

University of Pardubice
Faculty of Arts and Philosophy

American Cartoons: Parody and Satire in *South Park* and *The Simpsons*

Jana Brandová

Master thesis

2011

ZADÁNÍ DIPLOMOVÉ PRÁCE

(PROJEKTU, UMĚLECKÉHO DÍLA, UMĚLECKÉHO VÝKONU)

Jméno a příjmení: **Jana BRANDOVÁ**
Osobní číslo: **H05116**
Studijní program: **M7503 Učitelství pro základní školy**
Studijní obor: **Učitelství anglického jazyka**
Název tématu: **Americké kreslené seriály: parodie a satira v South Parku a Simpsonových**
Zadávací katedra: **Katedra anglistiky a amerikanistiky**

Z á s a d y p r o v y p r a c o v á n í :

Studentka s využitím relevantní sekundární literatury nejprve objasní základní pojmy, s nimiž bude pracovat (např. satira, parodie) a bude definovat žánr 'cartoons?', oba zvolené kreslené seriály pak do tohoto kontextu zasadí, svůj výběr zdůvodní a oba též charakterizuje s ohledem na jejich specifika. Jádrem práce bude analýza vybraných epizod zvolených seriálů, v níž se studentka zaměří na některá témata např. státní školství, rasové vztahy, homosexualitu a nelegální přistěhovalectví (témata, která podle průzkumů veřejného mínění nejvíce znepokojují či názorově rozdělují americké občany). Kulturní analýzu studentka opře o relevantní kritické zdroje a své vývody vhodně doloží odkazy na primární díla. Pojedná rovněž o divácké a kritické recepci obou děl a o jejich vlivu. Závěrem studentka shrne svůj rozbor a vysloví obecnější závěry o možnostech, podobách a efektivitě satirických postupů v obou kreslených seriálech.

Rozsah grafických prací:

Rozsah pracovní zprávy:

Forma zpracování diplomové práce: tištěná/elektronická

Seznam odborné literatury:

Attrando, S. Linguistic Teories of Humour. New York:Mounton de Gruyster, 1994 Attrando, S. Humorous Texts: A Semantic and Pragmatic Analysis, New York: Mounton de Gruyster, 2001 Borecký, B. Dialog a satira, Praha:Odeon, 1977 Borecký, V. Odvrácená tvář humoru, Liberec:Dauphin, 1996 Gray, M. A Dictionary of Literary Terms, Harlow:Longman group, 1992 Highet, G. The Anatomy of Satire, New Jersey:Princeton University, 1962 Peck, M. Literary Terms and Criticism, Basingstoke:Palgrave, 2002 Parker,T. Stone, M. South Park, The Scripts:Book One, London:Channel 4 Books, 1999 Raskin, V. Semantic Mechanisms of Humour, Boston:D.Reidel Publishing company,1985 Richter, M. The Best of Modern Humor, New York:Alfred A. Knopb, 1983
www.southparkstudios.com www.thesimpsons.com

Vedoucí diplomové práce:

Mgr. Šárka Bubíková, Ph.D.
Katedra anglistiky a amerikanistiky

Datum zadání diplomové práce: 30. dubna 2009

Termín odevzdání diplomové práce: 31. března 2011



prof. PhDr. Petr Vorel, CSc.
děkan

L.S.



Mgr. Šárka Bubíková, Ph.D.
vedoucí katedry

V Pardubicích dne 30. listopadu 2009

Prohlašuji:

Tuto práci jsem vypracovala samostatně. Veškeré literární prameny a informace, které jsem v práci využila, jsou uvedeny v seznamu použité literatury.

Byl jsem seznámena s tím, že se na moji práci vztahují práva a povinnosti vyplývající ze zákona č. 121/2000 Sb., autorský zákon, zejména se skutečností, že Univerzita Pardubice má právo na uzavření licenční smlouvy o užití této práce jako školního díla podle § 60 odst. 1 autorského zákona, a s tím, že pokud dojde k užití této práce mnou nebo bude poskytnuta licence o užití jinému subjektu, je Univerzita Pardubice oprávněna ode mne požadovat přiměřený příspěvek na úhradu nákladů, které na vytvoření díla vynaložila, a to podle okolností až do jejich skutečné výše.

Souhlasím s prezenčním zpřístupněním své práce v Univerzitní knihovně.

V Pardubicích dne 26. 3. 2011

Jana Brandová

Acknowledgment:

I would like to thank to my supervisor, Mgr. Šárka Bubíková, Ph.D., for her helpful advice and valuable comments.

I would also like to thank to my family and partner for their encouragement, understanding and support. Finally, special thanks go to my uncle Luboš for the provision of audiovisual materials.

Abstract

This thesis focuses on the popular and controversial adult-orientated American cartoons, *South Park* and *The Simpsons*, and the manner in which these cartoons comment on contentious issues which American society faces. The aim of this thesis is to compare and contrast different techniques and methods, especially the employment of different kinds of satire and parody, which are used by these cartoons when commenting on controversial issues, such as public education, homosexuality, race relations and illegal immigration. Further, the thesis tries to prove that despite the medium of animation and commercial success, the cartoons are worthy of analysis and can be regarded as a reliable critique of contemporary America.

Key words

South Park, The Simpsons, adult-orientated cartoons, Horatian satire, Juvenalian satire, parody, public education, homosexuality, race relations, illegal immigration

Souhrn

Tato diplomová práce se zaměřuje na dva populární a kontroverzní americké kreslené seriály pro dospělé, *South Park* a *Simpsonovi*. Především tedy na rozdílný způsob, kterým komentují některá ve Spojených státech hojně diskutovaná témata, jako státní školství, homosexualita, rasové vztahy a nelegální přistěhovalectví. Cílem této práce je porovnat rozdílné metody a techniky používané těmito kreslenými seriály při popisování výše zmíněných ožehavých témat, zejména použití rozdílných druhů satiry a parodie. Dále se tato práce snaží dokázat, že ačkoliv jsou oba seriály velmi komerčně úspěšné a vyjadřují své názory pomocí média animace, zůstávají relevantním zdrojem kritiky současné Ameriky a stojí za analyzování.

Klíčová slova

South Park, Simpsonovi, kreslené seriály pro dospělé, satira, parodie, státní školství, homosexualita, rasové vztahy, nelegální přistěhovalectví

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction.....	1
2. <i>South Park</i> and <i>The Simpsons</i> as adult cartoons.....	3
3. Satire and Parody.....	6
4. Public Education.....	11
4.1 Public education in <i>South Park</i> and <i>The Simpsons</i>	12
5. Homosexuality.....	21
5.1 Homosexuality in <i>South Park</i>	22
5.2 Homosexuality in <i>The Simpsons</i>	26
6. Race relations.....	33
6.1 African Americans.....	34
6.1.1 African Americans in <i>South Park</i>	35
6.1.2 African Americans in <i>The Simpsons</i>	43
7. Illegal immigration.....	50
7.1 Illegal immigration in <i>South Park</i>	51
7.2 Illegal immigration in <i>The Simpsons</i>	57
8. Conclusion.....	64
9. Résumé.....	66
10. Appendix.....	71
11. Bibliography.....	79

1. INTRODUCTION

“Oh, Marge, cartoons don’t have any deep meaning. They are just stupid drawings that give you a cheap laugh.” (Homer Simpson, 8F01, 2:03-2:07)

Most people who are acquainted with current television production have probably seen several episodes of *The Simpsons* and at least one episode of *South Park*. Although these cartoons are American in origin, their appeal is not limited to the United States and they have become popular in many different countries. Besides funny jokes and crude humor, these cartoons provide a critical commentary on long-term and immediate social and/or political problems of American society; and when these cartoons satirize a particular issue, it acknowledges its importance. Either loved or hated, *The Simpsons* and *South Park* have undoubtedly become a part of contemporary culture.

Academics and the general public do not regard shows as *The Simpsons* and *South Park* meaning-bearing and noteworthy. It is the commercial success and the medium of animation which dismiss the cartoons from the class of fiction which is considered to be worthy of analysis. However, these shows promote reflection and discussion about important issues that would otherwise be passed in silence. In fact, the shows’ mass appeal and diverse audience is a beneficial aspect, since the truths they convey are offered to a substantial number of people. The interpretation of the shows of course depends on the viewers’ presuppositions. Savage, Jr. claims, “If scholars and critics approach cartoons with the assumption that the medium is not capable of cultural critique, they set out on the wrong interpretive course from the beginning and so are less likely to get it.” (Savage, Jr. 2004, 219)

This thesis tries to prove that, although animated and commercially successful, *The Simpsons* and *South Park* provide relevant cultural critiques of America and can be taken seriously. Furthermore, the thesis explores and describes different techniques and methods of commenting on salient issues; primarily, the manner in which the cartoons use satire and parody.

The theoretical part offers a brief account of the development of the genre cartoon as a genre and contextualizes both shows. *The Simpsons* and *South Park* are compared and contrasted from several perspectives, such as target audience or production process.

The following chapter of the theoretical part covers the definitions of satire and parody proposed by various authors, and it also examines mutual relationship between these two concepts.

The practical part is divided into four chapters. The chapters represent contentious issues which have been endlessly discussed by the American public and authorities, such as public education, homosexuality, race relations and illegal immigration. The chapters include an introduction which seeks to briefly outline the cultural background of each topic. Further, a thorough analysis of particular episodes of both cartoons is conducted with respect to the topic of the chapter. Finally, a detailed comparison of the shows' employment of satire and parody is performed, and a conclusion about the effectiveness of the critique is drawn.

Personally, I disagree with the academics and scholars who indentify with Homer's quotation cited above. I believe that both *The Simpsons* and *South Park* offer more than meaningless jokes and juvenile vulgarity. To be able to see the clever satire and social commentary, one has to penetrate the rough surface. As I come from a different cultural background than the creators of *The Simpsons* and *South Park*, the fact that my interpretation of satire and parody in these cartoons does not have to correspond with the authors' intentions, must be taken into consideration. However, I systematically examined numerous sources whose authors are American; therefore, I believe my analysis can be regarded as reasonably objective.

2. SOUTH PARK AND THE SIMPSONS AS ADULT CARTOONS

The word *cartoon* conveys various meanings. As stated by Payne and Barbera, the word comes from the Italian “cartone” and the French “carton”, both meaning cardboard; and denotes a drawing for a picture or design intended to be transferred. (Payne, Barbera, 2010, 312) *Encyclopedia Britannica* similarly defines cartoon as “a sketch or drawing originally used as a pattern for graphic art forms, which gradually became a pictorial parody utilizing caricature and humor, and which is today primarily used for conveying political commentary and for social comedy and visual wit in magazines.” (Kehr, 2011)

The term cartoon is also connected with audio-visual media, primarily with television. *Encyclopedia Britannica* describes the word from this perspective as “a short, hand-drawn film for the cinema or television, which features some kind of story or plot.” (Kehr, 2011) *Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary* defines the term as a film using characters and images which are drawn rather than real, and which is usually amusing. Likewise, *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* states that cartoon is a short film that is made by photographing a series of drawings.

While discussing *South Park* and *The Simpsons* as cartoons, it is necessary to distinguish them from Saturday morning cartoons since they create a different branch of television animation. The basic difference lies in the target audience. More specifically, *South Park* and *The Simpsons* are primarily adult-orientated whereas Saturday morning cartoons are fully intended for children. In addition, *South Park* and *The Simpsons* actively pursue controversy. This feature was, according to Stabile and Harrison, a reason for “constant demonizing” of these cartoons in the 1990s. (Stabile, Harrison, 2003, 9) Last but not least, the aforementioned cartoons classify as prime-time animation and, unlike Saturday morning cartoons, are aired in the programming slot between 8 p.m. and 10 p.m.

Neither of cartoons did simply emerge out of nowhere. Rather, they developed out of and participate in the tradition of television animation. Mullen considers *The Simpsons* as a remarkable addition to U.S. prime-time television since its debut on the Fox network in 1989. She claims: “The cartoon brought a degree of social satire seldom seen in the mainstream media, and established a popular prime-time programming trend for the 1990s. Yet the program has not been the first of its kind and it owes its

inspiration to a much earlier effort in television animation: Hanna-Barbera's animated sitcom *The Flintstones*." (Mullen, 2004, 63) Similarly, Weinstock notes that *South Park*, which premiered in 1997 on Comedy Central, reflects the influence of the tradition of television animation. He specifies that much of the terrain that *South Park* now occupies as a prime-time cartoon for adults was initially surveyed by pioneering programs such as *The Flintstones*. (Weinstock, 2008, 88) Stabile and Harrison argue: "Both shows, thanks to their cartoon element, were able to address topics and issues that live sitcoms could not, and, therefore, they could easily function as a wider cultural critique." (Stabile, Harrison, 2003, 9)

Although both *South Park* and *The Simpsons* found inspiration in the same prime-time cartoon, they differ in many aspects. Firstly, it is the target audience. Both of them are adult-orientated, since they include a good portion of satire and parody. However, *The Simpsons* are also extremely popular as children's entertainment. Mullen suggests that not only does *Simpsons*-licensed merchandise continue to be aimed at children but the show with its "bright colors, comical characters and slapstick comedy" resembles the Saturday morning programming menu, and has a virtually guaranteed appeal to young viewers. (Mullen, 2004, 78-81) On the contrary, *South Park* has explicitly defined itself as an adult-cartoon since its premiere. Parker and Stone, its authors, have routinely insisted that *South Park* is not a children's show because it is on at 10 o'clock at night and even merchandizing is not aimed at children. (quoted in Becker, 2008, 149-150)

Secondly, the plot of the cartoons involves a different type of main characters. Becker states that *South Park*, unlike *The Simpsons* in which central narrative tensions are frequently resolved by and in the family, revolves its plot around four children who usually have to settle issues on their own since they rely on each other more than on their parents. (Becker, 2008, 159) By contrast, as described in Cantor, *The Simpsons* deals centrally with the family and although the cartoon mocks certain aspects of family life, it usually ends up celebrating the nuclear family as an institution. (Cantor, 2001, 162-163)

Thirdly, the cartoons differ in their production processes. As stated in *The Simpsons and Philosophy*, it takes 300 people 8 months, at a cost of 1.5 million dollars, to create a single episode of *The Simpsons*. (Irwin et al., 2001, 1) Whereas the

production process of *South Park*, as described by Sienkiewicz and Marx, is not so complex. The cartoon is produced on a weekly production schedule and Parker, with nominal support from a writing staff, writes every script, and he and Stone voice nearly every character. Therefore, one episode costs only 250,000 dollars. (Sienkiewicz and Marx, 2009, 10-13) A short production schedule and relatively sparse writing staff result in the authors' effective control over the show and *South Park's* flexibility in commenting on contemporaneous political and social issues.

Last but not least, the cartoons significantly vary in the approach to a cultural critique of America. *The Simpsons* adopts a more conciliatory tone while adverting to vice and folly in American society, whereas *South Park* generally maintains darker tone in addressing social evil. Savage aptly describes, "*South Park* definitely pushes the envelope farther than *The Simpsons*, especially regarding racial, ethnic, and sexual humor." (Savage, 2004, 220) The degree to which these cartoons differ in commenting on controversial issues is critically assessed in the practical part of the thesis.

On the whole, both *South Park* and *The Simpsons* rank among adult-orientated cartoons which provide insightful commentary on various social issues. They both found inspiration in the tradition of prime-time animation which originated in the 1960s, and they have also incorporated their own distinct features into this genre. Although they share some characteristics, such as wide popularity and pursuit of controversy, they differ in various aspects including the target audience, main characters, production process and the tone of satirical comments.

3. SATIRE AND PARODY

All of the examined definitions agree that there would be no satire if there was no vice and folly in the society. Ian Jack states: “Satire is born of the instinct to protest; it is protest become art [sic].” (quoted in Cuddon, 1979, 599) Definitions found in several dictionaries of literary terms are almost identical. According to Gray’s *Dictionary of Literary Terms* satire is: “Literature which exhibits or examines vice and folly and makes them appear ridiculous or contemptible. It uses laughter to attack its objects, rather than for mere evocation of mirth or pleasure.” (Gray, 1992, 255) *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms* similarly defines satire as: “A mode of writing that exposes the failings of individuals, institutions, or societies to ridicule and scorn.” (Baldick, 2001, 228) Peck and Coyle add that satire not only does mock errant individuals and the folly of society but does it with the purpose to correct conduct. (Peck, Coyle, 2002, 170) As the definitions suggest, satire is a kind of a guardian of moral standards and values. And this characteristic is one of the most important differences between satire and comedy. Gray describes: “Satire differs from the comic in having a purpose; the purpose of satire is that it is directed against a person or a type, and it is usually morally censorious.” (Gray, 1992, 255) The same notion could be found in Peck and Coyle when they state that even though satire is a form of comic writing, the satirist wishes to correct conduct, while comedy takes the view that all human conduct is absurd. (Peck, Coyle, 2002, 170) Of course, the fact that the distinction between comedy and satire is not always clear must be taken into consideration.

Next question which rises is – how does a satirist create satire? Peck and Coyle answer as follows: “The common feature of all satirical works is that they present a picture of people in society, and by exaggerating or distorting the picture draw attention to how people often act in an outrageous and absurd manner.” (Peck, Coyle, 2002, 170) Highet claims that elements which create satire are variety, down-to-earth unsophistication, coarseness, humor, mimicry, and a general feeling of devil-may-care nonchalance. (Highet, 1962, 233)

Satire can vary in its tone and it depends on the author whether they want to bitterly criticize the problem or point it up in an amusing way. *A Dictionary of Literary*

Terms by Gray distinguishes two kinds of satire. Firstly, it is Horatian satire which is described as urbane and witty, and which tends to enjoy rather than loathe human follies. Secondly, Juvenalian satire is distinguished; this type of satire is seriously moral and scourges mankind for its errors. (Gray, 1992, 256) Highet similarly describes two kinds of satire. Horatian, which tells the truth with a smile, so that it will not repel but cure foolish and blind mankind; and Juvenalian, which aims to punish and destroy mankind for its follies. (Highet, 1962, 235) Beckson and Ganz define Horatian satire as: “A gentle scoffing at man’s foibles.” (Beckson and Ganz, 1975, 223-224) Whereas its counterpart, Juvenalian satire, is defined as: “A violent denunciation severe in its reaction and expressing its moral displeasure with trenchant force.” (ibid) Abrams likewise distinguishes between Horatian and Juvenalian satire. The former is described as “urbane, witty and tolerant and attempting to evoke a wry smile at human failings and absurdities.” The latter is defined as “seriously moral, decrying modes of vice and error in order to evoke contempt and moral indignation at aberrations of humanity.” (Abrams, 1999, 276) As suggested above, it depends on the author which of these kinds they will use; whether they have decided to tell the truth with a smile and, therefore, to use Horatian satire or whether they will wound and punish while telling the truth using Juvenalian satire.

The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms suggests one more division of satire. Firstly, formal or direct satire is distinguished; in this kind of satire the writer directly addresses the reader with a satiric comment. Its counterpart is indirect satire, which is usually found in plays and novels and allow the audience or the readers to draw their own conclusions from the actions of the characters. (Baldick, 2001, 228)

As regards the cartoons *South Park* and *The Simpsons*, they both fulfill the criteria for satirical works as described by Peck and Coyle, Gray and Highet. The cartoons are also examples of indirect satire since their creators do not directly address the audience. What is more, it is the audience itself which has to read between the lines and draw their own conclusions from what they can observe. A more detailed analysis of the impact of the cartoons on the audience and the extent to which these cartoons fulfill the criteria for satirical works is the topic of the thesis.

Swift’s once said: “Satire is a sort of glass wherein beholders do generally discover everybody’s face but their own (...)” (Cuddon, 1979, 598) The definitions of

satire provided above confirm his quote. Satire is a powerful tool for reflecting on problems of society. Therefore, it is often used by creators of *South Park* and *The Simpsons*, as they wish to comment on the world around us. Since the tone of satire may vary from funny amusement to bitter criticism the episodes of these cartoons also vary. Some of them are darker than the others, some of them are simply amusing, yet they always offer the mirror reflection of our society's behavior and deeds.

