

NEGOTIATING PATERNALISM AND THE ENTERPRISING SELF IN TAIWANESE TALENT SHOWS

Abstract

Talent shows have rocketed to popularity in Taiwan in recent years, as demonstrated in the high rating programs, One Million Star (超級星光大道) and Super Idol (超級偶像). This article focuses on the Taiwan talent show phenomenon as an exemplar of today's contradictory and exploitable reality TV 'celebrity economy'. Through the oft-repeated assertion of 'yes, teacher' (謝謝老師), Taiwan's talent shows manage to combine a globalising self-enterprising ethos of neo-liberal labour conditions with a Confucian-patriarchal culture. Within this context, powerful judges become mentors, with obedient contestants positioned as their apprentices. This article scrutinises the interdependence between this power-laden relationship in the talent shows and the self-enterprising practices of Taiwan's entertainment industry. It argues that, rather than democratising the TV empire, these shows have, paradoxically, contributed to the revival and consolidation of the previously presumed to be outmoded figure of the 'star authority'.

Lifestyle TV, offering advice for everyday life, is not as popular in Asia as it is in Western countries. The few Taiwan reality shows are seldom reproduced programs based on purchased copyrights; most of them are imported programs with little market share (Lewis et al., 2012: 18). However, other reality lifestyle programs that not only encourage audiences to participate and position TV as a form of life-guidance, but also present a new ethos of self-branding in a changing era, have emerged in Asia with specific local cultural features.

In Taiwan, reality pop programs, or talent search shows, have caused a fever since 2007. These programs' aim is to tutor young contestants in shaping an image of stardom and achieving this for themselves by using the local entertainment industries' resources. The 'self' here is the main product of talent shows, which helps the contestants to form their own brand values. The shows also display a dream-come-true narrative of a 'nobody' becoming a 'somebody' through self-cultivation. On the other hand, when compared with the individualism and self-expression shown in Western talent shows, talent shows in Taiwan are unique in the paternalistic power held by the judges and program producers. Talent shows in Taiwan emphasise the process of contestants transforming through 'instructions' given by the program, instead of simply competing in a contest. Just as lifestyle TV instructs normal people with their daily lives and helps them to form better self-images, Taiwan talent shows tutor contestants to form images that are not only bound to an existing star system, but also help to reaffirm the logic of show business.

Among these are two representative programs: *One Million Star* (超級星光大道), which began in 2007 and later changed its name to *Chinese Million Star* (華人星光大道) in 2011; and *Super Idol* (超級偶像). These two programs initially appeared to resemble *American Idol*, claiming to be singing contest programs in search of the next superstar/idol of Taiwan. However, that goal has been achieved in a totally different cultural form, and the programs have been produced in the distinctive context of the Taiwan entertainment industry.

When *One Million Star* first aired in 2007, it heralded several significant changes. It was the first program in Taiwan to successfully combine reality TV and Western talent show genres with localised features, resulting in significant popularity. In a TV market with highly fragmented audiences, it created a Friday prime-time show (airing at 10.00 p.m. on Friday, repeated at other time on CtiTV cable channels) with ratings surpassing the constant ratings topper, FTV, and other channels airing drama (Wang, 2007; Yu, 2007). Many other TV stations have produced copycat talent search programs, such as *Super Idol* (TTV) and *Super Star* (FTV).

One Million Star is not an exact imitation of *American Idol*; instead, it is well blended into the cultural context of Taiwan society, and the targeting of the show has also been adjusted. For example, it is claimed to be a program suitable for ‘every family’ (*hejia gongshang*, 闔家共賞) and the judges are instructional more than sarcastically critical. In addition, it adopts virtually an ‘experts-only’ mechanism: the judges decide who is going to be evicted every week. The judges’ grading also decides who will be the final champion. Although the program has now introduced audience voting (via the internet or text messages) from the middle stage of the competition, the audience vote actually counts for very little of the total scores. Its function is mainly to reveal the popularity of each contestant with the audience, rather than to decide the winner. According to my interviews of the producers of *One Million Star* and *Super Idol*, the main reason for not adopting the audience vote is not the cost; rather, it is because the show’s market share is too small in the context of Taiwan’s fragmented TV markets. In an island with a total population of 23 million people, it would be too easy for an ambitious contestant to spend money on their championship through vote buying.

