

Lesson 13

Television Show Critique – NBC

Instructions and Format Requirements

The two main objectives for writing a critique of a television show are to apply what you have learned so far and to gain some knowledge about how the three major networks – ABC, CBS, and NBC – conduct their programming activities.

For Critique #3 please go to the [NBC website](#) and explore all that it offers. Get into some of the business practices of the network, noticing its advertising, how it broadcasts, and what shows it offers. How does this website compare with those of ABC and CBS?

Step 1: After exploring the site, choose **ONE episode** to watch of any show that the network offers online (preferably one you haven't seen). After watching the show, answer the questions in the order indicated below.

Step 2: In the heading of your paper put the show title, episode title, episode number, director, producer, two recurring stars, two guest stars (if applicable) and genre of program in the form of a list. **NOTE:** If you choose to view a news, game, or talk show, please skip Step 3 and complete Steps 4-8. If you watch a sitcom or drama, please complete Steps 3-7 (skipping Step 8).

Step 3: Give a brief description of the show in general and then compose a paragraph giving the narrative of the specific episode. Is this a show that you would discuss with your coworkers? Friends? Family? Why or why not? What format did you view this program in (HDTV, DTV, EDTV)?

Step 4: Examine the show for the ideological messages within its text and perform a textual analysis as discussed in Chapters 7 and 9. (Give several examples to support your conclusions.) When you watched the show, were you influenced by "dominant decoding" or "oppositional decoding," or did you fall into the category of "negotiated decodings"? Explain why.

Step 5: What is the target audience here? To what age group does the show appeal? Is the show associated with any "fandom" or licensed

merchandise? Are there any fan sites? Take a look at those sites and discuss what you see.

Step 6: Take a “media ecological” approach and discuss the communication and/or social impacts of the show. How does the program reflect American cultural values and/or beliefs? Reread pages 404-407 if you need some help with this.

Step 7: Do a little research on the production of the show. Where was it filmed? Is a location involved? How did the idea for the show originate? Did it originate domestically or internationally? Is this show distributed outside of the United States?

Step 8: If you have chosen a talk, game, or news show, please refer to Chapter 4 on broadcast journalism and discuss any bias that may be present. Give specific examples.

Note: You may label your paragraphs with the step numbers if you like. Please remember to give your paper a title that introduces the show and your thoughts about it.

Feel free to ask questions about this assignment if you find anything unclear and be sure to look at the sample rubric for this assignment.