

= 201 (South Park) =

" 201 " is the sixth episode of the fourteenth season of South Park , and the 201st overall episode of the series . It originally aired on Comedy Central in the United States on April 21 , 2010 . The episode continued multiple storylines from the previous episode , " 200 " , in which a group of angry celebrities demand South Park produce the Muslim prophet Muhammad . In " 201 " , a superhero @-@ like group of religious figures team up to save South Park from the celebrities and their monster Mecha @-@ Streisand , while Eric Cartman learns the true identity of his father .

The episode was written and directed by series co @-@ creator Trey Parker . Like " 200 " , it alludes to several past storylines and controversies from previous South Park episodes , especially Comedy Central 's refusal to show images of Muhammad on the network following controversies in 2005 and 2007 when cartoons depicting Muhammad ran in European newspapers , resulting in riots and threats . Prior to the broadcast of " 201 " , the radical Muslim organization Revolution Muslim posted a warning on their website that Parker and Stone risked being murdered for their depiction of Muhammad . Comedy Central modified Parker and Stone 's version of the episode , obscuring all images and bleeping all references to Muhammad ? to the effect of disruptively obscuring the entire two @-@ minute moral conclusion of the story . Nevertheless , both " 200 " and " 201 " were nominated for the Primetime Emmy Award for Outstanding Animated Program in 2010 .

The censorship drew strong criticism of Comedy Central . Critics said that the network 's action would encourage further threats from radical groups . " 201 " was not shown in repeats , has not been made available on the South Park website , and has not been shown in Sweden , Hungary , Australia or the Netherlands . In most places the episode " Sexual Healing " was shown instead of episode 201 . In the United Kingdom , some parts were removed , and a short on @-@ screen message appears , stating the outline of the removed parts and " MTV (on Viva) " or " Comedy Central " " ... has refused to air an image of Muhammad on their network " . According to Nielsen Media Research , the episode was seen by 3 @.@ 5 million viewers , making it the most watched cable television program of the night .

On January 31 , 2014 , the original uncensored version was leaked when it was pulled from the South Park Studios servers and was posted online in its entirety without approval by Comedy Central .

= = Plot = =

The episode opens with Cartman , as his hand @-@ puppet persona Mitch Connor , narrating a flashback to Connor 's 1972 medical discharge from his Vietnam War tour of duty in a parody of a scene from the film Apocalypse Now as the song " Time of the Season " by the Zombies plays in the background . Back in the present , Mr. Garrison refuses to reveal the identity of Cartman 's father , and instead sends Cartman to Dr. Mephisto . Meanwhile , the Ginger Separatist Movement and the townsfolk are negotiating the handover of Muhammad when Mecha @-@ Streisand begins to attack South Park . Muhammad , who is visually obscured throughout the entire episode by a black box superimposed with the word " CENSORED " , is taken by Stan , Kyle , and Kenny to Dr. Mephisto 's lab . The Gingers arrive and take Muhammad and Cartman captive . The Super Best Friends are called to South Park to help ; after their powers fail to subdue Mecha @-@ Streisand , they pacify her by having Krishna adopt the form of Neil Diamond and providing her the opportunity to perform a duet with him .

The Gingers contact the celebrities and offer to share Muhammad in exchange for access to the celebrities ' " goo transfer machine " , which transfers Muhammad 's power to remain free from ridicule to a target individual . Cruise is the first subjected to the process , gaining a " CENSORED " box identical to Muhammad 's , but further transfers are interrupted when the Super Best Friends arrive to free their comrade Muhammad . Meanwhile , Cartman is taken to the Ginger lair to meet Scott Tenorman , the Head Ginger . Depicted as a melodramatic madman , Scott has decorated his lair to represent the Chili Con @-@ Carnival in which Cartman gained his revenge on Scott by tricking him into eating his own parents . He reveals to Cartman that they share the same father ,

former Denver Broncos player Jack Tenorman , meaning that by his act of revenge against Scott , Cartman had killed his own father and fed him to his half @-@ brother .

