

PROPOSAL

When you're trying to sell a series, you have to do a lot of persuading. And one of the things you have to persuade is the network. And there's a lot of people in the network who have to consider a lot of potential series. And so you're always looking for neat, concise ways to make their jobs easier and to make your show sound like a series that their network can't possibly live without. And that's what this proposal is all about. I got a call one day from the network asking me for a two or three page document that could get the executives and stockholders excited about our show. Did it work? Well, we were on the air for 18 episodes, so I must have done something right! But then we got canceled. Well, don't blame it on my poor little proposal, you big meanie! Sorry. Enjoy!

"FREAKS AND GEEKS"

A One Hour Series

Freaks. Geeks. Jocks. Preppies. Farmers. Motorheads. Brains.
Every school has them. Everybody has been one of them.
So ... which group did you belong to?

"Freaks & Geeks" is a new one hour comedy/drama series that follows the very realistic, very funny and often very touching lives of Lindsay and Sam Weir -- a sister and brother who are trying, like all teenagers in this world, to get through high school and into adulthood as happily as possible.

It's a series for kids that tells them that all the seemingly insurmountable moments they're going through day to day are just the way it's always been when you stick a group of teenagers together in a large cinderblock building and hope they'll socialize. It's a series that says it's not so bad to be a teenager -- there is life beyond high school.

And it's a series for adults, who will see their former selves in the characters of the show and remember just what it was like to be a teen. Its universal stories and the nostalgia it brings will make them both laugh and long for a slightly more innocent time.

Each week, "Freaks and Geeks" will follow two parallel stories -- one from Lindsay and the "freaks" (a "freak," -- AKA "burn-out" -- for those of you not from the Midwest, is a student who is more into rebellion and skipping class than getting good grades) and one from Sam and the "geeks" (not necessarily "nerds," but teens who are a little backwards when it comes to the social side of life):

For Lindsay Weir, life has just become much more confused and complicated. Jolted by the death of her grandmother, Lindsay has found herself unsure of the life plan of which she thought she was so certain. Her goals of college and career now seem unimportant.

This has driven her away from her old "brain" friends and into the lives of the freaks -- the only other people in the school who seem to seek answers to the bigger questions in life. They are the outsiders by choice, kids who could be popular if they chose to but instead reject the superficiality that is the high school caste system. They are happily outside of the mainstream, which is right where Lindsay suddenly longs to be.

For her younger brother Sam, his new life as a high school freshman has brought a host of problems, the biggest problem being that Sam suddenly has to face the fact that, like it or not, he's growing up.

He has arrived at high school far less mature -- both physically and emotionally. It's that terrible period when you think you're still a little kid but

nobody's treating you like one anymore. Between the bullies, his teachers and the social pressures of high school, Sam will desperately try to keep himself in the safety of the geek world as much as he possibly can as he learns about life.

The first season of this series will introduce us to the real world of high school teenagers -- a world not often shown honestly on television. To mention just a few of the stories we'll see:

- Lindsay will rally the freaks to enter their band in the school talent show, only to find out that the band's not that good and, what's more, they all have bad cases of stage fright.

- Sam and the geeks decide to camp out overnight in order to get great tickets to an ELO concert and so concoct stories that they're each sleeping over each other's houses in order to spend the night on the street. However, they end up camping out at the wrong ticket booth and are forced to spend the night wandering the streets, unable to go home.

- Lindsay will deal with Kim Kelly, Daniel's tough girlfriend, who seems to have an endless resentment for Lindsay, and will slowly befriend her, having a minor breakthrough in the second episode. This will lead them into an on-again, off-again friendship, in which Lindsay will slowly gain Kim's trust and help Kim deal with her very ill mother and her very abusive father.

- Sam decides he wants to go trick-or-treating on Halloween night. Everyone tries to convince him that he's too old but he doesn't want to admit it. He and the geeks end up having the worst night of their life, being asked "aren't you boys a little old for this" at every house and getting egged and having their candy stolen by older kids. The evening will culminate in Sam being playfully harassed by Lindsay and the freaks, who don't recognize him in his costume.

