Comparative Analysis of Inferential Reality Shows--Take "Who's the Murderer" and "She Rlock" for Examples

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Abstract. With the continuous renewal of variety show forms, inferential reality showemerge one after another, among which the unit program "Who's the murderer"and the main program "She Rlock" are the most prominent. By comparing the structure and content of the two programs have great differences in investigation method and scene settings. "Who's the murderer" wasnmostly filmed in photostudio, while "She Rlock" was filmed in live action. However, the focus on the popularization of legal knowledge and social hot issues is consistent. Although "She Rlock" focuses more on women's safety and women's issues, both of which play positive roles in the discussion of social issues.

Keywords: Inferential reality show; "Who's the murderer"; "She Rlock"; social hot spot

1 Introduction

Star role playing inferential reality show appears. Inferential reality show is "content-conforming inference, that is, the process by which a new judgment (conclusion) is derived from one or more known judgments (premises), There are direct reasoning, indirect reasoning, etc. And the form of the variety shows broadcast on the Internet platform, including self-made or independent broadcast on the network platform, also includes the TV media side and the network side jointly broadcast programs."[1-3]. This kind of innovative program has aroused the attention of the audience, and similar programs have appeared continuously, among which "Who's the murderer" is the most prominent. Taking "Who's the murderer" as an example, the average score of Douban in its first six seasons was as high as 8.97 points, and the number of topics read on Weibo exceeded 20 billion, achieving both word-of mouth and traffic by virtue of differentiated theme content. (Data as of January 15, 2021).

2 Literature Review

There are relatively many studies on the program "Who's the murderer", mainly focusing on the variety form of the program and focusing on the theme and issues of the program. For example, Liu Shuting combed and analyzed the setting and expression of

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the themes of the first six seasons of “Who's the murderer”, and found that the programs mainly set the themes by constructing social issues, responding to hot opinions and arousing emotional resonance[6].In the “Localization Degree of Overseas Program Templates - An Analysis of Mango TV's ‘Who's the murderer’”, A Yi explored the forms of localization of overseas programs by comparing the differences between the Mango TV version of Who's the murderer and the original Korean version, and found that domestic variety shows tend to focus on program effect and theme.[4]Fang Ting and Lu Zhe focus on the setting of guests, and find that the participation of ordinary guests can make the program closer to the life of the audience, and the "foreign aid assistance" guests can promote the process of the program and enhance the sense of reality and technology of the program.[5]It is worth noting that previous studies were mainly based on the content of earlier programs, focusing on the theme setting of programs and the innovation of variety shows.

With the development of inferential reality shows, different presentation forms of this kind of show appear, including unit class and main class. This study focuses on these two kinds of programs, taking “Who's the murderer” and “She Rlock” as examples to analyze, and tries to explore the similarities and differences of these programs.

3 Research Objects

“Who's the murderer” is a series of celebrity role play reasoning variety series launched by Mango TV. By inviting celebrity guests to play the true murderer, criminal suspect and detective, they can personally experience a simplified version of a series of main processes such as evidence search, detail sorting, locking the murderer and restoring the truth in murder cases[6].The show originated from the South Korean JTBC television mystery variety show “Crime Scene”, the general process is similar. However, as a kind of entertainment program, Who's the murderer holds the setting of "30% dramatic plot +40% variety funny +30% intelligent reasoning". Under the premise of ensuring the effective promotion of reasoning, “Who's the murderer” pursues the effect of the program and the resonance of the plot theme, attracts the audience through the complex plot and reasoning process of the case, emphasizes the combination of education and entertainment, transfers positive energy.

“Who's the murderer”, which premiered on March 27, 2016, has been running for nine seasons and has been consistently rated at around 9 points. The first and second seasons of the show were exploratory, focusing on the process of reasoning and entertainment. Since the third season, the program has joined the real scene investigation, deepening the immersion experience of guests and audiences with the help of secret passages, secret rooms, blind areas and other Settings. And strengthen the theme awareness, almost every issue will focus on a certain social phenomenon to spread positive energy for the society.

