

= Homer Goes to College =

" Homer Goes to College " is the third episode of The Simpsons ' fifth season . It originally aired on the Fox network in the United States on October 14 , 1993 . In the episode , Homer 's lack of a college degree is revealed and he is sent to Springfield University to pass a nuclear physics class . Homer , who bases his perception of college on comedy films and TV shows , goofs around and is sent to a group of boys for tutoring . The boys , who are stereotypical nerds , try to help Homer , but he instead tries to help them party and decides to pull a prank on another college . They steal Springfield A & M 's mascot , but his friends are caught and expelled . Homer invites them to live with him , but his family soon become angered by their new housemates .

" Homer Goes to College " was directed by Jim Reardon and was the final episode of the show for which Conan O 'Brien received sole writing credit . O 'Brien would leave the series halfway through the production of the season to host his own show , Late Night with Conan O 'Brien . He had been working on this episode when he was informed that he had received the job and was forced to walk out on his contract .

The episode contains several references to the film Animal House as well as Monty Python and the Holy Grail , Star Trek and the song " Louie Louie " by The Kingsmen , which plays during the end credits .

= = Plot = =

During a surprise inspection of the Springfield Nuclear Power Plant from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission , Homer is placed in a test module van that simulates an emergency . He has no idea what to do and starts pressing buttons at random , somehow causing a nuclear meltdown even though there was no nuclear material inside the van . The NRC officials tell Mr. Burns that Homer 's job requires college training in nuclear physics , and that he must go back to college to keep his job . Homer is rejected by every college he applies to , but Burns helps him get into Springfield University .

Homer ignores his studies and instead focuses on his preconceived notions of college life through adolescent movies and TV shows , such as the fictional The School of Hard Knockers , which stereotype college life as pranks , partying and rigid deans . He also insults the college dean , Dean Peterson , believing him to be a crusty , conservative administrator . In reality , Peterson relates well with the students and is relatively young . Homer acts like a know @-@ it @-@ all in class and is asked to demonstrate how a proton accelerator operates ; consequently , he causes a nuclear meltdown in class . Dean Peterson takes him aside and recommends hiring a tutor . The tutors turn out to be three computer nerds named Benjamin , Doug , and Gary . The trio try to help Homer understand the material from his physics course , but he refuses to cooperate . Instead , he is determined to help them gain a social life by pulling a prank on rival college Springfield A & M University . The prank involves kidnapping the other school 's mascot , a pig named Sir Oinks @-@ a @-@ lot . However , Homer causes the pig to become very ill after feeding it malt liquor , and Benjamin , Doug , and Gary are blamed for the incident .

Dean Peterson is forced to expel the nerds , and a remorseful Homer immediately invites them to move in with his family . However , their presence quickly disrupts the normal family routine , and Marge orders Homer to evict them , leading him to try to get the three re @-@ admitted to the school . Homer 's plan involves an attempt to run down Dean Peterson with his car , but have the nerds push Peterson out of the way at the last moment , with the hope that Peterson would readmit the nerds out of gratitude for saving his life . But the plan backfires , and Homer winds up running down the dean , seriously injuring him . At the hospital , Homer admits he was fully responsible for the pranks , and asks that Benjamin , Doug , and Gary be reinstated . The dean agrees to reinstate them and does not punish Homer , agreeing to forget everything that has happened . The nerds thank Homer for his assistance and move back into their old dormitory room .

Unfortunately , having been preoccupied with the nerd situation , Homer is not prepared for his final exam . The nerds say the only way to pass is to cram for the final exam , which they help him do .

However , despite Homer 's best attempts , he gets an F. To Homer 's delight , the nerds hack into the school 's student records and change his grade to an A + , but unfortunately , Marge finds out and forces Homer to take the course again in order to set a good example for Bart and Lisa . Homer 's next college experience is shown during the end credits , with college clichés such as hazing by a fraternity , Telephone Booth Stuffing , a food fight , and finally his graduation ceremony where Homer flashes the audience .

