

= The Itchy & Scratchy Show =

The Itchy & Scratchy Show (often shortened as Itchy & Scratchy) is a running gag and fictional animated television series featured in the animated television series The Simpsons . It usually appears as a part of The Krusty the Clown Show , watched regularly by Bart and Lisa Simpson . Itself an animated cartoon , The Itchy & Scratchy Show depicts a sadistic anthropomorphic blue mouse , Itchy (voiced by Dan Castellaneta) , who repeatedly maims and kills an anthropomorphic , hapless threadbare black cat , Scratchy (voiced by Harry Shearer) . The cartoon first appeared in the Tracey Ullman Show short " The Bart Simpson Show " , which originally aired November 20 , 1988 . The cartoon 's first appearance in The Simpsons was in the 1990 episode " There 's No Disgrace Like Home " . Typically presented as 15 @-@ to @-@ 60 @-@ second @-@ long cartoons , the show is filled with gratuitous violence . The Simpsons also occasionally features characters who are involved with the production of The Itchy & Scratchy Show , including Roger Meyers , Jr . (voiced by Alex Rocco , and , later , Hank Azaria) , who runs the studio and produces the show .

The Itchy and Scratchy characters are grotesque , extremely violent parodies of Tom and Jerry and Herman and Katnip ; the names were inspired by " Pixie and Dixie " , who were mice on Pixie and Dixie and Mr. Jinks . The Italian comic strip Squeak the Mouse is also considered as an apparent inspiration for the characters . The mouse (or mice) are almost always the aggressors and , as in Tom and Jerry , are almost always the victors , killing Scratchy and any other cats around . The cartoons became popular among the show 's writers and animators and are often added when an episode needs expanding . As the shorts became popular with fans , the writers decided to have full episodes that centered on the production of The Itchy & Scratchy Show and featured multiple shorts . The first was " Itchy & Scratchy & Marge " (season two , 1990) , which was a commentary on censorship . Other episodes to feature the show in a prominent role include " Itchy & Scratchy : The Movie " (season four , 1992) , " The Front " (season four , 1993) , " Itchy & Scratchy Land " (season six , 1994) , " The Day the Violence Died " (season seven , 1996) and " The Itchy & Scratchy & Poochie Show " (season eight , 1997) and " Treehouse of Horror IX " (season ten , 1998) .

= = Role in The Simpsons = =

The Itchy & Scratchy Show is a show within a show that appears occasionally in episodes of The Simpsons . They typically appear in the form of 15 @-@ 60 second cartoons that are filled with gratuitous violence , usually initiated by Itchy the mouse against Scratchy the cat ; Itchy is almost always the victor . Itchy & Scratchy airs as a segment on The Krusty the Clown Show , and also aired on its brief replacements , Sideshow Bob 's Cavalcade of Whimsy and Gabbo .

Itchy & Scratchy is usually a parody of traditional cartoons or takeoffs on famous films , but the plot and content are always violent . The most direct and obvious example is Tom and Jerry , an animated series which was also about a constant battle between a cat and a mouse , with the mouse usually victorious . Itchy & Scratchy also includes shorts such as Scratchtasia , a parody of Fantasia , and Pinitchio , a parody of Pinocchio . Animation @-@ related jokes are prevalent in the show , such as the Manhattan Madness cartoon in " The Day the Violence Died " , which is based on very early animated cartoons such as Gertie the Dinosaur . The cartoons also occasionally serve to play out an exaggerated form of the conflict in the surrounding episode . For example , in " Deep Space Homer " (season five , 1994) , Homer is recruited by NASA , and later watches an Itchy & Scratchy cartoon which directly (and gruesomely) parodies the films 2001 : A Space Odyssey and Alien .

= = = Fictional production history = = =

Chester J. Lampwick created Itchy for the now @-@ lost silent cartoon Manhattan Madness , in which the mouse brutally attacks and kills an Irishman and Theodore Roosevelt , in 1919 (the year

of the first Felix the Cat cartoon) . However , the character was later stolen by Roger Meyers . Scratchy starred in his first cartoon in 1928 , titled That Happy Cat . The film , a 13 @-@ second @-@ long animation showing the cat whistling and tipping his hat , was a commercial failure . Later that year , Itchy and Scratchy starred in their first cartoon together , Steamboat Itchy , a violent parody of Disney 's Steamboat Willie . Along with the cartoon shorts , Itchy and Scratchy were featured in a World War II @-@ era radio series , at least two films ? Pinitchio and Scratchtasia (parodies of Pinocchio and Fantasia) , and television commercials for Laramie Cigarettes .

