

= Mike Scully =

Michael " Mike " Scully (born October 2 , 1956) is an American television writer and producer . He is known for his work as executive producer and showrunner of the animated sitcom The Simpsons from 1997 to 2001 . Scully grew up in West Springfield , Massachusetts and long had an interest in writing . He was an underachiever at school and dropped out of college , going on to work in a series of jobs . Eventually , in 1986 , he moved to Los Angeles where he worked as a stand @-@ up comic and wrote for Yakov Smirnoff .

Scully went on to write for several television sitcoms before 1993 , when he was hired to write for The Simpsons . There , he wrote twelve episodes , including " Lisa on Ice " and " Team Homer " , and served as showrunner from seasons 9 to 12 . Scully won three Primetime Emmy Awards for his work on the series , with many publications praising his episodes , but others criticizing his tenure as a period of decline in the show 's quality . Scully still works on the show and also co @-@ wrote 2007 's The Simpsons Movie .

More recently , Scully co @-@ created The Pitts and Complete Savages as well as working on Everybody Loves Raymond and Parks and Recreation . He co @-@ developed the short @-@ lived animated television version of Napoleon Dynamite . Scully is married to fellow writer Julie Thacker .

= = Early life = =

Scully was born October 2 , 1956 at Springfield Hospital in Springfield , Massachusetts and grew up in the Merrick section of West Springfield . His father , Richard , was a salesman and owned a dry cleaning business , his mother Geraldine worked for the Baystate Medical Center once Scully and his brothers were old enough to be left at home alone . Scully is of Irish ancestry .

As a child he " hoped to be a musician or a hockey player . " At Main Street Elementary School , with the encouragement of his teacher James Doyle , he developed an interest in writing , serving as editor for his school newspaper . He graduated from West Springfield High School in 1974 , having been voted " Most Likely Not to Live Up to Potential " by his classmates , and dropped out of Holyoke Community College after one day , undecided about what he wanted to do with his life . He took up work in the clothing department at Steiger 's department store , as a janitor at the Baystate Medical Center and also as a driving instructor . He commented : " I think if I had actually succeeded at college and gotten a degree in accounting or something , I might have given up too quickly on writing . Having no marketable job skills was a tremendous incentive to keep trying to succeed as a writer . " He realized " there probably wasn 't going to be a career in riding around with my friends listening to Foghat , " so Scully decided he " definitely wanted to break into comedy " even though he " really had no reason to believe [he] could succeed . " Regardless , he moved to Los Angeles , California in 1982 .

= = Career = =

= = = Early career = = =

In California , Scully worked in a tuxedo store . He also got a job writing jokes for comedian Yakov Smirnoff and developed his joke writing skills by performing himself at amateur stand @-@ up comedy nights . He purchased scripts from a variety of half @-@ hour comedy shows , including Taxi , to train himself to write them and had numerous speculative scripts rejected . He started " bouncing around Hollywood working on some of the lousiest sitcoms in history . " He served on the writing staff of The Royal Family , Out of This World , Top of the Heap and What a Country ! , where he did audience warm @-@ up , a role he also performed on Grand .

= = = The Simpsons = = =

In 1993 , David Mirkin hired Scully to write for The Simpsons , as a replacement for the departing Conan O'Brien , after reading some of his sample scripts . He began as a writer and producer for the show during its fifth season and wrote the episodes " Lisa 's Rival " , " Two Dozen and One Greyhounds " and " Lisa on Ice " which aired in season six . " Lisa 's Rival " was his first episode ; he wrote the script , but the original concept had been conceived by O'Brien . Similarly , he wrote the script for " Two Dozen and One Greyhounds " , which was based on an idea by Al Jean and Mike Reiss . " Lisa on Ice " was inspired by Scully 's love of ice hockey and featured many experiences from his childhood , as was " Marge Be Not Proud " (which he wrote for season seven) which was based " one of the most traumatic moments " of his life , when he was caught shoplifting aged twelve . He jokingly told Variety that " It 's great to be paid for reliving the horrors of your life . " He also wrote " Team Homer " and " Lisa 's Date with Density " . Scully noted : " I wrote a lot of Lisa 's shows . I have five daughters , so I like Lisa a lot . I like Homer , too . Homer comes very naturally to me : I don 't know if that 's a good or a bad thing . A lot of my favorite episodes are the ones when Homer and Lisa are in conflict with each other ... They 're very human , I think that 's their appeal . "

