

= Colonel Homer =

" Colonel Homer " is the twentieth episode of The Simpsons ' third season . It originally aired on the Fox network in the United States on March 26 , 1992 . In the episode , Homer embarrasses his wife Marge at a movie theater , leading to a big argument between the two . Homer , angry at Marge , visits a redneck bar in the middle of the night where he meets a waitress named Lurleen Lumpkin , a talented singer . Homer becomes Lurleen 's manager and tries to make her famous , but he does not appear aware that Lurleen has fallen in love with him . With Marge already upset and thinking Homer is cheating on her , he must decide on the importance of his marriage after Lurleen makes romantic advances toward him .

The episode was written by The Simpsons creator Matt Groening , and directed by Mark Kirkland . It is the only episode of the series for which Groening received an individual writing credit . American singer and actress Beverly D 'Angelo guest starred in the episode as Lurleen . Although the character makes several cameo appearances after this episode , Lurleen makes her second full @-@ time appearance sixteen years later in " Papa Don 't Leech " . The episode features cultural references to songs such as " There 's a Kind of Hush (All Over the World) " by Herman 's Hermits and " Funkytown " by Lipps Inc , and the films Deliverance , Honey , I Shrunk the Kids , and Look Who 's Talking .

Since airing , " Colonel Homer " has received mostly positive reviews from television critics . It attained a Nielsen rating of 14 @. @ 8 , and was the highest @-@ rated show on the Fox network for the week it aired . The episode was selected for inclusion in a video collection of selected episodes , titled The Last Temptation of Homer , that was released on November 9 , 1998 . An action figure set based on " Colonel Homer " was released in March 2002 , and two of Lurleen 's songs from the episode appeared on the Simpsons compilation album Songs in the Key of Springfield .

= = Plot = =

The Simpsons go to the local movie theater to see a film . Bart and Lisa see Space Mutants VI , while Homer , Marge , and Maggie see The Stockholm Affair . As the film starts , Homer acts loud and obnoxious , embarrassing Marge . When he gives away the film 's ending , Marge berates him and the audience heckles Homer , embarrassing them both . During the car ride home , Marge tries to apologize , but Homer will not accept it , by dropping Marge and the children off at home and goes off on a long drive into the night , finally stopping at a redneck bar called Beer ' N ' Brawl , where he grabs a beer while listening to an attractive waitress named Lurleen Lumpkin performing on stage . She sings a song that follows Homer 's current state with every detail , and once she finishes , Homer introduces himself to her .

Several days later , still humming Lurleen 's song , Homer drives to her mobile home to ask for a copy . Lurleen tells him she has not recorded the song , so Homer insists that she come to a recording company to record a CD . Homer grants the recording company clerk permission to play the song on the radio , and Lurleen 's songs are an instant hit all over Springfield . At home , Marge asks Homer about Lurleen ; he claims that she is just a waitress who is turning into a music superstar . Marge does not approve that he is seeing her , as she fears that something more will come of the relationship . Homer becomes Lurleen 's manager , and to fit with the role , she buys him an expensive white cowboy suit which he wears at home . Marge is annoyed , and asks if he is having an affair . He denies it , and says whether Marge likes it or not , he is going to help Lurleen become a country music star . The whole family gathers at the recording studio with Lurleen to record more of her songs . Her new single , a suggestive love metaphor called " Bagged Me a Homer " , leads Marge to lose her temper .

Homer gets Lurleen a gig on a country western television series called Ya @-@ Hoo ! Just before her performance , Homer and Lurleen spend the night in her mobile home , and she shows him one of her new songs . In the song she asks Homer to " bunk " with her , but Homer knows that would violate his marital vows and leaves . During her performance , Homer is approached by a business

agent who asks to buy Lurleen 's contract , but Homer refuses . In Lurleen 's dressing room , Homer becomes locked in an embrace with her , then describes how his love life is flashing before his eyes . Homer tells Lurleen that he only wanted to share her voice with the world and leaves before he does anything to lose his family . He again runs into the agent and this time sells Lurleen 's contract for US \$ 50 . At home , Marge is watching the Ya @-@ Hoo ! show when Homer returns . When Homer gets into bed , Marge hears what Homer did through Lurleen 's bluesy song on the television which Lurleen concludes by saying she knows how lucky Marge is .

