

The Encyclopedia of American Animated Television Shows

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David Perlmutter

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To the memory of June Foray (1918–2017), who, both directly through her work as a voice actor and indirectly as an influential off-screen figure, played a major and fundamental role in the shaping of American television animation as an institution.

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Preface

Before we begin, it is important to establish at the outset what this encyclopedia consists of and also what it does *not* consist of so that you may have a pleasant journey looking through it, as is my intention. This encyclopedia consists of the following:

- All animated television programs that have aired on a television network or a cable television channel in the United States and Canada between the fall of 1948 and the spring of 2016, for which documented evidence exists for their existence in the form of primary (e.g., program content viewing, TV schedules and promotions, DVD issues, Internet redistribution) or secondary (e.g., print and online scholarship) research by myself and others. The programs featured in the book are those in which animation is the sole or majority content and for which animation is the central or only means by which the story is told. The one exception is Hanna-Barbera's *Ruff and Reddy*, as discussed in the introduction, and this is done only to highlight its historical importance.
- The emphasis is on programs that aired in *both* the United States and Canada because most of the American series have aired in both countries, whereas not all of the Canadian series have. Canadian programs that did not have an extensive American broadcast run have largely been excluded. Additional series produced beyond the time limitations of the study period will be added to future issues of this encyclopedia, when and if warranted.
- The encyclopedia is preceded by an introduction that provides a comprehensive historical overview. In the encyclopedia proper, each program is addressed in a short entry that describes its narrative content and production history to the fullest extent possible, as well as giving credits for the most significant people responsible for the production of the series (i.e., producers, directors, writers, and voice actors) where knowledge of this material is available. Also listed are the network or cable channel where it was first broadcast and the years of its original broadcast run (or runs, if more than one program is addressed in an entry) *only*, to avoid confusion related to this due to the extensive rebroadcasting of many of these programs.

What it does *not* consist of is the following:

- Programming originally produced in a language other than English and redubbed for the North American market. The biggest casualty here is the anime of Japan, such as *Astro Boy*, *Speed Racer*, *Sailor Moon*, and *Pokémon*. Anime, however, has its own vast catalogue of source material, much wider than that of the subjects of this encyclopedia, so the reader seeking information on those programs should look to those sources instead.

- Programming that, while in the English language, was not produced in Canada or the United States nor involved significant creative or financial assistance from a programmer in those countries. Therefore, for example, the products of Cosgrove-Hall Studios (e.g., *Danger Mouse*, *Count Duckula*) are excluded because that firm was and is based in Great Britain.
- Programming that was not produced originally or intentionally for broadcast on a television network or cable television service, such as those distributed through streaming services (e.g., Netflix, Amazon Prime, Hulu) or direct Internet distribution. This is a programming model that should be considered independent of television proper because its content can be accessed independently from conventional television broadcast modes via such devices as smartphones, as well as by conventional television sets. My feeling is that animated films should be classified based on their original primary mode of distribution. Therefore, streamed animated series should be viewed as a separate broadcasting form from television animation, although it is often erroneously classified with television animation in terms of such award shows as the Emmys. Exceptions are made only in the cases where streamed programs also had runs on traditional network or cable television.
- Programs that consisted entirely of reruns, either of theatrical animation or television animation, unless deemed to be historically relevant to my discussion. Rebroadcasts do not constitute original content. However, some of the earliest television animation programs consisted entirely or in part of material repurposed from theatrical animation and, therefore, demonstrate the passage of influential animation traditions from one generation to the next. So, these programs are included.
- Programs less than one reel of film (i.e., 10 minutes) in length, particularly specimens of this kind that simply aired as segments of larger programs, unless it consisted of original content and was run independent of a larger source. Originally, program segments were structured at an average of seven minutes in length to be run together, as was the case in the 1950s and early 1960s, or to be dropped in a TV schedule or existing program to fill time gaps. During the mid-1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, some programs continued this tradition, though full-length programs became the norm. In the 1990s and 2000s, lengths became standardized, for the most part, at full-length narratives for some programs and two 11-minute narratives for others, with some variations in length occurring depending on program formats chosen by the producers. However, in recent years, that trend is reversing, with some programmers treating program narratives as independent units again rather than combining them in half-hours. For example, Cartoon Network's more recent fare, such as *Steven Universe*, *We Bare Bears*, and the revival of *The Powerpuff Girls*, is programmed on just this model.

Definite articles (i.e., *A*, *The*), when part of the full name of the program, are ignored for alphabetization purposes (e.g., *The Penguins of Madagascar* is listed under *P*).

Modifying terms, such as “The Series” or “The Animated Series,” used to describe properties adapted to animation from other media, are removed from the original title of the programs in these instances in the listings. To describe them as such in the context of this book is redundant and therefore unnecessary.

Program credits, for the most part, reflect those included with the original programs. Some confirmation has been required in certain areas, because animators and performers have not always been billed consistently (e.g., some producers/performers named Robert have been billed under both this name and the diminutive “Bob”). In some cases, I have adopted a standardized form of the name that has been used most often in billing the performers/producers to confirm that the same performer/producer was responsible for a certain group of performances and/or activities, and this was not done by a number of different people with the same name; however, this was done only after proper consultation of primary and secondary sources. Variations that occur are the result of the original billing system, not my research.

Corporate possessives (i.e., “Disney’s”), when part of the official name applied by the studio, have been removed from this alphabetic listing. It is important to my purpose and discussion that these programs be examined independent of the contexts in which they were produced, on their own terms, as well as within the larger historical contexts in which they exist. The inclusion of corporate names, possessive or otherwise, in a television series’ name often erroneously implies a larger level of political control in the narrative context of the programs. This control typically does not exist for the most part in the actual episode narratives, but the implication of its existence can and has been used in a discriminatory fashion against these programs in the past. Therefore, for example, *Disney’s 101 Dalmatians* is catalogued under *O*, because the numeral 101 begins with that letter when written as a word. Likewise, *Disney’s The Weekenders* is listed under “W” as *The Weekenders*.

One final note on the application of the term *creator*: This title was not commonly used in credit assignment in fictional television production as a whole until the 1970s. Programs produced prior to that date do not have that title assigned to them unless definite external evidence exists otherwise. This is chiefly because, in many cases, such as that of *The Flintstones*, the identity of the true creator or creators is unknown or disputed. This title is commonly assigned to the individual or individuals given the “created by” credit in the opening credits of the programs or those who have been defined as the true originator or originators of the work in secondary scholarship. It is assigned *only* to individuals, not to larger entities, such as studios, production companies, or corporations. The title is assigned only in situations where the creator (or at least one of the creators, if there was more than one) was actively involved with the production of the series. In instances where a character was created by an individual outside of the context of the series prior to the development of that series, it is specified in the credit listing, and the history of the character and its creation are explained in the analysis of the program.

Acknowledgments

First and foremost, thanks to my family and friends, who not only tolerated my somewhat-obsessive interest in many of these programs but also encouraged them, to the point of suggesting that I take up serious scholarship related to them. Primary and immediate thanks go to those who assisted me in the long process of drafting and revising this book: my mother, Kristine Perlmutter; my sister, Sara Perlmutter Thrift; and my aunts, Thora Delaquis, Lorna Jakobson, and Irene Marks.

Other thanks go to people who provided me with assistance from afar. Stephen Ryan at Rowman & Littlefield was enthusiastic about this project from day 1, and his encouragement helped me through difficult points in drafting and editing. I am likewise deeply indebted to the scholars of animation and media whose work has always informed mine; their names are inscribed on the books in the bibliography, and their exceptional and pioneering scholarship within is worth seeking out.

The greatest thanks, of course, belong to the men and women who wrote, produced, directed, and acted in these programs because the programs would not exist as they do without their tireless efforts. Their astounding achievements in the art of animation in the past and now remain a continuing source of inspiration and awe to me, as they do to their millions of admirers around the world.

Finally, a nod to my very young nephews, Elliott and Oliver Thrift, who are just in the process of discovering the world of animation for the first time. I hope that my work helps them in discovering and appreciating the greatest work this unique artistic medium has to offer in the future.

Introduction

Over the course of the 20th and 21st centuries, television in North America has had a complex relationship with animation as an artistic and commercial product. From the beginning of their relationship to today, the broadcasting medium and the art form have found ways to profit artistically and commercially from each other, the former by providing accessible air space to producers of animation on a regular basis, the latter by enriching the television landscape with engaging programs and characters accessible to a wide variety of audiences. That both entities have profited over time from this ongoing engagement is obvious, and the benefit both have enjoyed over time is immeasurable, not only in terms of quantity, but in quality as well.

However, this has not been a relationship without conflict. Television, as a functioning business as opposed to a medium of communication, has always been concerned with commercial profit over and above artistic quality, and animation, an art form where high artistic standards have always been a paramount concern to producers, has suffered more than other genres from this as a consequence. In part, this has come about due to some producers in the field being unwilling to compromise their standards and paying the price for it. Other producers endured the demands of the business at the expense of these standards. Another complicating factor has been the manner in which television sponsorship, and, particularly, content regulation, has tarnished the quality of animation production, as well as the manner in which television has made animation a scapegoat for concerns related to the whole medium. In the latter category in particular, the largely erroneous labeling of animation as a primary source of so-called violence and censorship imposed in relation to this have had damaging impacts on morale in the television animation industry that continue, both directly and indirectly, to resonate today.

In spite of these concerns, animation has endured as a vital part of the television industry in a way few other programming genres have. Very few of the genres present at the creation of television as a commercial medium in the late 1940s are still present in the contemporary world of television production. Even fewer have found themselves able to adapt by demonstrating their practical application to a wide variety of separate and distinct audiences. This has allowed animation to survive and thrive when the traditional hegemonic structure of network television was supplanted by the pluralistic one of cable television and even now, when newer forms of content distribution are challenging cable's importance. Like the heroes of its own programs, television animation knows how to adopt, adapt, improve, and survive when its back is against the wall. The entries in this encyclopedia, reflecting and representing programming from all facets of this diverse art form and genre's history, demonstrate this better than anything else.

Space prevents a lengthy discussion of the genre's history here.¹ However, it can be summarized briefly through an analysis of the key developments and trends throughout that period.

PREHISTORY: 1900–1948

An art form whose name appropriately derives from the Latin term for “giving life” to inanimate objects, animation existed in experimental form during the 19th century, through such objects as the zoetrope, a moving wheel through which drawings were rotated. Advancements and refinements of the basic technique of moving inanimate drawings to suggest movement were developed by individual artists like J. Stuart Blackton in the United States and Emile Cohl in France. However, the development of animation as a commercial medium dates only from the early 20th century. The major figure in this shift was the American comic strip artist Winsor McCay, who was one of the first to find practical forms of using animation beyond its roots as a novelty attraction. In addition to producing animated versions of his comic strips *Dreams of a Rarebit Fiend* and *Little Nemo in Slumberland*, McCay produced during the 1910s a wide range of one-shot films, from humorous short films, such as *Bug Vaudeville* and *How a Mosquito Operates*, to a full-scale docudrama re-creation of the sinking of the *Lusitania* in 1915. But his greatest legacy would prove to be introducing the first major “cartoon character,” Gertie the Dinosaur, with whom he interacted in vaudeville as a parody of that medium's standard animal acts. He ingeniously employed the medium to its greatest effectiveness for that time and suggested the further direction of its commercial implications. However, McCay disowned the genre and medium soon afterward, famously noting that it had become a “trade” rather than an “art,”² a dividing line that has always polarized the art form's growth along both concepts.

McCay's success inspired the creation of studios to mass produce animation for commercial purposes. Newspaper magnate William Randolph Hearst financed animated versions of his comic strip characters, while animator John Bray had some success with depicting a braggart adventurer named Colonel Heeza Liar. The biggest success story of the early 1920s, however, was *Felix the Cat*, whose innovative films explored the unique artistic experimentation potential of animation while fusing it with the raucous vaudeville-derived humor of silent films, creating a potent blend future animators would draw from greatly in the future. Though credited as productions of Australian émigré Pat Sullivan, they were primarily the uncredited work of his employee Otto Messmer, who was not given due credit for his work until much later. *Felix* would be revived for sound films and (as noted later) television animation, but little equaled the work of this time for its ongoing popularity and influence on future generations of animators.

By 1928, with the arrival of sound, Walt Disney established himself as the new gold standard in the emerging field, chiefly through his legendary character Mickey Mouse, who debuted that year in *Steamboat Willie*. The son of an itinerant Canadian-born farmer and businessman, Disney had begun production earlier in the 1920s, going bankrupt at least once before succeeding. He profited as much from employing Mickey as a merchandising figure as well as an animated

character, which aided him greatly in keeping his studio afloat during the Great Depression. A perfectionist, he introduced a wide variety of technological innovations, from the regular employment of storyboards for films to deep-focus cinematography, that enhanced animation in exceedingly positive ways. This was particularly evident in his *Silly Symphonies*, which used both sound and color to great effect. The culmination of this was the release in 1937 of the first commercially successful animated feature film, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, with many more films in that lineup until Disney's death in 1966 and beyond.

Disney's achievement did not go unnoticed; it facilitated the rapid growth of animation production and distribution in Hollywood to a previously unprecedented degree. By the late 1930s, the major Hollywood film studios—MGM, Warner Brothers, Paramount, Columbia, 20th Century Fox, RKO, Universal, and United Artists—either had set up their own in-house animation studios or had established distribution agreements with independent producers. For the most part, their achievements paled in comparison to Disney's, but there were exceptions to that rule. The most notable ones were the technologically innovative films made by Max and Dave Fleischer via Paramount in the 1930s and 1940s; the still highly regarded *Looney Tunes* and *Merrie Melodies* of Warner Brothers, made between the 1930s and the 1960s; the cleverly produced MGM films of the 1940s and 1950s; and Walter Lantz's productions for Universal from the 1930s to the 1970s. These films helped to establish the blueprint for comedy-oriented cartoons that, for better or worse, remain the template for much of their kind produced for television today.

Yet this era, retrospectively thought of as the "Golden Age" of animation in the United States, was not destined to last. By the late 1940s, the economic underpinnings of the Hollywood studio system, which had created the means for cost-effective animation production, among other things, were falling apart. The 1948 Supreme Court case *Paramount v. United States*, which successfully challenged the ability of the Hollywood studios to have economic control over the theaters in which their product was exhibited, deprived the studios of a major source of revenue and, with it, the ability to fund such second-tier film production as animation. In the following two decades, the majority of the Hollywood-based animation studios would close their doors for good.

But a more significant and enduring threat to the film industry came in the form of a new entertainment medium, decades in development, which arrived on the scene at roughly the same time.

THE EARLY AGE: 1948–1956

The creation of television as a commercial mass medium was a process that took the better part of the early decades of the 20th century to achieve fruition all over the world. In America, early experimental broadcasts took place in the 1920s and 1930s, but it was not until the end of World War II, with the potential for commercial benefit more evident, that it was to become what it is now. By 1948, the established radio broadcasting networks—NBC, CBS, and ABC—which had underwritten much of the recent research into television production and distribution, gradually began to abandon the old medium in favor of the new one.

It was a slow process at first. The high cost of sets meant that few individuals could afford them, and they were seen more often in this time in social institutions like bars and restaurants. Commercial growth was further hampered by hysterical and biased reporting that compared the new medium to an addictive drug, in that viewers lacked the willpower to stop watching once having started—an accusation that would come to haunt it for decades after. But a more immediate problem was the inability of viewers to see the same programs at the same time. The majority of the programming was live (tape recording for visual media did not come into existence until the 1960s) and originated from New York on the east coast; western viewers had to make do with “kinescopes”—primitive recordings of the live broadcasts—most of which do not exist today due to their poor quality. However, this problem was solved in the mid-1950s, when the first coaxial cable systems linking the coasts were established, allowing the networks to have simultaneous live broadcasts of programming for the first time.

Animation was first presented on television during this period, although in a primitive form more closely resembling the silent films of the 1910s and 1920s than the plush, full-color productions then being made for Hollywood. This supposed “inferiority” to theatrical animation was a major factor in television animation being seen as less valuable in comparison to its forebear for several decades. Another factor was its restriction to limited spheres of influence in distribution. A number of firms produced animated commercials during this time, most notably Tempo, whose management was among the celebrated victims of the anti-Communist “blacklist” of the early 1950s due to their leftist activism and politics in prior decades. Animated films were also featured as part of the daily children’s programming on the local and national levels, but by and large, it tended to be representations of material originally exhibited in theaters rather than original pieces. However, it provided a valuable means of reintroducing celebrated characters from the theatrical era to a new generation and set the groundwork for future revivals of characters successful in the past in later years. Original programming was few and far between, chiefly because the short length of animated films prevented them from being scheduled on a regular basis as easily as other programs. The one notable exception was *Crusader Rabbit*, produced by Alex Anderson and Jay Ward out of Los Angeles and airing mainly in NBC-based syndication during 1948–1949. The program’s life span was limited, but it set up a humorous adventure format that Ward, in his later productions, refined into what would become one of the most enduring and influential subgenres within television animation.

THE GOLDEN AGE: 1957–1969

It was not until the late 1950s that original animation began to be produced for television on a regular basis. The methods used for television broke down and compromised some of the traditionally time-consuming practices of theatrical animation production and were thus seen as heresy. Ironically, those responsible for introducing these methods were themselves active veterans of the theatrical animation community, and their methodology allowed for animation not just to survive in the competitive television marketplace but also to thrive in it.

William Hanna and Joseph Barbera had been active as a directing team in theatrical animation for the better part of two decades. Hanna, who had grown up in the Pacific Northwest, had established himself with the Harman-Ising studio before moving to MGM in the late 1930s, while Barbera, originally from New York City, had cut his teeth in the animation studios of the East Coast before moving west at the same time. At MGM, the duo found that their areas of expertise complemented each other, and they divided the directing chores accordingly. In the early 1940s, they launched the popular *Tom and Jerry* series, which focused on a perpetually feuding cat and mouse to comic effect. It was popular not only with the public but within the film industry. During its run, the series earned seven Academy Awards, along with additional nominations in other years.

However, MGM's animation division was among the first of its kind to suffer closure due to the twin blows of the breakup of the studio system and the encroachment of television. By the mid-1950s, the studio had such a large backlog of material in place that the management of the parent company felt that there was no longer a necessity to produce new material; older cartoons, they reasoned, could work just as well on theatrical bills. Accordingly, Hanna and Barbera, who had become the joint department heads, and their staff were dismissed en masse in 1955.

Wishing to remain active in the animation business, Hanna and Barbera truthfully believed that there was a place for animation in television, given the newer medium's perennial need for fresh programming sources. They set about developing new characters for potential television production, as well as a new system for filming animation to accommodate the rapid pace of time accompanying television ventures. "Limited" animation, as it came to be known, involved the continual use of recycled character facial and body movements and a set series of stock background art, which limited the overhead expense of creating new art for each film. Purists decried the limitations that supposedly existed for artistic expression in this format, but it allowed for streamlined production that truly met television's demands for the first time. Whereas theatrical short films and features could take months or years to produce, new films in this system could be produced in a matter of weeks.

It was difficult to find acceptance initially, but eventually Hanna and Barbera found a supporter in John Mitchell, an executive at Screen Gems, the television production division of Columbia Pictures. Managing to override the objections of Columbia founder Harry Cohn, Mitchell assisted the producers in establishing facilities and gaining financing. He would also be a persuasive sounding board for encouraging them to develop the innovative work that would come out of the studio in the following decade.

Hanna-Barbera Productions had its first success with *Ruff and Reddy*, first airing in 1957 as a segment of a children's program on NBC. From there, with John Mitchell's encouragement, it was not long before they were able to convince broadcasters and advertisers of the appeal of animation as a stand-alone half-hour attraction. *Huckleberry Hound*, *Quick Draw McGraw*, and *Yogi Bear* attracted and pleased audiences of the time (the former being the first television animation program to win an Emmy Award) and retained their appeal over decades of reruns. The same could also be said of *The Flintstones*,

the first television animation program aimed explicitly at adults (at least in its original incarnation), which ran in original programming for the first six years of the 1960s and in reruns (and occasional revivals) ever since. Drawing on the creative resources of their staff and their own production and marketing abilities, Hanna and Barbera built enormous creative and commercial influence that continues to resonate deeply in the television animation business today.

Hanna-Barbera did not have a monopoly on production of television animation during this period, but the majority of the other producers did not have their expertise at economical production or their evident creative integrity. Instead, they tended to focus on cheap production methods and repetitive storylines that did much to discredit the emerging genre. However, there were some significant exceptions.

Jay Ward was the most significant and influential of the non-Hanna-Barbera producers. Now working in close collaboration with theatrical animation veteran Bill Scott, who portrayed many of the studio's characters, Ward refined the elements of his earlier *Crusader Rabbit* series into a potent blend of escapism and caustic satire that attracted both children and adult viewers. The high points of the Ward-Scott collaboration were the daily *Rocky and His Friends* series for ABC from 1959 to 1961 and its continuation as the weekly *Bullwinkle Show* on NBC from 1962 to 1965. The engaging warmth of the title characters belied the comic effrontery inherent in all the segments of the program. Yet the latter element repeatedly rankled network executives and censors, and this, coupled with Ward's P. T. Barnum-esque zeal for self-promotion, limited his further success in the medium, as represented by the limited runs of his final projects. Ward nevertheless made a place available for television animation as a vehicle for light-hearted satire, and the strong endurance of this type of humor within television animation narratives is perhaps his greatest legacy to the genre.

Other significant producers in this period included Total Television Productions, led by Buck Biggers and Chet Stover, best known for *Underdog*; theatrical animation veteran Bob Clampett, whose *Beany and Cecil* combined escapism and satire in a manner similar to Ward and Scott's but in a bolder and more aggressive fashion; Arthur Rankin Jr. and Jules Bass, whose eponymous firm produced both successful series and highly acclaimed holiday specials; the eponymous firm run by producer David DePatie and legendary theatrical animator Friz Freleng; and Art Clokey, who brought clay animation into the fore with his *Gumby* and *Davey and Goliath* series. Like Hanna-Barbera and Ward, their productions were durable and memorable enough to last through decades of reruns for multiple generations of admirers, escaping the fate of obscurity given to the less successful products.

The middle of the 1960s brought with it a major change in the manner in which television animation was distributed and viewed. With this came a shift in how television animation was seen the minds of the public, both in terms of whom it was meant to be viewed by and, erroneously, what its content consisted of. Despite the lack of evidence for the latter in particular, it created negative publicity for the genre that took decades to recover from.

The concept of programming television animation for children on Saturday mornings first emerged in the mid-1960s, with Fred Silverman, then the head of

daytime programming at CBS. An admirer of animation, Silverman believed that there was every possibility for the art form to be as present and as competitive as other television programs in the schedule, and he felt that this then largely unheralded time period was the perfect place to attract large audiences of children. This proved to be correct, to the great benefit of CBS, and swiftly ABC and NBC joined the battle. The concept of the "Saturday morning cartoon" would become fixed in the public mind from then on, in part because the three networks, with some exceptions, did not sanction the programming of animation anywhere else on their schedules, turning Saturday morning into a programming "ghetto."

This practice had both positive and negative consequences for television animation. On the positive end, television animation producers had, after nearly two decades of fumbling about to find a place in the television spectrum, a regular place to exhibit their wares. This particularly benefitted a high-volume production studio like Hanna-Barbera, whose expanded resources were employed with regularity across all three networks' schedules. There was no concern at this time about exactly where and when television animation could be seen—and who would comprise the majority of its audience, either.

The negative consequences were, however, graver and longer-lasting. As Saturday morning was, by default, a programming strategy aimed at children, television animation became ipso facto a genre aimed at children, a stereotypical attitude not seriously challenged until the 1990s. As a result, it became one of the most prominent victims of campaigning against televised "violence" in the late 1960s because of its supposedly "violent" content. That "violence," then and now, was something that cannot be easily defined or quantified meant little to advocates against animation. Such organizations as Action for Children's Television (ACT), working in the name of "protecting" children, made this into a political issue during this heated period. The networks were forced to give in to their demands, particularly in the face of biased academic studies that blatantly favored antiviolence advocates. In turn, they increased their demands on the producers of television animation to make it something that would supposedly make it more "acceptable" to audiences without completely understanding what the appeal of animation really was to those audiences. The consequences of these actions were dire. Increasingly, television animation would become stuck in not only a "ghetto" but also a highly regulated and restricted "ghetto."

THE CENSORSHIP AGE: 1970–1989

If the late 1950s and 1960s reflected the first flowing of creativity in television animation, the 1970s marked the period when that creativity was most absent in the genre as a consequence of some of the most restrictive practices on content development ever created in the history of television. The 1980s marked a slight growth, in part due to the growth of new and more open-minded markets for content distribution, but even there, change was slow to occur.

In reaction to the highly charged antiviolence campaigns of the 1960s, the three networks, whose lineups constituted the sole major markets for television animation producers in the 1970s, used their political and economic leverage over producers often in the course of that decade. This came in two forms. First, and most obviously, was a blatant ban against anything remotely considered

“violent” in nature or anything that had the possibility of being “imitated” by the audience at home and creating stress or injury there in the process. Action-adventure programming suffered the most from this, as this regulation impaired the ability of producers to create truly engaging action and adventure to the eyes of anyone outside of the supposedly undemanding audience. Yet slapstick comedy was equally and more blatantly taken to task because of the “imitable” nature of much of it, and comedy series likewise suffered creative decline.

Understandably, whether you remained active as a television animation producer at this time was determined by how willing and able you were to play ball with the networks on their terms exclusively. Hanna-Barbera, for example, was able to regularly sell and produce series, although they were marred by increasing creative decline and, later, off-screen labor problems. In contrast, Jay Ward, the great nonconformist figure of the previous decade, was never able to bring another new series to air (though his older work was occasionally rebroadcast) and shifted the focus of his company to producing animated advertising instead.

Later in the decade came another network dictum that challenged the ability of producers to tell stories in their chosen genre. The so-called prosocial messaging strategy was a vague, catchall term that mandated the insertion of “educational” materials in programming for the supposed benefit of the audience. Despite the fact that respected professional educators were repeatedly called on to provide their expertise, the “educational” material in the narratives not only frequently disrupted the narrative flow of the programs but also were delivered with all the subtlety of a blow on the head with a sledgehammer. This was in sharp contrast, in particular, to the truly education-minded programs on PBS (which had, ironically, also arisen as a reaction to the antiviolence concerns of the 1960s), whose approaches were considerably more subtle. Under these conditions, it was remarkable that anything of genuine creative merit could be produced, but such instances did occur.

The majority of the programs of merit were the productions of a studio that was a relative newcomer to the business. Filmation had been established by Pittsburgh-born animator Lou Scheimer in 1962 and gained its first success when it produced the first television animation adventures of Superman three years later. Unlike many of his contemporaries, Scheimer was completely aware of his obligations to his child-centric audience, and his company benefitted from this knowledge. He was convinced that entertainment and education could co-exist peacefully in television animation, and he needed little encouragement or pressure to craft his narratives to meet demands other studios found impractical or difficult. This was even the case when he adapted previously existing cultural figures to television animation, which became one of Filmation’s ongoing strengths. The highlight of Scheimer’s success in this period was *Fat Albert and the Cosby Kids*, based on the comedy routines of comedian and actor Bill Cosby, who not only wholeheartedly facilitated and assisted in shaping the educational messaging of the program but also used it as the basis for achieving a doctoral degree in education in 1976. Scheimer’s many other achievements included the long-running *Archie* franchise and an acclaimed animated adaptation of *Star Trek*, which won Filmation its only Emmy (in 1975) and helped lay the ground-

work for *Star Trek* to become the basis for an astonishingly successful multimedia franchise in the following decades.

Yet, despite his achievements in producing prosocial-laced narratives for network distribution, Scheimer, in the late 1970s, was beginning to feel as constricted as his fellow producers in terms of creative ability. Fortunately, he found a new distribution manner that was less restrictive creatively in the following decade and one that other producers found convenient, as well.

Syndication—the distribution of programs through independent deal-making on a station-to-station basis as opposed to through the networks—had its origins in the distribution of prerecorded radio programs in the same manner in the pretelevision era. It had long been used by independent stations to acquire content because their lack of affiliation with the networks required this. With the growth of the recording of series on film and videotape in the 1960s, the practice grew, but it was not until the 1980s that it was used for television animation. Filmation pioneered the practice by entering into a production agreement with the Mattel toy company, in which the former's resources were used to create animated characters out of toy figures invented by the latter. The resulting series—*He-Man and the Masters of the Universe* and *She-Ra: Princess of Power*—were successful both commercially and creatively, in part because Mattel was lenient in allowing Filmation creative control in a manner that the networks never would have dared. This did not prevent backlash from the perceived economic origins of the series, but it also did not prevent Filmation and other companies from exploiting the five-episodes-a-week (as opposed to one episode a week at the networks) demands of syndication to their advantage. Unfortunately, Filmation was ultimately unable to establish itself securely in the new environment. After being acquired by the European conglomerate L'Oreal-Nestle in 1988, it was abruptly closed without warning.

In addition to established sources like Hanna-Barbera, Filmation, and Rankin-Bass, newer companies were entering the production mix. The most formidable of these was the Disney organization, which had previously shunned television animation production but began to embrace the potential of animation on television through the administration of the notorious Michael Eisner. Gradually but with an ever-present mandate of quality, Disney became one of the most influential voices in the business. Other organizations of note included the eponymous studio of former Hanna-Barbera writers Joe Ruby and Ken Spears; the Toronto-based Nelvana company, successful in both Canada and the United States; Film Roman, run by industry veteran Phil Roman; DIC, formerly the American branch of a French concern but fully Americanized by another Hanna-Barbera veteran, Andy Heyward; and Marvel Comics, which developed a successful animation division headed by studio production and network mediation veteran Margaret Loesch out of what had once been DePatie-Freleng. The environment was becoming pluralized as well by the inclusion of such figures as the infamous Ralph Bakshi on the production slate, but it could be only be so welcoming. Bakshi's revival of *Mighty Mouse* was short-lived—in part due to the negative publicity created when a viewer mistakenly interpreted the title character's sniffing of a flower as the ingesting of cocaine. There was, it seemed,

only so much latitude a television animation producer had in this time, and they were sure to hear about it negatively if a line was crossed.

The creative co-opting of television animation content to express “prosocial” content climaxed in 1990 with a notable event that, while not a regularly scheduled program, blatantly highlighted what had been one of the paramount political concerns of the narrative content of the previous decade. *Cartoon All-Stars to the Rescue* was an unsubtle blast against the worldwide trade in illicit drugs, with an introductory message from the president and First Lady. All of the active television animation studios of the period contributed characters, money, and time to develop a project that promised considerably more than it ultimately delivered. The perniciousness of the intent of the project was underlined by the fact that it was block-booked on the schedule, airing on every outlet available to it at the same time so that it could not be escaped. An enormous audience was delivered by default, but whether the message of the project registered with them was debatable. Nevertheless, the extent to which television animation had become a puppet to its patrons’ aims and desires in the previous decade is as blatantly obvious in hindsight, as was the political bias of the program’s content.

This situation would never occur again in television animation history. Partially, it was the result of the decline of Saturday morning television as a programming entity in the following decade due to shrinking profits and, thus, declining network interest. However, a more important reason was the emergence of a new generation of television animation producers who, rather than feeling themselves beholden to the corporate interests supporting them, felt exactly the opposite. The result of this was an exciting period of growth, change, and development, artistic and economic, for a genre that had only recently been moribund.

THE SILVER AGE: 1990–2008

Between the late 1960s and the late 1980s, the television animation industry changed little in terms of both economic distribution and creative content. But in the 1990s, both of these changed dramatically, largely for the better.

The former was the result of the expansion of the cable industry and the successful challenging of the ABC–CBS–NBC network hegemony in this decade. In the late 1980s, Australian media tycoon Rupert Murdoch purchased 20th Century Fox and Metromedia, a chain of independent stations, and combined their assets into the new Fox network. By targeting younger and more ethnically diverse viewers—demographics largely ignored elsewhere—the entity, after a slow start, was able to establish itself as a genuine contender. Animation, as is shown later, played an important role in the company’s success, both on Saturday mornings and, significantly, in prime time as well. The strategies behind Fox were also employed later in the decade with the United Paramount (UPN) and Warner Brothers Television (WB) networks, which were far less successful, as well as by the CW, resulting from a merger of those two entities.

The pluralism of the cable spectrum allowed for television producers and distributors to tailor programming to specific niche audiences with full-time channels for these kinds of material, and television animation benefitted from this, as its appeal to both children and adults came to be rediscovered by both producers and programmers. Nickelodeon and the Disney Channel, which had

both originated earlier, put more of their financial resources into sponsoring original television animation. Meanwhile, Cartoon Network, an outpost of the Turner media empire, made animation available on a 24/7 basis for the first time through its launch in 1994, and original content played a vital role in establishing its brand. As the older networks increasingly abandoned child and young adult audiences, the younger upstarts took advantage of the situation and profited from it. The extent to which they did so is very evident today. Nickelodeon, Disney, and Cartoon Network now control most of the cable market for television animation, whereas Fox remains the central outlet for it on the network level.

Perhaps even more significant was the degree to which the on-screen content itself changed. Younger producers and filmmakers had ascended to control in the industry, and they succeeded in producing work that was uniquely and recognizably theirs alone, something that censorship had once blotted out. *The Simpsons*, the invention of Oregon-born cartoonist Matt Groening, demonstrated this new attitude to its fullest flowering when it debuted on Fox in 1990. The program's irreverent, iconoclastic, and freewheeling humor and social commentary had never truly existed before in television animation, and it created an example other programs would follow in the following decades with varying degrees of success. Despite ongoing creative decline in more recent years, the series remains one of the shining achievements of both its network and its genre, having lasted far longer in original production than any of its predecessors or contemporaries.

While other programming executives did not entirely embrace the Pandora's box of liberated content *The Simpsons* opened, there was a clear sense in the minds of other animators that "if they can do it, so can we." Many proceeded to do just that. Over the course of the 1990s and early 2000s, programming formulas, ideas, concepts, plots, and characterizations that had once appeared to be written in stone were constantly rewritten as if scripted on more pliable materials. There was a clearer attempt to create a broader and more strident creative vocabulary and a mostly successful effort to use the genre as a form of social and political commentary. The growing prominence and empowerment of female characters, who had once been relegated to the sidelines, demonstrated this to its greatest degree—a reflection, at least in part, of the growing political importance of women in the off-screen end of the business as well.

It was now possible for a new method of analyzing television animation that took into account the increasing sophistication and intelligence noticeable in a fair number of the productions from the various houses. This was largely the result of a production strategy in which the mind-sets of series were guided by a single individual creator or a group of same who governed the creative decisions and approaches of the series across the board, a severe departure from the bureaucratic realpolitik of the 1970s and 1980s. These producers can arguably be seen, therefore, as defining the quality of the work of the programs in the same fashion as a director does in live-action feature films via the auteur theory of modern film criticism. In addition to the aforementioned Matt Groening, this group includes Tom Ruegger, Craig McCracken, Genndy Tartakovsky, Butch Hartman, Joe Murray, John Kricfalusi, Mike Judge, Rob Renzetti, and Seth Macfarlane, all of whose series are discussed in fuller detail in the following encyclopedia entries, along with influential others whose careers in the industry were more limited in their scope.

But some aspects of the older system of production did remain intact, despite the new freedoms available. The producers were still forced, whether they liked it or not, to cede control of their characters outside of the domains of the programs to their employers, who seemed to care more about the marketing of the characters as commercial entities for profit than their actual merits as fictional beings and, particularly, the level of endearment held to them by their audiences. This was reflected most notoriously in Nickelodeon's decision to fire Kricfalusi from his own *Ren and Stimpy* series for a variety of reasons (including his laboriously slow production methods) in 1991. These concerns have been seen more recently in Cartoon Network's decision to revive *The Powerpuff Girls* without the participation (and, seemingly, the input) of its creator, Craig McCracken, and the same network's decision to dismiss Skyler Page, the creator of *Clarence*, from his program when his irresponsible public behavior threatened to damage the network's public image.

Still, an environment where animators were allowed to do their own thing was healthier and more productive than one where they were not, and the quality of these productions remained high, especially in the ones "run" by talented and visionary creators. The one thing that changed was the number of houses that existed to supply the needed production opportunities and the time-slot venues allotted to the genre, both of which had been dramatically altered in the 1990s and early 2000s and would be shifted further in the following years.

THE DIGITAL AGE: 2009–PRESENT

The television landscape as a whole at the end of the 2000s was much different than it had been in the previous halcyon period. Two important venues for original television animation production and distribution were entirely lost. NBC and CBS had abandoned their traditional Saturday morning schedules in the 1990s in favor of expanding their daytime news programming into the weekend. ABC and Fox held out longer, the former based on its ties to Disney (which acquired it in the mid-1990s), the latter largely to lucrative foreign import contracts, until they both gave up the ghost in the 2000s for similar economic reasons. Syndication was similarly abandoned over that time, in part due to the fact that the remaining producers in that venue were producing embarrassingly weak material but also because the profits of the venture went into decline across the board. As a consequence, production shifted chiefly to Nickelodeon, Cartoon Network, and Disney in regards to "clean" material aimed at children and young adults, and Fox, Comedy Central, and other venues in terms of raunchier material aimed at primarily adult audiences. Because these producers tended to favor their in-house production units for obvious reasons, independent producers were placed in a vulnerable position, with many folding or becoming absorbed into the establishment machines.

These actions were the result of the entire television industry consolidating, with power contained increasingly within fewer hands. Likewise, outside events were affecting it to a degree unseen since the 1960s. The so-called "global economic crisis" of the late 2000s caused noticeable reductions in levels of production, which increased the necessity of series to prove economic as well

as creative worth to potential landlords. As well, the increasing development of sophisticated technological achievements in the computer and smartphone sectors reduced the overall size of conventional television audiences, in part because distribution modes now allowed for the access of television-like programming content without traditional network and cable distribution structures acting as middlemen and even without the use of television sets themselves. The traditional providers have fought back as best they can, but everyone is now fighting over an audience that, while still holding vast potential, is no longer as consistent or reliable as it once was.

Yet, in this environment, the traditional position of television animation as an art form aimed at children (and, to a lesser degree, young adults) has served it well. Marketers understand that these areas represent unique, valuable, and important niche markets and target them to the same degree as they were in the heyday of Saturday morning. However, the marketing is not the be-all and end-all at the expense of the programming, as it could be during the worst of the Saturday morning era. The strategy seems to be much more to create solid programming around which to build marketing rather than the other way around, without condescending to the audience's stereotypical "interests" or insulting their intelligence with blatantly inserted "educational" material. Disney in particular has benefitted from this strategy by dividing its animation productions among various "brands" aimed at specific sectors of the audience, with the others following suit to a lesser extent. This has served it well, as it has profited from educational programs aimed at very young children at one end to enormously sophisticated and entertaining programs like *Phineas and Ferb* and *Gravity Falls* at the other, which have achieved great success with multiple audience sectors while deeply enriching and enhancing the vocabulary of television animation in the process. This unique understanding of the multifaceted potential of television animation bodes well for the genre's position in the future of television as an entertainment medium.

CONCLUSION

There can be no doubt that television animation is a unique form of entertainment that has survived and thrived nearly everywhere it has existed in the medium's history. Very few other genres in television history can come close to claiming this. Yet this success has come chiefly because of its chameleon-like ability to adapt to the times and to its ability to constantly prove its worth to marketers, television executives, and audiences alike over that time. The programs discussed in this encyclopedia represent both the great successes and the great failures of this unique art form and how it requires much more than a casual approach to viewing to be fully and completely understood, both then and now.

NOTES

1. For such a lengthy discussion, see David Perlmutter, *America 'Toons In: A History of Television Animation* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2014).
2. Winsor McCay, quoted in Leonard Maltin, *Of Mice and Magic: A History of American Animated Cartoons* (New York: Plume, 1987), 1.

• A •

***AAAH! REAL MONSTERS!* (1994–1997)**

STUDIOS: Klasky-Csupo, Nickelodeon

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

CREATORS: Gabor Csupo, Peter Gaffney

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Arlene Klasky, Gabor Csupo, Mary Harrington

PRODUCERS: Geraldine Clarke, Chuck Swenson

DIRECTORS: Jim Duffy, Igor Kovalov

WRITERS: Lawrence H. Levy, Roger Eschbacher, Peter Gaffney, Bruce Kalish, Lance Khazei, Kat Likkell, Mark Palmer

VOICE ACTORS: Charlie Adler (Ickis), David Eccles (Krumm), Christine Cavanaugh (Oblina), Gregg Berger (The Gromble), Brett Alexander (Bradley), Beverly Archer (Library Monster), James Belushi (Simon the Monster Hunter), Tim Curry (Zimbo), Cynthia Mann (Dizzle), Lisa Raggio (Exposia), Marcia Strassman (Hairyyette), Billy Vera (Slickis), Edward Winter (Dr. Buzz Cutt)

SYNOPSIS: A group of young monsters—headed by neurotic Ickis, shape-shifting Oblina, and indolent Krumm—learn their trade at the underground Monster Academy under the tutelage of the demanding Gromble.

COMMENTARY: Originally developed as a potential replacement for the production company's prior series *Rugrats* (q.v.), this project merged Klasky-Csupo's signature Eastern European production design with an attempt to appeal to an older audience, with mixed success. The fact that the monsters tried and repeatedly failed to scare the human beings around them (in part because, ironically, the humans were "scarier" than they were) reflects the program's own limited means and abilities in comparison to what came before. The series aimed to fill time rather than innovate and succeeded at that aim, if anything.

***ABBOTT AND COSTELLO* (1967)**

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, RKO, Jomar

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Lee Orgel

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Bud Abbott (Himself); Stan Irwin (Lou Costello); Mel Blanc, Hal Smith, John Stephenson, Don Messick, and Janet Waldo (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: The animated adventures of comedy team Bud Abbott and Lou Costello.

COMMENTARY: William "Bud" Abbott and Lou Costello (née Louis Cristillo) were the most popular comedy team in America during the 1940s and early 1950s. Despite, or perhaps because of, a lack of sophistication in their presentation and delivery, they starred in numerous hit films as well as on radio

and television. Tall and thin Abbott was the team's con-artist straight man, while short and portly Costello was his often-bewildered comedic colleague-cum-victim. Their most popular routine, still known today, was "Who's on First?"—the listing of the lineup of a mock baseball team. In the process of the routine, Costello became increasingly agitated as Abbott attempted to explain the lineup, which had confusing names for the players ("Who" on first base, "What" on second, "I Don't Know" on third, etc.)

The animated series featuring the duo was one of a spate of other short-run series attempting to capitalize on the popularity of comedians from the past. It was given a grace note of authenticity by the fact that Abbott, crippled by both money and health problems at the end of his life, portrayed himself; the previously deceased Costello was impersonated. This did not mean it was anything to shout about in terms of quality. Ironically, it featured little of the verbal humor that had made the pair famous and focused more on repetitious story lines that simply put the animated doppelgänger of Costello in a position to shout his model's original on-screen sign-on, "Hey Abbott!"

THE ABC SATURDAY SUPERSTAR MOVIE (A.K.A. *THE NEW SATURDAY SUPERSTAR MOVIE*; 1972–1974)

STUDIOS: Various, including Hanna-Barbera, Rankin/Bass, Warner Brothers, Universal, Filmation, Columbia, King Features, and Fred Calvert

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: This was an anthology series of longer-than-average television animation productions, chiefly serving as the airing of "pilots" for potential series, though a number of one-shot films were also produced. It served a similar function to the *Weekend* and *Afterschool Specials* produced by the same network, although this was the only one in the format that was exclusively animation in content. Among the features were vehicles for established animated characters, including Popeye (in *Popeye Meets the Man Who Hated Laughter*), Yogi Bear (*Yogi's Ark Lark*), and Daffy Duck and Porky Pig (who were oddly paired with Filmation's *Groovie Goolies* [q.v.]). However, the majority of the productions were transparent adaptations of live-action properties, including *That Girl*, *Nanny and the Professor*, *The Brady Bunch*, *Lassie*, *Lost in Space*, *Gidget*, and *The Munsters*, some of which worked—and some of which did not. Arguably, the most original-minded production of the group was Rankin/Bass's one-shot presentation *Willie Mays and the Say Hey Kid*, a baseball-themed fantasy that featured the legendary Mr. Mays portraying himself.

ACE VENTURA (1996–1997, 1999–2000)

STUDIOS: Nelvana, Morgan Creek

DISTRIBUTORS: CBS (1996–1997), Nickelodeon (1999–2000)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Michael Hirsh, Patrick Loubert, Clive Smith

PRODUCER: Eleanor Kearney

WRITERS INCLUDED: Seth MacFarlane

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Michael Hall (Ace Ventura), Richard Binsley (Spike), Vince Corraza (Shickadance), Al Waxman (Aguado), Bruce Tubbe (Emilio), David Beatty (Woodstock)

SYNOPSIS: Ace Ventura, America's best (and only) pet detective, engages in a variety of adventures with his monkey sidekick, Spike.

COMMENTARY: Based on the 1994 film *Ace Ventura: Pet Detective*, starring Jim Carrey, and its 1995 sequel *Ace Ventura: When Nature Calls*, this series continued the flippant scatological humor of the films. It was part of a cycle of series aping the brazen, overacting Carrey's cartoon-character style of performing; others were *The Mask* (q.v.) and *Dumb and Dumber* (q.v.). This program managed well despite the absence of Carrey, curbing (though only slightly) the lack of taste and restraint that the films had presented in deference to the character's new venue. The series was terminated at the end of 1997, when CBS abandoned Saturday morning programming, but a group of new episodes was presented along with reruns of the older ones when Nickelodeon revived the project.

ACTION LEAGUE NOW! (2003–2004)

STUDIO/DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

CREATOR/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Tim Hill

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Victor Hart (The Chief), Scott Paulsen (Meltman/Announcer), Chris Winters (ThunderGirl), Jim Krenn (The Flesh/Stinky Diver/The Mayor/Bill the Lab Guy/Johnny Cool), Alyssa Grahm (Justice), Stephen Gaich (Generic Boy)

SYNOPSIS: An incompetent group of superhero action figures, toys, and dolls, brought to life through the imagination of a child, find adventure in confronting their enemies and conflict in dealing with their own obvious personal faults.

COMMENTARY: Originally presented as part of Nickelodeon's animated anthology series *Kablam!* (q.v.), this project combined live-action footage with stop-motion animation through a process dubbed "Chuckimation." That was, arguably, what was most novel about the series, given that it was parodying narrative tropes other series had done better, before and after. The majority of the cast members were, at the time, on-air performers at radio station WDVE in Pittsburgh.

ACTION MAN (1995)

STUDIOS: Hasbro, DIC

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Andy Heyward, Michael Maliani

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Mark Griffin (Alex Mann/Action Man), Rolf Leenders (Dr. X), Dale Wilson (Knuck), Joely Collins (Natalie), Richard Cox (Jacques), Gary Chalk (Norris), David Hay (Gangrene), Iris Quinn (Vira)

SYNOPSIS: Action Man, “The Ultimate Extreme Action Hero,” heads a multinational task force that repeatedly thwarts the efforts of the evil Dr. X while trying to determine the exact nature of his past identity.

COMMENTARY: This project accompanied the attempted relaunch of a famed British toy, the nation’s equivalent of G.I. Joe. The visual advantages of the then-relatively novel art of computer animation were not enough to disguise the generic narrative flaws of the series, whose debts to predecessor projects like the *James Bond* series was obvious. As was common with most projects based on Hasbro toys, the emphasis was on the hardware rather than the characters, which was also the case when the character was later revived (see following entry).

ACTION MAN (2000)

STUDIOS: Hasbro, Mainframe

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Ian Pearson, Mark Ralston, Paul Sabella

PRODUCER: Jennifer Twine McCarron

DIRECTORS: Patrick Carroll, William Lau, Gino Nichele, Ezekial Norton, James E. Taylor, Steve Ball, Steve Sacks, Greg Donis, George Samilski, Sebastian Brodin, Gio Corsi, Andrew Duncan, Angela Stevenson, Collin Adams, Chuck Johnson

WRITERS INCLUDED: Brooks Wachtel, Steven Melching, Marty Isenberg, Robert Skir, Marsha Griffin, Kaaren Brown, Brynne Chandler Reeves, Andrew Robinson, Eric Karten, Nick DuBois, Len Wein, Kurt Welldon, Sean Roche

VOICE ACTORS: Mark Hildreth (Alex Mann/Action Man), Michael Dobson (Desmond “Grinder” Sinclair), Andrew Francis (Templeton Storm/Tempest), Mackenzie Gray (Nick Masters), Tabitha St. Germain (Fidget Wilson), Christopher Judge (Simon Grey), Peter Kelamis (Rikkie Syngh-Baines), Tyler Labine (Brandon Caine), Campbell Laine (Dr. X), Janyse Jaud (Asazi)

SYNOPSIS: Superathlete Alex Mann travels the world competing in sporting events; utilizing his unique ability, Alternative Motor and Physical (AMP) Factor, to his advantage; and staying ahead of the evil Dr. X, who wants AMP for himself.

COMMENTARY: This version toned down the militaristic attributes of its predecessor but still offered little in terms of truly gripping action and adventure. It possessed the unique quirk of suggesting Dr. X’s involvement with Mann’s past, but FOX canceled the project before the final “reveal” in the narrative.

THE ADDAMS FAMILY

***The Addams Family* (1973, 1973–1975)**

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCER: Iwao Takamoto

DIRECTORS: Charles Nichols, Carl Urbano

WRITERS: Bill Raynor, Bob Atkinson, Jack Mendelsohn, Myles Wilder, Dick Comby, Gene Thompson, Jim Carmichael, Carl Felberg, Dave Hanan, Fred Crippen, Jan Green, Don Sheppard

VOICE ACTORS: Lennie Weinrib (Gomez Addams), Janet Waldo (Morticia Addams/Granny Addams), Jackie Coogan (Uncle Fester Addams), Ted Cassidy (Lurch), Jodie Foster (Pugsley Addams), Cindy Henderson (Wednesday Addams)

The Addams Family (1992–1995)

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, Fils Cartoons

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: David Kirschner, Mark Young

PRODUCER: Ron Myrick

DIRECTORS INCLUDED: Ray Patterson, Robert Alvarez, Don Lusk, Carl Urbano

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: John Astin (Gomez Addams), Nancy Linari (Morticia Addams), Debi Derryberry (Wednesday Addams), Jeannie Elias (Pugsley Addams), Rip Taylor (Uncle Fester Addams), Carol Channing (Granny Addams), Jim Cummings (Lurch), Patrick Fraley (Cousin Itt Addams), Edie McClurg (Mrs. Normina Normanmeyer), Rob Paulsen (Mr. Norman Normanmeyer), Dick Beals (Norman Normanmeyer Jr., a.k.a. N. J.).

SYNOPSIS: The adventures of the eccentric Addams Family, whose ghoulish living quarters and countercultural behavior make them stand out widely from the rest of the crowd.

COMMENTARY: Originally invented by *New Yorker* artist Charles Addams in the 1940s, these now-familiar characters were originally nameless and silent and bent on bizarre activities—like pouring boiling oil on Christmas carolers! Their ongoing popularity led to their successful adaptation for television by writer/producer David Levy in the 1960s, for which Addams created their names and identities and added the character of “Thing,” a disembodied hand who served as a family pet. While the series lasted only two years on the air in original production, it developed a following in syndication. It would later be adapted successfully for film and the stage, as well as in two television animation productions.

The earlier version was the lesser one, despite the involvement of original cast members Coogan and Cassidy and an astonishing artistic fidelity to Addams’s original drawings. Rather than being stuck in the mansion of the earlier series, the family traveled in an RV version of the same, accompanied by some standard-issue Hanna-Barbera “funny animals.” The problem, in addition to the inclusion of an unnecessary laugh track on the soundtrack, was the fact that the writing, under the censorship limitations of the time, was banal and derivative, using poor source material and plotting. It was a poor substitute for the original series, unlike the second version.

The 1990s version was more faithful to the 1960s version, particularly by restoring Vic Mizzy’s original theme to its place of honor and also by having Astin marvelously reassert his status as the definitive Gomez, with Taylor equally good as a ramped-up Uncle Fester. An additional asset was



The Addams Family in its first animated incarnation. Hanna-Barbera Productions/Photofest © Hanna-Barbera Productions

the ability of these producers to more fully establish the Addamses as nonconformists by placing their mansion in the conservative community of Happydale Heights, which was as eccentric as the family in an opposite political direction. (Paulsen signaled this in his portrayal by deftly impersonating then-president George H. W. Bush!) Though it downplayed some of the darkness of its source and engaged in scatology more than was necessary, this was a program that was highly clever artistically. Audiences seemed to agree: At its peak, it had 3.5 million viewers per week.

ADHD (2013–2015)

See *Animation Domination High-Def*, FOX ADHD, ADHD; 2013–2015).

ADVENTURES FROM THE BOOK OF VIRTUES (1996–2001)

STUDIOS: PorchLight, FOX, KCET-TV

DISTRIBUTOR: PBS

CREATOR: William J. Bennett

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Bruce D. Johnson, William T. Bauman

PRODUCERS: Tom Gleason, Fred Schaefer

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS: William J. Bennett, Mark Young, Robert Laws

VOICE ACTORS: Kevin Michael Richardson (Plato), Jim Cummings (Aristotle), Kath Soucie (Aurora/Annie), Pamela Segall (Zach, early episodes), Andrew Francis (Zach, later episodes), Frank Welker (Socrates)

SYNOPSIS: Plato, a storytelling buffalo, assists children Zach and Annie with their life problems by acquainting them with literature that reinforces approaches to solving these issues.

COMMENTARY: The program had its origins in a similarly named book by Bennett, a cabinet secretary in the Reagan government and an outspoken “family values” advocate, published in 1993. Not surprisingly, this was a work that established and maintained a conservative tone in its presentation of the reading of literature as a value-building exercise. If anything, it serves as an effective means of showing how television animation can be used to express conservative, as well as liberal, political sentiments.

THE ADVENTURES OF BATMAN AND ROBIN (1968–1970)

See *Batman* (and related series).

THE ADVENTURES OF BATMAN AND ROBIN (1994–1997)

See *Batman* (and related series).

THE ADVENTURES OF CHICO AND GUAPO (2006)

STUDIO/DISTRIBUTOR: MTV

CREATORS/EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Orlando Jones, P. J. Pesce, Paul D’Acri

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Paul D’Acri (Chico Bustello/Cezar, early episodes), P. J. Pesce (Guapo Martinez/Frank C. Angelo, early episodes), Michael Donovan (Frank C. Angelo, later episodes), Orlando Jones (Concepcion Rodriguez/Hank Holiday, early episodes), Jose Pou (Cezar, later episodes), Lee Tockar (Hank Holiday, later episodes)

SYNOPSIS: Puerto Rican immigrant Chico Bustello and Dominican immigrant Guapo Martinez are determined to start successful careers in the music business, despite their incompetent behavior as employees of Angelo Records.

COMMENTARY: Originally featured as a recurring segment of Jones's eponymous series on FX, this project blatantly courted the adult audience for television animation by featuring not only sexual innuendo but also simulated sex acts as part of its narratives. These attributes drowned out the skilled acting that the creators/producers brought to the project, and it soon lost favor with audiences for obvious reasons.

ADVENTURES OF FAT ALBERT AND THE COSBY KIDS (1984)

See *Fat Albert and the Cosby Kids/The New Fat Albert Show/Adventures of Fat Albert and the Cosby Kids*.

THE ADVENTURES OF GULLIVER (1968–1970)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

PRODUCERS/DIRECTORS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Gary Dexter (Gary Gulliver), Herb Vigran (Tagg), John Stephenson (Thomas Gulliver/Captain Leech/King Pomp), Ginny Tyler (Flirtacia), Allan Melvin (Bunko), Don Messick (Egger/Glum)

SYNOPSIS: Gary Gulliver, purportedly the teenaged son of Jonathan Swift's original hero, is shipwrecked off the coast of Lilliput trying to find his lost father. Befriending the Lilliputians, he protects them from threats of attack by giant monsters and the machinations of villains Captain Leech and Bunko.

COMMENTARY: Despite being adapted several times in the visual media, Jonathan Swift's groundbreaking 17th-century satire *Gulliver's Travels* has never been seen in its full form there, save perhaps for a 1995 TV miniseries adaptation with Ted Danson in the title role. The majority of the adaptations have focused solely on Gulliver's interactions with the Lilliputians, minus Swift's bitter humor, and simply ignored the rest. This was no different. Rather than the novel, it more accurately resembled Max Fleischer's 1939 feature-film adaptation, which also added comic-opera villainy, buffoonery, and romance to a scenario where it really did not belong in the first place.

THE ADVENTURES OF HYPERMAN (1995–1996)

STUDIOS: Hyperion, Illumination, IBM, Columbia TriStar

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Kevin O'Donnell, Willard Carroll, Ken Corr, Russell P. Merleau, Craig Southard, Thomas L. Wilhite

WRITERS INCLUDED: J. D. Smith

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Kevin O'Donnell (Hyperman, early episodes/Studd Puppy, early episodes/Kidd Chaos, early episodes/Comptroller, early episodes), Steve

Mackall (Hyperman, later episodes), Frank Welker (Entrobe), Joyce Gadiot (Emma C. Squared, early episodes), Tamera Mowry (Emma C. Squared, later episodes), Max Casella (Studd Puppy, later episodes), Maurice LaMarche (Kidd Chaos/Comptroller, later episodes), Mark Petrakis (Hyperboss/Narrator, later episodes), Neil Ross (Narrator, early episodes), Justin John Ross (E. Brian Small), Mayim Bialik (Brittany Bright)

SYNOPSIS: Superpowered secret agent Hyperman is assisted in his fight against the villainous Entrobe by his pet “dog” Studd Puppy and teenaged scientific genius Emma C. Squared.

COMMENTARY: Adapted from a popular computer game produced by IBM, this series debuted simultaneously on network television, the World Wide Web (a first for that then-infant medium), and CD-ROM. That aside, it represented a very traditional approach to the integration of entertainment and education, which, while well integrated into the narratives, was driven into the ground by relentless off-camera narration.

THE ADVENTURES OF JIMMY NEUTRON, BOY GENIUS (2002–2007)

STUDIOS: DNA, O Entertainment, Nickelodeon

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

CREATORS: Keith Alcorn, John A. Davis, Steve Oedekerk

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Julia Pistor, John A. Davis, Steve Oedekerk, Keith Alcorn, Jon Price

PRODUCERS: Jed Spingam, Albie Hecht, Paul Marshal, Ben Gilberg

DIRECTORS: John A. Davis, Keith Alcorn, Mike Gasaway

WRITERS INCLUDED: Gene Grillo, Steven Banks

VOICE ACTORS: Debi Derryberry (Jimmy Neutron), Frank Welker (Goddard), Rob Paulsen (Carl Wheezer), Carolyn Lawrence (Cindy Vortex), Candi Milo (Nick Dean), Jeffrey Garcia (Sheen Estevez), Crystal Scales (Libby), Mark DeCarlo (Hugh Neutron), Megan Cavanagh (Judy Neutron), Andrea Martin (Ms. Fowl)

SYNOPSIS: Ten-year-old boy genius Jimmy Neutron lives and works in the town of Retroville, where he attempts to use his 210 IQ for the betterment of humanity.

COMMENTARY: One of the first television animation series to be made with computer animation rather than traditional celluloid technology, in part because the concept originated at computer-imaging specialists DNA, where Davis and Alcorn worked, in the early 1990s. The original pilot episode was released as a theatrical film in 2001, and its commercial success ensured the launch of the series the following year. As with many computer-animation products, the technical gloss served to obscure some of the derivative elements that were present in the plotting and characterization, though only briefly at times.



A boy genius and his friends in trouble—again! Nickelodeon Network/Photofest © Nickelodeon Network

***THE ADVENTURES OF LARIAT SAM* (1962–1965)**

STUDIOS: Terrytoons, Robert Keeshan

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

PRODUCER: Bill Weiss

DIRECTORS: Arthur Bartsch, Robert Kuwahara, Connie Rasinski, David Tendlar

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTOR: Dayton Allen (All characters)

SYNOPSIS: Good-natured cowboy Lariat Sam and his horse Tippytoes engage in comic conflicts with evil, represented by the villainous Badlands Meeney.

COMMENTARY: This series originated as a segment of CBS's long-running children's series *Captain Kangaroo*, and the limitations of that original format became apparent when it was shown as a series on its own in thirteen installments of three parts each. It was broadly comic, inoffensive, and nothing more or less, in keeping with its studio's house style.***THE ADVENTURES OF OLIVER TWIST* (1996)**

STUDIOS: Saban, Montana

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

DIRECTOR: Jean Cheville

WRITER: Charles Cotton

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Mona Marshall (Oliver Twist), Tony Pope (Charlie Bates), Eugene Rubenzer (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: In Victorian England, orphan Oliver Twist falls in with thief Fagin and his gang of pickpockets while always remaining one step ahead of the law, in the person of the villainous Workhouse Master.

COMMENTARY: A relatively faithful adaptation of the Charles Dickens novel, save for the conversion of the characters into anthropomorphic animals and the addition of some characters and ideas not originally in the novel.

***ADVENTURES OF PINOCCHIO* (1992)**

STUDIOS: Saban, Orbis, Tatsunoko

DISTRIBUTOR: HBO

SUPERVISING PRODUCER: Winston Richard

PRODUCER: Eric S. Rollman

DIRECTOR: Ippei Kuri

WRITERS INCLUDED: Robert V. Barron, Jingo Toriumi

VOICE ACTORS: Unknown

SYNOPSIS: The young boy puppet Pinocchio desires to become a real human being but has to go through a series of travails before he can.

COMMENTARY: This Canadian–Japanese coproduction had a spirit and tone that was closer to creator Carlo Collodi's vision of the story in the original novel than the much more well-known and well-regarded 1940 Walt Disney animated feature film—namely, something that dwelled much more on the evil side of life than Disney would have permitted. The misanthropic nature of the program may be one reason it did not last very long in original production.

THE ADVENTURES OF POW WOW (1956)

STUDIOS: Sam Singer, Tempetoons, Screen Gems

DISTRIBUTORS: CBS (1956), Syndicated (1958)

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: A project that likely would ring political alarm bells if launched today, this series of short films, originally seen on *Captain Kangaroo*, focused on the abbreviated adventures of a young indigenous boy named Pow Wow and how both he and (presumably) the audience at home learned valuable lessons about life from them. Though some aspects of it were based on indigenous folklore, this was undercut by the overtly Caucasian moralism of the time, reflected particularly by typically condescending narration on the soundtrack.

THE ADVENTURES OF RAGGEDY ANN AND ANDY

(1988–1990)

STUDIO/DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Christina Lange (Raggedy Ann), Josh Rodine (Raggedy Andy), Kath Soucie (Raggedy Cat), Dana Hill (Raggedy Dog), Kenneth Mars (The Camel with the Wrinkled Knees), Tracy Rowe (Marcella), Charlie Adler (Grouchy Bear), Katie Leigh (Sunny Bunny)

SYNOPSIS: Anthropomorphic dolls Raggedy Ann and Raggedy Andy and their similar friends have adventures in the fantasy world of Raggedyland.

COMMENTARY: Writer/artist Johnny Gruelle invented this famous rag-doll duo in 1917, and their continued popularity has led to their occasional adaptation to animation since then. The Max Fleischer Studio did the earliest adaptation in the 1940s, followed by a 1977 feature film directed by Richard Williams, and a brace of Chuck Jones–produced specials for CBS in 1978–1979, with June Foray and Daws Butler in the title roles. This has been the only adaptation of the characters as regular series characters so far and seemed to spring more from a desire to exploit market trends than genuine respect for the characters, given its limited and derivative plotting.

ADVENTURES OF SONIC THE HEDGEHOG (1993)See *Sonic the Hedgehog* (and related series).**THE ADVENTURES OF TEDDY RUXPIN (1987)**

STUDIOS: Alchemy II, Worlds of Wonder, DIC

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

PRODUCERS: Andy Heyward, Jean Chalopin, Alison Clayton, W. H. Stevens Jr., M. H. Cloutier, Christopher Brough, Jack Spillum, Dave Mephan

DIRECTOR: Chris Schouten

WRITERS: Lori Crawford, Gail Chapple, Bill Ruiz, Patricia Hicks, Jack Mendelsohn, Brian Jeffrey Street, Doug Stratton, Mary Crawford, Derek Diorlo, Dan Lallando, Mary MacKay-Smith, Patrick McCarthy, Steven McLoughlin, Carol Bruce Mendelsohn, Ron Ross, Alan Templeton, Phil Barron, Lenny Levit

VOICE ACTORS: Phil Barron (Teddy Ruxpin), John Stocker (Newton Gimmick), Will Ryan (Grubby), John Koensgen (Tweeg), Robert Bockstael (LB/Prince Aran), Holly LaRoque (Leota), Abby Hagyard (Aruzia), Pierre Paquette (Wooly Whatsit)

SYNOPSIS: Heroic teddy bear Teddy Ruxpin, assisted by octopedal insect Grubby and inventor Newton Gimmick, embarks on a quest to discover the truth behind an unearthed cache of magic crystals.

COMMENTARY: One of the most notable successes—and then notable failures—of the toy industry in the 1980s was Teddy Ruxpin, an anthropomorphic bear who interacted with children via prerecorded audiocassettes through a player installed inside him. Initially launched to great success in 1985, the novelty soon wore off, and by 1987, Worlds of Wonder, formed exclusively to market Teddy, was bankrupt. This animated series was a by-product of that success and offered little that was not present in other series of the time. The main asset was Koensgen's engaging performance as Tweeg, the villainous head of the Monsters and Villains Organization (MAVO), whose comic-opera antics helped point the way, it seems now, for an entire generation of similar evil-doers in other programs.

***THE ADVENTURES OF THE GALAXY RANGERS* (1986)**

STUDIOS: Transcom, Gaylord, ITF

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Abe Mandell

PRODUCERS: Robert Mandell, Eleanor Kearney

DIRECTOR: David Gregg

WRITERS: Owen Lock, Christopher Rowley, Henry Beck, Veronica Chapman, Brian Daley, Laurel Davis, Tom De Haven, Mick Farren, Daniel Fiorella, James Lucerno, Robert Mandell, John Rawlins, Laura Robson, Shelley Shapiro, Josepha Sherman, Cy Voris

VOICE ACTORS: Jerry Orbach (Zachary Foxx), Hubert Kelly (Doc Hartford), Laura Dean (Nikko/Aliza Foxx/Jessica Foxx), Doug Preis (Goose/Mogel the Space Sorcerer/The General/Nimrod/Jackie Subtract/Bubblehead the Memory Bird), Robert Bottone (Zozo/Squeegie/GV/Little Zach Foxx/Brappo), Maia Danzinger (Maya/Annie Oh/Mistwalker), Earl Hammond (Commander Joseph Walsh/Lazarus Slade/Captain Kidd/Wildfire Cody/King Spartos), Auben Kelly (Roy), Henry Mandell (Waldo/Geezi the Pedulont/Q Ball/Larry/Scarecrow/Kilbane/Crown Agent), Alexander Marshall (Buzzwang), Corrine Orr (Queen of the Crown/Kiwi Kids), Ray Owens (Macross)

SYNOPSIS: The Series 5 Rangers, a group of artificially enhanced superhumans, keep the peace on behalf of the Bureau of Extra-Terrestrial Affairs (BETA) against the forces of evil in the galaxy.

COMMENTARY: One of a group of programs of its time that juxtaposed the clichéd situations and characters of the western with those of science fiction, this series was more successful than the others in part because of the better sense of humor it possessed. Otherwise, it was largely business as usual.

ADVENTURES OF THE GUMMI BEARS (1985–1990)

STUDIO: Disney

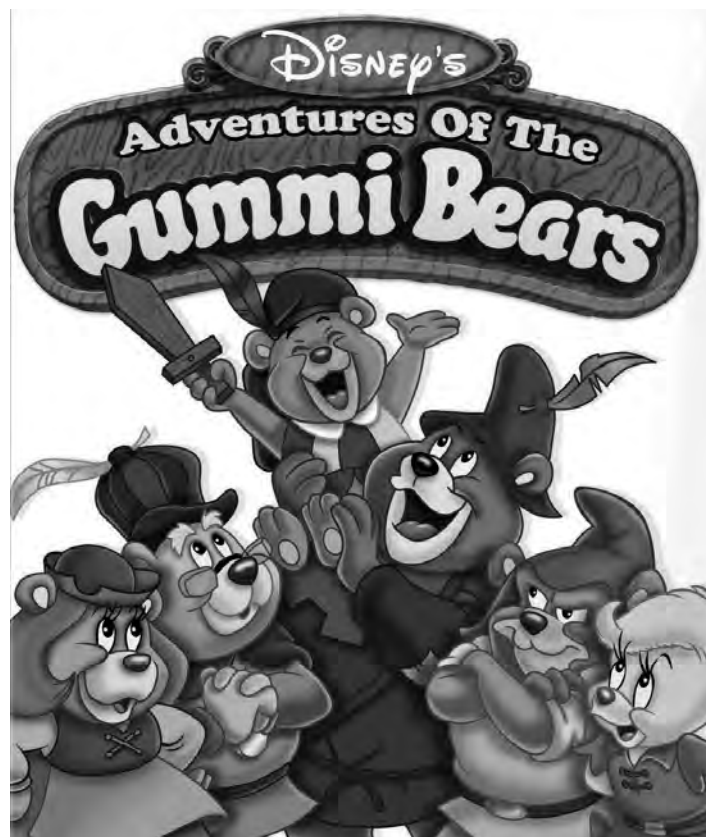
DISTRIBUTORS: NBC (1985–1989), ABC (1989–1990), Syndicated (1990)

PRODUCERS: Art Vitello, Tad Stones, Alan Zaslove, Tom Ruzicka

DIRECTORS: Art Vitello, Alan Zaslove

WRITERS INCLUDED: Jymn Magnon, Tad Stones

VOICE ACTORS: Corey Burton (Gruffi, later episodes/Toadie, later episodes/Gigglin, later episodes), Roger C. Carmel (Sir Tuxford, early episodes), Brian Cummings (Chillbeard, Jr., early episodes/Knight of Gummadon #1), Jim Cummings (Chummi), Walker Edmiston (Sir Thornberry), David Faustino (Knight of Gummadon #2), June Foray (Granni Gummi/The Most Peaceful Dragon in the World/Mobile Tree #1/Councillor Woodale), Bob Holt (Giant with the Wishing Stone/Dom Gordo of Ghent), Christian Jacobs (Cavin, early episodes), Brett Johnson (Cavin, later episodes), Katie Leigh (Sunni/Mobile Tree #2), Chuck McCann (Tadpole/Sir Tuxford, later episodes), Tress MacNeille (Marsipan/Great Oak/Mother/Lady Bane), Howard Morris (Sir Ponch), Lorenzo Music (Tummi/Bubble Dragon), Noelle North (Cubbi/Princess Calla/Mobile Tree #3), Alan Oppenheimer (Knight of Gummadon



The Gummi Bears was among Disney's first television animation productions. Buena Vista/Photofest © Buena Vista

#3), Pat Parris (Trina/Aquarianne), Rob Paulsen (Gusto), Will Ryan (Unwin/Gad/Zook/Ogres/King Carpie), Michael Rye (King Gregor/Duke Igthorn/Gowan/Malsinger), Bill Scott (Gruffi, early episodes/Toadie, early episodes/Sir Tuxford, early episodes/Angelo Divini/Ogre), Lennie Weinrib (Zorlock), Frank Welker (Ditto/Chillbeard Jr., later episodes/Mervyns/Mother Griffin), Paul Winchell (Zummi/Slumber Spire/Clutch/Tuck/Gigglin, early episodes)

SYNOPSIS: The medieval kingdom of Dunwyn is repeatedly saved from peril through the intervention of the magically powered Gummi Bears, who derive their abilities from the ingestion of gummiberry juice.

COMMENTARY: While handsomely animated in its studio's classic fashion, this early Disney television animation production was beset by a less-than-memorable narrative and character construction and presentation. Disney productions of this time tended to be more conservative than liberal in nature in this area, and what was presented here was typical, despite some exceptions (North's subtly rebellious princess and Rye's overripe resident bad-guy Igthorn, for example). The fact that multiple players could play the same parts at different times (as noted in the voice actor credits) reflects exactly how badly written the series was, despite the skills and reputations of those involved. Notable in this regard, however, was that the series represented the last major voice work of Bill Scott, who died in 1986; his reunion with longtime Jay Ward colleague June Foray for that brief period is equally important.

Despite the best efforts of the producers to create something that was both recognizably Disney and recognizable within the restricted creative environment of television animation, *Gummi Bears* was not entirely successful, regardless of its long production run. It only got some things right—a curse that would pass down to other studio productions of that decade as well.

ADVENTURES OF THE LITTLE MERMAID FANTASY (1991)

STUDIOS: Bohbot, Hexatol, Saban

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

TELEVISION DEVELOPER: Jean Chalopin

PRODUCERS: Eric S. Rollman, Koichi Sekazami, Satoshi Yashimoto, Keiko Tabani

DIRECTOR: Stephen Martinieri

WRITERS INCLUDED: Robert V. Barron, Tony Oliver, Tim Reed

VOICE ACTORS: Sonja Ball (Marina the Mermaid/Hedwig), Thor Bishopric (Prince Justin), Ian Finley (Dudhlee), Arthur Holden (Ridley), Gordon Masten (Chauncy), Anik Matern (Winnie), Aron Tager (Anselm), Jane Woods (Narrator)

SYNOPSIS: By downing a magical “potion of change,” Marina the Mermaid is able to visit dry land, where she learns about life from Prince Justin and his elderly tutor, Anselm, while avoiding the wrath of the sorceress Hedwig.

COMMENTARY: Though it avoided direct comparison with Disney's *Little Mermaid* movie from 1989, there is little doubt that this series was likely produced as a cash-in attempt on the film. Otherwise, why would it have been rushed on the market with derivative characters and storylines, to say nothing of a grammatically incorrect and nonsensical title?

THE ADVENTURES OF T-REX (1992)

STUDIOS: Gunther-Wahl, Kitty Film, Creativite et Developpement, All American Communications

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

CREATORS: Lee Gunther, Michael Wahl

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Michael Wahl, Lee Gunther, Hidenori Tagu, Mark Taylor

PRODUCERS: Rudy J. Zamora, Xavier Picard, Shigekazu Ochiai, Karen Marach, Robert Winthrop

DIRECTOR: Stephen Martinere

WRITERS INCLUDED: Peter Lawrence

VOICE ACTORS: Kathleen Barr, Michael Beattie, Gary Chalk, Jennifer Chopping, Ian Corlett, Michael Dobson, Kevin Hayes, Phil Hayes, Janyse Jaud, Allesandro Jauliani, Annabel Kershaw, Scott McNeil, Robert O. Smith, Venus Terzo, and Dale Wilson (Specific roles unknown)

SYNOPSIS: In dinosaur-dominated Rep City, the superpowered Tyrannosaurus brothers fight the criminal kingpin "Big Boss" Graves between performing gigs as a musical group.

COMMENTARY: This series was a borrowing from much of what was popular in television animation at the time and, as with most derivations, suffered because of this. The major element of novelty was the use of the imitations of celebrity impersonation voices for the title characters: the lead T-Rex sounded like Jack Benny, while the others sounded like Peter Falk, Jimmy Durante, Art Carney, and former U.S. president Jimmy Carter.

ADVENTURE TIME (2010–PRESENT)

STUDIOS: Frederator, Cartoon Network

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATOR: Pendleton Ward

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Pendleton Ward, Fred Seibert, Derek Drymon, Adam Muto

PRODUCERS: Kelly Crews, Pendleton Ward, Nick Jennings, Thuroop Van Orman

DIRECTORS INCLUDE: Patrick McHale, Larry Leichtler, Nate Cash, Adam Muto, Elizabeth Ito, Andres Salaff, Cole Sanchez, David O'Reilly, Maasaki Yuasa, David Ferguson, Kristin Lepore

WRITERS INCLUDE: Elizabeth Ito, Adam Muto, Pendleton Ward, Sean Jimenez, Patrick McHale, Kent Osborne, Niki Yang, J. G. Quintel, Cole Sanchez, Ako Castuera, Rebecca Sugar, Somilvay Xayayphone, Tom Herpich, Jesse Moynihan, Natasha Allegri, Skyler Page, Steve Wolfhard, David O'Reilly, Graham Falk, Luke Pearson, Andy Ristaino, Derek Ballard, Jillian Tamaki, Brandon Graham

VOICE ACTORS: Jeremy Shaada (Finn), John DiMaggio (Jake), Hynden Walch (Princess Bubblegum), Tom Kenny (The Ice King), Olivia Olson (Marceline the Vampire Queen), Pendleton Ward (Lumpy Space Princess), Niki Yang (BMO), Polly Lou Livingston (Tree Trunks)

SYNOPSIS: In the postapocalyptic world of Ooo, young human boy Finn and his shape-shifting canine pal Jake engage in a variety of weird adventures in the course of their travels. Princess Bubblegum (ruler of a kingdom consist-

ing entirely of beings made of candy), Marceline (whose full name is self-explanatory), the alien Lumpy Space Princess, BMO (a sentient video game console), and Tree Trunks (a miniature elephant) are regular aids/companions of the duo, while the incompetent, kinky Ice King is their regular antagonist.

COMMENTARY: This synopsis only hints at what this very unique but equally perplexing series is *really* all about. Part of the reason for this is the unusual production methods employed by creator/executive producer Ward. His insistence on the staff producing narratives in isolation from each other without knowledge of what the others are doing has resulted in a series that has little narrative framework to support it as a larger work, save for the setting and characters. Individual segments can sometimes have little to connect them besides these elements. As a result, there is often little continuity in the narratives, nor anything resembling traditional “stories,” which is as unnerving and frustrating to some viewers as it is enjoyable to others. However, by insisting the voice actors record their lines together in a measured fashion, Ward has also—at least in his own program—reduced the stereotypically excessive elements of animation voice acting, which also helps the series stand out from the crowd. The greatest strength of the series is the great level of setting-world building, character-backstory creation, and evolution Ward and his staff have done over the series’ run. These remain constant and have been adapted and refined with great versatility in spite of the alternating awkwardness and grandiosity with which many episodes are staged. Each installment within the episode structure rises and falls on its own merits, and this is the only way to view it fairly.

The series originated as a segment of the Nickelodeon anthology series *Random! Cartoons* (q.v.), but Nickelodeon did not accept it for series production; Cartoon Network did so only after it demonstrated great popularity on the Internet. This popularity has been maintained in spite of the inconsistencies of the show’s production methods, in part because of the memorable and relatable elements of the lead and supporting characters, which have more staying power than many others of their kind. Extensively issued on DVD, it has also won Emmy and Peabody Awards and has been adapted as a highly successful award-winning graphic novel series. This program has slowly but surely established its status as one of the great classics of its decade.

ÆON FLUX (1995)

STUDIOS: Colossal Pictures, MTV

DISTRIBUTOR: MTV

CREATOR: Peter Chung

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Abby Terkuhle, Japhet Asher

PRODUCERS: Catherine Winder, Peter Chung

DIRECTORS: Peter Chung, Howard Baker, Robert Valle

WRITERS: Peter Chung, Peter Gaffney, Shari Goodhartz, Japhet Asher, Mark Mars, Michael Ferris, John Brancato, Todd French, Eric Singer

VOICE ACTORS: Denise Poirier (Æon Flux), John Rafter Lee (Trevor Goodchild), Kermit Miller (Ilbren)

SYNOPSIS: In a future, extraterrestrial setting, guerrilla warrior/dominatrix Æon Flux fights off various murderous foes and in the process is regularly killed at the end of segments but resurrected again without explanation in the following ones.

COMMENTARY: Originally presented as a segment of MTV's *Liquid Television* (q.v.) in 1992, this project was distinguished as a series by the particularities creator Chung brought to the concept. These included near-constant character movement with virtually no dialogue, hand-drawn frames on painted backgrounds, and character designs unique to the series. The excessive violence, the title character's nearly nude body, and her foregrounded sexual proclivities clearly typed this as an "adult"-oriented animated series.

Only 10 half-hour episodes were produced before Chung and MTV decided to terminate the project permanently, though the company later unsuccessfully adapted the character in a live-action feature film project.

ALADDIN (1994–1997)

STUDIO: Disney

DISTRIBUTORS: Disney (1994), Syndicated (1994–1997), CBS (1994–1996)

PRODUCERS: Tad Stones, Alan Zaslove, Maia Mattise

DIRECTORS: Bob Hathcock, Rob LaDuca, Tony Shelton, Alan Zaslove, Gerald Baldwin, Carole Beers, Dale Case, Barbara Dourmakshin-Case, Terrence Harrison, Eddy Houchins, John Kimball, Marsh Lamore, Rick Leon, Mircea Manta, Mitch Rochon, Bob Shellhorn, Mike Svayko, Steven Trenbirth, James Walker, Woody Yocum, Bob Zamboni

WRITERS: Duane Capizzi, Doug Langdale, Mark McCorkle, Bill Motz, Bob Roth, Bob Schooley, Mark Seidenberg, Tad Stones, Michael Ryan, Mirith J. S. Colao, Kevin Campbell, Tom Minton, Steve Roberts, Bruce Reid Schaefer, Robert Schechter, Richard Stanley, Jan Strand, Brian Swenlin, Marlowe Weisman, Thomas Hart

VOICE ACTORS: Scott Weinger (Aladdin), Linda Larkin (Princess Jasmine), Dan Castelláneta (Genie/Frijheed), Gilbert Gottfried (Iago), Frank Welker (Abu/Faisal/Rajah/Xerxes), Val Bettin (Sultan of Agrabah), Jason Alexander (Abis Mal al-Bhatros), Bebe Neuwirth (Mirage), Michael Jeter (Runter), Carol Kane (Brawnilda), Jim Cummings (Akbar/Amal al-Kahteeb/Dominus Trask/Farouk/Hamar/Mad Sultan/Rasoul/Wazou), Jonathan Brandis (Mozenrath), John Astin (Sidney), Rene Auberjonois (Nefir Hassanuf), James Avery (Haroud Hazi Bin), Julie Brown (Sallen), Hamilton Camp (Ayam Agooll), Nancy Cartwright (Sprites), Christine Cavanaugh (Bud), Charlie Adler (Mekanikles, early episodes), Cam Clarke (Mekanikles, later episodes), E. G. Daily (Little Kid #1), J. D. Daniels (Little Kid #2), Jennifer Darling (Hipsodeath, early episodes), Kate Mulgrew (Hipsodeath, later episodes), Keith David (Minos/Zabar), Debi Derryberry (Dondi), Michael Dorn (Brisbane), Hector Elizondo (Malcho), Jonathan Freeman (Ding), Matt Frewer (Chaos), Ed Gilbert (Fasir), Ron Glass (Mamud's Vizier), Dorian Harewood (Murk/Sootenai), Haven Hartman (Little Kid #3), Erv Immerman (Destiny Stone Guardian), Tino Insana (Prince Uncouthma), Robert Ito (Yin), Charity James (Fatima), Tony Jay (Khartoum), Tone Loc (Magma), Kellie Martin



A durable Disney franchise in its television incarnation. Disney Channel/Photofest © Disney Channel

(Sadira), Malcolm McDowell (Shaman), Candi Milo (Thundra), Tahj Mowry (Tonti), Stuart Pankin (Pasta al-Dente), Valerie Pappas (Eden), Rob Paulsen (Omar/Worm), Ron Perlman (Arbutus/General Gouda), Peter Renaday (Village Elder), Maggie Roswell (Woman), Kath Soucie (Mother), Dave Thomas (Makha-na), Brian Tochi (Yang), Susan Tolsky (Scara), Marcia Wallace (Umpa), B. J. Ward (Fortune Teller)

SYNOPSIS: Reformed thief Aladdin has a variety of adventures defending the Arabian Nights sultanate of Agrabah from the forces of evil.

COMMENTARY: Disney's 1992 musical feature-film version of the Arabian Nights story "Aladdin and His Wonderful Lamp" was one of the most artistically and commercially successful films to come out of the studio since the death of Walt Disney in 1966. Chiefly, that came as the result of the tuneful score provided by the team of Alan Menken, Howard Ashman, and Tim Rice (one of these songs served as the program's theme) and the manic acting of Robin Williams, whose showstopping performance as the Genie was a spectacle in and of itself. The enduring appeal of the approach taken by the producers, though it was one that avoided the gritty realism inherent in the original story, has led to a long afterlife for the film, including several direct-to-video sequels and, more recently, a theatrical adaptation.

This television series version offered little that was not evident in the original source, as was common in Disney television animation productions

of the era, save for the noticeable absence of Williams (replaced by Castellaneta, as noted in the voice actor credits) and any musical numbers. Because Jafar, the villain of the original film, had been killed off, a variety of equal and lesser evildoers took his place, many given gravitas by celebrity performers (also noted in the voice actor credits) they would certainly not have had on their own. The other major change was that Iago, the quarrelsome parrot who had been Jafar's henchman, was now on the side of the good. Evidently, the producers didn't think the audience would notice or care about this, or they simply wanted to continue using what they thought was a good character (others might disagree). Although the show was well animated in the Disney fashion, the adventure and comedy components kept canceling each other out, unlike in the film, so that, rather than being faithful to the spirit of the source, it ended up being six of one and a half-dozen of the other—like much else coming out of Disney's television animation unit then.

ALF (*ALF*, 1987–1989; *ALF TALES*, 1989–1990)

STUDIOS: Alien, DIC, Saban

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

CREATORS: Paul Fusco, Tom Patchett

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Bernie Brillstein, Paul Fusco, Tom Patchett

DIRECTORS INCLUDED: Dan Riba, Kevin Altieri

WRITERS INCLUDED: David Cohen, Roger Schulman, Duane Capizzi, Alicia Marie Schudt

VOICE ACTORS: Paul Fusco (Gordon Shumway, a.k.a. Alf), Peggy Mahon (Flo), Paulina Gillis (Augie/Rhoda), Thick Wilson (Larson Petty/Bob), Dan Hennessey (Sloop), Rob Cowan (Skip), Ellen Ray Hennessey (Stella), Noam Zylberman (Curtis)

SYNOPSIS: On the planet Melmac, 193-year-old alien Gordon Shumway undergoes a series of humorous adventures.

COMMENTARY: The source of this project was *Alf*, a surprisingly popular live-action sitcom debuting on NBC in 1986 and running there until 1990. In that version, the title character (whose name is an acronym for "Alien Life Form") fled his imploding planet and settled on Earth, living with an American family until he was captured by the American military at the end of the series' run. Creator/executive producer Fusco was the on-screen voice of the character in both the live-action and animated versions, although, in the live version, the character was allegedly "played" by a little person in a suit.

The animated version was a logical extension of the program's fan base, but it was able to be more adventurous in terms of its storytelling than the stage-bound live version. It focused on the title character's youthful existence with his family as Gordon Shumway on the planet Melmac. While bound to the prosocial attributes of storytelling in television animation of the time, it was able to transcend them in unique ways: for example, the episode "20,000 Years in Driving School," where Gordon is sent to a maximum-security driving instruction camp merely for getting a single speeding ticket!

The satirical thrust of this aspect was extended in 1988, when the program expanded to an hour to incorporate "Alf Tales," featuring the show's

cast parodying a variety of fairy tales, fables, movies, and legends in its unique fashion. *Alf Tales* aired as its own series in 1989–1990, when the parent series was canceled, although this version consisted exclusively of reruns.

***ALIENATORS: EVOLUTION CONTINUES* (2001–2002)**

STUDIOS: DreamWorks, Dentsu, Montecito, DIC, Columbia TriStar

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Andy Heyward, Michael Maliani, Joe Medjuck, Tom Pollock, Ivan Reitman

PRODUCER: Michael Ryan

WRITERS: Dick Grunert, Paul Quinn, Michael Ryan, Michael Trouillet, Ben Townsend, Kurt Weldon

DIRECTORS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Kirby Morrow (Dr. Ira Kane), Andrew Francis (Wayne Green), Cusse Mankuma (Professor Harry Block), Akiko Morrison (Lieutenant Lucy Mai), John Payne (General Woodman)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: This series was based on the 2001 feature film *Evolution* (and was broadcast under the film's name for that reason in Great Britain), making it another adaptation to animation of a film project by executive producer Reitman (the most successful of these being the earlier *Real Ghostbusters* [q.v.] from the same animation studio). The film focused on a pair of instructors at an Arizona community college determined to explore the aftereffects of a meteor crash in the area, despite the U.S. government's ham-fisted efforts to stop them. Said meteor crash resulted in the emergence of a group of malevolent single-celled organisms known as the Genus, who were determined to take over Earth. Predictably, the animated series largely continued where the film left off, featuring the film's leads in conflict with the Genus, along with GASSIE (Genetically Altered Symbiotic Stasis in Evolution), a token good-guy alien. Lieutenant Mai, a made-for-the-show creation, was the team's reluctant military ally, while the (fictional but aptly named) Center for Impending Disaster represented the U.S. government's hammer-every-nail response to the situation. Significantly, the program's launch was delayed due to the aftereffects of what happened on September 11, 2001, which might be about the only truly notable thing about it.

***ALL DOGS GO TO HEAVEN* (1996)**

STUDIOS: MGM, Claster

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Paul Sabella, Jonathan Dern

PRODUCER: John Grusd

DIRECTORS: Gary Selvaggio, Larry Leker, Paul Sabella, John Grusd

WRITERS INCLUDED: Ray Pointer, Brenda Rees, Tom Nesbitt, James Wheelock

VOICE ACTORS: Steven Weber (Charlie B. Barkin), Dom DeLuise (Itchy Itchiford), Ernest Borgnine (Carface Carruthers), Charles Nelson Reilly (Killer), Sheena Easton (Sasha LaFleur), Bebe Neuwirth (Annabelle/Belladonna), Mark Benninghofen (Lance)

SYNOPSIS: Canine guardian angels Charlie and Itchy are dispatched to Earth to perform acts of kindness but find it harder to do than they thought.

COMMENTARY: A 1989 Don Bluth-directed feature film of the same name, distributed by United Artists, was the putative source of this series. In it, Charlie (portrayed by Burt Reynolds) is a rascal con artist who is denied entry to heaven until he is able to perform a good deed to atone for past mischief. However, the series is more accurately the child of the 1996 MGM-produced sequel (with Charlie Sheen replacing Reynolds and Borgnine assuming the role Vic Tayback played in 1989), which was nowhere near as creatively and commercially successful as the original. Bluth was not involved that time. That film can therefore accurately be said to be the “pilot” episode for what went on here, save for the fact that Weber replaced Sheen as Charlie. The latter film had more of a gender balance in the largely all-canine characterization than the first (represented by Easton as restaurateur Sasha and Newirth as the heavenly archangel Annabelle, as well as her evil doppelgänger Belladonna), and the series followed suit. It wasn’t much in terms of innovative plotting and characterization, but it earned an Emmy for best original song, as well as a voice-acting nomination for Borgnine.

ALLEN GREGORY (2011)

STUDIOS: Paul-Mogel-Goodman, Chernin, 20th Century Fox

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX

CREATORS: Jonah Hill, Andrew Mogel, Jarrad Paul

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Jonah Hill, Andrew Mogel, Jarrad Paul, Peter Chernin, Katherine Pope, David A. Goodman

DIRECTORS: Bernard Derriman, Colin Heck, Tyree Dellihay, Wesley Archer, Jennifer Coyle

WRITERS: Jonah Hill, Andrew Mogel, Jarrad Paul, Michael Colton, John Aboud, Hayes Davenport, Guy Endore Kaiser, Sean Clements, Domenic Dierkes, Gene Hong

VOICE ACTORS: Jonah Hill (Allen Gregory De Longpre/Guillermo), French Stewart (Richard De Longpre), Nat Faxon (Jeremy De Longpre), Joy Osmanski (Judith De Longpre), Cristina Pucelli (Patrick), Will Forte (Superintendent Stuart Rossmire/Ian), Renee Taylor (Principal Judith Gottlieb), Leslie Mann (Gina Winthrop), Keith David (Carl Trent D’Avis, a.k.a. Cole Train), Lacey Chabert (Beth), Nasim Pedrad (Val), Jake Johnson (Joel Zadak)

SYNOPSIS: Allen Gregory De Longpre, the precociously intelligent seven-year-old son of a wealthy gay couple, is forced to attend a local elementary school due to sudden financial hardship forced on his family.

COMMENTARY: This almost universally disliked series lasted for merely seven episodes in original production. It seems to have come into existence almost exclusively as a showcase for the talents of creator/executive producer/star Hill, whose previous film ventures had displayed the same combination of shock and puerile humor as this series. Despite its somewhat groundbreaking depiction of a homosexual couple in the leading adult roles, the use of highly outrageous plot devices (e.g., Allen’s unrequited love for the elderly

school principal) and further, similar shock tactics ensured that the program, however well intentioned, was destined for the short run it received.

ALL GROWN UP (2003–2004)

See *Rugrats/All Grown Up*.

ALL-NEW DENNIS THE MENACE (1993–1994)

See *Dennis the Menace/All-New Dennis the Menace*.

THE ALL-NEW EWOKS (1986–1987)

See *The Ewoks* (and related series).

THE ALL-NEW GUMBY (1988)

See *The Gumby Show/All-New Gumby*.

THE ALL-NEW PINK PANTHER SHOW (1978–1979)

See *The Pink Panther* (and related series).

THE ALL-NEW POPEYE HOUR (1978–1981)

See *Popeye* (and related series).

ALL-NEW POUND PUPPIES (1987–1988)

See *Pound Puppies* (and related series).

ALL-NEW SUPER FRIENDS HOUR (1977–1978)

See *Super Friends* (and related series).

ALL-STAR LAFF-A-LYMPICS (A.K.A. *SCOOBY'S ALL-STAR LAFF-A-LYMPICS*, *SCOOBY'S ALL STARS*; 1977–1979)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: Art Scott, Alex Lovy, Don Jurwich, Iwao Takamoto

DIRECTOR: Charles Nichols

WRITERS INCLUDED: Andy Heyward, Neal Barbera, Tom Dagenais, Bill Ackerman, Howard Swift, Alvaro Arce

VOICE ACTORS: Daws Butler (Snagglepuss/Yogi Bear/Huckleberry Hound/Hokey Wolf/Snooper/Blabber/Wally Gator/Quick Draw McGraw/Augie Doggy/Mr. Jinks/Scooby Dum/Dirty Dalton), John Stephenson (Doggy Daddy/Dread Baron/The Great Fondoo), Don Messick (Scooby Doo/Boo Boo/Pixie/Dastardly Dalton/Mumbly/Mr. Creepley/Announcer), Bob Holt (Grape Ape/Orfol Octopus/Dinky Dalton), Frank Welker (Mildew Wolf/Yakky Doodle/Dynomutt/Tinker/Soeey Pig/Magic Rabbit), Julie Bennett (Cindy Bear),

Casey Kasem (Shaggy), Scatman Crothers (Hong Kong Phooey), Julie McWhirter (Jeannie), Joe Besser (Babu), Gary Owens (The Blue Falcon), Mel Blanc (Captain Caveman/Speed Buggy), Marilyn Scheffler (Brenda Chance/Daisy Mayhem), Vernee Watson (Dee Dee Sykes), Laurel Page (Taffy Dare/Mrs. Creeply), Alan Reed (Fred Flintstone)

SYNOPSIS: Three teams—the Yogi Yahooeys, the Scoobie Doobies, and the Really Rottens—compete in a series of varied and outlandish athletic events all over the world.

COMMENTARY: By the late 1970s, Hanna-Barbera needed no one to rip them off creatively; they were doing that just fine themselves. A case in point was this project. Produced to coincide with the studio's 20th anniversary (and in the same year that a vindictive strike hit the organization), this was largely an expedient exercise in stargazing (for the audience) and navel-gazing (for the animators). The concept had been seen before more effectively in *Wacky Races* (q.v.), and all of the major cast members had been seen before in their own programs. The Really Rottens, the sole original creations, had their comic villainy broadly telegraphed in their very names, and nobody except the other characters in the show would have thought them "evil" in the slightest. All in all, it seemed much more likely to have viewers longing for what had been than what was because what was here wasn't very much.

THE ALVIN SHOW/ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS

***The Alvin Show* (1961–1962)**

STUDIOS: Format Films, Bagdasarian

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Herbert Klynn

PRODUCER: Leo Salkin

DIRECTORS: Osmond Evans, Rudy Larriva, Gil Turner, Alan Zaslove

WRITERS: Leo Salkin, Cal Howard, Bob Kurtz, Ed Nofzinger, Dale Hale, Jan Strejohn, Al Bertino, Jack Cosgriff, Bill Danch, Chris Jenkyns, Dick Kinney, Tedd Pierce

VOICE ACTORS: Ross Bagdasarian (Alvin/Simon/Theodore/David Seville/Sam Valiant), Shepard Menken (Clyde Crashcup), June Foray (Daisybelle), Lee Patrick (Mrs. Frumpington), Joe Besser (Dragon)

***Alvin and the Chipmunks* (1983–1990)**

STUDIOS: Bagdasarian, Ruby-Spears

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Joe Ruby, Ken Spears

PRODUCERS: Ross Bagdasarian Jr., Janice Karman

DIRECTOR: Charles Nichols

WRITERS INCLUDED: Cliff Ruby, Elana Lesser

VOICE ACTORS: Ross Bagdasarian Jr. (Alvin/Simon/Theodore/David Seville), Janice Karman (Jeannette/Brittany/Eleanor)

SYNOPSIS: The singing Chipmunks—Alvin, Simon, and Theodore—trouble the life of their manager/protector David Seville when not performing as a successful musical group.

COMMENTARY: This remarkably long-lasting media franchise began in the late 1950s, when Ross Bagdasarian, a struggling singer/songwriter/actor of Armenian descent, found a way of exploiting the pliability of the musical recording process as a novelty act. He would record his voice at normal speed, then play back the tape at double that speed; this resulted in the voice sounding high-pitched and distorted. His first success was with "Witch Doctor," a number-1 pop hit released in 1958 under the pseudonym David Seville, but he achieved greater success later that year with another number-1 pop hit, "The Chipmunk Song," introducing the now-familiar rodent trio. They were named in honor of Alvin "Al" Bennett (an executive at Liberty Records, Bagdasarian's label), Simon "Sy" Waronker (the cofounder of Liberty), and Theodore "Ted" Keep (the recording engineer Bagdasarian worked with to achieve his effects). Although appreciation of them, then and now, is a somewhat divisive thing, the recording received three Grammy awards at that inaugural ceremony, and Bagdasarian made further recordings with the "group." The assumed juvenile appeal of the characters (one of the Grammys had been for best recording for children), coupled with *The Flintstones'* igniting of a short-lived boom in prime-time animation, led to *The Alvin Show*, named after the trio's most prominent and quarrelsome member.

The Alvin Show proved not to be as an effective a showcase for the group as their records had been. Efforts were made to give the trio corporeal form almost as soon as their initial records were released, with vastly mixed results, but Format Films was able to create an appealing design for them. However, Bagdasarian's sped-up voice technique was nowhere near as effective for dialogue as it was for music, and while highly defined and individualized personalities were created for the boys and David Seville, this was a major stumbling block. That and poor ratings doomed it after one season of initial production. Ironically enough, the original supporting feature developed by Format was arguably better in terms of production and more memorable. This segment featured an egocentric scientist named Clyde Crashcup, who, with the aid of his nearly mute assistant Leonardo, proceeded to "invent" such things as baseballs, birthdays, bathtubs, and housewives. (This segment foreshadowed the similar characterizations and relationship of Dr. Bunsen Honeydew and Beaker on *The Muppet Show* and that of the protagonists of *Phineas and Ferb* [q.v.]).

Bagdasarian died in 1972, five years after releasing his final Chipmunks record, and initially, it seemed the project would die with him. However, later in the 1970s, his son, Ross Jr., began to resurrect the franchise in partnership with his wife, Janice Karman. Some successful "comeback" albums led to a Chuck Jones-produced special in 1981, which in turn led to the *Alvin and the Chipmunks* series. This was a better showcase for the trio, as it was better written and directed, with an element of satire in the humor, and audiences responded, with an average of 10 million viewers per episode at its peak. The major addition to the show was a female counterpart to the boys (voiced by Karman): the Chippettes, consisting of Brittany, Jeanette, and Eleanor, whose personalities mirrored those of their male counterparts. When *Alvin and the Chipmunks* ended, a successor series, *Chipmunks Go*

to the Movies, consisting of burlesques of popular films, kept them on the air for another year.

After that, the franchise died down a bit, until the mid-2000s, when the Bagdasarian company, now working with 20th Century Fox, successfully relaunched the characters as computer-generated images mixed with live action in a series of successful films. That, in turn, led to a new series—this one called *ALLLVIHNNN! and the Chipmunks* (in honor, perhaps, of the bellowing cry David Seville frequently shouted at Alvin)—based on the computer-generated images, which lies outside the time frame of this book but is largely business as usual and as expected.

AMAZIN' ADVENTURES (1992–1996)

STUDIOS: DIC, Saban, Bohbot

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: This was a two-hour programming block modeled on the success of Disney's "Disney Afternoon," focusing chiefly on action-adventure programming from the producers. The programs featured in the block are addressed on their own terms elsewhere in this book. They included *Around the World in Eighty Dreams*, *Double Dragon*, *Gulliver's Travels*, *The Hurricanes*, *Inspector Gadget*, *Mega Man*, *Mighty Max*, *Princess Gwenevere and the Jewel Riders*, *Skysurfer Strike Force*, *Street Sharks*, *Ultraforce*, and *The Wizard of Oz*.

THE AMAZING CHAN AND THE CHAN CLAN (1972–1974)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

DIRECTORS: Iwao Takamoto, Charles Nichols

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Keye Luke (Charlie Chan), Bob Ito (Henry Chan), Brian Tochi (Alan Chan), Stephen Wong (Stanley Chan, early episodes), Lennie Weinrib (Stanley Chan, later episodes), Virginia Ann Lee (Suzie Chan, early episodes), Cheryl Lynn Lee (Suzie Chan, later episodes; Mimi Chan, early episodes), Leslie Juwai (Suzie Chan, later episodes; Mimi Chan, later episodes), Leslie Kuna-mota (Anne Chan, early episodes), Jodie Foster (Anne Chan, later episodes), Michael Takamoto (Tom Chan, early episodes), John Gunn (Tom Chan, later episodes), Jay Jay Jue (Flip Chan, early episodes), Gene Andrusco (Flip Chan, later episodes), Debbie Jue (Nancy Chan, early episodes), Beverly Kushida (Nancy Chan, later episodes), Robin Toma (Scooter Chan, early episodes), Michael Morgan (Scooter Chan, later episodes), Don Messick (Chu Chu)

SYNOPSIS: Famed Asian detective Charlie Chan is assisted by his 10 children while attempting to unravel perplexing mysteries.

COMMENTARY: Based on a real-life Chinese police detective who worked in Honolulu in the early 20th century, Charlie Chan was introduced to media audiences in the 1920s in the novel *The House without a Key*, written by Caucasian author Earl Derr Biggers. This led to a series of novels, terminated

by Biggers's death, but Chan outlived his creator by starring in a brace of popular films from various studios between 1926 and 1949, with various actors in the lead role. Noted as much for his usage of pseudo-Asian aphorisms (e.g., "Dead man tell no tale") as his detective skills, Chan traveled the globe doing his work in his films, often accompanied by his "Number One Son," Lee (played chiefly by Keye Luke), and his cowardly African American valet, Birmingham Brown (Mantan Moreland).

Chan frequently mentioned the fact that he had a large family, but this series was the only time viewers saw all of them on screen. It was one of several programs that attempted to bring popular-culture figures from the past into the contemporary world, with mixed success. The uniqueness of the character was largely lost in the need to make the show conform to its studio's then-current production standards. This mainly explains the presence of pet dog Chu Chu, as well as the fact that the younger Chans were just as likely to be singing rock-and-roll musical numbers as they were trying to help their dad with his job. The best way, perhaps, to describe the results was the surprisingly accurate assessment of the usually completely out-of-touch watchdog group of the time known as the National Association for Better Broadcasting. In their words, it was "inept, shallow and tiresome."

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN AND THE INCREDIBLE HULK

(1983–1984)

See *Spider-Man* (and related series); *The Incredible Hulk* (and related series).

THE AMAZING WORLD OF GUMBALL (2011–PRESENT)

STUDIO: Cartoon Network

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATOR: Ben Bocquelet

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Ben Bocquelet, Michael Carrington, Daniel Lenard, Sarah Fell, Patricia Hidalgo

PRODUCERS: Joanna Beresford, Ellen Collins, Sarah Fell

DIRECTORS INCLUDE: Ben Bocquelet, Mic Graves

WRITERS INCLUDE: Ben Bocquelet, Jon Brittain, Tom Crowley, Jon Foster, Mic Graves, Chris Garbutt, James Lamont, Tobi Wilson

VOICE ACTORS: Logan Grove (Gumball Watterson, early episodes), Jacob Hopkins (Gumball Watterson, later episodes), Kwesi Boakye (Darwin Watterson, early episodes), Terrell Ransom Jr. (Darwin Watterson, later episodes), Kyla Rae Kowalewski (Anais Watterson), Dan Russell (Richard Watterson), Teresa Gallagher (Nicole Watterson/Penny Fitzgerald), Hugo Harold-Harrison (Rob, early episodes), David Warner (Rob, later episodes)

SYNOPSIS: The fictional American city of Elmore, inhabited by anthropomorphic people of various kinds, is the background for the exploits of 12-year-old Gumball Watterson and his family.

COMMENTARY: One of the bizarre acquired-taste series that emerged at Cartoon Network in the aftermath of *Adventure Time* (q.v.), this production, created by and overseen at the company's overseas development studio in Europe,

leaves much to be desired in terms of traditional storytelling and plotting. The logic of trying to accept different types of animals (Gumball and his mother Nicole are reputedly cats, sister Anais and father Richard rabbits, and adopted brother Darwin a goldfish) and other beings (Penny, Gumball's schoolmate, is an animated peanut with antlers) as being "related" or otherwise friendly is incredibly confusing to those who cannot buy into the premise at face value. Likewise, difficult to accept is the show's mixture of techniques, styles, and approaches, involving traditional animation as well as puppetry and live-action photography. The fact that creator Bocquelet admittedly developed the project as a *mélange* of previously rejected project ideas says much about why the program emerged as it is and is produced as it is, but this does little to prepare viewers for the experience of trying to watch it—a very unique and discomfiting experience, indeed.

AMERICAN DAD (2005–PRESENT)

STUDIOS: Fuzzy Door, Underdog, 20th Century Fox

DISTRIBUTORS: FOX (2005–2013), TBS (2014–present)

CREATORS: Seth MacFarlane, Mike Barker, Matt Weitzman

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Seth MacFarlane, Mike Barker, Matt Weitzman, Rick Wiener, Kenny Schwartz, Steve Callaghan

PRODUCERS: Keith Heisler, Kara Vallow

DIRECTORS INCLUDE: Ron Hughart, Brent Woods, Pam Cooke, Caleb Meurer, Albert Calleros, Rodney Clouden, John Aoshima, Mike Kim, Anthony Lioi, Kurt Dumas, Joe Daniello, Bob Bowen, Tim Parsons, Jansen Yee, Josue Cervantes, Chris Bennett, Shawn Murray, Valerie Fletcher, Jennifer Graves

WRITERS INCLUDE: Nahnatchka Khan, Dan Vebber, David Zuckerman, Neal Boushell, Sam O'Neal, Alison McDonald, Rick Wiener, Kenny Schwartz, Chris McKenna, Matt McKenna, Steve Hely, Brian Boyle, Mike Barker, Matt Weitzman, Erik Durbin, Michael Shipley, Jim Bernstein, Keith Heisler, Laura McCreary, Jonathan Fener, Erik Sommers, Matt Fusfeld, Alex Cuthbertson, Murray Miller, Judah Miller, Alan R. Cohen, Alan Freedland, Jordan Blum, Parker Deay, Brett Cawley, Robert Maittia, Joe Chandler, Nic Wegener, Ali Waller, Carlo Hart, Evan Sandman, Wayne Dublin, Kirk Rudell, Greg Cohen, Teresa Hsiao, Charles Suozzi

VOICE ACTORS: Seth MacFarlane (Stan Smith/Roger), Wendy Schaal (Francine Smith), Rachel MacFarlane (Hayley Smith), Scott Grimes (Steve Smith), Dee Bradley Baker (Klaus), Jeff Fischer (Jeff Fischer), Patrick Stewart (CIA Deputy Director Avery Bullock)

SYNOPSIS: CIA agent Stan Smith is dedicated to combatting foreign and domestic terrorism but finds his biggest challenges to his life and ideals are in his own family at home.

COMMENTARY: A remarkably frank and candid satirical sitcom that has remained both hilariously funny and pointedly shocking for the balance of its run. Drawing much of its strength from the collisions between the ultraconservative worldview of the title character and the more liberal-minded views cultivated by the other characters, the program has survived, surprisingly well, the turbulent and divisive political era that spawned it. The series frequently



The deceptively benign-looking protagonist of *American Dad*. Fox/Photofest © Fox

deals unflinchingly but comically with the darker sides of the personalities involved in the narratives in a manner unusual for television animation but not entirely foreign to the other programs in the oeuvre of creator/executive producer/star MacFarlane by any means. The comedy is both political and social in nature, though in later years, the former has taken a backseat position. This is partly due to the increased role of Roger, the gray-skinned alien houseguest of the Smiths, whose sibilant voice (derived from the late Paul Lynde) and chameleon-like personality and appearance make him a regular center of attention. Stewart's regular appearances as Stan's immediate superior are also notable, with the actor's domineering and very British mannerisms utterly belying his character's obvious lack of sanity.

AMERICAN DRAGON: JAKE LONG (2005–2007)

STUDIO: Disney

DISTRIBUTOR: Disney Channel

CREATOR: Jeff Goode

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Jeff Goode, Eddie Guzelian, Matthew Negrete, Christian Roman

PRODUCER: Larry Johnson

DIRECTORS: Christian Roman, Steve Lofer, Nicholas Filippi

WRITERS: Eddie Guzelian, Laura McCreary, Catherine Lieuwen, Matthew Negrete, Jeff Goode, Elijah Aron, Mark Meyers, Brandon Sawyer, Jim Peronto, Chris Nee, Scott M. Gimple, Mark Drop, Randi Barnes, Amy Wolfram, Chris Parrish, Chris Bowman, Vince Cheung, Ben Montaino, Johanna Stein, Sean Whalen

VOICE ACTORS: Dante Basco (Jake Long), Jeff Bennett (Mr. Long), Lauren Tom (Mrs. Long), Keone Young (Lao Shi Long), Amy Bruckner (Haley Long), John DiMaggio (Fu Dog), Charlie Finn (Spud), Miss Kittie (Trixie), Mae Whitman (Rose/Huntsgirl), Paul Rugg (Professor Rotwood)

SYNOPSIS: Thirteen-year-old Jake Long discovers that he is descended from a race of mystically powered magical dragons and uses his newly found abilities to protect the city of New York from the evil magical creatures that secretly reside there.

COMMENTARY: The concept and presentation were interesting and unique, and the animation production, especially in the action-oriented sequences, was strong. Unfortunately, there was something to be desired here in the characterization and plotting, which was rather shallow, in spite of the positive attributes the show possessed. The tendency to use animated stories as illustrated life lessons when the show was putatively aimed at children was never more obvious than here, something that could also be apparent in its contemporary female doppelgänger, *The Life and Times of Juniper Lee* (q.v.). A midseries reworking of the physical design of the characters should also have been done on the conventional story lines imposed on them by the writers.

AMERICAN HEROES AND LEGENDS (1992)

STUDIO: Rabbit Ears

DISTRIBUTOR: Showtime

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Mike Pogue, Matt Sotnick

PRODUCER: Ken Hoin

DIRECTOR: C. W. Rogers

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: This was the first major weekly television project produced by Rabbit Ears Video, a company that adapted children's books to video presentation by a primitive animation process, where the illustrations of books were treated as stop-motion camera images. Bolstered by the participation of a number of celebrities as narrators of their product, Rabbit Ears produced this series of adaptations of American folklore as a weekly project on the Showtime network. Among the stories and characters featured were those of New England whaler Alfred Bulltop Stormalong (narrated by

John Candy), railroad worker John Henry (narrated by Denzel Washington, with music by B. B. King), frontiersman Davy Crockett (narrated by Nicolas Cage, with music by David Bromberg), traveling gardener Johnny Appleseed (narrated by Garrison Keillor), sharpshooter Annie Oakley (narrated by Keith Carradine), and the tale of the first Thanksgiving (narrated by indigenous Canadian character actor Graham Greene).

AMIGO AND FRIENDS (1980–1982)

See *Cantinflas* (a.k.a. *Amigo and Friends*; 1980–1982).

ANATOLE (1990–1993)

STUDIOS: Scottish Television Enterprises, Nelvana, Valentine, YTV

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS (1998–2000)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Patrick Loubert, Michael Hirsh, Clive Smith, Ellen Freyer, Pascal Herold, Linda Jastim, Elizabeth Partyka

PRODUCERS: Stephen Hodgins, Patricia Burns, Jocelyn Hamilton, Ian Babeneanu, Marika Kocaba

DIRECTOR: Charles Bastien

WRITERS INCLUDED: Donna Sue Pode

VOICE ACTORS: Olivier L'Ecuyer (Anatole), William Colgate (Gaston), Jill Frappier (Doucette), Joe Dinicol (Paul), Alison Pill (Paulette), Jamie Haydon-Devlin (Claude), Annick Obonsawin (Claudette), Cole Caplan (Georges), Sarah Rosen Fruitman (Georgette), John Stocker (Francis le Pamplemousse)

SYNOPSIS: Anatole, a Parisian mouse, works as the house gourmet at the Duval Cheese Factory while avoiding both human and feline antagonists.

COMMENTARY: Originally seen on Canada's YTV network between 1990 and 1993, this series was based on a series of children's books by writer Eve Titus and illustrator Paul Galdone and was brought to America via CBS to allow the network to comply with new FCC-mandated educational guidelines. Whether it actually satisfied them is anybody's guess. However, as was often the case with Nelvana products, it was well produced and took few liberties with its source material, which was all that could be reasonably asked of it, given the circumstances under which it was presented in America.

ANGELA ANACONDA (1999–2002)

STUDIOS: Honest Art, Decode, CORE Digital Pictures, Teletoon, Family Channel

DISTRIBUTOR: Family Channel (1999–2002), FOX (2000)

CREATORS: Joanna Ferrone, Sue Rose

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Joanna Ferrone, Sue Rose, Neil Court, Steven Denure

PRODUCERS: Beth Stevenson, Kym Hyde, John Mariella

DIRECTORS: John Halfpenny, Doug Masters, Kyle Menzies

WRITERS: Jason Berlin, John Frizzell, Michael Kramer, Robert Lamoreaux, Kat Likkell, Mark Myers, Chris Nee, David Pitlik, Ford Riley, Jonathan Rosenthal

VOICE ACTORS: Sue Rose (Angela Anaconda), Edward Glen (Gordy Rhinehart), Bryn McAuley (Gina Lash), Ali Mukaddam (Johnny Abatti), Ruby Smith

Merovitz (Nanette Manoir), Richard Binsley (Mrs. Brinks), Jonathan Malen (Stu/Ray Wu), Kevin Duhaney (Jimmy Jamal), Robert Tinkler (Uncle Nicky)
 SYNOPSIS: In the (fictional) Canadian town of Tapwater Springs, eight-year-old underachiever Angela Anaconda reacts to the difficulties in her life by retreating into a fantasy world of revenge against her actual and perceived enemies.

COMMENTARY: Originally seen in America as a segment of Nickelodeon's animated anthology series *Kablam!* (q.v.), this Canadian-produced series possessed rather mean-spirited writing and characterization, which did not exactly lend it viewer sympathy in all quarters. Perhaps the most notable aspect of the series was its animation production. The characters were created as computerized images resembling cardboard cutouts from the neck down, with live-action photograph faces serving as the basis for their heads and facial movements. Live actors posed in a variety of expressions and as if they were saying letters and words into a camera, which then reproduced the results as computerized images.

Creator/executive producer/star Rose had previously been responsible for creating the Disney series *Pepper Ann* (q.v.), as well as the popular underground comics character Fido Dido, also in collaboration with Ferrone.

ANGRY BEAVERS (1997–2003)

STUDIOS: Gunther-Wahl, Viacom

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

CREATOR: Mitch Schauer

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Lee Gunther, Michael Wahl, Mary Harrington, Mitch Schauer

PRODUCER: Michael Gerard

DIRECTORS: Michael Gerard, Russ Mooney

WRITERS INCLUDED: Barry Stringfellow, Kat Likkel, Victor Wilson, Micah Wright, Keith Kaczorek

VOICE ACTORS: Nick Bakay (Norbert), Richard Horvitz (Daggett), Cynthia Mann (Treeflower), Victor Wilson (Bing), Scott Weil (Big Rabbit), John Garry (Barry the Bear), Mark Klastorin (Truckee), Ed Winter (Scientist #1)

SYNOPSIS: Bachelor beaver brothers Norbert and Daggett, when ejected from their family dam, set up their own living quarters and engage in conflict between themselves and with the outside world.

COMMENTARY: Though having the odd incident of genuinely funny material, this series was borne down chiefly due to the excesses of creator Schauer and also by his and the staff's stubborn insistence on defying what they saw as the inane censorship restrictions Nickelodeon imposed on them. For example, when the expression "shut up" was used in early stories, it was electronically masked, as if it was profanity, which may have given some viewers the mistaken belief that it was that kind of language. Vengeance was achieved somewhat in the final episodes by bringing the series to a definite end, contravening established network protocol, but Nickelodeon achieved the last laugh by withdrawing these episodes of the series from circulation for several years in response.

ANIMANIA (1991)

STUDIO/DISTRIBUTOR: MTV

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: A short-run animation anthology series in the mode of the earlier and more successful *Liquid Television* (q.v.) from the same network. The title characters of the segment *Stevie and Zoya* survived the death of the series proper by being used in 90-second interstitials.

ANIMANIACS (A.K.A. STEVEN SPIELBERG PRESENTS ANIMANIACS; 1993–1998)

STUDIOS: Amblin, Warner Brothers

DISTRIBUTORS: FOX (1993–1995), WB (1995–1998)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Steven Spielberg

PRODUCERS: Tom Ruegger, Rich Arons, Sherri Stoner

DIRECTORS: Rusty Mills, Dave Marshall, Gary Hartle, Rich Arons, Barry Caldwell, Michael Gerard, Alfred Gimeno, Bob Kline, Jerry Lerew, Audu Paden, Greg Reyna, Lenord Robinson, Chris Brandt, Jeffrey De Grandis, Jon McClenahan

WRITERS INCLUDED: Tom Ruegger, Paul Rugg, Sherri Stoner, Peter Hastings, Tom Hinton, Nicholas Hollander, John McCann, Randy Rogel, Deanna Oliver

VOICE ACTORS: Rob Paulsen (Yakko/Pinky/Dr. Scratchinsniff), Jess Harnell (Wakko), Tress MacNeille (Dot/Hello Nurse/Marita Hippo), Frank Welker (Ralph/Runt/Flavio Hippo/Chicken Boo), Maurice LaMarche (The Brain), Chick Vennera (Pesto), Sherri Stoner (Slappy Squirrel), Bernadette Peters (Rita), Nancy Cartwright (Mindy), John Mariano (Bobby), Julie Brown (Minerva Mink), Colin Wells (Colin)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: A revue program that both aped and updated the style of vintage *Looney Tunes*, this endlessly entertaining and amusing program was one of the most technically sound and creative-minded productions of its decade. All of the varied elements of the program were set on solid comic ground and managed to avoid stale repetition by an approach that was at once boisterously freewheeling and knowledgeable of the world around and preceding it. It set most of its contemporaries, which would then and later try fruitlessly to imitate its approach, to shame. Numerous Emmy Awards won during its run testify specifically to its brilliance.

The principal characters of the program were the semihumanoid Warner siblings—fast-talking con man Yakko, laconic Liverpooldian-accented Wakko, and unbearably cute Dot. Not exactly adults—but not exactly children, either—these creatures had reputedly been created as animated characters by the Warner Studio in the 1930s, only to be locked up in the studio water tower when they proved impossible to control. Their escape from the tower at the beginning of the series served as its launching moment, and the futile efforts of bald-headed, German-accented psychiatrist Scratchinsniff to recapture them helped provide more than a few plot lines.

Further segments added to the comic glow of the program. Among them were *Pinky and the Brain*, the saga of two lab rats who repeatedly try and fail to take over the world, which eventually became a series of its own (see *Pinky and the Brain/Pinky, Elmyra, and the Brain*); *Slappy Squirrel*, about



The title characters of one of the 1990s' funniest shows. Fox/Photofest © Fox

an elderly, crotchety retired cartoon star of the past; *Rita and Runt*, about a mismatched pairing of a smart cat and a dumb dog, respectively; the hip Latino-accented hippos *Flavio and Marita*; *Buttons*, an inept canine hero who regularly failed to rescue his mistress Mindy from peril; and *The Goodfeathers*, a broad parody of the film *Goodfellas* (Martin Scorsese, 1990), with the characters transformed into pigeons. Other minor projects were also featured on a lesser recurring scale.

This is arguably the zenith program of the collaboration between Spielberg and the Warner TV Animation Studio, setting a standard even they (together and apart) found impossible to match in the future.

ANIMATED HERO CLASSICS (1997)

STUDIOS: Warner Brothers, Richard Rich

DISTRIBUTOR: HBO

PRODUCER/DIRECTOR: Richard Rich

WRITERS: Peggy de Azevedo, Lex Azevedo

VOICE ACTORS: Unknown

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: Former Disney animator Rich produced this series of profiles of important figures from the historical past. Among those featured were George Washington; Harriet Tubman; the Wright Brothers; Pocahontas; Marco Polo; Alexander Graham Bell; Helen Keller; Joan of Arc; Florence Nightingale; Galileo; and the ancient Jewish heroes known as the Macca-bees, whose actions led to the creation of Hanukkah.

ANIMATION DOMINATION (A.K.A. ANIMATION DOMINATION HIGH-DEF, FOX ADHD, ADHD; 2013–2015)

STUDIO: Friends Night

DISTRIBUTORS: FOX (2013–2014), FX (2014–2015)

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: This was FOX's response to Cartoon Network's "Adult Swim" block for adult viewers and had characters and content similar in approach. The program lasted only a short time before being canceled due to a lack of viewership. The featured components included *Axe Cop*, about a policeman using a superpowered axe as a weapon against evil; *High School USA*, a parody of teen-oriented media narratives; *Lucas Brothers Moving Co.*, featuring the titular brothers as themselves; *Golan the Insatiable*, about a Conan-like warrior trapped in a modern American suburb (this briefly became a prime-time network series later; see *Golan the Insatiable*); *Stone Quackers*, focusing on anthropomorphic ducks living on Cheeseburger Island; and *Major Lazer*, the adventures of a Jamaican superhero. All told, the use of the acronym *ADHD* for the block was apt, considering how poorly and frantically the show was written, directed, and acted as a whole.

Following the program's cancellation by the main FOX network, new episodes later aired on the network's cable subsidiary, as noted in the production credits.

ANIMATOONS (1967)

STUDIOS: Radio and Television Packagers, Animatoons, Language Arts Films

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTOR: Nancy Berg (Narrator)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: A package of educational cartoons complemented by a related series of teaching guides to assist the young target audience in developing reading and cognitive skills. Stories adapted included such familiar works as "Peter and the Wolf" and "Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves."

ANNE OF GREEN GABLES (2001)

STUDIOS: Annemation, Sullivan

DISTRIBUTOR: PBS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Kevin Sullivan, Trudy Grant, Pat Ellingson

PRODUCER: Marilyn McAuley

DIRECTOR: Lillian Andre

WRITERS INCLUDED: John Flagg, Dan Nosella, Michael MacLennan

VOICE ACTORS: Bryn McAuley (Anne Shirley), Wayne Robson (Matthew Cuthbert), Patricia Gage (Marilla Cuthbert), Emily Hampshire (Diana Barry), Ali Mikkadam (Gilbert Blythe)

SYNOPSIS: On 19th-century Prince Edward Island, adopted red-haired orphan Anne Shirley endears herself to her rural community in spite of her outspokenness (for the time) and penchant for mischief.

COMMENTARY: One of the best known and most beloved works of Canadian literature, *Anne of Green Gables* has been in worldwide circulation almost constantly since its first publication in 1908. A semiautobiographical portrait of its author, Lucy Maud Montgomery, and the world she grew up in, it remains remarkable for its portrayal of its assertive heroine contrasted against her austere environment, which would also become a hallmark of Montgomery's later fiction. The appeal of the project has been expanded through its adaptation for the stage (in both straight dramatic and musical form) and for film and television in Canada and elsewhere.

While it seems on the surface to be an odd topic for an animated series, it worked out well enough. In part, this is due to the fact that executive producer Sullivan has built a whole career on adapting Montgomery's work for television. In the 1980s, he produced what is regarded as the definitive visual media presentation of the novel for a joint Canadian-American audience, following it up with adaptations of some of the later sequel novels, and then producing the popular series *Road to Avonlea* (known simply as *Avonlea* in the United States) based on other Montgomery works in the 1990s. It might seem cynical to say that Sullivan was simply expanding the character's "brand" into another entertainment medium, as was truly the case here, but he was careful to do so in a way that respected the characters' integrity, as well as his distributor's educational mandate. In this, the series was fortunate, as it easily could have floundered under the direction of others.

ANTHONY ANT (1999)

STUDIOS: HIT, PASI, Nelvana

DISTRIBUTOR: HBO

CREATORS: Lorna Philpot, Graham Philpot

WRITER: Brent Piaskoski

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Alan Marriott (Anthony Ant/Arnold Ant/Buzz), April Ford (Ruby/Anne Ant), Adrienne Posta (Billy Bedbug/Witch Weevil/Nate), Dan Russell (Terry/Kevin), Bob Saker (Count Mosquito/Grandpa), Melanie Hudson (Alexei)

SYNOPSIS: In the underground community of Antville, young Anthony Ant hangs out with his friends while trying to avoid being killed by "Bigfeet" (i.e., human beings) on the surface.

COMMENTARY: The concept's origin as a children's book series underlined the prosocial life-lesson approach of this series, which was nothing if not a standard approach at this time. That was certainly the message given by the promotion of the series by HBO, which originally broadcast the program.

AQUAMAN (1968–1969)

STUDIOS: Filmmation, National Periodicals (i.e., DC Comics)

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATORS: Paul Norris, Mort Weisinger

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Allen Ducovny

PRODUCERS: Lou Scheimer, Norman Prescott

DIRECTORS: Hal Sutherland, Norman McCabe, Lou Zukor

WRITERS INCLUDED: Mort Weisinger

VOICE ACTORS: Marvin Miller (Aquaman), Ted Knight (Imp/Tusky/Narrator), Jerry Dexter (Aqualad), Diana Maddox (Mera)

SYNOPSIS: Aquaman, the superpowered "King of the Seven Seas," fights evil from within and outside of the sea from his base in the "Aquacave."



Aquaman at his least superheroic, in service of the needs of the times. ABC/Photofest © ABC

COMMENTARY: First introduced in 1941, Aquaman spent time as a back-page feature in the DC line before becoming the lead feature in *Adventure Comics* during the 1950s. He possessed superhuman abilities from living and working underwater, which made him invulnerable on land, and he was also able to communicate telepathically with creatures of the sea, who frequently came to his aid. However, he is best known to the modern public as a television animation character—as a component of *The Superman/Aquaman Hour of Adventure* (see *Superman* for more details), as a series on his own with the *Hour's* components (new material was mixed with reruns, hence its separate listing), and later as a regular cast member of *Super Friends* (q.v.). Unlike some of the other superhero shows of its time, this one aped the contemporary live-action *Batman* series with a camp attitude and tone. This created a comic reputation the hero found hard to live down in later years, despite the company's efforts to portray him more seriously. The campy element of his character has led to him being parodied regularly, most notably as Mermaid Man from *Spongebob Squarepants* (q.v.), suggesting that the unfortunate legacy this particular series indirectly created for its star has cast a wider net than was originally thought.

AQUA TEEN HUNGER FORCE (2001)

STUDIO: Williams Street

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

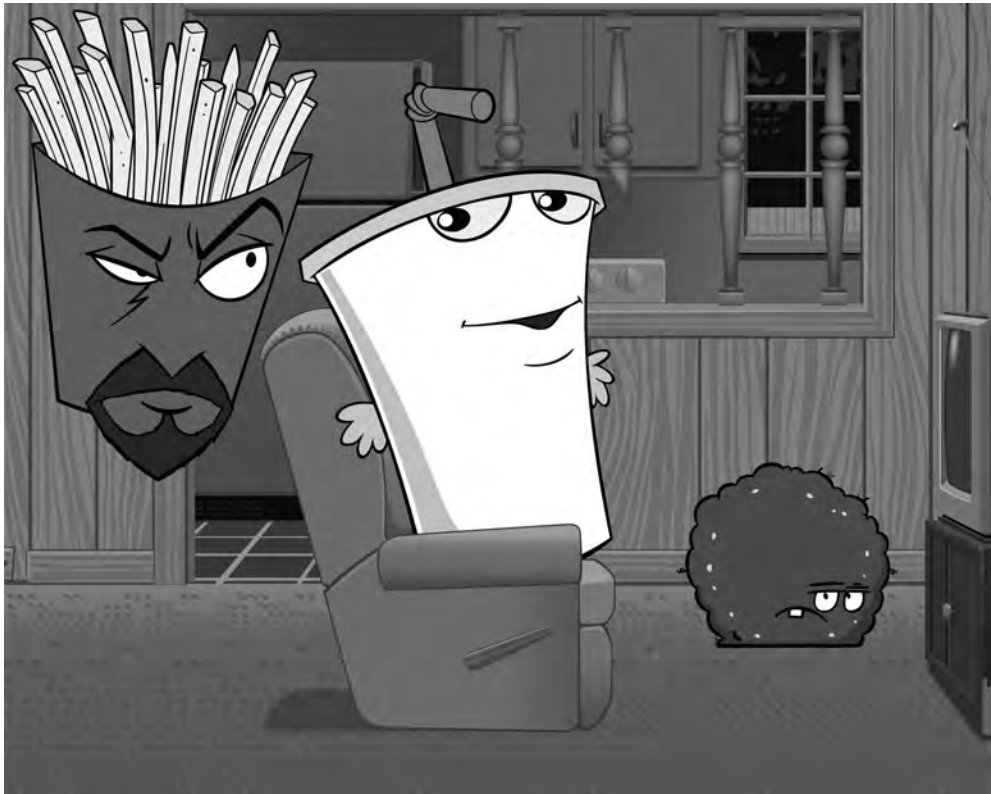
CREATORS/DIRECTORS/WRITERS: Matt Maiellaro, Dave Willis

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Keith Crofford, Michael Lazzo

VOICE ACTORS: Dana Snyder (Master Shake), Dave Willis (Meatwad), Carey Means (Frylock), C. Martin Croker (Dr. Weird), Scott Hilley (Flargin'), Andy Merrill (Oglethorpe/Merle the Blonde Leprechaun), H. Jon Benjamin (Moth-monsterman), Matt Maiellaro (Err), Don Kennedy (Vegetable Man), Mike Schatz (Emory), Todd Field (Drippy), Chris Ward (MC Pee Pants), David Cross (Happy Time Harry), Matt Harrigan (Major Shake), Todd Hanson (The www.yzzerd.com), Todd Barry (Romulox), George Lowe (Wedding DJ), Jon Glaser (Oog), Brooks Baselman (Travis), Ned Hastings (Himself), Seth MacFarlane (Wayne the Brain), Tom Scharplin (Willy Nelson), Isaac Hayes III (The Voice), Jon Schnepf (The Wisdom Cube), Patton Oswalt (DB/Skeeter), Barry Mills (Hillbilly Turkatron), Glen Danzig (Himself), Seth Green (Himself)

SYNOPSIS: Three anthropomorphic foods—a fast-food restaurant shake, a container of French fries, and a meatball—team up to save the world from evil (when they feel like it) and engage in various insult sessions and get-rich-quick schemes.

COMMENTARY: One of the linchpin programs of the “Adult Swim” block on Cartoon Network, this series illustrates the difficulties of programming a series in a limited-run format of 15 minutes with limited financial resources and hardly anything resembling a coherent plot. Nearly everything done or spoofed here had been done elsewhere before and better, and keeping the “ick” level high in terms of intentionally grossing out the audience did little to hide those glaring weaknesses.



Frylock, Meatwad, and Master Shake—the Aqua Teen Hunger Force—in typical poses.
First Look Intl/Photofest © First Look Intl

ARCHER (2009–PRESENT)

STUDIOS: Floyd County, Radical Axis, FX, 20th Century Fox

DISTRIBUTORS: FX (2009–2015), FXX (2015–present)

CREATOR: Adam Reed

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Adam Reed, Matt Thompson, Casey Willis

PRODUCERS: Neal Holman, Eric Sims, Bryan Fordney

WRITERS: Adam Reed, Boswell Cocker, Chris Provenzano, Tesha Kondrat, Mike Arnold, Casey Willis

DIRECTORS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: H. Jon Benjamin (Sterling Archer), Aisha Tyler (Laura Anthony Kane), Jessica Walter (Malory Archer), Chris Parnell (Cyril Figgis), Judy Greer (Cheryl Tunt, speaking voice), Jesse Lynn Martens (Cheryl Tunt, singing voice), Amber Nash (Pamela “Pam” Poovey), Lucky Yates (Dr. Algernop Krieger), Adam Reed (Raymond “Ray” Gillette), George Coe (Woodhouse, primary voice, 2009–2015), Roy McCrerry (Woodhouse, alternate voice), Tom Kane (Woodhouse, alternate voice)

SYNOPSIS: Sterling Archer, an agent for the International Secret Intelligence Service (ISIS), headed by his mother, Malory, deals as much with his own personal problems and those of his colleagues as he does with facing down evil.



So realistic that you wonder why it was animated in the first place. FX/Photofest © FX

COMMENTARY: An adult-oriented animated program that only certain kinds of people seem to love, *Archer* has lasted a surprisingly long time, given its limited premise of spoofing James Bond and his ilk. Part of the problem with it is its deliberate flouting of continuity in terms of what time period it is actually set in and its decision to upend its entire format when it needs a creative shot in the arm rather than making more minor and palatable changes. The deliberately realistic approach taken to the animation suggests that this is one animated program that could have been done live action with relatively few alterations and no change in quality. Much of the credit or blame for the program's success, unlike with other programs, lies with creator/executive producer Reed, as the author of the vast majority of the program's episodes.