Itchy & Scratchy Studios is run by Roger Meyers , Jr . , the son of Roger Meyers , the cartoon 's " creator . " The studio was bankrupted after it was sued by Lampwick for \$ 800 billion , but was saved after receiving a large cash settlement from the government over its use of Mr. ZIP . The show underwent a brief , non @-@ violent retooling following a protest campaign led by Marge Simpson , but returned to its original violent format after Marge was later discredited . Itchy & Scratchy has spawned an Academy Award @-@ winning film adaptation , amusement parks , and a musical , and like Krusty 's show , localized versions are produced for other countries , such as Jamaica 's The Itchem and Scratchem Blow .

= = Characters = =

= = = The Itchy & Scratchy Show = = =

Itchy and Scratchy are the main characters in the show . The duo first appeared in The Tracey Ullman Show short " The Bart Simpson Show , " which aired November 20 , 1988 . Their first appearance in The Simpsons was " There 's No Disgrace Like Home . " Itchy , voiced by Dan Castellaneta , is a blue mouse , and usually the aggressor and the victor over the hapless Scratchy in their battles . An exception is in " Homer Goes to College " (season five , 1993) . Bart and Lisa watch a cartoon called " Burning Down the Mouse , " as Lisa puts it , " This is the one where Scratchy finally gets Itchy . " However , due to the Simpsons ' television being unplugged , the viewer does not see the end of the cartoon and Krusty proclaims that the network will never let it be shown again . Scratchy , voiced by Harry Shearer , is a black cat and is the victim of much abuse from the sadistic Itchy . The writers often forget which character is which ; a trick they use is that Scratchy contains the letters c , a and t .

Poochie , voiced by Dan Castellaneta and Alex Rocco , is an anthropomorphic dog that appeared in " The Itchy & Scratchy & Poochie Show " (season eight , 1997) . In the episode , the producers of The Itchy & Scratchy Show believed the cartoons were getting stale , and needed a new character to reinvigorate the show . Homer Simpson gets the job of voicing Poochie , who is introduced in the cartoon , " The Beagle Has Landed . " A product of marketing department thinking , Poochie was near @-@ universally despised , and was killed off in his second appearance , despite Homer 's objections . The episode was both a reference to TV shows which added new characters purportedly to reinvigorate the show , and a commentary on the growing complaints of fans of The Simpsons . The original idea for the episode was that Poochie would be obnoxious because he was so rich , rather than because he was so cool . Poochie would later make brief speaking cameo appearances in " Treehouse of Horror IX " and " Little Big Mom . "

Disgruntled Goat , Uncle Ant , Ku Klux Klam , an anthropomorphic goat , ant and clam , respectively , were characters introduced in a short @-@ lived " Itchy and Scratchy and Friends " show . Bart and Lisa find plush toys of them in a gift shop in the " Itchy and Scratchy Land " episode .

= = = Production staff = = =

Roger Meyers , Jr . , voiced by Alex Rocco and Hank Azaria , is the chairman and CEO of Itchy & Scratchy Studios and is the son of Roger Meyers . He first appeared in " Itchy & Scratchy & Marge " (season two , 1990) . He distributes the cartoon and is a jaded and selfish businessman who has nothing but contempt for the children who comprise his audience . He also possesses an extremely

obnoxious personality , where he only cares about people who can help him . This is displayed in his contempt for the writers of The Itchy & Scratchy Show .

Alex Rocco also voiced Meyers in " The Day the Violence Died " and " The Itchy & Scratchy & Poochie Show . " He said that he liked voicing Meyers because " I get to be a big @-@ shot . " He professed being nervous when voicing the character for the first time in " Itchy & Scratchy & Marge " because he said that he had never done a voice @-@ over before . At first he tried doing a special voice , but was told to " just be yourself . " Rocco was one of Bill Oakley 's and Josh Weinstein 's favorite guest stars , and they liked including him in their episodes so they could " have a little fun with him . " On occasions when Rocco was unavailable to do a voice over , Meyers was voiced by Hank Azaria in " The Front " (season four , 1993) , " Lady Bouvier 's Lover " (season five , 1994) and " Itchy & Scratchy Land . "

The spelling of Meyers ' name has been inconsistent in the show . His last name was spelt both Myers and Meyers in " Itchy & Scratchy & Marge , " and Myers the later episode " The Day the Violence Died . " His name is spelt Meyers in " The Front , " as well as in the book The Simpsons : A Complete Guide to Our Favorite Family .

