

= Lisa the Beauty Queen =

" Lisa the Beauty Queen " is the fourth episode of The Simpsons ' fourth season . It first aired on the Fox network in the United States on October 15 , 1992 . In the episode , Homer enters Lisa into a beauty pageant to boost her confidence . Lisa is runner @-@ up , but gains the title of Little Miss Springfield after the original winner is injured . Little Miss Springfield 's duties include being a spokesperson for Laramie Cigarettes , which causes Lisa to speak out against smoking . As a result of her anti @-@ smoking protests , her title is taken away on a technicality .

Jeff Martin wrote the episode and its accompanying songs and music . The episode was directed by Mark Kirkland and Bob Hope made a guest appearance . The episode references various films , music , and historical events and was well received by critics .

= = Plot = =

Springfield Elementary School holds a school fair , where Lisa purchases a caricature of herself drawn at a carnival booth . She is horrified at the unflattering drawing and the reaction of the surrounding crowd . Homer wins the fair 's raffle , with the grand prize being a ride in the Duff Blimp . Back at home , Lisa is in tears because she feels unattractive . Homer sees a TV advertisement that says Laramie Cigarettes is sponsoring this year 's " Little Miss Springfield " pageant , and decides to enter Lisa to boost her self @-@ esteem . The entry fee for the pageant is \$ 250 , so he sells his Duff Blimp ticket to Barney to raise the funds needed . Homer excitedly tells Lisa he has entered her in the pageant , but she refuses . However , Marge tells Lisa that Homer sold his Duff Blimp ticket to pay the entry fee , and she realizes her father 's sacrifice and enters the pageant .

At the pageant 's registration , Lisa meets a formidable competitor named Amber Dempsey , a blonde girl who cheated by using eyelash implants from Paraguay to make her look cuter . In preparation for the pageant Lisa receives makeovers at the beauty parlor , training from her brother , and encouragement from her family . The day of the pageant arrives , and on @-@ stage Lisa explains her aim to make Springfield a better place , while Amber wins the crowd 's adoration by batting her large eyelashes . Lisa 's talent is a jazzy medley of " America the Beautiful " and " Proud Mary " . After Krusty the Clown 's interview segment , Lisa is announced as the runner @-@ up and Amber the winner . At Amber 's first official appearance , a thunderstorm creates a lightning bolt which strikes her metal scepter . She is hospitalized for her injuries , and Lisa is crowned Little Miss Springfield .

One of Little Miss Springfield 's duties as spokesperson for pageant sponsor Laramie Cigarettes , is to lure a younger demographic into smoking . Instead , Lisa protests against the dangers of cigarettes at her appearances , and also vows to target the corruption of Mayor Quimby . Quimby and the Laramie officials look for a way to dethrone and silence Lisa . They find a technical error on her entry form : Homer wrote " OK " underneath the instruction " Do not write in this space " . Amber is recrowned Little Miss Springfield . At home , Homer is upset that he cost Lisa her title , but Lisa reminds Homer that he entered her in the pageant to help her self @-@ esteem , and thanks him because it worked . Homer requests that she remember it " the next time I wreck your life " , to which Lisa gladly agrees and embraces him .

= = Production = =

Many of The Simpsons ' writers had left the show or were absent at the beginning of season four , which left Al Jean and Mike Reiss to brainstorm plot ideas alone . After brainstorming " Homer the Heretic " , they thought of Lisa entering a beauty pageant . They assigned Jeff Martin to write the episode because they assumed he would fill it with songs , like he had done on previous episodes . Martin obliged , and wrote the episode and its music . He also based the episode on some of his own experiences , such as the scene where Lisa has a caricature of herself drawn . According to Jeff Martin , " I 'm not sure if we could do this episode today . People had a more innocent view of child beauty pageants before JonBenet Ramsey . "

This episode featured then 89 year old Bob Hope as a guest star , with his part recorded at his house by Jeff Martin and Conan O'Brien . He is however portrayed as his younger , Vietnam War era self .

= = Cultural references = =

The episode makes several references to popular culture and history . One of the opening scenes sees Principal Skinner knocking out a man in a very similar manner to Mick Dundee in Crocodile Dundee . The episode includes a scene based on Francis Ford Coppola 's Apocalypse Now , where Lisa and Bob Hope escape the Fort Springfield stage . It also makes two references to Star Wars , where the caricature artist displays a caricature of Darth Vader and a montage shows Lisa with a double bun hairdo like Princess Leia . The Springfield Waxworks ' Chamber of Horrors contains Mr. T , Ronald Reagan and Dr. Ruth , and Laramie 's mascot Menthol Moose is a parody of Joe Camel . Musically , Homer mournfully sings a song , " Blimpie Boy " , to the tune of The Seekers ' " Georgy Girl " . Historically , there is a parody of the Hindenburg disaster , when the Duff Blimp crashes into the radio tower , to which Kent Brockman quotes " Oh , the humanity ! " When Lisa is sworn in as Little Miss Springfield on her front lawn , Marge is to her left wearing a pink suit dress in a pose similar to that of Jacqueline Kennedy in the famous photo of Lyndon B. Johnson being sworn in on Air Force One after John F. Kennedy 's assassination .

= = Reception = =

The episode finished 28th in the Nielsen ratings for the week of October 12 ? 18 , 1992 with a rating of 12 .0 , seen by approximately 11 .1 million households . 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 : " Another top notch episode " and adds that " Krusty gets some of his best lines in a few brief appearances . " The episode 's reference to Apocalypse Now was named the 29th greatest film reference in the history of the show by Total Film 's Nathan Ditum .

The Church of England 's book Mixing it up with The Simpsons , which encourages children to reflect on life issues , explores self image through " Lisa the Beauty Queen " .