

= Road to the Multiverse =

" Road to the Multiverse " is the first episode of the eighth season of the animated comedy series Family Guy . This and most of the Season 8 episodes were produced for season 7 . Directed by Greg Colton and written by Wellesley Wild , the episode originally aired on Fox in the United States on September 27 , 2009 , along with the series premiere of The Cleveland Show . In " Road to the Multiverse " , two of the show 's main characters , baby genius Stewie and anthropomorphic dog Brian , both voiced by series creator Seth MacFarlane , use an " out @-@ of @-@ this @-@ world " remote control to travel through a series of various parallel universes . They eventually end up in a world where dogs rule and humans obey . Brian becomes reluctant to return to his own universe , and he ultimately ends up breaking the remote , much to the dismay of Stewie , who soon seeks a replacement . The " Road to " episodes which have aired throughout various seasons of Family Guy were inspired by the Road to ... comedy films starring Bing Crosby , Bob Hope and Dorothy Lamour , though this episode was not originally conceived as a " Road to " show .

During the sixth season , episodes of Family Guy were delayed from regular broadcast due to the 2007 ? 08 Writers Guild of America strike . MacFarlane , the series creator and executive producer , sided with the Writers Guild and participated in the strike until its conclusion . As a result , the seventh season consisted entirely of hold @-@ overs . " Road to the Multiverse " was the first episode to be produced and aired after the strike ended . It was first announced at the 2008 San Diego Comic @-@ Con International .

Responses to the episode were highly positive ; critics praised its storyline , numerous cultural references , and use of various animation styles . According to Nielsen ratings , it was viewed in 10 @.@ 17 million homes during its original airing in the United States . The episode featured guest performances by Kei Ogawa , Kotaro Watanabe and Jamison Yang , along with several recurring guest voice actors for the series . Greg Colton won a Primetime Emmy Award for Individual Achievement in Animation , for storyboarding the episode , at the 62nd Primetime Emmy Awards . " Road to the Multiverse " was released on DVD along with seven other episodes from the season on June 15 , 2010 .

= = Plot = =

As the Griffin family attend the county fair , Stewie announces that he has bred a winning pedigree pig for the local Quahog Clam Day . Revealing to Brian that he got the pig from a parallel universe , he shows him a remote control that allows access to the various parallel universes . Each universe depicts Quahog in the same time and place but under different conditions . Deciding to test the device , they both visit a universe where Christianity never existed , leading an impressed Brian to ask whether the remote can take them to other alternate realities . Stewie guides them both through several more parallel universes , each having its own portrayal of the Griffin family . As time passes , Brian begins to lose his amazement for the device and eventually comes to realize that Stewie has no idea how to return home .

Continuing their explorations , they reach a universe where humans are subservient to dogs . Stewie finally figures out how to modify the remote device so that they can return home ; but Brian , overwhelmed by the thought of a world run by dogs like himself , is reluctant to leave and steals the remote . Stewie and Brian fight over the device , ultimately breaking it , which traps them in the alternate universe . In desperation , the two go to the universe 's version of the Griffin family ? who are all dogs except for their pet Brian , who is human ? hoping to find a solution . The dog version of Stewie quickly confronts the two , revealing that he has also developed a universe @-@ traveling device that would allow them to return to their own universe . Before Dog Stewie can fetch them his remote control , Human Stewie bites the dog version of his father , Peter , and is sent to the pound where he is to be euthanized later that day . The two Brians and Dog Stewie go to the human pound to free him , and both Stewie and Brian are sent back to their original universe . As they are being transported , human Brian , dreaming of a better life in a world of intelligent inhabitants , leaps into the inter @-@ universe portal at the last moment and successfully makes it to the original universe

with the other two . Excited about his new prospects in life , human Brian begins his optimistic adventure in a brand new universe but is quickly struck by a car .

