

## A Shift in Television Entertainment with a Little Help from God, Gays

By: Lee Singletary

Today as I was rearranging furniture as I often do in my Powelton Village apartment, my roommate asked me if I had watched the latest “Glee” episode, which aired the night before. I responded, “no” since I was in rehearsal but that I would be watching the episode I missed online.

My roommate went on to proclaim his discontent with the show and how the episodes are “themed” and lacking a storyline. I thought to myself for a minute and agreed that I too had noticed this shift in the show’s episodes. Though Glee is only three episodes into its second season, it did not take long to realize this trend; the thematic commercial spots for future episodes confirmed our findings.

Were we blinded by the premier episode with the ridiculously fabulous vocal stylings of Glee’s newest cast member Sunshine, played by Charisse Pampango? Perhaps it was the provocative sexiness of the “Britney/Brittany” episode featuring the “Queen of Pop” herself, Ms. Britney Spears. Personally, I found both episodes AMAZING. But when I think about it, my roommate was right – the show has started intentionally “theming” episodes and forgetting to add in one small element... a storyline!



New Glee cast member Charisse Pampango

In all of the show’s satirical glory and performance-value goodness I still love this show! However I do feel the viewers deserve to follow some sort of storyline in the midst of all the corniness and Rachel Berry’s exasperating ego.

Regardless, this is a show on FOX, meaning the writers have some kind of knowledge about television entertainment to write an award winning show. Right? Yes, that’s what I think too and that brings me to the realization that maybe its only natural that satirical dramas on major cable networks start sticking to themes, the same themes that are present in American media.

Yes I said it, Glee is shifting in a “new direction” (pun intended)! These writers are smart but I am not fooled. Look around, why are the ratings for this show so high? It’s because Glee sticks to the topics that matter, topics that we care about and receive via modern media. In recent news we heard about the unfortunate death of Tyler Clementi, the freshman from Rutgers University who committed suicide as a result of bullying based on his sexual orientation. We also recently learned that Glee is planning a gay awareness episode.

In another comparison, Glee premiered it’s second season on September 21 with the episode dealing with the start of school and new students and faculty. Coincidence? I think not. The premiere date was right around the time schools everywhere kicked off their new year.

Last night’s episode dealt with the topic of religion and explored faith and spirituality (I can just feel the controversy brewing), another themed episode with little ties to the one before it.

I certainly think that the “theming” of new Glee episodes adds to its corny-factor, but I also think its what makes the show so unique and so relevant. Perhaps this is simply a necessary new direction, one that has strategized to place emphasis on matters that effect American youth and shed light on relevant topics.

With episodes themed around god, gays and media topics, as long as I get to hear Charisse Pampango, Lea Michele and the rest of the Gleeks belt their little hearts out I will continue to be a fan of the show!