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**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Stereotypes in Children's Television: "The Proud Family" "The Proud Family" is a children's program that runs daily on The Disney Channel and on Saturday mornings on ABC Kids.

It is a TV-G rated program. The show is about an African-American family with the last name Proud. There is a mom, dad, three kids, and a grandmother. The main character of the show is the oldest daughter named Penny Proud who is probably in junior high. Also, some of Penny's friends are in the show. All of the characters in this show are stereotyped by many things such as race and gender, including Penny. The first stereotype I noticed about the show was the way the cartoonist drew the different characters.

All of the African-American characters were drawn with enormous lips and huge noses. Meanwhile, the two Caucasian characters in the show were both drawn with wider heads and seemed smarter than the other characters in the show. Also, all the African-American characters talked in a dialect while the Caucasian characters talked slower. In addition, all of the African-American characters all called each other "brotha," which is another stereotype, because not all African-Americans call each other that or like to be called that. There are many stereotypes made about the main character Penny.

First, her race is the main issue in the show. She is shown drawn the same way as the other African-American, with the bigger features described before. Penny also has a kind of attitude about her, which is also often associated with African-American females. Not only is she stereotyped by

race, but by gender as well. She is shown as the smart and understanding friend, probably because she is the main girl character in the show. For example, when her friend, Dlionay, has a problem with a boy, Penny is the one that helps Dlionay out and gives her advice and helps her try to win back the boy.

However, there were also other gender stereotypes in the show as well. The girl, Dlionay was often shown as the kind of “damsel in distress.” A few times a boy was sent to rescue her. For example, one of her friends was stuck out in the water and instead of getting him herself, she plead to the other boy to please save him.

This shows the stereotype that men are stronger and braver than women and that women need their protection. Other than Penny and Dlionay, there were other characters in “The Proud Family” that fit the typical minority stereotype as well. There were two radio hosts along with a few others that fit the stereotype that minority characters are goofy and lazy. For example, the radio announcers sang and made funny voices and also said silly things. Then, they were in a way stereotyped as lazy because but there were overweight and ate all the food at the eating contest, and these are things that are associated with laziness.

All of the stereotypes shown in the program help to reinforce society’s views of gender and racial identity. The way that the characters in this program were stereotyped might lead children to believe that all African-Americans call each other “brotha” and then a child that watches this show might call someone African-American that one day and get into trouble. This program

did nothing to try and break away from what society views a specific race as, and instead the program reinforced it by using typical stereotypes of the African-American population. My reaction to the character of Penny is mixed. I did like her as a character because she was compassionate and cared about her friends and family, and I believe this can help to teach children that are watching this show that these values are important in life.

However, I wish they would have gotten away from the typical African-American stereotype and would have not made Penny with such enlarged features and not talk so much the way she did. I would like them to change this because I feel that in a way they cartoonists are making fun of African-Americans by over exaggerating their facial features and speech dialect. Also, I don't believe with these characteristics there can be an