The program achieved its peak in 2007, but has experienced serious decline since late 2010. Later the show renamed itself *Chinese Million Star*, airing only one season a year (Hsieh et al., 2010; Chang, 2010).

As other researchers have noted, popular lifestyle TV or makeover shows in the Western world focus on ‘renovating’ ordinary people, their lifestyles and relationships, focusing on the entertaining spectacle of personal transformation under the advice given by experts. Those programs introduced new technologies of selfhood, citizenship and even the socialisation of labour in the context of global neo-liberal trends. Selfhood is increasingly reduced to middle-class, commoditised lifestyle choices; citizenship is constructed through the self-governing and ‘enterprising self’; labour is moulded to become more flexible as well as precarious (Lewis et al., 2012; Hearn, 2009; Weber, 2009). This leads to the central questions addressed by this article: Are the technologies of selfhood and personal transformation similar or different in the advice given in Taiwan talent shows? And what are the contextualised social, cultural and economic meanings of the instructional mechanism exercised in Taiwan talent shows?

Celebrity economy and self-branding

Talent search shows such as *American Idol* and *Britain’s Got Talent* embody a ‘celebrity economy’ that operates both in reality TV and life advice programs. Over the last decade, the trend of reality-based TV programs that emerged in the United States and

Western Europe has opened the doors of TV stations by calling on ordinary people to display their real life or compete in a contest on the TV screen, making some of them famous. Several scholars have theorised the new forms of economy and subjectivity that attend the ideas of celebrity, fame and stardom manipulated in such reality TV programs (Andrejevic, 2002, 2004; Holme, 2004; Couldry, 2002; Collins, 2008; Lewis, 2010). We might dub this trend the ‘celebrity economy’, underscoring the profit-seeking economic logic of reality TV that underlies the placement of the entire concept of celebrity value at the centre of programming. It is actualised on the one hand by democratising TV celebrity, and on the other by producing increasing popular content positioning ‘celebrities as experts and experts as celebrities’.

Taking the popular reality TV show of *Big Brother* and *The Real World* as examples, Mark Andrejevic (2002) suggests that reality TV offers a fantasy about ‘the democratization of celebrity’. The celebrity fantasy in reality TV emerges from offering to make stars out of real people and make real people out of stars. In the course of pursuing the democratisation of celebrity and the democratisation of TV, the reality program ‘has paradoxically undermined the uniqueness of celebrity and rendered star quality fungible’ (Andrejevic, 2004: 11). In the case of the specific genre of reality pop programs, its main foci are precisely the exposition of the internal workings of the music industry and its manufacture of celebrity and stardom (Holmes, 2004). The mediation of stardom and its power dynamic are always at the centre-stage of talent shows.

In addition to the rise to fame of ordinary people, the celebrity economy of reality TV also arises from real celebrities. In lifestyle TV, many celebrities are presented as exemplary ‘super-consumers’, revealing their modes of private life and providing instruction for the ordinary, ‘civilised’ audience. Meanwhile, many lifestyle specialists and ordinary experts have become new celebrities too, and create their own brand status. The domestic branding of Martha Stewart and the healthy cooking brand of Jamie Oliver are just two examples. As Lewis (2010: 587) puts it, ‘what lifestyle programming sells to the audience then is not just products but ways of living and managing one’s private life’. The celebrity lifestyle experts actually embody and enact models of contemporary consumer citizenship.

Some researchers extend their critical commentary about the ‘celebrity economy’ further by focusing on the production process and labour relationship in reality programs. Sue Collins (2008) argues that the celebrity value of reality TV is a mechanism to gather non-paid or low-paid contestants playing themselves, and thereby contribute to the TV industry’s flexible model of economy. My own previous study of *China’s Supergirl* (2009) suggested a similar viewpoint. By promoting the ‘TV Cinderella Myth’, pop reality programs not only acquire the extensive unpaid labour of wannabe singers but also enable the fans to contribute free promotional activities of the ‘fan economy’ to the programs (Jian and Liu, 2009; Jenkins, 2006). Reality TV has produced a huge number of ‘D-level celebrities’, a trend that Collins names ‘dispensable celebrity’. This is a lower stratum of celebrity value that affords both ‘surplus for cultural industries and the maintenance of the larger system of celebrity valorisation which is based on scarcity’ (Collins, 2008: 89). In other words, those unpaid or low-paid participants on reality shows who are involved in a long-running and keen competition have generated a contradictory and exploitable celebrity economy.