The fight between the Super Best Friends , celebrities , and Gingers spills over into the Ginger lair , and Tenorman escapes in the confusion . During the fight , Seaman leaps upon Cruise 's back , leading Stan to observe , " Tom Cruise has Seaman on his back . " The " CENSORED " box over Cruise disappears , and all present continue to make jokes based on the fact that the words " Seaman " and " semen " sound the same . Cruise questions why they are able to do this , which leads to a monologue from Kyle , Jesus Christ , and Santa Claus explaining that the goo does not exist , and that threatening people with violence is the only true answer (which is completely obscured by a continuous audio bleep) .

As the town begins to rebuild following the Mecha @-@ Streisand attack (" for the 39th time " , according to Mayor McDaniels) , Stan , Kyle , and Kenny find Cartman crying ? not because he learned that he murdered his father , but because he is " half @-@ ginger " . Mitch Connor reminds Cartman that he is " half @-@ Bronco " as well and tells him that makes him " pretty cool " and departs . The boys find Cruise crying for a place in which he can live without fear of mockery . Stan , Kenny and Kyle promise to help Cruise get to such a place . The episode 's closing shot is of Cruise 's corpse lying on the Moon 's surface alongside the corpse of the orca featured in " Free Willzyx " .

= = Production = =

Written and directed by series co @-@ founder Trey Parker , " 201 " was rated TV @-@ MA L in the United States . It originally aired on Comedy Central in the United States on April 21 , 2010 . The episode continued multiple storylines from the previous episode " 200 " , the 200th entry of the series . Parker and fellow co @-@ creator Matt Stone decided to celebrate their 200th episode by revisiting several subplots that had been featured throughout the show 's 14 seasons . Multiple celebrities have been lampooned throughout the series ' history , inspiring Parker and Stone to have all the past celebrities join in a class action lawsuit against the town of South Park . The ginger kids ? children with fair skin , freckles and red hair ? have been featured in several past episodes , where they were ridiculed by Cartman , who views them with prejudice . Cartman uses a hand @-@ puppet con @-@ artist named Mitch Connor who originally appeared in the seventh season episode " Fat Butt and Pancake Head " , in which Cartman pretends his hand is Jennifer Lopez and uses many Hispanic stereotypes in his portrayal of her . Cartman regards Connor as a separate entity and has conversations with him , while Stan and Kyle do not accept this idea at all .

" 201 " also included several characters and subplots that were not featured in " 200 " , such as the return of Dr. Alphonse Mephisto and Kevin , characters that had not been featured on South Park for about 10 years . Other previously recurring characters made appearances in " 201 " , including Mr. Hankey , Big Gay Al , Mr. Slave and Pip Pirrup . Scott Tenorman , and the references to Cartman 's murder of Scott 's parents , were from the fifth season episode " Scott Tenorman Must Die " . At the end of " 201 " , the dead body of Tom Cruise lies alongside the corpse of a killer whale , a reference to the ninth season episode " Free Willzyx " , in which the South Park boys help an orca escape a marine amusement park and flee to the moon , believing it to be a paradise .

= = Muhammad storyline = = =

One of the most prominent storylines from " 200 " , which continued into " 201 " , was the characters ' efforts to bring Muhammad into public view . This is based on two past controversies in 2005 (Jyllands @-@ Posten Muhammad cartoons controversy) and 2007 (Lars Vilks Muhammad drawings controversy) , when European newspapers published cartoons of Muhammad , resulting in riots , global protests , and death threats toward the artists . As a result of those incidents , many publications and television studios have refused to broadcast images of Muhammad in any form , which was the inspiration behind Tom Cruise 's efforts to harvest Muhammad 's apparent immunity to satire and ridicule . Parker and Stone have previously voiced dissatisfaction that images of Muhammad had been censored on the show despite the fact that his image was shown during the

2001 episode " Super Best Friends " , without any censorship , before the cartoon controversies began . " 201 " continues the theme from " 200 " that argues against fear and censorship , and calls for support of free speech , both of Muhammad 's image and any subject considered taboo .

