

= Homer to the Max =

" Homer to the Max " is the thirteenth episode of The Simpsons ' tenth season . It originally aired on the Fox network in the United States on February 7 , 1999 . In the episode , Homer discovers that a new television show , Police Cops , has a hero also named Homer Simpson . He is delighted with the positive attention he receives because of his name , but when the television character is rewritten from a hero to a bumbling idiot , he is mocked and taunted , so he changes his name to " Max Power " to rid himself of the negative attention . Max gains new friends , and is forced into a protest to prevent a forest from being knocked down . In the end , he changes his name back to Homer Simpson .

The episode was written by John Swartzwelder and directed by Pete Michels . Since airing , it has received mixed reviews from television critics . Overall , the episode received a Nielsen rating of 8 @. @ 5 .

= = Plot = =

The Simpson family looks through new mid @-@ season TV shows , and realize they are all pretty lousy . They settle on the pilot episode of Police Cops , a show which follows a suave and dashing detective named Homer Simpson and his partner Lance Kaufman . Homer is delighted with the positive attention he receives because he shares the dashing , intelligent character 's name . Despite the family telling him it is just a coincidence , Homer begins to receive congratulatory phone calls . He begins imitating the character , adopting his distinctive scarf and catchphrase , " ... and that 's the end of that chapter . "

Unfortunately , by the second episode of Police Cops , the Homer Simpson character has been rewritten from a handsome man into a stupid , fat , and lazy detective who uses a now ridiculous catchphrase " Uh @-@ oh , Spaghetti @-@ Os ! " when he makes a mistake , which results in Homer being mocked by his friends . Humiliated at being laughed at and being the subject of negative attention , Homer appeals to the producers to change the character back , demanding to know why they changed the character into a bumbling oaf . The producers refuse to either explain their reasons or change the character back . Then , after unsuccessfully attempting to sue the company for improper usage of his old name , Homer legally changes his name to " Max Power " (a name he got off of a hair dryer) .

Max seems to be more well @-@ adjusted with his new name as all the negative attention had faded away for good , but Marge is somewhat unhappy that he changed his name without consulting her , saying that she fell in love with " Homer Simpson " , though she understands that his new name is opening new doors to success for him . At work , Mr. Burns is impressed by the new name and compliments Max , who decides to shop at Costington 's in order to further improve his image . There , he meets a successful businessman named Trent Steel and , after a chat , they go out to lunch .

Trent invites Max and the family to a garden party . Despite Marge 's reservations , the couple attend the party , where they meet lots of famous people , including actor Woody Harrelson , then @-@ U.S. President Bill Clinton , TV producer Lorne Michaels , and actor Ed Begley , Jr .. Max finds out that the garden party is nothing more than an excuse to save a redwood forest from destruction , something which Max does not like . After traveling with the party guests to the forest , Max , Marge , and the rest of the guests chain themselves to the trees in order to prevent the bulldozers from knocking them down . Chief Wiggum arrives and decides to get rough with the protesters . Eddie and Lou start chasing Max around his tree , trying to " swab " him with mace . However , as Max runs round and round the tree , the chain begins cutting into the tree . The huge redwood falls , knocking down all the other redwoods in a large domino @-@ like chain reaction , angering their newfound friends .

That night at home , Marge is happy that Max has changed his name back to " Homer Simpson " . Homer , however , informs Marge that while he was at the courthouse , he took the opportunity to change her name to " Chesty La Rue " , along with the alternative names " Busty St. Clair " and "

Hootie McBoob " .

= = Production = =

Pete Michels , director of the episode , had read a story in the newspaper about people with famous names . He came up with a way of how Homer 's life could be affected if he saw someone on TV with his name . While creating the Homer Simpson television character , the production staff was deciding if the character should be " cool " throughout the episode , or if he should be an idiot from the beginning . The staff decided to use both methods and have him become an idiot after being seen as cool in the first episode of the new program . The hat Homer wears while walking through the mall is a parody of one owned by Woody Allen . Ron Hauge , a The Simpsons show producer , suggested the name Max Power to a friend who wanted to change his name . His friend , however , did not take it . The episode would also inspire Tom Martin 's cousin to name his son Max Power .

= = Cultural references = =

The TV show Police Cops is a parody of the television series Miami Vice . One of the new TV shows features Archie Bunker in the show All in the Family 1999 . Homer suggests the names Hercules Rockefeller , Rembrandt Q. Einstein , and Handsome B. Wonderful to Judge Snyder for his name change . The " Max Power " song is sung to the melody of " Goldfinger " , the theme from the James Bond film Goldfinger (1964) . Actor Woody Harrelson , President Bill Clinton and producers Lorne Michaels , Brian Grazer and Jerry Bruckheimer are shown in attendance at the party (Grazer 's appearance is identical to his guest @-@ voice appearance as himself from " When You Dish Upon a Star " , while Bruckheimer , who has not done a voice cameo for the show , is the thin man with a beard standing next to Grazer and wearing a bright sportcoat over a plain T @-@ shirt) . The police attempting to " swab " the protestors is a reference to several incidents in 1997 in which sheriff 's deputies of Humboldt County , California , swabbed pepper spray in the eyes of environmental protesters . Actor Jeremy Piven is mentioned by Homer in this episode who asks the producers of Police Cops " Who 's Jeremy Piven ? " to which they reply " We don 't know " .

= = Reception = =

" Homer to the Max " finished 39th in the weekly ratings for the week of Feb 1 ? 7 , 1999 , with a Nielsen rating of 8 @.@ 5 .

Since airing , this episode has received mixed reviews from television critics . The authors of the book I Can 't Believe It 's a Bigger and Better Updated Unofficial Simpsons Guide , Warren Martyn and Adrian Wood , wrote that though it was " funny in all the right places , this is an episode of two distinct stories , neither of which mesh together . The whole Ed Begley , Jr. saving the forest bit seems to have been tacked on , as if the stuff about Homer finding his name being abused (shades of Mr. Sparkle again ?) ran out of steam . Not a bad show , more a sort of ' So what ? ' show . " Robert Canning of IGN gave the episode a 7 @.@ 7 / 10 rating , commenting that " it has a number of really funny scenes and memorable lines " , but overall " the storyline didn 't really have anywhere to go and the final half of the third act is a complete waste of time . " Morgan Larrick of About.com noted " Homer to the Max " as " one of the most unforgettable episodes " when reviewing the complete tenth season .

In an article written for the Modern Day Pirates titled " In Search of The Last Classic Simpsons Episode " , author Brandon listed " Homer to the Max " as a contender for the latest episode that made him feel like he was " watching The Simpsons in their heyday " . He believes it was " the last classic episode before [the show 's] episodes start to seriously get spotty in quality " , and from that point on , " they start to go months or even seasons between episodes with polish " .