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The Big Bang Theory on TV: How to make a Big Bang with the Public

BILL PRADY, Executive Producer & Co-Creator of The Big Bang Theory

Is it possible for a television sitcom to accurately portray scientists? Probably not, but with some effort it can accurately portray science. Since its debut in 2007, *The Big Bang Theory* on CBS has striven to include accurate and current references to physics, astrophysics and other disciplines. This attention to detail (which means that Big Bang is the first television comedy to employ a physicist as a consultant) is an obsession of its co-creator and executive producer, Bill Prady. Prady, whose twenty-six year career in television has taken him from *Jim Henson's Muppets* to this current project, began his working life as a computer programmer. His frustration with how inaccurately science and technology is generally depicted in film and television led him to ask if it was possible to be both correct and funny. Using clips from the show as examples, we will engage in a discussion of the depiction of science on this program and in popular entertainment in general.