"She Rlock" is an all-female drama immersive plot reasoning program, from Mango TV, launched on April 18, 2023, by Qi Wei, Zhang Yuqi, Li Yitong, Li Xueqin, Tian Xiwei, Zhang Yifan six female star guests formed "good good reasoning society". According to the main tasks received in the first phase of the program, the undercover

infiltrates the target workplace environment, solves puzzles in a single phase and has a long-term plot, and the serialized dual-dimensional promotion, gradually unblocks the plot and deduces the truth. Through the issues of law popularization in each episode, the causes of the case and the social hot spots behind it are analyzed, the legal feelings around them are felt, and the social phenomenon with women as the main victims is voiced.

4 Research Finding

4.1 A Comparison of the Structure of “Who's the Murderer” and “She Rlock”

4.1.1. There are Great Differences between the Two Programs in the Investigation Methods and Scene Settings.

In “Who's the murderer”, a simulated scene in a photostudio is used as the main location for the search. Guests will get the character setting of their own roles and related story scripts in advance, and enter the venue in advance to familiarize themselves with the placement and placement of physical evidence, and then lock the real murderer through evidence search, centralized discussion, and voting, and the form of solving the case is relatively single and fixed. "She Rlock" builds a large number of well-equipped reality, can help guests and NPCs (non-player characters) personally involved in the plot, and the guests have no knowledge of the subsequent action goals and the plot to happen, need to explore step by step, after deducing the next direction gradually trigger the plot.

4.1.2. The Two Programs Also Differ in Their Presentation of the Truth of the story.

As an inferential reality show, the truth of a case is often a core component. “Who's the murderer” focuses on the guests' reasoning and discussion. In terms of the presentation of the truth, the murderer will tell the truth at the end of the case or launch a spin-off program, which increases the possibility of diversity of truth.In "She Rlock", the story interpretation of the truth will be interspersed in the form of flashbacks at the end of the reasoning, focusing on the reasoning process, emphasizing the story of the script and the uniqueness of the truth, and helping the audience to understand the development of the plot.

4.1.3. There is a Big Difference in Plot Continuity between the Two Programs.

The plot of each episode of “Who's the murderer” is basically independent, the guest lineup of each episode is not uniform, and there are only some basic Settings throughout the program, such as "hey hey hey detective agency" and "defuncts with family name Zhen". These elements become part of the main story line in some cases, which can trigger the audience's "memory killing". It shows that “Who's the murderer” focuses more on the comprehensive performance of the program. "She Rlock" is based on the

main storyline, with single-issue puzzles and long-term plot, serialized double-dimensional each episode. Most NPCs are active in the story for a long time, with few changes in the main story scene and the ups and downs of the characters' emotions, which highlights the continuity and story of the program.

4.1.4. The Configuration of the Guests of the Two Programs Reflects Their Positioning.

"She Rlock" tests the comprehensive abilities of female star guests, such as courage, reasoning ability, promptness, and speech skills, and the guests are fixed, but if there is a necessary absence, it will be set up a short supplementary explanatory story. However, the guests of “Who's the murderer” are not always the same. As a program with a fixed process, its guests often need to have different levels of ability each time. For example, they need abilities to control (He Jiong) , of performance (Wang Ou) , of emotional appealing (Yang Rong) , to be funny (Wu Yingjie) , to reason (Sa Beining and Bai Jingting) and of flow efficiency (Chen Zheyuan) , so as to ensure the excellent effect of program recording. At the same time, the two programs have obvious differences in the setting of NPCs . “Who's the murderer” has very few NPCs, which appear briefly in the show to advance the plot or deepen the theme. "She Rlock" has a large number of NPCs and a relatively long time with the guests, making the guests and the audience can have a stronger ability to empathize when the story happens, but also to a certain extent increase the confusion of reasoning, causing netizens to guess and discuss the direction of the plot.