However, the production of celebrity by reality TV echoes a range of broader shifts in the post-Fordist regime of flexible production and the neo-liberal ethos of renovating the self and our conditions of labour. Flexible labour and the ethos of self-enterprise are both immersed in the global context of neo-liberal labour conditions (Hardt and Negri, 2000; Rose, 1999; Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2008). The numerous dispensable

'15 minute celebrity/contestants' on talent shows provide exemplary evidence of flexible labour for the TV industry. In order to compete for the precious position of champion, they embrace the neo-liberal ethos of the enterprising self to generate novelty out of themselves with minimal risk, and temporal flexibility for the program. As Hearn observes, 'it is precisely at this conjuncture of ontological insecurity, precarious labour and promotional discourse of self-branding that reality television comes on the scene' (Hearn, 2009: 58). She explains this logic as follows:

Reality television, it can be argued, is the paradigmatic productive post-Fordist workplace – ground zero for the socialization of labour. This is evidenced in its exploitation of unpaid 'real' volunteers enticed by the mythologized glamour of Hollywood celebrity to simply 'be themselves', and in its growing promotional synergies with sponsors and corporations. Reality programming also formally enacts these processes of commodification and promotion, not only marketing goods but also people; proving the means by which contestants can become saleable image commodities or branded selves.

In sum, the mythologised glamour of celebrity/stardom and the promotional cultural turn to selfhood combined could well explain the rise of the celebrity economy and the enterprising self, with the practices of self-branding. It is in the context of this conjuncture of the reality TV economy and stardom-based talent shows that this article explores the contextualised celebrity economy in Taiwan. What kind of celebrity, star and expert images and imaginaries were introduced through the Taiwanese talent shows? How could that help to establish a local celebrity economy for Taiwan's reality-based TV programming and its attendant entertainment industry? In what ways do talent shows promote self-branding practices for the ordinary contestants? Do they represent a historically specific subject-formation for contemporary Taiwan society and its labour market?

Yes, teacher

A key difference between Taiwanese and Western talent shows is that in Taiwan judges are called 'teachers'. This respectful title, which is commonly used within Chinese society, makes the competition less competitive and more instructional. Most of the judges' comments are kind and guiding suggestions, not sarcastic criticisms. They also make the comments as teachers instead of detractors. Of course, there have to be some judges playing the role of harsh critics; however, this not only increases the show's entertainment effect but also builds the authority of the judges/teachers.

The celebrities in talent shows – especially the judges – are usually presented as senior artists, pioneers and experts in the entertainment industry. In Taiwan, the judges in the shows simultaneously represent the roles of celebrity, experts, authorised predecessors and teachers. Most of these judges are once-famous singers or producers; some of them have not made new or prominent work for a long time. In Taiwan, these people are still called 'teachers' out of respect for their former work and experience. This respectful manner cements their authorised position within the cultural hierarchy of the entertainment business. However, the judges are not the only teachers in the show; people like the host, the production team, the accompanying band members, their conductor, the dancers and the dancing instructors are all called 'teachers'. These ubiquitous teachers, and the paternalistic discourse that they embody, create a huge disciplinary power apparatus within the show.

For example, after judges make their comments, the host always turns to the contestant and makes sure that the person really 'gets it', as if they are students in

a class. After that, the host interprets the comments in their own way, and then cues the contestant to thank the teachers with them (see Figure 1). The hosts themselves are show business predecessors and experts too. For instance, the host of *One Million Star*, Jing-ying Tao (陶晶瑩, Momoco Tao), is a singer herself. She often sings a song or two to warm up the audience before the camera begins rolling. Her witty eloquence is also favoured by the audience, and has won a solid reputation for the show.