Roger Meyers , Sr. first appeared in video footage in " Itchy & Scratchy Land " and has never had a speaking role . He was created because the writers felt it would have been " tortured logic " to have the Roger Meyers , Jr. be the creator . Roger Meyers Sr. has similarities to Walt Disney . For example , Disney 's alleged antisemitism is spoofed when it is revealed that Meyers made a cartoon called Nazi Supermen are Our Superiors .

June Bellamy , voiced by Tress MacNeille , is the actress who portrays both Itchy and Scratchy . Her only appearance was in " The Itchy & Scratchy & Poochie Show . " It is assumed she is a reference to veteran voice actress June Foray , based on the same first name . In the episode , Bellamy states that a woman voiced the characters , although Itchy and Scratchy are voiced by male actors .

Chester J. Lampwick , voiced by Kirk Douglas , is the creator of Itchy and only appeared in " The Day the Violence Died . " The producers ' first choice for the character , William Hickey , declined . Douglas 's recording session was fraught with interruptions because he refused to wear the supplied earphones , and said the maximum he would do was two takes .

Writing staff : In several episodes revolving around the production of The Itchy & Scratchy Show , caricatures of the show 's staff are used as the staff of The Itchy & Scratchy Show . This first occurred in " Itchy & Scratchy & Marge " where caricatures of animators David Silverman , Wes Archer and Rich Moore can be seen . In " The Front " many of the show 's writers were used , this in @-@ joke was purely an idea of the animators . John Swartzwelder , George Meyer , Jeff Martin , Al Jean , Sam Simon , Jon Vitti and Mike Reiss all appeared in the episode . This joke returned in " The Itchy & Scratchy & Poochie Show " . Almost all of the writers shown are caricatures of the actual staff of The Simpsons . At the production table , David X. Cohen , Bill Oakley , Josh Weinstein are shown , while Meyer speaks out and gets fired . The animator shown designing Poochie is Silverman . Others who appear include Dan McGrath , Ian Maxtone @-@ Graham , Donick Cary , Ron Hauge , Ned Goldreyer and Mike Scully .

= = Background = =

= = = Origins = = =

The Itchy & Scratchy Show first appeared in the Tracey Ullman Show short " The Bart Simpson Show , " which originally aired November 20 , 1988 . They were the first major recurring characters outside of the Simpson family to appear . They are based on Tom and Jerry and other cat and mouse cartoons . As a child , series creator Matt Groening and his friends would fantasize about an ultra violent cartoon and how much fun it would be to work on a show like that . The names " Itchy " and " Scratchy " were inspired by " Pixie and Dixie , " who were mice on the cartoon show Pixie and Dixie and Mr. Jinks . The comic strip Squeak the Mouse is also considered as an apparent

inspiration for the characters . The show is also based on Herman and Katnip , a show that , according to director David Silverman , " is hilarious because it 's just bad . " As a child , Groening really liked the 1961 Disney film One Hundred and One Dalmatians , and it was one of the reasons to why he got into cartooning . In the film , the puppies watch television , and the idea that it is possible to have a cartoon within a cartoon thrilled Groening . From that idea he got the inspiration for The Itchy & Scratchy Show .

David Silverman states that Itchy and Scratchy cartoons are " an ironic commentary on cartoon mayhem in the sense that it 's taken to a more realistic level . The kids on The Simpsons are laughing at it , and we 're laughing too , but part of what you 're laughing at is the over @-@ the @-@ top excessiveness of the violence . "

= = = Development = = =

Itchy and Scratchy cartoons are often added when a show needs expanding or when there is an issue that the writers wish to satirize . In some cases , notably in " The Itchy & Scratchy & Poochie Show , " the writers use Itchy & Scratchy as a way to comment on The Simpsons . The shorts are often difficult for the writers , and take much time to develop and devise a title , and in the end they fill little time . Writing the Itchy & Scratchy cartoons is quite often a group effort , with it being pitched out one gag after another . Itchy & Scratchy are a favorite of John Swartzwelder , who has written many of the episodes that center on them and quite often pitches the ideas for the shorts . In the early seasons , fans wanted more Itchy & Scratchy , so the writers decided to do " Itchy & Scratchy & Marge , " an episode also dealt with censorship issues which would allow them to show several cartoons . The cartoons are often kept short , because according to David Silverman , " it doesn 't really work as a long cartoon . "

During his tenure as showrunner (season five and six) David Mirkin was asked by the Fox network not to do any more Itchy & Scratchy cartoons due to the amount of violence in them . In response , the show produced " Itchy & Scratchy Land . " The network asked them not to do the episode , and threatened that if the episode was produced , they would cut the Itchy & Scratchy parts out themselves , but relented when Mirkin threatened to tell the media . The writers nevertheless promised to try not to overdo the violence and in some scenes the violence was cut .

