

## What Would You Do?

Imagine that you are a member of a student-theater group at a college and want to stage the controversial musical RENT! RENT! by Jonathan Larson is a rock opera that tells the story of one year in the life of a group of bohemians struggling in modern day East Village New York. The story centers on two roommates Mark and Roger. The loss of Roger ex-girlfriend due to suicide has made Roger emotionless to life, Mark tries to capture life moments through film. The story also follows the lives of Mark's former girlfriend, Maureen Johnson and her lesbian lover Joanne Jefferson who is a Harvard educated lawyer; Roger's potential love interest, the HIV-positive drug addicted S&M dancer, Mimi Marquez; You also have their former roommate, HIV-positive computer genius Tom Collins whose the guys former roommate, Collins' HIV-positive drag queen street musician/lover Angel; and Benjamin Coffin III, who married for money and plans to evict the homeless from a lot in hopes of building a cyber-arts studio. In the year that follows, the group deals with love and loss in this powerful story. During the practice of the play a local politician finds out about it and mounts a political and public relations campaign against it. The politician distributes selected excerpts of the play to civic organizations and religious groups. The politician wants to pull public funding from the theater. The actors involved in the play have been subject harassment, hate mail and threats. Everyone involved the production get together for a meeting. Critical examine this issue by using questions from the six categories that are posed in chapter two. Remember the six categories are Fact, Interpretation, Analysis, Synthesis, Evaluation, and Application. You assignment is to write an editorial to the newspaper defending the production and the theatre.

## Commercials and Television Promos

We will watch five commercials and five television promos in class and discuss the techniques used to shape our thinking. You will analyze how each of the elements in the commercials and television promos use images, language, and music to affect the audience. On the sheet of paper you are to write down the symbolic associations, the words used and identify the emotions that these commercials and promos provoke. New DVR technologies enables us to watch TV without commercials you will also answer the following questions:

- If we never had to watch commercials or TV promos would we lose a valuable part of our cultural experience?
- What influential roles do commercials AND television promos play in our culture as a whole?