Bart Simpson

Bartholomew JoJo "Bart" Simpson is a fictional character in the American animated television series The Simpsons and part of the Simpson family. He is voiced by Nancy Cartwright and first appeared on television in The Tracey Ullman Show short "Good Night" on April 19, 1987. Cartoonist Matt Groening created and designed Bart while waiting in the lobby of James L. Brooks' office. Groening had been called to pitch a series of shorts based on his comic strip, Life in Hell, but instead decided to create a new set of characters. While the rest of the characters were named after Groening's family members, Bart's name is an anagram of the word brat. After appearing on The Tracey Ullman Show for three years, the Simpson family received its own series on Fox, which debuted December 17, 1989.

At ten years old, Bart is the eldest child and only son of Homer and Marge, and the brother of Lisa and Maggie. Bart's most prominent and popular character traits are his mischievousness, rebelliousness and disrespect for authority. He has appeared in other media relating to The Simpsons—including video games, The Simpsons Movie, The Simpsons Ride, commercials, and comic books—and inspired an entire line of merchandise.

Role in The Simpsons

The Simpsons uses a floating timeline in which the characters do not age or age very little, and as such, the show is always assumed to be set in the current year. In several episodes, events have been linked to specific times, though sometimes this timeline has been contradicted in subsequent episodes. Bart's year of birth was stated in "I Married Marge" (season three, 1991) as being in the early 1980s. In "Simpsonapalooza" (season 26, 2014) Bart states his birthday as February 23. He lived with his parents in the Lower East Side of Springfield until the Simpsons bought their first house. When Lisa was born, Bart was at first jealous of the attention she received, but he soon warmed to her when he discovered that "Bart" was her first word. Bart's first day of school was in the early 1990s. His initial enthusiasm was crushed by an uncaring teacher and Marge became worried that something was truly wrong with Bart. One day during recess, Bart met Milhouse and started entertaining him and other students with various gestures and rude words. Principal Skinner told him you've just started school, and the path you choose now may be the one you follow for the rest of your life! Now, what do you say?" In his moment of truth, Bart responded, "eat my shorts!". The episode "That '90s Show" (season nineteen, 2008) contradicted much of the backstory's time frame; for example, it was revealed that Homer and Marge were childless in the early 1990s.

Bart's hobbies include skateboarding, watching television (especially I Married Marge) and Bartmania, ensued, spoofing Bart Simpson-themed merchandise touting his rebellious attitude and pride at underachieving, which caused many parents and educators to cast him as a bad role model for children. Around the third season, the series started to focus more on the family as a whole, though Bart still remains a prominent character. Bart has appeared in every Simpson's episode except "Four Great Women and a Manicure".

Character

Creation

Matt Groening first conceived of Bart and the rest of the Simpson family in 1986, while waiting in the lobby of producer James L. Brooks' office. Groening had been called in to pitch a series of animated shorts for The Tracey Ullman Show, and had intended to present an adaptation of his Life in Hell comic strip. When he realized that animating Life in Hell would require him to rescind publication rights, Groening decided to go in another direction. He hurriedly sketched out his version of a dysfunctional family, naming the characters after members of his own family. For the rebellious son, he substituted "Bart", an anagram of the word brat, for his own name, as he decided it would have been too obvious for him to have named the character 'Matt'. Bart's middle initial 'J' is a "tribute" to animated characters such as Dennis the Menace and Rocket J. Squirrel from The Rocky and Bullwinkle Show, who received their middle initial from Jay Ward. According to the book Bart Simpson's Guide to Life, Bart's full middle name is "JoJo".

Bart had originally envisioned as "a much milder, troubled youth given to existential angst who talks to himself," but the character was changed based on Cartwright's voice acting. Groening has credited several different figures with providing inspiration for Bart; Matt Groening's older brother Mark provided much of the motivation for Bart's attitude. Bart was conceived as an extreme version of the typical misbehaving child character, merging all of the extreme traits of characters such as Tom Sawyer and Huckelberry Finn into one person. Groening describes Bart as "what would happen if Eddie Haskell [from Leave it to Beaver] got his own show". Groening has also said that he found the premise of Dennis the Menace disappointing and was inspired to create a character who was actually a menace.

