For over fifteen years, the adult sitcom *Family Guy* has been setting controversy.

Even the creator, Seth Macfarlane once said: *'Family Guy' has this weird thing of attracting people. People either hate it or can't get enough of it. There's really no one in between.*

Although the show is brilliant in many ways by winning multiple Annie Awards and Primetime Emmy Awards, there are a lot of people who have tried to pull the show from the air because of what it portrays of the American culture.

As we all know, *Family Guy* is based on the adventures of a family named The Griffins, who live in a fictional suburban city named Quahog in Rhode Island. As some of you may already know, the Griffins family consists of Peter the father, Louis the mother, Meg the teenage daughter, Chris the middle child, Stewie the baby, and Brian the talking dog. As the adventures the Griffin family encounters are in many cases vulgar, the sitcom is rated TV-MA.

Racial stereotypes, pedophilia, infanticide, rape, degenerative disorders, mocking of religions, disabilities, and the Holocaust, these are just a few of the many things shown on Family guy. Many feel unsure of whether to feel offended/upset or to laugh.

Critics typically compare *Family Guy* to the sitcom ‘The Simpsons,’ given that they are both very similar in concept. The only difference between *Family Guy* and The Simpsons is that *Family Guy* is directed towards a more mature audience as opposed to The Simpson which is directed to a younger audience.

The show *Family Guy* has entailed the perspective of its creator. Seth Macfarlane is known for his spontaneous and outrageous way of thinking. The sitcom has caused quite a controversy because of the way the show is produced and because of what the show entails in its scripts. It is not a surprise that because of the nature of the show Fox has been sued many times. But as his free-spirited self, Seth Macfarlane simply says “when we get sued, it’s usually because people are cranky.” With lawsuits including, misappropriation, publicity rights, and copyright issues; it is actually a surprise that Fox has only been sued four times because of *Family Guy.*

For example, Religion is heavily included in the show. Jesus is portrayed as a mid-aged white man, which long brown hair and a brown beard, wearing a white bath robe. God is portrayed as an old, white man, with long white hair, wearing a long white dress. Jesus is known for showing off his “magic,” and God is known for having “power.” Many actually believe that Family Guy wants to make God and Jesus look as silly and ridiculous as possible. God and Jesus Christ are mocked whenever they appear in the show. Seth admits that he is indeed an atheist, which explains why religion is taken as a joke in the show. In the episode “Blind Ambition,” God approaches a girl and lights her cigarette with his finger saying, “Yeah. I got the magic fingers.” Then, God points and winks, setting her on fire. In response, God screams, “Jesus Christ!” and Jesus appears; God then says, “Quick, get in the Escalade; we’re out of here!” Many Christians find this immensely offensive and not funny at all, yet no one has many an effort to get it pulled off the air.

Another example would be race, almost every race in *Family Guy* has been made fun of. From Asians not being able to drive, Asian children as “nerds,” Hispanic women as maids (like Consuelo whose English language only contains the word “no”), to Jewish people as money hungry, and even black women as gossipers.

Lastly let’s take for example one of the most controversial episodes in Family Guy is “Screams of Silence: The Story of Benda Q.” In this episode the audience meets Quagmire’s sister, Brenda, who is in a physical and metal abusive relationship with a white man. Brenda is frightened and terrorized by her partner, Jeff. In a moment of desperation Brenda reveals that she is pregnant and engaged to Jeff. Even after revealing that she was pregnant, Jeff continues to physically abuse Brenda in the show. Brenda’s character is portrayed as a woman who is poorly dressed and usually walks around with one black eye and blood dripping on the side of her mouth. Such an image can be very offensive and can trigger emotions to any viewer who is a victim of domestic violence. In this episode, Quagmire begins to get affected by the relationship his sister is in; thus resulting in a plan to murder Jeff. After Quagmire gets rid of Jeff, he writes a fake letter to Brenda from Jeff giving the impression that Jeff has ran away and left her. One of the most controversial parts of this episode was when Quagmire says to his sister, “The person I see before me right now is just a punching bag. And I call you "person," not "woman," because a woman is a strong, beautiful vibrant creature. Sadly, the fact that you are with Jeff proves to me that you have made a choice to make your life worse.” This specific episode has caused a lot of controversy since it was aired. A lot of people were enraged because they felt that Family Guy has crossed the line with this episode. But who says there is a line? Family Guy has and will continue to controversy without any boundaries. Many believe that the episode was very insensitive to how offensive this episode is to those who are victims of domestic violence.

As entertaining and funny as the show may be, it is important to put *Family Guy* under a critical lens so that we may understand not only the cultural impact the program has on viewers but also the ideological impact as well. In the end, those who understand the show basically use ‘common sense’ and thus they are not offended. The main reason why the sitcom is as controversial is because it actually does influence the audience’s perspective. Regardless if a person likes or dislikes the show, upon watching it one can always relate.