= = Production and development = =

The episode was first announced at the 2008 San Diego Comic @-@ Con International in San Diego , California , on July 26 , 2008 . It was written by series regular Wellesley Wild and directed by Greg Colton shortly after the conclusion of the seventh production season , which consisted entirely of held @-@ over episodes due to the 2007 ? 2008 Writers Guild of America strike . " Road to the Multiverse " is the fifth episode of the " Road to " hallmarks of the series , which have aired in various seasons of the show , and the second to be directed by Colton . The episodes are a parody of the seven Road to ... comedy films starring Bing Crosby , Bob Hope and Dorothy Lamour . Though it was not originally intended to be a " Road to " episode , Greg Colton convinced series creator and executive producer Seth MacFarlane and " Spies Reminiscent of Us " director Cyndi Tang to change the episode 's title from " Sliders " , parodying the science fiction television series Sliders . Colton 's suggestion of the new title " Road to the Multiverse " was accepted , as was altering the premise of " Spies Reminiscent of Us " , the season 's original " Road to " episode . Executive producer and former Star Trek : Enterprise writer David A. Goodman , a fan of science fiction and the series Sliders , played a key role in the episode 's original development . The production staff of Family Guy , including Wellesley Wild , watched an episode of Sliders before writing the show . Series regulars Peter Shin and James Purdum served as supervising directors , with Andrew Goldberg and Alex Carter working as staff writers for the episode . Composer Walter Murphy , who has worked on the series since its inception , returned to compose the music for " Road to the Multiverse " . Ron Jones and MacFarlane also contributed to the music and lyrics featured in the episode .

The episode features several examples of animation styles that differ greatly from the series ' customary appearance . One such example involves the Disney universe , where the characters are drawn in the style of classic Walt Disney animated films . The sequence was animated entirely in Los Angeles by Main Street Productions , which were approached and recruited by series producer Kara Vallow to create the sequence , rather than in South Korea where the show is normally animated . MacFarlane described the scene as " a bit of challenge " and " kind of an experiment " since every character had to be completely redesigned based on the style of such films as " Pinocchio , Beauty and the Beast and Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs . " Another difference occurs in the dog universe , where the human characters are redrawn as dogs and Brian is redrawn as a human . MacFarlane found redesigning Brian easiest , simply giving him " a big nose and a collar . " In addition to traditional animation , the episode included a parody by Sarah E. Meyer , Eileen Kohlhepp , Kelly Mazurowski of Robot Chicken , a stop motion series created by Family Guy cast member Seth Green for the Cartoon Network animation block Adult Swim . Green did not take part in the making of the parody ; it was instead animated by the Los Angeles company Screen Novelties , which had worked on the early seasons of Robot Chicken .

" Road to the Multiverse " , along with the seven other episodes from Family Guy 's eighth season , was released on a three @-@ disc DVD set in the United States on June 15 , 2010 . The DVDs included brief audio commentaries by Seth MacFarlane , various crew and cast members from several episodes , a collection of deleted scenes , a special mini @-@ feature that discussed the process behind animating " Road to the Multiverse " and a mini @-@ feature entitled Family Guy Karaoke . The set also includes a reprint of the script for the episode .

In addition to the regular cast , Japanese actors Kei Ogawa , Kotaro Watanabe and Jamison Yang guest starred in the episode as Japanese @-@ inspired versions of the Griffin family and Glenn Quagmire . Recurring guest voice actor John G. Brennan reprised his recurring role as Mort Goldman and Adam West reprised his role as Mayor Adam West , who appears as an anthropomorphic mouse in the Disney universe . Minor appearances were made by writer and showrunner Steve Callaghan , actor Ralph Garman , writer and showrunner Mark Hentemann and writers Patrick Meighan , Danny Smith , Alec Sulkin and John Viener .

= = Cultural references = =

The episode opens with Stewie revealing his ability to travel across parallel universes to Brian . The first universe that they decide to visit , after having questioned the origin of Stewie 's pedigree pig , is said to exist in a world where Christianity is absent . In this universe , everything is seemingly years in advance of the 21st century ; Quagmire is able to take a single pill and be instantly cured of the AIDS virus , and flying cars and buildings surround them . As the two travel through the universe , they come upon Stewie 's older sister Meg , who has become significantly more attractive . While they watch her walk down the street , the 1984 single " Drop Dead Legs " by Van Halen plays . Playing on the nonexistence of Christianity , Brian and Stewie visit the Sistine Chapel and discover that a large collection of photos of American actress Jodie Foster has been substituted for The Creation of Adam painting by Michelangelo , who was fired and replaced by John Hinckley .

Seeking to explore more alternate realities , Stewie takes Brian to a universe resembling the 1960 animated sitcom The Flintstones . Peter and his wife Lois are shown dressed in a manner similar to Fred Flintstone and Wilma Flintstone respectively . Becoming tired of this universe , the two then transport themselves to a universe where the atomic bombing of Japan never occurred , allowing Japan to conquer the United States in World War II .

Another universe references many works by Walt Disney . Meg appears as Ursula from the 1989 film The Little Mermaid and Herbert appears as the Queen from the 1937 film Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs . Walt Disney 's alleged antisemitism is also referenced by having the universe 's occupants attack the Disney version of Mort Goldman when he enters a room , brutally beating him to death off @-@ screen . Discouraged , Brian and Stewie transport themselves to a universe resembling the Adult Swim series Robot Chicken , a show executive @-@ produced by Family Guy cast member Seth Green . The sequence reveals several action figures of cartoon characters : He @-@ Man , Optimus Prime , Lion @-@ O and Duke from G.I. Joe .