= = Production = =

= = = Writing and directing = = =

The episode was written by series creator Matt Groening , the lone episode (discounting the Tracey Ullman shorts) in which he received an individual writing credit , though he has co @-@ written for the episodes " Some Enchanted Evening " , " The Telltale Head " , and " 22 Short Films About Springfield " . " Colonel Homer " was partly based on the 1980 film Coal Miner 's Daughter , which tells the story of country music singer Loretta Lynn . Groening said he had always wanted to write an episode in which Homer is offered a chance at being rich and famous , other than being with his family , but then chooses his family over glamour at the end . He pitched the idea to the writers of the show , who suggested the parody of Coal Miner 's Daughter and also that Homer should become a manager for a country singer . Show runner Mike Reiss was originally skeptical about the episode , as he did not think Homer could get a new job when he already had a full @-@ time job at the Springfield Nuclear Power Plant . Reiss eventually gave in , but in future episodes the writers tried to develop the explanation that he got fired from the plant and then rehired at the end . Groening said that during the episode production , he received comments from the production team that Homer was acting like a " jerk " in it , but his explanation was that Homer 's behavior was due to his desire to make Lurleen a star and he was oblivious to her attempts to seduce him until the end . Mike Reiss stated that " Whenever we want to write stories about characters getting divorced or actually having an affair , rather than with Homer and Marge , which we could never do , we use secondary characters for that . "

The episode 's director , Mark Kirkland , said he enjoyed directing the episode because the characters ' emotions throughout it are " very human and real " . He believed many viewers watching the episode would recognize the emotions from experiences in their own lives , and would feel sympathy for the characters . The idea of Homer annoying the people at the movie theater was based on an experience Groening had with a friend of his when he was younger . They were sitting by themselves in a movie theater and two " annoying " women sat down right in front of them . Groening 's friend told the women to move and they did . One of the women then turned to Groening and his friend and said , " Now are you satisfied ? " , to which Groening 's friend replied : " I won 't be satisfied until I see you burn in hell . "

= = = Voice acting and music = = =

American singer and actress Beverly D 'Angelo guest starred in the episode as Lurleen Lumpkin . The actress first met Groening at a party at Frank Zappa 's house , and was called in to audition for Lurleen based on her performance as Patsy Cline in Coal Miner 's Daughter . She got the role after completing a singing test . D 'Angelo wrote two songs for the episode : " Your Wife Don 't Understand You " (which Lurleen sings at the Beer ' N ' Brawl where Homer hears her for the first time) and " I Bagged a Homer " . D 'Angelo wrote both songs in an hour and presented them to Groening at the episode 's table read . Unlike most other guest stars on The Simpsons who record their lines and then leave to accommodate their schedule , D 'Angelo stayed with the production team all day and pitched several jokes for the episode . Entertainment Weekly named D 'Angelo 's performance as Lurleen one of the sixteen best guest appearances on The Simpsons . Tom

Nawrocki of Rolling Stone rated the songs D 'Angelo wrote as two of the best songs in the history of the show .

= = = Animation = = =

The episode marks the debut appearance of Lurleen on The Simpsons . She was created by one of the show 's character designers , John Rice . Kirkland thought the first design Rice drew of Lurleen was too " bland " and " plain " , so they decided to model her after D 'Angelo and add " every kind of pretty girl cliché " into the design . Rice and Kirkland then sent the character to Groening , who sent back a note saying " wow " . Reiss 's show runner partner Al Jean said that " one of the most difficult things when translating real people to a Simpsons look is for women to look beautiful " , as the Simpson overbite and facial construction make it particularly difficult to design women 's looks . Lurleen 's last name , Lumpkin , came from the country bumpkin character Tony Lumpkin in the 1773 comedy play *She Stoops to Conquer* by Oliver Goldsmith .

