

Undateable

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NBC's summer filler sitcom "Undateable" could make one adjustment to improve the show: kill off all of the characters except the jolly, chubby guy. Chris D'Elia, who played the husband on another NBC bomb, "Whitney," plays Danny, a promiscuous jerk trying to help his awkward roommate, Justin (Brent Morin) impress his employee/crush. Both a pale imitation of "The Odd Couple" and a television show based on a damn self-help book ("Undateable: 311 Things Guys Do That Guarantee They Won't Be Dating or Having Sex" by Ellen Rakieta and Anne Coyle, in case you had to know), "Undateable" fulfills all the stereotypes of bad multi-camera situation comedies.

The show abuses its laugh track so much it's surprising the button didn't break halfway through the pilot. A lot of great shows throughout the history of television have used laugh tracks, but "Undateable" might be breaking records with how often canned laughter pours over jokes that weren't funny. Jokes such as Justin breaking into a Backstreet Boys song. Not fresh stuff.

It also includes the following slam dunk – "You're so lucky you're gay. Whenever you want to hook up with a dude, you just go up and pull on his noodle like a doorbell chain." Yes, folks, this is a joke that was told on a show broadcast during primetime on a major American network in 2014. It doesn't help that the name of Justin's bar is often mistaken for "Black Guys" instead of "Black Eyes." And there's a joke about the use of the word "cans" in relation to breasts. Maybe the writers assume that it's summer, and nobody will notice anyway.

The characters are supposed to be charming nerds, a la "The Big Bang," but instead are unpleasant and bland. There's nobody to root for in "Undateable" because everyone is insufferable, even Justin, who the show tells us is a gent. He brags about singing terrible music, and he does the "oh no, which direction are you gonna go in" thing when he crosses paths with his crush, which is the most obnoxious and uncharming move a human could pull. All this awkwardness is supposed to be endearing, but there's no sense of self-awareness, so Justin's quirks just feel grating. The women on the show do little more than giggle and flip their hair. Shelly (Run Funches) is the only guy who demonstrates any self-awareness or actual charm, which is why he should be the only survivor in the fiery helicopter accident that needs to befall everyone else involved with this show.