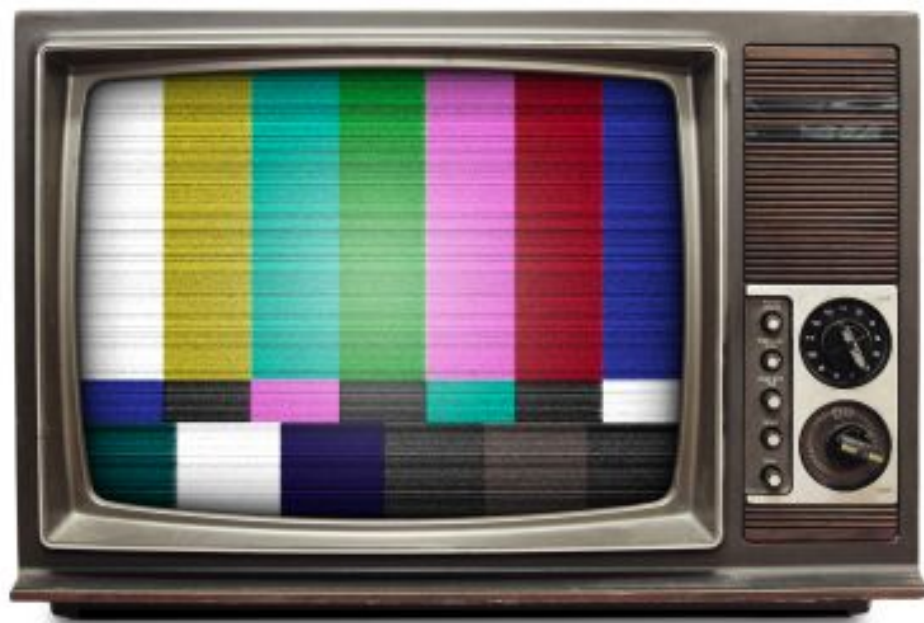


History of Television



1928



1929



1948



1950s



1957



1958



1972



1979

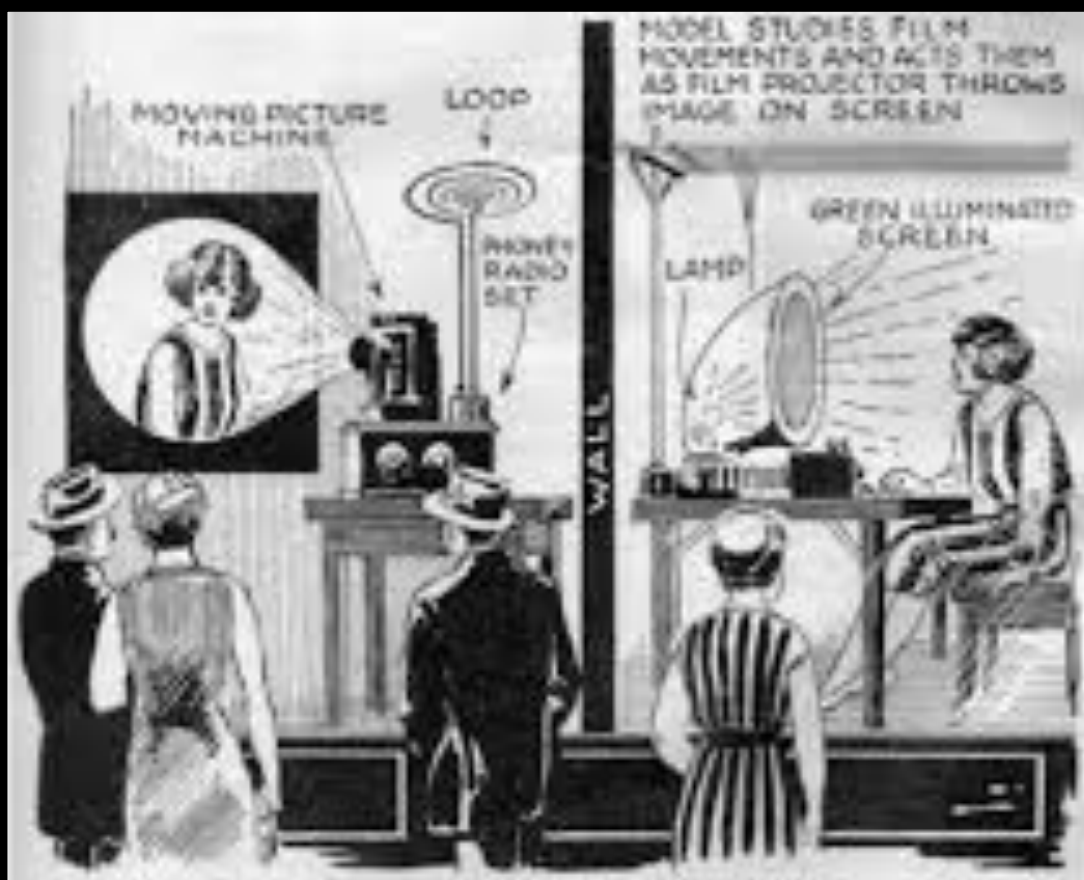


1990s



2008

Moving
images



Sound

- In the 1920s, organized efforts to develop television began.
- Television was an outgrowth of innovations in *film* & *radio*.

Television in the 1930s

Remember the scene from “Modern Times”? How do you think workers in the 1930s felt about television?



Television in the 1930s

- Early television was designed and controlled by big businesses.
 - Not for commercial use at first.
 - TV was primarily tested in *factories*, hoping to improve workers' efficiency by monitoring workers on the job.



Attempts to rouse interest in TV in the 1930s

- In 1933, television was displayed at the Century of Progress Exhibition in Chicago.
- In 1939, RCA demonstrated its television system at the New York World's Fair.
- In Gallup polls at the time, however, most people said that they didn't think they'd want a tv in their homes.



TV in the 1930s & 1940s



Radio was the big thing in the 1910s-1930s. Radio continued to thrive during the 1930s & 1940s.



THINK: Why did people not want to switch from radio to tv?

- The events of the 1930s-1940s slowed down the introduction of television in American markets.
- The Great Depression, followed by World War II, meant first people couldn't afford them and later companies were too busy making wartime goods.

After WWII (1945), the era of TV began.

- TV sets went on sale in 1946.
- TV got off to slow start. Why?
 - *They were expensive!*
 - A small black & white TV cost \$200 and a console \$2500 (FYI: The median income in the US was \$3000.)
 - *Many areas of the country had either just one or no stations.* (Not worth buying a tv for one channel!)



Television in the 1950s

- The 1950s were known as the **“Golden Age of Television,”** meaning the peak of tv popularity.
 - In the '50s, *more TV sets were sold than children born and by 1960, 90% of American homes had at least one tv.*
 - *By the end of the '50s, TV had become the dominant means for entertainment and information.* (Americans watched an average of 5 hrs of tv/day. TV offered the viewer the ability to be present as events unfolded on screen.)
 - *HUGE growth in # of stations & programming.* (In 1952 there were 108 TV stations. By 1962 there were 541.)
 - Today there are 1,600+ stations in the U.S. plus streaming options.



- By 1948, the 3 national networks (ABC, CBS, and NBC)
- These channels offered a full schedule of prime-time shows (8-10pm.) Other times of the day had limited/no shows.
- Most tv was filmed live.



Television's Appeal in the 1950s



- In the '50s as more families moved from cities to suburbs, TV offered suburban families with a cheap & convenient form of entertainment. TV offered something for everyone in the family.
- TV's appeal for adults:
 - *Didn't require a babysitter, a commute into the city and parking (movie theater attendance dropped at the same time.)*
 - Sold TV to housewives as being just *like a romantic night out on the town but from the comfort of your own couch.*
 - Women's magazines ran an ad for NBC that told women to “make a date to see the greatest theater in the world.”



APPLAUSE

- 1950s TV shows often felt like a live show:
 - Shows like the Texaco Star Theater made viewers feel like they were at a live performance with nightclub entertainment, animal acts, tumblers, and a live studio audience.

EVERY WEDNESDAY NIGHT

**THE TEXACO
STAR THEATRE**

2

GREAT SHOWS IN ONE

1. A GREAT VARIETY SHOW
30 MINUTES . . . FROM HOLLYWOOD!
WITH
Kenny BAKER • Frances LANGFORD
David BROEKMAN'S Orchestra
Jimmie WALLINGTON
AND
Ken MURRAY, Master of Ceremonies

2. A GREAT DRAMATIC SHOW
30 MINUTES . . . FROM NEW YORK!
Each Week—HIT PLAYS . . .
written by the world's fore-
most playwrights!
FAMOUS STARS . . .
playing brilliant roles!

WJAS
9 to 10
P.M., EST

PRESENTED BY
TEXACO
DEALERS







TV's Appeal for Families

- TV sitcoms mirrored the lives of white middle-class families. (*Segregated, suburban, family focused and conservative.*)



Leave it to Beaver

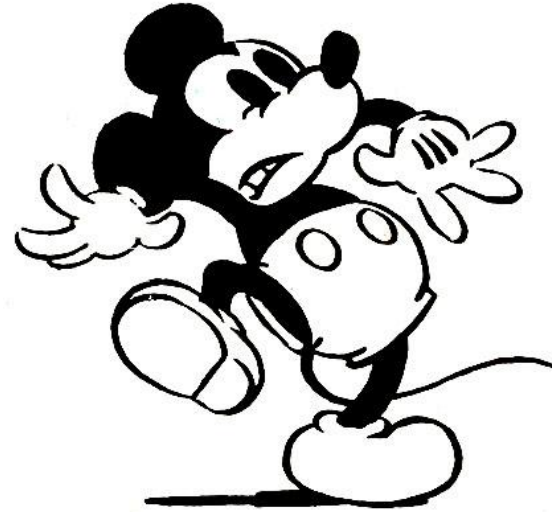


Father Knows Best

Father Knows Best



TV's Appeal for Kids



- By 1953, Hollywood film studios were eager to invest in TV.
- In 1954, ABC entered a deal with Disney, which was interested in using TV to promote its films and new theme park in southern CA.
 - As a result, *Disneyland* was launched on TV in 1954 and *The Mickey Mouse Club* in 1955.







