

**Presented By Ashley Dandridge**

**General Purpose:** To inform

**Specific Purpose:** To inform the audience about the television show “South of Nowhere”

**Central Idea:** Through summarizing the plot, analyzing the forbidden love affair, and explaining how this television show has helped and saved many lives I will inform the audience about the television show that is – “South of Nowhere”.

**INTRODUCTION:**

“A glooming peace this morning with it brings  
The sun for sorrow will not show its head  
Go hence to have more talk of these sad things  
Some shall be pardoned and some punished  
For never was a story of more regret  
Than this of Juliet, and her fair Juliet”

This Shakespearean quote is from an ‘under the radar’ television show “South of Nowhere”. It was softly narrated above a silhouette of violins [in the background] as Spencer Carlin, the main character, was caught by her shocked mother as she was engaging in sexual activity with her girlfriend, Ashley Davies, for the first time. This slow-motion shot was full of anger, sorrow, and violence as Mrs. Carlin pulled Ashley down stairs and out of her house, while still only in her bra and skirt. A scene with so many different emotions pouring that one could only view it with the utmost appreciation and respect for the actresses playing these daring roles. “South of Nowhere” is truly a fantastic show. And I say this as sucker for romance and good drama and as a communications major who can appreciate great film direction, discourse, and the value of entertainment. Through introducing the plot, analyzing the forbidden love of Spencer and Ashley, and explaining how this show has helped and saved many lives I will inform you about ‘The-N’s’ television show that is –“South of Nowhere”. And hopefully by breaking down this phenomenal show you will understand why it’s more than just another teen filled drama with no real story line or lesson to be learned, but a great show with even greater intentions.

**(TRANSITION:** But first what is this “South of Nowhere” all about?)

**BODY:**

- I. Introducing the plot
  - A. “South of Nowhere” centers on the Carlin family who moves from a small Midwest Ohio town to Los Angeles, California. The three siblings (Spencer, Glen, and Clay) each have their own issues throughout the series. For Spencer, it is struggling with her sexuality, for Glen it’s trying to be ‘Mr. Popular’, and for Clay who was adopted (and African American in a Caucasian household), is about realizing some of the stereotypes that come along with being African American in a city like L.A.

- B. The Friends – No good show can upgrade to ‘great’ without a full set of characters with interesting personalities. Ashley Davies, Spencer’s girlfriend, is the rebel without a cause on the outside, but a sweet soul yearning for happiness on the inside. She is the daughter of a rock star and is rich, but comes from a broken home. Aiden is the super hot, super star jock at King High, however his character develops into someone a lot deeper and emotionally scarred as the series matures. Madison is the ‘queen bee’ head cheerleader of King High, and was Aiden’s girlfriend for awhile. Chelsea is Clay’s girlfriend and an extremely talented artist who is cool and down to earth. And last but not least Kyla, who doesn’t come into the picture until season two, is discovered to be Ashley’s step-sister...from their rock star dad’s party days.
- C. Besides the main plot and issue of Spencer’s sexuality “South of Nowhere” deals with more problems. Issues such drug addiction, abortion, depression, gun violence, and tragedy arise in this television show as well.

**(TRANSITION:** But sticking to the main issue of “South of Nowhere”, I will now delve in to the love affair that is “Spashley”)

## II. The Love Affair of Spencer and Ashley

- A. Now I have watched many sitcoms and to me I haven’t seen a love portrayed so genuine, so heartfelt, and just so ‘real’ since “Boy Meets World” couple Cory and Topanga! And what’s great is the extra element of them being gay adds so much more burden and determination on their part to make it through.
- B. At First – In analyzing each character I will begin with Spencer Carlin. Spencer is a transfer junior at King High and is a sweet, innocent, grounded girl who is trying to discover who she really is. Spencer interestingly enough was labeled ‘straight’ before she moved to L.A. However, because of a simple and genius thing Gabrielle Christian (Spencer) was told to do from the creator Tom Lynch, the audience, with in the first 5-10 minutes of the 1st episode can deduce she was in fact gay before the series even started! [show clip].
- C. Ashley Davies is almost the complete opposite of Spencer. She’s the total rock-star who has been with guys and girls and doesn’t care what the world thinks of her. Oh, and she’s “not into labels. Before Spencer came along Ashley was a dark, jaded soul who had therapy appointments and known as the gay freak at King High.
- D. So how do they work together? Well opposites attract! They were good friends for a long time. Spencer asked Ashley questions about discovering whether she was gay or not, and like a good friend Ashley helped her as much as she could. And as their friendship progressed so did their attraction in a very realistic, cinematic way. For example when their hands softly touch the camera is always right on top of it. And also when you see them looking or starring at one another you can always see the chemistry

and concern in their eyes. Personally, what I truly love about this relationship is when I see them I don't think of it as a same-sex love affair, but just a genuine love story. I don't just see two girls in gay love, but love that just happens to be between two girls who are gay. Actually, from the first episode where Ashley 'accidentally' touches Spencer's hand to the last episode of the season where they kiss for the first time, the audience is always in the 'known' about their feelings because the chemistry and body language between these actresses are so strong.

**(TRANSITION:** And it is because this love affair is so genuine that "South of Nowhere" was able to help and save many lives)

III. How "South of Nowhere" has helped and saved many lives

A. "South of Nowhere" is a great drama, with a very interesting story line. But one of the greatest rewards and realities of this show is the fan base and how they have been inspired by this television show.

1. According to a Blog on The-N.com, "How has South Affected You?" many fans have been inspired to 'come out the closet' and tell loved ones their real sexual identity after seeing the courage and strength of Spencer and Ashley. Also confirmed by the cast members and creator of "South of Nowhere", in a video "Inside South of Nowhere" on iTunes, they have personally received letters thanking them for doing the show, helping their families understand who they are, and even thanking them for saving them from being another gay teen suicide.

B. And some entries found on this blog was:

1. [onetree123](#)

"I don't even have the words to tell how this show has affected me, all I know is without it, I don't know where I'd be."

Posted: 11/01/2008

2. [djh0m1eell](#)

"That pilot episode of South where nothing even happened between them, gave me the courage to tell her how I felt finally. & now I've been with her for two years.", Posted: 10/30/2008

**(TRANSITION:** Honestly, I've never seen such an out pouring from a fan base for a television show as I have of "South of Nowhere")

CONCLUSION:

In conclusion, television is, without a doubt, an extremely entertaining medium. And sometimes, as crazy as it may sound, can actually teach us how to be better people. How to love a little more and judge a little less can actually be a lesson learned through a television show. Learning how to stop listening to societal stereotypes and start listening to your heart can be learned through a television show. And by introducing the plot of "South of Nowhere", analyzing the love affair of "Spashley", and explaining how this show has helped and saved many lives I hope I have thoroughly informed about the show that forever will be, "South of Nowhere".

Bibliography

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