= = Threats and censorship = =

In the week between the broadcasts of " 200 " and " 201 " , the website for the New York @-@ based radical Muslim organization Revolution Muslim posted an entry that included a warning to creators Parker and Stone that they risked violent retribution for their depictions of Muhammad . The entry stated that they " will probably wind up like Theo van Gogh for airing this show . " Van Gogh was a filmmaker who was murdered by a man named Mohammed Bouyeri in 2004 for making a short documentary on violence against women in some Islamic societies . The posting provided the addresses to Comedy Central in New York and the production company in Los Angeles . The author of the post , Zachary Adam Chessner , said it was meant to serve as a warning to Parker and Stone , not a threat , and that providing the addresses was meant to give people the opportunity to protest .

The entry included audio clips of a sermon by al @-@ Qaeda imam Anwar al @-@ Awlaki calling for the assassination of anyone who has defamed Muhammad , saying , " Harming Allah and his messenger is a reason to encourage Muslims to kill whoever does that . " Subsequently , the website for the organization was hacked , temporarily redirecting web traffic to images of Prophet Muhammad with a bomb on his head and an older Muslim man kissing a young boy passionately .

Before " 201 " aired , the New York City Police Department increased security at the Comedy Central headquarters in direct response to the threats . Law enforcement officials said Revolution Muslim itself was " all talk " and had never engaged in any actual violence but they were concerned that the website post could inspire violence from others .

During the original broadcast of " 201 " on April 21 , 2010 , all references to Muhammad 's name were obscured by audio bleeps . Several other portions of dialogue were also censored , including almost the entirety of three consecutive monologues spoken by Kyle , Jesus and Santa Claus at the end regarding the moral of the episode . Muhammad 's name appeared in the previous episode , " 200 " , without any such censorship . Both episodes obscured all images of what was apparently Muhammad with a black " CENSORED " box . Immediately after the episode " 201 " aired , the series website South Park Studios posted a notice that said Comedy Central had inserted " numerous additional bleeps throughout the episode " after Parker and Stone submitted their final cut to the network . The network later confirmed they were responsible for the audio censorship .

On April 22 , 2010 , South Park Studios released a brief statement :

" In the 14 years we 've been doing South Park we have never done a show that we couldn 't stand behind . We delivered our version of the show to Comedy Central and they made a determination to alter the episode . It wasn 't some meta @-@ joke on our part . Comedy Central added the bleeps . In fact , Kyle 's customary final speech was about intimidation and fear . It didn 't mention Muhammad at all but it got bleeped too . We 'll be back next week with a whole new show about something completely different and we 'll see what happens to it . "

Some of these developments had been anticipated in the 2006 South Park episodes " Cartoon Wars Part I " and " Cartoon Wars Part II " . These episodes showed South Park 's reaction to a controversy regarding censorship of Muhammad depictions on two (fictional) episodes of Family Guy .

In the United States " 201 " has never re @-@ aired following its original debut as South Park would usually repeat during the week , and episodes from earlier in the season were shown instead . Although South Park Studios generally makes unexpurgated versions of their episodes immediately available to view , the notice indicated Parker and Stone did not have network approval to show their original version , and thus no version of " 201 " could be seen on the website .

The Canadian Comedy Network aired " 201 " on April 25 , 2010 , though the episode was censored as the American broadcast was , breaking the network 's multi @-@ year practice of airing South Park completely uncensored . Neither " 200 " nor " 201 " were shown in the version of Comedy Central in the Netherlands , and neither episode is available on the Dutch South Park Studios

website . The Swedish affiliate of Comedy Central also refused to broadcast " 200 " and " 201 " in Sweden , claiming :

" Comedy Central has decided not to air these two episodes of South Park . It is a decision we 've made with great reluctance . Comedy Central believes strongly in creative freedom of expression ; when unique and deeply insightful creative talents like those behind South Park are able to express themselves freely , we all benefit . However , the safety of our employees is our unquestioned number one priority , and therefore we have decided to take these precautionary measures . "

" Super Best Friends " was also pulled from the South Park Studios site following the increased media attention from " 201 " . Episodes " 200 " and " 201 " are also unavailable on Hulu , the iTunes Store , and other streaming and download services . This , along with " 200 " and " Super best friends " , are banned in Comedy Central .

