NBC, ABC, and CBS: The Feasibility of Developing Television Programming in the United States Featuring More Visible Minorities

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This research paper looks at the lack of ethnically diverse programming on the original three broadcast networks in the United States: NBC, ABC, and CBS. And it examines the financial viability of whether these networks should create more programs with visible minority lead characters and casts.

To determine the actions required to create successful ethnically diverse television shows, case studies of three shows featuring visible minorities are analyzed by comparing and contrasting them using four criteria. Statistics and reports from the U.S. government, media journals, and entertainment articles are also analyzed to measure the rate of immigrant and minority growth and to determine what makes “ethnic” shows successful.

The conclusion is NBC, ABC, and CBS should create more ethnically diverse programming to remain financially viable. This is due to the U.S. non-white demographic growing rapidly and outpacing the white demographic, and also because the research shows mass audiences will watch “ethnic” shows. Although, in creating ethnic-oriented shows, it is recommended certain criteria be followed in order to reach the widest audience possible.
According to the 2000 U.S. Census, approximately one in three people in the U.S. are considered non-white and these numbers are projected to rise considerably in the future (Armstrong and Watson, 2008). If the number of visible minorities continues to grow, this poses many questions as to the possibility of changing consumer habits, its implications in regard to businesses, and whether businesses will be able to change quickly enough to meet those needs, or falter.

This research topic is the lack of ethnically diverse programming on mainstream television networks in the United States, and whether it would be financially beneficial for the three original mainstream broadcast networks (NBC, ABC, and CBS) to create more programs like these. The current situation is that although the demographic in the U.S. is apparently becoming more ethnically diverse, there are not many television shows on the air that reflect this. Surprisingly, aside from the lament from interest groups over the “neglect” of mainstream broadcast networks to feature enough “visible minority” programming, there has been no literature that addresses how, or if, networks might financially benefit from the growing non-white demographic.

Broadcast networks are channels that are free for anyway with a television, which are different than the cable networks one has to pay for. Cable networks can be considered specialty, or niche-type channels like the Golf Channel, the Arts and Entertainment Channel (A&E), and Black Entertainment Television (BET). There are also two newer “upstart” broadcast networks, CW and FOX, which feature many ethnically diverse shows, much more than NBC, ABC, and CBS, the original three broadcast networks.

Prior to the 2008 American fall television season, it was announced that only one new show would have a minority lead character role. There were only two catches: The Cleveland Show on FOX happens to be an animated spinoff of the show The Family Guy and the black character, Cleveland, is voiced by a white actor. Of the returning shows, only a few had minority lead characters and/or casts (Armstrong, & Watson, 2008). But even then, shows like Ugly Betty on ABC that have a large Hispanic cast are usually created by minorities who have a lot of clout in Hollywood, like Ugly Betty producer and well-known Mexican actress Salma Hayek. (Armstrong and Watson 2008). This is a significant point because as with many things in Hollywood, everyone imitates and duplicates a winner until it is no longer an immediate winner and then, without looking at the long-term financial implications, those types of shows are not produced anymore. So the emergence of a few minority shows currently on broadcast television may not be proof of a change in the way the industry is doing business, but a trend that will soon get old. No one in broadcast television is looking below the surface of these television winners and previous winners to uncover what the winning formula is in the first place.

This lack in minority programming could potentially be a financial problem for NBC, ABC, and CBS, because, as mentioned, if the ethnic makeup of the United States continues to change, the tastes of the American consumer could change. Consumers could eventually demand there be television shows which feature people who not only look like them, but reflect the range
of diversity within those cultures, as well. Conducting research in this area will answer if there is a market or potential market and if it is worth developing more “ethnically diverse programming. Now is the time for the television industry to examine how best to serve this segment of the growing population and become a front-runner, whatever the outcome.

The three original networks have been around since before the advent of television as radio corporations. Then the networks successfully incorporated television into their businesses. But now, to stay relevant they must adjust to competition from the growing cable networks, and the popularity of the internet, which has fragmented the television audience. So creating more shows that have a significant number of visible minorities could mean getting some television viewers back.

The purpose of this research is to determine what actions are required to create more visible minority programming in the United States. The objective is to determine consumer television-watching preferences and what factors might get consumers to watch certain shows. This paper will address the following question: What is the feasibility of developing programming with more ethnically diverse casts, or lead characters for mainstream broadcast television networks? This will reveal if there is an audience for more “ethnic” shows and if there are mass audiences watching the few ethnically diverse shows currently on the air. And if there are no large audiences watching these shows, why not? The research will also examine what it will take to get people to start watching.

NBC, CBS, and ABC, as with all businesses, have limited funds and are competing with other media as mentioned, so the answer could mean millions of dollars for the three broadcast networks – if they take advantage of it – or the networks could potentially lose millions by not targeting the right market. A by-product would also be more employment for visible minorities, thus creating even more financial benefits for the broadcast networks, because the industry would be getting the “ultimate best” by drawing from a wider talent pool.

**Literature Review**

Review #1 - Why People Watch the Shows They Do
Review #2 - U.S. Population Growth
Review #3 - Financial Feasibility
Review #4 - Is Ethnic Diversity Lacking in Broadcast Television

**Why People Watch the Shows They Do**

*South Central: Black Writers and the Responsibility and Burden of Creating Black Characters for a Black Audience,* a peer-reviewed article, chronicles the 1994 “black” sitcom *South Central* and the reasons behind why it failed. The article at times speculates on some
issues with no facts, but immediately it makes that distinction clear and offers various perspectives from different sources on the issues speculated. This information does help, even though the FOX network is not the subject of this research paper (FOX is a broadcast “niche” network), because it is still a broadcast network and thus has the same structure the original three broadcast networks have.

Convergent Ethnicity and the Neo-platoon Show: Recombining Difference in the Postnetwork Era, a peer-reviewed article, focuses on the re-emergence of multiculturalism on television in the 2000s. This article is important, because it introduces a possible formula for why these shows might be successful. The author gives compelling arguments on the likelihood of success because he feels these types of shows have a built-in audience. However, the article does not give conclusive arguments that “neo-multiculturalism” is, indeed, the reason for the success of the shows he mentions.

