South Park is a worldwide-known animated comedy, and has always been subject to various sides of the opinion scale: love it or hate it. South Park has always been known for its dark humour, satirical elements, immature instances and overall crude language. The animation is always impeccable, and is definitely one of the most unique shows available on the television market – but is it worth all the criticism?

A report from the BBC in 2011 states “Germans do have a sense of humour” (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-16318471>). South Park cast an episode which set Chancellor Angela Merkel, the German president and various citizens to invade a school and hold the children at gunpoint – they then reveal the enemy is a robot, and it tells jokes which can be seemed both bad and good. Its release in the US earlier in the year gave the episode multitudes of good reviews, but in Germany, “Germans didn’t see the funny side”. The stereotypes are what offend, Stephen Evans writes, “This show follows a long tradition of the fascination with the German evil genius.” As the show only has a single German pupil, it is expected that the crude show would find some form of stereotype to enforce, and in this case, the pupil is a notorious anti-Semite, and another robot in the show who decided it was good idea to go on a mass murder. An analysis by Die Welt states that the more Germany succeeds, the greater the ridicule against it – “And the more seriously Germans are taken, the more they become a target for ridicule and scorn.”

“Taking South Park Seriously”, a book by Jeffrey Andrew Winestock (<http://books.google.co.uk/books?hl=en&lr=&id=H7OEFij0QkgC&oi=fnd&pg=PR9&dq=South+Park&ots=irP5qzALf8&sig=M-8qZJa2icU8i9cQvlNs4b6OkVk#v=onepage&q=South%20Park&f=false>) comments on how ‘South Park’s carnivalesque humor and the pride that creators Parker and Stone in rejecting official dogma and in mocking “high” culture make South Park so deliciously liberating and important as a popular text’. This comment is purely referring to again, how South Park takes extremes to the fullest, and allows opinions to be conveyed by their audience – it allows an essence of freedom for the viewers as someone may actually have the same opinion of them. However, this again can contribute to how higher authorities i.e. the government or parents, may be against the show – too strong of an opinion can show a negative state of mind and also influence masses and individuals to have radical thinking – something which is thought to be highly negative in society.

A network called SPIN featured prominently in an episode of South Park at one stage – but it wasn’t for the good reason others may think (<http://www.spin.com/articles/south-park-spin-lorde-parody-episode/>). They had written a post about Stan’s dad where he dressed as the singer Lorde, and a lot of fans got annoyed at the concept of it, saying they were ‘overly sensitive and missed the joke entirely’. SPIN agreed that ‘if we criticize it, we ought to be prepared to be fired back upon.’ However is this acceptable? I mean, I understand that if someone is to criticize a show, there will be some feedback, both good and bad. But did the site deserve this controversy? In my opinion, I believe South Park actually shows so many extremes, to the extent that their fans will react to anything that insults their dear ‘safe haven’ of opinions. The shows immaturity allows 12-year-olds to get involved and hate society/people/websites, and is that really what we want to teach the next generation?

South Park has always had a negative connotation in my mind, as the immature humour really doesn’t strike me at all. The show would essentially be for kids if there wasn’t any adult language of humour. The show in its entirety is a more adult-orientated Simpsons, and the entire premise seems like four kids were allowed to be on drugs and their dreams are the show. Part of me questions what the creators were thinking while making the show.
 Personally, I also hate the animation. Cut-out animation does not really work successful with the genre they are orientating the show to. It seems choppy, and while it stays consistent to the original concept in the pilot with full cut-out; upgrading to computer should’ve at least marginally increased the frame rate and made it look a lot more watchable. The gradual decline of the show’s ratings and quality have affected the writing and premise behind it, and the show would be a lot better if the creators stopped shoving their political views down the throats of the viewer, and went back to the original formula that made the show special previously – the adventures of four kids. A funny aspect of the show is the hypocrisy; they constantly make fun of celebrities who speak out about political views yet the show has turned into just that.

However, the show does have some original premise, while the animation is bad; the characters are still exactly the same as the original pilot. Having the characters scanned into the computer animation software, allowed the show to have some mild consistency which can allow a show to look good. Another aspect of the show that I like is the lengths the creators push with their scripts and animations, as it definitely proved that sometimes the extents of a show can be pushed past the TV legal limit, such as including Nazis, or men with testicles the size of their chests – the creators don’t hold back on anything, and the sheer writing can range of absurd to highly sophisticated opinions on current events. You watch TV to entertain yourself, and if you do understand the show and appreciate the kind of humour they use, you can see the writing is actually quite mature with its hidden meaning 0- it essentially shows how idiotic the show is while being geniuses of *some* forms of satire.

In conclusion, the show ‘South Park’ will never have a good place in my heart, but that’s due to my opinion being so heavily against the show. If I just focused on the animation, I would say its average, and I would much more prefer the frame rate to be a lot smoother but the fact it follows the original premise for the pilot. South Park is either a love or hate show. My opinion of the voice acting, is that it’s excellent – the quality is amazing as well as the execution – if South Park had to have one good quality, this would be it.