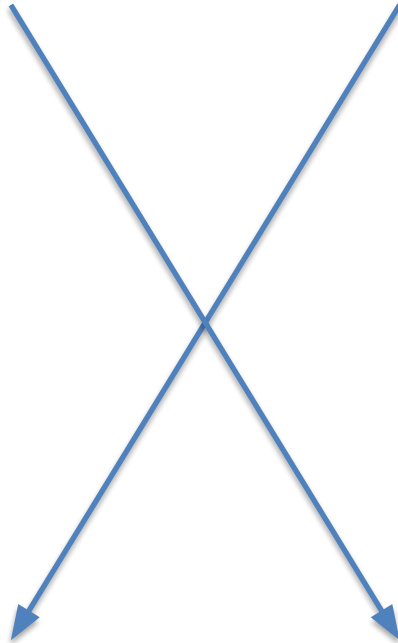
STOP

I Love Lucy (1951-1957)



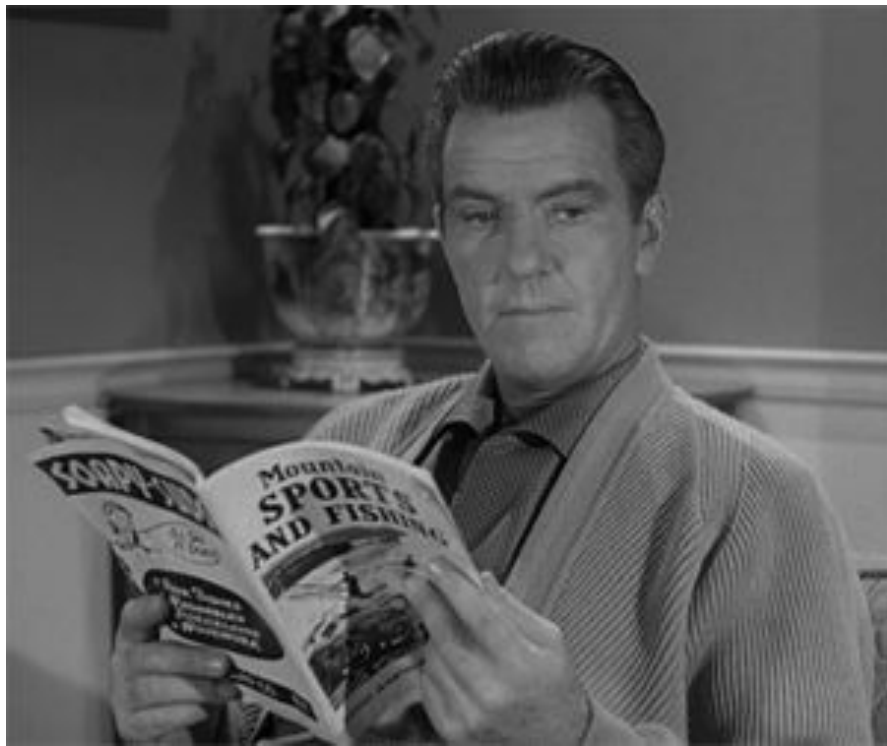
- Went on the air in 1951 and was the most watched show in the U.S. for 4 of the 6 years it aired.
 - A record-breaking 71% of American televisions were tuned in the night Lucy gave birth (more people than had watched Dwight D. Eisenhower get sworn in as President the following day.)
- Starred Lucy & Desi Arnaz as a married couple.
 - Lucy was a housewife who longed for a career in show business. Her husband, Ricky, worked as an entertainer at a nightclub.
 - Despite Lucy's lack of talent and Ricky's belief that a woman's place was in the home, Lucy dreamed of a life outside the home and concocted hilarious (and doomed) schemes to get out of the kitchen and into the limelight.

I Love Lucy, “Job Switching”



What was expected of men & women in the 1950s?

1950s Men



1950s Women



I Love Lucy, “Job Switching”

1. Why do the women, Lucy and Ethel, want to get a job?
2. How do the men, Ricky and Frank, react at first when they accept the challenge to stay home? What are their attitudes to what their wives do at home?
3. What kinds of jobs are offered to the women at the employment office?
4. What problems do the men have as they complete household chores?
5. How does the episode support traditional gender roles?





FUN FACT: *I Love Lucy* was the 1st show to invest in reruns



- *I Love Lucy* was filmed before a live studio audience to retain the sense of spontaneity of live TV.
- Desi Arnaz understood the economic value of film. Unlike live TV, films could be reproduced, rerun, and remarketed endlessly.
- The network, however, didn't think audiences would want to re-watch TV shows again and therefore didn't invest in the switch at first.
 - CBS agreed to allow Arnaz have the rights to their films in exchange for his own investment capital. By retaining rights to *I Love Lucy*, Ball & Arnaz were able to build their own tv production company on the profits (Desilu Productions.)
- By the end of the '50s, it was understood that the key to profits in the TV industry were to be found in reruns.

TV's Influence on Society



A Threat to Society?

Concerns with TV in the 1950s



- By the early 1960s, social scientists, the clergy, parent-teacher associations, citizen groups, and govt. officials all expressed concerns about tv's *effect on the public, especially children.*
 - Congress launched an investigation of radio and TV's effect on children
 - One senator complained that crime and adventure series showed *too much violence and immorality*
 - Argued tv *led to an increase in youth crime* in the '50s

Calls for Television Reform in the 1960s



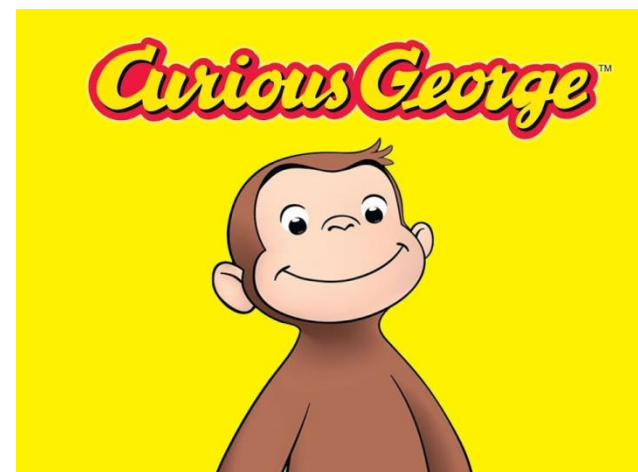
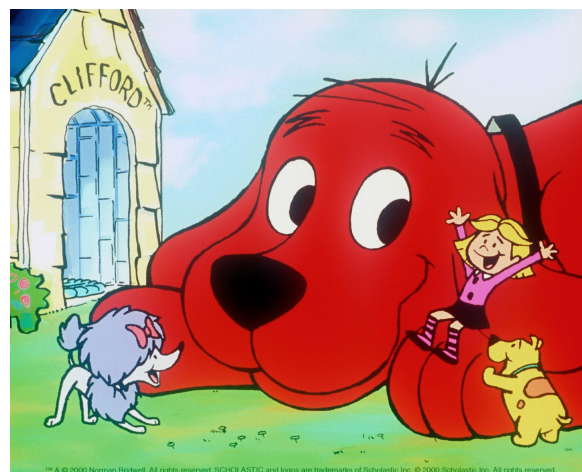
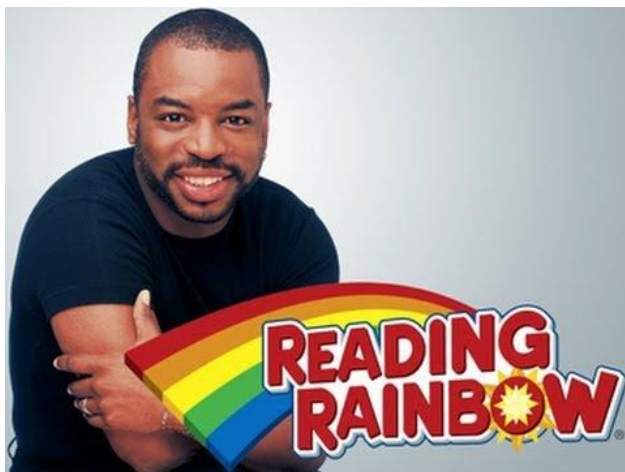
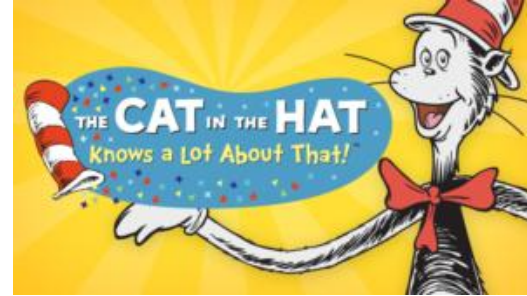
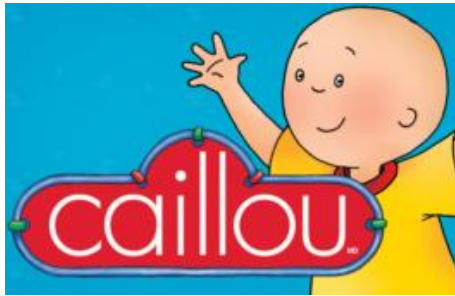
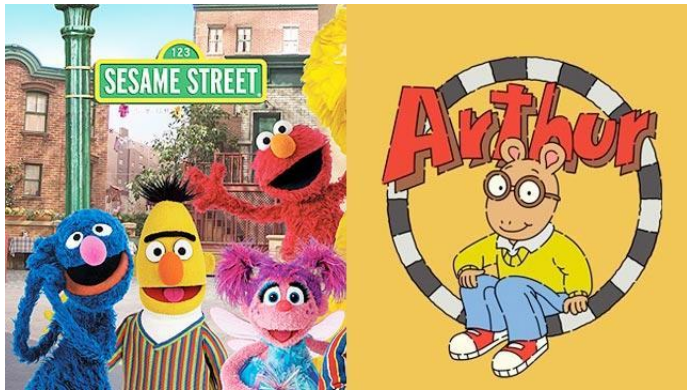
One solution: TV Reform (govt.)