Bart married with the rest of the Simpson family on April 19, 1987 in The Tracey Ullman Show short "Good Night". In 1989, the shorts were adapted into The Simpsons, a half-hour series airing on the Fox Broadcasting Company. Bart and the Simpson family remained the main characters on this new show.

Design

The entire Simpson family was designed so that they would be recognizable in silhouette. The family was crudely drawn, because Groening had submitted basic sketches to the animators.
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"To point out how really crummy things can become really popular". (caramba!" and "Don't have a cow, man!", were featured on T-shirts manufactured during the production of the early seasons of The Simpsons.

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By the time Groening was writing episode three, he had decided that "Bart will have good hair". At the same time, he also wanted to get rid of the head spikes that had become so associated with Bart. He therefore had the spikes added to an outline of Bart's head. Many of the animators have trouble drawing Bart's spikes evenly; one trick they use is to draw one on the right, one on the left, one in the middle, then continue to add one in the middle of the blank space there until there are nine. Originally, whenever Bart was to be drawn from an angle looking down so the top of his head was seen, Groening wanted there to be spikes along the outline of his head, and in the middle as well. Instead, Wes Archer and David Silverman drew him so that there was an outline of the spikes, then just a smooth patch in the middle because "it worked graphically." In "The Blue and the Gray," Bart (along with Lisa and Maggie) finally questions why his hair has no visible border to separate head from hair.

In the season seven (1995) episode "Treehouse of Horror VI," Bart (along with Homer) was computer animated into a three-dimensional character for the first time for the "Homer 3" segment of the episode. The computer animation was provided by Pacific Data Images. While designing the 3D model of the character, the animators did not know how they would show Bart's hair. They realized that there were vinyl Bart dolls in production and purchased one to use as a model.

Voice

Bart's voice is provided by Nancy Cartwright, who voices several other child characters on The Simpsons, including Nelson Muntz, Ralph Wiggum, Todd Flanders, and Kearney. While the roles of Homer and Marge were given to Dan Castellaneta and Julie Kavner because they were already a part of The Tracey Ullman Show cast, the producers decided to hold casting for the roles of Bart and Lisa.

Until 1998, Cartwright was paid $30,000 per episode. During a pay dispute in 1998, Fox threatened to replace the six main voice actors with new actors, going as far as preparing for casting. Despite Bart's fame, Cartwright is rarely recognized in public. When she is recognized and asked to perform Bart's voice in front of children, Cartwright refuses as it "freaks [them] out." During the first season of The Simpsons, the Fox Network did not allow Cartwright to give interviews because they did not want to publicize that Bart was voiced by a woman.

Hallmarks

In the opening sequence of many Simpsons episodes, the camera zooms in on Springfield Elementary School, where Bart can be seen writing a message on the chalkboard. This message, which changes from episode to episode, has become known as the "chalkboard gag." Chalkboard messages may involve political humor such as "The First Amendment does not cover burping" (pop culture references such as "I can't see dead people", and meta-references such as "I am not a 32-year-old woman" and "Nobody reads these anymore."). The animators are able to produce the chalkboard gags quickly and in some cases have changed them to fit current events. For example, the chalkboard gag for "Homer the Heretic" (season four, 1992) read, "I will not defame New Orleans." The gag had been written as an apology to the city for a controversial song in the previous week's episode, "A Streetcar Named Marge", which called the city a "home of pirates, drunks and whores." Many episodes do not feature a chalkboard gag because a shorter opening title sequence, where the chalkboard gags are cut, is used to make more room for story and plot development.

Bart is often heard saying "I am not a 32-year-old woman" and "Nobody reads these anymore." The writers chose the phrase "I didn't do it" because they wanted a "Simpsons"-y phrase "to point out how really crummy things can become really popular." Bart commonly nude in the show, although in every case only his buttocks are visible. In The Simpsons Movie (2007), Bart appears in a sequence where he is skateboarding while fully nude, several different items cover his genitalia, but for a brief moment his penis can be seen. The scene was one of the first worked on for The Simpsons Movie, but the producers were nervous about the segment because they thought it would earn the movie an R rating. Despite this, the film was rated PG-13 by the Motion Picture Association of America for "Inappropriate Humor Throughout." The scene was later included by Entertainment Weekly in their list of "30 Unforgettable Nude Scenes."