Bart 's voice actor , Nancy Cartwright , wrote in her autobiography *My Life as a 10 @-@ Year @-@ Old Boy* that the episode 's script gives the audience a " visual and aural feast " . She said the background designers " must have gone on another field trip for this one " because they captured the look of a typical musical recording studio . The recording studio in the episode , where Lurleen records her new songs with the Simpson family , features two rooms , one for the artist and one for the engineer , with a pane of glass between them . Cartwright said the designers added their own " special touch " by putting a few cracks on the walls , designing a slightly dilapidated ceiling , and by making it look as if the soundproofing on the walls is falling off . The property designers went on a field trip to Sun Studio to receive inspiration for the props in the recording studio , such as the " in session " red light , the mixing board , the musical instruments , and the volume @-@ unit meters that indicates how loud the artist is singing . For the interior design of the recording studio , the color designers mixed colors such as orange , mauve , gray , and brown to make them complement each other . The colors in the engineer 's booth were darker to make Homer 's white suit stand out from the background . The appearance of the engineer at the recording studio was based on John Boylan , an American music producer who produced the highly successful album *The Simpsons Sing the Blues* . Lurleen 's mobile home was designed to be " very confined " and " tiny " so that the compositions of Homer and Lurleen would be tighter , thus giving the scene an intimate , romantic feeling .

= = Cultural references = =

The episode 's title and Homer 's attire are references to Colonel Tom Parker , singer Elvis Presley 's manager . Films playing at the Springfield Googolplex movie theater at the beginning of the episode include *Honey* , *I Hit a School Bus* (a parody of *Honey* , *I Shrunk the Kids*) , *Look Who 's Oinking* (a parody of *Look Who 's Talking*) , and a film called *Ernest vs. The Pope* which stars the fictional character Ernest P. Worrell . During his long drive to the Beer ' N ' Brawl , Homer passes a boy playing a banjo on a porch , a reference to the " Dueling Banjos " sequence in the film *Deliverance* . The same boy appears later at the recording studio waiting in line with his banjo to record a CD . William Irwin writes in his book *Philosophy and the Interpretation of Pop Culture* that this " burst of banjo " must convey a message even if the viewers do not " get " the reference to *Deliverance* : " Thanks to prevailing connotations of banjo music , viewers who do not recognize the banjo tune as the theme from *Deliverance* will not laugh , but the mere sound of banjo tells the audience that Homer has entered a backward , redneck area . "

The Beer ' N ' Brawl redneck bar is based on the bar in the film *Urban Cowboy* . The Beer ' N ' Brawl sells Laramie High Tar cigarettes , a reference to the American cigarette brand Laramie . After arriving home from the Beer ' N ' Brawl , Lurleen 's song is stuck in Homer 's head , and he even sings it to his bowling ball for good luck . Homer 's co @-@ worker Lenny decides to give it a shot and sings " *There 's a Kind of Hush (All Over the World)* " to his bowling ball . Homer says that the last song before Lurleen 's " *Your Wife Don 't Understand You* " that he could not get out of his mind

was the Lipps Inc song " Funkytown " . The syndicated country comedy show that Lurleen appears on , Ya @-@ Hoo ! , is based on the country television series Hee Haw , which ran in syndication from 1971 to 1993 .

= = Reception = =

= = Ratings and critical reviews = =

In its original broadcast , " Colonel Homer " finished 22nd in the ratings for the week of March 23 ? 29 , 1992 , with a Nielsen rating of 14 @.@ 8 , equivalent to approximately 16 @.@ 63 million viewing households . It was the highest @-@ rated show on the Fox network that week . Since airing , the episode has received mostly positive reviews from television critics . Nate Meyers of Digitally Obsessed gave the episode a 5 / 5 rating and called it " another great " episode that chronicles the love between Homer and Marge , showing the " ups and downs " of their marriage . He said Lurleen 's songs are " filled with clever observations " , but it is Homer 's befuddlement that makes it a " classic " episode . Meyers added , however , that country music fans might " take offense at Matt Groening 's script , which hams up every stereotype imaginable " . DVD Movie Guide 's Colin Jacobson said that after the " great " previous episode " Dog of Death " , " one might expect some drop @-@ off with ' Colonel Homer ' , but virtually none occurs . It offers another classic episode that benefits from a memorable guest voice performance from D ? Angelo . Homer ? s moment in the sun creates a fun plot and the program nicely lampoons the country music business . " 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 the episode is a " good example of The Simpsons fixing itself on a target (in this case , country and western music) and extracting every possible gag . Lurleen 's songs are all marvelous . "

