

Analysis of the popularity of the Simpsons

The Simpsons is an animated situation comedy (Sitcom) based around a family, set in a small town of America. I think that situation comedy formula is so popular with TV audiences because it makes fun of everyday life so things that we worry about do not matter anymore because we can laugh at ourselves.

The Simpsons is similar to other situation comedies in that it is family based. It makes fun of serious problems and exaggerates everything. It also is different to other situation comedies in that it can be even more exaggerated and made weirder because it is an animated cartoon and anything can be done e.g. in the episode Homer goes into another dimension that would be almost impossible to do in any other situation comedy.



The Simpsons are an American family; classed with two adults mum Marge, and three children, Bart, Lisa and Maggie.

they are middle dad Homer and

People relate to the family because in some ways the characters remind them of themselves or people that they know, like I personally feel that my mum is a bit like Marge because Marge is very responsible, She helps Homer sort out his mistakes and is a very good caring mother to her children like my mum. My Dad is like Homer because Homer is often presented in the family as lazy. We see this when he spends a lot of time sitting down and watching television. He drinks beer all the time and is always eating just like my dad.

I would class the Simpsons as a typical American family but not for today because the mum stays at home whilst the dad works. Bart and Lisa get picked up in the traditional American school bus and go to a traditional American school and they have a typical small town American life like when they get involved in what goes on in the town. I think that it is typical for when the programme was first created in 1991.

Bart is presented in the family as a stereotypical boy, He likes playing jokes such as phoning the pub and says things like is Ima there Ima fool. He is a bit like his dad In that he is not very caring towards the others. He does lots of stupid things like trying to jump over the Grand Canyon on a skateboard. Bart is much more than a stereotype because deep down he is a thoughtful, loving and kind boy we see this in the episode "Bart Sells His Soul". He is at his bedside and crying, he whimpers to God, "...I'm... afraid. I'm afraid some weirdo's got my soul and I don't know what they're doing to it...I hope you can hear this." His admission of being "afraid" is hardly what one would expect from a rude mischievous boy.

Homer is presented in the family as a stereotypical Man. He is the father in the family and he is a self centred, overweight klutz who enjoys sitting on the couch in
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front of the TV or sitting on a bar stool in the local pub. Homer's job itself is an irony because he is employed as a safety inspector at a nuclear power plant but in actuality there is nothing safe about Homer. However, Homer is more complex than the stereotypical bumbling idiot of a father he is portrayed as being. Despite Homer's seemingly idiotic and uncaring attitudes, ultimately he is accepted to symbolize the new American father for all classes

Marge is presented in the family as a stereotypical Female. She is the mother and she stays at home with the baby, Maggie. Marge wants nothing more than to have "one big happy family" but that is spoiled in almost every episode by Homer's stupidity or by the trouble making of the older child Bart. Through the use of satire, Marge shows that she is more than a stereotypical woman. In the "A Streetcar Named Marge" episode, Marge explains to Homer, "...I spend all day home with Maggie. Sometimes it's like I don't even exist," to which Homer, eyes fixed on the television, robotically responds with, "Sounds interesting."

Lisa is presented in the family as a stereotypical girl. She is a member of the club Mensa which only accepts members if they possess a genius IQ level. Lisa is often the voice of reason for the family. But she is so much more than a stereotype because not only does her family ignore her exceptional talents, she is a social outcast and knows it. Maggie Simpson has done a lot in her one year of life. She's learned to spell her own name with an Etch A Sketch, she's wandered the town of Springfield all by herself, and she's shot Springfield's richest man because he attempted to steal her lollipop. So she's definitely not a stereotypical baby.

Typical situations for the Simpsons are:

- Going to school
- Going to work
- Going to church
- Eating dinner
- Bart being naughty
- Bart getting told off
- Bart getting bad grades
- Bart and Lisa solving mysteries
- Bart and Lisa arguing
- Lisa getting good grades
- Lisa making peace
- Lisa sorting things out
- Homer going down the pub
- Homer watching television and eating
- Marge cooking
- Marge being upset at Homer or Bart
- Marge being happy with Lisa



People Relate to these situations because almost every family has them like in the episode where Bart and Lisa help out the man that truly created the itchy and scratchy show Chester J. Lampwick. This shows Bart and Lisa working together just like brothers and sisters sometimes do. Or the episode where homer tells the kids how him and Marge met and how they got to where they are today, it is a really

sweet story but like normal kids Bart and Lisa aren't interested until the end and then its like one big happy family (Marge's dream).

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Types of comedy found in The Simpsons are:

- Sarcasm-A form of wit that is marked by the use of sarcastic language and is intended to make its victim the butt of contempt or ridicule.
- Satire-Irony, sarcasm, or caustic wit used to attack or expose folly, vice, or stupidity
- Mockery-An object of scorn or ridicule
- Irony-Incongruity between what might be expected and what actually occurs
- Comparisons- The act of comparing or the process of being compared
- Exaggeration-Represent as greater than is actually the case or to overstate
- Parody-Drawing on other types of media

Different types of comedy appeal to different age groups because some younger people don't understand certain jokes or comedy like comedy about things that happened before they were born or when they were very young or things that they aren't clever enough to understand.

Audiences find certain moments funny because it is at that moment that the comedy is used for example in the episode where Bart is going down a big massive hill the moments where he is falling over are funny and the audience will laugh.

The writers make fun of:

- School
- Work
- Parents
- Children
- Religion
- Other Countries
- Big businesses
- Food
- Television
- Pubs
- Achievements

Matt Groening created The Simpsons and it was first aired in 1989 and 1990. The programme is produced on computer and received on television.

The programme is on weekdays on BBC 2 At 6 o'clock this allows broad viewership for most people because BBC 2 is a free channel that everybody has and 6 o'clock is a reasonable time because it is not too late for the children, the only things are that it is shown at the same time as the news and it is too early for people who work late. The programme is also shown on sky one daily around 7 o'clock this probably does allow for broad viewership because most people are home at this time and it's not too late. Also people probably prefer watching sky one because it shows newer ones.

Reasons people become fans of the programme are Advertising -there are so many adverts that it is hard not to be a fan, Peer Pressure -if all your friends are watching it then you will want to join in, addiction -once you have seen a few episodes then you are hooked and merchandise -the merchandise is very appealing.

Other media referred to in The Simpsons are Text, sound, graphics, print and video.

Other products developed from the programme are:

- Videos
- DVD's
- Music-the simpsons sing the blues
- Calendars
- Books-Bart Simpsons guide to life
- Clothing-Bart t-shirt
- Alarm clocks
- Ornaments
- Games-Special Simpson editions of Monopoly, Cludo and Uno
- Posters-Springfield

The Simpson's has to be best show ever for me. The writing is clever and witty, the stories are hilarious, and the characters are magnificent. The things I enjoy more are that it's not very predictable and that the actual story is also quite often totally useless, but hilarious I hate when TV tries to teach you a lesson.

The Simpsons is the greatest, why else would it have lasted for this long?