A Dictionary of Literary Terms defines the term parody as: "An imitation of a specific work of literature (prose or verse) or style devised so as to ridicule its characteristics features." (Gray, 1992, 210) Cuddon describes parody as: "The imitative use of the words, style, attitude, tone and ideas of an author in such a way as to make them ridiculous." (Cuddon, 1979, 483) Both Gray and Cuddon agree that an imitation which is a crucial tool for parody is applied to both ideas of an author and their style. On the contrary, Baldick in *The Concise Dictionary of Literary Terms* limits the target of a mocking imitation, i.e. parody, only to the style of a literary work. (Baldick, 2001, 185)

Parody is not a simple imitation. Highet suggests: "If the imitation pleases the audience with the accuracy and leaves them unshaken in their admiration of the original, then it is no parody. If it at least slightly wounds the original, pointing out faults and emphasizing weaknesses, then it is parody. Parody is an imitation which through distortion and exaggeration evokes amusement, derision and scorn." (Highet, 1962, 68) As regards methods that are commonly used for creating parody; not a simple imitation, the definitions in the dictionaries of literary terms agree that exaggeration of certain traits or the application of a serious tone to an absurd subject rank among them. (Gray, 1992, 210) (Cuddon, 1979, 483) To accomplish parody well an author has to be imaginative and creative. Cuddon says, "A subtle balance between close resemblance to the original and a deliberate distortion of its principal characteristics is essential." (Cuddon, 1979, 483)

In *The Anatomy of Satire*, Highet distinguishes between two main types of parodies; "parody of form, i.e. formal parody", and "parody of content, i.e. material parody." The former is based on an external resemblance between the original and its parodic copy. The latter is not concerned with the form of the original and leaves the form unaltered,

while the thought within it is made “hideously inappropriate to the form or comically distorted.” (Highet, 1962, 69-80) He adds that it is difficult to draw the distinction between formal and material parody since the form and matter are so closely connected. Therefore, he continues, it is often unwise to dissociate them. (Highet, 1962, 80) Mocná suggests another division of parody. She distinguishes between humoristic and satirical parody. The former is described as a witty and playful imitation which is not supposed to scorn its original. The latter mocks moral attitudes and a value system of the original. In addition, she describes three kinds of parody according to a type of parodied original. Firstly, it is parody of a particular literary genre. Secondly, she defines parody of particular artistic work. And, thirdly, it is parody of an author’s individual style. (Mocná, 2004 441, my translation)

When discussing parody, satire cannot be omitted. Their mutual relationship is very close and the distinction between parody and satire is not always clear. The literature examined provided several descriptions of their mutual relationship. According to Cuddon, parody is: “A branch of satire and a kind of satirical mimicry.” (Cuddon, 1979, 483) *The Anatomy of Satire* says: “Parody is one of the most delightful forms of satire, one of the most natural, perhaps the most satisfying, and often most effective.” (Highet, 1962, 67) Finally, *The Concise Dictionary of Literary Terms* adds: “Parody is related to satire in its punishment of eccentricities.” (Baldick, 2001, 185) All of the definitions describe parody as a certain branch or kind of satire. They see satire as a superordinate category which includes parody as a subordinate part of this category. Highet suggests that parody is a “masked servant” of satire and when the mimic copies the original and exaggerates the faults, so that the audience laughs with a certain malicious delight, and admires the original a little less than it did before, then the act is parody, and the effect it produces is the effect of satire. (Highet, 1962, 68) His suggestion supports the opinion that parody is a process and satire is a goal. The differentiation between parody and satire is sometimes obscure and difficult to state since both of them aim to ridicule vice and folly.

To conclude, parody is a mocking imitation and it is an indispensable tool for satirizing words, thoughts and people in society. “Nevertheless, parody is not merely distortion; and mere distortion is not satire.” (Highet, 1962, 67) Well accomplished parody makes the audience laugh and think at the same time. Since to distinguish

clearly between parody and satire is very difficult – especially in the work of visual art - I will mostly discuss the two cartoons as satirical, unless there is something that can be pointed out as parody of a particular film genre, form or technique.

4. PUBLIC EDUCATION

Formal education provided by public schools is an endlessly debated subject in the United States. Public and academic debates revolve especially around its quality. Since equality of opportunity – which includes equal opportunity to learn – is one of the nation’s basic values, the discussion whether public schools are able to provide students with education comparable to education provided by private schools continues. Persell states that both conservatives and liberals agree that education is in trouble and the educational system has to be recuperated. (Persell, 1992, 283) As follows from the results of a PDK/Gallup poll, Americans continue to believe that the nation’s public schools are performing poorly and have graded public educational system a C¹ or below for the 25 years PDK/Gallup has been asking about it. On the other hand, more than three-quarters of parents give their own child’s school an A or a B. (Lopez, 2010) Given this, it is apparent that public education at the national level inspires trust neither among politicians nor public.

One of the factors which contributes to the vast differences in the quality of education in public schools is the manner in which schools are funded. Payne and Biddle describe: “The United States differs from almost every other industrialized nation since it funds the bulk of public education through local taxes. As a result, funding for public schools in the country varies sharply from wealthy to impoverished communities.” (Payne, Biddle, 1999, 4) Crandall claims that on account of the way schools are funded, poorer school districts have less tax money to spend on education, so they have older buildings with less modern equipment. (Crandall et al., 1997, 175) Gabaccia adds that urban inner-city schools are in sharp contrast with public schools in the suburbs since the former struggle with a chronic shortage of money and a general apathy toward education among students and parents alike. (Gabaccia, 2002, 248)

Another essential element which influences the quality of education is school personnel. Teachers are regarded as the crucial factor in improving students’ performance and education as a whole. According to a Gallup poll, most Americans believe that the key to improvement of formal education in the United States is

¹ grades A, B, C, D or FAIL

recruiting higher-quality teachers who are better educated, more involved and more caring. (Jones, 2009) Unfortunately, recruiting high quality teachers poses a complicated problem for schools. In general, it is difficult to attract academically talented people to teaching. Persell claims, “If teaching is to become an attractive occupation, it needs to be a well-paid career, with professional training, responsibility and respect.” (Persell, 1992, 293) He adds that although Americans believe teachers’ salaries should be increased they are resistant to higher taxes which could help to solve this problem. (ibid)

4.1 PUBLIC EDUCATION IN *SOUTH PARK* AND *THE SIMPSONS*

Formal education is one of the themes which are addressed in both cartoons. This theme is discussed from several points of view including critique of publicly funded schools and the incompetence and apathy of school staff and students. Since the plot of both *South Park* and *The Simpsons* involves schoolchildren’s lives, it is not surprising that the cartoons include numerous allusions to education and the problems it faces.

Critical comments on inadequate resources of public schools which are located in poorer school districts are made by frequent references to the schools in South Park and Springfield. Both Springfield Elementary and South Park Elementary are set in the lower-middle-class area and struggle with a lack of money which, in *The Simpsons*, results in cafeteria food made from circus animals or shredded newspaper and, in *South Park*, it causes hiring unemployed Mexicans as Math teachers. (2F19, 1106)

The Simpsons adverts to a lack of money by virtue of comparison with other richer schools, especially with Shelbyville Elementary. In the episode “The PTA Disbands,” the Springfield Elementary goes on a school trip and the school bus is in a terrible condition with its back bumper loose and holes in a floorboard. In addition, the students must stop the bus by holding their jackets out of the windows since the breaks are not working. Having reached Fort Springfield, Principal Skinner forces the students to watch the tour of the fort from behind a fence since he cannot afford to pay the admission. This is in a sharp contrast with Shelbyville Elementary whose principal is

able to pay the admission and he leaves the tour guide a tip. Moreover, the school bus of Shelbyville Elementary is entirely new. (2F19)

Unlike *The Simpsons*, *South Park* infrequently alludes to the issue of under-funded public schools by virtue of critical comments on the local school. However, the cartoon does reflect on that problem, for instance in the episode “Eek, a Penis!” Eric Cartman is appointed to teach math in an inner-city high school. The school building is old, covered with graffiti, and students, the predominantly Hispanics and African-Americans, have to go through a metal detector before being allowed to the building. They smoke, drink, fight and do not respect their teachers. Having been met by an initial refusal of students, Eric Cartman, who changed his name to Mr. Cartmenez, eventually manages to teach those underprivileged students various methods of cheating, which he claims are used by white people. (1205) The episode is a hilarious parody on a 1988 American drama film *Stand and Deliver*. Eric Cartman dresses and talks like the math teacher Jaime Escalante who teaches calculus in an urban high school. Not only does Cartman parody Escalante’s appearance but he also parodies his effort to teach inner-city students to succeed in life since Mr. Cartmenez teaches his students to cheat. The episode also portrays actual problems which this type of school usually faces. Gabaccia describes: “Inner-city schools are usually crowded, old and poorly staffed, maintaining order is often a higher priority than teaching, and they struggle with a lack of money, students’ deprived family background and the high levels of cynicism and despair found among teachers and students alike.” (Gabaccia, 2002, 248) Crandall adds that in schools where African-Americans and other minorities are the majority more than half the students come from low-income homes and it is doubtful whether these schools offer equal opportunity to learn. (Crandall et al., 1997, 179) The episode accurately depicts impoverished neighborhood suffering from apathy toward education, thus commenting on the issue of public education and its problematic funding.

On the whole, both cartoons provide the audience with satire on public schools and their limited financial resources. However, the cartoons choose different ways of expressing their attitudes toward this issue. While *The Simpsons* presents the critique of under-funded public education mainly by means of commentaries on Springfield

Elementary and its affairs, *South Park* rarely uses the local school to allude to the aforementioned issue.

As far as the theme of formal education is concerned, both cartoons focus their attention mostly on satirizing the stereotype of a teacher. In general, the fixed idea about teachers, i.e. the stereotype of a teacher, is not positive in the Western cultural context. As written in *Stereotyping: "Teacher" and "Good Teacher" Characteristics*: “Results indicated totally negative stereotypes for the concept ‘teacher.’ Seventy-five percent of the students identified teachers as mean. Other terms were boring, unemotional, cold, humorless, and uncaring.” (Wright, 2010) *Encyclopedia Britannica* summarizes: “The aphorism attributed to George Bernard Shaw, ‘He who can, does; he who cannot, teaches,’ appears to have wide credence among intellectuals and educated groups. Primary and secondary teaching is often seen as a refuge for mediocre people who are industrious but unimaginative and uncreative.” (Havighurst, 2010) In other words, the stereotype of a teacher describes someone incompetent and unambitious, whose university education is insufficient, who is tired of their duties and who is not interested in their students.

In *South Park*, satire on a stereotype of a teacher is taken to extremes in the character of Mr. Garrison. Mr. Garrison has a rather complicated personality. In the early seasons, Mr. Garrison was depicted as a closet homosexual who constantly held a puppet called Mr. Hat expressing his repressed sexuality this way. Eventually, Mr. Garrison came to terms with his homosexuality and developed a same-sex relationship with Mr. Slave. (412) After that, Mr. Garrison learned that he was feeling like a woman and underwent a sex reassignment surgery resulting in his turning into Mrs. Garrison. (901) Unsurprisingly, only few men were interested in having an affair with Mrs. Garrison, therefore, she decided to become a lesbian. (1106) Finally, Mrs. Garrison repented of the sex reassignment surgery and had another genital reconstruction surgery changing herself back to being Mr. Garrison. (1205)

All of these changes and crises of identity influence Mr. Garrison’s performance in the classroom. In the episode “The Death Camp of Tolerance” Mr. Garrison and Mr. Slave act inappropriately in front of the students in order to be dismissed for being

homosexuals and thus being able to sue the school for millions of dollars. (see fig. 1 in the appendix)

MR. GARRISON: I've found the new teacher's assistant, say hello to Mr. Slave. So that's Mr. Slave the teacher's assistant or as I like to write for short the teacher's ass.
MR. SLAVE: Oh, Jesus Christ. (614, 2:53-3:12)

Then Mr. Garrison spans Mr. Slave on the bottom and gags him. Another example of his/her inappropriate behavior in the classroom can be found in the episode "D-Yikes!" Mrs. Garrison is distraught over her relationships with men and loses control of herself.

MRS. GARRISON: Everyone sit down and shut the fuck up! God damn it! Stupid men, they are all the same.
KYLE: Oh God, here we go again.
MRS. GARRISON: All men care about is sex. (...) You boys make me sick. I'm assigning you weekend homework. You're going to read Hemingway's book *The Old Man and the Sea*. (...) If you don't have the essay written on Monday then you will fail. Is that clear? (1106, 1:00-2:08)

The examples listed above illustrate that not only professional competence of a teacher but also a balanced personality of a teacher is essential for working in the teaching profession. Lew confirms this notion claiming that a teacher's personality influences the behavior of the teacher in diverse ways, such as interaction with students, and is a significant variable in the teaching-learning process. He adds: "The teacher whose personality is able to create and maintain comfortable and motivating classroom environment is a desirable one." (Lew, 1977, 10) The authors of *South Park* use the character of Mr. Garrison to criticize that some people with unsolved personal problems teach and negatively influence their students. The depiction of Mr. Garrison as a pervert who uses a puppet to express his gay feelings and later he changes his sex and sexual orientation twice, bitterly satirizes the stereotype of the neurotic teacher who projects his or her personal problems to the students.

Besides being mentally unstable, Mr. Garrison also seems to lack professional competence. Rennie adversely comments: "Mr. Garrison rarely succeeds in teaching the boys much of anything. In fact, classroom practices and curricular goals are almost totally unsuccessful in the world of *South Park*." (Rennie, 2008, 195) Weinstock agrees, describing Mr. Garrison as a teacher who appears to have a split personality and

provides inaccurate, inappropriate, or useless information in his lectures. (Weinstock, 2008, 85) Young adds: “Many people of South Park believe they are teaching the children wisdom and virtue yet they seem to make the children worse, not better. For example, Mr. Garrison teaches the children life lessons from re-runs of *Barnaby Jones*.” (Young, 2007, 7) In “Roger Ebert Should Lay off the Fatty Foods” students are forced to watch *Barnaby Jones* for a week since this detective series is presented as a cultural text to be studied.

MR. GARRISON: Okay, children, what do you think Barnaby Jones meant when he said that this is not a victimless crime? Anybody? Children, were you paying attention?!

KYLE: Mr. Garrison, we’ve been watching Barnaby Jones repeats for eight days now. It’s hard to keep paying attention.

MR. GARRISON: Oh, well, excuse me, Kyle! Why don’t you just forget what Barnaby Jones has to say? Why don’t you not pay attention to Barnaby Jones and then let’s see how far you get in society?! Okay, Stanley, why don’t you tell us how Barnaby Jones knew the poison was in the milk?

STAN: Can’t we just be like normal third-graders for a little while?

MR. GARRISON: Oh, and what do you consider normal?

(211, 0:47-1:13)

In the same episode Mr. Garrison is supposed to explain the class what haiku is. Since he lacks professional competence and content knowledge, students are given an inadequate explanation.

MR. GARRISON: Okay, children, today we're going to learn all about Japanese poems called haiku. A haiku is just like a normal American poem, except that it doesn't rhyme, and it's totally stupid.

(211, 7:42-7:48)

These examples depict Mr. Garrison’s utter incompetence for teaching. He lacks content knowledge, he does not follow curricular goals and he confuses his students. Furthermore, his insufficient academic ability widens the already present gap between him and his students, since they cannot respect him for being a professional. However, his students obey him because they are afraid of him as he repeatedly threatens them with violence. When he demands excellent performance of his students, he uses fear to motivate them. (see fig. 2 in the appendix)

MR. GARRISON: You have to give your oral report to the entire South Park Town Committee tomorrow! And if it doesn't kick ass, and you make me look bad, Mr. Hat is gonna smack you bitches up! (217, 2:00-2:08)

Given this, it is apparent that his authority is based on fear rather than respect. This learning environment is not favorable for the students and causes their negative attitude toward school. By pointing out Mr. Garrison's professional incompetence including his controversial teaching styles and relationship toward his students, *South Park* bitterly satirizes one of the aspects of a stereotype of a teacher – a teacher whose knowledge is rather limited and who is, as a result, despised by students.

Mrs. Krabappel is a fourth grade teacher at Springfield Elementary. She is divorced and she is always willing to have an affair with the opposite sex. Her desperation has led to several unlikely relationships, including one with the principal of the school Seymour Skinner. After many years spent at Springfield Elementary, she has become jaded, yet she tries her best to perform her job as adequately as possible. (The Simpsons, 2010)

Her apathy influences the way she behaves toward the students of Springfield Elementary. She frequently makes ironic and bitter comments and she seems to have lost optimism and hope when it comes to her students' future. In "Bart the Genius" she hands out the IQ tests (see fig. 3 in the appendix):

MRS. KRABAPPEL: Now, don't you worry, class. These tests will have no effect on your grades. They merely determine your future status and financial success. [Reaches Bart] If any.... (7G02, 4:17-4:27)

Another illustrative example of her inappropriate behavior toward her students might be found in the episode "Bart's Friend Falls in Love" in which she introduces a new student to the class.

MRS. KRABAPPEL: I'm sure this is a little scary for you, dear.

SAMANTHA: Uh huh.

MRS. KRABAPPEL: So, why don't you stand up in front of the class and tell us about yourself. I'll be grading you on grammar and poise.
(8F22, 4:40-4:46)

Besides her uncaring relationship to her students, she has also adopted a negative attitude toward her profession. Her lack of enthusiasm for teaching is graphically

illustrated in the episode “Special Edna” in which she is nominated for the Teacher of the Year award. When she learns that the winner receives enough money so he or she does not have to teach for the rest of their life, she is extremely excited and shouts “Yeah!” (EABF02, 16:23-16:25) This scene mocks the lack of dedication to teaching profession which is generally attributed to teachers and which also creates one of the aspects of a stereotype of a teacher.

As regards her behavior to the students and her attitude toward her job, the character of Edna playfully satirizes the stereotypical image of an ironic, uninvolved teacher who suffers from the burnout syndrome and, as a result, does not motivate students. Actually, this stereotypical image seems to be no longer valid since, as follows from the results of a PDK/Gallup poll, a strong majority of American adults have trust and confidence in the nation’s public school teachers. (Mendes, 2010)

Mrs. Krabappel’s personal life occasionally complicates the performance of her job as she is seen heartbroken and emotionally disturbed during lessons in front of her students. Since she is divorced and lonely she demands attention of her students and she sometimes seems to have a fixation on them. In the episode “Bart the Lover”, she tries to prevent the students from leaving the classroom because she does not want to be alone:

MRS. KRABAPPEL: If anyone wants to learn more about zinc, they're welcome to stay. We can talk about anything. I'll do your homework for you? (8F16, 1:30-1:40)

Later in the same episode, she cries in front of Bart, telling him he is the closest thing to a man in her life, which she finds really depressing. In the episode “Special Edna”, her lover, the principal of the school Seymour Skinner, cancels their date and she is left in the classroom with Bart, who is held in detention. (see fig. 4 in the appendix)

BART: He is a wiener, Mrs. K. Just say the word and his desk is full of boogers.

MRS. KRABAPPEL: (sobbing) That’s sweet of you. But if I lost Seymour who else is there?

BART: Since we are both free why don’t you and me hit the town?

MRS. KRABAPPEL: A pity date from a ten year old? I’ll take it. (EABF02 5:42-6:14)

Similarly to Mr. Garrison, Mrs. Krabappel fails to control her emotions and her personal problems affect her performance in the classroom. On the other hand, she is mostly able to control herself in front of the whole class and she often cries only in front of Bart who becomes her confidant even though they are traditional enemies. In addition, her personal problems are not as shocking and confusing for the students as Mr. Garrison's ones. The above cited dialog aptly describes the true nature of the relationship between Mrs. Krabappel and Bart; although they seem not to like each other, they are able to support each other in a crisis situation.

The characters of the teachers in both *South Park* and *The Simpsons* meet the criteria for a satirical work. The impact of their personal problems on performing their jobs and the nature of these problems are, especially in the case of Mr. Garrison, widely exaggerated, which creates satirical effect and thus fulfills the description of satire by Peck and Coyle. In addition, the characters of Mr. Garrison and Mrs. Krabappel are used to expose failings of individuals, i.e. teachers, and institutions, i.e. public schools, to ridicule and scorn, which satisfies criteria for satire stated by Baldick. Since the authors of the cartoons use laughter to attack the characters of the teachers, the episodes discussed also meet the definition of satire by Gray.

Although both cartoons can be described as satirical when addressing the issue of public education, they differ in types of satire used. As regards the types of satire defined by Gray, *South Park* and *The Simpsons* do not employ the same type while commenting on the aforementioned issue through the characters of the teachers. The character of Mr. Garrison is depicted by virtue of Juvenalian satire since the authors of *South Park* use outrage, savage ridicule and sarcasm while describing Mr. Garrison's complicated personality and mocking his bizarre and pointless lessons. On the other hand, the character of Mrs. Krabappel is an example of Horatian satire, since the authors of *The Simpsons* playfully use the exaggerated image of a mean and resigned teacher to criticize the American public school system. Unlike Mr. Garrison's negative qualities, Mrs. Krabappel's weaknesses are depicted in a funny way using mild and light-hearted humor, which tends to exploit her follies rather than humiliate her. Similarly, the character of Mrs. Krabappel is more likely to evoke a wry smile rather than moral indignation. On the contrary, the character of Mr. Garrison certainly evokes contempt,

since his attitude to the teaching profession is unacceptable. Therefore, it can be stated, that the depiction of Mrs. Krabappel satisfies the criteria for Horatian satire and her male counterpart, Mr. Garrison, meets requirements for Juvenalian satire, as defined by Abrams. As far as the division of satire suggested by Baldick is concerned, it can be concluded that both cartoons use exclusively indirect satire, since the audience is required to recognize satire from the actions of the characters.

