

= Jaws Wired Shut =

" Jaws Wired Shut " is the ninth episode of The Simpsons ' thirteenth season . It originally aired on the Fox network in the United States on January 27 , 2002 . In the episode , Homer gets his jaw injured by running into the fist of Drederick Tatum 's statue . As a result , Homer 's jaw is wired shut , making him unable to speak . Initially , Marge enjoys Homer 's inability to talk , as it makes him a better listener and a more compassionate person . However , when Homer 's jaw is finally healed , Marge starts to miss his earlier , wilder personality .

The episode was written by Matt Selman and directed by Nancy Kruse . The plot idea for the episode was pitched by Selman , as was the setpiece , which originated from a discussion he had with current showrunner Al Jean . Comedian John Kassir guest @-@ starred as one of the gay dogs in the gay pride parade in the episode . In its original broadcast , the episode was seen by approximately 8 @.@ 7 million viewers , making it the most watched scripted program on Fox that night . Following its home video release , " Jaws Wired Shut " received mostly positive reviews from critics .

= = Plot = =

The Springfield gay pride parade passes by the Simpsons ' home , during which Santa 's Little Helper flirts with one of the gay dogs . Uncomfortable , Homer drags his family to the Springfield Googolplex to see a movie called " Shenani @-@ Goats " starring Tim Allen and rated PG @-@ 13 for brief rudeness and appearances by Garry Shandling . Homer grows impatient at the number of short films , previews (including one for a family movie called Soccer Mummy starring Ed O 'Neill) , on @-@ screen trivia games , and public service announcements preceding the film . He jumps up in front of the screen chanting , " Stop the madness ! Start the movie ! " The angry ushers then chase Homer out of the cinema , wielding oversized Kit Kat bars . While running without looking where he is going , Homer collides with the fist of a large metal statue of boxer Drederick Tatum .

At the Springfield General Hospital , Dr. Hibbert wires Homer 's broken jaw shut , saying that he will not be able to speak or eat solid food for a while . Not being able to talk , Homer starts to listen to his family , which pleases them , especially Marge . She decides that , since Homer is so well @-@ behaved , they can risk going to the Springfield annual formal event at the Country Club . The next day , the jaw wires come off . Homer and Marge appear on a chat show called " Afternoon Yak " to discuss how Homer became a changed man . During the show , Marge , with the support of the hosts , pleads with Homer to stop his " wreckless ways " and stay well behaved . Despite the temptation of the upcoming demolition derby , Homer decides not to do it for Marge 's sake .

Five weeks after Homer made his pledge to behave , Marge realizes that she is bored by all the sudden peace and quiet . The demolition derby form flies into her hand , and she decides to give it a try . When she leaves , Homer wakes up and finds Marge is gone and so is the demolition derby form , so he heads off to the derby with the kids to stop her . Although Marge initially enjoys the demolition derby , things soon get too dangerous for her . Homer has no idea how to save her , as he has given up being reckless . Bart comes up with an idea and calls for a beer can from a vendor . Homer then drinks the beer and rescues Marge (in a style similar to Popeye) , who makes him promise not to make her the live wire in the family .

= = Production = =

The episode was written by executive producer Matt Selman and directed by Nancy Kruse . It was first broadcast on the Fox network in the United States on January 27 , 2002 . The episode 's setpiece was pitched by Selman , and originated from a discussion he had with current showrunner Al Jean , about " how much crap there is at the movie theater before the movie actually begins . " The episode 's plot was also pitched by Selman , who had wanted to do an episode with a " jaws @-@ wired @-@ shut plot " for a while . It was not until long after the episode was completed that Selman learned that one can in fact talk with one 's jaw wired shut . He learned this from fellow

Simpsons writer Brian Kelley , who had had his jaw wired shut once in high school . Kelley joined the writing staff during the writing stage of the episode , however he did not mention that one could talk , since he did not want to " ruin " the episode . However , he did say that one should eat a lot before since one will lose weight when their jaw is wired shut . These trivia's were subsequently included in the episode .