Bill Cosby: TV Auteur, a peer-reviewed article, uses various research methods to find out whether the series of shows Bill Cosby has made over the years qualifies him for the title of TV Auteur, in other words, does Bill Cosby have a distinctive creative trademark. This article does add background and strengthens the credibility of this research paper for The Cosby Show. The article does not go into television ratings much, nor does it bring up how many people watched some of his shows (including The Cosby Show). Some of the shows took place in the 1960s, but they can still be considered relevant to this research paper, because the article convincingly establishes that Bill Cosby is a TV Auteur (in other words, for the purposes of this research paper, his style of TV storytelling has not changed).

The Cosby Show: The View from the Black Middle Class, a peer-reviewed article, researches what the Black middle-class in the U.S. thought of the sitcom The Cosby Show. A lot of the information from this article can be used in this research paper to study how class lines play a role in people relating to a show, no matter their ethnicity, and it is a great tool as far as knowing what it might take to get all kinds of people to watch any given show.

The Biggest Show in the World: Race and the Global Popularity of the Cosby Show, a peer-reviewed article chronicles the global success of The Cosby Show. Surprisingly, in comparing some of the literature for this research paper, many of the factors why The Cosby Show was popular in the rest of the world are the same reasons why the show was popular in the United States, which strengthens the argument for how to create more ethnically diverse shows that will appeal to the masses in the U.S.. This article, in many parts, is appropriate and relevant to this research paper. But even though it comes close, it can’t conclusively answer the question as to whether similar shows like these will work today, because the show was popular in a different time (the mid-1980s). Having said that, this article supplies both quantitative research (the interviews) and qualitative research (TV ratings and revenue), which strengthens credibility and is an ideal combination for this research paper.
Hispanic Viewers Getting Attention is about broadcast and cable networks in the United States beginning to target programming toward the growing Hispanic community. This article does produce evidence that when Hispanics are on television, there will be a Hispanic audience. It also mentions two particular shows with Hispanics in the cast that were popular among white people, as well. But the article gave no in-depth analysis as to the reasons why they were top-rated shows. This article may not have enough information to conclude that there is a broader audience for “Hispanic” TV shows, because the two shows used as examples could be doing well simply because the show is well-written and well-acted.

The other part of this article mentions cable network Spanish language shows that cater to Hispanic-Americans. For this research paper, it can be used as an example of cable’s far reach among minority audiences (cable is broadcast television’s “competition”). The article does discuss the Nielsen ratings for these particular cable network Spanish language shows, but they cannot be used for this research paper because the article admits there could be a difference between foreign-born Hispanic American’s and American-born Hispanic’s TV watching habits. The Nielsen ratings do not track for that potential anomaly.

One could speculate that if some mainstream broadcast networks are now responding to the growing Hispanic population, is there really a research gap regarding whether the networks are not making enough “ethnic” shows. The answer is that only two shows are mentioned in this article, so the assertion that broadcast TV is “beginning” to make shows that minorities can relate to would be highly subjective.

Also, some of the information in this article is dated. Dated information can be useful, particularly when many of the shows researched for this paper are not on the air anymore (so by default, they can be considered dated), but in this case, some of the information that is outdated is obsolete.

Ideas & Trends; How ‘Ugly Betty’ Changed on the Flight from Bogota is an article that is about the changes the Columbian Ugly Betty version went through to tailor the American Ugly Betty show to U.S. audiences. This article is, however, useful for contributing to the overall Ugly Betty case study for this research paper.

U.S. Population Growth

Hispanic Viewers Getting Attention is an article about how broadcast and cable networks in the United States are beginning to target programming toward the growing Hispanic population. This is the only section that alludes to the ever-increasing size of the Hispanic community, but it gives no actual population numbers.

In Ideas & Trends; How ‘Ugly Betty’ Changed on the Flight from Bogota, the article alludes to the ever increasing size of the Hispanic community, but gives no actual population numbers.
An Older and More Diverse Nation by Midcentury, a 2008 U.S. government report, is based on the 2000 Census, and is about how many people are projected to be 65 years and older by 2050 and how fast ethnic minorities will become the majority by 2042. This information is useful because it is current and in-depth, and could lend credence to the fact that if the population is changing all aspects of American society need to be examined to see what needs to be changed, or examined to see what will automatically change. Although a case could be made that 2042 is far off and that there is no need to worry about changing television programming so drastically and so quickly. And another argument can be made that according to the projections, in 14 years, more than half the children in the U.S. will be an ethnic minority. Still another argument is made that these figures are only projections, not estimates. Projections are only to be used in the absence of estimates because estimates are more reliable.

Diversity in Entertainment: Why is TV So White? is an article that looks at the lack of minorities in “significant” leading television roles. The only section of this article that is relevant to Review #2 is where it mentions recent population statistics and uses some case studies.

U.S. Census Bureau: The Foreign-Born Population: 2000, a U.S. government report, looks at statistics from the last official U.S. Census in 2000 of all the immigrants who came to the U.S. from 1990 – 2000. This report is important because it also breaks down the statistics by national regions and, most importantly for this research paper, by ethnicity.

U.S. Census Bureau: Annual Population Estimate Archives – Vintage 2000 to 2004, is a U.S. government reports that look at population estimates for the year 2004 for all racial and Hispanic groups in the country. These estimates are not the most accurate or up-to-date for these particular years, in the sense that after each official census is taken (which happens every ten years), estimates are calculated monthly and yearly, thereafter, for previous years and current years. So to keep consistent for this research paper, the 2004 estimate that is used is the one taken at the end of 2004. In other words, the estimates that are used for this research paper are taken in the exact year they were for, not estimates adjusted in subsequent years. Even though estimates like these are ever-changing, this information is useful because these are based on actual numbers of population growth and decline, which, in turn, are based on immigration patterns, births, and deaths. These numbers are not projections, which are less accurate than estimates.

U.S. Census Bureau: Annual Population Estimates: 2008, a U.S. government report, looks at 2008 population estimates for all racial and Hispanic groups in the country. Unlike other U.S. Census Bureau estimates used in this research paper, this statistic is the latest estimate for 2008 (the estimate was taken at the end of 2008). These estimates are the most accurate for 2008 (the 2009 estimates for 2008 are not out yet). They are the most up-to-date yearly numbers because as previously mentioned, the U.S. census also tracks changes in population monthly. This information is useful because these are based on actual numbers of population growth and decline, which, in turn, are based on immigration patterns, births, and deaths. These numbers are
not projections. These estimates will be consistent when comparing them with other reports collected for this research paper.