4.1.5. The Two Programs Have Different Emphasis on Enhancing the Audience's Sense of Participation.

As an inferential reality show, the sense of audience participation is very important. As a main line program, “She Rlock” focuses on the plot of the main line story, and the story itself can attract the audience to watch it continuously. Unlike the linear narrative of the main series, the continuous attraction of the audience, the unit series without a coherent plot is easy to make the audience lose the motivation to follow the series. In terms of audience participation, “Who's the murderer” gradually paid attention to the audience's sense of participation. Since the fourth season, it has launched derivative series and added the function of searching for evidence together in the official video software, which enabled the audience to participate in the process of searching for evidence and enhanced the audience's sense of experience.

4.2 Comparing Content of “Who's the murderer” and “She Rlock”

4.2.1 About Program Effects, “Who's the Murderer” Focuses on Entertainment, and "She Rlock" Emphasizes Ambience and Empathy.

The overall program effect of Who's the murderer focuses on entertainment. While discussing different program themes, entertainment is also taken as the main link of the program, accounting for a relatively high proportion. In the first episode of the fifth

season, "The Legend of 1900", the first half of the episode began with five guests playing the piano in a fancy way, which became one of the main entertainment parts of the episode. In the concentrated discussion stage of the second half of the case, the guests surprisingly found that they were relatives who met because of time travel. Then they formed a "world famous painting" of "four generations under the same roof", and many other funny scenes emerged. When it finally becomes clear that this is a redemption story about a father's love, every step of the truth is dissected with tears, creating one of the most classic stories in nine seasons.

"She Rlock" focuses more on the rendering of atmosphere and the paving and eruption of emotions. For example, the eighth episode of the second season, "Lost in Entertainment City," tells the story of a couple of high school female friends who have a relationship lasting more than 10 years. Xu Xiaoli and Li Xiaolan (character names) meet and become friends in high school, and one day Xu tells Li that he plans to confess to an unfamiliar male classmate Bi Sheng (character name), but Li does not understand and leaves in anger and disappointment. Xu confessed to Bi, but Bi and his girlfriend Ding Lingling (character name) cheated her to the entertainment club, and then she suffered many violations by many people. Two days later, Xu ran away from home and was missing. Li felt guilty about it, thinking that her anger hurt Xu to disappear, secretly decided to find her friend. Therefore, Li Xiaoan chose to become a police officer, pseudonym Li Renli, put Xu's name into her fake name to remember all this, and embarked on a journey to find. Finally, in episode 9, "The Devil's Date", police officer Li finds Xu, who has been kidnapped by Bi, but Xu has completely changed her face and changed her name to Du Duiqi, and lost her right hand for revenge. And the man, Bi Sheng, who hurt her has been duly punished. Li was originally a major character in the show's first season, and even after her identity as an undercover police officer was revealed, there were still some questions about her. When Li's story was fully completed in these two issues, the audience was not only surprised and missed for Li's appearance, but also deeply touched by her and Xu's relationship.

4.2.2. About Program Themes: "Who's the Murderer" Focuses on Social Facts and Looks at Different Social Topics, and “She Rlock” Focuses on Women's Safety and Women's Perspectives.

“Who's the murderer” focuses on different social facts, and basically each issue explores a different social topic. Through combing the contents of the 9 seasons of “Who's the murderer”, it can be found that the topics involved different aspects of society and were closely related to the hot social issues at the time of airing. There are 31 issues related to violence, 14 issues discussing the emotions between people, 13 issues focusing on the important choices in life, 8 issues on the relationship between human beings and technological development, 8 issues related to medicine and disease, 7 issues focusing on workplace phenomena, 7 issues related to environmental protection, and 5 issues discussing idols and fan groups, 5 issues focused on family and country feelings, and 3 focused on traffic safety. In "She Rlock", due to its clear positioning, the main guests are all women, showing a certain female perspective. The theme of this program mainly focuses on the social problems faced by women and social phenomena with serious repercussions, including workplace PUA, dark net candid shooting, public

opinion sass, etc., which echoes the social hot topics before and after the program's broadcast, triggering wide attention and discussion of women's safety among the audience.