The only example of parody is the episode “Eek, a penis!” which parodies the film *Stand and Deliver*. Since the character of Mr. Cartmenez imitates and distorts the character of Jaime Escalante and this distortion evokes amusement, the episode thus fulfills the criteria for parody suggested by Highet. Similarly, as the exaggeration of Jaime Escalante’s certain traits, such as his accent and his looks, is present; it can be stated that the episode also meets the definition of parody by Gray and Cuddon. According to Highet’s division of parody, the aforementioned episode can be defined as material parody, since it is the content, not the form, which is distorted. As regards the types of parody suggested by Mocná, the episode can be described as parody of a particular artistic work. In addition, the episode meets the requirements for satirical parody since it mocks education of inner-city students depicted in the film.

To sum up, Rennie suggests, “*South Park* presents an important critique of the contemporary public education and its role in youth culture. It also ridicules public schooling’s inability to contribute meaningfully to major aspects of development of young people.” (Rennie, 2008, 195-201) The character of Mr. Garrison is one of the key elements in this critique since he embodies many problems which American public school system struggles with. Similarly, the character of Mrs. Krabappel is used to point out inappropriate behavior and attitude which often occurs at schools. On the other hand, her character is depicted not as negatively as the character of Mr. Garrison. Cantor agrees when claiming that Mrs. Krabappel may not be a perfect educator, but when Homer and Marge need to talk to her she is readily accessible and willing to help. (Cantor, 173, 2001) Given this, it might be concluded that both cartoons offer implicit critique of public education, yet they differ in harshness with which they present it.

5. HOMOSEXUALITY

In *Leaving Springfield*, Henry claims:

Until quite recently, gay life and homosexuality was not widely reflected in America's popular arts including television, cinema and music. If it was, it often portrayed gayness as a problem to be solved. During the 1980s and the conservative zeitgeist of Regan years, the erasure of homosexuality from everyday life led to the erasure of gayness within the television world. However, the situation changed and during the 1990s gay-friendly entertainment stopped being neglected. (Henry, 2004, 227-228)

People's opinions on homosexuality changed similarly. According to a Gallup poll, which has been chronicling important changes in public attitudes about homosexuality and gay rights over the past quarter century, in 1982, 34 percent of respondents agreed that homosexuality is an acceptable alternative life style, in 1996, it was 44 percent of respondents and in 2008, it was 57 percent of respondents. Americans' support for the moral acceptability of gay and lesbian relations crossed the symbolic 50-percent threshold in 2010 with only 43 percent of respondents saying such relations are not morally acceptable. (Saad, 2008) The results from the 1990s are not available but one can imagine that the percentage of people who considered homosexual relations as morally acceptable would not definitely be higher than 50 percent, since only 40 percent of respondents considered them as morally acceptable in 2001. Despite being more tolerant toward homosexuals in the 1990s compared to 1980s, American society still considered homosexuality as a controversial topic and there were not so many shows on television which addressed this issue. (Alberti, 2004, 228)

The Simpsons and *South Park* have both reflected on the attitudes toward homosexuality through several homosexual characters in the series and by incorporating homosexual themes into several episodes.

The first episode which directly engages the topic of homosexuality in *The Simpsons* is in the ninth season and called "Homer's Phobia", aired in 1997. (4F11) Until that time *The Simpsons* only made allusions to the issues of homosexuality mainly through the character of Waylon Smithers, who is a closet homosexual and has a deep affection for his boss Mr. Burns. For instance, in the episode *Rosebud*, Smithers is extremely disappointed that he did not get what he had wanted for his birthday, namely naked Mr. Burns singing "Happy Birthday". (1F01) Henry states, "The show, though

visually and textually overt, seemed fearful being politically overt with the issue of sexuality.” (Henry, 2004, 235) As a result of this anxiety, it took nine seasons till *The Simpsons* was able to address the topic of homosexuality directly in the aforementioned episode “Homer’s Phobia”. The fact that *The Simpsons* originated in 1989, i.e. the era of neglecting homosexuality, and was bound to the rules of a prime-time show, must be taken into consideration as well. The combination of these factors might have been the reason for the show’s cautious approach to the topic of homosexuality.

On the other hand, the creators of *South Park* incorporated the issue of homosexuality into the very first season in the episode “Big Gay Al’s Big Gay Bow Ride”. (104) It was also aired in 1997 and as Trey and Parker claim, it addressed open homosexuality in the way that was uncommon for television at that time. (Trey, Parker, 2003)

5.1 HOMOSEXUALITY IN SOUTH PARK

In the episode “Big Gay Al’s Big Gay Bow Ride” the cartoon satirizes a stereotypical image of homosexuals and people’s reactions to homosexuality. Stan adopts a dog called Sparky and he discovers that Sparky is a homosexual. His friends tease him about the dog, for example, when Stan wonders where Sparky is, Cartman suggests, “Maybe he’s at the mall buying leather pants.” (104, 11:37-11:40) Another classmate asks whether Sparky has been to any pride marches lately and suggests taking the dog to a Barbara Streisand concert. These comments satirize a stereotype that all gay men wear leather garment, actively participate in the LGBT² activities and listen to Barbara Streisand.

Beard suggests: “The cartoon uses pre-existing mass media stereotypes in order to destabilize them.” (Beard, 2004, 273) On the contrary, Groening claims: “*South Park* ridicules stereotypes but it does not interrogate the utility of stereotypes and offers no possibility for undoing prejudice. Therefore, the viewers are allowed to feel comfortable with their own use of prejudicial remarks and the ambiguous satire is used to appeal to the widest possible audience.” (Groening, 2008, 115-117) Having taken both opinions

² lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people

into consideration, I incline towards Beard's, since a viewer who uses his/her common sense should recognise satire beyond the idea of a dog buying leather pants and participating in a pride march. Certainly, there is a group of viewers which do not discover the satire and laugh at the comments about a homosexual dog, yet these people completely miss the point and they are certainly not the target audience of the cartoon.

After the biting comments about his dog, Stan tries to find out what being a homosexual means. He unfortunately chooses his teacher Mr. Garrison to answer his question.

STAN: What's a homosexual?

MR. GARRISON: Hoh, well, Stanley, I guess you came to the right person. Sit down. Stanley, gay people...well, gay people are evil. Evil right down to their cold black hearts, which pump not blood like yours and mine, but rather a thick, vomituous oil that oozes through their rotten veins and clots in their pea-sized brains which becomes the cause of their Naziesque patterns of violent behavior. Do you understand?

STAN: I guess.

MR. GARRISON: Good, I'm glad we could have this little talk, Stanley. Now you go outside and practice football like a good little heterosexual.

(104, 4:55-5:29)

Mr. Garrison's inappropriate answer not only illustrates his professional incompetence (as discussed in detail in chapter 4 of the thesis), but also undermines, as Groening suggests, "the credibility of schoolteachers in general as ideologues." (Groening, 2008, 118) Mr. Garrison's description of homosexuals is so absurd and distorted that it cannot be taken seriously. Therefore, this dialogue contradicts Groening's suggestion that the use of satire in *South Park* is ambiguous and does not give viewers opportunity to realise that they themselves share various prejudices. (Groening, 2008, 117) Unfortunately, Stan relies on Mr. Garrison's opinion and starts to think being a homosexual is something undesirable and extremely negative. The bitter irony is that Mr. Garrison himself is a closet homosexual and his character represents a biting satire on people who strongly oppose something only because they are afraid of their own feelings and personality.

After the dialogue with Mr. Garrison and having learnt that being a homosexual is a negative thing, Stan attempts to train the dog not to be homosexual. (see fig. 5 in the appendix)

STAN: He just needs some training, that's all. Sit Sparky. [Sparky sits] Good boy, now shake. [Sparky shakes.] Good boy. Now, don't be gay. Don't be

gay Spark. Don't be gay. [Sparky looks at Stan with confusion and growls.]
KYLE: Did it work?
STAN: I don't know.
ERIC: He still looks pretty gay to me. (104, 5:52-6:06)

This scene satirizes false notions that homosexuality can be learned and unlearned and that homosexuality is physically evident. As Stan was not given a proper explanation of homosexuality, he believes that by training the dog he can change his sexual orientation. Besides satirizing homophobic attitudes, this scene also ridicules preposterous attempts of conversion therapies to change one's sexual orientation. As Drescher claims, although none of these therapies, whose tools include psychoanalysis, religious faith healing and aversive behavioural conditioning, successfully produced heterosexuality in the majority of patients treated, there are still plenty of mental health practitioners who use them. (Drescher et al., 2001, 1)

The topic of curing homosexuality is developed in greater detail in the episode "Cartman Sucks" in which Butters, one of the boys' classmates, is taken to a Christian conversion therapy camp since his parents think he is bisexual. The episode is a dark satire on the attempts to change children's sexual orientation as the boys in the camp are miserable and suicides are being committed several times a day. (1102)

Later in the episode "Big Gay Al's Big Gay Bow Ride", Sparky runs away and joins Big Gay Al Animal Sanctuary owned by Big Gay Al whose character represents another stereotypical image of a homosexual. Big Gay Al speaks with a slight lisp; he loves dancing to disco music, makes effeminate gestures and wears flamboyant clothes. As usual, the creators of *South Park* presuppose that the audience is able to identify these stereotypes in order to question them. As Yu claims, the viewers need to be aware of what stereotypes are in attendance and use this information to adopt relevant attitudes. (Yu, 2007, 27) The creators of the cartoon rely on this assumption since it is crucial for understanding the whole episode. Again, there is a possibility that the character of Big Gay Al will be misunderstood by some viewers but it is not a problem of the show but rather a problem of the viewers.

Toward the end of the episode, Stan finds The Sanctuary and Big Gay Al attempts to teach him tolerance by taking him on an automated boat ride which shows him the history of homosexuality. (see fig. 6 in the appendix) By the end of the boat ride, Stan realizes that his former opinion about gays was wrong and suddenly claims, "being gay

is okay.” Groening points out that the sudden resolution to the episode satirizes the absence of process when people are dealing with controversial issues, and describes Stan’s change of opinions rather as an “epiphanic conversion” so typical for modern society. Moreover, he questions the depth of Stan’s transformation from an ignorant homophobe to an enlightened progressive. (Groening, 2008, 119) Groening might be partly right that people often change their minds without thinking about the matter carefully and gaining some personal experience. On the other hand, Stan’s transformation is still significant and desirable no matter how it happened, since it changed his negative opinion on homosexuals so unfortunately formed by Mr. Garrison and by stereotypical comments of his classmates.

This episode can be described as satirical since it underlines the follies of the stereotypes about homosexuals and makes these follies appear ridiculous. In addition, laughter is used to attack homophobic characters, such as Mr. Garrison. Hence the episode satisfies the criteria for satire defined by Gray. Groening suggests the satire used in this episode fails to move to the corrective action while ridiculing the stereotypes of homosexuals and thus it does not undermine prejudices against them. (Groening, 2008, 117) However, the idea of a homosexual dog living in an animal shelter for homosexual pets which is owned by Big Gay Al, whose character combines various exaggerated homosexual stereotypes, is so absurd that the audience must inevitably start to question their own attitudes toward homosexuality, and realize the preposterousness of these stereotypes. Therefore, the satire used in this episode meets the requirement for satire – the purpose to correct conduct – suggested by Peck and Coyle.

According to Baldick’s division of satire, the episode is an example of indirect satire as the audience must draw their own conclusions from the actions of the characters. Consequently, there is always a possibility that the true meaning will remain hidden for some viewers or be misunderstood by them. This group of viewers might, in fact, adopt the approach Groening suggests, i.e. not looking beyond stereotypes and continuing to use them. Fortunately, there are more viewers who do not miss the point and appreciate the clever satire beyond the jokes.

The character of Mr. Garrison, a closet homosexual with homophobic rhetoric, is presented by virtue of Juvenalian satire. The authors of *South Park* decry his hypocrisy in order to evoke indignation over his behavior. Hence the depiction of Mr. Garrison is in accordance with the definition of Juvenalian satire by Abrams. However, the rest of the episode employs Horatian satire to point out the issue of homosexuality. While describing Big Gay Al and Sparky, the homosexual dog, wit and gentle humor which aim to evoke a wry smile are used; therefore, the episode applies Horatian satire as defined by Abrams. Moreover, this funny and urbane satire allows the audience to laugh at their own prejudices and does not humiliate them for being homophobes. Consequently, it meets the criteria for Horatian satire stated by Gray.

Not surprisingly, the episode was praised for tolerance shown toward homosexuality and it was nominated for GLAAD³ Award. (Weinstock, 2008, 155) Moreover, *South Park* creators Parker and Stone claim that the episode helped elevate show's credibility and relevance during the early days of the series and it still belongs among one of their favourite episodes. (Parker, Stone, 2003)

5.2 HOMOSEXUALITY IN *THE SIMPSONS*

The episode "Homer's Phobia" ridicules stereotypes about homosexuals and it also critiques common misconceptions about homosexuality; namely that it is contagious. Homer meets the proprietor of an antique shop named John and they quickly become friends. Since John is gentle and friendly, the Simpsons enjoy his company. When he visits the Simpsons in their house, he admires Marge's curtains, describes Homer's collection of vinyls as "camp" and dances with Homer to Alicia Bridge's disco classic *I Love the Nightlife*. (see fig. 7 in the appendix) Despite these signals, Homer is oblivious to the fact that John is gay and when Marge tells him the next morning he is horrified.

HOMER: Oh my God! Oh my God! Oh my God! I danced with a gay!
Marge, Lisa, promise me you won't tell anyone. [shaking Lisa] Promise me!

MARGE: You're being ridiculous.

HOMER: Am I, Marge? Am I? Think of the property values. Now we can never say only straight people have been in this house.

³ Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation

MARGE: I'm very sorry you feel that way, because John invited us all out for a drive today, and we're going.

HOMER: Whoa-ho-ho, not me! And not because John's gay but because he's a sneak. He should at least have the good taste to mince around and let everyone know that he's that way.

MARGE: What on Earth are you talking about?

HOMER: You know me, Marge. I like my beer cold, my TV loud and my homosexuals flaming!
(4F11, 7:05-7:47)

The dialogue illustrates Homer's negative attitude toward homosexuals. This negative attitude is obviously based on fear. As Kimmel points out: "The negative reactions to homosexuals involve fear to some extent, but the nature of the fear is often connected to anxiety about being labeled as homosexual, rather than anxiety about homosexuals per se." (Kimmel quoted in Herek, 2004, 10) Homer's hysterical reaction supports Kimmel's opinion since he is not afraid of John himself but he is terrified at the idea that other people could consider Homer to be a homosexual. Not only is Homer afraid of being labeled as gay, but also as Henry suggests, he is afraid that the friendship with a homosexual person might stigmatize him. (Henry, 2004, 240) And, as "stigma might lead to social ostracism, infamy and condemnation" (Herek, 2004, 14), Homer does not want others to know about his friendship with John.

Secondly, the dialogue introduces the common perception of homosexuals being flamboyant and easy to recognize. As John does not match Homer's stereotypical image of a homosexual man, Homer feels betrayed and, paradoxically, blames John for the fact that he was not sensitive enough to notice John's sexual orientation. Henry sums up: "In short, Homer is upset at having mistaken a gay person for a straight one; in other words, he is upset that gays do not conform to his preconceived stereotypes." (Henry, 2004, 240) In contrast to *South Park*, in which the character of Big Gal Al combines several exaggerated stereotypes of homosexuals, the character of John fails to represent these stereotypes. However, the aim of the cartoons – to exhibit false nature of stereotypes about homosexuals – is the same.

Homer's inability to cope with John's sexual orientation is vividly contrasted with Marge who tolerates and accepts the fact with apparent ease. This differentiation of attitudes within the Simpson family effectively reflects reality. According to Herek, heterosexual men are much more hostile to gay men than are heterosexual women. (Herek, 2004, 11) On the contrary, the results of a Gallup poll from March 2010 document a gradual increase in public acceptance of gay relations especially among

men. In 2006, 39 percent of men and 49 percent of women claimed homosexual relations as morally acceptable, and in 2010, it was 53 percent of men and 51 percent of women. (Gallup, Gay and Lesbian Rights, 2011) The numbers suggest that men have gradually become more tolerant toward homosexuals. Therefore, it might be seen as not correct to conclude that Homer's opposition and Marge's acceptance towards John's sexuality illustrates reality, yet the original airdate of the episode (February 16, 1997) must be taken into consideration. Having suggested this, it can be concluded that Homer's rejection of John satirizes the general attitude towards homosexual men among heterosexual men in the 1990s.

As the episode proceeds, Marge, Lisa and Bart are spending more and more time with John, which Homer does not find suitable. Having returned from a trip with John, Marge is immediately questioned by Homer. He is particularly interested in one thing, "He didn't give you gay, did he?" (4F11, 9:12-9:15) This comment ridicules a belief that homosexuality might be transmitted from one person to another by spending time together. Henry agrees that the intention of the comment is to illustrate the speciousness of believing that one can become a homosexual as a result of being in close proximity to a homosexual. (Henry, 2004, 241) An interesting fact might be that in 1996, i.e. one year before this episode was aired, 40 percent of respondents of a Gallup poll considered upbringing and environment as the cause of homosexuality and 31 percent regarded homosexuality as an inborn matter. (Gallup, Gay and Lesbian Rights, 2011) It is then obvious, that *The Simpsons* again reflected on the opinion of the majority of American society.

Homer begins to be obsessed with the idea that John might have negative influence on Bart and observes Bart's behavior closely. At this point, *The Simpsons* presents various stereotypes about homosexual behavior through Bart's actions, which include Bart choosing a pink cupcake rather than a brown one during a family dinner, wearing a bright Hawaiian shirt and dancing in a 1950s-style wig to a song by Cher. (see fig. 8 in the appendix) The stereotypes about homosexual behavior are again being questioned. The satire beyond Bart's actions is not difficult to discover since it is taken to extremes, perhaps most notably, when Bart's preference of a pink cupcake implies his homosexuality to Homer. Similarly to the absurdity of a dog wearing leather pants in

South Park, Bart's behavior in *The Simpsons*, ridicules and destabilizes the stereotypes about homosexuals.

The character of Homer supports this destabilization when he genuinely believes that Bart is becoming gay thus allowing audience to laugh at Homer's foolishness and, at the same time, reflect on its own attitudes.

HOMER: Look, John, you seem like a perfectly nice guy and all, just stay the hell away from my family.

JOHN: Homer, what have you got against gays?

HOMER: You know! It's not ... usual. If there was a law, it'd be against it.

MARGE: Homer, please, you're embarrassing yourself.

HOMER: No, I'm not, Marge! They're embarrassing me! They're embarrassing America! They turned navy into a floating joke. They ruined all our best names like Bruce, and Lance, and Julian. Those were the toughest names we had! Now, they're just, uh...

JOHN: Queer?

HOMER: Yeah, and that's another thing. I resent **you people** using that word. That's **our** word for making fun of you! We need it! Well, I'm taking back our word and I'm taking back my son. (4F11, 11:12-12:02)

Homer's proclamation that homosexuality is not usual corresponds with the overall attitude towards homosexuality in American society in the 1990s. As is stated at the beginning of this chapter, less than 40 percent of people considered homosexuality to be morally acceptable by that time. According to Henry, Homer displays classic "us versus them" mentality which includes the subconscious fear of granting rights to "them" and thus losing "our" rights. (Henry, 2004, 240) The word "queer" represents the right Homer believes heterosexual majority is losing, since it has eventually lost its derogatory connotation and it is commonly used among homosexuals. As the character of Homer illustrates, negative attitudes toward homosexuality do not have to be always caused by beliefs about sexual orientation since the "us versus them" logic seems to play an important part. Herek's opinion that "negative attitudes toward homosexuals might be understood as a rejection of members of an outgroup" (Herek, 2004, 18), only supports the aforementioned deduction.

Homer wants to take back his son and by this he means turning Bart into a man by involving him into activities normally connected with male gender. The character of Homer employs common view formulated in Herek that person's sexual orientation is often inferred from the extent to which he or she conforms to gender-role expectations. (Herek, 2004, 17) To reestablish these expectations and to unlearn Bart's assumed homosexuality, Homer makes Bart watch billboard with beautiful women for two hours

and takes him hunting although Homer himself has never been hunting before. Of course, neither method works. These “fixing” activities satirize the misconception that homosexuality is a disease and can be cured.

There is a parallel to the *South Park* episodes *Big Gay Al's Big Gay Bow Ride* and *Cartman Sucks*, which were discussed earlier in the chapter, since Stan's training of the dog and Butter's stay in a Christian conversion therapy camp ridicule exactly the same thing. Although homosexuality was removed from *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* in 1973, the conception of learning and unlearning homosexuality is still believed to be true for some people. (APA, 1973)

At the end of the episode, having been attacked by a herd of angry reindeer, Homer, Bart, Moe and Barney are saved by John. Moe and Barney lament being saved by a “sissy” but Homer speaks out in defense of John.