**U.S. Census Bureau: Race and Hispanic Origin in 2005**, a U.S. government report, looks at 2005 population statistics of all racial groups in the U.S., but it is not clear when these estimates were taken for the 2005 year. And also, the numbers from this report are a condensed version, so the racial groups are not broken down as much as other reports used in this research paper. So, these figures will not be used, because these estimates could taint the outcome of this paper when it comes to comparing and contrasting these numbers with population estimates of other years. This information, however, is important because it illustrates how to calculate the rate of change for each racial and Hispanic segment of the population. In other words, one can calculate how fast, or how slow each segment is growing, or declining relative to other “racial” groups and to the general population, which is information that will be used in this research paper.

**Financial Feasibility**

**Convergent Ethnicity and the Neo-platoon Show: Recombining Difference in the Postnetwork Era** does not intend to discuss financial feasibility in the television industry in any capacity. But this article can be used to see how television networks can make “easy” profits by creating more ethnically diverse shows using certain criteria the author sets out.

**Bill Cosby: TV Auteur** is about Bill Cosby’s “signature” style, but it does not specifically address whether this style could be (or is) a formula for financial feasible with future (or current) shows. There were also no financial figures in this article. It would have been interesting to know how high the ratings were for all of his “signature” shows, because it could have been a clue to their financial feasibility and important in establishing a trend for creating more shows like his.

**The Biggest Show in the World: Race and the Global Popularity of the Cosby Show** is about the amount of money *The Cosby Show* made for NBC and its international distributor Viacom, and how it made Viacom well-known internationally. This article does not mention how much money *The Cosby Show* made for NBC domestically, but the show was rated number one for eight years, so it is clear and common knowledge that NBC made millions from the show. The article also does not directly answer the question as to whether other successful “ethnic” shows can be financially feasible for broadcast networks in the United States, just like *The Cosby Show* was.

**The New Mainstream: How Buying Habits of Ethnic Groups Are Creating a New American Identity** recounts parts of the book *The New Mainstream: How the Multicultural Consumer is Transforming American Business*. This article is very helpful because the book focuses on the current and potential buying power of minorities in the United States. It backs up the argument that there is an ethnic market that can be lucrative for businesses who take
advantage of it. However, the article, based on the book, does not specifically discuss the television business, even though the book may have mentioned the television industry.

In *Rethinking TV’s Racial Divide*, this article discusses “black” shows that have cross-over appeal. It discusses the “black” sitcom *My Wife and Kids*, which is helpful for this research paper because the show received very high ratings in white households that translates into revenue for the networks.

In the article *Your Entertainment Now* it gives the list of ratings for television shows, which is needed for this research paper to show which programs were the most financially viable.

**Is Ethnic Diversity Lacking in Broadcast Television?**

*Hispanic Viewers Getting Attention* is about how mainstream broadcast and cable networks in the United States are beginning to target programming toward the growing Hispanic population. This assertion, in itself, implies there are not many Hispanic shows on television to begin with, even though their population has been significantly large (and growing) for decades, according to other articles used in this research paper. So this assertion, only together with the other articles, strengthens the argument that there is a lack of diversity on television.

In regard to the article *Diversity in Entertainment: Why is TV So White?*, the focus of this research paper is not to analyze alleged racism in the television industry. However, for this paper, there are case studies and statistics of current and (recently) past television shows that clearly show there are few television programs now that have ethnically diverse casts and lead characters.

**Methodology**

For this research paper, qualitative and quantitative methods will be used to get the best results. Mainly secondary research, but some primary research will be used for television show case studies to find out whether “ethnic” television shows could be successful. The case studies will be analyzed using four criteria: comparing and contrasting three distinct television shows featuring minorities, profit and loss benchmarks, television show placement and scheduling, and U.S. population estimates and projections. Analyzing these case studies is the best predictor of whether it will be financially beneficial for the three broadcast networks to create more shows with ethnic casts.
Secondary statistics, reports and articles from sources such as the U.S. government, entertainment articles and media journals will be used to determine the rate of immigrant and minority growth in the U.S.

**Discussion of Findings**

**Criteria #1 - Compare and Contrast**

One of the best ways to know whether a certain type of television show will do well – before spending money on producing that show – is to look at a cross-section of shows within that type to analyze what worked and what did not. The three television shows that will be critiqued are *The Cosby Show*, *Ugly Betty*, and *South Central*. These programs all have ethnic minorities who either make up the entire cast, or are the main part of the cast; all three debuted in different decades; two of the programs were commercially successful; and two of the shows aired on two of the original three broadcast networks.

**The Cosby Show**

*The Cosby Show*, a situation comedy (sitcom) had a successful, critical, and commercial run on NBC (one of the three original broadcast networks), for eight years from 1984 – 1992. The show is based on the everyday happenings of a black, upper middle-class Brooklyn, New York, family.

The underlying concept of the show was to focus on changing outdated and stereotypical notions about the lives of black people in the United States. The show was also an opportunity to do something different with the sitcom genre altogether. Comedian Bill Cosby, the creator, executive producer, and star of *The Cosby Show* wanted to set the show apart from other past black-oriented sitcoms and family sitcoms (Merritt, 1991). Before *The Cosby Show* came along, television shows which starred black actors, like the 1970’s sitcoms *Sanford and Son* and *Good Times*, had crossover appeal with white audiences, but the characters were stereotypical *caricatures*. Most white audiences could not relate to the experiences these earlier shows portrayed, but the audience could laugh at them. And family sitcoms of the time were mostly concerned with the goings on of the children in those TV families like the *Brady Bunch* and *Different Strokes*.

Bill Cosby wanted his show to appeal to a mass audience and embody certain ideals, so there was a list of criteria he had to achieve such goals. The situations depicted on *The Cosby Show* had to be true-to-life; every laugh had to come from real, everyday situations (Merritt, 1991, p.94). There would be no outlandish storylines, or cheap jokes. He did not want to put the characters in any “wacky” situations to illicit a laugh, he wanted the laughs to come out of normal, believable circumstances. An example of this is when the character Theo, the only son,
wants to impress his girlfriend by buying a $95 designer shirt. His parents, Claire and Cliff Huxtable, refuse to buy it for him, so his sister Denise offers to make him one. Denise subsequently does a horrible job, which angers and panics her brother, but in the end Theo’s girlfriend and the rest of his friends love the shirt and ask Denise if she could make them one. It is a simple concept where the plot and laughs spring out of plausible reactions. It is not driven by contrived scenarios used as the vehicle for making the situation funny.