The two programs both have their own characteristics in the naming of character names. The names of the characters in "Who's the murderer" usually directly indicate the occupation or identity of the characters, which helps the audience understand them quickly, such as “He Zhongyi” (work for traditional Chinese medicine) ,“Chen Xuyuan”(same pronunciation with programmer in Chinese). In "She Rlock", the guests use their real names to participate in the story, and the names of NPC are borrowed from the homophony related to the character's own attributes, which is easy for the audience and guests to remember. For example, the head of the network broadcast department "Shang Lianjie" (pronunciation in Chinese refers to providing links to facilitate users to buy goods when live selling),personnel department staff "Kally Du Duiqi" (pronunciation in Chinese means to describe the handover of work requirements and documents are complete).

4.2.3. About Program Titles: Directly Present the Theme of the Program or Form an Intertext with Well-Known Works.

The titles of some episodes of “Who's the murderer” are a direct indication of the themes and ideas being discussed, such as “Doomsday Bee”(environmental protection), “Nepenthes Grocery Store”(depression) “Urban Shadow”(dark web). Some are harder to see. Or the same name as a well-known film and television work, such as “The Legend of 1900” “Reply 1998”, capture the audience's attention and provoke speculation about the plot. And "She Rlock" does the same thing in this respect. Some series titles use idioms, such as “yi ming jing ren”(in Chinese, it is a metaphor for suddenly making an amazing move or achievement without any special performance.), “bu bu wei ying”(in Chinese, it describes cautious action and tight precautions). Some episodes are also straightforward about the themes they discuss, for example, “The invisible web”(dark web), “The vanishing heartbeat”(organ trafficking). Because of the setting of the main plot, the title also echoes the beginning and the end, for example, the first episode of the first season, "Saving Sanban Island" and the twelfth episode, "Goodbye Sanban Island", which can be directly seen from the title of the series.

4.2.4. About Popular Science and Law: Inferential Reality Shows’ Social Responsibility.

Inferential reality show also plays an important role in spreading law among its social responsibilities. Through discussion and reflection on cases, it provides professional legal information for the audience. "Who's the murderer" once invited law show host Sa Beining to participate as a star player to enhance the professionalism of the show, and added tips (supplementary information like post-it notes on the screen) in post-production to effectively help audience and guests understand the legal puzzles and professional words encountered during the investigation. The beginning of the fourth season will also add experts' interpretation and views on the relevant content of the current case at the end of the broadcast. Beginning with the seventh season, a special

introduction to the law was added at the end of the show named “The Panel of Great Detectives”. By inviting experts in law, sociology and other industries to analyze the behavioral psychology of the characters, the audience can popularize legal knowledge. "She Rlock" as a junior program on the same platform, tips not only explain the proper nouns, but also explain some of the guests and characters said the Internet language, and also set up in the end part of the law popularization "law after work", more in line with the main plot and real life, to provide the audience with legal information.

5 Discussion and Conclusion

With the continuous attention of inferential reality show, its role is gradually paid attention to. In addition to the functions of spreading law, entertaining the public and discussing social hot spots, the most obvious feature of inferential reality show is that the audience can effectively participate in the plot and participate in reasoning and discussion. As a typical representative of unit class, Who's the murderer is relatively weak in relation to cases before and after, and relatively few cases are presented in the form of linear stories. Therefore, it pays more attention to the expression of thematic meaning and emphasizes the process and content of reasoning and discussion. As a representative work of the main line, She Rlock highlights the overall structure of the story, and each drama serves the main line, integrating a social topic into the series-like plot, focusing on the immersive experience of the audience and guests, and empathizing with each character. The function of the two programs is to satisfy the audience's love for mystery programs and provide a diversified choice for different types of viewers. Inferential reality show not only popularized legal knowledge, but also aroused audience's attention and discussion on social hot spots and deepened audience's understanding of social issues, so that the role of reality show is not only entertainment, but also can promote social development to a certain extent.

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