- In 1961, FCC commissioner Newton Minnow delivered a speech which referenced the “vast wasteland” of tv and called for reform.
- He called for the *creation of educational channels*. This led to federal support and the formation of the Public Broadcasting Service (*PBS*) in 1969. PBS was designed to be an education and arts channel.



What kinds of shows do you find on PBS?



The value of educational programming



- Research done on the tv show *Sesame Street* reveals the value of educational programming.
 - The goal of the show was to develop early literacy, numeracy and emotional skills for preschool children - 80% of the show's content is dedicated to those goals.
- Research studies have revealed that for children who are regular viewers of the show, intelligence and educational aptitude increase.
 - In a 2 year study done in the early 1970s, researchers found that over 6 months, the experimental group gained 5.4 IQ points relative to the control group. The same children also showed gains in learning in several other measures as well.



Another solution? Censorship!

- In 1952, TV studios created an industry-wide censorship code that worked as a form of self-censorship (stayed in place until 1982.)
 - Similar to the Production Code used by the film industry



All married couples sleep in twin beds... totally normal, right?



The network said they couldn't say Lucy was "pregnant" because it was vulgar, instead she was "expecting."



A Brief Recap

- By the end of the 1950s, the average American was watching about 5 hours of TV each day.
- This led to concerns about what they were watching and what impact that was having on vulnerable populations (kids!)

'Vast wasteland' – Newton Minow



FCC Chair 1961

"When television is good, nothing — not the theater, not the magazines or newspapers — nothing is better. But when television is bad, nothing is worse... a procession of game shows, formula comedies about totally unbelievable families, blood and thunder, mayhem, violence, sadism, murder, western bad men, western good men, private eyes, gangsters, more violence, and cartoons. And endlessly commercials — many screaming, cajoling, and offending. And most of all, boredom."

What do these terms mean?

Escapism:



Realism:



TV in the 1960s provides examples of both.

CNN The Sixties: Television Comes of Age



Gidget



PREMIERES WEDNESDAY SEPT. 15th

In Color

abc

CNN



STOP

1960s TV: Realism



- Responding to criticism, the networks' tried to upgrade their image and prove their cultural worth by
 - *lengthening their news shows and started new documentary programs* that dealt with the serious social and political issues of the time.
 - *shifting shows away from lighter topics and instead aired dramas which dealt with social issues of the day* (welfare, divorce, racism, sexism, etc.)

1960s TV: Realism (News)

- President Kennedy began televising his press conferences.
- Technology enhanced TV's ability to go "live" at the scene of important events
 - Americans were presented nightly images of the war in Vietnam, anti-war protests, civil rights marches, etc.



Reporters went into battle with America's troops – bringing the war into Americans' living room for the first time.



The "space race" heated up and networks routinely covered each launch.

1960s TV: Realism (News)



- Video brought the realities & tensions of the world into Americans' homes for the first time.
- In 1963 President Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas.
 - Networks suspended their regular programming and commercials for four days.
 - An estimated 93% of American homes watched the president's funeral and burial.
- CBS anchor Walter Cronkite earned the title of “the most trusted man in America” for his unbiased, straightforward reporting.

1960s-1970s TV: Realism (Sitcoms)

- By the end of the 1960s, networks had shifted towards shows like:
 - *The Mod Squad* (1968-1973) – a youth centered police drama featuring 3 hippie cops and plots that addressed social issues of the day.
 - *All in the Family* (1971-1983) dealt with social controversies and gave sitcoms a new sense of realism.
 - New woman sitcoms like:
 - *The Mary Tyler Moore Show* (1970-1977) showed working women living on their own and feminist issues.
 - *Maude* (1972-1978) was the first prime-time show to feature a divorced woman as the lead character. She also became the first prime-time heroine to have an abortion (a plot which raised considerable controversy for CBS.)



1960s TV: Escapism





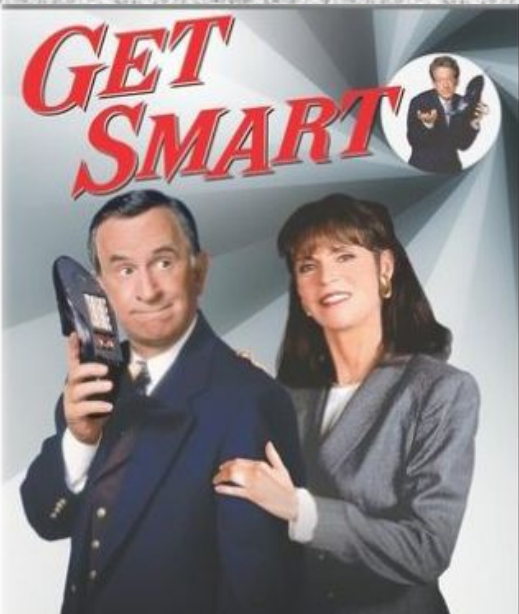
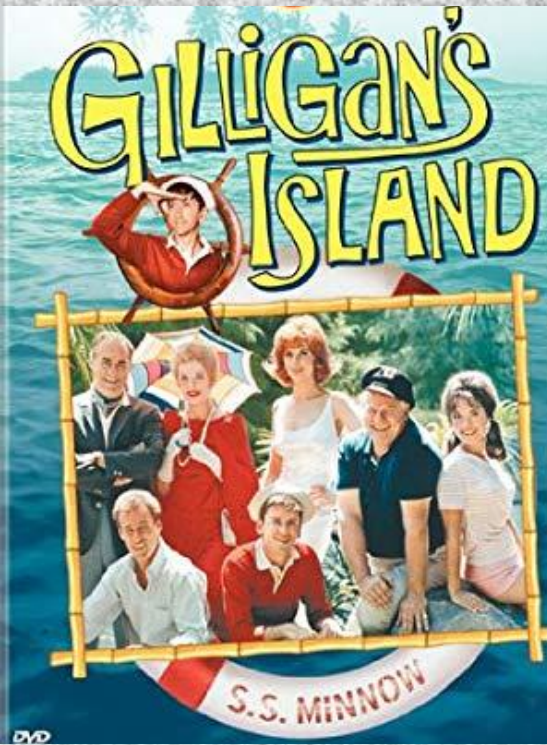
STOP

All in the Family



1970s Social Satire on Television

TV before *All in the Family* =
ESCAPIST





- *All in the Family* redefined American sitcoms in the early 1970s.
 - It introduced **social realism** & controversy to sitcoms, while keeping a focus on family. (*Social realism= taking real life people/ situations and building them into the characters/ storylines of the show*)

As you watch, consider what the element of realism is in this clip. How are the writers taking a page from real life with their characters/storylines? (FYI: this aired in the 1970s)



Origins of the Show



- The show was created by Norman Lear, a proud liberal with a clear purpose for his shows.
- Goal for *All in the Family*:
 - *Wanted to create a hit show that also paid attention to major social issues like class, race, & generational conflicts.*

Cast of Characters

The Generation Gap on TV - the Greatest Generation vs. the Baby Boomers.

The Older Generation:



- **Archie Bunker**: loud-mouth, *Republican, loading dock worker* – modeled on Norman Lear's own father
- **Edith Bunker**: Archie's *sweet, dim-witted wife*, the moral heart of the show, who cuts through the show's anger and becomes the voice of reason, the glue that holds the divided family together

The Younger Generation:



- **Gloria** their *rebellious, feminist daughter*, and **Michael Stivic**, *Gloria's scruffy, radical husband*. Both bleeding-heart liberals.

Breaking Taboos



- The show violated many of primetime tv's norms:
 - Archie's constant ranting, laced with racial & ethnic slurs
 - Gloria and Mike's obviously active sex life
 - The sounds of Archie's belches and flushing toilets were all a degree of reality previously not seen on primetime television.

We are going to watch an episode of
All in the Family.

As you watch, pay attention to:

- ❖ the characters' racial beliefs
 - ❖ gender norms
 - ❖ social class
- ❖ generational gaps
- ❖ elements of social realism

Special guest appearance by Sammy Davis, Jr.



Sammy Davis Jr. was said to be the "greatest living entertainer in the world." He sang, danced, played instruments, acted, did stand-up, and was known for his self-deprecating humor.



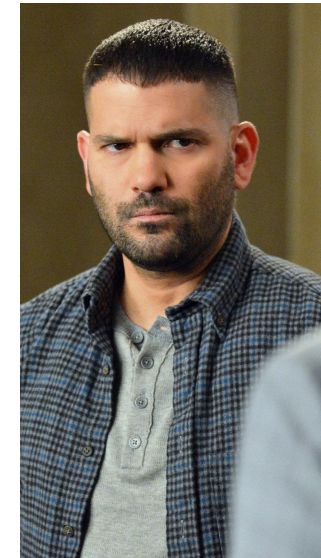
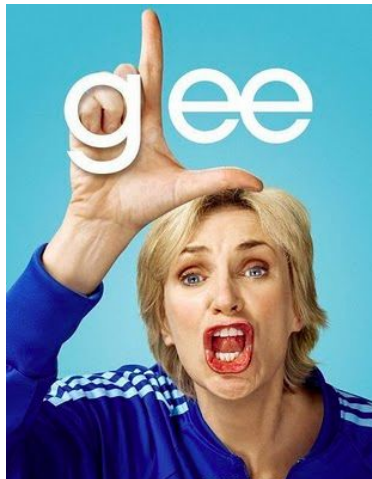
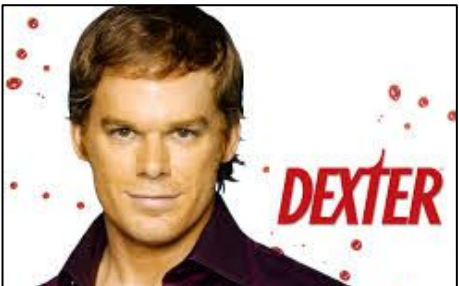
- **Anti-hero**: *someone who lacks heroic virtues, such as being morally good, courageous, or noble.* A character who blurs the line between hero and villain and are not quite one or the other.
- What makes someone an “anti-hero”?
 - More complex than at first glance. Does bad things but has good motivations in his heart or seeks to redeem himself for his bad behavior.
 - Loveable bad guys

What made Archie the classic anti-hero?