During their tenure as executive producers , Bill Oakley and Josh Weinstein tried to fit in one episode relating to The Itchy & Scratchy Show every season . They note that as the seasons progressed , it became increasingly difficult for them to create new Itchy & Scratchy episode ideas . Although the episode was difficult to animate , " Itchy & Scratchy Land " was " a dream come true " for the animators , as they enjoyed animating scenes filled with violence .

The theme song is adapted from the jazz standard " Should I (Reveal) ? "

= = Reception = =

In a 2006 article , IGN ranked Itchy & Scratchy in tenth position on their list of the " Top 25 Simpsons Peripheral Characters , " citing that " the Itchy & Scratchy Show shines a nice mirror on cartoons , showing just how funny cartoon violence really is . " In 2003 , Entertainment Weekly named " Itchy & Scratchy Land " and " The Itchy & Scratchy & Poochie Show " the 7th @-@ best and 23rd @-@ best episodes of The Simpsons , respectively . In 2007 , Vanity Fair named " The Itchy & Scratchy & Poochie Show " the sixth @-@ best episode in the show 's history , describing it as " a classic satire of network influence , obsessed TV fans , and programs that survive long after the shark has been jumped , the episode is a meta @-@ celebration , a tongue @-@ in @-@ cheek rebuttal to everyone who claimed that the quality of The Simpsons had declined over the years . " Todd Gilchrist called it a masterpiece , stating it " could easily be packaged and sold by [itself] . " Robert Canning of IGN writes that " it 's always fun to see an ' Itchy and Scratchy ' cartoon " but believes that the shorter and simpler cartoons are better than the longer more complex ones . In his book Planet Simpson , author Chris Turner describes Itchy & Scratchy as " by far the most gleeful visual riffing on The Simpsons [...] each snippet of " Itchy & Scratchy " packs as much frenetically

paced action , sight @-@ gagery and physical humor into its half @-@ minute of screen time as a half @-@ dozen Road Runner cartoons and a dozen Tom & Jerrys . " In a 2014 Vulture article , the Simpsons writers ranked their 9 favourite Itchy and Scratchy cartoons . Season @-@ wise their choices ranged from season 4 's " Steamboat Itchy " to Season 14 's " Bleeder of the Pack " , while also including the opening scene of The Simpsons Movie and the safety video " Safety First " that plays before The Simpsons Ride at Universal Studios , both from 2007 .

= = Merchandising = =

Itchy and Scratchy have appeared in various products and other media relating to The Simpsons . A video game named The Itchy & Scratchy Game was released for Genesis , Game Gear , Super NES and Game Boy . Another game , Itchy and Scratchy in Miniature Golf Madness , was released for Game Boy . Itchy , Scratchy and Poochie play roles in the " Grand Theft Scratchy " section in The Simpsons Game . Itchy & Scratchy have also appeared in commercials for various products , including a 1999 Butterfinger advert where Bart watches a short called " 500 Easy Pieces " . They appear in the very first scene of The Simpsons Movie . The writers of the film knew from the beginning that they were going to start with an Itchy & Scratchy short and the segment was the first scene that was storyboarded by the animators .

The duo also appear in the pre @-@ show video for The Simpsons Ride . They host a video called " Safety First " that shows riders what can happen to them if they do not follow ride requirements . Only Itchy has a speaking part in the ride , because Harry Shearer chose not to participate in the ride , so none of his characters have speaking parts .

British based street @-@ wear label Drop Dead released the first ever Itchy & Scratchy specific clothing range on May 31 , 2014 . The collection includes both men 's and women 's wear including leggings , sweat pants , hoodies , T @-@ shirts , and crew @-@ necks . The collection pays homage to classic simpsons , with a vintage theme throughout . Itchy & Scratchy feature on all almost all the garments , aside from a handful that feature Krusty the Clown .