

= Crippled Summer =

" Crippled Summer " is the seventh episode and mid @-@ season finale of the fourteenth season of the American animated television series South Park , and the 202nd overall episode of the series . It originally aired on Comedy Central in the United States on April 28 , 2010 . In the episode , the South Park children try to help Towelie overcome his drug addiction , while Nathan and his lackey Mimsy plot to destroy Jimmy during athletic competitions at a summer camp for handicapped children .

The episode was written and directed by series co @-@ creator Trey Parker , and was rated TV @-@ MA L in the United States . The story of Towelie 's addiction is presented as a parody of the reality series Intervention . Parker and fellow co @-@ creator Matt Stone originally planned an Intervention parody around Towelie for the tenth season episode " A Million Little Fibers " , but those plans were eventually scrapped . Several of the handicapped children in " Crippled Summer " are made to resemble characters from the Looney Tunes cartoon series , including Elmer Fudd , Beaky Buzzard , Daffy Duck , Pete Puma , and Porky Pig , as well as non @-@ Looney Tunes characters Droopy and Fat Albert .

" Crippled Summer " received positive reviews , though some commentators expressed disappointment that the episode did not respond to the controversies surrounding the show 's depictions of Muhammad in the previous episodes , " 200 " and " 201 " . According to Nielsen Media Research , " Crippled Summer " was seen by 3 @.@ 56 million viewers , making it the most watched cable show of the night , and outperforming even some prime time network shows that evening .

= = Plot = =

The drug addiction of Towelie , a living and talking towel , is growing so overwhelming that the South Park children make attempts to help him . Towelie 's history is shown , using head interviews and on @-@ screen captions (in a parody of " Intervention ") , starting with years of drug addiction to cannabis , crystal meth , heroin and crack . He previously had a girlfriend named Rebecca and conceived a child with her (a washcloth) , but he was kicked out of their home due to his persistently getting high . Having run out of money for hard drugs , Towelie starts getting high off of cans of computer duster . His life continued in a downward spiral , leaving him in heavy debt and offering oral sex to strangers for money in the alleys . The boys help him get a job at Lake Tardicaca , a summer camp for children with physical and mental disabilities , as a towel to dry off the campers . However , Towelie persists in drug use and fellating strangers in the supply closet , and is fired by the camp . The boys confront Towelie and make emotional speeches to him as a plea to help him from killing himself (except for Cartman , who uses this opportunity to read what appears to be several tens of thousands of pages of anti @-@ Semitic remarks on television , which the psychiatrist allows to continue in respect of the " no interruptions " rule) . Towelie refuses their pleas until Butters reveals he has brought Towelie 's child , " Washcloth " , which finally prompts him to accept the offer to go to a rehabilitation clinic in Southern California . Later , Towelie reveals he has completed rehab and is now living with his girlfriend and son .

Meanwhile , at the summer camp , young bully Nathan and his lackey Mimsy plot to destroy Jimmy during the athletic competitions so Nathan can be declared the camp 's champion . This sub @-@ plot is also narrated in the same style as " Intervention " . Nathan uses Mimsy as a minion to carry out his plans to harm Jimmy , but is repeatedly foiled by Mimsy , who either misinterprets his instructions or takes them too literally and causes his plans to backfire . Nathan tries to plant a black mamba in Jimmy 's canoe during a race , but Mimsy instead leaves it in Nathan 's canoe (when told to put it " in the canoe ") . Subsequently , Nathan tries to lead Jimmy 's team into dangerous Indian territory during a scavenger hunt , but instead Mimsy switches the maps and switches them again (Nathan demanded him to " Switch the maps ! Switch the maps ! ") , and leads Nathan 's team there . When Nathan tries to use a whistle with a shark mating call against Jimmy , Mimsy , who was supposed to blow the whistle underwater , instead swims in the water briefly then blows the whistle

on land and a shark jumps out of the water and anally rapes Nathan with its nine @-@ inch long penis , according to the Colorado National Wildlife Association . During the talent show , Nathan rigs Jimmy 's ukulele with C @-@ 4 , hoping it will explode during a solo , but when Jimmy cannot perform the solo correctly , Mimsy starts to show Jimmy the correct notes . Nathan interrupts and confronts Mimsy about his failure to follow orders . With a lapse of judgment , Nathan plays the correct notes and causes the ukulele to explode , knocking him away before being further injured by his past plans attacking him again . The ukulele solo is spoofing the Looney Tunes repeated use of the Xylophone gag , where the last note of Believe Me If All Those Endearing Young Charms , is booby trapped , but the protagonist always somehow manages to play it wrong . Nathan is subsequently escorted to an ambulance , but is given the champion 's crown by Jimmy . Nathan tells Jimmy he hates him anyway before he is sent away to the hospital .

The episode ends with a message encouraging people who know towels in need of drug rehabilitation to visit " Restore Stephen Baldwin " , a real @-@ life website seeking assistance for actor Stephen Baldwin .