“The triumph of *All in the Family* wasn’t that it introduced a racist character we could shake our heads at and disdain. The triumph was that it introduced a racist character we loved. The show paved the way for complexity on scripted television. It’s when TV started to grow up.”

- Jason Katims, co-creator, *Parenthood*

Impact/Legacy: TV’s Anti-Heroes



Impact / Legacy



- The show became the focus of a national debate on whether comedy was the right place to speak out against prejudice and social inequality.
- Led to a new generation of comedic shows that talked about important social issues.



STOP



The (now)
complicated
legacy of Bill
Cosby & *The
Cosby Show*

1984-1992



What, if
anything, do
you know about
Bill Cosby?

African-Americans on TV before *The Cosby Show*



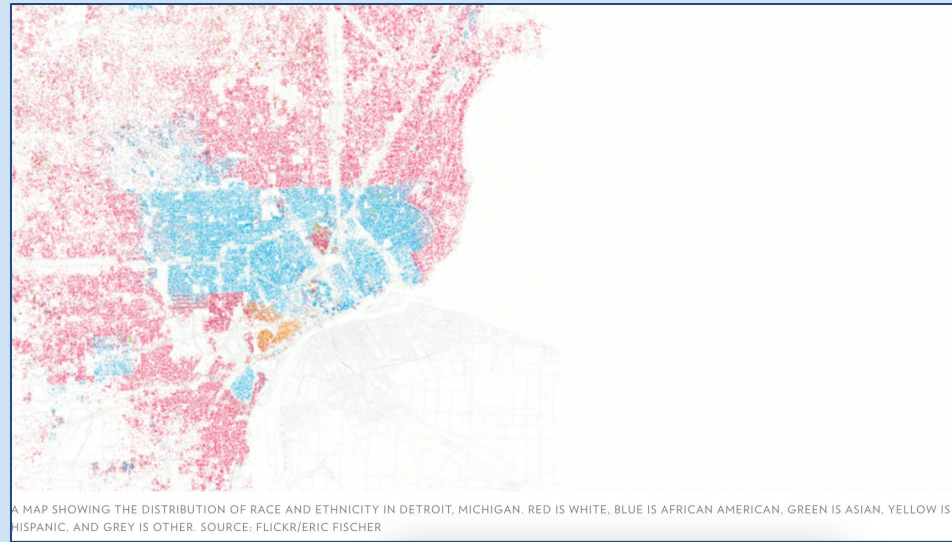
- There were few roles for African-Americans on TV before the 1970s and the few roles that existed were stereotypical
 - “In the early days, roles [for black people] on the whole were limited to gangsters, pimps, drug dealers, some kind of servitude, or buffoons” says Tim Cogshell, a film critic.

REPRESENTATION

MATTERS

Why does how people are shown on tv matter?

When it came to matters of race, white, middle-class Americans didn't know enough about black society to know if a black character on TV was unrealistic or offensive.



In the North, decades of discriminatory housing practices contributed to widespread housing segregation.



In the South, decades of Jim Crow laws institutionalized segregation in nearly all aspects of southern life.

African-Americans on TV in the 1950s



**Amos & Andy
(1950s)**

Amos 'n' Andy, one of the first shows with a mostly black cast, was based on a popular radio show in the 1920s & '30s.



Amos & Andy



If this was one of the only examples of black people that existed on tv in the 1950s, what do you think white Americans likely learned about black Americans from this clip/show?



Good Times (1974-1979)

- Show centered on the Evans family, a working class family who lived in a Chicago housing project. The storylines dealt with the humor & difficulties of living in a city.
- Progress: healthy, happy black, 2 parent family
- Criticism: working class, living in the projects, JJ's character increasingly was written as a fast-talking, lazy, clown (minstrel)

Good Times

Any time you meet a payment

Good Times

Any time you need a friend

Good Times

Any time you're out from under

Not getting hassled, not getting hustled

Keepin' your head above water

Making a way when you can

Temporary layoffs

Good Times

Easy credit rip-offs

Good Times

Scratchin' and surviving

Good Times

Hanging in and jiving

Good Times

Ain't we lucky we got 'em

Good Times

The Jeffersons (1975-1985)

- In 1975, the Jeffersons got their own spinoff from *All in the Family*.
- PLOT: George & Louise Jefferson (a laundromat entrepreneur), move from the Bunker's working-class neighborhood in Queens into a ritzy high-rise building on the Upper East Side.
 - The humor came from the family's adjustment to its newfound wealth.



Although roles for blacks on TV increased in the 1970s, those roles were still often stereotypical and there were still NOT a lot of TV shows for black audiences.



QUESTION: Of the 1,135 hours of TV broadcast monthly in 1969, how many hours were specifically designed for black audiences?

- A. 1 hour
- B. 14 hours
- C. 28 hours
- D. 52 hours

WHY? TV networks thought...

1. White audiences wouldn't watch characters who were different from them.
2. Black audiences weren't big enough to make more shows just for them.

What set *The Cosby Show* apart from shows before it?

Instead of focusing on the black working class, it was about a black upper-middle class family.

(At a time when the black middle class was growing in numbers.)



What was *The Cosby Show* about?

- The show centered on an upper-middle class black family living in Brooklyn, NY.
 - The family was headed by a doctor (Heathcliff) & a lawyer (Claire) and their five children.
 - They were an example of a black family living out the American Dream on TV.
- How'd the show do in the ratings?
 - *The Cosby Show* dominated TV in the '80s & topped the ratings for 5 straight years.

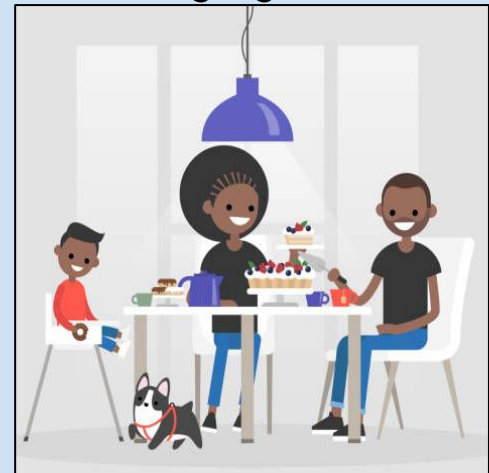


Cosby's goals for the show

1. Wanted to focus on the theme of family life (relatable regardless of one's race)
2. Wanted to make a show about a middle class black family who was not totally defined by their skin color.
 - "Bill depicted the Huxtables as an American family that happened to be black, rather than as an African-American family," he said. "For Bill, family was more important than race."



Cosby worked with a Harvard psychiatrist whose specialty was minority children to read scripts to make sure they reflected genuine child psychology and family dynamics.











How are these scenes similar to something that might happen in any household between a parent & child?

What was important about *The Cosby Show*?

- Although the show was a comedy, Cosby used the show to talk about serious issues like teen pregnancy & learning disabilities.
- The image of a stable black upper-middle class family was praised for breaking racial stereotypes.
 - "Black audiences greeted *The Cosby Show* with a certain amount of euphoria. It was a regular opportunity to see black life portrayed in a 'responsible' manner," says a professor of African & African-American Studies at Duke.
- Cosby made an effort to incorporate characters in non-stereotypical roles (i.e., Asian characters as friends and neighbors, not just Chinese food delivery people or dry cleaners or cooks.)



African American history &



While the show mostly stayed away from racial themes (choosing instead to focus on the universal theme of family), it did include references to black history/culture:

- Many leading entertainment figures, like BB King & Stevie Wonder, made guest appearances
- Jazz & blues music was part of the soundtrack or was integrated into the storylines
- Clair (the mom) was often seen reading books by noted black authors
- Paintings & other artworks by African American artists were displayed on the set

What came next



- *The Cosby Show's* success paved the way for a variety of black shows & casts on TV.
- In the '80s and '90s, black TV exploded, as networks fought to create positive programs for an engaged demographic.

Influence & Legacy of *The Cosby Show*

- Cosby believed that his show had a lasting effect on America's racial views.
- An essay in the *New York Times* in 2008 argued that the Huxtables' influence made it possible for people to imagine Barack Obama as president.
 - On election night Karl Rove, the former Bush strategist, said on Fox News: "We've had an African-American first family for many years in different forms. When *The Cosby Show* was on, that was America's family. It wasn't a black family. It was America's family."



IN SUMMARY:

What was important
about

The Cosby Show?

Revelations about Bill Cosby - from America's dad to America's rapist?



What should we do about/with Bill Cosby?