The writers on the show were asked to take each episode and make it as real as possible, and then find the “natural” humour in it. This approach mirrors Bill Cosby’s comedic style where, in his stand up routines, he examines everyday situations and reveals the humorous side (Merritt, 1991, p.98). Bill Cosby’s style was also about finding a way to universally relate these funny experiences, so everyone who came to his comedy shows could laugh and no person or group would go away feeling insulted. The Cosby Show had the same approach when it came to not trying to use insults to be funny. There were no “generational putdowns,” rude children, stereotypical people, or “wise-cracking black children with white parents.” As writer Bishetta D. Merritt put it, “This show exposed people to a two-parent, successful, upper middle-class, cohesive black family without the self-deprecation of series like The Jeffersons, or Good Times (Merritt, 1991, p. 94). In essence, the humour of The Cosby Show was “colour blind” (Merritt, 1991, p. 98).

To keep the show’s concept consistent from episode to episode, the show hired professional consultant Dr. Alvin Poussaint to go over each script to ensure its appeal and “authenticity” (Merritt, 1991, p. 92). Dramatic TV shows have been known to elicit help from professionals: real doctors or coroners for medical shows; real science consultants for science fiction shows, but it is rare to hire one for a comedy.

And at the time, even though The Cosby Show focused on the parents, which was also something a family sitcom had never done (with the exception of, maybe, All in the Family, but those children were adults), every character was three-dimensional. Each parent and child had their own character traits. And with five children on the show initially ranging in age from five to 20, it gave the show room to explore all types of personalities from each child. This, again, made every person watching able to relate to his or her own “Cosby kid” (Merritt, 1991, p. 92 & 97). Anyone could pick from the book-smart one, the fashionable free-spirit, the lazy under-achiever, the boy-crazy pre-teenager, and the adorable five year old. The connection to these characters was summed up best in a 1996 Washington Post article, featuring five families of varying ethnicities and income levels. It was about how each family could relate to the characters on the show (Merritt, 1991, p. 97).

The Cosby Show was also concerned with delivering a message in each episode. The show touched on such issues as sexism and the importance of getting an education. These issues were either done with humour, or through the use of imagery like Dr. Cliff Huxtable’s (Bill Cosby’s character) penchant for wearing varying collegiate sweaters around the house (Inniss & Feagin, 1995, p. 695 – 696). But even with the success of The Cosby Show, it was not without its critics, most of who came from the black community. Many felt the show did not address racism. Some people also felt the Huxtable clan did not have any “real” problems. And
one of the biggest charges against the show was that a black upper middle-class family headed by a doctor father and lawyer mother was “unrealistic” (Inniss & Feagin, 1995, p. 698).

While it can be argued *The Cosby Show* avoided showing obvious racial issues, it is inaccurate to say the show did not tackle this issue at all. It did touch on racism and the struggles of the black experience, but in subtle ways, and some of these ways were also addressed through imagery (Havens, 2000, p. 382). The set of the show was staged with signs to “end apartheid” on the walls, and there were also posters of the slave abolitionist and freed slave Frederick Douglass (Merritt, 1991, p. 94). In fact, in the second season on the episode “*Vanessa’s Bad Grade*”, the show started out looking like it was going to be about one of the daughters, Vanessa, getting a D on her history exam. Then it seemed like the episode was going to be about Vanessa borrowing her sister Denise’s sweater without permission (and this conflict ended in a physical fight). Again, the plot starts out simple, and one thinks it is going somewhere else, but the show ends in a surprising place: with the family watching the civil rights leader, the Reverend Martin Luther King’s ‘I Have a Dream’ speech on TV. This concluded with the sister’s apologizing and hugging each other. This scene at the end was about conveying what “real” problems are in the world (and that borrowing a sweater without permission is the least of it). This episode originally aired a few days before the first official Martin Luther King Jr. holiday.

What many in the black community could agree on and appreciate was the sense of “blackness” and black culture that shone throughout *The Cosby Show*. It wasn’t the “jive-talking”, witticisms of earlier “black” shows, like *The Jeffersons* and *Sanford and Son*, nor was it a show where the main character was black, but that character seemed stripped of all its ethnocentricities in order to appeal to a mass audience, as was the case with the 1960’s show *Julia* starring Diahnne Carroll (Merritt, 1991, p. 99). The Huxtable family listened to “black” music (R&B, Reggae, Jazz, Salsa). There was art, books, and artefacts throughout the house created by black painters, artists, and writers. The collegiate sweaters mentioned earlier, which Dr. Cliff Huxtable wore, were from historically black colleges, emphasizing the importance of not only going to school, but in supporting these particular institutions, (Merritt, 1991, p.94). And the first Huxtable twin grandchildren were named Winnie and Nelson after Winnie and Nelson Mandela.

Mainly, Bill Cosby wanted the audience to see the other end of the black experience, he wanted the show to be about a black functional family (but which all families could find a connection), since previous black-oriented shows had only been about looking at the other stereotypical end of the spectrum (Havens, 2000, p. 382 – 383). The very premise of *The Cosby Show* addressed racism and pre-conceived notions by showing that it was, in fact, in the realm of possibility to have two married, black professionals raising a family in a brownstone in New York City, with well adjusted children, a loving extended family of an aunt, an uncle, both sets of grandparents (Merritt, 1991, p. 95), and close friends who were multicultural and multiracial.

*South Central*

*South Central* is a comedy that is the complete opposite of *The Cosby Show* in that it shows the other end of the class spectrum and the grittier side of the black experience. It aired in
1994 on the eight year old FOX network, and even though it garnered critical acclaim for its “realness”, it lasted only from April to June 1994.

*South Central* is set in the inner city of South Central, Los Angeles, and it features the Moseleys, a black family with a divorced, recently laid off single mother who is raising a teenage son, a pre-teenage daughter, and a young foster son. As the show premieres, the mother’s eldest son, Marcus, has been murdered by a gang member years before.

