

My name is Rachel and I am a Real Housewives of New York fan

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RACHEL LITTLE - ACCOUNT MANAGER 08 AUG 2018

There, I said it.

It's only recently that I have been able to talk openly about my love for the Real Housewives of New York (or RHONY as it's known by fans), it was always something I kept quiet about, but now I stand before you a loud and proud housewives fan who would definitely choose the topic of RHONY as her specialist subject on mastermind.

It started off as just a bit of fun but now I am so invested in the lives of Bethenny, Ramona, Sonja, Luann, and Dorinda that I feel that I know them just as well as their friends and family if not better! I also keep up to date with what they are doing across all social media platforms so I don't miss one second of the outfits, drama, fighting, and tears. It's amazing!!

My obsession with RHONY began when my brain needed some form of escapism, when I was feeling stressed and anxious it was the perfect come down from trying to switch my brain off from working at a million miles an hour but as time went on I became more and more intrigued by these women's lives. It was like some weird social experiment that I and millions of others got to sit and watch meaning you didn't need to think of anything else for forty minutes.

I do feel the slightly judging looks from people when I tell them how much I love the housewives but I am learning to live with it?

Don't get me wrong I know it's not quality drama like The Handmaid's Tale (my other TV obsession at the moment) and it's fair to say that it isn't dealing head on with gender oppression but let me tell you it isn't just shopping and glamorous "vacays" to the Berkshires either!

Take season nine and ten for example, my favourite housewife Luann De Lesseps otherwise known as 'the countess' has had quite a dramatic couple of seasons. In nutshell she was in a bit of rubbish place and was scooped up by her knight in shining armour who turned out to be a bit of toad. She married him within months of meeting him despite all the other housewives begging her to call it off *spoiler alert* she didn't and it all ended in total disaster. It led to a very public mental breakdown (everything on the show happens very publicly) that saw her spiral into alcohol dependency and almost a bit of jail time for assaulting a police officer. Now some may claim that none of it is real, and that the up's and down's are all scripted for sensationalism but I say 'So what if they are? I'm hooked and I'm invested. It may be trash to some, but when I'm watching my favourite housewife crash and burn I'm right there with her – full of empathy.

Now I know there are bigger problems in the world and yes Luann is in the fortunate position of being very rich but that doesn't stop me feeling anger at her for failing to heed the warnings of fellow co-stars or feeling sad watching her spiral into alcohol dependency and nobody should judge me for this, seriously don't judge me, I really do know that it's just TV.

Ultimately TV provides an escape so does it matter whether you chose to escape in the depiction of a dystopian misogynistic society or the supposedly scripted reality of a group of over-privileged socialites.

I say no of course not.

My name is Rachel and I am a Real Housewives of New York fan (although I do like The Handmaid's Tale a lot too, honestly).

Images: Bravo

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