***THE ARCHIE SHOW* (AND RELATED SERIES)**

***The Archie Show* (1968–1969)**

STUDIO: Filmation

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Lou Scheimer, Norman Prescott

DIRECTOR: Hal Sutherland

WRITER: Bob Ogle

VOICE ACTORS: Dallas McKennon (Archie Andrews/Mr. Weatherbee/Salem/Mr. Andrews/Mr. Lodge/Coach Kleats/Chuck Clayton), John Erwin (Reggie Mantle/Hexter/Irwin/Dad), Jane Webb (Betty Cooper/Veronica Lodge/Sabrina/Big Ethel/Miss Grundy/Aunt Hilda/Aunt Zelda/Hagatha), Howard Morris (Jughead Jones/Big Moose/Pop Tate/Dilton Doily/Hot Dog)

The Archie Comedy Hour (1969–1970)

STUDIO: Filmmation

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Lou Scheimer, Norman Prescott

DIRECTOR: Hal Sutherland

WRITERS: Bob Ogle, Jim Mulligan, Jim Ryan, Bill Danch, Jack Mendelsohn, Chuck Menville, Len Janson

VOICE ACTORS: Dallas McKennon (Archie Andrews/Mr. Weatherbee/Salem/Mr. Andrews/Mr. Lodge/Coach Kleats/Chuck Clayton), John Erwin (Reggie Mantle/Hexter/Irwin/Dad), Jane Webb (Betty Cooper/Veronica Lodge/Sabrina/Big Ethel/Miss Grundy/Aunt Hilda/Aunt Zelda/Hagatha), Howard Morris (Jughead Jones/Big Moose/Pop Tate/Dilton Doily/Hot Dog)

Archie's Fun House Featuring the Giant Juke Box (1970–1971)

STUDIO: Filmmation

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Lou Scheimer, Norman Prescott

DIRECTOR: Hal Sutherland

WRITERS: Jim Ryan, Bill Danch

VOICE ACTORS: Dallas McKennon (Archie Andrews/Mr. Weatherbee/Salem/Mr. Andrews/Mr. Lodge/Coach Kleats/Chuck Clayton), John Erwin (Reggie Mantle/Hexter/Irwin/Dad), Jane Webb (Betty Cooper/Veronica Lodge/Sabrina/Big Ethel/Miss Grundy/Aunt Hilda/Aunt Zelda/Hagatha), Howard Morris (Jughead Jones/Big Moose/Pop Tate/Dilton Doily/Hot Dog)

Archie's TV Funnies (1971–1973)

STUDIO: Filmmation

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Lou Scheimer, Norman Prescott

DIRECTOR: Hal Sutherland

WRITER: Ken Sobol

VOICE ACTORS: Dallas McKennon (Archie Andrews/Mr. Weatherbee/Salem/Mr. Andrews/Mr. Lodge/Coach Kleats/Chuck Clayton/Captain/Hans/Kayo/Chief/Sam Ketchum/Pat Patton/B. O. Plenty), Howard Morris (Jughead Jones/Big Moose/Pop Tate/Dilton Doily/Hot Dog/Inspector/Fritz/Sluggo/Sandy/Moon Mullins), Jane Webb (Betty Cooper/Veronica Lodge/Sabrina/Big Ethel/Miss Grundy/Aunt Hilda/Aunt Zelda/Hagatha/Mama/Miss Della/Fritzi Ritz/Gravel Gertie), John Erwin (Reggie Mantle/Hexter/Irwin/Dad/Dick Tracy/Alvin/Smokey Stover)

Archie's Bang-Shang Lalapalooza Show (1977–1978)

STUDIOS: Filmmation, Fils Cartoons

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Lou Scheimer, Norman Prescott

DIRECTOR: Bill Reed

WRITER: Bob Ogle

VOICE ACTORS: Dallas McKennon (Archie Andrews/Mr. Weatherbee/Salem/Mr. Andrews/Mr. Lodge/Coach Kleats/Chuck Clayton), John Erwin (Reggie Mantle/Hexter/Irwin/Dad), Jane Webb (Betty Cooper/Veronica Lodge/Sabrina/

Big Ethel/Miss Grundy/Aunt Hilda/Aunt Zelda/Hagatha), Howard Morris (Jughead Jones/Big Moose/Pop Tate/Dilton Doily/Hot Dog), Jose Flores (Carlos), Don Messick (Harvey), Treva Frazee (Ophelia)

***Archie's Weird Mysteries* (1999–2001)**

STUDIO: DIC

DISTRIBUTORS: PAX (1999–2000), Syndicated (2001)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Andy Heyward, Michael Maliani, Robby London, Richard Goldwater, Charles Grimes, Tony DeRosa-Grund

WRITERS: James W. Bates, Dick Shimm, Jymn Magnon, Brian Swenlin, Michael Patrick Dobkins

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Andy Rannells (Archie Andrews), Derrel Maury (Jughead Jones), Camille Schmidt (Veronica Lodge), Danielle Young (Betty Cooper), Paul Sosso (Reggie Mantle), Ben Beck (Dilton Doily), Tony Wike (Mr. Weatherbee), John Michael Lee (Mr. Lodge), Ryle Smith (Pop Tate), Jerry Longe (Dr. Beaumont/Smithers)

SYNOPSIS: The adventures of “typical” teenager Archie Andrews and his friends in the fictional American town of Riverdale.

COMMENTARY: One of the most popular and enduring comic book franchises in America began in 1941, when Archie made his debut as a feature of *Pep Comics*, published by MLJ Publications. Its emphasis on “clean” humor, teenage fun, and a decided absence of blood and gore proved very popular, and soon Archie had completely taken over *Pep*. Then he took over the entire company, as MLJ changed its name to Archie Publications and devoted itself almost exclusively to publishing his adventures, as remains the case today.



Archie and friends in their 1990s incarnation. © Photofest

The efforts to clean up the violent content of television animation in the late 1960s made Archie an ideal choice to join the ranks of television animation characters. This was Archie's first appearance in the visual media (although the property had previously been adapted for radio in the late 1940s), and under the direction of CBS executive Fred Silverman, Filmation undertook the transition from comics to television. Little needed to be done in terms of plotting and characterization, as that had already been standardized by the publishing company, and it only had to be modified to the demands of weekly television broadcasts. The major addition to the established elements was a regular element of rock-and-roll music, whose production was supervised by music publication tycoon Don Kirshner and was seen in musical numbers regularly performed by the characters. Kirshner expanded the appeal of the show by releasing supposed recordings by the characters (credited to the Archies) on his record label, although these were produced independently from the series production. They proved surprisingly popular, with one, "Sugar, Sugar," becoming a number-1 hit on the *Billboard* pop charts in 1969.

Because the characters were stuck in a series of limited, repetitive formats in the comic books, Filmation found it necessary to shake things up every once in a while, with the characters repeatedly seen in new incarnations. Originally presented in a straightforward half-hour in 1968–1969, the show expanded to an hour in 1969–1970. Back at a half-hour in 1970–1971, it featured music as the prominent element this time; a giant jukebox was at the center of the action. The following year, *Archie's TV Funnies* found the characters operating a television station that presented the animated adventures of vintage comic strip characters; this later became a series of its own, *The Fabulous Funnies* (q.v.). *Everything's Archie* was more of the old stuff, but *U.S. of Archie* was more ambitious. Airing in anticipation of the American bicentennial, it focused on using the characters as a vehicle for examining important events in American history. After a year's layoff, the characters reemerged briefly as an hour show on NBC in 1977, which was then cut to a half-hour before being canceled midseason.

The characters have been dormant in television animation since then, save for two resurrections. *The New Archies* found them as junior-high kids dealing with typical travails of the time; the main element that was new here was the prominent presence of two African American characters, Amani and Eugene. *Archie's Weird Mysteries*, on the other hand, was something else entirely, with the characters entering *X-Files* territory by investigating a series of paranormal and extraterrestrial events in Riverdale in time-honored television animation fashion.

AROUND THE WORLD IN EIGHTY DREAMS (1992)

STUDIOS: Saban, Antenna 2, MBC, Brulsconi, Telecino

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Winston Richard, Jacqueline Tordjman, Vincent Chalvon-Demersay

PRODUCER: Eric S. Rollman

DIRECTORS: Bruno Bianchi, Dae-Jung Kim

WRITERS: Tony Oliver, Jean Cheville, Alan Garcia

VOICE ACTORS: Mark Camacho (Carlos), Rick Jones (Oscar/Grandma Tadpole), Pauline Little (Koki), Sonja Ball (A. J.), Patricia Rodriguez (Marianna)

SYNOPSIS: Beachcomber Carlos is repeatedly forced to prove the veracity of his actions in the past through the magical intervention of the frog known as Grandma Tadpole.

COMMENTARY: A whimsical program with an offbeat sense of humor, this program was arguably the best segment of the *Amazin' Adventures* (q.v.) block, in terms of both conception and execution. It is best summed up by the credo Grandma Tadpole acted on: that "half the fun" of being a child was being able to "keep an open mind and believe that anything's possible."

ARTHUR (1996–2004)

STUDIOS: CINAR, WGBH

DISTRIBUTOR: PBS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Micheline Charest, Carol Greenwald

PRODUCERS: Ronald Weinberg, Cassandra Schaffhausen, Lesley Taylor

DIRECTORS: Greg Bailey, Chris DeMeoise

WRITERS INCLUDED: Ken Scarborough, Daniel DeCelles

VOICE ACTORS: Michael Yarmush (Arthur Read, 1996–2001), Justin Bradley (Arthur Read, 2001–2002), Mark Rendall (Arthur Read, 2002–2004), Michael Caloz (D. W. Read, 1996–1999), Oliver Grainger (D. W. Read, 1999–2003), Jason Szimmer (D. W. Read, 2003–2004), Bruce Dinsmore (Binky/David Read), Sonja Ball (Jane Read), Danny Brochu (Buster Baxter), Jodie Resther (Francine Frensky), Melissa Altro (Muffy Crosswire), Luke Reid (Alan "The Brain" Powers, 1996–2000), Stephen Crowder (Alan "The Brain" Powers, 2000–2002), Alex Hood (Alan "The Brain" Powers, 2002–2004), Arthur Holden (Mr. Ratburn), Tammy Kaslov (Prunella), Patricia Rodriguez (Sue Ellen Armstrong), Walter Massey (Principal Herbert Haney), Joanna Noyes (Grandma Thora Read), A. J. Henderson (Grandpa Dave Read/Ed Crosswire), Bronwen Mantel (Mrs. Sarah MacGrady), Holly Frankel (Fern Walters), Kate Hutchison (Paige Turner), Hayley Reynolds (Nadine), Mitchell David (George Nordgren), Tracy Braunstein (Kate Read), Jessica Kardos (Marie-Helen), Vanessa Lengies (Emily), Greg Kramer (Nemo), Simon Peacock (Pal)

SYNOPSIS: In the anthropomorphic community of Ellwood City, young Arthur Read and his friends and family learn a variety of important life lessons.

COMMENTARY: The star of a long-running popular series of children's books dating back to 1956, Arthur (who was supposedly an aardvark, though creator Marc Brown gradually shed the distinctive features of that animal in his drawing of the character) was a natural choice for belated animated adaptation when PBS, after shunning television animation for most of its existence, began offering it as a feature of its daily children's programming in the 1990s. Following the blueprint Brown laid out in terms of character design and storytelling, the program dealt concretely with social and behavioral concerns related to modern children, some universal and timeless (e.g., fearing the consequences of finally returning an overdue library book, speaking in public) and others unique to its modern time period (e.g., learning disabilities, media addiction). Given that the educational component of the series was

expected and granted and not shoehorned in the fashion of its more commercially oriented peers, it succeeded in a highly admirable way in its aims, reflected particularly by the Emmy Awards it received during its run.

A spinoff series, *Postcards from Buster*, supposedly depicted the adventures of Arthur's pal in his travels across America, but this program is not included here because it was an animated/live-action hybrid project.

ASSY McGEE (2006–2008)

STUDIO: Soup 2 Nuts

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATORS: Matt Harrigan, Carl Adams

PRODUCERS: Carl Adams, H. Jon Benjamin, Matt Harrigan

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Larry Murphy (Assy McGee/Greg the Chief/Detective Don Sanchez), Jen Cohn (Abigail Morton), H. Jon Benjamin (Mayor/Art Critic), Patrick Borelli (Actor)

SYNOPSIS: Assy McGee, an anthropomorphic human anus, works as a policeman in tandem with his "good cop" partner, Detective Don Sanchez.

COMMENTARY: The excesses of the liberalization of television animation content in the 1990s and 2000s were most blatantly seen here. While it accurately parodied similar rogue-cop figures (Clint Eastwood's portrayal of "Dirty Harry" Callahan chief among them), it was undone by the revolting and unnecessary portrayal of the title character as he was.

AS TOLD BY GINGER (2000–2003)

STUDIOS: Klasky-Csupo, Nickelodeon

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

CREATOR: Emily Kapnek

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Gabor Csupo, Arlene Klasky, Eryk Casemiro

PRODUCERS: Cella Nicholas Harris, Sylvia Keulen, Kate Boutillier, Maureen Iser, Emily Kapnek

DIRECTORS: Anthony Bell, Cathy Malkasian, Dean Criswell, Frank Marino, Joseph Scott, Mark Risley, Michael Daedalus Kenny, Mihaly Sikur, Ron Noble, Sylvia Keulen

WRITERS INCLUDED: Emily Kapnek, Sheila Anthony

VOICE ACTORS: Melissa Disney (Ginger Foutley, 2000–2002), Shayna Fox (Ginger Foutley, 2002–2003), Jeannie Elias (Carl Foutley), Laraine Newman (Lois Foutley), Aspen Miller (Dodie Bishop), Jackie Harris (Macie Lightfoot), Kenny Blank (Darren Patterson), Tress MacNeille ("Hoodsey" Bishop), Liz Georges (Courtney Gripling), Cree Summer (Miranda Kilgallen), Kath Soucie (Blake Gripling), John Kassir (Winston), Hope Levy (Chet Zipper), Kathleen Freeman (Mrs. Gordon), Elizabeth Halpern (Mrs. Zorski), Emily Kapnek (Nelle Sussman), David Jeremiah (Dr. Dave)

SYNOPSIS: In the town of Sheltered Shrubs, 12-year-old junior high school student Ginger Foutley struggles to find the popularity and social acceptance she desperately wants.

COMMENTARY: Of the various “middle school angst” subgenre programs that made the rounds in the early 2000s, this was one of the better offerings. While the production and physical character designs remained characteristic of its production company, the storytelling and characterization strategies were realistic, in line with creator Kapnek’s intentions. The overall tone was comedic, given the stress on such oddball figures as telepath Noelle and pre-tentious Blake in the cast, but there was a great deal of drama here as well. This was typified not only by Ginger’s efforts to become cool while not abandoning her uncool friends but also in her having to deal with the sudden re-entrance into her life of her estranged father, who had abandoned the family after divorcing her mother several years prior to the series’ commencement.

***THE ASTRONUT SHOW* (1965)**

STUDIOS: Terrytoons, CBS, Viacom

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

PRODUCER: Bill Weiss

DIRECTORS: Connie Rasinski, David Tendlar, Arthur Bartsch, Robert Kuwahara, Cosimo Anzilotti

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Dayton Allen (Astronut/Others); Bob McFadden (Oscar Mild/Others); Lionel Wilson and John Myhers (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: Astronut, a friendly alien, lives with and otherwise enlightens the life of boring human Oscar Mild.

COMMENTARY: A mix of old and new features from Terrytoons, some concurrently produced for theatrical as well as television exhibition. In addition to the title character, the characters featured in the six-minute segments included the adventurous Luno the Flying Horse; the lachrymose Sad Cat; James Hound, a James Bond parody; dimwitted Possible Possum; martial arts expert mouse Hashimoto; and neurotic elephant Sidney.

***THE ATOM ANT/SECRET SQUIRREL SHOW* (1965–1968)**

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

DIRECTORS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera, Charles Nichols

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Howard Morris (Atom Ant, early episodes), Don Messick (Atom Ant, later episodes/Shag Rugg/Precious Pupp), Mel Blanc (Secret Squirrel), Paul Frees (Morocco Mole/Squiddly Diddly), John Stephenson (Chief Winchley), Henry Corden (Paw Rugg), Jean Vander Pyl (Maw Rugg/Floral Rugg/Winsome Witch), Janet Waldo (Granny Sweet)

SYNOPSIS: An hour-long anthology project with an emphasis on both adventure and comedy. The title characters were, respectively, a superhero ant and an ingenious rodent spy working in tandem with the enigmatic Morocco Mole. Also featured were “Squiddly Diddly,” an enthusiastic cephalopod with showbiz aspirations; the self-descriptive “Hillbilly Bears”; the mischief-



The likable Atom Ant was television's most unlikely superhero in the 1960s. NBC/Photofest © NBC

making canine Precious Pupp, who got active once his owner, Granny Sweet, left the room; and "Winsome Witch," a stereotype-defying maker of magic. COMMENTARY: One of Hanna-Barbera's more engaging efforts of the 1960s, the title characters parodied superheroes and James Bond-like spies effectively and with great aplomb. Where the weaknesses came was in the supporting features, which were underwritten and laden with situations that had already begun to become clichés. *Squiddly Diddly* in particular reflected how

quickly and regularly the studio was willing to overexpose and misuse a programming format that had served it well in the past, which would become an increasingly repetitive and unfortunate situation in the future.

Between January and September 1967, the two components aired separately, as *The Atom Ant Show* and *The Secret Squirrel Show*, respectively, before being reunited as an hour for the remainder of the original broadcast period.

ATOMIC BETTY (2004–2008 [CANADA];
2004–2006 [UNITED STATES])

STUDIOS: Atomic Cartoons, Breakthrough Films, TeleImages

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network (United States)

CREATORS: Trevor Bentley, Mauro Casalese, Rob Davies, Olaf Miller

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Ira Levy, Peter Williamson, Kevin Gillis, Trevor Bentley,
Philippe Alessandri, Simone Halberstadt Harari, Steven Hecht

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS INCLUDED: Jono Howard

VOICE ACTORS: Taija Isen (Betty Barrett/Atomic Betty/Timmy), Patrick McKenna
(Mr. Barrett), Kristina Nicoll (Mrs. Barrett), Jayne Eastwood (Beatrixo Barrett),
Adrian Truss (Admiral DeGill), Bruce Hunter (X-5), Rick Miller (Sparky),



Direct from Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan—a talented guardian of the galaxy. Cartoon Network/Photofest © Cartoon Network

Colin Fox (Supreme Overlord Maximus I.Q.), Len Carlson (Minimus P.U./Spindly Tam Kanushu), Michael D'Ascenzo (Chip Osborne/Dalton Osborne), Laurie Elliott (Noah Parker), Peter Oldring (Duncan Payne), Catherine Disher (Penelope Lang/Sarah), Stephanie Morgenstern (Megan), Dwayne Hill (Dylan/Atomic Roger/Dodger/Mr. Peterson)

SYNOPSIS: Canadian preteen girl Betty Barrett leads a double life as an average human being in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, and as a member of the Galactic Guardians, superpowered defenders of the universe against the forces of evil.

COMMENTARY: Too many Canadian television animation programs have openly aped the feel and style of their American counterparts rather than developing one more indigenous to their country and have utterly failed artistically as a consequence. This series was an important and very entertaining exception to that rule. Foregrounding the lead character's Canadian existence and background was a masterstroke on the producers' part, while making her an active and admirable exponent of can-do girl power flew boldly in the face of the stereotypical assumptions often made by television producers in other countries about the way Canadians act and speak. While the series did not always fulfill its potential, given the derivative characterizations of many of the bad guys and the occasional reliance on contrived writing and situations common in television animation, it was refreshing when the original elements chose to assert themselves. In all, it was a great example to Canadian television animation producers about how to produce for an international market without sacrificing obvious elements of local cultural significance.

In its final season in Canada, the series was retitled *Atomic Betty: Mission Earth*, and a number of rotating short features were added to the main adventures.

ATTACK OF THE KILLER TOMATOES (1990–1996)

STUDIOS: Four Square, Marvel, FOX

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX

CREATOR: John DeBello

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Joe Taritero, Steve Peace, John De Bello

PRODUCER: Richard Trueblood

WRITERS INCLUDED: Flint Dicce

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: John Astin (Dr. Putrid T. Gangrene), Chris Guzek (Chad), Kath Soucie (Tara), Neil Ross (Whitley White), Thom Bray (Wilbur Finletter), Cam Clarke (Igor), Scott Bullock (F. T.), Maurice LaMarche (Zoltan)

SYNOPSIS: The citizens of an average American town are affected in various ways by the by-products of the mad experimentations of Dr. Putrid T. Gangrene.

COMMENTARY: This series was derived from the 1979 film of the same name, written, produced, and directed by De Bello. A broad parody of low-budget, badly produced horror films, the film has since itself become celebrated for being a badly produced film. However, this series was hardly a low-budget affair, given that it was one of the first television animation programs to use computer-generated imagery on a regular basis. But its cliff-hanger plotting, driven by the machinations of Astin's mad scientist (he had previously

played the character in two sequels to the *Attack* film), was very routine, despite the aforementioned work of Astin, Ross's work as a pompous TV newscaster, and the regular appearances of a Woody Allen–esque nebbish known only as the “Tomato Guy,” who interjected much-needed humorous commentary into the dry scenarios.

AVATAR: THE LAST AIRBENDER (2005–2008)

STUDIO/DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

CREATORS: Bryan Konietzko, Michael Dante DiMartino

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Michael Dante DiMartino, Bryan Konietzko, Aaron Ehasz

DIRECTORS: Dave Filoni, Lauren MacMullan, Giancarlo Volpe, Anthony Lioi, Ethan Spaulding, Joaquim Dos Santos, Michael Dante DiMartino

WRITERS INCLUDED: Michael Dante DiMartino, Bryan Konietzko, John O'Bryan, Aaron Ehasz, Elizabeth Welch Ehasz, Tim Hedrick, Joshua Hamilton

VOICE ACTORS: James Garrett (Avatar Roku), Mae Whitman (Katara), Makato Iwamatso (Uncle Iroh), Dante Basco (Prince Zukor), Jack DeSena (Sokka), Dee Bradley Baker (Appa/Momo/Others), Zack Tyler Eisen (Aang), Melendy Britt (Gran Gran), Johanna Braddy (Princess Yue), Victor Brandt (Master Pakku), Jon Polto (Chief Arnook), Benjamin Diskin (Hahn), Erik Dellums (Koh), Mark Hamill (Fire Lord Ozai), Jessie Flower (Toph), Hector Elizondo (Wan Shi Tong), Raphael Shange (Professor Zai), Kristoffer Tabori (War Minister), Barry Dennen (General Sung), Karen Maruyama (Bureaucrat), Brian Tochi (Than), Kim Mai Guest (Ying), Nika Futterman (Smellerbee), Crawford Wilson (Jet), Sab Shimono (Master Yu), Malachi Throne (Colonel Mongke),



Anime in the English language. Nickelodeon Network/Photofest © Nickelodeon Network

Marc Graue (Xin Fu), Bill Bolender (Sha-Mo), Peter Jessop (Fung), Paul McKinney (Ghashiun), Olivia Hack (Ty Lee), Jim Meskimen (General Cricket), Andre Sogliuzzo (Hakoda), Clancy Brown (Long Feng), Brian George (Guru Pathik), Richard McGonagle (Bato), Phil LaMarr (Earth King)

SYNOPSIS: The setting is an ancient world consisting of four separate nations—the Water Tribes, the Earth Kingdom, the Fire Nation, and the Air Nomads. In these societies, certain men and women known as “benders” are able to control the prominent element by using a combination of martial arts and magic. Twelve-year-old Aang is the focus of the series; he is the last of his kind able to “bend” air, as well as the almighty “Avatar,” able to control all the elements at his will.

COMMENTARY: A series produced on highly ambitious terms for American television animation but on those common to anime. It was, in many ways, a kind of anime produced directly for the American market, with the biggest stumbling block—translation of the language from Japanese to English—removed. Consequently, the story line was much easier to understand, and the impact of the impressive use of the animation was very galvanizing at times. Each of the seasons was divided into a “book,” with a focus on one of the elements, which allowed the program to achieve the variety of setting and characterization other programs have desperately needed.

The series later spawned a 2010 live-action feature film, written and directed by M. Night Shyamalan, as well as a sequel series, *The Legend of Korra* (q.v.).

AVENGERS (A.K.A. *AVENGERS: UNITED THEY STAND*; 1999–2000)

STUDIOS: Marvel, Saban, 20th Century Fox

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX

CREATORS: Stan Lee, Jack Kirby

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Avi Arad, Ron Myrick, Stan Lee, Eric Rollman, Matthew Edelman

WRITERS: Steven Melching, Brooks Wachtel, Len Wein, John Loy, Len Uhley, Eric Lewald, Julia Lewald

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Rod Wilson (Dr. Hank Pym/Ant-Man), Stavroula Logothettis (Wanda Maximoff/Scarlet Witch), Martin Roach (Sam Wilson/Falcon), Tony Daniels (Clint Barton/Hawkeye), Lenore Zann (Greer Nelson/Tigra), Lynda Ballentine (Janet Van Dyne/Wasp), Hamish MacEwan (Simon Williams/Wonder Man), Ron Ruben (Vision), Ray Landry (Raymond Sikorsky), Graham Harley (Jarvis), Caroly Larson (Computer), John Stocker (Ultron), Dan Chamberoy (Captain America), Raoul Trujillo (Sub-Mariner), Francis Diakowsky (Iron Man)

SYNOPSIS: The Avengers—superheroes Ant-Man, Scarlet Witch, Falcon, Hawkeye, Tigra, Wasp, and Wonder Man working in tandem—combat a variety of evil foes, including the robotic Ultron and the extraterrestrial Zodiac.

COMMENTARY: The Avengers were developed by Marvel in 1963 in response to the success of DC's Justice League (see *Justice League/Justice League Unlimited* and *Super Friends*), and like that entity, it has continued to be published on an almost unbroken basis since then, with constantly shifting personnel in both fiction and fact. This short-lived animation production essentially followed the same protocols evident in pre-Disney Marvel media productions: mostly done with a straight face, with nominal injections of humor. The failure of the series was a consequence of it being delayed from its original debut date due to production problems, as well as a lack of moral support from veteran Marvel fans and, ultimately, poor ratings.

• B •

BABAR (1989–2000)

STUDIOS: Nelvana, Ellipse, Clifford Ross, CBC

DISTRIBUTOR: HBO (United States)

CREATOR: Jean de Brunhoff

PRODUCERS: Patrick Loubert, Michael Hirsh, Clive Smith, Lenora Hume, Peter Hudecki

DIRECTOR: Peter Hudecki

WRITERS INCLUDED: Peter Sauder, J. D. Smith

VOICE ACTORS: Gordon Pinsent (Babar as an adult), Gavin Magrath (Babar as a boy), Dawn Greenhalgh (Celeste as an adult), Tara Charendoff Strong (Celeste as a girl), Stephen Ouimette (Pompadour), Chris Wiggins (Cornelius), John Stocker (Basil), Elizabeth Hanna (Old Lady), Alan Stewart Coates (Rataxes), Corinne Koslo (Lady Rataxes), Lisa Yamanaka (Flora), Bobby Becker (Pom), Amos Crawford (Alexander)

SYNOPSIS: Babar, the benevolent elephant king of the Great Forest, relates stories from his life to his children to give them moral guidance.

COMMENTARY: Begun by Jean de Brunhoff in 1931 and continued by his son Laurent following Jean's death in 1937, the Babar children's book series has been popular in translations from the original French for many years, despite criticisms from detractors, who have accused the de Brunhoffs of implicitly approving of the actions of France's African colonial governments in the narratives. Babar had previously been adapted for American television in a series of specials in the late 1960s and early 1970s, but it was not until the success of a 1989 feature film (also produced by Nelvana and providing a moral and narrative framework for the series) that he became a regular-series production. This was a measured, well paced, and respectful adaptation of a beloved fictional character, and Nelvana was justly honored for it with a variety of awards, including a Cable Ace Award in 1989.

BABY BLUES (2000)

STUDIOS: Split the Difference, Warner Brothers

DISTRIBUTOR: WB

CREATORS: Rick Kirkman, Jerry Scott

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Rick Kirkman, Jerry Scott, Jeff Martin, Peter Ocko

PRODUCERS: Claudia Katz, Karen Miller, Chuck Tatham

DIRECTORS: Tony Cervone, Susan Dietter, Rich Moore, Sean Bjorklund, Ron Hughart, Chris Sauve, John Kavka, John Curtis, Bob Curtis, Brian Sheesley, Peter Avanzino

WRITERS: Neal Boushell, Leonard Dick, Bill Freiberger, Rob Kurtz, Eric Brand, Jeff Filgo, Jackie Behan, Matthew Weiner, Adam Barr

VOICE ACTORS: Mike O'Malley (Darryl MacPherson/Others), Julia Sweeney (Wanda MacPherson/Others), Joel Murray (Carl Bitterman/Others), Kath Soucie (Rodney Bitterman/Megan Bitterman/Others), Arabella Field (Melinda Bitterman/Others), Diedrich Bader (Kenny/Others), Nicole Sullivan (Bizzy/Others), E. G. Daily (Zoe MacPherson/Others), Phil LaMarr (Rex/Others)

SYNOPSIS: Young married couple Darryl and Wanda MacPherson deal with the changes brought to their lives by parenthood.

COMMENTARY: Created by Kirkman and Scott for King Features in 1990 and continuing to run today, the comic strip *Baby Blues* represents the trend in late-20th to early-21st-century versions of its art form to target humor aimed at niche audiences (in this case, parents) rather than the all-purpose general ones of the past. Television necessitated an expansion of the strip's small cast; thus, the presence of the MacPhersons' aptly named neighbors, the Bittermans; their disreputable babysitter, Bizzy; and Darryl's friend and coworker Kenny. While the strip's visual ambience was maintained, the program's potential for wider success was abruptly curtailed by corporate interference by the network (the show's launch was delayed several times after the 1998 Christmas special that served as a pilot), which ended up canceling the series after seven episodes. The remainder of the series aired only after Cartoon Network rebroadcast the originally broadcast installments following the cancellation.

THE BABY HUEY SHOW (1994)

STUDIOS: Harvey, Cluster

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Jerry Beck

DIRECTORS: Ron Zorman, Bob Jaques, Kelly Armstrong, Steve Loter, Victoria Jensen, Joe Horne, Don Judge

WRITERS: Ron Zorman, Bob Jaques, Kelly Armstrong, Steve Loter, Vincent Waller, Mauro Casalese, Jordan Reicheck, Tom Klein, Pat Ventura, Henry Gilroy, Gene Ray

VOICE ACTOR: Sid Raymond (Baby Huey)

SYNOPSIS: Baby Huey, an overly large, dimwitted avian infant, bumbles his way through life until finally redeeming himself in the final reel.

COMMENTARY: Created in comic-book form in 1949 and debuting in animation via Paramount's Famous Studios in 1951, Baby Huey—who was 5 feet tall and weighed 250 pounds in his ever-present bonnet and diaper—first appeared on television when his older adventures were featured as part of the omnibus series *Matty's Funday Funnies* (q.v.) in the late 1950s and early 1960s. However, for this project, a package of 26 new installments were produced, which were then grouped with animation of the same vintage and studio as the original Huey shorts. Where his older adventures were mired in banal repetition, this version was not, thanks chiefly to the efforts of executive producer Beck (a renowned animation historian and film preservationist) and writer/director Jaques (a veteran of *The Ren and Stimpy Show* [q.v.]) to keep the show's look retro while updating the comedy content.

BABY LOONEY TUNES (2002)

STUDIO: Warner Brothers

DISTRIBUTORS: Cartoon Network, Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Sander Schwartz

PRODUCERS: Tom Minton, Gloria Yuh Jenkins, Kimberly Smith

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS: John Behnke, Roger Eschbacher, Libby Hinson, Rob Humphrey, Earl Kress, Jim Peterson, Timothy Cahill, Karl Geurs, Julie McNally, Bob Doucette, Mark Howard

VOICE ACTORS: June Foray (Granny), Ian Corlett (Baby Taz), Terry Klassen (Baby Sylvester), Britt McKillip (Baby Lola), Samuel Vincent (Baby Bugs/Baby Daffy/Baby Tweety), Chiara Zanni (Petunia), Janyse Jaud (Melissa Duck)

SYNOPSIS: The legendary Warner Brothers animation characters are here presented as infants under the care of Granny.

COMMENTARY: The 2000s and 2010s have seen an increased level of remakes and reboots of both live-action and animation properties, as a consequence of (1) a desire to continue to profit financially from already-known and established copyrights by a studio and (2) a lack of creative independence and thoughtfulness on the part of most of the people running said studio. Several of such instances are discussed elsewhere in this book. This particular series was one of the most grievous instances where this policy was undertaken at the expense of the property involved. The desire for continuing profits was achieved by tying the series to the production of a line of toys, while the lack of creative independence was demonstrated by ransacking ideas and formats used earlier (such as with *Muppet Babies* [q.v.]) to better effect. Programs like these are a shameful waste of time and talent on the part of all who concern themselves with making them.

BACK AT THE BARNYARD (2007–2011)

STUDIOS: Omaton, Nickelodeon

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

CREATOR: Steve Oedekerk

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Steve Oedekerk, Jed Spingarn

PRODUCERS: Margaret Dean, Paul Marshall

DIRECTORS: Todd Grimes, T. J. Sullivan, Mike Gasaway, Spike Brandt, Tony Cervone, Tom Grevara, Bert Ring, Aaron Hammersley, Jim Schuman, Fred Gonzalez, Nick Simotas

WRITERS INCLUDED: Gene Grillo, Jed Spingarn, Alex Muniz, Dan Serafin, Sam O'Neal, Neal Boushell, Tom Sheppard, Jessica Gao

VOICE ACTORS: Chris Hardwick (Otis), Jeff Garcia (Pip), Leigh Allyn Baker (Abby), Tino Insana (Pig), Cam Clarke (Freddy), Rob Paulsen (Peck), Dom Irrera (Duke), Wanda Sykes (Bessy), Maria Bamford (Mrs. Nora Beady), Fred Tatasciore (Farmer Buyer)

SYNOPSIS: Otis, a male cow, and his friends have a variety of adventures on and off the farm on which they reside.

COMMENTARY: This series is a follow-up to *Barnyard*, a CGI feature film produced by Nickelodeon and distributed by Paramount in 2006. The film, typical for its kind, displayed a lack of creative integrity in spite of its technical substance, and the series generally followed suit. Given the producers' supposed cleverness in trying to present a character as a cow when he really should have been a bull, the humor level here consequently was equally transparent and unfunny.

BACK TO THE FUTURE (1991–1993)

STUDIOS: Amblin, Wang, ZM, Universal

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATORS: Robert Zemeckis, Bob Gale

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Kathleen Kennedy, Frank Marshall

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Dan Castallaneta (Emmett "Doc" Brown), David Kaufman (Marty McFly), Thomas Wilson (Biff Tannen), Josh Weiner (Jules Brown), Troy Davidson (Verne Brown), Danny Mann (Einstein), Mary Steenburgen (Clara Clayton Brown)

SYNOPSIS: Teenager Marty McFly and eccentric scientist Doc Brown have adventures traveling in space and time through a time machine created from a DeLorean automobile.

COMMENTARY: The original *Back to the Future* film, starring Michael J. Fox as Marty and Christopher Lloyd as Doc, was released in 1984, written by Zemeckis and Gale and directed by Zemeckis. In that film, Marty travels back to the 1950s to facilitate the meeting and marriage of his future parents and, therefore, his own existence. Two sequels followed: In the first, the characters visited the 21st century, while in the second, they went to the Wild West of the 1880s. The enormous popularity of the three films set the stage for this animated version, which also featured Doc's wife, Clara, and their sons, Jules and Verne (all introduced in the third film). The cleverness of the time-traveling conceit in the films, however, did not make the transition, given the program's continual slipping into the storytelling tropes of television animation of the era. The most entertaining aspect of the show was, oddly, not the animation component. It was a series of live-action wraparounds in which Christopher Lloyd reprised his portrayal of Doc to demonstrate science to the audience. He was assisted by Bill Nye (later to star in his own popular live-action series for Disney and, later still, to become a nationally recognized advocate for the validity of climate change and evolution as scientific concepts).

THE BACKYARDIGANS (2004–2010)

STUDIOS: Nickelodeon, Nelvana, Guru, Pipeline

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

CREATOR: Janice Burgess

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Janice Burgess, Robert Scull

DIRECTORS: Bill Giggie, Mike Shell, Dave Palmer

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Lashawn Tina Jefferies (Uniqua, speaking voice), Jamia Simone Nash (Uniqua, singing voice, early episodes), Avion Baker (Uniqua, singing voice, later episodes), Zach Tyler Eisen (Pablo, speaking voice, early episodes), Jake Goldberg (Pablo, speaking voice, later episodes), Sean Curley (Pablo, singing voice), Reginald Davis (Tyrone, speaking voice, early episodes), Jordan Coleman (Tyrone, speaking voice, later episodes), Christopher Grant Jr. (Tyrone, speaking voice, later episodes), Corwin Tuggles (Tyrone, singing voice, early episodes), Leon Thomas III (Tyrone, singing voice, later episodes), Damani Roberts (Tyrone, singing voice, later episodes), Tyrel Jackson Williams (Tyrone, singing voice, later episodes), Gianna Bruzesse (Tasha, speaking voice), Kristin Danielle Klabunde (Tasha, singing voice, early episodes), Gabriella Malek (Tasha, singing voice, later episodes), Jonah Bobo (Austin, speaking voice), Thomas Sharkey (Austin, singing voice, early episodes), Nicholas Barasch (Austin, singing voice, later episodes)

SYNOPSIS: Five young anthropomorphic preschoolers—Uniqua, an aptly named character of unknown biological origin; Pablo, a penguin; Tyrone, a moose; Tasha, a hippopotamus; and Austin, a kangaroo—have adventures together, chiefly devised from their own imaginations.

COMMENTARY: As with most programs produced for preschool-aged children, this series is best appreciated chiefly by that age group; everyone else above that age may not be as delighted by it.

B.A.D. (BUREAU OF ALIEN DETECTORS; 1996–1997)

STUDIO: Saban

DISTRIBUTOR: UPN

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Joel Andryc, Ron Myrick, Eric Rollman

DIRECTORS: Ron Myrick, Bob Nesler

WRITERS: Julia Lewald, Eric Lewald, Jamie Simone

VOICE ACTORS: Michael McConnochie (Sergeant Ben Becker); Bree Anderson, Ruben Daniels, Sammy Lane, Walter Rego, Peter Spellos, and Tyrone Week (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: The Bureau of Alien Detectors is a special-resistance task force of the American military designed to confront and control extraterrestrial and supernatural forces.

COMMENTARY: Despite being promoted as being both “educational and entertaining,” it was neither, borrowing too many tropes and concepts from live-action predecessors to be enjoyable on its own. Clearly, it was a series designed to fill its time slot—in its short-lived network’s children’s programming block on Sunday mornings—and do nothing else. Which it did and didn’t do.

BAD DOG (1998–2002)

STUDIOS: CinéGroupe, Storyopolous, Saban

DISTRIBUTOR: Family Channel

PRODUCER: Louis Duquet

DIRECTOR: Meinert Hansen

WRITERS: Brent Piasoski, Taylor Grant, Eric Senecal, Eric Weinthal, Angus Bungay
 VOICE ACTORS: Harvey Atkin (Vic Potanski); Sheila McCarthy, Tracy Moore, and John Stocker (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: Berkeley the dog tries to provide assistance to his human owners but ends up inadvertently causing havoc because of his actions.

COMMENTARY: Based on a computer-screen-saver character from the late 1990s, this program showed a predictable lack of substance, given its source. The one major notable aspect of the series was the portrayal of the title character because he was prone to “die” when reprimanded, not to be “resurrected” until the reprimand was withdrawn.

***BAGGY PANTS AND THE NITWITS* (1977–1978)**

STUDIO: DePatie-Freleng

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

PRODUCERS: David DePatie, Friz Freleng

DIRECTORS: Robert McKimson, Sid Marcus, Spencer Peel, Brad Case, Gerry Chiniquy

WRITERS INCLUDED: Bob Ogle

VOICE ACTORS: Arte Johnson (Tyrone); Ruth Buzzi (Gladys); Joan Gerber, Joe Besser, and Frank Nelson (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: Short animated films featuring, first, a pantomimic cat modeled on Charlie Chaplin’s Little Tramp, and, second, a pair of aging superheroes called back into action.

COMMENTARY: Though notable for the source material, this project did not succeed in part because of the failure of audiences to truly relate to that source material. The Little Tramp character was several decades old, and it was unlikely that many 1970s child viewers were as familiar and reverential toward him as the DePatie-Freleng staff was. Likewise, Tyrone and Gladys were a few years removed from their previous existence as a recurring feature on NBC’s popular live-action comedy revue *Rowan and Martin’s Laugh-In* and were unlikely sources for animated characters. The adult subtext of their relationship on that program, where Tyrone was a “dirty old man” in pursuit of the frumpy, hairnet-wearing Gladys, was removed entirely here, reducing them to the typical and unnoteworthy status of incompetent television animation characters who succeeded by accident, if at all.

***BAILEY’S COMETS* (1973–1975)**

STUDIO: DePatie-Freleng

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATORS: Joe Ruby, Ken Spears

PRODUCERS: David DePatie, Friz Freleng

DIRECTORS: Robert McKimson, Sid Marcus, Spencer Peel, Brad Case

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Carl Esser (Barnaby Bailey), Bob Holt (Dude), Sarah Kennedy (Bunny), Karen Smith (Candy), Jim Begg (Wheelie), Kathi Gori (Sarge), Frank

Welker (Pudge), Daws Butler (Dooter Roo), Don Messick (Gabby/Henry Jekyll-Hyde)

SYNOPSIS: Roller-derby player Barnaby Bailey and his teammates compete against a variety of less-ethical opponents in a number of varied geographical settings.

COMMENTARY: The sport of roller derby dates to the 1930s, when roller-skating marathons were held on banked tracks. However, it was not until the following decade that it achieved its modern competitive form. In this format, a variety of jams are held in an attempt to score points. Both teams designate one player to be a jammer to score points by lapping the members of the other team, who attempt to stop that player before they can achieve that objective by violently pushing or otherwise obstructing them. Blockers provide defense, while pivots serve as team captains, creating strategies for upcoming plays. Since the early 2000s, roller derby has achieved renewed popularity as a competitive league sport, chiefly involving women as the participants.

This series' use of the sport as a linchpin was its one notable achievement because otherwise it was very much indebted to earlier programs from other studios. Hanna-Barbera's influence seemed to be overly present, in the format of *Wacky Races* (q.v.), the creator credit of storied veteran Hanna-Barbera writers Ruby and Spears, and the presence of many of Hanna-Barbera's regular actors in the voice cast.

***THE BARKLEYS* (1972–1973)**

STUDIO: DePatie-Freleng

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

PRODUCERS: David DePatie, Friz Freleng

DIRECTORS: Steven DePatie, Robert McKimson, Sid Marcus, Spencer Peel

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Henry Corden (Arnie Barkley), Joan Gerber (Agnes Barkley), Julie McWhirter (Terry Barkley), Steve Lewis (Chester Barkley), Gene Andrusco (Roger Barkley)

SYNOPSIS: Anthropomorphic canine conservative bus driver Arnie Barkley deals with the stress put on his life by his more liberal family and neighbors.

COMMENTARY: This was perhaps the most derivative product of a studio whose work regularly tended to be derivative, though often this was no fault of its own. *All in the Family*, the groundbreaking live-action sitcom of the era, was the major source, as Corden was apparently told directly by the network to model his performance on the mannerisms of *Family*'s star, Carroll O'Connor. *The Honeymooners*, with its earlier blue-collar setting, and its television-animation cousin *The Flintstones* (q.v.) provided further grist for a hopelessly dire mill.

***BARNYARD COMMANDOS* (1990)**

STUDIOS: Those Characters from Cleveland, Murakami-Wolf-Swenson, Sachs-Finley

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

PRODUCERS: Fred Wolf, Bill Wolf

DIRECTORS: Bill Wolf, Bill Hutten, Tony Love, Kent Butterworth

WRITERS: Rowby Goren, Jack Mendelsohn

VOICE ACTORS: Scott Bullock, Thom Bray, Patrick Fraley, Paul Kreppel, John Mariano, Robert Ridgely, Lennie Weinrib, and Danny Wells (Specific roles unknown)

SYNOPSIS: The P.O.R.K.S. (Platoon of Rebel Killers) and the R.A.M.S. (Rebel Army of Military Sheep) engage in combat on a barnyard battlefield.

COMMENTARY: A deservedly short-lived series designed chiefly to promote an ill-conceived toy line that also failed. Unlike the production company's earlier hit *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* (q.v.), there was very little in terms of plotting or art that merited serious attention here.

***BATFINK* (1967)**

STUDIOS: Hal Seeger, Columbia

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

PRODUCER: Hal Seeger

WRITERS: Dennis Marks, Heywood King, Martin Taras

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Frank Buxton (*Batfink*), Len Maxwell (*Karate*), Bob McFadden (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: *Batfink*, a bat equipped with steel wings and "Super Sonic Sonar" hearing, works as a superhero, fighting crime in the company of his Japanese aide, *Karate*.

COMMENTARY: A poor attempt to parody the campy Adam West–Burt Ward live-action series *Batman* with an exaggerated approach in line with the potential in animation. While well-paced given its short structure (100 five-minute episodes were produced, with 6 used to comprise a half-hour at a time), it was neither as funny nor as entertaining as it might have been in a longer format and with more judicious hands at the helm, as later television animation superhero programs would prove to be.

***BATMAN* (AND RELATED SERIES)**

***The Batman/Superman Hour* (1968–1969)**

See *Superman* (and related series).

***The Adventures of Batman and Robin* (1968–1970)**

STUDIOS: Filmation, National Periodicals (i.e., DC Comics)

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATORS: Bob Kane, Bill Finger

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Alan Ducovny

PRODUCERS: Lou Scheimer, Norman Prescott

DIRECTOR: Hal Sutherland

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Olan Soule (Bruce Wayne/Batman/Alfred, early episodes), Casey Kasem (Dick Grayson/Robin), Jane Webb (Barbara Gordon/Batgirl/Catwoman), Ted Knight (Alfred, later episodes/Narrator/Others)

The New Adventures of Batman (1977)

STUDIO: Filmmation

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Lou Scheimer, Norman Prescott

PRODUCER: Don Christensen

DIRECTORS: Don Townsley, Ed Friedman, Gwen Wetzler, Kay Wright, Marsh Lamore, Lou Zukor

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Adam West (Bruce Wayne/Batman), Burt Ward (Dick Grayson/Robin), Melendy Britt (Barbara Gordon/Batgirl), Lennie Weinrib (Bat-Mite, early episodes/Others), Lou Scheimer (Bat-Mite, later episodes)

Batman: The Animated Series (1992–1994)

STUDIO: Warner Brothers

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Jean MacCurdy, Tom Ruegger

PRODUCERS: Bruce Timm, Eric Radomski, Alan Burnett

DIRECTORS: Kevin Altieri, Boyd Kirkland, Frank Paur, Eric Radomski, Dick Sebast, Dan Riba, Bruce Timm, Kent Butterworth

WRITERS INCLUDED: Laren Bright, Sean Derek, Marty Pasko, Michael Reaves, Paul Dini

VOICE ACTORS: Kevin Conroy (Bruce Wayne/Batman), Melissa Gilbert Brinkman (Barbara Gordon/Batgirl), Clive Revill (Alfred, early episodes), Efrem Zimbalist Jr. (Alfred, later episodes), Loren Lester (Dick Grayson/Robin), Lloyd Bochner (Mayor Hamilton), Bob Hastings (Police Commissioner James Gordon), Liane Schirmer (Lieutenant Renee Montoya, early episodes), Robert Costanzo (Harry Fox/Detective Harvey Bullock), Diana Muldaur (Leslie Thompkins), Brock Peters (Lucius Fox), Mark Hamill (The Joker/Others), Adrienne Barbeau (Selina Kyle/Catwoman), Paul Williams (The Penguin), Roddy McDowall (The Mad Hatter), Michael Ansara (Mr. Freeze), John Glover (The Riddler), Richard Moll (District Attorney Harvey Dent/Two-Face), Diane Pershing (Poison Ivy), Helen Slater (Talia), Alan Rachins (The Clock King), Ron Perlman (Clayface), Edward Asner (Roland Dugget), Michael York (Count Vertigo), Treat Williams (Professor Milo), Marc Singer (Man-Bat), Meredith MacRae (She-Bat), David Warner (Ra's Al Ghul), Arlene Sorkin (Harley Quinn), Ray Butenika (Dr. Hugo Strange), Mari Devon (Summer Gleeson), Michael Pataki (The Sewer King), Ingrid Olin (Lieutenant Renee Montoya, later episodes), George Murdock (Boss Biggs), John Vernon (Rupert Thorne), Micky Dolenz (Min/Max), Eugene Roche (Arnold Stromwell), Michael Gross (Lloyd Ventris), Michael Des Barres (Nostromos), Aron Kincaid (Killer Croc), Kimmy Robertson (Alice), Paddy Edwards (Maggie Paige), Bud Cort (Josiah Wormwood), Thomas Wilson (Tony Zucco), Robert Ito (Kyodai Ken), Harry Hamlin (Cameron Kaiser/Romulus), Robby Benson (Wilkes), Ed Begley Jr. (Charlie Collins), Jeff Bennett (HARDAC), William Sanderson (Karl Rossum), Leslie Easterbrook (Randa Duane), Joseph Maher (Dr. Emile Dorian), Jim Cummings (Tygrus), George Dzundza (The Ventriloquist), Richard Dysart (Psychiatrist), Matt

Frewer (Sidney Debris), Dorian Harewood (Riley), Marilu Henner (Veronica Vreeland), Julie Brown (Zatana), Joseph Campanella (Dr. Thorne), Steve Siskind (Maxie Zeus), Kate Mulgrew (The Red Claw), Adam West (The Gray Ghost), Paul Winfield (Earl Cooper), Tim Matheson (District Attorney Gil Mason), Nichelle Nichols (Thoth Khepera)

The Adventures of Batman and Robin (1994–1997)

STUDIO: Warner Brothers

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Jean MacCurdy, Tom Ruegger

PRODUCERS: Bruce Timm, Eric Radomski, Alan Burnett

DIRECTORS: Kevin Altieri, Boyd Kirkland, Frank Paur, Eric Radomski, Dick Sebast, Dan Riba, Bruce Timm, Kent Butterworth

WRITERS INCLUDED: Laren Bright, Sean Derek, Marty Pasko, Michael Reaves, Paul Dini

VOICE ACTORS: Kevin Conroy (Bruce Wayne/Batman), Melissa Gilbert Brinkman (Barbara Gordon/Batgirl), Clive Revill (Alfred, early episodes), Efrem Zimbalist Jr. (Alfred, later episodes), Loren Lester (Dick Grayson/Robin), Lloyd Bochner (Mayor Hamilton), Bob Hastings (Police Commissioner James Gordon), Liane Schirmer (Lieutenant Renee Montoya, early episodes), Robert Costanzo (Harry Fox/Detective Harvey Bullock), Diana Muldaur (Leslie Thompkins), Brock Peters (Lucius Fox), Mark Hamill (The Joker/Others) (see additional actor/character names above)

The New Batman/Superman Adventures (Batman episodes; 1997–2000)

STUDIOS: Warner Brothers, DC Comics

DISTRIBUTOR: WB

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Jean MacCurdy

PRODUCERS: Alan Burnett, Bruce Timm, Paul Dini

DIRECTORS: Andrea Romano, Atsuko Tanaka, Butch Lukic, Curt Geda, Dan Riba, Hiroyuki Aoyama, Kenji Hachizaki, Tim Maltby, Yuichiro Yano

WRITERS: Alan Burnett, Hilary Bader, Joe R. Lansdale, Michael Reaves, Paul Dini, Rich Fogel, Robert Goodman, Stan Berkowitz, Steve Gerber

VOICE ACTORS: Kevin Conroy (Bruce Wayne/Batman), Matthew Valencia (Tim Drake/Robin), Efrem Zimbalist Jr. (Alfred Pennyworth), Loren Lester (Dick Grayson/Nightwing), Tara Charendoff Strong (Barbara Gordon/Batgirl), Robert Costanzo (Detective Harvey Bullock), Bob Hastings (Police Commissioner James Gordon), Arlene Sorkin (Harley Quinn), Diane Pershing (Poison Ivy), Jeff Bennett (Jack Ryder), Mark Hamill (The Joker), Mel Winkler (Lucius Fox), Paul Williams (The Penguin), Ron Perlman (Clayface), Richard Moll (Two-Face), Michael Ansara (Mr. Freeze), Lloyd Bochner (Mayor Hamilton), Jeffrey Combs (The Scarecrow), Adrienne Barbeau (Catwoman), Sela Ward (Calendar Girl), Billy Zane (Jason Blood/Etrigan), Liane Schirmer (Detective Renee Montoya), Mark Rolston (Firefly), Laraine Newman (Baby Doll), Charity James (Roxy Rocket), Peter Breck (Farmer Brown), Roddy McDowall (The Mad Hatter), Gary Owens (Batman from the 1950s), Michael Ironside (Batman from the 1980s), Michael McKean (Joker from the 1950s), Nicholle Tom (Supergirl), Lori Petty (Livewire), Malachi Throne (The Judge)

***Batman Beyond* (1999–2001)**

STUDIO: Warner Brothers

DISTRIBUTOR: WB

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Jean MacCurdy

PRODUCERS: Paul Dini, Bruce Timm, Alan Burnett, Glen Murakami, Shaun McLaughlin

DIRECTORS: Curt Geda, Butch Lukic, Dan Riba, Yukio Suzuki, James Tucker, Kyoung-Won Lim

WRITERS: Hilary Bader, Stan Berkowitz, Alan Burnett, Paul Dini, Evan Dorkins, Sarah Dyer, Rich Fogel, Robert Goodman, John McCann, Shaun McLaughlin, Tom Ruegger, John Shirley

VOICE ACTORS: Will Friedle (Terrence McGinnis/Batman), Kevin Conroy (Bruce Wayne), Stockard Channing (Police Commissioner Barbara Gordon, early episodes), Angie Harmon (Police Commissioner Barbara Gordon, later episodes), Yvette Lowenthal (Chelsea Cunningham, early episodes), Rachel Leigh Cook (Chelsea Cunningham, later episodes), Jon Cypher (Spellbinder), Mari Devon (Miss Winston), Melissa Disney (Blade), Teri Garr (Mrs. Mary McGinnis), Seth Green (Nelson Nash), Sherman Howard (Derek Powers/Blight), Shannon Kenny (Inque), George Lazenby (Mr. Walker/The King), Ryan O'Donohue (Matthew McGinnis), Cree Summer (Max Gibson), Lauren Tom (Dana Tan), Michael Ansara (Victor Fries/Mr. Freeze), Laura San Giacomo (Mary Michaels/Freon), Robert Davi (Dr. Mike Morgan/Magma), Chris Mulkey (Walter Shreeve/Shrink), Olivia D'Abo (Melanie Walker/Ten), Omar Gooding (Jared Tate), Dorian Harewood (Jim Tate/Trey/Armory), Cary Elwes (Paxton Powers, early episodes), Ice T (Ramond), Stephen Collins (Tony Mayzhaki/The Earth Mover), Stacy Keach (Richard Vance), Henry Rollins (Mad Stan), Kate Jackson (Bombshell), Tim Curry (Mutro Botho), Paul Winfield (Sam Young), Michael McKean (Ian Peek), Kathleen Freeman (Ma Mayhem), Gary Cole (Zeto), Ed Begley Jr. (Dr. Peter Corso), Tristan Rogers (Simon Harper), Bill Fagerbakke (Howard Lewis/Payback), Mitch Pileggi (Dr. Stanton), Adam Wylie (Kenny), Daphne Zuniga (April), Gabrielle Carteris (Sable Thorpe), Parker Stevenson (Paxton Powers, later episodes), T'Keyah "Crystal" Kemah (Makeba), Stephen Baldwin (Charlie "Big Time" Bigelow, early episodes), Clancy Brown (Charlie "Big Time" Bigelow, later episodes), Robert Patrick (Richard Armacost), Charles Kimbrough (Gordon), David Warner (Ra's Al Ghul), Jodi Benson (Aquagirl), Wayne Brady (Micron), Farrah Foke (Barda), Christopher McDonald (Superman), Peter Onorati (Warhawk), Xander Berkeley (Dr. Chides), Diedrich Bader (Zita Zee)

***The Batman* (2004–2008)**

STUDIO: Warner Brothers

DISTRIBUTORS: WB, CW

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Alan Burnett, Sander Schwartz

PRODUCERS: Michael Goguen, Duane Capizzi, Jeff Matsuda, Glen Murakami, Linda Steiner

DIRECTORS: Seung Eun Kim, Brandon Vietti, Sam Liu, Christopher Berkly, Anthony Chun, Matt Youngberg, Vinton Heuck, John Fang

WRITERS INCLUDED: Adam Beechen, Stephen Melching, Greg Weisman, Thomas Pugsley, Greg Klein, Christopher Yost, J. D. Murray, Michael Jelenic, Joseph Kuhr, Alexx Van Dyne, Douglas Petrie, Jane Espenson, Stan Berkowitz, Paul Dini, Alan Burnett

VOICE ACTORS: Rino Romano (Bruce Wayne/Batman), Alastair Duncan (Alfred Pennyworth), Evan Sabara (Dick Grayson/Robin), Edward James Olmos (Police Chief Angel Rojas, early episodes), Jesse Corti (Police Chief Angel Rojas, later episodes), Ming Na (Detective Ellen Yin), Victor Brandt (Rupert Thorne), Adam West (Mayor of Gotham), Mitch Pileggi (Police Commissioner James Gordon), Danielle Judovits (Barbara Gordon/Batgirl), Kevin Michael Richardson (The Joker), Gina Gershon (Catwoman), Tom Kenny (The Penguin), Clancy Brown (Mr. Freeze/Bane, later episodes), Steve Harris (Detective Steven Harris/Clayface, early episodes), Jason Marsden (Firefly), Dan Castellaneta (The Ventriloquist/The Scarecrow), Peter MacNicol (Man-Bat), Glenn Shadix (The Cluemaster), Joaquim de Almeida (Bane, early episodes), Ron Perlman (Bane, later episodes/Killer Croc), Robert Englund (The Riddler), Frank Gorshin (Professor Hugo Strange, early episodes), Richard Green (Professor Hugo Strange, later episodes), Jeff Bennett (Ragdoll/D.A.V.E./Killer Moth), Michael Massee (The Spellbinder), Kevin Grevioux (Solomon Grundy), Piera Coppola (Poison Ivy), Will Friedle (Gearhead), Phil LaMarr (Maxie Zeus), Patton Oswalt (Cosmo Krank/The Toymaker), Michael Reisz (Prank), Jim Cummings (Temblor), Louis Gossett Jr. (Lucius Fox), Mark Hamill (Tony Zucco), James Remar (The Black Mask), Diedrich Bader (Number One), Brandon Routh (The Everywhere Man), Hynden Walch (Harley Quinn), Wallace Langham (Clayface, later episodes)

Batman: The Brave and the Bold (2008–2011)

STUDIOS: Warner Brothers, DC Comics

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Sam Register, Tramm Wigzell, Brian E. S. Jones

PRODUCERS: James Tucker, Michael Jelenic, Linda Steiner

DIRECTORS: Ben Jones, Brandon Vietti, Michael Chang, Michael Goguen

WRITERS INCLUDED: Steven Melching, J. M. DeMatteis, Jim Krieg, Todd Casey, Joseph Kuhr, Adam Beechen, Paul Dini, Marsha Griffin, Thomas Pugsley, Paul Giacoppo, Greg Weisman

VOICE ACTORS: Diedrich Bader (Bruce Wayne/Batman/Musketeer/Cave-Batman/Pirate-Batman/Batmanicus/Robot Batman/Kilowog/Others), Tom Kenny ('Mazing Man/Ray/Plastic Man/Others), Michael T. Weiss (Adam Strange), Henry Winkler (Ambush Bug), John DiMaggio (Aquaman/Legionnaire/Enemy Ace/Vigilante/Others), Ted McGinley (Aquaman, alternate voice, "Mitefall" episode), Zack Shada (Aqualad), Zachary Gordon (Aqualad as a boy/Bruce Wayne as a boy), Sirenia Irwin (Mera/Lois Lane), Preston Strother (Arthur Jr.), Peter Scolari (Ray Palmer/The Atom), James Sie (Dr. Ryan Choi/The Atom), Mikey Kelley (Bruce Wayne as a boy/Kamandi), Tara Strong (Bruce Wayne as a toddler/Billy Batson/Mary Batson/Mary Marvel/Huntress/Others), Dee Bradley Baker (Bruce Wayne as a baby/Ace the Bat-Hound/Private Elliott

“Lucky” Taylor/Sergeant Vincent Velcro/Warren Griffith/Etrigan/Dove/Tin/Others), Crawford Wilson (Robin/Nightwing), Jeremy Shada (Robin as a boy), Lex Lang (Batman II/Hourman/Gold/Wildcat as a young man/Others), Mae Whitman (Barbara Gordon/Batgirl), Vanessa Marshall (Katrina Moldoff/Batwoman/Poison Ivy, later episodes), Adam West (Pro-Bot/Thomas Wayne), Patrick Cavanaugh (Damian Wayne), Kevin Conroy (Batman of Zu-Enn-Aarrh/Phantom Stranger), Paul Reubens (Bat-Mite), Jeff Bennett (El Gaucho/Captain Marvel/Starman/OMAC/Red Hood), Grey DeLisle (Black Canary/Fire/Arisia Rrab), Wil Wheaton (Ted Kord), Will Friedle (Jaime Reyes/Lazy Eye/Others), Tom Everett Scott (Booster Gold), Billy West (Skeets), Gary Sturgis (Bronze Tiger), Kevin Michael Richardson (Bwana Beast/Detective Chimp/Others), Brian Bloom (Captain Atom/Creeper/Iron/Others), John DeVito (Freddy Freeman/Captain Marvel Jr.), Armin Shimmerman (Professor Haley/Guardian of the Universe #1/Others), J. K. Simmons (Ace Morgan/Guardian of the Universe #2/Others), Ioan Gruffudd (Red Ryan), James Arnold Taylor (Rocky Davis/Oliver Queen/Green Arrow/Guy Gardner/Others), Marc Worden (Lieutenant Matthew Shreve), Cathy Cavadini (Dr. Myhrra Rhodes), Michael Rosenbaum (Deadman), Greg Ellis (Dr. Fate/Hawk/Dr. Canus/Others), Richard McGonagle (Dr. Niles Calder/Perry White/Professor Carter Nichols), Henry Rollins (Robotman), Olivia D’Abo (Elasti-Girl), David K. Hill (Negative Man), Sean Donnellan (Ralph Dibny/The Elongated Man/Others), Bill Faggerbakke (Ronnie Raymond/Lead/Others), Tyler James Williams (James Rusch), Andy Milder (Jay Garrick/The Flash), Alan Tudyk (Barry Allen/The Flash), Hunter Parrish (Kid Flash/Geo-Force), Peter Renaday (Uncle Sam/Abraham Lincoln), Jason C. Miller (Black Condor/Doll Man), Hope Levy (Phantom Lady/Stargirl), Jason Marsden (Speedy as a man/Others), Ryan Ochoa (Speedy as a boy), Alexander Polinsky (G’nort/Others), Loren Lester (Hal Jordan), Jennifer Hale (Ice/Zatanna/Killer Frost/Poison Ivy, early episodes), Phil Morris (Jonah Hex/Fox), Corey Burton (Alan Scott/Dr. Mid-Nite/Mercury/Red Tornado/Others), William Katt (Hawkman), Nicholas Guest (Martian Manhunter/The Question), Hynden Walch (Platinum/Others), Yuri Lowenthal (Mr. Miracle), Diane Delano (Big Barda), Bumper Robinson (Black Lightning), Vyvann Pham (Katana, early episodes), Kim Mai Guest (Katana, later episodes), Scott Menville (Metamorpho), Stephen Root (Woozy Winks/Killer Croc/The Penguin/Planet Master), Gary Owens (Space Ghost), Mark Hamill (The Spectre), Roger Rose (Superman), Cree Summer (Vixen), R. Lee Ermey (Wildcat), Vicki Lewis (Wonder Woman), Fred Tassciore (Arsenal/Major Force), Gregg Berger (Hammer Toes), Ellen Greene (Mrs. Manface), Michael Dorn (Bane/Kru’ll the Eternal), Jim Piddock (Calendar Man/Dr. Sivana/Others), Thomas Wilson (Catman/Sportsman), Nika Futterman (Catwoman/Lashina), Enn Reitel (Chancellor Deraegis), Morena Baccarin (Cheetah), Jeffrey Tambor (Crazy Quilt/Red/Green), Ron Perlman (Dr. Double X), Oded Fehr (Equinox), Robin Atkin Downes (Firefly/Kobra/Weather Wizard/Others), Gary Anthony Williams (Fun Haus), James Sie (Dyna-Mite), Tim Matheson (Jarvis Kord), Peter Onorati (Joe Chill), Meghan Strange (Harley Quinn), Marc Worden (Kanjarr Ro), Jeffrey Combs (Kite Man),

Richard Green (Kreegaar), Jane Singer (Trung/Jewelee), Richard Moll (Lew Moxon), Lauri Johnson (Ma Murder), Tatyana Yassukovich (Morgan Le Fay), Neil Patrick Harris (Music Meister), Michael Leon Wooley (Darkseid/Kalibak), Wade Williams (Mantis/Others), Wallace Langham (Ocean Master), Clancy Brown (Per Degaton), John Wesley Shipp (Professor Zoom), Peter Woodward (Ra's Al Ghul/Great Caesar), Andrea Bowen (Talia Al Ghul), John Michael Higgins (The Riddler), Steven Blum (Captain Cold/Heat Wave), Edoardo Gobbetti (Jack/Vulture), Xander Berkeley (Sinestro), Michael Jai White (Tattooed Man), James Remar (Two-Face), Tim Conway (The Weeper), James Garrett (Alfred Pennyworth), David McCallum (Merlin), Ian Buchanan (Sherlock Holmes), Julie Newmar (Martha Wayne), Gabrielle Carteris (Vicki Vale), Dana Delany (Vilsi Vaylar)

***Beware the Batman* (2013–2014)**

STUDIOS: Warner Brothers, DC Comics

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Sam Register, Brian E. S. Jones, Christina Reynolds, Tramm Witzell

PRODUCERS: Glen Murakami, Mitch Watson

DIRECTORS: Sam Liu, Rick Morales, Curt Geda

WRITERS INCLUDED: Mitch Watson, Mark Banker, Erin Maher, Kathryn Reindl, John Matta, Matt Weinhold, Len Wein, Adam Beecher, Greg Weisman

VOICE ACTORS: Anthony Ruivivar (Bruce Wayne/Batman), J. B. Blanc (Alfred Pennyworth/Key/Lunkhead), Sumalee Montano (Tatsu Yamashiro/Katana/Madison Randall), Kurtwood Smith (Police Commissioner James Gordon), Brian George (Professor Pyg), Grey DeLisle Griffin (Margaret Sorrow/Magpie), Wallace Langham (Anarky), Carlos Alazraqui (Junkyard Dog), Arif Kinchen (Daedalus), Lance Reddick (Ra's Al Ghul), Finola Hughes (Lady Shiva), James Remar (Silver Monkey), Michael Leon Wooley (Tobias Whale/Matatoa), Greg Ellis (Phosphorous Rex), Matt Jones (Humphrey Dumpler/Humpty Dumpty), Wade Williams (Killer Croc), Robin Atkin Downes (Man-Bat/Deathstroke), Bruce Thomas (Dr. Anotyl Mykros), Christopher McDonald (District Attorney Harvey Dent/Two-Face), Tara Strong (Barbara Gordon/Oracle), Jeff Bennett (Simon Stagg), Emmanuelle Chiquiri (Sapphire Stagg), Gary Anthony Williams (Michael Holt), Cree Summer (Bethanie Ravencroft), Matthew Lillard (Dr. Jason Burr), Michael Patrick McGill (Officer O'Brien), Adam Baldwin (Metamorpho), C. C. H. Pounder (Mayor Marion Grange), James Patrick Stuart (Mayor David Hunter), Xander Berkeley (Manhunter), Tisha Banker (Ava Kirk)

SYNOPSIS: From his base of operations in the fictional American city of Gotham, wealthy businessman Bruce Wayne assumes the guise of the mysterious, enigmatic Batman to combat crime and other, darker forms of evil.

COMMENTARY: Since his debut in *Detective Comics* number 27 in 1939, Batman has been one of the most popular, influential, and enduring figures in American popular culture in the 20th and 21st centuries. His adaptability has been shown in his portrayal in a number of other media, notably film and televi-



Batman in one of his many animated incarnations. © Fox/Warner Brothers

sion, in addition to his regular comic book appearances over that time. He also appears in a variety of artistic tones and approaches, from humor-laden campiness at one end to grim, savage darkness at the other. That artistic range has arguably been most notable in his appearances as a television animation character, which have tended to range across that spectrum better than his appearances in other media, with widely varying results.

Batman's earliest appearances in television animation came in response to the popularity of the campy 1966–1968 live-action television series, with Adam West in the title role; Burt Ward as his young sidekick, Robin the Boy Wonder; and a variety of veteran actors and comedians deliberately overplaying their parts as the bad guys. The influence of that program was particularly evident in the late-1960s version produced by Filmation (partly running in tandem with that studio's *Superman* installments), as well as the later 1977 edition from the same studio, for which West and Ward reprised their roles. In both cases, the central elements of the live program—Batman's wooden, humorless reaction to the world around him; the villains'

overacting; and Robin's habitual uttering of exclamations starting with the word *holy*—remained intact. Batman's and Robin's portrayals in these series were also used in their appearances as regulars on *Super Friends* (q.v.) and its follow-ups with little alteration.

Popular as it was, the West-Ward project abruptly departed from the manner in which Batman had been originally conceived: a ruthless creature of the night with a grim visage. It was this version of the character that producers Timm, Radomski, and Burnett hoped to resurrect when they launched a new animated Batman in 1992. That they succeeded in doing so is an understatement. *Batman: The Animated Series* and its immediate follow-up, *The Adventures of Batman and Robin*, are arguably the most dramatically absorbing and technically complex superhero programs ever produced for television animation, with remarkable uniform excellence in all production categories. Deliberately eschewing the camp elements in favor of straight-ahead seriousness, the producers brought Batman back in line with his roots, as well as with the more unsympathetic manner in which he was now being portrayed in the comics by such artists as Frank Miller. The villainy in particular pulled no punches, thanks in particular to some excellent vocal performances by well-cast actors, as well as the producers' aforementioned starkly dramatic approach. In one case, a villain created specifically for the program—Harley Quinn, a former psychiatrist who became the companion of the Joker—went on to a life beyond the show in comics and feature films. The Emmy Awards presented to these programs over the course of their runs were well deserved, and their influence has been keenly felt in more recent television animation superhero narratives, even when the tone is more broadly comic, which is perhaps their greatest legacy to television animation as a whole.

Yet the formula, as such, inevitably wore thin through overexposure. The installments featured as part of *The New Batman/Superman Adventures* gradually eroded the gravitas of its two predecessors, and efforts to restore the dramatic depth in later programs proved elusive. *Batman Beyond* put the saga into a future time, where an aging Bruce Wayne surrendered the role of Batman to a young protégé. *The Batman* relaunched the saga anew but with few new surprises to those already familiar with the character. *The Brave and the Bold* was more ambitious, modeled as it was on the long-running comic book series, where Batman teamed up with other characters from the DC universe to halt evil. However, it was flawed; it seemed that the producers were simply doing casting calls for potential new series rather than fully exploiting the many featured characters (note the extensive voice actor credit list). *Beware the Batman* likewise added little to what had been seen before, save for being the first entry in the program cycle to be done in CGI.

In the 21st century, Batman—and his enemies—remain as popular as ever, with new live-action feature films coming out regularly. The live-action television series *Gotham*, depicting life in the city in the pre-Batman era, has added another element to his ongoing popularity, as has a cycle of new live-action films. Given this, as well as Batman's comfortably entrenched position as a fictional character and cultural figure within a giant media empire,

we may very well hear from him again as a television animation character in the future, for his saga truly seems endless.

BATTLETECH (1994)

STUDIO: Saban

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

PRODUCERS: Eric S. Rollman, Joel Andryc

WRITER: Michael Stackpole

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTOR: Peter Spellos (Captain Miles "Hawk" Hawkins)

SYNOPSIS: In a postapocalyptic future, the warriors known as the First Somerset Strikers fight for the side of the good against the villainous Clan.

COMMENTARY: Based as it was on a role-playing virtual reality game, it was no surprise that this action-oriented series displayed little in the way of innovative plotting and characterization. The involvement of veteran science fiction/fantasy writer Stackpole as a writer is perhaps the only thing about it meriting any sort of attention today.

THE BEAGLES (1966–1967)

STUDIOS: TOTAL Television, Leonardo, Lancelot

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Treadwell Covington

PRODUCERS: Joe Harris, Buck Biggers, Chet Stover

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Allen Swift (Tubby/Scotty), Sandy Becker (Stringer), Kenny Delmar (Narrator)

SYNOPSIS: The adventures of canine rock musicians Stringer and Tubby and their manager Scotty, who regularly forces his clients into the outside world to get them in the mood to write songs.

COMMENTARY: The final and least distinguished production of the TOTAL Television organization, whose best work was behind it by this time. While some historians erroneously have suggested the Beatles as an influence on the show, it was more accurately informed by the personalities of Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis, on whom the lead characters were clearly modeled.

BEANY AND CECIL (AND RELATED SERIES)

***Beany and Cecil* (a.k.a. *MATTY'S FUNNIES WITH BEANY AND CECIL*; 1962–1968)**

STUDIOS: Bob Clampett, Snowball

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATOR/PRODUCER: Bob Clampett

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: A. C. R. Stone

DIRECTOR: Art Scott

WRITERS: Bob Clampett, Eddie Maxwell, Al Bertino, Jack Bonestell, Jack Hannah, Dick Kinney, Dale Hale

VOICE ACTORS: Jim MacGeorge (Beany/Captain Horatio Huffenpuff), Irv Shoenmaker (Cecil/Dishonest John)

Beany and Cecil (1988)

STUDIOS: Bob Clampett, DIC

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATOR: Bob Clampett

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Andy Heyward

PRODUCER/DIRECTOR: John Kricfalusi

WRITERS INCLUDED: Chuck Lorre, Paul Dini

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Mark Hildreth (Beany), William Werstine (a.k.a. Billy West; Cecil), Jim MacGeorge (Captain Horatio Huffenpuff), Maurice LaMarche (Dishonest John)

SYNOPSIS: Young Beany, his friend Cecil the Sea Sick Serpent, and Beany's uncle Captain Huffenpuff have globe-trotting adventures while often encountering the machinations of the villainous Dishonest John.



Beany and Cecil went from puppets to animated characters effectively. ABC/Photofest © ABC

COMMENTARY: As an animator and director, Bob Clampett made crucial contributions to the development of the warped-house style of Warner Brothers theatrical animation in the late 1930s and 1940s, as shown by such exercises in blatant absurdity as *Porky in Wackyland* (1938). After leaving the studio in 1946, he worked briefly for other studios before turning his sights to television as an ideal place to produce a pet project he had been developing for a number of years. This resulted in the popular live-action puppet series *Time for Beany*, broadcast by the independent Los Angeles station KTLA between 1949 and 1954 and remaining in syndication (through kinescopes) until the late 1950s. Featuring Stan Freberg and Daws Butler as the puppeteers, the program won two Emmy Awards (in 1950 and 1952) and acquired some celebrity fans over its run, including Lionel Barrymore, Groucho and Harpo Marx, and Albert Einstein.

In an effort to move his puppet characters to his original mode of artistic expression, Clampett made a deal with Elliott Hyman, the head of Associated Artist Productions (AAP), to produce a series of theatrical animation films to be distributed internationally by AAP's parent company United Artists. These films, beginning with *Beany and Cecil Meet Billy the Squid* (1959), provided the genesis for the later television animation series and were included in the later television animation package, though only after creative inconsistencies in the television films were edited out. Clampett was able to leverage his theatrical success to convince ABC to take on his project as a weekly series, with Mattel as sponsor, which required Clampett to reuse characters and music from the company's earlier series *Matty's Funday Funnies* (q.v.).

As the live-action puppet series has largely faded from circulation and memory, this animated series is the primary means by which the characters are known today, much to the distaste of those with strong memories of the former. Regardless, the television animation version was one of the funniest and most colorful shows of its day, even though Clampett's parodies of then-current celebrity figures have become dated over time and his use of such techniques as dialect-based humor and racial caricature (shown in characters like an indigenous person with a broad Jewish accent) have become much more political liabilities now than they were then. Yet these elements showed Clampett had a boldness in terms of character and plot development severely lacking in most other television animation producers, then and now, which is a central reason the show continues to be appreciated when it is able to be seen.

After the program left the network TV airwaves, it was rarely seen until reissued as a series of VHS cassettes in 1984, the year Clampett died. Four years later, it was resurrected briefly as a television animation project without much creative distinction. However, the original version, when returned to syndication in 1989, proved to be as loved and popular as it had ever been.

While Kricfalusi, who idolized Clampett, was able to re-create much of the ambience of the original program effectively, he was unable to get his version past five installments. This had as much to do with his off-screen conflicts with studio and network management as it did with his needlessly

slow production methods, which would become his major Achilles heel as a television animation producer in the future.

***BEAST MACHINES: TRANSFORMERS* (1999–2001)**

See *Transformers* (and related series).

***BEAST WARS: TRANSFORMERS* (1996)**

See *Transformers* (and related series).

***THE BEATLES* (1965–1969)**

STUDIOS: Al Brodax, King Features

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Al Brodax

PRODUCERS: Mary Ellen Stewart, George Dunning, Jack Gettles, Leon Becker

DIRECTORS: Jack Stokes, Snav Sniekus, Bob Godfrey, John Dunn, Frank Adrina,
Tom MacDonald, Graham Sharpe, Ron Campbell, Ray Leach

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Paul Frees (John Lennon/George Harrison), Lance Percival (Paul McCartney/Ringo Starr)

SYNOPSIS: The animated adventures of the Beatles.

COMMENTARY: A highly iconic rock-and-roll band of the 1960s, the Beatles were first established in the late 1950s (as the Quarrymen) in their joint hometown of Liverpool, England. John Lennon (1940–1980) was the driving force behind the group's initial creation; Paul McCartney (1942–present) and George Harrison (1943–2001) joined soon afterward. Ringo Starr (né Richard Starkey, 1940–present) became the group's drummer in 1962, replacing original drummer Pete Best. That same year, after years of apprenticeship in live performances in England and Germany, the group signed a recording contract with the Parlophone label, which was later transferred to Parlophone's parent company, EMI (in America, their records were released on Capitol, an EMI subsidiary), before setting up their own label, Apple, in 1968. Between 1962 and their dissolution in 1970, the group released numerous hit singles in both America and Britain, as well as a string of highly regarded albums. Following the demise of the group, each member achieved considerable success as a solo recording artist (and, in Starr's case, actor).

This series was produced in the wake of the group's initial success and took its cues both from accurate caricatures of the band done by artists Peter Sander and Jack Stokes, as well as the frequently humorous, fast-paced ambience of two recent feature films featuring the group, *A Hard Day's Night* (Richard Lester, 1964) and *Help!* (Lester, 1965). Brodax was specifically recruited to develop the series for ABC, and he enlisted the aid of Britain's TVC Studios (later to produce the Beatles' animated feature film *Yellow Submarine*) and Australia's Astranasa Company to produce the animation. While actual Beatles records were used on the soundtrack, the group's voices were done by impersonators, with veteran voice man Frees (recording in Hollywood) being outclassed in terms of quality by British comedian Percival

(recording in London). The original appearance of the group was steadfastly maintained throughout the run as well, in spite of the drastic changes occurring to the group's music and physical appearances after 1966.

As with their music, the cleverly produced animated version of the Beatles set a high standard for other animated musical groups to duplicate; most would not come close to doing so.

BEAVIS AND BUTT-HEAD (1993–1997)

STUDIO/DISTRIBUTOR: MTV

CREATOR: Mike Judge

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Abby Terkuhle

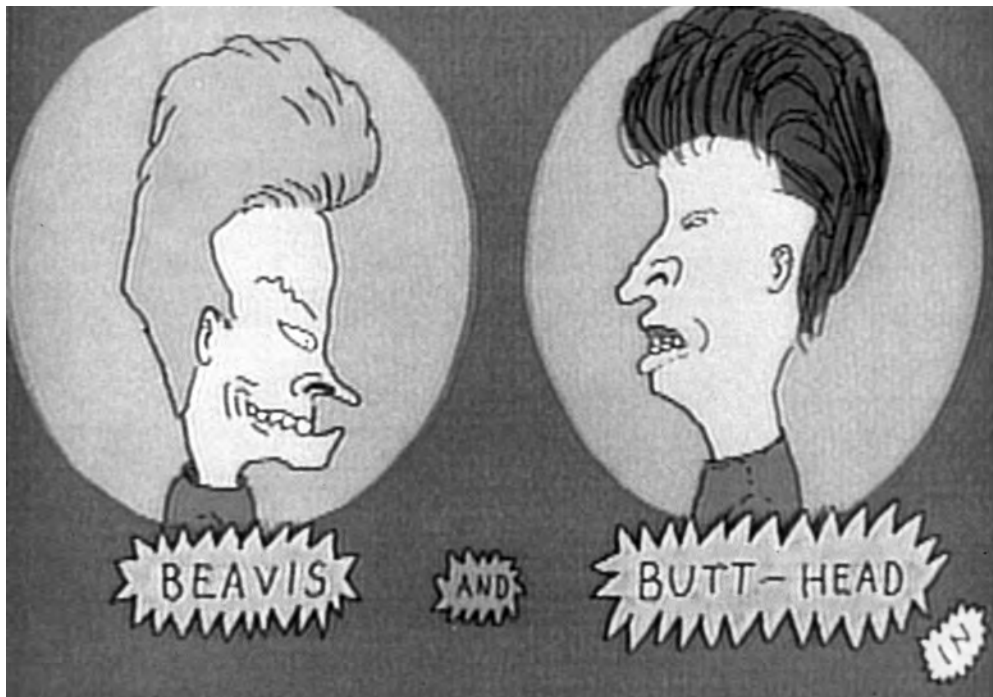
PRODUCERS: Christina Norman, Nick Litwinko, John Lynn

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS: Mike Judge, Joe Stillman, Chris Kreski, Glenn Eichler, Geoff Whelan, David Felton, Tiny Hong

VOICE ACTORS: Mike Judge (Beavis/Butt-Head/David Van Dreezen/Bradley Buzzcut/Principal McVicker), Tracy Grandstaff (Daria/Cassandra/Lolita/Tanqueray/Heather/Jennifer), Guy (Mr. Graham), Rottilio Micheli (Todd), Adam Welch (Stewart)

SYNOPSIS: Teenage ne'er-do-wells Beavis and Butt-Head engage in considerable mischief around their small American hometown, while complaining much about how and why things "suck."



MTV's biggest animated stars, for better or worse. MTV/Photofest © MTV

COMMENTARY: Introduced in "Frog Baseball," a segment of *Liquid Television* (q.v.), this deranged and lascivious duo were the creation of Judge, a university physics major who switched careers to animation from electrical engineering after attending an animation festival. Alternating viciously cruel illustrated pranks with reviews of and commentary on MTV's library of music videos, the series was a landmark production in the growing liberalization of television animation content, begun with *The Simpsons* (q.v.) and continuing with *The Ren and Stimpy Show* (q.v.) and *South Park* (q.v.) later on. It was justifiably condemned for the raw recklessness of its content and even blamed for things it was only indirectly responsible for (such as a five-year-old Ohio boy burning down his family's trailer, supposedly under its influence) that added unnecessary fuel to a heated moral fire over the content of television animation in the 1990s. The duo's popularity was such that they were even granted the honor of starring in a theatrical animation feature film, *Beavis and Butt-Head Do America*, soon after the series' expiration.

Judge has since gone on to producing more conventional fare, such as *King of the Hill* (q.v.) and the live-action sitcom *Silicon Valley* for television, and the films *Office Space* and *Idiocracy*. But some of us will never entirely forgive him for thrusting the recklessness of this pair onto their television screens.

BE COOL, SCOOPY DOO (2015–PRESENT)

See *Scooby Doo, Where Are You?* (and related series).

BEDTIME STORIES (1992)

See *Shelley Duvall's Bedtime Stories* (1992).

BEETHOVEN (1994–1995)

STUDIOS: Northern Lights, Universal

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Ivan Reitman, Michael Gross, Joe Medjuck

PRODUCERS: Paul Germain, Roy Allen Smith

WRITERS INCLUDED: Joe Ansolabehere, Jonathan Greenberg

DIRECTORS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Dean Jones (George Newton), Joel Murray (Beethoven), Francesca Smith (Alice Newton), Kath Soucie (Emily Newton), Nicholle Tom (Ryce Newton), Joe Pantoliano (Sparky), Bill Fagerbakke (Caesar), Tress MacNeille (Ginger), Hank Azaria (Killer), Justin Shenkarow (Roger/Others)

SYNOPSIS: Good-natured St. Bernard Beethoven attempts to do good for his human masters and canine friends but doesn't always succeed.

COMMENTARY: *Beethoven* was a highly popular live-action feature film about a lovable St. Bernard released by Universal in 1992, which was deemed popular enough to merit several sequels (most not released theatrically) and this animated offshoot. The sole novelty element about the program in comparison to its live-action progeny was giving the title character the ability to speak English, although he did so only—and predictably—in the presence of his canine friends Sparky (a bull terrier), Caesar (a Great Dane),

Ginger (a collie), and Killer (a poodle) or his one confidant in the Newton family circle, a hamster named Mr. Huggs, to say nothing of other animals. Evidently, they were sharing a joke the humans weren't in on—a good metaphor for the whole series.

Executive producer Reitman was also, not surprisingly, the producer of the film. He was likewise responsible for the animated series based on his films *Alienators: Evolution Continues* and *Ghostbusters* (q.v.), but only the latter showed true merit and distinction. Oddly, Jones, who played Beethoven's human master here, had portrayed the deranged scientist villain of the original *Beethoven* film.

BEETLEJUICE (1989–1993)

STUDIOS: Geffen, Tim Burton, Nelvana, Warner Brothers

DISTRIBUTORS: ABC (1989–1992), FOX (1992–1993)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Tim Burton, David Geffen

PRODUCERS: Michael Hirsh, Patrick Loubert, Clive Smith, Stephen Hodgins, Lenora Hume

DIRECTOR: Robin Budd

WRITERS INCLUDED: Patsy Cameron, Todd Anasti

VOICE ACTORS: Stephen Ouimette (Beetlejuice), Alyson Court (Lydia Deetz), Roger Dunn (Charles Deetz), Elizabeth Hanna (Delia Deetz)

SYNOPSIS: Beetlejuice, an otherworldly ghoul from the "Neitherworld," has adventures in the company of his human friend Lydia Deetz, a supernatural and occult devotee.

COMMENTARY: As television animation adaptations of live-action feature films go, this was better than most. Executive producer Burton, who had directed the film of the same name the previous year that inspired the series, was clearly intent on adapting the atmosphere he produced in the film to television animation, and he succeeded in this admirably with the able assistance of the Nelvana staff. The Neitherworld, with its Salvador Dali-esque landscape and (mildly) grotesque population, helped the program to stand out from the crowd, which was recognized when the series received an Emmy Award in 1990.

BEN 10 (AND RELATED SERIES)

Ben 10 (2005–2008)

STUDIO: Cartoon Network

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATORS: Duncan Rouleau, Joe Casey, Joe Kelly, Steven T. Seagle (a.k.a. Men of Action)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Sam Register

PRODUCERS: Kelly Crews, Donna Smith, Alex Soto

DIRECTORS: Scooter Tidwell, Sebastian Montes, Alex Soto

WRITERS: Thomas Pugsley, Duncan Rouleau, Joe Casey, Joe Kelly, Steven T. Seagle, Greg Klein, Marsha Griffin, Marty Isenberg, Kevin Hopps, Greg Weisman, Eugene Son

VOICE ACTORS: Tara Strong (Ben Tennyson/Upgrade/Lucy Mann), Richard Horvitz (Grey Matter), Steven Blum (Heatblast/Ghostfreak), Jim Ward (Diamondhead/KXLRB/Wildvine), Fred Tatasciore (Ripjaw/Cannon Bolt), Meagan Smith (Gwen Tennyson), Paul Eiding (Max Tennyson), Richard McGonagle (Fourarms), Dee Bradley Baker (Stinkfly/Wildmutt)

Ben 10: Alien Force (2008–2010)

STUDIO: Cartoon Network

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Sam Register

PRODUCERS: Donna Smith, Glen Murakami

DIRECTORS: Dan Riba, Butch Lukic, John Fang, Rick Morales

WRITERS INCLUDED: Dwayne McDuffie, Matt Wayne, Jim Krieg, Len Uhley, Stan Berkowitz, Charlotte Fullerton, Adam Beechen, Eugene Son, Len Wein

VOICE ACTORS: Yuri Lowenthal (Ben Tennyson/Albedo), Ashley Johnson (Gwen Tennyson), Greg Cipes (Kevin Levin), Vyvan Pham (Julie Yamamoto), Paul Eiding (Max Tennyson), James Remar (Vilgax)

Ben 10: Ultimate Alien (2010–2012)

STUDIO: Cartoon Network

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Brian A. Miller, Jennifer Pelphrey, Tramm Wigzell, Rob Swartz, Rob Sorcher

PRODUCERS: Donna Smith, Dwayne McDuffie, Glen Murakami

DIRECTORS: Dan Riba, Butch Lukic, Matt Youngberg, Chris Graham, Kenji Ono

WRITERS INCLUDED: Dwayne McDuffie, Len Uhley, Marty Isenberg, Len Wein, Charlotte Fullerton, Eugene Son, Ernie Altbacker, Jim Krieg, Matt Wayne, Peter David, Brian Swenlin

VOICE ACTORS: Yuri Lowenthal (Ben Tennyson), Ashley Johnson (Gwen Tennyson), Greg Cipes (Kevin Levin), Paul Eiding (Max Tennyson), J. K. Simmons (Magister Prior Gilhil), Rob Paulsen (Magister Patelliday), Chris Pratt (Cooper Daniels), Bumper Robinson (Alan Albright), Juliet Landau (Helen Wheels), Khary Payton (Manny Armstrong), Adam Wylie (Pierce Wheels), Vyvan Pham (Julie Yamamoto/Ship), Jeff Bennett (Azmuth), David McCallum (Paradox), Scott Menville (Jimmy Jones), Dee Bradley Baker (Bivalvan/Pandor/Andreas/Ra'ad), John DiMaggio (Galapagus), Peter Renaday (Sir George)

Ben 10: Omniverse (2012–2014)

STUDIO: Cartoon Network

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Brian A. Miller, Jennifer Pelphrey, Tramm Wigzell, Rob Sorcher

PRODUCERS: Donna Smith, Vincent Anciello, Matt Youngberg

DIRECTORS: Dan Riba, Jae Hong Kim, Christopher Berkeley, John Fang

WRITERS INCLUDED: Dwayne McDuffie, Geoffrey Thorne, Eugene Son, David McDermott, Len Uhley, Matt Wayne, Marty Isenberg, Len Wein, Charlotte Fullerton, Jonathan Callan, Kevin Rubio, Thomas Pugsley

VOICE ACTORS: Yuri Lowenthal (Ben Tennyson/Others), Bumper Robinson (Rook Blonko/Others), Paul Eiding (Max Tennyson/Others), Dee Bradley Baker (Lodestar/Others), Eric Bauza (Diamondhead/Others), Corey Burton (Malware/Others), John DiMaggio (Armodrillo/Others), David Kaye (Khyber/Others), Rob Paulsen (Magister Patelliday/Others), Kevin Michael Richardson (Snare-oh/Others), Tara Strong (Pakmar/Others)

SYNOPSIS: Ten-year-old Ben Tennyson discovers a mysterious device of otherworldly origin that allows him to assume a variety of heroic guises, though only for 10 minutes at a time. Over time, Ben takes on new responsibilities as a superheroic figure in the universe. His cousin Gwen and grandfather Max are his regular allies in his fight against evil.

COMMENTARY: At Cartoon Network, it seems, you can never get too much of a good thing. The original series, with its humorous undercurrent and interesting premise, worked well enough, but later incarnations took themselves far too seriously to be redeemed in the same way. The constant production of new series about the same characters is extremely tiresome, no matter how well they are produced on a technical level and particularly if they add nothing relatively new to previous incarnations. Yet somehow the executive staff at Cartoon Network, much like their predecessors at Hanna-Barbera in the 1970s, seem to be blissfully unaware of this, and their resulting work suffers creatively. And this particular narrative cycle is not yet over: a new rebooted version of the program debuted in the fall of 2016, outside this book's mandate.

THE BERENSTAIN BEARS

The Berenstain Bears (1985–1987)

STUDIOS: Joe Cates, Southern Star, Hanna-Barbera Australia

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATORS: Stan Berenstain, Jan Berenstain

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Joe Cates

PRODUCERS: Buzz Potamkin, Gordon Kent

DIRECTORS: Jon McClenahan, Darrell Van Citters

WRITERS INCLUDED: Rowby Goren

VOICE ACTORS: Ruth Buzzi (Mama Bear), Brian Cummings (Papa Bear), Christina Lange (Sister Bear), David Mendenhall (Brother Bear), Frank Welker (Raffish Ralph)

The Berenstain Bears (2003)

STUDIOS: Agogo, Berenstain, Nelvana

DISTRIBUTOR: PBS

CREATORS: Stan Berenstain, Jan Berenstain

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Michael Hirsh, Scott Dyer, Steven Ching, Jan Berenstain, Stan Berenstain

PRODUCERS: Patricia Burns, Jocelyn Hamilton, Michelle Melanson, Cynthia Taylor

DIRECTORS: Scott Glynn, Gary Hurst, Kervin Fana

WRITERS INCLUDED: Peter Sauder, Bob Ardiel

VOICE ACTORS: Camilla Scott (Mama Bear), Ben Campbell (Papa Bear), Michael Cera (Brother Bear), Tajia Isen (Sister Bear), Corinne Conley (Gran), Amanda Soha (Lizzy Bruin), Marc McMulkin (Cousin Fred), Mark Rendall (Furdy Factual), Jake Scott (Cub), Gage Knox (Too Tall), Patrick Salvagna (Skuzz)

SYNOPSIS: In the town of Beartown, the Bear Family—Mama, Papa, Sister, and Brother—learn instructive lessons about life.

COMMENTARY: The Berenstains developed their ursine characters in the mid-1970s and continued to produce books featuring them until their respective deaths. (Their son, Mike, has since added to the catalog with new adventures.) The simple, straightforward, and moralistic storytelling style caught on immediately with child audiences, and the Bears were quickly adapted to animation, appearing in several specials between 1979 and 1984 on NBC before this series aired. Added to the cast for the regular program was Raffish Ralph, a wheeler-dealer con man who served as the resident “bad example” for the audience *not* to follow.

The 2000s version removed much of the blatant comedy from the earlier version to focus more on family values, given the obvious absence of Raffish Ralph and the more active role of the Berenstains themselves in series production. Country singer Lee Ann Womack performed the theme music.

BEVERLY HILLS TEENS (1987)

STUDIO: KK and D, DIC, Access Syndication

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Andy Heyward

PRODUCERS: Robby London, Tetsuo Katayama

DIRECTORS: Michael Maliani, Bruno Bianchi

WRITERS INCLUDED: Jack Mendelsohn, Jack Olesker, Mike O'Mahoney, Brynne Stephens

VOICE ACTORS: Michael Beattie (Buck/Wilshire), Karen Bernstein (Tara/Jett), Hadley Ray (Radley/Guitar), Corinne Koslo (Nikki Darling), Mary Long (Larke/Dog), Stephen McMullen (Pierce Thorndyke), Tracey Moore (Jillian/Bianca/Blaise), Jonathan Potts (Troy), Mark Saunders (Gig/Dad), Joanne Schellenberg (Switchboard), Linda Sorenson (Fifi)

SYNOPSIS: The lives of teenage children of wealthy parents in Beverly Hills, California.

COMMENTARY: A product of its time, this series did nothing but flaunt the wealth of its characters in the face of economically poorer viewers. It deservedly failed to last more than one year and stands as one of its studio's most artistically bankrupt productions.

BEWARE THE BATMAN (2013–2014)

See *Batman* (and related series).

BIGFOOT AND THE MUSCLE MACHINES (1985)

STUDIOS: Marvel, Sunbow

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Wally Burr (Close McCall), Peter Cullen (Arthur Ravenscroft/Mr. Big), Lance LeGault (Yank Justice), Susan Blu (Red/Redder/Jennifer), Vince Howard (Professor D), Chris Latta (Adrian Ravenscroft/Ernie Slye), Neil Ross (Chauffeur)

SYNOPSIS: A group of anthropomorphized monster trucks, led by Yank Justice, help a young human pair escape from the clutches of the villainous Mr. Big.

COMMENTARY: This was a nine-episode serial featured as part of Marvel's *Super Sunday* and showed the typical lack of creative imagination (as shown by the name of the bad guy) evident in this studio and its brethren at this time. The serial was reportedly edited into a feature-length film, although no evidence exists for it being broadcast in this form. Additional episodes of the series had been planned beyond the nine produced, but they were abandoned before going into production.

BIGFOOT PRESENTS: METEOR AND THE MIGHTY MONSTER TRUCKS (2006)

STUDIOS: Meteor the Monster Truck, Brandissimo, Endgame

DISTRIBUTORS: Discovery, TLC

CREATORS/PRODUCERS: David Snyder, Bill Gross

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Cameron Ansell (Meteor), Mitchell Eisner (Jose), Taija Isen (Ponytail), Dan Petronijevic (Sarge), Cliff Saunders (Junkboy), Laurie Elliott (Amby), Linda Ballantyne (Sink), Joanne Vannicola (Hook), Brad Adamson (Announcer), Martin Roach (Big Wheelie)

SYNOPSIS: In Crushington Park, young monster truck Meteor learns about resiliency and sportsmanship from his elders.

COMMENTARY: Given where it was broadcast, it was not surprising that this program had an edifying element to it. Consequently, it was relatively standard fare. It received an Emmy nomination in 2007.

BIG GUY AND RUSTY THE BOY ROBOT (1999, 2001)

STUDIOS: Dark Horse, Columbia

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX

CREATORS: Frank Miller, Geof Darrow

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Jeff Kline, Richard Raynis, Mike Richardson

PRODUCERS: Duane Capizzi, Helen Kalafatic, Frank Squillace

DIRECTORS: Nathan Chew, Frank Squillace, Mike Goguen, Jane Wu Soriano, Andrew Thom, Dave Bullock, Curt Walstead

WRITERS: Bill Motz, Bob Roth, Eddie Guzelian, Steven Melching, David Slack, Greg Weisman, Duane Capizzi, Cade Chilcoat, Rodney Gibbs, Richard Raynis, Roger Schulman, Dean Stefan, Brian Swenlin, Alex Van Dyne, Marlowe Weisman

VOICE ACTORS: Pamela Segall (Rusty/Jo), Jonathan Cook (Big Guy), Jim Hanks (Lieutenant Dwayne Hunter), Gabrielle Carteris (Dr. Erika Slate), Stephen Root (Dr. Axel Donovan), Kathy Kinney (Jenny the Monkey), R. Lee Erney (General Thornton), Kevin Michael Richardson (Garth), M. Emmet Walsh (Mack)

SYNOPSIS: The saga of the superheroic robot BGY-11 ("Big Guy"), piloted by Lieutenant Dwayne Hunter, and his younger, more enthusiastic partner Rusty, who are employed as protectors of a futuristic United States against evil.

COMMENTARY: While Miller and Darrow's artistic vision from the original graphic novel version of the story was maintained, the producers made some selective additions, mostly by expanding the cast of characters. This did little to hamper the general success of the project, at least artistically. The program was withdrawn after only six episodes aired in its initial foray; the remaining episodes were broadcast in 2001.

***THE BIG WORLD OF LITTLE ADAM* (1964)**

STUDIOS: Little Adam, Banner

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

PRODUCER: Fred Ladd

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: John Megna (Little Adam), Craig Seckler (Wilbur)

SYNOPSIS: Young Adam and his brother Wilbur serve as hosts for a series of documentary films from the NASA Archives.

COMMENTARY: Another product of its time, a period when NASA's activities were unquestioned as advancements in science rather than seen as a bureaucratically muddled waste of time, as it often is now. Why they decided to make the lead characters animated is unknown, but live performers easily could have served the purpose without any change in the program's format.

***BIKER MICE FROM MARS* (1993–1995)**

STUDIOS: New World, Brentwood Television Funnies, Marvel, Worldwide

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

CREATOR: Rick Ungar

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Rick Ungar, Norman Singer

PRODUCER/DIRECTOR: Tom Tataranowicz

WRITERS INCLUDED: Bob Forward, Eve Forward, Glenn Leopold

VOICE ACTORS: Dorian Harewood (Modo), Rob Paulsen (Throttle), Ian Ziering (Vinnie), Leeza Miller McGee (Charley), Morgan Sheppard (Lawrence Limburger), Susan Silo (Dr. Karbunkle), Jess Harnell (Sweet Georgie Brown), Brad Garrett (Grease Pit)

SYNOPSIS: The Biker Mice from Mars—Modo, Throttle, and Vinnie—travel to Earth to save it from the wrath of the Plutarkians, villainous aliens intent on destroying it as they had other planets in the past.

COMMENTARY: Despite a highly imaginative premise and a somewhat light-hearted tone, this program was too deliberately cast in the shadow of *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* (q.v.) for it to be treated as anything but derivative by critics. Creator/executive producer Ungar's claim to have given his middle-



A very odd product of its time. © Photofest

grade target audience what it “wanted” based on consultations is a claim to be taken at face value and an indication of what level of intelligence he presumed they had—low.

***BILL AND TED'S EXCELLENT ADVENTURES* (1990–1992)**

STUDIOS: Big Star, Spectrum, DIC, Orion, Nelson

DISTRIBUTORS: CBS (1990–1991), FOX (1991–1992)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Andy Heyward, Robby London

PRODUCER/DIRECTOR: Stan Phillips

WRITERS INCLUDED: Judy Rothman

VOICE ACTORS: Keanu Reeves (Ted Logan, 1990–1991), Alex Winter (Bill Preston, 1990–1991), George Carlin (Rufus, 1990–1991), Dave Madden (Mr. Preston), Vicky Juditz (Missy), Peter Renaday (Mr. Logan), Danny Cooksey (Deacon Logan)

SYNOPSIS: California teenagers Bill and Ted visit events in time through the aid of a telephone booth provided by their futuristic mentor Rufus.

COMMENTARY: This series did little but expand the premise of the 1989 feature film *Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure* (and its 1991 sequel, *Bill and Ted's Bogus Journey*) to a weekly format. As the films were written at a lowbrow level to start with, the producers of the weekly series had not much to go by in terms of plotting and characterization to use, and it showed. The fact that Reeves, Winter, and Carlin—the original film's stars—bolted after the first season indicates that even they had some reservations about the property's usefulness as a series.

THE BIONIC SIX (1987)

STUDIOS: LJN, TMS, MCA

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

PRODUCERS: Yutaka Fujioka, Sachiko Tsuneda, Gerald Baldwin

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Norman Bernard (J. D. Bennett), Carol Bilger (Helen Bennett), Bobbi Block (Meg Bennett), Jennifer Darling (Madame O), Jim MacGeorge (Dr. Scarab), Hal Rayle (Eric Bennett), Neil Ross (F.L.U.F.F.I.), John Stephenson (Jack Bennett/Klunk), Brian Tochi (Bunji Bennett), Frank Welker (Glove/Mechanic/Chopper)

SYNOPSIS: Two bionic crime-fighters assume the guise of suburbanites by adopting four multiracial orphans, who join them in the fight against evil by donning electronic devices on their wrists.

COMMENTARY: This project existed chiefly as a marketing ploy for a line of toys (LJN was one of Japan's leading toy manufacturers at the time) and exhibited the lack of understanding of animation's subtleties that the majority of such products have demonstrated over television animation's history.

BIRDMAN AND THE GALAXY TRIO (1967–1968)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

DIRECTORS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera, Charles Nichols

WRITERS INCLUDED: Art Davis, Paul Sommer

VOICE ACTORS: Keith Andes (Ray Randall/Birdman), Don Messick (Falcon 7/Vapor Man), Dick Beals (Birdboy), Virginia Eiler (Galaxy Girl), Ted Cassidy (Meteor Man)

SYNOPSIS: Two short superhero narratives. In one, the solar-powered Birdman fights the various agents of the evil F.E.A.R. organization; in the other, a trio of heroes transverses the galaxy in their spaceship to find evil to combat.

COMMENTARY: Typical television animation superheroics of the 1960s: characterizations all straight as an arrow, with little evident humor; good and evil blatant on both sides; and (despite biased criticism) little in the way of actual on-screen “violence.” The characters, designed by veteran comic book artist Alex Toth, looked good, but they weren’t allowed to do more than what the producers allowed them to do, which, in comparison to later heroes, wasn’t much at all.

Birdman would later reemerge in an entirely different context as the title character of *Harvey Birdman, Attorney at Law* (q.v.).

***BIRDZ* (1998–1999)**

STUDIO: Nelvana

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATOR/PRODUCER/DIRECTOR: Larry Jacobs

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Michael Hirsh, Patrick Loubert, Clive Smith

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Susan Roman (Eddie Storkowitz), Stephanie Morgenstern (Steffy Storkowitz), Alison Sealy-Smith (Abby Storkowitz), Adam Reid (Tommy Turkey), Jill Frappier (Miss Finch), Len Carlson (Mr. Pip), Chris Wiggins (Officer Pigeon), Karen Bernstein (Olivia Owl), Richard Binsley (Mr. Nuthatch), Sally Cahill (Betty Storkowitz), David Huband (Morty Storkowitz), Rick Jones (Gregory Woodpecker), Juliet Lemieux (Sleepy the Bat), Ruby Smith-Merovitz (Spring)

SYNOPSIS: In the community of Birdland, 10-year-old Eddie Storkowitz aspires to become a film director in the fashion of his idol, Steven Spielbird.

COMMENTARY: Done with more humor, verve, and personality than most Canadian television animation productions, as well as a clear level of unusual but favorable ethnic characterization (note the surname of the lead character and his family), this project’s failure (in America, anyway) was due largely to poor scheduling and typical corporate interference on the part of the network, as creator Jacobs himself has admitted. Perhaps if it had been on the docket of a more sympathetic distributor, it might have fared better.

***THE BISKITTS* (1983–1984)**

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS (1983–1984, 1985)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCER: Art Scott

DIRECTORS: Ray Patterson, Oscar Dufau, George Gordon, Carl Urbano, John Walker, Rudy Zamora

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Darryl Hickman (Waggs), B. J. Ward (Lady), Dick Beals (Scat), Kathleen Helppie (Sweets), Bob Holt (Spinner/Bump/Flip), Kip King (Shecky), Jerry Houser (Shiner), Peter Cullen (Scratch/Fang/Dog Foot), Kenneth Mars (King Max/Fetch/Snarl), Jennifer Darling (Wiggle), Marshall Efron (Mooch), Henry Gibson (Downer)

SYNOPSIS: The Biskitts—a group of miniscule young dogs—serve as the palace guards for the crown jewels of Biskitt Castle against the evil machinations of King Max.

COMMENTARY: Hanna-Barbera repeating itself, despite a story line that sounded good on paper. Basically, a good-versus-evil scenario in the mode of *The Smurfs* (q.v.). The characterization was rendered anachronistic by the inclusion of Wiggle, a caricature of a California “Valley Girl,” and the jester Shecky (presumably named in honor of the legendary stand-up comic Shecky Greene, whom the show’s target audience would never have heard of) on opposite sides of the good–evil divide.

BLACKSTAR (1981–1983)

STUDIO: Filmation

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Lou Scheimer

DIRECTORS: John Armstrong, Ed Friedman, Lou Zukor, Marsh Lamore, Marja Dahl, Shelby Kelly, Ernest Schmidt, Louis Chavras

WRITERS INCLUDED: Tom Ruegger, Bruce Timm

VOICE ACTORS: George DiCenzo (John Blackstar), Pat Pinney (Balkar/Terra/Klone), Frank Welker (Gossamear/Burple/Rif), Alan Oppenheimer (Carpo/Overlord of the Underworld), Linda Gary (Mara)

SYNOPSIS: When astronaut John Blackstar is sucked through a black hole while traveling in space, he ends up on the planet Sagar and engages in heroic combat against the Overlord of the Underworld.

COMMENTARY: This program was something of a dress rehearsal for Filmation’s later and more successful *He-Man and the Masters of the Universe* (q.v.) and *She-Ra: Princess of Power* series (q.v.), where the good-versus-evil framework introduced here would have more room to move. Interestingly, Blackstar was originally supposed to have been an African American man (which would have been a revelatory act for the time), but CBS refused to endorse that idea. That lack of progressive thinking on the part of the network may have been what drove Scheimer and Filmation to syndication (where this series was rebroadcast briefly after its network run ended) later in the decade. What *Blackstar* ended up becoming was simply a mélange of preexisting plot ideas reworked, unfortunately for the viewers.

BLASTER’S UNIVERSE (1998–2000)

STUDIO: Nelvana

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Michael Hirsh, Patrick Loubert, Clive Smith

PRODUCER/DIRECTOR: Larry Jacobs

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Jonathan Wilson (Max Blaster), Maryke Hendrikse (G. C.), Juan Chioran (M.E.L.)

SYNOPSIS: In the year 2222, scientifically inclined 12-year-old Max Blaster teams up with silver-skinned, purple-haired alien girl G. C. to save the universe from peril.

COMMENTARY: Based on a popular educational CD-ROM project, this series typified educationally oriented television animation by sacrificing plotting and characterization whenever necessary to impart educational content. Nevertheless, it was thought-provoking and entertaining and did not entirely deserve to be as abruptly pink-slipped as it was by its American distributor.

BLAZING DRAGONS (1992)

STUDIOS: Nelvana, Ellipse

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated (United States, 1996)

CREATOR: Terry Jones

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Patrick Loubert

DIRECTOR: Larry Jacobs

WRITERS INCLUDED: John May, Suzanne Bolch, Hugh Duffy

VOICE ACTORS: Aron Tager (King Allfire), Steve Sutcliffe (Queen Griddle), Richard Binsley (Sir Blaze/Minstrel), Juan Chioran (Sir Loungetot/Count Geoffrey), Cedric Smith (Evil Knight #1), John Stocker (Evil Knight #2/Sir Burnevere), Dan Hennessey (Evil Knight #3), Edward Glen (Flicker), Stephanie Morgenstern (Flame), Richard Waugh (Cinder/Clinker)

SYNOPSIS: The kingdom of Camelhot, consisting primarily of anthropomorphic dragons, is protected by a wide variety of heroic figures against evil human knights.

COMMENTARY: Originally produced for Canadian and British television in 1992, this clever and humorous program was an exception to the rule that Canadian-produced programs are not as well done as their American counterparts in terms of humor. The main reason for this was the involvement of Jones, a founding member of the legendary Monty Python comedy team, whose trademark offbeat and irreverent humor is all over the place here. Minus the "adult" and grotesque elements, this is the clear missing link between the team's similar feature film *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* and *Spamalot*, the Broadway musical version of same concocted by Jones's colleague Eric Idle, and should be more widely seen than in the brief period it was for that reason. However, the setting and characters did live on afterward in a series of popular computer games.

BOB AND BETTY IN ADVENTURELAND (1949–1950)

See *Jim and Judy in Teleland* (a.k.a. *Bob and Betty in Adventureland*; 1949–1950).

BOB AND MARGARET (1998–2001)

STUDIOS: Nelvana, Comedy Partners, Silver Light, Channel 4

DISTRIBUTOR: Comedy Central (United States)

CREATORS: David Fine, Alison Snowden

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Michael Hirsh, Clive Smith

PRODUCER: Tom McGillis

DIRECTORS: Harold Harris, Julian Harris, Karen Lesman

WRITERS: David Fine, Alison Snowden, Chas Lawther, Rosie Shuster

VOICE ACTORS: Alison Snowden (Margaret Fish), Andy Hamilton (Bob Fish, 1998–2000 episodes), Brian George (Bob Fish, 2001 episodes), Jayne Eastwood (Cookie Fish/Joyce), Dwayne Hill (Trevor), Wayne Robson (Melvin Fish), Tracy Hoyt (Guinevere)

SYNOPSIS: Middle-aged British married couple Bob and Margaret Fish deal with the vexations that their lives create on a regular basis.

COMMENTARY: This illustrated sitcom had its origins in *Bob's Birthday*, a short film directed by Fine and Snowden for Canada's National Film Board in 1994 that won an Academy Award. Resisting efforts from American producers to adapt the film as a series directly for that market, Fine and Snowden instead worked with Canada's Nelvana company and British investors to bring such a series to life. The result was a program that preserved the integrity of the original short by bringing an unfamiliar level of realism and restraint to television animation and succeeding modestly at its modest aims.

BOBBY'S WORLD (1990–1998)

STUDIOS: Film Roman, Alevy, FOX

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX

CREATOR: Howie Mandel

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Howie Mandel, Phil Roman

PRODUCER: Mitch Schauer

DIRECTORS: Berny Wolf, Ron Myrick

WRITERS INCLUDED: Jim Fisher, Jim Stahl, Dianne Dixon

VOICE ACTORS: Howie Mandel (Bobby Generic/Howie Generic), Gail Matthius (Martha Generic), Charity James (Kelly Generic), Danny Mann (Roger, early episodes), Frank Welker (Roger, later episodes), Tino Insana (Uncle Ted), Benny Grant (Derek Generic, early episodes), Pamela Segall (Derek Generic, later episodes), Gary Owens (Captain Squash), Debi Derryberry (Jack), Susan Tolsky (Aunt Ruth)

SYNOPSIS: Four-year-old Bobby Generic deals with the complications of his life by retreating into complicated daydreams.

COMMENTARY: Comedian/actor Mandel had developed the character of Bobby as part of his stand-up comedy act using a prominent falsetto voice when portraying him. The character's facility for Walter Mitty–esque daydreaming served as the fulcrum for this series, which gave him a more-than-adequate showcase, in part by removing the raunchier adult aspect of Mandel's humor, although some of the parodies presented were above the audience's target age. The portrayal of Bobby's mother Martha as visibly pregnant in some episodes was a groundbreaking act, considering the audience the show was aimed at.

BOB'S BURGERS (2011–PRESENT)

STUDIOS: Wilo, Bento Box, Buck and Millie, 20th Century Fox

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX

CREATOR: Loren Bouchard

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Loren Bouchard, Jim Dauterive

DIRECTORS INCLUDE: Anthony Chun, Jennifer Coyle, Kyounghee Lim, Wesley Archer, Boohwan Lim, Bernard Derriman, Don MacKinnon, Tyree Dillihay, Chris Song, Brian Loschiavo

WRITERS INCLUDE: Loren Bouchard, Jim Dauterive, Dan Fybel, Rich Rinaldi, Holly Schlesinger, Scott Jacobson, Lizzie Molyneux, Wendy Molyneux, Steven Davis, Kelvin Yu, Nora Smith, Kit Boss, Jon Schroeder, Greg Thompson, Mike Benner, H. Jon Benjamin

VOICE ACTORS: H. Jon Benjamin (Bob Belcher/Robert "Big Bob" Belcher, early episodes/Jimmy Pesto Jr./Others), John Roberts (Linda Belcher/Others), Dan Mintz (Tina Belcher), Eugene Mirman (Gene Belcher), Kristen Schaal (Louise Belcher), Megan Mullally (Gayle), Sam Seder (Al), Renee Taylor (Gloria), Bill Hader (Robert "Big Bob" Belcher, later episodes), Larry Murphy (Teddy/Others), Andy Kindler (Mort), Jay Johnston (Jimmy Pesto Sr.), Sarah Silverman (Ollie Pesto/Others), Laura Silverman (Andy Pesto), David Herman (Philip Frond/Mr. Branca)

SYNOPSIS: The Belcher family operates a hamburger-oriented restaurant in a small town and deals with the personal hang-ups of themselves and their friends.

COMMENTARY: Probably the most unexpected success story of its decade, given that its enduring popularity and success at various awards shows belies the fact that its subject matter is distasteful in a number of respects. Although there are some interesting aspects of its construction (e.g., Schaal's portrayal of Louise, which won her an Annie), the producers' tendency to allow the writers to put the characters in either contrived or disgusting situations constantly is a major stumbling block to developing the series beyond its original premise. The fact that the Belchers' restaurant is frequently depicted as being temporarily closed down for violations of local health ordinances should give the audience some sense of what exactly is truly wrong with the show—although its network and devoted fans seem to neither notice nor care about that.

BOING BOING (1956–1958)

See *Gerald McBoing Boing* (and related series).

BONKERS (1993–1995)

STUDIO: Disney

DISTRIBUTORS: Disney (1993), Syndicated (1993–1995)

SUPERVISING PRODUCERS: Robert Taylor, Bob Hathcock

PRODUCERS: Hank Tucker, David Schwartz, Duane Capizzi

DIRECTORS: Roy Wilson, Carole Beers, Vincent Bassols, Charles Nichols, Bob Shellhorn, James Walker, Terence Harrison

WRITERS INCLUDED: Duane Capizzi, Carter Crocker, Ralph Sanchez, John Behnke, Ron Humphrey, Jim Peterson

VOICE ACTORS: Jim Cummings (Bonkers D. Bobcat/Sergeant Lucky Piquel), Jeff Bennett (Jitters A. Dog), Earl Boen (Police Chief Kanifky), Corey Burton (Ludwig Von Drake), Scott Bullock (Mr. Big), Carla DeVito (Miranda Wright), June Foray (Ma Parker), Brad Garrett (The Louse), Erin Gray (Shirley Wright), Dana Hill (Timmy), Maurice LaMarche (Turtle Turtle), Don Messick (The Mayor), Alan Oppenheimer (Various characters), Ron Perlman (Sergeant Francis Q. Grating), Robert Ridgely (Al Vermin), Neil Ross (Dobie), Frank Welker (Fall Apart Rabbit), April Winchell (Dil Piquel)

SYNOPSIS: After losing his acting job, manic cartoon character Bonkers D. Bobcat becomes a member of the Tinseltown Police Force (i.e., the LAPD) and is partnered with the all-too-human Lucky Piquel, who is not exactly pleased with the assignment.

COMMENTARY: This program was a clear case of recycling on the part of its studio. Bonkers had previously appeared as a recurring character in the earlier, ill-fated *Raw Toonage* (q.v.), while the imaginative Toontown setting of the program was based on the similarly conceived primary setting of the acclaimed feature film *Who Framed Roger Rabbit?* (Robert Zemeckis, 1988), which Disney had produced in collaboration with Steven Spielberg. The latter's depiction of the conflict-ridden relationship between the title character and human detective Eddie Valiant (Bob Hoskins) was the clear model for the relationship between Bonkers and Sergeant Piquel, though the latter obviously lacked the complexity of its forerunner. Unlike the film, the series tended to soft-pedal the political allegory of the relationship between humans and toons (save for Chief Kanifky appointing Bonkers to the force in a bid to get toon voters to ultimately elect him mayor!) in favor of emphasizing slapstick and buddy comedy. As a consequence, it trafficked too much in stereotypical characterization and plotting to do anything interesting with the characters beyond using them to get laughs, and therefore, the true potential of the imaginative usage of toons and their environs was wasted. The main asset here was Cummings's portrayal of his widely disparate dual role, which he did with great aplomb, as always.

THE BOONDOCKS (2005–2014)

STUDIOS: Rebel Base, Adelaide, Columbia

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATOR: Aaron McGruder

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Aaron McGruder, Reginald Hudlin, Rodney Barnes, Brian Cowan, Carl Jones

PRODUCERS: Ayub Dayir Kim, Brian Ash

DIRECTORS: Anthony Bell, Joe Horne, Seung Eun Kim, Calvin Lee, Dan Faussett, Sung Dae Kang, Young Chan Kim, Hea Young Jung, Dae Woo Lee, Kwang Il Han

WRITERS: Aaron McGruder, Rodney Barnes, Yamara Taylor, Angela Nissell

VOICE ACTORS: Regina King (Huey Freeman/Riley Freeman), Daveigh Chase (Cindy McPherson), Daryl Sabara (Timmy), Gabby Soleil (Jasmine DuBois),



One of the stars of a highly realistic—and effective—series. Cartoon Network/Photofest © Cartoon Network

Cedric Yarbrough (Thomas DuBois), Jill Talley (Sarah DuBois), John Witherspoon (Robert Freeman), Gary Anthony Williams (Uncle Ruckus)

SYNOPSIS: The adventures of the Freeman family—Huey, Riley, and their grandfather Robert—as they adjust to inner-city urban life after relocating to Chicago.

COMMENTARY: This was a truly groundbreaking series in terms of portraying African American life in television animation (not to mention television, period). An extension of McGruder's widely syndicated comic strip of the same name, the program dealt in difficult themes and characterizations without flinching once, as in a Peabody-winning episode about Martin Luther King Jr. and another confronting the legal travails of R&B singer R. Kelly. The characters were boldly multidimensional and the setting starkly dramatic, never resorting to the stereotypical shuck-and-jive humor so common in portrayals of African American people elsewhere in the media. King's vocal work as the budding revolutionary Huey was particularly impressive, as was Witherspoon as world-wise Robert and Williams as the reckless and feckless con man Uncle Ruckus. In total, viewers not entirely familiar with the African American experience might be surprised at what they saw, but those in the know might not be at all.

Anyone who falsely believes that television animation is only about fun, frivolity, and comic excess would be well advised to watch some episodes of

this show and completely change their perceptions about what kind of storytelling and characterization the genre is capable of presenting.

***BORDERTOWN* (2016)**

STUDIOS: Hentemann, Fuzzy Door, Bento Box, 20th Century Fox

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX

CREATOR: Mark Hentemann

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Mark Hentemann, Seth MacFarlane, Alex Carter, Dan Vebber

PRODUCERS: Valentina Garza, D. J. Porter

DIRECTORS: Jacob Hair, Albert Calleros, Gavin Dell, Jack Perkins, Oreste Canestrelli, Ray Claffey

WRITERS: Mark Hentemann, Lalo Alcaraz, Valentina Garza, Dan Vebber, Kenny Byerly, Michael Kennedy, Nathaniel Stein, Jason Reich, Alex Carter, D. J. Porter, Vanessa Ramos, Susan Hurwitz Arneson, Gustavo Arellano

VOICE ACTORS: Hank Azaria (Bud Buckwald), Nicholas Gonzalez (Ernesto Gonzalez/J. C. Gonzalez/Pablo Barracuda), Alex Borstein (Janice Buckwald/Becky Buckwald), Judah Friedlander (Sanford Buckwald), Missi Pyle (Gert Buckwald), Jacqueline Pinol (Pepito Gonzalez), Efren Ramirez (Ruiz Gonzalez), Carlos Alazraqui (Placido Gonzalez/El Coyote)

SYNOPSIS: In a town on the border between the United States and Mexico, conservative pro-American border patrol agent Bud Buckwald must deal with the fallout that occurs when his eldest daughter marries the son of his Mexican American neighbor.

COMMENTARY: An embarrassing exercise in political didacticism done in the name of comedy. Given that it aired in a year when Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump openly advocated the building of a wall between the United States and Mexico to keep out illegal Mexican immigrants, the program was clearly conceived in a biased fashion in the other political direction. This is particularly evident in Azaria's portrayal of the lead character as a Trump-esque conservative figure. Consequently, despite some good effort to portray the Mexican characters on multidimensional terms, the program's overall political tone, combined with the comedic excess now commonplace to the house of MacFarlane, made certain that it was not to last in the long run.

***BOZO THE CLOWN* (1959)**

STUDIOS: Larry Harmon, Ted Tickin, Jayhawk

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

CREATOR: Alan Livingston

PRODUCER: Larry Harmon

DIRECTOR: Paul Fennell

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Larry Harmon (Bozo/Butchy Boy), Paul Frees (Other characters)

SYNOPSIS: The animated adventures of Bozo the Clown and his sidekick, Butchy Boy.

COMMENTARY: Originally created for a series of recordings for Capitol Records in the late 1940s, the character of Bozo really took off after Harmon (né Lawrence Weiss) purchased control of the property in the late 1950s and developed a massive mass media empire around him. This included toys, comics, and a large number of local television programs hosted by Bozo figures personally trained by Harmon. The animated cartoons noted here were aired as elements of those programs in segments of five minutes each. At its peak in the mid-1960s, Bozo programs could be seen in more than 240 American markets. They and other similar programs were the kind that were likely being satirized by Krusty the Clown's program on *The Simpsons* (q.v.). The last remaining program, based in Chicago, went off the air in 2001.

***BRACEFACE* (2001–2003)**

STUDIOS: Nelvana, Jade Animation

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC Family (United States)

CREATOR: Melissa Clark

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Alicia Silverstone, Melissa Clark, Michael Hirsh, Patrick Loubert, Clive Smith

PRODUCERS: Patricia Burns, Marianne Culbert, Stephen Hodgins, Cynthia Taylor

DIRECTOR: Charles Bastien

WRITERS: Edwina Follows, Karen Moonah, Susan Nielsen, Jennifer Pertsch, Alyse Rosenberg

VOICE ACTORS: Alicia Silverstone (Sharon Spitz, early episodes), Stacy DePass (Sharon Spitz, later episodes), Dan Patronijevic (Adam Spitz), Vince Corazza (Alden Jones), Peter Oldring (Conner Mackenzie), Michael Cera (Josh Spitz), Marnie McPhail (Maria Wong), Tamara Bernier (Mrs. Spitz), Katie Griffin (Nina Harper), Jordan Allison (Marvin), Raoul Bhaneja (Dion), Alexander Conti (Dylan), Dwayne Hill (Dentist)

SYNOPSIS: Fourteen-year-old Sharon Spitz (a.k.a. Braceface) finds her already-difficult life needlessly complicated when her braces take on magical abilities after being struck by lightning.

COMMENTARY: A pleasant, inoffensive series with the unique hook of the synopsis on-screen and the involvement of Silverstone off-screen as an actor and producer, which gave the program attention in the press it likely would not have gained otherwise.

***THE BRADY KIDS* (1972–1974)**

STUDIO: Filmation

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATOR: Sherwood Schwartz

PRODUCERS: Lou Scheimer, Norman Prescott

DIRECTOR: Hal Sutherland

WRITER: Marc Richards

VOICE ACTORS: Maureen McCormick (Marcia Brady, early episodes), Erika Scheimer (Marcia Brady, later episodes), Barry Williams (Greg Brady, early episodes), Lane Scheimer (Greg Brady, later episodes), Eve Plumb (Jan Brady),

Christopher Knight (Peter Brady, early episodes), Keith Allen (Peter Brady, later episodes), Susan Olsen (Cindy Brady), Michael Lookinland (Robbie Brady), Larry Storch (Marlon/Ping/Pong), Jane Webb (Babs), "Lassie" (Moptop)
 SYNOPSIS: The animated adventures of the children of the live-action sitcom Brady family.

COMMENTARY: *The Brady Bunch* (ABC, 1969–1974) was a sitcom very much of the time it was produced and one of the earliest and most effective portrayals of a blended family in mass media. Despite the obviously dated elements of its original production, it remains popular in reruns and, more recently, was humorously remade as a series of feature films (the humor coming chiefly from the characters being stuck in a 1970s time warp in characterization, despite the world at large having moved on). This program was an expedient attempt to target the children who were the live show's core audience, to the extent of removing the major adult characters (the senior Bradys and matronly housekeeper Alice) from the program's narrative and replacing them with "funny" animals. As was the case in most other programs of this time, the narratives repeatedly stopped in their tracks so that the characters could perform rock-flavored musical numbers.

Creator Schwartz's other big TV hit, *Gilligan's Island*, would also be adapted for animation by Filimation on two separate occasions (see *The New Adventures of Gilligan/Gilligan's Planet*).

THE BRAK SHOW (2001–2002)

STUDIOS: Williams Street, TBS

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Michael Lazzo, Keith Crawford

PRODUCERS: Jim Fortier, Anne Susan Brown

WRITERS: Peter Smith, Jim Fortier, Andy Merrill

DIRECTORS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Andy Merrill (Voldemar "Brak" Guerta), C. Martin Croker (Zorak), George Lowe (Mr. Guerta), Marcia Crenshaw (Mrs. Guerta, 2001–2002), Joanna Daniel (Mrs. Guerta, 2002), Carey Means (Thundercleese), Ed-die Horst (Fuzzy), Alfreda Gerald (The Brakettes)

SYNOPSIS: The teenage years of future supervillain and television star Brak.

COMMENTARY: Originally he was one of the transparent villains on *Space Ghost and Dino Boy* (q.v.) but was later revived as a supporting character on *Space Ghost Coast to Coast* (q.v.), from which this series was spun off. Perhaps because he was a less-recognizable figure than the leading Hanna-Barbera characters who had preceded him in being revitalized in a new era and because its manic parody of sitcom clichés did not work, this show did not last very long.

BRAND SPANKING NEW DOUG/DISNEY'S DOUG (1996–2001)

See *Doug* (and related series).

BRANDY AND MR. WHISKERS (2004–2006)

STUDIO/DISTRIBUTOR: Disney

CREATOR: Russell Marcus

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Russell Marcus, Timothy Bjorklund, Bill Motz, Bob Roth

DIRECTORS: Timothy Bjorklund, John McIntyre, Steve Loter

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Kaley Cuoco (Brandy Harrington), Charlie Adler (Mr. Whiskers), Alanna Ubach (Lola Boa), Sherri Shepherd (Cheryl/Meryl), Tom Kenny (Ed), Jennifer Hale (Margo), Andre Sogliuzzo (Gaspar Le Gecko)

SYNOPSIS: Brandy Harrington, a pampered dog from Palm Beach, Florida, and Mr. Whiskers, an eccentric rabbit, become residents of the rain forest alongside the Amazon River after accidentally being lost while traveling by airplane.

COMMENTARY: One of its studio's lesser-known productions, likely because it received little attention and ratings during its original production run. Nevertheless, despite the fact that its buddy-comedy premise was somewhat unlikely and exaggerated, there was a good effort to produce something of quality here, given the veteran talent involved.

***B.R.A.T.S. OF THE LOST NEBULA* (1998)**

STUDIOS: Jim Henson, Decode, Wandering Monkey

DISTRIBUTOR: WB (United States)

CREATOR: Dan Clark

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Brian Henson, Dan Clark

PRODUCER: Don Asher

DIRECTORS: Dan Clark, Colin Cunningham

WRITERS INCLUDED: Lane Reichert

VOICE ACTORS: Glenn Cross (Duncan), Kirby Morrow (Zadam), Annick Obonsawin (Triply), Deborah Odell (Lavana), Evan Sabba (Ryle)

SYNOPSIS: Teenagers Zadam and Triply travel to the Lost Nebula to escape the wrath of the robotic army known as the Shock and meet up with others of their kind.

COMMENTARY: Despite the sophisticated production approach of combining Muppet-esque puppetry with then-current CGI technology, this series was abruptly canceled by its network after three installments had aired, so swiftly that the producers themselves were not made aware of the action until the deed was done. However, the complete 13-episode cycle did run in its entirety on Canada's YTV network.

***BRATZ* (2005–2008)**

STUDIOS: 4Kids, Mike Young, MGA

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Mike Young

DIRECTORS INCLUDED: Mucci Fassett

WRITERS INCLUDED: Peggy Nicoll, Peter A. Knight, Jennifer Klein, Ellen Levy Sarnoff, Katherine Butler

VOICE ACTORS: Dionne Quan (Yasmin), Olivia Hack (Cloe), Tia Mowry (Sasha), Soleil Moon Frye (Jade), Wendie Malick (Burdine), Kaley Cuoco (Kirstee), Lacey Chabert (Kaycee), Charlie Schlatter (Cameron), Ogie Banks (Dylan), Greg Ellis (Byron Powell)

SYNOPSIS: The adventures of four teenaged girls with a "passion for fashion."

COMMENTARY: Developed from a popular toy line created in 2001, this series showed a lack of creative ingenuity and received expected backlash from conservative quarters for use of fictional television narratives as forms of consumer voyeurism.

BRAVESTARR (1987)

STUDIO: Filimation

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Lou Scheimer

PRODUCER: Arthur Nadel

DIRECTORS: John Grusd, Marsh Lamore, Lou Kachivas, Ed Friedman, Lou Zukor

WRITERS INCLUDED: Bob Forward

VOICE ACTORS: Patrick Fraley (Marshall Bravestarr), Ed Gilbert (30-30/Shaman), Charlie Adler (Scuzz/Deputy Fuss), Susan Blu (Judge B. J.)

SYNOPSIS: On the planet of New Texas in the 24th century, Marshall Bravestarr maintains law and order armed with a variety of spiritual and robotic powers.

COMMENTARY: Sadly, this was the last television production of the storied Filimation Studio to see release before it was abruptly shut down after a change in ownership. Otherwise, it was, despite an imaginative setting and characters, largely routine, given its source material—a Mattel toy line. Bravestarr was subtly Native American in his design, making him an exception to the normal whites-only hero rule, while 30-30, an anthropomorphic gun-toting horse known as an Equestroid, seems like a logical ancestor of Sylvia Zbornak from *Wander over Yonder* (q.v.). Unfortunately, the production of the series was too weighed down by the imparting of life lessons to have much in the way of humor or action to balance it out, and that, along with competition from series with a similar format, meant its life span was shorter than the producers would have desired.

BREADWINNERS (2014–2016)

STUDIO/DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

CREATORS/EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Steve Borst, Gary Doodles (Gary DiRaffele)

PRODUCER: Lisabeth Velasco

DIRECTORS INCLUDED: Chris Martin, Dave Stone, Casey Burke Leonard, Ken McIntyre, Brian Morante

WRITERS INCLUDED: Steve Borst, Gary DiRaffele, Russ Carney, Ron Corcillo, Ben Gruber, Bill Motz, Bob Roth, Gene Grillo, Brady Klosterman, Mark Palmer

VOICE ACTORS: Robbie Daymond (SwaySway), Eric Bauza (Buhdeuce), Alexander Polinsky (Jelly), Fred Tatasciore (Bread Maker), Kari Wahlgren (Ketta), Scott Bullock (T. Midi), Audrey Wasilewski (Rambamboo), Nolan North (Oonski the Great)

SYNOPSIS: In the anthropomorphic world of Pondgea, ducks SwaySway and Buhdeuce provide the essential service of delivering bread to the populace in their superpowered rocket van.

COMMENTARY: This was a putative comedy that was only funny if you managed to avoid thinking about how much of the program, other than the setting

and some of the characters, was derivative in nature. It was clearly aimed at young boys at the expense of the rest of the audience, given how much of the comedy had a juvenile approach. It was also (at least in terms of the negative relationship between the lead characters and the amphibian police officer Rambamboo) misogynistic in nature, in a way rarely portrayed in post-1990 television animation, a fact borne by the absence of women among the writing and directing staff. Only rarely did the more positive elements, such as Wahlgren's portrayal of the ace mechanic crane Ketta (capable of doing repairs and constructing machines in mere seconds) and Bullock's of the Wodehousian, mother-dominated fop owl T. (for Talonious) Midi, assert themselves, and they were not enough to ballast a sinking creative ship.

***THE BROTHERS FLUB* (1999–2000)**

STUDIOS: Sunbow, Ravensburger

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

CREATOR: David Burke

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Ralph Grairl, Tommy Widmer

PRODUCER: Geraldine Clarke

DIRECTORS: Bob Boyle, Ralph Grairl

WRITERS: David Burke, Bob Widmer

VOICE ACTORS: Christine Cavanaugh (Donna), Marsha Clark (Judy Hen), Charlotte Rae (Ms. Tarara Boomdeyay), Tommy Widmer (Bob)

SYNOPSIS: Brothers Fraz and Guapo Flub work as couriers for the delivery service RetroGrade and manage to fail to make their deliveries as promised every time.

COMMENTARY: A German–American coproduction that was delayed a year from its original scheduled debut, an apt omen for the series' content but not its quality, which was subpar. Despite Nickelodeon being able to lure some celebrities to appear as guest performers, the show failed to catch on and was soon canceled.

***THE BROTHERS GRUNT* (1994–1995)**

STUDIOS: a.k.a. Cartoons, MTV

DISTRIBUTOR: MTV

CREATOR: Danny Antonucci

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Danny Antonucci, Abby Terkuhle

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS: Danny Antonucci, Rod Filbrandt, Michael Grimshaw, Dennis Heaton, Jono Howard, Sam Johnson, Chris Marcil, Mark Sawers, Angus Bungay

VOICE ACTORS: Doug Parker (The Brothers Grunt), Jennifer Wilson (Other characters)

SYNOPSIS: The boxer-shorts-wearing Brothers Grunt, who communicate only through that vocalization, seek to find their lost brother Perry, who has accepted the destiny of being "The Chosen One."

COMMENTARY: An unfortunate side effect of the new "let it all out" atmosphere of television animation in the 1990s, this series, consisting of three segments per broadcast, was nothing but disgusting unless you had a fetish for the

disgusting, as the producers here seemed to have. Antonucci would later be responsible for the longer-lasting *Ed, Edd 'n' Eddy* (q.v.), where he proved to have cleaned up his act in comparison to this.

BRUNO THE KID (1996)

STUDIOS: Film Roman, Flying Heart

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

CREATOR: Bruce Willis

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Phil Roman, Bruce Willis, David Lewis

PRODUCER: Lane Reichert

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS INCLUDED: Bruce Kalish, Chris Webb, Doug Chamberlin, David Garber

VOICE ACTORS: Bruce Willis (Bruno), Tony Jay (Jarlsburg), Jennifer Hale (Leecy Davidson), Kath Soucie (Grace), John Bower (Howard), Tim Curry (Lazlo Gigahertz), Matt Frewer (Booby Vicious), Mark Hamill (Harris), Earl Boen (Globe Member #1), Kenneth Mars (Von Trapp), Frank Welker (Koos Koos), Bronson Pinchot (General Armando Castrato), Paul Edig (Mr. X), Ben Stein (Professor Wisenstein), Dawnn Lewis (Di Archer), Rene Auberjonois (Leonard DaLinguini), Ed McMahon (Henchman)

SYNOPSIS: Eleven-year-old cyberkid Bruno creates a heroic computer alter ego for himself, which leads him to be recruited into the secret espionage organization GLOBE to aid in their fight against the Union of Evil.

