

**CBS plans to put a rural family on display  
in new Beverly Hillbillies “reality” show:**

# **“Imagine the episode where they have to interview maids,” chortled one CBS executive.**

**H**ow many ways can one TV network get it wrong? No. 1: Pick the group of Americans about whom disparaging stereotypes go almost unchallenged: the people who live in rural America. No. 2: After a “hick hunt,” as one headline put it, relocate an entire “lower middle class” rural family to a Hollywood mansion. No. 3: Revive the *Beverly Hillbillies* label and slap it on a cheap-to-produce reality show for even cheaper laughs. No. 4: Let the real-life humiliation begin.

Watching rural people being ridiculed in front of a national audience may be CBS’s notion of entertainment. But for most of us, mocking a group of rural Americans who have endured, despite hardship and inequity, is more than just offensive. It raises troubling questions about CBS management and the advertisers sponsoring these programs.

There are lots of things CBS could show us about rural America. Some things, like the realities of poverty, unemployment and environmental degradation, are painful to talk about, challenging to hear. Others, because of the grit, courage and faith of rural families and communities, might actually teach a thing or two to privileged entertainment executives who think it droll to “interview maids.”

CBS CEO Les Moonves may fly over rural America in his corporate jet but that doesn’t give him the right to look down on the hard-working people who live there. CBS executives may think humiliating real rural families is just another way to sell ads. Help us prove them wrong. Go to [www.ruralstrategies.org](http://www.ruralstrategies.org). Let’s tell CBS and its advertisers that we’re not buying.



*It can't be very reassuring for the shareholders of Viacom – which owns CBS – that CEO Les Moonves thinks network TV is an ethics-free zone where profits come before social responsibility. Does the FCC agree with Moonves? What about CBS affiliates? Go to [www.ruralstrategies.org](http://www.ruralstrategies.org) and ask them.*

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