Scully became showrunner of The Simpsons in 1997 , during its ninth season . As showrunner and executive producer , Scully said his aim was to " not wreck the show " , and he headed up the writing staff and oversaw all aspects of the show 's production . During his time as showrunner he was credited with writing or co -@-@ writing five episodes : " Treehouse of Horror VIII " (" The H?mega Man " segment) , " Sunday , Cruddy Sunday " , " Beyond Blunderdome " , " Behind the Laughter " and " The Parent Rap " . Scully was popular with the staff members , many of whom praised his organization and management skills . Writer Tom Martin said he was " quite possibly the best boss I 've ever worked for " and " a great manager of people " while Don Payne commented that for Scully " it was really important that we kept decent hours " . Scully served as showrunner until 2001 , during season 12 , making him the first person to run the show for more than two seasons . He returned in season 14 to write and executive produce the episode " How I Spent My Strummer Vacation " , and co -@-@ wrote and co -@-@ produced The Simpsons Movie in 2007 .

Scully 's tenure as showrunner of The Simpsons has been the subject of praise from some of the show 's fans . John Ortved wrote " Scully 's episodes excel when compared to what The Simpsons airs nowadays , but he was the man at the helm when the ship turned towards the iceberg . " The BBC noted " the common consensus is that The Simpsons ' golden era ended after season nine " , while an op @-@ ed in Slate by Chris Suellentrop argued The Simpsons changed from a realistic show about family life into a typical cartoon during Scully 's years : " Under Scully 's tenure , The Simpsons became , well , a cartoon ... [E] pisodes that once would have ended with Homer and Marge bicycling into the sunset (perhaps while Bart gagged in the background) now end with Homer blowing a tranquilizer dart into Marge 's neck . " The Simpsons under Scully has been negatively labelled as a " gag @-@ heavy , Homer @-@ centric incarnation " by Jon Bonné of MSNBC , while some fans have bemoaned the transformation in Homer 's character during the era , from sweet and sincere to " a boorish , self @-@ aggrandizing oaf " , dubbing him " Jerkass Homer " .

Despite this , much of Scully 's work on the show also received critical praise . Scully won five Primetime Emmy Awards for his work on The Simpsons , while Entertainment Weekly cited " How I Spent My Strummer Vacation " as the show 's 22nd best episode . Robert Canning of IGN also gave the episode a positive review , something he also did for " Behind the Laughter " and " Trilogy of Error " , which aired during season 12 . He called the latter : " one extremely enjoyable misadventure . The Simpsons may have peaked in the ' 90s , but that doesn 't mean the eight years since haven 't delivered their share of quality episodes . This was one of them . " Martin said that he does not understand the criticism against Scully , and that he thinks the criticism " bothered [him] , and still bothers him , but he managed to not get worked up over it . " Ortved noted in his book that blaming a single show runner for what some perceive as the lowering quality of the show " is unfair . " When asked in 2007 how the series ' longevity is sustained , Scully joked , " Lower your quality standards . Once you 've done that you can go on forever . "

= = = Further career = = =

Scully was a writer and co @-@ executive producer on Everybody Loves Raymond for part of season seven and all of season eight , winning an Emmy for his work . Scully co @-@ created (with wife Julie Thacker) The Pitts for Fox and Complete Savages for ABC , which was produced by Mel Gibson . The Pitts was a sitcom about a family suffering from bad luck . Thacker stated the show was designed " as a companion piece for The Simpsons . It had a very cartoony feel to it . We always knew the initial audience for the show would be 12 @-@ year @-@ olds to start , and then when families saw that the writing was very Simpsons - like , because many of the writers were from The Simpsons , [we thought] families would start to watch it together . " It was canceled after six episodes ; Scully and Thacker laid the blame for this on the show 's timeslot , 9 : 30 P.M. , which was too late for the target audience . Complete Savages , which Thacker and Scully wrote with the " Simpsons sensibility " of layered jokes , was canceled in January 2005 due to low ratings and network anger at Scully and Thacker 's decision to write to TV critics in what the Hartford Courant labelled " unsanctioned promoting " . A fan of NRBQ , Scully produced , with Thacker , a documentary about the band in 2003 entitled NRBQ : Rock ' n ' Roll 's Best Kept Secret ; Scully employed the group as the " unofficial house band " of The Simpsons during his tenure as showrunner . Scully also created a pilot for Fox called Schimmel in 2000 , starring Robert Schimmel , which was dropped after Schimmel was diagnosed with cancer .

