

= Duffless =

" Duffless " is the sixteenth episode of The Simpsons ' fourth season . It originally aired on the Fox network in the United States on February 18 , 1993 . After getting arrested for drunk driving , Homer tries to remain sober , at Marge 's request . Meanwhile , Lisa attempts to prove that Bart is less intelligent than a hamster after he ruins her first science fair project . It was written by David M. Stern , and directed by Jim Reardon . The episode received a positive reception .

= = Plot = =

Bart has a dream that he is at the school science fair presenting a Go @-@ Go Ray . He zaps all the teachers , resulting in their dancing uncontrollably . Principal Skinner declares him the winner , but Bart wakes up realizing it was Lisa messing with him .

At breakfast , Lisa shows the family her science fair project , a steroid @-@ enhanced tomato that she hopes will cure world hunger . Bart 's project is to study the effects of cigarette smoking on dogs ; his " volunteer " is Santa 's Little Helper .

At the Springfield Nuclear Power Plant , Homer ducks out of work early and accompanies Barney on a tour of the Duff brewery . After the tour , Homer refuses to let the exceptionally drunk Barney drive home and forces him to hand over his keys . On their way out of the parking lot , their car is pulled over by Police Chief Wiggum , along with Eddie and Lou . They administer a breathalyzer test to Homer , which he fails . He is arrested , his license is revoked , and he must attend traffic school and Alcoholics Anonymous meetings .

At school , three days before the science fair , Lisa leaves her super tomato under Bart 's care for a moment and he takes the opportunity to hurl it at Skinner while he is bent over tying his shoe . When Lisa sees what Bart has done with her project , she is furious . Lisa appeals to Marge for help , who suggests she run a hamster through a maze . Lisa takes the idea to heart , but instead of just testing the intelligence of a rodent , she pits a hamster against an unknowing Bart to find out who is smarter . After two simple tests , the hamster leads two to zero .

In bed , Marge gives Homer a magazine quiz about his drinking . Hearing his answers , she asks him to give up beer for a month , to which he agrees . Homer tries not to think about beer while he rides Lisa 's bike to work . After a series of severe temptations , Homer crashes the bike as hundreds of bottles of Duff parachuted down on him from a blimp .

Bart later discovers Lisa 's plans to humiliate him at the science fair and preempts them with a project of his own , " Can hamsters fly planes ? " . Lisa tries to reason that his project has no scientific merit , but everyone ignores her . A cute hamster sitting in the cockpit of a miniature plane wins over Skinner and he hands Bart the winning ribbon , much to Lisa 's dismay .

At Homer 's Alcoholics Anonymous meeting , he is kicked out by Reverend Lovejoy after confessing that his desperation for the taste of beer led him to " sneak into the football stadium and eat the dirt underneath the bleachers " . But he exhibits more positive changes such as losing weight , saving over \$ 100 and no longer sweating while he eats . After thirty days of sobriety , Homer rushes back to Moe 's , despite Marge asking him to stay home . However , after seeing how alcohol has ruined the lives of Barney and the other barflies , he turns around and goes home . Homer and Marge ride a bike into the sunset .

= = Production = =

Bart 's go @-@ go ray idea was " stolen " from the opening credits of Johnny Quest . Mike Reiss said they did not want to show the hamster getting shocked but had to for plot purposes . The first line Richard Nixon says , during the Duff commercial , was taken verbatim from the Kennedy @-@ Nixon Debate during the 1960 Presidential Campaign . Adolf Hitler 's head , among other things , can be seen going by in bottles of Duff when the quality control man is not paying attention .

The episode contains the first appearance of Sarah Wiggum .

The episode contains a two @-@ second snippet of footage from " Bart the Daredevil " : a close

@-@ up of Homer making a disappointed face and saying " D 'oh ! " when he gets arrested .

= = Cultural references = =

When Bart reaches for the cupcakes and collapses , it is a parody of a scene in A Clockwork Orange , where the main character Alex reaches for a woman 's breasts . The Duff clock is a parody of the " It 's a Small World " clock . In the Duff TV advertisement , a group of women were leading an anti @-@ sexism protest in front of the McMahon and Tate building , a reference to the advertising agency from Bewitched . The scene toward the end where Moe points toward individual customers declaring they will " be back " before pointing toward and addressing the viewer (later revealed to be Barney via a cutaway) is a parody of the end of the film Reefer Madness . The final scene , where Homer and Marge cycle into the distance while " Raindrops Keep Fallin ' on My Head " plays is a reference to the film Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid . Homer 's song " It was a Very Good Beer " is sung to the tune of the 1961 song " It Was a Very Good Year " ; one of its lyrics is Homer stating he stayed up and listened to the music of the British band Queen . Bart sitting in the chair , stroking the hamster is a reference to James Bond character Ernst Stavro Blofeld , who strokes a cat in his chair .

= = Reception = =

" Duffless " aired during February sweeps and finished 19th in the weekly ratings for the week of February 15 ? 21 , 1993 with a Nielsen rating of 15 @.@ 2 and was viewed in 14 @.@ 2 million homes . It was the highest rated show from the Fox Network that week .

The authors of the book I Can 't Believe It 's a Bigger and Better Updated Unofficial Simpsons Guide , Warren Martyn and Adrian Wood said , " A superb episode with a sincere message . Homer is excellent throughout , but it is the cameos by Principal Skinner and Edna Krabappel that steal the show , especially the latter 's reaction to Milhouse 's Slinky . " Entertainment Weekly ranked the episode as number eleven on their list of the top twenty @-@ five The Simpsons episodes .