The idea for the series was born out of the 1992 Los Angeles riots. The producers of the show Michael Weithorn and Ralph Farquhar wanted to make a series about the city of South Central that was different than the one always shown on the 6 o’clock evening news; the one with gang violence, drugs, and prostitution. So, with the help of the African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) community church, the producers conducted a series of interviews with the citizens of South Central to hear about the positive aspects of the city. The producers wanted the *South Central* television show to be as accurate as possible. The people in the community wanted the show to focus on the South Central that was “inhabited by law-abiding citizens who are ‘struggling, working, living’ just like everyone else in America.”

Like *The Cosby Show*, there were a few key things that set *South Central* apart from the rest. The show would not have a laugh track, so if the studio audience did not laugh at a joke there would be no “filler”. Further to that, not every scene would end in a joke, or have a happy ending (Henderson, 2001). The ‘no happy ending’ format was previously used by the detective show *Miami Vice*, but as a drama this ending was not such a leap to make in the viewer’s mind, but with *South Central* this was new territory for a sitcom. The show would also use the single camera technique, usually reserved for movie making, to get a more visually dramatic look. And most importantly, on *South Central* there would be no jokes made about the family’s lower-class status, as the show *Roseanne* did.

When the producers held the post-screening of the first episode for the South Central community, the community was not pleased with the results. They overwhelmingly complained the show was filled with stereotypes, yet there seemed to be a disconnection between their complaints and the realities that were happening within the community. Farquhar explained that someone in the audience wanted to know, “‘Why were the characters speaking in black English?’ but the person asking spoke black English.” And even though 50 percent of families in South Central were made up of single mothers, many in the audience were concerned that the show did not have a father character (Henderson, 2001, p. 243).

A larger bone of contention erupted over a line in the script when the daughter Tasha goes outside for the newspaper before getting ready for school. As she comes back inside she says, ‘Nothin’ gets me going like the smell of gunpowder in the morning.’ The South Central citizens at the post-screening did not like the joke. Actually, one of the show’s black writers and consultant wanted to take the line out because she knew it would not be received well. As she put it, “Art is supposed to depict the world as it should be. Not as it is.” But the black producer Farquhar thought it should be left in because it was “real”. It seemed the show was too real to the point where some people at the post-screening said they would not watch the show. Later, South Central community leaders who once wrote expressing their support for the show rejected it once
the rest of the community rejected it. Some leaders like Danny Bakewell, President of the Brotherhood Crusade, had supported the show’s efforts publicly, but afterward wrote an open letter declaring his disapproval in the direction the show was going. TV critics, however, loved *South Central* once it debuted nationally, because they felt it was well-written and well-acted (Henderson, 2001, p. 243 – 244).

But in regard to commercial success for *South Central*, all was not hopeless. After the first show aired, there was a flurry of phone calls from viewers to the FOX studios. Calls occurred every week after every episode. There were so many calls, in fact, that phone stations were set up to take viewer comments about what was “wrong” with the show, or how it could be improved. Suddenly after the fourth or fifth episode the calls were sounding positive; however, one of the producers stated that it was not that the show had changed, but that the audience was finally beginning to understand the concept of the show (Henderson, 2001, p. 245).

Then unexpectedly, midway through *South Central*’s first season, FOX executive Lucy Salhany who had been a strong supporter of *South Central* left the network. It was not a good sign that the show’s biggest advocate was now gone, because, although FOX is known for airing edgy and “different” shows, they did not know what to make of *South Central*. As mentioned earlier, it broke many television rules in general, and many sitcom rules in particular and the network did not know how to promote this unconventional show in their promotional spots, so they ended up advertising a type of show to potential viewers that did not exist (Henderson, 2001, p. 245). And it did not help that with the airing of the seventh episode, TV Guide starting labelling the half-hour comedy a drama, which most likely confused new viewers (historically, black and white audiences typically do not watch black dramas) (Henderson, 2001, p. 246). So as Salhany left, the new executive who arrived was not as enthusiastic about the show. Although *South Central* was buoyed by respectable (but not spectacular) ratings, the show was cancelled after 10 episodes (Henderson, 2001, p. 245).

**Ugly Betty**

*Ugly Betty* is a one hour dramedy (a show having elements of drama and comedy) currently airing on ABC, one of the original broadcast networks. The show has been on the air since 2006. *Ugly Betty* stars Betty Suarez a Mexican-American, slightly overweight, recent college graduate who is not very physically attractive. She longs to be a writer, but ends up working in the fashion industry for *Mode*, a top magazine, as an assistant to one of the owners. Betty has to deal with not fitting in to the superficiality of the fashion world. The refreshing thing about this character is that she does not let the name-calling and the mean looks from other people faze her. Betty just goes about her business trying to keep her foot in the door as a “sometime-writer” for the magazine. As she crosses the bridge each day from Brooklyn to Manhattan, New York, Betty is constantly straddling between her strong Mexican-American working-class values instilled by her family, and the cut throat, backstabbing goings on of the fashion industry.

*Ugly Betty* deals with issues that not only occur within the Hispanic community, but happen in mainstream society as well. Most of the show’s storylines arise out of issues in the
work place, and episodes have dealt with subjects such as immigration, work place politics, and going up and down the social class ladder (Rohter, 2007).

The show’s style is a takeoff of the telenovela genre, which originated as a radio serial in Cuba in 1948. Ugly Betty is the U.S. version of the successful Columbian telenovela Yo soy Betty, la fea (translated: I’m Betty, the ugly one). Telenovelas are a style of soap opera that are popular throughout Latin America. They are short serials, which usually last about six months, airing about five or six days a week. The genre deals with subjects like love, violence, class differences, revenge, family, homelessness and taboo topics such as incest, yet with each episode one is left with a social or political message (Rohter, 2007).

Ugly Betty has certainly become a global franchise with versions of the show airing in many countries, soon to be appearing in many more. This is why the ABC network took a chance on developing an American version. ABC also saw what happened when Telemundo, a Spanish-American cable network in the U.S., began airing the Columbian version of Ugly Betty and started to attract many Hispanic-American viewers. In fact, in 2006 – within a 48-night span – Mexico’s version of Ugly Betty began winning against, at least, one of the three original broadcast networks and FOX in the ratings in the 18 – 34 demographic among men (Karrfalt, 2006).