Hock Guan Teh of DVD Town said he enjoyed the episode , and although it does not contain the " usual amount " of The Simpsons humor , the " rich character development itself makes this episode worth multiple viewings . However , anyone allergic to country music should give this one a pass ! " Bill Gibron of DVD Verdict thought the episode featured " one of the best " parodies the Simpsons writers have ever conceived , the parody of the country television series Hee @-@ Haw called Ya @-@ Hoo ! : " While one must give multiple kudos to Beverly D 'Angelo for writing and performing her own witty hillbilly ditties , it 's the twisted cornpone [television series Ya @-@ Hoo !] , with such stars as Big Shirtless Ron and Cappy Mae , that really propels this installment into comic heaven . Homer 's sheepish response to Lurleen 's advances shows just what a decent , family loving man he is . " A reviewer for the Fort Worth Star @-@ Telegram called the episode " heartwarming " , and commented that The Simpsons " once again shows that at the heart of this crazy family there is an abiding love . " Genevieve Koski of The A.V. Club said " it 's a pretty impossible question for a die @-@ hard fan , but if I were forced at gunpoint to name my favorite episode ever , ' Colonel Homer ' would probably be the first to leap to mind , if only for the pure joy that is ' Bagged Me a Homer ' . "

= = Lurleen 's legacy = =

Lurleen has made several cameo appearances on the show after this episode . She appears for her second time in the season four episode " Marge vs. the Monorail " , voiced by Doris Grau , as she is briefly interviewed by Kent Brockman during the monorail 's maiden voyage party . When he asks her what she has been doing lately , she responds that since Homer left her , her personal and professional life have gone downhill . She looks dirty and scuffed up , and talks with a harsh , croaky , gravelly voice , rather than the soft , Southern voice she had when she was first introduced . Lurleen also has a cameo in the season four episode " Krusty Gets Kancelled " as the center square on The Springfield Squares , and appears in " Team Homer " as a member of the bowling team " The Home Wreckers " . In the season seven episode " Bart on the Road " , Lurleen 's name can be seen briefly on a banner saying " playing tonight " in Branson , Missouri . She made her second full

@-@ time appearance in the season nineteen episode " Papa Don 't Leech " , in which the Simpsons family takes Lurleen into their home after she becomes a fugitive from the Springfield authorities for not paying her taxes .

Compared to " Colonel Homer " , Lurleen 's comeback episode " Papa Don 't Leech " received rather negative reviews from television critics . Richard Keller of TV Squad expressed dislike for the episode , stating that he hopes the show will reconsider the next time they decide to give a " solo opportunity " to a one @-@ off character " many people don 't remember " . Robert Canning of IGN said , " there were too few laugh @-@ out @-@ loud moments in this lackluster episode . Overall , it was nice to see Lurleen again , but she 'd probably get more laughs in future cameos than in carrying an entire episode . "

= = Merchandise = =

" Colonel Homer " originally aired on the Fox network in the United States on March 26 , 1992 . The episode was selected for release in a video collection of selected episodes , titled The Last Temptation Of Homer , that was released on November 9 , 1998 . Other episodes included in the set were " One Fish , Two Fish , Blowfish , Blue Fish " , " Homer Alone " , and " Simpson and Delilah " . The episode was later included on The Simpsons season three DVD set that was released on August 26 , 2003 . Matt Groening , Mark Kirkland , cast member Dan Castellaneta , and show runners Al Jean and Mike Reiss participated in the DVD 's audio commentary of the episode . " Colonel Homer " was again included in the 2005 DVD release of the Last Temptation Of Homer set . An action figure set based on the episode was released exclusively to Toys " R " Us stores in March 2002 . The set , featuring Homer in his white suit and Lurleen with her guitar , is part of the World of Springfield series of The Simpsons action figures created by Playmate Toys . Lurleen 's songs " Your Wife Don 't Understand You " and " Bagged Me a Homer " appeared on the Simpsons compilation album Songs in the Key of Springfield , that was released on March 18 , 1997 .