HOMER: Hey! We owe this guy, and I don't want you calling him a sissy. This guy's a fruit, and a... no, wait, wait, wait: queer, queer, queer! That's what you like to be called, right?
JOHN: Well, that or John. (4F11, 20:59-21:13)

Although Homer does not completely reject “us versus them” logic, he does not feel threatened by John as a member of an outgroup anymore. The usage of the word “queer” illustrates the change of Homer's attitude. Homer's original notion that the word is a privilege of heterosexual majority changed. In addition, by using the word without a derogative connotation and thus admitting the word does not belong exclusively to heterosexuals, Homer shows newly gained tolerance toward homosexuality. Henry claims that Homer comes to see John as a fellow person rather than labelling him a gay person at the end of the episode. (Henry, 2004, 241) This statement has some limitations; although Homer changed his point of view and confronted his homophobia, he certainly does not become an enlightened progressive and still identifies John as a homosexual. The difference is that he does not feel fear or hatred toward him anymore.

Homer's transformation is nicely described by Lisa's sentence, “This is about as tolerant as Dad gets so you should be flattered.” (4F11, 21:14-21:17) In Homer's defence, it has to be pointed out that he is at the beginning of the process of gaining tolerance toward homosexuals. His substantial progress is demonstrated in the episode “Three Gays of the Condo” in which Homer is temporarily living with a gay couple in

Springfield's gay district, and this time he shows no anxiety about living and spending time together with gays. (EABF12)

The episode "Homer's Phobia" can be described as satirical since it, through the character of Homer, exposes the failings of individuals to ridicule and thus fulfills the criteria for satire by Baldick. Furthermore, the depiction of Homer as a homophobe at the beginning of the episode meets Gray's definition of satire in which he claims that satire is directed against a particular type. Undoubtedly, Homer's transformation from a homophobe and the implied messages it conveys satisfies Peck's and Coyle's requirement for satire – the purpose to correct conduct. The character of Homer also serves as a mirror for the audience and when laughing at Homer's fears, beliefs and actions, the audience is forced to think about and reconsider their own attitudes.

Since the episode employs gentle and light-hearted humor, and tends to enjoy human follies, for instance stereotypes of homosexuals and misconceptions about homosexuality; the kind of satire used, according to Gray's definition, is Horatian. In addition, the depiction of Homer's ridiculous beliefs can be described as a gentle scoffing rather than a violent denunciation. Therefore, the episode also satisfies the criteria for Horatian satire defined by Beckson and Ganz.

Similarly to "Big Gay Al's Big Gay Bow Ride", this episode only implies the desirable behaviour which should be adopted, and as the audience of *The Simpsons* is wide and includes children, there might be a possibility that not everyone will understand the true meaning behind the funny jokes. However, the episode, as Henry claims: "Offers its mainstream audience cogent critiques of a number of myths surrounding homosexual identity." (Henry, 2004, 241) In addition, McMahon sees an advantage rather than disadvantage in a large and diverse audience the show possesses: "Not only can it [*The Simpsons*] convey important truths and prompt the consideration of salient issues, it can offer these truths to, and compel increased reflection in, a huge number of people." (McMahon, 2001, 231)

All in all, some viewers might not see through the satire employed in the episode, but, undoubtedly, the majority are able to reveal and question stereotypes and misconceptions the episode ridicules. Unsurprisingly, "Homer's Phobia" met with positive reception from gay and lesbian community and it won a GLAAD Award for

Outstanding TV: Individual Episode defeating “Big Gay Al’s Big Gay Bow Ride” in 1998. (IMDb, 1998)

In conclusion, both cartoons courageously included the topic of homosexuality in the plot of their episodes, although it was a peripheral topic in the era of the 1990s. In addition, the inclusion of the topic was done skilfully, so the creators of both cartoons received acknowledgement from the homosexual community. The fact that *The Simpsons* addressed the topic directly after nine seasons and *South Park* did the same thing in its very first season is influenced by several factors including the different audience each cartoon appeals to, the year of origin and different status of each show. One of the key factors is definitely the fact that *South Park* is generally more radical and straightforward in pointing out the flaws of society. Although the episode “Big Gay Al’s Big Gay Bow Ride” employs mainly Horatian satire, other episodes revolving around the topic of sexual identity are dark in tone and include sarcasm and scorn, for example the briefly discussed episode “Cartman Sucks”. On the contrary, *The Simpson’s* conciliatory tone, mild and gentle humor which occurred in “Homer’s Phobia” is later used in other episodes dealing with homosexuality, for instance in the aforementioned “Three Gays of the Condo”. In the end, it is not that important what type of satire is used to communicate the meaning. What really matters is that gay life has been represented in both cartoons thus allowing viewers to question their own stereotypical views.

6. RACE RELATIONS

Due to its ethnic diversity, the United States gradually gained several sobriquets such as a “melting pot”, a “salad bowl” or a “mosaic”. Daniels summarizes that perhaps a million immigrants came to America between 1565 and 1800, about 20 million in the nineteenth century, and at least 55 million in the twentieth century. (Daniels, 2006, 73) Undoubtedly, millions of newcomers have had an impact on American culture since they have been from different cultural backgrounds and have brought their habits and customs to the United States. Bigsby agrees claiming that: “America can scarcely be understood unless it is acknowledged that its motor has been fueled by immigration.” (Bigsby, 2006, 15)

Gabaccia states that since World War II, the United States has often proudly proclaimed itself as a nation of immigrants. (Gabaccia, 2002, 1) On the other hand, the gradually increasing number of immigrants led to several restrictions in immigration policy, for instance, *The Immigration Act of 1924* or *The Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965*. (Daniels, 1991, 328-338) Immigrants were seen as a threat to the dominant American culture, which according to Crandall, “grew out of the nation’s early history and was English-speaking, Western European, Protestant and middle-class in character.” (Crandall et al., 1997, 148) As Huntington states, today slightly more than one third of Americans are of Hispanics, African American, East Asian or South Asia descent, and American culture and American values, established by early settlers, are at risk. Even the common heritage of the English language and Protestant faith are no longer secure. He noted, in particular, the dramatic rise in immigration from Hispanic countries, and insisted there is no Americano dream but there is only the American dream and Mexican Americans will share that dream only if they dream in English. (as quoted in Bigsby, 2006, 14-25) His notions quickly came under fierce assault, but, according to Bigsby, he was doing nothing more than registering a sense of crisis. (Bigsby, 2006, 26) Daniels supports Bigsby’s argument when he claims that the growing awareness of the failure of American immigration policies to control the border created increased public hostility to immigration. (Daniels, 2006, 90) This attitude is illustrated by the results of a Gallup poll taken in 2010 in which 45 percent of respondents favored a reduced level of immigration, 34 percent favored keeping a level

of immigration at its present level and 17 percent of respondents favored an increased level of immigration. (Gallup, Immigration)

6.1 AFRICAN-AMERICANS

Crandall states: “The process of assimilation in the United States has been much more successful for white ethnic groups than for nonwhite ethnic groups. Of the nonwhite ethnic groups, Americans of African descent have had the greatest difficulty in becoming assimilated into a larger culture.” (Crandall et al., 1997, 151) The problem of African-Americans to assimilate into a large culture is conditioned by the position in the society which African-Americans were given when they were brought to the United States as slaves. Landry describes white people’s behavior as follows:

To justify the total subjugation of Africans, they were portrayed as somewhat less human, without a Christian soul and devoid of refined, civilized sentiments. [...] Even after abolishing slavery in 1865, African-Americans were still not considered equal by the white rest of the population. In addition, the discriminatory structures and laws enacted against blacks in the South, and the discriminatory practices of the North, persisted for 100 years following the end of slavery. [...] Even nowadays, while whites are increasingly supportive of the principles of racial equality, they continue to shun sustained and close contacts with blacks. [...] Discrimination aimed against blacks is rooted very far in the past and very deep in the cultural psyche. (Landry, 1992, 201-204)

This notion is supported by the results of a Gallup poll taken in 2008, which found out that 56 percent of Americans say racism against blacks is widespread in the United States. (Jones, 2008) On the contrary, Hodgson claims that the situation for African-Americans is becoming better and better as they are now in a far stronger and freer state, in terms of both esteem and opportunities, than they were at the midpoint of the twentieth century. (Hodgson, 2006, 48) Hodgson’s notion certainly describes an optimistic attitude to the issue of assimilation of African-Americans in American society. However, the relationship between whites and black and the position of African-Americans in the society is still far from being ideal.

6.1.1 AFRICAN-AMERICANS IN *SOUTH PARK*

Although the issue of race, ethnicity and racism is very fragile, it is often portrayed in popular American film and television comedy. (Sienkiewicz, Marx, 2009, 5) The cartoons *South Park* and *The Simpsons* both integrate the issue of racism, race and ethnicity into their series. Undoubtedly, *South Park* addresses and exploits this topic to a greater extent. As Coleman points out, it is not a surprise that Parker and Stone use common stereotypes and insults within their series to provoke responses from viewers. (Coleman, 2008, 131) Sienkiewicz and Marx identify the ethnic humor of *South Park* as “overtly offensive” and question whether it makes progressive contribution to discussion of prejudice in America. (Sienkiewicz, Marx, 2009, 5)

Several episodes illustrate the overtly offensive ethnic humor. In “Christian Rock Hard”, Cartman refers to his African-American friend Token as a “black asshole” and he constantly refers derogatively to Kyle as a “Jew boy” or “filthy Jew”. (709) In the episode “With Apologies to Jesse Jackson”, Randy Marsh competes in *Wheel of Fortune* and he tries to solve a puzzle whose category is “People who annoy you”. Randy is supposed to complete only one vowel into the word “n _ gger” and, after initial hesitation, he completes the letter “i” instead of the letter “a”. (1101) (see fig. 9 in the appendix)

The episode “Here Comes the Neighborhood” is the first episode which revolves around the issue of the relationship between blacks and whites is called and it originally aired in 2001. (512) Token Williams, who comes from a very wealthy family, is teased for being rich by his friends. Therefore, he decides to invite wealthy people to South Park in order to have someone to relate to. His plan succeeds and a lot of wealthy people move to South Park. The residents of South Park do not appreciate the state of affairs and try to banish the newcomers from their town. Since Token, his family and all the wealthy people who moved to South Park are African-Americans, the episode undoubtedly becomes a crucial episode on the theme of race relations. A detailed analysis of the episode reveals plenty of allusions to the historical development of the position of African-Americans in American society.

As the episode proceeds, another rich black family moves to South Park and the townspeople watch from across the street.

MR. GARRISON: That's the fifth family of them that's moved here. Seems like all of a sudden, South Park is being overrun by those types.
 GERALD: Hey! W-what are you saying? What "types"?
 MR. GARRISON: You know, those types! Rich people!
 JIMBO: Oh. I don't take kindly to rich folk. I remember back in the day, rich folk weren't allowed in South Park! Now they're movin' here in droves!
 SKEETER: They're gonna be sending their kids to our schools, and mixin' them with our pure, non-rich kids!
 MR. GARRISON: Oh, yeah, and it won't be long before they drove all of us poor underachieving people out of town with inflated real-estate costs!
 SKEETER: Damn, I hate those stupid richers!
 MR. GARRISON: Yeah. [calls out] Hey, rich guy! Hey, cash-chucker! Yeah, I'm talkin' to you, richer! What's in the huge box, richer?! Your checkbook?
 (512, 9:26-10:13)

The scene contains numerous references to race relations. Firstly, the townspeople a priori disagree with the fact that the rich black families move into their poor white town. This aversion represents the rigidity of traditional residential settings, which still divide urban areas into black and white ones. Crandall describes these settings: “Although segregation and discrimination are against the law, residential patterns create largely segregated neighborhoods in many urban areas.” (Crandall et al., 1997, 155) Secondly, Jimbo’s rejoinder, “I remember back in the day, rich folk weren’t allow in South Park.” hints at the period of American history in which black people were not welcome in certain towns. For instance, Landry mentions a number of northern states, including Pennsylvania, Ohio and Illinois, which passed laws to prevent migration of free blacks into their states, after abolishing slavery. (Landry, 1992, 202) Thirdly, when Skeeter discontentedly comments on possibility of mixing poor and rich children in one school; he, in fact, addresses the issue of racially segregated education, which was in reality practiced till the mid-1960s. Hodgson clarifies:

Both Northern and Southern cities were racially segregated in residential terms and this residential segregation was reflected in schools. Efforts to change this by such court-approved devices as busing were bitterly resented as white-working families felt they were being asked to shoulder an unfair share of the burden of racial transformation (Hodgson, 2006, 41)

In addition, according to Franklin and Moss, the tendency toward segregation increased as white parents kept children away from school open to all, in the effort to force authorities to set aside separate facilities for blacks. (Franklin, Moss, 1994, 407-408) Last but not least, Coleman claims that the epithets Mr. Garrison invents to address his

new neighbors, such as “richer” and “cash-chucker”, are apparent substitutes for “nigger” and “spear-chucker”. (Coleman, 2008, 137) The comments made by the townspeople subtly imply that the hostility toward newcomers is based on race and ethnicity rather than on envy of material possession. Nonetheless, neither the black nor the white residents of South Park question the nature of these comments and consider them to be based on the aversion toward wealthy people and their property.

Another allusion to race relations is made when three rich men come to the local pub and order a beer. Everyone in the pub glares at them and they are refused to be served. The proprietor of the pub explains to them why they are not welcome: “Maybe you didn't see the sign out front. This bar is for people livin' below their means only!” (512, 11:29-11:38) Although the rich men are upset about the way they are being treated, in the end, they leave the facility. Similar allusion to racial segregation is made when a rich family sits in the back of a crowded bus. They meet with hostility from other passengers and they are told to change their seats. One angry passenger explains: “If you're going to ride the bus in South Park, you're gonna have to sit in the front, that's where the first-class seating is!” (ibid, 13:48-13:54) The family do not argue with the passengers and sit in the front of the bus.

These two scenes satirize the concept of “separate but equal” policy maintained by the United States till 1964. As Sollors summarizes, this concept meant an exclusion of former slaves and their descendants from ordinary citizens’ rights. Racial separation applied to all public facilities such as schools, parks, hospitals, means of transportation, restrooms, restaurants and drinking fountains. It forced blacks to inhabit a separate, inferior and unequal world. (Sollors, 2006, 154) A certain irony can be found in these particular scenes since the public facilities for rich people of South Park are not inferior to the public facilities for regular poor townspeople. In fact, the wealthy black people are forced to use better and more luxurious public facilities. For example, the three rich men are sent to have a drink in the new and expensive *Wolfgang Puck's* pub; and the rich family on the bus has to sit in the first class. However, the wealthy people feel frustrated and discriminated against because they are forced to inhabit a separate world, although this world cannot be described as inferior.

The townspeople resolve to banish rich newcomers from South Park once and for all. They discuss possible solutions in the pub.

MR. GARRISON: Those richers are getting snooty. We've got to show those richers they're not welcome here!

NED: What do you mean?

MR. GARRISON: How about tonight, we sneak up to one of their houses, and right on their lawn we'll set fire to a big lowercase "t"!

JIMBO: Lowercase "t"?

MR. GARRISON: Yeah, for "time to leave"! Jimbo, you take some folk and build a big wooden lowercase t! I'll take the rest and get some gas and torches ready! (512, 12:00-12:10)

Setting fire to a big lowercase "t", which resembles a cross with its shape, is an apparent reference to burning a Latin cross, which belongs, according to *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*, among the practices the Ku Klux Klan used to intimidate its targets. (Cross, 1996, 32) Once again, the townspeople ignore this historical connection and genuinely believe they are setting fire to a big lowercase "t" for "time to leave". When Kobe Bryant, who moved to South Park with other rich people, notices what is happening on his lawn, he goes out, looks at the burning lowercase "t" and says: "Tee, Tee. - Time to leave?" (512, 12:18-12:25) By this statement he makes the situation even more ironic because the audience expects him to reveal the symbolism.

Another allusion to the Ku Klux Klan is made at the end of the episode. Having united, the rich people march on the town's square to petition for the end of separate bars, bus seating and restaurants. The townspeople watch the march on TV and they wonder whether they could do anything else to banish the rich people from South Park.

MR. GARRISON: What scares rich people more than anything?

JIMBO: Ghosts?

MR. GARRISON: Bingo! Rich people don't want to live in South Park if they think it's haunted! Everyone get some sheets from home! If we can't chase the richers out, we'll spook 'em out! (ibid, 17:39-17:45)

While the mayor is giving a speech and promising to abolish all separation laws, the townspeople appear at the square dressed like ghosts and start to scare the rich people making ghost noises. The rich people are terrified and precipitously leave the town. The townspeople's ghost costume, i.e. a robe made of white bed sheet with a hood, explicitly refers to the Ku Klux Klan robe. (see fig. 10 in the appendix) However, neither the townspeople nor the rich people perceive the costumes as iconography associated with this white supremacist organization and, as Coleman claims, the appearance of townspeople in hoods only has racial resonance for the viewer since the

costumes are treated as theatrical props by the townspeople. (Coleman, 2008, 137) Unlike the townspeople and the rich newcomers, the viewer, who is at least faintly familiar with American history, is certainly able to identify the connection between white robes with hoods and the Ku Klux Klan.

This scene supports Sienkiewicz's and Marx's suggestion that the creators of *South Park* commonly employ hyper-irony into the cartoon. Sienkiewicz and Marx explain: "The show uses this sort of irony in order to turn the ostensibly racist jokes back on the viewer who by momentarily seeing the program as racist is forced to question his or her own assumptions and latent prejudices." (Sienkiewicz and Marx, 2009, 8) In other words, during the entire episode the tension between the new and the old residents of South Park is never articulated as racist and the reason for ostracizing African-Americans is supposed to be their wealth rather than their color, and, consequently, jealousy rather than racial prejudices. Nevertheless, the viewer perceives the tension as racist judging from frequent and obvious references to race segregation issues and the Ku Klux Klan iconography. This constant ignoring of obvious racist allusions perplexes the viewer who might start to think that it is only him or her who sees the racist allusions. Therefore, by means of hyper-irony, i.e. turning the jokes back on the viewer, the viewer might feel humiliated for his or her racist assumptions and is forced to question his or her latent prejudices.

A crucial turning point comes in the very last moment of the episode when the men of South Park gather in front of a mansion which used to belong to a wealthy black family, and discuss their eventual success in banishing the rich people from the town.

GERALD: They were so scared, I'm sure they'll never be back!

MR. GARRISON: That's great! And now we can sell all their homes, and become... millionaires!

JIMBO: But then you had us do all that for nothin'. Don't you see: If you get rich sellin' these homes, then there will still be rich people in South Park.

RANDY: Yeah. You'd become what you hate.

MR. GARRISON: Well yeah, but at least I got rid of all those damn ni-...

(512, 21:10-21:37)

The episode ends without letting Mr. Garrison finish the word "nigger". Yet his intention is apparent. At this point, the racial tension of the entire episode releases and the viewer realizes that his or her racist assumptions were correct although the issue of race and racism was ignored during the whole show. The whole concept of hyper-irony is ruined and some viewers might accuse the cartoon of racism. That unfinished word at

the end does reverse the entire tone of the episode. The notion that the episode undercuts the racial prejudices is no longer true. Yet it cannot be claimed that the surprising end of the episode makes the episode racist. Even though it does not undercut the racial prejudices, it does draw attention to the fact that racism and hostility toward African-Americans is still present in American society. The results of the aforementioned Gallup Poll from the year 2008 and Coleman's words that racism still pervades American social life confirm this assumption. (Coleman, 2008, 132)

Parker and Stone commented on this episode: "You almost create a world where you don't believe racism exists till the last line when you just ruin it." (Parker, Stone, 2005) Their commentary exactly describes the feelings the viewers have when watching this episode. Due to ignoring all racist allusions and not pointing out the irony, the viewers believe, although it seems ridiculous, that there is no racial tension between blacks and whites in South Park. The end of the episode destroys this misconception and confirms the hidden assumptions that the hostility was based on race and ethnicity after all. Racism and the tension between whites and blacks do exist in the town of South Park and since *South Park* reflects and comments on the problems of American society, it can be concluded, that by employing this fragile topic of race relations in the series, *South Park* once again pounces on a problem which might be seen as solved and which is, in fact, far from being solved.

The issue of race relations with focus on African-Americans is incorporated into several more episodes of *South Park*. By employing the topic into more episodes, Parker and Stone clearly articulate their concerns over race relations and relationship between African-Americans and white Americans. For instance, in the aforementioned episode "With Apologies to Jesse Jackson", Randy Marsh, who uttered the N-word on national television, gradually gains the epithet "nigger guy". He is deeply distressed as he is immediately referred to as "nigger guy" by everyone he encounters. Moreover, he becomes socially excluded, he is forbidden to shop in several supermarkets, people in the streets look at him with disgust and he is once chased by villagers who obviously embody the stereotype of southern farmers since they speak with strong southern accent and the Confederate flag can be found on their car. Since the whole episode is an ironic analogy to hostile behavior of whites toward blacks, it is not surprising that the southern

villagers are open-minded and enlightened and they hunt Randy because they do not approve of the intolerance to African-Americans. Toward the end of the episode, Randy wants to redeem himself founding a scholarship for blacks and gives a speech in front of puzzled black audience.

