

# Henry Winkler Stopped Daughter From Starring in Reality TV Shows

Henry Winkler is best known for playing Arthur 'Fonzie' Fonzarelli on the ABC-TV series 'Happy Days.'

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Actor Henry Winkler (C) with son Max Winkler (R) and daughter Zoe Emily Winkler arrive at Sony Pictures premiere of "Click" held at the Mann Village Theater in Westwood, Calif., on June 14, 2006. Kevin Winter/Getty Images



By Juliette Fairley

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Actor Henry Winkler, 79, prevented his daughter, Zoe Winkler Reinis, from pursuing a career in reality TV.

At the time, his now 44-year-old daughter had just finished college and was living at home.

Zoe spoke about it recently with her dad on the 4th episode of her podcast [What In The Winkler?!](#)

“Me, Kim [Kardashian] and Sarah Howard were asked to be on a show called ‘Quarter Life Crisis’ and I’ll never forget, Matt Hanna, he worked at VH1 at the time, flew out to LA and did a sizzle reel of us,” she said.

Henry admitted on the podcast that when Hanna came to their house, he met him outside and thwarted his daughter’s participation in the production.

“I said, ‘It is so lovely that you’re here, I can suggest some really good restaurants, [but] my daughter is not doing your show,’” he said.

Henry is known for playing Arthur ‘Fonzie’ Fonzarelli on the series “Happy Days”, which aired on ABC-TV from 1974 to 1984, and, more recently, the animated TV series “Rugrats.”

Hanna, who subsequently served as the Esquire Network’s head of original programming, told The Epoch Times on Nov. 25, “I promised Zoe that I wouldn’t tell my side of the story to anyone but her on an upcoming episode of the podcast.”

He currently works at a startup called Quickture.

Zoe subsequently became a preschool teacher, while Kardashian is now a household name with many of her own product endorsements,

such as SKIMS.

“Well obviously it worked out for Kim ‘cause she went on to become the most famous person in the world,” Zoe said.

She had another chance to star as “The Bachelorette”, but Henry shielded her from that reality TV aspiration as well.

“Oh, my goodness,” Henry said. “We put a stop to that ... and only for your protection.”

## Reality TV Comes With a Cost

TV producer, mental health advocate, and Starfury Productions co-founder Nubia DuVall Wilson believes that starring in a dating reality TV series like “The Bachelorette” can kickstart stardom at the expense of a cast member’s mental health.



“A TV career isn’t for everyone, and just because you are tapped for it by producers or casting directors, doesn’t mean you should accept the offer,” DuVall Wilson told The Epoch Times on Nov. 25.

Henry is married to Stacey Weitzman, 77, who is Zoe’s mother.

In addition to Zoe, the Winklers have 41-year-old Max, a writer, director and producer.

“Instead of getting caught up in the allure of potential fame, Henry Winkler prioritized Zoe’s safety and personal growth,” Cincinnati-based parent and wellness expert L'Taundra Everhart told The Epoch Times on Nov. 25.

Although Zoe thanked Henry for protecting her, she also titled the podcast episode “Introducing Father Doesn’t Always Know Best.”

Henry’s actions reflect a nuanced understanding of the entertainment industry and its challenges, according to Los Angeles-based Meridian Counseling CEO Sandra Kushnir.

“For individuals, especially women, entering this space, it’s crucial to weigh short-term gains against long-term consequences, both professionally and personally,” Kushnir told The Epoch Times on Nov. 25.

Short term gains include visibility, potential fame, and financial gain but the down sides are just as significant.

“A father might be concerned about how reality TV could affect his daughter’s mental health, privacy, and reputation,” celebrity brand, podcast and social media consultant Gary Frayter told The Epoch Times on Nov. 25. “The drama and intense public scrutiny could lead to stress, misrepresentation, or long-term damage.”

Zoe, who also confessed to wanting to be an actress and auditioning for a horror movie, objected when her father said she wasn’t cut out to be an actress.

“I’m cut out for anything I put my mind to,” she said.

Henry retorted, “You didn’t put your mind to that because my agent called me, who sent you on the call, and said, ‘It would be great if your daughter looked at the script before she went in.’ I trained for 15 years.”

She later said: “I just couldn’t be bothered,” about the horror movie audition. “I really couldn’t. I was a teacher. I had a job.”

Zoe married Rob Reinis, 50, in 2009, and they have three sons.

She later co-founded This Is About Humanity, a nonprofit that works with humanitarian organizations.

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