



Simpsonology: There's a Little Bit of Springfield in All of Us

Tim Delaney

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In this amusing and informative appreciation of *The Simpsons*, sociologist Tim Delaney looks at the many ways America's longest-running sitcom and animated TV program reflects American culture. For more than fifteen years, the Simpsons have touched upon nearly every aspect of the American social scene—from family dynamics and social mores to local customs and national institutions. With over four hundred episodes aired so far, Delaney finds a goldmine of insights couched in parody on any number of perennial topics:

- On television's influence on American culture, Krusty the Clown says, "Would it really be worth living in a world without television? I think the survivors would envy the dead."
- On New Age religion, Homer says, "To think, I turned to a cult for mindless happiness when I had beer all along."
- On the thorny issue of gun ownership and home security, Homer purchases a pistol at "Bloodbath and Beyond" and then tells Marge, "I don't have to be careful, I got a gun."
- On the theme of community spirit, Bart thoughtlessly signs up with a local Boy Scout troop while on a sugar rush from eating a "Super-Squishee." The next day he realizes what he has done: "Oh, no. I joined the Junior Campers!" To which his sister, Lisa, responds: "The few, the proud, the geeky."

Delaney finds many more episodes relevant to major sociological issues such as environmentalism, feminism, romance and marriage, politics, education, health, aging, and more. Students of popular culture and laypersons alike will learn basic sociological concepts and theories in a refreshing, jargon-free work that offers plenty of entertainment.

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