According to Jean , the episode 's table read went " great " until the third act . The Simpsons writers found the third act " pretty challenging " to write , because by having Homer 's jaws wired shut , they " took [their] funniest character " and " remove [d] comedy . " In the DVD commentary for the episode , Selman described it as " It 's the comedy of saying : ' Oh , he [Homer] can 't do all the stuff you want him to do ' . " It was also hard to " keep the story moving " back to normal , since they kept having to " re @-@ use the premise " . The episode features American comedian John Kassir as one of the dogs in the gay pride parade in the beginning of the episode . Barbara Walters and Star Jones , the hosts of The View , were portrayed by American voice @-@ actor Tress MacNeille . In the DVD commentary for the episode , Jean stated that MacNeille is " very versatile " . Lisa Ling and Joy Behar were portrayed by voice @-@ actor Pamela Hayden .

= = Cultural references = =

The title of the episode was pitched by The Simpsons writer Max Pross , and is a reference to Stanley Kubrick 's 1999 drama film Eyes Wide Shut . According to Jean , the writers chose the title because " [they] thought it would have been more well @-@ remembered . " When Homer 's jaw is wired shut , he writes words on a portable chalkboard to communicate with people . This is a reference to Anthony Hopkins ' character in Legends of the Fall , who , after having a stroke , also communicates with people using a chalkboard . The song used in the ballet scene is " The Blue Danube Waltz " , which was also used in 2001 : A Space Odyssey , another film by Kubrick .

A scene in the episode takes place on the American talk show The View , and the hosts are based on The View 's real @-@ life host Barbara Walters and Joy Behar , and former hosts Lisa Ling and Star Jones . The View 's audience members are also referenced , and are depicted in the episode as " giv [ing] a huge response " to everything in the program . The play that Bart and Homer are rehearsing in the living room was written by American playwright Edward Albee . Near the end of the episode , Homer gains strength by drinking a can of beer . The scene parodies the character Popeye , who gained super @-@ strength from eating spinach . Homer also talks in a manner similar to Popeye after drinking the beer . Marge also resembles Popeye 's love interest Olive Oyl in the scene . The message on the marquee announcing the demolition derby name @-@ checks the exploitation film series Faces of Death .

= = Release = =

In its original American broadcast on January 27 , 2002 , " Jaws Wired Shut " received an 8 @.@ 7 rating , according to Nielsen Media Research , translating to approximately 8 @.@ 7 million viewers . The episode finished in 22nd place in the ratings for the week of January 21 ? 27 , 2002 , making it the most watched scripted program on Fox that night . On August 24 , 2010 , " Jaws Wired Shut " was released as part of The Simpsons : The Complete Thirteenth Season DVD and Blu @-@ ray set . Matt Groening , Al Jean , Matt Selman , Carolyn Omine , Dana Gould , Joe Mantegna and Pete Michels participated in the audio commentary of the episode .

Following its home video release , " Jaws Wired Shut " received mostly positive reviews from critics . Stuart O 'Conner of Screen Jabber described " Jaws Wired Shut " , " The Parent Rap " , " She of Little Faith " and " Poppa 's Got a Brand New Badge " as " first @-@ rate ep [isodes] . " Giving the episode a B + , Jennifer Malkowski of DVD Verdict described the episode as having " nicely gooey family moments . " She called the " gay pride parade 's ' Salute to Safer Sex ' float " the episode 's " highlight " . Casey Broadwater of Blu @-@ ray.com gave the episode a positive review as well , calling it " a welcome return to a more old school Simpsons storytelling style , capable of being both comical , and , in its own bizarre way , touching . " Colin Jacobson of DVD Movie Guide wrote "

While Season 13 doesn't threaten to approach the high standards of the series' strongest years, episodes like "Shut Out" help make it better than expected. Sure, it follows fairly predictable patterns, but it develops them in a satisfying comedic manner. He concluded his review by writing that the episode's overall "entertaining," even though its ending "falters."

On the other hand, Ron Martin of 411Mania gave the episode a mixed review, calling it "uneven at best, mediocre at worst." Although he praised the episode's setpiece, Nate Boss of Project @-@ Blu gave the episode an overall negative review, writing: "With a hilarious take on movie theaters to start the episode, the duldrum of the rest can be forgiven ... almost." Adam Rayner of Obsessed with Film wrote that the episode was "woefully weak" and felt "contrived, rushed and handled by hacks." He added that the episode was "Dull".

In an article on gay marriage, The Economist references the Simpsons' blasé acceptance of the annual Springfield gay pride parade in this episode as being "a few steps ahead of real life. But only a few".