COMMENTARY: Something like an animated television series version of the various kinds of narrowly minded action-adventure films that creator/executive producer/star Willis has frequently starred in over the course of his career. This vanity project displayed, therefore, the same lack of creative substance and originality that those films themselves frequently displayed, to the audience's loss.

BUBBLE GUPPIES (2011–PRESENT)

STUDIOS: Wild Brain, Nelvana, Special Agent, Nickelodeon

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

CREATORS: Jonny Belt, Robert Scull

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Brianna Gentilella (Molly, early episodes); Bailey Gambertoglio (Molly, later episodes); Zachary Gordon (Gil, early episodes); Jacob Bertrand (Gil, later episodes); Teddy Walsh (Gil, singing voice); Jay Gragani (Gil, singing voice); Jelani Imani (Goby, early episodes); Marleik Walker (Goby, later episodes); Isaac Brown (Goby, later episodes); Johntae Lipscomb (Goby, singing voice); Christopher Borger (Goby, singing voice); Angelina Wahler (Deema, early episodes); Grace Kaufman (Deema, later episodes); Selena Gonzalez (Deema, singing voice); Reyna Shaskan (Oona, early episodes); Tori Feinstein (Oona, early episodes); Eamon Pirruccello (Nonny, early episodes); Jet Jurgensmeyer (Nonny, later episodes); Eason Rytter (Nonny, singing voice); Tino Insana (Mr. Grouper, speaking voice); Chris Phillips (Mr. Grouper, singing voice/Clam/Crabs/Lobster); Skai Jackson, Mia Vavasseur, and

Kalya Erickson (Little Fish); Frank Welker (Bubble Puppy); Kari Wahlgren (Bubble Kitty's Owner/Snails); Keke Palmer (Stylee); Glenn Leopold (Mr. Grumpfish); Candi Milo (Starfish)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: An educational series set in the underwater city of Bubbletucky. It follows a rigid format typical of these kinds of programs, with the content level typically geared toward a preschool audience.

***BUCKY AND PEPITO* (1959)**

STUDIOS: Samsing Creations, Trans-Artists

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

PRODUCER: Sam Singer

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTOR: Dallas McKennon (All characters)

SYNOPSIS: The adventures of, respectively, an American boy and an incompetent Latino inventor.

COMMENTARY: A 10-minute black-and-white feature that has largely remained in obscurity since its original broadcast era, in part because the surviving prints have not been archived or otherwise properly maintained. Reviving it today would be a tricky issue, as well, because of the blatant racist characterization of Pepito as (according to the theme music) "oh so lazy and so very, very slow."

***BUCKY O'HARE AND THE TOAD WARS!* (1991)**

STUDIOS: Abrams/Gentile, Sunbow, Claster, Marvel, Continuity Comics, IDDH

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

CREATORS: Michael Golden, Larry Hama

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Doug Parker (Bucky O'Hare), Scott McNeil (Deadeye Duck/Frax), Dale Wilson (Bruiser/Bruce), Terry Klassen (Blinky/Frix), Gary Chalk (Negator/Commander Dogstar), "Long" John Baldry (Toad Air Marshall), Shane Meier (Willy DeWitt), Margot Prinvidic (Jenny/Mimi LaFleur), Richard Newman (Komplex/Toadborg)

SYNOPSIS: The anthropomorphic agents of Sentient Protoplasm Against Colonial Encroachment (S.P.A.C.E.) fight against villainous amphibians from the planet Genus.

COMMENTARY: It could easily be construed as a mash-up of *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* (q.v.) and *Star Wars*, although the characters predated the turtles by several years, dating to 1978. And, in fact, it was. The intended tie-in with a line of action figures undid a lot of the satiric potential hidden in the narrative, such as the villains using a 24-hour television network to transmit their messages to the hapless beings whose planets they controlled, as did the implication of an uncomfortable level of xenophobia in the heroic characters' actions.

***BUFORD AND THE GALLOPING GHOST* (1979)**

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCER: Art Scott

DIRECTORS: Ray Patterson, Oscar Dufau, George Gordon, Carl Urbano, John Walker, Rudy Zamora

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Frank Welker (Buford Bloodhound/Nugget Nose), Pat Parris (Cindy Mae/Rita), Dave Landsburg (Woody), Marilyn Schreffler (Wendy), Frank Nelson (Mr. Fuddy), Henry Corden (Sheriff Dupres), Roger Deltz (Deputy Goofer)

SYNOPSIS: Two short animated mystery series featuring (1) a Southern-accented bloodhound whose nose turns red when tracking suspects and (2) an ectoplastic equine named Nugget Nose.

COMMENTARY: While Hanna-Barbera had a habit of creating intriguing characters and concepts for its animated series, it also, especially in the 1970s, had the much more irritating habit of locking them down into tight formulas, like the “kids solving mysteries” one used here and elsewhere. This series was a good example of this trend. The components had previously been featured on *Yogi’s Space Race* (see *Yogi Bear*) before being featured briefly on their own.

THE BUGS BUNNY SHOW (1960–1962)

STUDIO: Warner Brothers

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

PRODUCERS: Chuck Jones, Friz Freleng

DIRECTORS: Chuck Jones, Friz Freleng, Robert McKimson, Maurice Noble, Gerry Chiniquy, Hawley Pratt, Robert Tronson, Ken Harris, Abe Levitow, Tom Ray



**He came to TV in the 1960s—and has never really gone away. Warner Brothers/Photofest
© Warner Brothers**

WRITERS INCLUDED: Chuck Jones, Friz Freleng, Warren Foster, Michael Maltese
 VOICE ACTORS: Mel Blanc (Bugs Bunny/Daffy Duck/Others); Arthur Q. Bryan (Elmer Fudd); Daws Butler, June Foray, Julie Bennett, Stan Freberg, Billy Bletcher, and Bea Benaderet (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: The major specifically made-for-TV regular series edition of one of the longest-running media franchises in American history. Between the 1930s and the 1960s, the Warner Brothers' *Looney Tunes* and *Merrie Melodies* established themselves as one of the high-water marks of American theatrical animation, and their characters are among the most easily recognizable figures in American media. This series was only one of the many reissue packages of the older films for television, which has continued in some form or fashion to today. This version was unique, however, in that it produced original material to link existing material together, supervised personally by Jones and Freleng, the two arguably most artistically preeminent directors at the studio. In some cases, the extensions of the original material worked, but in others, it did not. The theme music, "This Is It" (by Mack David and Jerry Livingston), and the opening animation accompanying it would be revived in full for one of the longest-running of the repackages, ABC's *The Bugs Bunny and Tweety Show*, during the 1980s and 1990s.

THE BULLWINKLE SHOW

See *Rocky and His Friends/The Bullwinkle Show*.

BUMP IN THE NIGHT (1996–1998)

STUDIOS: Danger, Greengrass, DIC

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATORS/DIRECTORS: Ken Pontac, David Bleiman

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Ken Pontac, David Bleiman, Patricia Rose Duignan

PRODUCER: Mark Zaslove

WRITERS INCLUDED: M. K. Brown, Jeremy Kushner, Mark Zaslove

VOICE ACTORS: Jim Cummings (Mr. Bumpy/Destructo/Closet Monster), Rob Paulsen (Squishington), Gail Matthius (Molly Coddle), Burke Moses (Bumpsted), Jeff Bennett (Gloog), E. G. Daily (Germ Girl), Anndi McAfee (Little Sister), Scott McAfee (Boy)

SYNOPSIS: At night, in the bedroom of a young human boy, the toys in the room come to life and interact with each other in a society under the bed.

COMMENTARY: An American-Australian clay animation series that used its art form cleverly and humorously to great effect, with music playing an important role. The voice acting (particularly that of Cummings) was very well done and memorable. While the series was highly popular in its original run, enough to merit an expansion to a 60-minute time slot from its original 30-minute one, it was an unfortunate victim of the content purge that occurred when Disney took over ABC—and the network's whole Saturday morning lineup, in consequence.

***A BUNCH OF MUNSCH* (1991)**

STUDIOS: CINAR, CTV, Showtime, Maclean-Hunter

DISTRIBUTOR: Showtime (United States)

CREATOR: Robert Munsch

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Micheline Charest

PRODUCERS: Ronald Weinberg, Cassandra Schafhausen, Lesley Harris

DIRECTORS: Peter Sander, Greg Bailey

WRITERS INCLUDED: Peter Landecker

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: An anthology series adapting the children's books of American-born, Canadian-based children's author/storyteller Robert Munsch, who began publishing in the late 1970s and remains popular and prolific today. Carefully modeling the artwork on that employed by Munsch's principal illustrator Michael Martchenko, while removing some questionable material (i.e., fart jokes) from the narratives, the series presented faithful animated versions of many of Munsch's most popular books, including *The Paper Bag Princess*, *Thomas' Snowsuit*, *Angela's Airplane*, *Pigs*, and *David's Father*.

***THE BUSY WORLD OF RICHARD SCARRY* (1994)**

STUDIOS: CINAR, Paramount, Beta, BBC, Showtime, France 3, Crayon Animation

DISTRIBUTORS: Showtime (1994), Nickelodeon (1995–2000)

CREATOR: Richard Scarry

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Micheline Charest

DIRECTORS: Greg Bailey, Nadja Cozic

WRITERS: Bruce Robb, Cliff MacGillivray, Robert Askin, Todd Swift

VOICE ACTORS: Keith Knight (Father Cat/Lowly Worm), Sonja Ball (Huckle Cat)

SYNOPSIS: In the ever-active community of Busytown, the handyman Mr. Fixit relates stories about the community's residents.

COMMENTARY: This multinational production was a largely successful effort to translate the works of beloved children's author/illustrator Scarry to animation. (Scarry died the year the series was produced, but his son Huck served as a consultant.) It featured prosocial narratives conducted in an edifying fashion, not unlike coproducer CINAR's similar production of *Arthur* (q.v.).

***BUTCH CASSIDY AND THE SUN DANCE KIDS* (1971)**

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC (1973–1974)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS/DIRECTORS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCER: Alex Lovy

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Chip Hand (Butch Cassidy), Judy Strangis (Merilee), Micky Dolenz (Harvey), Tina Holland (Steffy), Frank Welker (Elvis the Dog), John Stephenson (Mr. Socrates)

SYNOPSIS: The rock band Butch Cassidy and the Sun Dance Kids moonlights as government agents solving crimes.

COMMENTARY: One of the typical products of Hanna-Barbera's assembly-line period, taking elements of things that had worked for the studio and others in the past and reworking them ad nauseum. As was common for the studio's more-derivative productions, it lasted only a single season on the air.

***BUTT UGLY MARTIANS* (2001–2002)**

STUDIOS: Just Group, Mike Young, DCDC, Polygram, Universal

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon (United States)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Wendy Choi

PRODUCERS: David Garber, Dennys McCoy, Pamela Hickey, Wing Tam

DIRECTORS: Josh Prikryl, Egidio Dalchele

WRITERS INCLUDED: David Garber, Pamela Hickey, Dennys McCoy

VOICE ACTORS: Ogie Banks (Cedric), Scott Bullock (Dr. Damage/Emperor Bog), Jess Harnell (Do-Wah-Diddy), Rob Paulsen (2-T Fru-T/Mike/Ronald), Charlie Schlatter (B-bop-A-luna), Kath Soucie (Angela), Robert Stack (Stoat Muldoon)

SYNOPSIS: After refusing to follow orders to destroy Earth, a group of Martians settles there instead, teaming up with some teenage humans against other alien invaders and the self-proclaimed alien hunter Stoat Muldoon.

COMMENTARY: This British-American coproduction first aired in Great Britain earlier in 2001 before making a transition to America via Nickelodeon. Despite some interesting creative decisions on the producers' part (notably the casting of deadpan grandmaster Stack as the obsessive Muldoon), there wasn't too much beyond the show's glossy CGI exterior to get excited about, and it quickly went away.

***BUZZ LIGHTYEAR OF STAR COMMAND* (2000–2003)**

STUDIOS: Disney, Pixar

DISTRIBUTORS: UPN (2000–2003), ABC (2000–2001)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Tad Stones, Mark McCorkle, Bob Schooley

DIRECTORS: Chris Rutkowski, Denise Koyama, Don MacKinnon, Nicholas Filippi, Steve Loter, Victor Cook

WRITERS INCLUDED: Adam Armus, Bill Motz, Bob Roth, Gary Sperling, Kay Foster, Mark Palmer, Tad Stones

VOICE ACTORS: Patrick Warburton (Buzz Lightyear), Nicole Sullivan (Princess Mira Nova), Neil Flynn (XR, early episodes), Larry Miller (XR, later episodes), Stephen Furster (Booster Munchaper), Wayne Knight (Evil Emperor Zurg), Adam Carolla (Commander Nebula), Craig Ferguson (NOS-4-A2), Bobcat Goldthwait (XL), Roz Ryan (President), Linda Hamilton (Dr. Ozma Furbanna), Diedrich Bader (Agent Z/Warp Darkmaster)

SYNOPSIS: Space ranger Buzz Lightyear and his colleagues defend the universe against the forces of evil.

COMMENTARY: The character of Buzz Lightyear made his first appearance in the popular CGI feature film *Toy Story* in 1995, which was followed by two sequels and other media spin-offs. This particular series purported to be the character's original existence as a fictional television character. Though

Pixar, which produced the *Toy Story* film, did the main title, the remainder of the work was turned over to veterans of the studio's television animation production unit, who seemed to treat the assignment as the journeyman tie-in effort it truly was, with mediocre results. The theme was handled better elsewhere in other series before and after.

***THE BUZZ ON MAGGIE* (2005–2006)**

STUDIOS: Disney, Bardel, Future Thought

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATOR: Dave Polsky

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Dave Polsky, Dave Wasson, Laura Perkins Brittain

DIRECTOR: Dave Wasson

WRITERS INCLUDED: Dan Fybel, Rich Rinaldi, Rachelle Romberg, Laura Perkins Brittain, Rachel Duguay, Manny Basanese, Chris Bowman, Robin J. Stein, Lloyd Garver, Sharon Schatz Rosenthal, Katherine Butler

VOICE ACTORS: Jessica DiCicco (Maggie Pesky), David Kaufman (Aldrin Pesky), Thom Advoc (Pupert Pesky), Cree Summer (Rayna Cartflight), Tara Strong (Dawn Swatworthy), Susan Tolsky (Frieda Pesky/Principal Peststrip), Brian Doyle Murray (Chauncey Pesky), Jodi Benson (Laura), Patrick Warburton (George), Curtis Armstrong (Mr. Bugspit), Billy West (Eugene/Wendell), Laraine Brewer (Lacey Ladybug)

SYNOPSIS: Maggie Pesky, a strong-willed young fly from the town of Stickyfeet, gets into difficult situations when she tries to manipulate people, things, and events to her advantage.

COMMENTARY: Much like producers in earlier decades, Disney in the 2000s tended to become reliant on default scenarios and characterizations simply to keep production going. Having seemingly exhausted the potential for animated middle school humans by this point, they instead turned to creator Polsky's presentation of them as anthropomorphic characters. While this series certainly had a considerable amount of charm and appeal to it (recognized with an Emmy nomination), there is only so much you can do in a television series with characters who in the real world are simply considered unlikable vermin. Executive producer Brittain's background in the highly contrived world of Disney's live-action teenage sitcoms was a further and enormous liability that the truly imaginative elements of Polsky's world never had a chance at overcoming.

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CADILLACS AND DINOSAURS (1993–1994)

STUDIOS: Nelvana, Galaxy, De Souza

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATOR: Mark Schultz

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Steven E. De Souza, Michael Hirsh, Sasha Hatari, Patrick Loubert, Toper Taylor

PRODUCERS: Stephen Hodgins, Patricia Burns

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: David Keeley (Jack Tenrec), Susan Roman (Hannah Dundee), Bruce Tubbe (Mustapha), Dawn Greenlough (Wilhelmina Scharnhorst), Teddy Dillon (Hammer Terhune), Colin O'Meara (Wrench), Frank Pellegrino (Vice), David Fox (Kirgo), Don Francks (Girth/Hobbs), Kristina Nicoll (Dahlgren), Phillip Williams (Toulouse), Lenora Zann (Mikla), Don Dickinson (Noe)

SYNOPSIS: In the 26th century, Jack Tenrec, the last of a line of "Mechanics" who still believe in the value of technology, is pursued by barbaric and politically motivated enemies while traveling the new "Xenozoic" Earth in his restored Cadillac automobile.

COMMENTARY: Creator Schultz developed the unique universe of this program in his long-running comic book series *Xenozoic Tales*, first produced in the late 1980s, which had a complicated backstory the synopsis can only hint at. The popularity of the comics attracted Galaxy Films, who had the idea of turning it into a multimedia franchise à la *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* (q.v.). For the program, the backstory was simplified into a more direct action-adventure yarn along the lines of the films executive producer de Souza had scripted, such as the *Die Hard* films. De Souza and his writing colleagues used a serialized writing format that was unique for the time in television animation, but it did little to help attract viewers to the subject matter. However, given that the political issues raised by the scenario of *Xenozoic Tales* (e.g., climate change, ecological destruction) are as timely as then as they are now, the franchise has every potential to be revived in some form or another.

CAILLOU (1997)

STUDIO: CINAR

DISTRIBUTOR: PBS (2000)

CREATORS: Christine L'Heureux, Helen Despeateaux

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Micheline Charest, Louis Fournier, Ronald Weinberg

PRODUCERS: Cassandra Schaffhausen, Greg Bailey, Jean Pilotte

DIRECTORS: Jean Pilotte, Nick Rijgersberg

WRITERS INCLUDED: Mark Dubeau, Natalie Dumolin

VOICE ACTORS: Bryn McAuley (Caillou, early episodes), Jaclyn Linetsky (Caillou, later episodes), Jennifer Seguin (Caillou's Mother), Pat Fry (Caillou's Father),

Brigid Tierney (Rosie/Clementine), Bob Stutt (Gilbert), Pier Kohl (Rexy), Matt Ficner (Teddy), Tim Gosley (Deidi), Marlee Shapiro (Storyteller)

SYNOPSIS: Four-year-old Caillou learns about the world and life in the company of his family and friends.

COMMENTARY: Originally produced in a French-language version for Canadian television in 1997, this series debuted on American television as part of PBS's "Bookworm Bunch" project, designed to encourage reading by children aged two to six. The original series had been produced in segments of five minutes each, which required repackaging of the material into half-hours, though this had little impact on the effective delivery the program gave to its content.

***THE CALIFORNIA RAISINS* (1989–1990)**

STUDIO: Murakami-Wolf-Swenson

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

PRODUCER: Fred Wolf

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Cam Clarke, Dorian Harewood, Jim Cummings, Brian Mitchell, Cree Summer, Rebecca Summers, Gailee Heideman, Michelle Mariana, Todd Tolces, and Brian Cummings (Specific roles unknown)

SYNOPSIS: The animated adventures of the anthropomorphic musical group the California Raisins—Stretch, Bebo, A. C., and Red.

COMMENTARY: The characters originated in 1987 in a series of television commercials made for a consortium of California raisin producers by the studio of award-winning clay animation specialist Will Vinton. The Raisins, whose precision-timed dance steps, blended harmonies, and facial acrobatics made them resemble many of the fabled R&B stars of the 1960s (particularly those from Motown Records), were popular enough to merit two animated specials produced by Vinton before this series was produced. In the process of transference from clay to celluloid animation, however, much of the charm of the project was removed.

***CALVIN AND THE COLONEL* (1961–1962)**

STUDIOS: Kayro, Creston, Universal

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATORS: Freeman Gosden, Charles Correll

PRODUCERS: Joe Connelly, Bob Mosher, Bob Ganon, Sam Nicholson, Gerald Ray

DIRECTORS: Charles McKimson, John Walker

WRITERS: Joe Connelly, Bob Mosher

VOICE ACTORS: Freeman Gosden ("Colonel" Montgomery J. Klaxon), Charles Correll (Calvin J. Burnside), Virginia Gregg (Maggie Belle), Beatrice Kay (Sister Sue), Gloria Blondell (Gladys), June Foray (Myrtle), Paul Frees (Oliver Wendell Clutch), Joe Flynn (Nephew Newton)

SYNOPSIS: Dimwitted bear Calvin Burnside is repeatedly made the victim of scams perpetrated by the avaricious fox Montgomery Klaxon.

COMMENTARY: This was a wholesale adaptation of the popular long-running radio program *Amos 'n' Andy* to television animation, going so far as to use

entire scripts from the former project (on which Connelly and Mosher had also worked) as plotlines. *Amos 'n' Andy* originated on local Chicago radio (as *Sam 'n' Henry*) in the late 1920s before going national via NBC, where it first existed as a serialized daily soap-opera style narrative before changing to a weekly sitcom in the 1940s. The project was also briefly adapted for television via CBS in the early 1950s. It focused on the lives and troubles of a pair of African American men from the South who established themselves in a northern city as proprietors of "The Fresh Air Taxi Cab Company of America, Incorporated [*sic*]" and became members of a local lodge, the Mystic Knights of the Sea, where they regularly fell prey to the con-artist scheming of the lodge's leader, George "Kingfish" Stevens. While the program was popular with a wide audience, there was a troubling element of racism involved, despite denials from the show's staff. Gosden and Correll, the show's writers and stars, were Caucasians, and their portrayal of the lead characters and others was loaded with stereotypical characterizations and fractured English dialogue (e.g., "I'se regusted!") straight from 19th-century minstrel shows. Despite the broadening of the show's cast to include actual African American people (particularly in the television episodes, where they assumed all the roles), this made the endurance of the property in the civil rights era much more of a liability.

Connelly and Mosher, best known as the creators/producers of the live-action sitcoms *Leave It to Beaver* and *The Munsters*, gave some assistance to Gosden and Correll's stagnating careers by underwriting this animated project. It was hoped that, by reviving the show's principal characterizations and plotting in a more neutral anthropomorphic setting, it might give the property new life. Not so, although the writing was above average and the artwork more experimental for animated programs of its time. The program disappeared from the airwaves soon after its debut in October 1961, only to be revived midseason in January 1962 and then removed again permanently.

CAMP CANDY (1989–1992)

STUDIOS: Frostback, DIC, Saban, Worldvision

DISTRIBUTORS: NBC (1989–1991), Syndicated (1992)

CREATORS: Joel Andryc, Ellen Levy

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: John Candy, Andy Heyward, Haim Saban

PRODUCER/DIRECTOR: Winston Richard

WRITERS INCLUDED: Betty Birney

VOICE ACTORS: John Candy (John Candy), Lewis Arquette (Rex de Forest), Valri Bromfield (Nurse Molly), Danny Mann (Chester), Tom Davidson (Iggy), Danielle Ferandes (Robin), Willow Johnson (Vanessa), Andrew Seebarin (Rick), Chiara Zanni (Alex)

SYNOPSIS: At Camp Cacciatore, counselor John Candy watches his young charges and communes with nature while thwarting the efforts of the villainous Rex de Forest to convert the campground into a group of condominiums.

COMMENTARY: One of the most popular comic actors of the 20th century, John Candy made his reputation as a member of the cast of the Emmy Award-winning sketch comedy series *SCTV* before going on to play leading and

supporting roles in a number of popular films during the 1980s and 1990s. This series was an outgrowth of his popularity, especially with children, at whom the program was aimed. Candy had worked as a camp counselor in his youth and retained a fervent love for the great outdoors that was a major component of the series' appeal. Yet it also contained a satirical element in the depiction of the ultracapitalist bad guy de Forest, which would become as much of a creative legacy as the proenvironment stance. Still, the program was limited by the censorship restrictions of the time that prevented it from having the same edge as most of Candy's live-action starring vehicles. The original network version received a Humanitas Award for an episode dealing with a young camper with leukemia in a positive way. In the syndicated version, live-action wraparounds were added depicting Candy philosophizing about the natural world. Candy's SCTV colleagues Eugene Levy, Andrea Martin, and Dave Thomas appeared as guest stars on both versions of the program.

CAMP LAZLO (2005–2008)

STUDIO: Cartoon Network

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATOR/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Joe Murray

PRODUCERS: Shareena Carlson, Janet Dimon, Mark O'Hare

DIRECTORS: Brian Sheesley, Russell Calabrese, Swinton Scott III, Lindsey Pollard, Sue Perroto, Joe Murray, Mark O'Hare

WRITERS: Merriwether Williams, Rick Farmiloe, Thurop Van Orman, Mark O'Hare, Joe Murray, Steve Little, Martin Olson, Clayton Morrow, Carey Yost, Mike Roth, Tom King, Kaz, Antoine Guilbaud, Mike Kenny, Tuck Tucker, Cosmo Segurson, John Infantino, Stephanie Erdel, J. G. Quintel, Kent Osborne, Eddie Trigueros, Kimberly Roberson, Piero Piluso, Ant Ward, Derek Drymon

VOICE ACTORS: Carlos Alazraqui (Lazlo/Clam/Chef McMuesli), Jeff Bennett (Raj/Samson/Commander Hoo Ha/Others), Tom Kenny (Scoutmaster Algonquin Lumpus/Slinkman/Others), Doug "Mr." Lawrence (Edward/Dave/Ping Pong/Nurse Leslie), Jodi Benson (Patsy Smiles/Jane Doe/Almondine), Jill Talley (Nina Neckerly/Gretchen/Miss Mucus), Steve Little (Chip/Skip/Lemmings/Others)

SYNOPSIS: At Camp Kidney, exuberant Bean Scout Lazlo is a ray of positive energy among the apathy and cynicism exhibited by his fellow young campers and their adult leadership.

COMMENTARY: One of the funniest and most engaging television animation productions of the 2000s, fully deserving of the various awards (including Emmys) it received during its original run. Creator/executive producer Murray expanded on the unique comic touch he displayed with anthropomorphic adult characters in his prior series *Rocko's Modern Life* (q.v.) to include characters who could easily be assumed to be children of the prior group. His approach continues to stand out in retrospect because he is one of the rare television animation producers to create narratives based on pure characterization and satire done in a measured rather than frantic fashion. As befitting a program focusing on two institutions (scouting and summer camp)



Hail to thee, Camp Kidney! Cartoon Network/Photofest © Cartoon Network

traditionally based around building character in the young, character (in the fictional sense) was king here. The voice actors did some of the best work of their careers, particularly Alazraqui's Brazilian monkey Lazlo, Bennett's Indian-accented elephant Raj and Truman Capote-esque wimp Samson, Kenny's corrupt and apathetic bull moose scoutmaster Lumpus, Lawrence's feckless cynical con man platypus Edward, and Benson's vivacious tomboy mongoose Patsy. As with the lead character vis-à-vis his environment, this program stood out among its contemporaries and deserves to remain so forevermore in reruns, like any other classic television animation program.

***CANTINFLAS* (A.K.A. *AMIGO AND FRIENDS*; 1980–1982)**

STUDIOS: Televisa, Hanna-Barbera, Diamex, Viacom

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS (American English version): Don Messick (Cantinflas, Amigo), John Stephenson (Narrator)

SYNOPSIS: The animated adventures of Mexican comedian/actor Cantinflas.

COMMENTARY: A highly popular performer in his native Mexico and other Spanish-speaking countries, Cantinflas is best known to English-language audiences for his portrayal of Passepartout in the 1956 feature-film version of

Around the World in 80 Days and the title role of the 1960 comedy *Pepe*. In this animated series, a drawn doppelgänger of the performer served as the audience's guide for tours of natural wonders of the Earth, the planets of the solar system, and events of history. It managed, unlike other series of its kind, to come close to depicting the true personality of the real performer. The series was syndicated in America as *Amigo and Friends*, with both episodes redubbed from the original Spanish-language source and newly produced as English programs. It failed to take off in America but achieved great success overseas, mirroring the established fan base of its star performer.

***CAPITOL CRITTERS* (1992)**

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, Steven Bochco

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATORS: Steven Bochco, Nat Mauldin, Michael Wagner

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Nat Mauldin, David Kirschner

PRODUCERS: Davis Doi, Dayna Flanagan, James Wang

DIRECTORS: Robert Alvarez, Joan Drake, Joanne Romersa, Allen Wilzbach

WRITER: Nat Mauldin

VOICE ACTORS: Neil Patrick Harris (Max), Bobcat Goldthwait (Muggle), Dorian Harewood (Moze), Jennifer Darling (Berkeley), Patti Deutsch (Trixie), Frank Welker (Presidential Felines)

SYNOPSIS: After his family is killed in an act of guerrilla warfare, a young mouse from Nebraska named Max settles in among a group of his kind living in the walls of the White House in Washington, DC.

COMMENTARY: One of the high-profile prime-time animation misfires that emerged in the wake of *The Simpsons* (q.v.), this series did little to hide the vindictive liberal streak dominating its creative agenda. This was no surprise when one considers the involvement of cocreator Bochco, whose live-action television productions (*Hill Street Blues*, *L.A. Law*, and *NYPD Blue* among them) showed a similar bias. Despite its best efforts to present current political humor as part of its story line, it seemed more interested in bashing previous Republican administrations retroactively than having a modern cutting edge, and that, along with low ratings, quickly led to it being dismissed and dropped by viewers and network alike.

***CAPTAIN CAVEMAN AND THE TEEN ANGELS* (1980)**

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCER: Alex Lovy

DIRECTOR: Charles Nichols

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Mel Blanc (Captain Caveman), Vernee Watson (Dee Dee), Marilyn Schreffler (Brenda), Laurel Page (Taffy)

SYNOPSIS: After being freed from glacial imprisonment, Stone-Age superhero Captain Caveman assists a trio of teenagers in solving crimes.

COMMENTARY: "Cavey," as he was known, was one of the best things to emerge out of a particularly dire period in his studio's history and gave Blanc another in a long line of wonderful showcases for his talent. The captain was a diminutive, hairy figure armed with a variety of superpowers and trick clubs and rocks used as weapons. Speaking in pidgin English ("me make wrong turn," "me love junk food," etc.), he stood out broadly from the increasingly repetitious scenarios the studio forced on him and the other characters and made himself all the more memorable for the doing. This particular series originated as a segment of the *Scooby's All-Star Laff-a-Lympics* omnibus in 1977 before running as its own program.

Fortunately, in this case, the studio had the good sense to revive Captain Caveman in two other standout projects. In 1980, he appeared as part of *The Flintstones Comedy Hour* as a Superman-like figure, complete with a milquetoast Clark Kent-style alter ego named Chester. Then, in 1986, now accompanied by his son Cavey Jr., he starred in a show within a show that was easily the best and most memorable thing about the otherwise moribund *Flintstone Kids*. See also *The Flintstones* (and related series).

CAPTAIN FATHOM (1967)

STUDIOS: TV III, Cambria

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

PRODUCER: Dick Brown

DIRECTOR: Clark Haas

VOICE ACTOR: Warren Tufts (Captain Fathom)

SYNOPSIS: Captain Fathom is the commander of a submarine and engages in underwater adventures.

COMMENTARY: A poor exercise in low-budget, no-imagination animation from the company responsible for the technically abysmal *Clutch Cargo* (q.v.) and *Space Angel* (q.v.) programs, though the awkward Syncro-Vox animation employed on those projects was replaced by "Superanivision," an attempt at creating cinematic motion from still photographs.

CAPTAIN N: THE GAME MASTER (AND RELATED SERIES)

***Captain N: The Game Master* (1989–1990)**

STUDIOS: DIC, Nintendo

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Andy Heyward

PRODUCER: Michael Maliani

DIRECTOR: Chuck Patton

WRITERS INCLUDED: Dorothy Middleton

VOICE ACTORS: Matt Hill (Kevin Keene, a.k.a. Captain N/Narrator), Gary Chalk (King Hippo/Others), Alessandro Juliani (Kid Icarus), Andrew Kavadas (Simon Belmont), Doug Parker (Megaman/Megamite), Venus Terzo (Princess Lana), Levi Stubbs Jr. (The Mother Brain), Tomm Wright (Duke)

Captain N and the Adventures of the Super Mario Brothers 3 (1990–1991)

STUDIOS: DIC, Nintendo

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Andy Heyward

PRODUCER: Michael Maliani

DIRECTOR: Chuck Patton

WRITERS INCLUDED: Dorothy Middleton

VOICE ACTORS: Matt Hill (Kevin Keene, a.k.a. Captain N/Narrator), Gary Chalk (King Hippo/Others), Alessandro Juliani (Kid Icarus), Andrew Kavadas (Simon Belmont), Doug Parker (Megaman/Megamite), Venus Terzo (Princess Lana), Levi Stubbs Jr. (The Mother Brain), Tomm Wright (Duke)

See also *The Super Mario Brothers Super Show* (and related entries).

Captain N and the New Super Mario World (1991–1992)

STUDIOS: DIC, Nintendo

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Andy Heyward

PRODUCER: Michael Maliani

DIRECTOR: Chuck Patton

WRITERS INCLUDED: Dorothy Middleton

VOICE ACTORS: Matt Hill (Kevin Keene, a.k.a. Captain N/Narrator), Gary Chalk (King Hippo/Others), Alessandro Juliani (Kid Icarus), Andrew Kavadas (Simon Belmont), Doug Parker (Megaman/Megamite), Venus Terzo (Princess Lana), Levi Stubbs Jr. (The Mother Brain), Tomm Wright (Duke)

See also *The Super Mario Brothers Super Show* (and related entries).

Captain N and the Video Game Masters (1992)

STUDIOS: DIC, Nintendo

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Andy Heyward

PRODUCER: Michael Maliani

DIRECTOR: Chuck Patton

WRITERS INCLUDED: Dorothy Middleton

VOICE ACTORS: Matt Hill (Kevin Keene, a.k.a. Captain N/Narrator), Gary Chalk (King Hippo/Others), Alessandro Juliani (Kid Icarus), Andrew Kavadas (Simon Belmont), Doug Parker (Megaman/Megamite), Venus Terzo (Princess Lana), Levi Stubbs Jr. (The Mother Brain), Tomm Wright (Duke)

SYNOPSIS: Young Kevin Keene is sucked into Videoland while playing on his Nintendo video game console and assumes the superheroic identity of Captain N to protect the Sun Stone from being stolen by an army of villains.

COMMENTARY: A program that was a blatant walking advertisement if there ever was one. Much of the fun of watching the program depended on how familiar you were with the products of the Nintendo company, which, at the time, ruled the roost in its product category. If you were, you probably recognized Simon Belmont, Kid Icarus, and Megaman as stars in their own right in the company's product line and King Hippo as one of the boxers in *Mike Tyson's*

Punch-Out. Otherwise, you were on your own. The Nintendo-derived elements were all that existed in terms of novelty, as the other elements were largely standardized from other series. Still, it was an interesting exercise in using existing video game characters divorced from their original contexts. The syndicated version combined older episodes with newly produced ones.

Stubbs is best-known as the lead singer of the legendary R&B group the Four Tops, as well as for portraying the villainous extraterrestrial plant Audrey II in the 1986 film version of *Little Shop of Horrors*, who clearly served as the template for the equally intimidating Mother Brain.

***CAPTAIN PLANET AND THE PLANETEERS* (1990–1994)**

STUDIOS: TBS, Turner, DIC, Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTORS: TBS, Syndicated

CREATOR: R. E. "Ted" Turner

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Barbara Y. E. Pyle, Andy Heyward, Robby London, Nicholas Boxer

PRODUCERS: Cassandra Schafhausen, Jim Duffy, Cosmo Anzilotti

DIRECTORS: Jim Duffy, Joanne Romersa, Ray Patterson, Don Lusk, Carl Urbano, Robert Alvarez, Frank Andrina, Allen Wilzbach, Joan Drake, Ken Southworth, Richard Bowman, Ernesto Lopez, Art Scott, Rebecca Bristow, Daniel de la Vega, Zeon Davush, Constantine Mustatea

WRITERS INCLUDED: Lori Crawford, Pat Allee, Ben Hurst

VOICE ACTORS: David Coburn (Captain Planet), LeVar Burton (Kwame), Joey Dedio (Wheeler), Janice Kawaye (Gi), Scott Menville (Ma-Ti), Kath Soucie (Linka), Frank Welker (Sushi/Leadsuit), Whoopi Goldberg (Gaia, early episodes), Margot Kidder (Gaia, later episodes), Edward Asner (Hoggish Greedly), Meg Ryan (Dr. Blight, early episodes), Mary Kay Bergman (Dr. Blight, later episodes), Scott Bullock (Argos Bleak), James Coburn (Looten Plunder), Tim Curry (MAL, early episodes), David Rappaport (MAL, later episodes), Jeff Goldblum (Verminous Skumm, early episodes), Maurice LaMarche (Verminous Skumm, later episodes/Duke Nukem, later episodes), John Ratzenberger (Rigger), Martin Sheen (Sly Sludge), Sting (Zarm, early episodes), David Warner (Zarm, later episodes), Dean Stockwell (Duke Nukem, early episodes), Cam Clarke (Ooze)

SYNOPSIS: Five supernaturally gifted young people combine their abilities to create the superhero Captain Planet, dedicated to protecting the Earth from the work of polluters and other villains.

COMMENTARY: A well-intentioned premise that was largely sabotaged by the self-congratulatory tone adopted by the producers, as well as the overreliance on tried-and-true good-versus-evil characterizations and preachy left-of-center moralizing on "protecting the environment." Media mogul Turner was able to use his influence to get a number of celebrities (see the voice actor credits) who shared his political attitudes involved with the series, if only briefly. At one point, it was said that Tom Cruise was to play Captain Planet, but this did not come to fruition. The final project lacked the kind of subtlety that would have made its message more effective. One is not inclined to take a program with villains named "Hoggish Greedly," "Looten Plunder," and "Verminous Skumm" very seriously.

DIC produced the animation for the first three seasons, with Hanna-Barbera (which Turner acquired in the early 1990s) taking over for the fourth and final one, for which the series was retitled *The New Adventures of Captain Planet*.

***CAPTAIN SIMIAN AND THE SPACE MONKEYS* (1996)**

STUDIOS: Monkeyshine, Epoch Ink, Toon-Us-In, Hallmark, Bohbot

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

CREATOR: Gordon Bressack

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Gordon Bressack, Gary Hartle, Rob Hudnut, Victoria Cardaro, Andy Kim

PRODUCER: Joe Pearson

DIRECTORS: David Schwartz, Brad Rader

WRITERS INCLUDED: Gordon Bressack

VOICE ACTORS: Jerry Doyle (Captain Chuck Simian), James Avery (Gor-illa), Dom Irrera (Spydor), Maurice LaMarche (Dr. Splitz/Splitzy), Karen Maruyama (Shao Lin), Malcolm McDowell (Rhesus 2), Frank Welker (Apax), Jeff Bennett (Orbitron), Michael Dorn (Lord Nebula), Oliver Muirhead (The Grxylpk), Andrea Thompson (Lilith)

SYNOPSIS: Monkeys sent into space for scientific experimentation are intercepted by an alien race, which gives them advanced humanlike intelligence and uses them to defend the cosmos against evil.

COMMENTARY: Creator/executive producer Bressack had originally intended this series to be produced in live action with real monkeys and dubbed-in dialogue but, fortunately, was persuaded that his concept would work much better in animation. Thus persuaded, Bressack was able to develop his project in such a way that the comic and dramatic components balanced each other well. The series was well-produced but had its run cut short when the action-figure line it was tied in with failed to do enough business.

***THE CARE BEARS* (AND RELATED SERIES)**

***The Care Bears* (1985)**

STUDIOS: Those Characters from Cleveland, DIC, SFM

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Jean Chalopin, Andy Heyward, Tetsuo Katayama

DIRECTORS: James Simon, Hideo Nishimaki

WRITERS: Lori Crawford, Sandi Fries, Jack Olesker, Francis Moss, Eleanor Burian-Mohr, Randal Case, Howard Cohen, Matt Geller, Jack Hanrahan, Don Hart, Shelley Karol, Bruce Reisman

VOICE ACTORS: Bob Dermer (Grumpy Bear), Dan Hennessey (Brave Heart Lion/Loyal Heart Dog/Good Luck Bear), John Stocker (Beastly), Melleny Brown (Birthday Bear), Luba Goy (Lotsa Heart Elephant/Gentle Heart Lamb), Billie Mae Richards (Tenderheart Bear), Laurie Weller Benson (Birthday Bear), Linda Sorenson (Love-a-Lot Bear), Janet Lane Green (Wish Bear), Patrice Black (Share Bear), Terry Sears (Champ Bear), Eva Almos (Swift Heart Rabbit), Jim Henshaw (Bright Heart Raccoon), Marla Lukovsky (Playful Heart

Monkey), Louise Vallance (Proud Heart Cat), Pauline Renny (Cozy Heart Penguin/Treat Heart Pig)

The Care Bears Family (1986–1988)

STUDIOS: Saul Group, Nelvana, SFM

DISTRIBUTORS: ABC (1986–1988), Syndicated (1988)

PRODUCERS: Michael Hirsh, Patrick Loubert, Clive Smith, Lenora Hume, Peter Hudecki, Stephen Hodgins

DIRECTORS: Joseph Sherman, Laura Shepherd, David Marshall

WRITERS INCLUDED: Peter Hudecki, John De Klein

VOICE ACTORS: Bob Dermer (Grumpy Bear), Dan Hennessey (Brave Heart Lion/Loyal Heart Dog/Good Luck Bear), John Stocker (Beastly), Melleny Brown (Birthday Bear), Luba Goy (Lotsa Heart Elephant/Gentle Heart Lamb), Billie Mae Richards (Tenderheart Bear)

SYNOPSIS: The cute Care Bears and their similarly designed animal cousins help to make the world a better place by allowing people to understand their inner feelings better and protecting the world from those with no positive feelings whatsoever.

COMMENTARY: Created in 1981 by Those Characters from Cleveland, a division of the American Greeting Cards Company, the Care Bears were a marketing project whose cuteness and empathy toward others made them a natural for the saccharine world of television animation in the 1980s. They appeared in



The Care Bears in their first TV incarnation. Samuel Goldwyn Company/Photofest © Samuel Goldwyn Company

their first television special in 1983 and then in an animated feature film in 1985, which led to two sequels and these regularly scheduled programs. Little needed to be changed from the elements introduced in the preceding projects, although the later Nelvana project emphasized a regular source of villainy in the aptly named No Heart and his comically inept henchman Beastly. The program's unsubtle moralizing and overly sweet characterizations would make it a ripe target for satirizing by a later generation of television animators, who seemed to hold the characters as being primarily responsible for television animation's dumbed-down content in the 1980s.

***CARTOON CARTOON SHOW* (1995–2005)**

See *World Premiere Toons* (a.k.a. *What a Cartoon!*, *Cartoon Cartoon Show*; 1995–2005).

***CARTOON SUSHI* (1997–1998)**

STUDIO/DISTRIBUTOR: MTV

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Abby Terkuhle

PRODUCER: Nick Litwinko

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: An animated anthology series in the mode of the network's earlier hit *Liquid Television* (q.v.). None of the variety of recurring features really caught on enough to be considered as series on their own, save for an early version of what would eventually become *Celebrity Deathmatch* (q.v.).

***CASPER THE FRIENDLY GHOST* (AND RELATED SERIES)**

Note: This entry concerns only made-for-TV productions and not repackages of theatrical films.

***The New Casper Cartoon Show* (1963–1970)**

STUDIOS: Harvey, Paramount

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATORS: Joe Oriolo, Sy Reit

DIRECTORS: Joe Oriolo, I. Sparber, Seymour Kneitel, Sam Buchwald

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Ginny Tyler (Casper); Allen Swift, Jack Mercer, and Sid Raymond (Additional voices)

***Casper and the Angels* (1979–1980)**

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: Art Scott, Alex Lovy, Iwao Takamoto

DIRECTORS: Ray Patterson, George Gordon, Carl Urbano, Oscar Dufau

WRITERS: Jim Ryan, Bob Ogle, Jack Bonestell, Patsy Cameron, Gary Greenfield, Dick Robbins

VOICE ACTORS: Julie McWhirter (Casper), Laurel Page (Mini), Diane McCannon (Maxi), John Stephenson (Hairy Scary/Commander)

Casper (a.k.a. The Spooktacular New Adventures of Casper; 1996–1998)

STUDIOS: Harvey, Universal

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Jeffrey Montgomery

PRODUCER: Tom Kline

DIRECTOR: Marija Dail

WRITERS: Cindy McKay, Sherri Stoner, Tony Marino, Deanna Oliver, Chris Ot-suki, Thomas Hart, Mark York, Henry Gilroy, Ken Koonce, Michael Merton, Robert Buccholz, Terry Collins, Don Gilles, Kate Donahue, Ralph Soll, Steve Granat, Cynde Clark, Cathy Shambly, Erin Erlich, Sean Hogan, David Ar-nott, Jess Winfield, David Wiemers, Alex Borstein, Tim Bagley, Steve Moore, George McGrath, Jim Wise, Mark Hoffmeier, Scott Kreamer, J. Keith Van Stratten, John Ballinger

VOICE ACTORS: Malachi Peterson (Casper), Dan Castalleneta (Dr. Harvey), Rob Paulsen (Spooky), Kath Soucie (Kat Harvey), Joe Alaskey (Stinkie/Gorey/Nar-rator), Brad Garrett (Fatso), Joe Nipote (Stretch)

SYNOPSIS: Casper, a young ghost bent on befriending rather than scaring human-ity, has a variety of adventures while trying to do just that.



**The friendliest ghost
we know. Harvey Famous
Cartoons/Paramount Pictures**

COMMENTARY: Originating in the 1945 Paramount short film *The Friendly Ghost*, the charming but somewhat vapid character of Casper (the name was not bestowed until 1949) has remained a steady presence in theatrical and television animation and comic books for nearly a century. When it ceased production in 1959, the theatrical series was released to television as part of the omnibus *Matty's Funday Funnies* (q.v.). For the 1963 series, the characters and settings from Casper's parallel universe existence in the Enchanted Forest for Harvey Comics—including Wendy the Good Little Witch, Nightmare the Horse, and the derby-wearing "tuff" ghost Spooky—were first brought to the screen. These more child-friendly films were a study in contrast to the more somber theatrical releases preceding them, but they managed to produce an effective, if creatively bland, program when blended together.

Casper and the Angels had the friendly ghost resurrected, for no good reason, in the future, specifically the year 2179, where he and his fellow spook Hairy Scary aided a couple of young female officers of the Space Police, Mini and Maxi, in solving crimes. It was a product of the more-tiresome and derivative phase of Hanna-Barbera's history and showed it by shamelessly borrowing characterizations and plot devices from other, more-popular television programs of the era.

After some legal problems involving ownership rights sidelined them, Casper and his associates reemerged in the late 1980s, when Jeffrey Montgomery assumed control of the Harvey company. Montgomery reissued some of the older theatrical films featuring the Harvey characters to television in 1991 but, in the process, committed the heinous sins of rerecording the original dialogue and music and cutting "offensive" material out. Four years later, Casper made a broader comeback as the star attraction of a 1995 feature film, whose characters and setting were then repurposed for a new Casper series. Series writers Stoner and Oliver had scripted the film, which ensured some level of continuity. This series had much more of a clever satirical bent to its writing, much in the style of *Animaniacs* (q.v.), for which Stoner and Oliver had also written, and therefore was somewhat more endurable and enjoyable than what had come before.

CATDOG (1998–2002)

STUDIOS: Peter Hannan, Studio B, Viacom

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

CREATOR/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Peter Hannan

DIRECTORS: Russ Mooney, Alan Smart

WRITERS: Steven Banks, Derek Drymon, Peter Hannan, Chris "Casper" Kelly, Robert Lamoreaux, Sultan Pepper, Robert Porter, Rachel Powell, Andy Rheingold

VOICE ACTORS: Jim Cummings (Cat/T. Rex), Tom Kenny (Dog/Cliff), Billy West (Rancid Rabbit/Mr. Sunshine/Randolph), Carlos Alazraqui (Winslow Oddfellow/Lube), Maria Bamford (Shriek DuBois/Tallulah/Fredo), Nika Frost (Lola Caricola), John Kassir (Dunglap/Mervis), Dwight Schultz (Eddie the Squirrel)

SYNOPSIS: An intellectual cat and a dimwitted dog who implausibly and inexplicably share the same body have adventures in the similarly bizarre town of Nearburg and with its citizens.

COMMENTARY: A television animation program whose unique design scheme was its principal selling point, as opposed to the arguably more important points of plotting and characterization. Hannan (who originally conceived the title character as a superhero figure!) and his colleagues certainly developed interesting figures in Catdog; the Brooklyn-accented mouse Winslow Oddfellow; the hillbilly Rancid Rabbit; and the greaser dogs Cliff, Lube, and Shriek in particular. However, in creative execution, they seemed incapable of using the characters in the same devil-may-care way that Bob Clampett and Tex Avery, who seemed to be the creator's primary influences, would have done with similar concepts and characters, and therefore it wasn't as good as it could have been.

CATSCRATCH (2005–2007)

STUDIO/DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

CREATOR: Douglas TenNapel

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Douglas TenNapel, Peter Hastings

PRODUCERS: Monique Beatty, Michael Girard

DIRECTORS: Michael Girard, Douglas TenNapel, Christine Koslov-Pitt

WRITERS INCLUDED: Peter Hastings, Mitch Watson, Scott Kreamer, Nicole Dubuc

VOICE ACTORS: Wayne Knight (Mr. Blik), Rob Paulsen (Gordon/Randall), Kevin McDonald (Waffle), Liliana Mumy (Kimberly), Maurice LaMarche (Hovis), John DiMaggio (The Chumpy Chumps), Richard McGonagle (Bootsy), Jess Harnell (Mitchell the Mammoth)

SYNOPSIS: When wealthy Mrs. Edna Crandilly dies unexpectedly and leaves her fortune to her pet cats, they begin living in a manner they are not entirely equipped to handle.

COMMENTARY: Based on TenNapel's graphic novel *Gear*, the series suffered from having the characters and plotting of a source shoehorned into the traditional cartoon slapstick comedy format. Despite his resourcefulness in turning some of his other graphic writing and computer game projects into successful television animation series in the past (see *Earthworm Jim* and *Project G.E.E.K.E.R.*), TenNapel was unable to do so here because Nickelodeon effectively watered down much of the edge of his work to pacify those who might have objected.

CAVE KIDS ADVENTURES (1996)

See *The Flintstones* (and related series).

THE C.B. BEARS (1977–1978)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCER: Iwao Takamoto

DIRECTOR: Charles Nichols

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Daws Butler (Hustle/Big Duke/Stick/Undercover Elephant), Henry Corden (Bump), Chuck McCann (Boogie/Blubber), Susan Davis (Charlie), Lennie Weinrib (The King/Yukayuka/Rattle), Sheldon Allman (Big H), Marvin Kaplan (Skids), Don Messick (Clyde), Susan Silo (Zelda), Ginny McSwain (Sheena), William Woodson (The Sheriff), Paul Winchell (Shake), Joe E. Ross (Roll), Alan Oppenheimer (Sidney Merciless), Bob Hastings (Loud Mouse), Michael Bell (The Chief)

SYNOPSIS: An anthology series composed of the following components: (1) "C.B. Bears," three bears solving crimes based on assignments sent to them via CB radio by a woman named Charlie; (2) "Heyyy, It's the King," the adventures of a Fonzie-like anthropomorphic lion and his friends; (3) "Blast Off Buzzard and Crazy Legs," a Road Runner-like "chase" between a bird and a snake; (4) "Shake, Rattle, and Roll," a trio of ghostly innkeepers; (5) "Posse Impossible," a group of incompetent cowboys; and (6) "Undercover Elephant," an incompetent pachyderm spy.

COMMENTARY: A typical Hanna-Barbera production of the 1970s that, in trying to be hip toward what the kids of the show's time liked, embarrassed itself in the process. It seemed like they felt it was only necessary to take some of their old comedy formats and update them with then-current technology and slang. All that it did, unfortunately, was make the material more dated than most of their enterprises and more a reflection of the time period when the show was produced than being good material in and of itself.

C-BEAR AND JAMAL (1996–1998)

STUDIO: Film Roman, Taurus, Plus One

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Tone Loc, Phil Roman

DIRECTORS: David Brain, Vincent Davis, Brian Hogan, Ron Myrick

WRITERS: Earl Richey Jones, Todd Jones, Sib Ventress, Al Sonja Rice

VOICE ACTORS: Arthur Reggie III (Jamal Wingo), Tone Loc (C-Bear), George Wallace (Hawthorne), Dawnn Lewis (Grandma), Darryl Sivad (Grandpa), Kim Fields Freeman (Maya), Aires Spears (Bill Chill/Kwamee), Jeannie Elias (Chipster), Margaret Cho (Kim), Paul Rodriguez (Javier), Danny Mann (Sooner)

SYNOPSIS: The anthropomorphic teddy bear C-Bear serves as a spiritual and moral guide for young Jamal Wingo as he comes of age in south-central Los Angeles.

COMMENTARY: Executive producer/star Loc (né Anthony Smith) first came to popularity as a rapper, having *Billboard* top-10 hits with "Wild Thing" and "Funky Cold Medina" in 1989. He later parlayed this into a string of acting roles. This semiautobiographical series combined a nostalgic look at his own upbringing with a clear and very contemporary sense of moral uplift absent in other programs of its kind—and particularly in programs featuring and targeted to the African American population. Viewers responded by making it the highest-rated program on its network, but it was canceled abruptly after

that network entered into an exclusive arrangement with the Saban Studio for television animation content.

***CBS CARTOON THEATRE* (1956)**

STUDIO: Terrytoons

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: This summer replacement series, an anthology of theatrical cartoons from the archives of Terrytoons (which CBS had recently purchased from its founder, Paul Terry), has the distinction of being the first animated series to be broadcast in prime time. Equally notable is the fact that it was hosted by Dick Van Dyke, who was relatively unknown at the time.

***CBS STORYBREAK* (1985–1998)**

STUDIO/DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

HOST: Bob Keeshan (early episodes), Malcolm Jamal Warner (later episodes)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: An “illustrated book” series featuring limited animation adaptations of popular children’s books narrated by hosts Keeshan (a.k.a. Captain Kangaroo) and Warner. The material ranged from classics, like Johnny Gruelle’s *Raggedy Ann and Andy*, to more contemporary fare, such as Thomas Rockwell’s controversial *How to Eat Fried Worms*.

***CELEBRITY DEATHMATCH* (1998–2002)**

STUDIOS: MTV, MGM

DISTRIBUTORS: MTV (1998–2002), UPN (2001)

CREATOR: Eric Fogel

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Eric Fogel, Abby Terkuhle

PRODUCER: John Lynn

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS: Chris Kreski, Eric Fogel, Matt Harrigan, Randolph Heard, Scott Prendergast, John T. Reynolds, Jed Spingarn, Michael Rubiner, Jay Shindell

VOICE ACTORS: Mills Lane (Himself), Maurice Schlafer (Johnny Gomez), Len Maxwell (Nick Diamond), Debbie Matenopoulous (Herself), Becca Lish (Stacy Cornbred), “Stone Cold” Steve Austin (Himself)

SYNOPSIS: Strategically paired celebrity figures are pitted against each other in fights to the death.

COMMENTARY: Originally seen in an episode of *Cartoon Sushi* (q.v.), this project combined a self-parodying excess in its presentation with uncomfortable levels of narcissism and voyeurism. Produced with a combination of clay animation and computer technology, it was a technically sound production, but it was only marginally intriguing, unless you seriously hated or disliked the celebrities and politicians featured as the gladiatorial combatants. While it had a loyal and vocal fan base, it seems unlikely to be revived, being much more a product of its time than an enduring and valuable franchise.

***CENTURIONS* (1985)**

STUDIOS: Ruby-Spears, Worldvision

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Joe Ruby, Ken Spears

PRODUCER: Larry Huber

DIRECTOR: Russell Mooney

WRITERS INCLUDED: Ted Pedersen, Dick Sebast, Rick Hoberg

VOICE ACTORS: Vince Edwards (Jake Rockwell), Diane Pershing (Crystal Kane), Patrick Fraley (Max Ray/Dr. Wu), Robert Ridgely (Rex Charger), Neil Ross (Ace McCloud), Ron Feiberg (Doc Terror), Edmund Gilbert (Hacker), Jennifer Darling (Amber)

SYNOPSIS: Created by computer scientist Crystal Kane, the Centurions are a team of humanized robots dedicated to combatting the evil Doc Terror and his Doom Drones.

COMMENTARY: Relatively straightforward action-adventure, with the novelty (for the time) of having an active female heroine involved and not on the sidelines. Other notable attributes: the involvement of Edwards (best known as the star of the 1960s live-action medical drama *Ben Casey*); the employment of veteran comic book artists Gil Kane, Jack Kirby, and Doug Wildey as consultants; and some well-produced, obligatory (for the time) public service announcements on the worlds of space travel and astronomy at the endings of the narratives proper.***CHALKZONE* (2002–2008)**

STUDIOS: Frederator, Nickelodeon

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

CREATORS: Bill Burnett, Larry Huber

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Fred Seibert, Larry Huber, Bill Burnett

DIRECTORS: Larry Leichliter, John Fountain, Alex Wallrich, Debby Hindman, Russell Mooney

WRITERS: Bill Burnett, Larry Huber, Steve Marmel, Jenny Nissenson

VOICE ACTORS: E. G. Daily (Rudy Tabootie), Candi Milo (Snap/Reggie Bullnerd/Bullynerd), Hynden Walch (Penny Sanchez), Miriam Flynn (Mildred Tabootie), Jess Harnell (Joe Tabootie), Robert Cait (Mr. Wilter)

SYNOPSIS: Ten-year-old Rudy Tabootie comes across a magical piece of chalk that allows him to enter the ChalkZone, where everything that has ever been drawn with chalk has a sentient afterlife.

COMMENTARY: An imaginative concept executed imaginatively, which is rare in television animation. Creators Burnett and Huber, both veterans of the television animation industry, made a case for how the development of imaginative thinking through art is important to personal identity development, but they did so through the actions of the plots rather than spoken homilies. Obviously, they had learned through experience how imposed educational messages could harm otherwise good programs, so they avoided this at all cost here. The result was a program that was able to explore the creative virtues of its central idea without encountering too many limitations in the process.

The show consisted of three short pieces per program, one an educational music video, and each segment closed by reminding the audience, somewhat defiantly, that what they had just seen was “Made in Hollywood, U.S.A.,” a tag also used on another Frederator show, *The Fairly Oddparents* (q.v.).

CHALLENGE OF THE GOBOTS (1984)

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, Tonka, TeleRep

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera, Joe Taritero

PRODUCER: Kay Wright

DIRECTORS: Ray Patterson, Art Davis, Oscar Dufau, Volus Jones, Don Lusk, Rudy Zamora, Alan Zaslove

WRITERS: Jeff Segal, Kelly Ward, Robert Taylor, Kent Butterworth, Roy Wilson, Rhydon Sishido, Michael Swanigan, Peter Von Sholly, Rich Chidlaw, Larry Latham, Marija Dail, Dale Barnhardt, Tom Sito, George Scribner, Bill Kroyer

VOICE ACTORS: Lou Richards (Leader-1), Arthur Burghardt (Turbo), Frank Welker (Scooter), Bernard Erhard (Cy-Kill), Bob Holt (Cop-Tur), Marilyn Lightstone (Crasher), Morgan Paull (Matt Hunter), Leslie Speights (A. J. Foster), Sparky Marcus (Nicky Burns), Rene Auberjonois (Dr. Braxis), Brock Peters (General Newcastle)

SYNOPSIS: The Gobots are heroic robots from the planet Gobotron, who engage in conflict with the villainous Renegades when both parties relocate to Earth.

COMMENTARY: The Gobots were created by Tonka as a means of capitalizing on the success of Hasbro’s *Transformers* (q.v.) franchise. And so, as with the Transformers, they ended up being featured in their own paint-by-numbers action-adventure series, with the animators simply following marching orders from the toy company rather than applying their own independent creativity. The main difference was that, while the Transformers morphed into a successful multimedia franchise in the 21st century, the Gobots simply disappeared when their usefulness to their corporate master ended.

CHALLENGE OF THE SUPER FRIENDS (1978–1979)

See *Super Friends* (and related series).

CHANNEL UMPTEE-THREE (1997–1998)

STUDIOS: Act II, Enchante-George, Columbia

DISTRIBUTOR: WB

CREATOR: Norman Lear

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: John Baskin, Norman Lear

PRODUCERS: Ping Warner, Peggy George, Jim George, Jeff Kline, Bob Seeley

DIRECTORS: Chris Headrick, Don Jurwich, Michael Peraza Jr., David Schwartz, Bob Seeley

WRITERS INCLUDED: Mark Evanier, Perry Zombolas

VOICE ACTORS: Jonathan Harris (Stickley Rickets), Neil Ross (Ed/Holey Moley), Gregg Berger (Bud), Rob Paulsen (Ogden), David Paymer (Sheldon Cargo),

Alice Ghostley (Pandora Rickets), Greg Burson (Professor Relevant), Susan Silo (Polly), Tara Strong (Heather)

SYNOPSIS: Ogden the ostrich, Holey Moley the mole, and Sheldon the snail operate a “pirate” television station that airs content “in the white space between channels” that is “too cool, too weird, and too wonderful” for conventional television broadcasting.

COMMENTARY: Creator/executive producer Lear is one of the most significant producers in television history, regularly producing series that challenge the medium’s creative presentational conventions. He had his first major hit with *All in the Family* in 1971; others followed, including *Sanford and Son*; *The Jeffersons*; *Maude*; *Good Times*; *Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman*; and *Fernwood* (a.k.a. *Fernwood/America 2 Night*). Given that Lear spent much of his career challenging the censorial limits of his chosen medium, it is not surprising that his one major venture into television animation would address similar concerns. Unfortunately, despite the creative potential of its premise, this series was destined not to last as long as Lear’s other hit programs, perhaps because it was aired at the wrong time of day and for the wrong audience by what was likely the wrong network.

THE CHARLIE BROWN AND SNOOPY SHOW (1983–1986)

STUDIOS: Mendelson-Melendez, Charles Schulz, United Media

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATOR/WRITER: Charles M. Schulz

PRODUCERS: Lee Mendelson, Bill Melendez

DIRECTORS: Dick Horn, Steven Melendez

VOICE ACTORS: Brian Kersten (Charlie Brown, early episodes), Bret Johnson (Charlie Brown, later episodes), Angela Lee (Lucy, early episodes), Heather Stoneman (Lucy, later episodes), Bill Melendez (Snoopy), Victoria Hodges (Peppermint Patty, early episodes), Gini Holtzman (Peppermint Patty, later episodes), Jeremy Schoenberg (Linus), Kevin Brando (Schroeder, early episodes), Danny Colby (Schroeder, later episodes), Michael Dockery (Marcie, early episodes), Keri Holzman (Marcie, later episodes), Jason Muller (Rerun), Mary Tunnell (Frieda), Carl Steven (Franklin), Dana Ferguson (Little Girl)

SYNOPSIS: The adventures of the beloved stars of the comic strip *Peanuts*.

COMMENTARY: Originating in the early 1950s (as *Lil’ Folks*), *Peanuts*, the invention of Minnesota-born cartoonist Charles Schulz, is one of the most well-known and respected examples of its art form, maintaining a high quality from the time of its origination until it ended following Schulz’s death in 2000. The characters made their first animated appearances in a series of commercials for Ford in the early 1960s, but their highest visibility came through a long string of television specials, beginning with 1964’s *A Charlie Brown Christmas*, that won a streak of Emmys and other awards for Schulz and his partners in the venture, producer Lee Mendelson and animation director Bill Melendez. Annual revivals of the holiday-themed productions in particular have ensured the visibility of the characters in the 21st century despite the strip being defunct, as has a recent CGI feature-film production.

Time has also shown it to be one of the most influential forces on the shaping of child characters and childhood themes in television animation narratives, with numerous series echoing it in a number of indirect but obvious ways.

This project was only one of two regularly scheduled series featuring the characters, the other being *This Is America, Charlie Brown* (q.v.). Schulz had originally opposed turning his comic strip characters into animated ones for fear of milking them dry through repetition but found the specials format prevented this. A series was a different matter, however; so Schulz, Mendelson, and Melendez avoided production of one until the 1980s, when they found a means of production that suited both them and the weekly television grind. This was to present the characters in a series of short narrative and gag sequences reminiscent of the strip itself rather than the full-length narratives of the specials. Given the production team's insistence on a quality product at all ends of the spectrum, *The Charlie Brown and Snoopy Show* was a more entertaining and higher-end production than its peers. As always, Schulz insisted his child characters be portrayed by real children, which added a charm and warmth to them often absent in other depictions of their kind.

***CHIP 'N' DALE'S RESCUE RANGERS* (1988–1989)**

STUDIO: Disney

DISTRIBUTORS: Disney (1988–1989), Syndicated (1989)

PRODUCERS: Tad Stones, Alan Zaslove

DIRECTORS: Alan Zaslove, John Kimball, Bob Zamboni

WRITERS INCLUDED: Tad Stones, Bryce Malek, Dev Ross

VOICE ACTORS: Corey Burton (Dale/Zipper), Peter Cullen (Monterey Jack, early episodes), Jim Cummings (Fat Cat/Monterey Jack, later episodes), Tress MacNeille (Chip/Gadget), Rob Paulsen (Flash the Wonder Dog/Donald Drake)

SYNOPSIS: The Rescue Rangers are a team of animal soldiers of fortune who thwart the actions of their evil criminal counterparts on a regular basis.

COMMENTARY: The characters of Chip 'n' Dale were two trouble-causing chipmunks originating as supporting characters in a Disney short in 1943 and appearing in several more before being elevated to star status briefly beginning in 1951. In this series, their established positions as straight man and comedian, respectively, were maintained in their heroic positions, with resourceful inventor Gadget, Australian-accented braggart Monterey Jack, and comedic fly Zipper filling out the ranks; the gangster Fat Cat was their most regular opponent. Though produced with some panache occasionally, it wasn't exactly revolutionary in terms of its plotting and characterization. It was hard to believe, sometimes, why Disney had invested \$28 million in a property with such a lack of dramatic depth, other than the one obvious reason.

***CHOWDER* (2007–2010)**

STUDIO: Cartoon Network

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATOR/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: C. H. Greenblatt

PRODUCER: Louis J. Cuck

DIRECTORS: Juli Hasiguchi, Kris Sherwood, Eddy Houchins, Shaun Cashman, Mike Milo, Majella Milne

WRITERS INCLUDED: C. H. Greenblatt, William Reiss, Alex Almaguer, Clayton Morrow, Tom King, Michelle McCole Moss, Danielle McCole, Kevin Kramer, Peter Browngardt, Pietro "Pappy" Piumetti, Ian Wasseluk, Darrick Bachman, Phil Rynda, Brett Varon, Kristina Baranovich, Maxwell Atoms, Mark O'Hare, Craig McCracken

VOICE ACTORS: Nicky Jones (Chowder), Dwight Schultz (Mung Daal), Kevin Michael Richardson (Schnitzel, first episode), John DiMaggio (Schnitzel, later episodes/Chestnut, later episodes), Tara Strong (Truffles), C. H. Greenblatt (Kimchi/Kiwi), Dana Snyder (Gazpacho), Liliana Mumy (Panini), Mindy Sterling (Endive), Will Shadley (Gorgonzola), Elan Garfias (Ceviche), Tone Loc (Chestnut, early episodes), Paul Reubens (Reuben), Bob Joles (Mr. Fugu), Diedrich Bader (Sergeant Hoagie)

SYNOPSIS: In the food-based world of Marzipan City, apprentice chef Chowder causes considerable trouble stemming from his youthful impatience, ignorance, and stupidity.

COMMENTARY: This clever and frequently hilarious program is the kind of thing Lewis Carroll or Edward Lear would have produced if they were animators: nonsensical, illogical, and exuberantly in denial of being either of those



The cast of *Chowder*—when they weren't cooking. Cartoon Network/Photofest © Cartoon Network

things. Greenblatt's imaginative setting was employed to its full potential in nearly every episode, and his characters were unpredictably zany in the classic tradition of animation. Even the food dishes frequently featured were named and prepared in bizarre ways that suggest Dr. Seuss was the author of the cookbook they used. The vocal performances are well done, especially Strong's of the Yiddish-accented "mushroom pixie" Truffles, and the interlocking running gags (such as the title character's frequent denials that he is the "boyfriend" of pink-furred rabbit Panini when she implies such at their meetings) are much better handled and less stale than other examples of this practice. A series needing to be seen to be believed, like all the classics of television animation, and then to be fully enjoyed when that happens, like the meals prepared in the show's own kitchen.

CHUCK NORRIS: KARATE KOMMANDOS (1986)

STUDIOS: Ruby-Spears, Worldvision

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Joe Ruby, Ken Spears

PRODUCER: Larry Huber

DIRECTORS: Charles Nicholls, John Kimball

WRITERS INCLUDED: Bob DiStefano, Ted Field, Dick Sebast

VOICE ACTORS: Chuck Norris (Himself), Robert Ito (Tabe), Sam Fontana (Reed), Mona Marshall (Too Much), Kathy Garver (Pepper), Alan Oppenheimer (President), Bill Martin (The Claw), Keone Young (Super Ninja)

SYNOPSIS: Presidential agent Chuck Norris and his team of Karate Kommandos battle the villainous cartel Vulture, led by the Claw.

COMMENTARY: Carlos "Chuck" Norris first gained fame as a professional karate champion, holding the middleweight title between 1968 and 1974. He made his first film appearance in 1969 and achieved renown in the late 1970s and early 1980s as the star of a series of popular action films, many produced by his brother Aaron. Between 1993 and 2001, he played the title role in the popular CBS television series *Walker, Texas Ranger*.

This short-run (five-episode) series was a blatant exploitation of Norris's popularity among child audiences, for whom, it seemed, the action-oriented narrative was directed. It was rather standard fare, save for the (undoubtedly unintentional) racism inherent in making the villains Asian people, as well as the public service announcements at the end, where Norris unconvincingly asserted that violent acts of the kind featured in the program were "my last option" when it came to problem solving.

CLARENCE (2014–PRESENT)

STUDIO: Cartoon Network

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATOR: Skyler Page

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Skyler Page, Curtis Lelash, Jennifer Pelphrey, Brian Miller, Rob Sorcher

PRODUCERS: Keith Mack, Bob Boyle, Yvette Kaplan, Nelson Boles, Stephen Neary

DIRECTORS INCLUDE: Skyler Page, Nelson Boles, Derek Evanick, Diana Lafyatis, Niki Yang, Stephen Neary, Brett Varon, Charlie Gavin, Kyler Spears, Kurt Dumas, Antony Mazzotta, Tiffany Ford, Michelle Xin, Sam King, Vitaly Strokous, Stu Livingston, Jason Dwyer, Katie Aldworth, Ray Xu

WRITERS INCLUDE: Skyler Page, Patrick Harpin, Mark Banker, Spencer Rothbell, Katie Crown, Nelson Boles, Tony Infante, John Bailey Owen, Sam Kremers-Nedell, Niki Yang, Stephen Neary, Tiffany Ford, Michelle Xin

VOICE ACTORS: Skyler Page (Clarence Wendell, early episodes/Nathan, early episodes/Jim Reese, early episodes), Spencer Rothbell (Clarence Wendell, later episodes/Mavis/Camden), Sean Giambrone (Jeffrey "Jeff" Randell), Jason Marsden (Ryan "Sumo" Sumouski, pilot episode/Belson Noles, pilot episode), Tom Kenny (Ryan "Sumo" Sumouski, series episodes), Katie Crown (Mary Wendell/Ms. Melanie Baker/Branda Shoop), Eric Edelstein (Charles "Chad" Caswell III), Roger Smith (Belson Noles, series episodes/Percy), Damien Haas (Nathan, later episodes), Donovan Patton (Jim Reese, later episodes), Grace Kaufman (Chelsea Keezheekoni), Joshua Rush (Breehn), Alberto Gonzalez (Emilio, early episodes), Enrique Contreras (Emilio, later episodes), Daniel DiMaggio (Brady), Isabella Niems (Kimby), Ivy Bishop (Malessica), Tayler Buck (Courtlin), Brent Popolizio (Joshua "Josh" Maverick), John DiMaggio (Mel Sumouski)

SYNOPSIS: In the fictional community of Aberdale, Arizona, nine-year-old Clarence Wendell has daily adventures, often in the company of his best friends Jeff and Sumo.

COMMENTARY: A series with a strong naturalistic bent, along with alternate streaks of absurdity and cruelty reminiscent of *Adventure Time* (q.v.), with which creator Page had previously been involved. Those of you seeking humor that you can understand easily, therefore, are out of luck, while those with a strong amount of schadenfreude in their makeup will be unquestionably amused. However, the producers deserve credit for developing some intriguing personality types among their cast and a school setting somewhat reminiscent of Mel Lazarus's comic strip *Miss Peach*.

Page was fired by Cartoon Network in the summer of 2014 due to a combination of mental health problems and sexual harassment allegations. Production has continued on the program since that time, with writer Rothbell and producer Boles assuming the roles vacated by Page.

CLERKS (2000)

STUDIOS: Disney, Miramax, Touchstone, View Askew

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATOR: Kevin Smith

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Billy Campbell, David Mandel, Scott Mosier, Kevin Smith, Bob Weinstein, Harvey Weinstein, Brian Kelley, Steve Lookner

PRODUCER: John Bush

DIRECTORS: Chris Bailey, Nick Filippi, Steve Loter

WRITERS: Paul Dini, Brian Kelley, Steve Lookner, David Mandel, Kevin Smith

VOICE ACTORS: Brian O'Halloran (Dante Hicks), Jeff Anderson (Randall Greaves), Jason Mewes (Jay), Kevin Smith (Silent Bob)

SYNOPSIS: The travails of Dante Hicks as he mans the counter of a convenience store in Leonardo, New Jersey.

COMMENTARY: The series was based on a 1994 film directed by Smith, which gained a cult following and transformed the director into a Hollywood player. To make this a series, the film's lack of narrative was transformed into that of a traditional sitcom, and the R-rated content and language of the film were predictably muted. Despite a high element of satire and the kind of free-association comedy often associated with Smith, audience reception was disappointing, and the series was canceled by ABC after six episodes were produced (though only two were broadcast).

THE CLEVELAND SHOW (2009–2013)

STUDIOS: Persons Unknown, Happy Jack, Fuzzy Door, 20th Century Fox

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX

CREATORS/EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Seth MacFarlane, Richard Appel, Mike Henry
PRODUCERS: Kara Vallow, Courtney Lilly

DIRECTORS: Anthony Lioi, Chuck Klein, Oreste Canestrelli, Ian Graham, Justin Ridge, Mike Mayfield, Matt Engstrom, Ron Rubio, Ken Wong, Anthony Agrusa, Jim Shellhorn, Seung Woo Cha, Jack Perkins, Steve Robertson, Phil Allora, Jeff Myers

WRITERS: Jonathan Green, Gabe Miller, Aaron Lee, Kirker Butler, Julius Sharpe, Aseem Batra, Matt Murray, Clarence Livingston, Kevin Biggins, Travis Bowe, Teri Schaffer, Raynelle Schwilling, Carl Reiner, Courtney Lilly, John Viener, Bill Oakley, Chadd Gindin, Dave Jeser, Matt Silverstein

VOICE ACTORS: Mike Henry (Cleveland Brown/Montclair "Rallo" Tubbs/Arch/Florence/Principal Wally Farquhare, early episodes/Oliver Wilkerson/Hot Wheels/Coach Charles McFall/Dwayne Meighan/Mr. Flippers), Sanaa Lathan (Donna Tubbs Brown), Kevin Michael Richardson (Cleveland Brown Jr./Auntie Momma, male voice/Lester Krinkelsac/Julius Nemeth/Reverend Jenkins), Nia Long (Roberta Tubbs, 2009–2010), Reagan Gomez Preston (Roberta Tubbs, 2010–2013), Frances Callier (Evelyn "Cookie" Brown), Craig Robinson (LeVar "Freight Train" Brown), Corey Holcomb (Robert Tubbs), Kym Whitley (Auntie Momma, female voice), Phylicia Rashad (Dee Dee Tubbs), Seth MacFarlane (Tim the Bear, early episodes/Dr. Fist, early episodes), Jess Harnell (Tim the Bear, later episodes), Arianna Huffington (Arianna), Nat Faxon (Raymond), Aseem Batra (Kendra Krinkelsac), Glenn Howerton (Ernie Krinkelsac), Jason Sudekis (Holt Richter/Terry Kimple), Rosie Perez (Choni), Elia Saldana (Cecilia Moreno), Bruce McGill (Lloyd Waterman), Alec Sulkin (Aaron/Lane/Angus), Fergie (Mrs. Richter/Jane), Rutina Wesley (Tori/Yvette), Will Forte (Principal Wally Farquhare, later episodes), Jamie Kennedy (Federline Jones), Julius Sharpe (Derek), Clarence Livingston (Reggie), Kanye West (Kenny West), Alex Borstein (Mrs. Lowenstein), Al Thompson (Walt Fuller), T-Pain (Theodore Parker Jr. III [*sic*]), will.i.am (Bernard Bernard), David Lynch (Gus), Carl Reiner (Murray), John Viener (Gordy), Bryan Cranston (Dr. Fist, later episodes), Tom Kenny (Dr. Fist, later episodes), Danny Smith (Donny), Kristen Wiig (Fern Stapleton, early episodes), Beth Littleford (Fern Stapleton,

later episodes), Brandon Richardson (Mike), Larry Box (Mayor of Stoolbend), Bebe Neuwirth (Sarah Friedman), Jason Alexander (Saul Friedman)

SYNOPSIS: After leaving his former residence in Quahog, Rhode Island, to return to his hometown of Stoolbend, Virginia, Cleveland Brown marries his high school crush, Donna Tubbs; becomes stepfather to her two children; and begins work as an installer for Waterman Cable.

COMMENTARY: Of the trilogy of programs produced by Seth MacFarlane for FOX in the 2000s and 2010s (the others being *Family Guy* [q.v.] and *American Dad* [q.v.]), this was the one that paled in comparison to the others, though not without lack of trying. It was partially because, as a spin-off of *Family Guy*, it was doomed to repeat the formula its predecessor had already run into the ground and partially because, as an animated series starring African American people primarily produced by (and starring, in Henry's case) Caucasian people, it was bound to come in for severe criticism from some quarters. Consequently, despite the involvement of some high-profile personalities (see the voice actor credits) and some extremely funny individual episodes (such as one allegedly televised "live"), this was a program that ended up promising more than it delivered. Following the cancellation of the series, Cleveland was reincorporated into the cast of *Family Guy* and resumed his normal existence there as if he had never left. Even he seemed to want to forget he had ever been a star.

CLIFFORD THE BIG RED DOG/CLIFFORD'S PUPPY DAYS

***Clifford the Big Red Dog* (2000)**

STUDIO: Scholastic Entertainment

DISTRIBUTOR: PBS

CREATOR: Norman Bridwell

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Deborah Forte

PRODUCERS: Bill Schultz, Liz Young, Martha Atwater

DIRECTOR: John Over

WRITERS INCLUDED: Cindy McKay, Jessica Wollman

VOICE ACTORS: John Ritter (Clifford), Grey DeLisle (Emily Elizabeth Howard), Cree Summer (Cleo), Kel Mitchell (T-Bone), T. C. Carson (Samuel), Ulysses Cuadra (Vaz), Gary Gray (Charley), Kath Soucie (Jetta Handover), Cam Clarke (Machiavelli/Mark Howard)

***Clifford's Puppy Days* (2003)**

STUDIO: Scholastic Entertainment

DISTRIBUTOR: PBS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Deborah Forte, Bill Schulz, Mike Young

DIRECTOR: Bob Doucette

WRITERS INCLUDED: Barry Hawkins, Dev Ross, Frederick Stoppel, James Ponti, Jeff Borkin, Peter Bakalian, Cindy McKay, Suzanne Collins, Tish Rabe

VOICE ACTORS: Lara Miller (Clifford), Grey DeLisle (Emily Elizabeth Howard/Caroline Howard/Evan's Mother), Ogie Banks (Zo/Narrator), Orlando Brown (Evan Thomas), Cam Clarke (Mark Howard/Crafts Shop Clerk/Nina's Father/

Speckle), Masiela Lusha (Nina), Jess Harnell (Jorge/Gruff/ Mr. Pit Bull/Choo Choo/Mr. Sardisky), LaTonya Holmes (Flo/Vanessa), Kath Soucie (Daffodil), Lauren Tom (Shun), Henry Winkler (Norville), Candi Milo (Nina's Mother)

SYNOPSIS: The adventures of Clifford, shown first as a big red dog, then as a young puppy.

COMMENTARY: Based on the long-running children's book series created by Bridwell, the series did little to depart from the established formulas set up by the books, save for, in both cases, introducing some nonhuman characters for the title character to engage in spoken dialogue with. He remained non-verbal in interacting with his human owner, Emily Elizabeth, and her family. Ritter received an Emmy nomination for his portrayal of the title character in the former series; Winkler won the award for his portrayal of a wisecracking bird in the latter.

CLONE HIGH (2001–2002)

STUDIOS: Nelvana, MTV

DISTRIBUTOR: MTV (United States, 2003)

CREATORS/EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Bill Lawrence, Christopher Miller, Phil Lord

PRODUCERS: Jocelyn Hamilton, Marianne Culbert, Tom Martin, Kim Cleary

DIRECTORS: Ted Colyer, Harold Harris

WRITERS: Adam Pava, Bill Lawrence, Christopher Miller, Eric Kentoff, Erica Rivinoja, Judah Miller, Murray Miller, Phil Lord, Tom Martin

VOICE ACTORS: Will Forte (Abe Lincoln), Michael McDonald (Gandhi), Nicole Sullivan (Joan of Arc), Christa Miller Lawrence (Cleopatra), Christopher Miller (JFK/Mr. Butlerton), Donald Faison (George Washington Carver/Toots/Wally), Neil Flynn (Caesar/Gandhi's Dad), Phil Lord (Principal Cinnamon Scudworth)

SYNOPSIS: After mad scientist Cinnamon Scudworth creates teenaged clones of famous historical figures, he sets up a high school, with himself as principal, to observe them in action.

COMMENTARY: A bizarrely conceived idea that combined old-school UPA-like limited animation with a particularly perverse 21st-century sense of humor. Most of the teens did not stray much in terms of appearance or personality from their historical models, with the exception of Gandhi, who seemed to resemble him in name and appearance only much of the time. (The series was criticized for this by some viewers of South Asian ancestry.) However, it was strongly on target in terms of mocking the clichés of teen-oriented films and television, particularly in its habit of labeling each episode of the series a "very special" one for no good reason. This did not save it from being canceled due to low ratings, though.

The series first aired in Canada, where the animation was produced. Since its demise, cocreators Lord and Miller have become a successful directing team in both animated (*Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs*, *The Lego Movie*) and live-action (*21 Jump Street*) feature films.

THE CLUE CLUB (1976–1979)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCER: Iwao Takamoto

DIRECTOR: Charles Nichols

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: David Joliffe (Larry), Bob Hastings (D. D.), Patricia Stich (Pepper), Tara Talboy (Dotty), Paul Winchell (Woofer), Jim MacGeorge (Wimper), John Stephenson (Sheriff Bagley)

SYNOPSIS: The Clue Club is a group of young people who solve mysteries with the aid of their bloodhounds Woofer and Wimper.

COMMENTARY: Hanna-Barbera seemed to find it hard to stray too far from past glory in the 1970s, given how often it produced series that repeated ideas from earlier shows. The main novelty here came from Winchell's performance as the deerstalker-wearing, southern-accented Woofer, as well as the first major depiction, in the form of the character of Dotty, of someone who was conversant with the then-nascent science of computer technology in television animation.

The program was briefly retitled *Woofer and Wimper, Dog Detectives* in the fall of 1978 before reverting to the original title.**CLUTCH CARGO** (1959)

STUDIO: Cambria

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

CREATOR: Clark Haas

PRODUCER: Dick Brown

DIRECTOR: Ed Gillette

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Richard Cotting (Clutch Cargo, early episodes), Ned LeFebvre (Clutch Cargo, later episodes), Margaret Smith (Spinner/Paddlefoot), Hal Smith (Swampy)

SYNOPSIS: The adventures of aviator Clutch Cargo in the company of his ward Spinner and dog Paddlefoot.

COMMENTARY: Creator Haas insisted that he and his company were *not* making animated cartoons, despite the tendency of animation historians to treat his company's product as such. Certainly, Cambria's productions, of which this is the most famous, were unique more in their design than their conventional plotting and characterization. The characters were literally cardboard cutouts, for whom the illusion of movement was created using only the most rudimentary technology of the time. Despite some impressive background art, the project is perhaps most (in)famous for the employment of Synchro-Vox, in which a live actor's moving lips were superimposed over the cardboard cutout characters' faces. A similar technique was later applied to celebrity photographs as a running gag on *Late Night with Conan O'Brien* in the 2000s.

COCONUT FRED'S FRUIT SALAD ISLAND! (2005–2006)

STUDIO: Warner Brothers

DISTRIBUTOR: WB

CREATORS: Sammy Oriti, Don Oriolo

PRODUCERS: Aaron Simpson, Margaret Dean

DIRECTORS: Matt Danner, Michael Hack

WRITERS: Ray De Laurentis, William Schifrin

VOICE ACTORS: Rob Paulsen (Coconut Fred), Tracy Moore (Bingo Cherry, early episodes), Britt McKillip (Bingo Cherry, later episodes/Tiffany Pears), Eric Bauza (Slip D'Peel/Slide D'Peel/Butchy), Michael Donovan (Mr. Mel Greenrind), Brian Drummond (Wedgie/Dr. Bartlett), David Kaye (Bunga Berry), Eddie Deezen (Slurpy), Maria Bamford (Melanie Greenrind), Kathleen Barr (Mrs. Plumcott)

SYNOPSIS: The peaceful existence of Fruit Salad Island is disrupted by the unruly and frantic Coconut Fred, who is able to make real anything he imagines in his head.

COMMENTARY: A program that displayed a stereotypically dismissive attitude toward its target audience (children aged 6 to 11) very much more so than others of its kind. The comedy was loud, too fast paced, and periodically scatological and frequently tested the patience of those who watched it. While there were some interesting aspects to the show (such as the interplay between the title character and the Margaret Dumont-like Mr. Greenrind), this was overshadowed by the overtly aggressive and abusive tone much of the comedy took. Although the series received two Emmy nominations for its one and only year on the air, most viewers would likely share the sentiments of series star Paulsen, who publicly dismissed the project as an un-subtle variation on *Spongebob Squarepants* (q.v.).

CODENAME: KIDS NEXT DOOR (2002–2008)

STUDIOS: Curious Pictures, Cartoon Network

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATOR: "Mr." [Tom] Warburton

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: "Mr." [Tom] Warburton, Susan Holden, Steve Oakes, David Starr, Richard Winkler, Jonathan Paley

PRODUCERS: Brian Miller, Linda Simensky, Khaki Jones, Bruce Knapp

DIRECTORS: Maurice Fontenot, Kim Arndt, Matt Peters, Bob Suarez, Guy Moore, Jesse Schmal, Quack Leard, Abigail Nesbitt, Anthony Davis

WRITERS INCLUDED: "Mr." [Tom] Warburton, Mo Willems, Robert Leighton, Alison Wilgus, Andy Rheingold

VOICE ACTORS: Benjamin Diskin (Nigel Uno, a.k.a. Numbuh 1/Hoagie Gilligan, a.k.a. Numbuh 2/Delightful Child from Down the Lane #1), Lauren Tom (Kuki Sanban, a.k.a. Numbuh 3), Dee Bradley Baker (Wallaby Beetles, a.k.a. Numbuh 4/Delightful Child from Down the Lane #2/Lou Pottingsworth III, a.k.a. Toilenator/Mr. Timothy Fibb/Henrietta "Heinrich" Von Marzipan/Ice Cream Man #2/Senior Citizen Squad Member #3/Tommy Gilligan, a.k.a. Numbuh T/Bradley the Skunk, a.k.a. Numbuh 6), Cree Summer (Abby Lincoln, a.k.a.

Numbuh 5/Delightful Child from Down the Lane #3/Cree Lincoln, a.k.a. Numbuh 11), Jennifer Hale (Fanny Fulbright, a.k.a. Numbuh 86), Rachel MacFarlane (Rachel McKenzie, a.k.a. Numbuh 362), Maurice LaMarche (Father), Jeff Bennett (Benedict Uno/Mr. Boss), Jason Harris (Chad Dickson, a.k.a. Numbuh 274), Tom Kenny (Jasper Jelly, a.k.a. Nightbrace/Mr. John Wink/Ice Cream Man #1/Senior Citizen Squad Member #2), Mark Hamill (Stickybeard), Grey DeLisle (Crazy Old Cat Lady/Grandma Stuffum/Elizabeth "Lizzie" Devine, a.k.a. Numbuh Vine), Candi Milo (Henrietta "Heinrich" Von Marzipan/Senior Citizen Squad Member #1), Kevin Michael Richardson (Ice Cream Man #3), Daran Norris (Ice Cream Man #4), Frank Welker (Montgomery "Monty" Uno), Dave Wittenberg (Numbuh 0), Tara Strong (Mushi Sanban)

SYNOPSIS: The espionage organization known as the Kids Next Door protects the well-being and safety of children from the evil machinations of their elders.

COMMENTARY: A clever idea executed well at some times but at others undone by the blatant us-versus-them posturing of the story lines, the habitual characterization of anyone who was not a child as inherently evil, and 1960s TV *Batman*-like overacting by the performers playing the villains. The strongest episodes were the ones in which the lead "Numbuhs" had to confront their own personal fears and insecurities more than the theatrical "evil" of the villains, and this was done in a more sensitive and constructive way than in some other series. The overall series would have worked better with more of an emphasis on this than on parodying the hackneyed hardware and ideas of the spy genre, as it virtually seemed to be required to do, given its premise.

***COLONEL BLEEP* (1957)**

STUDIOS: Richard H. Ullman, Soundac Color

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

CREATOR/WRITER: Robert D. Buchanan

PRODUCER: Richard H. Ullman

DIRECTOR: Jack Schleh

VOICE ACTOR: Noel Taylor (Narrator)

SYNOPSIS: Colonel Bleep, an alien from the planet Futura, receives tutorials in the life and times of Earth while protecting the planet from the likes of Dr. Destructo and Captain Patch.

COMMENTARY: Notable chiefly for being the first television animation series produced in color, by Miami's Soundac Studios, because it possessed a frenetic pace and sluggish characterization otherwise. The 104 six-minute episodes were largely seen as segments of existing children's programming, though rediscovery of the original negative prints in the 1990s led to an unexpected revival in exposure and popularity for the series.

***THE COMIC STRIP* (1987)**

STUDIOS: Rankin/Bass, Lorimar Telepictures

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Arthur Rankin Jr., Jules Bass

PRODUCER: Lee Dannacher

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS INCLUDED: Peter Lawrence

VOICE ACTORS: Bob McFadden, Earl Hammond, Maggie Jakobson, Gerriane Raphael, Larry Kenney, Jim Meskimen, Seth Green, Jim Brownold, Josh Blake, Danielle DuClos, Peter Newman, Gordy Owens, Gary V. Brown, Tanya Willoughby, Carmen De Lavallade, Ron Taylor, Daniel Wooten, Donald Acree, and Camille Banora (Specific roles unknown)

SYNOPSIS: An anthology program consisting of four components: (1) *Karate Kat*, the saga of a bumbling anthropomorphic operative for the McClaw Detective Agency; (2) *Mini-Monsters*, the adventures of the children of famous horror monsters (e.g., Dracula, Frankenstein, the Wolf Man) and their human friends at Camp Mini-Mon; (3) *The Street Frogs*, a group of African American-like rapping amphibians who solve crimes; and (4) *Tigersharks*, a group of superheroes able to transform themselves into sentient fish.

COMMENTARY: This, the final series production of the Rankin/Bass organization, was not a fitting epitaph. The program was structured as a two-hour block, with each component accorded two 11-minute segments; they could be run together or as separate series according to the whims of the stations airing them. *Karate Kat* had the most imaginative setting and plotting and *Mini-Monsters* the most interesting characters, but *The Street Frogs* and *Tigersharks* were too derivative to really stand on whatever merits they possessed.

COMMITTED (2001)

STUDIOS: Nelvana, Phillipine Animators Group

DISTRIBUTOR: Women's Entertainment Network (United States, 2002)

CREATOR: Michael Fry

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Michael Hirsh, Patrick Loubert, Clive Smith

WRITERS INCLUDED: Matthew Salsberg

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Catherine O'Hara (Liz Larsen), Eugene Levy (Joe Larsen), Andrea Martin (Frances Wilder), Annick Obonsawin (Tracy Larsen), Charlotte Arnold (Zelda Larsen), Cole Caplan (Nicholas Larsen), Dave Foley (Bob the Dog)

SYNOPSIS: The daily adventures of the Larsen family.

COMMENTARY: Based on Fry's popular comic strip, which originated in 1991, this series is noteworthy more for its original presentation (it was the first television animation program to air on Canada's CTV network, which it did briefly in 2001) and its celebrity stunt casting (SCTV stalwarts O'Hara, Levy, and Martin, plus former "Kid in the Hall" Foley) than its actual limited creative achievements. It had originally been slated to debut in the United States on the Family Channel, but a change of ownership at that entity ended those plans.

THE COMPLETELY MENTAL MISADVENTURES OF ED GRIMLEY (1988–1989)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

CREATOR: Martin Short

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera, Martin Short

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Martin Short (Ed Grimley), Joe Flaherty (Count Floyd), Catherine O'Hara (Miss Malone), Jonathan Winters (Mr. Freebus/Roger Gustav), Andrea Martin (Mrs. Freebus), Frank Welker (Sheldon), Danny Cooksey (Wendell Gustav)

SYNOPSIS: Pointy-haired nebbish Ed Grimley endures the stresses of daily living.

COMMENTARY: Of the several series in this book with connections to the legendary sketch comedy series *SCTV* (see *Camp Candy*, *Committed*, and *Rick Moranis in Gravedale High*), this is the only one directly connected to a featured component of the program. Short developed the character of Grimley, noted for his weird appearance and behavior and his catchphrase "I must say," in a number of *SCTV* segments during his term as a regular on the program in the early 1980s and revived him later during his one-season stint as a cast member of *Saturday Night Live* following *SCTV*'s demise. The character's appearance and manner made him a natural for animation, though Short has suggested the main reason the series came about was so that he could gain some attention from his cartoon-fan children. Regardless, the involvement of Short, Flaherty, O'Hara, Martin, and Dave Thomas (who portrayed a number of the supporting roles) clearly marked this series as an unofficial *SCTV* spin-off, with the presence of Winters creating additional comic gravitas in the eyes of some. Unfortunately, the program's bizarre narrative structures and characterizations were not appreciated as well as they could have been; it was produced and scheduled at a time when adult-oriented animated programs were felt to be nonexistent, and *SCTV* had always been meant for adults more than children. The series was instead thrust on a child audience who could not appreciate it and therefore neglected it.

CONAN THE ADVENTURER/CONAN AND THE YOUNG WARRIORS

***Conan the Adventurer* (1992)**

STUDIOS: Conan Properties, Graz, JetLag, Sunbow, Claster

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

CREATOR: Robert E. Howard

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Joe Bacal, Tom Griffin, C. J. Ketler

PRODUCER: Will Meugniot

DIRECTORS: Karen Peterson, Graham Morris

WRITERS INCLUDED: Christy Marx

VOICE ACTORS: Michael Donovan (Conan); Kathleen Barr, Michael Beattie, Jim Byrnes, Gary Chalk, John Pyper Ferguson, Janyce Jaud, Scott McNeil, Richard Newman, Doug Parker, and Alec Willows (Additional characters)

***Conan and the Young Warriors* (1994)**

STUDIOS: Conan Properties, JetLag, Sunbow, Claster

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

PRODUCER/DIRECTOR: John Grusd

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS: David Wise, Steve Perry, Diane Duane, Peter Morwood

VOICE ACTORS: Phil Hayes (Conan); Kathleen Barr, Jim Byrnes, Michael Donovan, Mark Hildreth, Kelly Sheridan, Louise Vallance, and Chiara Zanni (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: The adventures of Conan, a roving barbarian adventurer, warrior, and thief from the mythical land of Cimmeria.

COMMENTARY: Conan is the most famous of the many creations of Robert E. Howard, a prolific Texas-based writer of pulp fiction who published numerous stories in the legendary *Weird Tales* magazine and others like it between the mid-1920s and his untimely death in 1937. Conan embodied many of the central aspects of Howard's fiction: action above characterization, with a strong, nearly invincible male figure always at the center of the narrative storm. Following Howard's death, his work was reissued in paperback book form, supplemented by new narratives from such authors as L. Sprague de Camp and Lin Carter, often working from Howard's own unfinished ideas. However, Conan gained a wider audience as a comic book character for Marvel Comics beginning in 1970, as well as in a pair of theatrical films in the early 1980s with Arnold Schwarzenegger in the title role.

It was likely Conan's enduring appeal among boys and young men that convinced the producers of these two series that he was a good choice for television animation. In the process, however, Howard's original characterization of Conan was effectively sterilized, making him much more of a generic "good guy" than the complex and mysterious figure depicted elsewhere; this was much more obvious in *Conan and the Young Warriors*, where he served as a standard mentor figure for a superpowered group known as "The Barbarian Kids."

Those seeking an authentic depiction of Howard's character should look to other media instead of these series.

COOL McCOOL (1966–1969)

STUDIOS: Cavalier, King Features

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

CREATOR: Bob Kane

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Al Brodax

PRODUCER: George Dunning

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Bob McFadden (Cool McCool), Chuck McCann (Number 1/Riggs), Carol Corbett (Friday)

SYNOPSIS: Bumbling spy Cool McCool manages to collar criminals in spite of his ineptitude. An additional segment featured Cool's policeman father, Harry, and his partners Tom and Dick, who displayed the same level of competence as Harry's son.

COMMENTARY: Relatively standard fare for its time and very derivative of NBC's contemporary live-action hit *Get Smart*, though McFadden used Jack Benny as his vocal model rather than Don Adams, and Cool was employed with a

transistor in his mustache rather than a shoe phone. The first season was the only season of original material, the others being reruns.

C.O.P.S. (A.K.A. *CYBER C.O.P.S.*; 1988)

STUDIOS: DIC, Claster

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Andy Heyward

PRODUCERS: Robby London, Richard Raynis

DIRECTOR: Kevin Altieri

WRITERS INCLUDED: Bruce Shelley

VOICE ACTORS: Ken Ryan (Baldwin "Bulletproof" Vess), Jane Schoettle (Rafaella "Nightshade" Diamond), Brent Titcomb (Rock Crusher), Mary Long (Tina "Mainframe" Cassidy), Paul De La Rosa (Berserko Babel), Nick Nichols (Buttons McBoom Boom/Rex "Bowzer" Pointer), Dan Hennessey (Turbo Two Tone), Jeri Craden (Whitney Morgan), Darren Baker (Hardtop), Paulina Gillis (Ms. Demeanor), John Stocker (P. J. "Long Arm" O'Malley), Ron Rubin (Dr. Bad Vibes), Len Carlson (Brandon "Big Boss" Babel/Mace), Marvin Goldhar (Squeaky), Peter Keleghan (Bull's Eye), Elizabeth Hanna (Mirage), Ray James (David "Highway" Harlson/Barricade)

SYNOPSIS: In futuristic Empire City, the largely bionic Central Organization of Police Specialists (C.O.P.S.) keep the peace in spite of the existence of a wide variety of villainous characters, as well as various bureaucratic errors committed by the civic government.

COMMENTARY: You would actually have to see this show to tell the true difference between heroes and villains among the characters listed here; otherwise, you might not be able to tell at all. DIC's attempt to tell this cops-and-robbers saga coherently was similarly confusing, mixing as it did tried-and-true police procedural techniques with satire and absurdity in terms of the villainous characterizations. As a result, it was another one of those ideas in television animation that must have looked good on paper but failed in execution. A note of progressive thinking was achieved by making lead C.O.P.S. "Bulletproof" Vess an African American character, but the fact that the vast majority of the remainder of the cast was Caucasian canceled that out and made him simply a token instead.

The title *Cyber C.O.P.S.* was applied to the series when it was rerun on CBS in the spring of 1993, perhaps to play up the futuristic aspects of the story.

CORDUROY (2000)

STUDIOS: Lin Oliver, Nelvana, Studio B

DISTRIBUTOR: PBS

CREATOR: Don Freeman

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Lin Oliver, Michael Hirsh, Patrick Loubert, Clive Smith

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Todd Schick, Paul Dobson, and Jake Goldsbie (Specific roles unknown)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: Author/artist Freeman introduced Corduroy, a brown-furred, toddler-esque bear with green overalls and a hunger for peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, in the 1968 book of the same name. A sequel, *A Pocket for Corduroy*, was published in 1978, the year Freeman died. Since then, the character has been revived occasionally by other hands. This series saw the bear serving as the companion of a young African Canadian girl named Lisa as the latter navigated her way through an unnamed city resembling Toronto—where the animation studio producing the series was coincidentally based.

***THE COUNTRY MOUSE AND THE CITY MOUSE ADVENTURES* (1998–2000)**

STUDIOS: CINAR, France Animation, Ravensburger, Le Studio Canal, Reader's Digest

DISTRIBUTOR: HBO

CREATOR: Aesop

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Micheline Charest, Christian Davi, Ronald Weinberg

PRODUCER: Cassandra Schafhausen

DIRECTORS: Marcos Da Silva, Rémy Husson

WRITERS INCLUDED: Christophe Izard, Thomas LaPierre

VOICE ACTORS: Julie Burroughs (Emily), Terrence Scammell (Alexander), Rick Jones (No Tail No Goodnik)

SYNOPSIS: Naïve but sensible rural mouse Emily and her urbanite cousin Alexander travel around the world in a hot air balloon and witness major historical events of the late Victorian and Edwardian eras while thwarting the schemes of the villainous No Tail No Goodnik.

COMMENTARY: Aesop's morality tale about urban-rural cultural clash was here transformed into a historical adventure that managed to be entertaining without being overtly educational. Coproduced by Canadian, French, and German animation studios, this nonthreatening program lasted for a full three-year stint as part of HBO's children's lineup.

***COURAGEOUS CAT AND MINUTE MOUSE* (1960)**

STUDIOS: Sam Singer, Prime TV, Trans Artists, TeleFeatures

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

CREATOR: Bob Kane

PRODUCERS: Marvin Woodard, Ruben Timmins

DIRECTORS: Sid Marcus, Ruben Timmins

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTOR: Dallas McKennon (All characters)

SYNOPSIS: In Empire City, superheroes Courageous Cat and Minute Mouse battle it out with such villains as Flat Face Frog, Foxy Fox, Professor Shaggy Dog, and Rodney Rodent.

COMMENTARY: Kane, best known as the creator of *Batman* (q.v.), was engaging in a sly form of self-parody with this comic take on that character. The main gag on the series was the fact that Courageous Cat possessed a Catgun that

could transform itself into a variety of things but not often enough into the weapon it was supposed to be. Unfortunately, it seemed to be the only one the staff could come up with, as it was used at every possible opportunity—other than, perhaps, the open begging and pleading repeatedly done by the police for the heroes' assistance. One hundred episodes were produced, each lasting five minutes, which, like others in that format, could be aired individually on their own or in selected blocks of a few at a time.

***COURAGE THE COWARDLY DOG* (1999–2002)**

STUDIO: Stretch Films

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATOR/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER/DIRECTOR: John Dilworth

PRODUCER: Winnie Chaffee

WRITERS: John Dilworth, William Hohauser, Michelle Dilworth, Irvin Bauer, David Cohen

VOICE ACTORS: Marty Grabstein (Courage), Thea White (Muriel Bagge), Lionel Wilson (Eustace, 1999–2002), Arthur Anderson (Eustace, 2002), Simon Prebble (Computer), Paul Schoeffler (Katz), Billie Lou Watt (Ma Bagge), Tim Chi Ly (Dai Lung)

SYNOPSIS: After his parents are launched into space by an insane veterinarian, an easily frightened dog named Courage is adopted by elderly woman Muriel Bagge and her husband, Eustace, whom he comes to protect from various extraterrestrial, natural, and supernatural enemies.

COMMENTARY: A program that managed to achieve success in balancing horror with comedy as easily as it balanced humor directed at both adults and children. In producing the series, Dilworth insisted on keeping as much distance as he could from the production machine of his distributor, and by doing so, he ensured a unique personal vision of the kind that is rarely achieved in television animation. The visual style of the program remains unique, and its balancing of lighter moments with a sense of dread (as typified by naming the program's principal setting "Nowhere") gained it interest and appeal it would not have had if it was purely a light confection. Consequently, the series continues to be aired in reruns despite being out of production for many years and its creator's seeming unwillingness to return to the medium of television.

The series was based on Dilworth's animated short film *The Chicken from Outer Space*, which was nominated for an Academy Award in 1996.

***COW AND CHICKEN* (1997–1999)**

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, Cartoon Network

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATOR: David Feiss

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Vincent Davis, Sherry Gunther, Larry Huber, Linda Simensky, Buzz Potamkin

PRODUCERS: Vincent Davis, Davis Doi

DIRECTORS: David Feiss, Robert Alvarez, John McIntyre, Robin Steele, Monte Young

WRITERS: David Feiss, Pilar Melendez Feiss, Monte Young, Victor Ortado, Larry Huber, Vincent Davis, Greg Emison, Sherm Cohen, Gordon Coulthardt, Michael Ryan, Bill Burnett, Steve Marmel, Seth MacFarlane, Richard Pursel, Maxwell Atoms, Sherri Schrader, Jeff Kwitney, Gary Wilson, Sami Rank, Genndy Tartakovsky, Scott Morse, Nora Johnson

VOICE ACTORS: Charlie Adler (Cow/Chicken/Red Guy/I. R. Baboon/Boneless Chicken), Candi Milo (Mom), Dee Bradley Baker (Dad), Howard Morris (Earl), Dan Castalleneta (Flem), Michael Dorn (I. M. Weasel)

SYNOPSIS: The illogical "siblings" Cow and Chicken alternate between physically abusing each other and protecting each other from evil, in the form of the flamboyantly effeminate Red Guy. In a supporting segment, *I Am Weasel*, the efforts of dimwitted I. R. Baboon to outfox the intelligent I. M. Weasel predictably always end up in failure.

COMMENTARY: A bizarre and uncompromising series that was written and played at enough of a just-over-the-top level to be hilariously funny and not as disagreeable as it could have been in less-talented hands. Feiss (whose name is pronounced "feace") never bothered to challenge the illogic inherent in the concept, which originated in a bedtime story told to his daughter, and for that reason it ended up becoming a comic gold mine for viewers. It even managed to add superheroic action effectively into the comic mix once in a while, in the form of Cow's purple-union-suit-wearing, Spanish-speaking secret identity, Super Cow. Adler deserves considerable praise for his death-defying vocal acrobatics here (he received two Annie nominations for it); it is one of the rare cases in television animation where the voice acting truly makes the show work in a way it never would have otherwise. His work as the Red Guy is notable in particular because he is one of the few bad guys in the genre who could truly be considered to be an unquestionably (though stereotypically) gay man.

I Am Weasel aired as a separate series during 1999. However, because this package consisted entirely of reruns, it is not discussed independently here.

THE CRITIC (1994–1995)

STUDIOS: Gracie Films, Film Roman, Columbia

DISTRIBUTORS: ABC (1994), FOX (1995)

CREATORS: Al Jean, Mike Reiss

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: James L. Brooks, Al Jean, Mike Reiss, Anne Luiting, Phil Roman

PRODUCERS: Miles Horst, Michael Mendel, Rich Moore, Richard Raynis, Richard Sakai, Bill Schultz, Steve Tompkins

DIRECTORS: Bret Haaland, Dan Jeup, Lauren MacMullan, Tom Mazzocco, Rich Moore, Alan Smart, Brian Sheesley, Chuck Sheetz, D. R. L. MacMoofler, Mike Milo, Mike Reiss, Steven Dean Moore, Susan Dietter

WRITERS: Mike Reiss, Al Jean, Jon Vitti, Joshua Sternin, Judd Doctorow, Steve Tompkins, Steven Levitan, Tom Brady, Tom Gammill, Jeffrey Ventimilia

VOICE ACTORS: Jon Lovitz (Jay Sherman/Others), Nancy Cartwright (Margo), Christine Cavanagh (Marty Sherman/Others), Gerritt Graham (Franklin Sherman/Others), Judith Ivey (Eleanor Sherman, early episodes/Others), Kath

Soucie (Eleanor Sherman, later episodes/Others), Doris Grau (Doris), Nick Jameson (Vlada/Others), Maurice LaMarche (Jeremy Hawke/Others), Charles Napier (Duke Phillips/Others), Russi Taylor (Penny Thompkins), Park Overall (Alice Thompkins), Rhea Perlman (Ardith)

SYNOPSIS: Film critic Jay Sherman has no trouble giving out negative reviews to bad movies on his weekly television program but is in much less control of his life when the cameras stop filming him.

COMMENTARY: A caustic and witty sitcom that never got the love its high-caliber production level and no-holds-barred satire really deserved. Given that creators Jean and Reiss (and many of their colleagues) had previously worked on *The Simpsons* (q.v.) and would do so again afterward (Jean is that program's current "show runner"), the quality was to be expected, but the program was fumbled by two networks that didn't realize what a gem they had on their hands. The various film parodies featured were frequently hilarious, and it boasted great voice acting, particularly Lovitz as Sherman and Napier as the Ted Turner-like media boss Duke Phillips, that added much to its appeal.

Originally, the program was to have been a live-action series about a Manhattan sports writer, but Lovitz was not interested in being tied down to such a commitment, so the animated project was launched as a compromise. Deservedly, the program gained a cult following after its cancellation, and in 2001, Lovitz voiced a new series of short films as Jay Sherman for Internet distribution.

CRO (1993–1995)

STUDIOS: Film Roman, Children's Television Workshop

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Franklin Getchell, Marjorie Kalins, Phil Roman

PRODUCER: Bob Richardson

DIRECTORS: James West, Milt Gray, Kyle James, Swinton Scott III, Bob Nesler

WRITERS INCLUDED: Mark Zaslove

VOICE ACTORS: Max Casella (Cro), Charlie Adler (Mojo/Steamer/Big Red), Ruth Buzzi (Nandy), Jim Cummings (Phil/Ogg), Tress MacNeille (Esmerelda), Candi Milo (Pakka), Laurie O'Brien (Ivana), April Ortiz (Dr. C), Jane Singer (Selene), Jussie Smollett (Mike), Frank Welker (Earle/Gogg/Bobb)

SYNOPSIS: A Cro-Magnon-era caveboy learns about science from engaging with a tribe of intelligent mammoths.

COMMENTARY: Children's Television Workshop (now known as Sesame Workshop), responsible for, among other programs, *Sesame Street* and *The Electric Company* on PBS, used this network series as an attempt to reach children who otherwise would not have received educational messages as such from television programs. In doing so, they showed that their normal, heavily didactic mode of production did not work well in animated form. Despite using David Macaulay's well-regarded book *The Way Things Work* as a framework, the series displayed shallow and stereotypical characterizations among the cast; used inept, forced, and overtaxed elements among its plotting; and, overall, tended to display a smug and condescending attitude toward its target audience that was enormously off-putting. The organization indicated clearly

that it did not understand how to use the medium of television animation effectively with this series and, in the process, utterly wasted the time and talents of the animators, the writers, and especially the actors involved.

CRUSADER RABBIT (1949, 1957)

STUDIOS: Jerry Fairbanks, Television Arts (1949); Creston, TV Spots (1957)

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

CREATORS/PRODUCERS/DIRECTORS/WRITERS: Jay Ward, Alex Anderson (1949)

PRODUCER: Shull Bonsall (1957)

VOICE ACTORS: Lucille Bliss (Crusader Rabbit, 1949), GeGe Pearson (Crusader Rabbit, 1957), Vern Louden (Rags the Tiger), Russ Coughlan (Dudley Nightshade), Roy Whaley (Narrator)

SYNOPSIS: Modern knight errant Crusader Rabbit and his dimwitted sidekick Rags attempt to do good deeds and right wrongs.



Television animation's first star—but he didn't wear that armor on the job. NBC/Photofest © NBC

COMMENTARY: This is the first instance of what can be called television animation as it would eventually become, especially in terms of characterization, format, and plotting. The serialized adventure format allowed Ward and Anderson to engage in basic characterization aimed at children with satiric humor aimed at adults, a one-two combination that attracted both audiences and would remain a staple approach among the emerging genre's later programming. Departing from the standard characterization of anthropomorphic animals as "harmless," they developed Crusader into a character who was not afraid of danger and was willing to challenge men to a fight if he had to, in the tradition of live-action human adventure heroes. The abbreviated five-minute format of the films, plus the poor quality of the surviving black-and-white prints, meant that it has not seen the light of day for some time, other than on some VHS tapes from music reissue masters Rhino Records in the early 1990s. However, it remains historically important for its chronological origination and its establishment of an enduring comic adventure formula that has remained omnipresent in television animation, perfected by Ward later in his masterful *Rocky and His Friends/The Bullwinkle Show* (q.v.) series.

The 1957 edition has received wider circulation due to the fact that it was produced in color, but in nearly all respects otherwise, it was much more muted and considerably inferior creatively to what had come before.

CURIOUS GEORGE

***Curious George* (1979–1982)**

STUDIOS: Lafferty, Hartwood and Partners; Milktrain; Atkinson Film Arts

DISTRIBUTORS: Nickelodeon (United States, 1984), Disney (United States, 1989)

CREATORS: H. A. Rey, Margret Rey

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTOR: Jack Duffy (Narrator)

***Curious George* (2006–2015)**

STUDIOS: Imagine, WGBH, Universal

DISTRIBUTOR: PBS

CREATORS: H. A. Rey, Margret Rey

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Ron Howard, Brian Grazer, David Kirschner, Jon Shapiro

DIRECTORS: Scott Heming, Frank Mariano, Cathy Malkasian

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Frank Welker (Curious George/Bill's Bunnies/Benjoy/Willie/Bruno/Doxie/Fluffy/Tracy, later episodes), Bill Chott (Hundley, first season/Doorman, first season), Lex Lang (Hundley, later episodes/Doorman, later episodes), Rob Paulsen (Compass, cooing/Charkie/Mr. Glass/Leslie/Tracy, first season/Luke/Stig, first season/Calhoun the Gopher Getter/Mr. Reloj/Mr. Ruffweek), Willard Scott (Compass, speaking), Jim Cummings (Jumpy Squirrel/Chef Pisghetti/Mr. Quint/Male Quints/Stig, later episodes/Dr. Alvin Einstein/Grocer/Rodney), Deri Derryberry (Gnocchi/Lucky), William H. Macy (Narrator, first season), Rino Romano (Narrator, later episodes), Jeff Bennett (The Man in the Yellow Hat/Mr. Renkins), Rolonda Watts (Professor Wiseman), Susan Silo (Netti), Kath Soucie (Mrs. Renkins/Ada), Grey DeLisle (Marco, first season/Betsy/Dorothy/Zucchini #3), E. G. Daily (Marco, later episodes/Steve/Andie), Lara Miller (Allie), Annie Mumolo (Bill), Jess Harnell

(Dinwoodie), Carlos Alazraqui (Mr. Zoobel), Candi Milo (Mrs. Quint/Female Quints/Mrs. D.), Kevin Michael Richardson (Stew/Dr. Baker), Kari Wahlgren (Cayley), Dee Bradley Baker (Dr. Ghesund/Professor Anthony Pizza/Uncle Tam), James Arnold Taylor (Zucchini #1), Tara Strong (Zucchini #2)

SYNOPSIS: George, a young and eager monkey, creates mischief that requires the intervention of his guardian, the Man in the Yellow Hat.

COMMENTARY: This Canadian-produced series was essentially a moving still-photograph depiction of the long-running and popular children's book series created by the Reys in 1941 as they fled Nazi-occupied Europe for North America. Therefore, it was likely to satisfy the character's many youthful fans, and for that reason, it was a fixture of the daytime schedules of programmers targeting them. The later animated adaptation would be far more elaborate in nature, at least in terms of production values.

Earlier in 2006, *Curious George* had been featured in a highly successful animated feature film, starring Will Ferrell as the Man in the Yellow Hat (whose real name, apparently, is Ted) and Frank Welker as George. This animated program, with Welker reprising his role, was a natural outgrowth of that project, with the same production team involved. Adaptations of the books were mixed with newly conceived stories, as well as, given the voice actor credit list shown here, a much broader and more diverse cast of characters for George to interact with compared to his previous series.

***CYBERCHASE* (2002–2003)**

STUDIOS: Nelvana, WNET

DISTRIBUTOR: PBS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Sandra Shepard, Kristin Laskas Mann, Michael Hirsh, Patrick Loubert, Clive Smith, Toper Taylor

PRODUCERS: Marianne Culbert, Patricia Burns, Stephen Hodgins, Marissa Colyer

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS INCLUDED: George Bloom, Kristin Laskas Mann, Larry Jacobs

VOICE ACTORS: Christopher Lloyd (Hacker), Gilbert Gottfried (Digit), Novie Edwards (Jackie), Jacqueline Pilon (Matt), Annick Obonsawin (Inex), Len Carlson (Buzz), Rob Tinkler (Delete), Richard Binsley (Dr. Marbles), Kristina Nicoll (The Motherboard)

SYNOPSIS: In Cyberspace, the all-powerful Motherboard is disabled by the villainous Hacker, and the heroic Matt, Jackie, and Inez have to use their knowledge of math and computers to save her.

COMMENTARY: A didactic series intending to teach children directly about mathematics and indirectly about computers and succeeding at both. But there wasn't much of value for anyone else here, save for possibly enjoying Lloyd harrumph his way around as the main bad guy. Although only one season of episodes was produced, the series has been extensively rebroadcast by many PBS affiliates since its original broadcast and also employed regularly—and fittingly—on the network's digital platforms.

***CYBER C.O.P.S.* (1988)**

See *C.O.P.S.* (a.k.a. *Cyber C.O.P.S.*; 1988).

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DA BOOM CREW (2004)

STUDIOS: BFC Berliner, Jambalaya

DISTRIBUTOR: WB (United States)

CREATORS: Bruce Smith, John White, Silas White

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Thomas Wilhite, John White, Bruce Smith

DIRECTORS: T. J. House, Bruce Smith

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Jascha Washington (Nate), Morris Day (Helok), Jerome Benton (Jerome), Melanie Tonello (Rickie), Mitchell Eisner (Jubei), Jordan Francis (Justin)

SYNOPSIS: Following a power surge, four children are sucked into a video game universe of their own design and must find their way out of it.

COMMENTARY: Produced with the same urban hipness quotient as Smith's earlier *The Proud Family* (q.v.), this project had a greater element of escapism. However, it was canceled after only 4 episodes had aired in America. The complete series of 13 was broadcast on Cartoon Network's U.K. division (European interests had been involved in the production, as noted in the credits).

DANNY PHANTOM (2004–2007)

STUDIOS: Billionfold, Nickelodeon

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

CREATOR: Butch Hartman

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Butch Hartman, Steve Marmel, Mark Banker, Marty Isenberg, Kevin Sullivan

PRODUCER: Bob Boyle

DIRECTORS: Butch Hartman, Wincat Alcala, Richard Bowman, Juli Hashiguchi Murphy, Gary Conrad, Ken Bruce, Kevin Petrilak, Daniel de la Vega

WRITERS: Butch Hartman, Mark Banker, Steve Marmel, Sib Ventress, Marty Isenberg, Steven Sustarsic, Matt Wayne, Kevin Sullivan, George Goodchild, Ellen Lichwardt Goodchild, Scott Peterson, Mark Drop, Amy Keating Rogers

VOICE ACTORS: David Kaufman (Danny Fenton/Danny Phantom), Grey DeLisle (Sam Manson/Femalien/Nightmerica/Terminatra/Valerie Gray, early episodes/Princess Dorothea, first appearance/Star, early episodes), Rickey D'Shon Collins (Tucker Foley), Colleen O'Shaugnessy (Jasmine "Jazz" Fenton/Vid), Rob Paulsen (Jack Fenton/Box Ghost/Technus/Download), Kath Soucie (Maddie Fenton/Box Lunch/Lunch Lady, later episodes), Danny Mann (Amorpho), Daran Norris (Bullet), Eric Roberts (Dan Phantom), Peri Gilpin (Desiree), Tara Strong (Ember McLain, speaking voice/Lydia/Penelope Spectra/Star, later episodes/Tiffany Snow), Robbyn Kirmsse (Ember McLain, singing voice), Michael Dorn (Fright Knight), Will Arnett (Ghost Writer), Scott Bullock (Hotep-Ra/Operative O/Agent Alpha/Dairy King/

Ghost Dog/Klemper/Dash Baxter/Jeremy Manson), William Baldwin (Johnny 13), Chynna Phillips (Kitty), Patricia Heaton (Lunch Lady, first appearance), James Garrett (Nocturn), Brian Cox (Pariah Dark), Dee Bradley Baker (Prince Aragon/Operative K/Trash/Wulf/Observant #1/Mikey/Nathan/Lance Thunder), Peter MacNicol (Sidney Poindexter), Matthew St. Patrick (Skulker, early episodes), Kevin Michael Richardson (Skulker, later episodes/Operative M/Princess Dorothea, dragon form), Jim Ward (Bertrand/Operative L), Mark Hamill (Undergrowth), Martin Mull (Vlad Masters/Vlad Plasmius), Dave Boat (Vortex), James Arnold Taylor (Walker), Taylor Lautner (Youngblood), Jon Cryer (Freakshow), Cree Summer (Valerie Gray, later episodes), David Carradine (Clockwork), Anna Sophia Robb (Dani Phantom, first appearance), Krista Swan (Dani Phantom, later episodes), Bob Joles (Frostbite), April Stewart (Pandora), Susan Blakeslee (Princess Dorothea, later episodes), Phil Morris (Observant #2/Damon Gray), Ron Perlman (Mr. Lancer), Maria Canals Berrera (Paulina), Dat Phan (Kwan, early episodes), James Sie (Kwan, later episodes), Laraine Newman (Pamela Manson), June Angela (Principal Ishiyama)

SYNOPSIS: Following an accident in the laboratory of his ghost-hunter parents, 14-year-old Danny Fenton gains a variety of parapsychological powers and abilities, which he uses to combat evil in and around his hometown of Amity Park.

COMMENTARY: A marvelously conceived and constructed action-comedy series that is enjoyable to watch even in multiple viewings and excels at all levels of production. Hartman's construction of the series as a bildungsroman, where Danny must learn to use his abilities on the job as he goes along—a departure from traditional heroic portrayals in television animation—made him considerably more relatable to viewers than he would have been otherwise and was a major factor in the show's success. The construction of otherworldly settings (such as the nebulous Ghost Zone) and the great variety of antagonistic figures, from minor to apocalyptic, helped to retain audience attention further, and deservedly so. The voice acting was particularly well done, with Mull (as the series' central villain) and Perlman (as a prickly, arrogant high school teacher with a penchant for using works of literature as exclamations) the principal standouts.

***DARIA* (1997–2002)**

STUDIOS: MTV, Columbia

DISTRIBUTOR: MTV

CREATOR: Glenn Eichler

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Abby Terkuhle, Glenn Eichler

PRODUCERS: Susan Lewis Lynn, Amy Palmer, Cindy Brolsma, Lemon Krasny, John Lynn

DIRECTORS: Joey Ahlborn, Aaron Augenblick, Anthony Davis, Gloria De Ponte, Karen Disher, Eric Fogel, Karen Hyden, Ken Kimmelman, Tony Kluck, Tom Marsan, Guy Moore, Sue Perroto, Chris Prynosi, Margaret Rutherford, Pat Smith, Paul Sparagano, Ted Stearn, Machi Tantillo

WRITERS: Neena Beber, Anne Berstein, Jill Cargeman, Ron Corcillo, Larry Doyle, Glenn Eichler, Peter Elwell, Peter Gaffney, Jonathan Greenberg,

Sam Johnson, Laura Kightlinger, Rachel Lipman, Chris Marcil, Peggy Nicoll, A. J. Poulin, Jacquelyn Reingold, Rachele Romberg, Dan Vebber

VOICE ACTORS: Tracy Grandstaff (Daria Morgendorffer), Wendy Hoopes (Quinn Morgendorffer/Helen Morgendorffer/Jayne Lane), Julian Rebolledo (Jake Morgendorffer), Russell Hankin (Tom Sloane), Alvaro Gonzalez (Trent Lane), Marc Thompson (Kevin Thompson/Anthony DeMartino/Timothy O'Neill), Lisa Collins (Brittany Taylor, early episodes), Amir Williams (Brittany Taylor, later episodes), Geoffrey Arend (Charles Ruttheimer III, a.k.a. Upchuck), Delon Ferdinand (Michael "Mack" McKenzie, early episodes), Kevin Daniels (Michael "Mack" McKenzie, later episodes), Steven Huppert (Joey), Jessica Jackson (Jodie Landon), Nora Laudani (Ms. Angela Li), John Worth Lynn Jr. (*Sad Sick World* Announcer), Tim Novikoff (Jeffy), Jessica Zaino (Stacy Rowe)

SYNOPSIS: Teenager Daria Morgendorffer deals with the stresses of her peer group and family by adopting a witty but disengaged personal manner.

COMMENTARY: A spin-off from *Beavis and Butt-Head* (q.v.) but produced with considerably more intelligence and flair, with a broader range of characters and concepts more directly connected to the lives and concerns of the teenagers who were its primary audience. In Britain, a live-action sitcom version of the series was later produced for the BBC.

***DARK JUSTICE* (2000)**

STUDIOS: Hope Ranch, Playboy
 DISTRIBUTOR: Playboy Channel
 EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Jane Hamilton, Michael Nunn
 PRODUCER: Michael Fitzgerald
 DIRECTORS: Michael Nunn, Craig Crawford
 WRITERS: Unknown
 VOICE ACTORS: Jane Hart (Justina); Julia Ashton, Tina Tyler, Julia Ann, and Anthony Crane (Additional characters)
 SYNOPSIS: Voluptuous "girl reporter" Justina fights crime at night as a super-heroine.
 COMMENTARY: Given who was funding and airing it, it was no surprise that the action component of this series was simply a pretext for airing filmed images of women in the nude having sex, although the production levels were otherwise high. Jane Hart was a pseudonym for executive producer Hamilton, a star of soft-core pornography films who provided motion-capture film imagery for the animators to use in creating her animated doppelgänger.

***DARKSTALKERS* (1995)**

STUDIOS: Graz, Capcom, DIC
 DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated
 EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Kenzo Tsujimoto, Andy Heyward
 PRODUCER: Daniel Kletzky
 DIRECTORS: Unknown
 WRITERS INCLUDED: Katherine Lawrence, Brooks Wachtel

VOICE ACTORS: Michael Donovan (Lord Demitri), Gary Chalk (Donovan), Scott McNeil (Lord Raptor), Cree Summer (Felicia, early episodes), Janyse Jaud (Felicia, later episodes), Kathleen Barr (Morrigan, early episodes), Saffron Henderson (Morrigan, later episodes), Bill Switzer (Harry Grimoire, early episodes), Ian Corlett (Victor/Computer), Kyle Labine (Harry Grimoire, later episodes), Lee Tockar (Jonathan Talbaine), Tony Jay (Pyron)

SYNOPSIS: Alien overlord Pyron and vampire king Demitri enter into a plan to destroy Earth, leading some supernatural creatures to support them and others to dissent by defending humanity.

COMMENTARY: Based on Capcom's popular video game *Vampire Hunter*, this project lacked the level of seriousness and substance typical of materials derived from such a source. An attempt to play for laughs as well as action didn't help matters.

DARKWING DUCK (1991–1995)

STUDIO: Disney

DISTRIBUTORS: Disney (1991), Syndicated (1991–1995), ABC (1991–1993)

SUPERVISING PRODUCERS: Tad Stones, Alan Zaslove

PRODUCERS: Bob Hathcock, Ken Kessel, Russell Mooney, James Walker

DIRECTORS: Chris Bradley, Ian Harrowell, Henry Neville, Vincent Bassols, Carole Beers, David Brain, Terrence Harrison, John Kimball, Marsh Lamore, Rick Leon, Marcia Mantta, Tom Ray, Mitch Rochon, Bob Shellhorn, Michael Svayko, Bob Treat, Bob Zamboni

WRITERS INCLUDED: Kevin Hopps, Gordon Bressack, Duane Capizzi, Carter Crocker, Doug Langdale, Tom Minton, Steve Roberts, Tad Stones, Bruce Talkington

VOICE ACTORS: Jim Cummings (Drake Mallard/Darkwing Duck/Negaduck/Moliarty/Cousin Globby/Herb Muddlefoot), Hamilton Camp (Gizmo Duck), Christine Cavanagh (Gosalyn Mallard), Danny Mann (J. Gander Hooter), Terry McGovern (Launchpad McQuack), Rob Paulsen (Steelbeak), Katie Leigh (Honker Muddlefoot), Susan Tolsky (Blinky Muddlefoot), Dan Hill (Tank Muddlefoot), Ron Feinberg (Agent Gryslikoff), Dan Castallaneta (Megavolt), Kath Soucie (Morgana Macawber/Aunt Nasty), Kenneth Mars (Tuskernini), Frank Welker (Meraculo Macawber)

SYNOPSIS: Darkwing Duck, the masked and caped "terror that flaps in the night," confronts evil in his base of operations, the town of St. Canard.

COMMENTARY: A comic mock-superhero program that succeeded in some of its aims and floundered at others, in part because the producers seemed incapable of firmly deciding whether the program's approach should be comic or serious or both. Thus, most of the episodes reflected this indecision. The comic elements—Darkwing's flamboyance contrasted with his mild-mannered, fatherly image as Drake Mallard, plus the now-standard campy acting by the "bad guy" actors—tipped the boat in that direction, though the comic potential of the program was, for the most part, wasted.

DASTARDLY AND MUTTLEY IN THEIR FLYING MACHINES (1969–1971)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera, Alex Lovy

DIRECTORS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera, Charles Nichols

WRITERS: Larz Bourne, Dalton Sandifer, Michael Maltese, Alex Lovy, Bill Perez

VOICE ACTORS: Paul Winchell (Dick Dastardly/General), Don Messick (Muttley/Yankee Doodle Pigeon/Klunk/Zilly)

SYNOPSIS: Flying ace Dick Dastardly, his canine companion Muttley, and mechanics Klunk and Zilly attempt—and fail at—preventing Yankee Doodle Pigeon from delivering courier messages to their enemy.

COMMENTARY: One of two series spun off from *Wacky Races* (q.v.), along with *The Perils of Penelope Pitstop* (q.v.), this program had a very limited and obvious premise but executed it effectively with cheer, verve, and good humor. The show's theme song, "Stop That Pigeon," sung by Dastardly, contained the phrase that was the show's original intended title.

DAVE THE BARBARIAN (2004–2005)

STUDIO/DISTRIBUTOR: Disney

CREATOR/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Doug Langdale

DIRECTOR: Howy Parkins

WRITERS: Mark Drop, David Warick, Amy DeBartolemaeis, Tom Minton, Evan Gore, Heather Lombard, Ralph Soll, Brian Palermo, Kevin Hopps, John McCann, Doug Langdale, John Behnke, Rob Humphrey, Larry Spencer, Beth Fieger Falkenstein, Earl Kress, Billiam Coronel, Paul Rugg, Thomas Hart

VOICE ACTORS: Danny Cooksey (Dave), Erica Luttrell (Candy/Queen Glimia/Dinky), Tress MacNeille (Fang/Cheezette), Kevin Michael Richardson (Uncle Oswidge/King Throktar), Frank Welker (Faffy), Estelle Harris (Lula), Jeff Bennett (Narrator/Twinkle the Marvel Horse), Lisa Kaplan (Mrs. Bogmelon), Paul Rugg (The Dark Lord Chuckles the Silly Piggy [*sic*]), Rob Paulsen (Malsquando), Michael McShane (Quosmir), Melissa Rivers (Princess Irmaplotz), Joan Rivers (Queen Zonthara), Richard Horvitz (Ned Frischman)

SYNOPSIS: The three children of the king and queen of Udrogoth are left in charge of defending the kingdom while their parents go off on a quest. They are not entirely up to the task.

COMMENTARY: A clever send-up of fantasy narratives, particularly of the sword-and-sorcery type, that did a good job of puncturing that genre's traditional self-important seriousness with a heavy dosage of traditional "cartoon" humor. Jay Ward's influence, in characterization, plotting, and storytelling, was keenly felt, but this program was still one of a kind in its presentation and execution.

Although the series lasted only a year in original production, it has, like many Disney productions, been extensively rebroadcast since then.

DAVEY AND GOLIATH (1961)

STUDIOS: Clokey, United Lutheran Church in America

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

PRODUCER: Art Clokey

DIRECTORS: Art Clokey, Ray Peck

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Norma McMillan (Davey Hanson, early episodes), Nancy Wible (Davey Hanson, later episodes), Hal Smith (Goliath), Dick Beals (Other characters)

SYNOPSIS: Young Davey Hanson and his dog Goliath have a variety of adventures that test their faith in God but ultimately find it restored at the end.

COMMENTARY: Unique in the history of television animation as being one of the relatively few series whose didactic (and religious) message was intentional and not forced on it by outside mechanisms. Consequently, it was more effective than most in addressing such themes as prejudice and death that others would have avoided or failed to present well. Despite the overt involvement of the Lutheran Church, its ecclesiastic approach was not specifically Lutheran but universal in nature, and therefore it was acceptable and palatable to those who disliked the traditional Hollywood animation approach, such as religious leaders. The wide circulation of the program reflected this.

Production of the series, 64 films of 15 minutes each, ceased when funding for the project was no longer available. It was revived for a group of specials between 1965 and 1977; an attempted revival of the series in the 2000s did not come to fruition.



The stars of *Davey and Goliath* with their family. © Photofest

***DEFENDERS OF THE EARTH* (1986)**

STUDIOS: King Features, Marvel

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

CREATORS: Alex Raymond ("Flash Gordon"); Lee Falk and Ray Moore ("The Phantom"); Lee Falk ("Mandrake the Magician")

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Margaret Loesch, Lee Gunther, Bruce Paisner

PRODUCERS: Karl Geurs, John Ahern, Rick Hoberg, Bill Hutten, Glen Johnson, Tony Love, Lee Orgel, Don Sheppard

DIRECTORS: Ray Lee, John Gibbs, Warren Batcheler, Brad Case, Gerry Chiniquy, Charlie Downs, Bill Estes, Milton Gray, Bob Kirk, Al Kouzel, M. Flores Nichols, Karen Peterson, Tom Ray, Barbara Shellhorn, Bob Treat

WRITERS INCLUDED: Tony Pastor, Bryce Malek, Dick Robbins, Larry Parr, Alan Swayze

VOICE ACTORS: Bill Callaway, Adam Carl, Ron Feinberg, Buster Jones, Loren Lester, Sarah Partridge, Diane Pershing, Lou Richards, Peter Mark Richman, and Dion Williams (Specific roles unknown)

SYNOPSIS: When the villainous Ming the Merciless threatens the Earth, Flash Gordon, the Phantom, Mandrake the Magician, and their children and allies team up to stop him.

COMMENTARY: An odd attempt to reinvent three long-running comic strip stars from the King Features archives for television animation consumption. Most of the heroic heavy lifting was done by the younger characters because the older figures were now less inclined to that sort of thing. Mandrake in particular was portrayed as an egotistical, cowardly snob, a far cry from his original incarnation. Aside from a groundbreaking episode where Flash Gordon's son Rick battled his drug addiction, there wasn't too much really worthy here. Flash Gordon had been featured more effectively before in his own series, while the Phantom would later be featured in *Phantom 2040* (q.v.).

DENNIS THE MENACE/ALL-NEW DENNIS THE MENACE

***Dennis the Menace* (1985–1988)**

STUDIOS: DIC, DFS, General Mills

DISTRIBUTORS: Syndicated (1985–1988), CBS (1988)

CREATOR: Hank Ketcham

PRODUCERS: Jean Chalopin, Andy Heyward, Tetsuo Katayama

DIRECTORS: Michael Maliani, Masanori Miura

WRITERS: Jack Mendelsohn, David Garren, Steve Granat, Bob Logan

VOICE ACTORS: Brennan Thicke (Dennis), Brian George (Henry Mitchell, early episodes), Maurice LaMarche (Henry Mitchell, later episodes/Mr. George Wilson, later episodes), Louise Vallance (Alice Mitchell, early episodes), Marilyn Lightstone (Alice Mitchell, later episodes/Martha Wilson), Phil Hartman (Mr. George Wilson, early episodes/Ruff), Jeannie Elias (Margaret/Joey/Tommy), Hank Sound (Dick/Jim)

***All-New Dennis the Menace* (1993–1994)**

STUDIOS: DIC, General Mills

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Andy Heyward
 PRODUCERS: Keith Meredith, Kurt Weldon
 DIRECTOR: Gary Scott
 WRITERS INCLUDED: Sean Roche, Lori Crawford
 VOICE ACTORS: Adam Wylie (Dennis), Greg Burson (Mr. George Wilson), Jeanie Elias (Margaret/Peebee), June Foray (Mrs. Wilson), Dan Gilvezan (Henry Mitchell/Ruff), Katie Leigh (Joey), Anna Mathias (Alice Mitchell)

SYNOPSIS: Young Dennis Mitchell has adventures with his friends while frequently annoying his crochety neighbor Mr. Wilson.

