

NBC, Parenthood and the N word¹

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ABSTRACT

NBC was the first network to ban the N-word from its radio waves in the 1950's. Two decades later NBC's sitcom *Sanford & Son* used the word with no shortage of controversy. And in 2012, the word was used several times on NBC's critically acclaimed drama *Parenthood*. This article examines a recent *Parenthood* storyline regarding the use of the N word by bringing together Stuart Hall's British Cultural Studies tradition with Latin American Cultural Studies: It brings media, television, consumption and racial discourse directly into a study of a current primetime American television show with a contemporary American racial order that describes itself as post-racist.

KEY WORDS: television network, sitcom, N word, controversies

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