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## The Real Housewives of New Jersey

(Series -- Bravo, Tues. May 12, 11 p.m.)

By BRIAN LOWRY

Produced by Sirens Media. Executive producers, Rebecca Toth Diefenbach, Valerie Haselton, Nina L. Diaz; co-executive producer, Lucille D'Agostino; line producer, Cosmo C. De Ceglie.

Turns out all previous "Real Housewives" -- Orange County, Manhattan and Atlanta -- were just a tune-up to New Jersey. Seemingly culling from the same casting pool employed by "The Sopranos," the producers have out-done themselves with an assortment of women whose mouths are every bit as big as their hair. Playing to the cameras, even many elements that feel slightly staged (including convenient intra-housewife feuding) prove nearly irresistible, again reminding us that horrible people you'd never want to associate with are often the spice of reality. This show puts the Bada-Bing in Bravo.



'The Real Housewives of New Jersey'

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The "Housewives" franchise is all about conspicuous materialism, which has made the thinly veiled disdain the show harbors toward its participants more palpable, but the viewing experience (much to Bravo's delight) no less entertaining. In this case, the women are steeped in reality-TV culture ("If you think I'm a bitch, bring it on," one says with direct-to-camera brio) and yet oddly oblivious to how juicy some of their pronouncements are. These include, but are not limited to: "Jacqueline's heart is as big as her boobies" and "My boobs are too big for tennis."

But it gets better. One of the moms is trying to turn her moppet daughter into a pint-sized actress/model, injecting an element of child pageantry a la "Showbiz Moms and Dads," as a beaming mom sings along in her seat while the kid struts onstage. Another housewife has a twentysomething son whose goal in life-- wait for it -- is to open a strip club.

Finally, divorced Danielle -- who feuds with Dina, an interior designer -- has been engaging in phone sex with a guy she met online (his sign-on is "Gucci model") and arranges to meet him in person, much to the horror of her friends.

These are, in short, a pretty loathsome array of deliciously shallow stereotypes, almost feeling stitched together from pieces of other programs. And one suspects while the producers sifted through footage in assembling the premiere, the smiles in the editing bay were even bigger than those haircuts.

Camera, [Christian Mack](#), [Jack Reichert](#), [Matt Elkind](#). Running time: 60 MIN.

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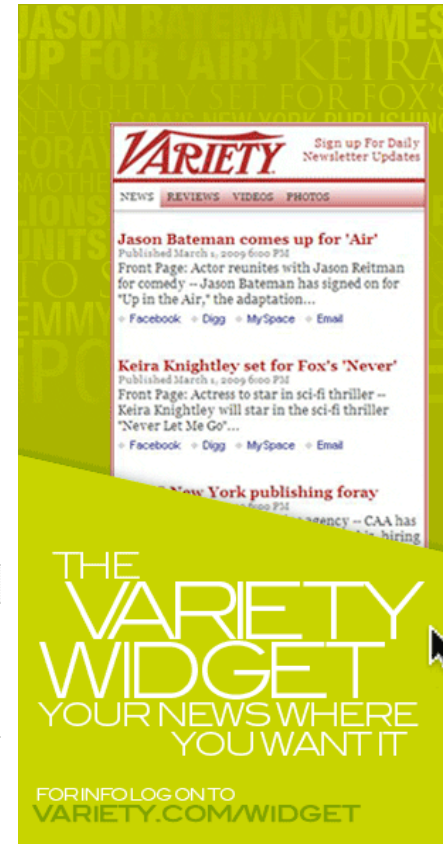
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