COMMENTARY: Hank Ketcham's comic strip, featuring a protagonist modeled on his then-young son, debuted in 1951 and continues to be circulated widely. The property's appeal for adaptation to other media was soon made evident, most obviously in a well-received live-action sitcom airing between 1959 and 1963 on CBS and a 1993 live-action feature film. These two animated versions did little to alter the essential formulas already established in the comics, although the DIC animators managed to produce images that were very faithful to Ketcham's sparse, realistic drawing style. The syndicated version had a wider range of narratives involved than the strip would have allowed, and Dennis here more accurately resembled his hellion comic-strip identity than elsewhere. The later network version, which employed classical music as the theme and incidental score, had Dennis restructured back into the milder personality of his live-action sitcom days, with content suitably updated for the modern era.

***DENVER, THE LAST DINOSAUR* (1988)**

STUDIOS: Calico, World Events
 DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated
 CREATOR/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Peter Keefe
 PRODUCER/DIRECTOR: Tom Burton
 WRITERS: Unknown
 VOICE ACTORS: Patrick Fraley (Denver), Adam Carl (Wally/Jeremy), Cam Clarke (Mario/Shades), Brian Cummings (Morton Fizzback/Professor Funt), Rob Paulsen (Chet/Motley), Kath Soucie (Heather/Casey)
 SYNOPSIS: A group of modern teenagers befriend and protect a dinosaur hatched from a petrified egg.
 COMMENTARY: A show with a limited plotline and premise and equally limited and vapid characterizations that were typical for programs produced in the 1980s. Perhaps the most memorable element of the program was its theme song, which those who saw the program can still recall even when they forget the program itself.

***DEPUTY DAWG* (1960–1963)**

STUDIOS: Terrytoons, CBS
 DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated
 CREATOR: Larz Bourne
 PRODUCER: Bill Weiss

DIRECTORS: David Tendlar, Robert Kuwahara, Connie Rasinski, Bill Tytla, George Gordon, Ralph Bakshi

WRITERS: Larz Bourne, Jack Mercer, Cal Howard, Chris Jenkyns, T. Hee, Dick Kinney, Al Bertino

VOICE ACTORS: Dayton Allen and Lionel Wilson (All characters)

SYNOPSIS: A canine deputy sheriff tries to maintain law and order in a Mississippi swamp town, despite the presence of miscreants Vincent Van Gopher and Ty Coon.

COMMENTARY: Like other Terrytoons series, this had a featured performer fronting for the classics of the studio archive with new productions, at least in the southern and midwestern markets, where the character was most popular. In other markets, it merely aired as a solo filler piece between programs. With good animation and acting, 104 installments were produced but, because of outsourcing, with erratic writing. In a reversal of the traditional animation practice, several of the films in the series were aired in movie theater outlets, principally in Texas, following their initial television broadcasts due to popular and exhibitor demand.

***DETENTION* (1999–2001)**

STUDIO: Warner Brothers

DISTRIBUTOR: WB

CREATORS: Timothy Cahill, Michael Maler, Julie McNally

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Jean MacCurdy

PRODUCER: Bob Doucette

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS INCLUDED: Timothy Cahill, Julie McNally

VOICE ACTORS: Carlos Alazraqui (Gug), Bob Doucette (Mr. Fletcher/Duncan's Yo Yo), Roger Eshbacher (Jim Kim), Pamelyn Ferdin (Shelley Kelley), Kathleen Freeman (Miss Eugenia Kisskillya), Mary Gross (Patsy Wicket), Tia Mowry (Lemonjella LaBelle), Tara Strong (Orangella LaBelle/Shareena Wicket), Billy West (Emmitt Roswell)

SYNOPSIS: A depiction of the regular weekend detention sessions at Benedict Arnold Middle School.

COMMENTARY: A derivative premise enlightened sporadically by offbeat humor—such as having yo-yo champ Duncan Bubble communicate *only* through the device on which he was proficient. Cahill and McNally would exploit middle school as a setting better on their later project, *My Gym Partner's a Monkey* (q.v.).

***DEVLIN* (1974–1976)**

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCER: Iwao Takamoto

DIRECTOR: Charles Nichols

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Michael Bell (Ernie Devlin), Micky Dolenz (Tod Devlin), Michele Robinson (Sandy Devlin), Norman Alden (Hank)

SYNOPSIS: The Devlin family, a team of stunt motorcyclists, serve as the principal attraction of an impoverished traveling circus.

COMMENTARY: Any adventurous elements of what could have been an interesting idea were weeded out of this series before production began. The program was originally titled *Wild Wheels* and its lead character "Dare" Devlin, both of which the network said had to go. Likewise, the stunt work was balanced by network-mandated safety tips, done with the typical unsubtle approach of the era. Consequently, the series, despite some impressively realistic character designs, proved to be something not of lasting cultural value, to say the least.

DEXTER'S LABORATORY (1996–1998, 2001–2003)

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, Cartoon Network

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATOR: Genndy Tartakovsky

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Genndy Tartakovsky, Larry Huber, Buzz Potamkin, Sherry Gunther

PRODUCER: Chris Savino

DIRECTORS: Genndy Tartakovsky, Rob Renzetti, Paul Rudish, Craig McCracken, Robert Alvarez, Rumén Petkov, John McIntyre, Chris Savino, David Smith

WRITERS: Genndy Tartakovsky, Jason Butler Rote, Seth MacFarlane, Butch Hartman, Clayton Morrow, Amy Keating Rogers, Michael Ryan, Jeffrey Delman, Taylor Lee, Cindy Morrow, Chris Savino

VOICE ACTORS: Christine Cavanagh (Dexter, 1996–1998), Candi Milo (Dexter, 2001–2003), Alison Moore (Dee Dee, 1996–1997, 2001–2003), Kat Cressida (Dee Dee, 1997–1998), Kath Soucie (Mom), Jeff Bennett (Dad), Eddie Deezen (Susan "Mandark" Astronomenoff), Frank Welker (Monkey/Krunk), Rob Paulsen (Major Glory), Tom Kenny (Val Hallen/The Living Bullet)

SYNOPSIS: Boy genius Dexter's scientific plans are routinely upset when his much less intelligent sister Dee Dee enters his laboratory and unwittingly fouls them up. Featured in the first season only were two supporting features—*Dial M for Monkey*, featuring the heroic exploits of Dexter's pet, and *Justice Friends*, the saga of some superheroes trying to live together in the same apartment.

COMMENTARY: A well-produced program that managed to overcome many of the stereotypical elements involved in all three components with verve and originality in artistic execution. As a director in particular, Tartakovsky displayed a flair for staging action sequences that neatly counterbalanced the particulars of the comic narratives, making the material much more effective (and funny) than it would have been under a director less committed to the project. This would also be a hallmark of his later, more serious *Samurai Jack* (q.v.). The groundbreaking elements of action-based visual staging combined with sharp humor introduced here would come to be developed further by the television animation producers of the future (Renzetti, McCracken,

MacFarlane, and Hartman), who cut their teeth developing the seemingly simple but gradually complex narratives of this clever series.

The program originated in a group of pilot programs produced for the anthology series *World Premiere Toons* (q.v.) before becoming its own project.

THE DICK AND PAULA CELEBRITY SPECIAL (1999)

STUDIO: S2N

DISTRIBUTOR: FX

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Tom Snyder, Mary Tucker, Bonnie Burns

PRODUCERS: Carl Adams, Niki Hebert, Melissa Galsky

DIRECTORS: Carl Adams, Tom Snyder, Andre Lyman

WRITERS: H. Jon Benjamin, Tom Snyder, Carl Adams

VOICE ACTORS: Richard Snee (Dick), Paula Plum (Paula)

SYNOPSIS: Husband and wife Dick and Paula host a talk show from the living room of their house in Worcester, Massachusetts.

COMMENTARY: Produced in Snyder's characteristic limited-animation "Squigglevision" process, accompanied by equally characteristic improvised dialogue, this was a relatively standard parody of the high-pressure universe of talk show production. The unique element was that most of Dick and Paula's guests were celebrated but deceased figures (Paul Revere was repeatedly prevented from appearing due to the show running over its allotted length, while Oedipus Rex commented on the audience's seemingly supportive reaction to the way he had treated his father and mother), although in typical talk show fashion, the hosts used every spare minute to promote themselves. The program was canceled after nine installments had aired.

THE DICK TRACY SHOW (1961)

STUDIO: UPA

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

CREATOR: Chester Gould

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Henry Saperstein, Peter DeMet

PRODUCER: Glan Heisch

DIRECTORS INCLUDED: Abe Levitow, Ray Patterson, John Walker, Steve Clark, Clyde Geronimi, Jerry Hathcock, Paul Fennell

WRITERS INCLUDED: Bob Ogle, Dick Kinney, Al Bertino, Homer Brightman

VOICE ACTORS: Everett Sloane (Dick Tracy); Mel Blanc, Benny Rubin, Paul Frees, Jerry Hausner, Johnny Coons, June Foray, and Joan Gardner (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: Police detective Dick Tracy fights crime in an unnamed big city with the aid of a variety of comic confederates.

COMMENTARY: Debuting in 1931, the comic strip *Dick Tracy* was one of the first and most enduring of its kind, a serious, adventure-oriented art form that is now largely extinct on the current newspaper page. Gould effectively balanced in the strip a sober, meticulous approach for depicting contemporary crime-fighting techniques with regular appearances by outrageous criminal figures, such as Flattop, Pruneface, Mumbles, B. B. Eyes, and the Blank, who

looked more like figures from a carnival freak show than any average real-life crook. This approach lent Tracy an adaptability to other media that Gould soon exploited. Tracy appeared on radio between 1935 and 1948, in the movies (in the person of Ralph Byrd) in the 1930s and 1940s, and briefly on television between 1951 and 1952. In 1990, Warren Beatty directed and played the title role in a well-received feature film (it received several Academy Award nominations) that managed to accurately depict the fine line between seriousness and outrageousness in Gould's original work.

Despite the obvious kinship between Gould's art and approach and the art of animation, it was not until 1960 that Tracy arrived there, with Gould himself providing input. Unfortunately, the results were not entirely desirable. For the most part, the films were produced on the cheap, with stock footage repeatedly employed and reemployed, although Gould's drawing style was admirably re-created. In their original incarnations, the 130 five-minute films linked segments in specifically designed local children's programs, nothing more or less. Tracy himself barely appeared in the program, tending to farm out the actual work to his deputies: police dog Hemlock Holmes, accompanied by the Retouchables; portly Heap O'Calorie; swift Latino Go Go Gomez; and Asian martial arts expert Joe Jitsu. Despite these limitations, the series was quite popular, running in prime time on Chicago's biggest independent station, WGN. It remained in circulation for some time, until justifiable criticism about the Gomez and Jitsu characters limited its ability to be replayed in most markets.

***DILBERT* (1999–2000)**

STUDIOS: Idbox, United Media, Columbia

DISTRIBUTOR: UPN

CREATOR: Scott Adams

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Larry Charles, Scott Adams, David Silverman, Stephen Sustarsic

PRODUCERS: Jeff Kahn, Kara Vallow, Ned Goldreyer, Denise Pleune

DIRECTORS: Rick Del Carmen, Chris Dozois, Todd Fredriksen, Alfred Gimeno, Michael Gogeun, Jennifer Graves, Bob Hathcock, Jim Hull, Gloria Jenkins, Seth Kearsley, Mike Kim, Andi Klein, Mike Kunkel, Craig Maras, Linda Miller, Declan Moran, Andi Thom, Joe Vaux, Barry Vodos, Perry Zombolas

WRITERS INCLUDED: Christina Cahal, Joe Port, Joe Wiseman

VOICE ACTORS: Daniel Stern (Dilbert), Chris Elliott (Dogbert), Gordon Hunt (Wally), Cathy Griffin (Alice), Larry Miller (Boss), Jackie Hoffman (Dilmom), Tom Kenny (Catbert)

SYNOPSIS: Office worker Dilbert is repeatedly troubled by the needless complications his job often throws at him.

COMMENTARY: Created in 1989, Adams's comic strip, satirizing the banality, absurdity, and capriciousness associated with jobs at the lowest rungs in America's numerous corporations, quickly developed a strong cult following that has persisted to this day, although those of us not familiar with its setting are not likely to appreciate it as well as those who are. This series, produced with Adams's active involvement as an executive producer, accurately

re-created the strip's drawings, as well as a number of intriguing plotlines for its earliest episodes in particular. However, doomed by low ratings on a low-rated network, it signed off after barely two seasons on the air. The series won an Emmy for the design of its main title sequence.

***DINK, THE LITTLE DINOSAUR* (1989–1991)**

STUDIO: Ruby-Spears

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Joe Ruby, Ken Spears

PRODUCER: Larry Huber

DIRECTORS: Bill Hutten, Tony Love

WRITERS INCLUDED: Ralph Sanchez

VOICE ACTORS: R. J. Williams (Dink), Andee McAfee (Amber), Ben Granger (Shyler), Scott Bullock (Flapper), Frank Welker (Scar/Crusty)

SYNOPSIS: The adventures of a young dinosaur and his friends in the Cretaceous period of history.

COMMENTARY: A gentrified approach to these creatures, compared to others before and after, which, while accurate in some aspects of the presentation, made sweeping generalizations about others. The watchword was education: Dink and his associates learned how to behave and cooperate with each other at the same time as viewers learned about them and their environs, both to decent effect.

***DINOSAUCERS* (1987)**

STUDIOS: Lightyear, KK and D, DIC, Coca-Cola, LBS

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Andy Heyward, Benjamin Melniker, Michael Uslan

PRODUCER: Michael Maliani

DIRECTOR: Stephen Martinieri

WRITERS INCLUDED: Diane Duane, Brynne Stephens

VOICE ACTORS: Len Carlson (Quackpot/Allo), Rob Cowan (Tricero), Marvin Goldhar (Bonehead/Bronto-Thunder), Dan Hennessey (Genghis Rex/Plesio), Ray Kahnert (Steggio), Gordon Masten (Styraco), Don McManus (Brachio), Barbara Redpath (Sara), Simon Reynolds (Ryan), John Stocker (Terrible Dactyl/Ankylo), Leslie Toth (David), Chris Wiggins (Dimetro), Thick Wilson (Ichthyo), Richard Yearwood (Paul)

SYNOPSIS: Two groups of alien dinosaurs, one good and one evil, transfer their ongoing battle from their native planet Reptillion to Earth.

COMMENTARY: An inept variation on *Transformers* (q.v.) that seemed to have been produced only for the purpose of trying to emulate that project's success. Its run in original production was brief, though it later resurfaced in cable reruns.

***DINOSAUR TRAIN* (2009–PRESENT)**

STUDIOS: Media Development Authority, Jim Henson, Sparky Animation, FableVision, Snee-Osh

DISTRIBUTOR: PBS

CREATOR: Craig Bartlett

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Craig Bartlett, Brian Henson, Lisa Henson, Halle Stanford

PRODUCER: Sue Bea Montgomery

DIRECTORS: Craig Bartlett, Terry Izumi

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Philip Corlett (Buddy Tyrannosaurus, early episodes), Sean Thomas (Buddy Tyrannosaurus, later episodes), Dayton Wall (Buddy Tyrannosaurus, later episodes), Claire Corlett (Tiny Pteranodon/Polly Polycotylus), Ian Corlett (Mr. Conductor/Adam Adocus/Alan Alamosaurus/Others), Erika Shaye Gair (Shiny Pteranodon/Annie Tyrannosaurus/Others), Ellen Kennedy (Mrs. Pteranodon/Others), Alexander Marr (Don Pteranodon, early episodes/Tank Triceratops), Joey Silva (Don Pteranodon, later episodes), Colin Murdoch (Announcer/Mr. Pteranodon/Others), Laura Marr (Don Pteranodon, later episodes/Quincy Quetzalcoatlus)

SYNOPSIS: The adventures of young and curious tyrannosaurus Buddy in prehistoric times.

COMMENTARY: Largely typical PBS educational fare, with the one surprising note being the fact that it was created and produced by Bartlett, whose earlier series *Hey Arnold!* (q.v.) was a far more down-to-earth and successful approach to this kind of material.

***DISNEY'S DOUG* (1996–2001)**

See *Doug* (and related series).

***D'MYNA LEAGUES* (2000)**

STUDIOS: MSH-Ashton, Studio B, Columbia

DISTRIBUTORS: Syndicated (2003–2004), WB (2003–2004)

CREATORS: W. P. Kinsella ("Inspiration"), Blair Peters (series format)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Blair Peters, Chris Bartleman

PRODUCER: Alia Nakashima

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS INCLUDED: Ian Weir, Leslie Mildner, Susan Nielsen

VOICE ACTORS: Matt Hill (Ebbet); Tabitha St. Germain (Nikki Tinker); Ian Corlett (Flamingo Kid/Schlitzy); Teryl Rothery (Lucinda); June Foray, David Kaye, and Lee Tockar (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: The Mynas baseball team, a group of anthropomorphic birds, struggle with difficulties on and off the field.

COMMENTARY: Other than the baseball games themselves, staged by placing the 2-D characters against well-developed 3-D backgrounds, there wasn't a great deal that was notable about this program. The producers used largely stereotyped personalities for the characters, which failed to create a great deal of sympathy for, and thus interest in, them. The program first aired on Canada's YTV network in 2000 before being imported to the United States.

***DOC McSTUFFINS* (2012–PRESENT)**

STUDIO: Brown Bag Films

DISTRIBUTOR: Disney

CREATOR: Chris Nee

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Chris Nee, Darragh O'Connell, Cathal Gaffney

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS INCLUDE: Shea Fontana

VOICE ACTORS: Kiara Muhammad (Dottie "Doc" McStuffins, early episodes), Laya DeLeon Hayes (Dottie "Doc" McStuffins, later episodes), Robbie Rist (Stuffie McStuffins), Jess Harnell (Chilly McStuffins), Loretta Devine (Hallie McStuffins), Kimberly Brooks (Dr. Maisha McStuffins/Surfer Girl), Gary Anthony Williams (Marcus McStuffins), Jaden Betts (Donny McStuffins, early episodes), Sayeed Shahidi (Donny McStuffins, later episodes), Andre Robbins (Donny McStuffins, later episodes), James Arnold Taylor (Boppy)

SYNOPSIS: Dottie McStuffins emulates her pediatrician mother by acting as a doctor for her stuffed animals and toys, which are anthropomorphic in nature.

COMMENTARY: A preschool series with a unique message based on acting out good behavior rather than simply reiterating themes and ideas. The fact that the lead character and her family are African American is a point that is shown without any obvious political didacticism involved. While preschool girls are the obvious target audience, it has also gained a following beyond it, as evidenced by its Peabody Award in 2014. The incarnations of the program have different subtitles attached (e.g., "Doc McStuffins: Toy Hospital"), which makes it easy for them to be told apart.

***DOG CITY* (1992–1995)**

STUDIOS: Nelvana, Jim Henson, Channel 4, Global Television Network, Autonomous Stations of Spain, Canal-Spain

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX (United States)

CREATOR: Jim Henson

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Michael Frith, Brian Henson, Patrick Loubert, Michael Hirsh, Clive Smith

PRODUCER: Stephen Hodgins

DIRECTOR: John Van Bruggen

WRITERS: Peter Sauder, J. D. Smith, Laraine Arkow, Terrie Collins, Robert Schechter, Gary Sperling

VOICE ACTORS: Ron White (Ace Heart), Elizabeth Hanna (Rosie O'Gravy), John Stocker (Bugsy Vile), James Rankin (Frisky), Howard Jerome (Bruiser), Paulina Gillis (Kitty), Stephen Ouimette (Mad Dog), Kevin Clash (Eliot Shag), Fran Brill (Colleen), Joey Mazzarino (Artie), Brian Meehl (Bruno)

SYNOPSIS: Canine private detective Ace Heart's bizarre exploits are contrasted with the more mundane life of his creator, Eliot Shag.

COMMENTARY: Based on a piece Jim Henson had presented on his eponymous short-lived NBC variety hour in 1989, this series uniquely blended Henson's Muppet technology (in the segments concerning Eliot) with some excellent animation and writing from Canada's Nelvana Studio. The program marvelously spoofed the Chandler/Hammett school of hard-boiled detection by adding the odd bit of obvious (and arguably stereotypical) dog behavior, business, and attributes into the mix. Overall, the series had an experimental, almost improvisational feel to it, particularly in the frequent and caustic verbal exchanges between fictional character Ace and real-life creator Eliot.

***DON COYOTE AND SANCHE PANDA* (1990)**

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, RAI

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera, Paul Sabella

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS INCLUDED: Don Nelson, Arthur Alsberg

VOICE ACTORS: Michael Bell, Gregg Berger, Lauree Berger, Sorrell Booke, Thom Bray, Ruth Buzzi, Hamilton Camp, Townsend Coleman, Didi Conn, Peter Cullen, Brian Cummings, Tim Curry, Keene Curtis, Jennifer Darling, Barry Dennen, Hector Elizondo, Bernard Erhard, Steve Franken, George Furth, Tereza Gancel, Brad Garrett, Joan Gerber, Henry Gibson, Ed Gilbert, Jim Gilstrap, Jonathan Harris, Phil Hartman, Jerry Hauser, Helen Hunt, Renee Jacoba, Tony Jay, Arte Johnson, Jean Kasem, Stacy Keach Sr., Zale Kessler, Alan Lurie, Sherry Lynn, Kenneth Mars, Allan Melvin, Sidney Miller, Pat Musick, Stacey Melkin, Alan Oppenheimer, Ron Palillo, Julie Payne, Henry Polic II, Peter Renaday, Robert Ridgely, Joan Roberts, Joe Ruskin, Michael Rye, Avery Schreiber, Susan Silo, Kath Soucie, Kristofer Tabori, Jeffrey Tambor, Marcelo Tubert, Lennie Weinrib, and Frank Welker (Specific roles unknown)

SYNOPSIS: Elderly soldier-of-fortune Don Coyote and his squire Sancho Panda travel through time and space righting wrongs.

COMMENTARY: Miguel de Cervantes' novel *Don Quixote*, first published in the 17th century, is considered one of the masterpieces of Spanish literature and of comic literature in general. The characterizations and themes originally developed by Cervantes continue to resonate strongly throughout modern popular culture (including a number of the animated series discussed in this book), a testament to its enduring appeal. For this series, coproduced with Italy's public broadcaster (the series originally aired in Europe before coming to America), Hanna-Barbera did little to alter the essential nature of the lead characters other than make them anthropomorphic, but they also found felicitous ways of exploiting Cervantes' concept (such as the use of time travel) that he would have likely considered impossible in his time.

***DORA THE EXPLORER* (2000–2014)**

STUDIOS: Nickelodeon, Viacom

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

CREATORS: Chris Gifford, Valeria Walsh, Eric Weiner

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Chris Gifford, Eric Weiner

PRODUCERS: Valeria Walsh, Jeff DeGrandis, Cathy Galeota, Miken Wong

DIRECTORS: Sherie Pollack, George Chialtas, Gary Conrad, Henry Lenardin Madden, Arnie Wong

WRITER: Eric Weiner

VOICE ACTORS: Kathleen Herles (Dora, 2000–2007); Caitlin Sanchez (Dora, 2008–2011); Fatima Ptacek (Dora, 2012–2014); Harrison Chad (Boots, 2000–2007); Regan Mizrahi (Boots, 2008–2014); Marc Weiner (Map/Swiper); Sasha Toro (Backpack, 2000–2007); Alexandria Suarez (Backpack, 2008–2014); Jake Burbage (Benny, 2000–2007); Matt Gumley (Benny, 2008–2014); Jose

Zelaya (Tico, 2002–2007); Jean Carlos Celi (Tico, 2008–2014); Ashley Fleming (Isa, 2000–2007); Lenique Vincent (Isa, 2008–2011); Skai Jackson (Isa, 2012–2014); Chris Gifford (Screen/Big Red Chicken); Philip Miller (Azur); Aisha Shicker (Flower); Christiano Anbri, Henry Gifford, Katie Gifford, Aisha Shickler, Muhammad Cunningham, Tom Sharkey, and Jose Zeleya (The Explorer Stars); Felipe and Andrea Dieppo (Diego, 2003–2006); Jake Austin (Diego, 2005–2010); Brandon Zambrano (Diego, 2011–2012); Jacob Medrano (Diego, 2012–2014)

SYNOPSIS: With the aid of various on-screen confederates and the participation of the home audience, young Dora Marquez explores her environs.

COMMENTARY: A groundbreaking series, both in setting the template for an entire school of preschool programming for its producer and other cable servers, as well as in the portrayal of Latino characters that was free of the inadvertent racism created in many cases by Anglophone American media. It had a simple agenda in mind, and it executed it well, in the process turning itself into a lucrative multimedia franchise. Diego, Dora's older cousin, would later be featured effectively in a series of his own, *Go Diego Go!* (q.v.).



A superstar of the preschool set.
Nickelodeon/Photofest © Nickelodeon

DOUBLE DRAGON (1993)

STUDIOS: DIC, Bohbot

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Andy Heyward, Robby London, Avi Arad, Byron Cook

PRODUCERS: Chuck Patton, Kurt Weldon

DIRECTOR: Chuck Patton

WRITERS INCLUDED: Phil Harnage, Chuck Patton, Lori Crawford

VOICE ACTORS: Jim Byrnes, Gary Chalk, Michael Donovan, Scott McNeil, Wezley Morris, French Tichner, and Cathy Weseluck (Specific roles unknown)

SYNOPSIS: Separated at birth, twin brothers Jimmy and Billy Lee fight at opposite ends of the spectrum between the good Dragonmasters and the evil Shadowboss.

COMMENTARY: Based on a popular video game, this series lacked substance in consequence of being faithful to the game's conceits. It was hypocritical as well: Characters would declaim violence as the "last refuge of the ignorant" just before going out and committing some. This was clearly produced as filler for the *Amazin' Adventures* (q.v.) block and for no other reason.**DOUG** (AND RELATED SERIES)***Doug*** (1991–1996)

STUDIOS: Jumbo Pictures, Ellipse, Nickelodeon

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

CREATOR: Jim Jinkins

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Jim Jinkins, Joe Aaron, David Campbell, Christine Martin, David Martin

PRODUCERS: Tony Eastman, Melanie Grisanti, Brad Gunther

DIRECTORS: Tony Eastman, John Paratore

WRITERS: Alan Silberberg, Lisa Melamed, Alicia Marie Schudt

VOICE ACTORS: Billy West (Doug Funnie/Roger Klotz), Constance Shulman (Patti Mayonnaise), Doug Preis (Phil Funnie/Vice Principal Lamar Bone), Alice Playten (Beebe Bluff), Fred Newman (Skeeter Valentine/Bud Dink/Grandma Opal), Becca Lish (Judy Funnie/Theda Funnie), Greg Lee (Mayor White)

Brand Spanking New Doug/Disney's Doug (1996–2001)

STUDIOS: Jumbo Pictures, Disney

DISTRIBUTORS: ABC (1996–2001), Syndicated (1998–2000), UPN (1998–2000)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Jim Jinkins, David Campbell

PRODUCERS: Mark York, Marty York, Jo Ellyn Marlow, Jack Spillum

DIRECTORS: Bernie Denk, Jim Jinkins, Maurice Joyce, Jack Spillum

WRITERS: Cydne Clark, Steve Granat, Steve Bannos, Betty Birney, Marcy Brown, Ted Cohen, Edward Edens, Michael Edens, Joe Fallon, Scott Fellows, Dennis Garvey, Don Gilles, Jeffrey Kindley, Scott Kreamer, Glenn Leopold, Tommy Nichols, Andrew Reich, Ken Scarborough, Matt Steinglass, Sandra Willard, Mark York

VOICE ACTORS: Thomas McHugh (Doug Funnie), Becca Lish (Judy Funnie/Theda Funnie/Connie Bengel), Fred Newman (Skeeter Valentine/Ned Valentine/Mr.

Dink/Porkchop), Chris Phillips (Roger Klotz/Boomer), Alice Playten (Beebe Bluff/ELO), Constance Shulman (Patti Mayonnaise), Doug Preis (Phil Funnie/Vice Principal Lamar Bone/Mr. Bluff/Willie/Chalkie), Doris Belack (Mayor Tippi Dink)

SYNOPSIS: In the town of Bluffington, middle-schooler Doug Funnie and his friends deal with the challenges of growing up.

COMMENTARY: One of Nickelodeon's first ventures into original television animation production, this series kept its characterization, plotting, and art design simple, the better for it to be seen, understood, and appreciated by its intended audience. Growing out of a failed children's book project developed by Jenkins when he worked in advertising, it kept a similar ambience of being understandable without being preachy. The program's nice and cute but eccentric tone was a study in contrast to the more raucous ones adopted by its contemporaries *Rugrats* (q.v.) and *The Ren and Stimpy Show* (q.v.), which helped it stand out even more.

The shift from Nickelodeon to Disney in 1996 was purely a business move, as the latter acquired Jumbo to serve as a satellite animation production house. When the series reemerged on its new outlet, Doug and company had aged (slightly) and had to cope with a new series of complications than it did on the Nickelodeon program. It was still fundamentally related to growing up, although the messages of the episodes were now presented bluntly in the Disney way. Nevertheless, while some of the eccentricities of the Nickelodeon version were discarded, the Disney version had its own charm and found its own pleasant creative directions. A feature-film version of the series produced in 2000 failed to create much interest, but the two separate-but-equal versions of the program continue to be broadcast on the cable holdings of their producers.

Perhaps the ultimate tribute to the show came from Peggy Charren, the usually hard-to-please founder of Action for Children's Television, who called it "nice, warm and funny" while avoiding the mistaken approach of "talking down" to the audience.

DOWNTOWN (A.K.A. *MTV DOWNTOWN*; 1999–2000)

STUDIO/DISTRIBUTOR: MTV

CREATOR: Chris Pynoski

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Abby Terkuhle

PRODUCERS: John Worth Lynn Jr., David McGrath

DIRECTORS: Chris Pynoski, Tony Kluck, Patrick Smith, Eugene Salandra

WRITERS INCLUDED: Anne Bernstein, Ralph Meyerling Jr., Richard Stanley

VOICE ACTORS: Gregory Gilmore (Alex Henson), Leyora Zumberman (Chaka Henson), Tammy Lang (Jen), Phoebe Summersquash (Serena), Aurora Lucia Levy (Mecca), Scott Rienecker (Goat), Marco Rodriguez (Fruity), Hector Fontanez (Matt), Delia Bonner (Virginia Capers)

SYNOPSIS: Twenty-four-year-old Alex Henson leaves suburban New Jersey to settle in an apartment in the East Village of New York City.

COMMENTARY: A program of its time, depicting Generation Xers in their natural environs and dealing with their concerns about life, love, and work. The project was based on a short film Prynoski made while a student at the School of Visual Arts in New York, which he pitched to MTV in only a slightly revised format. Though only one season of 13 episodes was produced, MTV kept the program in rotation on its schedule long afterward.

DRAGON BOOSTER (2004–2006)

STUDIOS: DIC, Nerd Corps, FUNimation, Alliance Atlantis, Story Hat, Jetix

DISTRIBUTOR: Family Channel

CREATORS: Rob Travalino, Kevin Mowrer

PRODUCERS: Asaph Fike, Chuck Johnson

DIRECTORS: George Samiski, Sebastien Brodin, Steve Ball, Stephane Podoriezsach, Rav Grewal, Blair Simmons

WRITERS INCLUDED: Rob Travalino, Raul Inglis, Richard Elliott, Simon Racioppa, Steve Ball, Alan Gregg, Sean Jara, J. Falconer, Mark Leiren-Young

VOICE ACTORS: Matt Hill (Artha Penn/Dragon Booster), Kathleen Barr (Lance Penn/Marianis/Dragon City News Reporter), Lee Tockar (Parmon Sean/Khata/Tannis), Lenore Zann (Kitt Wonn/Spynn), Gary Chalk (Connor Penn/Mortis), Mark Oliver (Word Paynn/Original Dragon Booster/Drakkus), Trevor Devall (Moordryd Paynn/Wulph/Captain Faier), Scott McNeil (Cain), Michael Kopsa (Propheci/Reepyr), Nicole Oliver (Pyrrah/Sentrus), Andrew Francis (Phistus), Richard Newman (Race Marshall Budge), Samuel Vincent (Dorsall/Stewardd/Vociferous), Brian Drummond (Kawake), Gerard Plunkett (Armageddon), Jonathan Holmes (Rivett)

SYNOPSIS: In a medieval universe where humans and dragons coexist and that has been divided by war between species, stable attendant Artha Penn assumes the role of the mythical hero, Dragon Booster, who alone is capable of uniting the species again.

COMMENTARY: A relatively standard adventure-oriented program that simply showed the work of a Canadian production house trying too hard to be an American one and succeeding enough to get the show aired in the States, which was apparently all that mattered. The similarities between the characters and those from Arthurian mythology were likely intentional, although there are no anthropomorphic dragons in those stories.

DRAGON FLYZ (1996)

STUDIOS: Abrams/Gentile, Gaumont

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

CREATORS: Anthony Gentile, John Gentile

PRODUCERS: Anthony Gentile, John Gentile, Marc DuPontavice, Emmanuel Prevost

DIRECTOR: Xavier Giacometti

WRITERS: Anthony Gentile, John Gentile, Lisa Morton

VOICE ACTORS: T. J. Benjamin, Saul Bernstein, Thomas Cannizzaro, Donna Daley, Jonathan Kahn, Don Mayo, James Michael, and K. C. Noel (Specific roles unknown)

SYNOPSIS: In the 41st century, after Earth has been rendered radioactive and unlivable, the floating city of Airlandis is defended by the Dragon Flyz, a joint team of humans and dragons, against the villainous mutants led by Dread Wing, which threaten it.

COMMENTARY: A very transparent aid for a toy line, much like some of the other productions the Abrams/Gentile Studio was involved in at this time (see *Happy Ness: The Secret of the Loch* and *Van-Pires* for other examples).

DRAGONS: RIDERS OF BERK (DEFENDERS OF BERK IN SEASON 2; 2012–2014)

STUDIO: DreamWorks

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATOR: Cressida Cowell

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Linda Teverbaugh, Mike Teverbaugh

PRODUCERS: Art Brown, Douglas Sloan

DIRECTORS: John Sanford, John Eng, Louie Del Carman, Joe Sichta, Elaine Bogan, Adam Henry, Anthony Bell

WRITERS: Mike Teverbaugh, Linda Teverbaugh, Art Brown, Douglas Sloan, Jim Cooper, Justin Hook, F. M. DeMarco, Mark Hoffmeier, Jack Thomas, Sam Cherington

VOICE ACTORS: Jay Baruchel (Hiccup Haddock III), America Ferrera (Astrid Hofferson), Christopher Mintz Plasse (Fishlegs Ingerman), Zack Pearlman (Snotlout Jorgenson), T. J. Miller (Tuffnut Thorston), Julie Marcus (Ruffnut Thorston, season 1), Andree Vermulen (Ruffnut Thorston, seasons 2–3), Nolan North (Stoick the Vast), Chris Edgerly (Gobber the Belch), David Tennant (Spitelout Jorgenson), Angela Bartys (Gothi), Stephen Root (Mildew), Mark Hamill (Alvin the Treacherous), Paul Rugg (Savage), David Faustino (Dagur the Deranged), Alfred Molina (Viggo Grimborn), J. B. Blanc (Ryker Grimborn), Michael Goldstrom (Trader Johann), Mae Whitman (Heather)

SYNOPSIS: Viking Hiccup Haddock and his friends try to keep the peace between their tribe and the nearby dragon population through their sympathetic employment of the latter as a defense mechanism.

COMMENTARY: Based on Cowell's popular middle-grade book *How to Train Your Dragon* and its sequels, though more directly on the 2010 CGI feature film it inspired (a sequel, with 2 transparently added to the title, followed in 2014), this was a largely by-the-numbers adaptation of a proven property to the demands of weekly television broadcasts, though the handsome design scheme (its main asset) netted the program several Annies. As with most of these kinds of adaptations, full understanding and appreciation of the series requires similar feelings for the projects from whence it came. Viewers of Norse descent are likely to take umbrage at some of the blatantly stereotypical portraits of the Viking characters here.

Beginning in 2015, DreamWorks removed the series from cable broadcast in favor of airing new episodes of the series exclusively on Netflix. Those episodes are not included in the analysis of the series, for reasons stated in the preface.

***DRAGON'S LAIR* (1984–1985)**

STUDIO: Ruby-Spears

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Joe Ruby, Ken Spears

DIRECTOR: Charles Nichols

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Arthur Burghardt (Cinge), Michael Mish (Timothy), Fred Travalena (King Ethelred), Bob Sarlatte (Dirk the Daring), Ellen Gastel (Princess Daphne), Clive Revill (Storyteller), Peter Cullen (Bertram), Marilyn Schreffler (Various characters)

SYNOPSIS: A medieval kingdom is defended from evil by the stalwart knight Dirk the Daring.

COMMENTARY: Based on a popular video game debuting in 1983, this series had little in the way of characterization and standard plotting, given its source. Recently, noted theatrical animator Don Bluth, who designed the graphics of the original video game, has been preparing a feature-film version of the concept, with funding coming partially from online crowdsourcing. This promises to improve on the assembly-line way the TV series was produced considerably, if it ever comes about.

***DRAGON TALES* (1999)**

STUDIOS: CTV, Children's Television Workshop, Columbia

DISTRIBUTOR: PBS (United States)

CREATORS: Jim Coane, Wesley Eure, Cliff Ruby, Elana Lesser

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Jim Coane, Nina Elias Bamberger

PRODUCERS: Richard Raynis, Jeff Kline, Rod Rodecker, Cliff Ruby, Elana Lesser

DIRECTOR: Tim Eldred

WRITERS INCLUDED: Jeffrey Scott

VOICE ACTORS: Kathleen Barr (Wheezie), Gary Chalk (Quetzal, early episodes), Eli Gabay (Quetzal, later episodes), Andrea Libman (Emmy), Danny McKinnon (Max), Scott McNeil (Zak, early episodes), Jason Michas (Zak, later episodes), Shirley Millner (Ord, early episodes), Ty Olsson (Ord, later episodes), Chantal Strand (Cassie)

SYNOPSIS: Humans Emmy and Max are magically transported to the world of Dragon Land and quickly befriend its anthropomorphic residents.

COMMENTARY: First seen on Canada's CTV network, this series was a nonthreatening educational project that fulfilled its intended expectations. In a nod to ethnic diversity, the two human characters were drawn as Hispanic children rather than the standard Caucasian model, which helped the program, if only briefly, not be as derivative as its concept suggested it was.

***DRAK PACK* (1980–1982)**

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCER: Art Scott

DIRECTOR: Chris Cuddington

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Jerry Dexter (Drak Jr.), Bill Callaway (Frankie/Howler), Alan Oppenheimer (Big D), Hans Conreid (Dr. Dred), Julie McWhirter (Vampira), Chuck McCann (Mummy Man), Don Messick (Toad/Fly)

SYNOPSIS: Drak Jr., Frankie, and Howler—respectively, teenage descendants of Dracula, the Frankenstein monster, and the Wolf Man—team up to fight the evil Dr. Dred and the Organization of Generally Rotten Enterprises (O.G.R.E.) by becoming superheroic versions of their ancestors.

COMMENTARY: Trying to make the evil monsters of classic Hollywood horror films into fighters for the good is something television animators, it seems, never tire of, given the number of instances the theme recurs in the genre's history. This was Hanna-Barbera's take of the concept, and it was no better or worse than the others. The fact that it was produced during a creatively fallow period for the studio is another strike against it.

***DRAWING POWER* (1980–1981)**

STUDIO: Newhall-Yohe

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: This live-action/animation hybrid was NBC's answer to *Schoolhouse Rock!* (q.v.) and fittingly came from the same production company. Three animators (shown in live action) produced animated vignettes featuring such characters as Dewey Decimal and such rotating subjects as "Bus Stop," "Pet Peeves," "Professor Rutabaga," "The Book Report," "What Do You Do, Dad/Mom?" and "Superperson U."

***DRAWN TOGETHER* (2004–2007)**

STUDIOS: Rough Draft, Double Hemm

DISTRIBUTOR: Comedy Central

CREATORS/EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Dave Jeser, Matt Silverstein

PRODUCERS: J. Michael Mendel, Claudia Katz

DIRECTORS: Peter Avanzino, Dwayne Carey Hill, James Purdum, Ray Claffey, Raymie Musquiz, Chuck Sheetz, Rich Moore, Tuck Tucker, Frank Marino, Kyunghie Lim, Stephen Sandoval

WRITERS: Matt Silverstein, Dave Jeser, Elijah Aron, Erik Sommers, Reid Harrison, Jordan Young, Reed Agnew, Eliot Blake, Jon Kimmel, Bill Freiburger, Sam Freiburger, Dave Lewman, Joe Liss, Valerie Ahern, Christian McLaughlin, Stacey Majers, Craig DeGregorio, Josh Lieb, Jessica Schram, Stacy Deddo

VOICE ACTORS: Jess Harnell (Captain Hero), James Arnold Taylor (Wooldoor Sockbat), Abbey McBride (Ling-Ling), Cree Summer (Foxxxy Love), Jack Plotnick

(Xandir Whifflebottom), Adam Carolla (Spanky Ham), Tara Strong (Princess Clara/Toot Braunstein), Chris Edgerly (Bucky Bucks), Jim Ward (Blue Ball)

SYNOPSIS: Eight animated cartoon characters, each representing a different drawing style, production era, production mode, or content distribution method, are forced to coexist in the same house while undergoing the typical tropes of an average "reality show."

COMMENTARY: A spoof of the reality-show formula that has been omnipresent in television since the mid-1990s (CBS's long-running *Big Brother* franchise in particular), this series' main asset was the producers' demonstrated knowledge of and love for the art of animation in all its varied forms. Not many other programs could boast characters clearly modeled on stereotypical superheroes (Captain Hero), *Looney Tunes* (Wooldoor), *Pokémon* (Ling-Ling), Disney princesses (Clara), *Josie and the Pussycats* (q.v.; Foxy), Internet cartoons (Xandir), and *Betty Boop* (Toot) so convincingly in the same setting. Unfortunately, the same producers also chose to repeatedly genuflect to the raunchiness and scatology so common in the programs of their distributor, and it became increasingly unbearable to endure. A clean approach might have worked better.

***DR. KATZ, PROFESSIONAL THERAPIST* (1995–1999)**

STUDIOS: Popular Arts, S2N, Comedy Central, HBO Downtown

DISTRIBUTOR: Comedy Central

CREATORS/WRITERS: Jonathan Katz, Tom Snyder

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Tom Snyder, Nancy Geller, Tim Braine

PRODUCERS: John Fisher, Loren Bouchard, Jonathan Katz, Julianne Shapiro

DIRECTORS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Jonathan Katz (Dr. Katz), H. Jon Benjamin (Ben Katz), Laura Silverman (Laura Sweeney), Will Le Bow (Stanley), Julianne Shapiro (Julie)

SYNOPSIS: A psychiatrist confronts not only the difficulty of dealing with his patients but also the rigors daily life throws at him.

COMMENTARY: Produced in the limited animation system of "Squigglevision," where only necessary body and lip movements were animated in loops of five drawings each, this series had a divisive reception during its period in the public eye. On one hand, it was admired and respected by people who otherwise never gave television animation a second thought and was rewarded with an Emmy and a Peabody. The fact that the majority of the dialogue was improvised attracted a number of high-profile guest stars, which increased its cachet with discerning viewers. On the other hand, it was resented by animation purists, who felt the series' production shortcuts debased the art. Both camps had points. Perhaps if the animation had been better, the latter group would not have complained as much and would have appreciated it as much as the former did.

The series grew out of a free-form comedy routine that Katz performed in nightclubs with colleagues Dom Irrera and Laura Kightlinger, who regularly appeared as guests. This, as well as the animation process, may account for the program's unusual stress on improvisation rather than purely on written scripts.

DROIDS: THE ADVENTURES OF R2-D2 AND C-3PO

(1985–1986)

STUDIOS: Lucasfilm, Nelvana

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATOR: George Lucas

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Miki Herman

PRODUCERS: Michael Hirsh, Patrick Loubert, Clive Smith, Lenora Hume

DIRECTORS: Ken Stephenson, Mike Fallows, Gord Stanfield, John Collin

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Anthony Daniels (C-3PO), Graham Haley (R2-D2)

SYNOPSIS: Robots C-3PO and R2-D2 make their way through the unique universe of the *Star Wars* films.

COMMENTARY: This was one of the first efforts to translate Lucas's elaborate universe into animation; more elaborate ones would follow in the 1990s and 21st century (see *Star Wars: Clone Wars* and *Star Wars: Rebels*). Compared with its contemporary, *The Ewoks* (q.v.), it was rudimentary, with short enough story lines for as many as four narratives in a single episode. Obviously, neither Lucas nor the animation studio had enough faith in the characters to trust them as anything other than second bananas. After being briefly combined with *The Ewoks* as *The Ewoks and Star Wars Droids Adventure Hour*, the Droids were retired from weekly series service in November 1986, while the Ewoks continued for another year.

DROOPY: MASTER DETECTIVE (1993–1994)

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, Turner

CREATOR: Tex Avery

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: Don Jurwich, Larry Huber, Kay Wright

DIRECTORS: Joanna Romersa, Ray Patterson, John Kafka, Robert Alvarez, Don Lusk, Carl Urbano, Ed Love, Allen Wilzbach, Frank Andrina, Joan Drake, Dan Hunn, David Michener, Margaret Nichols, Sam Nicholson, Jay Sarbry, Art Scott, Ken Southworth, Paul Sommer

WRITERS INCLUDED: Don Jurwich, Neal Barbera

VOICE ACTORS: Charlie Adler, Bill Callaway, Teresa Ganzel, Don Messick, Frank Welker, Brandon Adams, Joe Alaskey, Patricia Albrecht, Lewis Arquette, Rene Auberjonois, Michael Bell, Gregg Berger, Sheryl Bernstein, Susan Blu, Sorrell Booke, Charlie Brill, Nicole Brown, Scott Bullock, Arthur Burghardt, Greg Burson, Hamilton Camp, Nancy Cartwright, Marsha Clark, Selette Cook, Townsend Coleman, Danny Cooksey, Bud Cort, Jesse Corti, Peter Cullen, Brian Cummings, Jim Cummings, Tim Curry, Jennifer Darling, Mari Devon, Nancy Dussault, Maggie Egan, June Foray, Patrick Fraley, Brad Garrett, Kathy Garver, Joan Gerber, Barry Gordon, Archie Hahn, Phil Hartman, Pamela Hayden, George Hearn, Dana Hill, Jerry Hauser, Charity James, Nick Jameson, Tony Jay, Arte Johnson, Vicki Juditz, Zale Kessler, Kip King, Paul Kreppel, Maurice LaMarche, David L. Lander, Nancy Linari, Allen Lurie, Sherry Lynn, Tress MacNeille, Kenneth Mars, Chuck McCann, Edie Mc-

Clurg, Dani Michelle, Brian Mitchell, Alan Oppenheimer, Bibi Osterwald, Gary Owens, Pat Parris, Rob Paulsen, Pat Pinney, Henry Polic II, Tony Pope, Hal Rayle, Clive Revill, Robert Ridgely, Kimmy Robertson, Stuart Robinson, Roger Rose, Neil Ross, Ronnie Schell, Susan Silo, Sarah Silverman, Hal Smith, Michael Stanton, Kath Soucie, Sally Struthers, Barbara Stuart, Marcelo Tubert, Janet Waldo, B. J. Ward, Jimmy Weldon, Jane Wiedlin, Lee Willkoff, April Winchell, Paul Winchell, Joanne Worley, Kris Zimmerman, and Patric Zimmerman (Specific roles unknown)

SYNOPSIS: Mild-mannered, stony-faced animated basset hound Droopy pursues a career as a private investigator.

COMMENTARY: Introduced in the 1943 MGM cartoon *Dumb Hounded* and voiced by radio veteran and deadpan master Bill Thompson, Droopy was a cleverly conceived character who, unlike so many of his contemporaries, could reduce audiences to fits of laughter by simply showing up repeatedly unannounced and doing nothing or uttering pithy phrases ("Hello, you happy people") to the audience in an underplayed, emotionally detached tone of voice. While highly effective as a supporting character, he was less successful as a lead because his bag of comedy tricks was more limited when he had more screen time to fill. This proved to be as much the case for him on television as it had been in the movies. He was a featured player in Filmation's *The Tom and Jerry Comedy Show* (q.v.) in 1980 before landing a supporting slot in *Tom and Jerry Kids* (q.v.). That led to this series, which mixed previously produced material with newer installments. Here, Droopy was accompanied by his son Dripple, the spitting image of his old man in both appearance and manner. Yet the mock film noir premise could only go so far before it got stale. Between Droopy's adventures, another Tex Avery creation, Screwball (or Screwy) Squirrel, was resurrected, this time in conflict with German-accented public park attendant Dweeble and his dimwitted dog Grapple. Neither segment was fully up to the brilliant, one-of-a-kind standard in which Avery manipulated his characters in their prime, however. The enormous number of voice actors listed here seemed to have their talents misused.

***DUCK DODGERS* (2003–2005)**

STUDIO: Warner Brothers

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATORS: Chuck Jones and Michael Maltese (characters), Spike Brandt and Tony Cervone (series)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Sander Schwartz

PRODUCERS: Spike Brandt, Tony Cervone, Paul Dini, Tom Minton, Linda Steiner, Bobbie Page

DIRECTORS: Spike Brandt, Tony Cervone

WRITERS: Spike Brandt, Tony Cervone, Paul Dini, Tom Minton

VOICE ACTORS: Joe Alaskey (Duck Dodgers/Martian Commander X-2), Bob Bergen (Eager Young Space Cadet), Richard McGonagle (Dr. I. Q. High), Tia Carrere (Martian Queen), Michael Dorn (Martian Centurian Robots), John O'Hurley (Captain Star Johnson), Kevin Smith (Green Lantern)

SYNOPSIS: Released from 351 years of suspended animation, heroic spaceship captain Duck Dodgers takes to the skies to fight against the villainous Martians.

COMMENTARY: The source for this series was *Duck Dodgers in the 24½ Century*, a hilariously funny sci-fi parody directed by Jones and written by Maltese for Warner Brothers in 1953. Daffy Duck portrayed the vainglorious title character, while Porky Pig appeared as his cadet sidekick. These two reprised their parts here (though Alaskey and Bergen replaced the late Mel Blanc in the actual character voices); I. Q. High and Martian Commander X-2 (better known as Marvin the Martian) were also carryovers from the earlier project. In adapting a one-shot film to a weekly series format, Brandt and Cervone faced the problem of dealing with their source's limited characterization and plotting, but at least on some occasions, they were able to overcome it. This came about not only through drawing on the Warner Studio's own heritage (Yosemite Sam and Elmer Fudd both appeared as villainous aliens) but also in parodying both classic animation and contemporary action films, as well as through featuring the odd surprise guest (such as former *Tonight Show* announcer Ed McMahon, who dropped the fact that he'd been a fighter pilot in World War II, for no good reason). It was entertaining, but it also reflected the increasingly mercenary attitude of a studio with too many artistic crutches from the past. Warner's management did not seem to know when to leave well enough alone when it came to material that could be exploited from that past—a practice that Warner and its sister studio, Cartoon Network, would come to engage in the future more than was good for either of them.

DUCKMAN (1994–1997)

STUDIOS: Klasky-Csupo, Reno-Osborn, Paramount

DISTRIBUTOR: USA Network

CREATOR: Everett Peck

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Jeff Reno, Ron Osborn, Arlene Klasky, Gabor Csupo, David Misch

PRODUCERS: Sherry Gunther, Gene Laufenberg, Michael Markowitz, Mitch Watson, Everett Peck

DIRECTORS: Peter Avanzino, Anthony Bell, Stig Bergqvist, Donovan Cook, Paul Demeyer, Jaime Diaz, John Eng, Bob Hathcock, Igor Kovalyov, Steve Loter, Jeff McGrath, Raymie Muzquiz, Steve Ressel, Peter Shin, Norton Virgien

WRITERS INCLUDED: Michael Markowitz, Jeffrey Astrof, Mike Sikowitz, Jeff Reno, Ron Osborn

VOICE ACTORS: Jason Alexander (Duckman), Nancy Travis (Bernice), Dweezil Zappa (Alex), Dana Hill (Charles, early episodes), E. G. Daily (Mambo), Gregg Berger (Cornfed), Pat Musick (Charles, later episodes/Fluffy/Uranus), Tim Curry (King Chicken)

SYNOPSIS: A misanthropic mallard private investigator angrily stumbles his way through life.

COMMENTARY: Peck, a cartoonist whose credits include issues of *Playboy* and the *New Yorker*, developed the title character of this raunchy, satirical, and button-pushing program in an anthology produced by Dark Horse Comics in 1989; he was elevated to his own comic the following year. Not long

after, Gabor Csupo persuaded Peck to adapt the character to animation with the assistance of his studio. The pilot was first shown at the MIP-TV International Television Convention in Cannes in 1992, after which the series went into production.

The program was noted not only for its uncompromising adult tone and frequently unlikable protagonist but also for its cavalier, freewheeling humor; its unique artistic approach (a combination of Peck's personal style with the European-flavored approach of the studio); and its musical score (largely drawn from the work of Frank Zappa), as well as the considerable amount of liberty the individual episode directors were given. Despite its popularity and earning two Emmy nominations, the series ceased production after 70 episodes had aired—albeit in the midst of a cliff-hanger ending in the series finale!

***DUCKTALES* (1987–1992)**

STUDIO: Disney

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

CREATOR: Carl Barks

PRODUCERS: Fred Wolf, Bob Hathcock, Alan Zaslove, Alan Burnett, Ken Koonce, David Wiemers

DIRECTORS: Bob Hathcock, Alan Zaslove, James Walker, James Mitchell, Rick Leon, Terrence Harrison, Steve Clark, Mircea Mantta

WRITERS: Alan Burnett, Ken Koonce, David Wiemers, Mark Seidenburg, Jeffrey Scott, Gordon Bressack, Donald Glut, Jymn Magon, Brooks Wachtel

VOICE ACTORS: Alan Young (Scrooge McDuck), Russi Taylor (Huey/Dewey/Louie/Webby Vanderquack), Chuck McCann (Duckworth/Burger Beagle/Bouncer Beagle), Brian Cummings (Doofus), Hamilton Camp (Fenton Crackshell/Gizmo Duck), Hal Smith (Gyro Gearloose/Flintheart Glomgold), Frank Welker (Bubba/Big Time Beagle/Baggy Beagle), Terry McGovern (Launchpad McQuack/Baby Face Beagle), June Foray (Ma Beagle/Magica De Spell)

SYNOPSIS: Wealthy businessman-cum-adventurer Scrooge McDuck travels the world in search of treasures to increase his wealth, when not tending to his affairs in the town of Duckberg.

COMMENTARY: Barks (a.k.a. the Good Artist because he was not granted a byline) began work on Disney-related comic books for Dell Comics in 1937, after work as an apprentice animator at the Disney studio. From then until retiring in 1966, he developed a unique personal universe in the community of Duckberg and the actions of its residents, with very little input from the Disney studio, although he would not be publicly acknowledged for his work until after his retirement. Scrooge McDuck, reputedly a “centrifugillionaire,” first emerged in 1947 and quickly took over as the center of the universe’s attention from its previous star, Donald Duck. Scrooge first appeared in animated form in 1967, in the short film *Scrooge McDuck and Money*, but it wasn’t until he was cast as Ebenezer Scrooge in 1983’s *Mickey’s Christmas Carol* (Young voiced him here as well) that his true potential as a moving image was achieved. Four years later came *Ducktales*, which built on the crochety

but sensitive persona he had already established in the comics as well as the adventure-oriented format of many of the comics' installments.

Given that Barks had established the character personas and relationships earlier (with the exception of newer characters, such as the super-heroic Gizmo Duck and his mild-mannered secret identity Fenton), the producers merely had to fill in the blanks and take it from there artistically. They were fortunate in that line to have good source material. What was more groundbreaking about the show, however, was its distribution method. *Ducktales* was the first Disney show to be produced in a syndicated format (99 episodes would be produced in all, given the daily format's need for a greater volume of material than a weekly network series), and as such, it was a roaring commercial success. Taking the hint, the company used *Ducktales* as the initial fulcrum for the long-running "Disney Afternoon" syndication block, whose other productions would, not surprisingly, bear strong similarities to the adventure-plus-comedy content featured here and would endure for most of the 1990s.

THE DUKES (1983)

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, Warner Brothers

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCER: Kay Wright

DIRECTORS: Oscar Dufau, Bob Hathcock

WRITERS: John Bradford, Benny Ferman, Clive Ferman, O. Grady, John Graham, Orville Hampton, Tom Ruegger, David Tudman

VOICE ACTORS: Sorrell Booke (Jefferson Davis "Boss" Hogg), John Schneider (Bo Duke), Tom Wopat (Luke Duke), Catherine Bach (Daisy Duke), Denver Pyle (Uncle Jesse Duke), James Best (Sheriff Roscoe Coltrane), Christopher Mayer (Vance Duke), Frank Welker (Flash/Smokey/General Lee)

SYNOPSIS: The Duke family and their specially made car, the General Lee, compete in a round-the-world auto race in order to pay off the mortgage on their family homestead, held by unethical politician Boss Hogg, who is determined that they not succeed.

COMMENTARY: Airing on CBS between 1979 and 1985, *The Dukes of Hazzard* was a tremendously popular action-comedy series set in the mythical Southern Hazzard County. It focused on cousins Bo and Duke and their Uncle Jesse, who ran an illegal moonshine-running operation but always managed to stay ahead of the corrupt local politicians (represented by Boss Hogg) and law enforcement officials (Sheriff Coltrane, plus equally incompetent Deputy Enos Strate, who did not appear in the animated version) who theoretically "ran" things. The show ran smoothly until 1982, when Schneider and Wopat quit over disputes related to their salaries and royalty payments for the large amount of ancillary merchandising related to the show sold to children (the core audience of the program). Although they soon returned, the show's momentum was stalled.

The animated series debuted abruptly in February 1983, when CBS cut *The Bugs Bunny/Road Runner Show* from 90 minutes to 60 and installed *The*

Dukes in the now-available time slot. Other than the use of the format noted in the synopsis, the mixture was largely the same as in the live version, and most of the live performers recreated their roles (Mayer's Vance had been one of the temporary replacements for Schneider and Wopat when they walked off). The series lasted on CBS until November 1983, when it disappeared from the schedule as quickly as it came on the scene.

A feature-film version of the show, with Burt Reynolds as Boss Hogg and Willie Nelson as Uncle Jesse, was released by Warner Brothers in 2005.

***DUMB AND DUMBER* (1995–1996)**

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, New Line Cinema

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATOR: Andre Nieves

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Brad Krevoy

DIRECTOR: Troy Miller

WRITERS INCLUDED: Bennett Yellin

VOICE ACTORS: Matt Frewer (Lloyd Christmas), Bill Faggerbakke (Harry Dunne), Tom Kenny (Weenie), Bronson Pinchot (Dymbster), Kath Soucie (Waitress)

SYNOPSIS: Dimwits Lloyd Christmas and Harry Dunne bumble their way through life.

COMMENTARY: Based on the 1994 film of the same name starring Jim Carrey as Lloyd and Jeff Daniels as Harry but minus much of the raucous scatology found there, this series, in terms of design, plotting, and characterization, was a child of Hanna-Barbera's productions of the 1960s and 1970s (Harvey Korman and Howard Morris, who had worked for the company then, both guest-starred in separate episodes, which helped to confirm that link). In other words, relatively standard issue, save for the unusual inclusion of musical tracks from the likes of the Red Hot Chili Peppers, Robyn Hitchcock, and Todd Rundgren, among others.

***DUMB BUNNIES* (1998–1999)**

STUDIOS: Yoram Gross, EMTV, Village Roadshow, Nelvana

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATORS: Sue Denim, Dav Pilkey

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Michael Hirsh, Patrick Loubert, Clive Smith

PRODUCERS: Yoram Gross, Tim Brooke-Hunt

DIRECTOR: Eugene Linkov

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

SYNOPSIS: Papa, Mamma, and Baby Dumb Bunny live in Bunnyville and manage to find outrageous solutions to equally outrageous problems.

COMMENTARY: Based on a children's book series created by Denim and Pilkey (the latter better known for the *Captain Underpants* and *Ricky Ricotta's Mighty Robot* series), this 26-episode series was a coproduction between Canadian and Australian companies. It aired on CBS in part due to Nelvana's arrangement at that time to supply the network with material and probably for no other reason.

DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS (1983–1987)

STUDIOS: Marvel, TSR, Dungeons and Dragons Entertainment Group

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATORS: Gary Gygax (game); Dennis Marks and Mark Evanier (series format)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: David DePatie, Lee Gunther

PRODUCERS: Gary Gygax, Don Richardson, Hank Saroyan

DIRECTORS: John Gibbs, Gerry Chiniquy, Milton Gray, Tom Ray, Nelson Shin

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Willie Aames (Hank), Donny Most (Eric), Katie Leigh (Sheila), Toni Gayle Smith (Diana), Adam Rich (Presto), Ted Field III (Bobby), Sidney Miller (The Dungeon Master), Peter Cullen (The Venger)

SYNOPSIS: After being whisked from an amusement park ride into a fantasyland, six young children assume roles assigned to them by the benevolent Dungeon Master in a game of good versus evil, the latter represented by the Venger.

COMMENTARY: Created in 1975, Dungeons and Dragons (D&D) was the earliest and most famous of a genre known as role-playing games. In such offerings, conventional game-playing (e.g., dice-rolling) is combined with acting out fictional roles, of a medieval-quest nature in the case of D&D. The game has been very popular since then, despite the fact that some players, then and now, tended to absorb themselves—method-acting style—in their roles, to the exclusion of reality itself. That aspect of the game was not confronted here because the children were cast in roles that were simply extensions of their own personalities and interests (or, in the case of the character Presto being made a magician, the Dungeon Master's assumed prejudices) and therefore had some reality left in them. This was a relatively standard series, therefore, in terms of plotting and characterization. Later television animation productions aimed at children would satirize D&D (chiefly through fictional doppelgängers) better on their own terms.

DYNAMUTT, DOG WONDER (1976–1977)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATORS: Joe Ruby, Ken Spears

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: Alex Lovy, Iwao Takamoto

DIRECTOR: Charles Nichols

WRITERS: Norman Maurer, Earl Doud, Jeff Maurer, Lee Orgel, Haskell Barkin, Donald Glut, Orville Hampton, Michael Maurer, Dalton Sandifer, Deirdre Starlight

VOICE ACTORS: Frank Welker (Dynomutt), Gary Owens (Bradley Crown/Blue Falcon)

SYNOPSIS: Robotic dog Dynomutt assists the superhero Blue Falcon on the latter's heroic duties in Big City—or, given his humorous incompetence, *tries* to.COMMENTARY: Airing in tandem with *Scooby Doo* (q.v.) in an hourly format, this series combined comedy and superheroics in a largely effective way, the

same way the former series goofed up serious mystery narratives. Given that the Falcon's background, personality, and design were largely derivative of *Batman* (q.v.), being paired with the engaging and funny "dog blunder" (as Dynomutt was derisively called after displays of incompetence) made the Falcon more memorable than he would have been as a humorless straight man working alone. Still, Welker and Owens had a good showcase for their respective acting talents, though the latter's oft-repeated line, "When will that dog ever learn?" never came to fruition.

After its initial broadcast period, the series entered syndication, sans *Scooby Doo*, which showed that it was worthy of standing on its merits in comparison to its more derivative one-time saddle mate.

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EARTHWORM JIM (1995–1996)

STUDIOS: Studio USA, Akom, Flextech PLC, Shiny, Universal

DISTRIBUTOR: WB

CREATOR: Douglas TenNapel

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Douglas TenNapel, David Perry IV

PRODUCERS: Kathy Castillo, Roy Smith

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS: Doug Langdale, Steve Roberts, John Loy, Thomas Hart, Jim Peterson, John Behnke, Rob Humphrey, Henry Gilroy

VOICE ACTORS: Dan Castallaneta (Earthworm Jim), Andrea Martin (Queen Slug for a Butt), Jeff Bennett (Peter Puppy/Narrator), Kath Soucie (Princess What's Her Name), Charlie Adler (Professor Monkey for a Head/Monkey), Edward Hibbert (Evil the Cat), John Kassir (Snott/Henchrat), Jim Cummings (Psy-Crow/Bob the Killer Goldfish)

SYNOPSIS: An earthworm accidentally gains possession of a supersuit powered by the "battery of the gods" and becomes a superpowered fighter against the forces of darkness.

COMMENTARY: Based on TenNapel's video game project of the same name, this clever and funny mock-heroic program was memorable enough for the names of its characters alone. However, it also possessed a curveball style of humor that placed it above many of its peers in the writing department as a whole. It ceased production after just over 20 installments had been produced, but given its high quality, it easily could have continued if it had been on a network that was willing and able to support it in the manner it deserved.

ED, EDD 'N' EDDY (1998–2008)

STUDIOS: a.k.a. Cartoons, Yesno, Funbag

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATOR/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Danny Antonucci

PRODUCERS: Bill Schultz, Christine Danzo, Daniel Sioui, Ruth Vincent

DIRECTORS: Danny Antonucci, Scott Underwood, John Han, Kwang Jin Kim, Young Keun Kim, Chul Ki Kwon

WRITERS: Danny Antonucci, Jono Howard, Scott Underwood, Mike Kubat, Rob Boutillier, Robert Leighton, Marlowe Weisman, John Mein, Geoff Berner, Brent Miller, Aaron McLaughlin, Keith Giffen, Rachel Connor, Michael Hockney, Stacy Warnick

VOICE ACTORS: Matt Hill (Ed), Samuel Vincent (Edd), Tony Sampson (Eddy), Keenan Christiansen (Jimmy), Janyse Jaud (Sarah/Lee Kanker), Tabitha St. Germain (Nazz, 1999–2000), Erin Fitzgerald (Nazz, 2000–2008/May Kanker, 1999–2003), David Paul "Buck" Grove (Jonny), Jenn Forgie (May Kanker, 2003–2008), Kathleen Barr (Marie Kanker/Kevin), Peter Kelamis (Rolf)

SYNOPSIS: A group of Three Stooges–like male teenagers (with variations on the same first name) creates considerable chaos among their peers in the suburban cul-de-sac where they live.

COMMENTARY: This Canadian-produced series fit in well with its American counterparts on its provider, given its stress on lowbrow, frantic, fast-paced, and nonsensical humor. Antonucci understood whom, exactly, his series was intended to be appreciated by the most, and he played to them, in the process excluding those in the audience not privy to the joke. Consequently, the rough edges of the show could be too blunt for some people to appreciate, but it had elements of typical cartoon weirdness (such as having one character tote around a plank of wood with a crudely drawn face, which functioned as his “best friend,” for lack of others) that compensated, though only occasionally.

Antonucci received the Reuben Award from the National Cartoonists Society in 1998. The series concluded with a TV movie-length finale that aired several months after the final original half-hour broadcasts.

***EDGAR AND ELLEN* (2007–2009)**

STUDIOS: Star Farm, Bardel, Studio B, Nickelodeon, YTV

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

CREATORS: Charles Ogden, Rick Carton

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Delna Bhesania, Barbara Ferro, Trish Lindsay

PRODUCER: Brian Behling

DIRECTOR: Keith Ingham

WRITERS: Adam Beechen, Scott Gray, Steven Kriozere, Guy Toubes

VOICE ACTORS: Unknown

SYNOPSIS: Twelve-year-old fraternal twins Edgar and Ellen disrupt the peace of the town of Nod’s Limbs with a regular array of juvenile pranks.

COMMENTARY: This limited-run series of specials was based on a group of short interstitial films airing between shows on Nickelodeon, which were, in turn, based on a group of children’s books. Thus, it was no surprise that the holiday-related material presented here was itself juvenile and predictable in nature. The culture clash between gothic and conventional culture shown here was much better handled in *The Addams Family* (q.v.).

***EEK! THE CAT* (AND RELATED SERIES)**

***EEK! The Cat* (1992–1993)**

STUDIOS: Savage, Nelvana, FOX, 20th Century Fox

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX

CREATORS: Savage Steve Holland, Bill Kopp

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Savage Steve Holland

PRODUCERS: Bill Kopp, Stephen Hodgins, Patrick Loubert, Michael Hirsh, Clive Smith

DIRECTOR: John Halfpenny

WRITERS: Savage Steve Holland, Bill Kopp, Kati Rocky, Henry Gilroy, Paul Germain, Sandy Fries, Pamela Wick, Frank Santopadre

VOICE ACTORS: Bill Kopp (Eek! the Cat/Others), Savage Steve Holland (Elmo the Elk/Others), E. G. Daily (Wendy Elizabeth/Kozy/Others), Charlie Adler (J. B./Granny/Others), Cam Clarke (Puffy/Wuz Wuz/Piggy the Penguin/Others), Elinor Donahue (Mom/Others), Dan Castellaneta (Mittens, 1992–1994/Others), Tawny Kitaen (Annabelle, 1992–1995), Eddie Deezen (Ringo), Gary Owens (Announcer/Others), Brad Garrett (Various characters)

Eek! And the Terrible Thunderlizards (1993–1995)

STUDIOS: Savage, Nelvana, FOX, 20th Century Fox

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX

CREATORS: Savage Steve Holland, Bill Kopp

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Savage Steve Holland

PRODUCERS: Bill Kopp, Stephen Hodgins, Patrick Loubert, Michael Hirsh, Clive Smith

DIRECTOR: John Halfpenny

WRITERS: Savage Steve Holland, Bill Kopp, Kati Rocky, Henry Gilroy, Paul Germain, Sandy Fries, Pamela Wick, Frank Santopadre

VOICE ACTORS: Bill Kopp (Eek! the Cat/Others), Savage Steve Holland (Elmo the Elk/Others), E. G. Daily (Wendy Elizabeth/Kozy/Others), Charlie Adler (J. B./Granny/Others), Cam Clarke (Puffy/Wuz Wuz/Piggy the Penguin/Others), Elinor Donahue (Mom/Others), Dan Castellaneta (Mittens, 1992–1994/Others), Tawny Kitaen (Annabelle, 1992–1995), Eddie Deezen (Ringo), Gary Owens (Announcer/Others), Brad Garrett (Various characters), Karen Haber (Annabelle, 1995–1997), John Kassir (Mittens, 1995–1997/Others)

Eek!stravaganza (1995–1997)

STUDIOS: Savage, Nelvana, FOX, 20th Century Fox

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX

CREATORS: Savage Steve Holland, Bill Kopp

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Savage Steve Holland

PRODUCERS: Bill Kopp, Stephen Hodgins, Patrick Loubert, Michael Hirsh, Clive Smith

DIRECTOR: John Halfpenny

WRITERS: Savage Steve Holland, Bill Kopp, Kati Rocky, Henry Gilroy, Paul Germain, Sandy Fries, Pamela Wick, Frank Santopadre

VOICE ACTORS: Bill Kopp (Eek! the Cat/Others), Cam Clarke (Puffy/Wuz Wuz/Piggy the Penguin/Ryan Heap/Others), Savage Steve Holland (Elmo the Elk/Wade Heap/Others), E. G. Daily (Wendy Elizabeth/Kozy/Others), Charlie Adler (J. B./Granny/Others), Sandy Fox (Sandy Heap), Kathy Ireland (Angela Heap), David Silverman (John Heap), Kirk Thatcher (Klutter/Kopp), Halle Stanford (Vanna), Dan Castellaneta (Mel/Others), Amy Heckerling (Nel), Elinor Donahue (Mom/Others), Tawny Kitaen (Annabelle, 1992–1995), Eddie Deezen (Ringo), Gary Owens (Announcer/Others), Brad Garrett (Various characters), Karen Haber (Annabelle, 1995–1997), John Kassir (Mittens, 1995–1997/Others)

SYNOPSIS: A good-natured but accident-prone cat tries to live his life by helping out others, only to become engaged in a variety of comic mishaps. Also fea-

tured, *The Terrible Thunderlizards*, about a trio of mercenary dinosaurs in conflict with a pair of dimwitted cavemen, and *Klutter*, the saga of a golem-like pet created from discarded clothes and toys.

COMMENTARY: One of the funniest and most absurd animated series of the 1990s, and given its current absence from wide circulation, one of the decade's hidden treasures, as well. Holland and Kopp conducted their affairs with a devil-may-care brazenness that frequently got them into difficulties with network censorship, but that did little to affect the intense, runaway-train pacing that made even the show's weakest gags come over like gangbusters. The result was a unique blend of comic chaos that, for the most part, has remained the province of this one-of-a-kind series, despite efforts by other producers (including Kopp himself) to replicate it. Very rarely has the no-holds-barred school of animated parody and satire had a better showcase than here.

***ELLEN'S ACRES* (2006–2007)**

STUDIO: Animation Collective

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATOR: Larry Schwarz

DIRECTOR: Stephen Moverley

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Emily Currao (Ellen), Marc Thompson (Dad), Evelyn Lanto (Mom), Vibe Jones (Connie), Michael Baley (Cooter)

SYNOPSIS: Five-year-old Ellen, the daughter of rural hotel keepers, is forced to use her imagination to entertain herself and does so effectively.

COMMENTARY: A relatively standard project aimed at preschool audiences. Twenty episodes were produced, with two installments per episode.

***ELLIOT MOOSE* (2000–2001)**

STUDIOS: Nelvana, TV Ontario

DISTRIBUTOR: PBS

CREATORS: Andrea Beck (characters), Jeff Mackay (series format)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Michael Hirsh, Patrick Loubert, Clive Smith

PRODUCER: Marianne Culbert

DIRECTORS: Steve Wright, Michael McNamara, Charles Bastien

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Charles Schott, Alisa Walton, Heidimarie Guggie, Stephen LaFrenie, and Mark Wallace (Specific roles unknown)

SYNOPSIS: In a child's playroom, the stuffed toys assume sentient life when the child is absent and embark on various flights of fancy.

COMMENTARY: Largely a live-action puppet show with animated inserts and based on creator Beck's long-running children's book series. Besides the title character, the cast also included Socks (a monkey), Amy (an anteater), Beaverton (a beaver—naturally), Paisley (a bear), Snowy and Puff (bear cubs), and Lionel (a lion—obviously—with an appropriately regal bearing).

ELOISE (2006–2007)

STUDIOS: Film Roman, Handmade Films, Anchor Bay

DISTRIBUTORS: Starz Kids, Family Cable Network

CREATORS: Kay Thompson, Hillary Knight

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Thomas Adelman, Morris Berger, Stephen Brown, Sidney Clifton, Ted Green, Scott Greenberg, John Hyde, Ken Lipman, Patrick Meehan

PRODUCER: Malisa Caroselli

DIRECTOR: Wesley Archer

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Mary Mouser (Eloise), Lynn Redgrave (Nanny), Tim Curry (Mr. Salamone), Kathleen Gati (Mrs. Thornton)

SYNOPSIS: Eloise, a young girl, lives at the affluent Plaza Hotel in New York City, where she inadvertently causes a lot of trouble.

COMMENTARY: Based on the long-running children's book series written by Thompson and illustrated by Knight, this program was faithful to the design scheme and characterization of the source, as would be expected, but did little to elaborate or expand on them. The series had little merit beyond its visual quality, as the property was much better suited to live action than animation for adaptation, as some later live-action adaptations would demonstrate.

EL TIGRE: THE ADVENTURES OF MANNY RIVERA
(2007–2008)

STUDIO/DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

CREATORS/EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Sandra Equiha, Jorge Gutierrez

DIRECTORS: Dave Thomas, Gabe Swarr

WRITERS: Scott Kreamer, Doug Langdale, Scott M. Gimple, Rob Humphrey, John Behnke, Tracy Berna, Brandon Sawyer, Sean Szeles, Dave Thomas, Gabe Swarr, Jorge Gutierrez, Henry Gilroy

VOICE ACTORS: Alannah Ubach (Manny Rivera/El Tigre), Grey DeLisle (Frida Suarez), Eric Bauza (Rodolfo Rivera/White Pantera), Carlos Alazraqui (Grandpapi Rivera/Puma Loco/El Tarantula), Charlie Adler (Mano Negra), Jeff Bennett (Sergio/Senor Siniestro), John DiMaggio (El Oso/General Chaputza), Candi Milo (Zoe Aves/Black Cevero/Ms. Chichita/Teacher), Richard Horvitz (Diego/Dr. Chipotle), Rene Mujica (Titanium Titan), Susan Silo (Sartanna of the Dead), Daran Norris (Officer Emiliano Suarez), April Stewart (Maria Rivera)

SYNOPSIS: In crime-laden Miracle City, young Manny Rivera assumes the superheroic identity of El Tigre to deal with the local evildoers.

COMMENTARY: An impressive though short-lived project that managed to successfully wed the superhero genre with a Hispanic tinge rarely seen in a field that remains largely Caucasian in nature. It helped immensely that the series was developed and produced by Latinos (Equiha and Gutierrez) because it served to be much more of a genuine celebration of Hispanic life, art, and culture than it would have been otherwise. The gritty urban ambience of the program's setting (modeled on Mexico City, where Gutierrez had grown up) added another element of intrigue, while DeLisle, as the title character's

comrade-in-arms, the black sheep in a family of law enforcers, was the main standout among the well-cast voice actors. There have been very few of these kinds of programs in the history of television animation—there should be more of them.

Gutierrez has since expanded his unique visual and storytelling approach into theatrical animation with the acclaimed CGI feature *The Book of Life*, where visual ideas and concepts from this series are strongly echoed.

***EMERGENCY + 4* (1973–1976)**

STUDIOS: Mark VII, Fred Calvert, Universal

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

CREATOR/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Jack Webb

PRODUCERS: Fred Calvert, Michael Caffey, Janis Diamond

DIRECTOR: Michael Caffey

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Kevin Tighe (Roy DeSoto), Randolph Mantooth (John Gage), Sarah Kennedy (Sally/Carol Harper), David Joliffe (Matthew Harper), Donald Fullilove (Jason Phillips), Peter Haas (Randy Alrich)

SYNOPSIS: The members of Squad 51 of the Fire Department of Los Angeles County are called in to duty when emergency situations require their involvement.

COMMENTARY: *Emergency* (NBC 1972–1977) was a popular live-action television series that enacted the scenario noted in the synopsis through five seasons of original production and a long afterlife in syndicated reruns and DVD issues. As with some other animated adaptations from this time, this spin-off came about due to the fact that children represented a large chunk of the live program's audience. Tighe and Mantooth were the only members of the live cast to reprise their parts in the animated version; here, they were joined by four children (hence the title change), as well as some examples of that television-animation stereotype, funny animals. The program's departure from the schedule was as expedient as its emergence on it; it was canceled when it appeared the live one was doomed in the same way, although the latter ended up continuing for another year afterward.

***THE EMPEROR'S NEW SCHOOL* (2006–2008)**

STUDIO: Disney

DISTRIBUTORS: Disney, ABC

CREATOR: Mark Dindal

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Roberts Gannaway

DIRECTORS: David Knott, Howy Parkins

WRITERS: Kevin Campbell, Ed Scharlach, Mark Dindal

VOICE ACTORS: J. P. Manoux (Kuzco), Jessica DiCicco (Malina), Fred Tatasciore (Pacha), Wendie Malick (Chica/Others), Shane Baumel (Tipo), Eartha Kitt (Yzma), Patrick Warburton (Kronk Pepikrankenitz), Curtis Armstrong (Mr. Moleguaco), Bob Bergen (Bucky), Rip Taylor (Royal Record Keeper)

SYNOPSIS: Vain Incan emperor-in-waiting Kuzco attends high school until such time as he is felt to be mature enough to assume his responsibilities.

COMMENTARY: A prequel to the 2000 Disney feature film *The Emperor's New Groove*, where the setting and many of the characters originated. Kitt, who won an Emmy for her work, was the main holdover from the film's voice cast, which featured David Spade as Kuzco and John Goodman as Pacha. Any charm the Dickensian premise of self-improvement the film had was obliterated by the series restructuring it in a derivative high school format, though Kitt's dramatically high-kicking villainess and Warburton as her boneheaded henchman enlivened the show at times. However, overall, this was another example of Disney's tacit (and smug) assumption that *everybody* likes *all* their movies, and *everybody* would also enjoy seeing characters *from* those movies in a television show—when this was hardly the case at all, especially here.

ENCHANTED TALES (1995)

STUDIO: Sony Wonder Entertainment

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated (1997)

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: A package of programs based on mythology, fairy tales, and classic literature, done in a serviceable but derivative manner. The series was originally released as a series of videocassettes in 1995 prior to its brief syndication run.

ERKY PERKY (2006–2009)

STUDIOS: Ambience, CCI

DISTRIBUTORS: VOOM (United States), Animania HD (United States)

CREATOR: David Webster

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Michael Boughen, Christopher Mapp, Matthew Street, Arnie Zipursky, Lisa Fitzpatrick

PRODUCERS: David Webster, Mandy Fanning, Kristine Klok

DIRECTORS: David Webster, Tim Golsby Smith, Cameron Chittock

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Jason Barr (Erky Windsor), Neil Crone (Perky Rosendahl), Adrian Truss (Cecil), Judy Marshak (Mad Margret), Melissa Shaw (Sajuica), Ron Rubin (Frenzel), Keith Knight (Moldy Van Oldy), Annick Obonsawin (Stinks), Diana Brooke (Delils), Carter Hayden (Boof), Andrew Pifko (Grand Armandor)

SYNOPSIS: After accidentally leaving their home in a hot dog stand to relocate to a house, insects Erky and Perky try to establish a social position in their new residence.

COMMENTARY: A Canadian–Australian coproduction that stressed derivative plotting and gross-out humor (as represented by one character being named “Stinks”) in its narratives in a way that its good CGI graphics could not possibly compensate for. This was a series that tended to fill its space on the schedule uneventfully without making a lot of public waves, which was all that was seemingly desired from it.

EVIL CON CARNE (2003–2004)

See *Grim and Evil*/*Evil Con Carne*/*The Grim Adventures of Billy and Mandy*.

THE EWOKS (AND RELATED SERIES)***The Ewoks* (1985–1986)**

STUDIOS: Lucasfilm, Nelvana

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATORS: George Lucas, Lawrence Kasdan

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Miki Herman

PRODUCERS: Michael Hirsh, Patrick Loubert, Clive Smith, Lenore Hume

DIRECTORS: Ken Stephenson, Mike Fallows, Gord Stanfield, John Collin

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Jim Henshaw (Wicket), John Stocker (Widdle/Hoom/Dulok Scout), Greg Swanson (Weechee/Jinda Boy), Eric Peterson (Teebo/Murgoob), Paul Chato (Pabloob), Richard Donat (Deej), Nonnie Griffin (Shodu), Leanne Coppen (Winda/Baby Nippet), Cree Summer Francks (Princess Knessa), Taborah Johnson (Latarah), Doug Chamberlain (Logray), George Buza (Chief Chirpa/Lumat/Nah-Kee), Pam Hyatt (Aunt Bozzie), Michael Fantini (Baby Wiley), Paulina Gillis (Ashma), Don McManus (Chukah-Trok/Bondo), Antony Parr (Erphram), Pauline Rennie (Kaink), Ron James (Mring), Hadley Kay (Ubel/Shaman's Nephew), Rob Cowan (Punt), Jackie Burroughs (Morag), Glori Gage (Singing Maiden), Alan Fawcett (Trebla), Desmond Ellis (Rock Wizard), Joe Matheson (Zut), Diane Polley (Dobah), Myra Fried (Hoona), Dan Hennessey (King Corneesh/Trome 1), Meleny Brown (Urgana), Don Francks (Dulok Shaman), Marvin Goldhar (Trome 2), Peter Blais (Trome 3)

***The Ewoks and Star Wars Droids Adventure Hour* (1986)**

STUDIOS: Lucasfilm, Nelvana

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATORS: George Lucas, Lawrence Kasdan

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Miki Herman

PRODUCERS: Michael Hirsh, Patrick Loubert, Clive Smith, Lenore Hume

DIRECTORS: Ken Stephenson, Mike Fallows, Gord Stanfield, John Collin

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Jim Henshaw (Wicket), John Stocker (Widdle/Hoom/Dulok Scout), Greg Swanson (Weechee/Jinda Boy), Eric Peterson (Teebo/Murgoob), Paul Chato (Pabloob), Richard Donat (Deej), Nonnie Griffin (Shodu), Leanne Coppen (Winda/Baby Nippet), Cree Summer Francks (Princess Knessa), Taborah Johnson (Latarah), Doug Chamberlain (Logray), George Buza (Chief Chirpa/Lumat/Nah-Kee), Pam Hyatt (Aunt Bozzie), Michael Fantini (Baby Wiley), Paulina Gillis (Ashma), Don McManus (Chukah-Trok/Bondo), Antony Parr (Erphram), Pauline Rennie (Kaink), Ron James (Mring), Hadley Kay (Ubel/Shaman's Nephew), Rob Cowan (Punt), Jackie Burroughs (Morag), Glori Gage (Singing Maiden), Alan Fawcett (Trebla), Desmond Ellis (Rock Wizard), Joe Matheson (Zut), Diane Polley (Dobah), Myra Fried (Hoona), Dan Hennessey (King Corneesh/Trome 1), Meleny Brown (Urgana), Don Francks (Dulok Shaman), Marvin Goldhar (Trome 2), Peter Blais (Trome 3), Anthony Daniels (C-3PO), Graham Haley (R2-D2)

The All-New Ewoks (1986–1987)

STUDIOS: Lucasfilm, Nelvana

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATORS: George Lucas, Lawrence Kasdan

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Miki Herman

PRODUCERS: Michael Hirsh, Patrick Loubert, Clive Smith, Lenore Hume

DIRECTORS: Ken Stephenson, Mike Fallows, Gord Stanfield, John Collin

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Denny Delk (Wicket), Jim Cranna (Teebo), Sue Murphy (Lalara), Esther Scott (Shodu), Rick Cimino (Logray)

SYNOPSIS: The rodent-like aliens known as the Ewoks live on the moon of Endor, which they defend against the encroachment of the evil Empire.

COMMENTARY: Introduced in the 1983 film *Return of the Jedi* (scripted by Kasdan and Lucas), the third film in the popular *Star Wars* franchise, the Ewoks were then featured in two live-action TV movies before becoming animated characters. The animated program was unremarkable both technically and creatively, but along with its companion piece *Droids*, it marked the first major effort to expand the *Star Wars* "brand" beyond its original live-action film existence, something that would become more commonplace in the 21st century (see *Star Wars: Clone Wars* and *Star Wars: Rebels* for later examples).

The cuter side of the *Star Wars* universe. Lucasfilm Ltd./ABC/Photofest © Lucasfilm Ltd./ABC

EXO-SQUAD (1993)

STUDIO: Universal

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

CREATOR: Jeff Segal

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Will Meugniot

DIRECTORS: Graham Morris, Richard Bowman, Milton Gray, Ron Myrick, Eric Peterson, Kevin Petrilak

WRITERS INCLUDED: Eric Lewald

VOICE ACTORS: Robby Benson (Lieutenant J. T. Walsh); Lisa Ann Beley, Michael Benyaer, Richard Newman, John Payne, Michael Donovan, Teryl Rothery, Rob Morton, Janyce Jaud, Wally Marsh, Garrison Chrisjohn, Karin Konovan, Ken Camroux, Sudsey Clark, Sylvia Biller, and Jason Geffney (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: The soldiers known as the Exo-Squad patrol the skies of space as protection against the villainous, robot-like Neosapiens.

COMMENTARY: A sophisticated science fiction narrative with adult-oriented characterization and plotting, this was the opening gambit in the Universal Family Entertainment Network, the producing studio's attempt to copy Disney's success in the syndication market (series creator Segal was, at the time, head of Universal's animation division). Unfortunately, the backstory was more complicated and the plotting more labyrinthine than the majority of action-adventure-oriented syndicated programs were at the time, which caused most viewers to stop following it. The gradual decline of syndication as a programming vehicle for television animation in the 1990s didn't help matters any in regards to gaining a popular following.

EXTREME DINOSAURS (1997)

STUDIOS: DIC, Bohbot

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Andy Heyward

DIRECTOR: Kurt Weldon

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Scott McNeil (T-Bone), Gary Chalk (Bad Rap), Lee Tockar (Haxx), Sam Kouth (Stegz), Cusse Mankuma (Spike), Jason Gray Stanford (Bullzeye), Terry Klassen (Spittor), Louise Vallance (Chedra), Blu Mankuma (Hardrock), Marcy Goldberg (Dr. Becky Scarwell)

SYNOPSIS: A quartet of verbally and muscularly enhanced dinosaurs emerge in our time as a result of a time warp in order to defeat a group of evil similarly designed raptors.

COMMENTARY: The *extreme* in the title was apt, considering how extremely derivative its concept was, borrowing chiefly from *Jurassic Park* and *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* (q.v.). However, it managed a two-season run of 52 episodes, due to being scheduled protectively within the confines of syndicator Bohbot's "Kids Network" umbrella.**EXTREME GHOSTBUSTERS** (1997)See *The Real Ghostbusters* (and related series).

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***THE FABULOUS FUNNIES* (1978–1979)**

STUDIO: Filmation

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

CREATORS: Russell Myers (*Broom Hilda*), V. T. Hamlin (*Alley Oop*), Ernie Bushmiller (*Nancy*), Rudolf Dirks (*The Katzenjammer Kids*), Tom Ryan (*Tumbleweeds*)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Lou Scheimer, Norman Prescott

PRODUCER: Don Christensen

DIRECTORS: Kay Wright, Ed Friedman, Gwen Wetzler, Marsh Lamore, Lou Zukor

WRITERS: Jim Ryan, Bill Danch, Sam Simon, Buzz Dixon

VOICE ACTORS: June Foray (*Broom Hilda*/*Sluggo*/*Ooola*/*Hans*/*Fritz*), Bob Holt (*Alley Oop*/*Gaylord*/*Foozy*/*Captain*), Jayne Hamil (*Nancy*/*Emmy Lou*), Alan Oppenheimer (*King Guzzle*/*Irwin*/*Inspector*/*Grelber*)

SYNOPSIS: Popular comic strip characters adapted to animation. Featured characters included the eccentric witch *Broom Hilda*; caveman adventurer *Alley Oop*; child pals *Nancy* and *Sluggo*; and the delinquent, German-accented *Katzenjammer Kids*.

COMMENTARY: A logical extension of the premise originally featured in *Archie's TV Funnies* (see *The Archie Show*), this time allowing the strips to rise and fall more on their own merits. For the most part, they were effective adaptations on a visual level. However, the advanced age of most of the properties (*Katzenjammer* dated to 1898, *Alley Oop* and *Nancy* to the 1930s, *Broom Hilda* to 1970) meant that adapting them to the restrictions of television animation in the 1970s required unwelcome compromises to the material that impaired their abilities to tell stories as effectively as they had in the comics. "Tumbleweeds" was withdrawn from the series after the first episode aired because the studio failed to properly secure adaptation rights from creator Ryan.

***THE FAIRLY ODDPARENTS* (2001–2006, 2007–PRESENT)**

STUDIOS: Frederator, Nickelodeon (early episodes); Billionfold, Frederator, Nickelodeon (later episodes)

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

CREATOR: Butch Hartman

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Butch Hartman, Fred Seibert, Scott Fellows

PRODUCERS: Steve Marmel, Ray De Laurentis, Randy Saba, Bob Boyle, George Goodchild

DIRECTORS INCLUDE: Butch Hartman, Gary Conrad, Jaime Diaz, John Fountain, Sarah Frost, Larry Leichliter, Ken Bruce, Wincat Alcala

WRITERS INCLUDE: Butch Hartman, Stephen Banks, Tracy Berna, Spencer Green, Jaime Diaz, Michael Bell, Steve Marmel, Tim O'Rourke, Jack Thomas, Joel Zimmer, Kevin Arrieta, Will Schiffrin, Cindy Spackman, Kevin Sullivan

VOICE ACTORS: Tara Strong (Timmy Turner/Poof/Princess Mandie/Blonda Fairywinkle, first appearance/Goldie Goldenglow/Tad/Tommy Turner/Tammy Turner/Giggiepie #1/Overlord Glee/Britney Britney/Vicky's Mom), Daran Norris (Cosmo/Mr. Turner/Jorgen Von Strangle/Anti-Cosmo/April Fool, later episodes/Nana Boom Boom/Papa Cosma/Dyno Dad), Susan Blakeslee (Wanda/Mrs. Turner/Anti-Wanda/Blonda Fairywinkle, later appearances/Mighty Mom/H2Olga), Grey DeLisle (Vicky/Tootie/Tooth Fairy/Veronica/Chad/Molly/Golden Locks/Spatula Woman/Tom Sawyer/Giggiepie #2/Principal Geraldine Waxelplax), Matthew Taylor (Sparky, from season 9 on), Kari Wahlgren (Chloe Carmichael, from season 10 on), Frankie Muniz (Chester McBadabat, 2001–2003), Jason Marsden (Chester McBadabat, 2003–present/Imaginary Gary/Ricky/Dunsworth), Ibrahim Muhammad (A. J., 2001–2003), Gary Gray (A. J., 2003–present), Carlos Alazraqui (Mr. Denzel Crocker/Juandissimo Magnifico/Simon Sparklefield/Billy Crystal Ball/Poof Everwish/Fairy Reassigner/Super Bike/Jeff/Mayor of Dimmesdale/Sheldon Dinkelberg/Mrs. Crocker/Mr. Tang, later episodes), Faith Abraham (Francis), Eric Bauza (Foop), Ben Stein (Pixies), Dee Bradley Baker (Bronze Kneecap/Remy Buxaplenty/Binky/Abdul/Elmer/Sanjay/Billy Gates/Brass Knuckles/Brad Cuspidor/Dale Dimmadome), Jay Leno (Crimson Chin/Negachin), Gilbert Gottfried (Dr. Bender, early episodes), Butch Hartman (Dr. Bender, later episodes/Dr. Rip Studwell, early episodes/Erik/Mr. Tang, early episodes/Bouncer, later episodes), Kevin Michael Richardson (Dark Laser/Santa Claus, later appearances/Arnold Schwartzengermann/Morgan Freeman/A. J.'s Dad/Bouncer, first appearance), Norm Macdonald (Norm the Genie), Tom Kenny (Cupid), Brian Dunkleman (April Fool, first appearance), Tony Sirico (Big Daddy Fairywinkle), Dana Carvey (Schnozmo), Jane Carr (Mama Cosma), Jim Ward (Dr. Rip Studwell, later appearances/Chet Ubetcha/Doug Dimmadome/Sylvester Calzone/Vicky's Dad), Mary Hart (Fairy Hart), Bob Goen (Bob Glimmer), Rob Paulsen (Fairy Mason/Gilded Arches/Mark Chang/King Grippulon/Bucky McBadabat/Mr. Birkenbake/Mr. Ed Leadly), Jackie Mason (Harvey Sandman), Robert Costanzo (Easter Bunny), Tom Arnold (Santa Claus, first appearance), Laraine Newman (Mother Nature/Queen Jipjorrulac), Jeff Bennett (Father Time/Catman, later episodes), Dionne Quan (Trixie Tang), Charlie Schlatter (Dwight), Adam West (Catman, first appearance), James Arnold Taylor (Crash Nebula), Carolyn Lawrence (Miss Sunshine/Ms. Doombringer), Chris Kirkpatrick (Chip Skylark/Skip Sparklypants), Patton Oswalt ("Crimson Chin" Writer), Daisy Carson (A. J.'s Mom), Brendan Fraser (Turbo Thunder)

SYNOPSIS: Young Timmy Turner uses the magical abilities of his fairy godparents Cosmo and Wanda to help him escape the drudgery of his everyday life, only to discover that most of the things he wishes for have extremely negative side effects that he must counterattack swiftly.



A witty comedy with much magic attached. Nickelodeon Network/Photofest © Nickelodeon Network

COMMENTARY: A breakneck-paced fantastic farce, fully exploiting creator Hartman's wonderful comedic timing, world-building skill, and adept action staging. Somewhat fittingly, the program has long endured as one of its network's biggest hits, although in the later episodes, the magic has started wearing thin through mechanical repetition, despite the effort to bring in new blood in the form of new lead characters. Still, the show's format, ideas, and concepts were tailor-made for television animation in the 2000s (later efforts to redo the show in live action reinforced that belief), and at its best, the series reflects television animation at its most mobile, irreverent, imaginative, exuberant, and joyous.

FAMILY CLASSIC THEATRE/FAMILY CLASSIC TALES

Family Classic Theatre (1971)

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, Air Programs International

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

Family Classic Tales (1975)

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, Air Programs International

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: Not a series but the umbrella term for a group of weekly 60-minute special offerings, chiefly of classic literature, with Hanna-Barbera and the Australian studio Air Programs alternating production duties. After their network exposure, many of the programs would be revived for syndication and cable broadcasts.

FAMILY DOG (1993)

STUDIOS: Amblin, Universal, Warner Brothers

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATOR: Brad Bird

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Steven Spielberg, Tim Burton, Dennis Klein

PRODUCERS: Chuck Richardson, Steven Hodgins

DIRECTORS: Chris Buck, Clive Smith, Robin Budd, Steve Whitehouse

WRITERS: Dennis Klein, Paul Dini, Sherri Stoner

VOICE ACTORS: Martin Mull (Skip Binford), Molly Cheek (Bev Binford), Zak Huxtable Epstein (Billy Binford), Cassie Cole (Buffy Binford), Danny Mann (Dog)

SYNOPSIS: The Binford family's life is enlivened by the antics of their pet dog, whose optimistic nature is a study in contrast to their pessimistic one.

COMMENTARY: One of the biggest fiascos in television animation history, on both a creative and a commercial level, in spite (but, in many ways, because of) the high-powered talent behind the project. Bird had originally developed the characters in a short film that had aired on Spielberg's NBC anthology series *Amazing Stories* in 1987, and this served as the genesis for what the series was supposed to have been. However, the series was undone by its focus on cheap-shot and scatological humor, highly unlikable human characters, bad production values, a "show runner" (Klein) with no experience with either animation or dogs (as he himself admitted), and other questionable decisions made in the midst of production. (Mull, for example, was a last-minute replacement for Doug Coffin, who was originally cast in the role of Mr. Binford, because the former was a well-known celebrity and the latter was not.) The result was a series that, somewhat unfortunately but in most respects deservedly, lasted only for barely a month on the air. Those responsible for the project had done much better work in both theatrical and television animation before (Spielberg and Burton) and would do much better work after (Bird).

FAMILY GUY (1999–2002, 2005–PRESENT)

STUDIOS: Fuzzy Door, 20th Century Fox

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX

CREATOR: Seth MacFarlane

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Seth MacFarlane, David Zuckerman, Daniel Palladino, David Goodman, Chris Sheridan, Danny Smith, Mark Hentemann, Steve Callaghan, Alec Sulkin, Wellesley Wild

PRODUCERS: Shannon Smith, Julius Sharpe, Kara Vallow, Steve Marmel, Sherry Gunther, Alex Borstein

DIRECTORS INCLUDE: Michael Dante DiMartino, Neil Affleck, Jack Dyer, Swinton Scott III, Gavin Dell, Dan Povenmire, Glen Hill, Bert Ring, Scott Wood, Rob Renzetti, Brian Hogan, Peter Shin, Pete Michels, Sarah Frost, James Purdum, Seth Kearsley, Greg Colton, Kurt Dumas, Chuck Klein, Domenic Polcino, Zac Moncrief, Cyndi Tang, John Holmquist, Julius Wu, Brian Illes, Mike Kim, Jerry Langford, Dominic Bianchi, Joseph Lee, Bob Bowen, Joe Vaux, Steve Robertson

WRITERS INCLUDE: Seth MacFarlane, Chris Sheridan, Danny Smith, Neil Goldman, Garrett Donovan, Mike Barker, Matt Weitzman, Ricky Blitt, Gary Janetti, Craig Hoffman, Steve Callaghan, Mike Henry, Dave Collard, Ken Goin, Michael Shipley, Jim Bernstein, Mark Hentemann, Alec Sulkin, Wellesley Wild, Alex Borstein, Patrick Meighan, John Viener, Tom Devaney, Kirker Butler, Cherry Chevapravatdumrong, David Goodman, Andrew Goldberg, Matt Fleckenstein, Alex Carter, Brian Scully, Spencer Porter, Dave Ihlenfeld, David Wright, Mike Diselits, Anthony Blasucci, Julius Sharpe, Artie Johan, Shawn Ries, Teresa Hsiao, Ted Jessup, Kristin Long, Travis Bowe, Kevin Biggins, Chris Regan

VOICE ACTORS: Seth MacFarlane (Peter Griffin/Stewie Griffin/Brian Griffin/Glenn Quagmire/Tom Tucker/Carter Pewderschmidt/Dr. Elmer Hartman/Others), Alex Borstein (Lois Griffin/Tricia Takanawa/Loretta Brown/Barbara Pewderschmidt/Others), Seth Green (Chris Griffin/Neil Goldman/Others), Lacey Chabert (Meg Griffin, first season, uncredited), Mila Kunis (Meg Griffin), Mike Henry (Cleveland Brown/Mr. John Herbert/Bruce/Others), H. Jon Benjamin (Carl), Alexandra Breckenridge (Various characters), Johnny Brennan (Mort Goldman/Horace), Carrie Fisher (Angela, 2005–2016), Ralph Garman (Various characters), Christine Lakin (Joyce Kinney, 2010–present), Phil LaMarr (Ollie Williams/Judge/Others), Rachel MacFarlane (Olivia/Others), Emily Osment (Various characters, 2012–present), Kevin Michael Richardson (Jerome/Cleveland Brown Jr., 2009–present), Chris Sheridan (Various characters), Danny Smith (Evil Monkey/Al Harrington/Ernie the Giant Chicken/Others), Alec Sulkin (Jesus Christ/Others), Fred Tatasciore (Various characters), Patrick Warburton (Joe Swanson), Jennifer Tilly (Bonnie Swanson), John Viener (Various characters), Adam West (Mayor Adam West), Wally Wingert (Various characters), Lori Alan (Diane Simmons, 1999–2010), Carlos Alazraqui (Mr. Weed), Drew Barrymore (Jillian Russell), Gary Cole (Mr. Shepherd/Others), Butch Hartman (Various characters), Mark Hentemann (Opie/Others), Tara Strong (Various characters), Nicole Sullivan (Muriel Goldman,



TV animation's other great dysfunctional family. Fox Network/Photofest © Fox Network

1999–2008), Mae Whitman (Various characters), Wellesley Wild (Various characters), Lisa Wilhoit (Connie D'Amico, 2001–2013)

SYNOPSIS: Rhode Island–based working-class patriarch Peter Griffin and his dysfunctional relations and friends have a reckless knack for getting into various kinds of trouble.

COMMENTARY: A series that is highly enjoyable at best and extremely loathsome at worst. What elements you as a viewer find enjoyable or loathsome depends on your tolerance of off-color jokes; personal insults bordering on slander; hyperactivity; don't-give-a-damn recklessness; and, above all, the ignorance of any sort of conduct that could even remotely be considered realistic. However, as with its predecessor and contemporary *The Simpsons* (q.v.), the program has been produced with professionalism and care in the writing, directing, and voice acting, and this has negated some of the off-putting elements, though certainly not all of them. In its earliest years, when it was performed at a blisteringly fast pace, even the weakest material seemed to be put over with panache, particularly the regular injections of vinegar into the sentimental nature of popular culture past and present in the parodies presented. In the years since its 2005 resurrection, however, the quality of the program has increasingly declined, in spite of continued popularity. This has been partly due to creator MacFarlane finding other ways to occupy his time beyond the series (such as directing movies [*Ted*, *A Million Ways to Die in*

the West]; recording albums [*Music Is Better Than Words*]; producing other animated series; and, infamously, hosting the Academy Awards in 2013) and partly due to the inevitable breakdown of the program's formula, as happens to all series running past their best-before date. The now-slower pace allows the weaknesses in the work to be more evident than the strengths, but the program's provider seems to be too dependent on the revenue it generates, as with *The Simpsons*, to want to dispose of it at this moment.

MacFarlane originally developed the characters who would make up the show's cast while he was a student at the Rhode Island School of Design. He spent much of the 1990s building up a resume as an animation writer before managing to convince FOX of the viability of his concept, which debuted following the network's telecast of the Super Bowl in 1999. His control of the project, at least in its earliest years, was strong, not only by voicing the majority of the program's leads but also in playing a dominant role in the writing, which often seemed to be done in an "on the fly" manner unusual in television animation. As his interest in and control over the series waned, however, so did its quality. Still, in both incarnations, the program has been blessed with unusually strong and often-arresting writing and acting (particularly MacFarlane's portraits of Peter; mad-genius baby Stewie; and sentient, high-living pet dog Brian) that have helped the program weather creative difficulties other series might have been felled by.

The program was initially canceled in 2002, despite a core loyal fan base, due to a lack of overall ratings. However, the nascent popularity of the program was fully established through reruns on Cartoon Network and sales of DVD issues, which prompted the revival in 2005. A multiple Emmy and Annie winner, it was nominated for Outstanding Comedy Series at the 2009 Emmy ceremony, the first television animation program to be nominated in the category since *The Flintstones* (q.v.) was nominated in the category of Outstanding Program Achievement in The Field of Humor (as it was then known) in 1961. MacFarlane has deservedly won two Emmys and an Annie for his excellent voice acting, and the continued good work of the voice actors as a whole remains one of the program's stellar assets in its declining years.

THE FAMOUS ADVENTURES OF MISTER MAGOO

(1964–1965)

See *Mister Magoo* (and related series).

FANBOY AND CHUM CHUM (2009–2012)

STUDIOS: Frederator, Nickelodeon

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

CREATOR: Eric Robles

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Fred Seibert, Steve Tompkins, Eric Robles

PRODUCERS: Shaun Cashman, Jason Maier

DIRECTORS: Shaun Cashman, Brian Sheesley, Jim Schumann, Russell Calabrese, Eddie Trigueros, Brandon Kruse, Tom King, Ken Mitchroney

WRITERS: Eric Robles, Steve Tompkins, Eric Horsted, Scott Kreamer, Itai Grunfeld, Michael Caine, Stephen Stusarcic, Russ Carney, Ron Corcillo, Jonathan Corben Butler, Kristine Songco, Derek Iversen

VOICE ACTORS: David Hornsby (Fanboy/Mitzi), Nika Futterman (Chum Chum/Others), Jeff Bennett (Boog/Yo/Mr. Hank Muflin/Dollarnator/Man-Arctica/Others), Wyatt Cenac (Lenny/Michael Johnson), Jamie Kennedy (Kyle/Fankleychum), Josh Duhamel (Oz), Steve Tompkins (Janitor Poopatine), Candi Milo (Lupe/Francine/Cher Leader/Miss Olive/Marsha), Nolan North (Thorvald the Red), Estelle Harris (Oz's Mom), Jim Cummings (Professor Flan), Amir Talai (Brizwald Harmounian), Dee Bradley Baker (Precious/Mecha-Tech), Kevin Michael Richardson (Berry), Kari Wahlgren (Nancy Pancy/Others), John DiMaggio (Yum Yum), Scott Grimes (Fanman)

SYNOPSIS: Would-be superheroes Fanboy and Chum Chum bother and annoy the population of Galaxy Hills in their efforts to rid the world of evil in the manner of their fictional idols.

COMMENTARY: The sharp CGI animation featured in the series was well produced, but as with many other productions in that branch of the art form, the technical quality was a brilliant smokescreen for a concept and characters who lacked three dimensions entirely. The title characters, who are so obsessed with superheroics that they wear capes, masks, and cowls on a seemingly 24/7 basis, are as annoying and tiresome to the home audience as they very much are to the other characters. It is unfortunate that such a talented group of writers, directors, and actors were forced to waste their talents on such tripe.

The final episode to be broadcast aired in the summer of 2014, when it had, in fact, been produced three years earlier and had already been issued on DVD. The original pilot episode aired as a segment of *Random! Cartoons* (q.v.).

FANGFACE (1978–1979)

STUDIOS: Ruby-Spears, Filmways

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Joe Ruby, Ken Spears

PRODUCER: Jerry Eisenberg

DIRECTOR: Rudy Larriva

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Jerry Dexter (Sherman Fangworth, a.k.a. Fang), Susan Blu (Kim), Frank Welker (Biff), Bart Braverman (Puggsy)

SYNOPSIS: Due to a curse placed on his family, Sherman Fangworth turns into a werewolf on the occasion of a full moon or even at seeing pictures of the same. He uses this ability to root out crimes, in the company of his friends.

COMMENTARY: A bizarre ersatz *Scooby Doo*, fittingly one of the first productions from the eponymous studio of Ruby and Spears, who had done so much as writers to develop the previous series. It was derivative even in the characterizations—Fang was modeled on Joe E. Ross, while Biff and Puggsy resembled Bowery Boys Leo Gorcey and Huntz Hall, respectively. Save for being the subject of a semiotic analysis in a 1986 book by structural theorists Robert

Hodge and David Tripp, the program was out of sight and mind after its one year on the air, only to reemerge as *Fangface and Fangpuss* in the same studio's *Plastic Man Comedy-Adventure Show* (q.v.) soon afterward.

THE FANTASTIC FOUR (AND RELATED SERIES)

***The Fantastic Four* (1967–1970)**

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATORS: Stan Lee, Jack Kirby

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: Alex Lovy, Lewis Marshall

DIRECTOR: Charles Nichols

WRITERS: Phil Hahn, Jack Hanrahan

VOICE ACTORS: Gerald Mohr (Reed Richards/Mr. Fantastic), Jo Ann Pflug (Sue Storm Richards/Invisible Girl), Paul Frees (Ben Grimm/The Thing/Dr. Doom/Others), Jack Flounders (Johnny Storm/The Human Torch), Don Messick (Various characters)

***The New Fantastic Four* (1978–1979)**

STUDIOS: DePatie-Freleng, Marvel

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

PRODUCERS: David DePatie, Friz Freleng

DIRECTORS: Brad Case, Jack Kirby, Lewis Marshall

WRITERS: Stan Lee, Roy Thomas, Christie Marx, Bob Stitzel, Bob Johnson

VOICE ACTORS: Mike Road (Reed Richards/Mr. Fantastic); Ginny Tyler (Sue Storm Richards/Invisible Girl); Ted Cassidy (Ben Grimm/The Thing); Frank Welker (HER-B); John Stephenson (Dr. Doom); Hal Smith, Dick Tufeld, Don Messick, Gene Moss, Nancy Wible, Joan Gerber, and Vic Perrin (Additional characters)

***The Marvel Action Hour* (*Fantastic Four* segments, 1994)**

STUDIOS: Marvel, New World

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Avi Arad, Stan Lee

PRODUCERS: Tom Tataranowicz, Matthew Edelman

DIRECTOR: Tom Tataranowicz

WRITERS INCLUDED: Ron Friedman, Cydne Clark

VOICE ACTORS: Beau Weaver (Reed Richards/Mr. Fantastic), Lori Alan (Sue Storm Richards/Invisible Girl), Quinton Flynn (Johnny Storm/The Human Torch), Chuck McCann (Ben Grimm/The Thing), Pauline Lomas (Alicia Masters), Brad Garrett (Hydroman), Iona Morris (Madame Medusa), Ron Perlman (Wizard/Hulk), John Rhys Davies (Thor), Edward Albert (The Silver Surfer), Simon Templeton (Dr. Doom, early episodes), Neil Ross (Dr. Doom, later episodes), Richard Grieco (Ghost Rider)

***The Incredible Hulk and Friends* (*Fantastic Four* segments, 1998–1999)**

STUDIOS: Marvel, New World

DISTRIBUTOR: UPN

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Avi Arad, Stan Lee

PRODUCERS: Tom Tataranowicz, Matthew Edelman

DIRECTOR: Tom Tataranowicz

WRITERS INCLUDED: Ron Friedman, Cydne Clark

VOICE ACTORS: Beau Weaver (Reed Richards/Mr. Fantastic), Lori Alan (Sue Storm Richards/Invisible Girl), Quinton Flynn (Johnny Storm/The Human Torch), Chuck McCann (Ben Grimm/The Thing), Pauline Lomas (Alicia Masters), Brad Garrett (Hydroman), Iona Morris (Madame Medusa), Ron Perlman (Wizard/Hulk), John Rhys Davies (Thor), Edward Albert (The Silver Surfer), Simon Templeton (Dr. Doom, early episodes), Neil Ross (Dr. Doom, later episodes), Richard Grieco (Ghost Rider)

The Fantastic Four: World's Greatest Heroes (2006–2009)

STUDIOS: Moonscoop, Marvel, Cartoon Network, M6

DISTRIBUTORS: Cartoon Network, Nickelodeon

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Christophe Di Sabatino, Benoit Di Sabatino, Nicolas Atlan, Avi Arad, Craig Kyle, Eric S. Rollman, Stan Lee, Suzanne Berman, Daniel Lennard

DIRECTOR: Franck Michel

WRITERS: Christopher Yost, Avi Arad, Chris Hicks, Francis Lombard, Bob Forward, Rob Loos, George Taweel, Joseph Kelly, Craig Kyle, Joshua Fine, Len Uhley, Dan Slott, Paul Giacoppo

VOICE ACTORS: Hiro Kanagawa (Reed Richards/Mr. Fantastic), Lara Gilchrist (Susan Storm/Invisible Woman), Christopher Jacot (Johnny Storm/The Human Torch), Brian Dobson (Ben Grimm/The Thing/Flat Man), Samuel Vincent (HER-B/Trapster/Peter Parker/Spider-Man), Paul Dobson (Dr. Doom/The Mole Man/Captain Ultra), Sunita Prasad (Alicia Masters), Mark Acheson (Attuma), Michael Adamthwaite (Namor, a.k.a. Sub-Mariner), Don Brown (Henry Gyrich), Trevor Devall (Diablo), Michael Dobson (Ronan the Accuser/Mr. Bonner Davis), Brian Drummond (Agent Pratt), Laura Drummond (Courtney Bonner Davis), Mark Gibbon (Hulk), Jonathan Holmes (Wizard), Andrew Kavadas (Dr. Bruce Banner), David Kaye (Tony Stark/Iron Man), Terry Klassen (Impossible Man), Scott McNeil (Annihilus), Colin Murdock (Willie Lumpkin), Peter New (Rupert the Geek), John Novak (Supreme Intelligence), Mark Oliver (Commander Kl'rt/Super-Skrull), John Payne (Dr. Hank Pym/Ant-Man), Alvin Sanders (Philip Master/Puppet Master), Rebecca Shoichet (Jennifer Walters/She-Hulk/Squirrel Girl), Venus Terzo (Lucia Von Bardas), Lee Tockar (Terminus)

SYNOPSIS: After gaining superpowers from an encounter with cosmic radiation, four scientists from Earth become the planet's defenders against evil forces.

COMMENTARY: Arguably the most famous superhero team of them all, this memorable quartet made their debut in an eponymous comic book from Marvel in 1961, written and edited by Lee and drawn by Kirby, as they would be for most of their most memorable subsequent adventures in that format. It was an innovative work because the nature of the writing defied many of the established conventions in characterization in comic books up to that time. Rather than being beknighted, almost godly figures, as so many of their



The second TV edition of Marvel's legendary superhero team. NBC/Photofest © NBC

predecessors had been, the Four retained many of their human flaws and foibles after gaining their powers, and those self-same powers oftentimes made their lives worse rather than better. This groundbreaking approach would, over time, come to revolutionize the telling of superhero stories in all media by making the characters more multidimensional and more able to establish pure emotional connections with the readers, thus ensuring the latter's loyalty to those characters. It would remain a hallmark of all the heroes Marvel would introduce across the 1960s and give the company a unique identity—the scrappy underdog forever nipping at the heels of its stodgy older rival, DC. Marvel's influence on superheroics in television animation remains large, both through continued production of series based on its characters and through the continual creation of original superhero characters whose conflicted personalities are as much a feature of their development as their superpowers themselves.

Television animation soon beckoned for the Four after their creation, given that genre's focus on superheroic action in the 1960s. While Hanna-Barbera was, because of obvious production restrictions, unable to duplicate Lee and Kirby's complex, labyrinthine plotting from the comics, their 1967 adaptation of the Four was well produced in every other respect, and gave the team welcome exposure to those previously unfamiliar with their comic-book existence. The voice actors were unusually well cast, with Frees's

Brooklyn-accented Thing standing out, and this helped compensate for the limitations of the animation process of the time. Unfortunately, the erroneous concerns about violence in the mass media ultimately marginalized the series, as it did others from the same time period.

The late-1970s edition from DePatie-Freleng was structured in a more sedated fashion, with limited displays of violence, but it had the advantage of having cocreators Lee and Kirby onboard to make things work. The Human Torch was absent from this version on account of the fact that Marvel was, at the time, developing a solo live-action project for him in collaboration with Universal that ultimately failed to materialize. In his place was a robot known as Human Electronic Robot—B Model, or HER-B for short. The quartet now traveled from place to place in a souped-up automobile that was called, somewhat predictably, the Fantastacar.

The 1994 resurrection, done in the wake of the success of *X-Men* (q.v.) as an animated series, was done as part of *The Marvel Action Hour*, where the group was paired in separate but interrelated adventures with another of Marvel's flawed heroes, Iron Man. The episodes were later repeated as a segment of *The Incredible Hulk and Friends*, as noted previously. The revival of interest in the Four following a popular live-action feature film of their saga made in the early 2000s led to another serviceable but unremarkable adaptation to animation in 2006. This version, unlike the others, was not a strict chapter-and-verse reworking of existing comic book stories and themes but a genuine effort to present somewhat original versions of those stories and themes, although it didn't always succeed in doing so.

FANTASTIC MAX (1988)

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, Kalisto, Booker

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

CREATOR: Mike Young

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: Dave Edwards, John Parkinson

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS INCLUDED: Mike Young, Kelly Wood

VOICE ACTORS: Ben Ganger (Fantastic Max), Nancy Cartwright (FX), Gregg Berger (A. B. Sitter), Gail Matthius (Mom), Paul Eiding (Dad), Elizabeth Harnois (Zoe)

SYNOPSIS: A preschooler from Earth gains superpowers and some alien companions after accidentally hitching a ride on a spaceship.

COMMENTARY: A segment of *The Fantastical World of Hanna-Barbera* (q.v.) that did its job of filling space adequately and at a fast clip. Perhaps the most interesting thing about it, and clearly meant to underscore who the main audience for this show was, was the fact that Max derived much of his powers and abilities from the diaper and safety pin he wore on a regular basis.

FANTASTIC VOYAGE (1968–1970)

STUDIOS: Filmation, 20th Century Fox

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Lou Scheimer, Norman Prescott

DIRECTOR: Hal Sutherland

WRITERS INCLUDED: Ken Sobol

VOICE ACTORS: Marvin Miller (Corby Birdwell), Jane Webb (Erica Stone), Ted Knight (Commander Jonathan Kidd/Professor Carter)

SYNOPSIS: The Combined Miniature Defense Force, a group of government scientists, shrinks down to microscopic size to investigate otherwise inaccessible elements of the universe, such as the human body.

COMMENTARY: Based on the 1966 feature film of the same name, which focused strictly on using the premise to explore a human bloodstream. The series' major concession to the demands of television animation of the period was the development of a regular villain, the turbaned, mysterious Guru, who was responsible for much of the events that caused the team to shrink down in the first place.

FAT ALBERT AND THE COSBY KIDS/THE NEW FAT ALBERT SHOW/ADVENTURES OF FAT ALBERT AND THE COSBY KIDS

Fat Albert and the Cosby Kids (1972–1979)

STUDIO: Filmmation

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATOR/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: William H. Cosby Jr.

PRODUCERS: Lou Scheimer, Norman Prescott, Arthur Nadel

DIRECTORS: Hal Sutherland, Lou Zukor, Don Christensen, Bob Arkwright, Don Townsley, John Armstrong, Kent Butterworth, Ed Friedman, Lou Kachivas, Marsh Lamore, Ernie Schmidt, Kay Wright

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Bill Cosby (Fat Albert/Mushmouth/Bill/Mudfoot/Brown Hornet), Michael Gray (Fat Albert, singing voice), Lou Scheimer (Dumb Donald/Stinger/Legal Eagle), Jan Crawford (Russell/Bucky/Moe), Gerald Edwards (Weird Harold/Gabby), Eric Suter (Rudy), Jay Scheimer (Miss Berry/Mrs. Breyfogle/Miss Wucher), Erika Scheimer (Tweeterbelle/Margene)

The New Fat Albert Show (1979–1984)

STUDIO: Filmmation

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATOR/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: William H. Cosby Jr.

PRODUCERS: Lou Scheimer, Norman Prescott, Arthur Nadel

DIRECTORS: Hal Sutherland, Lou Zukor, Don Christensen, Bob Arkwright, Don Townsley, John Armstrong, Kent Butterworth, Ed Friedman, Lou Kachivas, Marsh Lamore, Ernie Schmidt, Kay Wright

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Bill Cosby (Fat Albert/Mushmouth/Bill/Mudfoot/Brown Hornet), Michael Gray (Fat Albert, singing voice), Lou Scheimer (Dumb Donald/Stinger/Legal Eagle), Jan Crawford (Russell/Bucky/Moe), Gerald Edwards (Weird Harold/Gabby), Eric Suter (Rudy), Jay Scheimer (Miss Berry/Mrs. Breyfogle/Miss Wucher), Erika Scheimer (Tweeterbelle/Margene)

Adventures of Fat Albert and the Cosby Kids (1984)

STUDIO: Filmmation

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

CREATOR/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: William H. Cosby Jr.

PRODUCERS: Lou Scheimer, Norman Prescott, Arthur Nadel

DIRECTORS: Hal Sutherland, Lou Zukor, Don Christensen, Bob Arkwright, Don Townsley, John Armstrong, Kent Butterworth, Ed Friedman, Lou Kachivas, Marsh Lamore, Ernie Schmidt, Kay Wright

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Bill Cosby (Fat Albert/Mushmouth/Bill/Mudfoot/Brown Hornet), Michael Gray (Fat Albert, singing voice), Lou Scheimer (Dumb Donald/Stinger/Legal Eagle), Jan Crawford (Russell/Bucky/Moe), Gerald Edwards (Weird Harold/Gabby), Eric Suter (Rudy), Jay Scheimer (Miss Berry/Mrs. Breyfogle/Miss Wucher), Erika Scheimer (Tweeterbelle/Margene)

SYNOPSIS: In an unnamed American city, rotund African American boy Fat Albert and his friends learn life lessons as a result of getting into various kinds of scrapes.



Hey, hey, hey—it's a legendary, groundbreaking show. Bill Cosby/Filmmation Associates/Photofest © Bill Cosby/Filmmation Associates

COMMENTARY: Comedian/actor Bill Cosby, one of the most prominent and influential African American men in the late 20th century, started his career as a stand-up comic before becoming a successful actor in films and, especially, television (notably with *I Spy* in the 1960s and *The Cosby Show* in the 1980s and 1990s), as well as a prolific commercial pitchman, before having his career derailed by numerous allegations of sexual assault in the 2010s. This now-iconic animated program was an outgrowth of a major component of Cosby's stand-up act: his humorous recollections of growing up in poverty in an African American neighborhood in Philadelphia and particularly his interaction with his equally humorously depicted friends (Fat Albert, whose real surname was Robertson, being one). However, it might have been entirely ordinary were it not for the unusual stress Cosby put on developing an educational component within the narratives, which was largely unprecedented in television animation at the time of the program's debut but would, for most of the 1970s and 1980s, become the genre's structural norm, in part thanks to this program's success.

That Cosby would have stressed educational material was not a surprise, considering he was, at the time, studying for a doctoral degree in education, which he would earn at the end of the 1970s. But Cosby the educator made sure Cosby the entertainer was also present to provide the hook needed to attract children to the show. Not only did he voice most of the lead characters (he won an Emmy for his work on the episode "The Secret"), but he also appeared in live-action form in the main title sequence and various linking segments, serving as a guide to the animated adventures of his characters as well as to reiterate the morals being discussed within them. Morality was further underlined in the characterizations. Fat Albert was the group's moral center, for instance, while Rudy was depicted as an arrogant braggart who was clearly meant to be a bad example.

Significantly, the program was also one of the first to constructively examine race relations, doing so well in spite of the limitations of its format. There was a definite lack of the sort of condescension that occurred in media depictions of African American people before and an equally definite attempt to define the characters by their individual personalities rather than their joint racial background. As with the introduction of educational themes, this was a groundbreaking idea that would have significant influence over time on the literal and metaphorical portrayal of difference of any kind within television animation narratives. The program was equally effective in confronting urban living issues, such as drug dealing and gang violence, that other shows would not have touched, simply because Cosby truthfully believed the show's format could present them in such a way that his audience could understand them.

Unfortunately, while the series demonstrated great popularity, only a small number of continually rotated episodes were produced while the program aired on CBS, chiefly because the network displayed a penurious attitude toward the producers by not being willing to advance money for new episode production on a regular basis. Consequently, it was not until the program entered syndication in the 1980s that a fuller production schedule began. While some connection with the past was maintained with such

installments as the “Scared Straight” and themed episode “Busted,” the characters were increasingly divorced from their original black background. Some of that was balanced out by the introduction of the comic superhero known as the Brown Hornet, who remains one of the few African American characters of this type who was not limited by his racial background but was a genuinely entertaining and enlightening figure on his own.

While it may not have appeared to be so on face value, *Fat Albert* was a genuinely game-changing program for television animation, one whose influence continues to be felt, if only indirectly, on a whole host of programs that followed in its wake. As Cosby himself noted in the program’s opening credits, “If you’re not careful, you might learn something before it’s done.” He was certainly correct when it came to the following generation of television animators, who definitely did.

FATHERHOOD (2004–2005)

STUDIOS: Smiley, Toon City, Nickelodeon

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

CREATORS: Bill Cosby, Charles Kipps

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Charles Kipps

PRODUCERS: Jamie Mitchell, Mo Willems, Bill Cosby, Marc Seal, Jeff Kahn, Bob Sand, Richard Day, Paul Tibbit

DIRECTORS: Jamie Mitchell, Michael Lembeck, Greg Garcia

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Blair Underwood (Dr. Arthur Bindlebeep), Sabrina Le Beauf (Norma Bindlebeep), Giovonnie Samuels (Angie Bindlebeep), Marc Jeffries (Roy Bindlebeep), Jamai Fisher (Katharine Bindlebeep), Lou Rawls (Lester Bindlebeep), Ruby Dee (Louise Bindlebeep), Vaneza Pitynski (Skye), Daryl Sabara (Larry Keating)

SYNOPSIS: The adventures of the Bindlebeep family.

COMMENTARY: The third of three animated series based on the work of Bill Cosby (see *Fat Albert and the Cosby Kids* and *Little Bill*), this otherwise-undistinguished project was notable for being the first animated series from Nickelodeon to air on its evening cable service, Nick at Nite, which had previously been limited to live-action sitcom and drama reruns. Using Cosby’s best-selling book of the same title as a jumping-off point, the program functioned in many ways as an animated version of Cosby’s popular live-action sitcom from the 1980s, with a similar range of characters and themes. There was no set reason it had to be done as an animated program, as the themes easily could have been done, and on better terms, in a live-action format.

FATHER OF THE PRIDE (2004)

STUDIOS: DreamWorks, Imagi

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

CREATOR/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Jeffrey Katzenberg

DIRECTORS: John Stevenson, Mark Risely, John Holmquist, Bret Haaland, Mark Baldo, John Puglisi, Steve Hickner, John DeSeve

WRITERS: Jonathan Groff, Cheryl Holliday, Robert Cohen, Peter Mehlman, Ron Weiner, Vanessa McCarthy, David Goodman, Glasgow Phillips, Mike Barker, Matt Weitzman, Jon Pollack, Jon Ross

VOICE ACTORS: John Goodman (Larry), Cheryl Hines (Kate), Danielle Harris (Sierra), Daryl Sabara (Hunter), Carl Reiner (Sarmoti), Orlando Jones (Snack), Julian Holloway (Siegfried Fischbacher), David Herman (Roy Horn), Lisa Kudrow (Foo-Lin), Eddie Murphy (Donkey), Danny DeVito (Emerson), John O'Hurley (Blake), Tress MacNeille (Chimmi/Changa, uncredited), Wendie Malick (Victoria), Andy Richter (Nelson, a.k.a. Bong Bong), Garry Marshall (Bernie), David Spade (Tommy), Kelsey Grammer (Himself), Greg Cipes (Roger), Seth MacFarlane (Hi Larious), Don Stark (Vincent), John DiMaggio (Snout Brothers/Tom), Amanda Peet (Lilly), Dom DeLuise (Duke), Denis Leary (Chaz), Kathryn Joosten (Edna Falvey), Julia Sweeney (Brittany), Brian George (Chutney), Pauly Shore (Justin)

SYNOPSIS: Life among the animal menagerie that is part of the act of Las Vegas-based magicians Siegfried and Roy.

COMMENTARY: Incredibly, each episode of this short-lived CGI failure cost approximately \$1.6 million to produce, with a nine-month production period for each of the episodes. This would not seem so bad if the show was actually worth it, but as with many CGI productions, on a creative level, it wasn't. Creator/executive producer Katzenberg—one-third of the brain trust that developed the DreamWorks Studio, along with Steven Spielberg and David Geffen—seemed to be so infatuated with his idea that he failed to notice that it had much more limited appeal to an audience than he believed it did, which was demonstrated when the program died a quick death. The failure of the series was undoubtedly responsible, if only partly, for DreamWorks moving its animation production away from television in favor of feature films and other more valuable platforms.

Siegfried and Roy, who were merely supporting players here, had previously been portrayed in animation as the stars of *Siegfried and Roy: Masters of the Impossible* (q.v.).

***FELIX THE CAT* (1960)**

STUDIOS: Oriolo, Trans Lux

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

CREATORS: Pat Sullivan, Otto Mesmer, John King

PRODUCER/DIRECTOR: Joe Oriolo

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTOR: Jack Mercer (All characters)

SYNOPSIS: The cliff-hanger adventures of an enterprising feline.

COMMENTARY: One of the earliest animated cartoon "stars," the black-bodied, white-faced Felix made his first appearance in 1919 and remained enormously popular until the advent of sound in the late 1920s. The innovative animation of his films—which pioneered much of the death- and logic-defying antics of modern animation comedy writing—was largely the work of Mesmer, though Sullivan, the producer, took the lion's share of the credit for the feature's success. The pinnacle of his fame and a harbinger of his fu-



Felix the Cat in the 1960s—in one of his more mobile moments. © Photofest

ture came in 1928, when a three-dimensional toy statue of Felix was used by RCA as the central image in one of the first experimental television broadcasts in the United States.

The demise of Sullivan's studio in the late 1920s (and Sullivan himself around the same time) put Felix into creative and economic limbo, apart from a brief revival in 1936, until the production of this series commenced. Oriolo, who had helped develop *Casper the Friendly Ghost* (q.v.) during his stint at Paramount's Famous Studios, was drawing a Felix comic strip he inherited from Mesmer when he pitched Trans Lux the idea of producing an animated Felix series. Unfortunately, the company was only willing to give him a budget of \$5,000 per episode. As a result, the series was produced in a primitive fashion, in comparison to its better-budgeted peers. Oriolo famously instructed his animators not to hand over any sequences that could not fit under his office door, as they held too many drawings to be filmed within the budget. The producer also worked voice actor Mercer harder than average, insisting not only that he drawl out every syllable as slowly as possible but also that he read all his parts in real time rather than looping them separately, which meant Mercer had to switch tones and octaves abruptly as he shifted between characters. As a result, the series as a whole was produced in a limited, robotic frame of mind, as would also be the case with Oriolo's other animated projects during the following decade. Although it was serviceable and popular, the theme song's claim that "[y]ou'll laugh so much your sides will ache" was a blatant case of false advertising. Still, because the program was produced in color, it enjoyed a long and successful spell of rebroadcasts, even though only a small number of episodes had originally been produced.

Following Oriolo's death, his son Don resurrected Felix, first in a feature-film-length TV special in 1989 and then, in 1994, in partnership with Phil

Roman, producing *The Twisted Tales of Felix the Cat* (q.v.), whose technical and creative quality was considerably superior to what had come before.

FESTIVAL OF FAMILY CLASSICS (1972)

STUDIOS: Ruby-Spears, Mushi

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Arthur Rankin Jr., Jules Bass

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Carl Banas, Len Birman, Bernard Cowan, Peg Dixon, Keith Hampshire, Peggi Loder, Donna Miller, Frank Perry, Henry Raymer, Billie Mae Richards, Alfie Scopp, and Paul Soles

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: A package of 18 short animated films shown on a syndicated basis. They consisted chiefly of adaptations of serviceable and known fairy tale, literature, and mythological projects, such as "Around the World in Eighty Days," "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs," "Cinderella," and "Robin Hood."

FIEVEL'S AMERICAN TALES (1992–1993)

STUDIOS: Amblin, Nelvana, Universal

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATOR: David Kirschner

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Kathleen Kennedy, Frank Marshall

PRODUCERS: Patrick Loubert, Michael Hirsh, Clive Smith, Larry Jacobs, Stephen Hodgins

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS INCLUDED: Chris Hubbell, Sam Graham

VOICE ACTORS: Dom DeLuise (Tiger), Lloyd Battista (Papa Mousekewitz), Dan Castellaneta (Chula), Cathy Cavadini (Tanya Mousekewitz), Philip Glasser (Fievel Mousekewitz), Gerrit Graham (Cat R. Waul), Kenneth Mars (Sweet William), Arthur Burghardt (Hambone), Carlos Carrasco (Jorge), Alan Dent (Fernando), Cynthia Ferrer (Miss Kitty), Paige Gosney (Stanley), Danny Mann (Dog), Pat Parris (Aunt Sophie), Lisa Picotte (Lorna Holcombe), Hal Rayle (Clint Mousewood), Rolland Thompson (Jack)

SYNOPSIS: European immigrant mouse Fievel Mouskewitz and his family live a new life in a town in the American West in the 19th century.

COMMENTARY: The character of Fievel originated in *An American Tail*, a highly successful animated feature film produced in 1986, orchestrated by executive producer Steven Spielberg (who named the character after his grandfather's original Yiddish name), and sharply directed by Don Bluth. The film depicted Fievel traveling from Europe to join his family in the New World on the Lower East Side of New York City. However, this series was actually based on the 1991 sequel, *An American Tail: Fievel Goes West*, whose title was self-explanatory. That film had an unusually star-studded voice cast: In addition to DeLuise as the über-friendly cat Tiger, there was John Cleese as the feline bad guy Cat R. Waul, Amy Irving as saloon denizen Miss Kitty, Jon Lo-

vitz as Chula the spider, and (in a fitting valediction to a distinguished career) James Stewart as an aging canine lawman whom Fievel helps to rehabilitate.

The series effectively continued where the film left off, save for the absence of Stewart and the recasting of several other vocal roles (as noted in the credits), though the core players remained. Unfortunately, in producing the series, much of the novelty of the property was removed, as was the case when another Spielberg-produced feature, *Back to the Future* (q.v.), came to animation. The fact that Spielberg was not actually involved with the shows as he had been with the films played a part, but it was mostly due to the fact that the producers wanted to play it safe by not toying too much with viewer expectations. Although the series was cheerfully produced and played up the positive virtues of literacy by showing Fievel using it to solve many of his problems, it wasn't able to last long on the air.

FILLMORE (2002–2004)

STUDIO: Disney

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATOR/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Scott M. Gimple

DIRECTOR: Christian Roman

WRITERS INCLUDED: Scott M. Gimple, Eddie Guzelian, Madellaine Paxson, Matthew Negrete

VOICE ACTORS: Orlando Brown (Cornelius Fillmore), Tara Strong (Ingrid Third), Horatio Sanz (Junior Commissioner Vallejo), Lauren Tom (Tehama), Danny Tamberelli (Anza), Kyle Sullivan (Danny O'Farrell), Wendie Malick (Principal Dawn S. Folsom), Jeff Probst (Raycliffe), Kyle Gass (Mr. Collingwood), Frankie Muniz (Augie Sansom, first appearance), Kiel Holmes (Augie Sansom, later appearances), Brian George (Mr. Lendrum), Debi Derryberry (Cheri Shotwell), Michael Welsh (Philsky/Wade), Marcus Toji (Vern Natoma), Anthony Head (Professor Third), Chris Marquette (Jamie Townsend/Lab Coat Kid #1), Shaun Fleming (Proper Kid), Lukas Behnken (Wayne Liggett/Frankie Polk), Don LaFontaine (Announcer)

SYNOPSIS: The X Middle School Safety Patrol is responsible for keeping law and order in the hallways and athletic fields of the school that employs it, although it faces numerous internal and external obstacles to maintaining that objective.