= = Production = =

" Crippled Summer " was written and directed by series co @-@ creator Trey Parker , and was rated TV @-@ MA L in the United States . It originally aired on Comedy Central in the United States on April 28 , 2010 and served as the mid @-@ season finale of the fourteenth season before a months @-@ long hiatus for the series . Parker and fellow series co @-@ creator Matt Stone originally planned for the tenth season episode " A Million Little Fibers " to be about Towelie 's struggle to overcome addiction in the style of the television series Intervention , with the children and residents of South Park coming together to help him , just as it was done in " Crippled Summer " . However , after writing portions of the story for the tenth season episode , they found they did not know where to bring the story or how to resolve it . As a result , they completely revamped the episode and focused it on talk show host Oprah Winfrey and the controversy surrounding the James Frey book A Million Little Pieces , rather than Towelie 's addiction . " Crippled Summer " also marked the first appearance by Towelie since the " A Million Little Fibers " , and the first appearance of Nathan , Jimmy 's handicapped nemesis , since the eighth season episode " Up the Down Steroid " .

= = Cultural references = =

" Crippled Summer " served as a parody of Intervention , the A & E Network documentary series about people struggling with various addictions . Throughout the episode , information about Towelie 's drug addiction is presented on completely black screens with white letters . This device is used frequently in Intervention . The interviews with Towelie 's friends and footage of their pleas to get help are also characteristic of the reality series . During one of Towelie 's interviews , he quotes " feels like I 'm walking on sunshine " after huffing air duster cans . Both the quote and his actions are from Season 5 , episode 9 of the TV reality series Intervention where they interview " Allison " . Many of the campers at Lake Tardicaca are parodies of characters from the cartoon series Looney Tunes . Nathan and Mimsy , in particular , are strongly influenced by Rocky and Mugsy , with Nathan taking on the role of the diminutive mastermind (like Rocky) who is constantly thwarted by his large but dim @-@ witted accomplice (like Mugsy) . Other characters from the summer camp in the episode resemble cartoon characters such as Elmer Fudd , Pete Puma , Droopy , Porky Pig , Taz , Foghorn Leghorn , and Beaky Buzzard .

The episode ends with a reference to " Restore Stephen Baldwin " , a real @-@ life website seeking to restore actor Stephen Baldwin 's career and solicit donations to repay his \$ 2 @. @ 3 million debt . The joke compares Towelie 's addiction and rehabilitation to that of Baldwin , who had a history of drug abuse before becoming a born @-@ again Christian . A version of " Are You Ready for the Summer ? " , a camp theme song sung by children in the comedy film Meatballs , is featured . The episode makes reference to actress Kirstie Alley when a counselor says Towelie is the most

troubled towel he had seen since Alley 's towel , who he said " has seen some nasty stuff " .

= = Reception = =

In its original American broadcast on April 29 , 2010 , " Crippled Summer " was watched by 3 @. @ 56 million viewers , according to Nielsen Media Research , making it the most watched cable television show of the night . It received a 2 @. @ 2 rating / 4 share among overall viewers and a 2 @. @ 0 rating / 6 share among adult viewers between ages 18 and 49 . This rating marked an improvement over the previous South Park episode , " 201 " , and outperformed those of several primetime network shows that evening , including Fox 's Lie to Me , ABC 's The Middle , NBC 's Minute to Win It , CBS 's The New Adventures of Old Christine and The CW Network 's America 's Next Top Model , most of which were in repeats that evening . " Crippled Summer " received a 4 @. @ 1 rating / 13 share among male viewers between ages 18 and 34 . The episode also ranked fourth for the week among cable viewers between ages 18 and 49 and , because it ranked only behind three NBA playoff games , it was the highest @-@ rated scripted cable show of the week . " Crippled Summer " was the highest @-@ rated cable show among the 18 ? 34 viewer demographic .

" Crippled Summer " received mixed reviews . Ramsey Isler of IGN called " Crippled Summer " a brilliant episode , particularly praising the return of Towelie , who he said " has a slew of great moments in this story , making up for his long absence from the series " . Isler said after the controversy raised from the depictions of Muhammad in the previous two episodes , " 200 " and " 201 " , he appreciated that the show returned to a simpler plot and provided " a little comedy relief " . The A.V. Club writer Josh Modell also praised South Park for " not getting too caught up in the Muhammad thing " , and praised the jokes about Intervention , which he said " is one of those shows that 's really easy to parody " . He also praised several individual jokes , like Cartman 's theories about the Jews and Nathan getting raped by a shark , although he said the Mimsy jokes were " a little one @-@ note " . Ken Tucker of Entertainment Weekly said of the episode : " Not the kind of South Park episode that ? s going to stir national @-@ news debate , but funny and vulgar enough to satisfy fans . "

Carlos Delgado of iF Magazine pointed out that although the episode mocked drug addicts and handicapped children , it did not face the kind of censorship " 200 " and " 201 " did , which he suggested proved that censorship was born of fear rather than ethics . Delgado also said the comparison of handicapped children to Looney Tunes characters " should remind us all that such cruel portrayals of disabled people have been going on for years " . Others criticized the episode . MTV writer Adam Rosenberg thought the episode " just wasn 't very funny " , and said it missed an opportunity to continue the creative edginess demonstrated in " 200 " and " 201 " . Rosenberg found the jokes about handicapped children " pointlessly mean " , and said the fact that they are allowed where depictions of Muhammad are censored " makes a point about the absurdity of what is and isn 't TV @-@ acceptable " . The television website TV Fanatic praised the Towelie storyline and the use of his son " Washcloth " , but said the jokes about the handicapped children were unfunny and irritating . The site called it " by far the weakest of the season " and a disappointment following " 200 " and " 201 " .

= = Home release = =

" Crippled Summer " , along with the thirteen other episodes from South Park 's fourteenth season , were released on a three @-@ disc DVD set and two @-@ disc Blu @-@ ray set in the United States on April 26 , 2011 .