What makes Ugly Betty unique is that it is the first show to have a Hispanic female lead as the title character. Betty’s character is supported by her older sister who is a high school dropout turned hairstylist, her pre-teenaged effeminate nephew, and her widowed father who all live together. The show also has a larger ensemble cast comprised of her co-workers, her love interests, and the people and events in her family’s lives. The cast is so diverse in a myriad of ways, one writer created the term “neo-platoon” to describe the shows new brand of diversity. The term came from the 1940’s platoon war movies where the cast was made up of soldiers who were white, black, poor, Jewish, rich, from the country, from the city, and so on. In other words, many segments of society were represented in those movies. In the 1970s and 1980s those types of shows made a comeback with shows like the police drama Hill Street Blues, the medical drama St. Elsewhere; and sitcoms like Taxi, Welcome Back Kotter, and Barney Miller. And according to the writer, since the 1990s the “neo-platoon” shows have featured different people from many backgrounds, interacting with each other on many levels on an equal basis. No character is subservient to another as far as their prominence on the show, and every character is “allowed” to retain her or her distinctiveness (Brook, 2009).

Within Ugly Betty’s cast of characters, everyone is “themselves” culturally; no one is trying to be someone he or she is not; the cast is not homogenized. For example, when one takes a look at Betty Suarez’s house, it looks like a middle-middle class Mexican-American home in Brooklyn, NY, where her family speaks Spanish every now and then. Also, Wilhelmina Slater, Betty’s African American boss, is more often than not, the villain on the show. She is decidedly upper-class and has a U.S. Senator for a father. Wilhelmina looks down on others who are not her equal, and she is extremely conniving. The show is also not shy about being politically incorrect. The characters have no problem pointing out the differences in each other and unapologetically making fun of them.
Besides the presence of African Americans and Hispanic-Americans on *Ugly Betty*, there are many characters with diverse personalities, life experiences, and ethnicities who play a major role on the show. There are homosexuals, Caucasians, Asians-Americans, international characters, rich, poor, men, women, children, and transsexuals; and interracial relationships are prominent on the show, as well (Brook, 2009, p. 345). Indeed, naming the show *Ugly Betty* could almost be a misrepresentation of the type of show it truly is, because it is not just about Betty; it is ensemble in the most diverse sense of the word.

**Criteria #2 – Profit and Loss Benchmarks**

There are many factors that go into the financial success of a television show, and the single most important factor is “majority rules”. Since the advent of television, white audience preferences have been able to make, or break a show simply based on how many people tuned in. This, of course, is a huge draw to advertisers who want to buy commercial time on television shows that attract the most people. To put it another way, whichever segment of the population has the most buying power is the one that is paid the most attention. Advertising is crucial to the success of a show, because, literally, advertising revenue keeps a show on the air. The most important measuring tool advertisers and television networks use to know which shows are most likely to turn a profit is the Nielsen rating. It tracks the number of times households and individuals watch a particular television show, and it also tracks many subcategories, including which programs have cross-over appeal (i.e. Caucasians watching African American shows, Asians watching Hispanic shows, etc.).

**The Cosby Show**

During *The Cosby Show*’s eight year run on NBC, it ranked number one in the Nielsen ratings and for the first time in thirty years NBC won the ratings war over the other two broadcast networks (Merritt, 1991, p. 94 - 95). More than 50 percent of the American television audience watched *The Cosby Show* and it was extremely popular among white audiences and white critics (Havens, 2000, p. 378). There had previously been cross-over success with white audiences watching black-oriented shows, but the positive response among white people to *The Cosby Show* was unprecedented. In fact, it is the top-rated show in the 1980s and it became the most watched show in history (Inniss & Feagin, 1995, p. 695). The show is also widely seen as the reason for the comeback of the sitcom genre, which many people in the 1980s “predicted” was on the verge of extinction (Inniss & Feagin, 1995, p. 692).

One can also look to *The Cosby Show*’s international success for clues as to why the show was popular among most Americans, because the show’s international audience spanned many ethnicities and cultures. *The Cosby Show* was popular in many countries such as the Philippines, some Caribbean countries, Australia, Lebanon, Norway, Indonesia, Hong Kong, and the U.K. to name a few. And due to its worldwide popularity it changed domestic TV market rules, because today an American show will most likely not get produced unless television networks deem it can be sold internationally (syndication is the act of selling shows to other television outlets whether domestic, or international) (Havens, 2000, p. 375).
Research interviews done during the initial international syndication run of *The Cosby Show* surprisingly revealed that white and non-white South African audiences – during the time of apartheid – loved the show, but each group loved it for completely different reasons. Throughout the 1990s, *The Cosby Show* ranked number one for many years on the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), which was a channel dedicated to mainstream programming. White South Africans identified with *The Cosby Show* because they could relate to the family as far as social class was concerned. As one white viewer said, “African Americans ‘first world’ values made them fundamentally different from black South Africans.” While a black South African viewer said, “Cosby is a big doctor, he is consulted, he has authority, and he receives full respect due to him. This is the kind of thing we blacks want here in South Africa.” The black viewer obviously identified to the shows along racial lines (Havens, 2000, 376 - 377).

*The Cosby Show* made $600 million in syndication revenue for Viacom its international distributor and NBC got its share of the international revenue, as well (prior to that, broadcast networks were restricted from receiving international revenue before NBC lobbied successfully to change the laws due to *The Cosby Show* phenomenon). Internationally, there was such frenzy over the show that Viacom had international television stations bidding to get it on their networks, which was also something that had never happened before. The bidding was especially telling, considering that up until that time, American comedies were not seen as exportable, because humour was thought to be difficult to translate across language and cultural lines (Havens, 2000, p. 371).

**South Central**

The FOX sitcom *South Central* drew good ratings, but not great; however, it did garner more ratings than the show it replaced, and it won its time slot many times in its ten-episode run (Henderson, 2001, p. 245). That meant that on many occasions, other shows that were on at the same time on different networks lost to *South Central* in the ratings.

Before a show can become a cross-over success and appeal to the masses, it first has to hook its core audience completely. In this case, the core audience for *South Central* was the black audience, but black people were not drawn to the show in big enough numbers. The show was considered well written, but for some it might have been too well written. The stark reality of *South Central* hit too close to home, and apparently black audiences did not want that. Like any segment of a population, not all people share the same tastes, so in this respect it can be a challenge to create a successful show (Henderson, 2001, p. 247).

