
The Issues Reflecting Human Rights in the Simpsons

Sometimes, people use cartoons to reflect on today's society, talking about problems and laws in a humorous way. The Simpsons is an animated sitcom that was created by Matt Groening, who puts hilarity into the cartoon, to show the brutal satire of today's society.

The Simpsons talks about a family of five, living their lives in a small town called Springfield. The main characters are Homer (Father), Marge (Mother), Bart (Son), Lisa (Daughter), and Maggie (Youngest daughter), which they all have different personalities, and different ways of looking at things. Homer is a very impulsive person, who does things without ever thinking about the consequences, and he usually has poor judgment on things that are apparently common sense. But, Homer's wife, Marge, has a quite opposite personality than Homer. Marge is a loving and caring person, who always cares about the family's safety, and looking at things in a much mature way, which helped Homer from making many mistakes.

The three episodes from The Simpsons, Girls Just Want to Have Sums, Much Apu About Nothing, and There's Something About Marrying reflect issues that exist in sex segregation, same-sex marriage, and illegal immigrants, where equal opportunity has taken a huge part in reflecting human rights.

In the episode Girls Just Want to Have Sums directed by Nancy Kruse, has shown the audience that sex segregation has become a big issue in the society. People tended to think boys are smarter than girls, where they are able to decide on things better, and they are academic smarter than girls. The school decided to split up the boys and the girls into two groups that based on their genders, where teaching the boys with regular elementary math, but kindergarten level of math to the girls. Lisa, the daughter of Homer, she doesn't like to be treated like a princess in math, perhaps, she desires something more challenge in math. She jumped over the wall to the boys' school to learn, but was asked to leave, because she is not smart enough to be a boy. Lisa disguised herself to be a boy, then blended into the boys' school. Later, she is recognized for her outstanding performance in the subject, she then reveals her true identity to the whole school to prove that girls are smart too.

The tendency of men to predominate in fields imposing high quantitative demands, high physical risk, and low social demands, and the tendency of women to be drawn to less quantitatively demanding fields, safer jobs, and jobs with a higher social content are, at least in part, artifacts of an evolutionary history that has left the human species with a sexually dimorphic mind. (Browne) People should be treated equally, there should not be who is better than whom. Because everyone is different, people decide on, or to do things based on their

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level of experiences, and their capability. People, all, are born different and they are raised up differently by different parents with different values, norms and principles and maybe even in different cultures.

In the episode sex segregation has also been shown in Homer's family, where Homer and his son, Bart, tended to be reckless, and irresponsible. But on the other hand, Marge and her daughter, Lisa, are acting very mature, they clearly know the difference between right and wrong, and they always know how to comfort Homer and Bart when they got upset. Any segregation will make some people uncomfortable, and there might not be anything beneficial about it. Especially with the younger generation, because they are still developing their knowledge, and segregations might eventually end up misplacing them into a group that they do not belong.

In the episode Much Apu About Nothing directed by Suzie Dietter, have reflected unequal opportunity issues that were existing in the United States, where immigrants can't have the same rights than natives do. The episode started with, on a regular day, a bear walked into Springfield, frightening the whole town, and created a big sensation. In order to protect the citizens of Springfield, a bear patrol team was established, but people started to see higher taxes and less income on their paycheck. Mayor Quimby, the Mayor of Springfield, told the citizens that the reason behind increasing of taxes is because the illegal immigrants, and he created Proposition 24, trying to deport the illegal immigrants out of the United States. Apu, an illegal immigrant who works at the Kwik-E-Market, told homer that if Proposition 24 passes, then he will get deported back to India.

Apu is a very self-motivated individual, who came to America seeking better education and carried out with family hope, after he finished school, he chose to stay in America to pay off his education debt. While under pressure, Apu was forced to obtain a false United States citizenship. However, he felt he had disgraced his family, and turned down the hope that his family had in him, then he destroyed the false passport. Luckily, he was able to pass the test and obtain the United States citizenship legally through the help of Homer's family, then became an American-Indian.

Moving aggressively under the new Federal welfare law to cut off state services to illegal immigrants, Gov. Pete Wilson today signed an executive order ending those immigrants' access to benefits ranging from public housing to prenatal care and child abuse prevention programs (Golden). The State of California passed Proposition 187 in 1996, which prohibit illegal immigrants from using non-emergency health care, public education, and other services in the State of California. But soon, the law was repealed by Governor Gray Davis in 1999, because the law was found unconstitutional by the Federal Court. There are a lot of people who came to this country to fight for their American Dream, who hope to have a fresh start. America was

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founded by immigrants, which later declared independence from the British in 1776. That being said, everyone should at least have equal opportunity as part of their human rights.

In the episode *There's Something About Marrying* directed by Nancy Kruse, have reflected on same-sex marriage is being a huge deal in America's society. The story started with Springfield has legalized same-sex marriage to draw more visitors into the town, soon, hundreds of gay and lesbian couples came to Springfield. But, Rev. Lovejoy will not marry any same-sex couple, because he still believes that marriage is only between a man and a woman. But Homer, he overhears that he can make \$200 per couple, then he registered himself to become a minister. He marries every same-sex couple in Springfield. One day, Patty, Marge's sister, came to Simpson's house, and told Marge that she is a lesbian, and then asks Homer if he is willing to marry her to another woman, Veronica. Marge is very uncomfortable with this situation, because Patty is her sister, and she never knew that Patty was a lesbian. But Marge later discovered that Veronica is a male who disguised himself to be a woman. Marge was happy, because now, her sister Patty is going to marry a man. On the day of the wedding, Marge was touched by the vow from Patty, but she didn't want to lie to her own sister, then she told Patty that Veronica is male, who has been lying to her. Patty was shocked and canceled the wedding. They came mostly in couples, holding roses, banners, rainbow flags and each other's hands to join a throng of around 10,000 people. And as the clock inched towards midnight, on the steps of the city hall in Cambridge, Massachusetts, gay couples who had been in relationships for years counted down the seconds to the moment when their unions would be legally validated (Younge).

The State of Massachusetts legalized same-sex marriage in 2004. Ever since, America has become a country that allows same-sex marriage. Until 2015, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down all state bans on same-sex marriage, legalized it in all fifty states and required states to honor out of state same marriage license in the case *Obergefell v. Hodges*. People have fought over same-sex marriage for too long, it is the right of same-sex couples to marry and receive the full benefits and blessing from others, especially from the ones that they care about. To give people the freedom to choose their other half is creating a more expanded sense for what people hold as sacred and worthy of respect.

The Simpsons is a very realistic and comedy show that reflects on today's society by using their own ways of humor. The show talks about the problems that the society has. The three episodes from The Simpsons – *Girls Just Want to Have Sums*, *Much Apu About Nothing*, and *There's Something About Marrying* – reflect on issues that deal with human rights, such as sex segregation, same-sex marriage, and illegal immigrants. Equal opportunity has taken a huge part in America's society in reflecting human rights.

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