COMMENTARY: This was a surprising but welcome anomaly among animated television series. There were no raucous or disruptive comic elements in it to be dealt with. If comedy was present, it was used in the most hidden and least irritating of means. Rather, the program was played with a brilliant and perceptive straightness, with character and plot edges as sharp as a knife. This is extremely unusual for television animation but commonplace among the live-action television police procedural dramas (especially the 1970s versions) that creator/executive producer Gimple admittedly used as his model. The absence of comedy for comedy's sake allowed for a blunt and haunting exploration of the kinds of social, gender, and political issues that could possibly turn up not only in middle school but also in

the real world. The series was well acted, well written, and well directed across the board, with Malick's control-freak, politician-like principal one of the iciest antagonistic characters ever invented for television animation. In all, it was a series that treated its characters as human beings rather than puppets to be manipulated by other hands, and it was much richer and deeper in that respect than most of its peers. Television animation would be a more enlivened and interesting place if this unique program's wonderful and refreshing example was emulated further.

***FIREHOUSE TALES* (2005–2006)**

STUDIO: Warner Brothers

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATOR: Sidney Bailey

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Sidney Bailey, Sander Schwartz, Clark James, Alice Kahn, Peter Kilcommons

PRODUCERS: Ken Kessel, Alan Burnett, Linda Steiner

DIRECTORS: Kathi Castillo, Clark James

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Jesse Moss (Red), Richard Cox (Crabby), Blu Mankuma (Bubba), Ron Halder (Chief), Ellen Kennedy (Mayor Precious Primly), Colin Murdock (Snootie Tootie/Tech), David Kaye (Spinner), Michael Dobson (Tug), French Tickner (Wiser)

SYNOPSIS: Three anthropomorphic trucks attend firefighting school to learn the tools of their trade.

COMMENTARY: Relatively standard children's educational fare, with an emphasis on how anyone is capable of being a hero, regardless of their external appearance. The influence of the long-running British children's institution *Thomas the Tank Engine* was clearly at work here.

***FISH HOOKS* (2010–2014)**

STUDIO/DISTRIBUTOR: Disney

CREATOR: Noah Z. Jones

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Maxwell Atoms, Noah Z. Jones

PRODUCERS: Louis J. Cuck, Alex Hirsch

DIRECTORS: Maxwell Atoms, William Reiss, C. H. Greenblatt, Tom Warburton, Derek Evanick, Diana Lafyatis

WRITERS: Tim McKeon, Maxwell Atoms, Justin Roiland, William Reiss, Alex Hirsch, Ian Wasseluk, Jackie Buscarino, Derek Evanick, Andy Rheingold, Alex Almaguer, Niki Yang, Carl Faruolo, Clayton Morrow, Neil Graf, Ryan Ridley, Tom Warburton, Blake Lemons, Noah Z. Jones, Diana Lafyatis, Megan McCarthy, Jessica Gao, Nick Confalone, Neal Dusedau, Darin McGowan, Sherm Cohen, C. H. Greenblatt, Carson Kugler, Darrick Bachman, Joe Johnston, David Teitelbaum, Craig Lewis, Domenic Bisigano, Tyler Chen, David Shair

VOICE ACTORS: Kyle Massey (Milo), Chelsea Kane (Bea Goldfishberg), Justin Roiland (Oscar), Kari Wahlgren (Shellsea), Alex Hirsch (Clamantha/Fumble),

Atticus Shaffer (Albert Glass), Steven Parker (Jumbo Shrimp), Kimberley Mooney (Finberley), Rachel Dratch (Esmargot/Koi), John DiMaggio (Jocktopus), Dana Snyder (Mr. Baldwin), Jennifer Coolidge (Ms. Lips), Tiny Lister (Mr. Mussels), Jerry Stiller (Principal Stickler, first season), Jeff Bennett (Principal Stickler, later episodes), Annie Potts (Nurse Fishington), Josh Sussman (Randy Pincherson), Greg Cipes (Steve Jackson), Maxwell Atoms (Bo Gregory/Razor V. Doom/Hugh Edmondson), Richard Simmons (Coach Salmons), Laura Ortiz (Piranhica), Blake Clark (Chief), Tress MacNeille (Bassy), Noah Z. Jones (Mr. Goldfishberg), Edie McClurg (Mrs. Goldfishberg), Lil' Twist (Brandon Bubbler), John Caparulo (Headphone Joe), Dave Wittenberg (Pass), Roger Smith (Punt), Kevin McDonald (Dr. Frog), Felicia Day (Angela Fishburger), Sabina Bryan (Pamela Hamster)

SYNOPSIS: Life at Freshwater High School, an institution designed for the children of the aquatic denizens of a pet shop—specifically, hyperactive Milo, emotionally unstable “acting superstar” Bea, and intelligent milquetoast Oscar.

COMMENTARY: While this program started out well, given the veteran talent involved, it quickly faltered, becoming so obsessed with plotting the minutiae of its own self-created fishbowl universe that it abruptly lost its creative touch. Considering it was well-directed and sharply produced on a technical basis, the flaws were most evident in the writing (which mirrored the self-absorbed narcissism of the characters) and the voice acting, which (save for Kane's and Roiland's more multidimensional work as Bea and Oscar, respectively) was incredibly shrill, loud, and, above all, hammy. The imaginative conceit at the heart of the program deserved a more-objective and less-frantic execution and, perhaps more importantly, less genuflecting toward every high school narrative cliché imaginable in the space of the show's running time. What resulted, instead, was a shotgun wedding between the typically hyperspace-paced narrative approaches of Cartoon Network (where the majority of the production staff had previously worked) and the more measured and balanced style typical of Disney, with the audience, unfortunately, being the biggest loser.

***FISH POLICE* (1992)**

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATOR: Steve Moncuse

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: David Kirschner, Benjamin Melnick, Michael Uslan, Melissa Goldsmith, Paul Sabella

PRODUCERS: Larry Huber, Jeanne Romano

DIRECTORS: Ray Patterson, Joanna Romersa

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: John Ritter (Inspector Gil), Edward Asner (Chief Abalone), JoBeth Williams (Angel), Megan Mullaly (Pearl), Hector Elizondo (Clams Calamari), Georgia Brown (Goldie), Jonathan Winters (Mayor Cod), Buddy Hackett (Crabby), Robert Guillaume (Catfish), Frank Welker (Marinara/Doc Croaker), Charlie Schlatter (Tad), Tim Curry (Sharkster)

SYNOPSIS: A film noir narrative set in an underwater community.

COMMENTARY: Moncuse created the concept in comic book narratives in 1985, and it was there that his idea of reimagining the Hammett–Chandler hard-boiled detective story under the sea worked best. Unfortunately, his concept was brought to animation with the seriousness downplayed, and more public attention was given to the star-studded voice cast than the actual quality of the series, which, other than the graphics, was poor and repetitive. A poor public reception in both creative and commercial streams led to the program being axed after only three installments had aired.

***FLASH GORDON* (AND RELATED SERIES)**

***The New Adventures of Flash Gordon* (1979–1980)**

STUDIO: Filmation

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATOR: Alex Raymond

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Lou Scheimer, Norman Prescott

PRODUCER: Don Christensen

DIRECTORS: Hal Sutherland, Marsh Lamore, Lou Kachivas, Kay Wright, Don Townsley, Gwen Wetzler, Lou Zukor, Ed Friedman

WRITER: Samuel Peeples

VOICE ACTORS: Robert Ridgely (Flash Gordon/Prince Barin), Diane Pershing (Dale Arden), Alan Oppenheimer (Dr. Zarkov/Ming the Merciless), Melendy Britt (Aura/Fria), Allan Melvin (Thun/Vultan), Lou Scheimer (Gremlin), Vic Perrin (Vultan, pilot episode), Ted Cassidy (Thun, pilot episode)

***Flash Gordon* (1996)**

STUDIOS: Hearst, Lacewood, Audiovisuel Dupuis-Carriere Television, France 3

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

PROJECT DEVELOPERS: Garfield Reeves Stevens, Judith Reeves Stevens

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Toby Proctor (Flash Gordon), Lexa Doig (Dale Arden), Paul Shaffer (Dr. Zarkov)

SYNOPSIS: After being launched into space, American athlete Flash Gordon becomes the defender of the universe from the wrath of the ruthless villain Ming.

COMMENTARY: Launched by writer/artist Raymond in 1934, *Flash Gordon* quickly became one of the most popular and enduring comic strips of its era. Its popularity increased with its expansion into a number of highly popular movie serials soon after, with former Olympic swimming champion Clarence “Buster” Crabbe making an acting name for himself as Flash. The endurance of the feature into the 1970s led inevitably to its popularity among children. It was turned into an animated series by Filmation, the company most capable of handling that assignment during the decade, after the success of *Star Wars* (whose creator, George Lucas, admitted *Gordon* was an influence on his project) made science fiction more of a bankable commodity in Hollywood. The series, at least, fared better on a technical and creative level than producer Dino De Laurentiis’s ill-fated 1980 feature-film version, although it was simply a matter of filling in the established blanks. The same

could be said of the 1996 version, although it also updated the content somewhat, mainly by making Flash a teenager with a bad case of angst. An older and less-heroic Gordon had previously been featured as one of the *Defenders of the Earth* (q.v.).

THE FLINTSTONES (AND RELATED SERIES)

***The Flintstones* (1960–1966)**

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, Columbia

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

DIRECTORS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera, Alex Lovy, Charles Nichols

WRITERS INCLUDED: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera, Michael Maltese, Ralph Goodman, Warren Foster, R. Allen Safian, Barry Blitzner, Tony Benedict, Herbert Finn, Alan Dinehart, Jack Raymond, Sidney Zelinka, Arthur Phillips, Joanna Lee, Bill Idelson, Rance Howard, Phil Hahn, Jack Hanrahan, R. S. Allen, Harvey Bullock, George O'Hanlon

VOICE ACTORS: Alan Reed (Fred Flintstone), Mel Blanc (Barney Rubble/Dino/Others), Jean Vander Pyl (Wilma Flintstone/Pebbles Flintstone, 1963–1966), Bea Benaderet (Betty Rubble, 1960–1964), Gerry Johnson (Betty Rubble, 1964–1966), John Stephenson (Mr. Slate/Others), Don Messick (Bamm Bamm Rubble, 1963–1966/Arnold/Others), Verna Felton (Wilma's Mother), Harvey Korman (The Great Gazoo, 1965–1966)

Note: Daws Butler and Hal Smith both filled in for Blanc as Barney in 1961–1962, while the latter was recuperating from a debilitating automobile accident.

***Pebbles and Bamm Bamm* (1971–1972)**

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera, Iwao Takamoto

DIRECTOR: Charles Nichols

WRITERS: Joel Kane, Woody Kling, Howard Morganstern, Joe Ruby, Ken Spears

VOICE ACTORS: Sally Struthers (Pebbles), Jay North (Bamm Bamm), Lennie Weinrib (Moonrock), Mitzi McCall (Penny), Gay Hartwig (Wiggy/Cindy), Carl Esser (Fabian)

***The Flintstones Comedy Hour/The Flintstones Show* (1972–1974)**

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera, Iwao Takamoto

DIRECTOR: Charles Nichols

WRITERS: Joel Kane, Woody Kling, Howard Morganstern, Joe Ruby, Ken Spears

VOICE ACTORS: Mickey Stevens (Pebbles, early episodes), Sally Struthers (Pebbles, later episodes), Jay North (Bamm Bamm), Alan Reed (Fred Flintstone), Mel Blanc (Barney Rubble/Zonk/Stub), Jean Vander Pyl (Wilma Flintstone), Gay Hartwig (Betty Rubble/Wiggy), John Stephenson (Mr. Slate/Noodles), Mitzi McCall (Penny), Lennie Weinrib (Moonrock/Bronto), Carl Esser (Fabian)

The New Fred and Barney Show (1979)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: Alex Lovy, Iwao Takamoto

DIRECTORS: Ray Patterson, Carl Urbano, Oscar Dufau, George Gordon

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Henry Corden (Fred Flintstone), Mel Blanc (Barney Rubble), Jean Vander Pyl (Wilma Flintstone), Gay Autterson (Betty Rubble)

Fred and Barney Meet the Thing (1979)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

CREATOR: Stan Lee ("The Thing")

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: Alex Lovy, Iwao Takamoto

DIRECTORS: Ray Patterson, Carl Urbano, Oscar Dufau, George Gordon

WRITERS INCLUDED: Jim Ryan, Ray Parker, Tex Avery, Doug Booth

VOICE ACTORS: Henry Corden (Fred Flintstone), Mel Blanc (Barney Rubble), Jean Vander Pyl (Wilma Flintstone), Gay Autterson (Betty Rubble), Joe Baker (The Thing), Wayne Booth (Benjy Grimm), Noelle North (Kelly), Marilyn Schrefler (Betty/Miss Twilly), John Erwin (Ronald Radford), John Stephenson (Stretch/Dr. Harkness), Art Metrano (Spike), Michael Sheehan (Turkey)

Fred and Barney Meet the Shmoo (1979–1980)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

CREATOR: Al Capp ("The Shmoo")

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: Alex Lovy, Iwao Takamoto

DIRECTORS: Ray Patterson, Carl Urbano, Oscar Dufau, George Gordon

VOICE ACTORS: Henry Corden (Fred Flintstone), Mel Blanc (Barney Rubble), Jean Vander Pyl (Wilma Flintstone), Gay Autterson (Betty Rubble), Frank Welker (Shmoo), Dolores Cantu Primo (Nita), Chuck McCann (Billy Joe), Bill Edelson (Mickey)

The Flintstones Comedy Show (1980–1981)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: Alex Lovy, Carl Urbano

DIRECTORS: Ray Patterson, George Gordon, Rudy Zamora

WRITERS INCLUDED: Ray Parker, Tex Avery, Doug Booth, Chuck Couch, Chuck Menville, Duane Poole, Dick Robbins, Cliff Roberts, Tom Shale, Don Christensen, Donald Glut, Jack Kinney, Jack Mendelsohn, Bob Ogle, Virgil "Vip" Partsch, Chris Jenkyns, Bill Perez

VOICE ACTORS: Henry Corden (Fred Flintstone), Mel Blanc (Barney Rubble/Dino/Captain Caveman), Jean Vander Pyl (Wilma Flintstone), Gay Autterson

(Betty Rubble/Wiggy), Russi Taylor (Pebbles/Cave Mouse), Michael Sheehan (Bamm Bamm), Kenneth Mars (Lou Granite), Lennie Weinrib (Sergeant Boulder/Moonrock), John Stephenson (Mr. Slate), Mitzi McCall (Penny), Don Messick (Schleprock), Charles Nelson Reilly (Frank Frankenstein), Ruta Lee (Hidea Frankenstein), Zelda Rubenstein (Atrocia Frankenstein), Paul Reubens (Freaky Frankenstein), Frank Welker (Rockjaw)

The Flintstones Family Adventures (1981)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: Alex Lovy, Carl Urbano

DIRECTORS: Ray Patterson, George Gordon, Rudy Zamora

WRITERS INCLUDED: Ray Parker, Tex Avery, Doug Booth, Chuck Couch, Chuck Menville, Duane Poole, Dick Robbins, Cliff Roberts, Tom Shale, Don Christensen, Donald Glut, Jack Kinney, Jack Mendelsohn, Bob Ogle, Virgil "Vip" Partsch, Chris Jenkyns, Bill Perez

VOICE ACTORS: Henry Corden (Fred Flintstone), Mel Blanc (Barney Rubble/Dino/Captain Caveman), Jean Vander Pyl (Wilma Flintstone), Gay Autterson (Betty Rubble/Wiggy), Russi Taylor (Pebbles/Cave Mouse), Michael Sheehan (Bamm Bamm), Kenneth Mars (Lou Granite), Lennie Weinrib (Sergeant Boulder/Moonrock), John Stephenson (Mr. Slate), Mitzi McCall (Penny), Don Messick (Schleprock), Charles Nelson Reilly (Frank Frankenstein), Ruta Lee (Hidea Frankenstein), Zelda Rubenstein (Atrocia Frankenstein), Paul Reubens (Freaky Frankenstein), Frank Welker (Rockjaw)

Flintstone Funnies (1982–1984)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: Alex Lovy, Carl Urbano

DIRECTORS: Ray Patterson, George Gordon, Rudy Zamora

WRITERS INCLUDED: Ray Parker, Tex Avery, Doug Booth, Chuck Couch, Chuck Menville, Duane Poole, Dick Robbins, Cliff Roberts, Tom Shale, Don Christensen, Donald Glut, Jack Kinney, Jack Mendelsohn, Bob Ogle, Virgil "Vip" Partsch, Chris Jenkyns, Bill Perez

VOICE ACTORS: Henry Corden (Fred Flintstone), Mel Blanc (Barney Rubble/Dino/Captain Caveman), Jean Vander Pyl (Wilma Flintstone), Gay Autterson (Betty Rubble/Wiggy), Russi Taylor (Pebbles/Cave Mouse), Michael Sheehan (Bamm Bamm), Kenneth Mars (Lou Granite), Lennie Weinrib (Sergeant Boulder/Moonrock), John Stephenson (Mr. Slate), Mitzi McCall (Penny), Don Messick (Schleprock), Charles Nelson Reilly (Frank Frankenstein), Ruta Lee (Hidea Frankenstein), Zelda Rubenstein (Atrocia Frankenstein), Paul Reubens (Freaky Frankenstein), Frank Welker (Rockjaw)

The Flintstone Kids (1986–1988)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCER: Kay Wright

DIRECTORS: Ray Patterson, Art Davis, Don Lusk, Carl Urbano, Rudy Zamora

WRITERS INCLUDED: Arthur Alsberg, John Klodin, Don Nelson, Lane Raichert

VOICE ACTORS: Scott Menville (Freddy, first season), Lennie Weinrib (Freddy, second season/Commissioner), Hamilton Camp (Barney/Flab Slab), Elizabeth Lynn Fraser (Wilma, first season), Julie McWhirter Dees (Wilma, second season/Micky/Mica/Tarpit Tommy), B. J. Ward (Betty/Miss Rockbottom), Mel Blanc (Robert Rubble/Captain Caveman/Dino), Henry Corden (Ed Flintstone/Edna Flintstone), Jean Vander Pyl (Doris Slaghoople), Marilyn Schreffler (Flo Rubble/Rocky Ratrock), Frank Welker (Nate Slate/Stalagbite), Susan Blu (Dreamchip Gemstone/Granite Janet), Kenneth Mars ("Captain Caveman" Narrator), Bumper Robinson (Philo Quartz), Rene Levant (Officer Quartz), Charlie Adler (Cavey Jr.)

***Cave Kids Adventures* (1996)**

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTORS: Cartoon Network, Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Sherry Gunther

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Aria Curzon (Pebbles), Christine Cavanagh (Bamm Bamm), E. G. Daily (Bamm Bamm, singing voice), Taylor Gunther (Baby Pebbles), Frank Welker (Dino)

SYNOPSIS: Stone Age working men Fred Flintstone and Barney Rubble are frequently drawn into complicated comic situations, despite the warning advice of their respective wives, Wilma and Betty.

COMMENTARY: The original *Flintstones* series was a landmark moment in the history of television animation when it debuted in 1960. For the first time, an animated program was targeted at an adult rather than child demographic and proved definitively that an audience existed among older viewers as well as children for the art form, although it would take decades before both animators and the television industry fully accepted that fact. By then, however, the novelty of *The Flintstones* had long vanished, being stripped from it through a number of thoughtless and colorless revivals in series, feature films, and television specials that robbed the concept of the great creative vitality it had often shown in its original incarnation.

In 1959, John Mitchell, the television executive who had helped bring the Hanna-Barbera Studio into existence two years earlier, brought to the producers' attention the fact that their syndicated weekday afternoon programs had nearly as many adult as child followers. If adults were that interested in animation, Mitchell mused, why couldn't the studio produce a series aimed directly at them? Hanna and Barbera then attempted to do that, although they were forced to table numerous proposals before they found the setting—recasting modern life in the Stone Age—that seemed to be the one that worked the best and began to develop scenarios for it.

Even still, it was a hard sell, first getting sponsorship and then a network to back the idea. Joseph Barbera was forced to spend much of his time and



They were—and still are—a modern Stone Age family. ABC/Photofest © ABC

energy doing literal presentations to skeptical ad men and network executives, who did not view the idea with the same enthusiasm the studio staff did. Eventually, he gained sponsorship from Reynolds Tobacco (which led to the now-somewhat-unthinkable but real occurrence of Fred Flintstone and Barney Rubble doing cigarette ads!) and Miles Laboratories and thus a prime-time slot on ABC.

In its earliest years, despite its fantastic setting, the series was very much a rough-and-tumble project depicting life, friendship, marriage, money, and other everyday issues with a tart bluntness, with the characters in conflict with each other in more than one way. The influence of the earlier live-action sitcom *The Honeymooners* could be keenly felt, which has led more than one detractor in the mass media to write it off as “simply” an animated version of that property. However, the Stone Age setting was highly unique, and the studio did as much as it could to present material that created humor out of the disjunctive mirror-image comparisons between our world and theirs, which was where the program’s humorous strength always came from.

When the Flintstones and Rubbles became parents in 1963, the satiric and blunt edges of the program were abruptly removed, which was also a result of the program gaining more kid-friendly sponsors and more directly targeting that age group. However, much of the humorous ambience remained intact. In fact, the change probably helped the program to have a brighter tone and the characters a more positive outlook than previously, which worked in the show’s favor creatively. Nevertheless, the program came to an abrupt end

in 1966, when its sponsors withdrew their financial support and the studio could not find others to replace them.

If no other versions of the program had been produced, Hanna-Barbera could have continued to make the profits it did with the series in syndication without feeling they had harmed their or the program's reputation in the process. Unfortunately, in the following years, the studio promptly squandered the original program's honor, seeming to care more about maintaining the presence of the characters in the media than whether they actually had fit vehicles for that exposure.

Pebbles and Bamm Bamm was the first resurrection, depicting the genial adventures of the Flintstones' and Rubbles' now-teenage offspring. Additional episodes of the project brought the entire family into the mix for what became known as *The Flintstone Comedy Show*. Several years elapsed before *The New Fred and Barney Show* arrived, but the only thing that was really new about it was that Henry Corden replaced the late Alan Reed (who had died in 1977) as Fred. The inclusion of vintage *Flintstones* episodes to fill out the new programs in the time slot clearly indicated that much of the property's creative life was gone. *Fred and Barney Meet the Thing* and *Fred and Barney Meet the Shmoo* featured, as supporting figures, a teenaged version of Marvel Comics' Thing (see *The Fantastic Four*) and Al Capp's metamorphic, seal-like creature known as the Shmoo. Despite the titles, the characters only "met" in bumper segments leading to commercial breaks and not the narratives proper. *The Flintstones Comedy Show* and its later spin-offs updated the old sitcom format for the new time period, along with including a range of similar short features of varying quality.

The Flintstone Kids was, as Joseph Barbera himself admitted, developed to fill a time slot when plans to produce another series fell through. Why else, then, would the studio have violated the well-established notion that the series principals had not met until they were young adults by presenting them here as childhood friends, along with some similarly designed, if stereotypical, peers?

There was little that was novel here, other than admitting an African American character into the program ranks in the form of child genius Philo Quartz and including the weird and wild misadventures of Captain Caveman (structured as the kids' favorite television show), which, as with the captain's earlier appearances on *The Flintstones Comedy Show*, were good enough to receive a full show on their own (but sadly never came to fruition).

The enduring and iconic status of the characters led to their adaptation for the movies in live-action form in 1994 in a project that, while modestly successful commercially, was an enormous waste of time in terms of plot and characterization: the well-designed setting, as with the original show itself, was the true star. Subsequently, there came another brace of animated TV specials (two of which showed Pebbles and Bamm Bamm marrying and having a child). Then, in 1996, came *Cave Kids Adventures*, where Pebbles and Bamm Bamm slid back to infancy and, in a series aimed at much younger children than before, engaged in learning adventures inspired by fairy tales. At the same time, their fathers continued their love-hate relationship

through their long stint as the spokesmen for Post's Cocoa Pebbles and Fruity Pebbles cereals, which created a strange dichotomy.

That *The Flintstones* is an enduring and recognizable media franchise is unquestioned, and its important position in advancing the narrative possibilities of television animation remains significant. But Hanna-Barbera's overreliance on it to maintain its financial and creative stability, as with its other enduring property, *Scooby Doo* (q.v.), should remain a vital and important lesson to television animators and program providers about when exactly it is time to leave a well-worn property alone.

***FLYING RHINO JUNIOR HIGH* (1998–2000)**

STUDIOS: Nelvana, Flying Rhinoceros, Big Daddy, Neurones France s.r.l.

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATORS: Ray Nelson, Douglas Kelly

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Michael Hirsh, Patrick Loubert, Clive Smith

WRITERS: David Finley, Joseph Mallozzi, John Pellatt, Brent Piasoski, Kenn Scott, J. D. Smith

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Richard Binsley (Earl P. Sidebottom, a.k.a. the Phantom), Ron Rubin (Raticus/Rod), Ashley Brown (Billy O'Toole), Terri Hawkes (Lydia Lopez), Tracy Ryan (Ruby Snarkis), Tracey Moore (Marcus Snarkis), Lindsay Leese (Mrs. Snodgrass/Edna), Len Carlson (Principal Mulligan), Catherine Gallant (Flo/Nurse Cutlip), Paul Hadad (Buford/Mr. Needlenose), Edward Glen (Fred/Johnny)

SYNOPSIS: The mysterious scientific genius known as the Phantom uses a magically powered ashtray to transport students from the title institution back into time, from which fellow student Billy O'Toole typically rescues his peers before they are trapped in the past forever.

COMMENTARY: Drawing inspiration from the Internet media production company Flying Rhinoceros and the book series *From the Files of the Flying Rhinoceros* by Nelson and Kelly, this series was an odd mélange of comedy and adventure that didn't really accomplish much creatively during its short time on the air. The Phantom here was clearly modeled on Gaston Leroux's Phantom of the Opera, down to the mask, the basement residence, and the pipe-organ playing, which was what the adults in the room, rather than the children, were presumably supposed to find funny.

***FONZ AND THE HAPPY DAYS GANG* (1980–1982)**

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, Paramount

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATOR: Garry Marshall

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCER: Don Jurwich

DIRECTORS: Ray Patterson, George Gordon, Rudy Zamora

WRITERS: Ray Parker, Tom Swale, Hank Poole, Gary Hoffman, Emilie Kong, Dick Sebast, Don Sheppard

VOICE ACTORS: Henry Winkler (Arthur “Fonzie” Fonzarelli), Ron Howard (Richie Cunningham), Donny Most (Ralph Malph), Didi Conn (Cupcake), Frank Welker (Mr. Cool)

SYNOPSIS: Fifties tough guy Fonzie and friends Richie and Ralph are launched into time and space through the work of “girl of the future” Cupcake.

COMMENTARY: *Happy Days* (ABC, 1974–1984), a nostalgia-washed sitcom portraying life in America (specifically, Milwaukee) in the late 1950s, was one of the most popular television programs ever broadcast, with Winkler’s portrayal of the leather-clad, motorcycle-riding Fonzie turning him into a beloved international celebrity. As was typical of such situations, this program was produced to exploit *Happy Days*’s popularity with children in particular. The authenticity of the adaptation was secured by having Winkler, Howard, and Most reprise their live-action parts (although the latter pair had recently exited the live-action series), while Cupcake (who was prone to uttering such things as “Leaping logarithms!”) and Fonzie’s dog Mr. Cool (a canine clone of his master) served as the main wild-card elements, along with depictions of past time periods. However, the quality of the work was hampered by the fact that the animators habitually recycled all of the lead characters’ body poses and facial movements from episode to episode; the background art was done better, but this was little compensation.

***FOOFUR* (1986–1988)**

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, Sepp International

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

CREATOR: Phil Mendez

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera, Freddy Monnickendam

PRODUCER: Paul Sabella

DIRECTORS: Ray Patterson, Paul Sommer, John Kimball, Bob Goe, Oscar Dufau, Jay Sarbry, Frank Andrina, Joan Drake, Oliver Callahan, Rick Leon, Don Patterson, Joanna Romersa, James Walker

WRITERS: Mark Young, Arthur Alsberg, Don Nelson, Bob Taylor, Rhydon Shushido, Mitch Schauer, Lewis Marshall, Richard Bowman, Jesse Casio, Roy Wilson, Joel Seibel, Jim Willoughby, John Brown

VOICE ACTORS: Frank Welker (Foofur), Christina Lange (Rocky), Susan Tolsky (Annabelle), Pat Carroll (Hazel), Don Messick (Pepe), Allan Melvin (Chucky), Susan Blu (Dolly), David Doyle (Mel), Jonathan Schmock (Fritz-Carlos), Dick Gautier (Louis), Chick Vennera (Sam), Bill Callaway (Burt), Eugene Williams (Fencer), Susan Silo (Mrs. Escrow), Michael Bell (Harvey)

SYNOPSIS: After inheriting a mansion in the town of Willowby from his late master, blue-furred bloodhound Foofur and his niece Rocky convert it into a halfway home for imperiled animals, despite realtor Mrs. Escrow’s efforts to shut them down so that she can sell the property.

COMMENTARY: A series that was firmly cast in the mold of other cute series produced by Hanna-Barbera and Sepp in collaboration and the former on its own when that subgenre ruled television animation in the 1980s. The animals-versus-evil-humans theme was overdone by this point, but the studio staff chomped at the bit that had been imposed on them by integrating clever but

subtle bits of parody and satire into the stories—a sign of things to come, if there ever was one in that decade.

FOSTER'S HOME FOR IMAGINARY FRIENDS (2004–2009)

STUDIO: Cartoon Network

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATOR/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Craig McCracken

PRODUCERS: Vincent Ancieto, Ryan Slater, Mike Moon, Lauren Faust

DIRECTORS: Robert Alvarez, Randy Myers, James Walker, Paul O'Flanagan, Robert Cullen, Craig Kellman, Chris Savino, Lauren Faust, Eric Pringle, Brian Hogan, Rob Renzetti

WRITERS: Craig McCracken, Brian Larsen, Lauren Faust, Chris Dent, Ed Baker, Craig Lewis, Amy Keating Rogers, Meghan McCarthy, Chuck Klein, Chris Savino, Clayton Morrow, Vaughn Tada, Mike Kim, Adam Pava, Tim McKeon, Neal Sternecky, Alex Almaguer, Kirk Hanson, Andy Schuler, Douglas McCarthy, Cindy Morrow, Kirk Thatcher, Kelsey Mann, Darrick Bachman, Charlie Bean, Rob Renzetti, Mitch Larson, Ben Balistreri

VOICE ACTORS: Sean Marquette (Mac), Keith Ferguson (Blooregard Q. Kazoo, a.k.a. Bloo/Billy the Squid/Sunset Junction), Phil LaMarr (Wilt/Jackie Khones), Tom Kenny (Eduardo/Yogi Boo Boo), Candi Milo (Coco/Madame Foster/Cheese), Grey DeLisle (Frankie Foster/Duchess/Goo/Berry/Fluffer Nutter), Tom Kane (Mr. Herriman), Tara Strong (Terrence), Jeff Bennett (Bloppy Pants/Adam), Kevin Michael Richardson (Uncle Pockets/Foul Larry), Max Burkholder (World), Kevin McDonald (Iwan)

SYNOPSIS: Foster's Home for Imaginary Friends is a residential space for the title characters—who are sentient, free-thinking beings rather than being invisible and nonverbal as in real life—when they are abandoned by the children who created them as the latter grow up. They are awaiting to hopefully be reassigned to newer, younger children. When impudent and irreverent Blooregard Q. Kazoo and his human creator Mac become part of the entourage, the façade of order and control created by the institution's management is frequently compromised.

COMMENTARY: A well-written, well-directed, well-designed, and well-acted program that deserved the many awards (including five Annies and seven Emmys) it earned during its run. The power of the human imagination and its ability to do both good and bad with what it can conceive was no better honored and respected than with the characters and stories presented here. As with his earlier and later successes, *The Powerpuff Girls* (q.v.) and *Wander over Yonder* (q.v.), creator/executive producer McCracken developed a unique, auteur-like personal vision for what he wanted to do and executed it with a kind of flair, compassion, and intelligence rarely seen elsewhere in television animation in tandem with a team of excellent workers in all disciplines related to the production of the program. He has truly set standards in his body of work for the genre that future generations of television animators will likely only wish they could equal.

FOX ADHD (2013–2015)

See *Animation Domination High-Def*, FOX ADHD, ADHD; 2013–2015).

FRAGGLE ROCK (1987–1988)

STUDIOS: Jim Henson, Marvel

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

CREATOR: Jim Henson

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Jim Henson, Margaret Loesch

PRODUCERS: Michael K. Frith, Mike Jones

DIRECTORS: Ray Lee, Kim Peterson, Vonnice Batson, Rudy Cataldi, Charlie Downs, Eileen Dunn, Bob Kirk, Al Kouzel, Margaret Nichols, Stan Phillips, Tom Ray, Bob Trent, Neal Warner, John Wilson, Warren Batchelder

WRITERS INCLUDED: John Semper, Cynthia Friedlob

VOICE ACTORS: Bob Bergen (Wembley), Townsend Coleman (Gobo/Archibald/Wrench), Barbara Goodson (Red/Wingnut), Mona Marshall (Mokey/Cotterpin), Patti Parris (Ma Gorg), Rob Paulsen (Boober/Sprocket/Marjory), Pat Pinney (Traveling Matt/Pa Gorg/Flange), John Stephenson (Doc/Philo/Gunge), Stu Rosen (Storyteller)

SYNOPSIS: Beneath the home of human scientist Doc, the fantastic races known as the Fraggles, the Doozers, and the Gorgs engage in adventures that stress their cooperative tolerance of each other, in spite of minor conflicts that arise.

COMMENTARY: The original *Fraggle Rock* series was a clever and compassionate Muppet extravaganza that originally aired in the early to mid-1980s on HBO, making it the first children's series to air on that usually adult-oriented provider, before gaining a wider audience in America through reruns on TBS. (In Canada, where the show was produced, it aired on the much-more-accessible CBC network and thus arguably gained a wider audience in first-run broadcasts there.) Given the parent series' obviously wide appeal to children and Henson's success in collaborating with Marvel on *Muppet Babies* (q.v.), adapting this universe to animation was something of a no-brainer. Unfortunately, in this case, it didn't work because the cast of this show seemed much more one-dimensional than the cast of the previous animated show, and the story lines, vacillating between short segments and long ones, tended to meander and lose focus rather easily. The program was also hampered by being scheduled in the unenviable position opposite an undeniable hit—the clever live-action kid's show *Pee-Wee's Playhouse* in the midst of its successful run on CBS.

FRANKENSTEIN JR. AND THE IMPOSSIBLES (1966–1968)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

DIRECTOR: Charles Nichols

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Ted Cassidy (Frankenstein Jr.), Dick Beals (Buzz Conroy), John Stephenson (Professor Conroy), Don Messick (Multi Man), Paul Frees (Fluid Man), Hal Smith (Coil Man)

SYNOPSIS: Two short superhero features. The first featured a 30-foot-tall super-powered robot invented and controlled by boy genius Buzz Conroy, while the second focused on a trio of heroes who masquerade as a rock-and-roll band when not fighting evil.

COMMENTARY: Relatively standard superhero fare, presenting what was expected of it without trying to be more dramatically ambitious. The influence of the popular live-action *Batman* series was felt most keenly in the regular use of humor in the narratives and such overacting villains as Dr. Spectro and Mr. Menace in the former component and the Fiendish Fiddler and the Terrible Twister in the latter.

Reruns of *Frankenstein Jr.* later aired in tandem with reruns of *Space Ghost* (see *Space Ghost and Dino Boy*) in *The Space Ghost/Frankenstein Jr. Show* on NBC during 1976–1977.

FRANKLIN (1985)

STUDIOS: Nelvana, Kids Can Press

DISTRIBUTORS: Nickelodeon (United States, beginning in 1997), CBS (United States, 1998–1999, 2000–2002)

CREATOR: Paulette Bourgeois

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Michael Hirsh, Patrick Loubert, Clive Smith, James Wang, Marc Minjauw, Paul Hannequart, Paul Robertson

PRODUCERS: Marika Cocaba, Marissa Collyer, Merle Ann Ridley

DIRECTORS: John Van Bruggen, Gary Hurst, Dermot Walshe

WRITERS: Peter Sauder, John Van Bruggen, Bob Ardiel, Dale Scott

VOICE ACTORS: Noah Reid (Franklin Turtle), Richard Newman (Mr. Turtle), Elizabeth Brown (Mrs. Turtle), Luca Perlman (Bear), Leah Cudmore (Beaver), Olivia Garratt (Goose), Kyle Fairlie (Rabbit), Gil Filar (Fox), Kristen Bone (Snail), Sophie Lang (Otter), Mari Trainor (Coach Porcupine/Mrs. Bear), James Rankin (Mr. Owl), Donald Burda (Mr. Bear), William Colgate (Mr. Mole), Amos Crawley (Moose), Ellen Ray Hennessey (Mrs. Moose), Shari Ann Ross Laney (Porcupine), Ruby Smith Merovitz (Badger), Corinne Conley (Granny Turtle), Catherine Disher (Mrs. Goose), Annick Obonsawin (Skunk), Paul Hadad (Mr. Fox), Marcia Bennett (Mrs. Muskrat), Dan Lett (Constable Raccoon), Valerie Boyle (Mrs. Beaver), Shane McPherson (Mr. Skunk), Wayne Robson (Mr. Heron), Cole Caplan (Squirrel), Coretta Jafelice (Mrs. Badger), Chris Wiggins (Mr. Groundhog), Adrian Truss (Mr. Beaver), Stephen Ouimette (Mr. Coyote), Tyrone Savage (Jack Rabbit), Susan Roman (Beatrice), Janet Laine Green (Narrator)

SYNOPSIS: Franklin, an anthropomorphic young turtle, learns to confront the “horrors” of life bravely in the company of his family and friends.

COMMENTARY: Based on Bourgeois’s popular children’s book series, this series originally aired on Canadian television in 1985 and ended after 65 episodes and a TV movie were produced. It was retrieved from the Nelvana archives for its Nickelodeon and CBS engagement after the Franklin character

belatedly began to achieve a popularity in America and overseas comparable to the initial Canadian popularity that caused the series to be produced in the first place.

***FRANNY'S FEET* (2004–2011)**

STUDIO: Decode

DISTRIBUTOR: PBS (United States, 2006–2011)

CREATORS: Cathy Moss, Susan Nielsen

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Steven DeNure, Neil Court, Beth Stevenson

PRODUCERS: Elana Adair, John Mariella, Kym Hyde

DIRECTOR: Joanne Boreham

WRITERS: Nicole Demerse, Shelley Hoffman, Louise Moon, Cathy Moss, Robert Pincombe

VOICE ACTORS: Phoebe McAuley (Franny Fantoosie), George Buza (Grandpa), Katherine Crimi (Lucy), Juan Chioran (Nat), Stacey DePass (Zuca), Taija Isen (Princess Tia), Scott Beaudin (Fritz), Julie Lemieux (Zelda), Scott McCord (Charlie), Alex House (Kinka), Robert Tinkler (Salsa), Sunday Muse (Li Mei), Noah Reid (Carlos), Carlos Diaz (Johnny), Dwayne Hill (Cricket), Connor Price (George), Adrian Truss (Joanna), Martin Roach (Joey), Dennis Akiyama (Sally), Len Carlson (Chaser), Mark Rendall (Adam), Terry Hawkes (Jessie), Tracey Moore (Li Wei), Colin Soleman (Pixie), Jonathan Wilson (Morrison), Ron Rubin (Joey), Hadley Kay (Sarah)

SYNOPSIS: Five-year-old Franny Fantoosie is whisked off into educational adventures by putting on magical shoes in her cobbler grandfather's shop.

COMMENTARY: First airing on the CBC in 2004, this nonthreatening educational program found an ideal home on PBS's kids division, where it aired sporadically for the balance of its production run.

***FREAKAZOID* (A.K.A. STEVEN SPIELBERG PRESENTS *FREAKAZOID*; 1995–1996)**

STUDIOS: Amblin, Warner Brothers

DISTRIBUTOR: WB

CREATOR: Bruce Timm

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Steven Spielberg

PRODUCERS: John McCann, Mitch Schauer, Paul Rugg, Rich Arons, Tom Ruegger

DIRECTORS: Rich Arons, Ronaldo Del Carmen, Dan Riba, Dave Marshall, Eric Radomski, Jack Heiter, Peter Shin, Scott Jeralds, Turk Flipnutt

WRITERS: John McCann, Alan Burnett, Jed Spingarn, Kate Donahue, Ken Segall, Lisa Malone, Melody Fox, Mitch Watson, Paul Dini, Paul Rugg, Tom Minton, Tom Ruegger, Tom Sheppard, Wendell Morris

VOICE ACTORS: Paul Rugg (Freakazoid), Joe Leahy (Announcer), Edward Asner (Sergeant Cosgrove), David Kaufman (Dexter Douglas), Tress MacNeille (Debbie Douglas), John McCann (Douglas Douglas), Googy Gress (Duncan Douglas), Tracy Rowe (Steph), David Warner (Lobe), Jeff Bennett (Lord Bravery/Cave Guy/Candle Jack/Huntsman), Stephen Furst (Fan Boy), Ricardo Montalban

(Armondo Guttierrez), Maurice La Marche (Longhorn), Frank Welker (Foamy the Freakdog)

SYNOPSIS: During an Internet crash, computer expert Dexter Douglas is sucked inside his device and emerges with the ability to turn into the eccentric superhero Freakazoid at will.

COMMENTARY: An odd effort attempting to merge a straight superhero narrative (as creator Timm intended) with an overkill dose of *Looney Tunes*-style humor (as insisted on by executive producer Spielberg), with the end result being neither fish nor fowl. Granted, Spielberg and the Warner Brothers Studio could do comedy and superheroics separately very well, but those approaches clashed too heavily to be fully effective here, despite the series being awarded an Emmy for its single year on the air. Writer/producer/actor Rugg came off best fashioning a good role for himself (even some of his ad-libs during recording sessions were animated as bits), but everyone else seemed to struggle to make it work. Other later series, such as *The Powerpuff Girls* (q.v.), would make the marriage of comedy and superheroics work chiefly because, unlike here, the comedy was restrained and did not blatantly disrupt the narrative. Undoubtedly, this was what Timm wanted, and if Spielberg had wanted things to work here, he probably should have taken that approach.

***FRED AND BARNEY MEET THE SHMOO* (1979–1980)**

See *The Flintstones* (and related series).

***FRED AND BARNEY MEET THE THING* (1979)**

See *The Flintstones* (and related series).

***FREE FOR ALL* (2003)**

STUDIO: Film Roman

DISTRIBUTOR: Showtime

CREATOR: Brett Merhar

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Merriwether Williams, Brett Merhar, Richard Hull, John Hyde

PRODUCER: Mindi Lipschultz

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS INCLUDED: Merriwether Williams

VOICE ACTORS: Brett Merhar (Clay Zeeman), Jonathan Silverman (Johnny Jenkins), Juliette Lewis (Paula), Sam McMurray (Doug Jenkins), Mitzi McCall (Grandma), John Kozeluh (Mr. Stanky), Jonah Convy (Omar), Dee Bradley Baker (Angus), Grey DeLisle (Various characters)

SYNOPSIS: Slacker Clay Zeeman becomes wealthy after a successful lawsuit against a fast-food restaurant, although it doesn't change his freeloading, wheeler-dealer attitude.

COMMENTARY: Based on a comic strip created by Merhar for the school paper at Colorado State University in 1992 and entered national syndication six years later. Although the program was widely promoted for its pioneering

use of high-definition 3-D graphics, the characters and narratives didn't merit such opulent treatment, given how obnoxious and unsympathetic they were. This was made apparent when the show was canceled after a single seven-episode season.

***FREE WILLY* (1994–1996)**

STUDIOS: Nelvana, Warner Brothers

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Lauren Schuler Donner

PRODUCERS: Michael Hirsh, Patrick Loubert, Clive Smith

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Zachary Bennett (Jesse), Paul Hadad (Willy), Rachel Crawford (Marlene), Michael Fletcher (Randolph), Gary Crawford (Machine), James Kidnie (Amphonids), Alyson Court (Lucille), Geordie Johnson (Ben Shore), Kevin Zegers (Einstein), Neil Crone (Mr. Naugle), Andrew Sabiston (P. R. Frickey), Sheila McCarthy (Annie), Ron Lea (Glenn)

SYNOPSIS: Willy, an anthropomorphic orca, befriends a young human being named Jesse, and they work to save the ecology of Earth from being spoiled by the villainous Machine.

COMMENTARY: Based on the 1993 film of the same name (produced, not surprisingly, by series executive producer Schuler Donner), where, because it was a live-action project, the lead character was *not* anthropomorphic. What this series essentially did was graft the lead characters of the film onto the cliché-heavy proenvironment narratives of animated series of the 1970s and 1980s. This was made most evident in branding the problems of the story as chiefly the fault of one villain (rather than collective human disinterest and neglect, which then and now were more at fault) and giving the “good” characters a pious faith in their mission that was put over with an unlikable amount of smug arrogance by the production team.

***FRISKY DINGO* (2006–2008)**

STUDIOS: 70-30, Williams Street

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATORS/DIRECTORS/WRITERS: Adam Reed, Matt Thompson

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Keith Crofford, Michael Lazzo, Adam Reed, Matt Thompson

VOICE ACTORS: Adam Reed (Killface/Xander Crews, a.k.a. Awesome X/Ronnie/Wendell T. Stamps), Christian Danley (Simon), Stuart Culpepper (Stan), Kelly Jenrette (Sinn/Hooper), Kate Miller (Grace Ryan/Antagone), Scott Lipe (Arthur Watley/Dread Lobster), Lucky Yates (Xctacles), Killer Mike (T'aquil, “Mr. Ford” (Mr. Ford), Amber Nash (Valerie), Mike Bell (Philip Mazzone), Marshall Bell (Jack Taggart), Rachael Harris (A.L.E.X.), Mike Schatz (Torpedo Vegas), Ellis Hanican (Harper Ellis)

SYNOPSIS: The conflicted relationship between supervillain Killface and his arch-enemy Xander Crews, a wealthy billionaire who masquerades as the hero Awesome X, is depicted.

COMMENTARY: As with other programs on Cartoon Network's "Adult Swim" block, conventional (and respectful) characterization and plotting gave way to being both as adult and as immature as possible. Just as with their colleagues in the block, Reed and Thompson preferred sex and shock value as approaches to conventional entertainment, and as a consequence, their program was only entertaining to those who shared their mind-set.

A spin-off show called *The Xtacles* aired its only two episodes in November 2008. Further production was halted when 70-30 abruptly went out of business in January 2009.

THE FUNKY PHANTOM (1971–1972)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

PRODUCERS/DIRECTORS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Daws Butler (Jonathan "Musty" Muddlemore); Micky Dolenz (Skip); Tommy Cook (Augie); Tina Holland (April); Jerry Dexter and Julie Bennett (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: After being trapped in a grandfather clock escaping the British in 1776, Jonathan Muddlemore is freed from his imprisonment by a trio of teens from the 20th century.

COMMENTARY: Hanna-Barbera in the 1970s had a habit of creating such intriguing lead characters as Mr. Muddlemore but also a habit of sticking them mechanically into preexisting formats (in this case, that of *Scooby Doo* [q.v.]), just as easily as the animators manipulated the character drawings onto the backgrounds. Consequently, the series was not even close to its potential and met the same fate as other studio fare from this time by being quickly canceled and forgotten.

THE FUNNY COMPANY (1963)

STUDIOS: Funny Company, Kenneth Snyder, Mattel

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Kenneth Snyder

PRODUCERS: Leo Salkin, Sam Nicholson

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Dick Beals (Buzzer Bell/Shrinkin' Violette), Robbie Lester (Polly Plum), Nancy Wible (Merry Twirter/Jasper National Park), Kenneth Snyder (Terry Dactyl), Hal Smith (Dr. Todd Goodheart/Belly Laguna/Dr. Van Upp), Tom Thomas (Broken Feather), Bud Hiestand (Weisenheimer)

SYNOPSIS: A short-length, education-oriented series of films focusing on the title organization and the UNIVAC-like computer known as the Weisenheimer.

COMMENTARY: A pioneering effort in education-oriented animation, with clips neatly culled from previously existing industrial films for that purpose. The comedy effort was more labored, unless you liked a lizard (Terry Dactyl) doing impersonations, enjoyed somebody named Shrinkin' Violette actually "shrink" when frightened, or thought it was funny that a Native

American man named Super Chief would “speak” with the air horn of his namesake train.

THE FUNTASTIC WORLD OF HANNA-BARBERA (1985–1993)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera, Jayne Barbera

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: Hanna-Barbera’s principal entry into the syndication sweepstakes of the 1980s, which turned out well for them, given the project’s extended life span. Among the series featured in the project (and addressed in their own entries in this book) were *Don Coyote and Sancho Panda*; *Fantastic Max*; *The Flintstone Kids*; *The Further Adventures of SuperTed*; *Galtar and the Golden Lance*; *Jonny Quest*; *The Midnight Patrol*; *Paddington Bear*; *The Paw Paws*; *The Pirates of Dark Water*; *Richie Rich*; *Sky Commanders*; *The Snorks*; *Swat Kats: The Radical Squadron*; *2 Stupid Dogs*; *Yogi’s Treasure Hunt*; *Yo, Yogi*; and *Young Robin Hood*.

THE FURTHER ADVENTURES OF DR. DOOLITTLE

(1970–1971)

STUDIOS: DePatie-Freleng, 20th Century Fox

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

CREATOR: Hugh Lofting

PRODUCERS: David DePatie, Friz Freleng

DIRECTOR: Art Leonardi

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Bob Holt (Dr. Doolittle); Hal Smith (Tommy Stubbins); Lennie Weinrib (Sam Scurvy); Robbie Falloon, Colin Johnson, and Annadell (Grasshoppers); Don Messick and Barbara Towers (Various characters)

SYNOPSIS: Dr. Doolittle is a physician able to communicate with all sentient animal life.

COMMENTARY: British American author Lofting originated the character (whose name is properly spelled with only one o) in a series of children’s books, though this version of the character seems to stem more from the 1967 film adaptation of the stories, which featured Rex Harrison as the title character. (Eddie Murphy would play a more-Americanized version of the character in another film and its sequel several decades later.) The main amendments were the inclusion of a villain in the person of Sam Scurvy and musical numbers by a group called the Grasshoppers, who actually *were* grasshoppers.

THE FURTHER ADVENTURES OF SUPERTED (1988)

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, Telin, S4C, Siriol

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: Jeff Segal, Bruce Johnson, Charles Grosvenor, Licia Rester

DIRECTORS: Ray Patterson, Robert Alvarez, Bob Sommers, Oliver Callahan, Joanna Romersa

WRITERS INCLUDED: Kelly Ward, Mark Young

VOICE ACTORS: Danny Cooksey (SuperTed), Patrick Fraley (Spottyman)

SYNOPSIS: After being abandoned, a defective teddy bear is turned into a superhero by an alien from the planet Spot, who becomes his timorous assistant.

COMMENTARY: It was called the “Further” adventures because it was an Americanized follow-up to a clever short-form animated series produced by Disney in collaboration with the Welsh studio Siriol in 1979 and first making its appearance in America in 1983. This version, which featured the voices of veteran British comic actors Roy Kinnear and Victor Spinetti in the lead roles, is generally thought to be superior to this sequel, which compromised some of its creative integrity in abandoning its old droll and very British mind-set in favor of a more-frantic American approach. But one thing didn’t have to change—in both versions, the hero’s main nemesis was an unethical American cowboy named Texas Pete.

***FUTURAMA* (1999–2003, 2008–2013)**

STUDIOS: Curiosity Company, 20th Century Fox (billed as 30th Century Fox)

DISTRIBUTORS: FOX (1999–2003), Comedy Central (2008–2013)

CREATOR: Matt Groening

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Matt Groening, David Cohen, Ken Keeler

PRODUCERS: Lewis Morton, J. Stewart Burns, Patric Verrone, Jason Grode, Claudia Katz, Brian Cowan

DIRECTORS: Rich Moore, Gregg Vanzo, Peter Avanzino, Bret Haaland, Brian Shee-sley, Carlos Baeza, Ron Hughart, Jeffrey Lynch, Kevin O’Brien, Susan Dietter, Mark Ervin, Chris Sauve, Chris Loudon, James Purdum, Swinton Scott III, Patty Shinagawa, Wesley Archer, Dwayne Carey Hill, Frank Marino, Stephen Sandoval, Crystal Chesney Thompson, Rayme Musquiz, Ray Claffey, Edmund Fong, Lance Kramer

WRITERS: David Cohen, Matt Groening, Ken Keeler, Eric Horsted, Brian Kelley, Evan Gore, Heather Lombard, Patric Verrone, J. Stewart Burns, Lewis Morton, Eric Kaplan, Bill Odenkirk, Darin Henry, Eric Rogers, Ron Weiner, Dan Vebber, Jeff Westbrook, Jason Gorbett, Scott Kirby, Aaron Ehasz, Kristin Gore, David Goodman, Carolyn Premish, Michael Rowe, Maya Williams, Josh Weinstein, Michael Saikin, Neil Mukhopadhyay

VOICE ACTORS: Billy West (Philip Fry/Professor Hubert Farnsworth/Dr. John Zoidberg/Zapp Brannigan/Others), Katey Sagal (Leela), John DiMaggio (Bender/Others), Lauren Tom (Amy Wong), Phil LaMarr (Hermes Conrad/Others), Frank Welker (Nibbler), Maurice LaMarche (Kif Kroker/Others), Tress MacNeille (Mom/Others), David Herman (Various characters), Kath Soucie (Cubert Farnsworth)

SYNOPSIS: After being accidentally cryogenically frozen for 1,000 years, 20th-century pizza delivery man Philip Fry finds himself having to adjust to the strange new world of the 30th century.

COMMENTARY: A clever and frequently hilarious skewering of the clichés of science fiction, much as creator/executive producer Groening’s earlier *The Simpsons* (q.v.) had demolished those of the traditional situation comedy. The unique characters featured here were strongly backed up by excellent



The future ain't what it used to be. Fox Network/Photofest © Fox Network

writing and direction, which made them all the more memorable. A winner of several Annies and Emmys, the series suffered from poor scheduling during its run on FOX, which ultimately led to its termination. However, the popularity of several DVD features of the characters shown in half-hour blocks on Comedy Central led to the program's resurrection in a series format for several more years. Groening has suggested publicly that he hopes for a further resurrection in the future.

• G •

GADGET BOY AND HEATHER (1995–1998)

See *Inspector Gadget* (and related series).

GADGET BOY'S ADVENTURES IN HISTORY (1995–1998)

See *Inspector Gadget* (and related series).

GALAXY HIGH SCHOOL (1986–1988)

STUDIO: TMS Entertainment

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATOR: Chris Columbus

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Yutaka Fujioka

PRODUCERS: Barry Glaser, Gerald Baldwin

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS INCLUDED: Ken Koonce, David Wiemers

VOICE ACTORS: Susan Blu (Aimee Brighttower), Hal Rayle (Doyle Cleverlobe), John Stephenson (Beef Bonk), Pat Carroll (Biddy McBrain/Katrina), Nancy Cartwright (Gilda Gossip/Flat Freddy), Gary Christopher (Earl Eccchhh), Gino Conforti (Ollie Oilslick/Reggie Unicycle), Jennifer Darling (Wendy Garbo/Booey Bubblehead), Patrick Fraley (Coach Frogface/Sludge), Henry Gibson (Aimee's Locker/Doyle's Locker), Danny Mann (Creep), Neil Ross (Rotten Ronald), David L. Lander (Milo de Venus), Howard Morris (Professor MacGreed/Professor Icenstein/Luigi LaBounci)

SYNOPSIS: Intelligent human beings Aimee Brighttower and Doyle Cleverlobe become exchange students at an extraterrestrial high school located on the Flotor asteroid.

COMMENTARY: The plotting was relatively straightforward here as a high school narrative, but the producers took great care to present their truly alien cast on the most human and relatable of levels. The animation supported their aims in this regard. Koonce and Wiemers won a Humanitas Award for the script for "Brain Blaster," a subtler-than-average antidrug story.

GALTAR AND THE GOLDEN LANCE (1985)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: Bob Dranko, Berny Wolf

DIRECTORS: Ray Patterson, Don Lusk, Alan Zaslove, Oliver Callahan, Bob Goe, Jay Sarbry

WRITERS INCLUDED: Neal Barbera, Floyd Norman, Alex Fierro, Bob Singer, Rick Estrada, Mike Vosberg, Rick Chidlaw

VOICE ACTORS: Lou Richards (Galtar), Mary Lewis (Goleeta), Brock Peters (Tormack), Robert Arbogast (Ither), Barry Dennen (Krimm), George DiCenzo (Otar), Don Messick (Pandat), Bob Frank (Rak), David Mendenhall (Zork), Frank Welker (Tuk/Thork/Koda)

SYNOPSIS: The supernaturally powered Galtar fights evil in the form of the villainous Tormack, who was responsible for the death of Galtar's parents.

COMMENTARY: Best described as Hanna-Barbera's answer to *He-Man and the Masters of the Universe* (q.v.), although done with touches that were pure Hanna-Barbera, such as lisping comedy-relief second-tier bad guys. However, the animation, outsourced to Taiwan, was better than on many of the studio's productions in this time period. Featured as part of *The Funtastic World of Hanna-Barbera* (q.v.), the series won a Golden Reel Award for its editing.

GAME OVER (2004)

STUDIOS: Carsey-Werner, Program Exchange

DISTRIBUTOR: UPN

CREATOR/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: David Sacks

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Patrick Warburton (Rip Smashenburn), Lucy Liu (Raquel Smashenburn), Rachel Dratch (Alice Smashenburn), E. G. Daily (Billy Smashenburn), Artie Lange (Turbo), Marie Matiko (Dark Princess Chang)

SYNOPSIS: The Smashenburns are a family of video game characters living in an alternate universe, with similarly designed neighbors and pets.

COMMENTARY: A CGI series that, despite its seemingly open premise of exploring what happens to video game characters after their games end, resorted to the standard tropes of the family sitcom with only mild changes to exploit the setting. The series was canceled after six episodes had been produced, of which only five were actually broadcast; the sixth was included on a DVD issue.

GARFIELD AND FRIENDS (AND RELATED SERIES)

***Garfield and Friends* (1988–1995)**

STUDIOS: United Media, Mendelson, /Film Roman, Paws

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATOR: Jim Davis

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Jim Davis, Lee Mendelson, Phil Roman

PRODUCERS: Bob Curtis, Bob Nesler, George Singer, Vince Davis, Mitch Schauer

DIRECTORS: Jeff Hall, Tom Ray, Tom Tataranowicz

WRITERS: Mark Evanier, Sharman DiVono

VOICE ACTORS: Lorenzo Music (Garfield), Thom Huge (Jon Arbuckle/Binky the Clown/Roy/Gort), Gregg Berger (Odie/Orson/Floyd/Mailman/Pig), Howard Morris (Wade/Duke/Wart), Desiree Goyette (Nermal), Victoria Jackson (Penelope), Julie Payne (Liz/Lanolin), Frank Welker (Booker/Bo/Sheldon/Mort), Pat Buttram (Cactus Jake), Gary Owens (Announcer)

The Garfield Show (2009–2012, 2015–2016)

STUDIOS: Dargaud, Paws

DISTRIBUTORS: Cartoon Network (United States, 2009–2012), Boomerang (United States, 2015–2016)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Jim Davis, Robert Rea

PRODUCERS: Mark Evanier, Kim Campbell, Marie Pierre Moulinjeune

DIRECTOR: Philippe Vidal

WRITERS: Mark Evanier, Mike Puley, Julien Magnat, Christophe Poujol, Baptiste Heidrich, Mathilde Maraninchi, Antonin Poiree, Peter Berts, Julien Monthiel, Laurent Bounore, Jean Noel Gabilan, Arnelle Aubert, Jessica Menendez, Jim Davis, Christelle Chatel, Kim Campbell, Emmanuelle Aubert, Thomas Forwood, Marek Acey, Dodine Herry Grimaldi, Samuel Barksdale

VOICE ACTORS (North American edition): Frank Welker (Garfield/Others), Gregg Berger (Odie/Others), Wally Wingert (Jon Arbuckle/Others), Jason Marsden (Nermal/Others), Julie Payne (Dr. Liz Wilson/Others), Laura Summer (Drusilla/Minerva/Others), Audrey Wasilewski (Arlene/Gloria/Newscaster), Grey DeLisle (Jack Allwork/Nathan, later episodes/Nathan's Mother), Melissa Disney (Nathan, early episodes), Frank Ferrante (Lyman), June Foray (Mrs. Cauldron), Stan Freberg (Dr. Whipple/Fluffykins/Mole/Spencer Spendington), Laraine Newman (Aunt Ivy/News Anchor/Winona/Angelica/Aunt Esther), Maurice LaMarche (Samuel W. Underburger), David L. Lander (Doc Boy Arbuckle), Misty Lee (Angie/Scheherazade), Tress MacNeille (Esmeralda Brubaker/Hostess/Squirrel #1), Candi Milo (Lester/Chester/Reporter/Squirrel #2), Chuck McCann (Mayor Grafton), Marvin Kaplan (Hiram "Hi" Pressure), Jack Riley (Mr. Allwork/Ghost Cat), Neil Ross (King Glorm/Tyler Edge/Brandon Scoop), Susan Silo (Neferkitty), Fred Tatasciore (Biff/Dirk Dinkum)

SYNOPSIS: Garfield the cat manages to live an exciting life, in spite of his inherent laziness and an addiction to vast quantities of food.



A clever show from a mostly tepid decade. CBS/Photofest © CBS

COMMENTARY: Indiana-born cartoonist Davis created Garfield in 1978, naming him in honor of his grandfather (who in turn was named after former American president James A. Garfield), with Garfield's theoretical "master," Jon Arbuckle, serving as something of an overly flawed self-portrait of the artist. The comic strip featuring them was an enormous success, attracting legions of admirers and reprinted constantly in a series of best-selling paperback anthologies. Garfield proved to be equally successful in animation, where Lorenzo Music supplied a definitive vocal portrayal through a long string of Emmy-winning prime-time television specials airing between 1982 and 1988. A regularly scheduled series was, therefore, a natural fit. The program, which both explored and expanded on the material addressed in the strip, debuted in a half-hour format in 1988 but expanded to an hour the following year due to its popularity and retained that position until it ended.

Part of that extra time was devoted to segments of *U.S. Acres*, based on a less-successful strip by Davis, which proved to be an excellent animation feature that occasionally and broadly upstaged the main attraction. Led by Orson, a bookish, Walter Mitty-esque pig whose heroic daydreams formed the crux of a number of story lines, and featuring such colorful figures as loudmouthed con-man rooster Roy and forever-panicking, inner-tube-wearing duck Wade, this clever feature deserved to be spotlighted as its own separate project. Unfortunately, the producers chose not to go this way.

The later CGI *The Garfield Show*, which, unlike before, was all Garfield all the time, was a coproduction between the French animation studio Dargaud and Davis's company Paws Inc., conducted to mark the 30th anniversary of the strip. Music had died in 2001, and his presence was much missed in the lead role, despite the work of stellar veteran Welker in his place. Initially airing in Europe before being broadcast in America, it was less interesting than the earlier series, in part because of the strip's now-declining popularity. Unfortunately, in spite of expanding the cast to include new characters and the involvement of Davis and Mark Evanier (who had coauthored the scripts for the earlier show) as writers and producers, the Dargaud team tended to rely too much on Davis and Evanier's old bag of tricks than develop a new one of their own. Sometimes, what works well in two dimensions does not easily translate to three, as this series so obviously proved.

GARGOYLES (AND RELATED SERIES)

***Gargoyles* (1994–1997)**

STUDIO: Disney

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

CREATOR: Greg Weisman

PRODUCERS: Frank Paur, Greg Weisman, Bob Kline, Dennis Woodyard

DIRECTORS: Frank Paur, Saburo Hashimoto, Takamitsu Kawamura, Bob Kline, Yeun Young Sang, Kazuo Terada, Dennis Woodyard

WRITERS INCLUDED: Greg Weisman, Eric Luke, Michael Reaves, Diane Duane, Lydia Marano, Peter Morwood, Brynne Chandler Reaves, Cary Bates, Robert

Cohn, Adam Gilad, Shari Goodhartz, Marty Isenberg, Steve Perry, Robert Skir, Gary Sperling, Len Uhley, Len Wein

VOICE ACTORS: Keith David (Goliath), Bill Faggerbakke (Broadway), Thom Adcox Hernandez (Lexington), Edward Asner (Hudson/Jack Danforth), Jeff Bennett (Brooklyn/Magus/Owen), Salli Richardson (Eliza Maza), Clancy Brown (Hakon), J. D. Daniels (Tom), Jonathan Frakes (David Xanatos/Coyote), Martina Sirtis (Demona), Patrick Fraley (Brendan), Peter Renaday (Commander), Ed Gilbert (Captain of the Guard), Laura San Giacomo (Fox), Bridget Bako (Angela), Kath Soucie (Princess Katherine/Weird Sisters/Maggie the Cat), Frank Welker (Bronx), Thomas Wilson (Matt Bluestone), Terrence Mann (Oberon), Kate Mulgrew (Titania), Paul Winfield (Jeffrey Robbins), Diedrich Bader (Jason), Roxanna Beckford (Beth Maza), James Belushi (Fang), Xander Berkeley (Iago/Coldsteel), Victor Brandt (Rabbi Loew), Avery Brooks (Nokar), LeVar Burton (Anansi), Rocky Carroll (Derek Mazatalon/Glasses), Cam Clarke (Erik), Scott Cleverdon (John Castaway), Jesse Corti (Halcyon Renard, early episodes), Robert Culp (Halcyon Renard, later episodes), Jim Cummings (Dingo), Tim Curry (Dr. Sevarius), Neil Dickson (Canmore/Grif), Michael Dorn (Coldstone), Sarah Douglas (Una), Amentha Dymally (Grandma), Sheena Easton (Finella/Robyn Canmore), Hector Elizondo (Zafiro), Matt Frewer (Jackal), Gerritt Graham (Guardian), Richard Grieco (Anthony Dragon), Charlie Hallahan (MacDuff/Jaffe), Michael Horse (Peter Maza/Carlos Maza), Clyde Kusastu (Kai), Bruce Locke (Yama), Roddy McDowall (Proteus), Colm Meaney (Dougal), Haunani Minn (Sora), Nichelle Nichols (Diane Maza), C. C. H. Pounder (Coldfire), Gregg Rainwater (Coyote Trickster), Don Reed (Fara Maku), Roger Rees (Prince Malcolm), John Rhys Davies (MacBeth), James Saito (Taro), Emma Samms (Gruoch), John St. Ryan (King Arthur), Ruben Santiago Hudson (Gabriel), Peter Scolari (Preston Vogel), Tony Shalhoub (Emir), Morgan Sheppard (Petros Xanatos), Brent Spiner (Puck), Cree Summer (Hyena), Rachel Ticotin (Obsidiana/Maria Chavez), B. J. Ward (Fleance/Lady of the Lake), David Warner (Archmage), Scott Weil (Max Loew), Ric Young (Hiroushi), Efrem Zimbalist Jr. (Mace Malone)

Gargoyles: The Goliath Chronicles (1996–1997)

STUDIO: Disney

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

PRODUCER: Scott Thomas

DIRECTOR: Charles Bastien

WRITERS INCLUDED: Eric Lewald, Jay Fukuto, Kim Christianson, Julia Lewald, Mark Edens, Jan Strand, Brooks Wachtel

VOICE ACTORS: Keith David (Goliath), Bill Faggerbakke (Broadway), Thom Adcox Hernandez (Lexington), Edward Asner (Hudson/Jack Danforth), Jeff Bennett (Brooklyn/Magus/Owen), Salli Richardson (Eliza Maza), Clancy Brown (Hakon), J. D. Daniels (Tom), Jonathan Frakes (David Xanatos/Coyote), Martina Sirtis (Demona), Patrick Fraley (Brendan), Peter Renaday (Commander), Ed Gilbert (Captain of the Guard), Laura San Giacomo (Fox), Bridget Bako (Angela), Kath Soucie (Princess Katherine/Weird Sisters/

Maggie the Cat), Frank Welker (Bronx), Thomas Wilson (Matt Bluestone), Terrence Mann (Oberon), Kate Mulgrew (Titania), Paul Winfield (Jeffrey Robbins), Diedrich Bader (Jason), Roxanna Beckford (Beth Maza), James Belushi (Fang), Xander Berkeley (Iago/Coldsteel), Victor Brandt (Rabbi Loew), Avery Brooks (Nokar), LeVar Burton (Anansi), Rocky Carroll (Derek Mazatallon/Glasses), Cam Clarke (Erik), Scott Cleverdon (John Castaway), Jesse Corti (Halcyon Renard, early episodes), Robert Culp (Halcyon Renard, later episodes), Jim Cummings (Dingo), Tim Curry (Dr. Sevarius), Neil Dickson (Canmore/Grif), Michael Dorn (Coldstone), Sarah Douglas (Una), Amethysta Dymally (Grandma), Sheena Easton (Finella/Robyn Canmore), Hector Elizondo (Zafiro), Matt Frewer (Jackal), Gerritt Graham (Guardian), Richard Grieco (Anthony Dracon), Charlie Hallahan (MacDuff/Jaffe), Michael Horse (Peter Maza/Carlos Maza), Clyde Kusastu (Kai), Bruce Locke (Yama), Roddy McDowall (Proteus), Colm Meaney (Dougal), Haunani Minn (Sora), Nichelle Nichols (Diane Maza), C. C. H. Pounder (Coldfire), Gregg Rainwater (Coyote Trickster), Don Reed (Fara Maku), Roger Rees (Prince Malcolm), John Rhys Davies (MacBeth), James Saito (Taro), Emma Samms (Gruch), John St. Ryan (King Arthur), Ruben Santiago Hudson (Gabriel), Peter Scolar (Preston Vogel), Tony Shalhoub (Emir), Morgan Sheppard (Petros Xanatos), Brent Spiner (Puck), Cree Summer (Hyena), Rachel Ticotin (Obsidiana/Maria Chavez), B. J. Ward (Fleance/Lady of the Lake), David Warner (Archmage), Scott Weil (Max Loew), Ric Young (Hiroushi), Efrem Zimbalist Jr. (Mace Malone), Val Bettin (Egon Pax), Gabrielle Carteris (Amy Schummer), Lacey Chabert (Bobbi/Kim), E. G. Daily (Alex), John Forsythe (Pat Doyle), Dorian Harewood (Little Anton), Tress MacNeille (Margot Yale), Rob Paulsen (Quarryman Robert), Malachi Pearson (James), Rino Romano (Gang Leader), April Winchell (Shauna Coyle), Adam Wylie (Matthew)

SYNOPSIS: After being released from a magical enchantment, the Gargoyles, an ancient race of heroic warriors, defend New York City from forces of evil at night and become rigid statues during the daytime.

COMMENTARY: A very well-animated series cast in the mode of Warner's recent *Batman* (q.v.), except for the fact that it was based on a truly original concept and employed a neat, soap-opera-style serialized continuity for its once-a-week episodes. It was Disney's first attempt at producing a serious rather than comic animated program, and the studio more than proved it was up for that task. As with *Batman*, some well-cast voice actors added greatly to the dramatic impact of the work, as did some inspired artwork. Unfortunately, the sequel series, *The Goliath Chronicles*, was produced without Weisman's involvement (he had either been acrimoniously fired or withdrew voluntarily upon being demoted in the ranks of the crew, according to reports) and, while the sequel managed to advance and update the serialized themes of the forerunner, it was less successful, lasting only one season to the predecessor's three.



Disney goes dramatic—in a big way. Disney/Photofest © Disney

GARY AND MIKE (2001)

STUDIOS: Big Ticket, Will Vinton

DISTRIBUTOR: UPN

CREATORS: Fax Bahr, Adam Small

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Fax Bahr, Adam Small, Tom Turpin, Will Vinton

PRODUCERS: Doug Aberle, Erik Vignau

DIRECTORS: Doug Aberle, Robin Ator, Gayle Auers, David Bleiman, Sean Burns, Jim Hardison, Paul Harrod, Ken Pontac

WRITERS INCLUDED: Tracy Moody

VOICE ACTORS: Christopher Moynihan (Gary Newton), Harland Williams (Mike Bonner), Kurtwood Smith (Officer Dick), Charlton Heston (Cassette Tape/Narrator)

SYNOPSIS: Slackers Gary and Mike travel the country in a dilapidated Chevrolet.

COMMENTARY: A Claymation series that was heavily at odds with the typically family-friendly style of art usually done by producer Vinton but perfectly in line with the offbeat, off-color humorous style of creators Bahr and Small, who created and originally produced FOX's long-running but underrated sketch comedy show *Mad TV*. Witness, for example, the character crudely named Officer Dick, as well as Heston bizarrely cast as a cassette tape. This element of irreverence, however, was too unchecked for the show to truly work, and being pitted against more accessible and popular programs in the ratings didn't help, either.

THE GARY COLEMAN SHOW (1982–1983)

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, Gary Coleman

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCER: Art Scott

DIRECTORS: Ray Patterson, George Gordon, Bob Hathcock, Carl Urbano, Rudy Zamora

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Gary Coleman (Andy LeBeau), Jennifer Darling (Angelica), Sidney Miller (Hornswoggle), Calvin Mason (Spence), LaShanda Dendy (Tina), Jerry Hauser (Bartholomew), Lauren Anders (Chris), Julie McWhirter Dees (Lydia), Steve Schatzberg (Matt), Jeff Gordon (Haggle), Casey Kasem (Announcer)

SYNOPSIS: Apprentice angel Andy LeBeau must complete a series of good deed tasks before being able to truly earn his heavenly position.

COMMENTARY: Gary Coleman, the diminutive African American child actor who was the principal star of the popular live-action sitcom *Diff'rent Strokes* (NBC/ABC, 1978–1986), was the main attraction of this program, as the name implied. Born with a congenital kidney condition that caused him to appear to be younger than his true age, he (or, perhaps more accurately, his management) was quick to exploit his popularity with regular appearances on talk shows and TV movies in addition to the sitcom. (He would later be involved in a legal imbroglio related to his earnings as an adult, as have many former child stars vis-à-vis their guardians.) One of the

latter, *The Kid with the Broken Halo*, served as the jumping-off point for this animated program, although live-action costar Robert Guillaume did not make the transition. The series proved unsuccessful. A bad omen was the fact that the Mexican animators working on the show, obviously unfamiliar with Coleman, drew him as a white child in the first prints of the show, which had to be scrapped and redone.

GARY THE RAT (2003)

STUDIOS: Gramnet, Viacom

DISTRIBUTORS: TNN/Spike TV

CREATORS/WRITERS/DIRECTORS: Mark Cullen, Robb Cullen

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Mark Cullen, Robb Cullen, Kelsey Grammer

PRODUCERS: James Fino, Joanne Weiss

VOICE ACTORS: Kelsey Grammer (Gary Andrews), Robb Cullen (Johnny Bugz), Spencer Garret (Truman Pinksdale), Billy Gardell (J. B. Harrison), Vance DeGeneres (Therapist), Susan Savage (Boots the Cat)

SYNOPSIS: Unethical lawyer Gary Andrews inexplicably changes into an anthropomorphic rat but finds it has very little effect on his lifestyle or behavior.

COMMENTARY: With a premise modified from Franz Kafka's novella *Metamorphosis*, this was a clever program that deserved a wider audience. It was enjoyable because, unlike Kafka's character Gregor Samsa, Gary did not despair over his changed situation to the point of suicide but remained the shameless bastard he had always been, a leopard who had definitely not changed his spots. Grammer's charming, assured vocal performance sealed the deal, though a greater highlight was the hilariously inept manner in which Brooklyn-accented exterminator Bugz tried to kill off our hero at the subtle repeated requests of the latter's landlord, Pinksdale.

The series was originally produced by MediaTrip online in 2000 before migrating to mainstream television three years later.

GENERATION O! (2000–2001)

STUDIOS: Sunbow, RTV, TM, DC Comics, Columbia

DISTRIBUTOR: WB

CREATORS: David Hale, Tim Newman, James Proimos

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Martha Ripp, Ken Olshansky, Carole Weitzman

PRODUCERS: Jodey Kaminsky Cashman, Mike Milo

DIRECTOR: Mike Milo

WRITERS INCLUDED: Suzanne Collins

VOICE ACTORS: Chantal Strand (Molly O), Kay Hanley (Molly O, singing voice), Tabitha St. Germain (Eddie), Scott McNeil (Nub), Jay Brazeau (Colonel Bob), Kathleen Barr (Mrs. O), Doug Parker (Mr. O), Matt Hill (Buzz O), Cathy Weseluck (Chadd), Andrew Francis (Kemp)

SYNOPSIS: Preteen pop music star Molly O finds that fame does not shield her from the typical problems and insecurities felt by her peer group.

COMMENTARY: Another charming series from a weak network that deserved to be seen on a better one, at least in America. Based on Proimos's book

Joe's Wish, concurrent with a format developed by Hale and Newman, the program was distinguished by the enormous mouths and lips borne by the characters, as well as regular performances of original music by the Boston-based group Letters to Cleo, which dubbed in such sequences in the program. Equally memorable was the fact that the group had a kangaroo (named Yo Yo) as the drummer, for no explained reason.

GENERATOR REX (2010–2013)

STUDIO: Cartoon Network

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATORS: Joe Kelly, Joe Casey, Duncan Rouleau, Steven Seagle (a.k.a. Men of Action)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Brian Miller, Jennifer Pelphrey, Tramm Wigzell, Rob Swartz, Rob Sorcher

PRODUCERS: Ryan Slater, John Fang

DIRECTORS: Sam Montes, Rick Morales, Chris Graham, Seung Hyun Oh, Kenji Ono, John Fang, Rob Hoegee

WRITERS: Joe Kelly, Joe Casey, Duncan Rouleau, Steven Seagle, Scott Sonneborn, Amy Wolfram, Marty Isenberg, Alexx Van Dyne, Adam Beechen, Marsha Griffin, Paul Giacoppo, Eugene Son, Rob Hoegee, Michael Ryan, Andrew Robinson, Tad Stones, David Slack, James Felder, Ken Pontac, John Fang, Charlotte Fullerton, Jake Black, Jonathan Callahan

VOICE ACTORS: Troy Baker (Van Kleiss/Biowulf/Others), Grey DeLisle (Rebecca Holiday/Diane Farrah/Others), John DiMaggio (Bobo Haha/Skalamander/Others), Wally Kurth (Agent Six/Captain Calan), Daryl Sabara (Rex Salazar/Others), Tara Sands (Circe/Others), Fred Savage (Noah Nixon/Others), Freddy Rodriguez (Caesar Salazar/Others), J. K. Simmons (White Knight/Others), Hynden Walch (Breach/Others)

SYNOPSIS: Alien nanites turn ordinary human beings into Exponentially Variated Organisms (EVOs), which are frequently, though not always, violently destructive creatures threatening humanity. The organization Providence combats the threat of the overtly violent EVOs, with the aid of the good but amnesiac EVO Rex.

COMMENTARY: This project, from the creators of the *Ben 10* (q.v.) franchise, mirrored the monsters at the heart of its narrative by itself being a violently and capriciously destructive action-oriented program working to no good end. In that sense, it resembled the later editions of the earlier program, with which it shared a crossover episode and more than a few of the writers and directors.

GENTLE BEN (1981)

STUDIO: Gentle Ben Animation

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

CREATOR: Walt Morey

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: The original *Gentle Ben* (CBS, 1967–1969) was a series about the title character, a friendly black bear who lived with the Wedloe

family in the Florida Everglades. This animated version featured the title character as a cape-wearing superhero. The run of the series seems to have been short and unmemorable, as little information about the series other than these details is available.

GEORGE AND MARTHA (1999)

STUDIOS: Nelvana, Wild Things

DISTRIBUTOR: HBO (United States)

CREATOR: James Marshall

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Maurice Sendak, John Carls, Michael Hirsh, Patrick Loubert, Clive Smith, James Wang

PRODUCERS: Stephen Hodgins, Patricia Burns

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Nathan Lane (George), Andrea Martin (Martha), Sean Cullen (Wilde/Eton), Robin Duke (Penny), Kathryn Greenwood (Frieda), Greg Kramer (Anton), Colin Mochrie (Oscar/Bud Chuckles), Debra McGrath (Valerie Chuckles), Tony Rosato (Duke)

SYNOPSIS: The adventures of a pair of happy-go-lucky hippos.

COMMENTARY: Based on Marshall's long-running children's book series, this was another one of Nelvana's scrupulously accurate adaptations from that genre, with the production input of Marshall's contemporary Sendak and some well-cast vocal performances securing the program's value. Unlike many others of its kind, it was likable without being irritating or condescending to those beyond its target age group, as was characteristic of both the production company and the respective oeuvres of Marshall and Sendak.

GEORGE OF THE JUNGLE (1967–1970)

STUDIO: Jay Ward

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Jay Ward, Bill Scott, Ponsonby Britt

DIRECTORS: Gerald Baldwin, Frank Braxton, Pete Burness, Paul Harvey, Jim Hiltz, Bill Hurtz, Lew Keller, John Walker

WRITERS: Chris Jenkyns, Jim MacGeorge, John Marshall, Jack Mendelsohn, Lloyd Turner

VOICE ACTORS: Bill Scott (George of the Jungle/Tom Slick/Super Chicken/Gertie Growler), June Foray (Ursula/Marigold), Paul Frees (Ape/Fred/Narrator/Dick Two Lane/Baron Otto Matic), Daws Butler (District Commander/Others)

SYNOPSIS: Three short animated features. The title segment starred an incompetent Tarzan figure aided by his much more intelligent animal friends and wife. Also featured was "Tom Slick," the saga of an extremely ethical auto racer, and "Super Chicken," a mock superhero program.

COMMENTARY: Jay Ward's swan song as a producer of television animation productions, going out as he entered the business nearly twenty years earlier: in style. The sharp, Hollywood-produced animation was a marked improvement over the more limited forms that had been featured on his earlier programs, and the writing, directing, and acting were as sharp as ever. The



Watch out for that tree, George! ABC/Photofest © ABC

studio easily could have continued production of series beyond this excellent one, but Ward was politically blackballed by the networks for his past actions, and after this production, the company was limited to producing television commercials.

The central difference between this program and Ward's others was that the narratives were not serialized but self-contained. This prevented the wide-ranging and ever-elongated stories that had dominated *Rocky and His Friends/The Bullwinkle Show* (q.v.) and *Hoppity Hooper* (q.v.) from being used, but it also forced the writers to remain focused on making each segment work on its own merits rather than forcing it into an extended satirical continuity. This was achieved. Each of the segments had its own peculiar charm, recurring jokes, and theme songs that made them both funny and memorable, then and now, in a way few other series are. The series was a fitting valediction to Ward's brilliant ability to keep both children and adults entertained and often for the same reasons.

GEORGE SHRINKS (2000)

STUDIOS: Nelvana, Jade Animation, TVOntario

DISTRIBUTOR: PBS (United States)

CREATOR: William Joyce

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Joyce, Michael Hirsh, Patrick Loubert, Clive Smith, Wallace Wong

PRODUCERS: Stephen Hodgins, Patricia Burns, Jocelyn Hamilton, Michelle Melanson

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS INCLUDED: J. D. Smith

VOICE ACTORS: Tracey Moore (George), Paul O'Sullivan (Dad), Kathy Laskey (Mom), Robbi Jay Thuet (Junior), Bryn McAuley (Betty)

SYNOPSIS: Young George wakes up one morning to find that he is only three inches tall. Complications ensue.

COMMENTARY: Based on Joyce's popular children's book, this series had more of a limited premise than his other collaboration with Canadian animators, *Rolie Polie Olie* (q.v.). Therefore, it had a shorter life, despite some well-produced episodes. Unlike other animated series aimed at children, it had a much-needed soft-pedaled tone toward its learning and moralizing component.

GERALD McBOING BOING (AND RELATED SERIES)

***The Gerald McBoing Boing Show* (a.k.a. *Boing Boing*; 1956–1958)**

STUDIO: UPA

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATOR: Dr. Seuss (né Theodor Geisel; *Gerald McBoing Boing*)

PRODUCERS: Robert "Bobo" Cannon, Bill Scott

DIRECTORS: Robert "Bobo" Cannon, George Dunning, Ernest Pintoff, Fred Crippen, Jimmy Murakami, Jim Hiltz, Mordi Gerstein

WRITERS: Robert "Bobo" Cannon, George Dunning, Ernest Pintoff, Fred Crippen, Jimmy Murakami, Jim Hiltz, Mordi Gerstein, Bill Scott, Leo Salkin

VOICE ACTORS: Bill Goodwin (Host/Interpreter); Marvin Miller and Howard Morris (Additional characters)

***Gerald McBoing Boing* (2005–2007)**

STUDIOS: Cookie Jar, Mercury Filmworks, Classic Media

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

DIRECTOR: Robin Budd

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Glenn Barna (Gerald McBoing Boing), Sam Weinstein (Janine), Joanne Vannicola (Jacob), Patrick McKenna (Mr. McBoing Boing), Linda Balantyne (Mrs. McBoing Boing), Deanne DeGruitjer (Narrator)

SYNOPSIS: Gerald McBoing Boing is a little boy who can only communicate through vocalized sound effects, which makes fitting into society a little difficult for him.

COMMENTARY: Gerald was first developed by Seuss as a character in a children's record, which seemed to be a logical place for him, but when the record flopped, he took the character to UPA. In 1950, the studio featured him in an acclaimed, Academy Award-winning short film, which was hailed at the time as much for its breakthroughs in graphic design as its on-screen

A true star—even though he didn't speak English. UPA/Photofest © UPA



narrative content. Gerald was then featured in three more theatrical films before he became the star of his own television program in 1956. It was a breakthrough for television animation as the first series on its network to be broadcast in color, and, arguably, the first animated series to be broadcast in prime time (if 5:30 p.m. Eastern Standard Time on Sundays can be considered such).

The logistics of having a star who did not speak in the conventional fashion was balanced by veteran CBS announcer Goodwin serving as the host, as well as the translator of Gerald's utterances into standard English. It also helped that the entire show did not revolve around him. Also featured were the Twirler Twins, a pair of incompetent child actors; Dusty of the Circus, who, foreshadowing *The Wild Thornberrys* (q.v.), could communicate with animals; and a variety of recurring and one-shot features, some of which, such as "Meet the Inventor" and "Mr. Longview Looks Back," foreshadowed some of coproducer/cowriter Scott's later work with Jay Ward (see *Rocky and His Friends/The Bullwinkle Show* for specific examples). Unfortunately, while it was well produced, the series was not a success, in part due to the fact that some of CBS's affiliates jettisoned it to air more popular programs in its time slot instead.

The 2005 edition featured a modernized Gerald, along with two normal-speaking kids, Jamie and Jacob, who jointly filled the interpreter role. By this time, UPA had long ceased to exist; this project was produced by the independent Cookie Jar Studio, along with Classic Media, which now holds UPA's copyrights (including Gerald). In what was likely a nod to Gerald's nominal creator, the dialogue for the series consisted primarily of rhymed verse, which, along with Gerald's peculiar ability, was part of what made it stand out compared to others of its time.

THE GET ALONG GANG (1984–1986)

STUDIOS: Those Characters from Cleveland, Scholastic, Lorimar, DIC, LBS

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Jean Chalopin, Andy Heyward

PRODUCER/DIRECTOR: Cullen Blaine

WRITERS: Allan Swayze, Marc Scott Zicree, Larry Parr, Jack Olesker, Pamela Hickey, Dennis McCoy, George Hampton, Mike Moore, George Atkins, Bob Rosenfarb, John Ludin, Michael Maliani, Felicia Maliani

VOICE ACTORS: Bettina Bush, Timothy Gibbs, Georgi Irene, Nicky Katt, Robbie Lee, Sherry Lynn, Sparky Marcus, Chuck McCann, Scott Menville, Don Messick, Frank Welker, Donovan Freberg, and Eva Marie Hesse (Specific roles unknown)

SYNOPSIS: In the town of Greenmeadow, the anthropomorphic members of the Get Along Gang gather to confront and deal with their personal shortcomings.

COMMENTARY: Given the title, this project's lack of outright conflict and violence was obvious. Each of the lead characters had a particular positive trait balanced by a negative one (Dotty the dog, for example, was very strong physically but also very careless), while the purely villainous characters (reptiles all) had little in the way of redemption in their personalities. Somehow, the idea of promoting equality among animals of different kinds (meant to evoke human equality) got lost in the process of demonizing one type of animal as a particularly bad example. The project had a stronger afterlife than some of its contemporaries, later being incorporated into DIC's syndication block *Kideo TV* (q.v.), and in the late 1990s rebroadcast in its entirety on the cable channel PAX.

GET ED (2005–2006)

STUDIOS: Red Rover, Jetix

DISTRIBUTOR: Disney

CREATOR/DIRECTOR: Andy Knight

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Lyon Smith (Ed), Megan Fahlenbock (Deets), L. Dean Ifill (Burn), Bailey Stocker (Fizz), Peter Cugno (Loogie), Tony Daniels (Ol' Skool/Torch), Jamie Watson (Mr. Simon Bedlam), Jennifer Dale (Kora), Tony Rosato (Crouch), Lorne Kennedy (Spyker), James Rankin (DNA Deliveries), Heather Bambrick (DJ Drive/Caretaker), Jeff Lumby (Dirk Cheap), Steve McHattie (Dr. Hong), Don Dickinson (Buster/Pit), Don Francks (Rodney)

SYNOPSIS: In futuristic Progress City, genetically engineered teenage-courier-cum-crimefighter Ed and his courier colleagues are the main line of defense against villainous industrialist Bedlam.

COMMENTARY: As with many action-oriented animated series, substance was bypassed here in favor of style. This Canadian import had some interesting touches to it, such as the seeming omnipotence of radio broadcaster DJ Drive, but it was clearly commissioned and produced merely as a way of killing cable channel time, and that was what it ended up doing.

GHOSTBUSTERS (1986)

STUDIOS: Filmation, Tribune

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

CREATOR: Mark Richards

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Lou Scheimer

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Patrick Fraley (Jake Kong Jr./Ghost Buggy/Jake Kong Sr./Skelescope/Scared Stiff), Peter Cullen (Eddie Spencer Jr./Eddie Spencer Sr./Brat-a-Rat/Haunter/Floatzart/Big Evil/Corpulon), Lou Scheimer (Tracy/Ansabone/Skelevision/Fuddy/Sir Trance-a-Lot/Fib Face), Susan Blu (Belfry/Futura/Jessica Wray/Time Hopper), Linda Gary (Madame Why/Mysteria/Appertitia), Erika Scheimer (Skelevator/Shock Clock), Alan Oppenheimer (Prime Evil/Merlin/Fangster/Long John Scarecrome/Airhead)

SYNOPSIS: Jake Kong Jr. and Eddie Spencer Jr. continue the paranormal hunting activities of their namesake fathers, most often coming into conflict with the powerful sorcerer Prime Evil and his minions.

COMMENTARY: While this series was decent enough on its own merits, it received negative attention when Filmation engaged with an extended which-came-first legal battle with Columbia Pictures related to the latter's popular *Ghostbusters* film franchise, which spawned *The Real Ghostbusters* (q.v.). Filmation's series was actually based on a live-action comedy series it had produced in the mid-1970s called *The Ghost Busters*, starring Larry Storch and Forrest Tucker as Spencer and Kong. A video issue of that series was what sparked the Columbia legal imbroglio, and it was fanned when both animated projects went into production and broadcasting simultaneously.

That being said, the two series had very little in common other than a similarity in subject matter, which is something that cannot be copyrighted. And Filmation's version did well to distinguish itself by invoking a more gothic feel than its peer, with the protagonists using a variety of tools and confronting a range of spooks that reinforced this ambience. There was also a well-constructed theme song and montage sequences. But Filmation diminished its own project by increasingly using recycled animation sequences and tirelessly repeating jokes to the point of nausea—as with Prime Evil's constant inability to actually utter the name of the organization that repeatedly bedeviled him.

G.I. JOE (AND RELATED SERIES)***G.I. Joe: A Real American Hero* (1985, pilot in 1983)**

STUDIOS: Marvel, Sunbow, Claster

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Joe Bacal, Tom Griffin, Margaret Loesch

PRODUCERS: Don Jurwich, Sam Weiss, Michael Hill, Jim Duffy, Mark Glomack, Larry Houston, Alex Lovy, George Singer, John Walker, Dan Thompson

DIRECTORS: Ray Lee, Robert Alvarez, Warren Batchelder, Brad Case, Joan Case, Rudy Cataldi, Gerry Chiniquy, Charlie Downs, Lilian Evans, John Freeman, Milton Gray, Bob Kirk, Bill Knoll, Norman McCabe, Bob Matz, Joe Morrison, Margaret Nichols, Karen Peterson, Thom Ray, Robert Shellhorn, Bob Trent, Neal Warner

WRITERS INCLUDED: Buzz Dixon

VOICE ACTORS: Jackson Beck (Narrator); Charlie Adler, Jack Angel, Liz Aubrey, Michael Bell, Arthur Burghardt, Corey Burton, Bill Callaway, Peter Cullen, Brian Cummings, Patrick Fraley, Hank Garrett, Dick Gautier, Ed Gilbert, Dan Gilvezan, Dave Hall, Zack Hoffman, Kene Holiday, Jerry Hauser, Chris Latta, Loren Lester, Mary McDonald Lewis, Chuck McCann, Michael McConnohie, Rob Paulsen, Pat Pinney, Lisa Raggio, Bill Ratner, Hal Rayle, Bob Remus, Neil Ross, Will Ryan, Ted Schwartz, John Stephenson, B. J. Ward, Lee Weaver, Frank Welker, Stan Wojno, and Keone Young (Specific roles unknown)

***G.I. Joe* (1990)**

STUDIOS: DIC, Claster

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Andy Heyward, Robby London

PRODUCER: John Grusd

DIRECTORS: Jim Duffy, Chuck Paxton

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Lee Jeffrey (Stalker), Suzanne Emmett Balcom (Lady Jaye), Kevin Conway (Rock and Roll), Dale Wilson (Mutt), Jim Byrnes (Alley Viper), Ian Corlett (Gnauthahyde), Michael Benyaer (Scoop), Maurice LaMarche (Copperhead/Lowligh/Serpentor/Spirit/Destro), Chris Latta (Cobra Commander), Morgan Lofting (Baroness), Sergeant Slaughter (Himself)

***G.I. Joe: Extreme* (1995)**

STUDIOS: Sunbow, Claster

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Michael Wahl

PRODUCER: Lee Gunther

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS INCLUDED: Buzz Dixon

VOICE ACTORS: Jim Byrnes (Nelson), Randall Carpenter (Mayday), Gary Chalk (Stone), Ian Corlett (Inferno), Michael Dobson (Sergeant Savage), Brian Drummon (Eagle Eye), Matt Hill (Metal Head), Terry Klassen (Black Dragon), Campbell Lane (Mr. Clancy), Blu Mankuma (Freight/Quick Stryke), Colin Murdock

(Rampage), Richard Newman (Iron Klaw), Elizabeth Savenkoff (Steel Raven), Francisco Trujillo (Harpoon), Dale Wilson (Wreckage/President/Red)

G.I. Joe: Sigma 6 (2005–2007)

STUDIOS: 4Kids Entertainment, Gonzo

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Rebecca Soler

DIRECTOR: Kobun Shizuno

WRITER: Masaki Wachi

VOICE ACTORS (North American edition): Tony Salerno (General Hawk), David Willis (Duke, 2005), Greg Abbey (Duke, 2006–2007), Jason Griffin (Snake Eyes), Lisa Ortiz (Jinx, 2005), Liza Jacqueline (Jinx, 2006–2007), Michael Sinterniklaas (Kamakura, 2005/Tunnel Rat, 2005), Marc Thompson (Kamakura, 2006–2007/Cobra Commander/Destro/Zartan), Amy Birnbaum (Scarlett, 2005), Veronica Taylor (Scarlett, 2006–2007), Sebastien Arcelus (Tunnel Rat, 2006–2007), Scottie Ray (Long Range), F. B. Owens (Heavy Duty), Eric Stuart (Hi Tech/Machete, 2006–2007), Darren Dunstan (Spirit Iron Knife), Dan Green (Lieutenant Stone), Bella Hudson (Baroness, 2005), Kayzie Rogers (Baroness, 2006–2007), Tom Wayland (Storm Shadow, 2005), Ted Lewis (Storm Shadow, 2006–2007/Torch, 2006–2007), Madeleine Blaustein (Overkill), Sean Schemmel (Firefly), Wayne Grayson (Buzzer), David Brimmer (Torch, 2005/Machete, 2005)

G.I. Joe: Renegades (2010–2011)

STUDIOS: Darby Pop, Hasbro

DISTRIBUTOR: The Hub

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Jeff Kline

PRODUCERS: Phil Crain, Teresa Trujillo

DIRECTORS: Nathan Chew, Scott Bern, Kevin Altieri, Scooter Tidwell, Patrick Archibald

WRITERS: Henry Gilroy, Marty Isenberg, Stan Berkowitz, Eugene Son, Rich Fogel, Greg Johnson, Dean Stefan, Andrew Robinson, Scott Sonneborn, Alexx Van Dyne, Brandon Aurman, Tom Pugsley, Mitch Rothenberg, Josh Eiserike, Bill Wolkoff, Ed Lee, Tim Jennings, Eric Karten, Michael Ryan

VOICE ACTORS: Jason Marsden (Duke/Ripper), Danny Cooksey (Snake Eyes), Natalia Cigliutti (Scarlet), Kevin Michael Richardson (Roadblock/Road Pig), Matthew King (Tunnel Rat/Torch), Khary Payton (Ripchord), Greg Ellis (Breaker), Johnny Messner (Flint), Nika Futterman (Lady Jaye), Charlie Schlatter (Wild Bill/Lift Ticket/Dr. Mindbender), Keith Ferguson (Heavy Duty), Charlie Adler (Cobra Commander/Buzzer/Monkeywrench), Clancy Brown (Destro), Tatyana Yassukovich (Baroness), Andre Sogliuzzo (Major Bludd), Andrew Kishino (Storm Shadow/Stalker/Tripwire/Frostbite), Phil LaMarr (Scrap Iron/Doc), Brian Bloom (Zartan), Stephen Stanton (Tomax/Xamot), Peter MacNicol (Firefly), Michael Emerson (Dr. Venom), Lee Majors (General Abernathy), Kim Mai Guest (Jinx), Eddie Mata (Steeler), Corey Burton (Law), Jerry O'Connell (Barbecue), Nolan North (Snow Job), Carlos Alazraqui (Shipwreck), Liam O'Brien (Red Star), Troy Baker (Airtight)

SYNOPSIS: Collectively, *G.I. Joe* refers to a group of American soldiers in perennial conflict with the evil Cobra organization.

COMMENTARY: The term *G.I. Joe* (the initials stood for "Government Issue") originated during World War II as a generic military term for the average soldier and was popularized as such with the general public by journalist Ernie Pyle, who specialized in dispatches from the front lines. The term and image persisted in the minds of the American public long after the war ended, so much so that, when Hasbro developed a soldier toy aimed at boys in the mid-1960s, it seemed like the logical name to be used. The toy sold well until the late 1970s, when the line was abandoned. However, when the Reagan administration, with its more hawkish outlook, came into power, *G.I. Joe* came back and was more popular than ever. This, in turn, led to the first of the animated series listed here, all of which were entirely or in part underwritten by the toy manufacturer to promote a new incarnation of the line. As it did with its *Transformers* (q.v.) franchise, Hasbro would turn *G.I. Joe* into a live-action film franchise in the 2000s and 2010s.

As each of the series largely functioned as an advertisement for the toy line and nothing more, the particulars of the narrative remained the same. The Joes functioned as the multiethnic good guys and girls who fought hand to hand with a variety of realistically designed weapons against the forces of Cobra, some of whom looked like human beings, while others resembled humanized reptiles. What resulted in most cases was a relentless game of shoot-'em-up that extended as long as the series' production quota would allow. It received the expected backlash from antiviolence and anticommmercialism advocates, but there was more to quibble with related to the series' virtual absence of decent plotting and realistic characterization—if you were into such things. Mostly, Hasbro bet its young-boy target audience didn't care about that and succeeded that way commercially.

G.I. Joe: Renegades, the most recent incarnation, did attempt to be a bit different, taking a page from *The A Team* (NBC, 1982–1987) by making the lead characters a group framed "for a crime they did not commit" and thus taking heat from both Cobra (more of an industrial rather than military force this time) and the elite regular Army squad sent out to arrest them or destroy them or both. Still, given that even the character names were recycled here, there was very little that this series could do to avoid emulating and restaging the generic military fireworks of its predecessor.

As with some of the other series it has produced, Hasbro seemed to regard television animation here as a selling vehicle for *G.I. Joe* toys and nothing else. This misuse of the genre for entirely commercial purposes is unfortunate and remains one of the biggest barriers to understanding and accepting the production of animation for television as an artistic pursuit.

***GILLIGAN'S PLANET* (1982–1983)**

See *The New Adventures of Gilligan/Gilligan's Planet*.

***GIRLSTUFF/BOYSTUFF* (2003)**

STUDIOS: Decode, YTV

DISTRIBUTOR: Noggin (United States)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Beth Stevenson, Steven Denure, Neil Court

PRODUCERS: Dan Fill, Richard Fitzer

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS INCLUDED: Richard Elliott, Simon Racioppa

VOICE ACTORS: Carly Stipanich (Hanna), Jesse Dubinsky (Jason), Kathyleen Johnson (Reanne), Brennan Stang (Ben), Heidi Emery (Talia), Matt Rubel (Simon)

SYNOPSIS: Six teenagers try to understand the sociological differences between boys and girls and thus themselves.

COMMENTARY: A Canadian import that seemed to have no reason for being animated because most of its content could have been done just as well in live action, but it was effective in presenting its cultural message about diversity and difference.

***GO DIEGO GO!* (2005–2011)**

STUDIO/DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

CREATORS/EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Chris Gifford, Valerie Walsh

PRODUCER: Cathy Galeota

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Jake Austin (Diego Marquez, seasons 1–3), Matt Hunter (Diego Marquez, season 4), Brandon Zambrano (Diego Marquez, season 5), Constanza Sperakis (Alicia Marquez, early episodes), Serena Kerrigan (Alicia Marquez, later episodes), Gabrielle Aisenberg (Alicia Marquez, later episodes), Rosie Perez (Click), Thomas Sharkey (Baby Jaguar), Keeler Sandhaus (Rescue Pack), Jose Zelaya (Bobos), Laura Abreu (Linda the Llama)

SYNOPSIS: Aided by his older sister Alicia, a baby jaguar, and intelligent mechanical equipment, 11-year-old Diego Marquez frequently embarks on animal rescue missions in the jungles of Latin America.

COMMENTARY: A spin-off of *Dora the Explorer* (q.v.)—Diego is Dora's cousin—this series continued the same nonthreatening educational terrain as its predecessor, with its main objective, as with the prior series, to help its target audience understand the Spanish language and sympathize with its speakers.

***GOD, THE DEVIL AND BOB* (2000)**

STUDIOS: Vanity Logo, Carsey-Werner

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

CREATOR: Matthew Carlson

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Marcy Carsey, Tom Werner, Matthew Carlson, Caryn Mandbach, Harvey Myman, Linwood Boomer, Gary Murphy

PRODUCERS: Jeffrey DeGrandis, Margot Pipkin, Alex Reid, Mitch Watson

DIRECTORS: Jeffrey DeGrandis, Dan Fauset, Sherie Pollack, Steve Ressel, Swinton Scott III

WRITERS: Matthew Carlson, Gary Murphy, Alex Reid, Neil Thompson

VOICE ACTORS: James Garner (God), Alan Cumming (The Devil), French Stewart (Bob Alman), Laurie Metcalf (Donna Alman), Nancy Cartwright (Megan Alman), Kath Soucie (Andy Alman), Chi McBride (Mike), Jeff Doucette (Smeck)

SYNOPSIS: God and the Devil wager that God cannot find one person left on Earth who can still be redeemed—otherwise, mankind is doomed to Hell. Detroit-based auto plant worker Bob Alman, a neglectful husband and father who enjoys liquor and strip joints, is chosen by God to be that one person.

COMMENTARY: A failed attempt by a conservative mainstream network to produce edgy animated fare à la FOX and Comedy Central. The failure was magnified by the fact that it was produced by a studio with little experience with or understanding of the art of animation and no way of replicating the artistic skill that its predecessors of this kind work in achieving their objectives. The casting of Garner as God was a major selling point, and he and Cumming both did their best to enliven what increasingly became a sterile and futile comedic situation, but that wasn't enough. Thirteen episodes were produced, but only four aired in America before the series was canceled (22 NBC affiliates refused to show the program at all because the show's raunchy content wasn't their cup of tea). The entire series later aired in Britain, where it did little better.

GODZILLA (AND RELATED SERIES)

***The Godzilla Power Hour* (1978)**

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, Benedict, Toho

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

CREATOR: Doug Wildey (*Jana of the Jungle*)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: Iwao Takamoto, Doug Wildey

DIRECTORS: George Gordon, Ray Patterson, Carl Urbano

WRITERS INCLUDED: Dick Robbins, Duane Poole

VOICE ACTORS: Ted Cassidy (Godzilla/Montaro), Don Messick (Godzooky), Jeff David (Captain Carl Majors), Brenda Thompson (Dr. Quinn Darien), Al Eisenmann (Pete), Hilly Hicks (Brock), B. J. Ward (Jana of the Jungle), Michael Bell (Dr. Ben Cooper)

***Godzilla and the Super 90* (1978–1979)**

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, Benedict, Toho

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

CREATOR: Doug Wildey (*Jana of the Jungle*)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: Iwao Takamoto, Doug Wildey, William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

DIRECTORS: George Gordon, Ray Patterson, Carl Urbano, William Hanna, Joseph Barbera, Charles Nichols

WRITERS INCLUDED: Dick Robbins, Duane Poole, Paul Sommer, Arthur Pierson

VOICE ACTORS: Ted Cassidy (Godzilla/Montaro), Don Messick (Godzooky), Jeff David (Captain Carl Majors), Brenda Thompson (Dr. Quinn Darien), Al Eisenmann (Pete), Hilly Hicks (Brock), B. J. Ward (Jana of the Jungle), Michael

Bell (Dr. Ben Cooper), Tim Matthieson (a.k.a. Tim Matheson; Jonny Quest), Mike Road (Roger "Race" Bannon), John Stephenson (Dr. Benton Quest, early episodes), Don Messick (Dr. Benton Quest, later episodes/Bandit), Danny Bravo (Hadji), Vic Perrin (Dr. Zin/Others), Cathy Lewis (Jezebel Jade)

The Godzilla Show (1979)

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, Benedict, Toho

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: Iwao Takamoto, Doug Wildey

DIRECTORS: George Gordon, Ray Patterson, Carl Urbano

WRITERS INCLUDED: Dick Robbins, Duane Poole

VOICE ACTORS: Ted Cassidy (Godzilla/Montaro), Don Messick (Godzooky), Jeff David (Captain Carl Majors), Brenda Thompson (Dr. Quinn Darien), Al Eisenmann (Pete), Hilly Hicks (Brock), B. J. Ward (Jana of the Jungle), Michael Bell (Dr. Ben Cooper)

The Godzilla/Globetrotters Adventure Hour (1979–1980)

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, Benedict, Toho

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: Iwao Takamoto, Doug Wildey

DIRECTORS: George Gordon, Ray Patterson, Carl Urbano, William Hanna, Joseph Barbera, Charles Nichols

WRITERS INCLUDED: Dick Robbins, Duane Poole

VOICE ACTORS: Ted Cassidy (Godzilla/Montaro), Don Messick (Godzooky), Jeff David (Captain Carl Majors), Brenda Thompson (Dr. Quinn Darien), Al Eisenmann (Pete), Hilly Hicks (Brock), B. J. Ward (Jana of the Jungle), Michael Bell (Dr. Ben Cooper), Stu Gilliam ("Curly" Neal), John Williams ("Geese" Ausbie), Scatman Crothers ("Meadowlark" Lemon), Richard Elkins (Gip), Eddie "Rochester" Anderson (Bobby Joe Mason), Robert DoQui (Pablo), Nancy Wible (Granny)

The Godzilla/Dynomutt Hour with the Funky Phantom (1980)

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, Benedict, Toho

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

CREATORS: Doug Wildey (*Jana of the Jungle*); Joe Ruby and Ken Spears (*Dynomutt, Dog Wonder*)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: Iwao Takamoto, Doug Wildey, Alex Lovy, William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

DIRECTORS: George Gordon, Ray Patterson, Carl Urbano, Charles Nichols

WRITERS INCLUDED: Dick Robbins, Duane Poole, Norman Maurer, Earl Doud, Jeff Maurer, Lee Orgel, Haskell Barkin, Donald Glut, Orville Hampton, Michael Maurer, Dalton Sandifer, Deirdre Starlight

VOICE ACTORS: Ted Cassidy (Godzilla/Montaro); Don Messick (Godzooky); Jeff David (Captain Carl Majors); Brenda Thompson (Dr. Quinn Darien); Al Eisenmann (Pete); Hilly Hicks (Brock); B. J. Ward (Jana of the Jungle); Mi-

chael Bell (Dr. Ben Cooper); Frank Welker (Dynomutt); Gary Owens (Bradley Crown/Blue Falcon); Daws Butler (Jonathan "Musty" Muddlemore); Micky Dolenz (Skip); Tommy Cook (Augie); Tina Holland (April); Jerry Dexter and Julie Bennett (Additional characters)

The Godzilla/Hong Kong Phooey Hour (1980–1981)

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, Benedict, Toho

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

CREATOR: Doug Wildey (*Jana of the Jungle*)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: Iwao Takamoto, Doug Wildey

DIRECTORS: George Gordon, Ray Patterson, Carl Urbano, Charles Nichols

WRITERS INCLUDED: Dick Robbins, Duane Poole, Myles Wilder, Bill Raynor, Fred Fox, Seaman Jacobs, Len Janson, Chuck Menville, Larz Bourne, Jack Mendelsohn

VOICE ACTORS: Ted Cassidy (Godzilla/Montaro), Don Messick (Godzooky/Spot), Jeff David (Captain Carl Majors), Brenda Thompson (Dr. Quinn Darien), Al Eisenmann (Pete), Hilly Hicks (Brock), B. J. Ward (Jana of the Jungle), Michael Bell (Dr. Ben Cooper), Scatman Crothers (Penrod Pooch/Hong Kong Phooey), Joe E. Ross (Sergeant Flint), Kathi Gori (Rosemary)

Godzilla: The Series (1998–2000)

STUDIOS: Adelaide, Centropolis, Columbia

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Dean Devlin, Roland Emmerich, Richard Raynis, Jeff Kline

PRODUCER: Audu Paden

DIRECTORS: Audu Paden, Nathan Chew, David Hartman, Sam Liu, Frank Squillace, Alan Caldwell, Brad Raden, Christopher Berkeley, Sean Song

WRITERS: Marty Isenberg, Robert Skir, Tom Pugsley, Greg Klein, Martha Griffin, Jeff Kline, Richard Raynis, Steven Melching, Steve Perry, Neil Ruthenberg, Len Wein, Marv Wolfman, Baz Hawkins, Harry "Doc" Kloor, Scott Lobdell, Gregory Pincus, Brooks Wachtel, Steve Cuden, Carl Ellsworth, Janna King, William Stout, Jeffrey Wynne, Angel Lopez, Craig Miller

VOICE ACTORS: Ian Ziering (Dr. Nick Tatopoulos), Malcolm Danare (Dr. Mendel Craven), Rino Romano (Randy Hernandez), Brigitte Bako (Monique Dupre), Tom Kenny (N.I.G.E.L.), Charity James (Dr. Elsie Chapman), Keith Szarbarajka (Philippe Roache), Michael Lerner (Mayor), Kevin Dunn (Major Tony Hicks), Paget Brewster (Audrey Timmonds), Joe Pantoliano (Victor "Animal" Palotti), Frank Welker (Godzilla)

SYNOPSIS: Godzilla, the T. Rex-like "King of the Monsters," frequently emerges from his aquatic subterranean lair to fight natural forces and others of his kind threatening humanity.

COMMENTARY: *Gojira*, as he was originally known (it is a combination of the Japanese word for "whale" and the English word "gorilla"), first appeared in motion pictures in an eponymous feature in 1954 from Japan's Toho Studios. It was, as were all subsequent ones, clumsily dubbed into English for release in North America after its initial Japanese run. While killed off in the original

film, Gojira proved so popular that he was subsequently resurrected in 1959 in a film known as *Gigantis, the Fire Monster* in the United States. Rechristened “Godzilla” for subsequent English-language appearances, he continued to appear in Toho films for the balance of the 20th century (despite low-tech production methods, such as having actors “playing” monsters by cavorting in rubber suits, that got the later films mocked), as well as two higher-end American productions made in 1998 and 2014, respectively. He was also recently made an honorary citizen of Japan, a belated recognition of the many times he has saved the country from peril in his starring vehicles there.

Despite the camp elements of the Toho films, the character’s popularity was undeniable, and he seemed like an ideal candidate for American television production, given that children made up a considerable portion of his most loyal fans. At least Hanna-Barbera seemed to believe this when they licensed the character from Toho for use in America. The series that resulted followed the pattern of the more recent Toho films, where Godzilla emerged from the sea to fight some supernaturally powered evil monsters who threatened human beings he had befriended. In this case, it was the crew of the scientific research vessel *Calico*, who gained Godzilla’s loyalty after they came to the aid of his little relation Godzooky (a typical Hanna-Barbera comic-relief character of the time). He proceeded to come to their aid repeatedly when they encountered various evil beings, in a drawn-out, cliff-hanger format. Filling out the original version of the show was *Jana of the Jungle*, a well-produced and animated saga of a female Tarzan that the studio downplayed in its publicity of the series, and therefore it didn’t get the attention it deserved.

Perhaps due to consistently low ratings, unfortunately, Hanna-Barbera kept misusing Godzilla by tinkering with the length and format of his show during their three-year association, which hurt its chances of gaining attention and success. *The Godzilla Power Hour* had not been on the air for more than two months before it became *Godzilla and the Super 90* with the addition of *Jonny Quest* (q.v.). At the beginning of the 1979–1980 season, the supporting components were slashed, and Godzilla worked alone, but later in the season, he was teamed, oddly, with *The Harlem Globetrotters* (q.v.). Then came some exotic chalk-and-cheese pairings with old comedy features from the studio’s past, first with *Dynomutt*, *Dog Wonder* (q.v.) and *The Funky Phantom* (q.v.) and then *Hong Kong Phooey* (q.v.), before a final solo rerun version in the spring and summer of 1981.

The 1998 animated incarnation was less campy and more dramatically ambitious, as was the case with the feature-film version of earlier that year, of which executive producers Devlin and Emmerich had been producer and director, respectively. In this version, the title character was a hatchling of the monster who had been killed off in the film and who, due to genetic imprinting, considered Dr. Nick Tatopoulos his father (although the scientist had been responsible for destroying his real father in the movie). This Godzilla became the protector of Dr. Tatopoulos and his colleagues in the Humanitarian Ecological Analysis Team (H.E.A.T.) as they set off to resolve pressing ecological concerns and deal with other mutations similar to

Godzilla (such as, in one episode, the fabled Loch Ness monster) who were threatened by or threatening humanity. This program was better produced technically than its Hanna-Barbera predecessor, though it was marred by excessive philosophizing and moralizing and lasted for two seasons. It managed to be shown as a three-episode block on FOX's Saturday-morning schedule during the summer of 1999.

***GO GO GLOBETROTTERS* (1978)**

See *The Harlem Globetrotters* (and related series).

***GOLAN THE INSATIABLE* (2013–2015)**

STUDIOS: Double Hemm, Amazing Schlock, Friends Night, ADHD

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX

CREATOR: Josh Miller

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Nick Weidenfeld, Hend Baghdady, Dave Jeser, Matt Silverstein, Josh Miller, Elijah Aaron, Jordan Young

PRODUCERS: Greg Brown, Patrick Casey, Matthew Chadwick

DIRECTORS: Rusty Yunusoff, Douglas Olsen, David Stephan, Aldin Baroza, Chase Conley, Mike McCraw

WRITERS: Josh Miller, Patrick Casey, Dave Jeser, Matt Silverstein, Jordan Young, Nick Rutherford

VOICE ACTORS: Josh Miller (Golan the Insatiable, early episodes/Mayor of Oak Grove, early episodes), Rob Riggle (Golan the Insatiable, later episodes), Mary Mack (Dylan Beekler, early episodes), Aubrey Plaza (Dylan Beekler, later episodes), Maria Bamford (Carole Beekler/Swingley), Matt Silverstein (Richard Beekler), Rachel Butera (Alexis Beekler), Nick Rutherford (Keith Knudsen Jr.), John DiMaggio (Mayor of Oak Grove, later episodes), Kaitlyn Robrock (Mrs. Budnick), Abbey DiGregorio (Mackenzie B, early episodes), Tara Strong (Mackenzie B, later episodes), Ken Marino (Keith Knudsen Sr.), Cree Summer (Go-Go Knudsen)

SYNOPSIS: After being banished to Earth from his native realm of Gkruool, warlord Golan the Insatiable finds a friend and a willing confederate for evil mischief-making in Dylan Beekler, a goth girl from the town of Oak Grove, Minnesota.

COMMENTARY: The only feature from *Animation Domination High-Def* (q.v.) to graduate to full-series status, and it was not able to make that transition work on a creative level. Robert E. Howard (whose fantastic oeuvre was being mocked here) would not be pleased; the show's treatment of the denizens of small-town Minnesota as dimwitted hicks was little better. The premise was interesting, as was the fact that Dylan supported Golan's war-making rather than trying to reform him, as other projects might have tried to do with such a character. But the animation team, used to the artistic freedom of late-night broadcasts, could not modify their style well enough to the comparatively conservative standards of prime time to make the series successful. The project is currently in limbo, having been neither renewed nor officially canceled by its broadcaster.

The series originated in a number of short pieces written by Miller that appeared on the website *Something Awful* before making the transition to animation.

***GOLDIE GOLD AND ACTION JACK* (1981–1982)**

STUDIO: Ruby-Spears

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Joe Ruby, Ken Spears

PRODUCER: Jerry Eisenberg

DIRECTORS: Rudy Larriva, John Kimball

WRITERS: John Dorman, Kurt Conner, Mario Piluso, Dick Sebast, Lew Woodbury, Doug Wildey, Bill Way, Buzz Dixon, Mark Evanier, Marty Pasko, Christopher Vane, Ted Pedersen, Jeffrey Scott, Roy Thames, Steve Gerber

VOICE ACTORS: Judy Strangis (Goldie Gold), Sonny Melendez (Action Jack Travis), Booker Bradshaw (Sam Gritt)

SYNOPSIS: Wealthy heiress/publisher Goldie Gold and journalist Jack Travis (in the former's employ) repeatedly team up for investigative journalistic missions that are fraught with peril.

COMMENTARY: An opulent idea ineptly executed. The action component borrowed too excessively from the James Bond and Indiana Jones canons to work on its own, and the so-called jokes related to Goldie's wealth (her mansion was so large that she had to use a hang glider to navigate between the rooms!) were badly botched. Ruby-Spears Enterprises had only been in business for a couple of years before the series began, and it was still finding its artistic feet during this time. This series is ample evidence that it had not yet been able to develop an identity independent of Hanna-Barbera (where Ruby, Spears, and producer Eisenberg had previously been employed) that would help them achieve artistic success.

***GOOBER AND THE GHOST CHASERS* (1973–1975)**

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCER: Iwao Takamoto

DIRECTOR: Charles Nichols

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Paul Winchell (Goober), Ronnie Schell (Gilly), Jerry Dexter (Ted), Jo Ann Harris (Tina)

SYNOPSIS: Goober the dog, capable of becoming invisible when scared, assists human associates Gilly, Ted, and Tina in solving mysteries.

COMMENTARY: Another of Hanna-Barbera's 1970s misfires and another case of an interesting lead character, specifically the orange-toque-clad, wisecracking Goober, being wasted on the derivative *Scooby Doo* (q.v.) format. The studio attempted to shake things up by including guest performers, notably the junior members of the cast of the popular *Partridge Family* series, but that did little to improve things. The obviousness of the borrowing was

most apparent in the climaxes, where the unmasked villains repeated the “if it hadn’t been for your meddling kids” monologues used in the same situations in the prior series.

THE GOODE FAMILY (2009)

STUDIOS: Ternion, 3 Arts, Media Rights

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATORS: Mike Judge, John Altschuler, Dave Krinsky

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Mike Judge, John Altschuler, Dave Krinsky, Tom Lassally, Michael Rotenberg

DIRECTORS: Wesley Archer, John Rice, Jennifer Coyle, Anthony Chun, Seth Kearsley

WRITERS: Mike Judge, John Altschuler, Dave Krinsky, Matt Silverstein, Dave Jeser, Jordana Arkin, Jonathan Collier, Franklin Hardy, Shane Kosakowski, Brad Pope, Howard Kremer, Leila Strachan, Gene Hong, Owen Ellickson, Jace Richdale

VOICE ACTORS: Mike Judge (Gerald Goode/Average Guy), Nancy Carell (Helen Goode), David Herman (Ubuntu Goode/Kent Jenson/Treyvon/Thug 2/Benny), Linda Cardellini (Bliss Goode), Dee Bradley Baker (Che the Dog), Brian Doyle Murray (Charlie), Amy Hill (Kiki), Julia Sweeney (Margo Jenson/Trish), Laraine Newman (Mo/Isabelle), Lori Loughlin (Penny), Gary Anthony Williams (Ray Johnson/Duncan), Phil LaMarr (Solosolo/Maffew/Thug 1/Principal Whitmore), Cree Summer (Souki/Tanya), Grey DeLisle (Jenn), Howard Kremer (Mr. Heelo), Tara Strong (Mrs. Glavin), Elvis Costello (Professor Mead), Alyson Hannigan (Michelle), Diedrich Bader (Jeff)

SYNOPSIS: Liberal community college instructor Gerald Goode and his family struggle with the responsibilities of maintaining their political beliefs when in conflict with the outside world.

COMMENTARY: A failed attempt by Judge to re-create the humorous vibe of his long-running hit *King of the Hill* (q.v.) by focusing on a liberal-minded family as opposed to a conservative-minded one. While the show was handsomely produced and effectively showed some of the same cultural clashes that characterized the earlier project, the absence of the sort of local color that *King of the Hill* benefitted from hurt this show’s chances of success. The fact that, unlike *King of the Hill*, this series was not on a network that was willing to support and underwrite it as it grew creatively, however, was a much bigger factor in the show’s early demise.

GOOF TROOP (1992–1996)

STUDIO: Disney

DISTRIBUTORS: Syndicated, ABC

PRODUCER: Robert Taylor

DIRECTORS: Robert Taylor, Vincent Bassols, Ron Campbell, Carole Beers, Terence Harrison, Ian Harrowell, Marsh Lamore, Mircea Manta, Russell Mooney, Charles Nichols, Mitch Rochon, Bob Shellhorn, Mike Svayko, Richard Trueblood, Woody Yocum, Charles Zamboni

WRITERS INCLUDED: Bruce Talkington, Carter Crocker, Rich Fogel, Karl Geurs, Jymn Magon, Mark Seidenberg, Dean Stefan

VOICE ACTORS: Bill Farmer (Goofy), Dana Hill (Max), Jim Cummings (Pete), Rob Paulsen (P. J.), April Winchell (Peg), Nancy Cartwright (Pistol), Corey Burton (Narrator/Others), Jay Thomas (Fenton Sludge), Frank Welker (Waffles/Chainsaw)

SYNOPSIS: Goofy and his son Max move into the town of Spoonerville, where they constantly disrupt the otherwise-placid existence of Pete and his family.

COMMENTARY: A wretched sitcom from a studio then coasting on its established reputation rather than trying to be a true innovator in television animation, as it would in later decades. It was that reputation—and not the (lack of) quality of the show itself—that won the show its extensive syndication berth (it aired as part of the “Disney Afternoon” in some markets and independently elsewhere, with an additional block airing on ABC), with business triumphing over merit. While, on a technical level, things went smoothly, as is always the case with Disney, the tired and clichéd suburban situations that formed the nucleus of the show needed a serious makeover that never happened.

Later in the decade, Goofy and Max appeared together again in the popular film *A Goofy Movie* and then its obviously named sequel, *An Extremely Goofy Movie*.

GRAVITY FALLS (2012–2016)

STUDIO/DISTRIBUTOR: Disney

CREATOR/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Alex Hirsch

PRODUCERS: Rob Renzetti, Tobias Conan Trost, Brian Doell, Suzanna Olson

DIRECTORS: John Aoshima, Aaron Springer, Joe Pitt, Rob Renzetti, Matt Braly, Stephen Sandoval, Sunil Hall

WRITERS: Alex Hirsch, Michael Rianda, Aury Wallington, Zach Paez, Tim McKeon, Mitch Larson, David Slack, Tommy Reahard, Nancy Cohen, Matt Chapman, Jeff Rowe, Shion Takeuchi, Matt Rizzo, Josh Weinstein

VOICE ACTORS: Jason Ritter (Dipper Pines), Kristen Schaal (Mabel Pines), Alex Hirsch (“Grunkle” Stan Pines/Soos/Fiddleford “Old Man” McGucket/Bill Cipher/Gnomes), Linda Cardellini (Wendy Corduroy), Dee Bradley Baker (Waddles), J. K. Simmons (Stanford Pines, a.k.a. the Author), Niki Yang (Candy Chiu), Carl Faruolo (Grenda), Thurop Van Orman (Gideon Gleeful), Gregg Turkington (Toby Determined), Jackie Buscarino (Priscilla Northwest), Nathan Fillion (Preston Northwest), Kari Wahlgren (Pacifica Northwest/Shandra Jimenez), T. J. Miller (Robbie V), Jessica DiCicco (Tambry), Scott Menville (Thompson/Nate), Michael Rianda (Lee), John DiMaggio (Manly Dan Corduroy), Jennifer Coolidge (Lazy Susan), Will Forte (Tyler Cutebiker), Kevin Michael Richardson (Sheriff Blubs/Ghost-Eyes), Keith Ferguson (Deputy Durland), Stephen Root (Bud Gleeful), Matt Chapman (Abuleita), Frank Welker (Gompers), Justin Roiland (Blendin Blandin), Nick Offerman (Agent Powers), Jeff Rowe (Agent Trigger), John Roberts (Xyler), Greg Cipes (Craz), Dave Wittenberg (Time Baby)



**One of the sillier moments from one of the 2010s' best shows. Disney Channel/Photofest
© Disney Channel**

SYNOPSIS: While visiting their “Grunkle” Stan in the town of Gravity Falls, Oregon, twin tweens Dipper and Mabel Pines discover and unravel a huge cache of supernatural, paranormal, and extraterrestrial activity occurring, often clandestinely, within the community and try to discover what it all means.

COMMENTARY: An excellent, engrossing epic of a show that assuredly succeeds in achieving its comic and dramatic aims. Hirsch and his colleagues were not interested in simply taking the easy way out by recycling ideas from the past. Rather, they emulated their characters by finding new kinds of stories to tell in television animation form and told them with passionate authority. While the show, like many of the best television animation programs, is set entirely in its own internal universe with its own internal rules and logic, its true strength lies in its vivid plotting and, particularly, in the multidimensional levels to the characterizations of both major and minor players in the ongoing story. Very few other television animation programs have managed to do this so effectively, making the show a textbook example of how to do it correctly.

When a brilliant concept meets a production team willing to exploit its most humorous and harrowing potential to the fullest, this is exactly the kind of magic that results. Hopefully, others will be as inspired by this show to do it more often.

***THE GRIM ADVENTURES OF BILLY AND MANDY* (2003–2008)**
See *Grim and Evil*/*Evil Con Carne*/*The Grim Adventures of Billy and Mandy*.

GRIM AND EVIL/EVIL CON CARNE/ THE GRIM ADVENTURES OF BILLY AND MANDY

Grim and Evil (2001–2003)

STUDIOS: Rough, Cartoon Network

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATOR/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Maxwell Atoms (Adam Burton)

PRODUCERS: Vincent Davis, Victoria McCollum

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS INCLUDED: Maxwell Atoms, Gord Zajac

VOICE ACTORS: Grey DeLisle (Mandy/Major Dr. Ghastly), Greg Eagles (Grim), Richard Horvitz (Billy/Harold), Jennifer Hale (Gladys), Phil LaMarr (Hector Con Carne), Jesse Corti (Boskov, early episodes/Cod Commando), Frank Welker (Boskov, later episodes), Armin Shimmerman (General Skarr)

Evil Con Carne (2003–2004)

STUDIO: Cartoon Network

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATOR/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Maxwell Atoms

PRODUCER: Louis J. Cuck

DIRECTORS: Juli Hashiguchi, Pat Shinagawa, Randy Myers, John McIntyre, Robert Alvarez, Maxwell Atoms, Brian Hogan, Dave Brain, Shaun Cashman, Phil Cummings, Robert Hughes, Steve Socki, Brian Sheesley, Kris Sherwood

WRITERS: Gord Zajac, Mucci Fassett, Brian Kindregan, Alex Almaguer, Michael Diedrich, Matt Sullivan, Trevor Wall, Maxwell Atoms, Bob Camp, Joe Orrantia, Greg Miller, Mike Stern, Vincent Davis, Nora Johnson, Octavio Rodriguez, Brett Varon, C. H. Greenblatt, Mary Hanley, Michael Bell, Vincent Waller, Grey DeLisle, Phil LaMarr, Armin Shimmerman, Rosalind Ayres, Greg Ellis

VOICE ACTORS: Phil LaMarr (Hector Con Carne), Grey DeLisle (Major Dr. Ghastly), Armin Shimmerman (General Skarr/Stomach), Frank Welker (Boskov/Enrique Jr.), Maxwell Atoms (Cod Commando), Rino Romano (Destructicus Con Carne), Maurice LaMarche (Estroy), Peter Renaday (Abraham Lincoln/Dr. Courage), Masasa Moyo (Kablamity Jane), Jim Rash (Ensign Slaughter), Quinton Flynn (Max Courage), Charlie Schlatter (Tony), Charlie Adler (Snowman), Susan Blakeslee (Hector's Mama), Greg Ellis (Lady of the Lake), Kathryn Fiore (Heidi), Mark Hamill (Judge Bukowski), Jess Harnell (Policeman), Roger Jackson (Mojo Jojo), Tom Kenny (Warren/Huckleberry Hound), Rachel Macfarlane (Nurse Bully), Scott Menville (Rick Courage), Edie Mirman (Angel), Billy West (Gollum), Judy Tenuta (Announcer)

The Grim Adventures of Billy and Mandy (2003–2008)

STUDIO: Cartoon Network

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATOR/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Maxwell Atoms

PRODUCERS: Louis J. Cuck, Shaun Cashman

DIRECTORS: Robert Alvarez, Juli Hashiguchi, John McIntyre, Pat Shinagawa, Randy Myers, Brian Hogan, Dave Brain, Maxwell Atoms, Brian Sheesley, Shaun Cashman, Phil Cummings, Eddy Houchins, Sue Perrotto, Robert

Hughes, Matt Engstrom, Russell Calabrese, Kris Sherwood, R. Michel Lyman, Gordon Kent

WRITERS: Ben Spengel, Rachel MacFarlane, Gord Zajac, Michael Diedrich, Maxwell Atoms, Brett Varon, Spencer Laudiero, Paul McEvoy, Alex Almaguer, Micci Faussett, Craig Lewis, David Feiss, Trevor Wall, Matt Sullivan, Brian Kindregan, Chris Savino, Chris McCulloch, Greg Miller, Mike Stern, Amy Rogers, Rob DeSales, John McIntyre, Shellie Kvilvang, C. H. Greenblatt, Celia Weiss, Rich Chidlaw, James Silverman, Zena Wyss, Vincent Waller, Chris Reccardi, Brian Larsen, Jim Schumann, Jackie Buscarino, Nina Bargiel, Richard Horvitz, Dr. Richard Burton, Bill Reiss, C. Scott Morse, Shaun Cashman, Ian Wasseluk, Thurop Van Orman, Harriet Kim, Louie Del Carmen, Jeremy Bargiel, Drew Neumann, Aaron Springer, John Holmquist, Debbie Cone, Kristen Lazarian, Jeff Prezenkowski, Alex Que, Anna Chambers, Zena Logan, Cindy Morrow, Antoine Guilbaud, Holly Almaguer, Chris Headrick, Stephen DeStefano, Clayton Morrow, Tim McKeon, Jay Baker, Chris Mitchell

VOICE ACTORS: Richard Horvitz (Billy/Harold/Saliva, later episodes/Mr. Snuggles), Grey DeLisle (Mandy/Aunt Sis/Milkshakes), Greg Eagles (Grim/Sperg/Cerberus, later episodes), Vanessa Marshall (Irwin), Jennifer Hale (Gladys/Claire), Phil LaMarr (Dick/Grandmama/Judge Roy Spleen/Dracula), Rachel MacFarlane (Mindy/Eris), Dee Bradley Baker (Phil), Armin Shimmerman (General Skarr), Jane Carr (Pud'n), Renee Raudman (Eleanor Butterbean), Chris Cox (Principal Goodvibes), Diedrich Bader (Hoss Delgado), Maxwell Atoms (Jeff the Spider), David Warner (Nergal, early episodes), Martin Jarvis (Nergal, later episodes), Debi Derryberry (Nergal Jr.), Fred Willard (Boogey Man), Jake Thomas (Nigel Planter), John Vernon (Dean Toadblatt, early



Billy, Grim, and Mandy in their (super)natural habitat. Cartoon Network/Photofest © Cartoon Network

episodes), Ronnie Schell (Dean Toadblatt, later episodes), John Kassir (Lord Moldybutt), C. H. Greenblatt (Fred Fredburger), Henry Gibson (Lord Pain), Jess Harnell (Saliva, early episodes/Cerberus, early episodes), Danny Mann (Cerberus, later episodes)

SYNOPSIS: *Grim and Evil* consisted of two components. In *The Grim Adventures of Billy and Mandy*, the Grim Reaper became the companion and protector of two children, dimwitted Billy and humorless Mandy, after they defeated him in a limbo contest. *Evil Con Carne* focused on the scheming of mad genius Hector Con Carne and his colleagues as they repeatedly tried—and failed—to conquer the world. After their combined run, they became separate series.

COMMENTARY: A clever pair of funny series, heavy on slapstick comedy, mind-bending reality, and (in the case of *The Grim Adventures of Billy and Mandy*) an adept use of supernatural lore and godlike beings from various religions and cults around the world as a source of material. The programs were both sharply directed and well written and acted, together and apart. However, *The Grim Adventures of Billy and Mandy* proved to be much more successful on its own, lasting for five seasons and some full-length specials, while *Evil Con Carne* expired after barely one and a half seasons had aired.

GRIMMY (1991–1993)

See *Mother Goose and Grimm* (a.k.a. *Grimmy*; 1991–1993).

THE GROOVIE GOOLIES (1971–1972)

STUDIO: Filmation

DISTRIBUTORS: CBS (1971–1972), ABC (1975–1976)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Lou Scheimer, Norman Prescott

PRODUCER: Hal Sutherland

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Howard Morris (Frankie/Mummy/Ghoulahand), Jane Webb (Hagatha/Aunt Hilda/Aunt Zelda/Bella La Ghostly/Broom Hilda/Sabrina), Larry Storch (Count Drac/Ratzo), Larry Mann (Boneapart/Dr. Jekyll-Hyde/Batzo/Hauntleroy)

SYNOPSIS: A depiction of the regular doings at Horrible Hall, a boarding house for supernatural creatures run by Count Drac, his wife Hagatha, and their son Frankie.