Continuing their travels , the two come across a universe where singer and performer Frank Sinatra was never born , resulting in the loss of the 1960 presidential election by President John F. Kennedy to then @-@ Vice President Richard Nixon , which causes World War III . Brian questions whether Lee Harvey Oswald shot Kennedy , and Stewie responds that he shot Mayor McCheese instead . A sequence similar to the Zapruder film , which shows the assassination of Kennedy , is shown , with Jacqueline Kennedy also appearing . Brian and Stewie next discover a universe completely depicted as a political cartoon . The final reference of the episode occurs in the dog universe when Stewie mentions , " Gosh , Brian , I sure hope this next leap , will be the leap home , " a nod to the opening narration of the time travel series Quantum Leap .

= = Reception = =

" Road to the Multiverse " was broadcast on September 27 , 2009 , as a part of the Animation Domination block on Fox , and was preceded by an episode of The Simpsons and the pilot episode of MacFarlane 's new show The Cleveland Show . It was followed by the season premiere of MacFarlane 's other show American Dad ! . It was watched by 10 @.@ 17 million viewers in its original airing , according to Nielsen ratings , despite being aired simultaneously with the season premiere of Desperate Housewives on ABC , the season premiere of The Amazing Race on CBS and Sunday Night Football on NBC . The episode also acquired a 5 @.@ 2 rating in the 18 ? 49 demographic , beating The Simpsons , The Cleveland Show and American Dad ! , in addition to edging out all three shows in total viewership . The episode 's ratings were Family Guy 's highest since the airing of the season six episode " McStroke " . The episode 's first broadcast in Canada , on Global TV , was watched by 1 @.@ 29 million viewers , making it first for its timeslot in the week it was broadcast .

" Road to the Multiverse " received critical acclaim , with one calling the storyline " right up there with the best of the early episodes we 've seen on the series . " In a simultaneous review of the episodes of The Simpsons and American Dad ! that preceded and followed the episode respectively

and The Cleveland Show pilot , The A.V. Club 's Todd VanDerWerff commented that he felt " essentially predisposed to like " the episode , adding that he enjoyed the entire theme of the show , in addition the fact that it was more than just science fiction . In the conclusion of his review VanDerWerff called the episode a " solid start to the eighth season " and rated it as a B + , the best rating between The Simpsons episode " Homer the Whopper " , the American Dad ! episode " In Country ... Club " and The Cleveland Show 's series premiere . Ahsan Haque of IGN gave the episode a 9 @. @ 6 out of 10 , saying that the episode featured " plenty of memorable lines , some truly stunning animation [ ... ] and a relentless non @-@ stop barrage of witty jokes . " In a subsequent review in January 2010 of " Stewie and Brian 's Greatest Adventures " , Haque called the episode " creative , visually impressive , and features some of the best random gags we 've seen on the show in a long time . " Television critic Alex Rocha of TV Guide also found the episode to have " great laughs , " saying that the show is " definitely off to a great start " to a new season . The director of " Road to the Multiverse " , Greg Colton , was awarded the Primetime Emmy Award for Outstanding Individual Achievement in Animation , for storyboarding the episode , on August 21 , 2010 , at the 62nd Primetime Emmy Awards 's Creative Arts Awards .

Although the Parents Television Council , a frequent Family Guy critic , did not name Family Guy its " Worst TV Show of the Week " for " Road to the Multiverse " , it did refer to this episode in its negative review of the following episode , " Family Guy " . The review noted that the appearance of the Griffin family 's Jewish neighbor , Mort Goldman , in " Multiverse " was notable since , in the Disney parody , Mort was beaten to a bloody pulp by Disney @-@ inspired versions of the cast ? a reference to Walt Disney 's purported antisemitism . The review goes on to state , " apparently , in Seth MacFarlane 's mind , the best way to fight anti @-@ Semitism is with more anti @-@ Semitism . One must wonder what young , angry , disaffected bigots tuning into the show must think . All they see is a nebbish stereotype getting his teeth knocked out of his skull and a blood @-@ soaked Star of David tumbling to the floor . "

In a 2012 interview , Seth MacFarlane stated : " As far as the all @-@ around best episode , " Road to the Multiverse " would have to be up there . "

= = Sequel = =

A video game sequel called Family Guy : Back to the Multiverse was made . It is also a continuation of the season 9 episode " The Big Bang Theory " .