CS294-7

Matthias Goerner

Matt Groening

Matthew Abram Groening

http://www.search.com/reference/Matt_Groen

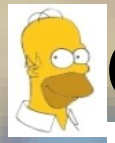
- born 1954, Portland/Oregon
- Creator of:
  - Life in Hell
  - The Simpsons
  - Futurama
- National Cartoonist Society Reuben and Emmy Award

Life in Hell

- After BA at The Evergreen State College, Olympia, Washington, Groening moved to Los Angeles to become a writer
- worked “as chauffeur and “biographer” of unsuccessful 88-year-old B-Western movie director” (Wikipedia)
- “described life in Los Angeles to his friends in form of a comic book”

Life in Hell: Characters and Themes

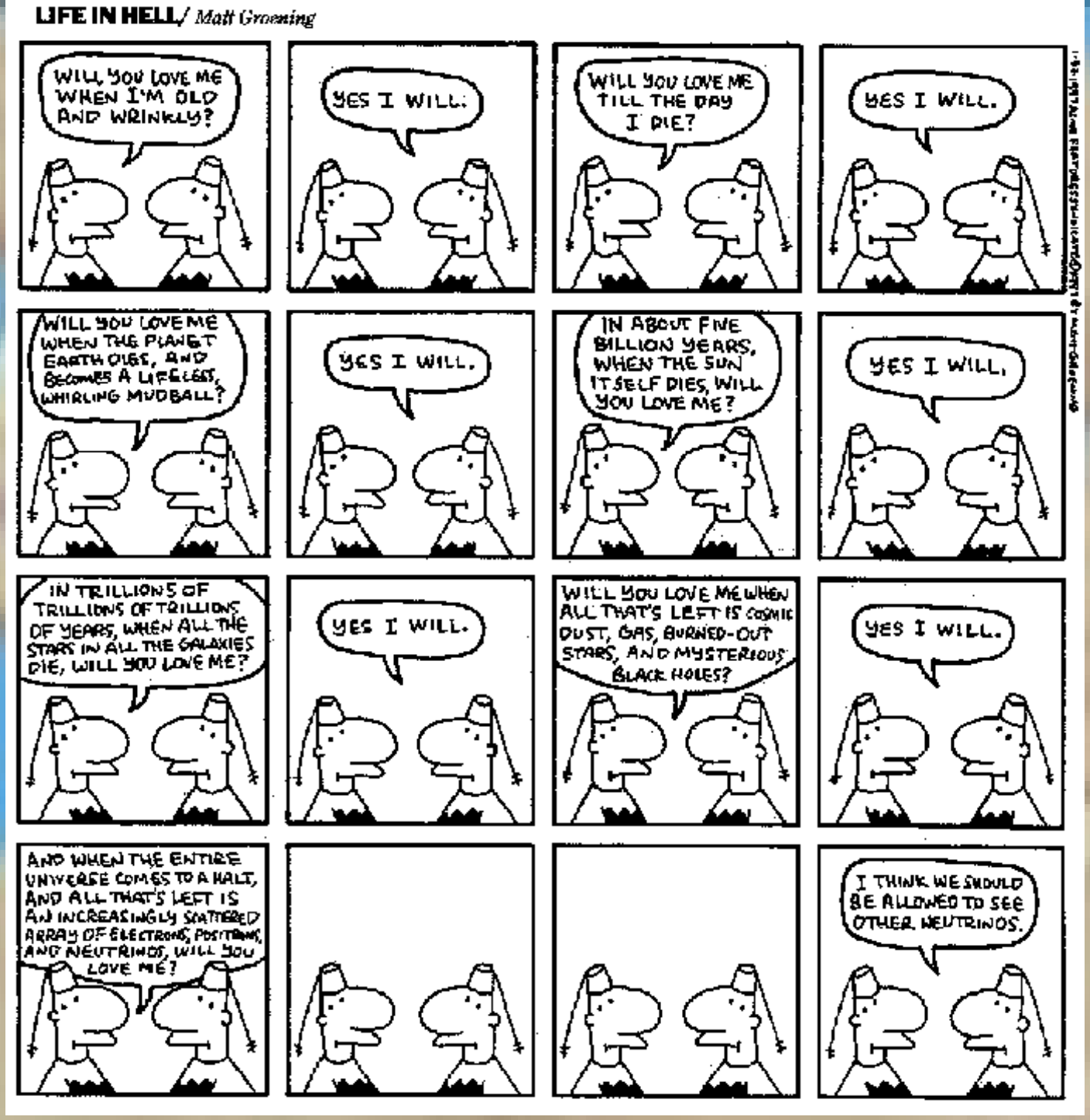
drawings: fun and laughs, but also expression of angst, alienation, fear


Characters: mostly rabbits

star “Binky”: bitter, depressed, alienated, has estranged girlfriend (Sheba), one-night stand (Hulga) and illegitimate son (Bongo)

Akbar & Jeff: Gay Lovers, “brothers or lovers or possibly both”

Groening himself



http://www.phys.psu.edu/~cowen/cartoons/life-in-hell-neutrinos-smaller.gif

http://www.godlessgeeks.com/LINKS/LifeInHell.jpg

Life in Hell

"photocopying and distributing it in the book corner of Licorice Pizza[a record store he was working at]" (Wikipedia)

became quickly popular

appeared in newpapers like Los Angeles Reader, series of books

writer/producer James Brooks asks Groening for animations for the Tracey Ullman Show (1985)

The Simpsons: The beginning

- 1987: Shorts for the Fox variety show The Tracey Ullman Show

http://www.superiorpics.com/tracey_ullman/ and Wikipedia

- Groening: storyboard and script
- David Silverman/Wes Archer: animation

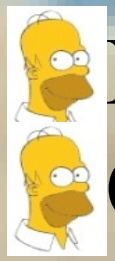
Video 1

The Simpsons: The Show

- Spin-off in 1989
- Groening: executive producer/creative consultant, Show runner for Season 1/2
- Longest running American sitcom (381 episodes, 18 seasons)
- Fox' most successful show
- Groening: producer and writer for the movie coming out July 2007 (video2)

The Simpsons

Assume everybody has seen enough Simpsons episodes to know the characters and setting



Name: “Simpson”=”Son of a Simpleton”

Characters are named after his younger sisters, mother and father

self-referential/meta-referential humor

developed its own cartoon style

influential on televison (adult-oridented animation, Family Guy, South Park), music, language

The Simpsons: Animation Techniques

in the beginning: hand-drawn animation

later partly computerized, e.g. filling with colors

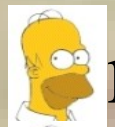
parts 3D cel-shaded (toon shading) animation

Futurama

- developed by Groening/David X Cohen
- Emmy award
- on Fox Network 1999-2003
- Comedy Central ordered 13 new episodes for 2008

Futurama

Assume everybody has seen enough epsiodes...


named after 1939 New York World's Fair

highly referential to science fiction literature

Galactic politics: United States of Earth, Democratic Order Of Planets (Wikipedia)

Linguistics: Alienese is a subsitution cipher from Latin alphabet