COMMENTARY: Whereas the generation prior to World War II knew Frankenstein, Dracula, the Wolf Man, the Mummy, and others as fearsome supernatural monsters, the generation after the war saw these figures tamed and domesticated, their fearsomeness decreased by the advent of the atomic age. The entry point to them for many didn't help: the cheesy late-night horror movie festivals hosted by such goofy figures as John "Cool Ghoul" Zacherle in Philadelphia and "Ghoulardi" in Cleveland, who bombarded their audiences with bad graveyard humor between film acts. (These shows were brilliantly parodied later by *SCTV*, with Joe Flaherty's hilariously inept Count Floyd.) *The Groovie Goolies* was an animated version of this kind of buffoonery. They were originally supporting players on Filmation's *Sabrina and the*

Groovie Goolies (q.v.) before their status was raised at the order of then CBS boss Fred Silverman. It was no better and no worse than anything else on the air at the time, though it got considerable flack in the press for supposedly being frightening and worthless. Nor was it any better or worse than similar supernatural mockeries that preceded and followed it: other examples include Rankin-Bass's Animagic feature *Mad Monster Party*; the CGI animated feature *Hotel Transylvania* and its sequel; and the Canadian-produced live-action series *The Hilarious House of Frightenstein*, which featured intros and outros from Vincent Price and the multifaceted comic acting of Billy Van.

GROWING UP CREEPIE (2006–2008)

STUDIOS: Discovery Kids, DAG, Story Hat, Mike Young, Taffy

DISTRIBUTOR: Discovery

CREATORS: Anthony Gaud, Chris Woods, Carin Greenberg

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Paul Cummins, Elizabeth Koshy, Melinda Toporoff, Jim Rapsas

PRODUCERS: Phil DiBartolo, Michark Puskas, Clarence Jeyartenam, Marie Cechino-Brand, Siobhan Ni Ghadra, Lim Lin Li, Anad Pandey, Sara Helman

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Athena Karkanis (Creepie Creecher/Melanie), Julie Lemieux (Caroleena/Ms. Monserrate), Dwayne Hill (Vinnie), Stevie Vallance (Gnat/Bunny Hollyruler), David Berni (Pauly), Richard Yearwood (Budge Bently), Leah Cudmore (Chris Alice Hollyruler/Marge), Scott McCord (George Hollyruler/Harry Helby), Stephanie Ann Mills (Carla), Juan Chioran (Dr. Pappas), Dan Patronijevic (Skipper, a.k.a. Tarantula Boy), Patrick McKenna (Dr. Lance Pierce)

SYNOPSIS: After being raised by the insects of Dweezwold Mansion, orphaned middle-schooler Creepie Creecher needs to hide her origins as she interacts with the human beings of Middlington.

COMMENTARY: The interesting premise of this program was sidelined primarily by the imposed educational mandate of the broadcaster it aired on. This included any subtextual addressing of racism in the wider population that the interactions between Creepie and the uniformly insect-phobic humans she interacted with might have prompted. Instead, what happened were simply the established story lines of middle school related to gaining acceptance and popularity and so on that other animated programs had done before and better with a vaguely gothic glaze, and that wasn't enough to make it truly interesting.

GRUNT AND PUNT (1994–1995)

STUDIOS: Jumbo, Indigo, NFL

DISTRIBUTORS: FOX, Syndicated

CREATORS: Howard Hoffmann, John R. Dilworth

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: Very little information has survived about this program since it first aired, but what is known about it is that it concerned a pair of animated pigs who were heavily into NFL football, as their names implied.

Given that the league was a producer of the show, the fact that it was a blatant promotional tool for both the league and the network its games aired on, was thunderously obvious, and ultimately, it proved to be a short-term idea whose usefulness quickly expired.

***GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY* (2015–PRESENT)**

STUDIOS: Marvel, Disney

DISTRIBUTOR: Disney

CREATORS: Dan Abnett, Andy Lanning

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Alan Fine, Dan Buckley, Joe Quesada, Jeph Loeb, Stan Lee, Eric Radomski, Cort Lane, Stephen Wacker

PRODUCERS: Marty Isenberg, Harrison Wilcox, Stephen Melching

DIRECTORS INCLUDE: Leo Riley, James Yang, Jeff Wamester

WRITERS INCLUDE: Marty Isenberg, Stephen Melching, Andrew Robinson, David McDermott, Marsha Griffin, Matt Wayne, Mairghread Scott, Todd Garfield, Eric Karten, Henry Gilroy

VOICE ACTORS: Will Friedle (Peter Quill, a.k.a. Star Lord), Trevor Devall (Rocket the Raccoon), Vanessa Marshall (Gamora), Kevin Michael Richardson (Groot), David Sobolov (Drax)

SYNOPSIS: The Guardians of the Galaxy are a team of superheroes who must prevent the powerful, universe-destroying weapon known as the Cosmic Seed from falling into evil hands.

COMMENTARY: The first major animated project from Marvel since its acquisition by Disney, this series was based on the comic book project launched by Abnett and Lanning in 2008 (in turn dating from a concept from the late 1960s) and turned successfully into a feature film in 2014. (A sequel to this film was released in 2017.) The source material was obvious, particularly because both film and series extensively used classic rock music from the 1970s on their soundtracks, with the series even using it for episode titles. Whether you enjoy this series or not, as with others of this kind, depends on how familiar you are with the source material—if you are a Guardians fan, you will be rewarded, but if you are new to the universe, you are basically on your own.

***GULLIVER'S TRAVELS* (1992)**

STUDIOS: Saban, Antenna 2, Silvio Berlusconi, Telescino

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

CREATOR: Jonathan Swift

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Winston Richard, Jacqueline Tordjman, Vincent Chalvon-Demersay

PRODUCER: Eric Rollman

DIRECTOR: Bruno Bianchi

WRITERS: Tony Oliver, Jean Cheville, Alain Garcia

VOICE ACTORS: Terence Scammel (Gulliver), Danny Brochu (Rafael), Jessalyn Gilsig (Folia), Sonja Ball (Fosla), A. J. Henderson (Flim)

SYNOPSIS: Mariner Gulliver is marooned in Lilliput, where he is a giant compared to the enormously small residents.

COMMENTARY: Although Jonathan Swift's caustic satire had already proven it was difficult to adapt accurately to animation (see *The Adventures of Gulliver* for more details), Saban apparently felt it was still worth a try. Airing as part of the *Amazin' Adventures* (q.v.) block, this series may go down in history more for the involvement of infamous former Italian prime minister Berlusconi in its financing rather than its own threadbare content.

THE GUMBY SHOW/ALL-NEW GUMBY

***The Gumby Show* (1957, 1966)**

STUDIO: Art Clokey

DISTRIBUTORS: NBC (1957), Syndicated (1966)

CREATOR/PRODUCER: Art Clokey

DIRECTORS: Ray Peck, Pete Kleinow

WRITERS: Ray Peck, Pete Kleinow, Ruth Goodell

VOICE ACTORS: Art Clokey and Dallas McKennon (All characters)

***The All-New Gumby* (1988)**

STUDIOS: Art Clokey, Premavision, Lorimar, Warner Brothers

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

PRODUCER: Art Clokey

DIRECTORS: Art Clokey, Michael Belzer, Tom Gasek, Eric Leighton, Harry Walton

WRITER: Art Clokey



He literally had feet of clay. NBC/Photofest © NBC

VOICE ACTORS: Art Clokey, Gloria Clokey and Dalmac Productions staff (All characters)

SYNOPSIS: Gumby, a lump of flexible clay, has a variety of bizarre adventures in the company of his similarly derived friends.

COMMENTARY: Art Clokey stands out in the history of television animation as the only producer of clay stop-motion (or, as it was dubbed, "pixilation") animation to succeed in producing successful series, judging by this and his later *Davey and Goliath* (q.v.). From his earliest appearances, Gumby developed a solid fan base of children who remained fans into adulthood because both children and adults were captivated by Gumby's perennially optimistic personality and his elastic, gravity-defying squashing and stretching of his body. Still, production on the series was sporadic and largely abandoned after the 1966 series. Yet Gumby's star rose again when the old films were replayed on *Saturday Night Live* in 1982 in tandem with then-cast-member Eddie Murphy portraying him in live action as a has-been, aging, Yiddish-accented figure! Six years later, Clokey was able to get financing together for a new group of Gumby films, which both reaffirmed and confirmed the character's universal appeal and the uniqueness of the art form through which Clokey brought him to life.

GUMMI BEARS (1985–1990)

See *Adventures of the Gummi Bears* (1985–1990).

• H •

HAMMERMAN (1991–1992)

STUDIOS: Bustin' Productions, DIC

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Andy Heyward

PRODUCER: Kevin O'Donnell

DIRECTOR: Michael Maliani

WRITERS INCLUDED: Reed Shelley, Bruce Shelley

VOICE ACTORS: [MC] Hammer (Stanley Burrell/Hammerman); Clark Johnson, Jeff Jones, Miguel Lee, Dean Wint, Susan Roman, Joe Markeson, Ron Rusta, Neil Crone, Louise Vallance, Carmen Twilte, Phil Aken, Royal Morenz, Jason Burke, George Buza, Len Carlson, Ron Cowan, Michelin Emelle, Dan Hennessey, Mark Marut, Greg Morton, Jackie Richardson, Judith Scott, Enos Slue, Michael Stark, John Stocker, Marion Vella, and Richard Yearwood (Specific roles unknown)

SYNOPSIS: In the community of Oaktown, mild-mannered Stanley transforms into the superhero Hammerman with the aid of a pair of anthropomorphic magic dancing shoes.

COMMENTARY: MC Hammer (née Stanley Burrell) was, unquestionably, the most popular rap music artist of the early 1990s. Initially working and promoting himself in his hometown of Oakland, California, he gained enough notice to be signed to influential Capitol Records in the late 1980s. Part of his appeal was the fact that, unlike many other rappers before and after him, his raps were free of profanity, sexual metaphors, and politics, which made him acceptable to both children and their parents. He gained his greatest fame and exposure in 1990 with the release of the acclaimed best-selling album *Please Hammer, Don't Hurt 'Em* and the hit single "U Can't Touch This" (conveniently featured on the album). Several more releases followed, by which time the MC had been removed from his moniker, but his popularity suddenly began to slide. By the mid-1990s he had been forced to declare bankruptcy and withdrew from public exposure, reemerging years later only after a religious conversion, which was apparent in his later recordings.

Hammerman was an outgrowth of the rapper's popularity with children, and he viewed his work on the series as a social responsibility to be taken seriously. Consequently, the series resembled *Fat Albert and the Cosby Kids* (q.v.) in its stress on analyzing and critiquing personal and social comportment and did so effectively. (It also resembled *Fat Albert* through Hammer interacting in live-action form with his animated doppelgänger in the main title sequence and with children in the same way in the opening and closing sequences.) However, it was much more memorable than other programs focusing on real-life celebrities, in part because it understood exactly who its target audience was and what kinds of narratives would appeal to them.

It was particularly notable for the well-conceived rogues' gallery of villains concocted for Hammerman to face down. One does not easily forget people with names like Defacely Marmeister, Boss Grimenheimer, Boom T. Boxer, and Felonious Feedbacker, whose physical appearances were made just as intimidating through the series' signature urban-renewal design style.

HANDY MANNY (2006–2013)

STUDIOS: Disney, Nelvana

DISTRIBUTOR: Disney

CREATORS: Roger Bollen, Marilyn Sadler, Rick Gitelson

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Pam Lehn

PRODUCERS: Vanessa Tilley, Jane Sobol

DIRECTOR: Ted Bastien

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Wilmer Valderrama (Manny Garcia), Nancy Truman (Kelly Crenshaw), Brian George (Mr. Kumar), Tom Kenny (Mr. Leonard Lopart/Fluffy/Pat/Sneeze), Carlos Alazraqui (Felipe/Spinner), Dee Bradley Baker (Turner), Kath Soucie (Dusty/Junior), Julianna Rose Mauriello (Squeeze, early episodes), Nika Futterman (Squeeze, later episodes/Stretch), Fred Stoller (Rusty), Grey DeLisle (Flicker, 2007–2013/Lily), Eddie Deezen (Zip), Jesse Corti (Ticks), Cristobal Parson (Totts), Bill Faggerbakke (Roland), Mark DeCarlo (Lefty), Steve Moreno (Beamer), Daran Norris (Jack)

SYNOPSIS: Young Manny and his anthropomorphic tools perform repair jobs for the citizens of the town of Sheetrock Hills.

COMMENTARY: A series that was very much Disney's answer to both *Dora the Explorer* (q.v.) and *Go Diego Go!* (q.v.) in terms of the age and race of the star and his and the other characters' fluency with Spanish. However, it was pleasant and effective enough on its own terms to be very successful in its original run. Also notable was that, unlike *Dora the Explorer* and *Go Diego Go*, the acting pool consisted of some familiar names (at least to television animation fans and the readers of this book), who made the show work better than some other educational shows on that end.

HAPPY EVER AFTER: FAIRY TALES FROM EVERY CHILD

(1995–1997)

STUDIO: Hyperion Animation

DISTRIBUTOR: HBO

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Donna Brown Guillaume, Willard Carroll, Meryl Marshall, Thomas Wilhite

PRODUCERS: Libby Simon, Lynne Southerland

DIRECTOR: Edward Bell

WRITERS INCLUDED: Gerard Brown, Joe Menendez, Michael Din, Darryl Nickens

VOICE ACTOR: Robert Guillaume (Host)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: A well-regarded anthology series that took a decidedly progressive and multicultural approach to the telling of fairy tales for a young audience, in the process winning two Image Awards and the

Humanitas Prize. Besides Guillaume (the husband of executive producer Brown Guillaume), a number of other celebrities contributed to the telling and enacting of the stories, including Harvey Fierstein, Tone Loc, Rosie Perez, George Takei, Regis Philbin, Kathie Lee Gifford, Denzel Washington, Tia Carrere, Margaret Cho, Whoopi Goldberg, Will Smith, Lou Rawls, Sharon Stone, and Ben Vereen.

***HAPPY NESS: THE SECRET OF THE LOCH* (1995)**

STUDIOS: Abrams/Gentile, Creativite and Development, AB

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: John Brewster, Dan Conroy, Donna Daley, Eddie Korbich Jr., Connor Matthews, and Kathryn Zaremba (Specific roles unknown)

SYNOPSIS: The McCoy children befriend the family of Nessies living beneath the surface of Loch Ness in Scotland.

COMMENTARY: First brought to worldwide attention in 1933, though the first sighting was in the 1870s, the fabled monster who is said to reside in Loch Ness has fascinated both scientific observers and the general public ever since. The various attempts to prove that Nessie is a real being have been either failures or exposed as shams and fakes. This series was more in line with the latter category, designed to plug a toy line highly derivative of *The Care Bears* (q.v.) and coming to naught financially due to a royalty payment dispute between Abrams/Gentile and its syndicator, the Independent Producers Group.

***THE HARDY BOYS* (1969–1971)**

STUDIOS: Filmmation, 20th Century Fox

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATOR: "Franklin W. Dixon"

PRODUCERS: Lou Scheimer, Norman Prescott

DIRECTOR: Hal Sutherland

WRITERS: Ken Sobol, H. F. Mauberly, Eric Blair, David Melmoth

VOICE ACTORS: Dallas McKennon (Frank Hardy/Chubby Morton), Byron Kane (Joe Hardy/Pete Jones/Fenton Hardy), Jane Webb (Wanda Breckenridge/Gertrude Hardy)

SYNOPSIS: Teen detectives Frank and Joe Hardy travel the world as part of an eponymous rock group and encounter many strange mysteries along the way.

COMMENTARY: The Hardy Boys were not the creation of one individual but of the staff of the publishing company headed by Edward Stratemeyer, who issued their first adventures in the late 1920s. "Franklin W. Dixon" was the house name assigned to the books ("Carolyn Keene," for their fictional peer Nancy Drew, served the same purpose), although numerous others (including Canadian Leslie McFarlane, who was responsible for a large percentage of books) were contracted to produce the books based on outlines mass-produced by the company. In some form or another, they continue to be produced today. The Hardys appeared three times in live-action form on television in the

20th century—as a segment of Walt Disney’s *Mickey Mouse Club* in the mid-1950s, an ABC series in the late 1970s, and a syndicated offering in the mid-1990s. The major memorable assets of this animated program were the kind of prosocial material that would eventually become a hallmark of Filmation’s house style, including the prominent featuring of an African American boy (Pete) in the cast.

THE HARLEM GLOBETROTTERS (AND RELATED SERIES)

***The Harlem Globetrotters* (1970–1973)**

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCER: Iwao Takamoto

DIRECTORS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera, Charles Nichols

VOICE ACTORS: Stu Gilliam (“Curly” Neal), John Williams (“Geese” Ausbie), Scatman Crothers (“Meadowlark” Lemon), Richard Elkins (Gip), Eddie “Rochester” Anderson (Bobby Joe Mason), Robert DoQui (Pablo), Nancy Wible (Granny)

***Go Go Globetrotters* (1978)**

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCER: Iwao Takamoto

DIRECTORS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera, Charles Nichols

VOICE ACTORS: Stu Gilliam (“Curly” Neal), John Williams (“Geese” Ausbie), Scatman Crothers (“Meadowlark” Lemon), Richard Elkins (Gip), Eddie “Rochester” Anderson (Bobby Joe Mason), Robert DoQui (Pablo), Nancy Wible (Granny)

***The Super Globetrotters* (1979)**

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: Art Scott, Alex Lovy

DIRECTORS: Ray Patterson, George Gordon, Carl Urbano

VOICE ACTORS: Stu Gilliam (“Curly” Neal, a.k.a. Sphere Man), John Williams (“Geese” Aubie, a.k.a. Multi Man), Adam Wade (“Sweet Lou” Dunbar, a.k.a. Gizmo Man), Scatman Crothers (Nate Branch, a.k.a. Fluid Man), Buster Jones (“Twiggy” Sanders, a.k.a. Spaghetti Man), Frank Welker (Crime Globe), Michael Rye (Announcer)

***The Godzilla/Globetrotters Adventure Hour* (1979–1980)**

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: Iwao Takamoto, Doug Wildey

DIRECTORS: George Gordon, Ray Patterson, Carl Urbano, William Hanna, Joseph Barbera, Charles Nichols

WRITERS INCLUDED: Dick Robbins, Duane Poole

VOICE ACTORS: Ted Cassidy (Godzilla/Montaro), Don Messick (Godzooky), Jeff David (Captain Carl Majors), Brenda Thompson (Dr. Quinn Darien), Al Eisenmann (Pete), Hilly Hicks (Brock), B. J. Ward (Jana of the Jungle), Michael Bell (Dr. Ben Cooper), Stu Gilliam ("Curly" Neal), John Williams ("Geese" Ausbie), Scatman Crothers ("Meadowlark" Lemon), Richard Elkins (Gip), Eddie "Rochester" Anderson (Bobby Joe Mason), Robert DoQui (Pablo), Nancy Wible (Granny)

SYNOPSIS: The Harlem Globetrotters, in both normal and superhero form, use their prodigious basketball skills and comic antics to confound their opponents.

COMMENTARY: Despite the name, the Globetrotters were actually formed in Chicago, drawing their wealth of talent initially from the powerhouse players of the high schools in the city's predominantly African American south side. The team was established as a barnstorming organization in 1927 by Jewish British businessman Abe Saperstein, who ran the operation until he died several decades later. Because most of their opponents on the Midwest circuit they traveled were Caucasian, *Harlem* was added to the team name to signify their race. Initially they succeeded at playing straight basketball, but as the barnstorming circuit declined with the rise of the NBA in the late 1940s, they switched to becoming pure entertainers with a large comedy component. This remains their performance format today. They lived up to their name by traveling the world extensively while still maintaining a following in North America and remain a drawing card as a touring company.

The team's switch to a comedy-dominated format meant it was easy for them to attract large numbers of children as a fan base, and this, along with the heavily visual emphasis in their comedy (double takes, hiding the basketball in the jersey, etc.) made them a natural for television animation. The actual team members did not provide their own voices, despite the use of their names and likenesses, and instead were portrayed by impersonators. But, in most other respects, the authentic Globetrotter experience was maintained in the climactic ball games of the CBS series, even when they happened to be playing against a team of robots or a team of kangaroos. The later *Super Globetrotters* merged the team with the superhero clichés in Hanna-Barbera's closet and ended up not being totally satisfactory to fans of superheroes, the team, or both in the process.

The Globetrotters also starred in the live-action series *The Harlem Globetrotters Popcorn Machine* on CBS between 1974 and 1976. Then, in 1981, they appeared opposite some other veterans of animation transformation, the cast of *Gilligan's Island* (see *The New Adventures of Gilligan/Gilligan's Planet*), in a now-infamous TV movie.

***HAROLD AND THE PURPLE CRAYON* (2002)**

STUDIO: Columbia

DISTRIBUTOR: HBO

CREATOR: Crockett Johnson

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Jeff Kline

PRODUCER: Helen Kalafatic

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Sharon Stone (Narrator), Connor Matheus (Harold)

SYNOPSIS: Young Harold gets himself in and out of adventures courtesy of a magical purple crayon that allows him to conceive of anything he thinks about.

COMMENTARY: Johnson wrote and illustrated the eponymous book that served as the source material for the series in 1955, with several more following between then and 1963. Although the content of the book would suggest that they had a natural kinship with animation, the property did not become an animated series until the 21st century, having only previously been animated in a one-shot film in 1959. Fortuitously, the production company chose not to update the material with contemporary additions but retained Johnson's simplistic, childlike approach to drawing and his equally minimalist storytelling style, embodied by Stone's narration, and therefore it was a genuinely respectful adaptation in comparison with others of its kind. The design of the programs' opening titles won an Emmy in 2002.

***HARVEY BEAKS* (2015–2017)**

STUDIO/DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

CREATOR/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: C. H. Greenblatt

PRODUCERS: Joanne Estoesta, Derek Evanick, Diana Lafyatis

DIRECTORS: Michelle Bryan, Gary Conrad, Derek Evanick, Diana Lafyatis, Januel Mercado

WRITERS: C. H. Greenblatt, Kevin Kramer, Hannah Ayoubi, Brandon B., Shane Houghton, Charlie Gavin, Chris Houghton, Dani Michaeli, Monica Ray, Nicholas Sumida, Katie Matilla, Zeus Cervas, Colin Heck, Derek Evanick, Diana Lafyatis, Amalia Levari, Aaron Austin, Madeleine Flores, Tyler Chen, Niki Yang, Chris Pianka, Liz Climo, Anna O'Brian, Ashlynn Anstee, Carson Kugler, Celestino Marina, William Reiss, Destiny Wood, Saeid Zameniateni

VOICE ACTORS: Max Charles (Harvey Beaks), Angelina Wahler (Fee), Jackson Brundage (Foo, early episodes/M. J.), Tom Robinson (Foo, later episodes), Kari Wahlgren (Michelle Beaks/Felicity/Carol), C. H. Greenblatt (Dade/Jeremy/Squirrels/Gerald), Nicole Weidel (Clare), Andres Salaff (Princess Roberts), Mason Vaughn (Techno Bear), Matthew Zhang (Kratz), Laz Meiman (Rooter, early episodes/Paul), Addie Chandler (Rooter, later episodes), Madeleine Curry (Piri Piri), Oliver Max (Seth/Blargus), Monica Ray (Wade), Nicholas Sumida (Mikey/Kathy), Davis Pak (Pip), Kerri Kenney Silver (Miriam Beaks), Scott Adsit (Irving Beaks), Matt Berry (Dr. Roberts, early episodes), Jeff Bennett (Dr. Roberts, later episodes), Dwight Schultz (Spirit of Wetbark Lake), Marc Maron (Randl), Dave Foley (Moff Williamson), Fred Stoller (Bartlebert), Ana Gasteyer (Tara), Andre Sogliuzzo (Jean-Luc), RuPaul (Jackie Slytherstein), Michael Leon Wooley (Officer Fredd), Mikey Kelley (The Inspiration), Rachel Butera (Pooker), Jim O'Heir (Aidan), Catherine O'Hara (Miley), Blake Clark (Roland Beaks)



Obsessive-compulsive Harvey Beaks, flanked by his pals Foo (top) and Fee (bottom).
Nickelodeon Network/Photofest © Nickelodeon Network

SYNOPSIS: In the anthropomorphic community of Littlebark Grove, nine-year-old Harvey Beaks and his friends and family are frequently engaged in adventure, mischief, or both, even when not intending to be in such situations.

COMMENTARY: One of the funniest and most cleverly heartwarming series of the 2010s. It is a departure from creator/executive producer Greenblatt's previous series *Chowder* (q.v.) because it focuses much more on characterization than nonsensical humor, with the latter developing much more directly from the actions of the characters than previously. It is also blessed with some excellent voice acting, particularly from Charles as the obsessive-compulsive Harvey and Wahler as the aggressive but sensitive tomboy Fee, that really made things continue to be funny and interesting when there were lulls in the action. Greenblatt and company had a particular knack for creating memorable characterizations and then mining them to their fullest for subsequent episode plotlines, which not many other programs can do effectively. The series as a whole brought enchanting new life to the often-overemployed use of anthropomorphic animals and is particularly effective and moving in terms of its characterization of its childhood characters, without ever resorting to the kind of suck-up-to-the-audience-and-their-parents humor that weighs down lesser endeavors. Hopefully, it will be a series learned from as an example of quality television animation production in the future.

***HARVEY BIRDMAN, ATTORNEY AT LAW* (2000–2007)**

STUDIOS: Williams Street, Turner

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATORS: Michael Ouweleen, Erik Richter

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Keith Crawford, Michael Lazzo, Khaki Jones, Michael Ouweleen, Eric Richter, Linda Simensky, Matthew Charde

PRODUCER: John Cawley

DIRECTORS: J. J. Sedelmaier, Ben Jones, Vincent Waller, Rob Renzetti, Robert Alvarez

WRITERS: Erik Richter, Michael Ouweleen, Pete Johnson, Steve Patrick

VOICE ACTORS: Gary Cole (Harvey Birdman/Judge Hiram Mightor), Stephen Colbert (Phil Ken Sebben/Myron Reducto), Neil Ross (Vulturo), Pamelyn Ferdin (Sallie), Josh Albee (Bobby), Bill Callaway (Sparks), John Michael Higgins (Judge Mentok the Mind-Taker), Thomas Allen (Peanut)

SYNOPSIS: After retiring from the superhero business, Harvey Birdman begins a new and successful career as a lawyer.

COMMENTARY: One of the few components of the "Adult Swim" block that was genuinely funny and not merely a collection of shocking, off-color, and sex jokes cast to the wind. A major component of this was the way the producers raided the Hanna-Barbera archives to bring humor to the most unexpected places and situations, not simply recontextualizing only the lead superhero character as a lawyer but also his colleagues, clients, opposing counsel, and presiding justices. As a result, it wasn't just the standard legal drama being parodied here—it was also, in many ways, all of the storytelling tropes and production shortcuts Hanna-Barbera seemed to rely on too heavily. The only thing the writers needed to do was present Hanna-Barbera

characters drastically out of their original contexts to create laughter—and they did so numerous times, to great effect. However, it was clear that this parodying was being done largely with affection and not malice, and therefore it worked much better.

***HBO STORYBOOK MUSICALS* (1987–1993)**

STUDIOS: Michael Sporn, Italtoons, Radiotelevisione della Svizzera Italiana, DIC, CINAR, Hare Bear, HBO

DISTRIBUTOR (United States): HBO

CREATOR: Michael Sporn

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Giuliana Nicodimi

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: Just what the title implied—musical/comedy narratives derived from children's books and instigated by illustrator Sporn, whose productions dominated the series, though other producers also contributed. Among the celebrities who contributed to the production as readers/narrators were Tim Curry, F. Murray Abraham, Robert Klein, Amanda Plummer, Carol Burnett, Lauren Bacall, and Julian Lennon.

***HEATHCLIFF* (AND RELATED SERIES)**

***Heathcliff and Dingbat* (1980–1981)**

STUDIO: Ruby-Spears

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATOR: George Gately (*Heathcliff*)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Joe Ruby, Ken Spears

PRODUCER: Jerry Eisenberg

DIRECTORS: Rudy Larriva, Charles Nichols, John Kimball

WRITERS INCLUDED: Emily Kong, Alex Lovy, Tom Minton, Norman Maurer, Tony Benedict, Jack Hanrahan, Don Jurwich

VOICE ACTORS: Mel Blanc (Heathcliff/Spike/Mugsy/Iggy/Mr. Schultz/Milkman), Julie McWhirter (Sonja, early episodes), Marilyn Schreffler (Sonja, later episodes), Henry Corden (Clem/Digby/Dog Snatcher), June Foray (Crazy Shirley/Sonja, later episodes/Grandma/Marcy), Frank Welker (Dingbat), Don Messick (Nobody/Sparerib)

***Heathcliff and Marmaduke* (1981–1982)**

STUDIO: Ruby-Spears

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATORS: George Gately (*Heathcliff*), Brad Anderson (*Marmaduke*)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Joe Ruby, Ken Spears

PRODUCERS: Jerry Eisenberg, Gordon Kent

DIRECTORS: Rudy Larriva, Charles Nichols, John Kimball

WRITERS INCLUDED: Emily Kong, Alex Lovy, Tom Minton, Norman Maurer, Tony Benedict, Jack Hanrahan, Don Jurwich

VOICE ACTORS: Mel Blanc (Heathcliff/Spike/Mugsy/Iggy/Mr. Schultz/Milkman), Julie McWhirter (Sonja, early episodes), Marilyn Schreffler (Sonja, later episodes), Henry Corden (Clem/Digby/Dog Snatcher), June Foray (Crazy Shirley/

Sonja, later episodes/Grandma/Marcy), Paul Winchell (Marmaduke/Phil Winslow), Russi Taylor (Dottie Winslow/Barbie Winslow/Billy Winslow/Missy), Marilyn Schreffler (Barbie's Sister)

***Heathcliff* (1984)**

STUDIOS: DIC, McNaught Syndicate, LBS

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Jean Chalopin, Andy Heyward, Tom Katayani

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITER: Alan Swayze

VOICE ACTORS: Mel Blanc (Heathcliff), Donna Christie (Cleo/Iggy), Stanley Jones (Riffruff/Wordsworth/Milkman), Marilyn Lightstone (Sonja), Danny Mann (Hector/Fishmonger), Derek McGrath (Spike/Muggsy/Knuckles), Danny Wells (Bush/Raul), Ted Ziegler (Leroy/Mungo/Grandpa)

SYNOPSIS: Heathcliff, an aggressive orange-furred cat, causes no end of trouble for the humans in his hometown in his pursuit of food and mischief.

COMMENTARY: Created by Gately in 1973, Heathcliff differed from his later comic strip peer *Garfield* (q.v.) chiefly in that he was in better physical shape, in part because he was constantly on the move to escape pursuers of both human and canine persuasions. In the comics, he did not hesitate to use unethical means to achieve his goals, but due to the restrictions of television animation storytelling in the 1980s, he was transformed into much more of a standard do-gooder—at least in the network-approved hands of Ruby-Spears; the later version by DIC was closer to the genuine article because it could sidestep network restrictions as a syndicated project.

The other orange cat of comic strip fame. ABC/Photofest © ABC



The Ruby-Spears versions were also hamstrung by the fact that Heathcliff was paired with inept supporting features. Dingbat, a studio creation, was a vampire dog with the mannerisms of Jerome "Curly" Howard of the Three Stooges; he was accompanied by Nobody, a pumpkin that sounded like Jimmy Durante, and Sparerib, a skeleton who sounded like Bela Lugosi, as they worked for Odd Jobs Inc. The following year that feature was dropped, and Heathcliff was instead paired with another comic strip refugee: the enormous but lovable Great Dane Marmaduke.

HEAVY GEAR (2001)

STUDIOS: Adelaide, Mainframe, Columbia

DISTRIBUTORS: Syndicated, WB

CREATOR: Pierre Ouellette

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Richard Raynis, Chris Lee

PRODUCERS: Kevin Gamble, Jason Giacobelli, Shea Wageman, Steven Wendland, Barbara Zelinski, Susan Blu

DIRECTORS: Chris Dozois, Jay Oliva, Mark Hoffmeier, Mark Seidenberg, Tim Eldred, Johnny Darrell, Sean Frewer, William Lau, Sean Osborne

WRITERS: Michael Goguen, Vincent Edwards

VOICE ACTORS: Charles Shaughnessy (Major Drake Wallis III), Sarah Douglas (Colonel Magnilda Rykka), Michael Chiklis (Lieutenant Jan Augusta), Nicholas Guest (Sergeant Gunther Groonz), Lukas Haas (Marcus Rover), Vanessa Williams (Sonja Briggs), David DeLuise (Dirx), Greg Ellis (Rank), Clancy Brown (Zerve), Ed Hopkins (Sebastian), Tom Kane (Greco), Jim Wise ("Boom Boom" Maddox), Clyde Kusatsu (Kusunocki Tachi), Keith Szarabajka (Serge Garpenlov), Karen Maruyama (Yoji Kirakowa)

SYNOPSIS: In the world of Terra Nova, teams of soldiers equipped with "Heavy Gear" fighting machines square off in conflict.

COMMENTARY: An extension to television animation of the computer universe Ouellette developed for Dream Pod 9 in 1994, and little more than that. Despite impressive CGI graphics, this project was basically part of the *G.I. Joe* (q.v.) school of mindless, pointless violence.

THE HECTOR HEATHCOTE SHOW (1963–1965)

STUDIOS: Terrytoons, CBS

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

PRODUCER: Bill Weiss

DIRECTORS: Arthur Bartsch, Martin Taras, David Tendlar, Connie Rasinski, Bill Tytla, Bob Kuwahara, Mannie Davis

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: John Myhers (Hector Heathcote/Hashimoto/Mrs. Hashimoto/Yuriko/Saburo), Dayton Allen (Sidney, early episodes/Stamley/Cleo), Lionel Wilson (Sidney, later episodes)

SYNOPSIS: Hector Heathcote has a knack for appearing in the right place at the right time for various incidents in American history. Also featured were the Japanese mouse Hashimoto and the neurotic elephant Sidney.

COMMENTARY: A typical Terrytoons package, combining previously released theatrical cartoons with newly produced adventures of the featured characters. Unfortunately, the made-for-TV installments were vastly inferior to the theatrical films in quality and production methodology, and the differences were extremely obvious to viewers who cared about such things.

***HELLO KITTY'S FURRY TALE THEATER* (1987–1988)**

STUDIOS: DIC, MGM, United Artists

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Andy Heyward

PRODUCERS: Michael Maliani, Robby London, John Francis Jr., Krista Haimovitch, Lisa Salamone

DIRECTOR: Michael Maliani

WRITERS: Lori Crawford, Phil Harnage, Jack Hanrahan, Eleanor Burian Mohr, Jim Lenahan, Martha Moran, Tony Marino, Pat Allee, Ben Hurst, Temple Mathews, Matt Uitz, Jack Olesker

VOICE ACTORS: Tara Charendoff (Hello Kitty), Sean Roberge (Tuxedo Sam), Noam Zylberman (Chip), Maron Bennett (My Melody), Carl Banas (Grandpa Kitty), Elizabeth Hanna (Mama Kitty/Grandma Kitty), Len Carlson (Papa Kitty), Cree Summer Francks (Catnip), Greg Morton (Grinder), Denise Pidgeon (Fangora)

SYNOPSIS: Hello Kitty and her friends and family perform theatrical adaptations of classic legends, fables, and fairy tales.

COMMENTARY: The Japanese doll Hello Kitty was created in 1974 for the LJN/Sanjuro toy company and quickly became a sensation. This series, with strong overtones of *Muppet Babies* (q.v.), was meant to serve as a debut to American audiences, and although pleasant on its own, it is debatable whether it really succeeded in its aim, as Kitty remains a marginal figure among American toy collectors.

The later series, *Hello Kitty's Paradise*, which aired on the Family Channel in 2000, was produced in Japan and is therefore ineligible for this survey.

***H.E.L.P.!* (1979–1980)**

STUDIOS: 8 Films, Dahlia, Phil Kimmelman

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Ken Greengrass, Phil Lawrence

PRODUCER: Lynn Ahrens

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: A series of educational vignettes similar to the same network's *Schoolhouse Rock* (q.v.). The title was an acronym for Dr. Henry's Emergency Lessons for People, as the focus of the vignettes was first aid and general safety. The series won an Emmy Award in 1980.

***HELP! IT'S THE HAIR BEAR BUNCH!* (1971–1972)**

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCER: Alex Lovy

DIRECTOR: Charles Nichols

WRITERS: Joel Kane, Woody Kling, Howard Morganstern, Joe Ruby, Ken Spears, Brad Case, Cullen Houghtaling, Earl Klein, Lewis Marshall, George Singer, Paul Sommer, Warren Tufts

VOICE ACTORS: Daws Butler (Hair Bear), Paul Winchell (Bubi Bear), Bill Callaway (Square Bear), John Stephenson (Mr. Peevely), Joe E. Ross (Botch)

SYNOPSIS: The Hair Bear Bunch—led by the Afro-sporting Hair Bear—connive to keep their existence in Cave Block #9 at Wonderland Zoo as comfortable as possible.

COMMENTARY: Hanna-Barbera's mixed attempt at adapting its animal con-artist formula to the new countercultural norms of the 1970s. The drawings of the bears as hippie-type figures was amusing, if only briefly, but it was little compensation for the studio's increasingly desperate reliance on formula storytelling to stay afloat (e.g., the obvious characterizations of Mr. Peevely [a vocal caricature of Joe Flynn] and the aptly named Botch). When it went into syndication in 1974, the references to hairiness (and thus hippiedom) were masked by retitling the series *Yo Yo Bears*.

HE-MAN AND THE MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE (AND RELATED SERIES)

***He-Man and the Masters of the Universe* (1983–1985)**

STUDIOS: Filmation, Mattel, Group W

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Lou Scheimer

DIRECTORS: Steve Clark, Lou Kachivas, Lou Zukor, Gwen Wetzler, Marsh Lamore, Ed Friedman, Hal Sutherland, Ernie Schmidt, Bob Arkwright, Bill Reed, Richard Trueblood

WRITERS: Tom Ruegger, Larry DiTillio, Paul Dini, David Chappe, Robby London, Ron Schultz, Sam Schultz, Marc Scott Zicree, Michael Reaves, J. Brynne Stephens, Douglas Booth, Janis Diamond, Peter L. Dixon, Richard Pardee, Barney Cohen, Jeffrey O'Hare, Arthur Browne Jr., David Wise, Patrick Duncan, Misty Stewart, Lee Robert, Coslough Johnson, Marc Richards, Mel Gilden, Phyllis White, Robert White, John Berwick, Rowby Goren, Antoni Zalewski, Harvey Brenner, J. Michael Straczynski, Beth Bornstein, Warren Greenwood, Michael Kirschenbaum, Robert Lamb, Phil Harnage, Bob Forward, Leslie Wilson, Steve Bussard, John Curtin, D. C. Fontana, Richard Fontana, Don Heckman, Michael Chase Walker, Joseph Botsford, Shelley Karol, Tom Tataranowicz, Barbara Chain, Jina Bacarr, Cinnamon Wengrod, J. Larry Carroll, Mike Hazy, Drew Lawrence, Karen Willson, Chris Weber

VOICE ACTORS: John Erwin (Prince Adam/He-Man/Ram Man/Others), Alan Oppenheimer (Skeletor/Marman/Beast Man/Others), Linda Gary (Queen Marlena/Teela/Sorceress/Evil-Lyn/Others), Lou Scheimer (Orko/King Randor/Others), Erik Gunden (Cringer/Battle Cat/Man-at-Arms/Others)

The New Adventures of He-Man (1990)

STUDIOS: DIC, Jet Lag

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Andy Heyward

PRODUCERS: Mark Taylor, Akihero Ikeda

DIRECTORS: Kazuo Terade, Masanori Miura, Bernard Deyries

WRITERS INCLUDED: Jean Chalopin, Jack Olesker, Jack Mendelsohn

VOICE ACTORS: Don Brown, Gary Chalk, Ted Cole, Tracy Eisner, Mark Hildreth, Anthony Holland, Campbell Lane, Doug Parker, Alvin Sanders, and Venus Terzo (Specific roles unknown)

He-Man and the Masters of the Universe (2002)

STUDIOS: Mike Young, He-Man

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Mike Young, Liz Young, Bill Schultz

PRODUCER: Marie Cecchino

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS INCLUDED: Eric Canette, Chap Yaep, Tim Devar

VOICE ACTORS: Cam Clarke (Prince Adam/He-Man), Lisa Beley (Teela), Nicole Oliver (Queen Marlena/Sorceress), Michael Donovan (King Randor), Brian Dobson (Keldor/Skeletor/Buzz Off), Gary Chalk (Man-at-Arms/Whiplash), Gabe Khouth (Mekaneck/Orko), Kathleen Barr (Evil-Lyn), Paul Dobson (Man-E-Faces/Trap Jaw/Tri-Klops), Scott McNeill (Beast Man/Clawful/Mer-Man/Ram Man/Stratos)

SYNOPSIS: Prince Adam of Eternia possesses a magical sword that, in times of peril for his kingdom, allows him to transform into the superpowered hero He-Man.

COMMENTARY: The original 1983 version of this property was a watershed series in the history of television animation, not only in terms of technical quality but also in plotting and characterization. Despite being highly indebted to a corporate sponsor (Mattel) for the initial characters and ideas, the Filmmation staff managed to make these characters and ideas their own in a way few other series based on preexisting properties could ever be seen. Being a syndicated series as opposed to a network one (as was originally intended) provided multiple opportunities to present concepts, stories, and animated visions that were dramatically opposed to the closed-off world of network television animation at the time. The scripts (done by past and future luminaries of both television animation and television as a whole) were excellent and benefitted from both sensitive direction and restrained but effective acting from the vocal players (except for Oppenheimer's rather hammy portrayal of Skeletor). There are relatively few other series to compare it to, then and now—other than its equally good spin-off, *She-Ra: Princess of Power* (q.v.).

Unfortunately, the 1990 and 2002 versions of the series were nowhere near as good because the producers of those series simply treated the assignments as work for hire and let it go at that—something Lou Scheimer and his colleagues on the original series never would have done.



The most powerful man and woman in the universe—and eternally good people, thankfully. *Mattel/Photofest* © *Mattel*

HERCULES (1998–1999)

STUDIO: Disney

DISTRIBUTORS: Syndicated, UPN, ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Tad Stones

PRODUCERS: Bob Schooley, Mark McCorkle

DIRECTOR: Phil Weinstein

WRITERS INCLUDED: Cade Chilcoat, Michael Merton, Jon Weissman, Bob Schooley, Mark McCorkle, Ted Supa

VOICE ACTORS: Tate Donovan (Hercules), French Stewart (Icarus), Sandra Bernhard (Cassandra), James Woods (Hades), Bobcat Goldthwait (Pain), Matt Frewer (Panic), Paul Shaffer (Hermes), Diedrich Bader (Adonis), Robert Stack (Bob the Narrator), Rob Paulsen (Orpheus), Robert Costanzo (Philoctetes ["Phil"]), Susan Egan (Meg), Rip Torn (Zeus), Samantha Eggar (Hera), Barbara Barrie (Alcmene), Keith David (Apollo), Jay Thomas (Ares), Gilbert Gottfried (Clio), Jane Leeves (Athena), Carl Reiner (Prometheus), Reba McEntire (Artemis), Jason Alexander (Poseidon), LaChanze (Terpsichore), Kathy Najimy (Thespis), Annie Potts (Syrinx), Roz Ryan (Thalia), Lillias White (Calliope), Cheryl Freeman (Melepomene), Vaneese Thomas (Clio), Lacey Chabert (Callista), Jennifer Love Hewitt (Medusa), Lisa Kudrow (Aphrodite), David Hyde Pierce (Daedalus), Jon Favreau (Jealousy), Alice Ghostley (Miss Cassiopeia), Stephen Tobolowsky (Numericles), Kevin West (Calculus), Mandy Patinkin (Hippocrates), Kerri Kenney (Gaia), Paddi Edwards (Atropos), Tress MacNeille (Clotho), Carole Shelley (Lachos), Dom Irrera (Achilles), David Cross (Fear), Jane Curtin (Hippolyte), Dom DeLuise (Bacchus), Peri Gilpin (Hecate), Jon Cryer (Winged Wolves), Tom Arnold (Cupid), William Shatner (Jason), Rebecca Gayheart (Medea), Jonathan Katz (Morpheus), Idina Menzel (Circe), Cary Elwes (Paris), Nick Stahl (Castor), Rider Strong (Pollux), Jodi Benson (Helen of Troy), Jennifer Aniston (Galatea), Kathie Lee Gifford (Echidna), Sarah Michelle Gellar (Andromeda), Eric Idle (Parenthesis), Eugene Levy (King Midas), Tia Carrere (Marigold), Michael Dorn (Minotaur), Eric Stolz (Theseus), Chris Elliott (Triton), Jesse Spencer (Triton Jr.), Vince Vaughn (Loki), Merv Griffin (Gryphon), Estelle Harris (Phil's Mother), Frank Welker (Pegasus), Joey Adams (Electra), Linda Larkin (Princess Jasmine), Scott Weinger (Aladdin), Jonathan Freeman (Jafar), Linda Hamilton (Nemesis), Steven Weber (Odysseus), Bob Keeshan (Aesop), Mike Connors (Chipacles), Richard Simmons (Phys Oedipus)

SYNOPSIS: Hero-in-training Hercules learns his craft as a student at Prometheus Academy.

COMMENTARY: Based on the 1997 Disney feature film (Donovan, Egan, and Woods reprised their parts from that source), with the story lines and characterizations going from there. Obviously, much more money was used to recruit celebrity vocal performers (recognize any of the names listed in the credits?) and place them in derivative mythological situations than to benefit creative research and development, as was typical of this phase of Disney's television animation existence.

THE HERCULOIDS (1967–1969)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

PRODUCERS/DIRECTORS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Mike Road (King Zandor/Zok/Igoo/Tundro), Virginia Gregg (Queen Tara), Teddy Eccles (Prince Dorno), Don Messick (Gloop/Gleep)

SYNOPSIS: The Herculooids—Zok (a dragon), Tundro (a rhinoceros), Igoo (a gorilla), and Gloop and Gleep (shape-shifting amoebas)—are the superpowered defenders of the royal family of the planet Quasar and their kingdom.

COMMENTARY: A time capsule from the late 1960s that shows what Saturday-morning television animation was like at that preovert regulation time—and how good it was. Despite the limitations of the animation production methods of the time, the characterizations of the title characters and the villainous aliens they battled were vivid and impressive. In addition, the narratives of the programs included moral lessons that were subtly included in the program stories and not beaten over the heads of the audience, as would be the case in later decades.

Reruns of the series were later included in the omnibus *Go Go Globetrotters* (see *The Harlem Globetrotters*), while newer episodes—which did not equal the earlier ones in quality—were produced for the later omnibus series *Space Stars* (q.v.).

HERE COMES THE GRUMP (1969–1971)

STUDIOS: DePatie-Freleng, Mirisch

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

PRODUCERS: David DePatie, Friz Freleng

DIRECTORS: Gerry Chiniquy, Art Davis, George Gordon, Sid Marcus, Hawley Pratt, Grant Simmons

WRITERS: John Dunn, Don Christensen, Nick George, Bill Lutz

VOICE ACTORS: Jay North (Terry Dexter), Stefanianna Christopherson (Princess Dawn), Rip Taylor (The Grump)

SYNOPSIS: Terry Dexter attempts to rescue Princess Dawn and her kingdom from the curse of Gloom placed on it by the antagonistic Grump.

COMMENTARY: A comic adventure series that eerily prefigures elements of many others in that subgenre, particularly resembling what *Adventure Time* (q.v.) would have looked like had it been given a traditional *Looney Tunes*-style treatment rather than the idiosyncratic one unique to that show. It was better written and directed than most of the programs that would come out of its studio later on and boasted a memorable vocal performance from Taylor as the title character. The program defies the stereotypical belief that most 1960s television animation programs were hackwork, for it was not by any means. It deserves to be revived more widely than the short-lived stint it had on SciFi Channel's *Cartoon Quest* omnibus in 1994–1995.

HEROES ON HOT WHEELS (1991–1992)

See *Hot Wheels* (and related series).

HEY ARNOLD! (1996–2004)

STUDIOS: Snee-Osh, Games Animation, Nickelodeon

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

CREATOR: Craig Bartlett

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Craig Bartlett, Mary Harrington, Steve Viksten

PRODUCERS: Joe Ansolabehere, Steve Viksten, Joseph Purdy, Michelle Lamoreaux, Jamie Mitchell, Kathrin Seitz, Steve Socki, Donna Smith, Melinda Dilger, Kelly Crews, Ryan Slater, Michael Lessa

DIRECTORS: Tuck Tucker, Larry Leichliter, Kelly James, Juli Hashiguchi, Bert Ring, Don Judge, Debbie Baber, Steve Socki, Jamie Mitchell, Dan Povenmire, Dale Case, Mark O'Hare, Sherm Cohen, Alan Smart, Stark Howell, Rob Porter, Frank Nissen, Howy Parkins, Cullen Blaine, George Chialtas, Derek Drymon, Frank Weiss, Christine Kolosov

WRITERS: Craig Bartlett, Joe Ansolabehere, Steve Viksten, Rachel Lipman, Jonathan Greenberg, Josie Nericcio, Joseph Purdy, Keith Kaczorek, Glen Gold, Jordana Akin, Antoinette Stella, Jonathan Rosenthal, Jim Ryan, Danica Ivancevic, Lesa Kite, Rick Gitelson, John D. Beck, Ron Hart, Michelle Lamoreaux, Steve L. Hayes, Celia Bonaduce

VOICE ACTORS: Toran Caudell (Arnold, 1996–1997/Wolfgang), Philip Van Dyke (Arnold, 1997–1999/Ludwig), Spencer Klein (Arnold, 1999–2002), Alex D. Linz (Arnold, 2002–2004), Jamil Smith (Gerald Johansen), Francesca Marie Smith (Helga Pataki/Timberley Johansen, later episodes/Sheena/Gloria/Campfire Lass), Anndi McAfee (Phoebe Heyerdahl), Justin Shenkarow (Harold Berman/Iggy, early episodes/Joey Stevenson, early episodes), Christopher Walberg (Stinky Peterson), Sam Gifaldi (Sid/Iggy, later episodes), Olivia Hack (Rhonda Lloyd), Christopher Castile (Eugene Horowitz, 1996), Jarrett Lennon (Eugene Horowitz, 1996–1997), Benjamin Diskin (Eugene Horowitz, 1997–2001), Blake Ewing (Eugene Horowitz, 2001–2004), Ashley Buccille (Lila Sawyer), Steve Viksten (Oskar Kokoshka), Mary Scheer (Suzie Kokoschka), Dom Irrera (Ernie Potts), Baoan Coleman (Mr. Hyunh), Christine Ebersole (Lana Vail), Dan Castelleneta (Grandpa Phil/Phil's Father/Phil's Grandfather/Earl, early episodes/Nick Vermicelli/Willie the Jolly Olly Man), Tress MacNeille (Grandma Gertrude/Miss Slovak/Mayor Dixie), Grant Hoover (Arnie), Craig Bartlett (Miles/Brainy/Earl, later episodes/Abner the pig), Antoinette Stella (Stella), Phyllis Diller (Aunt Mitzi), Maurice LaMarche ("Big Bob" Pataki), Kath Soucie (Miriam Pataki/Marilyn Berman/Lunch Lady, early episodes/Mrs. Vitello, later episodes), Nika Futterman (Olga Pataki), Rick Fitts (Martin Johansen), Shari Belafonte (Mrs. Johansen), Ben Hoag ("Jamie O" Johansen, early episodes), Phil LaMarr ("Jamie O" Johansen, later episodes), Avril Epps (Timberly Johansen, early episodes), George Takei (Kyo Heyerdahl), Jean Smart (Reba Heyerdahl), David Wohl (Jerry Berman/Principal Wartz), Michael Jeter (Nate Horowitz), Lori Alan (Brooke Lloyd), Sam McMurray (Buckley Lloyd), Dan Butler (Mr. Sawyer/Mr. Simmons), Adam Wylie

(Thaddeus "Curly" Gammelthorpe), Michael Bacall (Torvald), Victor Lopez (Lorenzo), Marcus Toji (Iggy, later episodes/Park), Joseph Ashton (Iggy, later episodes), Lauren Robinson (Nadine), Michael Fishman (Joey Stevenson, later episodes), Jordan Warkol (Chocolate Boy), Tim Wiley (Edmund), Marty York (Mickey), Lacey Chabert (Ruth McDougal), Pamela Hayden (Connie), Mayim Bialik (Maria), Danielle Judovits ("Big Patty" Smith), Zelda Rubenstein (Mrs. Smith), Henry Gibson (Mr. Smith), Jack Angel (Superintendent Chaplin), Kathy Baker (Dr. Bliss), Julia Louis Dreyfus (Miss Felter), John Garry (Lieutenant Major Goose *[sic]*), Danica Ivancevic (Lunch Lady, later episodes), Daniel Stern (Mr. Packenham), Mary Gross (Shelly), James Belushi (Coach Jack Wittenberg), Cathy Moriarty (Tish Wittenberg), Grant Gelt (Tucker Wittenberg), Tony Jay (Rex Smythe Higgins), Joey Stinson (Rex Smythe Higgins III), Rick Corso (Dino Spumoni), Harvey Korman (Don Reynolds), Vincent Schiavelli (Mr. Bailey), Elizabeth Ashley (Mrs. Vitello, early episodes), James Keane (Councilman Marty Green), Davy Jones (Himself), Ron Perlman (Mickey Kaline), Richard Mulligan (Jimmy Kafka), Elliott Gould (Rabbi Goldberg), Paul Sorvino (Alphonse Perrier du von Scheck), Cameron Van Hoy (Big Gino), Danny Cooksey (Stoop Kid), Carlos Alazraqui (Eduardo), Lou Rawls (Harvey the Mailman), John Mariano (Morrie/Vic)

SYNOPSIS: Orphaned fourth-grader Arnold, whose head is shaped like a football, grows up in more than one way in the gritty urban ambience of his hometown.

COMMENTARY: A delightfully and emotionally absorbing program, where the onus was clearly on the characters and their relationships, not on doing



They called him "Football Head" for a very good reason. Nickelodeon/Photofest © Nickelodeon

comedy for comedy's sake. This approach is far removed from the anything-for-a-laugh antics of too many of its peers and followers and made the program stand out among the crowd both in its original run and in reflected glory through regular reruns. Despite the fantastic nature of animation as an art form, Bartlett was much more concerned with presenting as realistic an image as possible in terms of both setting and character portrayals, and he and his team achieved that goal extremely well. Not many programs could have such a wide cast of characters and give them all deep and often starkly dramatic as well as comic personalities, but somehow, this one does. (Smith's finely etched portrayal of the emotionally conflicted Helga Pataki is the standout among the vocal performances.) Bartlett's stress on realism in his production is highly unusual and unprecedented and continues to be so these many years after it ceased production—making it a great example to future television animation producers who wish to cast their dramatic net beyond the genre's overused clichés.

The program was adapted into a feature film in 2002 but with little of the artistic and commercial success of the series. A TV reunion movie is scheduled to air in the near future.

***HEY MONIE* (2003)**

STUDIO: S2N

DISTRIBUTORS: BET, Oxygen

CREATOR/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER/DIRECTOR: Dorothea Gillim

PRODUCER: Tom Snyder

WRITERS: Dorothea Gillim, Anne Bernstein

VOICE ACTORS: Angela Shelton (Simone, a.k.a. Monie), Frances Callier (Yvette), Brendon Small (Chad), Bill Braudis (Bill)

SYNOPSIS: Upscale Monie and earthy Yvette experience the big city as roommates.

COMMENTARY: Originally seen as a segment of *X-Chromosome* (q.v.), this was a project largely by African American creators for an African American audience. The majority of the dialogue was ad-libbed, which allowed the program to enter areas other more tightly scripted series could not. One major difference between the shorter version and the full series version was that the uninhibited nature of the former was curbed in favor of a more controlled structure, but this did little to curb the project's appeal to its target audience: African American women.

***HIGGLYTOWN HEROES* (2004–2008)**

STUDIOS: Wild Brain, Happy Nest

DISTRIBUTOR: Disney

CREATORS: George Evelyn, Holly Huckins, Denis Morella, Ken Redeker, Jeff Ulin

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Frankie Manriquez (Wayne), Taylor Masamitsu (Eubie), Liliana Mumy (Twinkle), Roby Thost (Kip), Edie McClurg (Fran the Squirrel), Donald Faison (Firefighter Hero), Kathie Lee Gifford (Mail Carrier Hero), Jim Ward (Grandpa Krank), Camryn Manheim (Handy Plumber Hero), Steven

Weber (Gardener Hero), Betty White (Grandmama), Katey Sagal (Police-woman Hero), Frances Conroy (Veterinarian Hero), Lance Bass (Electrician Hero), John Michael Higgins (Tow Truck Driver Hero), Tim Curry (Librarian Hero/Higgsquatch), Cyndi Lauper (Telephone Operator Hero), Jim Wise (Sanitation Worker Hero/Tour Guide Hero), Susan Lucci (Weathergirl Hero), Miguel Sandoval (Painter Hero), Travis Tritt (Farmer Hero), Ed McMahon (Tugboat Driver Hero), John Astin (Santa Claus), Sean Astin (Pix the Elf), Nathalia Hencker (Translator Hero), Jamie Lynn DiScala (Miss Fern), David Naughton (Orchestra Conductor Hero), Sharon Stone (Nicki), Anne Heche (Gloria), Dee Bradley Baker (Egg Farmer Hero/Pizza Guy/Musician Hero #1), Cicely Tyson (Great Aunt Shirley), Rocco Dispirito (Baker Hero), Steve Harris (Coach Hero), Marissa Winokur (Taxi Driver Hero), Carlos Alazraqui (Shelter Worker Hero), Jesse Corti (Jax/Submarine Captain Hero), Irene Bedard (Forest Ranger Hero), Henry Dittman (Detective Hero/Sign Language Interpreter Hero/Higglytown Coast Guard Hero), Erik Estrada (Paramedic Hero), Kevin Michael Richardson (Uncle Lemmo), Rob Paulsen (Barber Hero), Mindy Sterling (Mrs. Barber/Musician Hero #2), Diedrich Bader (Crane Operator Hero), Masaya Moyo (Judge Hero), Trace Adkins (Cowboy Hero), Serena Williams (Snow Plow Driver Hero), Thomas Wilson (Truck Driver Hero), Phil LaMarr (Lifeguard Hero), Gwendoline Yeo (Dentist Hero), Naomi Judd (School Nurse Hero), Kate Pierson (Beekeeper Hero), Debbie Allen (Dance Instructor Hero), Gregory Jbara (Tree Trimmer Hero), Mo Collins (Science Fair Judge/Paleontologist Hero), Simon Templeman (Banker Hero), Philip Anthony Rodriguez (Furnace Repairman Hero), Jentle Phoenix (Environmental Hero), Rain Pryor (Pediatrician Hero), Wally Wingert (Waiter Hero/Hector the Prospector Hero), Michael T. Weiss (Mountain Rescue Squad Hero/Veterinarian Hero), Matthew St. Patrick (Policeman Hero), Jane Kaczmarek (Astronaut Hero), Jorge Garcia (Dog Trainer Hero), Debi Mae West (Lighthouse Keeper Hero/Physical Therapist Hero), Nicole Parker (Window Washer Hero), Pete Siragusa (Ice Resurfacer Hero), Roberto Alcaraz (Air Traffic Controller Hero), Kathy Najimy (Photographer Hero), Matthew Kaminsky (Drawbridge Operator Hero), David Joliffe (Radiographer Hero), Wayne Brady (Doctor Hero), Henry Winkler (Printer Hero), Neil Kaplan (Mover Hero), Joey Fatone (Bulldozer Operator Hero), Jessica Walter (Motel Manager Hero), Wilmer Valderrama (Helicopter Pilot Hero), Gayla Goehl (Sheep Shearer Hero), Alanna Ubach (Babysitter Hero/Musician Hero #3), Jonathan Adams (Road Worker Hero), Aisha Tyler (Museum Curator Hero), Dave Wittenberg (Sled Dog Musher Hero), Stephnie Weir (Animal Control Officer Hero), Jess Harnell (Laundry Worker Hero), Lesley Boone (Mechanic Hero/Bessy the Cow/Farmer Lulu/Dump Truck Driver Hero), Meghan Strange (Camp Counselor Hero), Bill Farmer (Janitor Hero), Billy Vera (Captain Hero), Charlie Schlatter (Receptionist Hero), David Jeremiah (Mapmaker Hero), Catero Colbert (Camel Rider Hero), Tom Kenny (Reporter Hero), Jeff Bennett (Auctioneer Hero), Julianne Grossman (Roofer Hero), Jon Curry (Allergist Hero), J. Grant Albrecht (Locksmith Hero), J. P. Manoux (Bike Repairman Hero), Scott McShane (Bridge Builder Hero), JoAnn Worley (Customer Service Clerk Hero), John O'Hurley (Freight Train Engineer Hero), Bobby Holiday (House Painter Hero), Charlie Janasz (Photographer

Hero), Kimberly Brooks (Ski Patrol Hero), Jeffrey Tambor (Radio Announcer), Wes Brown (Phone Repairman Hero), Leanza Cornett (Airplane Pilot Hero), Debra Wilson Skelton (Marine Biologist Hero), Chris Carmack (Referee Hero), Joseph Gian (Stan the Bricklayer Hero), They Might Be Giants (The Super-tasters), Shawn King (Usher Hero), Ruth Williamson (Lunch Lady Hero), Anna Maria Perez de Tagle (Shelby the Safety Patrol Hero)

SYNOPSIS: In Higglytown, where all the people resemble Russian nesting dolls, children Wayne, Eubie, Twinkle, and Kip learn about the importance of various adult professions through hero figures in those various fields.

COMMENTARY: A clever and thoughtful educational series with a unique design scheme and a perennially important message about how everyone's chosen (or forced-upon) job is important, especially to those actually doing it. Unfortunately, it is a message not everyone in the world has yet learned.

***HIGHLANDER* (1994–1998)**

STUDIOS: Nelvana, Gaumont

DISTRIBUTOR: USA Network (United States)

CREATORS: Gregory Widen (concept), Serge Rosenzweig (series)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Marc Du Pontavice, Christian Charret, Peter Davis, William Panzer

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Miklos Perlos (Quentin MacLeod), Lawrence Bayne (Kortan), Ben Campbell (Don Vicente Marino Ramirez), Don Dickinson (Arak), Lorne Kennedy (Malone), Wayne Robson (Asklephios), Katie Zegers (Clyde)

SYNOPSIS: The Highlanders are warriors granted the power of immortality through unholy means and who constantly fight to the death among themselves because "there can be only one."

COMMENTARY: Originating in the 1986 feature film of the same name, this concept came to television animation after three sequel films and a live-action television version, generally felt to be far superior to the film series. This animated series took the concept into the far future of the 27th century and dealt with the last living descendent of the original Highlander combatting an evil dictator named Kortan, with predictable results.

***HI HI PUFFY AMIYUMI* (2004–2006)**

STUDIOS: Renegade Animation, Cartoon Network

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATOR/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Sam Register

PRODUCER: Ashley Posthewaite

DIRECTORS: Scott O'Brien, Howie Perry, Darin McGowan, Dave Pruiksmas, Mark Kausler, Mike Kazaleh, Shellie Kvilvang, Bruce Morris, James Lopez, Brian Hatfield

WRITERS: Robert Lamoreaux, Michelle Lamoreaux, Steven Banks, Mitch Watson, Dave Pruiksmas, David Slack, Ken Segall, Darrell Van Citters, Adam Beechen, Scott Gray, David Shayne, Guy Toubles, Bill Matheny, Chris Hicks, Francis Lombard, Kim Evey, Greg Benson, Maureen Driscoll, Ford Riley, J. Torres, Brooks McBeth, Joelle Seliner, Steve Kriozere, Brian Beau-

champ, Ursula Ziegler, Michelle Gendelman, Dave Markowitz, Shannon Denton, Keith Giffen, Jack Siegel

VOICE ACTORS: Janice Kawaye (Ami Onuki/Tekirai/Janice), Grey DeLisle (Yumi Yoshimura/Jang Keng), Keone Young (Kaz Harada/Domo), Sandy Fox (Harmony), Nathan Carlson (Eldwin Blair/Vlad/Mitch/Jarhead), Katie Leigh (King Chad), Will Ryan (Wall), Corey Burton (Nicolai), Rob Paulsen (Atchan), Lara Miller (Julie)

SYNOPSIS: Pop stars Ami and Yumi face a number of travails as they travel the world performing, some at the hands of their greedy but well-intentioned manager Kaz and others of a more supernatural nature.

COMMENTARY: The series' protagonists were based on the real-life Japanese pop band Puffy AmiYumi, which has been a popular attraction in Japan since the late 1990s, and their manager. However, the show was done in a wildly exaggerated style that resembled a North American edition of anime, though with a strong dose of Western animation slapstick. The characters' Japanese roots came up in unexpected ways, such as the substitution of Japanese words for English ones (e.g., *Takusete* for "Help!") in the dialogue, which added to the show's interesting, multicultural approach.

The program was abruptly canceled in October 2006, with five episodes left unaired.

***HISTERIA!* (1998–2001)**

STUDIO: Warner Brothers

DISTRIBUTOR: WB

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Tom Ruegger

PRODUCERS: Bob Doucette, Mark Seidenberg, Bobbie Page

DIRECTORS: Mike Milo, Bob Doucette, Scott Jeralds, Steve Lewis, Jon McClenahan, Herb Moore

WRITERS INCLUDED: Alex Borstein, Timothy Cahill, Julie McNally, Mark Seidenberg, Melody Fox, Roger Eschbacher, Michael Maler, Jeff Zimmer, Brian Palermo, Marc Drotman

VOICE ACTORS: Frank Welker (Father Time/Fetch), Cree Summer (Aka Pella), Laraine Newman (Miss Information/Charity Bazaar), Tress MacNeille (Cho Cho/Pepper Mills), Jeff Bennett (Lucky Bob), Nora Dunn (Lydia Karaoke), Rob Paulsen (Mr. Smartypants), Nathan Ruegger (Froggo), Cody Ruegger (Loud Kiddington), Luke Ruegger (Big Fat Baby)

SYNOPSIS: An irreverent, humorous look at past historical events.

COMMENTARY: An attempt to repeat the success of the studio's earlier comic masterpieces *Tiny Toon Adventures* (q.v.) and *Animaniacs* (q.v.) by mocking the past as it informed the intended young child audience about it and often falling short of the mark. Typical of the approach was a recurring gag about notorious Russian politician Nikita Krushchev trying to escape to Disneyland, referencing an obscure incident from the Cold War that only hardcore history fans would have known about. Though it was well produced in line with Warner's earlier comic work, it drew disappointing ratings, had its episode-production level cut, and disappeared when its usefulness ended to its provider.

HOME MOVIES (1999, 2001–2004)

STUDIOS: Burns and Burns, S2N

DISTRIBUTORS: UPN (1999), Cartoon Network (2001–2004)

CREATORS: Loren Bouchard, Brendon Small

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Loren Bouchard, Tom Snyder, Bonnie Burns, Mary Micka, Brendon Small, Carl Adams

PRODUCERS: Melissa Galsky, Carl Adams, Jack Ferraiolo

DIRECTOR: Loren Bouchard

WRITERS: Brendon Small, Loren Bouchard, H. Jon Benjamin, Paula Poundstone, Melissa Galsky, Bill Braudis

VOICE ACTORS: Brendon Small (Brendon Small/Perry/Duane/Adelbergs/Drill Sergeant), H. Jon Benjamin (Coach John McGuirk/Jason Penopolis/Walter), Melissa Galsky (Melissa Robbins), Paula Poundstone (Paula Small, early episodes), Janine DiTullio (Paula Small, later episodes), Ron Lynch (Mr. Lynch), Jonathan Katz (Erik Robbins), Sam Seder (Fenton Mulley), Loren Bouchard (Josie Small), Louis C. K. (Andrew Small), Laura Silverman (Linda Small/Loni), Jen Kirkman (Nurse Kirkman/Cynthia), Andy Kindler (Arnold Lindenson), Emo Phillips (Shannon), Kelly Kimball (Stephanie), Valerie Kappa (Clarice, a.k.a. Lil' Mama), Will Lebow (Jimmy Monet), Paula Plum (Trudy Mulley), Todd Barry (Clerk), David Cross (Guy in Grocery Store), They Might Be Giants (Camp Counselors), Mitch Hedberg (Pet Eulogist/Mitch/Cop/Anger Management Counselor), Tom Kenny (Doctor), Eugene Mirman (Eugene), Patton Oswalt (Helmet), Mary Lynn Rajksub (Penny), Ian Roberts (Tom Wilsonberg), Maria Bamford (Journal Instructor/Joviana)

SYNOPSIS: Eight-year-old Brendon Small deals with the anxiety-producing aspects of his life by creating short films in the company of his friends Jason and Melissa.

COMMENTARY: An eccentric sitcom in the same mold as *Dr. Katz, Professional Therapist* (q.v.), from the same producers, and employing the same animation production mode as that series in its UPN run. By the time it made it to Cartoon Network's "Adult Swim" (due to its on-screen content and obviously not because the lead characters were children), it had switched to the more malleable Flash system. However, the tradition of semi-improvised dialogue from *Dr. Katz* did continue to be used, something that contributed considerably to the program's eccentric nature.

HONG KONG PHOOEY (1974–1976)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCER: Iwao Takamoto

DIRECTOR: Charles Nichols

WRITERS: Myles Wilder, Bill Raynor, Fred Fox, Seaman Jacobs, Len Janson, Chuck Menville, Larz Bourne, Jack Mendelsohn

VOICE ACTORS: Scatman Crothers (Penrod Pooch/Hong Kong Phooey), Joe E. Ross (Sergeant Flint), Kathi Gori (Rosemary), Don Messick (Spot)

SYNOPSIS: Mild-mannered custodian Penrod Pooch assumes the guise of martial arts “expert” Hong Kong Phooey to confront crime in an unnamed city.

COMMENTARY: A clever parody of both Blaxploitation and martial arts heroism, made even more so by Crothers’ adept portrayal of the leading roles. This was one of the few comedy-oriented Hanna-Barbera series of its decade that was actually funny, in part because of the ingenious manner in which it engaged and negotiated successfully with the censorship practices of the era. The fact that Hong Kong Phooey was not nearly as competent in his job as he believed that he was, reflected by his perennially having to examine his *Kung Fu Book of Tricks* for advice on how to proceed, was another excellent factor in creating a unique humorous ambience in a time when other comedy-oriented projects, from this studio and others, had gone sterile.

Although only sixteen episodes were produced, *Hong Kong Phooey* was later rebroadcast on NBC during the spring of 1978 and then again in 1980–1981 as part of the same network’s *Godzilla/Hong Kong Phooey Hour* (q.v.).

HOPPITY HOOPER (A.K.A. *UNCLE WALDO AND HIS FRIENDS*; 1964–1967)

STUDIOS: Jay Ward, P.A.T.

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Ponsonby Britt

PRODUCERS: Jay Ward, Bill Scott, Peter Piech

DIRECTORS: Bill Hurtz, Pete Burness, Lew Keller

WRITERS: Bill Scott, Chris Jenkyns

VOICE ACTORS: Chris Allen (Hoppity Hooper), Hans Conreid (“Professor” Waldo Wigglesworth), Alan Reed (Fillmore Bear, early episodes), Bill Scott (Fillmore Bear, later episodes), Paul Frees (Narrator, early episodes), William Conrad (Narrator, later episodes)

SYNOPSIS: In the town of Foggy Bog, Wisconsin, amphibian Hoppity Hooper assists his “uncle,” a con man fox named Waldo Wigglesworth, in perpetrating schemes and going on adventures.

COMMENTARY: A series that was a poor cousin to Ward and Scott’s earlier *Rocky and His Friends/The Bullwinkle Show* (q.v.), with the comparisons made even more apparent through the rebroadcasting of segments of that series as part of this one (as were segments of “The World of Commander McBragg,” from TOTAL Television’s *Tennessee Tuxedo and His Tales* [q.v.], due to fiat of the studios’ joint sponsor General Mills.) By order of the network, the show was written directly for a child audience, meaning that many of the charming attributes of the earlier series’ narrative approach were inaccessible, save for the odd bit of self-recognition of their fictional status by the characters (e.g., Fillmore rhetorically asking Waldo what “all them kids out there” would think of him potentially turning cowardly). The serialized nature of the earlier series, which had been an asset there, simply turned into a liability as the show bumbled its way through its run, with only flashes of its creators’ prior brilliance.

***HORRIBLE HISTORIES* (2001)**

STUDIO: Mike Young

DISTRIBUTOR: Animania (United States, 2006)

CREATOR: Terry Deary

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Mike Young

PRODUCERS: Martha Atwater, Tamar Hoffs, Michelle Conway, Paul Cummings, Deborah Forte, Mark Young, Beth Richman, Charlie Stickney

DIRECTORS: Andrew Young, Gordon Langley

WRITERS: Martha Atwater, Terry Deary, Charlie Stickney, Andrew Young, Gordon Langley, William Cluverius

VOICE ACTORS (American version): Billy West (Stitch Fleischer/Narrator), Cree Summer (Mo Burrows), Jess Harnell (Darren Dongle)

SYNOPSIS: Stitch and Mo use a portal to travel through time to various historical events while enduring the taunting of nerdy bully Darren.

COMMENTARY: Based on Deary's book series (the author later characterized the series as a "negative experience"), this British-American project attempted to teach children as it entertained them, in the same line as "Peabody's Improbable History" (see *Rocky and His Friends/The Bullwinkle Show* [q.v.]) and *Histeria!* (q.v.). It was more effective than the latter in particular because its tight structure allowed it to stay on message for both the storytelling and the historical name-dropping elements.

***HORSELAND* (2006–2008)**

STUDIO: DIC

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Andy Heyward, Michael Maliani

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Dara Dorian, Emily Hernandez, Bianca Heyward, David Kalis, Jerry Longe, Stephen Shelton, Laura Marr, Vincent Michael, Marissa Shea, Aleyah Smith, and Michelle Zacharias (Specific roles unknown).

SYNOPSIS: At the Horseland ranch, horse-loving children raise and train anthropomorphic horses, who compete in equestrian competitions.

COMMENTARY: Based on an online game and virtual community, which was presumably the target market for the series. The program aired as part of CBS's *KOL Secret Slumber Party* block on the network's Saturday-morning schedule.

***HOT WHEELS* (AND RELATED SERIES)**

***Hot Wheels* (1969–1971)**

STUDIOS: Mattel, Pantomime

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Kenneth Snyder

PRODUCERS: Jean Lindsay, Charles Phalen, Dick Reed, Paul Shively

DIRECTORS: Fred Crippen, Joe Bruno, George Singer, Irv Spector

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Robert Arbogast (Jack Wheeler/Doc Martin), Melinda Casey (Janice Martin), Albert Brooks (Mickey Barnes/Kip), Susan Davis (Ardeth Pratt),

Casey Kasem (Tank Mallory/Dexter Carter), Nora Marlowe (Mother O'Hara), Michael Rye (Mike Wheeler)

Heroes on Hot Wheels (1991–1992)

STUDIOS: LaCinq, C and D, Lucky World, Jingle, Hit, CNC, Family Channel, LBS, Mattel

DISTRIBUTOR: Family Channel

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Christian Masson, Mark Pierre Houlinjeane, Mark Taylor

DIRECTORS: Christian Ligman, Eiji Okabe

WRITERS: Dominique Prive, Patrick Vanetti, Jack Olesker, Mark Taylor, Kazumi Sawaguchi

VOICE ACTORS: Ian Corlett, Michael Donovan, Scott McNeil, Venus Terzo, and Dale Wilson (Specific roles unknown)

Hot Wheels Highway 35: World Race (2003)

STUDIOS: Mainframe, Mattel

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

PRODUCERS: Jeff Gomez, Gio Corsi, Ian Richter, Sharan Wood

DIRECTORS: Andrew Duncan, William Lau

WRITERS: Mark Edens, Jeff Gomez, Fabian Nicieza

VOICE ACTORS: Michael Donovan (Dr. Peter Terzla), Andrew Francis (Vert Wheeler), Brian Drummond (Kurt Wylde), Will Sanderson (Markie Wylde), Kevin Ohtsji (Taro Kitano), Venus Terzo (Lani Tam), Kasper Michaels (Gig), Kathleen Barr (Gelorum)

Hot Wheels Acceleracers (2005)

STUDIOS: Mainframe, Mattel

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

PRODUCERS: Ian Richter, Gio Corsi, Shea Wageman, Ben Smith

DIRECTORS: Andrew Duncan, Gino Nichele, William Gordon, William Lau

WRITER: Mike Edens

VOICE ACTORS: Adrian Holmes (Tork Maddox), Kevan Ohtsji (Taro Kitano), David Kaye (Deezel "Porkchop" Riggs), Will Sanderson (Markie Wylde), Andrew Duncan (Michael "Monkey" McClurg), Dexter Bell (Noro Pasaro), Andrew Francis (Vert Wheeler), Brian Drummond (Kurt Wylde), Kirby Morrow (Shirako Takamoto), Lisa Beley (Karma Eiss), Craig Veroni (Tone Pasaro), Kathleen Barr (Gelorum), John Payne (Major Jack "Rabbit" Wheeler), Michael Donovan (Dr. Peter Terzla), Venus Terzo (Lani Tam), Kasper Michaels (Gig), Cusse Mankuma (Brian Kadeem)

Hot Wheels Battle Force 5 (2009–2011)

STUDIOS: Nerd Corps, Nelvana, Mattel

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

PRODUCER: Audu Paden

DIRECTORS: Johnny Darrell, George Samilski, Rav Grewal, Daniel Ife, Clint Butler, Sebastian Brodin, Blair Simmons, Steve Sacks, Logan McPherson, Andrew Duncan, Michael Dowding, Barry Karnowski

WRITERS: Sean Jara, Steve Sullivan, Dan Pilditch, Terry Saltsman, Richard Clark, Jeremy Winkels, Andy Guerdat, Dan Pilditch, Dave Dias, Grant

Suave, Andrew Nichols, Darrell Vickers, Doug Hadders, Adam Rotstein, Matt Sheppo, Doug Molitor, Shawn Kalb, Al Schwartz, Cole Bastedo, Matt Huether, Robin Stein, Daniel Williams, Lianne Sawatsky, Hugh Duffy, Scott Albert, Adam Higgs, Ken Cuperus, Amy Benham, Josh Gal

VOICE ACTORS: Mark Hildreth (Vert Wheeler/Kryosus/Praxion), Kathleen Barr (Agura Ibaden/Hatch/Kyburu/Zen), Brian Drummond (Sherman Cortez/Krocomodo/Zug/Krytus/Sheriff Johnson, early episodes), Gabe Khouth (Spinner Cortez/Quardian), Noel Johansen (Stanford Rhodes IV/Tess Volitov), Alessandro Juliani (Zoom Takazumi), Kira Tozer (Sage/Grace), Michael Dobson (A. J. Dolton/Zemerik/Kytren/Tors 10/Boralis/Sol), Colin Murdock (Captain Kalus/Sever/Krylox/Zeke), Brian Dobson (Zorak/Sheriff Johnson, later episodes), Scott McNeil (Grimian/Master Takeyasu/Tromp), Mark Acheson (Rawkus), Dan Whedon (Himself), Alan Marriott (Simon Rhodes II), Jim Byrnes (Jack Wheeler)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: Introduced in 1968, the Hot Wheels brand of die-cast miniature automobiles has been one of Mattel's steadiest-selling properties for nearly five decades. Given that the property was targeted toward children, particularly boys, Saturday morning was a natural selling ground, and consequently, the cars made it to animation only a year after they were first introduced. The initial series, using producer Snyder's new "Anamorphic" production methods, focused on a group of teenage auto enthusiasts who took their cue from veteran Doc Warren, with the reckless drivers Dexter Carter and "Stuff" Haley serving as the resident bad examples. Although the program had some merit, the FCC, in a historic ruling, declared that it was simply a "program-length commercial" and that such things had no place on the air (at that time, anyway). ABC complied with the ruling forthwith by removing the show from the air.

It was not until the more permissive post-Reagan period that another "program-length commercial" featuring the popular cars appeared in a Franco-American coproduction called *Heroes on Hot Wheels* during 1991–1992. Then, with the focus again on the automobile fireworks at the expense of such things as plot, characterization, and narrative depth, came three Canadian-American coproductions in the 2000s, with Mattel keeping its hands firmly on the economic and creative steering wheel by providing seed money.

THE HOUNDCATS (1972–1973)

STUDIO: DePatie-Freleng

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: David DePatie, Friz Freleng

DIRECTORS: Sid Marcus, Robert McKimson, Spencer Peel, Brad Case

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Daws Butler (Stutz), Aldo Ray (Muscle Mutt), Arte Johnson (Rhurbarb), Joe Besser (Puddy Puss), Stu Gilliam (Ding Dong)

SYNOPSIS: A crack team of anthropomorphic characters is assigned to pull off impossible missions in the Old West, despite their obvious ineptitude.

COMMENTARY: Based in part on the popular live-action series *Mission: Impossible* (CBS, 1966–1973) but more directly on a Western clone of that program, *The Bearcats* (CBS, 1971–1972), which was already in the TV graveyard when *Houndcats* debuted. The obviousness of the names of Muscle Mutt and Puddy Puss (so named because he could transform his face into multiple guises) very much hinted at the level of comedy being presented herein. The series (which repeated the exploding-tape-recording device from *Mission*), lasted for 13 episodes—exactly as many as *The Bearcats* itself had.

HOUSE OF MOUSE (2001–2002)

STUDIO: Disney

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS/DIRECTORS: Roberts Gannaway, Tony Craig

PRODUCER: Melinda Rediger

WRITERS INCLUDED: Kevin Campbell, Rick Schneider, Ed Baker, Garret Ho

VOICE ACTORS: Wayne Allwine (Mickey Mouse), Tony Anselmo (Donald Duck/Huey/Dewey/Louie), Diane Michelle (Daisy Duck, early episodes), Tress MacNeille (Daisy Duck, later episodes), Russi Taylor (Minnie Mouse), Bill Farmer (Goofy/Pluto/Pete), Corey Burton (Professor Ludwig Von Drake)

SYNOPSIS: The House of Mouse is a trendy nightspot where veteran Disney characters gather to watch both newly produced and vintage Disney cartoons.

COMMENTARY: The Disney Studio at its most self-indulgent, with a series that showed how old and out of fashion their vintage characters and the formats they had once thrived in had become. (Ironically, the vintage material presented proved that point exceptionally well.) Although producers/directors Gannaway and Craig did an excellent job of bringing back to life nearly all of the vintage Disney short-subject and feature-film stars (in some cases, with their original voice actors reengaged), this was done more in the interests of star—and navel—gazing than in actually using them constructively as anything beyond extras. This was simply an excellent opportunity wasted.

THE HUCKLEBERRY HOUND SHOW (1958–1962)

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, Columbia

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCER: Art Scott

DIRECTORS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera, Charles Nichols

WRITERS INCLUDED: Joseph Barbera, Alex Lovy, Warren Foster, Michael Maltese, Tony Benedict, Charles Shows, Dan Gordon

VOICE ACTORS: Daws Butler (Huckleberry Hound/Mr. Jinks/Dixie/Yogi Bear/Hokey Wolf/Others), Don Messick (Narrator/Pixie/Boo Boo/Ranger Smith/Others), Doug Young (Ding-a-Ling)

SYNOPSIS: Huckleberry Hound, a blue-furred, Southern-accented dog with a largely unflappable personality, bumbles his way through a variety of adventures and jobs. Also featured were installments with Pixie and Dixie, a pair of

Hanna-Barbera was the house that the unflappable Huck built. Hanna-Barbera Productions/Photofest © Hanna-Barbera Productions



clever mice in conflict with the scheming cat Mr. Jinks; Yogi Bear, featuring an enterprising bruin from Jellystone Park; and, later, Hokey Wolf, a con-artist lupine character working with his young fox associate Ding-a-Ling.

COMMENTARY: This program was among the first to demonstrate to television network executives and sponsors that a target audience existed for animation on television beyond the established one of children. If anything, being the first television animation program to win an Emmy (in 1959) reinforced this as much as the program's artistic quality did. Consequently, it can arguably be said to have planted the seeds for an approach that favored both children and adults that continues to be practiced effectively by television animation producers in the 21st century. The series itself was wry, clever, and satirical (for its time), as Huck and company benefitted from the work of a staff of talented veteran writers (who weren't afraid to pinch gags intact from their previous employers when it suited their needs), as well as excellent vocal performances from Butler and Messick, who had already established themselves as the core members of the studio's team of such actors and would remain so for many years afterward. Butler's portrayal of Huck was particularly inspired, reacting with little or no obvious emotion other than a Southern

drawl to situations that would have angered or upset others. Despite this, Huck was ultimately outclassed in popularity by Yogi Bear, who was given a program in his own name in 1961 (see *Yogi Bear*).

When his own program ended, Huck, despite his proven appeal, was mothballed, in contrast to many of his peers, whose programs and formats ended up being done to death over the years. However, he was recalled to service when needed occasionally, largely as a supporting figure on such projects as *Yogi's Gang* during the 1970s and *Yogi's Treasure Hunt* in the 1980s, in which he served more as an elder statesman of a bygone era than a genuinely vital creative figure in his own right. He was restored to stardom briefly in the TV movie *The Good, The Bad and the Huckleberry* in 1988 but then was retired again, save for cameos in other people's series. One such example: in 1999, he made a memorable appearance at the tail end of a documentary-styled episode of *The Simpsons* (q.v.), in which he claimed to be a closeted gay dog!

***HULK HOGAN'S ROCK 'N' WRESTLING!* (1985–1987)**

STUDIOS: DIC, WWF, Titan Sports

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

PRODUCERS: Jean Chalopin, Andy Heyward, Tetsuo Katayama

DIRECTOR: Bruno Bianchi

WRITERS INCLUDED: Jeffrey Scott

VOICE ACTORS: Brad Garrett (Hulk Hogan), Charlie Adler ("Rowdy" Roddy Piper), James Avery (Junkyard Dog), Lewis Arquette ("Superfly" Snuka), Jodi Carlisle (Moolah/Richter), George DiCenzo (Captain Lou Albano), Ronald Feinberg (Andre the Giant), Patrick Fraley (Hillbilly Jim), Ronald Gans (Volkoff), Ernest Harada (Mr. Fuji), Aron Kincaid (Iron Sheik), Chuck Licini (Big John Studd), Joey Pento (Tino Santana), Neil Ross ("Mean Gene" Okerlund)

SYNOPSIS: The stars of the World Wrestling Federation circa the mid-1980s are featured in a series of adventures involving rock music and prosocial teamwork.

COMMENTARY: The World Wrestling Federation (known as World Wrestling Entertainment since 2002) was established in the early 1980s as a union of several regionally based pro-wrestling circuits established by entrepreneur Vince McMahon, who remains in control of the enterprise. Through exposure on cable television and home video, as well as such annual pay-per-view events as the ongoing "Wrestlemania" series, the organization and its main players were swiftly elevated to superstar status. None, however, proved to be nearly as popular and enduring a figure as blond-haired, heavy-muscled Californian Hulk Hogan (né Terry Bollea), who used his exposure to gain star status in the film and reality-television mediums, as well.

It was the federation's—and particularly Hogan's—popularity among children that brought this hybrid animation/live-action series into being, based on a notion from rock singer Cyndi Lauper, who was such a fan of the federation that she served as a manager for some participants. Hogan appeared in live-action form in the main title sequence, with a crowd of children following him pied-piper style, and he also interacted in live sequences with match

announcer “Mean Gene” Okerlund, famous for his unflappable poker face. Both, however, were impersonated in the animated sequences, as were their featured colleagues; the female wrestlers Richter and Moola were inventions of the animation staff. Much of the comedy of the series could be said to come more from the live sequences, where the wrestlers danced and lip-synched to then-current pop music hits, than the actual animated sequences, which were largely paint-by-numbers-style adventures typical of the era.

THE HURRICANES (1993)

STUDIOS: Siriol, Scottish Television Enterprises, DIC, Bohbot

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Andy Heyward, Robby London, Sandy Ross, Jeff Henry

PRODUCERS: Robin Lyons, Lisa Salamone

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS INCLUDED: Phil Harnage, Lori Crawford

VOICE ACTORS: Chiara Zanni, Stuart Hepburn, Ian Corlett, Michael Benyaer, Chris Humphreys, Jay Brazeau, Brent Chapman, Andrew Airlie, Carl Hibbert, Chris Gaze, Colin Heath, Peter Williams, Scott McNeil, Alvin Sanders, Candus Churchill, Carol Alexander, Christina Lippa, Gary Chalk, Kathleen Barr, Louise Vallance, Mark Hildreth, Wezley Morris, Roger Crosby, and Jeannie Zahni (Specific roles unknown)

SYNOPSIS: The Hurricanes are a multiethnic soccer team who compete in the (fictional) World Soccer League under the leadership of teenaged owner Amanda Carey, trainer Jock Stone, and enigmatic star player Cal Howard.

COMMENTARY: A British-American coproduction presumably designed to help children understand and appreciate the “beautiful game,” given that it originally aired as part of DIC’s afternoon programming block *Amazin’ Adventures* (q.v.). Executive producer Heyward wanted to craft a series that had international appeal, and soccer, with its wide international presence, seemed like a natural entry point to such a project. Not surprisingly, the series did much better in terms of international sales and exposure than in the United States, where the response was tepid. The program’s insistence on maintaining a strict gender divide (Carey had to disguise herself as a man to play with the team) and good-versus-evil plotlines (the latter supplied by the stereotypical wealthy villain Stavros Garkos) made it standard issue for the era. The show was briefly revived in reruns on the PAX network in 1998–1999, but the tarnishing of soccer’s international reputation due to recent corruption scandals will likely make further revivals a touchy subject.

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***I AM THE GREATEST: THE ADVENTURES OF MUHAMMAD ALI* (1977–1978)**

STUDIOS: Fred Calvert, Farmhouse

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER/DIRECTOR: Fred Calvert

PRODUCER: Janis Diamond

WRITERS: Fred Calvert, Janis Diamond

VOICE ACTORS: Muhammad Ali (Himself), Patrice Carmichael (Nicky), Casey Carmichael (Damon), Frank Bannister (Himself)

SYNOPSIS: Famed boxer Muhammad Ali embarks on a variety of adventures.

COMMENTARY: One of the most famous and successful athletes of the 20th century, Muhammad Ali (né Cassius Clay) won a gold medal in boxing at the 1960 Olympics in Rome and then held the professional heavyweight championship on three separate occasions between 1964 and 1980. Noted for his arrogant public persona, his habit of celebrating himself in elaborate rhymes and phrases (“I’m so tough I make medicine sick”), and his starring role in such celebrated fights as the “Rumble in the Jungle” and the “Thrilla in Manila,” Ali remained an important and revered figure in American sports until his recent death, despite being humbled by Parkinson’s disease in his later years. In the mid-1990s, his achievements were commemorated in a biographical film, with Will Smith in the title role.

Ali did attempt acting himself, starring in the biographical film *The Greatest* and other film and TV projects, but he proved not to be as good at it as he was at throwing punches. That should have been a sign to the producers of this series that a project featuring him wasn’t a good idea, but they ignored it, banking on Ali’s popularity with children to make the series work. It did not. This was, instead, perhaps the most clumsily animated, written, and acted series in television animation history, with little of value presented. Ultimately, it was exiled to a very early morning slot on its network’s schedule to play out its existence.

Still, the project might have suggested a career move to one of Ali’s successors: in the 2010s, heavyweight champion Mike Tyson starred in and produced the bizarre Netflix series *Mike Tyson Mysteries*, structured on the same lines as Ali’s series but with 21st-century dramatic irony fully attached.

***INCH HIGH PRIVATE EYE* (1973–1974)**

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: Alex Lovy, Iwao Takamoto

DIRECTOR: Charles Nichols

WRITERS: Bill Raynor, Fred Fox, Seaman Jacobs, Myles Wilder, David Harmon, Gene Thompson, Bill Carney, George Jorgensen, Earl Klein, Alex Lovy, Dan Milk, Dan Noonan, Vey Risto, Jay Sarbry, Don Sheppard, Paul Sommer

VOICE ACTORS: Lennie Weinrib (Inch High), Kathy Gori (Lori), Bob Luttrell (Gator), John Stephenson (Mr. Finkerton), Jean Vander Pyl (Mrs. Finkerton), Don Messick (Braveheart)

SYNOPSIS: Inch High, a private investigator who is only an inch tall, bumbles his way toward success.

COMMENTARY: As was typical of Hanna-Barbera in the 1970s, this was a unique idea executed very poorly. The main character, modeled on Don Adams's Maxwell Smart (with Weinrib doing an impersonation of Adams), was unlikable; the "small" jokes and gags did not work; and the lead characters were saddled with such accoutrements as the Hushmobile, which, despite its name, wasn't effective camouflage—considering it resembled Oscar Meyer's Wienermobile. The viewers, in the original version and later syndicated revivals, were undoubtedly driven to the same levels of despair that Inch drove his employer Mr. Finkerton to until he actually succeeded at doing his job. The main saving grace was the background art of the underrated Fernando Montelagre, whose work enlivened many pedestrian Hanna-Barbera efforts of the time.

***THE INCREDIBLE DIC MOVIE TOONS* (2002)**

STUDIO: DIC

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Andy Heyward, Michael Maliani

PRODUCER: Eric Lewald

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: An anthology series of films with characters who had previously been featured in productions of the DIC Studio, as well as newer properties. Among those featured were *Sabrina the Teenage Witch* (see *Sabrina* [and related series]), *Inspector Gadget* (q.v.), *Dennis the Menace* (q.v.), and *Madeline* (q.v.), as well as adaptations of *Treasure Island*, *The Time Machine*, *Black Beauty*, and *Ben-Hur*.

***THE INCREDIBLE HULK* (AND RELATED SERIES)**

***The Incredible Hulk and Spider-Man* (Hulk segments; 1982–1983)**

STUDIO: Marvel

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

CREATORS: Stan Lee, Jack Kirby

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: David DePatie, Lee Gunther

PRODUCER: Don Jurwich

DIRECTORS: Don Jurwich, Gerry Chiniquy, Steve Clark, John Gibbs, Sid Marcus, Nelson Shin, Art Vitello, Bob Richardson, Tom Ray, Dan Thompson, Sam Weiss, Arnie Wong, Kent Butterworth, Milton Gray

WRITERS INCLUDED: Creighton Barnes, Doug Booth, Francis Deighen, Donald Glut, Jack Hanrahan, Christy Mark, Larry Parr, Jeffrey Scott, Will Meugniet, Michael Swanigan, Doug Wildey

VOICE ACTORS: Stan Lee (Narrator); Jack Angel, Michael Bell, Lee Brillee, Bill Boyett, Corey Burton, Susan Blu, Wally Burr, Bill Callaway, Hamilton Camp, Victoria Carroll, Phil Clarke, Hans Conreid, Regis Cordic, Henry Corden, Brad Crandall, Roberto Cruz, Peter Cullen, Brian Cummings, Jeff David, Jack DeLeon, Jerry Dexter, Michael Evans, Al Fann, Ron Feinberg, Elliot Field, June Foray, Patrick Fraley, Brian Fuld, Kathy Garver, Linda Gary, Dan Gilvezan, Bob Holt, Michael Horton, Ralph James, Lynn Johnson, Stanley Jones, Lee Lampson, Morgan Lofting, Mona Marshall, John Mayer, Shepard Menken, Don Messick, Vic Perrin, Tony Pope, Richard Ramos, Robert Ridgely, Neil Ross, Gene Ross, Stanley Ralph Ross, Michael Rye, Marilyn Schrefler, John Stephenson, Ted Schwartz, Gary Seeger, Michael Sheehan, Andre Stojka, Janet Waldo, B. J. Ward, Frank Welker, Paul Winchell, and William Woodson (Additional characters)

Amazing Spider-Man and the Incredible Hulk (Hulk segments; 1983–1984)

STUDIO: Marvel

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

CREATORS: Stan Lee, Jack Kirby

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: David DePatie, Lee Gunther

PRODUCER: Don Jurwich

DIRECTORS: Don Jurwich, Gerry Chiniquy, Steve Clark, John Gibbs, Sid Marcus, Nelson Shin, Art Vitello, Bob Richardson, Tom Ray, Dan Thompson, Sam Weiss, Arnie Wong, Kent Butterworth, Milton Gray

WRITERS INCLUDED: Creighton Barnes, Doug Booth, Francis Deighen, Donald Glut, Jack Hanrahan, Christy Mark, Larry Parr, Jeffrey Scott, Will Meugniot, Michael Swanigan, Doug Wildey

VOICE ACTORS: Stan Lee (Narrator); Jack Angel, Michael Bell, Lee Brillee, Bill Boyett, Corey Burton, Susan Blu, Wally Burr, Bill Callaway, Hamilton Camp, Victoria Carroll, Phil Clarke, Hans Conreid, Regis Cordic, Henry Corden, Brad Crandall, Roberto Cruz, Peter Cullen, Brian Cummings, Jeff David, Jack DeLeon, Jerry Dexter, Michael Evans, Al Fann, Ron Feinberg, Elliot Field, June Foray, Patrick Fraley, Brian Fuld, Kathy Garver, Linda Gary, Dan Gilvezan, Bob Holt, Michael Horton, Ralph James, Lynn Johnson, Stanley Jones, Lee Lampson, Morgan Lofting, Mona Marshall, John Mayer, Shepard Menken, Don Messick, Vic Perrin, Tony Pope, Richard Ramos, Robert Ridgely, Neil Ross, Gene Ross, Stanley Ralph Ross, Michael Rye, Marilyn Schrefler, John Stephenson, Ted Schwartz, Gary Seeger, Michael Sheehan, Andre Stojka, Janet Waldo, B. J. Ward, Frank Welker, Paul Winchell, and William Woodson (Additional characters)

The Incredible Hulk (1984–1985)

STUDIO: Marvel

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

CREATORS: Stan Lee, Jack Kirby

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: David DePatie, Lee Gunther

PRODUCER: Don Jurwich

DIRECTORS: Don Jurwich, Gerry Chiniquy, Steve Clark, John Gibbs, Sid Marcus, Nelson Shin, Art Vitello, Bob Richardson, Tom Ray, Dan Thompson, Sam Weiss, Arnie Wong, Kent Butterworth, Milton Gray

WRITERS INCLUDED: Creighton Barnes, Doug Booth, Francis Deighen, Donald Glut, Jack Hanrahan, Christy Mark, Larry Parr, Jeffrey Scott, Will Meugniot, Michael Swanigan, Doug Wildey

VOICE ACTORS: Stan Lee (Narrator); Jack Angel, Michael Bell, Lee Brillee, Bill Boyett, Corey Burton, Susan Blu, Wally Burr, Bill Callaway, Hamilton Camp, Victoria Carroll, Phil Clarke, Hans Conreid, Regis Cordic, Henry Corden, Brad Crandall, Roberto Cruz, Peter Cullen, Brian Cummings, Jeff David, Jack DeLeon, Jerry Dexter, Michael Evans, Al Fann, Ron Feinberg, Elliot Field, June Foray, Patrick Fraley, Brian Fuld, Kathy Garver, Linda Gary, Dan Gilvezan, Bob Holt, Michael Horton, Ralph James, Lynn Johnson, Stanley Jones, Lee Lampson, Morgan Lofting, Mona Marshall, John Mayer, Shepard Menken, Don Messick, Vic Perrin, Tony Pope, Richard Ramos, Robert Ridgely, Neil Ross, Gene Ross, Stanley Ralph Ross, Michael Rye, Marilyn Schrefler, John Stephenson, Ted Schwartz, Gary Seeger, Michael Sheehan, Andre Stojka, Janet Waldo, B. J. Ward, Frank Welker, Paul Winchell, and William Woodson (Additional characters)

The Incredible Hulk (1996–1998)

STUDIOS: Marvel, New World

DISTRIBUTOR: UPN

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Avi Arad, Stan Lee

PRODUCERS: Tom Tataranowicz, Matthew Edelman

DIRECTORS: Dan Thompson, Dick Sebast, Ernesto Lopez, Leo Sullivan, Richard Trueblood, Ron Myrick, Tom Tataranowicz

WRITERS: Greg Blair, Ann Knapp Austin, Bob Forward, Bruce Reid Schaefer, Cydne Clark, Diane Fresco, Douglas Sloan, Greg Johnson, Jess Winfield, John Semper, Len Wein, Meg McLaughlin, Steve Granar, Stewart St. John

VOICE ACTORS: Lou Ferrigno (The Incredible Hulk), Neal McDonough (Dr. Bruce Banner), Thom Barry (Gabriel Jones), Luke Perry (Rick Jones), Genie Francis (Betty Ross/Sister Rose Erak, early episodes), Philece Sampler (Betty Ross/Sister Rose Erak, later episodes), Lisa Zane (Jennifer Walters/She-Hulk, early episodes), Cree Summer (Jennifer Walters/She-Hulk, later episodes), John Vernon (General Thaddeus "Thunderbolt" Ross), Kevin Schon (Major Glenn Talbot/The Abomination/ZZZAX/Samuel Larroquette/Judge), Shadon Stevens (Dr. Leonard Samson), Matt Frewer (Leader), Mark Hamill (Gargoyle), Kathy Ireland (The Ogress), Michael Donovan (Gray Hulk)

The Incredible Hulk and Friends (1998–1999)

STUDIOS: Marvel, New World

DISTRIBUTOR: UPN

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Avi Arad, Stan Lee

PRODUCERS: Tom Tataranowicz, Matthew Edelman

DIRECTORS: Dan Thompson, Dick Sebast, Ernesto Lopez, Leo Sullivan, Richard Trueblood, Ron Myrick, Tom Tataranowicz

WRITERS: Greg Blair, Ann Knapp Austin, Bob Forward, Bruce Reid Schaefer, Cydne Clark, Diane Fresco, Douglas Sloan, Greg Johnson, Jess Winfield, John Semper, Len Wein, Meg McLaughlin, Steve Granar, Stewart St. John

VOICE ACTORS: Lou Ferrigno (The Incredible Hulk), Neal McDonough (Dr. Bruce Banner), Thom Barry (Gabriel Jones), Luke Perry (Rick Jones), Genie Francis (Betty Ross/Sister Rose Erak, early episodes), Philece Sampler (Betty Ross/Sister Rose Erak, later episodes), Lisa Zane (Jennifer Walters/She-Hulk, early episodes), Cree Summer (Jennifer Walters/She-Hulk, later episodes), John Vernon (General Thaddeus "Thunderbolt" Ross), Kevin Schon (Major Glenn Talbot/The Abomination/ZZZAX/Samuel Larroquette/Judge), Shadoe Stevens (Dr. Leonard Samson), Matt Frewer (Leader), Mark Hamill (Gargoyle), Kathy Ireland (The Ogress), Michael Donovan (Gray Hulk)

SYNOPSIS: After exposure to toxic radiation, Dr. Bruce Banner transforms into the formidable, rage-filled monster known as the Incredible Hulk when he becomes angry.

COMMENTARY: The Hulk first stumbled into comic books via writer/editor Stan Lee and artist Jack Kirby in the spring of 1962, and he has been a major player in the ongoing Marvel comic book soap opera ever since. In terms of exposure beyond the comics, his best-known incarnation has been the eponymous 1978–1982 live-action series originally airing on CBS, starring Bill Bixby as Dr. Banner and Lou Ferrigno as the Hulk. Since then, the Hulk has starred in two live-action films, neither of them successful; though, in the current personage of Mark Ruffalo, he remains a valued supporting player in the new hypercharged, Disney-sponsored Marvel film universe.

As with Marvel's other comic-book-to-animation transitions, the adaptations of the Hulk stuck closely to the narratives and characterizations from the comics (the variation in the format created by the live series was ignored), counting on the loyalty of Marvel and comic book fans of all ages to provide the audience. Consequently, the value of all the series matters mostly to completists of the Marvel media universe. Those who did not find the Hulk entertaining simply ignored them, and there were enough of them to ensure that each incarnation of the project had a relatively short production and broadcast run.

***THE INHUMANOIDS* (1986)**

STUDIOS: Marvel, Claster, LBS

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Joe Bacal, Tom Griffin, Margaret Loesch

PRODUCERS: Stephanie Burt, Flint Dille, Chris Pelzer

DIRECTORS: Ray Lee, Charlie Downs, Bob Kirk, Margaret Nichols, Bob Matz, Rudy Cataldi, Karen Peterson, Joe Harrison, Spencer Peel, Neal Warner, Lillian Evans, Stan Phillips, Norman McCabe, Gerry Chiniquy, Warren Batchelder, Bob Trent, Brad Case, Joan Case, John Freeman, Tom Ray, Bill Knoll

WRITERS INCLUDED: Larry Parr

VOICE ACTORS: Michael Bell, Bill Callaway, Fred Collins, Brad Crandall, Dick Gautier, Ed Gilbert, Chris Latta, Neil Ross, Stanley Ralph Ross, Richard Sanders, Susan Silo, and John Stephenson (Specific roles unknown)

SYNOPSIS: The Inhumanoids, an ancient race from the Earth's subterranean core, come to the surface to conquer it, only to be opposed by the heroic Earth Corps.

COMMENTARY: A rather standard action-oriented limited-run (eight episodes) series, only minimally enhanced by some comic-book-style paneling work from the Marvel artists and the odd attempt at humor. It ended up being little more than a tie-in for Hasbro, Marvel's corporate partner for much of its syndicated work during the 1980s, and thus of little value on its own.

***INSPECTOR GADGET* (AND RELATED SERIES)**

***Inspector Gadget* (1983–1986)**

STUDIOS: DIC, France 3, Nelvana, Field Communications, LBS, TMS, Cuckoo's Nest

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

CREATORS: Andy Heyward, Jean Chalopin, Bruno Bianchi

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Andy Heyward, Jean Chalopin, Tetsuo Katayama

PRODUCER: Patrick Loubert

DIRECTORS: Harry Love, Bernard Deyries, Bruno Bianchi, Toshi Uuki, Philippe Landrot

WRITERS INCLUDED: Andy Heyward, Jean Chalopin, Peter Sauder, Eleanor Burian Mohr, Mike O'Mahony, Glen Egbert, Jack Hanrahan

VOICE ACTORS: Don Adams (Inspector Gadget), Mona Marshall (Penny, early episodes), Cree Summer Francks (Penny, later episodes), Holly Berger (Penny, later episodes), Frank Welker (Brain/Dr. Claw/Mad Cat), Maurice LaMarche (Chief Quimby), Townsend Coleman (Corporal Capeman, 1984–1985)

***Gadget Boy and Heather/Gadget Boy's Adventures in History* (1995–1998)**

STUDIOS: DIC, Gangster, France Animation, M6, Bohbot, Tribune

DISTRIBUTORS: Syndicated (1995–1997), History Channel (1997–1998)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Andy Heyward

DIRECTOR: Claude Raviet

WRITER: Steve Pesce

VOICE ACTORS: Don Adams (Gadget Boy, early episodes), Maurice LaMarche (Gadget Boy, later episodes/G-9/Boris/Mulch/Hummus/Myron Dabble/Chief Drake Stromboli), Tara Charendoff (Agent Heather), Louise Vallance (Spydra)

***Inspector Gadget's Field Trip* (1996–2004)**

STUDIO: DIC

DISTRIBUTOR: History Channel

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Andy Heyward, Brad Kriesberg, Robby London, Michael Maliani

VOICE ACTOR: Don Adams (Inspector Gadget)

***Inspector Gadget* (2015)**

STUDIO: DHX Media

DISTRIBUTOR: Netflix (United States)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: David Watson, Richard Rowe, Steven Denure, Michael Hirsh, Mark Gosine, Anne Loi

PRODUCERS: Colleen McGrath, Stephanie Betts, Evan Thaler Hickey

DIRECTORS: William Gordon, Phillip Stamp, Pedram Goshtasbpour, David Watson, Derek Jessome

WRITERS: Doug Hadders, Adam Rotstein, David Dias, Andrew Harrison, Emer Connon, Shawn Kalb, Alice Prodanou, Evan Thaler Hickey, Craig Martin, Sean Cullen, Andrew Annigson, John Saltzman, Laurie Elliot, Sean Jara

VOICE ACTORS: Ivan Sherry (Inspector Gadget), Tara Strong (Penny), Scott McCord (Brain/Professor Von Slickstein), Derek McGrath (Chief Quimby), Martin Roach (Dr. Claw), Lyon Smith (Talon), Katie Griffin (Kayla)

SYNOPSIS: Inspector Gadget, a bionic man powered with robotic weaponry, fights against the evil forces of MAD, led by Dr. Claw—with some clandestine assistance from his niece Penny and her dog Brain.

COMMENTARY: The original *Inspector Gadget* was one of the most amusing and entertaining programs of the 1980s and deservedly has had a long afterlife in syndicated, cable, and network replays. As a syndicated program, it was able to avoid the restrictions on comedy practice placed on its network brethren in that decade and thus was able to present this material in an unfiltered manner in comparison with others. But its greater legacy was that it managed to show how comedy and adventure formats could coexist successfully in the same narrative, and in that sense, it pointed the way for at least one generation of television animators to pursue their narrative goals in the same fashion.



What kind of gadgets didn't he have? LBS Communications/Photofest © LBS Communications

Producer Heyward had developed the character as a comic bumbler, and it made sense to cast an actor who had credentials in that area. Don Adams, who had played a similar character in the popular 1960s mock-heroic sitcom *Get Smart*, ended up getting the part and invested so much of his established personality in the character that it seems hard to believe that he wasn't the first choice (veteran character actor Jesse White had played the role in the original pilot). Just as Gadget was surrounded by clearer-headed individuals (Penny and Brain) who took on the more serious aspects of the narratives, Heyward and his production colleagues made certain the program worked on a proper balance. The comedy material was exceptionally timed and staged, in spite of the limitations of working with a multinational animation network to produce the program. Even when he was forced to deliver the mandatory prosocial messages to the audience, Gadget entertained by showing the consequences of acting in the wrong way in his usual bumbling fashion. These elements added up to a program that was always entertaining, no matter how many times you saw particular episodes or the whole series—which, it should be said, is a quality of only a few select television animation programs.

To their credit, DIC did not immediately wear out the character's welcome, as it was nearly a decade before a new series featuring him emerged. In this new version, he had become infantilized, now known as Gadget Boy. Here, he was teamed with Heather (an older version of Penny) and G-9 (a robotic version of Brain) against the masked, multi-armed villainess Spydra. A later version of the series focused on time traveling through history, appropriate considering it aired on the History Channel. In his normal adult form, Gadget had already been holding court there as the host of *Inspector Gadget's Field Trip*, an instructional travelogue project.

Other than these projects, Gadget increasingly fell into limbo in America, a consequence of the shifting financial and ownership status of his studio in the 1990s. The brief period in which DIC was owned by Disney led that studio to produce the inevitable live-action feature film version in 1999, with Matthew Broderick in the title role (Adams made a cameo appearance); a sequel ultimately followed in 2003. His main animation appearance during this time was in *Gadget and the Gadgetinis*, a French-produced series from 2002–2003 that has never been broadcast in the United States. Maurice LaMarche, who had been a voice actor on the original series, took over from Don Adams as Gadget here.

Gadget's most recent reappearance has been in a new sequel project issued in 2015 and produced by the Canadian studio DHX Media, which inherited digital distribution rights to DIC's products in that country. Neither Don Adams (who had died in 2005) nor Andy Heyward was involved with this series. In this version, Dr. Claw was freed from a period of suspended animation and took charge of MAD again. Consequently, Gadget was recalled to duty, and Penny (older than previously) and Brain now worked in actuality as his aids rather than clandestinely, as in the original program. A complicating fly in this ointment was Dr. Claw's enigmatic nephew Talon, on whom Penny inevitably developed a conflicted crush.

Despite these more recent attempts to keep the character up to date, his original incarnation remains the definitive version, and it, rather than the later retreads, will be the one most likely to be seen by ever-appreciative audiences in the later years of the 21st century.

***INVADER ZIM* (2001–2002)**

STUDIOS: Viacom, Nickelodeon

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

CREATOR: Jhonen Vasquez

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Jhonen Vasquez, Mary Harrington

PRODUCERS: Monique Beatty, Steve Russel, Christine Griswold

DIRECTORS: Steve Russel, Jordan Reichel

WRITERS: Jhonen Vasquez, Rob Hummel, Roman Dirge, Brent Crowe, Courtney Lilly, Danielle Koenig, Eric Truehart, Frank Conniff

VOICE ACTORS: Richard Horvitz (Zim), Rosearik Simons (Gir), Andy Berman (Dib Membrane), Melissa Fahn (Gaz Membrane), Rodger Bumpass (Professor Membrane), Lucille Bliss (Miss Bitters), Wally Wingert (Almighty Tallest Red), Kevin McDonald (Almighty Tallest Purple)

SYNOPSIS: Zim, an incompetent alien soldier from the planet Irk, is dispatched to Earth (which is regarded as insignificant) to gather information that will lead to a successful invasion and conquering. Would-be alien-hunter Dib Membrane, a school classmate of the disguised Zim, discovers the alien's secret but has difficulty convincing others of the truth and must fight him alone.

COMMENTARY: Despite its impressive stylistic background (Vasquez brought his history as an underground comic book artist to the show's design) and well-thought-out narrative and character designs, this series was canceled midway through its first and only season on Nickelodeon, though it retains a strong cult following. Only 26 of the proposed 40 episodes of the series were produced, with 1 completed episode suppressed due to its contextual similarities to the events of September 11, 2001.

***INVASION AMERICA* (1998)**

STUDIOS: DreamWorks, Warner Brothers

DISTRIBUTOR: WB

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Steven Spielberg

PRODUCERS: Harve Bennett, Dan Fausett, Michael Reaves, Wayne Lemon

DIRECTORS: Dan Fausett, Ruel Fischmann

WRITERS: Harve Bennett, Michael Reaves, Ruel Fischmann, Wayne Lemon

VOICE ACTORS: Mikey Kelley (David Carter), Lorenzo Lamas (Cale Oosha), Tony Jay (Dragit), Edward Albert (Rafe), Kath Soucie (Rita Carter/Sonia), Leonard Nimoy (General Konrad), Thom Adcox (Simon), Greg Eagles (Philip Stark), Kristy McNichol (Angie Romar), Ronny Cox (Doc), Jim Cummings (Major Lomack), James B. Sikking (General Gordon), Rider Strong (Jim Bailey)

SYNOPSIS: Aliens from the planet Tyrus plot to overthrow Earth.

COMMENTARY: A highly ambitious effort from executive producer Spielberg and producer/writer Bennett (a veteran of the *Star Trek* franchise, among

other credits) to create a “serious” science-fiction drama in animated form. This was not only apparent through the decidedly nonhumorous tone of the project but also in its unprecedented airing in an hour-long time slot on its network. While it ambitiously combined elements of 2-D and 3-D animation in its production process, it proved too ponderous and philosophical for those viewers in its initial prime-time slot and was soon shunted away to live out the rest of its limited days on the network’s Saturday-morning schedule.

***IRON MAN: ARMORED ADVENTURES* (2009–2012)**

STUDIOS: Marvel, Method Animation, D’Images, LuxAnimation

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon (United States)

CREATORS: Stan Lee, Larry Lieber, Don Heck, Jack Kirby

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Aton Soumache, Alexis Vonars, Dimitri Rassam, Stan Lee, Eric Rollman, Tapaas Chakravarti, Lillian Eche, Steve Christian, Trevor Drinkwater, Steven Bannon

PRODUCERS: Joshua Fine, Cort Lane, Cedric Pilot, Romain Van Liemt

DIRECTORS: Stephane Juffe, Philippe Guyenne

WRITERS: Romain Van Liemt, Craig Kyle, Christopher Yost, Alexx Van Dyne, Eugene Son, Paul Giacoppo, Brandon Aurman, Len Uhley, Chris “Doc” Wyatt, Ken Pontac, Sean Ryan, Thomas Barichella, Andrew Robinson, Cyril Tysz, Julien Magnat, Clella Constantine, Thomas Krajewski, Gavin Highnight, David Micheline, Bob Layton, Mark Henry, Mathias Fourier, Henry Gilroy, Rob Benaviddes Jr., John Shirley, Sean McKeever

VOICE ACTORS: Adrian Petrew (Tony Stark/Iron Man), Daniel Bacon (James “Rhodey” Rhodes/War Machine), Vincent Tong (Gene Khan/Xin Zhang/Mandarin), Anna Cumber (Patricia “Pepper” Potts/Rescue), Mackenzie Gray (Obadiah Stane/Iron Monger), Alistair Abell (Happy Hogan/Black Knight), Michael Adamthwaite (Justin Hammer/Titanium Man), Ashleigh Ball (Natasha Romanoff/Black Widow), Eric Bauza (General Thaddeus “Thunderbolt” Ross), Lisa Ann Beley (Abigail Brand/Onboard Computer), Jeffrey Bowyer Chapman (Black Panther), Christopher Britton (Dr. Doom), Louis Chirillo (Arthur Parks/Living Laser), Michael Dangerfield (Unicorn), Michael Dobson (Ghost), Brian Drummond (O’Brian), Mark Gibbon (Hulk), Andrew Francis (Rick Jones/Hawkeye), Catherine Haggquist (Robertta Rhodes), Ron Halder (Professor Abraham Klein/Magneto/Professor Charles Xavier), Fred Henderson (Howard Stark), Peter Kelamis (Marc Scarlotti/Whiplash), Michael Kopsa (Dr. Basil Sandhurst/Controller), Paula Lindberg (Sasha), Donny Lucas (Mr. Fix), Kristie Marsden (Whitney Stane/Madame Masque), Richard Newman (Dr. Anton Harkov), Brenna O’Brien (Rhona Burchill/Mad Thinker), Mark Oliver (Ivan Vanko/Crimson Dynamo), David Orth (Donnie Gill/Blizzard), Ty Olsson (Killer Shrike), Dean Redman (Nick Fury), Russell Roberts (Count Nefaria), Tabitha St. Germain (Maria Hill/Technovore), Venus Terzo (Jean Grey), French Tickner (Professor Zimmer), Lee Tockar (Modok), Dale Wilson (Senator Robert Kelly), Alex Zahara (Peter Corbeau)

SYNOPSIS: When industrialist Howard Stark disappears after the plane he is traveling in crashes, his son Tony assumes control of his company while also doing regular duty as the armor-suited superhero Iron Man and attending school.

COMMENTARY: A typical Marvel television animation adaptation of one of its signature superhero characters in terms of graphic, plot, and characterization fidelity. The major difference here from the comic-book narratives was that Stark was a teenager in these stories rather than the middle-aged, emotionally crippled alcoholic he was in the comics (his colleagues Rhodes and Potts were similarly reduced in age), presumably in order to facilitate greater recognition and sympathy in the intended audience. This did little good, as it simply retread ground Marvel had trod in earlier comic-book and animation projects, and guest appearances by heroes, villains, and other prominent supporting characters from these narratives did little to counteract.

***I SPY* (2002)**

STUDIO: Scholastic

DISTRIBUTOR: HBO

CREATORS: Jean Marzolo, Walter Wick

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Deborah Forte

DIRECTOR: Peter Sluszka

WRITERS: Bruce Robb, Kerri Berney

VOICE ACTORS: Unknown

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: This series took its cue from a highly popular series of books produced by Marzolo and Wick, in which preschool-aged children were presented with visual tableaux and invited to search for objects based on clues in the texts. The series starred a child named Spyler and a dog named CeCe, who served as on-screen guides/companions for the children and would loudly announce whenever they had solved the mystery within the narrative. The program won an Emmy in 2003.

***IT'S PUNKY BREWSTER* (1985–1987)**

STUDIO: Ruby-Spears

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC (1985–1987, 1988–1989)

CREATOR: David Duclon

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Joe Ruby and Ken Spears

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Soleil Moon Frye (Penelope “Punky” Brewster), George Gaynes (Henry Warnimont), Ami Foster (Margaux Kramer), Cherie Johnson (Cherie), Casey Ellison (Allen Anderson), Frank Welker (Glomer/Brandon)

SYNOPSIS: Seven-year-old orphan Punky Brewster is adopted by avuncular photographer Henry, who runs the Chicago apartment building she was squatting in.

COMMENTARY: This series was derived from the popular live-action sitcom *Punky Brewster*, with the same cast as noted here, which ran on NBC from 1984 to 1986 and in syndication during 1988–1989. It followed most of the same cut-and-dried procedures of prefabricated animated series of this time, not deviating very much from the source material handed to it by the network. The major addition to the cast was a rodent-like sprite named Glomer, whose magical interventions gave the show an edge in plotting

that was denied the live series, though it wasn't much of an edge in terms of improving the quality.

***THE ITSY BITSY SPIDER* (1993–1996)**

STUDIOS: Hyperion, Paramount

DISTRIBUTOR: USA

CREATOR: Matt O'Callaghan

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Willard Carroll, Thomas Wilhite, Mike Mitchell

PRODUCERS: David Cobb, Ron Rocha

DIRECTOR: Mike Mitchell

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Frank Welker (Itsy/Langston), Charlotte Rae (Adrienne Facts), Matt Frewer (Exterminator), Francesca Marie Smith (Leslie), Jonathan Taylor Thomas (George)

SYNOPSIS: High-spirited spider Itsy comes into repeated conflict with grande dame Adrienne Facts.

COMMENTARY: Despite the best of intentions, this project did not come together as well as it could have in other hands, instead tending toward the scatology and slapstick that dominated other projects, and failed to accomplish any sort of positive aims it might have had.

• J •

JABBERJAW (1976–1978)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATORS: Joe Ruby, Ken Spears

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: Iwao Takamoto, Alex Lovy

DIRECTOR: Charles Nichols

WRITERS: Don Jurwich, Michael O'Connor, Paul Sommer, Kay Wright, Ray Parker, George Atkins, Haskell Barkin, John Bates, Larz Bourne, Tom Dagenais, Robert Fisher

VOICE ACTORS: Frank Welker (Jabberjaw), Barry Gordon (Clamhead), Julie McWhirter (Bubbles), Pat Parris (Shelley), Tommy Cook (Biff)

SYNOPSIS: In the underwater community of Aquaworld, Jabberjaw, a dim-witted shark, serves as the drummer for the otherwise all-human rock band the Neptunes.

COMMENTARY: Another of Hanna-Barbera's now-patented retreads of its own concepts and themes, with the underwater setting not put to the kind of use it could have been. In the case of Welker's portrayal of the title character, there was an additional level of borrowing because his voice and mannerisms were patterned on those of Jerome "Curly" Howard of Three Stooges fame, effective and funny as it was. As with other lead characters in Hanna-Barbera shows of this time, one wonders what the results would have been had the lead character been used in a more innovative and skilled context.

JACKIE CHAN ADVENTURES (2000–2003)

STUDIOS: Adelaide, JC Group, Blue Train, Columbia

DISTRIBUTOR: WB

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Jackie Chan, Willie Chan, Brian Gersh, Solon So, Jeff Kline, Duane Capizzi

PRODUCERS: Fred Squillace, Therese Trujillo

DIRECTOR: Elaine Owcalz

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: James Sie (Jackie Chan/Shendu/Chow), Stacie Chan (Jade Chan), Noah Nelson (Tohru), Sab Shimono (Uncle Chan), Amy Hill (Mama Tohru), Clancy Brown (Captain Augustus Black/Ratso), Julian Sands (Valmont, 2000–2001), Greg Ellis (Valmont, 2001), Adam Baldwin (Finn), Jim Cummings (Hak Foo, 2001–2003)

SYNOPSIS: The animated adventures of archeologist/martial arts expert Jackie Chan.

COMMENTARY: Hong Kong native Jackie Chan (né Chan Kon Sang) has been a major film star, beginning in Asia and later elsewhere, since the late

1970s. Noted for his energetic performances that frequently exhibit his expert skill with martial arts, Chan was slow to catch on as a performer in English-speaking countries. In the 1990s, he began to achieve popularity there equal to his Asian following, thanks to such hits as *Rumble in the Bronx*, *Shanghai Noon*, and the *Rush Hour* series. By then, he had gained a measure of control over his career, frequently producing and directing the films in which he starred.

By the 2000s, Chan's popularity in America was such that he was able to headline this self-named project. He produced the series and appeared in live-action inserts at the end, where he answered questions posed to him by viewers, but did not perform his fictional equivalent's voice. Chan's fictional doppelgänger was an archeologist who was in pursuit of artifacts with magical powers, hoping to prevent them from falling into the hands of the evil Valmont and his colleagues in the nefarious Black Hand. The live-action inserts, where Chan displayed his knowledge of Chinese history, culture, and philosophy, were a more notable feature than the actual animated adventures, which were standard issue by this time.

THE JACKSON FIVE (1971–1973)

STUDIOS: Rankin/Bass, Halas-Batchelor, Motown

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

PRODUCERS: Arthur Rankin Jr., Jules Bass

DIRECTOR: Robert Balser

WRITERS: Romeo Muller, William Kennan, Hal Hackaday, Lou Silverstone, Sue Milbern

VOICE ACTORS: Jackie Jackson, Tito Jackson, Jermaine Jackson, Marlon Jackson, and Michael Jackson (Themselves); Paul Frees, Edmund Silvers, Joe Cooper, Michael Martinez, and Greg Grandy (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: The animated adventures of the popular rhythm-and-blues singing group the Jackson Five.

COMMENTARY: The Jackson boys hailed from Gary, Indiana, where they were among the eight children raised by parents Joe and Katherine (the others being sisters Rebbie, La Toya, and Janet, who all had success as singers on their own after their brothers led the way). Beginning in the mid-1960s, Jackie (né Sigmund), Tito (né Toriano), Jermaine, Marlon, and Michael began performing professionally around Gary after being tutored by Joe and made their first recordings for the Steeltown label. Their local renown eventually caught the ear of Motown Records, the most dominant rhythm-and-blues label of the time, whose founder, Berry Gordy Jr., took a personal interest in the boys by collaborating in the writing and producing of their earliest records. This paid off during 1970, when the group had four consecutive number-1 hits on the *Billboard* pop and R&B charts ("I Want You Back," "ABC," "The Love You Save," and "I'll Be There"), with others following that were nearly as successful. At the same time, Michael launched a career as a solo artist, which would ultimately lead to popularity that would dwarf the group's and endure until his untimely death in 2009. The group continued to record for Motown until 1975, when they left following a contract dispute and began recording (as the



Jackie, Tito, Jermaine, Marlon, and Michael hit the TV screen. ABC/Photofest © ABC

Jacksons because Motown owned the Jackson 5 name) for Columbia Records' Epic subsidiary, having success under this name into the mid-1980s.

This animated project was thin on plot because it served mainly as a marketing device for the group and its music, and because the boys played themselves, they didn't have much of a chance to be real actors in the format. A typical episode focused on the Jacksons trying to keep their favorite park from being destroyed. The series has not been seen much since it ended, though it was briefly revived in syndication in the mid-1980s, after Michael's enormous success with the best-selling *Thriller* album in 1983, and again briefly in 1996, on the music-oriented cable channel VH-1.

JACOB TWO TWO (2003–2006)

STUDIOS: Nelvana, 9 Story

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC (United States; 2006)

CREATOR: Mordecai Richler

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Doug Murphy, Scott Dyer, Peter Moss

PRODUCERS: Patricia Burns, Jocelyn Hamilton, Wendy Errington

DIRECTORS: Lan Lamon, Helene Lebeau, Eric Flaherty, Shawn Seles, Gary Hurst

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Billy Rosenberg (Jacob), Harvey Atkin (Morty), Janet Laine Green (Florence), Robert Tinkler (Daniel), Jocelyn Barth (Marfa), Marc McMulkin

(Noah), Kaitlin Howell (Emma), Kristopher Clark (Buford Orville Gaylord Pugh), James Rankin (X. Barnaby Dinglebat), Julie Lemieux (Renee Ratelle), Dwayne Hill (Principal Greedyguts), Howard Jerome (Leo Louse), Fiona Reid (Ms. Sour Pickle), Bret “The Hit Man” Hart (Gary, a.k.a. the Hooded Fang)

SYNOPSIS: Jacob Two Two, an honest, truth-telling young boy, frequently has to repeat everything he says to be heard in the midst of difficult circumstances.

COMMENTARY: Though Mordecai Richler was a prolific writer of ribald satiric novels and pointed essays for adults, several generations of Canadian children know him best as the chronicler of the adventures of the necessarily repetitive Jacob, which are among the best works ever written for children in Canada. The initial novel, *Jacob Two Two Meets the Hooded Fang*, was published in 1975; it was later followed by *Jacob Two Two and the Dinosaur* (1987) and *Jacob Two Two’s First Spy Case* (1995). After Richler’s death in 2001, Cary Fagan—a writer who, like Richler, is capable of writing for both children and adults—published another volume, *Jacob Two Two on the High Seas* in 2009.

This animated project, like many of Nelvana’s literary adaptations, was scrupulously faithful to the plotting and characterization of the books, which were more realistic than average because Richler used his own family as the model for that of the title character and named him after one of his sons. The main difference was the visual style, which departed from the limited illustrations of the books toward presenting the setting and characters in a way more reminiscent of woodcut tableaus than conventional television animation presentations. This helped to enliven the series on the inevitable occasions when the plotting became tedious and repetitive. One wonders what the notoriously caustic Richler might have made of this animated adaptation of his fictional universe, but it served its purposes very well.

The series initially aired on Canada’s YTV network before being imported to the United States.

JAKE AND THE NEVER LAND PIRATES (2011–PRESENT)

STUDIO/DISTRIBUTOR: Disney

CREATORS: James M. Barrie (characters and setting), Roberts Gannaway (series format)

EXECUTIVE Producer: Rob LaDuca

PRODUCER: Mark Seidenberg

DIRECTOR: Howy Parkins

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Colin Ford (Jake, early episodes), Cameron Boyce (Jake, later episodes), Sean Fox (Jake, later episodes), Riley Stewart (Jake, later episodes), Madison Pettis (Izzy, early episodes), Megan Richie (Izzy, later episodes), Jonathan Heit (Cubby, early episodes), Jadon Sand (Cubby, later episodes), David Arquette (Skully, speaking voice), Loren Hoskins (Skully, singing voice/Sharky, singing voice/Sandy), Corey Burton (Captain Hook), Jeff Bennett (Mr. Smee/Sharky, speaking voice/Bones, speaking voice), Kevin Hendrickson (Bones, singing voice), Ariel Winter (Marina), Dee Bradley Baker (Tick Tock/Others), Russi Taylor (Never Bird), Tori Spelling (Pirate Princess Patricia),

Lisa Loeb (Winger), Adam West (Wise Old Parrot), Sharon Osbourne (Mama Hook), Jane Kaczmarek (Red Jessica), Josh Duhamel (Captain Flynn), Adam Wylie (Peter Pan), Allisyn Arm (Stormy), Carol Kane (Sea Witch), Tiffani Thiessen (Misty the Wonderful Witch), Jerry O'Connell (Pip the Pirate Genie), Rhys Darby (Percy), Teri Hatcher (Beatrice Le Beak), Leigh Allyn Baker (Queen Coralie), Jack McBrayer (Wander the Pirate Mummy), Bill Farmer (Ghostly Bob/Jones Burtonburger), Maia Mitchell (Wendy Darling), Elliot Reeve (John Darling), Colby Mulgrew (Michael Darling), Estelle Harris (Peg Leg Peg), David Tennant (Dread), Malcolm McDowell (Lord Fathom), Mark Hamill (Shiver Jack), Tony Hale (Dr. Undergear), Christian Slater (Grim Buccaneer), Vincent Tong (Raul Burtonburger), Tara Strong (Lucia Burtonburger), Rebecca Shoichet (Betty Burtonburger), Enid Raye Adams (Kate Burtonburger), Brian Doe (Jamie Burtonburger)

SYNOPSIS: Junior pirates Jake, Izzy, and Cubby get into good-natured trouble in the fantastic realm of Never Land.

COMMENTARY: While the fictional Never Land universe of James M. Barrie (as established in the play *Peter Pan*) has been adapted for stage and screen many times since first being introduced in 1901, Disney has a particular proprietary claim on it, given that it produced a near-definitive animated adaptation in 1953. That film served as the template for this series, although the atmosphere was dumbed down somewhat given that it was aimed at preschool-aged children. Still, it managed to do its entertainment/educational duties well, with the aid of some veteran adult actors who played their parts to obvious theatrical extremes.

***JAKERS! THE ADVENTURES OF PIGGLEY WINKS* (2003)**

STUDIOS: Mike Young, Entara

DISTRIBUTOR: PBS (United States)

CREATOR: Mike Young

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Mike Young, Louisa Stretton, Stephanie Gurgeon, Bill Schultz

PRODUCERS: Liz Young, Cary Silver, John Over

DIRECTORS: Liz Young, John Over

WRITERS INCLUDED: Sindy McKay, Pamela Hickey, Dennys McCoy

VOICE ACTORS: Mel Brooks (Wiley), Paedar Lamb (Grandpa), Melissa Disney (Meg), Maile Flanagan (Piggley Winks), Tara Strong (Dannan/Molly), Russi Taylor (Ferny/Mrs. Winkle), Nika Futterman (Sean/Seamus), Charlie Adler (Da Winks/Mr. Hornsby), Fernando Escandon (Don Toro)

SYNOPSIS: The elderly Irish pig Piggley Winks regales his American great-granddaughter Meg with tales of his youth on the Raloo Farm.

COMMENTARY: A program with a considerable amount of depth and heart to it compared to other programs with an educational mandate. It sought and gained authenticity by referencing photographs of rural Irish and Welsh areas for the background art, by casting Irish-accented actor Lamb as the elderly Piggley, and by using actual Irish slang terms (such as the first word of the series title) in the dialogue. The wild-card element came with the casting of Brooks as Wiley because he maintained his normal Jewish American persona

amid all the Irishness. (He also had the advantage of having a particular unit within the studio craft his dialogue.) Soccer player Cobi Jones appeared in live-action segments at the end of the installments to underline the educational message behind each episode.

JAMES BOND JR. (1991)

STUDIOS: Mac B, Murikami-Wolf-Swenson, Claster, MGM, United Artists

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

CREATOR: Ian Fleming

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Fred Wolf

PRODUCERS: Walt Kubiak, Bill Hutten, Tony Love

DIRECTORS: Bill Hutten, Tony Love

WRITERS INCLUDED: Jack Mendelsohn, Mark Jones, Brian Halek, Jeffrey Scott

VOICE ACTORS: Jeff Bennett, Corey Burton, Julian Holloway, Mona Marshall, Brian Mitchell, Jan Rabson, Susan Silo, Simon Templeton, Aride Talent, Ed-die Barth, Cheryl Bernstein, Susan Blu, Susan Boyd, Hamilton Camp, Jennifer Darling, Mari Devon, Jane Downs, Paul Eiding, Jeannie Elias, Patrick Fraley, Linda Gary, Ellen Gerstell, Ed Gilbert, Rebecca Gilchrest, Michael Gough, Gaille Heidenmann, Vicki Juditz, Matt Miller, Pat Musick, Alan Oppenheimer, Samantha Paris, Tony Pope, Robert Ridgely, Maggie Roswell, Kath Soucie, B. J. Ward, and Jill Wayne (Specific roles unknown)

SYNOPSIS: James Bond Jr., the teenaged nephew of the famed secret agent, fights against the villainous cartel SCUM (Saboteurs and Criminals United in Mayhem) while attending Warfield Academy.

COMMENTARY: Fleming, a former intelligence operative for Britain's Royal Navy, created the character of James Bond in 1953 in the novel *Casino Royale*, turning out nearly a dozen novels in the series before his death in 1964. However, Bond gained greater fame through a series of films adapted from the novels (and, later, original plots), beginning with 1962's *Dr. No* and continuing through to today. This was despite the corporate decline of his original home studio, United Artists (later productions were released by MGM and then Columbia, which inherited distribution rights), and regular changes in the person of the actor playing Bond himself. Famed for its top-notch plotting and villainy, elaborate gadgetry, and attractive female characters, the Bond series cast a wide cultural shadow, inspiring both imitations and parodies that furthered its cultural influence. That influence has been felt on a regular basis in television animation in a wide range of programs spanning decades, from *Cool McCool* (q.v.) to *Phineas and Ferb* (q.v.).

Though Bond had a strong fan base among children, he was considered too much of an adult figure to be successfully translated to television animation in his prime. It was not until the 1990s, therefore, when the features (and clichés) of the series had been firmly and familiarly entrenched, that an attempt to make an animated version of the Bond canon came into being. Unfortunately, the series tended to focus on the clichés, such as the damsel-in-distress portrayals of the women and the deranged lunatic villains, instead of on the well-staged action sequences and verbal exchanges that had always been the great strength of the movies. Neither a flop nor a

hit, it fulfilled its duties as a tie-in to a Hasbro toy line as expected before disappearing into the ether.