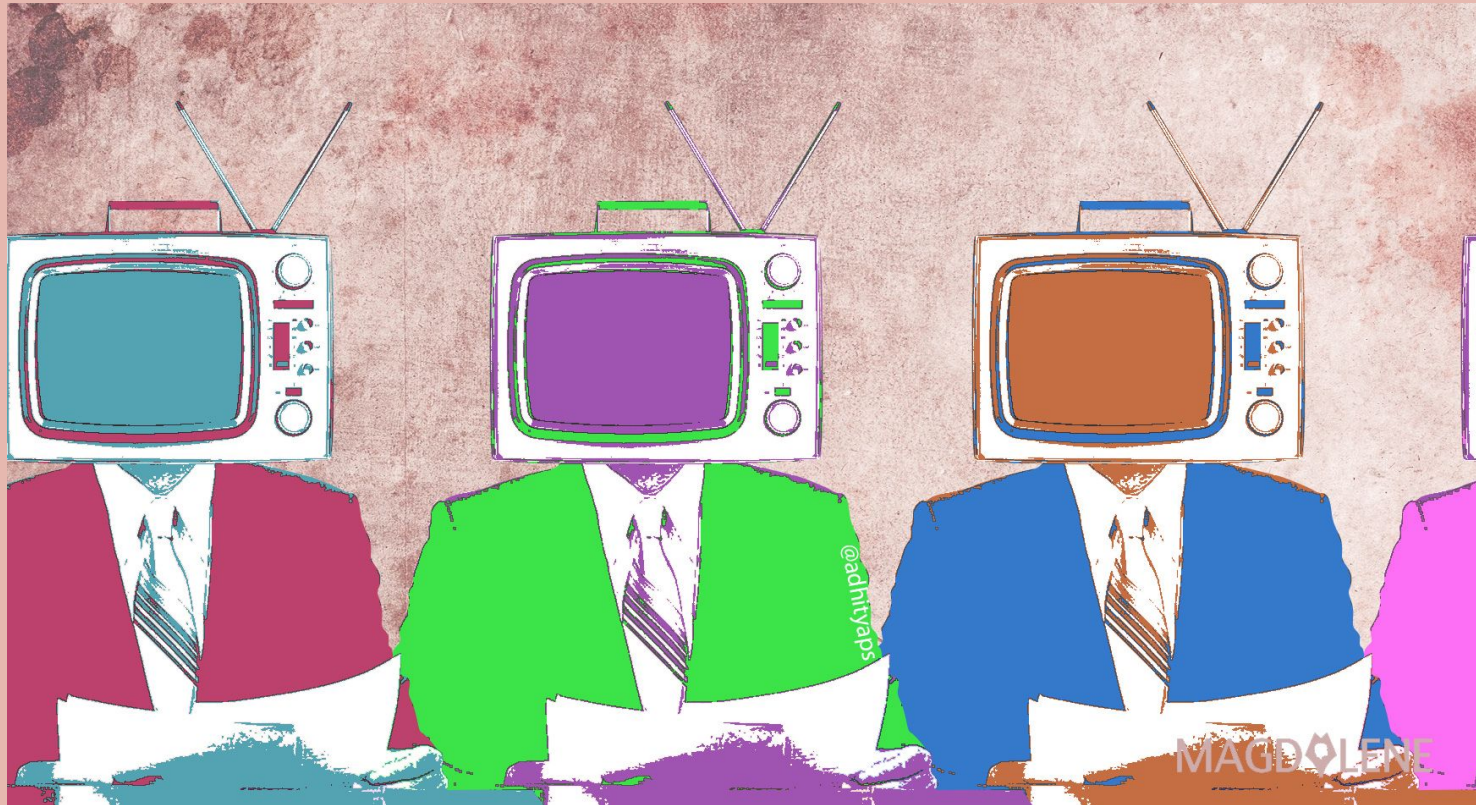
- Do his actions mean we should dismiss his work and stop watching him as an actor?
- What do you think of the assertion that “talent is more important than morals”?
- Do Cosby’s actions make *The Cosby Show* any less important?



STOP

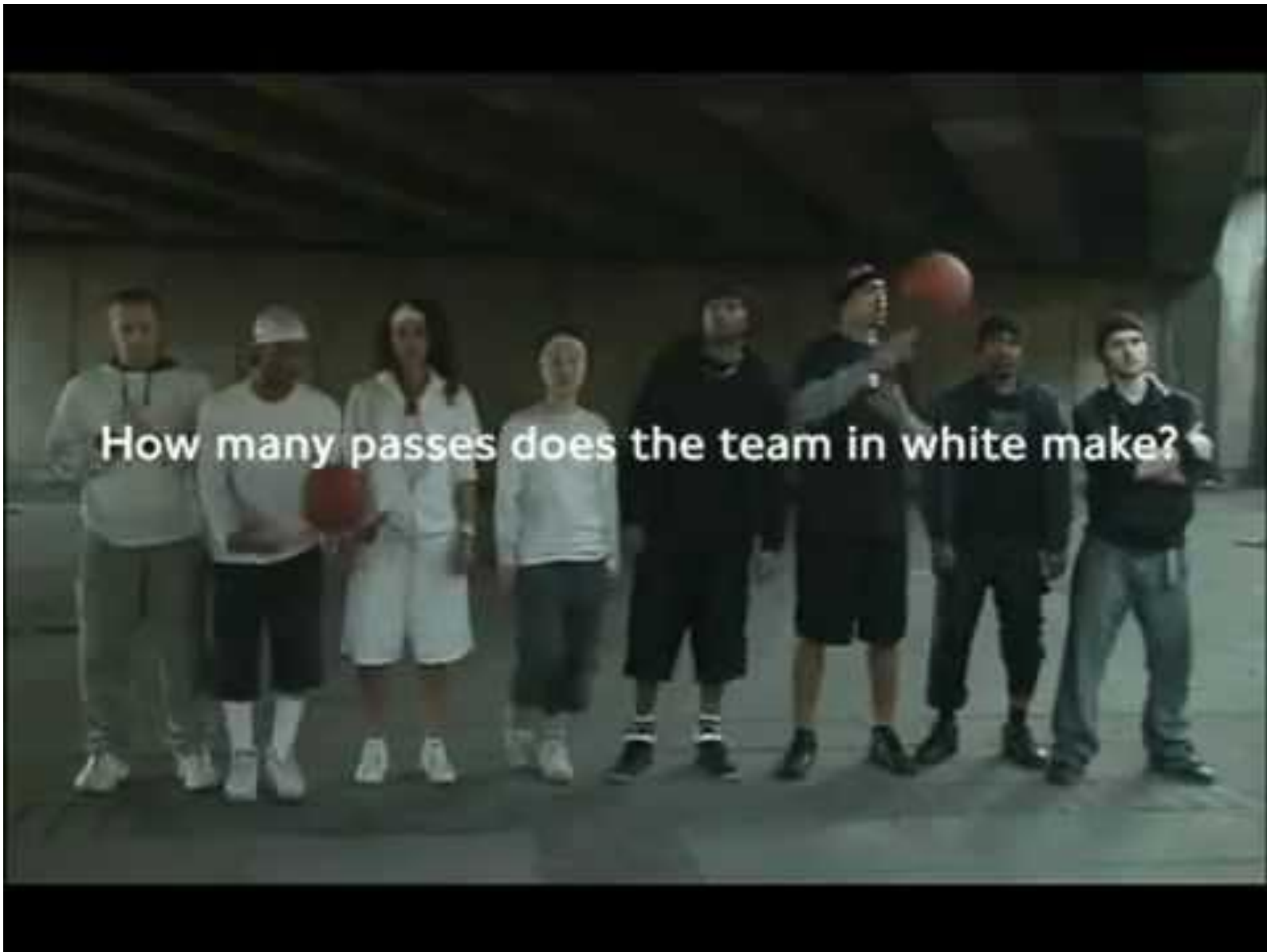
Representation on Television

AAP1 & the trouble with Apu



Watch closely...

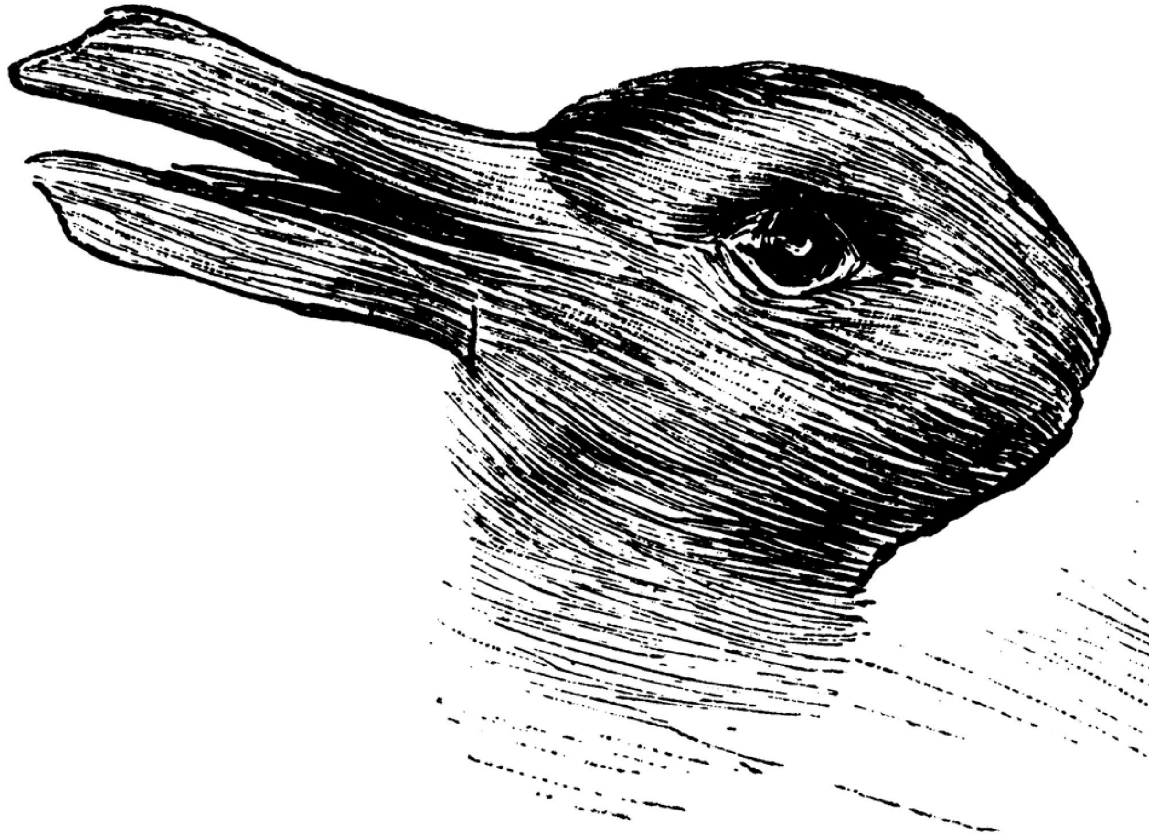
How many passes did the team in white make?



