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■ DVD review

## Who killed Kenny? South Park defines a generation with its jokes

DVD release includes episodes about sex education and religion

BY RYAN NYBURG  
PULSE EDITOR

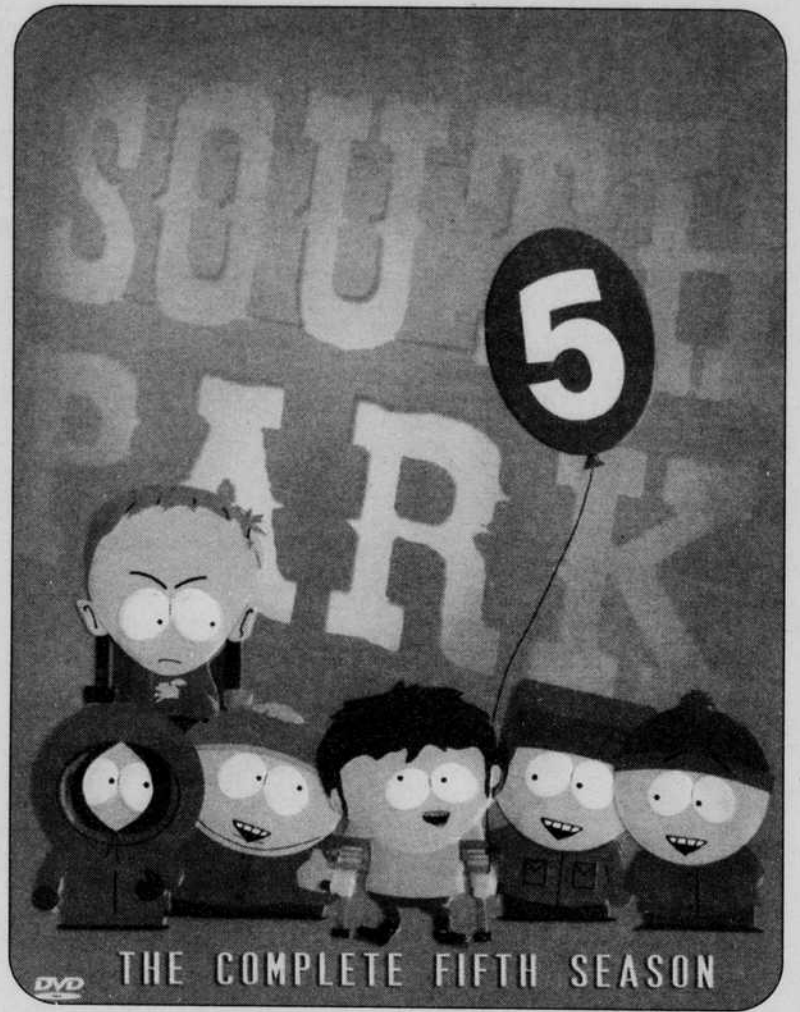
It occasionally strikes me as odd that in 10 or 15 years a show about foul-mouthed fourth graders will be considered one of the satirical hallmarks of my generation. The 1950s and '60s had the urbane wit and sophistication of Mad Magazine and Zap Comics; the 1970s and '80s had Saturday Night Live and the rise of stand-up comedy; and the early 1990s had Dan Quayle.

But now SNL and Mad blow chunks, stand-up is where good jokes and stereotypes go to die and we have The Onion, "The Daily Show" and the increasingly brilliant "South Park," which is headed into its ninth season and has just released its fifth season on DVD. As a madhouse amalgamation of blatantly obscure pop culture references, libertarian ideology, toilet humor and vicious social satire, "South Park" has been running strong since it first appeared in 1997.

The fifth season shows the series coming into the top of its powers, slowly becoming aware of itself and making television history a couple more times. The DVD set starts off in fine form with "It Hits The Fan," which mocks network television's attempts to gain credibility through swear words by repeating the word "shit" 162 unbleeped times in less than half an hour.

Other targets include the Boy Scouts and their detractors ("Cripple Fight"), sex education ("Proper Condom Use") and religion ("Super Best Friends"). Among these are some of the best episodes creators Matt Stone and Trey Parker have yet developed, such as "Here Comes the Neighborhood," in which South Park is taken over by uber-wealthy celebrities such as Will Smith, Bill Cosby and Snoop Dogg (that all of the rich people are also black is not mentioned until the episode's killer punch line).

The set also includes the first animated response to the Sept. 11 attacks,



COURTESY

The complete fifth season of the funny and controversial series "South Park" became available on DVD on Feb. 22.

"Osama Bin Laden Has Farty Pants," which aired Nov. 7, 2001. The episode was daring at the time for tackling the subject matter, though overall the job feels rushed and unfocused. It's actually one of the weakest episodes of the season, although it does have its moments.

Occasionally the show manages to come up with the perfect satirical jab, an image that perfectly taps into the Zeitgeist. The episode "The Entity" comes up with one of these, as teacher Mr. Garrison gets mad at airline companies and comes up with a competing form of transportation. The catch is that the device requires the user be penetrated both orally and rectally by long metal tubes. "Better than airline travel" is the common response of the populace.

A couple of episodes cross the line from edgy satire to the truly comically disturbing, such as "Scott

Tenorman Must Die" and "Butters' Very Own Episode." The first contains one of the most astounding, gap-mouthed conclusions in the entire series, which gets its laughs from the simply outrageous extent to which the premise is taken. The latter is a perfect example of the comedy of contrasts, as the stuttering title character's wholesome outlook is placed alongside the depraved actions of his parents.

Now that much of the initial controversy concerning the show has slipped away, it is easy to see "South Park" for what it is: clever, hard-hitting satire for adults. "South Park" has come to specialize in a difficult form of comedy, one that finds boundaries and crosses them consistently, making you laugh both at the show and at yourself for ever being shocked.

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IN BRIEF

**Dance department to host two Dead Week shows**

The Department of Dance will present two free, informal showings in its Dance Quarterly concert March 9 and 10 for University students and staff and the Eugene community.

On March 9 at 7 p.m., Dance Quarterly will feature works from the department's dance improvisation and second-level dance composition classes, projects created by students in the department and a short piece

from Traduza, a small dance company from Roseburg. Assistant dance professor Walter Kennedy said Dance Quarterly presents different styles every term, but the upcoming show will be mostly modern, with a blend of modern and contemporary Brazilian dance from Traduza.

The department always holds Dance Quarterly on Wednesday of Dead Week, and normally includes performances from composition and repertory classes, works in progress from students and pieces from dancers in the community.

"It's an informal showing and

sharing of things that relate to dance performance that come from performance-based classes," Kennedy said.

On March 10 at 5:30 p.m., the traditional Open Showing, held every term on Thursday of Dead Week, will feature pieces that students learned from each winter technique class.

"It's such a fun thing; everyone's friends come and hoot and holler for them," Kennedy said.

Dancers in both showings will perform without costumes or lighting. The shows will take place at the Dougherty Dance Theatre in the Gerlinger Annex.

— **Natasha Chilingierian**