***JANE AND THE DRAGON* (2005–2006)**

STUDIOS: Nelvana, WETA

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC (United States; 2006)

CREATOR: Martin Baynton

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Martin Baynton, Scott Dyer, Michael McNeil, Doug Murphy, Richard Taylor, Jan Haynes, Pamela Lehn, Patricia Burns, Eric Flaherty, Jocelyn Hamilton, Andrew Smith

DIRECTORS: Mike Fallows, Theo Baynton

WRITERS: Martin Baynton, Steven Sullivan, Michael Stokes, Terri Baynton, Hugh Duffy, Ross Hastings, Jeff Schechter, Richard Elliott, Carolyn Hay, Simon Racioppa

VOICE ACTORS: Taija Isen (Jane), Adrian Truss (Dragon), Mark Rendal (Jester), Alex House (Smithy), Sunday Muse (Pepper), Will Bowes (Rake), Noah Reid (Gunther), Clive Walton (Magnus), Juan Chioran (King Caradoc), Cameron Ansell (Prince Cuthbert), Isabel De Carteret (Princess Lavinia), Aron Tager (Sir Theodore), Ben Campbell (Sir Ivan)

SYNOPSIS: In the eighth century, in the English kingdom of Kippurnia, 13-year-old lady-in-waiting Jane befriends a dragon, who becomes her companion and protector.

COMMENTARY: A coproduction of Canadian and New Zealand animation houses, based on Baynton's popular book series, that first aired jointly on Canada's YTV network and the Australian Broadcasting Corporation before coming to America. The use of computer animation and motion capture for the realistic faces of the characters, plus the plot device of making Jane an apprentice knight, made this series stand out from other projects of this type, which tended to reinforce the lazy sexism of the historical period rather than challenge it.

***JAYCE AND THE WHEELED WARRIORS* (1985)**

STUDIOS: DIC, WWP, ICC Canada-France TV, SFM

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Andy Heyward, Jean Chalopin, Tetsuo Katayama

PRODUCERS: Denys Heroux, John Kemeny

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS INCLUDED: Jim Carlson, Haskell Barkin

VOICE ACTORS: Darin Baker (Jayce), Dan Hennessey (Audric/Monster Mind #1/Sawtrooper/Ko Kruiser), Valerie Politis (Flora), Len Carlson (Herc Stormsailer/Monster Mind #2/Terror Tank), Charles Joliffe (Gillian), Luba Goy (Oon), Giulio Kukurugya (Sawboss), John Stocker (Monster Mind #3/Gun Grinner)

SYNOPSIS: On an agrarian planet in space, heroic young man Jayce and his scientist father Audric fight against the ruthless villain Sawboss.

COMMENTARY: A 65-episode serial that was deeply in debt to the *Star Wars* saga but not so much as to openly violate the copyright. The second half of the

title should give away the fact that this was also a fairly blatant act of toy merchandising. Both things, sadly, went hand in glove during the 1980s far too often.

JAY JAY THE JET PLANE (1998–2001)

STUDIOS: Porchlight, Modern Cartoons

DISTRIBUTORS: TLC (1998–2001), PBS (2001–)

CREATORS: David Michel, Deborah Michel

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: David Michel, Bruce Johnson, William Bauman, Chris Walker

PRODUCERS: Andrea Tompkins, Douglas Rusk

DIRECTOR: Hugh Martin

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Mary Kay Bergman (Jay Jay); Chuck Morgan and Gina Ribisi (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: Jay Jay, an anthropomorphic young plane, engages in adventures with his similarly designed friends, as well as interacting with live-action air-traffic-controller Brenda Blue (Eve Whittle).

COMMENTARY: Originating as a series of home videocassettes, this educationally minded program was animated through the Compaq Alpha Powered Rendering computer animation system. The TLC episodes were newly produced episodes, whereas the PBS installments were reruns.

JEANNIE (1973–1975)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATOR: Sidney Sheldon

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCER: Iwao Takamoto

DIRECTOR: Charles Nichols

WRITERS: Marion Hargrove, Austin Kalisch, Irma Kalisch, Sid Morse, Bill Canings, Dave Ketchum, Bruce Shelley, Leonard Stadd, Arlene Stadd, Frank Waldman, Phyllis White, Robert White

VOICE ACTORS: Julie McWhirter (Jeannie), Joe Besser (Babu), Mark Hamill (Corky Anders), Bob Hastings (Henry Glopp), Arlene Golonka (Debbie), Michael Bell (Mark), Janet Waldo (Mrs. Anders)

SYNOPSIS: Jeannie, a teenaged genie, and her companion Babu are rescued from imprisonment by teenager Corky Anders; they become his friends and protectors. Complications ensue.

COMMENTARY: This series had its roots in the live-action fantasy sitcom *I Dream of Jeannie* (NBC, 1965–1970), created by Sheldon and produced by Columbia's Screen Gems subsidiary, which starred Barbara Eden as the title genie. Larry Hagman played Captain (later Major) Tony Nelson, the soldier/astronaut who released her from imprisonment, making him her "master." Whereas the original series thrived on adult-oriented innuendo and complications, this version focused squarely on the children and teenagers who

were the default audience for Saturday morning. Besser's portrayal of the bumbling Babu easily stole the show in a series of weak reimaginings of the original concept, but the show's high popularity in its original run dispelled any belief that the audience noticed or cared about the show's weaknesses.

JEM (A.K.A. *JEM AND THE HOLOGRAMS*; 1985)

STUDIOS: Sunbow, Wildstar, Wildfire, Claster

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

PRODUCERS: Joe Bacal, Tom Griffin, Margaret Loesch, Gwen Wetzler, Marja Dahl, Don Thompson, Will Meugniot, Roger Slifer

DIRECTOR: Jim Graziano

WRITERS INCLUDED: Roger Slifer, Christy Mark

VOICE ACTORS: Britta Phillips (Jerrica Benton/Jem); Ellen Bernfield (Pizzazz); Charlie Adler, Patricia Albrecht, Tammy Amerson, Marlene Aragon, Alison Argo, Bobby Block, Catharina Blore, Susan Blu, Anne Bryant, Angela Capelli, Kim Carlson, T. K. Carter, Cathy Cavadini, Linda Dangeil, Louise Dorsey, Walker Edmiston, Diva Grey, Denise Goyette, Lauri Groves, Michael Horton, Ford Kinder, Jeff Kinder, Ullanda McCullough, Cindy McGee, Cathie Marcuccio, Samantha Newark, Noelle North, Neil Ross, Jack Roth, Michael Sheehan, Terri Textor, Florence Warner, and Valerie Wilson (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: Music business executive/orphanage patroness Jerrica Benton leads a double life as the superpowered rock star Jem, leader of the Holograms.

COMMENTARY: Given that animated series focusing on rock-and-roll singers prior to this time had lacked substance, it was a surprise to see that this series was such a potent blend of aspirations come true and, in some cases, dashed. As it was a product of the MTV era, it was not a surprise to see videos of songs regularly performed by the fictional artists (complete with song title and even record label credits!). But it also, unlike other similar series, did not ignore the negative aspects of being in the music business. The villains here were not of the usual breed but unethical fellow musicians, business managers, record company executives, lawyers, betraying would-be friends, and hangers-on out for themselves, and the problems faced were not the kind that could easily be solved in one episode. As a consequence, this series could be said to be one of the few television animation programs of the 1980s that dared to take a realistic approach to its subject matter rather than painting it over with excess or escapism and, therefore, one of the more exceptional and well-produced shows of its decade.

A 2015 live-action feature film adaptation, however, lacked this substance and ended up being both a critical and commercial failure.

THE JETSONS

The Jetsons (1962–1963)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

DIRECTORS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera, Charles Nichols

WRITERS: Michael Maltese, Warren Foster, Harvey Bullock, Larry Marks, Tony Benedict

VOICE ACTORS: George O'Hanlon (George Jetson), Penny Singleton (Jane Jetson), Mel Blanc (Mr. Cosmo Spacely), Daws Butler (Elroy Jetson), Janet Waldo (Judy Jetson), John Stephenson (Cogswell), Don Messick (Astro), Jean Vander Pyl (Rosie)

***The Jetsons* (1985–1987)**

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

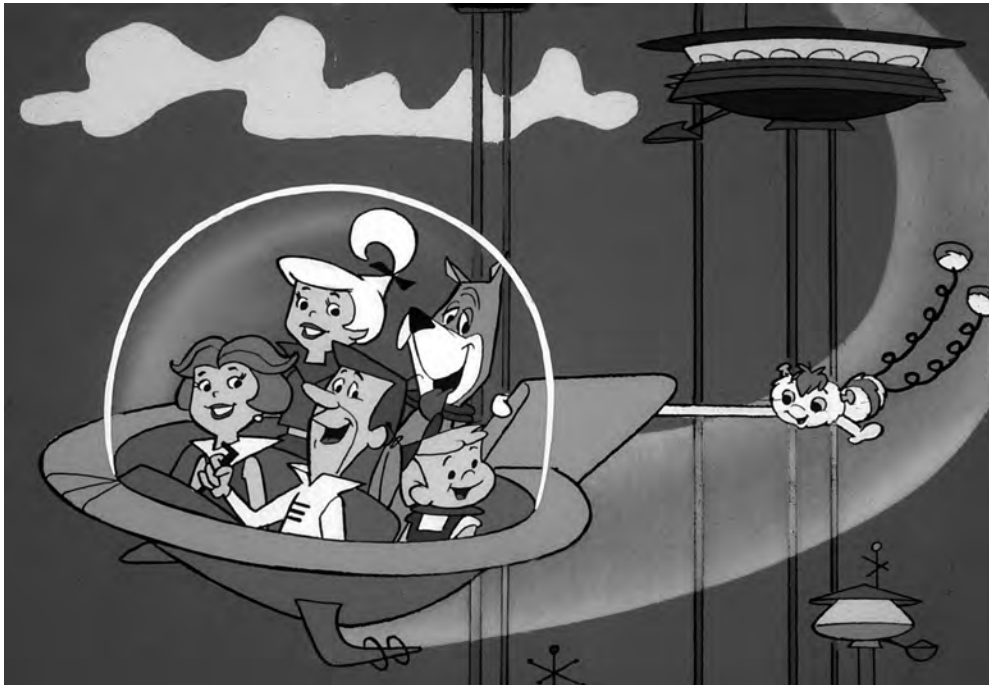
PRODUCERS: Bob Hathcock, Jeff Hall, Alex Lovy

DIRECTORS: Ray Patterson, Art Davis, Oscar Dufau, Carl Urbano, Rudy Zamora, Alan Zaslove, Don Patterson, Don Lusk, Bob Goe, Rick Leon, Irv Spence

WRITERS INCLUDED: Arthur Alsberg, Tony Benedict, Don Nelson, Art Scott

VOICE ACTORS: George O'Hanlon (George Jetson), Penny Singleton (Jane Jetson), Mel Blanc (Mr. Cosmo Spacely), Daws Butler (Elroy Jetson), Janet Waldo (Judy Jetson), John Stephenson (Cogswell), Don Messick (Astro), Jean Vander Pyl (Rosie), Frank Welker (Orbitty)

SYNOPSIS: George Jetson and his family deal with the humorous unpredictability of life in the 21st century.



The family of the future—whenever it comes. ABC/Photofest © ABC

COMMENTARY: A series that, in both of its incarnations, remains funny and engaging to audiences of multiple generations. Although some of the humorous situations and characterizations, particularly in the network version, have not aged well, the eternal appeal of a positive-thinking-oriented future time has. Likewise, the program so precisely anticipated many of the innovations in technology created by such companies as Microsoft, Apple, Amazon, and Google in the actual 21st century that it seems, in some ways, prophetic. And let's not forget that engaging theme music, coupled with an equally engaging main title sequence, which did its job of enticing people to stay tuned perfectly—at least later on. The network version failed to catch on in its initial prime-time run but remained popular in rerun revivals, ultimately leading to the syndicated version, which combined the older episodes with newly produced ones. Rounding things out were some excellent vocal performances, particularly O'Hanlon as the perennially world-weary George and Blanc as the diminutive, tyrannical boss man Spacely, who made the expression "You're fired!" his own long before Donald Trump came around.

Later spin-offs included TV movies, including the self-explanatory *The Jetsons Meet the Flintstones* in 1987, before the futuristic family was given the ultimate treatment of a feature-length film project in 1990. However, the film, which had a weak story line in spite of impressive animated effects, faltered at the box office. By the time the film was released, O'Hanlon (1990), Blanc (1989), and Butler (1988) had died. However, that did not stop Warner from later reviving the characters for a made-for-video release that teamed them with the stars of the WWE (see *Hulk Hogan's Rock 'n' Wrestling!*) to typically bad effect.

JIM AND JUDY IN TELELAND (A.K.A. BOB AND BETTY IN ADVENTURELAND; 1949–1950)

STUDIOS: Film Flash, Television Screen

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated (1953)

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Merrill Johns (Jim), Honey McKenzie (Judy)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: A 52-episode, 5-minute series reduced to obscurity despite its pioneering role in bringing animation to television. The young protagonists literally walked into their television screen and then proceeded to have elaborate adventures within. Little more is known about it, save for the fact that it was regularly featured as a component of local television children's programs during the 1950s.

JIMMY NEUTRON, BOY GENIUS (2002–2007)

See *The Adventures of Jimmy Neutron, Boy Genius* (2002–2007).

JIMMY TWO-SHOES (2009–2012)

STUDIOS: Breakthrough, Jetix, Teletoon, Mercury Filmworks

DISTRIBUTOR: Disney (United States)

CREATORS: Edward Kay, Sean Scott

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Edward Kay, Sean Scott, John Lambur, Ira Levy, Peter Williamson

PRODUCER: Mark Evastaff

DIRECTORS: Kyle Marshall, Sean Scott

WRITERS: Mark Steinberg, Deb Jarvis, Phil Lafrance, Jordan Voth, Max Reid, Adam Reid, Jenn Engels, Helder Mendonca, Steve Whitehouse, John May, Alex Galatis, Jamie LeClaire, Kenn Scott, Simon Paquette, Nick Cross, Robert Pincombe, Shelley Hoffmann, Mike Smukavick, Edward Kay, Paul Watling, Rex Hackelberg, John Slama, Hugh Duffy, Cristin Simms, Alan Resnick, Craig Martin, Blayne Burside, Ted Collyer, Scott Albert, Todd Brian, Scott Oh, Steve Schnier, Steve Stefanelli, Jose Pou, Jeff Barker, Chris Roy, Jay Shore, Terry Saltsman, Scott Oleskowicz, Mark Ackland, Jeff Barker, Jamie Mason, Riccardo Durante, Steve Daye, Lyndon Ruddy, Brian Coughlan, John Flagg, Jeff Amey, Dermot Walshe, Miles Smith, Josh Gal, Chris Labonte, Joe Giampapa, Meghan Read

VOICE ACTORS: Cory Doran (Jimmy Two-Shoes/Big Lava Worm), Brian Froud (Beezy J. Heinous), Tabitha St. Germain (Heloise/Jasmeen), Seán Cullen (Lucius Heinous VII/Lucius Heinous VI/Jacomo/Schwartzentiger), Dwayne Hill (Sammy Garvin/Dr. Ludwig Von Scientist/Dorkus/General Molotov/Reggie Weavil/Mrs. Gherkin), Valerie Buhagiar (Jez/General Molotov's Wife), Sunday Muse (Saffi), Christian Potenza (Peep, a.k.a. Jimmy Two Squirrels), Ron Pardo (Rodeo Clowns)

SYNOPSIS: The tightly controlled atmosphere of the depressing company town Miseryville is repeatedly disrupted by the antics of the perennially cheerful Jimmy Two-Shoes, much to the displeasure of its iron-fisted leader, Lucius Heinous VII.

COMMENTARY: If it were a crime for Canadian animators to flagrantly imitate the humorous concepts and ideas of their American counterparts, the folks who brought this show into the world ought to have been arrested. The show's repeated attempts at emulating the superior approaches of such series as *The Grim Adventures of Billy and Mandy* (see *Grim and Evil*/*Evil Con Carne*/*The Grim Adventures of Billy and Mandy*), an obvious template to the material, were stiff and forced, a reflection of the writing staff's inability to do its job at times. The show's central redeeming figure was (ironically) the character of Heloise, a bad-girl/mad-scientist type technically in the employ of the bad characters but sympathetic to the good ones (reflected in her crush on the title character) and thus having much more conflicted loyalties than usual for a television animation character. St. Germain gave her a very worthy vocal performance, but Heloise deserved her own program, not to be messed up in a derivative farce like this one.

JOHNNY BRAVO (1997–2004)

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera (1997–2001), Cartoon Network (2001–2004)

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATOR: Van Partible

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Sherry Gunther, Larry Huber, Van Partible, Buzz Potamkin

PRODUCERS: Kara Vallow, Cosmo Anzilotti, Gary Hartle, Jed Spingarn

DIRECTORS: Van Partible, Rumen Petkov, Butch Hartman, John McIntyre, Russell Calabrese, Kirk Tingblad, Nathan Chew, Dave Schwartz, Robert Alvarez, James Walker, David Brain, Ken Petrilak

WRITERS: Van Partible, Travis Cowsill, Butch Hartman, Barrington Bunce, Seth MacFarlane, Tom Mazzocco, Zac Moncrief, Steve Marmel, Michael Ryan, Robert Ramirez, Jed Spingarn, Lynell Forestall, Drew Graybeal, Michael Diedrich, Wendell Morris, Gene Grillo, Mary Hanley, Doug Compton, Neal Sternecky, Michelle Bryan, John Crane, Russell Calabrese, Dave Schwartz, Mark Zoeller, Charles Visser, Tammy K. List, Alex Almagauer, Vaughn Tada, Troy Adomitis, Paul Kozlowsky, Gary Hartle, Brian Kindregan, Dan Haskett, Craig Bartlett, Craig Lewis, Jim Schumann, Amy Keating Rogers, Charlie Bean, Octavio Rodriguez, Adam Pava, S. P. Krause, Shayne Armstrong

VOICE ACTORS: Jeff Bennett (Johnny Bravo), Mae Whitman (Suzy), Brenda Vaccaro (Bunny Bravo), Micky Dolenz (Carl, early episodes), Tom Kenny (Carl, later episodes), Larry Drake (Pops), Brian Hama (Master Tochi), Donny Osmond (Himself), Cody Dorkin (Jungle Boy)

SYNOPSIS: Handsome but bumbling Johnny Bravo tries his best to attract the attentions of women, but he is rejected, beaten up, or both most of the time for his efforts.

COMMENTARY: A cleverly produced series firmly structured in the mode of the classic Hanna-Barbera cartoons of the 1950s and 1960s (some of whose characters appeared in guest-starring roles or cameos). At least during its earliest episodes, it was just as funny as the best of those shows, with very sharp comedic timing compared to some of its contemporaries. The borrowing continued from other sources: Johnny's mannerisms and voice owed much to those of Elvis Presley, while his name was taken from a fictional rock-and-roll performer featured in an episode of *The Brady Bunch*. However, the program had a singular artistic approach that it maintained throughout its run, even when it was clear the presentation style began faltering in later years.

Several years after production on the series ended, a 2009 special was produced exclusively for the Indian subcontinent in the Hindu language by Mumbai's Famous Animation House but with creator Partible's involvement. This special was later dubbed into English and included as an extra feature on a DVD release.

***JOHNNY CYPHER IN THE DIMENSION ZERO* (1967)**

STUDIOS: Joe Oriolo, Seven Arts

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

PRODUCER: Joe Oriolo

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Paul Hecht (Johnny Cypher), Corrine Orr (Zina), Gene Allen (Rohm/Others)

SYNOPSIS: Scientist Johnny Cypher uses his abilities to confront intergalactic villains of all kinds.

COMMENTARY: A six-minute science-fiction cliff-hanger serial noted chiefly for its ultrarealistic character designs. The *Dimension Zero* of the title referred

to Cypher's ability to use his skills to defy the laws and barriers of time and space, not to an actual place.

JOHNNY TEST (2005–2014)

STUDIOS: Warner Brothers (first season), Coliseum, Cookie Jar, DHX Media

DISTRIBUTORS: WB (United States, 2005–2006), CW (United States, 2006–2008), Cartoon Network (United States, 2009–2014)

CREATOR: Scott Fellows

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Loris Kramer Lunsford, Sander Schwartz, Lesley Taylor, Scott Fellows, Michael Hirsh, Pamela Slayvin, Topper Taylor, John Vandervelde

PRODUCERS: Scott Fellows, Chris Savino, Pamela Slayvin, Jennifer Picherack, Dave Beatty, Audrey Velichka

DIRECTORS: Chris Savino, Joseph Sherman, Larry Jacobs, Paul Riley, John Lei

WRITERS: Scott Fellows, Chris Savino, Joe Horne, Mike Kazaleh, Brian Larsen, Cynthia True, Lazar Saric, Jun Falkenstein, Eddie Guzelian, John Drevlany, Scott Shawl, Madellaine Paxson, Joey Banazkiewicz, Karl Toerge, Pat Ventura, Milton Knight, Michael Priester, Nora Johnson, Gene Grillo, Mark Fellows, Chris Brown, Adam Beechen, Julian Harris, Jeff Barker, Dave Pemberton, John Lei, Dmitri Kostic, Scott Gray, Derek Jessume, Jeff Knot, Naeiem Kavari, Frank Ramirez, Dan Nosella, John Williamson, Brian Cahill, Ted Bastien, Kevin Hopps, Kevin Currie, Louie Escaragia, Kervin Faria, Ron Holsey, Keith Wagner, Sajit Matharu, Spencer Walker, Peter Johansen, Lyndon Ruddy, Blair Kitchen, Dave Thomas, Brad Birch, Rick Groel, Rafael Alvarez, Mark Drop, Rod Amador, Michael MacAdam, Dale Schott, Steve Whitehouse, Gerry Fournier, Greg Hill, Bobby Gaylor, Martin Olson, Mike Yank, Josh Hamilton, Denise Downer, John Flag, Stephen Sustarsic, Merriwether Williams, Paul Brown, Jenny Keene, Tom Nesbitt, Robin Budd, Phil Ivanusic, Dave Beatty, Chad Hicks, Nathan Knechtel, Paul Schibli, Nick Confalone, Katie Shanahan, Marcy Brown, Dennis Haley, Dan Serafin, Sean Jara, Ethan Banville, Jun Naysayo, Joanne Rice, Paul Riley, Neal Dusedau, Mo Sherwood, Doug Leiblich, Aaron Barnett, Steve Evangelatos, Derek Dressler

VOICE ACTORS: James Arnold Taylor (Johnny Test/Hank Anchorman/Mr. Mitens/Dark Vegan), Louis Chirlillo (Dukey, early episodes/Mr. Teacherman, early episodes/Brain Freezer, early episodes), Trevor Devall (Dukey, later episodes/Mr. Teacherman, later episodes), Maryke Hendrikse (Susan Test/Jillian Vegan), Brittney Wilson (Mary Test, early episodes/Sissy Blakely, early episodes/Missy), Ashleigh Ball (Mary Test, later episodes/Sissy Blakely, later episodes), Ian Corlett (Hugh Test), Kathleen Barr (Lila Test/Janet Nelson Jr.), Andrew Francis (Gil Nexdor), Bill Mondy (Mr. Black/Brain Freezer, later episodes), Scott McNeil (Mr. White/Mitchell "Bumper" Randalls/Zizrar), Lee Tockar (General/Eugene "Bling Bling Boy" Hamilton/Mr. Whacko), Richard Newman (Professor Slopsink)

SYNOPSIS: Eleven-year-old Johnny Test is among the regular guinea pigs for his scientific genius older twin sisters Susan and Mary, whose experimentations rarely go off without dramatically and comedically exaggerated problems ensuing in the process.

COMMENTARY: As the lead character of this show would say, “I didn’t see it coming” that this program would last as long as it did because its often-incompetent presentation involved (and wasted) talented people on both sides of the Canadian-U.S. border during its run. Despite the imaginative elements of the premise (which creator Fellows explored best in his own scripts for the show), the show suffered from poor execution (except in the earlier American-produced episodes, which had some spirit to them) that drained the idea of its vitality. The show’s enduring popularity, however, defied this entirely, showing that popular taste and creative quality can often be highly disparate concepts in the television animation industry of North America.

***JOJO’S CIRCUS* (2003)**

STUDIOS: Cartoon Cola, Cartoon Pizza, Cuppa Coffee, Disney

DISTRIBUTOR: Disney

CREATORS: Jim Jenkins, David Campbell, Lisa Jenkins, Eric Weiner

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Jim Jenkins, David Campbell, Adam Shaheen

PRODUCERS: Jack Spillum, Lalitha Pookasamy, Jeff Kindley, John Carapano, Morghan Foster

DIRECTORS: John Schnall, Tim Snyder

WRITERS INCLUDED: Suzanne Collins, Frederick Stroppel

VOICE ACTORS: Madeline Martin (Jojo), Rob Smith (Goliath), Austin Di Iulio (Skeebo), Cole Caplan (Tater), Jayne Eastwood (Mrs. Kersplatski), Tajia Isen (Trina Tightrope), Julie Lemieux (Dinky), Marnie McPhail (Peaches), David Sparrow (Mr. Tickle), Diana Perressini (Croaky)

SYNOPSIS: Six-year-old clown-in-training Jojo lives in Circus Town with her family and gets involved in adventures that teach her life skills.

COMMENTARY: A very spirited preschool educational series with a unique premise. The most obvious aspect of this came at the end of each segment, where Jojo and company would use the foundational structures of the classic big-top circus as a means for reiterating the educational messages each episode was designed to showcase.

***JOKEBOOK* (1982)**

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCER: Harry Love

CONTENT SUPERVISION: Matty Murphy

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Henry Corden, Bob Hastings, Joan Gerber, Joyce Jameson, Don Messick, Sidney Miller, Robert Allen Ogle, Ronnie Schell, Marilyn Scheffler, Hal Smith, John Stephenson, Janet Waldo, Lennie Weinrib, and Frank Welker (Specific roles unknown)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: A short-lived animated variety series, focusing on the presentation of a wide-ranging collection of short animated films from around the world, with Hanna-Barbera providing short blackout gags with a

recurring repertory company as linking material. Placed in an underperforming time slot, the show was canceled after only three episodes had aired.

JONNY QUEST/THE REAL ADVENTURES OF JONNY QUEST

Jonny Quest (1964–1965)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

DIRECTORS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera, Charles Nichols

WRITERS INCLUDED: Paul Sommer, Arthur Pierson

VOICE ACTORS: Tim Matthieson ([Tim Matheson] Jonny Quest), Mike Road (Roger "Race" Bannon), John Stephenson (Dr. Benton Quest, early episodes), Don Messick (Dr. Benton Quest, later episodes/Bandit), Danny Bravo (Hadji), Vic Perrin (Dr. Zin/Others), Cathy Lewis (Jezebel Jade)

Jonny Quest (1986)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCER: Berny Wolf

DIRECTORS: Ray Patterson, Oscar Dufau, Don Lusk, Rudy Zamora, Rick Leon, Don Patterson, Jay Sarbry

WRITERS INCLUDED: Mark Young

VOICE ACTORS: Scott Menville (Jonny Quest), Don Messick (Dr. Benton Quest/Bandit), Sonny Van Dusen (Race Bannon), Rob Paulsen (Hadji)

The Real Adventures of Jonny Quest (1996)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: TBS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Michael "Tony" Meagher, Mark Galvin, Rick Ostiguy, Mario Doucet

PRODUCERS: Carol Bonnefil, David Lipman, Doug Williams, Kate Roach, Kunio Shimamura, Carl Seibert, Cyndi Lyn Peltier, Cosimo Anzilotti, Larry Houston, Davis Doi, Francois Cardin, John Eng, Larry Houston, Raymond Colfax, Sherry Gunther

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS INCLUDED: Dean Caccarno, Michael Ryan, Glenn Leopold, Joseph Molinari, Matthew Malach, Nick DuBois, Peter Lawrence

VOICE ACTORS: J. D. Roth (Jonny Quest, early episodes), Quinton Flynn (Jonny Quest, later episodes), George Segal (Dr. Benton Quest, early episodes), John De Lancie (Dr. Benton Quest, later episodes), Michael Benyaer (Hadji, early episodes/Williams Messenger, later episodes), Rob Paulsen (Hadji, later episodes/Others), Frank Welker (Bandit), Robert Patrick (Race Bannon, early episodes), Robert Foxworth (Race Bannon, later episodes), Sonny Van Dusen (Race Bannon, later episodes, uncredited), Jesse Douglas (Jessie Bannon, early episodes), Jennifer Hale (Jessie Bannon, later episodes), Dee Bradley Baker (Williams Messenger, early episodes), David Ackroyd (Ezekiel Rage, early

episodes), Michael Bell (Ezekiel Rage, later episodes), Earl Boen (Dr. Forbes), Dean Jones (Dr. Katel), Jim Meskimen (Dr. Vedder), B. J. Ward (Iris)

SYNOPSIS: Young Jonny Quest has globetrotting adventures in the company of his scientist father, Dr. Benton Quest, and bodyguard/mentor Race Bannon, among others.



Jonny and company brought a new kind of thrill to television animation. Hanna-Barbera Productions/Photofest © Hanna-Barbera Productions

COMMENTARY: One of the earliest attempts to expand the creative vocabulary of television animation to include drama as well as comedy. While much of the cultural ambience of the original series, at least, could be interpreted as dated and even racist (in the depictions of the primarily Asian evildoers) to some 21st-century viewers, the program did succeed in making the cultural point it intended to make. However, it was some time before the message was fully accepted. It was, in addition, much better-animated than some of the company's other products before and after, with great care demonstrated in producing realistic character designs and special effects, in emulation of the thrill-packed film and literature narratives that clearly inspired it. However, as would become commonplace at Hanna-Barbera, the original impetus and appeal of the project was bled dry across the 1960s, as the program's stony-faced dramatic heroics were replayed across many more average Saturday-morning serials, from Hanna-Barbera itself and others.

The later revivals, first as part of *The Funtastic World of Hanna-Barbera* (q.v.) and then on its own again in 1996, essentially kept things as they were, at least on-screen (given the latter program's high actor turnaround and overproduction of episodes by separate units at the studio), with only token updates made to reflect contemporary politics, science, and technology.

JOSIE AND THE PUSSYCATS/JOSIE AND THE PUSSYCATS IN OUTER SPACE

***Josie and the Pussycats* (1970–1972)**

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATORS: John Goldwater, Richard Goldwater

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: Iwao Takamoto, Alex Lovy

DIRECTOR: Charles Nichols

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Janet Waldo (Josie); Jackie Joseph (Melody); Barbara Pariot (Valerie); Jerry Dexter (Alan M.); Casey Kasem (Alexander Cabot III); Sherry Alberoni (Alexandra Cabot); Don Messick (Sebastian); Cathy Douglas, Patricia Holloway, and Cherie Moore (Vocalists)

***Josie and the Pussycats in Outer Space* (1972–1974)**

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATORS: John Goldwater, Richard Goldwater

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: Iwao Takamoto, Alex Lovy

DIRECTOR: Charles Nichols

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Janet Waldo (Josie); Jackie Joseph (Melody); Barbara Pariot (Valerie); Jerry Dexter (Alan M.); Casey Kasem (Alexander Cabot III); Sherry

Alberoni (Alexandra Cabot); Don Messick (Sebastian/Bleep); Cathy Douglas, Patricia Holloway, and Cherie Moore (Vocalists)

SYNOPSIS: The female rock group Josie and the Pussycats embarks on a world tour that is not free of adventurous incidents.

COMMENTARY: The Josie character was created by Archie Comics in 1963, targeted toward young girls who wanted to use the beautiful title character as a means of modeling preproduced dress designs. The series itself was more in line with Filmation's *Archie* franchise (see *The Archie Show*), in that it was designed to promote recordings by the fictional group, although this time no hits resulted. The program was mired in repetitious, limited story lines, partly due to restrictive censorship but also because of a lack of imagination exhibited by the director and writers. Even when the group was inadvertently locked into a NASA capsule and blasted into space at the beginning of *Josie and the Pussycats in Outer Space*, little occurred that was novel. The program's major innovation was the involvement of African American lead character Valerie, done in a complementary, progressive fashion that called little attention to her race, which was clearly a watershed for further portraits of African American characters in television animation.

The characters later appeared in a live-action feature film from Universal Pictures in 2001, which departed radically from the animated program in content and ended up being a financial failure at the box office.

***JOT* (1965–1970)**

STUDIO: Southern Baptist Radio-Television Commission

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

CREATORS/PRODUCERS/WRITERS: Ruth Byers, Ted Perry

VOICE ACTORS: Unknown

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: Given that it was members of the Baptist faith who formed the greatest religious opposition to television animation between the 1970s and 1990s, it is surprising that no one at that time brought up the fact that the faith had once been in the business of producing television animation itself. The program in question focused on the title character, an anthropomorphic white dot designed to represent a child, who learned spiritual and moral lessons in a surprisingly soft-pedaled fashion. The dot changed shape and color to reflect changes in emotion brought on by sudden crisis, showing astonishing shape-shifting abilities in the process. Designed to reflect the conscience as what cocreator Byers described as a "spiritual thermometer," the program was originally seen on *Peppermint Place*, a local children's program based in Dallas, before going into wider syndication, which continued far into the 1980s.

***JOURNEY TO THE CENTER OF THE EARTH* (1967–1969)**

STUDIO: Filmation

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATOR: Jules Verne

PRODUCERS: Lou Scheimer, Norman Prescott

DIRECTOR: Hal Sutherland

WRITERS INCLUDED: Ken Sobol

VOICE ACTORS: Ted Knight (Professor Lindenbrook/Count Sacnusson), Jane Webb (Cindy Lindenbrook), Pat Harrington Jr. (Alec McEwen/Lar/Torg)

SYNOPSIS: Professor Lindenbrook, his niece Cindy, and student Alec McEwen explore a mysterious world beneath the Earth's surface.

COMMENTARY: Pioneering science-fiction writer Verne published *Voyage au Centre de la Terre* (its original French title) in 1864. The novel focused on Professor Lindenbrook and colleagues as they traveled through a hole in the Earth that had opened in Iceland in order to solve the mystery of a cryptic note left behind by earlier explorer Arne Saknussemm. Adventure ensued as they discovered a world locked in a dangerous prehistoric past. However, this series was more accurately based on the 1959 feature-film version released by 20th Century Fox, which added a villain (plus henchmen), an attractive heroine, and a duck designed to provide "comic" relief to the mix. All were used without question in the Filmation version, although there was some effort taken, if minimal, to have some version of what Verne had originally envisioned in the story's subterranean land.

JUMANJI (1996–1999)

STUDIOS: Adelaide, Interscope, Titler, Columbia, Bohbot

DISTRIBUTOR: UPN

CREATOR: Chris Van Allsburg

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Richard Raynis

PRODUCERS: Kevin Campbell, Bob Hathcock

DIRECTORS: Bob Hathcock, Gloria Jenkins, Youn Suk Jin, Cathy Malkasian, Jeff Myers, Steve Ressel, David Schwartz, Andi Thom, Scott Wood

WRITERS: Neil Alsip, Tom Astle, Siobhan Byrne, Kevin Campbell, Pat Carr, Peter Elwell, Peter Gaffney, Jonathan Greenberg, Barry Hawkins, Greg Klein, Nancy Neufeld Callaway, Thomas Pugsley, Steve Roberts, Lara Rannels, Tony Schilliacci

VOICE ACTORS: Ashley Johnson (Peter Shepherd), Debi Derryberry (Judy Shepherd), Bill Faggerbakke (Alan Parrish), Melanie Chartoff (Nora Shepherd), Richard Allen (Officer Carl Bentley/Tribal Bob), Sherman Howard (Van Pelt), William Sanderson (Professor Heinrich Ibsen), Tim Curry (Professor J. H. "Trader" Slick), Pamela Segall (Rock), Billy West (Brute/Manji #1), Kevin Schon (Dead-Eye/Manji #2), Danny Mann (Fang/Manji #3)

SYNOPSIS: After being sucked into the cursed board game Jumanji while playing it, Peter and Judy Shepherd connect with Alan Parrish, a previous victim of the game's supernatural abilities, and they attempt to escape the land the game has imprisoned them in.

COMMENTARY: Originally one of Van Allsburg's acclaimed, lavishly illustrated children's books, the concept was adapted, despite its somewhat limited premise, into a financially successful feature film in 1995, with Robin Williams portraying Alan Parrish. Given that the film was released by TriStar Pictures, it was not a surprise that this animated version was produced by

the animation studio affiliated with that company, nor that it provided little in the way of advancement beyond the film's adequate depiction of a jungle-like alternate universe. Perhaps the most interesting aspect of it was the fact that the character of Peter was repeatedly turned into different animals every time he told a lie—which was often.

After its run on UPN, the 40-episode series went into syndication on a regional basis via Bohbot.

***JUNGLE CUBS* (1996–1998)**

STUDIO: Disney

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

PRODUCERS/DIRECTORS: Kenny Thompkins, Mircea Manta

WRITERS INCLUDED: Don London, Seth MacFarlane, Sam Graham, Chris Hubbell

VOICE ACTORS: E. G. Daily (Bagheera), Pamela Segall (Baloo), Jim Cummings (Kaa/Fred/Jed), Jason Marsden (Prince Louie, early episodes/Shere Khan), Cree Summer Francks (Prince Louie, later episodes), Rob Paulsen (Akela/Hathi), Michael McKean (Cecil), Kath Soucie (Winnifred)

SYNOPSIS: The early days of Bagheera, Baloo, Kaa, King Louie, Shere Khan, and Colonel Hathi, all of *Jungle Book* fame.

COMMENTARY: Another of Disney's habitual raidings of its archives to make its classic characters more palatable to children of successive generations. This series was in the typical young-characters-learning-life-lessons school, with only the novelty of the characters (and perhaps the involvement of the eventually famous/infamous MacFarlane as a writer) marking it as anything worthy of future attention.

JUSTICE LEAGUE/JUSTICE LEAGUE UNLIMITED

***Justice League* (2001–2004)**

STUDIO: Warner Brothers

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Sander Schwartz, Jean MacCurdy, Linda Simensky, Jay Bastien

PRODUCERS: Rich Fogel, Glenn Murakami, Bruce Timm, James Tucker

DIRECTORS: Dan Riba, Butch Lukic

WRITERS: Rich Fogel, Stan Berkowitz, Kevin Hopps, Joseph Kuhr, Dwayne McDuffie, Andrew Kreisberg, Keith Damron, Len Uhley, Bruce Timm, Paul Dini, John Ridley

VOICE ACTORS: Kevin Conroy (Bruce Wayne/Batman), George Newbern (Clark Kent/Superman/DJ Rubber Ducky), Susan Eisenberg (Diana Prince/Wonder Woman), Phil LaMarr (John Stewart/Green Lantern/Ed Reiss), Michael Rosenbaum (Wally West/The Flash/Arkkis Chummuck/Colonel Joseph Andre/Deadshot/Franzee), Carl Lumbly (J'onn Jonzz, a.k.a. Martian Manhunter/Krizblack), Maria Canals (Shayera Hol/Hawkgirl/Livewire/Py'tar), Grant Albrecht (General Hoffman), William Atherton (Dr. Destiny), Rene Auberjonois (Kanjar Ro/Guardian/Gallus Zed/Desaad/Steppenwolf), Fairuza Balk (Penny Dee), Dorie Burton (Audrey), Kristin Bauer (Mera), Xander

Berkeley (General Brak), Serena Berman (Cassie), Earl Boen (Simon Stagg), Powers Boothe (Gorilla Grodd), Julie Bowen (Aresia), Max Brooks (Howie), Kimberly Brooks (Mrs. Saunders), Clancy Brown (Lex Luthor), Ian Buchanan (Ultra-Humanite), Corey Burton (Brainiac/Forger/Metallo/Toyman/Weather Wizard), Cathy Cavadini (Dr. Mary), Greg Cipes (Jack), Enrico Colatoni (Glorious Godfrey), Gary Cole (J. Allen Carter), Rickey D'Shon Collins (Chris McGee), Olivia d'Abo (Morgaine Le Fay/Star Sapphire), Keith David (Despero), Dana Delany (Lois Lane/Maggie Sawyer), Michael Dorn (Kalibak), Richard Doyle (Dr. Louis), Brian Doyle Murray (Artie Baumann), Larry Drake (Colonel Vox), Fred Dryer (Sgt. Rock), Patrick Duffy (Steve Trevor), Lisa Edelstein (Mercy Graves), Ashley Edner (Trina/Jennifer), Hector Elizondo (Kragger), Robert Englund (Felix Faust), Shelley Fabares (Martha Kent), Mike Farrell (Jonathan Kent), Oded Fehr (Dr. Fate), Carlos Ferro (Radocko), Efrain Figueroa (Copperhead, early episodes), Soren Fulton (Mordred), Brad Garrett (Lobo), Brian George (Guardian/Parasite/President/Morgan Edge), Peri Gilpin (Volcana), Michael Gough (Professor Henry Moss), Richard Green (Orm), Pam Grier (My'ria'h), Julianne Grossman (Phillipus), Kim Mai Guest (Katma Tui), Nicholas Guest (Luminus), Jennifer Hale (Giganta/Killer Frost/Sroya Bashir/Inza), Mark Hamill (The Joker/Solomon Grundy), Neil Patrick Harris (Ray Thompson), Dennis Haysbert (Kilowog), Grant Heslov (Dr. Patel), Michael Ironside (Darkseid), Robert Ito (Mr. Hama), Jeffrey Jones (Sir Swami), William Katt (Green Guardsman), David Kaufman (Jimmy Olsen), Udo Keir (Music Master), Ted Levine (Sinestro/Bulldozer), Virginia Madsen (Sarah Corwin), Jason Marsden (Snapper Carr), Karen Maruyama (Tsukuri), Bruce McGill (General McCormick), Ted McGinley (Tom Turbine/Burns), Stephen McHattie (Shade), Michael McKean (Sportsman/Sgt. O'Shaughnessy), Danica McKellar (Sapphire Stagg), Scott Menville (King), Alfred Molina (Gustav), Richard Moll (Java), Garrett Morris (Al Rob Paulsen (Lightray), Khary Payton (Ten), Elizabeth Pena (Paran Dull), Ron Perlman (Clayface/Orion), Diane Pershing (Poison Ivy), Robert Picardo (Blackhawk/Amazo), Jan Rabson (Professor Erlich), James Remar (Manhunter), John Rhys Davies (Hades), Kevin Michael Richardson (General Wells/Imperium), Victor Rivers (Hro Talak), Eric Roberts (Mongul), Mark Rolston (Firefly), Steven Root (Cat Man), Scott Rummell (Aquaman), Mitchell Ryan (Highfather), Pepe Serna (Shifflet), W. Morgan Sheppard (Merlin), Tom Sizemore (Metamorpho), William Smith (Draaga), Arleen Sorkin (Harley Quinn), David Ogden Stiers (Solovar), Tara Strong (Sera/Queen), Susan Sullivan (Queen Hippolyta), Dave Thomas (Harv Hickman/Ernst), Lauren Tom (Chung), Hynden Walch (Ace), Tracey Walter (Morphir), Michael Weiss (Etrigan/Jason Blood), Maggie Wheeler (Antiope), Michael Jai White (Doomsday), Jose Yenque (Copperhead, later episodes), Keone Young (Dr. Chin), Efrem Zimbalist Jr. (Alfred Pennyworth), Rob Zombie (Ichthulu)

Justice League Unlimited (2004–2006)

STUDIO: Warner Brothers

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Sam Register, Sander Schwartz

PRODUCERS: Dwayne McDuffie, Bruce Timm, James Tucker, Shaun McLaughlin
 DIRECTORS: Joaquim dos Santos, Dan Riba

WRITERS: Stan Berkowitz, J. M. DeMatteis, Henry Gilroy, Robert Goodman, Paul Dini, Andrew Kreisberg, Warren Ellis, Dwayne McDuffie, Jim Steranko, Darwyn Cooke, Gail Simone, Bruce Timm, Matt Wayne, Geoff Johns

VOICE ACTORS: Amy Acker (Huntress), Tomas Arana (Tharok), Edward Asner (Hephaestus/Granny Goodness), Dee Bradley Baker (Blockbuster), Adam Baldwin (Hal Jordan/Green Lantern/Jonah Hex/Rick Flag), Jason Bateman (Hermes), Morena Bacarin (Black Canary), Michael Beach (Mr. Terrific/Devil Ray), Powers Boothe (Red Tornado/Gorilla Grodd), Julie Bowen (Aresia), Ben Browder (Bat Lash), Clancy Brown (Lex Luthor/Guardians of the Universe), Corey Burton (Aztek/Brainiac/Key/Sonar/Weather Wizard), Maria Canals Barrera (Hawkgirl/Fire/Livewire), Nestor Carbonell (El Diablo), Seymour Cassel (Chuck Sirianni), Jeffrey Combs (Question/Dr. Moon), Kevin Conroy (Bruce Wayne/Batman/Atom Smasher/Commander Steel/Crimson Avenger/Joe Chill), Bud Cort (Toyman), Chris Cox (Captain Atom/Smashing Knight), Matt Czuchry (Brainiac 5), Olivia d'Abo (Morgaine Le Fay/Star Sapphire), Dana Delany (Lois Lane), Alexis Denisof (Mirror Master), Grey DeLisle (Downpour/Shifter), John DiMaggio (Dreamslayer/Lord Havok), Michael Dorn (Kalibak), Robin Atkin Downes (Gentleman Ghost), Douglas Dunning (Deimos), George Eads (Captain Atom, "Initiation" episode), Hector Elizondo (Hath-Set), Robert Englund (Felix Faust), Susan Eisenberg (Wonder Woman/Rampage), Mike Erwin (Speedy), Shelley Fabares (Martha Kent), Dennis Farina (Wildcat), Mike Farrell (Jonathan Kent), Oded Fehr (Dr. Fate), Nathan Fillion (Vigilante/Spy Smasher), Farrah Foke (Big Barda), Robert Forster (President), Robert Foxworth (Professor Hamilton), Will Friedle (Kyle Rayner/Green Lantern/Terry McGinnis/Batman), Brian George (Parasite), Donal Gibson (Captain Boomerang), Peri Gilpin (Volcana), Googy Gress (Bouncing Boy), Ioan Gruffudd (Mr. Miracle), Paul Guilfoyle (Warlord), Kim Mai Guest (Katma Tui/Green Lantern/Linda Park/Silver Banshee), Jennifer Hale (Zatanna/Bernadeth/Giganta/Killer Frost), Mark Hamill (The Joker/Trickster), Dennis Haysbert (Kilowog/Green Lantern), Jason Hervey (Dove), Michael Ironside (Darkseid), Arte Johnson (Virman Vundarbar), Jonathan Joss ("Pow Wow" Smith), Bob Joles (Hades), David Kaufman (Jimmy Olsen), Daniel Dae Kim (Mertron), Phil LaMarr (John Stewart/Green Lantern/Steel/S.T.R.I.P.E./Machiste/Static), Juliet Rose Landau (Zatanna, "The Balance" episode/Plastique/Tata), Lex Lang (Atomic Skull/Blue Devil/Captain Cold/Heat Wave), Ted Levine (Sinestro), Giselle Loren (Stargirl), Carl Lumbly (J'onn J'onzz, a.k.a. Martian Manhunter), Peter MacNichol (Chronos), Alan Rachins (Clock King), Virginia Madsen (Roulette), Karen Maruyama (Tsukuri), Tim Matheson (Maxwell Lord), Christopher McDonald (Jor-El), Michael McDowell (Metallo), John C. McGinley (Atom), Stephen McHattie (Shade), Dick Miller (Oberon), George Newbern (Superman/Bizarro/Evil Star), Jerry O'Connell (Captain Marvel), Peter Onorati (B'wana Beast/Warhawk), Scott Patterson (King Faraday), Ron Perlman (Orion), Robert Picardo (Amazo), Jeremy Piven (The Elongated Man), C. C. H. Pounder (Amanda Waller/Juice), Sheryl Lee Ralph (Cheetah), James Remar (Hawkman/Shadow)



DC's legendary star lineup—now in uncensored form. Cartoon Network/Photofest © Cartoon Network

Thief), Eric Roberts (Mongul), Michael Rosenbaum (Flash/Vigilante, "Task Force X" episode/Deadshot/Dr. Polaris), Scott Rummell (Aquaman), Tom Everett Scott (Booster Gold), Fred Savage (Hawk), Raphael Sbarge (Deadman), Glenn Shadix (Steven Mandragora), Armin Shimmerman (Professor Milo), Kin Shiner (Green Arrow), James Sie (Wind Dragon), J. K. Simmons (General Wade Elling/Mantis), Tom Sizemore (Metamorpho), Gregg Rainwater (Long Shadow), Susan Sullivan (Queen Hippolyta), Bruce Timm (Solomon Grundy), Lauren Tom (Dr. Light/Kai-Ro/Green Lantern), Nicholle Tom (Supergirl/Galatea), Gina Torres (Vixen), Hynden Walch (Ace), Michael Weiss (Etrigan),

Joanne Whalley (Emerald Empress), Michael Jai White (Doomsday), Marc Worden (Parasite, "Epilogue" episode), Jose Yenque (Copperhead), Michael York (Ares), Rachel York (Circe)

SYNOPSIS: The Justice League, consisting of a large number of the world's superheroes, fights collectively against the elaborate schemes concocted by their many enemies, alone or together.

COMMENTARY: For those who thought the various *Super Friends* series (q.v.) were inadequate to their desires, this truly had to be the real deal. Produced by much of the same team responsible for the *Batman* (q.v.) and *Superman* (q.v.) series from the 1990s on, along with some of the then-current staff of the comic book division, this project presented much of the epic grandeur that had come to be present in the comics of DC and rival Marvel during that time. Tempers and egos clashed and heads butted, not simply good versus evil (as was the case in *Super Friends*), but also good versus good and evil versus evil. Nearly every character in DC's lengthy history, good or evil, from the past or the then-current present, seemed to be given a role in a highly soap-operatic narrative, which interlinked not only the episodes of the series itself but also other projects from the same studio, such as *Batman Beyond*. Given that the ongoing narrative could be a put-off to those who didn't follow the series from the beginning, the well-produced animation compensated at times but only occasionally.

And they aren't done yet. A new *Justice League* series is in development, which will undoubtedly reflect the current status of the DC universe in its own way now as the earlier series did then. A new feature film version of the property was also released in 2017.

• K •

KABLAM! (1996–2000)

STUDIOS: Nickelodeon, Flying Mallet

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

CREATORS: Bob Mittenenthal, Will McRobb, Chris Viscardi

WRITERS: Bob Mittenenthal, Will McRobb, Chris Viscardi, Rick Groel, Anne Bernstein, Vince Calandra, Madga Liolis, Kevin Kopelow, Heath Seifert, Michael Rubiner, Matt Harrigan, Jylian Gunther, Mark Hentemann, Randolph Heard, Francis Gasparini, Kevin Strader, Andy Rhinegold, James Greenberg, Ariel Leve, Cote Zellers, Stephen Holman, Josephine Huang, Ben Nichols, Jay Martel, Adam Idelson, Julie Bottenberg, P. Kevin Strader

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Noah Segan (Henry), Julia McIlvane (June)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: An animated variety series in comic book form, with Henry and June the young animated presiding hosts. In addition to installments featuring that pair, a variety of short animated features were included, such as *Patch Head*, *Life with Loopy*, *Sniz and Fondue*, *Prometheus and Bob*, *The OffBeats*, and *JetCat!* Little about the series could be considered subtle, as it fully embraced both knockabout slapstick humor and Nickelodeon's trademark antiauthoritarian childishness. Two featured segments, *Action League Now!* (q.v.) and *Angela Anaconda* (q.v.), became series on their own.

KAPPA MIKEY (2006–2008)

STUDIOS: Animation Collective, Kanonen and Bestrichen

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon (United States)

CREATOR: Larry Schwarz

PRODUCERS: Larry Schwarz, Sergei Aniskov, Sean Laher, Christopher Fauci, Michael Gold

DIRECTOR: Sergei Aniskov

WRITERS: Conrad Klein, Larry Schwarz, Leila Strachan, Colin Jost, Chris Reisig, Rob Dubbin, Steve Lookner, Len Wein, Michael Yank, Gerry Duggan, Giuseppe Ziplovia, Ryan Koh, Walt Gardner, James Harvey, Bob Berens, Dan Schofield, Sean Boyland, Sean Lahey

VOICE ACTORS: Michael Sinterklaas (Mikey Simon/Suave Mikey), Sean Schemmel (Gonard/Gonard's Mother/Pirate Captain/Ninjaman McFranklin/Phantom of the Soundstage/Richie McMillions III), Gary Mack (Guano), Annice Moriarty (Lily), Evelyn Lanto (Mitsuki/Kappa/Reggie), Stephen Moverley (Ozu/Brozu), Jesse Adams (Yes Man/Yoshi/No Man/Evan), Adam Moreno (Socky), Kether Donahue (Ethel), Wayne Grayson (Cat Burglar/Dr. Takashi Katashi/Mr. Stereo), Dan Green (Mr. Simon/Dadzuki/Bike), Zoe Martin (Mrs. Simon/Kello/Riku), Michael Baley (Agent Yoshida), Lex Woutas (Masako Masako/Mr. Tatami), Bella Hudson (Tatami Twins), Marc Diraison (Karaoke

Genie/Dr. Igor), Marc Thompson (Lawrence Von Martenhouse), Seth Herzog (Forbes), Robert Riddell (Lawrence), Morgan York (Samoa)

SYNOPSIS: After winning a contest, American Mikey Simon becomes a star performer on the Japanese anime series *LilyMu*.

COMMENTARY: This animated sitcom, part backstage farce and part culture clash, should be appreciated more by devotees of anime than of North American television animation because they will likely be more in tune to where the humor in the show truly lies. Much like Cartoon Network's similar *Hi Hi Puffy AmiYumi* (q.v.), it was a game effort to bridge the never-the-twain-shall-meet divide between Japanese and North American television animation, but to those not really "in" on the jokes, the series may simply seem as loud, repetitious, and tiresome as typical second-rate anime can be in and of itself.

THE KARATE KID (1989–1990)

STUDIOS: Jerry Weintraub, DIC, Columbia

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

CREATORS: Robert Kamen (characters), Dan DiStefano (series format)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Andy Heyward, Jerry Weintraub, Robby London

PRODUCERS: Larry Houston, Ken Duer

DIRECTORS: Larry Houston, Katsumi Takasuga

WRITERS INCLUDED: Dorothy Middleton, Michael Maurer, Lori Crawford, George Robinson, William Ruiz

VOICE ACTORS: Joe Dedio (Daniel), Robert Ito (Mr. Miyagi Yakuga), Janice Kawaye (Taki)

SYNOPSIS: Young karate student Daniel and his mentor Miyagi Yakuga attempt to find the location of a mysterious shrine with healing properties.

COMMENTARY: The original *Karate Kid* movie, starring Ralph Macchio as Daniel and Pat Morita as Miyagi, was released by Columbia Pictures in 1985 and was about a young man who used the discipline and technique of martial arts to avenge himself against a bully. A major hit, it soon spawned three inferior sequels between 1986 and 1994; a recent remake, set in China, featured Jaden Smith and Jackie Chan in the student and mentor roles. The limited format of the movies was replaced by a more structurally sound format for the series, with good background artwork in particular, but in terms of reigniting the waning popularity of the franchise, it was too little, too late. The series was soundly beaten in its time slot by the competition and disappeared after one season.

KATIE AND ORBIE (1995)

STUDIOS: Entertainment Rights, Lacewood, Amberwood, Bacon Broadcasting, North Texas Public Broadcasting, Worldwide Sports and Entertainment, Le Chaine De TV Ontario, Rogers Telefund, Ontario Film Development, Motion Picture Guarantors

DISTRIBUTOR: PBS (United States, 1995–1997), Disney (United States, after 1997)

CREATORS: Ben Wicks, Susan Wicks

WRITER: Susan Wicks

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTOR: Leslie Nielsen (Narrator)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: A simplistic stop-motion project based on a series of children's books by the Wickses; narrator Nielsen was a producer of the series through his company, Amberwood. The premise was simple: An alien boy named Orbie was adopted by preschooler Katie and her family after crashing his ship in a pumpkin patch. The young pair proceeded to learn life lessons in the typical preschool media fashion, at the rate of three adventures per episode.

***KENNY THE SHARK* (2003)**

STUDIO: Phase 4 Entertainment

DISTRIBUTORS: NBC, Discovery

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Bob Mitten, Winnie Chaffee, George Engelbrecht, Peter Roos, Jim Rapsas

DIRECTOR: George Engelbrecht

WRITERS INCLUDED: Tim Hill, Jay Martel, Mike Rubiner

VOICE ACTORS: Jim Conroy (Kenny), Kelli Rabke (Kat), Karen Culp (Grace), Russell Horton (Peter), Nicolas King (Oscar)

SYNOPSIS: Kenny, a predatory tiger shark, lives as the pet of 10-year-old Kat and her family in a typical American suburban neighborhood.

COMMENTARY: Part of NBC and Discovery's "Real Toons" project, which combined animation with educational instruction (*Tutenstein* [q.v.] was another), this program attempted, with only modest success, to combine entertaining slapstick comedy with educational material related to sharks. In some aspects they tied together well (Kenny's suffering from insomnia, for instance, was the result of sharks needing to be in constant motion in order to survive), but in other cases (e.g., the need for the shark to be restrained à la Hannibal Lecter to prevent him from killing others), it was a bit too much, even for the wild world of television animation.

***KEWPIES* (1997)**

STUDIO: Sachs Family Entertainment

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

CREATOR: Rose O'Neill

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: O'Neill developed the title characters of this project in a series of drawings for *Ladies Home Journal* in 1909. Three years later, the characters were mass marketed into a series of dolls that quickly became a staple element of carnivals and fairs, along with other marketing tie-ins. Surprisingly little information exists about this animated project, designed presumably to introduce the characters to a new generation, other than the fact that the title characters resided in Kewp Valley and were in conflict with the villainous countess.

KICK BUTTOWSKI, SUBURBAN DAREDEVIL (2010–2012)

STUDIOS: Disney, Mercury Filmworks

DISTRIBUTOR: Disney

CREATOR: Sandro Corsaro

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Sandro Corsaro, Chris Savino

DIRECTORS: Chris Savino, Sherm Cohen, Clayton Morrow

WRITERS: Nate Knechtel, Chris Savino, David Shayne, John Derevlany, Mitch Larson, Nick Confalone, Mark Drop, Derek Dressler, Clayton Morrow, Carl Faruolo, Mike Kunkel, Bob Camp, Scott O'Brien, Guy Toubes, Dean Batali, Howie Perry, Dave Lewman, Joe Liss, Patrick O'Connor, Brendan Duffy, Chuck Klein, Troy Adomitis, Heather Martinez, Mark Fellows, Tom Krajewski, Robert Lilly III, Erik Wiese, Chris Reccardi, Mark Ackland, Riccardo Durante, Chong Lee, Stephen DeStefano, Eric Rivera, Chris Sonnenburg, Brett Varon, Jonathan Howard, Michael Yank, Jennifer Keene

VOICE ACTORS: Charlie Schlatter (Clarence "Kick" Buttowski), Matt Jones (Gunther Magnuson), Danny Cooksey (Brad Buttowski), John DiMaggio (Mr. Vickie/Others), Jeff Bennett (Billy Stumps/Mall Cop/Others), Eric Olsen (Wade), Grey DeLisle (Brianna Buttowski/Others), Brian Stepanek (Harry Buttowski), Kari Wahlgren (Honey Buttowski), Emily Osment (Kendall Perkins), Maria Bamford ("Wacky" Jackie Wackerman), Clancy Brown (Magnus Magnuson), April Winchell (Helga Magnuson), Richard Horvitz (Mouth), Dwight Howard (Rock Callahan), Roz Ryan (Ms. Fitzpatrick), Sandro Corsaro (Anthony DiPazzi/Michael DiPazzi/Others), Harland Williams (Pantsy), Jessica Di Cicco (Penelope Patterson), Mindy Sterling (Ms. Chicarelli), Daran Norris (Jock Wilder), Susan Blakeslee (Librarian/Grandma), Greg Cipes (Horace/Emo Kid), Brian Doyle Murray (Glenn), Simon Helberg (Ronaldo), Tom Kenny (Kyle), Carlos Alazraqui (Shogun Sanchez/Principal Rival/Amigo Grande), Henry Winkler (Principal Henry), Tony Hawk (Hush), Will Forte (Gordie Gibble), Skai Jackson (Madison), Doug Brochu (Abbie), Danny Jacobs (Bjorgen/Rowdy Remington), Fred Tatasciore (Janitor), Jeffrey Tambor (Chief of Food 'n' Fix), Jonathan Pryce (One-Eyed Jackson), Leigh Allyn Baker (Sally), Alyssa Milano (Scarlett Rosetti), Tiffany Thornton (Teena Sometimes), Ed O'Neill (Grandpa), Fergie (April), Jim Parsons (Larry Wilder), Joanna Garcia (Shannon), Emmanuelle Chriqui (Kelly), J. B. Smoove (Inspector Finecombe), David DeLuise (Dead Man Dave), Debbie Reynolds (Mary Van Der Deth), Brian Van Holt (Boom McCondor), Dick Vitale (Mayor of the Old Country), Rico Rodriguez (Luigi Vendetta), Jay Harris (Brick Bristol), Michael Wilbon (Officer Mack), Tony Kornheiser (Officer Irwin), John Henson (Chuck Glarman), Carl Edwards (Eddie Clutch), Nestor Carbonell (Javier), Tony Real (Dark One), Alec Baldwin (Mr. Gibble), Mike Golic (Coach Sternberg)

SYNOPSIS: Ten-year-old "Kick" Buttowski is a freewheeling aspiring daredevil who aims to live each day as if he were the star of his "own personal action movie," despite the various humorous and dramatic obstacles he finds to achieving this.

COMMENTARY: An action-comedy that frequently missed the mark, in part because the writers and directors embodied the persona of the lead character and took things to extreme ends far too often. Jones's humorous portrayal of Nordic American goofball Gunther, Kick's stunt coordinator and biggest fan, was the program's central saving grace, but one good character does not make a good show.

KIDD VIDEO (1984–1987)

STUDIOS: DIC, Saban

DISTRIBUTORS: NBC (1984–1987), CBS (1987)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Andy Heyward, Haim Saban, Jean Chalopin

PRODUCER: Rudy Zamora

DIRECTORS INCLUDED: Bernard Deyries

WRITERS: Jeff Book, Kevin Clyne, Carole Markin, Don McGlynn, Bud Schaetzle, Marty Wiley, Jim Carlson, Terrence McDonnel

VOICE ACTORS: Bryan Scott (Kidd Video), Gabrielle Bennett (Carla), Robbie Rist (Whiz), Steve Alterman (Ash), Cathy Cavadini (Glitter), Peter Renaday (Master Blaster), Marshall Efron (Fat Cat), Robert Towers (Cool Kitty), Susan Silo (She-Lion)

SYNOPSIS: Live-action rock singer Kidd Video and his group are transported to the animated fourth-dimensional world known as the Flip Side, where the villainous Master Blaster intends to steal their signature sound for his own purposes.

COMMENTARY: A show that was a definite product of its time, combining televised rock 'n' roll à la MTV with video-game-styled imagery and characterizations. Despite its limited idea and premise, it managed to hang on for 27 episodes in its original run and reemerged briefly (in reruns but with new musical material added) for a short syndicated run in 1989.

KIDEO TV (1986)

STUDIO: DIC

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Andy Heyward, Jean Chalopin, Tetsuo Katayama

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: A 90-minute syndicated block consisting of three American series—*The Get Along Gang* (q.v.), *Popples* (q.v.), and *Rainbow Brite* (q.v.)—plus the Japanese import *Ulysses 31*, which *Rainbow Brite* replaced in the lineup.

KID KAPERS (1952–1953)

STUDIO/DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: One of the earliest presentations of animation on television in a regularly scheduled time slot, in this case one lasting 15 minutes. The exact content is not known but is believed to include the *Flip the Frog* and *Willie Whopper* films made by Ub Iwerks for MGM in the 1930s and Paul Terry's *Aesop's Fables*, dating from the mid-1920s.

KID NOTORIOUS (2003)

STUDIOS: Adams and Adams, Brett Morgen, Woodland, Comedy Partners

DISTRIBUTOR: Comedy Central

CREATORS/EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Robert Evans, Alan Cohen, Alan Freedland, Brett Morgen

PRODUCERS: J. Michael Mendel, Monica Mitchel

DIRECTORS: Brett Morgen, Cullen Blaine, Pete Michels

WRITERS: Alan Cohen, Alan Freedland

VOICE ACTORS: Robert Evans (Kid Notorious), Niecy Nash (Tollie Mae), Alan Selka (English), Slash (Himself)

SYNOPSIS: The life and times of wealthy film studio executive Kid Notorious.

COMMENTARY: One of the more colorful behind-the-scenes figures in Hollywood history, Robert "Bob" Evans hustled his way from sportswear salesman to the head job at Paramount Pictures in the early 1970s, where he was responsible for overseeing the production of such films as *Love Story*, *The Godfather*, and *Chinatown*. But he became better known for various other, sometimes scandalous, romantic and business exploits, many of which were detailed in his autobiography, *The Kid Stays in the Picture* (itself made into a documentary film in 2002). This animated series was an extension of Evans's narcissistic view of himself, depicting him as he looked in the days when he ran Paramount and featuring his real-life estate, Woodland, as well as thinly veiled depictions of his staff and celebrity neighbors. The humor was over the top and raunchy, befitting the late-night time slot in which it was scheduled, and featured such figures as film director Francis Ford Coppola and then president of France Jacques Chirac in what can best be described as compromising positions on a regular basis. (No celebrities actually played themselves except Slash and Evans, "who may or may not have slept with your wife," according to the closing credits). The program was well animated, but that may have been the one and only thing about it that might have been considered positive to fans of good taste.

KID POWER (1972–1974)

STUDIOS: Rankin/Bass, Videocraft

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATOR: Morrie Turner

PRODUCERS: Arthur Rankin Jr., Jules Bass, Basil Cox

DIRECTORS: Arthur Rankin Jr., Jules Bass

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Charles Kennedy Jr. (Wellington), Jay Silverheels Jr. (Oliver), John Gardiner (Nipper), Allan Melvin (Jerry), Carey Wong (Connie), Guy Shapiro (Ralph), Michele Johnson (Sybil), Jeff Thomas (Diz), Greg Thomas (Albert)

SYNOPSIS: The multiethnic members of the youthful Rainbow Power Club work to make the world a better place.

COMMENTARY: Turner's comic strip *Wee Pals*, on which this was based, began in 1965 and resembled Charles Schulz's *Peanuts*, with a broader ethnic mix among the characters. (Schulz himself encouraged Turner in gaining

newspaper space and openly endorsed him). The same broad ethnic mix was included in the series, making it one of the first television animation programs aimed at children to accurately reflect the racial diversity of America and thus providing an example for many others to follow. However, besides making this statement (over and over again), producers Rankin and Bass seemed somewhat unsure about exactly what they could do with Turner's characters in a series format, given that they were mired in repetitive themes and musical numbers. Only one season of episodes was produced, which was rerun in its entirety the following season.

***THE KID SUPER POWER HOUR WITH SHAZAM* (1981–1982)**

STUDIOS: DC Comics, Filmation

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

CREATORS: C. C. Beck and Bill Parker ("Shazam")

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Lou Scheimer, Norman Prescott

PRODUCER: Arthur Nadel

DIRECTORS: Arthur Nadel, Bill Davis

WRITERS INCLUDED: Coslough Johnson

VOICE ACTORS: Christopher Hensel (Captain California), Becky Perle (Gorgeous Gal), Mayo McCaslin (Dirty Trixie), Jere Fields (Misty Magic), John Berwick (Rex Ruthless), John Greenleaf (Weather Man), John Venocour (Punk Rock), Alan Oppenheimer (Mr. Sampson/Tawky Tawny/Uncle Dudley Batson/Dr. Sivana), Erika Scheimer (Miss Grimm), Burr Middleton (Billy Batson/Captain Marvel), Barry Gordon (Freddie Freeman/Captain Marvel Jr.), Dawn Jeffrey (Mary Batson/Mary Marvel), Lou Scheimer (Sterling Morris), Norman Prescott (Narrator)

SYNOPSIS: Two superhero features contained in an hour format that also included a variety of live-action wraparound segments. *Hero High* focused on the exploits of heroes and villains in training at a specialized high school for the same, while *Shazam* focused on the new animated adventures of the famed comic book superhero Captain Marvel and his equally empowered allies.

COMMENTARY: A rather odd mash-up of humorous superheroics at one end and more straight-faced ones at the other. *Hero High* was the former; it was originally to have featured the *Archie* (see *The Archie Show*) characters in that format but was revamped after Filmation terminated its relationship with the Archie company during development. Anyone familiar with the Archie formula can tell you who was supposed to be whom in the resulting project. On the other hand, *Shazam* was a welcome animation debut for Captain Marvel, who had thrived in the comics between 1939 and 1954, when his original publisher, Fawcett, went out of business. The word *shazam* was the means by which young Billy Batson turned into the captain and was applied directly to the character after Marvel Comics brought out an entirely different Captain Marvel in its product line. Filmation had produced a live-action series about the captain using the *Shazam* name in 1974, and the animated series borrowed from this, as well as the original Beck/Parker comics, for its content, which included their memorable villains mad scientist Dr. Sivana and malevolent worm Mr. Mind chief among them.

Because of antiviolence regulations at its network in particular, neither segment was entirely what it could have been in terms of narrative. This was unfortunate, considering that Captain Marvel and company, at least, deserved better. However, they have largely remained absent from television animation since then, other than guest spots on such series as *Batman: The Brave and the Bold* (see *Batman*) and *Justice League* (see *Justice League/Justice League Unlimited*), which gave fleeting glimpses about what a modern television animation series featuring them might look like.

THE KIDS FROM ROOM 402 (1999–2002)

STUDIOS: CinéGroupe, Storyopolis, Paraskevas

DISTRIBUTOR: Family Channel (United States)

CREATORS: Betty Paraskevas, Michael Paraskevas

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Michel Lemire, Jacques Pettigrew, Fonda Snyder

PRODUCER: Louis Duquet

DIRECTORS: Michael Hack, Wade Konowalchuk

WRITERS INCLUDED: Cindy Begel, Les Kite

VOICE ACTORS: Debi Derryberry (Melanie), Mindy Cohn (Nancy), April Winchell (Miss Gracie Graves), Tara Charendoff (Sanjay/Penny), Colleen O'Shaughnessy (Polly/Mary/Ellen/Don), Olivia Hack (Gabrielle), Edie McClurg (Mrs. McCoy), Bryton McClure (Freddie Fay), Chris Marquette (Arthur Vanderwall), Andrew Lawrence (Vinny), Spencer Klein (Jesse McCoy), Rodger Bumpass (Principal Besser), Lori Alan (Nurse Pitts), Lauren Tom (Jordan)

SYNOPSIS: Life within room 402 at the daily sessions of Harding Elementary School in fictional Anytown, USA.

COMMENTARY: A Canadian import fitted out with an American vocal cast, going over again the terrain of eccentric elementary school students addressed in other animated programs, as well as in other media (e.g., Mel Lazarus's comic strip *Miss Peach*). The Paraskevases—mother and son—adapted this project from one of their children's book collaborations but couldn't fatten it up to completely fill the needs of weekly television broadcasts. This would prove to be the case, as well, with adaptations to animation of two of their other projects as well—*Maggie and the Ferocious Beast* (q.v.) and *Marvin the Tap Dancing Horse* (q.v.).

KIM POSSIBLE (2002–2007)

STUDIO: Disney

DISTRIBUTORS: Disney, ABC

CREATORS: Bob Schooley, Mark McCorkle

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Bob Schooley, Mark McCorkle, Chris Bailey

DIRECTORS: Chris Bailey, Steve Loter, David Block

WRITERS: Bob Schooley, Mark McCorkle, David Bullock, Rossen Varbanov, Eugene Salandra, Julie DuFine, Amanda Schwartz, Holly Forsyth, Mark Palmer, Ed Baker, Tom Bernardo, Nick Filippi, Adam Van Wyck, Louis Police, Brian Swenlin, Troy Adomitis, Chris Rutkowski, Scott Morse, Robert Klein, Marsha Griffin, Madellaine Paxson, Michael Manley, Laura McCreary, Stephen

Sandoval, Patti Carr, Laura Runnels, David Lux, Gary Sperling, Curt Geda, David Schwartz, Kayte Kuch, Sheryl Scarborough, Nathan Chew, Robin Riordan, Meg McLaughlin, Lyndon Ruddy, Doug Murphy, Matthew Negrete, David Filoni, Carolyn Gair, Llyn Hunter, Kurt Weldon, Sharon Forward, Robert Griggs, John Dorman, David Knott, Bill Motz, Bob Roth, Eddie Guzelian, Barry Caldwell, Louie Del Carmen, Nicole Dubuc, Earl Kress, Ashley Lenz, Tim Maltby, Thomas Hart, Brian Sintay, Joseph Molinari, Greg Weisman, Michael Newton, John Nevares, Francisco Barrios, Zach Stones, Fred Gonzalez, Zac Moncrief, Nunzio DeFillipi, Christina Weir, Kyle Menke, Luke Brookshier, John Behnke, Rob Humphrey, Robb Pratt, Craig Rousseau, Jennifer Graves, Tracy Berna, Jim Peterson, David Prince, LaSean Thomas, Mark Drop, Martin Korth, Todd Britton, Alan Wan, Calvin Lee, Kim Duran, James Yang, Charleen Easton, Larry Scholl, Stephanie Phillips, Denise Moss, Jim Peronto, Henry Gilroy, Charlotte Fulton, Kenneth Laramay

VOICE ACTORS: Christy Carlson Romano (Kim Possible), Will Friedle (Ron Stoppable), Nancy Cartwright (Rufus/Bernice), Tahj Mowry (Wade), Gary Cole (Dr. James Possible), Jean Smart (Dr. Ann Possible), Shaun Fleming (Jim and Tim Possible, early episodes), Spencer Fox (Jim and Tim Possible, later episodes), Debbie Reynolds (Nana Possible), Brian Posehn (Larry), Mary Jo Catlett (June), Tara Strong (Joss Possible/Shawn/Britina/Amelia, later episodes/Tara/Espadrille), Elliott Gould (Mr. Stoppable), Andrea Martin (Mrs. Stoppable), Kirsten Storms (Bonnie Rockwaller), Grey DeLisle (Hana Stoppable/Miss Starter/Connie Rockwaller/Lonnie Rockwaller), Roz Ryan (Wade's Mother), Felicity Huffman (Dr. Betty Director), Gary Dourdan ("Dash" D'Amont), Eric Close ("Crash" Cranston), Adam Rodriguez ("Burn" Berman), B. D. Wong (Will Du), George Takei (Master Sensei), Keiko Agena (Yori), Christopher McDonald (Hego), Jere Burns (Mego), Fred Savage (Wego Twins), Jason Marsden (Felix Renton/Oh Boy #3), Sherri Shepherd (M. C. Honey), Clyde Kusatsu (Nakasumi), Lauren Tom (Miss Kyoko), Raven-Symoné (Monique), Patrick Warburton (Mr. Steven Barkin), Carly Pope (Amelia, early episodes), Rider Strong (Brick Flagg), Enrico Colatoni (Dr. Cyrus Bortel), Shawnee Smith (Dr. Vivian Porter), Rob Paulsen (Francois/Prince Wally/Dallas/Hank Perkins/Vinnie Wheeler), John Cho (Hirotaka), A. J. Trauth (Josh Mankey), Eddie Deezen (Ned), Wendie Malick (Elsa Cleeg), Lance Bass (Oh Boy #1), Joey Fatone (Oh Boy #2), Justin Shenkarow (Oh Boy #4), Bill Goldberg (Pain King), Test (Steel Toe), Dan Castellaneta (Private Cleotus Dobbs/Baxter/Mr. Gemini), Maurice LaMarche (Professor Acari/"Big Daddy" Brotherson/Sheldon "Gemini" Director), Brian George (Professor Ramesh/Duff Killigan), Gedde Watanabe (Professor Robert Chen), Peter Bonerz (Rabbi Katz), Adam West (Timothy North), Nika Futterman (Zita Flores), John DiMaggio (Dr. Drakken/Captain Louis/Heinrich/"Motor Ed" Liskpy), Nicole Sullivan (Sheego), Tom Kane (Monkey Fist), Ricardo Montalban (Señor Senior Sr., early episodes), Earl Boen (Señor Senior Sr., later episodes), Nestor Carbonell (Señor Senior Jr.), Patton Oswalt (Professor Dementor), Melissa McCarthy (DNamy), Justin Berfield (Gill), Kerri Kenney (Bebes), Ashley Tisdale (Camille Leon), Rachel Dratch (Adrena Lynn), Richard Horvitz (Avarius), Jeff Bennett (Bates), Stephen Root (Chester Yapsby), Tom Kenny (Dr. Fen), Kari

Wahlgren (Electronique), Phil Morris (Falsetto Jones/Snowy), Richard Kind (Frugal Lucre), Dante Basco (Fukushima), Fred Willard (Jack Hench), Bill Barretta (Jackie "The Jackal" Oakes), Martin Spanjers (Malcolm Needious), Jane Carr (Nanny Maim), Hallie Todd (Summer Gale), Kevin Michael Richardson (Sumo Ninja), Charlie Schlatter (Chino), Gwendoline Yeo (Hoodie), Brian Stepanek (Mather), Ron Perlman (Warhawk), Kristen Johnston (Warmonga), John C. McGinley (White Stripe), Clancy Brown (Yono the Destroyer)

SYNOPSIS: Mild-mannered high-schooler Kim Possible and her forever-bumbling friend Ron Stoppable live double lives as globetrotting secret agents, combatting evildoers with varying skill sets.

COMMENTARY: A well-produced series that constantly teetered on the brink between straightforward action-adventure and goofy comedy, never allowing one or the other to completely dominate the narrative but drawing out subtleties within both approaches that other producers might not have noticed or might have lain dormant. The villains were, for the most part, cut from the same cloth as those of the 1960s *Batman* series: self-aggrandizing fools whose flaws were all too apparent, except in the rare cases when they were allowed to be fleshed out. Consequently, they tended to serve more as a backdrop for the ongoing relationship between Kim and Ron, who started out as friends and gradually moved toward a more intimate relationship in a manner that was both humorous and unusually realistic. There were occasions when the series became too comic or dramatic for its own good, and the balance was not fully achieved on a satisfactory level, but these were rare. Overall, it was a project that achieved its aims well and remains a good example of how to effectively blend action, comedy, and romance in a respectful fashion in television animation programs aimed at teens.

THE KING FEATURES TRILOGY (1963)

STUDIOS: King Features, Paramount

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

CREATORS: Mort Walker (*Beetle Bailey*), Billy DeBeck (*Snuffy Smith*), George Herriman (*Krazy Kat*)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Al Brodax

PRODUCERS: Gerry Ray, Gene Deitch

DIRECTORS: Seymour Kneitel, Shamus Culhane, Gene Deitch

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Howard Morris (Beetle Bailey/General Amos Halftrack), Allan Melvin (Sergeant Orville Snorkel), Paul Frees (Barney Google/Snuffy Smith/Ignatz Mouse/Offissa Pup), Penny Phillips (Loweezy/Krazy Kat)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: After their success with their newly produced *Popeye* (q.v.) cartoons earlier in the 1960s, King Features decided to repeat the process with some other comic strip properties that they owned the rights to. Repeating the same haphazard process of farming out animation to various studios in order to meet unrealistic production quotas, the same results were produced: unevenly produced fare that often failed to do its well-regarded subject matter justice. Each segment had 50 installments produced, some of which coproducer Paramount also issued as theatrical releases, despite their

poor artistic quality. The cartoons received an ignominious fate that their poor quality deserved, slotted individually or together to fill whatever time slot local stations thought they would work best in.

THE KING KONG SHOW (AND RELATED SERIES)

***The King Kong Show* (1966–1969)**

STUDIO: Rankin/Bass

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATOR: Merian C. Cooper (*King Kong*)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Arthur Rankin Jr., Jules Bass

PRODUCER: William Keenan

DIRECTORS: Hiroshi Ikeda, Yasuji Mori

WRITERS: Cherney Berg, Lew Lewis, Bernard Cowan, Ron Lewis

VOICE ACTORS: Carl Banas (Professor Bond); Susan Conway (Susan Bond); Billie Mae Richards (Bobby Bond); John Drainie, Alfie Scopp, and Paul Soles (Additional characters)

***Kong* (2000)**

STUDIO: Bohbot

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX (2001)

PRODUCERS: Nadia Nardonnet, Allen Bohbot

DIRECTOR: Marc Boreal

WRITERS: Katherine Lawrence, Randy Littlejohn, Christy Marx, Francis Nief, Dominique Latil, Edouard Blanchet, Glenn Leopold, Jean Christophe Darian, Larry DiTillio, Len Wein, Philippe Vale'riola, Richard Mueller, Romain Van Liemt, Sean Derek, Stephane Piera, Bob Forward

VOICE ACTORS: Kirby Morrow (Jason Jenkins), Scott McNeil (Eric Tannenbaum, a.k.a. Tann), Saffron Henderson (Dr. Lorna Jackson), Daphne Goldrick (Lua), David Kaye (Professor Ramon De La Porta)

SYNOPSIS: The animated adventures of the giant ape King Kong.

COMMENTARY: Introduced and featured most impressively in the 1933 feature film bearing his name, this legendary, enormous ape has been resurrected from time to time, notably in two latter-day remakes of the original film and various spin-offs, including one Japanese film where he battled his main rival in the giant monster sweepstakes, *Godzilla* (see *Godzilla* [and related series]). Much like *Godzilla*, Kong's appearances in television animation were far removed from his original fictional incarnation, making him less a fearsome force of nature on the loose than a kindly protector of humanity from evil. And, also like *Godzilla's*, they did him very little justice in the end.

The Rankin/Bass series from the 1960s featured Kong as a denizen of the island of Mondo, where he befriended and protected Professor Bond and his family from the evil Dr. Who (no relation to the famed British television time traveler of the same name). Two Kong adventures were sandwiched between a project that shows the program's true age to historians. *Tom of T.H.U.M.B.* merged the fairy tale about the world's smallest man with the late-1960s mania for secret-agent shenanigans, having the title character work as an op-

erative for the Tiny Humans Underground Military Bureau in the company of an Asian fellow known only as Swinging Jack.

The later *Kong* series, on the other hand, was deadly serious, much in the vein, again, of Godzilla's 2000s television animation resurrection. Here, a scientist named Lorna Jackson had somehow managed to preserve Kong's DNA after his death at the end of the original 1933 film and worked to make a (less violent) clone through the intervention of a program on the Internet. Many years later, her grandson Jason and his friend came upon the island where Kong lived and befriended him. This came in handy after Jason's mentor-turned-enemy Professor De La Porta, who had the ability to use animal DNA to shape-shift into various monster combinations, went on the attack. This series was produced originally for Canadian TV and came to American television simply as a midseason replacement, airing only 13 of its 39 episodes on the American airwaves.

***KING LEONARDO AND HIS SHORT SUBJECTS* (1960–1963)**

STUDIOS: Leonardo, TOTAL Television, P.A.T.

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

PRODUCERS: Treadwell Covington, Peter Piech

DIRECTORS: Bob Schleh, Lou Guarnier, Sam Kai

WRITERS: Buck Biggers, Chet Stover

VOICE ACTORS: Jackson Beck (King Leonardo/Biggy Rat); Allen Swift (Odie Cologne/Itchy Brother/Tooter Turtle); Kenny Delmar (Hunter); Ben Stone (Fox); Frank Milano (Wizard); George Irving, Sandy Becker, and Delo States (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: King Leonardo of Bongo Congo struggles to keep his kingdom safe from the villainous schemes of Biggy Rat and Itchy Brother. Also featured were the intrepid dog detective known as the Hunter and the Walter Mitty-esque reptile Tooter Turtle, who frequently sought advice from sagely Mr. Wizard.

COMMENTARY: The first production of TOTAL Television, which would become one of the most successful television animation producers of the 1960s, climaxing with the iconic *Underdog* (q.v.). The central elements of future series from the company were set here: cliff-hanger story lines and good art offset by bad, repetitious writing and gratuitous use of impressions for the voices (Odie Cologne sounded like Ronald Colman, for example, while the Hunter sounded like Senator Claghorn from Fred Allen's radio programs of the 1930s and 1940s [whom Delmar had also portrayed]). The studio used the same animation studio as Jay Ward did for *Rocky and His Friends/The Bullwinkle Show* (q.v.), but that, it must be stressed, was the only thing the two producers really had in common. They should not be confused for that reason as they have been in the past.

***KING OF THE HILL* (1997–2010)**

STUDIOS: Anivision, Film Roman, 3 Arts, Deedle-Dee, Judgmental, 20th Century Fox

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX

CREATORS: Mike Judge, Greg Daniels

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Mike Judge, Greg Daniels, Richard Appel, Jonathan Aibel, Glenn Berger, John Altschuler, Dave Krinsky

PRODUCER: Mark McJimsey

DIRECTORS: Wesley Archer, Gary McCarver, Klay Hall, Monte Young, Pat Shinagawa, Adam Kuhlman, Brian Sheesley, Martin Archer Jr., Chuck Sheetz, John Rice, Jeff Myers, Tricia Garcia, Chris Moeller, Cyndi Tang Loveland, Lauren MacMullan, Shaun Cashman, Jack Dyer, Dominic Polcino, Chris Moeller, Anthony Lioi, Allan Jacobsen, Chuck Austen, Kyounghee Lim, Boowhan Lim, Michael Dante DiMartino, Matt Engstrom, Robin Brigstocke, Yvette Kaplan, Julius Wu, Ken Wong, Ronald Rubio, Michael Loya, Anthony Chun, Tony Kluck, Steve Robertson, Jack Perkins

WRITERS: Mike Judge, Greg Daniels, Joe Stillman, Cheryl Holliday, Johnny Hardwick, Paul Lieberstein, Jonathan Aibel, Glenn Berger, Alan Cohen, Alan Freedland, Jonathan Collier, David Zuckerman, Jim Dauterive, Gina Fattore, John Altschuler, Dave Krinsky, Brent Forrester, Norm Hiscock, Jon Vitti, Kit Boss, Garland Testa, Alex Gregory, Peter Huyck, Dean Young, J. B. Cook, Etan Cohen, Emily Spivey, Sivert Glarum, Michael Jamin, Tom Saunders, Kel Cahoon, Dan Sterling, Dan McGrath, Tim Croston, Chip Hall, Tony Gama Lobo, Rebecca May, Wyatt Cenac, Greg Cohen, Christy Stratton, Aron Abrams, Greg Thompson, Sanjay Shah, Paul Corrigan, Brad Walsh, Dave Schiff, Judah Miller, Murray Miller, Erin Erlich, Jennifer Barrow, Blake McCormick, Jerry Collins

VOICE ACTORS: Mike Judge (Hank Hill/Boomhauer/Dr. Boomhauer/Mrs. Boomhauer/"Mee Maw" Boomhauer/Stuart Dooley/Ted Wassanasong/Octavio/Monsignor Martinez), Kathy Najimy (Peggy Hill), Pamela Segall Adlon (Bobby Hill/Leanne Platter/Donna/Clark Peters/Chane Wassanasong/Ramon Alejandro), Johnny Hardwick (Dale Gribble), Stephen Root (Sergeant Bill Dauterive/Eric Dauterive/Buck Strickland/Sergeant "Topsy" Toppington), Brittany Murphy (Luanne Platter [later Kleinschmidt]/Joseph Gribble, 1997–2000), Toby Huss (Colonel Cotton Hill/Kahn Souphanousinphone/Joe Jack/Coach Kleehammer/M. F. Thaterton), Ashley Gardner (Didi Hill/Nancy Hicks Gribble/Reverend Karen Stroup, 2000–2010), Tammy Wynette (Tillie Hill Garrison, 1997–1998), Beth Grant (Tillie Hill Garrison, 1999), K. Callan (Tillie Hill Garrison, 2000–2009), Tom Petty (Elroy "Lucky" Kleinschmidt), Paget Brewster (Myrna Kleinschmidt), Johnny Knoxville (Hoyt Platter), Joanna Gleason (Maddy Platter), David Carradine (Junichiro), Dusty Hill (Himself), Breckin Meyer (Joseph Gribble, 2000–2009), David Herman ("Bug" Gribble/Gilbert Dauterive/Randy Miller, 2000–2009/Jimmy Whichard/Buckley/Eustace Miller/Anthony Page), Meryl Streep (Esme Dauterive), Natalie Maines (Violetta Dauterive), Ellen Barkin (Lenore Dauterive), Brad Pitt (Patch Boomhauer), Lauren Tom (Minh Souphanousinphone/Connie Souphanousinphone/Cindy Wassanasong), Lucy Liu (Tid Pao Souphanousinphone), Amy Hill (Laoma Souphanousinphone/Mrs. Kakaiki-Ali'i), James Sie (General Gum/Nguc Phong), Eloy Casados (Enrique, 1997–1998), Danny Trejo (Enrique, 2002–2009), Chris Rock (Roger "Buddha" Sack, first appearance), Phil LaMarr (Roger "Buddha" Sack), Kathleen Turner ("Miss Liz")



That was a pretty good show, I tell you what. Fox Broadcasting/Photofest © Fox Broadcasting

Strickland), Reese Witherspoon (Debbie Grund), Dennis Burkley (Principal Carl Moss/Carl the Restaurateur), Cheryl Holliday (Randy Miller, 1997–1999), Ashley Johnson (Emily), Jillian Bowen (Emily), Edward Asner (Stinky), Jack Carter (Irwin Linker), Jim Cummings (Ted “Pops” Popazito/Others), Victor Aaron (John Redcorn, 1997), Jonathan Joss (John Redcorn, 1998–2009), Burt Reynolds (M. F. Thaterton, first appearance), Maurice LaMarche (Reverend Thomason), Mary Tyler Moore (Reverend Karen Stroup, 1999), Chuck Mangione (Himself), Dwight Yoakam (Lane Pratley, first appearance), Dave Thomas (Lane Pratley), Fred Willard (Officer Brown), Brian Doyle Murray (Jack), Henry Gibson (Bob Jenkins), Jennifer Coolidge (Miss Kremzer), Dawnn Lewis (Sharona Johnson), Chris Elliott (Chris Sizemore), Carl Reiner (Gary Kasner), Phil Hendrie (Tom Chick), Brendan Fraser (David Kakaiki-Ali’I, a.k.a. The Flying Hawaiian), Chelcie Ross (Fred Ebberd), Diedrich Bader (Jody “Ray Roy” Strickland), Andy Richter (Wesley Cherish), Renée Zellweger (Tammi Duvall), Snoop Dogg (Alabaster Jones), Tre Cool (Cane Skretteburg), Henry Winkler (Himself)

SYNOPSIS: Conservative-minded, Texas-based propane salesman Hank Hill and his family find it difficult understanding and adapting to a changing world around their hometown of Arlen, to say the least.

COMMENTARY: A witty and deservedly long-lasting sitcom that is about as realistic as a fictional narrative can be, which is ironic considering that it is an animated program. Judge, Daniels, and their colleagues possessed a remarkable ear for dialogue, a coherent and plausible understanding of the kinds of things that could (and did) occur within the boundaries of their setting, and a sympathetic and endearing manner of sketching their characterizations so that they could be viewed objectively, without the implied need to take sides in the frequent verbal conflicts that ensued. Judge’s portrayal of the perennially confused and conflicted Hank is one of the finest of its kind in the genre. There are very few television animation programs that are able to get on with their business in a mature manner in terms of plotting and characterization, without the insecurities that cause more inferior products to joke things up constantly for fear of losing the audience’s attention permanently. This series was one of them, and it deserves to be remembered as a well-made and sophisticated example of what television animation can be at its most thoughtful.

***KISSYFUR* (1986–1987)**

STUDIOS: DIC, Saban, NBC

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC (1986–1987, 1988–1990)

CREATOR: Phil Mendez

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Andy Heyward, Jean Chalopin

PRODUCERS: John Semper, Cynthia Friedlob, Carol Corwin, Brian Miller, Tetsuo Katayama, Koichi Ishiguro, Yasumi Ishida, Masanori Kobayashi

DIRECTORS: Bernard Deyries, David Feiss, Marek Buchwald, Masaaki Osumi, Mike Longden

WRITERS INCLUDED: Len Janson, Chuck Menville, John Semper, Cynthia Friedlob

VOICE ACTORS: R. J. Williams (Kissyfur, early episodes), Max Meier (Kissyfur, later episodes), Edmund Gilbert (Gus), Russi Taylor (Beehonie/Toot/Miss Emmy Lou/Cackle Sister/Bessie), Neil Ross (Duane), Stu Rosen (Floyd/Stuckey), Devon Feldman (Toot), Terry McGovern (Jolene), Lennie Weinrib (Lenny/Charles), Frank Welker (Uncle Shelby/Howie/Claudette), Susan Silo (Ralph)

SYNOPSIS: After escaping from a circus, eight-year-old bear cub Kissyfur and his father Gus settle among the equally anthropomorphic residents of the swampland community of Paddlecab.

COMMENTARY: A bucolic escapist folly, much in the vein of Walt Kelly's comic strip *Pogo*, minus the political agenda, as would also be the case with the later, similar Disney series *PB&J Otter* (q.v.). Where comedy failed, and it often did, music served as an entertaining substitute. The title character had been devised to be the focus of a child-centered marketing campaign beyond the series, but this was a major failure. The characters and setting were introduced in some specials aired during the 1985–1986 season, which were later rebroadcast as part of the start-and-stop scheduling of the regular series.

KRYPTO THE SUPERDOG (2005–2006)

STUDIO: Warner Brothers

DISTRIBUTOR: CW

CREATORS: Mort Weisinger (character); Alan Burnett and Paul Dini (series concept)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Sander Schwartz, Alice Cahn

PRODUCERS: Paul Dini, Linda Steiner, Alan Burnett, Scott Jeralds

DIRECTOR: Scott Jeralds

WRITERS: Alan Burnett, Paul Dini, Ken Pontac, Jennifer Gardner, John Loy, Timothy Cahill, Julie McNally Cahill, Matthew Wilson, Len Uhley, Ken Koonce, Michael Merton, Michael Maler, Wendell Morris, Bill Matheny, Matt Wayne, Bradley Zweig, Earl Kress, Andy Merrill, Mark Garabedian, Joseph Kuhr, Steven Darancette, Brennan Czar, George Patterson, Ralph Soll, Nancy French, Corey Powell, Jeff Elmassian, Phil Harnage, David Teitelbaum, Renee Palyo, Rich Fogel, Julia Lewald, Mosa Kaleel, Nancy Kaleel

VOICE ACTORS: Samuel Vincent (Krypto), Brian Drummond (Streaky), Alberto Ghisi (Kevin Whitney), Scott McNeil (Ace the Bat-Hound/Ignatius/Martin the Magnificent/Superflea), Tabitha St. Germain (Andrea Sussman/Melanie Whitley), Ellen Kennedy (Brainy Barker), Kelly Sheridan (Mammoth Mutt), Michael Dobson (Bulldog/Lex Luthor), Dale Wilson (Paw Pooch), Peter Kelamis (Tail Terrier), Terry Klassen (Tusky Husky), Trevor Devall (Hot Dog), Ty Olsson (Drooly), Michael Dangerfield (Superman), Lee Tockar (Stretch-O-Mutt), David Grove (Robbie the Bird Wander), Mark Oliver (Mechanikat), Nicole Bouma (Snooky Wookums), Kathleen Barr (Delilah/Isis), Louis Chirillo (Dogwood)

SYNOPSIS: After surviving the demise of his home planet Krypton by escaping via rocket ship, Krypto the superpowered dog uses his abilities to keep others—particularly his new human master Kevin—safe from evil.

COMMENTARY: It is difficult being an anthropomorphic animal superhero, especially when you are stuck in the confused hierarchy that is the DC universe. The human heroes get all the attention and get to be taken seriously in the

context of their programs. You, on the other hand, have to play it for laughs because apparently you're just another funny animal to those who give you life. Such was the case here. The program showed a singular lack of respect for Krypto (and his equally gifted feline companion Streaky) by making them the butt of a joke rather than the more serious-minded characters they should have been. What made this even more disappointing was the fact that Burnett and Dini, the masterminds behind the groundbreaking versions of *Batman* (q.v.) and *Superman* (q.v.) from this same studio, were the brains behind this. They knew, therefore, very well how to make good television animation superheroics without camping it up for laughs whenever they could. Surely they could have done it here.

***KUNG FU PANDA: LEGENDS OF AWESOMENESS* (2011–2016)**

STUDIOS: DreamWorks, Nickelodeon

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Peter Hastings, Cheryl Holliday, Bret Haaland

PRODUCERS: Andrew Huebner, Dean Hoff

DIRECTORS: Jim Schurmann, Gabe Swarr, Michael Mullen, Juan Meza Leon, Luther McLaurin, Lane Lueras, Aaron Hammersley

WRITERS: Doug Langdale, Scott Kreamer, Kevin Seccia, Jessica Gao, Jon Ross, Paul Rugg, Joshua Hamilton, Gene Grillo, Peter Hastings, Tom Sheppard, Kevin Campbell, Katie Matilla, Brandon Sawyer, John McCann, Allan Rice

VOICE ACTORS: Mick Wingert (Po/Zeng), Fred Tatasciore (Master Shifu/Gah-ri/Irwin/Chuntun/Grim/Bao), Randall Duk Kim (Grand Master Oogway), Kari Wahlgren (Master Tigress), Lucy Liu (Master Viper), James Sie (Master Monkey/Master Chao/Wu Kong), Max Koch (Master Mantis/Bataar), Amir Talai (Master Crane), Paul Rugg (Master Yao), Toby Huss (Mr. Yeung), Amy Hill (Mrs. Gow/Su), Tim Dadabo (Master Shenqi), Jim Meskimen (Master Kweng/Meng Tao), April Winchell (Master Mugan), Michael Leon Wooley (Master Lun), Nolan North (Master Elephant), Mindy Sterling (Master Snow Leopard), Eric Bauza (Master Rooster), Andre Sogliuzzo (Tai Lung), Lynn Milgrim (Scorpion), John DiMaggio (Fung/Wall Eye), Jim Cummings (Lidong), Kevin Michael Richardson (Temutai/Jing Mei), Wallace Shawn (Taotie), Simon Helberg (Bian Zao), Wayne Knight (Jong Sung Jai Kai Chow/Jong's Son), Jeff Bennett (Tong Fo), Wendie Malick (Fenghuang), Stephen Root (Master Junjie), Diedrich Bader (Hundun), Gary Anthony Williams (Lao/Tsao), R. Lee Ermey (General Tsin), Christopher McDonald (Undertaker), Alfred Molina (Ke-Pa), Enn Reitel (Master Ding), Maurice LaMarche (Heilang), Clancy Brown (Pai Mei), Susan Blakeslee (Mei Ling), Tohoru Masamune (Kira Kozu), Dwight Schultz (Fu-Xi), John Kassir (Sanzu), Paul Reubens (Ju-Long), Gaille Heidemann (Madame Zhou), Malcolm McDowell (Shirong), Danny Cooksey (Peng), Lauren Tom (Song), Neil Ross (Constable Hu), Matthew Moy (Yijiro)

SYNOPSIS: Martial arts expert panda bear Po and his similarly gifted colleagues defend their homeland from the forces of evil.

COMMENTARY: The original *Kung Fu Panda* movie, which featured the voices of Jack Black as Po and Dustin Hoffman as Master Shifu, was released by DreamWorks in 2008; two sequels followed, in 2011 and 2016, respectively,

along with a television special in 2010 and several video games. It also spawned this program, which, while including a number of genuinely talented people among the producers, directors, writers, and actors, was largely expected to serve simply as an extension of the overall brand, and that was what it proved to do. Consequently, this series is something that would appeal mainly to those who enjoyed the movies (and, given their popularity, there were many) at the exclusion of those in the minority, who might have felt the production resources accorded here would have been better served with a more original and less derivative property to work with.

***THE KWICKY KOALA SHOW* (1981–1982)**

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATOR: Tex Avery

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCER: Art Scott

DIRECTORS: George Gordon, Rudy Zamora, Carl Urbano

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Robert Allan Ogle (Kwicky Koala/Rawhide Clyde), John Stephenson (Wilfred Wolf), Frank Welker (Dirty Dawg), Marshall Efron (Ratso), Matthew Faison (Officer Bullhorn), Jim MacGeorge (Crazy Claws), Peter Cullen (Bristletooth), Michael Bell (Ranger Rangerfield/George Bungle), Allan Melvin (Joey Bungle)

SYNOPSIS: An anthology series consisting of four short comedy features—*Kwicky Koala*, *Dirty Dawg*, *Crazy Claws*, and *The Bungle Brothers*.

COMMENTARY: Legendary theatrical animator Avery had conceived the idea for the title feature in the short period he worked for Hanna-Barbera prior to his death in 1980. Not wanting to lose the concept, the studio built an entire show around it, developing some other features that might easily have been part of Avery's oeuvre during his prime, as well. However, typical network censorship of the content (Wilfred Wolf wanted to have Kwicky Koala as a pet as opposed to a meal, for example) watered down what might have been well-done premises. It is interesting to think how Avery himself would have handled a full-scale television animation production, as his own TV work was limited to advertising, but it might not have come out better than this or the later, more abysmal *The Wacky World of Tex Avery* (q.v.) in trying to bring his particular approach to theatrical animation to the world of TV.

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LADY LOVELYLOCKS AND THE PIXIETALES (1987)

STUDIOS: Mattel, Those Characters from Cleveland, DIC, LBS

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

PRODUCERS: Andy Heyward, Tetsuo Katayama, Brian Miller

DIRECTORS: Bernard Deyries, Kazuo Terada

WRITERS: Jack Olesker, Howard Cohen, Jody Miles Connor, Phil Harnage, Susan Leslie, Jeff Rose

VOICE ACTORS: Tony St. Vincent (Lady Lovelylocks/Pixiesparkle), Louise Vallance (Duchess Ravenwaves/Lady Curleycrown), Jeannie Elias (Maiden Fairhair/Snags/Pixiebeauty), Danny Mann (Comb Gnome/Strongheart/Prince), Brian George (Shining Glory/Hairball/Tangle/Pixieshine)

SYNOPSIS: Lady Lovelylocks, the benevolent blond-haired ruler of the Land of Lovelylocks, faces conflicts with darker-haired rivals seeking her throne.

COMMENTARY: Another toy/greeting card-based multimedia tie-in from the 1980s, this one attempting to instruct young girls in the virtues of friendship, loyalty, and personal confidence. Unfortunately, the main message presented seemed to be that people with lighter hair are better than people with darker hair, which is questionable. The program disappeared from the airwaves after one season, when the larger merchandising entity of which it was a part proved to be a commercial failure.

LASSIE'S RESCUE RANGERS (1973–1975)

STUDIOS: Filmmation, Wrather

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

PRODUCERS: Lou Scheimer, Norman Prescott, Robert Chenault

DIRECTOR: Hal Sutherland

WRITERS: Jim Ryan, Bill Danch, Chuck Menville, Len Janson

VOICE ACTORS: Ted Knight (Ben Turner/Narrator), Jane Webb (Laura Turner), Lane Scheimer (Jackie Turner, early episodes), Keith Sutherland (Jackie Turner, later episodes), Erika Scheimer (Susan Turner), Hal Harvey (Gene Fox/Ben Turner Jr.), Lassie (Herself)

SYNOPSIS: Lassie, the famous heroic collie dog, works with Ben Turner and his family in the Forest Force, designed to promote wildlife conservation and prevent forest fires.

COMMENTARY: The character originated in the story *Lassie Come Home*, written by Eric Knight and first published in the *Saturday Evening Post* in 1938. MGM adapted the story for the movies and then made several additional films starring Lassie. The dog reached her greatest fame, however, in a long-running live-action television series, running first on CBS and then in syndication, from 1954 to 1974. Since that time, Lassie has been seen occasionally in films and television, although not to the same degree of popularity.

This series was modeled on the final incarnation of the live-action show on CBS, where Lassie was the companion of Forest Ranger Corey Stewart. However, it wasn't a fit extension of the program's brand, considering it was poorly animated and written, with a raccoon and skunk in the cast as comic-relief "mascot" figures. The fact that Lassie was perennially animated with a vacuous grin made it appear artificial in nature, in comparison to the realism the live series cultivated. But to describe it as "rubbish" (as did the National Association for Better Broadcasting) or "trash" (according to Rudd Weatherwax, the trainer of the dogs playing the live-action Lassie) might be pushing it.

LAUREL AND HARDY (1966)

STUDIOS: Larry Harmon, Hanna-Barbera, Wolper

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Larry Harmon, William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Larry Harmon (Stan Laurel); Jim MacGeorge (Oliver Hardy); Paul Frees and Don Messick (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: The animated adventures of famed comedy duo Laurel and Hardy.

COMMENTARY: Stan Laurel (né Arthur Stanley Jefferson) and Oliver Hardy made their first joint film appearance in 1917 but did not work together on a regular basis until the late 1920s. Laurel, a tall, thin Englishman, had been a member of Fred Karno's traveling music hall company, where he had been the understudy for fellow member Charlie Chaplin. Hardy, a short, portly American, had previously been an extra in silent films. They were first paired by director Leo McCarey while employed at Hal Roach's studio, with Laurel taking artistic control of the duo's work when McCarey left the organization. On camera, Hardy was the domineering, bullying instigator, with Laurel playing an easily cowed, highly emotional simpleton. The difference between their sizes and personalities (and, when sound filmmaking began, their speaking voices) created a humorous contrast that sustained their career even when their popularity waned. While most effective in short subjects (their 1932 film *The Music Box* won an Academy Award in this category), they also began appearing in feature films, beginning with 1931's *Pardon Us* and finishing with 1950's *Utopia*. After Hardy's death in 1957, Laurel permanently retired from performing. Laurel received an honorary Academy Award in 1960 and died five years later.

Harmon, best known as the franchiser of *Bozo the Clown* (q.v.), was responsible for developing the idea of featuring the duo as animated characters in the 1960s. Reportedly, he had gained Laurel's blessing by ensuring that the comedians' wives would be the principal beneficiaries of any profits the films made. The films did not emerge until the year after Laurel died, although Harmon had already franchised the duo's images for other merchandise before then. By the time they were finally seen, they were received disappointedly. This was not simply due to them being poorly animated—it was the fact that no latter-day imitators of the duo could ever fully recapture the magic of the original pair's performances.

LAVERNE AND SHIRLEY IN THE ARMY
(AND RELATED SERIES)

***Laverne and Shirley in the Army* (1981–1982)**

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, Paramount

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATOR: Garry Marshall

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCER: Art Scott

DIRECTORS: George Gordon, Carl Urbano, Rudy Zamora, Bob Goe, Terry Harrison

WRITERS INCLUDED: Duane Poole

VOICE ACTORS: Penny Marshall (Laverne DeFazio), Lynn Marie Stewart (Shirley Feeney), Kenneth Mars (Sergeant Turnbuckle)

***Laverne and Shirley with the Fonz* (1982–1983)**

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, Paramount

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATOR: Garry Marshall

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCER: Art Scott

DIRECTORS: George Gordon, Carl Urbano, Rudy Zamora, Bob Goe, Terry Harrison

WRITERS INCLUDED: Duane Poole

VOICE ACTORS: Penny Marshall (Laverne DeFazio), Lynn Marie Stewart (Shirley Feeney), Ron Palillo (Sergeant Squealy), Henry Winkler (Arthur “Fonzie” Fonzarelli), Frank Welker (Mr. Cool)

SYNOPSIS: Live-action sitcom stars Laverne and Shirley enter the military and get up to predictable hijinks.

COMMENTARY: A spin-off of *Happy Days*, the highly popular sitcom *Laverne and Shirley* (ABC, 1976–1983) focused on a pair of working-class women trying to get ahead in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, during the 1950s. (During the 1980–1981 season, the characters relocated to California, where they remained for the rest of the show’s run.) The program received mixed reviews and was notorious for the off-screen friction between its stars, Marshall and Cindy Williams (who did not participate in the animated version), the latter exiting the program in 1982. The animated series did little to create novelty, putting them through the typical tropes related to military greenhorns, other than the novelty of having their sergeant during the second year be an anthropomorphic pig! The second year also imported their old pal Fonzie from his own contemporary animated series (see *Fonz and the Happy Days Gang*) to run the motor pool with his dog Mr. Cool in tow. That did little to further distinguish or save the series from cancellation.

LAZER TAG ACADEMY (1986–1987)

STUDIOS: Ruby-Spears, Alchemy II, Worlds of Wonder

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Joe Ruby, Ken Spears

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Noelle Harding (Jamie Jaren), Booker Bradshaw (Draxon Dreer, a.k.a. Silas Mayhem), Patrick Fraley (Charlie/Skugg), Billy Jacoby (Tom Jaren), Christina McGregor (Beth Jaren), Tress MacNeille (Genna Jaren), Sid McCarthy (Olanga), Frank Welker (Andrew Jaren), R. J. Williams (Nicky Jaren)

SYNOPSIS: Thirteen-year-old Jamie Jaren, an agent of the Lazer Tag Academy, travels to the 20th century from 3010 to halt the villainous schemes of evil time traveler Draxon Dreer/Silas Mayhem.

COMMENTARY: An adaptation of a popular video game with a much more complicated backstory than its source seemed to merit, which was perhaps why it was only able to last one year in its original form. However, under the title *Lazer Patrol*, it was rerun successfully on the Sci-Fi Channel between 1993 and 1996.

***THE LEGEND OF CALAMITY JANE* (1997)**

STUDIOS: Contre Allée, Gangster, Canal+, Warner Brothers

DISTRIBUTOR: WB

PRODUCERS: Michel Pinard, Thierry Rivard

DIRECTOR: Pascal Morelli

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Jennifer Jason Leigh (Calamity Jane, one episode), Barbara Scaff (Calamity Jane), Clancy Brown (James “Wild Bill” Hickok), Frank Welker (Joe Presto), Miriam Flynn (Lonely Sue), Michael Horse (Quanna Parker), Tim Matheson (Captain John O’Rourke), Mark Rolston (Bill Doolin)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: One of the most colorful figures of the historical American West, Martha “Calamity Jane” Canary (1849–1903) was a boisterous tomboy based in Arizona and the Dakotas who dressed and behaved as a man, including being deadly accurate with a gun. Yet she was also capable of more sympathetic acts, such as nursing the sick during a smallpox epidemic in Deadwood, South Dakota. Her relationship with the legendary lawman “Wild Bill” Hickok was one of friendship but not necessarily of romance. She has been depicted many times in films and television, most notably in an eponymous 1953 musical film that featured Doris Day in the title role.

This very short-lived program (three episodes) followed traditional protocol by depicting Jane as a beautiful young woman (which she actually was not) and ignoring her addictions to alcohol and tobacco, while having her wield a bullwhip as a weapon in place of a gun. The animation, produced in Spain and Belgium with dubbed-in English dialogue, was above average for North America, but the series was abruptly removed from the air in America with little in the way of explanation from network brass. However, the website related to the series remained online well into the 2000s.

***THE LEGEND OF KORRA* (2012–2014)**

STUDIOS: Ginormous Madman, Studio Mir, Studio Pierrot, Nickelodeon

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

CREATORS: Michael Dante DiMartino, Bryan Konietzko

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Michael Dante DiMartino, Bryan Konietzko, Joaquim Dos Santos

PRODUCERS: Tim Yoon, Ki Hyun Ru, Lauren Montgomery

DIRECTORS: Joaquim Dos Santos, Ki Hyun Ru, Colin Heck, Ian Graham, Melchior Zwyer, Michael Dante DiMartino

WRITERS: Michael Dante DiMartino, Bryan Konietzko, Tim Headrick, Joshua Hamilton, Katie Matilla

VOICE ACTORS: Janet Varney (Korra), Seychelle Gabriel (Asami Sato), David Faustino (Mako), P. J. Byrne (Bolin), J. K. Simmons (Tenzin), Mindy Sterling (Lin Beifong), Dee Bradley Baker (Naga/Pabu/Oogi/Tarrlok), Steven Blum (Amon), Lance Henriksen (Amon's Lieutenant), Daniel Dae Kim (Hiroshi Sato), Clancy Brown (Yakone), Lisa Edelstein (Kya), Aubrey Plaza (Eskaa), James Remar (Tonraq), Stephanie Sheh (Zhu Li), Eva Marie Saint (Katara), Steven Yeun (Wan), Henry Rollins (Zaheer), Grey DeLisle (Ming-Hua), Bruce Davison (Zuko), Alyson Stoner (Opal), Anne Heche (Suyin Belfong), Jim Meskimen (Bataar/Daw), Zelda Williams (Kuvira)

SYNOPSIS: In a world separated into communities based on the elements (earth, air, fire, and water), benders are capable of manipulating these elements in their worlds to their advantage. Only avatars are capable of bending all four elements. Korra is one of those; the series follows her evolution from naïve student of the art to heroic master.

COMMENTARY: A sequel to *Avatar: The Last Airbender* (q.v.), set 70 years later in the same universe and with largely the same production team involved. As with its predecessor, it had a complex, ongoing story line divided into four "books," one related to each of the elements, as well as an effective, anime-inspired production style, which allowed it to effectively address issues related to conflict and sexuality that others series of its kind might have handled ineptly or not at all. Again, as with its predecessor, it was well received, but unlike *Avatar*, it has not been adapted for any other media besides animation—at least not yet.

THE LEGEND OF PRINCE VALIANT (1991–1992)

STUDIOS: Hearst Media, IDDH Groupe Bruno Rene Hurchez, Polyphonfilmund Fernsehgesellschaft mbH, Sei Young, King Features, Family Channel

DISTRIBUTOR: Family Channel

CREATOR: Harold "Hal" Foster

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Miller, Jeffrey Schorr

PRODUCERS: David Corbett, Mary Chojnowski Corbett, Gwen Wetzler

DIRECTORS: Michael Lyman, Marla Dall, Ron Myrick, Mike Kaweski

WRITERS INCLUDED: Diane Dixon

VOICE ACTORS: Robby Benson (Prince Valiant), Michael Horton (Arn), Efrem Zimbalist Jr. (King Arthur), Samantha Eggar (Queen Guinevere), Alan Oppenheimer (Merlin), Tim Curry (Sir Gawain), Noelle North (Lady Rowanne)

SYNOPSIS: Prince Valiant is a knight in training at the court of King Arthur in Camelot.

COMMENTARY: Canadian-born artist Foster, who had previously worked on the comic strip version of *Tarzan* (q.v.), developed the comic strip *Prince Valiant*

in 1937, focusing on a young knight in Camelot whose adventures ultimately led to him becoming king of his own kingdom. Foster used the format of a “continuing legend” that combined Shakespearian dialogue, painstakingly accurate illustration, and captioned literary text, all of which stood out from other strips of its time, and allowed it to endure past its author’s death into the 21st century. The popularity of the strip was such that King Features, which owned the copyright on the character, attempted to expand his reach into animation, with limited success. While Foster’s artistic style was well-emulated and his serialized narrative adopted for this program, making Valiant’s younger self the focus of the series weakened its appeal to older viewers. The studio also made the mistake of including a female knight (Rowanne) in the cast. This was an act that, while politically correct for the time in which the series was produced, was a flagrant violation of Foster’s sacrosanct respect for the way things were done in his hero’s place and time.

THE LEGEND OF TARZAN (2001–2003)

See *Tarzan* (and related series).

THE LEGEND OF WHITE FANG (1992–1994)

STUDIOS: CINAR, Crayon Animation, France Animation

DISTRIBUTOR: HBO (United States, 1994)

CREATOR: Jack London

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Micheline Charest

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Mark Hellman (White Fang), Patricia Rodriguez (Wendy Scott), Michael Rudder (“Beauty” Smith), Terrence Scammell (Weedon Scott/Alex De Lazlo), Neil Shee (Raven Moon), Rick Jones (Matt Laberge), Pierre Lenoir (Sergeant Oakes)

SYNOPSIS: In the Klondike district of the Yukon, during the fabled Gold Rush of the late 19th century, White Fang, a wolf-dog cross who lives on the boundaries between civilization and wilderness, has a number of adventures, often involving rescuing his young human friend Wendy Scott from peril.

COMMENTARY: Originally serialized in the magazine *The Outing* before being published as a book in 1906, *White Fang* was a follow-up to London’s iconic success *The Call of the Wild*, published three years before and covering much of the same structural and characterization territory. Whereas London stressed that outrageous mistreatment by human beings had driven White Fang to fully embrace his wild wolf heritage at the expense of being a tame dog, the series tempered this by making him a more enigmatic figure, being able to nobly assist his human friends when he felt they needed his assistance but perennially viewed with suspicion by those who hated or distrusted him. Seemingly to make up for bending London’s original plot to meet their needs, the producers used some of the character names from the novel for their characters, although they didn’t really resemble their models. “Beauty” Smith, while keeping his ironic nickname, was a vicious brute in the novel, whereas in the series he was simply a dim-witted lackey of the refined villain

De Lazlo. Likewise, Weedon Scott, a hard-bitten but sympathetic old man in the novel, was made younger and more appealing here, in part because he was also made the widowed father of Wendy. The series managed to effectively balance the wilderness-versus-civilization themes and metaphors of London's work with more contemporary concerns related to the environment and indigenous peoples (represented here by White Fang's friend and ally, the shaman Raven Moon), making it a far more skilled and enjoyable literary adaptation than is typical for such works in television animation.

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA (1989)

STUDIOS: Nintendo, DIC, Viacom

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

PRODUCERS: Andy Heyward, Robby London

DIRECTOR: John Grusd

WRITERS INCLUDED: Reed Shelley, Bruce Shelley

VOICE ACTORS: Cyndy Preston (Princess Zelda), Jonathan Potts (Link), Len Carlson (Ganon/Moblin), Elizabeth Hanna (Triforce of Wisdom), Allan Coates (Triforce of Power)

SYNOPSIS: Teenaged Princess Zelda, accompanied by similarly aged adventurer Link, competes with the villainous wizard Ganon for control of the realm of Hyrule.

COMMENTARY: Airing as a segment of *The Super Mario Brothers Super Show* (q.v.), this was an adaptation of one of Nintendo's most popular video game franchises that attempted to put some weight on a typically thin good-versus-evil plotline imported from the game, with only mixed success. However, in a number of ways, it proved to be better than others of its kind during that time, both the animated *Super Mario* segments it originally aired with and others as well.

LEGION OF SUPER HEROES (2006–2008)

STUDIOS: Warner Brothers, DC Comics

DISTRIBUTOR: CW

CREATORS: Otto Binder, Al Plastino

PRODUCERS: Unknown

DIRECTORS: Ben Jones, Lauren Montgomery, Tim Maltby, Brandon Vietti, Scott Jeralds, James Tucker

WRITERS: Amy Wolfram, Matt Wayne, Scott Sonneborn, John Esposito, Rob Hoegee, Marty Isenberg, Stan Berkowitz, Rob Hummell, David Slack, Michael Jelenic, Greg Weisman, J. M. DeMatteis, Eddie Guzelian, Keith Damron, Joseph Kuhr, Steven Melching

VOICE ACTORS: Michael Cornacchia (Bouncing Boy), Adam Wylie (Brainiac 5/Colossal Boy/Computo), Alexander Polinsky (Chameleon Boy/Matter Eater Lad/Chlorophyll Kid/Calamity King), Wil Wheaton (Cosmic Boy/Roderick Doyle), Tara Platt (Dream Girl), Dave Wittenberg (Ferro Lad/Gullug), Andy Milder (Lightning Lad), Keith Ferguson (Karate Kid/Nemesis Kid), Heather Hogan (Phantom Girl), Kari Wahlgren (Saturn Girl/Shrinking Violet/

Triplicate Girl/Duo Damsel/Infectious Lass/Ayla Ranzz), Bumper Robinson (Star Boy/Ontirr), Yuri Lowenthal (Superman/Kell-El, a.k.a. Superman X/Stone Boy), Shawn Harrison (Timber Wolf/Ron-Karr), James Arnold Taylor (Ultra Boy/Lightning Lord/Color Kid/Porcupine Pete), Jennifer Hale (Emerald Empress, early episodes), Tara Strong (Emerald Empress, later episodes/Alexis Luthor/Eesper), David Sobolov (Persuader), David Lodge (Tharok/Controller), Harry Lennix (Dr. Mar Londo, early episodes), Dorian Harewood (Dr. Mar Londo, later episodes), Greg Ellis (Drax), Khary Payton (Hunter/Tyr), Taylor Negron (Starfinger), Lauren Tom (Zyx), Richard McGonagle (Mordru, early episodes), Jim Ward (Mordru, later episodes), Phil Morris (Imperiex), Lex Lang (Grimbor the Chainsman/R. J. Brande), Jeff Black (Terra-Man), Corey Burton (Brainiac), April Winchell (President Winema Wazzo)

SYNOPSIS: In the fourth millennium, the Legion of Super Heroes, a team of largely teenaged superpowered beings, becomes responsible for protecting the newly formed political entity known as the United Planets from the forces of evil.

COMMENTARY: Introduced in a comic book series originated by Binder and Plastino in the late 1950s, the legion was a project with calculated appeal to DC's largely teenage readership. Although it was an organization with high standards for membership (potential members were always audited and vetted through very thorough "auditions"), it managed to acquire a diverse and interesting number of members over the scattered years of its comic book existence, with numerous "boys," "lads," and "girls" among its ranks. Despite the concept's age and vintage, it adapted well to television animation in part because the physical powers and exoticism of many of the legion's members seemed tailor-made for the moving medium. Unfortunately, due to internal politics within the various Warner subsidiaries, it didn't last nearly as long as it could have. Nor was any real attempt made to transcend the various superhero tropes that were continually rehashed in the episode stories.

***LIBERTY'S KIDS* (2002)**

STUDIOS: DIC, Melusine, Hong Ying Universe

DISTRIBUTOR: PBS

CREATORS: Kevin O'Donnell, Michael Maliani

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Andy Heyward, Robby London, Michael Maliani

PRODUCERS: Kevin O'Donnell, Karen Brown

DIRECTOR: Judy Reilly

WRITERS INCLUDED: Cat Sides, James Marshall

VOICE ACTORS: Reo Jones (Sarah Phillips), Chris Lundquist (James Hiller), Kathleen Barr (Henri), D. Kevin Williams (Moses), Annette Bening (Abigail Adams), Warren Buffett (James Madison), Aaron Carter (Joseph Martin), Walter Cronkite (Benjamin Franklin), Billy Crystal (John Adams), Michael Douglas (Patrick Henry), Don Francisco (Governor Galvez), Whoopi Goldberg (Deborah Sampson), Dustin Hoffman (Benedict Arnold), Yolanda King (Elizabeth Freeman), Liam Neeson (John Paul Jones), Arnold Schwarzenegger (Baron Von Steuben), General H. Norman Schwarzkopf (Colonel Clark), Sylvester Stallone (Paul Revere), Ben Stiller (Thomas Jefferson), Michael York (Sir William Howe)

SYNOPSIS: During the American Revolution, teenagers Sarah Phillips (loyal to Britain) and James Hiller (an American patriot) work as apprentices to newspaper publisher Benjamin Franklin.

COMMENTARY: A well-intentioned and largely successful project that was more open-minded and pluralistic in exploring the politics of the colonial era than other previous and more blatantly pro-American projects and therefore reflected an attempt to portray a more realistic portrait of that time. The historical accuracy of the narratives, however, was somewhat overshadowed by the presence of numerous celebrities in the vocal cast, as noted in the voice actor credits. Of these, Cronkite as Franklin (portrayed as the anchorman of the anachronistic "Liberty News Network" TV news service) did best, earning an Emmy nomination, and Schwarzenegger, for once cast in a part where his ethnicity was not a handicap, acquitted himself well. The others, not so much.

***THE LIFE AND TIMES OF JUNIPER LEE* (2005–2007)**

STUDIO: Cartoon Network

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATOR/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Judd Winick

PRODUCERS: Janet Dimon, Shareena Carlson, Frank Squillace

DIRECTORS: Frank Squillace, Brian Larsen, Fred Reyes, Vincent Edwards, Jason Park, David Chlystek, Shannon Denton, Jim Schumann, Jill Trousdale, Alex Que, Harry Sabin, Patrick Kochakji, Mike Kunkel, Jennifer Coyle, Rafael Rosado

WRITERS: Judd Winick, Tim McKeon, Marsha Griffin, Tom Franck, Adam Pava, Michael Jelenic, Eric Kentoff, Kevin Seccia

VOICE ACTORS: Lara Miller (Juniper Lee), Amy Hill ("Ah-Mah" Jasmine Lee), Kath Soucie (Ray Ray Lee), Carlos Alazraqui (Monroe/Michael Lee), Alexander Polinsky (Dennis Lee), Colleen O'Shaughnessy (Jody Irwin), Candi Milo (Ophelia Ramirez/Ms. Gomez/Barbara), Tara Strong (Roger Radcliffe/Beatrice), Phil LaMarr (Marcus Conner), Martin Jarvis (William)

SYNOPSIS: Eleven-year-old Juniper Lee functions as the Te Xuan Ze, the protector of Earth from the magical forces of the Veil, a role inherited from her grandmother Jasmine.

COMMENTARY: An interesting and intriguing program that cleverly worked its premise without removing all the joy from the basic idea in the process. Winick, a former cast member of MTV's *The Real World* who has since become a prolific comic book author, understood exactly who his series was aimed at and proceeded accordingly. The result was a series that did not offend or alienate those outside of the targeted age group, increasing its appeal. As with its contemporary from Disney *American Dragon: Jake Long* (q.v.), it served to introduce Occidental viewers to previously unknown aspects of Oriental magic without being chauvinistic or condescending in the process, an exceedingly rare achievement.

***LIFE'S A BITCH* (2003–2004)**

STUDIOS: Cinemania, Oxygen Media

DISTRIBUTOR: Oxygen

CREATOR: Roberta Gregory

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Mo Collins (Midge McCracken), Khandi Alexander (Yolanda), Elaine Stritch (Mom)

SYNOPSIS: Internet entrepreneur Midge McCracken finds numerous opportunities to complain about the difficulties of her life.

COMMENTARY: Based on Gregory's comic book series *Naughty Bits*, this series originated on television as a segment of the anthology series *X-Chromosome* (q.v.) before its short run as an independent program. The comic viewpoint was skewed toward women in their 30s (Midge's age), to the exclusion of other ideas and viewpoints, which was entirely appropriate considering the series aired on the women-centric Oxygen network. However, it was off-putting to those not part of that demographic.

***LIFE WITH LOUIE* (1995–1999)**

STUDIOS: Hyperion, Hassan, FOX

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX (1995–1999, 2001)

CREATORS: Louie Anderson, Matthew O'Callaghan

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Louie Anderson, Thomas Wilhite, Willard Carroll, Ahmos Hassan

PRODUCERS: John Lanza Jr., Russell Marleau

DIRECTORS: Bert Ring, Matthew O'Callaghan

WRITERS: Sean Dwyer, Joshua Fisher, Michael Gandolfi, Russell Marleau, Andy Rose, Mary Rubin, David Silverman

VOICE ACTORS: Louie Anderson (Little Louie Anderson/Andy Anderson/Narrator), Edie McClurg (Ora Anderson), Miko Hughes (Tommy), Justin Shenkarow (Mike Gruenwald/Glen Glenn), Debi Derryberry (Jeannie Harper), Mary Wickes (Grandma)

SYNOPSIS: Eight-year-old Louie Anderson deals with the difficulties of growing up in the town of Cedar Knoll, Minnesota.

COMMENTARY: Veteran stand-up comic Anderson presented a realistic but simplified portrait of his youth in this series. Realism was shown particularly in the characterizations, such as that of overbearing father Andy and younger brother Tommy, which defied stereotypical assumptions about television animation. The series was simplified in that it ignored the fact that, in real life, Anderson was 1 of 11 children and his father was a raging, abusive alcoholic, elements that would have been difficult to animate in more than one way. Despite the simplistic nature of its format, it was received well, winning two Emmys, a Genesis Award, and three Humanitas Awards over the course of its run.

***LILO AND STITCH* (2003–2006)**

STUDIO: Disney

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATORS: Dean DeBlois, Chris Sanders

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Tony Craig, Roberts Gannaway, Jess Winfield

PRODUCER: Clark Spencer

DIRECTORS: Roberts Gannaway, Tony Craig, Chris Sanders, Dean DeBlois, Vic Cook, Don McKinnon

WRITERS: Roberts Gannaway, Tony Craig, Jess Winfield, Kevin Campbell, Thomas Hart, Brian Swenlin, Madellaine Paxson, John Wray

VOICE ACTORS: Daveigh Chase (Lilo), Chris Sanders (Stitch), Tia Carrere (Nani), Kevin McDonald (Pleakley), Ving Rhames (Cobra Bubbles), David Ogden Stiers (Dr. Jumba), Kevin Michael Richardson (Captain Jumba), Jeff Bennett (Baron Jacques Von Hamsterveil), Liliana Mumy (Mertle Edmonds), Shaun Fleming (Keoni Jameson), Rob Paulsen (Experiment #625)

SYNOPSIS: Lilo, a young Hawaiian girl, is friends with Stitch, an alien experiment produced by scientist Dr. Jumba.

COMMENTARY: Based on the highly popular 2002 film of the same name and targeted toward the people who were fans of said film. The adaptation to television, which saddled the concept with formulaic and derivative elements not originally present and robbed the idea of its freshness, was not entirely successful. McDonald's clever and amusing performance as the highly effeminate alien Pleakely was the program's central grace.

***LINUS THE LIONHEARTED* (1964–1966)**

STUDIOS: Ed Graham, General Foods

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

PRODUCERS: Ed Graham, Irv Spence

DIRECTORS: Gerald Baldwin, Clyde Geronimi, George Singer, Marvin Woodward

WRITERS INCLUDED: Bill Schnurr

VOICE ACTORS: Sheldon Leonard (Linus), Carl Reiner (Billie Bird/Sascha Grouse/Dinny Kangaroo), Bob McFadden (So-Hi/Rory Raccoon/Lovable Truly), Ruth Buzzi (Granny Goodwitch), Jesse White (Claudius Crow), Gerry Matthews (Sugar Bear), Ed Graham (Mockingbird)

SYNOPSIS: Runyon-esque lion king Linus commands his empire from a barber chair that serves as his throne. Other featured characters included the gently wheedling Sugar Bear; Lovable Truly, an effeminate mailman; and So-Hi, a diminutive Asian boy who told fables.

COMMENTARY: A series that was the very definition of "30-minute animated commercial," as the majority of the characters had first been developed as spokes-characters for various cereals in General Foods' Post division. Initially, this conflict between ad and narrative content was ignored, but it would later lead to the program being withdrawn from circulation for a number of years. This was a shame, considering the 39 episodes (produced at \$87,000 per installment) were above average for the time, were well written and directed, and featured in the voice cast (in addition to those noted in the voice actor credits) such figures as Jonathan Winters, Anne Meara, Jerry Stiller, and Paul Frees. A revival is overdue, particularly because only Sugar Bear continues to be used as an advertising figure for Post today.

THE LIONHEARTS (1998)

STUDIOS: MGM, Claster

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Ruth Bennett, Jonathan Dern, Paul Sabella, Byron Vaughns

DIRECTORS INCLUDED: Byron Vaughns

WRITERS INCLUDED: Peter Hunziker

VOICE ACTORS: William H. Macy (Leo Lionheart), Peri Gilpin (Lana Lionheart), Natasha Slayton (Kate Lionheart), Cameron Finley (Spencer Lionheart), Nicolette Little (Judy Lionheart), Jeffrey Tambor (Hank), Betty White (Dorothy), Harve Presnell (Leo Lionheart Sr.), Joe Pantoliano (Director), Wallace Shawn (Freddy)

SYNOPSIS: The private life of Leo, MGM's leonine mascot, and his family.

COMMENTARY: Leo was created by Howard Dietz for the Goldwyn company in 1917 (Dietz also created the faux-Latin slogan *Ars Gratia Artis*, placed above Leo in the logo) and was retained as the company logo when Goldwyn merged with Metro Pictures and Louis B. Mayer Productions to form MGM in 1924. He has remained the company's figurehead through good times and bad, with several different lions portraying him over the years. This particular series was produced during bad times with a strongly reflected eye toward the good, given that many of the characters had names that had once belonged to stars who reigned at MGM during the glory years. It reflected the paucity of material available to the company's television animation unit, which expired soon after the series did. However, the series did score Emmy nominations for its theme music and for Tambor's portrayal of the domineering current boss of MGM.**THE LION KING'S TIMON AND PUMBAA (1995–1997)**

STUDIO: Disney

DISTRIBUTORS: Syndicated, CBS

PRODUCERS: Tony Craig, Roberts Gannaway, Jeff DeGrandis, Rob LaDuca

DIRECTORS: Tony Craig, Roberts Gannaway, Jeff DeGrandis, Rob LaDuca, Eddy Houchins, John Kimball, Marsh Lamore, Rick Leon, Kirk Tingblad, Woody Yocum, Bob Zamboni

WRITERS INCLUDED: Roberts Gannaway, Heather Kenyon

VOICE ACTORS: Nathan Lane (Timon, early episodes), Quinton Flynn (Timon, later episodes), Ernie Sabella (Pumbaa), Nancy Cartwright (Pumbaa Jr.), Robert Guillaume (Rafiki), Corey Burton (Quint), Scott Bullock (Fred), Estelle Harris (Timon's Mother), Townsend Coleman (Vulture Policeman #1), Brian Cummings (Vulture Policeman #2)

SYNOPSIS: Timon the meerkat and Pumbaa the warthog engage in a variety of adventures in and out of their jungle home.

COMMENTARY: This oddly paired but effective duo made their debut as comic relief but narratively important figures in Disney's epic 1994 animated feature film *The Lion King*. The film's massive popularity led to a television spin-off with Lane and Sabella, who played the characters in the film, reprising

their parts, although Lane withdrew soon after production commenced. The producers did their best to try to make the duo short-subject comedy stars in the Disney studio's tradition, but it was mostly a failure. They proved to be best served by the film, both in its original form and a later, direct-to-video version, titled *The Lion King 1½*, which provided additional, previously unknown biographical information about the pair.

LIPPY THE LION (1962)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

PRODUCERS/DIRECTORS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Daws Butler (Lippy the Lion), Mel Blanc (Hardy Har Har)

SYNOPSIS: Braggart lion Lippy is often forced to act on his boasts, unsuccessfully, while his companion, the lugubrious hyena Hardy Har Har, looks on in despair.

COMMENTARY: This five-minute feature was paired with two series of similar length (*Touché Turtle* [q.v.] and *Wally Gator* [q.v.]) under the umbrella title of *The Hanna-Barbera New Cartoon Series*. Under this arrangement, individual stations could choose to play the three features as a combined program or to broadcast each segment at separate times. On a creative level, the projects represented an emerging decline in the effectiveness of formulas the studio was already in the process of overusing. However, they are significant in that they were the first Hanna-Barbera projects to be both produced and broadcast in color; previous series, while filmed in color, were first broadcast in black-and-white formats.

LIQUID TELEVISION (1991–1993)

STUDIOS: Colossal, BBC, MTV

DISTRIBUTOR: MTV

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Abby Terkuhle

PRODUCERS: Japhet Asher, Prudence Fenton, John Payson, Amy Cappen

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: An influential animation anthology series, showcasing a variety of styles in an ever-evolving format that strongly encouraged viewers to stay tuned for what was coming next. Contributors included Bill Plympton and Richard Sala; *Æon Flux* (q.v.), *Beavis and Butt-head* (q.v.), and *Stickin' Around* (q.v.) appeared in their earliest incarnations here.

LITTLE BEAR (1995)

STUDIOS: Nelvana, John B. Carls, Wild Things, CBC

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon (United States)

CREATORS: Else Holmelund Minarik, Maurice Sendak

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Maurice Sendak, John B. Carls

PRODUCERS: Michael Hirsh, Patrick Loubert, Clive Smith, Stephen Hodgins, Patricia Burns

DIRECTORS: Raymond Jafelice, Anna Selznick, John Van Bruggen

WRITERS INCLUDED: John B. Carls

VOICE ACTORS: Kristin Fairlie (Little Bear), Janet Laine Green (Mother Bear), Dan Hennessey (Father Bear), Amos Crawley (Owl), Tracey Ryan (Duck), Elizabeth Hanna (Hen), Andrew Sabiston (Cat), Jennifer Martini (Emily), Ashley Taylor (Mitzi), Diane D'Aquila (Grandmother Bear), Sean McCann (Grandfather Bear)

SYNOPSIS: Little Bear, a young cub, learns about life in the woods in the company of his friends.