Scully served as a consulting producer on the NBC series Parks and Recreation , and wrote the episodes " Ron and Tammy " in 2009 , and " The Possum " in 2010 . Scully also had a cameo role in the episode " Eagleton " as a speaker at the Pawnee community meeting .

In 2012 , Scully co @-@ produced and co @-@ wrote an animated TV version of the film Napoleon Dynamite , which was canceled after six episodes . That May , Scully signed a seven @-@ figure , multi @-@ year overall deal with 20th Century Fox Television to develop several projects . He served as co @-@ executive producer on the single @-@ season NBC sitcom The New Normal (2012 ? 2013) , alongside Allison Adler and Ryan Murphy . Scully held the same title for Fox 's Dads (which debuted in 2013) .

= = Personal life = =

He is married to writer Julie Thacker ; the couple has five daughters . His brother Brian Scully is also a comedy writer and he has a second brother called Neil , who is an ice hockey writer . His mother died in 1985 . Scully was awarded an honorary doctorate in fine arts from Westfield State University in 2008 . He walked the picket line during the 2007 ? 2008 WGA strike while on crutches .

Scully received a lifetime achievement award by the WGA West in 2010 .

= = Credits = =

Episodes listed are those Scully has been credited as writing or co @-@ writing

What a Country ! (1986 ? 1987) ? writer

Out of This World (1987 ? 1991) ? supervising producer , writer

" Baby Talk "

" Mosquito Man : The Motion Picture "

" Blast from the Past "

" Old Flame "

" Evie 's Two Dads "

" Evie Goes to Hollywood "

" Whose House Is It , Anyway ? "

" Evie 's Driver 's License "

" The Rocks That Couldn 't Roll "

" My Mother the Con "

" Goodbye , Mr. Chris "

" New Kid on the Block "
 " Come Fly with Evie "
 " Would You Buy a Used Car from This Dude ? "
 " Mayor Evie "
 Grand ? writer
 " Lady Luck "
 Top of the Heap (1991) ? writer
 " The Agony and the Agony "
 " The Marrying Guy "
 The Royal Family (1992) ? writer
 " Cocoa in Charge "
 The Simpsons (1993 ? present) ? writer , producer , executive producer , showrunner , consulting producer
 " Lisa 's Rival "
 " Lisa on Ice "
 " Two Dozen and One Greyhounds "
 " Marge Be Not Proud "
 " Team Homer "
 " Lisa 's Date with Density "
 " Treehouse of Horror VIII " (" The H?mega Man ")
 " Sunday , Cruddy Sunday " (with Tom Martin , George Meyer and Brian Scully)
 " Beyond Blunderdome "
 " Behind the Laughter " (with Tim Long , George Meyer and Matt Selman)
 " The Parent Rap " (with George Meyer)
 " How I Spent My Strummer Vacation "
 The Preston Episodes (1995) ? writer
 " The Halloween Episode " (with Julie Thacker)
 Schimmel (2000) ? creator , producer
 The Pitts (2003) ? creator , executive producer , writer
 Everybody Loves Raymond (2003 ? 2004) ? co @-@ executive producer , writer
 " Fun with Debra "
 " Party Dress "
 " Blabbermouths "
 " Angry Sex "
 Complete Savages (2004 ? 2005) ? creator , executive producer , writer
 " Pilot "
 " Free Lily "
 " Thanksgiving with the Savages "
 " Saving Old Lady Riley "
 The Simpsons Movie (2007) ? producer and writer
 Parks and Recreation (2009 ? 2012) ? consulting producer and writer
 " Ron and Tammy "
 " The Possum "
 " The Comeback Kid "
 Napoleon Dynamite (2012) ? co @-@ developer , producer , writer
 " FFA "
 The New Normal (2012 ? 2013) ? co @-@ executive producer , writer
 " The Godparent Trap "
 " Dog Children "
 70th Golden Globe Awards (2013) ? special material
 Dads (2013-) ? co @-@ executive producer