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## All's Fair for Love and War

### Rash Report: ABC's 'Bachelorette' Beats NBC's 'Gladiators'

By [John Rash](#)

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MINNEAPOLIS (AdAge.com) -- An unresolved war. An unpopular president. A compelling campaign to succeed him. In some ways it may seem like 1968 all over again, but this time around, young people aren't taking to the streets to chant, "Make Love, Not War."



What passes for love in reality TV, ABC's 'Bachelorette,' easily beat the sanitized war zone of NBC's 'American Gladiators.'

Photo Credit: ABC/Adam Larkey

Political dynamics may be echoing those of 30 years ago, but in 2008, social dynamics are different. The youth of today aren't chanting, but channeling, as what passes for love in reality TV, ABC's "Bachelorette," easily beat the sanitized war zone of NBC's "American Gladiators."

Of course, the combat comparison to the ongoing wars in Iraq and Afghanistan isn't meant to take away from the valor American troops are showing in both countries. What's being taken away is coverage, as the June figures from the Project for Excellence in Journalism show only 3.1% of the total U.S. media's newshole was dedicated to Iraq -- less than a third of last June's 9.8%. The 1.7% of time spent on Afghanistan -- where even more Americans died last month than in Iraq -- is also remarkably low, but is at least up from .3% in May.

### Escapism factor

Part of the news tune-out is because viewers are tuning in to especially escapist fare such as last night's "Bachelorette" finale, which delivered a 3.4/10 rating and share from 8-10 p.m. This led into a 3.7/10 for "The Bachelorette: After the Final Rose" to give ABC a decisive demographic victory of 3.5/10 for the night.

The "Bachelorette" delivery was 79% higher than the 1.9/6 for "Gladiators," which then led into "Nashville Star" (1.6/4) and "Dateline" (1.8/5) as NBC finished fourth with a 1.7/5 overall rating.

And as far as summertime prime-time programming goes, some nets are also tuning out by going through the motions of running a full slate of reruns. CBS, for example, ran two repeats of "The Big Bang Theory" (1.8/6 at 8 p.m. and 2.3/6 at 9:30), as well as "How I Met Your Mother" (1.8/6), "Two and a Half Men" (2.9/8) and "CSI: Miami" (2.1/6) to give CBS a 2.2/6 second-place finish.

Fox finished just behind in third with a 2.1/6, as the network ran second showings of "Bones" (1.6/5) and "House" (2.6/7). The CW averaged a .5/1 with reruns of "Gossip Girl" (.5/2) and "One Tree Hill" (.4/1).

### Diversions needed

To be sure, there's not only room, but a need for diversions. And "The Bachelorette" -- not to mention "American Gladiators" -- are small-screen versions of big-screen popcorn movies: fun and forgettable.

The late 1960s had their share of frivolous fare, of course: Long before "The Bachelorette," ABC ran "That Girl"; before there was "American Gladiators," there were America's mythological version of gladiators, the tough-guy cowboys in shows such as "Gunsmoke," "Big Valley" and "The Virginian." But the era also had what was called "the living-room war," with network TV news so powerful that President Lyndon B. Johnson once said of CBS News, "If I've lost Walter Cronkite, I've lost middle America."

### The news is the news

This week, at least, the news about network news isn't the wars overseas, but the volleys between Fox News and The New York Times. And the foreign affairs coverage that seems to glean the most interest is not reported by CBS's Lara Logan, but is about her.

Soon enough, the networks will return to prime-time-news mode -- but not from Baghdad or Kabul, rather, Denver and St. Paul, the sites of the Democratic and Republican national conventions. They were there, too, in 1968's chaotic convention in Chicago, when young people took to the streets chanting, "The whole world's watching!"

The whole world may be watching in 2008, too. But based on viewing and programming patterns, very few are watching the wars.

### WHAT TO WATCH:

**Tuesday:** Two views of Japan say a lot about America, as ABC's "I Survived a Japanese Game Show" runs at the same time as PBS's "Wide Angle" look at the evolving role of the Japanese military on "Japan's About Face."

**Wednesday:** One of summer's best reality shows is ABC's "Hopkins," which runs on Thursdays. On Wednesday, watch the reality behind the reality show with PBS's "Nova scienceNOW," featuring a profile of Dr. Alfredo Quiñones-Hinojosa, a Johns Hopkins neurosurgeon and oncologist.

**WHAT TO WATCH FOR:** The ratings (if not the contestants) on ABC's "Wipeout" stayed steady for last week's follow-up to its dazzling debut. Week three ratings from Tuesday night will better tell its

trend.

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*NOTE: A share is a percentage of TV households that have their TV sets on at a given time. A rating is a percentage of all TV households, whether or not their sets are turned on. For example, a 1.0 rating is 1% of the total U.S. households with TVs. Ratings quoted in this column are based on live-plus-same-day unless otherwise noted. (Many ad deals have been negotiated on the basis of commercial-minute, live-plus-three-days viewing.)*

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in love and war, people are not bound by rules of fair play. in certain situations, like love or war, you are allowed to be deceitful to fulfill your objectives. in highly charged situations, even any method of achieving your goals is acceptable. certain situations are so overwhelming that acting in your own selfish interest is justifiable. Example Sentences. In order to go on a date with Elle, Paul tricked her into believing that her boyfriend was seeing another woman. Well, all's fair in love and war. When Ray realised that his best friend and he were attracted to the same girl, he made every effort to put him down in front of her. All's fair in love and war. He kept asking her out although she had said no several times " all's fair in love and war. You and me, we make love all night Then we end up in a knock down, drag out fight We kick and cuss and scream and shout Until we forget what we're fightin' about Kiss, makeup and make love some more 'Cause all is fair in love and war. Well, anything goes when it come to love Someone's going down when push comes to shove It's a fight to the finish with no holds barred If someone winds up with a broken heart That's tough, that's real tough. Now baby you know I sure would grieve If you were to ever leave me I guess I'd have to find me someone new Someone who's a little bit prettier than you Just to even up the score 'Cause all is fair in love and war. in love and war you do not have to obey the usual rules about reasonable behaviour. SMART Vocabulary: related words and phrases. Justice and fairness. (Definition of all's fair in love and war from the Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary & Thesaurus © Cambridge University Press). Browse.