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“*Roseanne* Re-BOOTED: The Complexity and Complicity of Depicting the White Working Class”

Roseanne Barr created her hallmark television show, *Roseanne*, to foreground the experiences of the white working class people who had been feeling forgotten and abandoned in recent history. Barr’s humor and her unique blend of white liberal and white conservative ideas garnered her impressive ratings and critical success. The original show, which premiered in 1988 and ended in 1997, depicted Midwestern white working class families at the tail-end of the Reagan Administration and ran through the subsequent Bush and Clinton presidencies. The short-lived revival (March 2018 - May 2018) came shortly after the campaign and election of Donald Trump.

Roseanne’s combination of liberal ideas and conservative bodies created a unique blend of white liberalism and white conservatism which attracted white people from both sides of the political aisle. The show’s family values and moral lessons highlighted the anxieties of the people it portrayed and the insufficiency with which white people discuss race and other social issues. While *Roseanne* is credited with foregrounding the needs and desires of the white working class, it also highlights the legacy of white supremacy that *Roseanne* takes part in by its complicit behaviors and insufficient analysis of its characters’ privilege and prejudices.

When Roseanne Barr was fired for a racist tweet back in 2018, it sparked a debate on the validity of cancel culture, mental health, and the alleged-erasure of the white working class. Barr’s show had a lasting impact on the television landscape and our landscape of national discourse. What does Barr’s show and its/her cancellation mean for us today? We are living through a transition of moralizers and the new guards are making their presence known. Who will survive these Cancel Crusades?