The ubiquitous teachers in Taiwan talent shows indirectly suggest that the contestants and audience can gain access to the once-mysterious entertainment industry, and be supplied with the business's internal resources. When the contest nears the end of the season, once-famous singers or the 'idol of the finalists' often dramatically appear on



Figure 1: *One Million Star*, 10 July 2009, season 5. After hearing the judges' comments, the contestant (left) expresses his appreciation by replying: 'Yes, teacher' under the helpful mediation of the host, Jing-ying Tao (right).

the show. Subsequently, the host asks these idols to make suggestions to the finalists, while the latter respond with obedient gratitude. Some episodes will invite a couple of popular recording artists to sing with every contestant. This theme is called 'Sing with your idol and battle your stress' 偶像對唱抗壓, and appeared in Seasons 1–3 of *One Million Star*. Some finalists seemingly perform better than their idols, yet they still thank the 'teacher' with great respect. Figures 2 and Figure 3 show a judge harshly asking a finalist to learn from the idol/singer beside him, followed by the finalist, surrounded by the host, the singer and the judges, bowing and responding reverently, 'Yes, thank you, teacher'. The bowing accompanies the 'thank you'; this expression of gratitude is actually equivalent to an obedient attitude – it is like saying 'yes, teacher' in Chinese. It implies a total acceptance of the comments. There are no further doubts, queries or ideas raised, only humble gratitude given. This kind of authoritarian atmosphere is contrary to democratisation, not to mention the expression of a participant's 'true self' with a so-called superstar/idol-to-be's charisma. The contestants are detached from their own personality, becoming obedient students who only say 'yes'.

In the show, the title of 'teacher' not only represents a professional and authorised identity; it also implies a position of moral authority whose usual domain is family and school. From the beginning of the program, contestants are often referred to as



Figure 2: One Million Star, 22 June 2007, ep. 24, season 1. In an episode titled 'Sing with your idol and battle your stress', the famous judge is suggesting that the contestant learn from his idol: 'All of you really could learn a lot of great singing techniques from [the idol], alright?'



Figure 3: The idol as 'expert' (left) watches the obedient contestant (right) reply to the judge: 'Yes, thank you, teacher.'

'kids' by the hosts and judges, as well as by the producers in interviews. There was previously an age restriction that only allowed people under 25 to sign up for the show, meaning most of the contestants are young students. Although the age restriction has been lifted, most of the final ten are young people aged under 25. Wei-chung Wang (王偉忠), the producer of *One Million Star*, is a senior Taiwan producer with almost 30 years' experience. Wang is not the executive producer of the show, but with his 'godfather' reputation, he makes public statements on behalf of the show and serves as a leading judge in the finals. Like the host, he always calls the contestants 'kids'. In his most famous commentary, he expressed his gratification at seeing the kids grown and changed. He also said that the greatest reward of producing the show was knowing that 'parents needn't worry about their kids joining show business' (*One Million Star*, 6 July 2007, episode 26, season 1). The host calls Wang 'the principal'; each season's contestants are 'classmates', and contestants from former seasons are 'seniors'.

This paternalistic tone and the school-like instructional context diminish the democratic quality of the competition, and instead place the competition within an ethical relation network of master and apprentices drawn from Chinese Confucian culture. The relational network is all about respect for seniority, which turns into a hierarchy of authority. It is precisely the 'ideology of hierarchical collectivism' that has so often been found in Taiwanese variety programs (Lewis et al., 2012: 25–26). 'To rule the country is just like governing the family.' (Jin and Liu, 1994: 77) This belief stabilises the structure of Chinese societies, and is also the basis of social order (Sun, 1990). Although Taiwan has undergone an accelerating transformation of political, economic and cultural democracy, paternalistic leadership, Confucian pedagogic culture and hierarchical collectivism are nonetheless still critical components of its modern civic life.

You've never taught me before, and I'm not your child. How come I have to call you 'teacher', and you call me 'child'? The ubiquitous teachers and children phenomenon expresses a paradoxical contradiction attending talent shows in Taiwan. On the one hand, the focus of these shows produces the wonder of making common people famous. Ordinary people are known, favoured and further voted for due to the talents they reveal in the program. However, in Taiwan talent shows, champions are mainly decided by the judges rather than the audience; therefore, it is more important for the contestant to impress the judges. For both participants and audience, the democratisation of television is distorted by this structure (Jian, 2008b).

The contestants' achievements outside of the talent shows are also worth reviewing. Except for the winner from the first season, very few are widely known or have become stars. Many of them have waited for years, and ended up rescinding their contract with their record company or agency (Jiang, 2010; Huang, 2011; Chang, 2012). Champions from the early second season generated some success, while other champions' achievements were hardly discernible (Hsu and Chu, 2010; Wu, 2012). These people are the most dispensable, and D-level celebrities, whose fifteen minutes of fame constitutes the value of the programs (Collins, 2008). Ironically, the host and judges are the ones who really benefit from the show. As a result of their participation, many of them enjoy a second peak in their careers, and become online artists with unceasing invitations to either perform or host other shows (Tsai, 2008; Chang, 2008; Tsai, 2008; Nien, 2009).