= = Cultural references = =

During Mitch Connor 's flashback of the Vietnam War at the beginning of the episode , " Time of the Season " by English rock group the Zombies plays in the background . The scenes between Cartman and Scott Tenorman closely mirror a scene from the 1988 graphic novel Batman : The Killing Joke where the Joker tortures and taunts Commissioner Gordon . Mecha @-@ Streisand is defeated by her inability to resist performing duets with Neil Diamond , a pop singer @-@ songwriter . During one scene , Mecha @-@ Streisand crushes a building and someone screams , " The Casa Bonita is gone ! " This is the name of a real @-@ life restaurant that had been seen in the episode " Casa Bonita " , and after which Parker and Stone 's production facility was named .

= = Reception = =

= = = Ratings = = =

In its original American broadcast on April 21 , 2010 , " 201 " was watched by 3 @.@ 5 million viewers , according to Nielsen Media Research , making it the most watched cable television show of the night . It outperformed the previous week 's episode , " 200 " , which was seen by 3 @.@ 33 million viewers .

= = = Reviews = = =

The A.V. Club writer Sean O 'Neal said " 201 " was an improvement over " 200 " , but nevertheless felt " 201 " was " less a cohesive episode than a grab bag of balls @-@ out crazy scenes and cameos only loyal fans would really appreciate . " However , he also said , " it 's sure to become one of , if not the most talked @-@ about episode of South Park ever . " Even after Comedy Central announced they were responsible for the censorship in " 201 " , he speculated as to whether it was possibly a publicity stunt by Parker and Stone to create controversy and increase viewership . Ramsey Isler of IGN said the episode built on the events of " 200 " and delivered a strong payoff , particularly with the subplot about Cartman 's father and the way it tied back to " Scott Tenorman Must Die " . Isler said the bleeps added by Comedy Central provided some unintentional laughs and underscored the episode 's underlying theme opposing censorship .

= = = Response to censorship = = =

According to a Zogby International survey conducted after " 201 " aired , a majority of Americans opposed Comedy Central 's censorship of the episode . 71 % disagreed with the network 's decision to censor " 201 " , with only 19 % agreeing with the decision . 47 % of those who disagreed with the censorship said they disagreed strongly , with only 5 % who agreed claiming they felt strongly . Some commentators suggested because Comedy Central responded to Revolution Muslim 's

warnings by censoring depictions of Muhammad , the Muslim extremists scored a significant public victory .

Michael Cavanaugh of The Washington Post wrote , " To invoke the revived phrase : The terrorists win . " Toronto Sun columnist Mike Stobiel pointed out Revolution Muslim is a relatively small group of " a half @-@ dozen wannabe Osamas , " but said because of Comedy Central 's response , " The loonies and terrorists win one . No doubt , they 'll try this stunt again . " Likewise , Jean Marbella of The Baltimore Sun said , " It 's not even that the terrorists have won , it 's that wannabe terrorists have won . " Margaret Wente of The Globe and Mail said the censorship of " 201 " could be " the lowest point in the history of American TV , " and that it represented a gravitation toward fear in a post @-@ September 11 attacks world . Los Angeles Times columnist Patrick Goldstein said there were " no easy answers " and that he was not surprised Comedy Central took the threat seriously , but added , " in a democracy , artists and political satirists should be allowed to say what they believe , even if it offends some of its audience . " Roger Catlin of the Hartford Courant suggested Comedy Central actually drew more attention to the Muhammad controversy , not less , by censoring the episode . UCLA School of Law Professor Eugene Volokh said Comedy Central 's actions risk empowering other extremists :

" The consequence of this position is that the thugs win and people have more incentive to be thugs . There are lots of people out there who would very much like to get certain kind of material removed , whether religious or political . The more they see others winning , the more they will be likely to do the same . Behavior that gets rewarded gets repeated . "

Seventeen Pulitzer Prize @-@ winning cartoonists protested the threats in a petition released April 27 , 2010 . Among the signatures were those of Garry Trudeau , Mark Fiore , Tony Auth , David Horsey and Paul Szep . The petition stated :

We , the undersigned , condemn the recent threats against the creators of South Park , Matt Stone and Trey Parker , by the extremist organization , Muslim Revolution . Freedom of expression is a universal right and we reject any group that seeks to silence people by violence or intimidation . In the United States we have a proud tradition of political satire and believe in the right to speak or draw freely without censorship .