Debrief

- What connection can we make between this basketball video and how we watch tv?
 - What are you looking for when you watch tv?
 - What are you missing when you watch tv?

What do you see in the picture?



HOW DOES THIS CONNECT TO TV?

- Once you see the image both ways, it's nearly impossible to un-see it. Same with TV.
- This week's focus is to watch tv from a possibly new vantage point:
 - Who is on-screen & behind the screen and who is left out?

Why does
who's on
screen
matter?



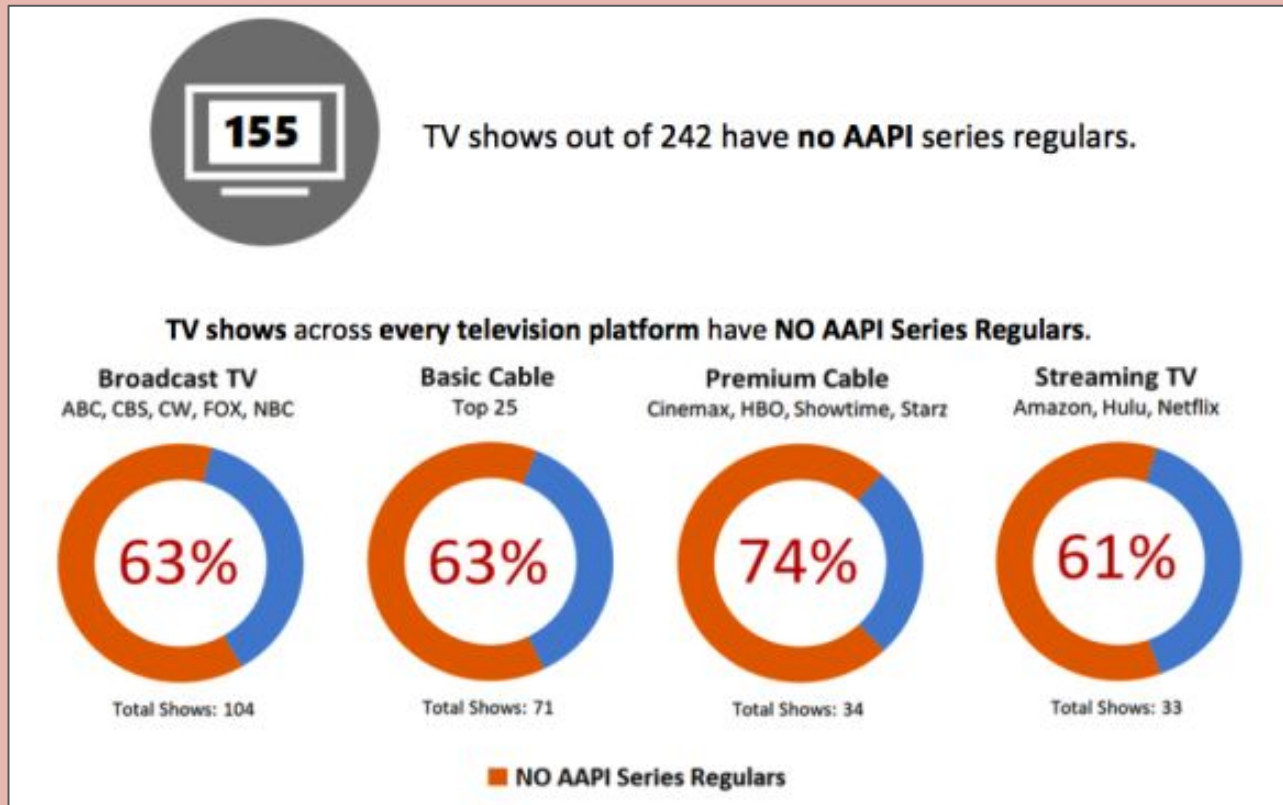
Other
recent
examples
in
children's
media:

A 2017 study of television looked at how Asian-Americans & Pacific Islanders (AAPI) fare on television (settings, screen time, relationships, stereotypes & storylines.)



What shows do you watch that have Asian-Americans or Pacific Islanders cast in major or recurring roles?

What did the study find?



AAPI CHARACTERS ARE MISSING IN ACTION:

A full 64% of all shows do not feature a single AAPI series regular. In contrast, 96% of TV shows have at least one White series regular.

A majority of shows set in high AAPI-populated cities have **NO AAPI** series regulars.

New York

70% have NO AAPIs

Totals shows set in New York: 46



Los Angeles

53% have NO AAPIs

Totals shows set in Los Angeles: 45

HOLLYWOOD

AAPI CHARACTERS ARE MISSING IN ACTION:

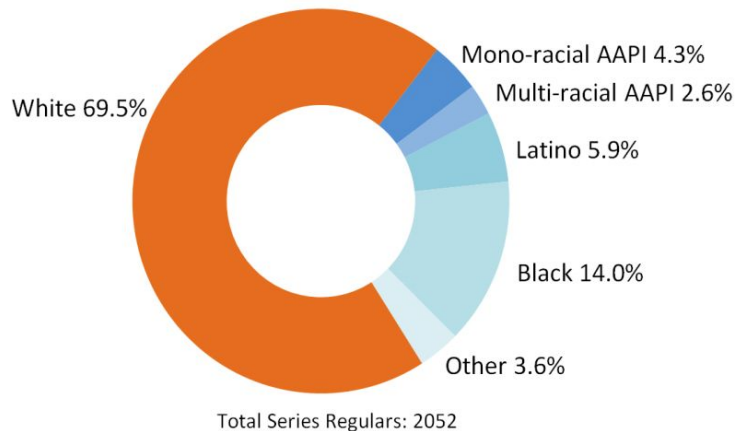
Also worth mentioning was that the majority of shows set in AAPI-dense cities including NY and LA have no AAPI series regulars.



TV SO WHITE:

Whites dominate the television landscape, making up nearly 70% of television series regulars compared to monoracial Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders who comprise only 4%.

TV Series Regulars by Race



Television vs. U.S. Population

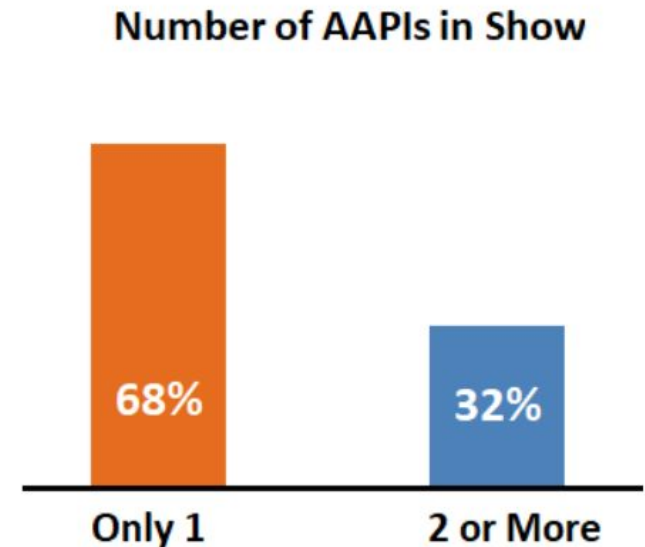
	TV Series Regular %	U.S. Population % ²
AAPI (monoracial)	4.3%	5.9%
Black	14.0%	13.3%
Latino	5.9%	17.8%
White	69.5%	61.3%

TOKENS:

68% of TV shows featuring AAPI series regulars have **ONLY 1**.

“There can be one, but there can’t be two.”
–Dev, “Indians On TV,” *Master of None* (Netflix)

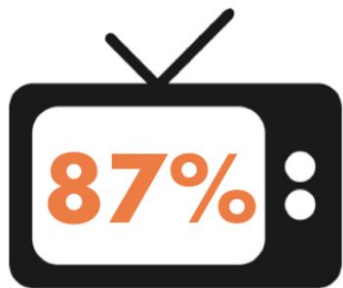
A majority of shows featuring AAPIs (68% of 87 shows) have **ONLY 1 AAPI** series regular.



LOW VISIBILITY: 87% of AAPI series regulars are on-screen for less than half an episode. Audiences also see White series regulars on-screen 3 times longer than AAPI series regulars.

Even on shows where they are series regulars, **AAPIs barely appear on-screen.**

Out of 142 AAPI series regulars...



are on screen for
less than HALF an episode

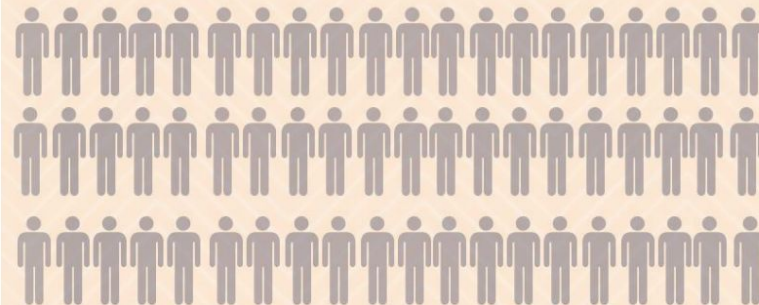
17%

have the
LOWEST SCREEN TIME
on their show

On shows featuring AAPIs, Whites are on-screen
more than **3 times** longer.



Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders: 20 Hours



Whites: 64 Hours

STEREOTYPED: The tv landscape continues to be littered with problematic racial stereotypes, including forever foreigner, yellow peril, model minority, emasculated men, exoticized women, sidekicks to White characters, etc.



Based on the study we just
reviewed, how are
Asian-Americans and Pacific
Islanders faring on television
today?

tru^{TV}

THE PROBLEM WITH APU

The Simpsons & the problem with Apu



**THE
DAILY
SHOW**
WITH TREVOR NOAH

**HARI KONDABOLU - EXPOSING
"THE PROBLEM WITH APU"**

COMEDY  CENTRAL

In the clip we just watched, Kondabolu argues that “the lack of representation fundamentally shapes how people see the world around them.”

HOW does the lack of representation of
Indians on TV shape how people see
things?

What do you think? Should *The Simpsons* permanently retire the character of Apu?

If so, why? If not, why not?

20th Century Fox / The Simpsons



abc NEWS

In the wake of the documentary, a wave of criticism followed Azaria, the white actor who voiced Apu for 30 years, as well as creator Matt Groening and showrunner Al Jean.

"Once I realized that that was the way this character was thought of, I just didn't want to participate in it anymore," Azaria told the NY Times. "It just didn't feel right."

"I've given this a lot of thought, and, as I say, my eyes have been opened," Azaria said. "I think the most important thing is to listen to Indian people and their experience with it. I really want to see Indian, South Asian writers in the writers room ... including how [Apu] is voiced or not voiced. I'm perfectly willing to step aside. It just feels like the right thing to do to me."

Kondabolu has said that he hoped the character would **REMAIN** on the show and be portrayed accurately instead of cut out entirely:

"If @HankAzaria is indeed no longer doing the voice of Apu, I do hope they keep the character & let a very talented writing staff do something interesting with him. If not to better the show, then to at least spare me some death threats," Kondabolu wrote on Twitter, referencing those who blame his documentary for Apu's voiceless status.

The comedian added that his goal with the doc was never *"to get rid of a dated cartoon character, but to discuss race, representation & my community (which I love very much)."*

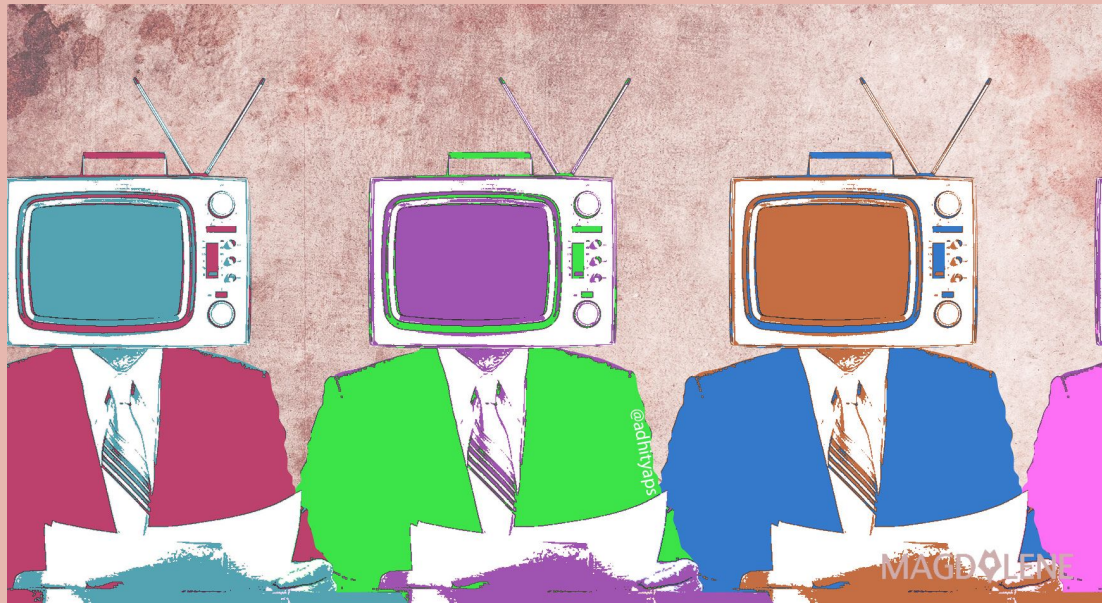
"It was also about how you can love something (like the Simpsons) & still be critical about aspects of it (Apu)," Kondabolu wrote.



STOP

Representation on Television

Indians on TV



Agenda

- As a class, watch episode of *Master of None*
- Answer the questions on your handout

Main Writers/
Producers

Master of None, *Indians on TV*





What points are raised in this episode?

What complaint are actors of color making in this clip?

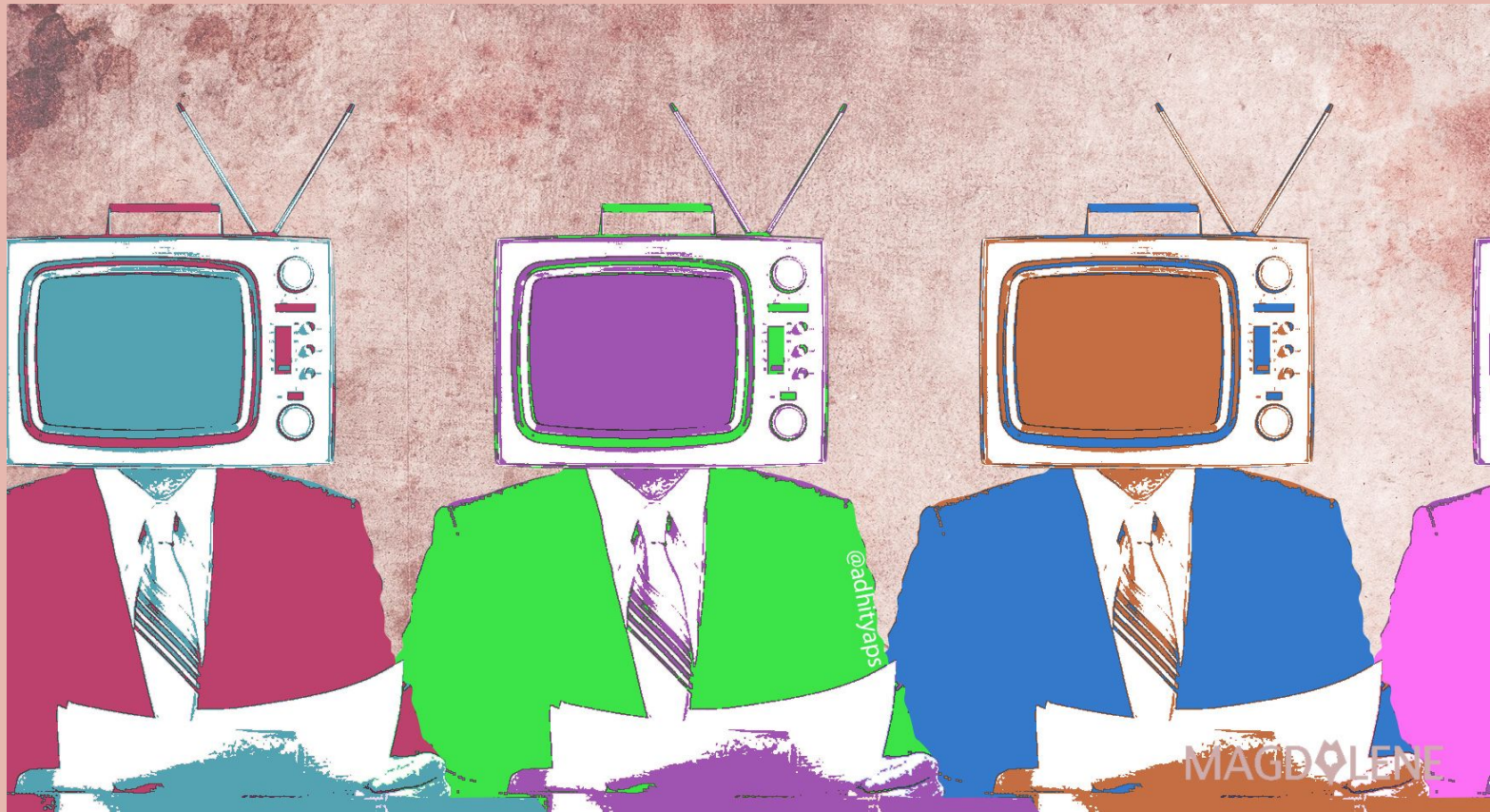




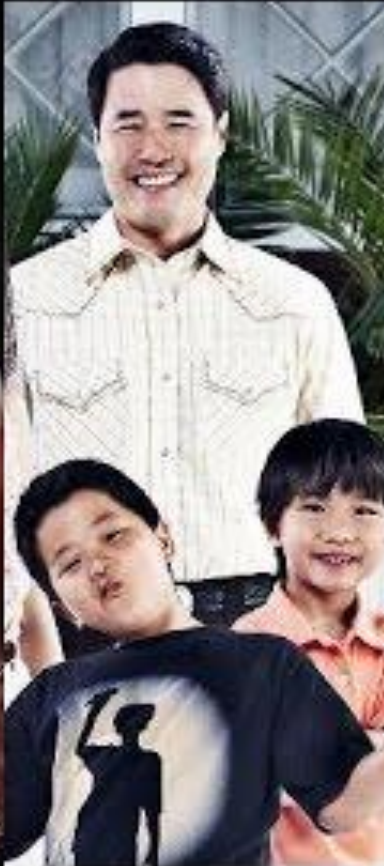
STOP

Representation on Television

Fresh Off the Boat



This is what happens when writers rooms aren't diverse... (thus the importance of diversity on screen and off)

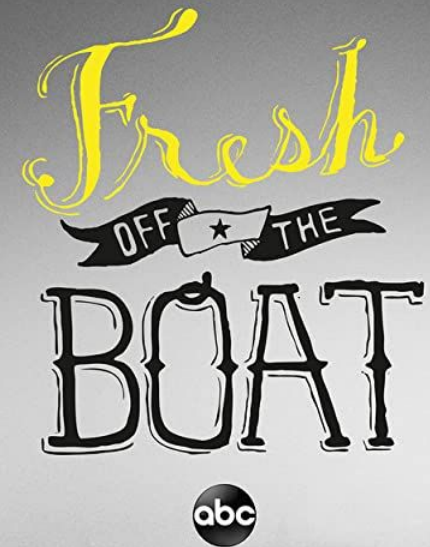


**What point does the video on the previous slide make about the importance behind having diversity not just on screen but also in the writers' rooms?
(What happens when writers' rooms are **NOT** diverse?)**

Fresh Off the Boat

(ABC, 2015-2020)

- *Fresh Off the Boat* is a sitcom loosely inspired by the life of chef & food personality Eddie Huang and his 2013 autobiography of the same name. Huang also executive produced the series and narrated its first season.
- The show depicts the life of a Taiwanese-American family in Florida in the 1990s.
- The series premiered on ABC in February 2015 and became the first network tv sitcom in the U.S. to feature a family of Asian Americans as main characters in over 20 years.