RANDY: I mean I just wanna move on from what happened on "Wheel of Fortune," you know and when people call me "nigger guy" they're bringin up a painful chapter of my history and all the negativity that went along with it. You just, you can't imagine how that feels.

(1101, 14:15-14:30)

By using the hateful word “nigger guy” against whites, Parker and Stone reversed the whole concept of racist slurs and created the episode full of biting and dark satire, which culminates in Randy’s speech in which he completely ignores the analogy between the words “nigger guy” and “nigger”. His speech underlines the overall tone of the episode which through the character of Randy satirizes ignorance and negative attitudes of whites toward the position of African-Americans in the society. The episode is finished with an absurd scene in which Randy demands banning the word “nigger guy”. His description of the word, “two words which by themselves can be harmless but which together form a verbal missile of hate”, contributes to the overall satiric tone of the episode. Coleman adds that Parker and Stone satirically illustrate the power of prejudicial slurs to act as “social dividers”. (Coleman, 2008, 131) The character of Randy Marsh confirms her notion as he was completely socially excluded from both black and white members of the community.

Once again there is the possibility that the show might be accused of racism. In addition, frequent usage of the word “nigger” in the episode might appeal to some viewers who, consequently, might feel comfortable with using racist slurs and their own racist attitudes. Yet these people are not able to move beyond the show’s crudeness and lack understanding of the authors’ intentions. On the other hand, the viewers who get the point of this episode are forced to question their racist attitudes and think about the power of racist slurs. Therefore, satire used in this episode fulfills its corrective function yet it does not overtly offer possible solutions for this fragile issue.

As stated above, Parker’s and Stone’s concern for this topic is obvious since several more episodes include satirical comments on the relationship between blacks

and whites. For example, the episode “Die Hippie, Die” satirizes the position of black people in the white society. South Park is invaded by thousands of hippies and Eric Cartman organizes a team of brave people who will risk their lives and try to save the town. He announces: “Along with me I'm gonna need a scientist, an engineer, and of course, a black person who can sacrifice himself in case something goes wrong.” (902, 15:06-15:12)

In conclusion, either short comments within unrelated story-lines of *South Park* or entire episodes dedicated to the topic of discrimination and racism against blacks, mirror the inequalities between whites and blacks in American society. The cited episodes undoubtedly include elements such as coarseness and humor, which according to Hight, create satire. Coarseness can be found in Cartman’s racial slurs and Randy’s usage of the word “nigger”. The townspeople in white and checked bed sheets haunting African-Americans are one of the examples of humor used in the episodes. The laughter which is provoked by these humorous situations does not evoke pleasure; instead, it attacks racist attitudes. Since satire uses humor to criticize its objects the episodes fulfill the criteria for satire defined by Gray. Although the cartoon does not propose any ideas for improving the relationship between blacks and whites, the depiction of the interaction between these two races is frequently so absurd that the audience must inevitably question their own behavior and attitudes toward blacks. Therefore, the cartoon meets Peck’s and Coyle’s requirement for satirical works – the purpose to correct conduct – and can be regarded as satirical.

The authors of *South Park* use Juvenalian satire in order to address social evil rather than to identify follies of the society. Due to bitter irony and sarcasm, the tone of the show in dealing with this fragile issue is pessimistic and abrasive. The racist remarks uttered by Eric Cartman and Randy Marsh’s insensitivity to racist slurs are depicted using outrage and savage ridicule typical for Juvenalian satire as described by Abrams. In addition, they do not evoke amusement but disgust in the audience. By employing Juvenalian satire into this very topic, the authors of *South Park* scourge and punish society for its errors, namely for slavery and maltreatment of blacks in the course of history.

The episodes cited above provided only a few examples of parody. Setting fire to a big lower-case “t” for “time to leave” might be discussed as parody of the Ku Klux

Klan practices. The act of setting fire to a big lower-case “t” is parody and the effect it creates is satire on the Ku Klux Klan itself. Therefore, this particular example fulfills the criteria for parody by Highet. According to Mocná’s division of parody, this scene can be described as satirical parody since it mocks the value system of the Klan. Another example of parody is the quiz show *The Wheel of Fortune*. Unlike the previous example, the depiction of this particular quiz show can be regarded as humoristic parody, since it is simply a witty and playful imitation.

On the whole, Parker and Stone very often include the topic of the relationship between whites and blacks in the cartoon. Therefore it is apparent that they regard this issue as important to comment on. Viewers who do not miss the point are able to enjoy the humor on a deeper level and identify racist prejudices, confront their possible racist attitudes and question false beliefs about racial equality within American society.

6.1.2 AFRICAN-AMERICANS IN *THE SIMPSONS*

Unlike *South Park*, *The Simpsons* addresses the issue of the relationship between blacks and whites only marginally. Since more African-Americans reside the town of Springfield than in the town of South Park, it might be assumed that the involvement of African-American characters and reflecting on race relations would be even more frequent than in the case of *South Park*. Contrary to all expectations, the authors of *The Simpsons* do not extensively exploit the demographic composition of Springfield and seldom involve African-American characters, such as Carl Carlson, Dr. Hibbert, Bleeding Gums Murphy and Lou the cop, in the plot of the episodes for the purpose of commenting on their “blackness”. If the aforementioned characters of African-Americans are involved, their presence in episodes is scarcely focused on their African origin and never overtly comments on racial tension. Instead, their appearance in episodes is connected with the job they perform or the relationship they have with the Simpsons family. For instance, Dr. Hibbert is almost exclusively depicted performing his job of a local doctor. (7F06) His character is used as a critique of health care rather than a commentary on race relations. (9F09)

The character of Carl Carlson, Homer's co-worker, is the most prominent black character that appears on the show on a regular basis, thus leaving the authors ample opportunity to introduce the topic of race relations. Nevertheless, his character is seldom used to remark upon the issue of race and ethnicity. On rare occasions he is confronted with comments based on racial stereotypes. For instance, in the episode "The Children of a Lesser Clod", Carl is irritated by his colleagues who hold high expectations of his performance in a game of basketball, "I'm so sick of everyone assuming I'm good at basketball because I'm African-American." (see fig. 11 in the appendix) Confirming the assumption, his performance is excellent and he plays basketball like a professional. (CABF16) In "The Great Wife Hope", Homer is interested whether Carl knows the African-American boxer Dedrick Tatum. Carl is offended at the presupposition that he must know all African-Americans in Springfield only because he is black. Eventually, he admits meeting Dedrick Tatum at a party at Bleeding Gums Murphy's house, which was attended also by Dr. Hibbert. (LABF16) By admitting being at this social event, Carl once again unwillingly confirms the stereotypical assumption made by his friend. Although Carl detests being stereotyped, he proves to the audience that all stereotypical judgments uttered by his close friends are correct.

Similar confirmation of ethnic and racial stereotypes is often found in *South Park* too. For instance, in the episode "Christian Rock Hard" mentioned in chapter 6.1.1, Cartman insists on Token's ability to play the bass guitar since Token is black. He is, of course, offended by being stereotyped, yet to his surprise he can play the guitar with a high level of proficiency. Coleman suggests: "These example situations describe the "dual-edge" of racism. Assuming a black person possesses certain qualities is as racist as a black person accepting a stereotypical notion as intrinsically valid because it was uttered by a white person." (Coleman, 2008, 134) Her notion might be applied to both cartoons since both African-American characters, Carl and Token, confirm shallow stereotypical judgments pronounced by their white companions.

Unlike *South Park*, *The Simpsons* does not provide more allusions to the relationship between whites and blacks using a prominent supporting African-American character of the show. Although Carl appears in the show on a regular basis, his character is not primarily used to comment on race relations, which distinguishes him from the character of Token who is almost exclusively included into episodes to allude

to various issues of the relationship between whites and blacks. The scenes from *The Simpsons* described above are the only ones which employ Carl's African origin in order to comment on race relations. With regard to the number of episodes aired within twenty-one years, it can be concluded that the presence of Carl in the show as an African-American is not fully exploited.

The only episode which comments on the issue of the relationship between whites and blacks is the thirteenth episode of the twenty-first season called "The Color Yellow". (MABF06) Nonetheless it does not purvey any complex reflection upon African-Americans, whites and their mutual relationship. The episode introduces The Simpsons' ancestors who helped a black slave escape to freedom. (see fig. 12 in the appendix) Instead of reflecting on slavery, the episode focuses on the relationships among the members of the Simpsons family in the past. At the end of the episode, Lisa learns that her ancestors were of African origin.

LISA: We're 1/64 black!

BART: That's why I'm so cool!

LISA: That's why my jazz is so smooth.

HOMER: That's why I earn less than my white co-workers.

LISA: Why did you try to keep us from finding this out?

GRANDPA: It's hard to explain this to a young person...but people of my generation are...you know...

LISA: Racist.

GRANDPA: That's it!

(ibid, 20:10-20:30)

Having employed various racial stereotypes, this final scene is the only one in the whole episode which contains allusions to the issue of race relations. Whereas Lisa's and Bart's utterance describes positive stereotypical judgments about African-Americans, Homer's explanation of his failure at work alludes to a more serious issue. His utterance might be understood in two different ways.

Firstly, it comments on racial inequality as regards the amount of money earned by whites and blacks, concluding that blacks receive lower salary than whites. Crandall agrees with the racial inequality suggested in Homer's utterance, claiming that, "The median income of a married black man working full time is 23 percent behind a married white man." (Crandall et al., 1997, 154) Similarly, the results of a Gallup poll show that 42 percent of respondents believe that racism against blacks is the major factor in blacks' income levels. (Jones, 2008)

Secondly, as it is generally known that Homer is an irresponsible and incompetent employee, so the reason for his lower salary is not connected with the color of his skin, Homer's comment might satirize blaming ethnic origin for failure in one's life. As stated in Crandall, 44 percent of blacks say the problems are due to white discrimination against them and claim that some African-Americans have given up on ever having equal treatment within a society dominated by whites. Unsurprisingly, only 21 percent of whites agree. (Crandall et al., 1997, 155) Similarly, according to Masuoka, racial minorities including African-Americans view race as the cause for significant social problems whereas whites do not adopt the same attitude. (Masuoka, 2008, 255)

The latter explanation of his comment is based on the evidence following from numerous situations of the show, for instance when Homer's incompetency nearly caused a nuclear meltdown. (1F02) However, it is still disputatious what exactly is satirized since the meaning of Homer's comment might be understood differently by viewers from different cultural backgrounds. In other words, African-Americans would perceive the final scene differently from Caucasian Americans. Beard agrees claiming, "Culturally divergent interpretation of the show is closely connected to diverse reading of the show and affects the potential efficacy of its satirical element." (Beard, 2004, 277) Given this, it might be concluded that the ambiguity of Homer's comment results in addressing a broad audience since viewers might project their own attitudes into decoding the final scene. On the other hand, the ambiguity blurs the authors' intentions and it is not clear what position toward the issued they prefer and thus satire does not fulfill its corrective function.

The final dialogue between Lisa and Grandpa illustrates different perception of the status of African-Americans in American society. Whereas Grandpa, who embodies opinions of the older generation, feels humiliated by having an African-American slave as his ancestor, Lisa, representing the progressive and enlightened young generation, does not feel greatly disturbed by this fact. A direct confrontation of these characters demonstrates gradual development in the perception of blacks by white majority. The character of Lisa and her open-minded opinions represent the positive changes in the perception of African-Americans and their status in American society which started in the 1960s. As Crandall comments, the civil right laws of the 1960s eventually helped to

reduce the amount of white prejudice toward black people and caused a significant degree of assimilation of blacks into the larger American culture. (Crandall et al., 1997, 154) Sollors describes this change as follows: “While the United States and the beginning of the twentieth century was an impressively active producer and exporter of racial stereotypes and ideas inspired by racial segregation, a century later US politicians typically criticize anything which seems racist.” (Sollors, 2006, 169) By contrast, the character of Grandpa represents rigid attitudes toward African-Americans which were and have been maintained by people who experienced racial segregation and disagreed with the change of social paradigm in the 1960s. As illustrated in Franklin and Moss, the improvement in the status of African-Americans was not accepted without vigorous opposition. Although there was a notable decline in discrimination, the period following the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was marked by strong resistance to its endorsement. (Franklin, Moss, 1994, 508) Similarly, Gabaccia claims that even years after the passage of the Civil Rights Act, the color line was still “a national dilemma.” (Gabaccia, 213, 2002) In addition, the results of a Gallup poll taken in 2007 showed that Americans aged 50 and older are less likely to approve interracial marriages than those of 18 to 49 years of age. (Carroll, 2007) And as interracial marriage is used by scholars as key indicator of racial and cultural assimilation (Masuoka, 2008, 253), it can be concluded that the older generation of Americans still feel noticeable differences between blacks and whites and do not easily identify with the idea of racial equality.

Although it is difficult to draw a firm conclusion from such a limited number of characters and scenes which comment on the issue of the relationship between blacks and whites, the aforementioned examples might be regarded as satirical. On the one hand, by introducing racial stereotypes about Carl, the authors of the cartoon exhibit the controversial nature of these stereotypes and make them appear ridiculous, hence satisfying the criteria for satirical works defined by Gray. In addition, Grandpa’s intolerant behavior toward African-Americans exposes his failing to ridicule, and therefore, his dialog with Lisa meets the requirements for satire stated by Baldick. On the other hand, the ambiguity of Homer’s comment on lower salary and the confirmation of the racial stereotypes by Carl’s actions, contradict the notion that satire mocks its objects with the purpose to correct conduct as described by Peck and Coyle.

Yet the arguments for considering the discussed parts of episodes as satirical prevail.

As regards the kind of satire used, the racial stereotypes used in the comments about the character of Carl are examples of Horatian satire since the comments direct wit and exaggeration. Moreover, the comments use mild humor and can be described as gentle scoffing at Carl's foibles, and therefore, as Horatian satire as defined by Beckson and Ganz. On the other hand, Homer's and Grandpa's remarks about their black ancestor are on the verge of Juvenalian satire since they are darker in tone and deal with a more serious issue, which is pervasive racism and unequal work conditions. Yet the number of the comments is insufficient for describing general approach to dealing with the topic of race relations.

As regards parody, its only example is the title of the episode "The Color Yellow", which parodies the title of a 1982 novel "The Color Purple" by Alice Walker. Both the episode and the novel explore the topic of slavery but there the resemblance ends. According to Mocná's division of parody, the altered title is an example of humoristic parody since its aim is not to scorn its original as it is a simple playful imitation of it.

In sum, *The Simpsons* offers rather limited commentary on the issue of the relationship between blacks and whites. Although African-American characters regularly appear on the show, they are not primarily used to either question racial stereotypes or satirize racial prejudices. Seldom does the cartoon dedicate its episodes to commentaries on the status of African-Americans in American society. Exclusion of this topic either expresses the authors' attitudes toward the issue or illustrates the tendency of the show not to be potentially controversial. In other words, the position of African-Americans in American society is not discussed in *The Simpsons* since the authors do not believe that racism against blacks is widespread. This explanation is not highly probable because various sources contradict it. For instance, Landry claims that whites still hold negative stereotypes about blacks. (Landry, 1992, 205) Likewise, Crandall agrees that, "A gulf between the whites and blacks is still present." (Crandall et. al, 1997, 154) Last but not least, the results of a Gallup poll cited on page 34 confirm Landry's and Crandall's opinions. The other explanation – the effort of the show not to be controversial – seems more probable. Although *The Simpsons* satirizes the faults of

American society, the criticism, as suggested by Gray, is rarely if ever scathing. (Gray, 2005, 233) Likewise, Henry suggests that although the show established itself as a biting satire on American society, its satirical edge has waned in recent years. (Henry, 2004, 225)

Undoubtedly, the topic of race relations seems necessary to employ bitter and darker tone in order to underline the complex and controversial nature of the issue. Yet *The Simpsons* as a light-hearted and sympathetic prime-time show is not capable of such biting criticism. The lightweight episode “The Color Yellow” certainly confirms this notion. In his review, critic Robert Canning says: “I guess it is difficult to find the humor in slavery, even for *The Simpsons*.” (Canning, 2010) As a result, instead of a caustic comment on slavery and assimilation of African-Americans into American society, the episode provides only brief insight into the issue and does not fully exploit the potential of its plot. Therefore, *The Simpsons* when compared with *South Park*, fail to satirize effectively the fragile issue of the relationship between whites and blacks.

7. ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION

As discussed in chapter 6, the United States can be described as a nation of immigrants. Rumbaut agrees when he claims that The United States has aptly been called a “permanently unfinished society” and immigrants have made their passages to America a central theme of the country’s history. (Rumbaut, 1992, 244) Yet not all newcomers entered the country legally. Daniel states that during the twentieth century, particularly after World War II, as American immigration laws and regulations became more complex, the phenomenon of illegal immigration became increasingly significant. He adds that 10 million immigrants out of 55 million twentieth-century immigrants were illegal immigrants. (Daniels, 2006, 73)

The issue of illegal immigration has always disturbed both American authorities and the public. Ironically, as suggested by Daniels:

It was government policy to bring in temporary workers from Mexico during World War II and following years, which abetted what became the major source of illegal immigration, since these supposedly temporary workers remained illegally in the United States even after the end of the program and were often joined by other family members. (Daniels, 2006, 83)

As stated in *Coming to America*, the long and sometimes hysterical debate over immigration policy in the 1980s, in which even the staid and scholarly Population Reference Bureau could refer to illegal immigration as “a cancer in American society”, led to the creation of the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA). (Daniels, 1991, 397) Daniels notes: “This act was designed to reduce immigration but it actually expended it as its massive legalization for aliens who were illegally in the United States created an appetite for further amnesties.” (Daniels, 2006, 90) Rumbaut adds that IRCA did not stop the flow of unauthorized migrants; in fact, the number of apprehensions along the Mexican border increased abruptly after 1989. (Rumbaut, 1992, 216) Daniels claims:

IRCA’s failure contributed to increased public hostility toward immigration. [...] The most extreme example of the furor was the passage of an anti-immigrant referendum in California in 1994. This law made illegal immigrants ineligible for public social services or attendance at public schools. [...] Although a federal judge issued an injunction barring enforcement of the new law, so the law was never applied, the high percentage of people who voted for the law were disturbing. (Daniels, 2006, 90-92)

Even nowadays, illegal immigration is a very sensitive issue which does concern the general American public. As stated in Gabaccia, Americans view workers without documents as potential criminals who have already violated American laws by entering the country or overstaying their visas. (Gabaccia, 2002, 258) Similarly, the results of a USA Today/Gallup poll present illegal immigration as one of American concerns. According to the results, illegal immigration is positioned fairly high as a public concern with the 64 percent of Americans rating illegal immigration as an “extremely serious” or “very serious problem”. (Saad, 2010) In addition, another Gallup poll showed majority support for making illegal immigration a crime, and for making it a crime to knowingly assist an illegal immigrant. (Saad, 2006) The general attitude of the public toward illegal immigration is also illustrated by the results of a Gallup poll conducted in April 2010 which was interested in public perception of the state of Arizona’s new strict immigration law, which makes it a state crime for illegal immigrants to be in the country. The results reveal that 51 percent of Americans who heard about this law favor it and 39 percent oppose it. (Jones, 2010) Based on the aforementioned results, it can be concluded that the issue of illegal immigration disturbs the American public. Therefore, due to its controversial nature, it is not surprising that it has become one of the themes which are addressed in *South Park* and *The Simpsons*.

7.1 ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION IN *SOUTH PARK*

The topic of illegal immigration is explored in the episode “Goobacks”, the sixth episode of the eighth season. (806) The opening scene depicts a creation of a time portal in the desert. This time portal is used by people from the future who come back to the present in search for work since the future is so overpopulated that there are no jobs to apply for. Although it is not directly stated that people from the future allude to Mexicans, the placement of the time portal in the desert clearly refers to the United States-Mexico border. Moreover, the derogatory nickname used for newcomers, a gooback, makes reference to a taboo word wetback, which describes a person from Mexico who came to the United States illegally. The arrival of people from the future significantly affects the life in the town of South Park

Most importantly, the overwhelming number of newcomers creates a significant impact upon the labor market in the town. As the immigrants are willing to accept very low wages, the workers all over South Park are being dismissed. Not only does the situation result in severe unemployment but also in a heated discussion about illegal immigrants. For instance, the discussion held on a talk show, which is a parody on *The O'Reilly Factor*, introduces two contrasting views on the subject.

BILL O'REILLY: What we're talkin' about today are the immigrant from the future. I've got two guests with me tonight who have opposing views on the matter. On my right is pissed-off white-trash redneck conservative. And on my left is aging hippie liberal douche. Now, pissed-off redneck, you say we shouldn't allow anyone else through the time portal, all right?

MAN 1: You're Goddamned right! These people from the future are takin' all the work away from us decent present-day Americans! They took our jobs! Those jobs belong to people from the present!