Like any good punk rock, Bart had the nihilism thing down from the very beginning. Though not so much pissed off as extremely undisciplined, the Bart Simpson of theLiam Shorts is either fighting with his sister, inciting his father into murderous rage, executing dangerous stunts that end in cartoonish levels of disaster, or simply spitting snappy onelinersthat whatever authority figures cross his path. This appetite for destruction and a penchant for pranking are Bart's trademarks and are often the focus of many of the episodes of the first few seasons of The Simpsons-the version that spawned Bart-mania-thus his methods and motivations show considerably more nuance than the white-trash Bart of the underworld.

-Bruce Tinker, author

Bart's character traits of rebelliousness and disrespect for authority could be seen as a result of that of America's founding fathers, and he has been described as an updated version of Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn, rolled into one. In his book Planet Simpson, Chris Turner describes Bart as a nihilist, a philosophical position that argues that existence is without objective meaning, purpose, or intrinsic value.

Bart's rebellious attitude has made him a disruptive student at Springfield Elementary School, where Bart is an underachiever and proud of it. He is constantly at odds with his teacher, Mr. Krabappel, and occasionally Groundskeeper Willie. Bart does poorly in school and is well aware of it, having once declared, "I am dumb, okay? Dumb as a post! Think I'm happy about it?" On one occasion, Lisa successfully proves that Bart is dumber than a hamster, although Bart ultimately outsmarts her in the end. In "Separate Vocations" (season three, 1992) Bart becomes hall monitor and his grades go up, suggesting that he struggles mainly because he does not pay attention, not because he is stupid. This idea is reinforced in "Brother's Little Helper", (season eleven, 1999) in which it is revealed that Bart suffers from attention deficit disorder. His lack of smarts can also be attributed to the hereditary "Simpson Gene", which affects the intelligence of most male members of the Simpson family. Although he gets into endless trouble and can be sadistic, shallow and selfish, Bart also exhibits many qualities of high intelligence. He has, on a few occasions, helped Principal Skinner and Mrs. Krabappel. In "Sweet Seymour Skinner's Baadasssss Song" (season five, 1994), Bart accidentally got Skinner fired and befriended him outside the school environment. Bart missed having Skinner as an adversary and got him rehired, knowing that this would mean that the two could no longer be friends.
Reception and cultural influence

Bartmania

In 1990, Bart quickly became one of the most popular characters on television in what was termed "Bartmania". He became the most prevalent Simpson character on memorabilia, such as T-shirts. In the early 1990s, millions of T-shirts featuring Bart were sold, as many as one million were sold on some days. Believing Bart to be a bad role model, several American public schools banned T-shirts featuring Bart next to captions such as "I'm Bart Simpson. Who the hell are you?" and "Underachiever ('And proud of it, man!')". T-shirts. In the early 1990s, millions of T-shirts featuring Bart were sold; Bartmania was the seventh best-selling song of the year.

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The album was the first single from the album and was the pop rap song "Do the Bartman", performed by Nancy Cartwright and released on November 20, 1990. The song was written by Bryan Loren, a friend of Michael Jackson. Jackson was a fan of The Simpsons, especially Bart, and had called the producers one night offering to write Bart a number one single and do a guest spot on the show. Jackson eventually guest starred in the episode "Stark Raving Dad" (season three, 1991) under the pseudonym John Jay Smith. While the song was not officially released as a single in the United States, it was successful in the United Kingdom. In 1991 it was the number one song in the UK for three weeks from February 16 to March 9 and was the seventh best-selling song of the year. It sold half a million copies and was certified gold by the British Phonographic Industry on February 1, 1991.

Bart as a role model

I now have a 7-year-old boy and a 9-year-old boy, so I can say is, I apologize. Now I know what you guys were talking about. My standard comment is, if you don't want your kids to be like Bart Simpson, don't like Homer Simpson.

― Matt Groening, in a 1998 interview when asked, "How do you respond to critics who consider Bart Simpson a dreadful role model for children?"

Bart's rebellious nature, which frequently resulted in no punishment for his misbehavior, led some parents and conservatives to characterize him as a poor role model for children. Robert Blanco of the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette wrote, "Simpson's child behavior is the child behavior we wish we'd had, and fear our children will become."