Branding yourself, or just 'like a star'?

The process of ordinary people (amateurs) transforming into stars (professionals) is common to most talent shows. In *American Idol*, this kind of transformation has even been articulated with the American dream (Weber, 2009; Miezal, 2011). Taiwanese talent

shows are no exception. However, the transformation is not a gradual process of skill improvement, but an abrupt makeover of each contestant's 'look', which provides the spectacle of personal transformation just as in life-advice or makeover shows. One good example is the 'big transformation episode' of *One Million Star*, in which a professional styling team creates new looks for the final ten. With the audience as witnesses, the contestants enjoy a professional style designing service, just like a superstar. Among the five judges of *One Million Star* is the noted stylist Roger Cheng, who is in charge of the styling process. Many contestants admit that to be styled 'just like a star' is what they most want from the program.

Just as with other makeover shows, the transformed result is presented by juxtaposing the 'before' and 'after' looks in order to reinforce the magical difference between the two. The host and professional stylists express their evaluative standard for a star in their comments on the contestant's new look, which include mocking their before look as sloppy or boring. This kind of appreciating and deprecating of personal appearance becomes part of the tutorship. It also implies that to fulfil the dream of becoming famous, one must work on one's self-branding. Just as lifestyle TV uses consumerism to create the identity of a middle-class self (Palmer, 2004), the encouragement of self-branding in these talent shows is also a response to the contemporary consumer-self, as well as the neo-liberal enterprising self. The process of style guidance not only involves participants performing as free labourers, but also a transformation to 'be like a star'. Being 'like a star' translates to the surface characteristics of makeup, hairstyle, dress and deportment. In other words, it is simply enacting a 'simulation' of stardom (Baudrillard, 1983).

These simulations are repeatedly represented in the conversations of the host and judges. Representative comments include that professional makeup makes the attendant 'more glamorous, more stand-out'; 'you must be wilder, with more personality'; 'Yes, now you are just like a superstar'. Becoming like a star is represented as a correction of ordinary people's flaws. For example, it 'makes a boyish girl more girly'; girls have to get used to high heels; you are advised to 'show your body and act sexier' to become more visible. The host constantly emphasises that through these transformations, the contestants become more like the acknowledged international Asian or international stars like Justin Bieber (Canada), Ken Hirai (Japan), Takeshi Kaneshiro (金城武) Taiwan, Jolin Tsai (Taiwan) and the Johnny's Jr 4 (Japan). The program also highlights the position of the stylists who created the transformation by stressing their experience of styling numerous stars.

Various class images are also referenced in those conversations. For example, Taike (台客, a semi-pejorative term describing native Taiwanese and their unsophisticated outlook and behaviour) style is represented as outdated, while J-pop or K-pop style is seen as hip. After the transformation presentation, the judges comment on and praise the contestants' professional looks. All of the above form a closed circuit of stardom simulation. Stardom is presented through style, class and materialism, as distinct from the singing talent and personality on which the competition supposedly focuses. We must also note once again that audience participation is absent from the decision-making process around who will become the next idol/ superstar.

In addition to the transformation of the contestants' fashion style, the program also sets up official blogs or Facebook pages for the top ten contestants and asks them to blog from time to time. The contestants are advised that the purpose of blogging is to 'express yourself' and 'interact with your fans', as well as expand the possible audience base for yourself and for the program. Although some contestants already have their

own personal blog or Facebook page, the popularity of their official pages still matters. It could influence their chances to be cited by the host and their image shown on the program. Therefore, 'self-enterprise' through internet management is not actively generated by the contestants here. Blogging and chatting with your fans on the official website is more like part of the show's 'star training program'. If you are eager to be the next idol/superstar, you not only need to have a star-like appearance, but you must also learn how to interact with fans as well as manage your public image on the web.

This is probably the most intriguing and distorted scenario of the show: seeking an outstanding winner, yet giving them a highly standardised 'star-look', plus superficial star-fan interactive practices. Taiwan talent shows seem to be selling to audiences not only a competition, but also a path to becoming a star/idol that is approved by the entertainment business, which includes the ideology of predecessors/teachers as cultural and moral authorities.