WATCH: Fresh Off the Boat (2015)



If you think about TV as a form of storytelling, what story is *Fresh Off the Boat* attempting to tell?

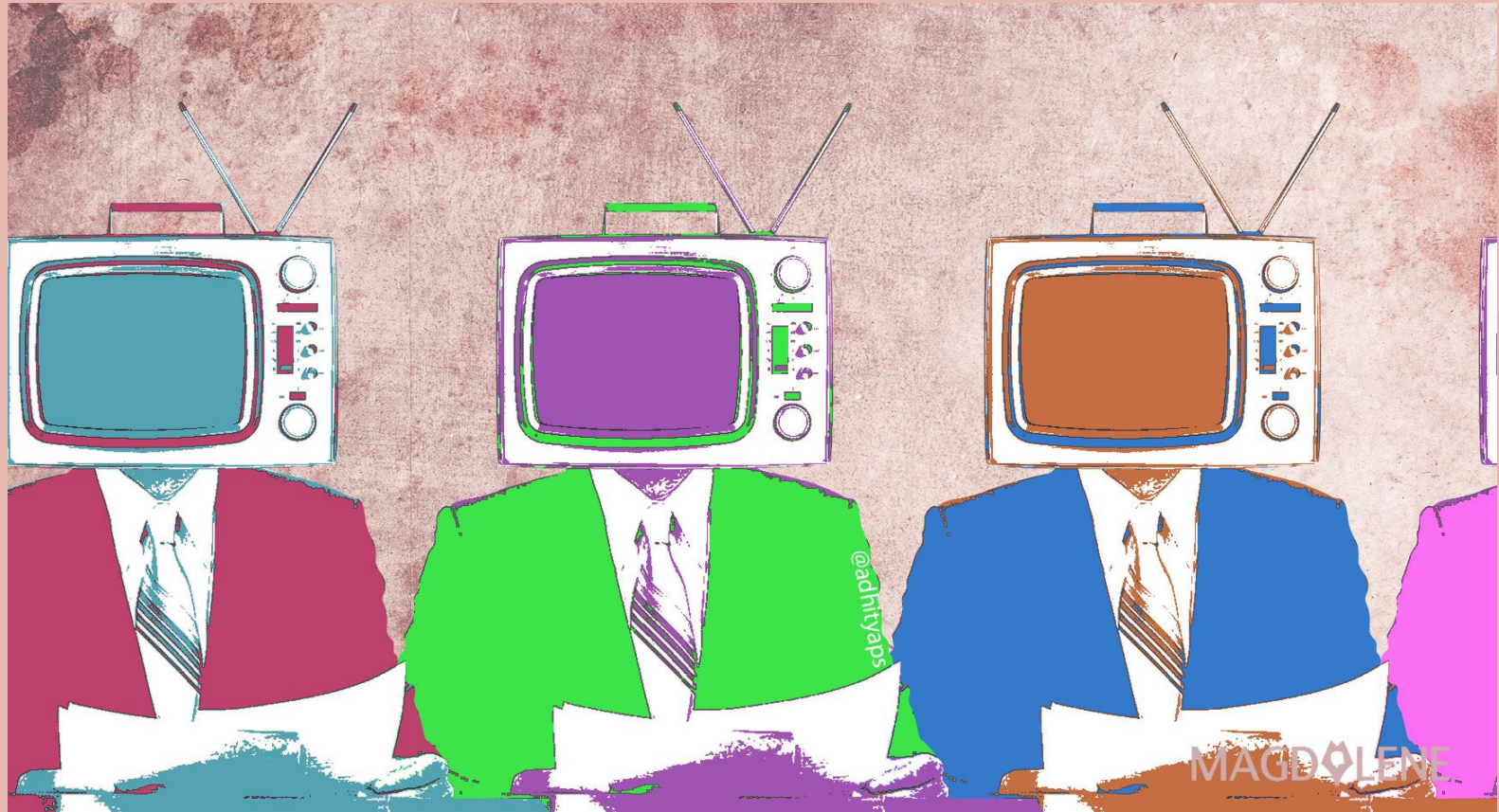
Why is this tv show an example of progress on TV for Asian-Americans?



STOP

Representation on Television

The state of TV today...



According to GLAAD's annual report, "[Where We Are on TV](#)," which was released last week...

- In the 2020-2021 season, the percentage of **LGBTQ** characters on broadcast tv decreased to 9.1% (down from 10.2% in 2019.)
 - This decrease was in part because coronavirus caused several networks/creators to pause production. This impacted shows with prominent LGBTQ characters such as "Euphoria" and "Killing Eve."
 - For the first time, more than half of the **LGBTQ** characters on prime-time cable series were people of color.
 - The number of **transgender** characters decreased from 29 to 38 last season, although the percentage of those played/voiced by trans actors increased to 90% from 82%.
- 46% of the regular characters on broadcast tv are **women** (the U.S. population is estimated to be 51% women.)
- The amount of regular primetime broadcast characters who have a **disability** has increased to 3.5%, but that number still underrepresents the 26% of Americans with disabilities.
- The percentage of **black** characters on broadcast tv remained the same at 22%, while the percentage of **Latino** characters decreased from 7% to 9%.
- The CW is the most inclusive broadcast network, while FX tops the cable networks and Netflix claims the title for streaming platforms.

Sarah Kate Ellis, GLAAD president and chief executive, said the shifting cultural and political landscape of 2020 has presented “an opportunity to break new ground with stories” and to create characters who “do not reinforce harmful stereotypes.”

She went on to say, **“Representation matters more than ever as people turn to entertainment storytelling for connection and escape.”**

What do you think of Ellis’ quote? Does representation matter more today than it did in the past? Why or why not?

[Link to the assignment](#)

Consider all the different things “representation” can mean: race, class, sexuality, gender, ethnicity, physical and intellectual differences, etc..

Representation on TV Reflection

We began our unit on tv with a look at shows in the ‘50s-’60s and have since moved our focus up to the present. In that time, tv has changed in many ways, one of which is who is on tv, who is writing tv and what audiences ask of our tv shows.

What are 2 things you have learned about the broader issue of representation on television?

~~Choose 1 of your favorite tv shows. Given the lens we’ve been using over the past week, please evaluate how the show measures up in terms of its representation?~~

Name of show (years it aired)

The diversity and range of the characters displayed on screen

- What parts are people given?
- How well-rounded are the characters’ lives?
- Are all of the characters equally well-developed or do some fall flat? (meaning they share info on their family, relationships, jobs, opportunities, etc.)

How diverse is the cast?

How diverse is the writers room and/or producers?

Does the show address or reinforce stereotypes? If so, how?

**** Please make sure your answers to the above questions include detail on the show itself. Don’t simply say “yes the cast is diverse” - EXPLAIN how so with details on the background of various characters, etc..**



STOP

Influential TV Shows Project

Influential TV Shows Project

Our central question for this unit and this project is the following:
**In what way is TV both a reflection of social change
& a source of change for society?**

You are going to **research ONE** of the influential tv shows below and put together a presentation **about your topic**. You will have roughly 2 weeks of class time to research, plan & build out your presentation. Presentations will happen the week before Feb. break in class (you'll present to ½ of the class.)

What are the topics?

- **On-screen representations of**
 - **Race/Ethnicity** (The Jeffersons, Good Times, Fresh Prince, Oprah, The Mindy Project, Blackish, Atlanta, The Watchmen, Jane the Virgin, One Day at a Time, Euphoria, Kim's Convenience, Never Have I Ever, Ginny & Georgia, Gentefied, All, American, etc.)
 - **Sexuality & Gender** (Will & Grace, Ellen, Pose, Queer Eye, Mary Tyler Moore Show, Charlie's Angels, Murphy Brown, Scandal, The Politician, Sex Education, Heartstopper, etc.)
 - **Social Class** (Married With Children, Roseanne, Shameless)
 - **Mental Health** (BoJack Horseman, Homeland, Jessica Jones, Crazy Ex-Girlfriend, Adventure Time)
 - **Disability** (Atypical, The Good Doctor, Bones, Glee, Parenthood, Daredevil)
- **Animated, adult TV** (South Park, Family Guy, Simpsons, Rick & Morty, Steven Universe, Futurama, King of the Hill, Archer, Big Mouth)
- **Breaking boundaries through science fiction** (Twilight Zone, Star Trek, Buffy the Vampire Slayer, X-Files, The Walking Dead, American Horror Story, etc.)
- **Children's TV as a form of education** (Sesame Street, Mr. Roger's Neighborhood, Bill Nye the Science Guy, The Magic School Bus)

Project components:

- Notes (10 pts)
- Episode analysis (10 pts)
- Finished presentation (30 pts)
- Notes/feedback on classmates' projects (5 pts)

[TV show options](#) (plot summary/trailer)