During the April 22 broadcast of Comedy Central 's The Daily Show , host Jon Stewart responded to the censorship of " 201 " with a ten @-@ minute monologue about the death threats , expressing disgust toward Revolution Muslim , culminating with a song telling Revolution Muslim to " go fuck [themselves] " . Stewart criticized Comedy Central 's decision to alter the episode , while simultaneously acknowledging they likely did so to protect their employees from " possible harmful repercussions " . Bill Maher , host of the HBO talk show Real Time with Bill Maher , said the threats against " 201 " demonstrated the importance of the First Amendment and other American civil liberties , and said , " When South Park got threatened last week by Islamists incensed at their depiction of Muhammad , it served ? or should serve ? as a reminder that our culture isn 't just different than one that makes death threats to cartoonists . It 's better . " He added jokingly , " If you don 't get that , and you still want to kill someone over a stupid cartoon , please make it Garfield . "

As a result of Revolution Muslim 's statement , Seattle cartoonist Molly Norris suggested that many people draw and publish pictures of Muhammad on May 20 , 2010 , which she dubbed the " first annual Everybody Draw Mohammed Day " . However , very few cartoonists actually joined her in criticizing Islam or depicting the prophet Muhammed ; instead , much like Maher and Stewart , they merely praised her for her efforts and condemned the idea of censorship . Norris herself went into hiding , shortly thereafter , on the advice of the FBI . Animated comedy series Family Guy creator Seth MacFarlane voiced this ambivalence on the part of the creative community , saying " No one is a bigger critic of organized religion than I am , " but nevertheless added , " It 's tricky . You pick your battles . You have to judge how real the threat is against how funny the joke is . How much do I care about the joke ? " And The Simpsons also addressed the apparent hypocrisy of those who claimed to stand with South Park in a chalkboard gag during the opening sequence of the April 25 , 2010 episode " The Squirt and the Whale " , with Bart Simpson writing " South Park ? We 'd Stand Beside You If We Weren 't So Scared . "

= = = Sri Lanka ban = = =

The depiction of Buddha snorting cocaine in " 200 " and " 201 " prompted the government of Sri Lanka to ban the entire series outright .

= = Home release = =

The fourteenth season of South Park was released April 26 , 2011 to DVD and Blu @-@ ray , including the episode " 201 " . When playing the episode , prior to the theme playing , a text card appears saying : " The following episode appears as it originally aired on April 21 , 2010 . After it aired Matt Stone and Trey Parker released the following statement " and then shows the original message that was released after the episode aired . Consequently , Muhammad , his name , and the speeches made by Kyle , Jesus , and Santa are still censored as in the broadcast version . Although the end speeches are still censored , the bleeps are accompanied with music on DVD , unlike the April 21 , 2010 airing , which featured a raw audio bleep .

In the episode 's audio commentary , Parker only comments on the opening scene , noting that they did the episode as intended and sent it in . He and Stone comment that they are not supposed to talk about it . For the next several moments , a large audio beep obscures the commentary before Stone says " Yeah , that 's pretty much it . " During the commentary in both " 201 " and " 200 " Parker and Stone never mention Muhammad directly , referring to him only as " the prophet of the Muslim faith " . Despite the package claiming otherwise , both " 200 " and " 201 " were omitted from the Region 4 release and have been completely omitted from the Region 2 (which contains the predominantly Islamic Middle East and North Africa) release as well .

= = Online leak of uncensored version = =

On January 31 , 2014 , the original uncensored version of this episode was illegally leaked and distributed online without any approval of Comedy Central after a user on 4chan realized that the episode existed on the official website 's web server and could be downloaded using rtmpdump .

Despite having been leaked uncensored , " 201 " as well as " Super Best Friends " and " 200 " have still not aired in reruns and are still only legally available on DVD .