MAN 2: Heh, it's typical for conservative rednecks like these to view the immigrants as the problem, heh, but really, the problem is America. It is our greedy multinational corporations that keep everyone else in poverty.

BILL O'REILLY: All right, redneck, your rebuttal?

MAN 1: They took our jobs! (806, 10:53-11:54)

This scene mocks opposing views on illegal immigration. The “pissed-off white-trash redneck” conservative, dressed in a checked shirt and cowboy boots, is an exaggerated representation of a right-winger or simply a Republican, and the aging hippie liberal “douche”, wearing sandals and a backpack, presents a distorted picture of a left-winger or a Democrat. (see fig. 13 and 14 in the appendix) As showed by a Gallup poll, Republicans and Democrats differ in opinions on possible solutions of the problem of illegal immigration. Their different attitudes might be illustrated by conflicting opinions on the strict Arizona’s immigration law of 2010, with which 75 percent of Republicans and only 34 percent of Democrats agree. (Jones, 2010)

The authors of *South Park* exploit this disagreement and instead of inkling to one of the aforementioned beliefs about illegal immigration, they mock both sides of the debate concerning this contentious issue. Becker agrees while claiming that *South Park* satirizes issues commonly associated with contemporary left-liberal politics but it also routinely lampoons issues commonly associated with contemporary right-wing conservatives. (Becker, 2008, 146-147) Curtis and Erion are of the same opinion as

Becker, when they state that *South Park* criticize both left-wing and right-wing political extremists. (Curtis, Erion, 2007, 120)

The phrase “They took our jobs!” is widely used by conservatives in the whole episode as an all-purpose response to any question concerning the topic of illegal immigration. By the end of the episode the workers are not even pronouncing the words properly; instead, the phrase changes into “Too-kourderb!” Given this, it might be stated that the authors of *South Park* ridicule the emptiness of that phrase and thus satirize the notion that the presence of illegal immigrants necessarily leads to unemployment. Rumbaut states:

Claims about immigrants taking jobs away from native-born workers are made in the absence of any evidence that unemployment is caused by both legal and undocumented immigrants. [...] Less-skilled immigrants typically move into manual labor markets deserted by native-born workers, who shift into preferred non-manual jobs. (Rumbaut, 1992, 236)

The results of a Gallup poll conducted in 2006 support Rumbaut’s argument stating that 74 percent of respondents believe that illegal immigrants mostly take low-paying jobs Americans do not want, and only 17 percent of respondents believe that they take jobs Americans want. (Gallup, Immigration, 2011)

The attitude of the aging hippie liberal “douche” toward illegal immigration mocks the left-wing anti-capitalistic rhetoric. As Cantor points out, Parker and Stone ridicule the effort of “the intellectual establishment” to blame all the troubles of America on the corporations. (Cantor, 2007, 103) By insisting on not seeing illegal immigrants at least partly responsible for the situation, the aging hippie and thus liberals/Democrats becomes a legitimate target for mockery. The fact that illegal immigrants potentially contribute to the depression of wages in some areas is confirmed by Rumbaut, who in spite of claiming that illegal immigration is not necessarily the cause of unemployment, also admits that some newcomers in areas of immigrant concentration – especially the undocumented and unskilled immigrant women – are exploited as sources of cheap labor since under their precarious circumstances are willing to accept whatever work is offered. Therefore, he concludes, in this context, the presence of a large supply of cheap labor does keep wages down. (Rumbaut, 1992, 237-238)

In addition, the notion that jobs which illegal immigrants do are not wanted by native-born Americans is not always true. As follows from the results of the

aforementioned Gallup poll, almost one fifth of respondents believe that illegal immigrants take jobs Americans want. What is more, the same research showed that 24 percents of blacks believe that illegal immigrants take the jobs which are wanted by native-born American workers. (Gallup, Immigration, 2011) Gabaccia claims, “African-Americans who are major competitors for both legal and undocumented immigrants fear that employers prefer immigrant employees in low-wage jobs, citing their willingness to accept long hours and low wages.” (Gabaccia, 2002, 246) Therefore, it is apparent that there is a group of people in the labor market which is interested in the same job positions as illegal immigrants. Given this, it might be stated that not all jobs illegal immigrants do are unwanted by American native-born workers.

In conclusion, by not favoring the conservative point of view over the liberal, and vice versa, the authors of South Park are able to point out preposterousness included in arguments of both opposing sides. Hence the episode presents satire on both oversimplified conclusions drawn by conservatives and also empty pseudo-intellectual rhetoric used by liberals.

Toward the end of the episode, the unemployed conservatives devise several plans in order to stop the flow of illegal immigration. These plans include “shooting everyone who crosses the time border”, “causing more global warming, so that it ushers in a new ice age in the future”, and, most notably, “stop the future from happening by getting gay with each other and trying to turn everyone gay, so that there are no future humans”. The last option gain strong support from the unemployed conservatives, so they all scramble into a big pile and start having sex with one another. The aging hippie liberal “douche” disagrees with the unemployed conservatives claiming that “trying to stop immigration is ignorant and intolerant because immigrants have a right to pursue happiness.” When Stan is asked by a news reporter about opinion he says:

STAN: I think it's wrong to call them goobacks because they're no different from us. They're just humans trying to make their lives better. Look, it sucks that the immigrants' time is so crappy, but the cold hard truth is that if we let them all come back to our time, then it's just gonna make our time crappy too. Maybe the answer isn't trying to stop the future from happening, but making the future better. (806, 19:53-20:11)

After Stan's speech the unemployed conservatives stop copulating, and together with the aging hippie liberal "douche" and other residents of South Park start working toward a brighter tomorrow. With soft background music, they plant trees, recycle cans, bring food to African tribesmen, and presents to the homeless. Suddenly, Stan stops working and announces:

STAN: Dude, wait, wait, hold on. Wait a second. This is gay.

CARTMAN: Yeah, this is even gayer than all the men getting in a big pile and having sex with each other.

STAN: Okay, sorry, my bad, everyone back in the pile.

MAN: Back in the pile everyone! We're going back to the pile.

MAN: Never mind, we're going back to the pile! Took ur jurb!

(806, 21:15-21:31)

The attempts to stop illegal immigration described above ridicule the debate revolving around this thorny issue. Once again, the authors of *South Park* mock both right-wing and left-wing oriented suggestions. "Shooting everyone who crosses the time border" satirizes similarly harsh Republican-oriented proposal to build a wall along the border with Mexico to stop the flow of illegal immigrants. The preposterous nature of the suggestion of "turning everyone gay", mocks the absurdity of a proposal of not allowing illegal immigrants to use American schools and hospitals.

However, the results of a Gallup poll show that the aforementioned proposals are considered effective by the American public. For instance, 30 percent of respondents consider not allowing illegal immigrants to use American schools and hospitals very effective, with an additional 30 percent calling it somewhat effective, and only 37 percent find it not effective. As regards the effectiveness of building a wall along U.S.-Mexican border, only 18 percent of respondents consider this very effective, 30 percent find it somewhat effective, and 49 percent calling it not effective. (Saad, 2006)

The left-wing idea of "making a better tomorrow" corresponds to the proposal of taking action to raise the standard of living in countries where large numbers of immigrants come from. As follows from the results of the same Gallup poll, 28 percent of Americans believe this is a very effective solution, 39 percent consider it as somewhat effective and 31 percent think it is not effective. (ibid) By calling this idea "even gayer than all men having sex with one another", Parker and Stone clearly express their distrust of liberal or left-wing campaigns and do-gooding of all kinds.

Both suggestions for solving the problem of illegal immigration, either conservative-oriented or liberal-oriented, are presented as absurd and ineffective in this episode. Once again, *South Park* does not provide keys to social harmony yet it points out preposterousness of both extremes – right-wing and left-wing. This episode only confirms Cantor’s notion that the show usually ends up offending both conservatives and liberals. (Cantor, 2007, 102) Wild agrees when he claims that *South Park* leans neither reliably right nor left and, instead, represents the attitudes of a generation that is almost post-political. (quoted in Becker, 2008, 147) Since the episode ridicules every attempt to stop illegal immigration, it implies that instead of focusing on closing the borders, government’s main focus should be on developing a plan to deal with the illegal immigrants who are already in the country.

In conclusion, the episode “Goobacks” completely fulfills criteria for a satirical work. It uses laughter to attack its objects – both right-wing and left-wing extremists – and makes them, their beliefs and attitudes appear ridiculous and contemptible. Therefore, the episode fits the definition of satire by Gray. Although its entire plot revolves around the topic of illegal immigration, the episode does not either directly comment on or judge the issue. Instead, it satirizes continuing debate over the impact of illegal immigrants on employment, and possible solutions for stopping or, at least, reducing the flow of illegal immigrants. The targets for authors’ biting satire are from both ends of political spectrum. While describing stereotypical images of conservatives and liberals, gross exaggeration and savage ridicule is used to draw attention to their absurd behavior. Hence the episode also meets criteria for satire defined by Peck and Coyle.

The tone is pessimistic since both suggestions for solving the problem proved to be ineffective. Further, the episode can be described as an episode with less emphasis on humor and if laughter is used, it abrasively attacks its targets rather than playfully criticizes them. Therefore, it can be stated that Juvenalian satire, as defined by Highet, is used. The episode clearly expresses its displeasure with an endless debate over this issue and uses sarcasm and bitter irony to evoke contempt for all participants in the discussion. Consequently, the episode also meets the definition of Juvenalian satire by

Beckson, Ganz and Abrams. The choice of satire also corresponds with the complicated nature of the issue and strong emotions which accompany the debate over it.

As regards parody, only one example can be found in the episode. The talk show in which people from the future are discussed imitates and also distorts *The O'Reilly Factor*. The host is depicted as an aging TV star that overuses the word "right". The particular scene can be described as parody of the aforementioned talk show since the imitation evokes amusement and derision; therefore, it satisfies criteria for parody by Highet. According to Mocná's division of parody, the scene can be defined as satirical parody since it aims to mock the original talk show. It focuses mainly on Bill O'Reilly's mannerism and the choice of guests who due to their extremist views do not meaningfully contribute to the debate, and they are only used to boost the popularity of the show.

7.2 ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION IN *THE SIMPSONS*

The Simpsons develops the theme of illegal immigration in the episode called "Much Apu About Nothing", the twenty-third episode of the seventh season. (3F20) The title of the episode is a parody on Shakespeare's play "Much Ado About Nothing", yet the story line is completely unrelated. Having been frightened by a bear strolling along the streets of Springfield, the townspeople demand protection from bears, and soon the Bear Patrol is created. Unsurprisingly, the Bear Patrol costs money and consequently taxes are increased. The townspeople are outraged and make a complaint to Mayor Quimby. To propitiate them, Mayor Quimby lays the blame on illegal immigrants.

MAYOR QUIMBY: People, your taxes are high because of illegal immigrants.
That's right, illegal immigrants. We need to get rid of them.

MOE: Immigrants [sic]. I knew it was them. Even when it was the bears, I knew
it was them. (ibid, 5:43-5:58)

This dialogue not only satirizes politicians' efforts to blame illegal immigrants for various problems of the country, but also refers to the fact that some citizens do the same. The issue of high taxes serves as a clear illustration of this attitude. As follows from the results of a Gallup poll from 2006, 66 percent of respondents believed that illegal immigrants cost taxpayers too much, and only 29 percent believed that illegal

immigrants become productive citizens and pay their fair share of taxes. (Gallup, Immigration, 2011) Similarly, Saad states that in 2010 Americans were more likely to think illegal immigrants are a burden on taxpayers. (Saad, 2010) Contrary to popular belief, Rumbaut claims that, “Illegal immigrants, due to their vulnerable legal status, are much less likely to use welfare services, yet about three-fourths of them pay federal income tax.” (Rumbaut, 1992, 236) Gabaccia describes the atmosphere of the mid-nineties – the time when “Much Apu About Nothing” was originally aired – as a period in which citizens feared newcomers’ claims on welfare, healthcare and schools, despite evidence that immigrants were less likely than natives to apply for welfare, and that even illegal immigrants paid more in taxes than they withdrew in payments for healthcare and education. (Gabaccia, 2002, 259) The fact that native-born Americans are more likely to receive welfare is aptly illustrated in a scene in which Apu, having passed a citizenship test, shouts, “Yes, I am a citizen. Now, which way to the welfare office?” (3F20, 19:39-19:46) Suffice to say that he never considered receiving welfare as an illegal immigrant. Although the results of a Gallup poll from mid-nineties are not available, it is apparent, based on Gabaccia’s and Rumbaut’s notions, that citizens shared a deep conviction that illegal immigrants are a burden on taxpayers in that period too.

Homer blames illegal immigrants not only for high taxes but also for Bart’s disappointing results at school.

HOMER: Open your eyes, Lisa! Our schools are so jam-packed with immigrants; kids like Bart have lost the will to learn.

BART: There’s no denying it, Sis. (ibid, 6:55-7:01)

Although it is not proved that Bart’s performance at school is influenced by the presence of immigrants – legal or undocumented – Homer affected by anti-immigrant mood of the town, claims the opposite. Paradoxically, as claimed by Gabaccia, as regards ordinary public schools in the suburbs, studies showed that even very poor foreign-born students did better in school than their native black and white counterparts. (Gabaccia, 2002, 252) Since Springfield Elementary cannot be definitely described as a poor inner-city school, in which all students, both immigrants and native-born Americans, have lost the will to learn, Homer’s effort to blame immigrants for Bart’s failure is simply not legitimate. Placing the blame on illegal immigrants for either high

taxes or children's unsatisfactory performance at school satirizes making undocumented aliens the scapegoats for all the ills of the society and diverting attention from other serious issues. Beard supports this notion by comparing Mayor Quimby, who tries to distract attention from "a bear tax", to Pete Wilson, a Republican and Governor of California, who focused only on illegal immigration and, in so doing, was accused of willfully ignoring more important issues. (Beard, 2004, 284)

To solve the problem with illegal immigrants, Mayor Quimby creates Proposition 24 which requires all illegal immigrants to be deported. The Proposition 24 is overwhelmingly supported by the townspeople and they start to express openly their hatred of all immigrants. For instance, they carry placards saying "United States for United Statesians", "The only good foreigner is Rod Stewart", and "Get Eurass Back to Eurasia". (see fig. 15 in the appendix) Beard suggests that the townspeople's behavior satirizes American xenophobia, which is shown to arise from ignorance – as illustrated by the absurdity of the slogans used on the placards. He also states that the Proposition 24 controversy mirrors the real-life California Proposition 187. (Beard, 2004, 283) The writer of the episode, David S. Cohen, confirms his notion claiming that the inspiration for the main theme of the episode, illegal immigration, came from California's Proposition 187. (Cohen, 2005)

Direct allusion to Proposition 187 is obvious even without Cohen's confirmation. Both propositions reinforced hostile attitude toward all immigrants. Daniels even describes the case from California when persons who "looked like foreigners" met demands that they prove their citizenship in everyday situations. (Daniels, 2006, 91) This vigilante spirit is hilariously satirized by Nelson who teases a German exchange student, telling him, "Hey, German boy, go back to Germania." Nelson's hostile attitude is supported by Skinner, the principal of Springfield Elementary, who does not take into consideration the fact that the boy came to the United States legally as an exchange student and tells him, "Young man, the only thing we exchange for you is our national dignity." (3F20, 6:21-6:33)

Another allusion to Proposition 187 is made by description of hypocritical behavior of citizens of Springfield. As Beard describes, Proposition 187 eventually became politically incorrect and few people would publicly admit to supporting it. On Election Day, however, the proposition passed with a huge majority. (Beard, 2004, 284)

This hypocrisy is satirized in *The Simpsons*, when at the end of the episode, the people of Springfield persuaded by Homer not to vote yes on Proposition 24, express publicly their opposition to it, while a disturbing 95 percent of them eventually vote “yes.”

As the episode proceeds, the townspeople are preparing for Election Day and a heated discussion over illegal immigrants continues.

MOE: You know what really aggravates me? It's them immigrants. They wants all the benefits of living in Springfield, but they ain't even bother to learn themselves the language.

HOMER: Hey, those are exactly my sentiments.

BARNEY: [babbles]

MOE: Yeah, you said it, Barn.

(3F20, 8:59-9:15)

Not only does this scene direct satirical attention to American feeling of superiority over newcomers but it also introduces the common stereotype of immigrants as people who are not willing to learn the language of the country. This belief is widely held yet it is not entirely true. As suggested in *Passages to America*:

English proficiency has always been a key to socioeconomic mobility and full participation of immigrants into their adoptive society. [...] Therefore, immigrants are motivated to gain knowledge of the English language. And, however, immigrant groups vary in their rates of English language ability, the trend toward anglicization is present, even among Spanish speakers, who are considered the most resistant to language shift. (Rumbaut, 1992, 243)

In addition, by making mistakes in vocabulary and grammar, the characters of *The Simpsons* and thus the cartoon itself undermine the stereotype of a language unskilled immigrant, since the audience realizes that not all native-born Americans are perfect English speakers and not all immigrants – legal or undocumented – have to necessarily be unable to speak English fluently and without mistakes.

To Homer's surprise, one of his friends, Apu Nahasapeemapetilon, is also an illegal immigrant, since he came to the United States as a graduate student and overstayed his student visa because he wanted to pay off his student loans. Having learned that Apu loves the United States more than Homer loves “a cold beer on a hot Christmas morning”, Homer changes his attitude toward Proposition 24 and becomes more sympathetic to illegal aliens.

Apu eventually avoids deportation by taking a citizenship test, in which he reveals a complex knowledge of the history of the United States unmatched by any of the native-born American characters, particularly Homer, who teaches Apu that the thirteen

stripes on the American flag are for “good luck.” The interpretation of this particular scene may differ according to the cultural background of the audience. American viewers can perceive comparing Homer’s and Apu’s attachment to the United States and pointing out clear distinction between the amounts of knowledge they have of the history of the country, as satire on a popular notion that only native-born Americans are patriots who truly love and are interested in their country. However, Czech or European audience can read this scene as satire on uneducated Americans who lack basic knowledge of historical facts. Beard agrees with possible differences in perception of the show saying: “An unavoidable transmutation of meaning occurs when the show is viewed by an audience whose cultural understanding is distinct from that of its originally intended audience.” (Beard, 2004, 289) However, both interpretations portray the character of Apu, an illegal immigrant, in a positive light.

At the very end of the episode, Homer gives a speech, in which he praises immigrants, in order to persuade the people of Springfield to vote “no” on Proposition 24. (see fig. 16 in the appendix)

HOMER: Most of us here were born in America. We take this country for granted. But not immigrants like Apu. While the rest of us are drinking ourselves stupid, they’re driving the cabs that get us home safely, they’re writing the operas that entertain us every day, they’re training our tigers and kicking our extra points. These people are the glue that holds together the gears of our society. If we pass Proposition 24, we will be losing some of the truest Americans of all. (3F20, 20:24-20:59)

Although his stirring speech has no impact on the townspeople, since Proposition 24 eventually passes, it illustrates Homer’s noticeable change in attitudes to illegal immigrants. At the beginning of the episode, the character of Homer was described as xenophobic and easy to generalize. Whereas, having learned from personal experience, he seems more sympathetic to immigrants at the end of the episode. It can be observed that Homer’s final speech is similar – especially in its sympathetic tone and minimal impact upon the others – to Stan’s final speech. However, unlike Stan who concludes that his idea is “totally gay”, Homer does not question the truth of his argument yet he accuses others from being obstinate. “When are people going to learn? Democracy doesn’t work!” (ibid, 21:25-21:31)

Therefore, it can be concluded that Stan’s liberal opinion on immigration was not presented as a desirable attitude toward this issue since he stopped believing in it. On

the other hand, Homer's left-wing point of view and his complete trust in his opinion suggest that *The Simpsons* presents Homer's attitude as a desirable one. Simply put, *The Simpsons* reveals its liberal left-wing attitude toward the issue of immigration, whereas *South Park* does not prefer one point of view over the other one.

The episode "Much Apu About Nothing" presents the citizens of Springfield as arrogant xenophobes who blame immigrants for every problem their town faces to. The episode draws attention to their absurd attitudes and beliefs; and exposes them to ridicule. Hence the episode can be described as satirical because it fits the definitions by Gray and Baldick. In addition, Homer's transformation and his final approval of immigrants suggests desirable behavior which should be adopted by viewers of *The Simpsons*, and thus the episode can be discussed as satirical since its purpose is to correct conduct – which is one of the criteria for satire stated by Peck and Coyle.

The criticism is expressed in a different manner than in *South Park*. The episode playfully mocks various notions about illegal immigrants and uses wit to point out ignorance of the people of Springfield. Although the episode addresses such a controversial subject, it is not dark in tone and it employs light-hearted and mild humor in order to convey its view on the issue. Therefore, it can be stated that "Much Apu About Nothing", unlike *South Park*, uses Horatian satire. Furthermore, Homer's and the townspeople's foolishness evokes a wry smile rather than moral indignation, which contributes to the notion that Horatian satire, as defined by Abrams, is used.

