

= Scenes from the Class Struggle in Springfield =

" Scenes from the Class Struggle in Springfield " is the 14th episode of The Simpsons ' seventh season . It originally aired on the Fox network in the United States on February 4 , 1996 . In the episode , Marge buys a Chanel suit and is invited to join the Springfield Country Club . Marge becomes obsessed with trying to fit in , but realizes that it has changed her personality and that she was happier being her old self . She decides she would rather go back to the way things were than continue to pursue high social ambitions .

The episode was written by Jennifer Crittenden and directed by Susie Dietter . It was the first time a female writer and director were credited in the same episode . Tom Kite guest starred in the episode , and he " really enjoyed " recording his parts for it . The episode 's title is a parody of the 1989 film Scenes from the Class Struggle in Beverly Hills . Since airing , the episode has received mostly positive reviews from fans and television critics . It acquired a Nielsen rating of 8 @. @ 8 , and was the fifth highest @- @ rated show on the Fox network the week it aired .

= = Plot = =

When Grampa tries to " fix " the family 's television , it breaks irreparably , so the family travels to the Ogdenville outlet mall . Marge and Lisa wander off to a discounted store and Marge locates a fancy Chanel suit , which has been marked from \$ 2 @, @ 800 and is now \$ 90 . Marge is first reluctant to buy the suit , but after Lisa 's convincing that it 's a great buy , Marge purchases the suit , so she becomes infatuated with it and wears it constantly , begging Homer to take her somewhere fancy so the suit can be put to good use . However , one day when Marge wears it to the Kwik @- @ E @- @ Mart , she runs into an old classmate , Evelyn , who is impressed by Marge 's fashion sense and invites her to come to the Springfield Country Club (even though Marge has married Homer , as Evelyn originally assumed it was a rumor) . Marge , intimidated by the wealthy club members , works hard to fit in with their snobbish ways . Along the way , Marge loses interest in her family and becomes obsessed with both impressing the club members and altering her suit so she comes off as wealthy .

Meanwhile , the rest of the family is uncomfortable at the country club until Lisa finds the stables and Homer begins playing golf . Homer is revealed to have a knack for golf , and Mr. Burns , having seen Homer 's skill in the bathroom at work , challenges him to a match . Mr. Burns believes that he is the best golfer in Springfield , and is determined to take down Homer . However , once they begin playing , Homer , who is in disbelief at one of Mr. Burns ' shots , runs over to the green and finds Mr. Smithers replacing the ball Mr. Burns hit with a new one that is close to the hole . Homer , who breaks out in a sing @- @ songy over Mr. Burns ' cheating , threatens to tell everyone about how Mr. Burns is not the best golfer he says he is . Mr. Smithers then offers Homer a chance to be sponsored for membership if he keeps quiet about the decades of Mr. Burns ' cheating , since Mr. Burns holds a lot of influence at the club . Homer is unswayed , as he does not care about joining the club . However , Mr. Burns reminds Homer that the family being allowed to join the club is important to Marge .

In the meantime , Marge is offended by a crack made by one of the snobby club members and is eager to change the suit even more to impress at a party . However , due to Lisa 's annoyingly inquisitive nature , Marge accidentally destroys the suit on the sewing machine . Marge rushes back to the Ogdenville outlet mall , but there are no suitable clothes for the party . Marge , having nowhere left to turn , goes to the actual Chanel store and purchases a \$ 3 @, @ 300 dress . When she and the rest of the Simpsons arrive at the party , Marge criticizes the behavior of everyone in her family , including Maggie . Homer tells Marge that he and the kids have realized what awful people they are compared to the changed Marge . Marge realizes that she has changed for the worse , and goes to Krusty Burger with her family instead of the party . However , it is later revealed that the party was actually supposed to be an initiation party , as Evelyn Peters , Mr. Burns , and the rest of the club has decided to sponsor their membership . The snobby club member who frequently bashed and insulted Marge remarks that she hopes that Marge didn 't take her " attempt to destroy

her too seriously . "

= = Production = =

The episode was written by Jennifer Crittenden and directed by Susie Dietter . It was the first time a female writer and director were credited in the same episode . The episode 's title is a parody of the film *Scenes from the Class Struggle in Beverly Hills* . The first script of the episode was too long and it had to be cut down . Dietter remembered that it " took on a more serious tone " because they had to keep the parts that were essential to the story and cut the many " throwaway gags " . Bill Oakley , the show runner of *The Simpsons* at the time , praised the episode for having a " terrific " story that " really comes together well " . Oakley said that he and his partner Josh Weinstein wanted to have more " emotionally " based episodes this season that still had humor in them . He thought Crittenden did a " good job " at that and he thought the episode " came out well " .

Marge 's dress was modeled on an actual Chanel dress , and also the type of dresses that former First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis used to wear . The show 's creator , Matt Groening , was worried that such a detailed dress would look " weird " on a *Simpsons* character because they are " simply designed " and their clothing is " very generic " . He ended up liking the design , though , and Dietter thought it looked " good " on Marge . Oakley also liked the design and thought the cut on Marge was " flattering " . The country club women 's clothes were changed in every scene , something Dietter thought was hard to do because the animators had to come up with new designs .

Tom Kite guest starred in the episode as himself . He said that he " really enjoyed " recording his parts for it . " It was a lot of fun trying to imagine exactly what Homer 's golf swing is going to look like . My number one fear is that Homer will end up having a better golf swing than I do ? heaven forbid ! " , he added .

= = Reception = =

In its original American broadcast , " *Scenes from the Class Struggle in Springfield* " finished 64th in the ratings for the week of January 29 to February 4 , 1996 , with a Nielsen rating of 8 @. @ 8 . The episode was the fifth highest @-@ rated show on the Fox network that week , following *The X @-@ Files* , *Beverly Hills , 90210* , *My Cousin Vinny* , and *Married ... With Children* .

Since airing , the episode has received mostly positive reviews from television critics . Warren Martyn and Adrian Wood , authors of the book *I Can 't Believe It 's a Bigger and Better Updated Unofficial Simpsons Guide* , summed it up as follows : " Marge looks great in her Chanel , the golf scenes between Homer and Mr. Burns are brilliant , and there are many true , touching moments as Marge struggles valiantly to improve herself . Yet again , it 's tempting for the viewer to urge Marge on and get the hell away from the family . " DVD Movie Guide 's Colin Jacobson said that he does not know if he " accepts " the episode as being " in character " for Marge . He said that it borrows liberally from *The Flintstones* , but he " likes it anyway " . Jacobson added that the episode " jabs the idle rich nicely " , and he enjoys the golf scenes with Homer . The program succeeds despite a few problems . " Jennifer Malkowski of DVD Verdict considered the best part of the episode to be Mr. Burns 's demand for his tires to be revulcanized at the gas station . The website concluded its review by giving the episode a grade of B. The authors of the book *Homer Simpson Goes to Washington* , Joseph Foy and Stanley Schultz , wrote that in the episode , " the tension of trying to demonstrate a family 's achievement of the American Dream is satirically and expertly played out by Marge Simpson " .