**Ugly Betty**

*Ugly Betty* on ABC continues to enjoy a very successful run with no hint of slowing down, the show has been rated no lower than fourth among 18 – 49 year olds since its debut three years ago (Your Entertainment Now, 2009). *Ugly Betty* is different than *The Cosby Show* and *South Central* because very technically it is not a “Hispanic” show. As mentioned earlier, the show has a multicultural cast that relate to each other as equals, not as subordinates, or sidekicks,
but the show does manage to retain its Mexican-American-ness because the star character of the
show is Hispanic. This multicultural mix has allowed for tremendous cross-over appeal. And as
more consumers in the United States experience multiculturalism within their daily lives, the
more they will watch shows with multicultural themes, and the more these shows will attract
advertising dollars (Brook, 2009, p. 333).

**My Wife and Kids**

*My Wife and Kids* is another “black” family sitcom that successfully aired on ABC from
2001 – 2005. It starred well-known comedian Damon Wayans. In the first season of the show, 71
percent of white audiences watched each week, whereas only **26 percent** of black audiences
tuned in. The show had tremendous cross-over appeal and received very high ratings.
Interestingly, aside from the show being able to relate to a mass audience, it was similar to *The
Cosby Show* in that its humour was also “colour-less” (Frutkin, 2001).

**Criteria #3 – The Crucial Process of TV Scheduling and Placement**

It *should* go without saying that quality writing and acting are the greatest barometers for
whether a show will become a success. But another factor that cannot be overlooked when
forecasting the best chance for success is **placement**: what time and day a show will be seen. For
example, if a new show is run opposite a very popular show, no matter how critically acclaimed
that show may be, the new show might not become a commercial success if the popular show
wins the ratings race each time. Or if a critically acclaimed show was moved from Mondays to
Wednesdays, and then over to Tuesdays a show might end up being cancelled simply because no
viewer can find it from one week to the next. Conversely, a viewer might give a new show a
chance if it consistently comes right after a viewer’s favourite show, but more than likely, the
shows would probably be somewhat similar, though it is not a requirement for placement.

**The Cosby Show**

*The Cosby Show* aired in the sought-after time slot of Thursday at 8 pm (‘sought after’
because that is when most people are at home). It was paired with the #2 show *Family Ties*, and
years later it was paired with the next #2 show *A Different World* (*a Cosby Show* spinoff). These
three shows were paired back to back to back and they were all considered well-written and well
acted. *Family Ties* was more or less similar to *the Cosby Show* in that it was a family sitcom
about a white nuclear family headed by post-hippie, liberal parents who had three children –
including a teenaged Republican son. Interestingly, even in international syndication *Family Ties*
was regularly the #2 show behind the *Cosby Show* (Havens, 2000, p. 382).
As mentioned earlier, *South Central* was a difficult show to match because the network did not know what other show would most compliment it. It aired on Tuesdays at 8:30 pm. Although *South Central* was on the upstart, “think-outside-the-box”, edgy FOX network, the network did not know how to package this unconventional television show, and receiving rave reviews from the critics could not help in the process of figuring out what to do with it. The show did follow another critically acclaimed show, the black-oriented comedy *Roc*, but during *Roc*’s three-year run, its own ratings were consistently low (though the show had high ratings in African American homes). With two other low-rated shows that came on after *South Central* and *Roc*, the entire Tuesday night lineup for FOX was a ratings loser (Your Entertainment Now, 2009).

**Ugly Betty**

*Ugly Betty* was set to premiere on Friday nights, but because of the positive post-screening comments the producers received from viewers, the network decided to move the show to Thursday nights at 8 pm, which, coincidentally, is the same day and time *The Cosby Show* first aired 22 years earlier - only on a different network. As previously mentioned, that timeslot is coveted because Thursday night at 8 pm is the best time when people in the crucial advertising demographic of 18 – 49 will be home. It is assumed that on Friday’s most people are not home, and on the weekends people are also out, so Thursday night at 8:00 or 8:30 pm is when every producer wants to have his or her show on the air to give their program the best possible chance for success. *Ugly Betty* is paired with the medical drama *Grey’s Anatomy*. Except in the category of both being considered “neo-platoon” shows, the programs are not similar (Brook, 2009), but *Grey’s Anatomy* is a critical and commercial success, which makes for a perfect lead-in for any show.

**Criteria #4 – U.S. Population Estimates and Projections**

In any business, knowing the target market is critical, because selling to the most people will obviously yield the greatest amount of revenue. And to keep up with demand when it comes to consumer tastes, it is also important to know how and why those tastes might change, especially when new technological innovations quickly become essential one moment and obsolete the next. Any business will quickly go out of business if it does not stay alert and keep up with the times, and broadcast television networks are no different. With the shifting racial demographic happening in the U.S., broadcast television needs to know whether to keep pace with their cable network rivals and create more programming in real proportion to the population, or continue to produce their current type of programming, which does not feature many visible minorities.

In 1965, when a U.S. immigration law that favoured Western European immigrants was struck down, Latin American, African and Asian immigrants benefited and their numbers have
been increasing steadily ever since (Wharton - University of Pennsylvania, 2005). In fact, according to the last U.S. Census in 2000, more than half of all immigrants to the U.S. – over 16 million people – were from Latin America (Malone, Baluja, Costanzo, & Davis, 2003).

Table 1 shows the rate of change in growth, so it tracks how fast or slow the population is growing. Estimates from the 2000 U.S. Census up to 2008 census show the total population of the United States grew by 6.9 percent. And while the black, Asian, and Hispanic populations exceeded the national growth rate, the only segment of the population that did not grow faster, or at the same pace as the country, was the white population which grew by just 2 percent in the last eight years. Of these four groups, the Hispanic and Latino population has grown the fastest in eight years by 33 percent, the Asian population grew the second fastest by 27 percent, while the Black population grew just slightly faster than the national average at 8 percent (U.S. Census Bureau) (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005*).