The title of the episode, "Much Apu About Nothing", can be described as parody of the Shakespeare's play title "Much Ado About Nothing". According to Mocná's division of parody, the title of the aforementioned episode can be regarded as an example of humoristic parody because it is a playful imitation which does not scorn its original.

Mayor Quimby, whose character is not so prominent in this episode, is a brilliant parody of the president J.F. Kennedy. One of the president's characteristic features which are imitated is his Boston Irish accent with which Quimby speaks. The parody of the president's accent fulfills the criteria for humoristic parody established by Mocná as it is only a flippant imitation. Therefore, it can be stated the character of Mayor Quimby satirizes politicians in general, whereas it parodies J.F.K. without satirical intention.

In conclusion, unlike *South Park*, which remains neutral about the issue of illegal immigration, *The Simpsons* conveys its view on this sensitive subject. More specifically, the episode mocks only conservative point of view and satirizes opinions usually connected with the right side of political spectrum, such as scapegoating of illegal immigrants and a belief that illegal immigrants abuse the welfare system. Although the episode also presents liberal postures toward the issue, it does not ridicule them. Therefore, its political preference is apparent.

Unlike anonymous undocumented aliens in *South Park*, Apu, a family friend and one of frequently featured supporting characters, vividly describes his reasons for violating the U.S. law and overstaying his student visa. In this way, the cartoon tries to foster understanding for illegal immigrants and explain the motives for their presence in the country. Taken into account the period of mid-nineties, in which this particular episode originated, it is possible that one of the aims of *The Simpsons* was to spread awareness about immigration and calm down the public furor and anti-immigrant mood.

Besides political bias and the effort to imply what is good and wrong, employment of different kind of satire also illustrates different approach to addressing the issue of illegal immigration adopted by *The Simpsons* in comparison with *South Park*.

8. CONCLUSION

South Park and *The Simpsons* can be legitimately regarded as the most discussed adult-orientated cartoons of the past two decades. Primarily, the latter has achieved widespread popularity all around the world, and has become American television's longest running animated program. Both cartoons provide their audience with incisive commentaries on America's contentious issues and seek to promote discussion about these issues. Further, the shows offer their non-American viewers valuable insights into American culture. However, not everyone is willing to admit that *South Park* and *The Simpsons* contain more than toilet humor and amusing jokes. Critics particularly disparage the medium of animation and commercial success of the shows, and claim that they are not worthy of analysis. Despite critical voices, the cartoons have gained a reputation as satirical shows which present a cultural critique of contemporary America not only among their viewers but also among academics.

South Park and *The Simpsons* are seemingly identical; they are animated prime-time shows set in a fictional small American town, they are humorous, and they frequently employ satire and parody in order to prompt the consideration of salient issues. However, each of them has its own distinct features which clearly distinguish the cartoons from each other.

Most notably, the shows differ in the manner of directing attention to problems which beset American society. Although both *South Park* and *The Simpsons* use satire to reveal unpleasant truths, they considerably vary in the kinds of satire they employ. *South Park* is generally darker in tone with less emphasis on slapstick humor, roundly condemns political and human follies and it voices severe criticism of faults of the society. On the contrary, *The Simpsons* contains mild and light-hearted humor and uses urbane and witty satire which does not aim to evoke moral indignation. In addition, *South Park* explores and exploits politically incorrect and culturally taboo social issues in greater depth than *The Simpsons*. Therefore, it can be stated that the former uses Juvenalian, whereas the latter employs Horatian satire while commenting on contemporary America's problems. Both cartoons caricature other works of popular culture yet they parody them in a different manner. *South Park* mainly parodies television shows or films or particular scenes from films, and in so doing it uses satirical

parody which lampoons the original text. By contrast, *The Simpsons* generally applies humoristic parody and distorts the titles of famous books, plays and films which are then used for the titles of episodes. On the whole, not only does *The Simpsons* use milder tone of satire but it also avoids employing cruel parody. Consequently, when compared with *South Park*, the criticism is less severe and the tone is more conciliatory.

Furthermore, political opinions of the cartoons vary. Whereas *South Park* does not prefer either liberals or conservatives and scornfully mocks both of them, *The Simpsons* tends to favor liberal viewpoints over conservatives ones. The show of course ridicules both sides of political spectrum but it gets more vicious when it comments on right-wing politics. Therefore, *The Simpsons* can be described as pro-Democrat and anti-Republican, while *South Park* can be regarded as apolitical.

In conclusion, due to their popularity and longevity both cartoons have undoubtedly become a part of contemporary culture. They allude to controversial issues and mock the debate which revolves around them. *South Park* is more straightforward and radical in addressing these issues and frequently ridicules both sides of the debate, whereas *The Simpsons* inclines to praise liberal points of view and it reveals its criticism in a moderate manner. However, it is important to realize that *The Simpsons* originated in the late 1980s and it was perceived as a highly controversial show at that time. Critics accuse the cartoons of juvenile vulgarity and slapstick humor, whereas fans appreciate clever satire hidden behind crude jokes. Either loved or hated, *South Park* and *The Simpsons* have become cult classics of television animation and they have made millions of people think about delicate subjects.

9. RESUMÉ

Americké kreslené seriály *South Park* a *Simpsonovi* se dají právem považovat za jedny z nejvíce oblíbených a zároveň nejvíce kontroverzních animovaných seriálů posledních let. Jejich popularita a vliv výrazně překročily hranice Spojených států amerických, ve kterých je jejich děj zasazen a na jejichž problémy oba seriály často a rády poukazují.

Tato diplomová práce se převážně zabývá rozбором rozdílného přístupu obou seriálů ke kritice americké společnosti. Pro tyto účely je nezbytně nutné nejprve vymezit základní pojmy jako „satira“ a „parodie“ a také oba seriály zasadit do kontextu vývoje žánru „cartoons“ tj. kreslených seriálů. Všechny tyto pojmy detailně rozebírá teoretická část práce.

O satirě můžeme hovořit ve chvíli, kdy umělec použije k vyjádření své nespokojenosti s konkrétním problémem výsměch a pomocí humoru poukáže na situaci, kterou považuje za nežádoucí. Vždy záleží na umělci, jak ostrá a zesměšňující jeho kritika je a zda má vyvolat u čtenáře či diváka pouze škodolibý úsměv nebo spíše opovržení. K satirickému efektu umělci také často používají imitaci, která zesměšňuje buď autora, jeho dílo nebo charakteristické znaky jeho stylu. Pokud tato imitace vyvolává ve čtenáři či divákovi pochyby o hodnotě díla imitovaného, můžeme hovořit o parodii. Jelikož je někdy velmi těžké rozlišit mezi satirou a parodií, tato diplomová práce přistupuje k oběma seriálům především jako k dílům satirickým, pokud není zcela zřejmé, že se jedná o parodii konkrétního žánru, díla nebo postavy.

Další kapitola teoretické části zasazuje *South Park* a *Simpsonovi* do kontextu vývoje žánru „cartoons“. Především je definuje jako kreslené seriály pro dospělé a odlišuje je od ranních kreslených pohádek pro děti. Dále blíže rozebírá jednotlivá specifika obou seriálů. Zmiňuje cílovou skupinu diváků, která tyto seriály výrazně odlišuje. Ačkoliv jsou oba původně určeny pro dospělé, *Simpsonovi* na rozdíl od *South Parku* svým postupným zařazením do středního proudu televizní zábavy, komickými prvky a cílenou marketingovou strategií oslovují i dětské publikum. S tímto faktem úzce souvisí jejich další odlišnost – způsob prezentace kritického postoje. Zatímco seriál *Simpsonovi* volí smířlivější tón kritiky a používá méně expresivních výrazů, tudíž není

pro dětské diváky nevhodný, *South Park* kritizuje jedovatě a tvrdě a často se v něm objevují slova a situace pro dětské publikum naprosto nepřijatelná.

Praktická část je rozdělena do čtyř kapitol, které popisují kontroverzní či palčivé problémy Spojených států. V úvodu každé kapitoly je o konkrétním problému pojednáno nejen z historického hlediska, ale také z perspektivy amerických občanů. K tomuto účelu jsou použita data z výzkumů veřejného mínění „Gallup poll“. Poté se kapitola zaměřuje na rozbor konkrétních epizod, na nichž je zkoumáno, jakým způsobem oba seriály poukazují na konkrétní problémy.

Kapitola s názvem *Public Education* se zabývá problémy ve státním školství. Především problematikou financování státních škol, jejichž chod je zajišťován převážně penězi z daní obyvatel konkrétních místních správních celků a z tohoto důvodu jsou velké rozdíly mezi vybaveností škol v bohatších a chudších oblastech. Dále kapitola rozebírá personální problémy, kterým školství v důsledku odchodu velkého počtu kantorů do penze a malého zájmu o toto povolání mezi mladou generací v posledních letech čelí.

South Park na problematiku špatně financovaných škol poukazuje parodií filmu „Ukaž, co umíš“ (*Stand and Deliver*) a vysílá Erica Cartmana jako učitele matematiky do školy plné latinskoamerických studentů, které místo aritmetiky učí podvádět, aby v životě uspěli za pomoci způsobu bílých lidí. *Simpsonovi* ke kritice tohoto problému využívají svou vlastní základní školu ve Springfieldu a v epizodě číslo 2F19 popisují cestu na školní výlet autobusem v naprosto katastrofálním stavu.

Chytrou satirou stereotypu učitele oba seriály poukazují na neuspokojivý stav učitelských sborů ve státním školství. Seriál *South Park* k tomuto komentáři používá postavu učitele pana Garrisona, který je prezentován jako podivín s rozdvojenou osobností a jehož vyučovací hodiny se omezují na videoprojekci kriminálních seriálů a telenovel. Jeho vztah k žákům je negativní, ti se ho bojí a nejsou motivováni k dobrým výsledkům. Seriál *Simpsonovi* na výše zmíněný problém poukazuje prostřednictvím postavy učitelky paní Krabappelové, která vtipně satiruje stárnoucí zahořklou kantorku, jež ztratila veškeré naděje a iluze o smysluplnosti vzdělávání mladé generace. Často se k žákům chová přezíravě a někdy až škodolibě. Na rozdíl od pana Garrisona má však své studenty v jádru ráda a je ochotná jim v mezních situacích pomoci.

Oba seriály prokazatelně satirují neduhy státního školství, neboť ke kritice používají výsměch. Tón jejich kritiky se však značně liší. Zatímco seriál *South Park* cynicky a jedovatě vykresluje postavu nekompetentního učitele pana Garrisona a tím zpochybňuje důvěryhodnost státního školství, seriál *Simpsonovi* prostřednictvím postavy vyhořelé učitelky shovívavě upozorňuje na jeho problémy.

Následující kapitola se věnuje v televizní tvorbě dlouho tabuizovanému tématu homosexuality. Úvodní část popisuje pozvolnou změnu stanoviska většinové společnosti k homosexualitě, jak byla zaznamenána v průzkumech veřejného mínění společností Gallup. Dále tato kapitola nastiňuje, jakým způsobem se oba seriály chopily zpracování tohoto kontroverzního tématu.

Seriál *South Park* zařadil epizodu věnovanou tématu homosexuality a reakcím na ni hned do své první série. V této epizodě vtipně satiruje populární stereotyp homosexuála jako výstředního a zženštilého muže se zálibou v diskotékové hudbě a růžové barvě. Jelikož postava velkého teplého Ala záměrně tuto stereotypní představu naplňuje a díky obrovskému množství nadsázky působí velmi absurdně, divák je nucen zapochybovat o pravdivosti těchto stereotypů a svých možných předsudcích.

Po osmi letech opatrných narážek na sexuální orientaci pana Smitherse seriál *Simpsonovi* uvedl jeden díl, který se podrobně zabývá předsudky a mylnými představami o homosexuálech. Jádrem tohoto dílu je Homerův měnící se vztah k nově získanému příteli, který je gay. Na rozdíl od velkého teplého Ala není postava Johna prezentována jako souhrn zveličených stereotypů o homosexuálech, neboť se John chová jako obyčejný muž ve středních letech. Poté co Homer přijde na Johnovu odlišnou sexuální orientaci, začne se obávat se, že by od něho mohl Bart homosexualitu „chytil“. Na konci epizody si ovšem uvědomí, že jeho předsudky nebyly na místě a stává se k homosexuálům tolerantní. Tato epizoda prostřednictvím postavy Homera a jeho směšného strachu z Johna velmi vtipně satiruje mylnou avšak stále zažitou představu o tom, že homosexualita je nakažlivá. Mnozí diváci, kteří najdou paralelu mezi chováním Homerovým a svým, dostávají šanci uvědomit si, jak směšně toto chování působí a tudíž ho mohou na popud zhlédnutí této epizody přehodnotit.

Oba seriály více či méně zřetelně naznačují, jaký postoj by k problematice homosexuality měli diváci zaujmout. V tomto případě tedy můžeme hovořit o satíře, neboť jedním z jejich úkolů je náprava nežádoucího chování. Tentokrát oba seriály

vtipně a humorně cílí na zesměšnění homofobních postojů a místo rozhořčení a opovržení publika se tato satira snaží vzbudit na tvářích diváků spíše jízlivý úsměv.

Tématem další kapitoly jsou vztahy mezi různými skupinami obyvatelstva v multikulturní americké společnosti. Důraz je kladen především na vztah mezi bělochy a černochoy, který je do velké míry poznamenán problematickou kapitolou amerických dějin – otroctvím. Ve zpracování tohoto tématu se seriály ve srovnání se zpracováním zbylých témat nejvíce odlišují.

Seriál *South Park* často ostře poukazuje na přetrvávající napětí ve vztahu černých a bílých Američanů. Pro ilustraci těchto vztahů se neobává použití rasistických nadávek, ačkoliv se vystavuje nebezpečí nepochopení a obvinění z rasismu – tedy přesně z té věci, proti které bojuje. Analyzovaná epizoda popisuje nevraživost mezi chudými starousedlíky South Parku a nově příchozími bohatými občany. Ačkoliv je zřejmé, že napětí je založeno na rozdílné barvě kůže obyvatel, neboť všichni nově příchozí jsou Afroameričané a epizoda obsahuje spoustu odkazů na praktiky Kukluxklanu a segregáční zákony, až do úplného konce epizody žádná z postav nepřipustí, že by tato nevraživost byla založena na něčem jiném než na pouhé závisti. Poté co se divák na konci epizody dozví, že jeho tušení bylo správné, uvědomí si, jak temná a sžíravá satira celou epizodu provázela.

Seriál *Simpsonovi* se ke kritice vztahu mezi zmíněnými skupinami obyvatel staví zdrženlivě. Nepočítáme-li vykreslení dvou stereotypů o Afroameričanech prostřednictvím postavy Carla a jedné epizody zasazené do roku 1860, není tomuto tématu v seriálu věnován prostor. Navíc výše zmíněná epizoda, kromě závěrečného dialogu, který satiruje některé stereotypní domněnky o Afroameričanech, nekomentuje problém otroctví či komplikovanost vztahu mezi bělochy a černochoy a spíše se věnuje rodinným vztahům předchůdců Simpsonových.

Seriál *South Park*, který zcela určitě satiruje rasové problémy současné Ameriky, ke své kritice používá velmi ostrá slova, cynický humor a zraňující výsměch. Zhodnotit druh satiry použitý v seriálu *Simpsonovi* je problematičtější, neboť seriál nenabízí dostatek příkladů k analýze. Máme-li ovšem hodnotit výše zmíněný dialog a zpochybnění zjednodušených představ o Afroameričanech, je zřejmé, že *Simpsonovi* nepoužívají tak radikálních metod k pojmenování konkrétních problémů.

Poslední kapitola se zabývá hojně diskutovaným tématem nelegálního přistěhovalectví. Z průzkumu veřejného mínění vyplývá, že nejen orgány státní správy, ale také řadoví občané považují nelegální přistěhovalectví za podstatný problém, který by měl být efektivně řešen.

Seriál *South Park* v epizodě o lidech z budoucnosti, kteří se vrací zpět do přítomnosti kvůli pracovním příležitostem, zesměšňuje jak liberální tak konzervativní postoje k problému ilegálního přistěhovalectví. Ostře kritizuje pravicovou útočnou a xenofobní rétoriku, ale také levicová idealistická a v praxi neproveditelná řešení. Vzhledem k tomu, že se v závěru epizody nepřiklání ani k liberálnímu ani ke konzervativnímu názorovému stanovisku, můžeme říci, že tento seriál je nepolitický.

V seriálu *Simpsonovi* se téma nelegálního přistěhovalectví objevuje jako satira konkrétní události a to návrhu 187, který měl v Kalifornii v roce 1994 vyřešit problémy s velkým počtem nelegálních imigrantů. Podobně jako v Kalifornii i ve Springfieldu se strhne velký rozruch kolem hlasování o tomto návrhu. Epizoda vtipně a výstižně satiruje běžné předsudky o nelegálních imigrantech a také pokrytectví rodilých Američanů. Kritika je směřována výhradně k pravicově orientované rétorice, což poukazuje na spíše liberální orientaci nejen této konkrétní epizody, ale celého seriálu.

Satira problému nelegálního přistěhovalectví se objevuje v obou seriálech. I tentokrát seriál *Simpsonovi* používá smířlivější tón a více čistě humorných situací pro kritiku nejen tohoto problému, ale i debaty, která se kolem něj odvíjí. Seriál také jasně vymezuje svůj liberálně orientovaný postoj k tomuto problému. *South Park* zůstává i v tomto případě věrný svému ostrému a cynickému humoru při zesměšňování obou názorových stanovisek na problém nelegálního přistěhovalectví a zároveň se jasně vymezuje jak proti liberálnímu tak i proti konzervativnímu hledisku.

Oba seriály poukazují pomocí satiry na problémy a neduhy americké společnosti. Jejich hlavní přínos tkví v tom, že mnohdy kontroverzní a politicky nekorektní témata zpracují a napomáhají tak k diskuzi o těchto tématech. Z diplomové práce dále vyplývá, že seriál *South Park* nemilosrdně a bez výjimky zesměšňuje vše, co považuje za špatné, zatímco seriál *Simpsonovi* volí ke kritice chyb společnosti smířlivější a opatrnější tón. Ať je ale tón kritiky jakýkoliv, důležité je, že je přítomna a že svým divákům tyto seriály umožňují zamyslet se nejen nad chybami společnosti, ale i nad chybami a předsudky vlastními.

10. APPENDIX



Fig. 1 “The Death Camp of Tolerance”, Production number 614.



Fig. 2 “Gnomes”, Production number 217.



Fig. 3 “Bart the Genius”, Production code 7G02.



Fig. 4 “Bart the Lover”, Production code 8F16.



Fig. 5 “Big Gay Al’s Big Gay Bow Ride”, Production number 104.



Fig. 6 “Big Gay Al’s Big Gay Bow Ride”, Production number 104.



Fig. 7 “Homer’s Phobia”, Production code 4F11.



Fig. 8 “Homer’s Phobia”, Production code 4F11.



Fig. 9 “With Apologies to Jesse Jackson”, Production number 1101.



Fig. 10 “Here Comes the Neighborhood”, Production number 512.



Fig. 11 “Children of a Lesser Clod”, Production number CABF16.



Fig. 12 “The Color Yellow”, Production number MABF06.



Fig. 13 “Goobacks”, Production number 807.



Fig. 14 “Goobacks”, Production number 807.



Fig. 15 "Much Apu About Nothing", Production number 3F20.



Fig. 16 "Much Apu About Nothing", Production number 3F20.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

PRINTED MATERIALS

ABRAMS, M.H. *A Glossary of Literary Terms*. 7th ed. Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace, 1999. 366 s. ISBN 0-15-505452-X.

ALBERTI, John. *Leaving Springfield: The Simpsons and the Possibility of Oppositional Culture*. 1st ed. Detroit, Michigan: Wayne State University Press, 2004. 343 s. ISBN 0-8143-2849-0.

ARP, Robert. *South Park and Philosophy: You Know, I Learned Something Today*. 1st ed. Chelsea, Michigan: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2007. 273 s. ISBN 978-1-4051-6160-2.

BALDICK, Chris. *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001. 280 s. ISBN 0-19-280118-X.

BEARD, Duncan Stuart. Local Satire with a Global Reach: Ethnic Stereotyping and Cross-Cultural Conflicts in *The Simpsons*. In *Leaving Springfield: The Simpsons and the Possibility of Oppositional Culture*. Alberti (ed.), Detroit, Michigan: Wayne State University Press, 2004. s. 273-291. ISBN 0-8143-2849-0.

BECKER, Matt. I Hate Hippies: *South Park* and the Politics of Generation X. In *Taking South Park Seriously*. Weinstock (ed.), Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 2008. s. 145-164. ISBN 978-0-7914-7566-9.

BECKSON, Karl; GANZ, Arthur. *Literary Terms: a Dictionary*. 1st ed. New York : Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1975. 280 s. ISBN 0-374-51225-6.

