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Columbia Daily Spectator, 4 December 2008 — BEYOND THE STREETS OF PHILADELPHIA [ARTICLE]

BEYOND THE STREETS OF PHILADELPHIA

After the early '90s boom in AIDS-related films, spotting HIV-positive characters in movies and TV shows has become difficult. When characters with AIDS or HIV are present on television or in film, they tend to appear on melodramatic medical shows (like *ER* or *Grey's Anatomy*), soap operas (like *General Hospital* or *Beverly Hills, 90210*), or programs designed for a largely gay audience (like *Queer as Folk*). Failing that, AIDS tends to be a punch line—see *South Park* and *Team America*. Here's an incomplete list of notable AIDS-related entertainment from the past 12 years.

1996: *Rent*

Jonathan Larson's Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award-winning musical is centered around a diverse group of New Yorkers living with AIDS. A widely panned film adaptation was released in 2005.

1997–2003: *Oz*

The gritty HBO drama, set in the Oswald State Correctional Facility, features several HIV-positive characters—many of whom are confined to the prison's AIDS ward.

2000–2005: *Queer as Folk*

The HIV-positive characters in this series about gay white men are almost uniformly—surprise!—gay white men.

2000: *Sex and the City*: “Running With Scissors”

Samantha, the most promiscuous of the show's four main characters, finds that a man won't sleep with her until she gets tested for HIV. Her test comes out negative, of course.

2004: *Team America: World Police*

From the creators of *South Park*: a puppet movie complete with a wicked *Rent* parody in the form of a musical called *Lease*. The show's big finale? An elaborate production number entitled “Everyone Has AIDS.”

2007: *South Park*: “Tonsil Trouble”

Cartman somehow contracts HIV after get

Cartman somehow contracts HIV after getting his tonsils removed, then finds out that nobody cares about AIDS anymore.

2007: *Girl, Positive*

A classic Lifetime made-for-TV cautionary tale about a teenage girl who loses her virginity, then discovers that she's HIV positive.

2008: *Private Practice: "A Family Thing"*

A teenager who wants to have sex with his girlfriend for the first time finds out that he's actually been HIV positive all his life—his parents just haven't told him until now.

—Hillary Busis