### Rates of Change in U.S. Population: 2000 - 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race and Hispanic Origin</th>
<th>April 1, 2000 Estimates Base</th>
<th>July 1, 2008 Estimates</th>
<th>Change 2000 - 2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Population (Estimate)</td>
<td>284,424,602</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>304,059,724</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White alone (not Hispanic or Latino)</td>
<td>195.6</td>
<td>69.49</td>
<td>199.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or African American</td>
<td>34.3</td>
<td>12.19</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino (any race)</td>
<td>35.3</td>
<td>12.54</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Totals are calculated in millions
These figures do not include those who are incarcerated, in nursing homes, or in juvenile detention.
Annual estimates are calculated by the base population, plus births, minus deaths of U.S. residents, plus immigrants.
*This article was used solely to calculate rate of change percentage.

Table 2 shows how much the population grew or decreased (as opposed to how fast or how slow it grew). Again, this was tracked from the 2000 census estimates to 2008 estimates (2004 estimates have also been listed here to gain a better perspective). The white population has been steadily decreasing against the national population. According to April 1, 2000 population estimates, the white population was 69 percent of the population, but approximately eight years later estimates show their numbers decreased to 65.6 percent. Conversely, every other racial demographic, according to the chart, has been increasing in population. The fastest growing demographic is the Hispanic and Latino population. They went from being 12.54 percent of the population to 15.4 percent of the population within eight years (U.S. Census Bureau).

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race and Hispanic Origin</th>
<th>April 1, 2000 Estimates Base</th>
<th>July 1, 2004 Estimates</th>
<th>July 1, 2008 Estimates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Population (Estimate)</td>
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<td>100</td>
<td>293,655,404</td>
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<td>195.6</td>
<td>69.49</td>
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<tr>
<td>Black or African American</td>
<td>34.3</td>
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<td>Hispanic or Latino (any race)</td>
<td>35.3</td>
<td>12.54</td>
<td>41.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>12.07</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Totals are millions. These figures do not include those who are incarcerated, in nursing homes, or in juvenile detention. Annual estimates are calculated by the base population, plus births, minus deaths of U.S. residents, plus immigrants.

With a look to the future, the U.S. government released population projections in August 2008. Projections are a useful guide, but are not as concrete as estimates simply because it is only speculation of what might happen based on previous census data collecting. These projections show that minorities as a whole, and who make up about a third of the population now, will become the majority by 2042, and by 2050, minorities will make up 54 percent of the U.S. population. This means by 2050, 235.7 million people, out of a projected population of 439 million, will be an ethnic minority. And by 2023 – fourteen years from now – more than half of all U.S. children will be an ethnic minority.

Looking at these projections by groups, the Hispanic and Latino population is projected to grow from 47 million people in 2008 to 132.8 million in 2050, which will make them approximately 30 percent of the national population. In that same time period, the Asian population is projected to grow to 41 million (9.2 percent), and the Black population will be at 66 million (15 percent). By 2050, the white population is projected to grow to 203 million, but as a percentage they will be 46 percent of the population, which is down considerably from 66 percent in 2008. This means that one in every three United States citizens will be Hispanic/Latino by 2050 (U.S. Census Bureau: Newsroom, 2008).

Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusion
Having analyzed the research, the conclusion reached is for the original three broadcast networks, NBC, ABC, and CBS to offer more ethnically diverse programming, at least in proportion to the current demographic in order to remain financially viable. Visible minorities are the largest demographic and the fastest growing demographic in the U.S., so catering to this audience will help ensure the greatest number of people will be watching programming from these networks. This action will engender brand loyalty among viewers, but only when the networks establish a reputation of listening to the viewing needs of minorities will the viewer remember and associate the broadcast networks with this.

Alternative forms of entertainment aside, ABC, CBS, and NBC compete for viewership with newer, upstart broadcast networks like FOX and CW, which are known for appealing to minority audiences. The three original networks are also competing with the twenty-four hour cable networks. The mandates of many cable networks, like BET (Black Entertainment Television) and SiTV (a Hispanic channel) are to produce solely ethnically-driven programming.

The following are the recommendations:

1) To get a majority of consumers, programming featuring ensemble casts with a diverse range of ethnicities is the most effective way to do that. This formula has gotten large ratings in the recent past, and is currently garnering high ratings on many multi-ethnic shows now. However, minorities on multicultural shows have to be portrayed as equal to their white counterparts, not just the sidekick, or a supporting player, or viewers could feel pandered to and might not watch.

2) There should also be fewer stereotypes on television. Fewer because even though certain characteristics should not be attributed to any one group, one will always find all characteristics in all ethnicities. Many groups have been known to “accept” watching stereotypes about their ethnic groups, because that was the only image they could find on television of themselves. And there are a plethora of these types of shows on ethnic cable networks and the other two broadcast networks now. But the concern for NBC, ABC, and CBS should be looking to the demographic future and keeping viewers loyal to their networks, and filling the niche the niche networks are not filling. As minority viewers in the U.S. eventually become the majority, they will demand less and less stereotypes on television and elsewhere, and they will have more financial clout to have their concerns heard.

3) To get more advertising revenue and attract the largest audience possible for current and future television programs featuring minorities, the three broadcast networks should promote ethnic minority programming simply as ‘quality’ programming or ‘funny or dramatic’ programming. Emphasizing that a show is a “black” show or a “Hispanic” show should not be part of the promotion. Doing the latter leaves certain segments of the population not watching those shows, because subconsciously they feel “it’s not made for us.” Doing the former can get all types of viewers watching and advertisers will invariably follow the viewer’s lead and want to advertise on those shows. Broadcasts networks will then be able hold out for more money from those advertisers. There are
many companies, for various reasons, that are not willing to pay as much to air a commercial on an ethnic minority-themed show as they are on a white-themed show, so advertisers should also be educated on the current and future financial benefits of advertising their products during “ethnic” shows. And in doing this, they too will gain consumer loyalty from minority communities if they start sooner than later.

4) There is evidence that minority TV audiences, in the absence of quality ethnic programming, will “make do” with watching shows that have few minorities, or they will watch reality-based programming because those shows “specialize” in showcasing diverse people. More research should be done on whether creating more reality-based shows is the best way to keep everyone watching, including visible minorities. Keeping broadcast television the way it is now, where minorities have to “take what they can get” is not good for the future of NBC, ABC, and CBS, because, again, the demographic is changing and minority audiences are mainly being served by the cable networks and the newer broadcast channels.
Bibliography


