

Yr 10 - Satire Task 2

Individual Research Task



This episode of 'The Simpsons', 'The Fat and the Furriest' was about Homer and a giant Grizzly bear. When Homer is caught on tape running away from a large bear at the town dump, he becomes the laughingstock of Springfield. Determined to win his dignity back, Homer devises a bear-proof suit that will protect him once he returns to the wild to hunt down the bear. When he confronts the beast, he realizes the bear is only upset because he's been tagged with a painful tracking device. Homer reverses course and helps bring the bear to safety.

'The Fat and the Furriest' satirises many different issues about social, political and cultural things. In the beginning after the theme song they show the family getting onto and sitting on the couch. There are hundreds of different ways that the characters manage to do this. In this particular episode, they show Homer walking down a hallway by himself, through many, high security metal doors with a telephone booth at the end, which then drops him onto the couch with the rest of the family. This is the same beginning (with theme song) that is featured in every 'Get Smart' episode (a comedy TV show from the 80's).

Another thing that they satirise is the stupidity of men, through the stupidity of Homer and Bart. On Mother's Day morning, the kids and Homer discuss what they got Marge for Mother's Day and this is what happens:

Homer: Well...~~what~~ did you get her?

Lisa: I ~~picked~~ mum a bouquet of ~~erigeron elodeas~~... (~~Homer & Bart stare with lost expression~~)...daisies... (~~Homer & Bart still staring~~)...flowers... (~~Homer & Bart still staring~~)...mmmm... (Lisa ~~gestures~~ flowers towards them)

Homer & Bart: Qh...!

Even in the simplest terms (i.e. "flowers"), Homer and Bart had no idea about what Lisa was talking about. This shows that they are really stupid and could reflect the stupidity of men in society, especially those who don't think before they say or do things. They also satirise the stupidity of cops, as seen in the seen with a police officer and the chief:



Police Officer: Chief, ~~that~~ guy ~~shouldn't~~ be in the car pool lane. ~~His~~ passenger is just a...big piece of candy

Chief: I wish mine was! (~~looks at~~ officer angrily)

Police Officer: ~~What~~?!

Chief: Nothing...

Like most episodes of 'The Simpsons' with Chief Wiggum in it, shows him caring more for food than for his job as a cop. This could be satirising cops and suggesting that they are lazy and don't do their job properly.

They also satirise society and how it takes things for granted, throwing away the old things when new versions come along. This



is shown is the city dump seen before Homer gets attacked by a bear for the first time. As Homer walks through the dump, there are 3 signs behind him. The first sign says 'Betamax Tapes' and shows a pile of tapes, the second pile says 'Laser Discs' and has a pile of discs below it, and the third sign says 'Reserved for DVDs'. This is just saying that once we create something that is even better and more compact than DVDs, everyone will get rid of the DVDs. No one wants to look like they aren't 'in with the times', they care a lot about their image and how society sees them.

There are many satirical techniques that are used to make fun of these issues and satirise them. One of the most frequent satirical techniques used throughout this episode and most Simpsons episodes is Irony. An example of this is when Homer is trying to get the hunter off their track by chucking away the tracking device that he is following:

Homer: ~~The hunter has become the hunter. We must be following this thing (tracking device). Well I'm gonna make sure it never harms another living creature! (throws tracking device is pond, fish and diver surface after dying from electrical charges put out by tracking device)~~

This is a form of irony because Homer throws the tracking device into the pond because he didn't want it to hurt another living thing anymore. But instead he killed every fish in that pond as well as a diver who was exploring the pond.



Another satirical technique used in this episode is a parody. This was when Homer had created a huge 85 pound ball of deep fried fairy floss and caramel. While making this weird creation, Homer was whimpering as if he was afraid of what could happen, but this whimpering turned into a maniacal evil laugh. This parody is imitating movies and shows where there is an evil person who laughs maniacally when they create something, such as in the movie 'Spiderman'. The green goblin laughs evilly when he schemes up a plan to destroy and kill Spiderman. There are many movies which use this cliché and this particular Simpsons scene is satirising that cliché.

The hyperbole is also another technique used in this episode of 'The Simpsons'. For example, when the local hunter, Grant Connor, is telling Homer about Grizzly bears before he goes off to face one, he says:

Grant Connor: ~~The grizzly is over eight foot tall and can cut through a tree like a Jewish mother through self-esteem.~~

This is an exaggeration of what he is trying to say, which is that grizzly bears are very strong and their claws are very sharp, so be careful.



The last, but not least technique used in this episode of 'The Simpsons' is humour. This technique is used in the beginning of the show before Homer, Lisa and Bart are going to go shopping for a Mother's day gift for Marge.

Homer: ~~Mids, we're going mother's day shopping. I'm glad this holiday only comes every 4 years.~~

This statement is full of humour and makes us laugh because of the stupidity of Homer and how he is so lost in life. He doesn't even know what he is saying is wrong and he believes that he is not doing anything wrong. There are also many other examples of humour used throughout the whole episode and all the seasons.

All these issues that are being satirised and the techniques used to satirise them, all play an important part in the shows ability to satirise social, political and/or cultural context.

This particular episode mainly satirises social context. This is evident in the way they portray men, women, children and old people. But in other episodes of the show, political and cultural contexts are both satirised. For example, when President George Bush moves in next door to the Simpsons, or the many times where Mayor Quimby does things wrong. Examples of cultural context is the episode where Apu talks about how he came to America and the episode where Springfield has a referendum, 'Proposition 24' about whether refugees should be allowed to stay in Springfield. There are many other episodes and scenes where the show satirises social, political or cultural context. The effectiveness of all this satirising must be great because 'The Simpsons' is aired in many countries and languages throughout the world. It has been running on TV for around 15 years and has created 15 seasons and there are still many more episodes still to come in the future.

I think that 'The Simpsons' is a great TV show that satirises many things to do with social, political and cultural contexts. The many techniques and characters used to make fun of this issue make the show a great laugh and very fun to watch. This very episode, 'The Fat and the Furriest' was one of the funniest yet, and featured some very good laughs to get your attention. I'm sure that for years to come, 'The Simpsons' will continue to amaze us and make us all laugh.

