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January 3, 2011

» Neglected in '10: The I Think We're A...

Neglected in '10: The I Think We're Alone Now <u>commentaries</u>

For the next several days, I'll be touching on stuff that happened and/or was released last year that I never got around to writing about. We all need ways to make our year-to-year transition easier — this is mine.

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I Think We're Alone Now, a <u>film</u> that follows a middle-aged man with Asperger's and a younger, intersex woman who are united through their (current!) love of '80s flash-in-the-pan <u>teen pop</u> sensation Tiffany, is one of my favorite <u>documentaries</u> of all time (it's just behind *Paris Is Burning* and *Living Dolls* on my list). <u>I've already said so much</u> <u>about it already</u>, but that was before I listened to the commentaries on the <u>DVD</u> of the film that was released several months after I wrote about it.

Wow.

Both Jeff (Asperger's) and Kelly (intersex) provide their own commentary tracks, which work as both updates on their lives and opportunities for meta-voyeurism, as these people (who were followed in the first place because of their unique world views) look at themselves in the mirror of <u>documentary</u> filmmaking and report back. If you found the <u>movie</u> (or the likes of it) exploitative and off-putting, you will find this encouraged stream-of-consciousness harrowing; if you loved the opportunity to visit with people who are clearly like no one else on this earth, you'll love these tracks just as much. Jeff's is the drier of the commentaries (he calls it a "voice over" for whatever reason). He does, though, reveal that Tiffany has Asperger's and that Alyssa Milano has the "rare combination" of both Asperger's and sociopathy. (By the way, both Tiffany and Alyssa have filed restraining orders against Jeff for separate instances.) He says that Kelly tried to kill herself after Tiffany got married (a tidbit that is probably best not revealed regarding your silent competitor for the title of Biggest Tiffany Fan of All Time) and that Tiffany once said to him, "There are a lot of things that we talk about that shouldnt be heard by most people." This may very well be true, but he takes it as a compliment. Whoops.

Kelly's track is something of a goldmine of good quotes...

In fact, here are my Top 10:

- 10. "Seeing myself now compared to then, uh, its a little weird. But I can handle it.
- 9. Tiffany and I are old friends from high school.
- 8. As Patti LaBelle says in her song from Beverley Hills Cop, I got a new attitude!
- 7. No offense to you, Jeff, but you just seem like a complete dork.

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6. When Jeff calls me a male, I find it very disgusting. I feel like calling him, OK, hey scuzz bucket. Hey, old man. Why dont you get your brain out of your butt for once and wake up to reality? Duh!

5. Jeff Turner just seems too weird. Excuse me but his Asperger disease has nothing to do with it, its more like, uh, him being a complete psycho!

4. And Jeff Turner straps a bicycle helmet onto his head with all these gizmos on it and hes supposed to be hearing every thought of Tiffanys. I mean, hello, that is called invasion of privacy, Jeff. Hello? Are you that dumb?

3. I now have a girlfriendthat actually looks exactly like pop singer Kimberly Cole. But her name is Devorah.

2. I cannot talk about that health reform stuff cause its kind of a very controversial issue right now.

1. So those people that, like the media and *Rolling Stone* magazine, that said that I am a crazed, psycho stalker, youre absolutely wrong. Do you know me? Have you walked in my shoes? Have you lived any part of my life? I dont think so? I mean, what, are you going to blame me for the events of 9/11 next?

Kelly mentions Devorah several times (whenever her onscreen self expresses a deep love for Tiffany, in fact). At one point, she suggests that Devorah may not watch this commentary, and I get the feeling it wouldn't be out of self-protection, but a lack of interest, which: 🙁 . The best mention of Devorah is bookended by large moments of silence as Kelly trips on her climactic meeting with Tiffany. A sole "...I love Devorah..." is all the commentary anyone would ever need.

A new attitude and girlfriend aren't the only things that have changed in Kelly's life since shooting the film, by the way. Other differences include:

- Kelly no longer wears the color of lipstick she wore in the film.

- She now lives in a "more upscale" part of Denver.

" e's no longer on SSI.

e no longer wears a fanny pack.

e no longer smokes.

e has a different cell phone now (and says Cricket is a much better company than T-Mobile).

e no longer owns the book The Ultimate Body: 10 Perfect Workouts for Women.

e believes more in herself now.

So that's uplifting, right? Especially the part about Cricket, I think. But the biggest change between what we saw in the film and the commentary-era Kelly is that she is no longer intersex — that's to say, she never was. She's transgendered, but was born just with male genitalia. I can't think of a commentary track that has changed my perception of a film more. On her reason for lying, Kelly explains, "I dont know why I said it, probably to get more people to like me." That statement on choosing to make yourself out to be what so many people in this cruel world would call a freak of nature because it'd get a better reaction than the alternative says even more about Kelly's sadness and her place in society than the film already had. This is absolutely essential viewing.

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