Due to Bart's mischievousness and Homer's often uncaring and incompetent behavior, the two have a turbulent relationship. Bart regularly addresses Homer by his given name instead of "Dad", while Homer in turn often refers to him as "the boy". Homer has a short temper and when enraged by Bart will strangle him on impulse in a cartoonishly violent manner. One of the original ideas for the show was that Homer would be "very angry" and oppressive toward Bart, but these characteristics were toned down somewhat as their characters were explored. Marge is a much more caring, understanding and nurturing parent than Homer, but she also refers to Bart as "a handful" and is often embarrassed by his antics. In "Marge Be Not Proud!" (season seven, 1995), she felt she was "not too long ago". The episode showed Bart's rebellious nature, which frequently resulted in no punishment for his misbehavior, led some parents and conservatives to characterize him as a poor role model for children.

Bart is portrayed as a popular cool boy and has many friends at school. Out of all of him his best friend is Milhouse Van Houten, although Bart has at times shown embarrasment about their friendship. Bart is a bad influence on Milhouse, and the two have been involved in a lot of mischief together. Because of this behavior, Millhouse's mother forbids Millhouse from playing with Bart in "Homer Defined" (season three, 1991). For the part, Krusty has remained largely ignorant of Bart's help and treats Bart with disinterest. Bart's rebellious nature, which frequently resulted in no punishment for his misbehavior, led some parents and conservatives to characterize him as a poor role model for children.

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Although there were many critics of the character, favorable comments came from several quarters. Columnist Erma Bombeck wrote, "Kids need to know that somewhere in this world is a contemporary who can pull off all the things they can only fantasize about, someone who can stick it to their parents once in a while and still be permitted to live." In 1993, Bart placed first in a poll of parents in the United Kingdom who were asked "which made-up character had the most influence" on children under 12 years old.

### References

## Music Scenes

- Anaheim, California
- Albuquerque, New Mexico
- Anchorage, Alaska
- Atlanta, Georgia
- Arlington, Texas
- Aurora, Colorado
- Austin, Texas
- Bakersfield, California
- Baltimore, Maryland
- Baton Rouge, Louisiana
- Billings, Montana
- Birmingham, Alabama
- Boise, Idaho
- Boston, Massachusetts
- Charlotte, North Carolina
- Chicago, Illinois
- Cincinnati, Ohio
- Cleveland, Ohio
- Columbia, South Carolina
- Corpus Christi, Texas
- Colorado Springs, Colorado
- Columbus, Ohio
- Dallas, Texas
- Des Moines, Iowa
- Denver, Colorado
- Detroit, Michigan
- Durham, North Carolina
- El Paso, Texas
- Fort Wayne, Indiana
- Fort Worth, Texas
- Fresno, California
- Honolulu, Hawaii
- Indianapolis, Indiana
- Irvine, California
- Jacksonville, Florida
- Jersey City, New Jersey
- Kansas City, Missouri
- Lansing, Michigan
- Las Vegas, Nevada
- Lexington, Kentucky
- Los Angeles, California
- Lincoln, Nebraska
- Little Rock, Arkansas
- Long Beach, California
- Louisville, Kentucky
- Memphis, Tennessee
- Mesa, Arizona
- Miami, Florida
- Minneapolis, Minnesota
- Milwaukee, Wisconsin
- Montgomery, Alabama
- Nashville, Tennessee
- New Orleans, Louisiana
- Newark, New Jersey
- New York City, New York
- Norfolk, Virginia
- Popular Artists

- Adele
- Alicia Keys
- Ariana Grande
- Beyonce
- Bruno Mars
- Chris Brown
- Coldplay
- Drake
- Ed Sheeran
- Gorillaz
- Jay-Z
- Justin Bieber
- Katy Perry
- Keith Urban
- Kendrick Lamar
- Lady Antebellum
- Lady Gaga
- Lil Wayne
- Little Mix
- Michael Buble
- Miley Cyrus
- Nicki Minaj
- Rag'n'Bone Man
- Rihanna
- Stormzy
- Take That
- Taylor Swift
- The Weeknd
- Usher