the verbs, listen to the snippet again and fill the gaps with the correct forms

strand

stage

describe

arise

pair

boot

construct

thrust

The UK Guardian \_\_\_\_\_ the show vastly: Love Island , a \_\_\_\_\_ reality TV show, \_\_\_\_\_ a collection of twenty-somethings into close quarters in a Majorcan villa for about eight weeks. During that time the contestants are given a task of \_\_\_\_\_ up, going on \_\_\_\_\_ dates and \_\_\_\_\_ around in beach wear. Every week the public vote on which couples they want to \_\_\_\_ off. While opportunities to re-couple also \_\_\_\_\_ which can lead to some animosity when contestants leave their lover for another islander right in front of them.

**10. Listen, read and ask questions for the “answers” in bold** \_\_\_\_\_

- The first Island suicide was Sophie Gradon, aged 32. She was a former beauty queen who had spent a lot of time raising money **for kids with cancer**, she seems nice.



When she showed up on the show, her fan-base exploded, but a ton of people also got angry **that she paired off with some guy they had a parasocial relationship with**. Right? Like, she starts, I think, I'm not an expert on the show, but she starts dating a guy and fans of that guy,

within the community of Love Island fans, start harassing her.

- Oh, lovely. Right, I know I said in the last episode that it feels like people would get used to that over the time of reality TV , but this is a new component. This is the Internet-created cyber bullying, which, you know, you don't even have to be on the show to be affected by this.

- Sophie gets on the show and deals **with just a directed torrent of abuse**. Later the year, that year, like a few months after that interview she gave where she talks about how overwhelming it is, she hangs herself in her family home. Her boyfriend finds her body and he kills himself **less than three weeks later**. It's a fucking rough story.

### Levels of parasocial relationships (Giles & Maltby, 2006)