= = Production = =

" Homer Goes to College " was the final episode of the show for which Conan O 'Brien received sole writing credit ; his final writing credit altogether was for the episode " Treehouse of Horror IV " , which he co @-@ wrote with five other writers . O 'Brien would leave the series halfway through the production of the season to host his own show , Late Night with Conan O 'Brien on NBC . O 'Brien was informed that he had been hired by NBC not long before the recording session for this episode began , and he was forced to walk out on his contract . The concept of the episode was that Homer attends college , but bases his entire understanding of what college is on " bad Animal House rip @-@ off movies " . O 'Brien mentioned in the DVD commentary that the antics of the characters Benjamin , Doug , and Gary were based on three " incredible nerds " who lived in the same college dormitory as O 'Brien .

The Fox Network executives had wanted the season premiere to be " Homer Goes to College " because it was an Animal House parody . However , the writers felt that " Homer 's Barbershop Quartet " would be a better episode because of George Harrison 's involvement . During the episode , Homer sings " I am so smart ! S @-@ M @-@ R @-@ T ... I mean S @-@ M @-@ A @-@ R @-@ T ! " while he lights his high school diploma (and the house) on fire . During the recording session , Dan Castellaneta was singing the song and accidentally misspelled " smart " . The writers decided that it was much funnier that way , because it seemed like something Homer Simpson would do , so they left the joke in . The song has since become a fan favorite .

Jim Reardon directed the episode and has noted he remembers the episode for several scenes in which the action is viewed through windows , such as when Homer prank calls the dean . The animators were short on time , so for the design of Benjamin they took an earlier drawing of director Rich Moore and made it African @-@ American .

= = Cultural references = =

The episode contains several references to the film Animal House , including the song " Louie Louie " by The Kingsmen which plays throughout the film . The couch gag with the huge pink foot squashing the Simpsons is a reference to The Foot of Cupid of the television series Monty Python 's Flying Circus . The film Monty Python and the Holy Grail is also referenced when Benjamin , Doug , and Gary imitate the Knights who say Ni . They play Dungeons & Dragons , hold arguments over Star Trek , and their room number is 222 , a reference to the television series Room 222 . Homer has posters of Albert Einstein and W. C. Fields . The episode contains the first reference to the Internet on The Simpsons , as " computer signals " being sent between the Nerds and MIT . A picture in the dorm shows four men wearing silver dome hats resembles the ' 80s new wave band Devo . The phrases the nerds say when Homer greets them (Intruder Alert) , (Get the Humanoid !) are from the 1980 arcade game Berzerk .

Mr. Burns asks Homer to " find the jade monkey " in a reference to the film The Maltese Falcon . He also offers the nuclear inspectors a washer and dryer or the contents of a mysterious box , which parodies the gameshow Let 's Make a Deal . Mr. Burns ' escape pod resembles the one used by R2 @-@ D2 and C @-@ 3PO in the first Star Wars film . Mr. Burns tries to get Homer into college by using violence and hitting one of the members of the admissions committee with a baseball bat , a reference to the film The Untouchables . The scene in which Homer is studying for the final exam contains a reference to the Ludovico technique from the movie A Clockwork Orange .

== Reception ==

In its original broadcast , " Homer Goes to College " finished 44th in ratings for the week of October 11 to October 17 , 1993 , with a Nielsen rating of 11 @. @ 3 , and was viewed in 10 @. @ 5 million households . It was tied with Beverly Hills , 90210 as the highest @- @ rated show on the Fox network that week .

The episode has received mostly positive 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 , " Homer at his most excruciatingly stupid in another superb episode ? his attitude to the college 's ' stuffy old dean ' (who was , in fact , bassist for The Pretenders) is a joy . " Thomas Rozwadowski of the Green Bay Press @- @ Gazette listed Homer 's line " Curly , straight . Curly , straight " whilst he torments the pig as " instantly memorable " . DVD Movie Guide 's Colin Jacobson commented that it did not " quite live up to its two predecessors " Homer 's Barbershop Quartet " and " Cape Feare " this year , but it remains a strong show nonetheless . Actually , it starts a little slowly but builds steam along the way . It includes some classic moments of a Homer idiocy ? hard to beat him chasing squirrels with a stick ? and one of the better visual gags via Burns ? chair . Who can dislike a show in which Richard Nixon threatens Homer due to a drunken pig ? " The episode 's reference to The Untouchables was named the 13th greatest film reference in the history of the show by Total Film 's Nathan Ditum .

In 2014 , The Simpsons writers picked " Burning Down the Mouse " from this episode as one of their nine favorite " Itchy & Stratchy " episodes of all time .