- Lindsay and the freaks are forced to take a career aptitude test, which tells each freak that he has a less than stellar future ahead, by test standards. Who ends up scoring the highest? Lindsay, of course. But Kim Kelly outscores them all and couldn't be more embarrassed about it.

- Lindsay will ask her freak friend Daniel to drive Sam home from school one day. The two end up getting arrested for shoplifting, a skill Daniel tries to teach Sam. Sam ends up in huge trouble with his father, who also owns a store, and Lindsay suddenly finds her parents meddling in her life, wanting to get her away from the "bad element."

- Sam will have to face a nightmare situation -- his mom gets her teaching license and becomes a substitute teacher in one of his classes. Sam then finds himself caught between two worlds -- the fun world of torturing substitute teachers and the horrible world of having to stick up for your mom.

- Sam will try to help Neal deal with the breakup and eventual divorce of Neal's parents. This will lead Neal into becoming the new brother Sam never wanted, with Neal appearing at the Weir house more and more frequently.

- Lindsay will see her former best friend Millie, in a desperate act to get Lindsay back, try to become a freak. Millie, however, chooses a much less intelligent and more dangerous group and ends up having to be saved by Lindsay, Nick, Daniel and Ken.

- Over the course of the first season, Sam will befriend a new girl in school, Dawn, who is extremely overweight. In Dawn, he will find his perfect intellectual partner. The only problem is, Sam just can't get past the fact that she's ... well ... less than perfect by physical standards. At the same time, Sam becomes just what he didn't want to be -- Cindy's platonic friend -- and is forced listen to all her problems with other boys.

- Sam's fellow geek friend Neal tries to reproduce the sensory-deprivation experiment in "Altered States" by lying in the bathtub in the dark. His mom walks in on him, thinks he's nuts and sends him to a psychiatrist.

- Daniel lets an unlicensed Lindsay drive his Trans Am and eggs her on to drive very fast. They get pulled over and the cop turns out to be her father's best friend, who decides to try and pull a "scared straight" on Lindsay by putting her in jail.

- Sam, worried that Lindsay may be starting to experiment with alcohol, finds out that Lindsay is planning on throwing a keg party. In order to save her, he arranges to have Near Beer substituted for real beer. However, the placebo effect goes into overdrive when the freaks think they're getting drunk anyway and end up "drunkenly" trashing the Weir house.

- Arcing over the first season, we will witness the slow break-up of Daniel and Kim -- the school's "mature" couple -- and see a strange triangle develop between Nick and Lindsay and Daniel and Kim, a drama that threatens to break up the group.

- Sam will help his friend Bill deal with the fact that Bill's hot divorced mother is now dating Mr. Fredricks, the geeks' dreaded gym teacher. Bill will end up trying to turn this to the geeks' advantage, using the relationship to lessen their load in gym class.

- Arcing over the first season, Lindsay and Nick, her best friend among the freaks, will be in a back and forth battle of whether to be friends or something more as she helps Nick deal with the fact that his life plan of becoming a famous drummer very possibly isn't where his future lies.

- The geeks will find their individual homes in the school -- Sam falling in with the drama club, not as an actor but as a set and scenery builder (helped by the fact that he has a huge crush on the pretty new alcoholic drama teacher), Neal joining the swing choir and Bill finding his home with the A/V department.

- Lindsay will attend her first ever "freak party," where a misunderstanding leads to the rumor that she slept with one of the freaks. She's incensed by the fact that this untruth is being spread and the fact that Nick and Daniel now aren't speaking to each other because of it.

- Sam will have to deal with the horrors of mandatory showers, being quite embarrassed about his body and the idea of stripping down in front of others. Sam's nightmare gets worse when the fire alarm goes off and he's forced to run from the showers out to the football field in nothing but his towel (where he is met by the love of his life, Cindy Sanders).

- The geeks become obsessed with the new Pac-Man machine at the local pizza parlor and it becomes their lives for a couple of days. They soon grow tired of it except for Bill, who becomes addicted to it. The geeks have to stage an intervention to get him away from it.

- Sam asks a girl to the Christmas dance who he knows will make out with him. The evening turns disastrous when the girl gets drunk on beer on the way to the dance, throws up at the dance, and then forces Sam to French kiss her after the dance.