Medical Reality Television (MedRTV) is a form of health narrative that follows patients who receive medical treatment. MedRTV relies on the narrative vehicle of an ‘Open Body’ where patients are exposed nude in medical exams and surgical sequences.

Fascination with looking within the body is not a modern phenomenon – public autopsies performed in anatomical theatres are one such example. The spectacle of the Open Body has long held a place in science and art in displays of preserved bodies and wax models.

MedRTV is widely seen as lowbrow entertainment. Although the narratives are similar to makeover shows whereby human bodies undergo transformation, their screen time is mostly devoted to the spectacle of physical illness, struggle, and invasive treatment.

This PhD thesis adopts a reader-guided textual analysis to examine MedRTV in the context of everyday reception.