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Channeling Blackness: Studies on Television and Race in America (Media and African Americans)

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Channeling Blackness: Studies on Television and Race in America (Media and African Americans)

Channeling Blackness: Studies on Television and Race in America (Media and African Americans) Blackness has always played a central role in the American imagination. Therefore, it should not be surprising that popular television - a medium that grew up with the Civil Rights Movement - has featured blackness as both a foil and a key narrative theme throughout its sixty-year existence. Ironically, in modern "colorblind" times, we are faced with a unique turn of events - blackness is actually overrepresented in television sitcoms and dramas. Channeling Blackness: Studies on Television and Race in America presents fifteen classic and contemporary studies of the shifting, complex relationship between popular television and blackness. Using a variety of methodological and theoretical approaches, these essays examine four key issues that have framed popular and scholarly inquiries into the nature of race on television: * The black-white binary * The power of media * Distinguishing between "negative" and "positive" images * The relative importance of markets versus racial motives in television Firmly establishing popular television as a central cultural forum in our society, Channeling Blackness looks at how television has profoundly shaped and been shaped by America's ambivalent relationship with blackness. It provides numerous examples of how our current interaction with television distinguishes the lived experiences of today from those of the past. The book also shows how the entertainment function of television often masks its ideological purpose, particularly its role in reflecting and reproducing America's racial order. A useful supplement in any number of courses on race and society, Channeling Blackness is an ideal text for advanced undergraduate and graduate courses on race and media, media and society, television studies, television criticism, communication studies, and African American and ethnic studies.

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