Conclusion: Negotiating paternalism with the enterprising self

Due to the widespread local karaoke culture and general admiration of popular singers, talent shows are considered more entertaining, and are therefore more popular, than lifestyle reality programs in Taiwan. However, the core concern of Taiwan talent shows differs from those in the Western world, which highlights the pursuit of contestants' egoistic dreams of becoming famous. Contestants in Taiwan talent shows seek to be approved by celebrities and experts from inside the industry, hence smoothing their way to enter the entertainment business. In this article, I have shown that the judges of Taiwanese talent shows are presented as teachers – a title that brings with it a Confucian tradition of paternalistic authority. This kind of paternalistic power makes the contestants, who yearn for an entertainment career, into obedient student-subjects. As for their dream of becoming famous, they have to negotiate with this paternal authority in order to develop the enterprising selfhood that is needed in a competitive neo-liberal labour market and appears here through the contest process.

The authorised 'teacher/experts system', which embodies the paternalistic and hierarchical power of Taiwan's popular music and television industry, manifests in different variations at all levels of life within the broader Taiwan society. As we can see, the talent show judges' ascribed power reflects the Taiwanese cultural tendency to favour and think highly of successful predecessors in all specialised fields. This represents the patriarchal tradition in Chinese culture, yet it also paradoxically hinders the emergence of creativity. To take a recent example: the government-sponsored musical extravaganza *Dreamers* (夢想家), staged in late 2011 to celebrate the centenary of Taiwan ROC, has been denounced as 'misusing NT\$215 million (US\$7.3 million) of public funds' to 'favor Performance Workshop Theatre founder Stan Lai' and his associates (Wang, 2012). The Taiwan government has been generous in throwing its money around in the granting of funding for the policy of developing cultural and creative industries since 2010. However, since most bids were won by established, renowned cultural entrepreneurs, the funding schemes consequently crowded out any new creative talent. Wei-Chung Wang, the owner of *One Million Star*'s production company, is also a frequent beneficiary of cultural grants, which is considered inappropriate and ethically questionable by many in Taiwan (Chen, 2012; Chou and Yeh, 2012).

This paternalistic and hierarchical power system in Taiwan's talent shows practises an extreme exploitation of labor conditions, including a huge discrepancy in payments. However, poor and low-paid working conditions within Taiwan's television, popular music and film industry – especially for 'below the line' crafts or independent film

workers – makes the problems with talent shows part of a broader situation (Chang, 2005; Lin, 2006; Liu, 2011). According to my field study of the local TV industry since 2005, TV jobs are seen by many as uncertain and poorly paid, as well as arduous and involving overly long hours (Jian, 2008). Therefore, the exploitation within Taiwan's talent shows might not only be directed at the contestants for their free labour during their performances, but rather aimed at the few production crew. In *One Million Star*, the most expensive cost for the show was the host, who was paid NT\$300,000 for every weekly episode, whereas the five production crew were paid, on average, lower than NT\$30,000 per month.

In all talent shows, regardless of production location, the most valuable aspect is the flexible labour that wins the audience's support throughout the competition. I refer here to the flexible production of the program, in which contestants are responsible for the program's creativity, and their performances are customised to the tastes of audiences. However, the self that Taiwanese talent shows mould throughout the competition may not be equivalent to the enterprising self promoted by neo-liberalism. Instead, what the shows encourage is a combination of Confucian paternalistic authority and a contradictory self-branding. The result of this combination is that contestants become obedient apprentices and provide free labour for the program. This reveals a localised process whereby real, ordinary people's subjectivity is disciplined by the glory of TV celebrities and the expert/teacher's authority. Paternalistic power makes the participants into obedient apprentices/subjects, which paradoxically helps to fight the career crisis of certain outdated celebrities. Meanwhile, it also effectively helps the declining TV/music/advertising industry to fight the industry crisis brought about by media convergence (Jenkins, 2006). Talented wannabe singers in Taiwan thus become creative competitors pursuing enterprising selfhood against the drag of an authoritarian cultural structure, while at the same time being exploited as free labour for the programs. They always seem to be struggling because they have never been allowed to stop showing gratitude, while recognition of their own personality and talent is made a merely secondary concern.

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Miao-ju Jian is an Associate Professor in the Department of Communication and the Graduate Institute of Telecommunications, National Chung Cheng University, Taiwan.