BIGSBY, Christopher. Introduction: What, then, is the American?. In *The Cambridge Companion to Modern American Culture*. Bigsby (ed.), New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006. s.1-32. ISBN-13: 978-0-521-60109-2.

BIGSBY, Christopher. *The Cambridge Companion to Modern American Culture*. 1st ed. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006. 468 s. ISBN-13: 978-0-521-60109-2.

CANTOR, Paul A. The Invisible Gnomes and the Invisible Hand: *South Park* and Libertarian Philosophy. In *South Park and Philosophy: You Know, I Learned Something Today*. Arp (ed.), Chelsea, Michigan: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2007. s.97-111. ISBN 978-1-4051-6160-2.

CANTOR, Paul A. *The Simpsons: Atomistic Politics and the Nuclear Family*. In *The Simpsons and Philosophy: the D'oh! of Homer*. Irwin et al.(ed.), Chicago, Illinois: Open Court, 2001. s. 160-178. ISBN 0-8126-9433-3.

COLEMAN, Lindsay. Shopping at J-Mart with the Williams: Race, Ethnicity and Belonging in *South Park*. In *Taking South Park Seriously*. Weinstock (ed.), Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 2008. s. 131-144. ISBN 978-0-7914-7566-9.

CRANDALL, J; DATESMAN, M.K.; KEARNY, E. *The American Ways: an Introduction to American Culture*. 2nd ed. White Plains, NY: Prentice Hall Regents, 1997, 276 s. ISBN 0-13-342015-9.

CROSS, Theodor. A Brief History of the Ku Klux Klan. *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*. Winter 1996, no. 14, s. 32.

CUDDON, J.A. *A Dictionary of Literary Terms*. 1st ed. London: Penguin Books, 1979. 761 s. ISBN 0-14-051363-9.

CURTIS, David Valleau; ERION, Gerald J. *South Park* and the Open Society: Defending Democracy Through Satire. In *South Park and Philosophy: You Know, I Learned Something Today*. Arp (ed.), Chelsea, Michigan: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2007. s.112-120. ISBN 978-1-4051-6160-2.

DANIELS, Roger. *Coming to America: A History of Immigration and Ethnicity in American Life*. New York: HarperPerennial, 1991. 449 s. ISBN 0-06-092100-5.

DANIELS, Roger. Immigration to the United States in the twentieth century: 1900-1960. In *The Cambridge Companion to Modern American Culture*. Bigsby (ed.), New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006. s.73-95. ISBN-13: 978-0-521-60109-2.

DRESCHER, J; SHIDLO, A; SCHROEDER, M. What Needs Fixing?: An Introduction. In *Sexual Conversion Therapy: Ethical, Clinical and Research Perspective*. Drescher et al.(ed.), Binghamton, New York: The Haworth Medical Press, 2001. s. 1-4. ISBN 0-7890-1910-8.

FRANKLIN, John Hope; MOSS, Alfred A. Jr. *From Slavery to Freedom: A History of African Americans*. 7th ed. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1994. s. 680. ISBN 0-679-43087-3.

GABACCIA, Donna R. *Immigration and American Diversity: a Social and Cultural History*. Malden, Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers Inc., 2002. 306 s. ISBN 0-631-22033-X.

GRAY, Jonathan. Television Teaching: Parody, *The Simpsons*, and Media Literacy Education. *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, August 2005, vol. 22, no. 3, s. 223-238.

GRAY, Martin. *A Dictionary of Literary Terms*. 2nd rev. ed. Beirut: York Press, 1992. 324 s. ISBN 0-582-08037-1.

GROENING, Stephen. Cynicism and Other Postideological Half Measures in *South Park*. In *Taking South Park Seriously*. Weinstock (ed.), Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 2008. s. 133-130. ISBN 978-0-7914-7566-9.

HENRY, Matthew. Looking for Amanda Hugginkiss: Gay Life on *The Simpsons*. In *Leaving Springfield: The Simpsons and the Possibility of Oppositional Culture*. Alberti (ed.), Detroit, Michigan: Wayne State University Press, 2004. s. 225-243. ISBN 0-8143-2849-0.

HEREK, Gregory M. Beyond "Homophobia": Thinking about Sexual Prejudice and Stigma in the Twenty-First Century. *Journal of National Sexuality Resource Center*, April 2004, vol. 1, no. 2, s. 6-19.

HIGHET, Gilbert. *The Anatomy of Satire*. 1st ed. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1962. 301 s.

HODGSON, Godfrey. The American Century. In *The Cambridge Companion to Modern American Culture*. Bigsby (ed.), New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006. s.33-52. ISBN-13: 978-0-521-60109-2.

IRWIN, William; CONARD, Mark T.; SKOBLE Aeon J. *The Simpsons and Philosophy: The D'oh! of Homer*. Chicago, Illinois: Open Court, 2001, 303 s. ISBN 0-8126-9433-3.

LANDRY, Bart. The Enduring Dilemma of Race in America. In *America at Century's End*. Wolfe (ed.), Los Angeles, California: University of California Press, 1992. s. 185-207. ISBN 0-520-07477-7.

LEW, William J.F. Teaching and the Teacher's Personality. *Educational Journal*, 1977, no.6, s. 9-22.

MASUOKA, Natalie. Political Attitudes and Ideologies of Multiracial Americans: The Implications of Mixed Race in the United States. *Political Research Quarterly*, June 2008, vol. 61, no. 2, s. 253-267.

MAYOR, M. *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*. 5th ed. Harlow: Longman, 2009. 2081 s. ISBN 978-1-4082-1533-3.

MCMAHON, Jennifer L. The Function of Fiction: The Heuristic Value of Homer. In *The Simpsons and Philosophy: the D'oh! of Homer*. Irwin et al.(ed.), Chicago, Illinois: Open Court, 2001. s. 215-232. ISBN 0-8126-9433-3.

MOCNÁ, Dagmar. *Encyklopedie literárních žánrů*. 1.vyd. Praha Litomyšl : Paseka, 2004. 699 s. ISBN 80-7185-669-X

MULLEN, Megan. *The Simpsons and Hanna-Barbera's Animation Legacy*. In *Leaving Springfield: The Simpsons and the Possibility of Oppositional Culture*. Alberti (ed.), Detroit, Michigan: Wayne State University Press, 2004. s. 63-84. ISBN 0-8143-2849-0.

PAYNE, Kevin J; BIDDLE, Bruce J. Poor School Funding, Child Poverty, and Mathematics Achievement. *Educational Researcher*, August-September 1999, vol. 28, no. 6, s. 4-13.

PAYNE, Michael; BARBERA, Jessica Rae. *A Dictionary of Cultural and Critical Theory*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010. 832s. ISBN 987-1-4051-6890-8.

PECK, John; COYLE, Martin. *Literary Terms and Criticism*. 3rd ed. Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002. 241 s. ISBN 0-333-96258-3.

PERSELL, Caroline Hodges. Schools under Pressure. In *America at Century's End*. Wolfe (ed.), Los Angeles, California: University of California Press, 1992. s. 283-297. ISBN 0-520-07477-7.

RENNIE, James. Cultural Pedagogy and the Limits of Formal Education in *South Park*. In *Taking South Park Seriously*. Weinstock (ed.), Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 2008. s. 195-208. ISBN 978-0-7914-7566-9.

RUMBAUT, Rubén G. Passages to America: Perspectives on the New Immigration. In *America at Century's End*. Wolfe (ed.), Los Angeles, California: University of California Press, 1992. s. 208-244. ISBN 0-520-07477-7.

SAVAGE, Jr. William J. "So Television's Responsible!": Oppositionality and the Interpretive Logic of Satire and Censorship in *The Simpsons* and *South Park*. In *Leaving Springfield: The Simpsons and the Possibility of Oppositional Culture*. Alberti (ed.), Detroit, Michigan: Wayne State University Press, 2004. s.197-224. ISBN 0-8143-2849-0.

SIENKIEWICZ, Matt; MARX, Nick. Beyond a Cutout World: Ethnic Humor and Discursive Integration in *South Park*. *Journal of Film and Video*, Summer 2009, vol. 61, no. 2, s. 5-18.

SOLLOROS, Werner. African Americans since 1900. In *The Cambridge Companion to Modern American Culture*. Bigsby (ed.), New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006. s.153-173. ISBN-13: 978-0-521-60109-2.

STABILE, Carol A; HARRISON, Mark. *Prime Time Animation: Television Animation and American Culture*. 1st ed. London: Routhledge, 2003. 220 s. ISBN 0-415-28-32-5.

WEINSTOCK, Jeffrey Andrew. "Simpsons Did It": *South Park* as Differential Signifier. In *Taking South Park Seriously*. Weinstock (ed.), Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 2008. s. 79-98. ISBN 978-0-7914-7566-9.

WEINSTOCK, Jeffrey, Andrew. *Taking South Park Seriously*. 1st ed. Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 2008. 253 s. ISBN 978-0-7914-7566-9.

WOLFE, Alan. *America at Century's End*. 1st ed. Los Angeles, California: University of California Press, 1992. 577 s. ISBN 0-520-07477-7.

YOUNG III, William. Flatulence and Philosophy: A Lot of Hot Air or the Corruption of Youth? In *South Park and Philosophy: You Know, I Learned Something Today*. Arp (ed.), Chelsea, Michigan: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2007. s. 5-16. ISBN 978-1-4051-6160-2.

YU, Catherine. Is It Okay to Laugh at *South Park*? In *South Park and Philosophy: You Know, I Learned Something Today*. Arp (ed.), Chelsea, Michigan: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2007. s.17-28. ISBN 978-1-4051-6160-2.

INTERNET SOURCES

APA. *Homosexuality and Sexual Orientation Disturbance: Proposed Change in DSM-II* [online]. 1973, [cit. 2011-01-01]. < http://www.psychiatryonline.com/DSMPDF/DSM-II_Homosexuality_Revision.pdf>.

CANNING, Robert. *IGN TV* [online]. February 22, 2010 [cit. 2011-02-27]. The Simpsons: "The Color Yellow" Review – TV Review at IGN. Dostupné z WWW: < <http://tv.ign.com/articles/107/1070860p1.html> >.

CARROLL, Joseph. *Gallup* [online]. August 16, 2007 [cit. 2011-02-13]. Most Americans Approve of Interracial Marriages. Dostupné z WWW: <<http://www.gallup.com/poll/28417/most-americans-approve-interracial-marriages.aspx>>.

Gallup [online]. c2011 [cit. 2011-01-09]. Immigration. Dostupné z WWW: <<http://www.gallup.com/poll/1660/immigration.aspx>>.

Gallup [online]. c2011, [cit. 2011-01-01]. Gay and Lesbian Rights. Dostupné z WWW: <<http://www.gallup.com/poll/1651/gay-lesbian-rights.aspx>>.

HAVIGHURST, Robert J. Encyclopædia Britannica [online]. c2010 [cit. 2010-12-05]. Teaching. Dostupné z WWW: <<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/585183/teaching>>.

IMDb: The Internet Movie Database [online]. 30th March 1998, [cit. 2011-01-02]. <<http://www.imdb.com/event/ev0000286/1998>>.

JONES, Jeffrey M. *Gallup* [online]. 25 August, 2009 [cit. 2011-03-13]. Public Says Better Teachers Are Key to Improved Education. Dostupné z WWW: <<http://www.gallup.com/poll/122504/public-says-better-teachers-key-improved-education.aspx>>.

JONES, Jeffrey. *Gallup* [online]. August 4, 2008 [cit. 2011-01-09]. Majority of Americans Say Racism Against Blacks Widespread. Dostupné z WWW: <<http://www.gallup.com/poll/109258/majority-americans-say-racism-against-blacks-widespread.aspx>>.

KEHR, Dave. Encyclopædia Britannica [online]. c2011 [cit. 2011-03-21]. Animation. Dostupné z WWW: <<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/25806/animation>>.

LOPEZ, Shane J. *Gallup* [online]. 25 August, 2010 [cit. 2011-03-11]. American's Views of Public Schools Still Far Worse Than Parents'. Dostupné z WWW: <<http://www.gallup.com/poll/142658/americans-views-public-schools-far-worse-parents.aspx>>.

MENDES, Elizabeth. *Gallup* [online]. 25 August, 2010 [cit. 2011-03-16]. U.S. Parents Want Teachers Paid on Quality, Student Outcome. Dostupné z WWW: <<http://www.gallup.com/poll/142664/parents-teachers-paid-quality-student-outcomes.aspx>>.

SAAD, Lydia. *Gallup* [online]. 18 June, 2008 [cit. 2010-12-31]. Americans' Acceptance of Gay Relations Crosses 50% Threshold. Dostupné z WWW: <<http://www.gallup.com/poll/135764/americans-acceptance-gay-relations-crosses-threshold.aspx>>.

SAAD, Lydia. *Gallup* [online]. July 6, 2010 [cit. 2011-03-02]. Americans Closely Divided Over Immigration Reform Priority. Dostupné z WWW: < <http://www.gallup.com/poll/141113/americans-closely-divided-immigration-reform-priority.aspx> >.

The Simpsons [online]. c2010 [cit. 2010-12-05]. Bios - The School - Edna. Dostupné z WWW: <http://www.thesimpsons.com/bios/bios_school_krabappel.htm>.

WRIGHT, Claudia. ERIC [online]. c2010 [cit. 2010-12-05]. Stereotyping: "Teacher" and "Good Teacher" Characteristics. Dostupné z WWW: <http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/search/detailmini.jsp?_nfpb=true&_&ERICExtSearch_SearchValue_0=ED255533&ERICExtSearch_SearchType_0=no&accno=ED255533>.

SAAD, Lydia. *Gallup* [online]. April 13, 2006 [cit. 2011-03-02]. Halting the Flow is Americans' Illegal Immigration Priority. Dostupné z WWW: <<http://www.gallup.com/poll/22408/halting-flow-americans-illegal-immigration-priority.aspx>>.

JONES, Jeffrey M. *Gallup* [online]. April 29, 2010 [cit. 2011-03-02]. More Americans Favor Than Oppose Arizona Immigration Law. Dostupné z WWW: <<http://www.gallup.com/poll/127598/americans-favor-oppose-arizona-immigration-law.aspx>>.

OTHER SOURCES

COHEN, David. The Simpsons season 7 DVD commentary for the episode "Much Apu About Nothing". 2005. [DVD]. 20th Century Fox.

PARKER Trey, STONE Matt. *South Park: The Complete First Season: "Mr. Hankey, the Christmas Poo"*. 2003 (Audio commentary). [DVD]. Comedy Central.

EPISODES CITED

SOUTH PARK

“4th Grade” Production number 412. Original airdate 2000-11-08. Writer: Trey Parker.

“Big Gay Al’s Big Gay Bow Ride.” Production number 104. Original airdate 1997-09-03. Writers: Trey Parker, Matt Stone.

“Cartman Sucks.” Production number 1102. Original airdate 2007-03-14. Writer: Trey Parker.

“Christian Rock Hard.” Production number 709. Original airdate 2003-10-29. Writer: Trey Parker.

“Die Hippie, Die.” Production number 902. Original airdate 2005-03-16. Writer: Trey Parker.

“D-Yikes!” Production number 1106. Original airdate 2007-04-11. Writer: Trey Parker.

“Eek, a Penis!” Production number 1205. Original airdate 2008-04-16. Writers: Trey Parker, Matt Stone.

“Gnomes.” Production number 217. Original airdate 1998-12-16. Writers: Pam Brady, Trey Parker, Matt Stone.

“Goobacks.” Production number 807. Original airdate 2004-04-28. Writer: Trey Parker.

“Here Comes the Neighborhood.” Production number 512. Original airdate 2001-11-28. Writer: Trey Parker.

“Roger Ebert Should Lay Off the Fatty Foods.” Production number 211. Original airdate 1998-09-02. Writers: Trey Parker and David Goodman.

“The Death Camp of Tolerance.” Production number 614. Original airdate 2002-11-20. Writer: Trey Parker.

“With Apologies to Jesse Jackson.” Production number 1101. Original airdate 2007-03-07. Writer: Trey Parker.

THE SIMPSONS

“Bart the Daredevil.” Production number 7F06. Original airdate 1990-12-06. Writers: Jan Kogen, Wallace Wolodarsky.

“Bart the Genius.” Production code 7G02. Original airdate 1990-01-14. Writer: Jon Vitti.

“Bart the Lover.” Production code 8F16. Original airdate 1992-02-13. Writer: Jon Vitti.

“Bart’s Friend Falls in Love.” Production code 8F22. Original airdate 1992-05-07. Writers: Jay Kogen and Wallace Wolodarsky.

“Children of a Lesser Clod.” Production number CABF16. Original airdate 2001-05-13. Writer: Al Jean.

“Homer Goes to College.” Production number 1F02. Original airdate 1993-10-14. Writer: Conan O'Brien.

“Homer’s Phobia.” Production code 4F11. Original airdate 1997-02-16. Writer: Ron Hauge.

“Homer’s Triple Bypass.” Production number 9F09. Original airdate 1992-12-17. Writers: Gary Apple, Michael Carrington.

“Much Apu About Nothing.” Production number 3F20. Original airdate 1996-05-05.
Writer: David S. Cohen.

“Mr. Lisa Goes to Washington.” Production number 8F01. Original airdate 1991-09-26.
Writer: George Meyer.

“Rosebud.” Production code 1F01. Original airdate 1993-10-21. Writer: John Swartzwelder.

“Special Edna.” Production code EABF02. Original airdate 2003-01-05. Writer: Jon Vitti.

“The Color Yellow.” Production number MABF06. Original airdate 2010-02-21.
Writers: Ian Maxtone-Graham, Billy Kimball.

“The Great Wife Hope.” Production number LABF16. Original airdate 2009-10-11.
Writer: Carolyn Omine.

“The PTA Disbands.” Production code 2F19. Original airdate 1995-04-16. Writer:
Jennifer Crittenden.

“Three Gays of the Condo.” Production code EABF12. Original airdate 2003-04-13.
Writer: Matt Warburton.

APPENDIX

Fig. 1 [viewed 25 March 2011] :

Available at: <<http://www.southparkstudios.com/fans/downloads/images/season-6/page-19>>.

Fig. 2 [viewed 25 March 2011] :

Available at: <<http://www.southparkstudios.com/fans/downloads/images/season-3/page-9>>.

Fig. 3 [viewed 25 March 2011] :

Available at: <<http://www.wearysloth.com/Gallery/ActorsW/tve17841-20021117-696.gif>>.

Fig. 4 [viewed 25 March 2011] :

Available at:

<http://2.bp.blogspot.com/_upF4Etvqv9Y/TUwakTohMGI/AAAAAAAAAGnY/PPZmGn0VOtk/s200/LoverBartandKrabappel.jpg>.

Fig. 5 [viewed 25 March 2011] :

Available at:

<http://southparkstudiosintl.mtvnimages.com/shared/sps/images/shows/southpark/vertical_video/import/season_01/sp_0104_05_v6.jpg?width=480>.

Fig. 6 [viewed 25 March 2011] :

Available at: < <http://media.screened.com/uploads/0/2774/317983-bga.jpg>>.

Fig. 7 [viewed 25 March 2011] :

Available at:

<http://3.bp.blogspot.com/_UWgNCJQWGgA/RriolLsAhLI/AAAAAAAAAF0/zUza4VpdUeE/s400/HomersPhobia.jpg>.

Fig. 8 [viewed 25 March 2011] :

Available at: <http://25.media.tumblr.com/tumblr_18566dPG8i1qdoghio1_500.png>.

Fig. 9 [viewed 25 March 2011] :

Available at: <<http://www.southparkstudios.com/fans/downloads/images/season-11> >.

Fig. 10 [viewed 25 March 2011] :

Available at: <<http://www.southparkstudios.com/fans/downloads/images/season-5/page-20> >.

Fig. 11 [viewed 25 March 2011] :

Available at:

<<http://img.photobucket.com/albums/v327/bo5ton/simpsonsoftheweek/Children%20of%20a%20Lesser%20Clod/carlangry.gif> >.

Fig. 12 [viewed 25 March 2011] :

Available at: < http://tvmedia.ign.com/tv/image/article/107/1070860/the-simpsons-color-yellow_1266861260.jpg >.

Fig. 13 [viewed 25 March 2011] :

Available at:

<http://southparkstudiosintl.mtvnimages.com/shared/sps/images/shows/southpark/vertical_video/import/season_08/sp_0806_07_v6.jpg?width=480>.

Fig. 14 [viewed 25 March 2011] :

Available at:

<http://1.bp.blogspot.com/_qyhZ9_eXCHM/SqW_T43as8I/AAAAAAAAACMk/IZ66g4Jpk00/s400/aging_hippie_liberal_douche.jpg>.

Fig. 15 [viewed 25 March 2011] : Available at: < <http://i55.tinypic.com/66hrhx.jpg>>.

Fig. 16 [viewed 25 March 2011] :

Available at: < http://28.media.tumblr.com/tumblr_laeme7rpXJ1qdoghio1_500.png>.