COMMENTARY: Based on a long-running series of books by Minarik and Sendak, although Sendak's involvement was prioritized (the full title of the series was *Maurice Sendak's Little Bear*). This may have been because, as noted in the credits, he was the series' executive producer. Nevertheless, the series was effective in bringing the anthropomorphic prosocial universe he and Minarik had developed in the books to television animation effectively, given its limited audience, aims, and desires.

***LITTLE BILL* (1999)**

STUDIO: Viacom

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

CREATOR: Bill Cosby

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Bill Cosby, David Brokaw, Charles Kipps

PRODUCERS: Shawn Cuddy, Brian Street, Misma Zaman, Robert Scull

DIRECTOR: Jennifer Oxley

WRITERS INCLUDED: Fracaswell Hyman, Eric Weil

VOICE ACTORS: Ruby Dee (Alice the Great), Gregory Hines (Big Bill), Phylicia Rashad (Brenda), Xavier Pritchard (Little Bill), Monique Beasley (April), Devon Beckford (Bobby), Eunice Cho (Kiko), Ayo Haines (Miss Murray, early episodes), Melanie Nicholls King (Miss Murray, later episodes), Zachary Tyler (Andrew), Kiana Underwood (Fuchsia)

SYNOPSIS: Kindergarten-aged Little Bill experiences life and his imagination in the company of his family and friends.

COMMENTARY: One of three animated series produced by Cosby or inspired by his work (the others being *Fat Albert and the Cosby Kids* [q.v.] and *Fatherhood* [q.v.]), this was the gentlest and most simplistic in tone, given that it was clearly aimed at an audience of young children. Developed from a series of children's books written by Cosby and illustrated by Varnelle Honeywood, the series focused on a child's-eye view of the world, with the children portrayed by actual children and the animation done in the style of cutout pictures from construction paper to convey the effect. Dee earned an Emmy nomination for her portrayal of Little Bill's imposing but affectionate grandmother.

***THE LITTLE CLOWNS OF HAPPYTOWN* (1987–1988)**

STUDIOS: Murakami-Wolf-Swenson, Marvel, ABC

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

PRODUCER: Fred Wolf

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Charlie Adler, Susan Blu, Danny Cooksey, Patrick Fraley, Ellen Gerstel, Howard Morris, Ron Palillo, Josh Rodine, and Frank Welker (Specific roles unknown)

SYNOPSIS: Life in the all-clown community of Itty Bitty City.

COMMENTARY: Designed as a means of encouraging a positive attitude and to laugh at life as often as possible, this program was well intentioned but was swiftly lost among the hurly-burly of Saturday morning. Norman Cousins, an editor at *Atlantic Weekly* who had used daily laughter therapy to survive a debilitating bout with cancer, served as a consultant.

***A LITTLE CURIOUS* (1999)**

STUDIO: Curious Pictures

DISTRIBUTOR: HBO

CREATORS: Steve Oakes, John Hoffman

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Richard Winkler

DIRECTORS: Steve Oakes, John Hoffman, Hunt Squibb

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: One of the first original animated series created for HBO, this project was designated as "mixed media for preschoolers" because it combined live-action footage, stop-motion photography, 2-D celluloid animation, and 3-D CGI. The "Video Lunchbox" technique used by the animators allowed them to create still pictures of the characters and then film them in the same fashion as live images, giving a unique view of work in progress. In contrast, the subjects of the episodes were very basic (e.g., soft, up, down, etc.) with similarly designed characters (e.g., Doris the Door).

***THE LITTLE LULU SHOW* (1995)**

STUDIOS: CINAR, Loonland, Western Publishing, HBO, CTV

DISTRIBUTOR: HBO (United States)

CREATOR: Marge (Marjorie Henderson Buell)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Micheline Charest, Ronald Weinberg, Peter Volke

DIRECTORS: Nick Rijgersberg, Greg Bailey, Louis Piche

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Tracey Ullman (Little Lulu, early episodes), Jane Woods (Little Lulu, later episodes/Iggy), Bruce Dinsmore (Tubby), Michael Caloz (Annie), Ajay Fry (Alvin), Andrew Henry (Willie), Pauline Little (Mrs. Moppet), Jacob Tierney (Wilbur), Angelina Bolvin (Gloria)

SYNOPSIS: Little Lulu, an outspoken young girl, is not afraid of trying to prove herself superior to other children in the neighborhood.

COMMENTARY: Marge first developed Lulu as a feature in the *Saturday Evening Post* in the mid-1930s, and Lulu proved popular enough to become an animated character for the first time in a series of films for Paramount in the 1940s. However, Lulu is probably best known to modern popular cultural followers for her long stint as a comic book character for the Dell company in the 1940s and 1950s, which were done not by the creator but the uncredited (and, until recently, unheralded) writer/artist John Stanley. It was Stanley's fictional universe and the characters and atmosphere he created to sustain

Lulu as a comic book figure that the producers of this series drew from for inspiration more than the original model, and this was done in a highly effective manner that very accurately reflected both Stanley's drawing style and his subject matter. Ullman was heard as Lulu during the program's first season, with Woods taking over during the second.

***THE LITTLE MERMAID* (1992–1995)**

STUDIOS: Disney, Buena Vista

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATOR: Hans Christian Andersen

PRODUCERS: Jamie Mitchell, Todd Anasti, Patsy Cameron

DIRECTORS: Jamie Mitchell, Mircea Mantta

WRITERS INCLUDED: Todd Anasti, Patsy Cameron

VOICE ACTORS: Jodi Benson (Ariel), Samuel Wright (Sebastian), Kenneth Mars (King Triton), Edan Gross (Flounder), Mary Kay Bergman (Spot)

SYNOPSIS: Ariel, the mermaid daughter of undersea monarch Triton, defiantly chafes at the restrictions her father imposes on her.

COMMENTARY: Andersen's original story of a maiden's sacrifice in the name of true love has often been sacrificed itself in the name of finding a more positive ending in media adaptations. None more so than in Disney's 1989 animated feature film, an enormous, Oscar-winning hit. This series was set up as a prequel to the film, with Ariel portrayed as (slightly) younger than in the source. But much of the original film was still there: The voice actors were the same, and the animators even used the same model sheets and character movement charts used by the film's animators to ensure accuracy. However, there was not much more to the story that the film hadn't already told, and particularly minus the film's enchanting musical score, it was hard sailing unless you were a truly devoted fan of the film.

***THE LITTLE RASCALS* (1982–1984)**

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, King World

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATOR: Hal Roach

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: Art Scott, Don Jurwich, Oscar Dufau

DIRECTORS: Ray Patterson, George Gordon, Bill Hutten, Bob Hathcock, Carl Urbano, Rudy Zamora, Bob Goe, Terry Harrison

WRITERS: Mark Evanier, Bryce Malek, Jack Mendelsohn, Dick Robbins, Jan Green, Rich Fogel, Jim Simon, Tom Yakutis

VOICE ACTORS: Scott Menville (Spanky), Julie McWhirter Dees (Alfalfa/Porky/Woim), Patty Maloney (Darla), Shavar Ross (Buckwheat), B. J. Ward (Butch/Waldo), Peter Cullen (Officer Ed/Pete the Pup)

SYNOPSIS: The adventures of a rough-hewn gang of kids, circa the mid-1930s.

COMMENTARY: Producer Roach initiated the *Our Gang* comedies (as they were originally known) in the late 1920s and kept them going until the late 1930s, with his distributor, MGM, keeping it going for a few years after that. The

latter's ownership of the *Our Gang* name led the films to be retitled *The Little Rascals* for the extensive television distribution and the 1993 feature film based on the series by which they became known to modern audiences. Among the better-known members of the group, whose screen characters were used for this highly derivative and cloying animated version, were George "Spanky" McFarland, Carl "Alfalfa" Switzer, Darla Hood, Billie "Buckwheat" Thomas, Darwood "Waldo" Kaye, Tommy "Butch" Bond, Sidney "Woim" Kirkpatrick, and Eugene "Porky" Lee (who successfully sued Hanna-Barbera for using his characterization without authorization). The program aired with *Pac-Man* (see *The Pac-Man Show*) and *Richie Rich* (q.v.) during its first season and alone during its second.

***LITTLE ROSEY* (1990–1991)**

STUDIOS: Little Rosey, Nelvana

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Roseanne Arnold, Tom Arnold

PRODUCERS: Michael Hirsh, Patrick Loubert, Clive Smith

WRITERS INCLUDED: Pam Sauder

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Kathleen Laskey (Little Rosey), Noam Zylberman (Buddy), Pauline Gillis (Tess), Lisa Yamanaka (Nanny/Tater), Judy Marshak (Mom), Tony Daniels (Dad), Stephen Bednarski (Jeffrey/Matthew)

SYNOPSIS: The adventures of opinionated preteen girl Rosey.

COMMENTARY: This was largely a vanity project financed by executive producer Roseanne Arnold (née Barr, eventually known just by her first name) after she achieved enormous success starring in the long-running live-action sitcom *Roseanne* for ABC. Behind-the-scenes turmoil, also an issue with her live series in relation to the network and studio, led the project to end after a single year. However, Roseanne resurrected the lead character and her male cohort Buddy in an eponymous 1992 prime-time special, voicing the character herself this time.

***THE LITTLES* (1983–1986)**

STUDIOS: DIC, Tetsuo Katayama, ABC

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATOR: John Peterson

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Andy Heyward, Jean Chalopin

DIRECTOR: Bernard Deyries

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Jimmy Keegan (Henry Bigg), Bettina Bush (Lucy), Donovan Freberg (Tom), Alvy Moore (Grandpa), Laurel Page (Mrs. Bigg), Robert D. Hall (Mr. George Bigg/Dinky), B. J. Ward (Ashley), Patrick Fraley (Slick)

SYNOPSIS: The Littles, a diminutive race of pixie-like humans, are introduced into our world through the machinations of normal-sized human Henry Bigg.

COMMENTARY: Peterson created the characters for a series of children's books from publisher Scholastic, although the concept of diminutive humans in

conflict with larger humanity had been done earlier and better by Mary Norton in her *Borrowers* books. The characters' origins in a children's book series, along with their diminutive stature, were likely the main reasons they were picked up for series development, as many series of this time were influenced by either one of these trends or the other.

***LITTLE SHOP* (1991–1992)**

STUDIOS: Marvel, Saban

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Haim Saban, Joe Taritero, Winston Richard, Ellen Levy

PRODUCER: Tom Tataranowicz

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS INCLUDED: Mark Edward Evans

VOICE ACTORS: Harvey Atkin, David Huban, Tamar Lee, Roland "Buddy" Lewis, and Marlo Vola (Specific roles unknown)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: An animated series version of the 1986 movie musical *Little Shop of Horrors*, itself derived from a stage presentation based on the 1961 Roger Corman film of the same name. Given the intended audience and venue, the horrific elements of the story were removed entirely and the characters reduced in age, with the focus shifting to mundane issues that were stereotypically believed to be the concerns of teenagers.

***THE LITTLEST PET SHOP* (1995)**

STUDIOS: Sunbow, Claster

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

PRODUCER: Greg Chalekian

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Lynda Boyd (Viv), Gary Chalk (Sarge), Babs Chula (Chloe), Tel Cole (Squeaks), Ian Corlett (Elwood Funk), Mike Donovan (Stu), Shirley Mil-liner (Delilah), Sarah Strange (Rookie), Lee Tockar (Chet)

SYNOPSIS: Elwood Funk is the manager of the title establishment, which specializes in selling miniature animal specimens that have trouble staying sold.

COMMENTARY: Based on a Hasbro toy line, as was the later series of the same name (see the next entry), this was a series clearly aimed at young children, specifically girls, although some of the more adventurous scriptwriters inserted the odd clean adult joke here and there.

***THE LITTLEST PET SHOP* (2012–2016)**

STUDIOS: DHX Media, Hasbro

DISTRIBUTORS: The Hub (2012–2014), Discovery Family (2014–2016)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Julie McNally Cahill, Timothy Cahill, Stephen Davis, Chris Bartleman, Kirsten Newlands

PRODUCERS: Chantal Hennessey, Lesley Jenner

DIRECTORS: Joel Dickie, Dallas Parker, Steven Garcia, Mike Myhre

WRITERS: Julie McNally Cahill, Timothy Cahill, Roger Eschbacher, Mitch Larson, Evan Gore, Heather Lombard, Corey Powell, Cindy Morrow, Merriwether

Williams, Adam Beechen, Tom Minton, Guy Toubes, F. M. DeMarco, David Shayne, Eric Rogers, Nick Confalone

VOICE ACTORS: Ashleigh Ball (Blythe Baxter/Hubble/Baa Baa Lou/Mitzi), Samuel Vincent (Russell/Fisher Biskit/Josh Sharp/Esteban/Old Bananas/Steve/Sweet Cheeks/Captain Cuddles/Speedy Shellberg), Tabitha St. Germain (Pepper/Clarissa Trent/Gail/Nutmeg Dash/Stephanie "Steph" Hart/Cairo/Jun Ling/Delilah/Parker), Kira Tozer (Minka/Sue Patterson/Aunt Christie/Olive Shellstein), Nicole Oliver (Zoe, speaking voice/Velvet/Cashmere/Meow-Meow), Kylee Epp (Zoe, singing voice), Peter New (Sunil/John Trent/Francois LeGrande/Mary Frances/Digby/Pete/Joey Featherton/Otto Von Fuzzlebutt/Dodger/Whiskers/Big Al/Weber/Basil/Harold/Ivan), Kyle Rideout (Vinnie), Jocelyne Loewen (Penny, speaking voice), Laura Hastings (Penny, singing voice), Kathleen Barr (Mrs. Twombly/Jasper Jones/Madame Pom/Scout/Sunshine Sweetness/Dolores/Poppy Pawsley/Fleur le Moose), Shannon Chan Kent (Whittany Biskit/Brittany Biskit/Youngmee Song/Eliza Biskit/Madison), Michael Kopsa (Roger Baxter), Brooke Goldner (Emma Hart/Peachy Fluffton), Colin Murdock (Ramon/Wiggles McSunbask/Tangier/Twist/Cheep Cheep), Cathy Weseluck (Buttercream Sundae/Judi Jo Jameson/Ling Jun), Kelly Metzger (Sugar Sprinkles), Brian Drummond (Shahrukh/Shivers/Ollie Arms/Desi/Ling Pen/Goldy), Terry Klassen (Princess Stori), Anne Yoo (Jebbie), Lee Tockar (Sideburns), Heidi Klum (Heidi, the Lady Yodely of the High D), Casey Wilson (Felina Meow)

SYNOPSIS: After hitting her head on a dumbwaiter, Blythe Baxter discovers she has the ability to talk to animals, which is put to good use at the title establishment and elsewhere.

COMMENTARY: A rare case where a revival is more interesting and entertaining than its forerunner, though it was energized by merging it with the lead character of another Hasbro-owned toy line here. It also helped that it had experienced management behind the scenes—the Cahills had previously created and produced *My Gym Partner's a Monkey* (q.v.), while other writers had worked on that series and other quality programs, so the characterization, at least, was above average. Yet, despite this advantage and a successful four-year run, the series was never entirely able to transcend its origins as a corporate toy property and therefore could not entirely develop a secure creative identity of its own. The cloyingly bad names of many of the supporting characters did not help in the slightest.

***LITTLE WIZARDS* (1987–1988)**

STUDIOS: Janson and Menville, Marvel

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Len Janson, Chuck Menville

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Charlie Adler, Joey Camen, Peter Cullen, Katie Leigh, Danny Mann, Scott Menville, Amber Souza, and Frank Welker (Specific roles unknown)

SYNOPSIS: Three diminutive wizards—Boo, Gump, and Winkle—aid heroic Prince Dexter in his aim to regain control of his kingdom from villainous King Renwick.

COMMENTARY: Largely derivative of Disney's *Adventures of the Gummi Bears* (q.v.), with a bit of *Hamlet* thrown in for good measure. Though magic was used as a source of good rather than evil, it wasn't enough to keep this show on the air, victim as it was of an increasingly overexploited Saturday-morning trend.

LLOYD IN SPACE (2001–2002)

STUDIOS: Paul and Joe, Disney

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATORS: Paul Germain, Joe Ansolabehere

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Paul Germain, Joe Ansolabehere, Mark Drop

PRODUCERS: Howy Parkins, Stephen Swofford, Bart Jennett

DIRECTORS INCLUDED: Howy Parkins, Chuck Sheetz

WRITERS INCLUDED: Paul Germain, Joe Ansolabehere, Bart Jennett, Richard Whitley

VOICE ACTORS: Courtland Mead (Lloyd Nebulon), April Winchell (Captain Nora Nebulon), Nicollette Little (Francine Nebulon), Bill Faggerbakke (Kurt), Pamela Hayden (Douglas), Justin Shenkarow (Eddie), Brian George (Station), Tress MacNeille (Miss Bolt), Clancy Brown (Horton)

SYNOPSIS: Lloyd Nebulon endures middle school onboard the space station *Luna Vista*, commanded by his mother.

COMMENTARY: The duo behind the successful *Recess* (q.v.) here tried and failed to repeat the same experiment in a more exotic setting, with more exotic characters, as well. Plotting and characterization were paper thin, and despite the use of a number of guest stars, nothing could make things better. It was perhaps more notable for the off-screen jockeying that allowed the producers to have their production company billed on equal terms with the Disney logo at the end of the episodes than anything that occurred prior to that.

THE LONE RANGER

***The Lone Ranger* (1966–1969)**

STUDIOS: Format, Lone Ranger, Wrather

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATORS: Fran Striker, George W. Trendle

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Arthur Jacobs

PRODUCER: Herb Klynn

DIRECTORS INCLUDED: John Halas, Joy Batchelor, Art Babbitt, Bill Tytla

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Michael Rye (The Lone Ranger), Shepard Menken (Tonto), Agnes Moorehead (Black Widow), Dick Beals (Tiny Tom), Hans Conreid (Etcetera, early episodes), Marvin Miller (Etcetera, later episodes/Warlock)

***The Lone Ranger* (1980–1982)**

STUDIO: Filmmation

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATORS: Fran Striker, George W. Trendle

PRODUCERS: Lou Scheimer, Norman Prescott, Don Christensen

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS INCLUDED: Arthur Brown, Marty Warner, Robby London

VOICE ACTORS: William Conrad (billed as J. Darnoc; The Lone Ranger/Announcer), Ivan Naranjo (Tonto)

SYNOPSIS: The Lone Ranger, the famed masked lawman of the Old West, and his indigenous companion Tonto deal with evil threats that cross their path.

COMMENTARY: *The Lone Ranger* began as a radio series broadcast originally on WXYZ in Detroit between 1933 and 1954 and later syndicated nationally via the Mutual network. It was also adapted for live-action television during the 1950s and made into several films (most recently a creative and financial fiasco released by Disney in the 2010s). This version differed from the earlier incarnations in that, rather than fighting traditional western outlaws, the Lone Ranger and Tonto were often thrown into combat with the exotic mad-scientist and mad-woman types then cluttering television animation. In other words, it made them exactly like any other heroes of Saturday morning of that time. The later series featuring them would not make the same mistake.

The second series was the superior version of the two animated versions of the masked man, in part because of Filmation's commitment to quality and fidelity. This allowed this series to more accurately resemble the radio and live-action television versions, down to the opening narration and *William Tell Overture* theme music. Casting radio veteran Conrad as the Ranger was a good call, though why he chose a pseudonymous billing is an unresolved mystery. The program had a strong educational bent, shown not only in the now-standard usage of postnarrative PSAs but also in the use of historical figures (such as, in a memorable joint appearance, Buffalo Bill Cody and Annie Oakley) as supporting characters.

The program aired in tandem with Filmation's *Tarzan* (q.v.) series during the 1980–1981 season and with *Tarzan* and *Zorro* (q.v.) during 1981–1982.

LOONATICS UNLEASHED (2005–2007)

STUDIO: Warner Brothers

DISTRIBUTOR: WB (2005–2006), CW (2006–2007)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Sander Schwartz

PRODUCERS: Ron Myrick, Miguel Gaban

DIRECTORS INCLUDED: Dan Fausett, Curt Walstead, Kenny Thompson

WRITERS INCLUDED: Chris Brown, Brian Swenlin, Mark Hoffmeier, Vinny Montello, Christopher Painter, Jack Monaco, Len Uhley, Stephen Kriozere, Wendell Morris, Steve Cuden

VOICE ACTORS: Charlie Schlatter (Ace Bunny), Jessica DiCicco (Lexi Bunny), Jason Marsden (Danger Duck/Rupes Oberon), Kevin Michael Richardson (Slam Tasmanian/Tech E. Coyote/Queen Grannicus, disguised voice), Rob Paulsen (Rev Runner/Mr. Leghorn, later episodes/Gorlop), Candi Milo (Zadavia/Queen Grannicus, normal voice/Ma Runner/Sagittarius Stomper's Mother), Jeff Bennett (Dr. Fidel Chroniker/Professor Zane), Bill Farmer (Mr. Leghorn,

early episodes), Maurice LaMarche (Ophiuchus Sam/Pierre Le Pew), Joe Alaskey (Royal Tweetums/Syth Vester/Melvin the Martian/Stoney), Daran Norris (Pa Runner), Mikey Kelley (Rip Runner), Billy West (Sagittarius Stomper/Electro J. Fudd), Bob Bergen (Pinkster Pig), James Arnold Taylor (Bugsy), Tom Kenny (Gunnar the Conqueror), Steven Blum (Fuz-Zs), Vivica Fox (Black Velvet), Kaley Cuoco (Weather Vane), Simon Templeman (Dr. Thomas Dare), Tim Curry (Ringmaster), Dee Bradley Baker (Otto the Odd), Michael Clarke Duncan (Massive), Phil LaMarr (Sypher), David Faustino (Time Skip), Florence Henderson (Mallory "Mastermind" Casey), Charlie Adler (Optimatus), Khary Payton (General Deuce), Mark Hamill (Adolpho), Serena Williams (Queen Athena), William "Bootsy" Collins (Bootes Belinda)

SYNOPSIS: In the year 2772, the city-planet of Acmetropolis is struck by a meteor, knocking it off its axis and granting many of its residents superhuman abilities. Six teenage residents gifted in this fashion team up to form the superheroic Loonatics to defend the community from evil.

COMMENTARY: The phrase "What were they *thinking?*" could easily describe any of the quick-buck ventures in which the classic *Looney Tunes* characters have been exploited by the management of Time Warner in the 21st century but probably not more so than here. It was hard to tell whether the series was to be taken straight at face value or as a joke, mainly because the producers could not decide that for themselves. Unlike other series of the time that deftly managed to combine comedy, drama, and action (mostly in unexpected ways), this series was too stark in its nature to be seen as funny and too flippant to be seen as straight, so it worked as neither. It ended up being yet another case of how Warner clearly does not know how to stop exploiting the animated characters whose copyrights it owns whenever there is money to be made from them.

THE LOONEY TUNES SHOW (2011–2014)

STUDIO: Warner Brothers

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Sam Register

PRODUCERS: Spike Brandt, Tony Cervone, Matt Danner, Hugh Davidson, Rachel Ramras

DIRECTORS: Spike Brandt, Tony Cervone, Chris Headrick, Jeff Siergey, Mauricio Pardo, Keith Davidson, Swinton Scott III, Seth Kearsley, Ethan Spaulding

WRITERS: Jim Cashman, Hugh Davidson, Larry Dorf, Rachel Ramras, Pat Devine, Steve Little, Ben Falcone, Doug Langdale, Steve Mallory, Steve Borst, Seth Kearsley, Paul Rugg, Mark Banker

VOICE ACTORS: Jeff Bergman (Bugs Bunny/Daffy Duck/Sylvester/Tweety/Foghorn Leghorn/Pepe Le Pew, later episodes), Bob Bergen (Porky Pig), Fred Armisen (Speedy Gonzales), Maurice LaMarche (Yosemite Sam/Blacque Jacques Shellaque/Henry Bear), Kristen Wiig (Lola Bunny), Jennifer Esposito (Tina Russo, first season), Annie Mumolo (Tina Russo, second season), Jim Cummings (Tasmanian Devil/Beaky Buzzard), Rob Paulsen (Mac), Jess Harnell (Tosh), John Kassir (Pete Puma), Eric Bauza (Marvin the Martian), Roz Ryan (Witch Lezah), Kwesi Boakye (Gossamer), June Foray (Granny), Stephanie Courtney

(Young Granny), Rene Auberjonois (Pepe Le Pew, first season), Billy West (Elmer Fudd), Garry Marshall (Dr. Weisberg), John O'Hurley (Walter Bunny), Grey DeLisle (Patricia Bunny, first season/Carol/Mama Bear), Wendi McLendon Covey (Patricia Bunny, second season), Ben Falcone (Henery Hawk), Jim Rash (Cecil Turtle), Dennis Farina (Frank Russo), John DiMaggio (Hugo the Abominable Snowman/Junior Bear), Hugh Davidson (Slowpoke Rodriguez), Katy Mixon (Petunia Pig), Chuck Deezy (Rodney Rabbit)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: This rather convoluted attempt at modernizing a group of iconic cartoon characters for the 21st century was structured as a situation comedy, with Bugs, having gotten rich by inventing a popular carrot peeler, enduring the freeloading efforts of Daffy while romancing Lola (a modern character introduced in the 1995 film *Space Jam* but presented as a vastly different personality here). Brandt and Cervone presumably got the job of producing this after their revival work on the earlier *Duck Dodgers* (q.v.) and continued that program's mostly tedious production track record here. The most interesting episode, ironically, was the last, which told a condensed version of the stories of the films in Warner's *Superman* (q.v.) series, with Bugs in the lead role as Super Rabbit.

However, having not learned their lesson, Warner then proceeded to produce another unnecessary modernized version of the characters in *Wabbit* (q.v.).

LUNCH BOX (1989–1994)

STUDIO/DISTRIBUTOR: Disney

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: A long-running anthology series of child-centric short-form series, some of them American, others from other countries, with Great Britain being a major contributor. Regular features included *Rupert*, *Will Quack Quack*, and *The Adventures of Spot*, the latter based on the long-running British book series created by Eric Hill and by far the most popular feature.

• M •

MAD (2010–2013)

STUDIO: Warner Brothers

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATOR: Harvey Kurtzmann

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Sam Register, Peter Girardi, Curtis LeLash, Nick Weidenfeld, Conrad Montgomery

PRODUCERS: Kevin Shinck, Mark Marek, Dave Mandel

DIRECTOR: Aaron Horvath

WRITERS: Kevin Shinck, Aaron Blitzstein, Marly Halpern Glazer, Steve Borst, Justin Becker, Ben Joseph, Greg White, Mason Steinberg

VOICE ACTORS: Kevin Shinck, Hugh Davidson, Mikey Day, Larry Dorf, Rachel Ramras, Gary Anthony Williams, and others (Specific roles unknown)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: *Mad* magazine debuted in 1952, edited by Kurtzmann and published by EC Comics, operated by William M. Gaines. Originally a comic book, it lived up to its name by presenting a variety of highly comic features, including parodies of current American popular culture, that helped it gain and retain a strong following. In 1955, the comic converted to a magazine format to escape growing censorship in the comic book business, with Kurtzmann replaced as editor by Albert Feldstein. Over the next several decades, the magazine established itself as a major satirical voice in North America, with a flippant, entertaining style maintained by the “Usual Gang of Idiots” (as per the masthead) until inevitable decline ensued in the 1990s. The magazine, now under the banner of DC Comics, continues to be published, with issue number 543 coming out in 2017. The magazine’s name was also licensed for a popular live-action comedy-variety series airing on FOX between 1995 and 2009 and briefly revived on the CW in 2016.

This animated series was more faithful to the magazine’s content compared to the variety series, featuring animated versions of some long-running features, such as *Spy vs. Spy* and the bizarrely constructed illustrations of the late Don Martin. However, it tended to reflect the much more lowbrow approach adopted by the magazine at the time of the series’ production rather than the more sophisticated work of years past, and therefore it tended to discredit the magazine’s name rather than honor it, although the magazine had been discrediting itself for years before.

Hanna-Barbera had attempted to license the *Mad* name for a similar series project in the 1980s, but this failed to materialize. This may likely have been the impetus for the production of their similarly structured series *Jokebook* (q.v.) during that decade.

MADELINE (1993–1995)

STUDIOS: DIC, Family Channel

DISTRIBUTORS: Family Channel (1993–1995), ABC (as *The New Adventures of Madeline*; 1995)

CREATOR: Ludwig Bemelmans

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Andy Heyward, Robby London, Saul Cooper, Pancho Kohner, Michael Maliani

PRODUCERS: Stan Phillips, Lisa Salamone

DIRECTORS: Stan Phillips, John Wilson, Judy Reilly

WRITERS INCLUDED: Judy Rothman, Lori Crawford

VOICE ACTORS: Tracey Lee Smythe (Madeline, early episodes/Danielle, early episodes), Andrea Libman (Madeline, later episodes), Louise Vallance (Miss Clavel/Genevieve), Christopher Plummer (Narrator), David Morse (Pepito), Veronika Sztopa (Danielle, later episodes), Kirstin Fairlie (Danielle, later episodes)

SYNOPSIS: Madeline is the smallest and self-proclaimed bravest of the twelve girl students at Miss Clavel's boarding school in Paris, France.

COMMENTARY: Author/artist Bemelmans wrote the first of the books featuring Madeline (named for his wife) in 1939, with several sequels produced in the following years by Bemelmans and others. Bemelmans drew in an overhead fashion with a wide forced perspective, which earned him both child and adult fans. Madeline was first animated in a 1952 theatrical short produced by UPA and was previously animated by DIC for HBO in 1988 before this series, with CINAR producing an adaptation between. The weekly nature of the program forced the abandonment of Bemelmans's storytelling style in favor of more conventional sitcom-style plotting, which the voice actors did not help by speaking with exaggerated Gallic accents. Nevertheless, Bemelmans's artwork was reproduced respectfully, and Plummer's narration kept order on the chaos. The ABC series' run was abruptly ended after barely a month, but the entire contents of both series have been consistently rebroadcast on cable since then.

MAD JACK THE PIRATE (1998–1999)

STUDIOS: Bill Kopp, FOX Arts, Saban

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX

CREATOR: Bill Kopp

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Bill Kopp, Eric Rollman

DIRECTOR: Jeff DeGrandis

WRITERS: Bill Kopp, Steve Ochs, Martin Olson

VOICE ACTORS: Bill Kopp (Mad Jack), Billy West (Snuk), Jess Harnell (Flash Dashing), Tom Kenny (Wizard), Brad Garrett (Darsh the Dragon), Cam Clarke (Fuzzy)

SYNOPSIS: Inept pirate Mad Jack sails his poorly constructed ship, *The Sea Chicken*, across the flat planet known as the Slab.

COMMENTARY: A spoof of pirate adventure films and about as funny as some of the creatively weak straight films in that genre. Kopp admitted that the pop-

ular live-action British comedy series *Blackadder* was his main inspiration, but he was unable to emulate that program's success, as internal politics and bad scheduling at FOX combined to sink his project after a short run.

MAGGIE AND THE FEROCIOUS BEAST (2000)

STUDIOS: Paraskevas, Nelvana

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon (United States)

CREATORS: Betty Paraskevas, Michael Paraskevas

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Betty Paraskevas, Michael Paraskevas, Patrick Loubert, Michael Hirsh, Clive Smith

DIRECTOR: Jamie Whitney

WRITERS INCLUDED: Heidi Foss

VOICE ACTORS: Kristen Bone (Maggie), Stephen Ouimette (Beast), Michael Caruana (Hamilton Hocks)

SYNOPSIS: In the alternate universe of Nowhere Land, Maggie and her friends the Beast and Hamilton (a pig) repeatedly learn lessons related to friendship.

COMMENTARY: Based on a children's book project by the Paraskevases, this series was geared toward a preschool audience and showed it in every frame. Consequently, there was only so much plot, dialogue, and characterization to set things in motion, and everything else was simply let go at that.

THE MAGIC SCHOOL BUS (1994–2003)

STUDIOS: Nelvana, Scholastic, South Carolina ETV

DISTRIBUTORS: PBS, FOX (1998–2001), TLC (1999–2003), Noggin (2003)

CREATORS: Joanna Cole, Bruce Degen

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Alison Blank, Kristin Laskas Martin, Jane Startz, Patrick Loubert, Michael Hirsh, Clive Smith

PRODUCERS: Stephen Hodgins, Karen Stevens, Patricia Burns, Vince Comisso, Hasmi Giakoumis

DIRECTORS: Charles Bastien, Larry Jacobs

WRITERS INCLUDED: Jocelyn Stevenson, George Bloom

VOICE ACTORS: Lily Tomlin (Ms. Frizzle), Malcolm Jamal Warner (Producer), Amos Crawley (Arnold, early episodes), Daniel Tamberelli (Arnold, later episodes), Tara Meyer (Dorothy Ann), Lisa Yamanaka (Wanda), Daniel DeSanto (Carlos), Erica Luttrell (Keesha), Maia Filar (Phoebe), Stuart Stone (Ralphie), Andre Ottley Lorant (Tim), Paul Winfield (Mr. Ruhle)

SYNOPSIS: Elementary schoolteacher Ms. Frizzle uses the title vehicle to teach her students lessons on a variety of subjects.

COMMENTARY: Based on author Cole and illustrator Degen's children's book series from Scholastic Publishing (the publisher put its name in possessive form in the official series title), this was a well-produced educational project that won over many hard-to-please critics of television and animation in its long run on a variety of programming sources. Tomlin (who won an Emmy for her work on the show in 1995), Warner, and Winfield were just the tip of the iceberg in terms of celebrity participation; guest performers included Edward Asner, Ed Begley Jr., Carol Channing, Tyne Daly, Dom DeLuise, Sherman



Ms. Frizzle in the driver's seat. Public Broadcasting Service (PBS)/Photofest © Public Broadcasting Service (PBS)

Hemsley, Eartha Kitt, Bebe Neuwirth, and Tony Randall, while Little Richard sang the series' theme music in his trademark flamboyant style.

MAGILLA GORILLA (1964)

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, Columbia, Ideal Toys

DISTRIBUTORS: Syndicated (1964), ABC (1966–1967)

PRODUCERS/DIRECTORS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Allan Melvin (Magilla Gorilla/Punkin Puss), Howard Morris (Mr. Peebles/Mush Mouse/Breezly), Jean Vander Pyl (Ogee), Don Messick (Ricochet Rabbit), Mel Blanc (Droop-a-Long Coyote/Sneezly), John Stephenson (Colonel Fusby)

SYNOPSIS: A variety series with several rotating segments. Featured segments included *Magilla Gorilla*, an oversized, friendly denizen of Mr. Peebles's pet shop; *Punkin Puss and Mush Mouse*, two feuding hillbillies; *Ricochet Rabbit*, an energetic anthropomorphic Wild West lawman; and, later, *Breezly and Sneezly*, a polar bear and seal in conflict with the commander of Alaska's Camp Frostbite.

COMMENTARY: Launched with great fanfare (including a promotional behind-the-scenes film showing life at Hanna-Barbera at the time) in January 1964 over 151 stations, this program was highly popular at the time of its first airing and remains attractive in reruns, although the production quality was merely average in comparison to what the studio had produced before then. In January 1965, *Ricochet Rabbit* was removed from the series and transferred to *The Peter Potamus Show* (q.v.), another Hanna-Barbera-Ideal collaboration, to bolster that program's weak ratings; *Breezly and Sneezly*, originating on *Potamus*, then moved to *Magilla*. New episodes were produced for both programs' ABC runs, in which the supporting components were juggled yet again between the two shows.

MARSUPILAMI (1993–1994)

STUDIOS: Disney, Buena Vista

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATOR: Andre Franquin ("Marsupilami")

PRODUCERS: Ed Wexler, Bill Kopp, Jeff DeGrandis, Bob Hathcock

DIRECTORS INCLUDED: Ed Wexler, Bob Hathcock, Jeff DeGrandis, Vincent Basals, Marsh Lamore, James Walker, Karen Peterson

WRITERS INCLUDED: Bill Matheny, Kevin Hopps, Ken Koonce, Bill Kopp, Gary Sperling, David Wiemers

VOICE ACTORS: Steve Mackall (Marsupilami), Jim Cummings (Maurice/Norman), Samuel Wright (Sebastian), Jason Marsden (Shnookums), Frank Welker (Meat), Dan Castalleneta (Stuie/Groom), June Foray (Norman's Aunt), Steve Landesberg (Eduardo), Tress MacNeille (Woman), Rene Auberjonois (Chef Louie)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: A Disney mash-up of three disparate comedies that were not nearly as amusing as their producers assumed they were. *Marsupilami* was created by Franquin, a contemporary of *The Smurfs* (q.v.) creator Peyo, for *Spirou* magazine in the 1950s and was first seen in English form in America as a component of Disney's earlier *Raw Toonage* (q.v.). Marsupilami himself was a cheetah with an enormously long tail that served as a weapon against hunters, on the occasions when his gorilla pal Maurice did not come to his aid. The second segment featured Sebastian, the Jamaican-accented crab from *The Little Mermaid* (q.v.), now reincarnated as the concierge of a hotel. Added to the series in 1994 was the wacky conflict between cat Shnookums and dog Meat, which read like a collaboration between Tex Avery and John Kricfalusi but failed to resemble either's work effectively. Nevertheless, this project eventually got a funny cartoon show of its own.

THE MARVEL ACTION UNIVERSE (1988)

STUDIOS: Marvel, Orion, New World

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Margaret Loesch Stimpson, Lee Gunther

PRODUCERS: Rick Hoberg, Larry Houston, Will Meugniot, Stan Lee

DIRECTORS: Ray Lee, Neal Warner, Rudy Cataldi, Tom Ray, Eileen Dunn, Charlie Downs, Margaret Nichols, Stan Phillips

WRITERS INCLUDED: Rick Hoberg, Larry Houston, Will Meugniot, Larry Parr

VOICE ACTORS: Charlie Adler, Michael Bell, Robert Bockstael, Earl Boen, Barbara Budd, Wally Burr, Len Carlson, Andi Chapman, Cam Clarke, Joe Colligen, Peter Cullen, Shawn Donahue, Patrick Fraley, Ronald Gans, Dan Gilvezan, Rex Hagon, Dan Hennessey, Ron James, Gordon Masten, Greg Morton, Noelle North, Alan Oppenheimer, Pat Pinney, Susan Roman, Neil Ross, Susan Silo, Kath Soucie, John Stephenson, Alexander Stoddart, Alan Stewart Coates, Chris Ward, and Frank Welker (Specific roles unknown)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: This was Marvel's attempt at producing a 90-minute syndication block, à la Hanna-Barbera's *The Funtastic World of Hanna-Barbera* (q.v.). Featured components included *Spider-Man* (q.v.), rebroadcasts of the 1981 network series featuring that character; *Robocop*, based on the popular 1987 film of the same name about a robotic police officer; and *Dino Riders*, where modern adventurers got caught back in prehistoric times and in conflict with the villainous Vipers, who attempted to use modern technology to increase the intelligence of T-rexes in order to achieve their evil desires. Originally, five segments were to have been produced, but production problems, including a contemporary strike by the Writers Guild of America, prevented this from happening. One of the canned features focused on the X-Men, eventually to star in a series of their own (see *X-Men*).

THE MARVELOUS MISADVENTURES OF FLAPJACK (2008–2010)

STUDIOS: Cartoon Network, Screen Novelties

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATOR/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER/DIRECTOR: Thurop Van Orman

PRODUCERS: Pernelle Hayes, Jennifer Pelphrey

WRITERS: Thurop Van Orman, J. G. Quintel, John Infantino, Patrick McHale, Mike Roth, Pendleton Ward, Kent Osborne, Brett Varon, Alex Hirsch, Steve Little, Cindy Morrow, Somvilay Xayaphone, Ghostshrimp, Sean Szeles, Cole Sanchez, Nate Cash, Chris Reccardi, Benton Conner, Derek Evanick, Peter Browngardt, Max Winston, Noel Belknap, David Smith, Tom King, Piero Piluso, Ako Castuera

VOICE ACTORS: Thurop Van Orman (Flapjack), Brian Doyle Murray (Captain K'nuckles), Roz Ryan (Bubbie), Jeff Bennett (Peppermint Larry/Inventor/Sea Urchin #1), Steve Little (Dr. Julius Barber), Daran Norris (Dock Hag), Jackie Buscarino (Sally Syrup), Richard McGonagle (Eight-Armed Willy), Scott Bullock (Patch), Kent Osborne (Thomas Hatch), Kevin Michael Richardson (Sea Urchin #2)

SYNOPSIS: Young aspiring adventurer Flapjack is caught between the influence of disreputable Captain K'nuckles and matronly whale Bubbie growing up in Stormalong Harbor.

COMMENTARY: A cleverly produced and amusing series that never completely got the exposure or respect it deserved. Creator Van Orman combined his life-long affection for the sea with a uniquely designed steampunk-type universe that brought to mind both the technology and the moral ambiguity inherent

in 19th-century media, as reflected particularly in many fictional narratives from that time. He likewise did an excellent job portraying the lead character, whose engaging innocence was repeatedly tested by his dangerous, well-animated adventures but typically remained intact throughout. Doyle Murray and Ryan did similarly good work, although Bennett's mentally deranged storekeeper Peppermint Larry frequently stole the show from everyone in his hilariously memorable appearances.

MARVEL SUPERHEROES (1966)

STUDIOS: Grantray-Lawrence, Paramount, ARP, Krantz

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Steve Krantz

PRODUCERS: Robert Lawrence, Shamus Culhane

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Unknown

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: Marvel Comics' first attempt at animating its heroic characters and, because of subpar production quality, by far the worst. Each segment (195 produced) ran for six minutes and was budgeted at the bare-bones level of \$6,000 per segment, with the copying-based process of Xerography used in place of more elaborate animation. Consequently, the animation as such was restricted to extreme movement between poses and carefully controlled lip movements, although the cliff-hanger scripts, written by the Marvel staff themselves, compensated in some ways but not in enough of them. Eventually, both Stan Lee and veteran Marvel fans disowned the program, but its historical role in expanding the company's brand beyond the comic book medium should not be ignored. Grantray-Lawrence went on to do a (slightly) better job animating another Marvel property, *Spider-Man* (q.v.), the following year.

MARVIN THE TAP DANCING HORSE (2000)

STUDIOS: Paraskevas, Nelvana, Teletoon

DISTRIBUTOR: PBS (United States)

CREATORS: Betty Paraskevas, Michael Paraskevas

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Michael Hirsh, Patrick Loubert, Clive Smith

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS INCLUDED: Ken Cuperus, Nicole Demerse, Hugh Duffy, Richard Elliott, Jennifer Pertsch, Alice Prodanou, Simon Racioppa, Betty Paraskevas, Michael Paraskevas

VOICE ACTORS: Ron Pardo (Marvin), Marlowe Windsor Menard (Eddy Largo), Dwayne Hill (Jack), Sheila McCarthy (Elizabeth), Fiona Reid (Diamonds)

SYNOPSIS: Marvin and his fellow performing animals in a carnival confide their feelings to human Eddy Largo between performances.

COMMENTARY: The third of three animated series based on books by the Paraskevases (see *The Kids from Room 402* and *Maggie and the Ferocious Beast*), this property had the shortest turnaround time between book and series, being optioned only a year after initial publication. Originally airing as part of

PBS's "Bookworm Bunch" block, it was heavy on the educational component and light on characterization and narrative, given whence it aired.

MARY-KATE AND ASHLEY IN ACTION! (2001–2002)

STUDIOS: Dualstar, DIC

DISTRIBUTORS: ABC, Family Channel

CREATORS: Diane Dixon, Robin Riordan

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Robert Thorne, Mary-Kate Olsen, Ashley Olsen

PRODUCERS: Andy Heyward, Michael Maliani, Neil Steinberg, Kaaren Lee Brown, Tonya Hurley

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS INCLUDED: Madeline Bassett, Paul Francis, Kerry Glover, Madellaine Paxson, Kati Rocky, Joelle Sellner, Michel Trouillet, Diane Dixon

VOICE ACTORS: Mary-Kate Olsen (Misty), Ashley Olsen (Amber), Brendan Beiser (Quincy), Terry Chen (Rodney Choy), Jason Connery (Bennington), Michael Dobson (Clive Hedgemorton Smythe), Chris Gray (Oliver Dickens), Kim Hawthorne (Bernice Shaw/Dr. Sandy), Michael Heyward (Ivan Quintero), Maggie O'Hara (Romy Bates), Samuel Vincent (Capital D), Lenore Zann (Renee LaRouge).

SYNOPSIS: The espionage exploits of special agents Misty and Amber.

COMMENTARY: Twins Mary-Kate and Ashley Olsen gained fame as child performers on the sitcom *Full House* (ABC, 1987–1995) and parlayed this into a surprisingly durable acting and business career. This series, produced by the duo's own company, was largely a vanity project that featured the pair not only in animated form but as themselves in live-action intro sequences; the program episodes were structured as a series of films collectively known as *Super Teen Agent*. The episode content resembled the animated series of the 1970s in their scrupulous avoidance of actual violence and the touting of progressive proenvironment politics whenever possible.

M.A.S.K. (1985)

STUDIOS: Canada France, DIC, ICC, Kenner-Parker, LBS

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Jean Chalopin, Andy Heyward, Tetsuo Katayama

PRODUCER: Dennis Heroux

DIRECTORS: Bruno Bianchi, Bernard Deyries, Michael Maliani, Mineo Goto, Kazuo Terada

WRITERS INCLUDED: Terrence McDonnell, Gary Warne

VOICE ACTORS: Doug Stone (Matt Tracker/Nash Gorey/Dusty Hayes/Bruno Shepard/Boris Bushkin/Max Mayhem), Mark Halloran (Buddy Hawkes/Ace Riker/Sly Rax), Brendon McKane (Alex Sector/Floyd Malloy/Miles Mayhem/Jacques LaFleur/Nevada Rushmore), Graeme McKenna (Brad Calhoun/Burns/T-Bob), Sharon Noble (Gloria Baker/Vanessa Warfield), Brennan Thicke (Scott Tracker), Brian George (Lester Sludge/Jimmy Rashad)

SYNOPSIS: The Mobil Armored Strike Kommand (M.A.S.K.) is a secret agency of specialized soldiers and weapons experts designated to combat evil in the form of the Vicious Evil Network of Mayhem (VENOM).

COMMENTARY: A highly derivative action-oriented series that was a product of its time. Given that it was tied into a toy line produced by coproducer Kenner-Parker, the intent was clearly to showcase the weaponry and vehicles at the expense of anything deeper in terms of plotting and characterization. That being said, the series did manage to do the little it was asked to provide in advertising the toys.

THE MASK (1995–1997)

STUDIOS: Dark Horse, Film Roman, Sunbow, New Line Cinema

DISTRIBUTORS: CBS, Syndicated

CREATORS: Randy Stradley, Mike Richardson

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Phil Roman

PRODUCER: Gary Hartle

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS INCLUDED: Steven Melching, Ralph Soll, Brooks Wachtel

VOICE ACTORS: Rob Paulsen (Stanley Ipkiss/The Mask), Jim Cummings (Doyle/Lars/Others), Tim Curry (Praetorius), Tress MacNeille (Mrs. Preenan), Mary McDonald Lewis (Mrs. Forthwright), Neil Ross (Lieutenant Callaway), Kevin Michael Richardson (Mayor Tilton), Heidi Shannon (Peggy Brandt), Mark Taylor (Charlie Schumacher), Frank Welker (Milo/Pepe/Baby Forthright)

SYNOPSIS: The title object, an 11th-century artifact containing the powers of the Norse God of Mischief (i.e., Loki), allows mild-mannered Stanley Ipkiss to become the loquacious and unlikely superpowered defender of Edge City.

COMMENTARY: One of three animated series based on Jim Carrey movies (see *Ace Ventura* and *Dumb and Dumber*) and by far the most entertaining and intriguing of the three because it alone managed to successfully adapt the milieu of its source to animation. Paulsen was handed a difficult assignment standing in for Carrey, but he handled it extremely well. While the series verged on comedic overkill at times, it was generally well done, but whether you liked it depended on whether you were a fan of the kind of bizarre slapstick both Carrey and the series traded in regularly.

MATTY'S FUNDAY FUNNIES (1959–1962)

STUDIOS: Harvey, Bob Clampett, Mattel

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: An anthology series, airing first on Sunday afternoons and then in prime time, initially featuring cartoons from the Paramount/Harvey archives. Matty was the sponsor-created host, who was accompanied by his sister, Sisterbelle. In early 1962, *Beany and Cecil* (q.v.) replaced the vintage cartoons, and the show's title became *Matty's Funnies with Beany and Cecil*. Matty and Sisterbelle were retired in April 1962, allowing *Beany* to run independently until the show was dropped from prime time in December and moved to Saturday mornings.

MATTY'S FUNNIES WITH BEANY AND CECIL (1962–1968)

See *Beany and Cecil* (and related series).

MAURICE SENDAK'S LITTLE BEAR (1995)

See *Little Bear* (1995).

MAX AND RUBY (2002)

STUDIOS: Nelvana, Treehouse, TFO TV Toronto, Silver Lining

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon (United States)

CREATOR: Rosemary Wells

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Michael Hirsh, Scott Dyer, Tina Peel

PRODUCERS: Jocelyn Hamilton, Patricia Burns, Marianne Culbert, Cynthia Taylor, Alice Bell, Tracy Leach

DIRECTOR: Jamie Whitney

WRITERS INCLUDED: Kate Barris, Patrick Granleese

VOICE ACTORS: Billy Rosenberg (Max), Samantha Morton (Ruby), Julie Lemieux (Louise), Kay Hawtrey (Grandma)

SYNOPSIS: Anthropomorphic young rabbits Max and Ruby have a loving relationship in spite of their frequent quarrels and the trouble caused by Max's bizarre toy collection.

COMMENTARY: First published in 1979, Wells's long-running series for young children received a typically faithful transition to animation in this series. Its gentle, low-key tone made it a perfect fit among the other animated preschool-oriented series airing on its American provider.

MAXIE'S WORLD (1989)

STUDIOS: DIC, Claster

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Andy Heyward

PRODUCERS: Cassandra Schafhausen, John Francis Jr.

DIRECTOR: Marek Buchwald

WRITERS: Judy Rothman, Lori Crawford, Bill Ruiz, George Robinson, Phil Harnage, Jack Olesker, David Ehrman, Sean Roche, Mike O'Mahoney, Kevin O'Donnell, Martha Moran, Pat Allee, Ben Hurst, Anthony Adams, Christina Adams, Betty Birney, Eleanor Burian Mohr, Jack Hanrahan, Richard Glatzer, Doug Molitor, Celia Bonaduce, Lisa Maliani, Margaret Belgrade, Robin Lyons, Andrew Ollifer

VOICE ACTORS: Loretta Jafelice (Maxie), Simon Reynolds (Rob), Tara Charendoff (Carly), Susan Roman (Ashley), Suzanne Coy (Simone), Nadine Rabinovitch (Jeri), Yannick Bisson (Ferdie), Geoff Kahnert (Mushroom), John Stocker (Garcia)

SYNOPSIS: Maxie, a "pretty," "cool," and "exciting" teenager, alternates life as a student at Surfside High School with hosting a popular TV series.

COMMENTARY: A very self-indulgent, opportunistic series from a studio with a similar mandate in its economic vision during this time. It had originally been planned as a series starring Mattel's Barbie, but when negotiations with Mattel fell through, DIC instead partnered with Mattel's rival Hasbro, who conveniently manufactured a self-indulgent Barbie clone tie-in to go along with this program.

MAX STEEL (2000–2001)

STUDIOS: Mainframe, Netter Digital, Columbia

DISTRIBUTOR: WB

CREATOR: Greg Weisman

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Richard Raynis, Greg Weisman, Jeff Klein

PRODUCER: Ian Hirota

DIRECTORS: Andre Clavell, Alan Caldwell, Dick Sebast, Hank Tucker, Sam Liu, Sean Song

WRITERS: Greg Klein, Katherine Furgate, Kevin Hopps, Lydia Marano, Marsha Griffin, Michael Reaves, Tom Pugsley, Tony Schillaci, Jon Weisman

VOICE ACTORS: Christian Campbell (Josh McGrath, early episodes/Max Steel, early episodes), Matthew Kaminsky (Josh McGrath, later episodes/Max Steel, later episodes), Martin Davis (John Dread), Jeremiah (Maeve), Shannon Kenny (Rachel Leeds), Chi McBride (Jefferson Smith), Keith Szarabajka (Psycho), Jacob Vergas (Berto), Jay Williams (Kit Kat Ryan), Edward Asner (Chuck Marshak), Thomas Wilson (Pete), Mae Whitman (Jo)

SYNOPSIS: When college athlete Josh McGrath meets the malignant “cyborg code” Psycho and is exposed to a high-tech nanoprobe, he is transformed into “superspy” Max Steel.

COMMENTARY: Weisman, previously responsible for *Gargoyles* (q.v.), here created a more generic and less stately program with a great more formula involved. Production was on a more ambitious level, with the same motion-capture techniques used on Mainframe’s earlier *Reboot* (q.v.) project. While 35 episodes were produced, the series lasted only 17 months on the air. Universal Pictures later produced a film adaptation in the 2010s.**MAX, THE 2,000-YEAR-OLD MOUSE** (1969)

STUDIOS: Krantz, Quality Entertainment, ARP

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

PRODUCER: Steve Krantz

DIRECTOR: Shamus Culhane

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: A short four-minute filler piece involving the title rodent, a supposed witness to history, who served as a humorous interlocutor in an otherwise dry recitation of facts. Production levels were high, involving rare drawings, paintings, woodcuts, and tintypes, but that was all the project really had in the way of merit.

MAYA AND MIGUEL (2004–2007)

STUDIOS: Scholastic, PBS

DISTRIBUTOR: PBS

CREATOR: Deborah Forte

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Candi Milo (Maya Santos/Tito Chavez/Chrissy’s Mom), Nika Futterman (Miguel Santos), Jerod Mixon (Theo), Lucy Liu (Maggie), Beth Payne (Chrissy), Jeannie Elias (Andy/Mrs. Lee/Jimmy McCorkle), Lupe Ontiveros

(Abuela Elena), Carlos Alazraqui (Paco/Mr. Nguyen/Ernesto Chavez), Elizabeth Peña (Rosa Santos), Carlos Ponce (Santiago Santos), Maria Canals Berrera (Ms. Rodriguez), Leslie Carrara Rudolph (Simon), Gigi Ermeta (Esperanza), Erik Estrada (Gus Lopez), Annie Mumolo (Kylie)

SYNOPSIS: The lives of fraternal twins Maya and Miguel Santos and their friends and family in a largely Hispanic neighborhood.

COMMENTARY: An educational series with a largely flattering and respectful portrait of the Spanish-speaking community in the United States rarely seen in other American television series, animated or otherwise. The fact that the twins were of a mixed national heritage (their mother was Mexican, while their father was Puerto Rican) added a uniting touch between the often-disparate communities of Spanish-speakers across North America. PBS's educational mandate was all over the project; it is hard to imagine how such a project could be made successfully on a commercial network without the staff slipping into the unfortunate ethnic clichés that have reduced the effectiveness of similarly minded series there.

***MEATBALLS AND SPAGHETTI* (1982–1983)**

STUDIOS: Intermedia, DePatie-Freleng, Marvel

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: David DePatie, Fred Silverman

PRODUCERS: Jerry Eisenberg, Bob Richardson

DIRECTORS: Gerry Chiniquy, John Gibbs, Tom Ray

WRITERS: Alex Lovy, Lewis Marshall, Michael Jones, Jack Mendelsohn

VOICE ACTORS: Ron Masak (Meatballs), Sally Julian (Spaghetti), Frank Welker (Woofers)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: A dated portrayal of a mod rock group of an earlier era, consisting of a fat husband (Meatballs), a thin wife (Spaghetti), and their dog (Woofers). Modeled on the 1970s variety series starring Sonny and Cher, the program featured comedy sequences that alternated with at least one original tune per program.

***MEGA MAN* (1994)**

STUDIOS: Ruby-Spears, Bohbot, Summit Media

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Kenzo Tsujimoto

PRODUCERS: Joe Ruby, Scott Heming, Jun Aida, Daniel Kletzky

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS INCLUDED: Jeffrey Scott, Evelyn Gabai, Matt Ulitz, Michael Maurer

VOICE ACTORS: Ian Corlett (Mega Man/Rush), Scott McNeil (Dr. Wily/Proto Man), Gary Chalk (Guts Man), Kathleen Barr (Rock), Robyn Ross (Roll), Jim Byrnes (Dr. Light), Terry Klassen (Cut Man), Jay Brazeau (Bright Man/Needle Man), Craig Bullock (Gemini Man), Michael Donovan (Ring Man), Charles Frazier (Gyro Man), Eric Martin (Star Man), Mark McGrath (Spark Man), Shirley Millner (Mark LaPierre), Crystaleen O'Bray (Drill Man), Bill Sheenan (Knight Man), Pat Torpey (Plant Man)

SYNOPSIS: The robotic warrior Mega Man, the creation of scientist Dr. Light, battles the evil Dr. Wily and his various like-minded robot creations.

COMMENTARY: Based on the popular video game series from Nintendo and Sega, although the producers took liberties with the game's narrative in the adaptation process that not all of the game's fans appreciated, to say the least. The series lasted for two seasons as part of the *Amazin' Adventures* (q.v.) programming block. A later 2003 series airing on WB, *Megaman: NT Warrior*, with a similar series format, was produced in Japan and is therefore excluded from this survey.

MEGAS XLR (2004–2005)

STUDIOS: Cartoon Network, Low Brow

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATORS/EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: George Kristic, Jody Schaeffer

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: David DeLuise (Coop Cooplowski), Wendee Lee (Commander Kiva Andrew), Steven Blum (Jamie), Scott Rienecker (Goat), Clancy Brown (Gorath), Kevin Michael Richardson (Glorft Commander), Sean Marquette (Little Tommy), Julie Nathanson (Ally), Tia Carrere (Darklos), Janice Kawaye (Galaxa), Rachel MacFarlane (Gina), Richard McGonagle (Lunar Captain), Bruce Campbell (Magnanimous), Frankie Manriquez (Skippy), Tom Kenny (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: Mechanic Coop Cooplowski and pilot Kiva Andrew use the title 80-foot robot to defend the world against villains, specifically the alien race known as the Glorft.

COMMENTARY: A series that fused Western and Japanese animated action series with humor and video game graphics in a Frankenstein monster fashion, to mixed effect. The absence of a clear tone, either serious or comic, prevented many viewers from getting what the point of the show really was and likely caused its short broadcast and production run. The seven-minute pilot episode (titled "Low Brow") originally aired on the anthology series *Cartoon Cartoon Weekend* on Cartoon Network in 2002.

MEL-O-TOONS (1960)

STUDIOS: New World, United Artists

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTOR: Don Wilson (Narrator)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: A six-minute filler series that used limited animation to provide visuals for prerecorded 45-rpm records aimed at children. Children's author Thornton Burgess, who specialized in nature stories about animals, was the primary source of material, but legends, fairy tales, and classic literature also provided subject matter.

MEN IN BLACK (1997–2001)

STUDIOS: Amblin, Adelaide, Columbia

DISTRIBUTOR: WB

CREATOR: Lowell Cunningham

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Jeff Kline, Laurie MacDonald, Walter Parkes, Richard Raynis

PRODUCERS: Duane Capizzi, Frank Paur, Rafael Rosado, Kara Vallow

DIRECTORS: Frank Paur, Nathan Chew, Michael Goguen, Dennis Woodyard

WRITERS: Mark Amato, Duane Capizzi, Greg Klein, Stephen Melching, Thomas Pugsley, Steve Roberts, Alexx Van Dyne, Greg Weisman, Jon Weisman

VOICE ACTORS: Keith Diamond (Jay), Ed O’Ross (Kay, early episodes), Gregg Berger (Kay, later episodes/Zed, later episodes), Charles Napier (Zed, early episodes), Jennifer Lien (Elle, early episodes), Jennifer Martin (Elle, later episodes), David Warner (Alpha), Pat Pinney and Patrick Fraley (Twins/Worms), Sherman Howard (Buzzard)

SYNOPSIS: The Men in Black are a secret team of black-suit-clad government agents who protect the world from the threat of alien invasion.

COMMENTARY: Having its origins in a comic book series created by Cunningham, as well as an urban legend that had first circulated decades before, the 1997 film *Men in Black*, starring Will Smith as Jay and Tommy Lee Jones as Kay, was a massive box office hit that ultimately spawned two sequels as well as this animated spin-off. As with the films, the series combined humor (reflected largely in the team’s unflappable reactions to the events engulfing them) with the combatting of both obvious and unlikely looking alien menaces. However, while animation might have (and has) enlivened similar premises in the past, the films’ effective use of CGI production to create aliens made any attempt to depict such creatures in animation pale in comparison. Nevertheless, the series, based largely on the success of the media brand behind it rather than its own merits, managed to last for 53 episodes (much longer than average for both its studio and its network) before it finally expired.**METALOCALYPSE (2006–2012)**

STUDIOS: Titmouse, Williams Street

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATORS: Brendon Small, Tommy Blacha

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Brendon Small, Tommy Blacha, Keith Crofford, Nick Weidenfeld

PRODUCERS: Keith Fay, Shannon Prynosi

DIRECTORS: Jon Schnepp, Chris Prynosi, Brendon Small, Tommy Blacha, Mark Brooks, Mike Roush, Felipe Salazar

WRITERS: Tommy Blacha, Brendon Small, Bill Braudis, Mark Rivers, Kristofor Brown, Janine DiTullio, Brian Posehn, Matthew Libman, Daniel Libman, Dani Vetere

VOICE ACTORS: Brendon Small (Nathan Explosion/Skwisgaar Skwigelf/Pickles/Charles Offdensen/Dick “Magic Ears” Knubbler/Dr. Jonathan Twinkletits/

Facebones/Mordhaus Scientist #1/Dr. Rockso, singing voice/Ishnifus Meadle, singing voice/Seth/Edgar Jomfru/Magnus Hammersmith, singing voice), Tommy Blacha (Toki Wartooth/William Murderface/Deathlok's Doctor/Mordhaus Scientist #2/Dr. Rockso/Deathlok Minute Host/Teenager), Mike Keneally (Toki Wartooth, singing voice), Mark Hamill (Senator Stampington/Mr. Salacia/Jean-Pierre/Calvert/Roy Cornickleson), Victor Brandt (General Crozier/Cardinal Ravenwood), Malcolm McDowell (Vater Orlaag), Janeane Garofalo (Abigail Remeltindtdric), Raya Yarbrough (Abigail Remeltindtdric, singing voice), Werner Herzog (Ishnifus Meadle), Laraine Newman (Molly), Michael Arnott (Tony DiMarco Thunderbottom), Warrel Dane (Sammy "Candynose" Twinskins), Steve Smyth (Snizzy "Snazz" Bullets), Mike Patton (Rikki Kixx), George "Corpsegrinder" Fisher (Metal-Masked Assassin), Angela Gossow (Lavona Succuboso), Marc Maron (Magnus Hammersmith)

SYNOPSIS: The heavy-metal rock band Deathlok enjoys enormous, influential popularity and massive sales, in spite of their unusual ability to cause chaos wherever they go and whatever they do. A mysterious organization called the Tribunal constantly monitors them and their activities to prevent things related to them from getting out of hand.

COMMENTARY: A clear labor of love for creators/producers/directors/writers/actors Small and Blacha, who used the show to investigate both the positive and negative attributes of being a rock-and-roll star in constructive ways, despite the show's limited 15-minute-per-episode length. The creators wrote and performed the majority of the original music heard in the series and, in a surprising case of life imitating art, Deathlok became a bona fide band, releasing several albums and going on tour. Their real-life popularity did not match the enormous influence wielded by their animated doppelgängers, by any means.

A short miniseries aired the year after the program's official run ended, which tied up the majority of the previously unresolved plot elements.

***METRIC MARVELS* (1978–1979)**

STUDIO: Newhall-Yohe

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: Airing at a time when it was assumed that the United States would be converting to the metric measurement system (it ultimately elected to remain with imperial measurements, although Canada converted to metric around the same time), this 150-second-length insert series touted the values of said system to children. The metric branding extended to the names of the characters, who included Meter Man, Wonder Gram, Liter Leader, and Super Celsius.

***MICKEY MOUSEWORKS* (AND RELATED SERIES)**

***Mickey Mouseworks* (1999–2001)**

STUDIO: Disney

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATOR: Walt Disney

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Roberts Gannaway, Tony Craig

PRODUCER: Melinda Rediger

DIRECTORS: Roberts Gannaway, Tony Craig, Rick Schneider Calabash

WRITERS INCLUDED: Kevin Campbell, Roberts Gannaway, Rick Schneider Calabash

VOICE ACTORS: Wayne Allwine (Mickey Mouse), Tony Anselmo (Donald Duck/Huey/Dewey/Louie), Diane Michelle (Daisy Duck, early episodes), Tress MacNeille (Daisy Duck, later episodes/Chip/Dale), Russi Taylor (Minnie Mouse/Clara Cluck), Bill Farmer (Goofy/Pluto/Pete/Horace Horsecollar), Corey Burton (Ludwig Von Drake/Segment Narrator/Chief O'Hara/J. Audubon Woodlore), John Cleese (Segment Narrator), John O'Hurley (Phantom Blot), Maurice LaMarche (Mortimer Mouse), Frank Welker (Louie/Dinah/Salty/Butch/Aracuan Bird), Jim Cummings (Humphrey Bear), April Winchell (Clarabelle Cow), Alan Young (Scrooge McDuck), Rob Paulsen (Jose Carioca), Jeff Bennett (Mr. Jollyland/Baby Shelby), Estelle Harris (Mrs. Turtle)

Mickey Mouse Clubhouse (2006–2016)

STUDIO/DISTRIBUTOR: Disney

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Roberts Gannaway

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Wayne Allwine (Mickey Mouse, 2006–2009/Martian Mickey, 2006–2009), Bret Iwan (Mickey Mouse, 2006–2009/Martian Mickey, 2006–2009/Count Mickula, 2009–2016), Russi Taylor (Minnie Mouse/Martian Minnie/Qoodles), Tony Anselmo (Donald Duck), Tress MacNeille (Daisy Duck/Chip/Mommy Red Bird/Baby Red Bird), Bill Farmer (Goofy/Pluto/Goofbot/Goofles), Rob Paulsen (Toodles), Jim Cummings (Pete), Corey Burton (Dale/Ludwig Von Drake), April Winchell (Clarabelle Cow), Dee Bradley Baker (Boo Boo Chicken/Santa Claus), Frank Welker (Figaro/Butch/Mr. Pettibone), Will Ryan (Willie the Giant), Maurice LaMarche (Mortimer Mouse), Dick Van Dyke (Captain Goof Beard), Avalon Robbins (Millie Mouse/Melody Mouse), Chloe Moretz (Boodles)

Mickey Mouse (2013–2016)

STUDIO/DISTRIBUTOR: Disney

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Paul Rudish

DIRECTORS: Paul Rudish, Aaron Springer, Clayton Morrow, Dave Wasson, Chris Savino, Eddie Trigueros, Heiko Dregenberg, William Reiss, Alonzo Ramos, Dave Thomas

WRITERS: Derek Dressler, Clayton Morrow, Paul Rudish, Aaron Springer, Heiko Dregenberg, Dave Wasson, Alonzo Ramos, Darrick Bachman, David Gemmill, William Reiss, Cindy Morrow, Aliko Theopoulos Grafft, Richard Pursel, Mark Ackland, Matt Chapman, Riccardo Durante, Chris Houghton, Andy Suriano, Dave Tennant, Bernie Petterson, Joe Pitt, Dave Thomas, Eddie Trigueros

VOICE ACTORS: Chris Diamantopoulos (Mickey Mouse), Russi Taylor (Minnie Mouse), Bill Farmer (Goofy/Pluto), Tony Anselmo (Donald Duck), Tress MacNeille (Daisy Duck)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: Since his debut in the 1928 short film *Steamboat Willie*, Mickey Mouse has been one of the most universally known and beloved



Animation's first superstar in one of his TV incarnations. Walt Disney Productions/Photofest © Walt Disney Productions

cartoon characters in the world. His enormous popularity, coupled with the marketing savvy with which his image has been exploited for economic gain, has made him both a creative and economic linchpin for the Disney organization, even as its exploits and enterprises extended far beyond him. While Mickey ceased appearing in theatrical shorts in 1953, he remains Disney's central marketing brand and cultural ambassador, and the company has periodically revived him and his associates in the television era in reflection of this exalted position.

These three projects, along with the related *House of Mouse* (q.v.) venture, represent the main attempts so far to resurrect Mickey for younger audiences on television. *Mickey Mouseworks* was the first of these attempts, with advance promotion describing it as being more "ambitious" and "expensive" than any series before it. Series producers/directors Gannaway and Craig intended to revive the traditional animated short-subject format on contemporary terms, with retrograde production methods (from the 1940s to the 1960s) combined with modern subject matter. None of the segments ran longer than 12 minutes, the better to fulfill Gannaway and Craig's plan to later redistribute them as theatrical short subjects (a plan that never came to fruition). While well animated and produced in the established Disney fashion, the program tended to reinforce the attitude that these were old

characters trying to be hip and relevant to the current generation of television animation fans, and while the program was well received critically, it was largely ignored by its intended audience.

In comparison, *Mickey Mouse Playhouse* was yet another case of vintage cartoon characters embarrassing themselves for the enjoyment of preschoolers in a heavily dumbed-down format. While it demonstrated the wide appeal of the Disney brand, it also indicated that this brand could be compromised as any other could through association with an inferior product. Sadly, this series marked the last portrayal of Mickey by his longest-lasting voice actor, Wayne Allwine, who died in 2009.

Whereas these other series had not truly done justice to Mickey, the later *Mickey Mouse* series did just that, after a fashion. Executive producer Rudish was operating from the same mandate that Gannaway and Craig had undertaken previously: create a new version of Mickey based on the old one. However, where Gannaway and Craig had chosen the stodgier, respectable Mickey of the 1940s and 1950s, Rudish and his associates took the mouse back to the earliest days of his career. This Mickey sported the appearance he had been seen with during his classic 1920s and 1930s films—spherical ears, round black eyes, white gloves, yellow shoes, and red pants—with the other characters drawn in a similar fashion. Likewise, the producers emulated the freewheeling, anything-can-happen manner of the theatrical films of this time rather than the more firmly plotted films that came afterward and managed to have a lot going on in a spare, uniform running time of four minutes each. It might easily be said that this was the way Walt Disney would have wanted Mickey to look and behave as a television animation character, for it was in exactly this fashion that Mickey first established his reputation—and Disney's. Certainly, viewers watching this series in tandem with the original theatrical cartoons might have trouble telling them apart in terms of quality, for these latter-day animators obviously set the same high standards for Mickey as Walt Disney had so long ago.

THE MIDNIGHT PATROL (1990)

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, Sleepy Kid, BBC

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

CREATORS: Martin Powell, Vivien Schrager Powell

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera, Paul Sabella, Martin Powell, Vivien Schrager Powell, Theresa Plummer Andrews

PRODUCERS: Jeff Segal, Davis Doi

DIRECTORS: Ray Patterson, Don Lusk, Paul Sommer, Joanne Romersa, Sam Nicholson, Robert Alvarez, Joan Drake, Bill Hutten, Glen Kennedy, Ed Love, Tony Love, Irv Spence, Alan Wilzbach

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Charlie Adler, Christina Avila, Michael Bell, Hamilton Camp, Brian Cummings, Jim Cummings, Judyanne Elder, Patrick Fraley, Dick Gautier, Joan Gerber, Dorian Harewood, Elizabeth Harnois, Whitby Hertford, Janice Kawaye, Emily Kuroda, George Lemoire, David L. Lander, Marilyn Lightstone, Allan Lurie, Kenneth Mars, Scott Menville, Brian Mitchell, How-

ard Morris, Ron Palillo, Rob Paulsen, Henry Polic II, Clive Revill, Ronnie Schell, Tom Scott, Hal Smith, B. J. Ward, Frank Welker, and Anderson Wong (Specific roles unknown)

SYNOPSIS: Four preteen kids unite in the “Dream Zone” created by their evening slumber to become the superpowered defenders of the dreams of other children.

COMMENTARY: Airing as a segment of *The Funtastic World of Hanna-Barbera* (q.v.), this Anglo-American collaboration had an idea that looked good on paper but failed to attract attention on its own terms or as an extension of the established marketing brand that it basically was. (It originated as a line of children’s bedtime clothing and toys in England before its adaptation.) If, perhaps, it had not had this corporate mandate to fulfill, the idea might have been done better by a company with a far-less-blatant corporate agenda.

THE MIGHTY B (2008–2009)

STUDIOS: Paper Kite, Polka Dot, Nickelodeon

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

CREATORS/EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Amy Poehler, Cynthia True, Erik Wiese

DIRECTORS: Erik Wiese, Bill Wray, Larry Leichtler, Alex Kirwan, Eddie Trigueros

WRITERS: Cynthia True, Erik Wiese, Jessica Chaffin, Chuck Klein, Will Berson, Dani Michaeli, Piero Piluso, Andy Suriano, John Ross Bowie, Dannah Feinglass, Fred Gonzales, Sherm Cohen, Louie Del Carmen, Jessica Gao, Ken Boyer, Octavio Rodriguez, Ray Angrum, Lynne Naylor, Bernie Petterson, Eddie Trigueros, Chris Graham, Sunil Hall, Ian Graham

VOICE ACTORS: Amy Poehler (Bessie Higginbottom/Sissy Sullivan), Dee Bradley Baker (Happy), Andy Richter (Ben Higginbottom), Megan Cavanagh (Hilary Higginbottom), Dannah Feinglass (Penny Lefcowitz), Grey DeLisle (Portia Gibbons/Millie Millerson/Chai Gallagher/Maude), Jessica DiCicco (Gwen Wu), Sarah Thyre (Mary Frances Gibbons), Niecy Nash (Miriam Breedlove), Kenan Thompson (Rocky Rhodes), Matt Besser (Anton St. Germain/Hippie), Keone Young (Mr. Wu), Jessica Chaffin (Chelsea Gibbons), Kevin Michael Richardson (Donald the Mailman), Maya Rudolph (Cherry), Audrey Wasilewski (Bibi)

SYNOPSIS: In San Francisco, obsessive and energetic Bessie Higginbottom is determined to earn all badges awarded by her beloved Honeybee Scouts, in the hopes of becoming the superheroic “Mighty B.”

COMMENTARY: A clear case of a television animation provider not knowing a good thing when it had it and letting it die after a single year on the air. This was an innovative, funny, and charming program that deserved a far longer run than it was allowed, given the high quality of its directing, writing, and particularly its voice acting (Poehler as the title character and Feinglass as portly, dimwitted Penny being the standouts here), which it maintained right up to its mandated ending in an ambitious and brilliant final episode. There have been plenty of “what might have been” occasions in the history of television animation for shows that ended too soon, but the end of this program, with its vivid animation, subtle feminist messaging, and unique approach to plotting and characterization, was one of the saddest of such instances.

THE MIGHTY DUCKS (1996–1998)

STUDIO: Disney

DISTRIBUTORS: Syndicated (1996–1998), ABC (1996–1997)

PRODUCERS: Blair Peters, Joe Barruso, Frank Squillance

DIRECTORS: Blair Peters, Joe Barruso

WRITERS INCLUDED: David Wise

VOICE ACTORS: Ian Ziering (Wildwing), Steve Mackall (Nosedive), Jennifer Hale (Mallory McMallard), Brad Garrett (Grin), April Winchell (Tanya), Dennis Franz (Police Chief Cleghorn), Charlie Adler (Dr. Droid/Otto Matron), James Belushi (Phil Palmfeather), Jeff Bennett (Duke L'Orange), Clancy Brown (Seige), Scott Bullock (Young Grin), Tim Curry (Lord Dragaunus), David Hyde Pierce (Baron Von Lichtenstamp), Tony Jay (Wraith), Frank Welker (Chameleon), Roy Firestone (Game Announcer), Jim Cummings (Various characters)

SYNOPSIS: After fleeing their home planet of Puckworld, a team of anthropomorphic ducks skilled at playing hockey ends up in Anaheim, California, which becomes their home base as they seek revenge on those who betrayed them.

COMMENTARY: Despite the similarity of the name, this series had nothing to do with the 1992 Disney-produced live-action feature film of the same name (and its sequels) nor with the Anaheim-based, Disney-owned hockey team, also with the same name, which bowed in the NHL the following year. (The team remains part of the active league roster, although the adjective *Mighty* was dropped from the team name several years ago.) What we had here was Disney trying to extend the brand by actually using genuine ducks as the title characters, although in doing so, they pillaged hither and yon for ideas and concepts whose best-before date was clearly the mid- to late 1980s. Franz earned an Emmy nomination for his portrayal of Anaheim's persistently wary and suspicious chief of police.

THE MIGHTY HERCULES (1963)

STUDIOS: Joe Oriolo, Trans-Lux, Adventure Cartoons for Television

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Roger Carlin

PRODUCER: Joe Oriolo

DIRECTORS: Joe Oriolo, Reuben Grossman

WRITERS: George Kashman, Jack Miller

VOICE ACTORS: Jerry Bascombe (Hercules), Helene Nickerson (Helena), Jimmy Tapp (Newton/Tweet/Daedalus/Evil Wizard)

SYNOPSIS: The adventures of the legendary Greek hero Hercules.

COMMENTARY: A rather formulaic production typical of its time, with a number of endlessly repeating plot and character motifs, notably Tapp's Newton the Centaur repeating everything he said—in case you didn't get it the first time, presumably. Rather than being powerful on a full-time basis, as in the Greek legends, this Hercules summoned the “strength of 10 ordinary men” by exposing a pinkie ring he wore on his hand to a blast of lightning, the better to introduce complications into the story when he *wasn't* all-powerful. African

American singer Johnny Nash, best-known later as the singer and composer of the massive 1970s pop hit “I Can See Clearly Now,” warbled the considerably inferior and rather overtly boastful title song on the soundtrack at the beginning and end.

THE MIGHTY HEROES (1966–1967)

STUDIOS: Terrytoons, CBS

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATOR/PRODUCER: Ralph Bakshi

DIRECTORS: Ralph Bakshi, Bob Taylor

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Herschel Bernardi and Lionel Wilson (All characters)

SYNOPSIS: The superhero team known as the Mighty Heroes—consisting of Diaper Man, Tornado Man, Cuckoo Man, Rope Man, and Strong Man—has its hands full regularly confronting villains.

COMMENTARY: A clever parody of animated superheroics at the time of its first flowering as a TV attraction and an indication that creator/producer/director Bakshi did not necessarily have his mind in the gutter as often as those who criticized his later 1970s and 1980s feature films might have believed. The program has only been seen occasionally since its first broadcasts, save for being reissued as theatrical films in 1969–1970 and, later, being featured as a segment of the syndicated version of Bakshi’s *Mighty Mouse: The New Adventures* (q.v.).

MIGHTY MAX (1993)

STUDIOS: Bluebird Canal D&A, Film Roman, Bohbot

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Phil Roman, Rob Hudnut

PRODUCERS: Mark Zaslove, Gary Hartle

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITER: Mark Zaslove

VOICE ACTORS: Rob Paulsen (Max), Tony Jay (Virgil), Richard Moll (Norman), Tim Curry (Skullmaster), Tress MacNeille (Max’s Mom)

SYNOPSIS: Preteen latchkey kid Max discovers he is the “chosen one” of a 5,000-year-old organization looking for the last person capable of donning the “cosmic cap to victory.” Donning this hat, Max becomes endowed with magical and superhuman powers that he uses to fight evil.

COMMENTARY: The complicated backstory belies the simplicity of this series, which was based on a popular pocket-sized toy and its accompanying game. The main thing the two items had in common was the presence of the Skullmaster. Still, it was better produced than some other syndicated manifests of its year or others, with Paulsen’s skill at delivering humorous comedic dialogue allowing him to set the show’s hero off in contrast to the straighter heroes he shared space with on the dial.

MIGHTY MOUSE: THE NEW ADVENTURES (1987–1989)

STUDIO: Ralph Bakshi Animation

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Ralph Bakshi

DIRECTORS/WRITERS: Ralph Bakshi, John Kricfalusi, Bob Jaques, Kent Butterworth, Michael Kazaleh, John Sparey

VOICE ACTORS: Dana Hill, Pat Pinney, Maggie Roswell, and Beau Weaver (Specific roles unknown)

SYNOPSIS: Mike Mouse, an assembly-line worker at the factory owned by Pearl Pureheart, transforms into the superheroic title character at appropriate times.

COMMENTARY: One of the rare cases where a revival of a property exceeds its source material in terms of creative quality. Bakshi had cut his teeth at the Terrytoons Studio and had turned back to television animation at a point when his theatrical feature animation career had ebbed. The program maintained a short narrative length, as per the original cartoons, but had a considerably edgier feel to it in terms of content, notably the hero's frequent breakouts in feelings of introspection, angst, and self-doubt, and the frequent use of parody and satire, involving both the Terrytoons archive and more contemporary creations. The series had a cult adult fan base but was canceled due to its inability to find the child audience the network wanted. In addition, it achieved negative notoriety for a time when the producers were (falsely) accused of having shown the character ingesting cocaine in one installment (due to a misinterpretation fueled by right-wing religious leader Donald Wildmon). However, this should not be held as an indictment of the series as a whole.

MIGHTY MOUSE PLAYHOUSE (AND RELATED SERIES)***Mighty Mouse Playhouse* (1955–1966)**

STUDIO: Terrytoons

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

Various producers, directors, writers, and voice actors

***The New Adventures of Mighty Mouse and Heckle and Jeckle* (1979–1982)**

STUDIO: Filmation

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Lou Scheimer, Norman Prescott

PRODUCER: Don Christensen

DIRECTORS: John Armstrong, Lou Zukor, Marsh Lamore, Gwen Wetzler, Kay Wright, Lou Kachivas, Marja Dahl, Ernie Schmidt

WRITERS: Buzz Dixon, Sam Simon, Ted Pedersen, Bill Danch, Jim Ryan, Coslough Johnson

VOICE ACTORS: Alan Oppenheimer (Mighty Mouse/Oil Can Harry), Diane Pershing (Pearl Pureheart), Frank Welker (Heckle/Jeckle/Quackula), Norman Prescott (Theodore H. Bear)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: The world's most powerful rodent got his start in *The Mouse of Tomorrow*, a 1942 film parody of *Superman* (q.v.), and quickly be-



Here he comes to save the day. CBS/Photofest © CBS

came so popular that he became the main attraction of Terrytoons Studio. This was in spite of the presence of endlessly repetitive story lines (one of the major faults of the Terrytoons Studio as a whole) and the fact that Mighty Mouse typically did not appear in his own cartoons until the need for him manifested itself, which could be well toward the end most times. When studio founder Paul Terry sold his business to CBS in 1955, the network took advantage of their new acquisition by packaging a television program out of the existing films, with one of television animation's most memorable theme songs heard over the top of the opening montage. The program was run successfully for 11 years, with enormously high ratings (nearly 46 percent of the audience at one time) justifying both keeping it on and not tinkering with the formula whatsoever.

The 1979 series, in contrast, was newly produced, and 60 minutes long, with Mighty Mouse teamed up with Terrytoons' other major stars, the glib

magpie duo Heckle and Jeckle (who had themselves been featured in a theatrical rerun series on CBS between 1956 and 1961). Joining them was Quackula, a newly created vampire duck who was about as funny as his name implied, during the initial season only. Originally, Mighty Mouse appeared in both serialized and self-contained adventures and spoke the mandated educational messages at the end, while the birds appeared in two features. The series was cut to 30 minutes after its first season and remained as such to the end of its run.

Unfortunately, this series was marred by restrictive, nonviolent plotting, as was typical for programming of this time. But such restrictions were less evident and less observed when Ralph Bakshi took a stab at reviving the character more successfully later, in *Mighty Mouse: The New Adventures* (q.v.).

MIGHTY MR. TITAN (1965)

STUDIOS: Mister Titan, Richard H. Ullman

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: A collaboration between the distributor of *Felix the Cat* (q.v.) and the producer of *Colonel Bleep* (q.v.), this series, widely syndicated at its first broadcast but rarely seen since, featured the title character leading his (presumably) child audience through exercise routines. Whether Mr. Titan was a human being or a robot, as has been reported, has yet to be completely confirmed.

THE MIGHTY ORBOTS (1984–1985)

STUDIOS: TMS, MGM, United Artists, Intermedia

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATOR: Barry Glasser

PRODUCERS: Fred Silverman, George Singer, Tat Ikeuchi, Nobuo Inada, Sachiko Tsuneda, Marilyn Kouvalchuk, Mitsuo Yoshimura, Rikio Yoshida

DIRECTORS: Osamu Deaski, Yutaka Fujioka

WRITERS INCLUDED: Michael Reaves, Hideo Takayashi

VOICE ACTORS: Sherry Alberoni (Bo), Julie Bennett (Boo), Jennifer Darling (Dia), Barry Gordon (Robert Simmons), Jim MacGeorge (Bort), Robert Ridgely (Returns), Don Messick (Rondy/Crunch), Bill Martin (Umbra/Tor), Noelle North (Ohno), Gary Owens (Narrator)

SYNOPSIS: In the 23rd century, the villainous cyborg Umbra plots to destroy the Earth, only to be thwarted by the Galactic Patrol and the heroic robots known as the Orbots.

COMMENTARY: A typically derivative project of the 1980s, despite the input of good animation and producer Silverman. Part of its problem lay in the fact that it could not decide whether it was supposed to be a comic or serious program, with moments meant to be serious undercut by the pompous tone employed by narrator Owens. However, a bigger problem was its much-higher-rated competition on other networks, which doomed the show to a short run.

MIGRAINE BOY (1997)

STUDIO/DISTRIBUTOR: MTV

CREATOR: Greg Fiering

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: Fiering's underground comic strip was originally used by MTV as a series of linking segments between music videos and commercials but was deemed popular enough to be given a full 30-minute slot in 1997. The title character was an angry young man with a perennial headache, accompanied by his dog Tylenol. He did little to try to resolve his condition, instead using it as a crutch that allowed him to vindictively insult anything and everything that came within his path, with Tylenol coming in for a fair share of that abuse. Despite the limited premise of the series, it spawned a spin-off soundtrack CD and a later incarnation as an online film project.

MIKE, LU AND OG (1999–2001)

STUDIO: Kinofilm

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATORS/EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Charles Swenson, Mikhail Aldashin, Mikhail Shindel

PRODUCER: Vladimir Horunzhy

DIRECTORS: Valery Konoplev, Slava Ushakov, Elena Rogova, Alexander Tatarsky, Mikhail Tumelia, Alexander Guriev, Mikhail Aldashin, Oleg Kuzovokov

WRITERS: Charles Swenson, Slava Ushakov, Valery Konoplev, Oleg Kuzovokov, Elena Rogova, Eduard Kiritch, Natalia Chernishova, Artur Kraus, Vasiko Bedovshii, Mikhail Tumelia, Sergey Merinov, Alexander Guriev, Andrey Sokolov, Vera Duffy, Michael Karnow, Lance Khazei, Susan Meyers, Susan Sherman, Mikhail Shindel, Michael Ryan

VOICE ACTORS: Nika Frost (Micheline "Mike" Mavinski), Nancy Cartwright (Lu), Dee Bradley Baker (Og/Goat), Kath Soucie (Pig/Margery), Martin Rayner (Spiney/Alfred), Scott Bullock (Wendell/Baggis Cuzzlewit), Corey Burton (Queeks), Alison Larkin (Hermione Cuzzlewit), Brian George (Haggis Cuzzlewit/Captain)

SYNOPSIS: Eleven-year-old New Yorker Mike Mavinski comes to the tropical island of Albonquetine as an exchange student and tries to adapt to life there when it is clear she can't easily go back home.

COMMENTARY: A Russian–American coproduction with an interesting premise and characters but burdened with directors and writers not willing to employ them to their full potential. The conflict between streetwise Mike and the backward-thinking natives of the island was amusing, as a result, but only up to a certain point before it became too repetitive.

MIKE THE KNIGHT (2011–2017)

STUDIOS: Nelvana, HIT

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon (United States)

CREATOR: Alexander Bar

WRITER: Marc Seal

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS (North American version): Jake Beale (Mike, early episodes/Fernando, early episodes), Trek Buccino (Mike, later episodes/Fernando, later episodes), Erin Pitt (Evie), Martin Roach (Sparkie), Andrew Sabiston (Squirt), Alyson Court (Queen Martha), Nissae Isen (Trollee)

SYNOPSIS: Young prince Mike aspires to be like his father the king by exploring and doing heroic deeds.

COMMENTARY: An international production, with a different vocal cast for different countries. In each version, the central message of making sure to do tasks and objectives right came through without subtlety, as was typical for series aimed at preschool children.

THE MILTON THE MONSTER SHOW (1965–1968)

STUDIO: Hal Seeger

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

PRODUCER: Hal Seeger

DIRECTORS INCLUDED: Shamus Culhane, Myron Waldman, James Tyler, Tom Golden, Arnie Levy

WRITERS INCLUDED: Jack Mercer, Kin Platt

VOICE ACTORS: Bob McFadden (Milton the Monster), Dayton Allen (Professor Weirdo/Herman Fly/Fearless Fly/Chester Penguin/Stuffy Durma/Bradley Binkley/Flukey Luke), Larry Best (Count Kook/Muggy Doo/Two Feathers), Bev Arnold (Florrie Fly/Penny Penguin), Hettie Galen (Beulah Penguin)

SYNOPSIS: A variety series consisting of six recurring segments, each running six minutes. The title segment focused on a would-be monster who became good when too much "Tincture of Tenderness" was injected into his personality. Other features included the comic superhero Fearless Fly, who derived his superpowers from atomic-powered eyeglasses; Penny Penguin, a trouble-causing anthropomorphic girl; Flukey Luke, a Western parody; Muggy Doo, a con-artist cat; and Stuffy Durma, the tale of a skid-row derelict who inherits a fortune but does not allow that to prevent him from continuing to act like the hobo he once was.

COMMENTARY: Arguably the best product of one of the second-tier television animation production houses due to the unusual input of high-quality directors, writers, and performers. Its network evidently thought so, for its run lasted far longer than the original 28 episodes that were produced. Then it was reduced to obscurity until being released on DVD in the new millennium.

MINORITEAM (2005–2006)

STUDIOS: Funny Garbage, Reas International, Monkey Wrangler, Williams Street, Cartoon Network

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATORS/DIRECTORS: Adam De La Pena, Peter Girardi, Todd James

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Todd James, Adam De La Pena

PRODUCERS: Peter Girardi, Sandi Yi Trimble

WRITER: Adam De La Pena

VOICE ACTORS: Dana Snyder (Dr. Wang), Nick Puga (Richard Escartin, a.k.a. El Jefe), Rodney Saulsberry (Landon Dutton, a.k.a. Fasto), Enn Reitel (Neil Horowitz, a.k.a. Jewcano), Keith Lal (Dave Raj, a.k.a. Non-Stop), Adam De La Pena (White Shadow/Racist Frankenstein), Todd James (Corporate Ladder), Peter Girardi (Standardized Test), Dicky Barrett (Dirty Cop)

SYNOPSIS: The adventures of a group of superheroes who represent a variety of ethnicities in positive and negative ways, with their enemies largely composed of the white establishment.

COMMENTARY: Given the traditional exclusion of racial minorities from superhero narratives in nonstereotypical roles in the 20th century (though this has been strongly addressed and revised in the 21st), this series could be viewed as a satiric rejoinder to that exclusion—that is, if it had been better written and directed; not limited to 15 minutes in length; and not been forced into the bump-and-grind protocol of the “Adult Swim” block, potentially offending every viewer, not just some, by blatantly rubbing its presence in the audience’s face. Other superhero programs before and after this series have addressed ethnic concerns in more subtle ways.

MISSION: MAGIC (1973–1974)

STUDIO: Filimation

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Lou Scheimer, Norman Prescott

DIRECTORS: Don Christensen, Hal Sutherland, Jack Townsley, Rudy Larriva, Bill Reed

WRITERS: Mark Richards, Ben Starr, Jim Ryan, Bill Danch

VOICE ACTORS: Rick Springfield (Himself), Erika Scheimer (Miss Tickle), Lola Fisher (Carl/Kim), Lane Scheimer (Vinny/Franklin), Howard Morris (Harvey/Socks/Mr. Samuels/Tolamy/Tut-Tut)

SYNOPSIS: Teacher Miss Tickle is able to magically escort her students from their school into a fantasy realm via a magic blackboard.

COMMENTARY: Originally seen as a segment of Filimation’s *The Brady Kids* (q.v.), this can be seen, in some ways, to be an embryonic version of what *The Magic School Bus* (q.v.) would become a couple of decades later. The inclusion of Australian actor/singer Springfield, who’d had his first hit record in 1972 but would not obtain sustained popularity until the 1980s, was an imposition on the part of the network, and he regularly performed musical numbers on the subject at hand. In all, it was par for the course for television animation in this time, where actually being entertaining to anyone who was not a child took a backseat to ramming education down that child audience’s collective throats.

MISSION HILL (1999–2000, 2002)

STUDIOS: Oakley-Weinstein, Castle Rock

DISTRIBUTORS: WB (1999–2000), Cartoon Network (2002)

CREATORS: Bill Oakley, Josh Weinstein

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Bill Oakley, Josh Weinstein, Lolee Aries, David Pritchard

PRODUCER: J. David Stern

DIRECTORS: Lauren MacMullan, Gary McCarver, Tricia Garcia, Mike Kim, Dominic Polcino, Ilya Skorupsky, Scott Alberts, Michael Dante DiMartino, Cynthia Wells, Christian Roman, Jim Shellhorn

WRITERS: Bill Oakley, Josh Weinstein, Andrew Kreisberg, J. David Stern, David Weiss, Ben Kull, Michael Panes, Robin Stein, Aaron Ehasz, Dan McGrath, Rob Schwartz, Rich Siegel

VOICE ACTORS: Wallace Langham (Andy French), Scott Menville (Kevin French), Brian Posehn (Jim Kuback), Vicki Lewis (Posey Tyler/Natalie Leibowitz-Hernandez), Nick Jameson (Gus Duncz), Tom Kenny (Wally Langford), Herbert Siguenza (Carlos Hernandez), Jane Wiedlin (Gwen), Josh Weinstein (Toby Mundorf), Bill Oakley (George Bang), Nick Jameson (Ron)

SYNOPSIS: In the Mission Hill district of the city of Cosmopolis, a group of young bohemians try to figure out what to do with their lives.

COMMENTARY: A series that was a product of its time, with an edgy type of humor not for children whatsoever. Oakley and Weinstein, who had previously been producers of *The Simpsons* (q.v.), hoped to channel the visual and contextual appeal of alternative comics in their series. They were largely successful in this regard, doing particularly well in addressing gay issues then neglected by the mass media. First intended to have been called *The Downtowners*, the project was to have debuted on the WB in 1997 but did not first air until two years later. Its network run was abbreviated because of low ratings, though the entire series was eventually seen in cable reruns and a DVD issue.

MISS SPIDER'S SUNNY PATCH FRIENDS (2004)

STUDIOS: Nelvana, Absolute Digital, Callaway Arts and Entertainment

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon (United States)

CREATOR: David Kirk

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Michael Hirsh, Scott Dyer, Nicholas Callaway, Doug Murphy

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Kristen Davis (Miss Spider), Robert Smith (Holley), Tony Jay (Spiderus), Scott Beaudin (Squirt), Julie Lemieux (Bounce), Rebecca Brenner (Shimmer), Mitchell Eisner (Dragon), Alexandra Lai (Snowdrop), Aaryn Doyle (Pansy), Austin DiIulio (Spinner), Marc Donato (Wiggle), Patricia Gage (Betty Beetle), Wayne Robson (Mr. Mantis), Scott McCord (Stinky), Carar Pifko (Eunice Earwig), Peter Oldring (Gus), Catherine Gallant (Beatrice), Jonathan Wilson (Ned), Philip Williams (Ted), Richard Binsley (Felix), Ezra Perlman (Eddy), Taija Isen (Little Sis)

SYNOPSIS: Kindly Miss Spider tries to encourage tolerance among her fellow insects in spite of the opposition of some, notably the evil Spiderus.

COMMENTARY: Based on Kirk's popular children's book series, this 3-D animated series was accurately animated and educational, in line with other series with similar setups from its studio. Jay received an Emmy nomination for his portrayal of the resident evil fly in the ointment.

MISTER BOGUS (1991)

STUDIOS: YC Alligator, Zodiac, Calico

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

CREATORS: Ghislain Honore and Michael Durieux (character); Peter Keefe (series format)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Peter Keefe

PRODUCERS/DIRECTORS: Tom Zeitlin-Burton, Claudia Zeitlin-Burton

VOICE ACTORS: Cam Clarke (Mister Bogus); Tress MacNeille, Patrick Fraley, Jeannie Elias, Neil Ross, Jim Cummings, and Russi Taylor (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: An unruly but friendly gremlin tries—and often fails—to help out the family who owns the house, whose walls he resides in.

COMMENTARY: A follow-up and companion to the same studio's *Widget, the World Watcher* (q.v.), though with a more explicitly comedic mandate not tied to politicking, as had been the case before. The program was popular enough in its first year on the air to expand to a daily time slot from a weekly one, but this overstepping seemed to backfire when the studio closed shop in 1994.**MISTER MAGOO (AND RELATED SERIES)*****Mister Magoo* (1960)**

STUDIO: UPA

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

PRODUCERS: Henry Saperstein, Peter DeMet

DIRECTOR: Abe Levitow

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Jim Backus (Mr. Magoo/Mother Magoo), Julie Bennett (Millie), Paul Frees (Tycoon Magoo/Others), Richard Crenna (Hamlet), Jerry Hausner (Waldo/Prezley, early episodes), Daws Butler (Prezley, later episodes)

***The Famous Adventures of Mister Magoo* (1964–1965)**

STUDIO: UPA

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

PRODUCER: Henry Saperstein

DIRECTORS: Abe Levitow, Robert McKimson, Gerald Baldwin, Steve Clark, Alex Lovy

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Jim Backus (Mr. Magoo); Marvin Miller, Paul Frees, Shepard Menken, Julie Bennett, Howard Morris, Joan Gardner, and Everett Sloane (Additional characters)

***What's New, Mr. Magoo?* (1977–1979)**

STUDIO: DePatie-Freleng

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

PRODUCERS: David DePatie, Friz Freleng

DIRECTORS: Sid Marcus, Robert McKimson, Spencer Peel

WRITERS: Unknown



The crochety Mr. Magoo shares space with his voice actor, Jim Backus, in this off-camera shot. © Photofest

VOICE ACTORS: Jim Backus (Mr. Magoo), Frank Welker (Waldo), Robert Allan Ogle (McBarker)

SYNOPSIS: Elderly, nearsighted Quincy Magoo is compromised as much by his physical handicaps as he is by his snobbish, antiradical political views.

COMMENTARY: Debuting in the 1949 theatrical short film *Ragtime Bear*, Mr. Magoo was the closest thing that the highbrow-minded United Productions of America Studio had to a sustained series character. He starred in numerous short films over the 1950s, with *When Magoo Flew* (1954) and *Magoo's Puddle Jumper* (1956) winning Oscars, as well as in the feature film *1001 Arabian Nights* (1959). On the heels of this, he made his first appearances in television animation in 130 five-minute films produced between 1960 and 1962, although the nastier aspects of his personality had by this time been curbed. Though some satirical elements were retained from the theatrical cartoons, the television cartoons were largely weak in comparison.

In December 1962, Magoo starred as Ebenezer Scrooge in a lavish animated musical version of *A Christmas Carol* (titled *Mr. Magoo's Christmas Carol*) telecast over NBC. This served as the template for *The Famous Adventures of Mr. Magoo*, airing on the network as a regular series during 1964–1965. Arguably UPA's most elaborate of its typically bargain-basement

TV productions, it gave Magoo (to say nothing of Backus) a chance to expand as an actor by playing parts in well-established media narratives. Among the characters he played were Dr. Watson, Cyrano de Bergerac, Don Quixote, William Tell, Friar Tuck, and the Seven Dwarfs (*all* of them). Unfortunately, poor scheduling meant the series' first season proved to be its only one.

UPA's increasing production dormancy meant that Magoo himself was dormant, save for the 1970 special *Uncle Sam Magoo*, until he was revived by DePatie-Freleng for the 28-episode series *What's New, Mister Magoo?* The format here returned to the original theatrical cartoons, with Magoo now joined by a canine dopplegänger named McBarker, to little effect. Other than a series of NutraSweet ads (with Greg Burson replacing the deceased Backus) in the early 1990s and an ill-advised 1997 live-action feature film with Leslie Nielsen as Magoo, little has been heard from the old man since then.

MISTER T (1983–1986)

STUDIO: Ruby-Spears

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

PRODUCERS: Joe Ruby, Ken Spears

DIRECTORS: Gary Shimokawa, Rudy Larriva

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Mr. T (Himself), Amy Linker (Robin), Siu Ming Carson (Kim), Teddy Field III (Spike), Phil LaMarr (Woody), Shawn Lieber (Jeff), Takayo Fisher (Miss Bisby)

SYNOPSIS: Gymnasium owner Mr. T. lends assistance to his youthful friends Robin, Kim, Spike, Woody, and Jeff when they get into trouble.

COMMENTARY: Mr. T. (né Lawrence Tero or Turand, depending on the source) first came to public prominence in the late 1970s as a bodyguard for boxing champion Muhammad Ali. His formidable appearance—a perennially scowling face, a heavily muscled body draped with gold rings and chains, and a distinctive mohawk—soon led to him gaining public attraction of his own. His first major screen appearance was as Clubber Lang, the vicious opponent of the title character in the third *Rocky* movie. This led to his signature role, that of fugitive soldier-turned-freelance-mercenary B. A. Baracus on the popular action-adventure television series *The A Team* (NBC, 1982–1987). That program's enormous popularity with children led Mr. T. to be featured in a series of antidrug ads aimed at this group, as well as being featured on this animated series.

Mr. T.'s program resembled that of his former boss Muhammad Ali (see *I Am the Greatest: The Adventures of Muhammad Ali*) in a number of ways, but it was far better produced in terms of animation quality, and Mr. T., who had a slightly less-pompous attitude toward himself than did Ali, turned in a better vocal performance as his animated dopplegänger. Other touches to the series that were typical of the era were the presence of Mr. T.'s near-lookalike bulldog named Dozer and the obligatory closing PSA with a moral lesson related to the episode's plot, which Mr. T. delivered in live-action form in his usual deceptively unsympathetic fashion.

MOBY DICK AND THE MIGHTY MIGHTOR (1967–1969)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera, Art Scott

DIRECTORS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera, Charles Nichols

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Bobby Resnick (Tom), Barry Balkin (Tub), Don Messick (Scooby), Paul Stewart (Mightor), Bobby Diamond (Tor), Patsy Garrett (Sheera), John Stephenson (Pondo/Ork/Tog/Rollo), Norma McMillan (Lil' Rok)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: Not to be confused with Herman Melville's vicious literary leviathan, the Moby Dick of this animated program was an über-friendly heroic type, coming to the aid of his human pals Tom and Tub and Scooby the seal when they needed his assistance. The segment's main asset was better-than-average animation for its studio, with a good use of rippling-water effects. The second segment, *The Mighty Mightor*, was more interesting. Set in prehistoric times, it focused on a young boy named Tor who was able to transform into the superhero Mightor by raising a magic club (a scenario that foreshadowed He-Man; see *He-Man and the Masters of the Universe*). Although the program's caveman setting was more realistic than that of *The Flintstones* (q.v.), it still departed from history by having the characters speak perfect English and looking surprisingly well-groomed.

MONCHICHIS (1983–1984)

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, Mattel

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: George Singer, Kay Wright

DIRECTORS: Ray Patterson, Oscar Dufau, Carl Urbano, George Gordon, John Walker, Rudy Zamora

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Robert Morse (Moncho), Laurel Page (Kyla), Ellen Gerstell (Tootoo), Frank Welker (Patchitt), Hank Saroyan (Thumkii), Sidney Miller (Horrg), Frank Nelson (Wizzar), Robert Arbogast (Snogs), Peter Cullen (Shreeker/Snitchitt/Gonker), Laurie Faso (Yabbot/Fassit/Scumgor)

SYNOPSIS: The diminutive monkey-like Monchichis live in trees in a forest, where they are protected by the wizard Wizzar and threatened by the villainous Grumplins, led by "His Loathsomeness" Horrg.

COMMENTARY: An adaptation of Mattel's Happiness Dolls line to animation and, admittedly, an attempt by the studio to continue the success it had been enjoying with diminutive cute things beginning with *The Smurfs* (q.v.). It was relatively standard plotting and characterization, save perhaps for the character of Thumkii, who had a habit of not being able to finish his spoken sentences whenever he got excited.

MONSTER FORCE (1994)

STUDIOS: L and P, Lacewood, Universal

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Sheldon Wiseman

PRODUCER: Gerald Tripp

DIRECTOR: Chris Schouten

WRITERS: Mary Crawford, Alan Templeton, Darson Hall, Craig Miller, Ken Ross, Marv Wolfman, Patrick Granleese

VOICE ACTORS: Lawrence Bayne (Dr. Reed Crawley), Paul Hadad (Luke Talbot/Wolf Man), Caroly Larson (Shelley Frank), Philip Akin (Tripp Hansen), David Hewlett (Lance McGruder), Howard Jerome (Frankenstein's Monster), Robert Bockstael (Dracula), Dean Hagopian (Renfield), Rob Cowan (Bela/Niles Lupon)

SYNOPSIS: In the year 2020, the Monster Force, headed by Dr. Reed Crawley, attempts to prevent an army of monstrous creatures of the night, headed by Dracula, from conquering the world.

COMMENTARY: This Canadian-American coproduction was a blatant attempt by Universal to exploit the studio's historical position as the producers of some of Hollywood's finest horror films in the 1930s and 1940s. The presence of monsters on both sides (Frankenstein's Monster, his "descendant" Shelley Frank, and the Wolf Man on the good side; Dracula, his henchman Renfield, the Creature from the Black Lagoon, and the Mummy on the bad one) made the story line rather confusing and hard to follow, which may have been the main reason the program lasted only 13 episodes. However, the concept came to profit Universal in the end as a line of action figures and video games.

MONSTERS VS. ALIENS (2013–2014)

STUDIOS: DreamWorks, Nickelodeon

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Bret Haaland, Bob Schooley, Mark McCorkle

PRODUCERS: Chris Neuhan, Andrew Huebner, Kellie Smith

DIRECTORS: Jim Schumann, Eddie Trigueros, Matt Engstrom, Sunil Hall, Fred Osmond

WRITERS: Bill Motz, Bob Roth, Kim Duran, Brandon Sawyer, Gabriel Garza, David Tischman, Eddie Guzelian, Mark Palmer, Todd Garfield, John Behnke, Bob Schooley, Mark McCorkle, Katherine Butler, Mark Drop, Devin Bunje, Nick Stanton, Frank Rocco

VOICE ACTORS: Riki Lindholme (Susan Murphy/Ginormica), Eric Edelstein (B.O.B.), Chris O'Dowd (Dr. Cockroach), Diedrich Bader (Link), James Stuart (President Hathaway), Jeff Bennett (Coverton), Gillian Jacobs (Sta'abi), Dee Bradley Baker (Zombie Moon Ape), Jane Carr (Miss Klangpopper), Lucas Cruikshank (Smarty), Robin Atkin Downes (Academic Dr. Cockroach/Party Dr. Cockroach), Will Friedle (Man-Beast), Josh Gad (Internet), Nolan North (Derek Dietl), Kevin Michael Richardson (General Warren Monger), Joey Richter (Jace Lovins), Amy Sedaris (Dr. Cutter), Fred Tatasciore (Vornicarn), Haley Tju (Sqweep), James Urbaniak (Rule Bot), Kari Wahlgren (Baby President), April Winchell (Educational Alien Device)

SYNOPSIS: At the secret U.S. military base Fifty Something, B.O.B., an amorphous blob; Link, an amphibian–man hybrid; Dr. Cockroach, a mad scientist; and Susan Murphy, a normal human woman who periodically inflates into the

giantess Ginormica, are commissioned periodically by the president of the United States to deal with outside threats only they can confront.

COMMENTARY: Based on the 2009 DreamWorks feature film of the same name, which starred Reese Witherspoon as Susan Murphy, Seth Rogen as B.O.B., Hugh Laurie as Dr. Cockroach, Will Arnett as Link, and Stephen Colbert as the president. The television series was announced the same year as the film but was delayed several years due to production problems. When it finally emerged, it predictably played the safe route in terms of plotting and characterization, expanding on plots and characterizations as found in the film, which left viewers unfamiliar with the film on their own with no help of truly understanding what was going on.

MORAL OREL (2005–2008)

STUDIOS: Moral Orel, Shadow Machine, Williams Street

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATOR: Dino Stamatopoulos

PRODUCERS: Dino Stamatopoulos, Scott Adsit, Alexander Bulkley, Corey Campodocino, Victoria Howard, Eric Blyer, Keith Crofford, Nick Weidenfeld, Chris McKay, Jay Johnston, Ollie Green, Jeannie Rohn

DIRECTORS: Dino Stamatopoulos, Scott Adsit, Jay Johnston, Chris McKay, Ross Shuman, Ethan Marak, Jeff Gardner, "Orel Puppington," Cameron Balty, David Cromer, Duke Johnson, Sihanouk Mariona, Joshua Jennings, David Tuber

WRITERS: Dino Stamatopoulos, Nick Weidenfeld, Scott Adsit, Mark Rivers, David Agosto, Jay Johnston, Matthew Harawitz, Scott Aukerman, Neil Campbell, Paul Rust, "Orel Puppington"

VOICE ACTORS: Carolyn Lawrence (Orel Puppington/Dolly Forghetti/Christina Posabule), Scott Adsit (Clay Puppington/Coach Daniel Stopframe, later episodes/Doughy Latchkey/Ms. Frances Censordoll, later episodes/Dr. Quentin Potterswheel/Mr. Christein/Link McMissons/Mr. Art Posabule), Britta Phillips (Bloberta Puppington/Miss Agnes Sculpham/Tommy Littler/Nurse Nursula Bendy/Stephanie Foamwire Putty/Mrs. Christein/Ms. Florence Papermouth/Mrs. Poppet Posabule), Tigger Stamatopoulos (Shapey Puppington/Block Posabule), Jeanette Baity (Modella Hymenact), William Salyers (Reverend Rod Putty), Jay Johnston (Principal Norm Fakey, early episodes/Coach Daniel Stopframe, early episodes/Joe Secondopinionson Bendy/Ms. Frances Censordoll, early episodes/Mr. Sal Figuerelli, early episodes/Officer Roger Papermouth, early episodes/Mr. Karl Latchkey), David Herman (Principal Norm Fakey, later episodes/Mr. Sal Figuerelli, later episodes/Officer Roger Papermouth, later episodes), Dino Stamatopoulos (Mr. Armature/Mr. Creeply/Mr. Nohammers), K. K. Dodds (Mrs. Kim Latchkey)

SYNOPSIS: In the fictional American town of Moraltown, Statesota, 12-year-old Orel Puppington tries to live his life according to his interpretation of the sermons he hears in church, only to regularly fall victim to disastrous consequences as a result.

COMMENTARY: A stop-motion animation series (the medium's production apparatus furnished the names of a number of the characters in the series, as noted in the credits) which parodied fictional television programs that used

religion as a primary storytelling device, specifically *Davey and Goliath* (q.v.). The parody was enhanced by the fact that Orel was punished for his religious devotion, in more than one way, rather than being rewarded for it, as was the case in the program's model. Whether you consider this program funny depends on your tolerance for mockery of religion, which continues to remain a hot-button issue in the United States and elsewhere.

MORK AND MINDY (1982–1983)

STUDIOS: Ruby-Spears, Paramount

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATOR: Garry Marshall

PRODUCERS: Joe Ruby, Ken Spears

DIRECTORS: John Kimball, Rudy Larriva

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Robin Williams (Mork), Pam Dawber (Mindy McConnell), Conrad Janis (Fred McConnell), Frank Welker (Doynge), Stan Jones (Carruthers), Shavar Ross (Eugene), Ralph James (Orson), Mark Taylor (Hamilton)

SYNOPSIS: Mork, an alien from the planet Ork, befriends Mindy, a young human woman from Colorado.

COMMENTARY: The noted scenario was the basis for a popular live-action sitcom, airing on ABC from 1978 to 1982, whose main historical importance was the introduction to the popular-cultural world of Williams. His manic, break-neck comedy style would dominate a variety of film and television ventures (including some animated ones) until his death in 2014. The adaptation of the program to animation was a logical step, considering that creator Marshall's other hits, *Happy Days* and *Laverne and Shirley*, had already been transformed in this way (see *Fonz and the Happy Days Gang* and *Laverne and Shirley in the Army*). And so, *Mork and Mindy* got the same treatment, with the title characters made into teenagers and Mork being given a canine Orkian companion named Doynge. Unfortunately, the live-action version had been canceled by the time the animated version appeared, which ended up robbing the animated program of its momentum.

MORTAL KOMBAT: DEFENDERS OF THE REALM (1996–1998)

STUDIOS: Film Roman, Threshold

DISTRIBUTOR: USA

CREATORS: Ed Boone, John Tobias

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Phil Roman, Lawrence Kusanoff

PRODUCERS: Joshua Wexler, Michael Goguen, Susan Levin

DIRECTOR: Michael Goguen

WRITERS: Brooks Wachtel, Cydne Clark, Cynthia Harrison, Joshua Wexler, Mark Hoffmeier, Reed Robbins, Sean Derek, Steve Granat

VOICE ACTORS: Luke Perry (Sub-Zero), Ron Perlman (Stryker), Olivia d'Abo (Sonya Blade), Brian Tochi (Liu Kang), Clancy Brown (Rayden), Cree Summer (Princess Kitana), Dorian Harewood (Jax), Todd Thawley (Nightwolf)

SYNOPSIS: A series of tournament-style battles is what stands between the heroic Outworld Investigation Agency and a team of villains intent on escaping the Outworld and conquering Earth.

COMMENTARY: Based on the popular video game, notorious for its labyrinthine plotting and its (for the time) graphic displays of violence and bloodshed, although it owed much more to the 1995 feature film based on the game (executive producer Kananoff also produced the film). The game's limited premise was enough for 13 episodes, airing until its supplier ceased animated programming in 1998. Besides sequels to the video game, the franchise continued to grow and evolve, with the live-action series *Mortal Kombat: Conquest* debuting the same year the animated one ended.

THE MOST IMPORTANT PERSON (1972–1973)

STUDIOS: Sutherland Learning Associates, H.E.W., Viacom

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

PRODUCER: John Sutherland

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: Originally a feature on CBS's *Captain Kangaroo*, this was a series of 3½-minute films dealing with educational topics, in which animated content was intercut with live-action footage related to the topic at hand. The featured performers were Fumble, an ostrich; Hairy, a fur-covered missing-link type; the excitable Bird; and two token human beings, Mike and Nicola. The most notable aspect of the program was that it was the first television animation program to receive financial aid from the American federal government, as the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare was a coproducer of the series.

MOTHER GOOSE AND GRIMM (A.K.A. GRIMMY; 1991–1993)

STUDIOS: Lee Mendelson, Film Roman, Grimmy, Tribune, MGM, United Artists

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATOR: Mike Peters

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Lee Mendelson, Phil Roman, Mike Peters

PRODUCER: Bob Curtis

DIRECTORS: Vincent Davis, Jeff Hall, Ron Myrick, Glenn Kirkpatrick

WRITERS INCLUDED: Mark Evanier

VOICE ACTORS: Charlie Brill (Grimmy); Greg Burson (Attila); Eddie Deezen (Ham); Mitzi McCall (Mother Goose); Frank Welker, Hal Rayle, Rob Paulsen, Tress MacNeille, Howard Morris, Pat Harrington Jr., Hal Smith, Charlie Adler, Pat Music, Stan Freberg, and Danny Mann (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: The adventures of yellow-furred canine Grimmy and his deceptively mild mistress, Mother Goose.

COMMENTARY: Peters, a Pulitzer Prize-winning editorial cartoonist, launched the comic strip that served as the source of this program in the mid-1980s; by the following decade, it was in more than 600 newspapers nationwide. Following in the footsteps of Jim Davis's *Garfield* franchise (see *Garfield and Friends*), Peters was teamed up with the animators who had brought that

property into animation for this project. On a creative level, it was highly successful, with both Peters's trademark drawing style and his wacky, satirical sense of humor fully and often hilariously making an excellent transition to animation. Unfortunately, network interference brought the party to an end far too early. In its second season, the program's title was changed in order to attract viewers who had been supposedly misled by the original title, and this undoubtedly sparked the decline in viewership, which caused the series' abrupt expiration in March 1993.

THE MOUSE AND THE MONSTER (1996–1997)

STUDIO: Saban

DISTRIBUTOR: UPN

CREATOR: Jerry Leibowitz

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Jerry Leibowitz, Eric Rollman, Elizabeth Daro

PRODUCER: Kent Butterworth

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS INCLUDED: Glenn Eichler

VOICE ACTORS: Neal Kaplan and Lisa Brounstein (Specific roles unknown)

SYNOPSIS: Chesbro the mouse and Mo the monster are the product of botched scientific experiments by Dr. Wackerstein, who continually pursues them after they escape his lab.

COMMENTARY: Noted cartoonist Leibowitz, the founder of the all-comics newspaper *L.A. Funnies*, was the creator of this program, which followed the tradition of *Beany and Cecil* (see *Beany and Cecil*) and *Rocky and Bullwinkle* (see *Rocky and His Friends/The Bullwinkle Show*) in pitting a pair of oblivious nonheroes against incompetent, satirical villainy. The program was reviewed well and earned good ratings but was canceled after a single season on the air, at which point it disappeared into distribution oblivion.

MTV DOWNTOWN (1999–2000)

See *Downtown* (a.k.a. *MTV Downtown*; 1999–2000).

MTV ODDITIES (1994–1996)

See *Oddities* (a.k.a. *MTV Oddities*; 1994–1996).

¡MUCHA LUCHA! (2002–2005)

STUDIOS: Fwak, Warner Brothers

DISTRIBUTOR: WB

CREATORS: Lili Chin, Eddie Mort

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Sander Schwartz

PRODUCERS: Ken Kessel, Eddie Mort, Lili Chin, Alfred Gimeno, James Krieg, Joel Kuwahara, Michael Ryan

DIRECTORS INCLUDED: Russ Mooney

WRITERS INCLUDED: James Krieg, Peter Hastings, Michael Ryan, Mitch Watson

VOICE ACTORS: Carlos Alazraqui (Rikochet, 2002–2004/El Perrito/Tibor the Terrible, early episodes/Timmy of a Thousand Masks, early episodes), Jason

Marsden (Rikochet, 2004–2005), Kimberly Brooks (Buena Girl/Snow Pea/Cindy Slam, early episodes), Candi Milo (Flea/Cindy Slam, later episodes/Electricity/Puglita/Mama Maniaca), Michael Donovan (Megawatt, early episodes/Double Ninja Ninja/El Rey), Tom Kenny (Megawatt, later episodes), Tabitha St. Germain (Penny Plutonium), Cusse Mankuma (Potato Potata Jr./Zero Kelvin/Tic-Tac-Toe), Scott McNeil (Francisco of the Forest/Minotoro/Protozoa/Skelantonio), Garry Chalk (El Haystack Grande), Brian Drummond (Sonic Sumo), Lee Tockar (French Twist/El Gundamo/El Loco Mosquito), Brent Pachman (Pierre Del Fuego), Rob Paulsen (Private Reinhardt), Dee Bradley Baker (Tibor the Terrible, later episodes/Ensalada de Frutas), Kathleen Barr (La Pinata/Mrs. Flea/Buena Mom), Janyse Jaud (Dragonfly), Matt Hill (Timmy of a Thousand Masks, later episodes), Colin Murdock (Mr. Flea), Nicole Oliver (Chinche), Eric Bauza (Buena Dad), Benito Martinez (Lonestar), Terry Klassen (Abuelito), John DiMaggio (Big Dipper), Phil LaMarr (Little Dipper)

SYNOPSIS: In the town of Lucha Libre, aspiring mascarita wrestlers Rikochet, Buena Girl, and the Flea refine their abilities at wrestling school while protecting the town from evil.

COMMENTARY: One of the first television animation programs to be animated in the now-common Adobe Flash computer system, this series was derived from the popular Mexican professional wrestling presentation known as *lucha libre* ("free fighting"), whose combatants typically wear brightly colored masks to disguise their identities from the audience. While not always top-notch in terms of comedic quality, this program, along with the similarly themed *El Tigre: The Adventures of Manny Rivera* (q.v.), successfully tapped the rarely explored vein of Mexican American culture in television animation.

MUMMIES ALIVE! (1997)

STUDIOS: DIC, Ivan Reitman, Bohbot

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

CREATOR: Phil Harnage

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Ivan Reitman, Daniel Goldberg, Joe Medjuck, Michael Maliani, Andy Heyward, Robby London, Janice Sonskia

PRODUCER/DIRECTOR: Seth Kearsley

WRITERS INCLUDED: Julia Lewald, Mark Edens

VOICE ACTORS: Scott McNeil (Rath), Cree Summer (Nefer-Tina), Bill Switzer (Presley Carnovan), Dale Wilson (Ja-Kal), Graeme Kingston (Armon), Gerald Plunkett (Scarab), Pauline Newstone (Heka), Louise Vallance (Amanda/Katt)

SYNOPSIS: Twelve-year-old American Presley Carnovan discovers that he is the reincarnation of the son of an Egyptian pharaoh and is protected from villains wanting the secrets he comes to possess by a tribe of living mummies.

COMMENTARY: Something of an Egyptian variant on Disney's *Gargoyles* (q.v.), with none of that program's charm or gravitas. It disappeared after 42 episodes had aired, 3 of which were later reedited into a feature film for home video distribution.

THE MUMMY (2001–2003)

STUDIOS: Sun Woo, Universal

DISTRIBUTOR: WB

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Barbara Beck

PRODUCER: Joe Barruso

DIRECTORS: Susan Blu, Eddy Houchins, Dick Sebast, "Alan Smithee"

WRITERS INCLUDED: Jeff Gordon, John Dubiel, Greg Klein, Tom Pugsley

VOICE ACTORS: Chris Marquette (Alex O'Connell), Jim Cummings (Imhotep), Grey DeLisle (Evy O'Connell), John Schneider (Rick O'Connell), Tom Kenny (Jonathan Carnahan), Michael Reisz (Colin Weasler), Nicholas Guest (Ardeth Bey)

SYNOPSIS: Archeologists Rick and Evy O'Connell and their son Alex are vengefully trailed by the mummy Imhotep, who plans to eliminate them based on past assumed wrongs they committed in his eyes.

COMMENTARY: Based on a series of films released by Universal between 1999 and 2001, which were apparently popular enough to justify a second-rate animation adaptation. After having its launch delayed by the events of September 11, 2001, the series' decline was ensured when its network placed it on hiatus for months before finally canceling it.

MUPPET BABIES (1984–1992)

STUDIOS: Marvel, Jim Henson

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATOR: Jim Henson

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Jim Henson, Margaret Loesch, Lee Gunther

PRODUCERS: Bob Richardson, John Ahern, Adam Bleibereau, Bob Shellhorn

DIRECTORS INCLUDED: Bob Shellhorn, Norman McCabe, Gerry Chiniquy, Hank Saroyan, John Gibbs

WRITERS INCLUDED: Jeffrey Scott

VOICE ACTORS: Frank Welker (Kermit/Beaker/Skeeter, later episodes), Howie Mandel (Animal, early episodes/Skeeter, early episodes), Dave Coulier (Animal, later episodes/Bunsen), Greg Berg (Fozzie/Scooter), Katie Leigh (Rowlf), Laurie O'Brien (Piggy), Russi Taylor (Gonzo), Barbara Billingsley (Nanny)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: Mississippi-born, Washington, DC-raised Jim Henson first created his unique Muppet characters (the name was either a portmanteau combination of *marionette* and *puppet* or a variation on *moppet*, depending on the source) in the late 1950s. During the 1960s, he built his and his characters' reputations through a series of appearances in advertisements and network television variety shows. His first major break came in 1969, when his characters began being featured on the iconic children's television series *Sesame Street*, broadcast on PBS. However, the Muppets reached a wider audience as the stars of the popular syndicated variety series *The Muppet Show*, produced in England by ITC between 1977 and 1981. In turn, this led to them starring in a series of films produced or directed or both by Henson—*The Muppet Movie* (1979), *The Great Muppet Capers* (1981), and



Muppets as babies. What's not to like? CBS/Photofest © CBS

The Muppets Take Manhattan (1984)—that further affirmed their enormous popularity, which continues via later film and television ventures, despite Henson's unexpected and tragic death in 1990.

This highly successful and enormously acclaimed program, which won nearly a half-dozen Emmys in its original run, had its origins in a flashback sequence in *Muppets Take Manhattan* that depicted the principal Muppets as young children. They were confined to the nursery in which they were overseen by their nanny, but they frequently escaped the real world through

elaborately designed fantasies that formed the core of the show's narrative. The production of the series was just as elaborate as the characters' imaginations, involving the inserting of live-action footage and real-world photography whenever needed or required. Henson's active involvement in the series ensured quality and that certain annoying and overused production techniques (such as talking down to the child audience) were ignored. The overall effect was quite impressive, as it seemed to encourage many young kids to succeed in life just through the proper employment of their imaginations (just as Henson had succeeded in life using his). The program initiated a subgenre known as "babyfication," where other media characters would similarly be reduced in age in similar landscapes, but few took the subtle, playful, and encouraging approach Henson and the Marvel Studio used here, and therefore none of them were nearly as successful.

In 1985–1986, following its initial success as a half-hour program, the series was expanded to an hour and retitled *Jim Henson's Muppets, Babies and Monsters*. The main reason for this was the inclusion of *Little Muppet Monsters*, a live-action feature best described as an amateur theatrical version of *The Muppet Show*, but this feature was dropped after three episodes due to high costs. The series stayed at an hour until 1987, when it became a 90-minute feature, chiefly because of CBS's unprecedented decision to cancel the series *Garbage Pail Kids* before it was scheduled to debut. In 1988, it returned to an hour and remained at that length until that series ended.

Unfortunately, legal problems have prevented a DVD release of the series as of this writing, which is extremely unfortunate given the program's long run and its exceptional quality, which made it stand out in an otherwise tepid period in the history of television animation.

MUTANT LEAGUE (1994)

STUDIOS: Franklin-Watterman, Claster

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

CREATORS: Jeff Franklin, Steve Watterman

PRODUCER: Rhonda Smiley

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS: Rhonda Smiley, Steve Pesce

VOICE ACTORS: Roman Foster (Bones Justice), Jim Hirbie (Zalgor Prigg/Spewter), Rich Buchlloyd (Razor Kidd), Mark Fleisher (K. T. Blayer/Kang/Mo), Kati Starr (Eleanor McWhimble), Robert Brosseau (Bob Babble/George McWhimble/Jukka)

SYNOPSIS: The saga of the Midway Monsters, an all-kinds sports team composed entirely of mutants.

COMMENTARY: A series with a limited premise and a bizarre design sequence that limited it further, leading it to come to an end after 27 episodes had aired.

MY DAD THE ROCK STAR (2003–2004)

STUDIOS: Nelvana, Carrere

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon (United States)

CREATOR/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Gene Simmons

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Joanne Vannicola (Willy Zilla), Lawrence Zayne (Rock Zilla), Kathleen Lasky (Crystal Zilla), Stephanie Mills (Serenity Zilla), Sara Gadon (Alyssa), Martin Villafana (Quincy), Don Francks (Nigel "Skunk" Fanshawe), Rob Stefanuk (Robert "Buzz" Sawchuck), Jim Millington (Principal Malfactor), Dwight Schultz (Mr. Kant)

SYNOPSIS: Wealthy rock star Rock Zilla relocates with his family to suburban Silent Springs. Trouble inevitably ensues.

COMMENTARY: Creator/producer Simmons first shot to fame in the 1970s as a member of the iconic rock group Kiss, who were much more noteworthy for their elaborate facial makeup, flamboyant costumes, and special-effects-laden concert presentations than the quality of their music itself. The program had an autobiographical quality about it, as Simmons used himself and his real-life family as the models for their fictional doppelgängers. The novelty element of the show's creator and its conception was likely the main reason the program made it on the air in the first place, and its reliance on formula rather than innovation in its storytelling was the main reason it ended after one season.

MY FAVORITE MARTIANS (1973–1975)

STUDIOS: Filmation, Jack Chertok

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Lou Scheimer, Norman Prescott

DIRECTORS: Hal Sutherland, Don Townsley, Rudy Larriva, Lou Zukor, Hal Reed, Ed Solomon

WRITERS: Ben Starr, Bill Danch, Marc Richards

VOICE ACTORS: Jonathan Harris (Uncle Martin), Howard Morris (Tim O'Hara/Bill Brennan/Brad Brennan/Tiny/Crumbs/Chump/Okey Dokey), Lane Scheimer (Andromeda), Jane Webb (Katy O'Hara/Lorelei Brown/Jan/Coral/Miss Casserole)

SYNOPSIS: Tim O'Hara tries to conceal the fact that his "uncle" Martin is actually an alien from Mars, without success.

COMMENTARY: Originally, this premise was the focus of *My Favorite Martian*, a live-action sitcom that aired on CBS between 1963 and 1966. In that program, Bill Bixby portrayed Tim, and Ray Walston portrayed Martin (Walston also had a supporting role in a later feature-film adaptation from Disney, in which Christopher Lloyd portrayed the alien). Filmation kept the format of the sitcom largely intact, in spite of the pluralization of the name and the expansion of the cast. Additions included Tim's niece Katy, Martin's biological nephew Andromeda ("Andy" for short), and an alien dog named Okey Dokey. These changes did little for the format of the series, and it expired after 17 installments, making it one of Filmation's lesser productions among its shows adapted from other properties.

MY GYM PARTNER'S A MONKEY (2005–2008)

STUDIO: Cartoon Network

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATORS/EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Julie McNally Cahill, Timothy Cahill

PRODUCERS: Victoria McCollum, Haven Alexander

DIRECTORS: Timothy Cahill, Gary Hartle, John McIntyre

WRITERS: Tom Sheppard, Rosen Varbanov, Julie McNally Cahill, Timothy Cahill, William Reiss, Roger Eschbacher, Kelsey Mann, Nate Cash, Chong Suk Lee, Kirk Tingblad, Adam Pava, Sherm Cohen, Brett Varon, Darrick Bachman, Michael Allen, Marlowe Weisman, Mitch Larson, Marc Crisafulli, Douglas McCarthy, Suzie Vicek, Chris Savino, Chris Headrick, Ian Wasseluk, Carl Faruolo, Kevin Hopps, Howie Perry, Kevin Kaliher, Todd Garfield, Cindy Morrow

VOICE ACTORS: Nika Futterman (Adam Lyon/Miss Chameleon), Tom Kenny (Jake Spider Monkey/Henry Armadillo/Dickie Sugarjumper), Rick Gomez (Windsor Gorilla/Slips Python), Grey DeLisle (Lupe Toucan/Ingrid Giraffe/Mrs. Geraldine Warthog/Nurse Gazelle), Maurice LaMarche (Principal Ponceherello Pixiefrog/Mr. Hornbill/Mr. Maurice Mandrill), Phil LaMarr (Virgil "Bull" Sharkowski/Endugu Elephant), Brian Doyle Murray (Coach Tiffany Gills), Cree Summer (Mrs. Tusk/Kerry Anderson)

SYNOPSIS: Because of a blatant clerical error, human middle school student Adam Lyon is forced to attend Charles Darwin Middle School (CDMS), an institution for the children of zoo animals.

COMMENTARY: This program's seemingly limited premise was utterly belied by the fact that it proved to be much more engaging, entertaining, satirical, and hilarious than might be believed. The Cahills and their staff anchored the show by developing some uniquely goofy and endearing characters with bizarre and unexpected quirks in their natures, none more so than the supposedly civilized human being Adam, who proved to have as much of a wild, unpredictable personality as any of his animal cohorts. The supporting characters were equally well drawn, particularly Kenny's portrayal of wise-guy con man Jake; DeLisle's of the towering but insecure Ingrid; and especially LaMarche's of the self-absorbed, Dickensian Pixiefrog. Likewise, the plots defied and ignored the sitcom conventions the premise might have suggested in favor of wildly satirical stories that used the antics at CDMS as a springboard for potshots at the wider world in the classic television animation tradition. An Emmy Award winner and Annie Award nominee, this series deserves wider exposure and scrutiny than its spare DVD and current limited rerun exposure merits.



**Adam (left) and Jake (right) in typically awkward/amusing poses. Cartoon Network/
Photofest © Cartoon Network**

MY LIFE AS A TEENAGE ROBOT (2003–2005, 2008–2009)

STUDIOS: Frederator, Nickelodeon

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

CREATOR: Rob Renzetti

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Rob Renzetti, Fred Seibert

DIRECTORS: Rob Renzetti, Tim Walker, Bob Jaques, Randy Myers, Chris Sauve, John Fountain, Robert Alvarez, Ron Hogart, Chris Savino, Ray Pointer, Bob Nesler, Greg Miller, Daniel de la Vega, Monty Young

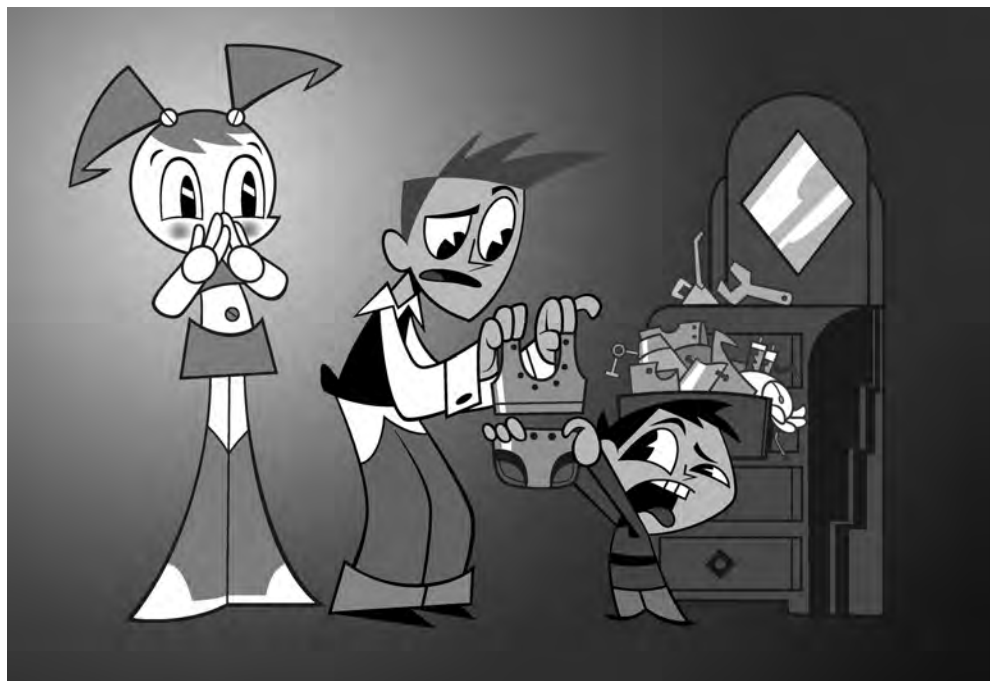
WRITERS: Alex Kirwan, Rob Renzetti, Chris Mitchell, Brandon Kruse, Ashley Lenz, Mary Hanley, Carlos Ramos, Chuck Klein, Bernie Petterson, Trevor Wall, John Fountain, Stephen Sandoval, Chris Dent, Ed Baker, Gabe Swarr, Kelly Armstrong, Heather Martinez, Mike Kunkel, Tom King, Dave Thomas, Chris Reccardi, Bryan Andrews, Will Finn, Chuck Greib, Wendy Greib, Scott Bern, Cindy Morrow

VOICE ACTORS: Janice Kawaye (XJ-9, a.k.a. Jenny/Tammy/XJ-1), Candi Milo (Dr. Nora Wakeman/Olga/Sludge/Jantrice/Pteresa/XJ-6), Chad Doreck (Brad Carbunkle), Audrey Wasilewski (Tuck Carbunkle/XJ-7/XJ-8), Quinton Flynn (Sheldon Lee/Don Prima), Thora Birch (Princess Vega), Sandy Fox (Melody), Kevin Michael Richardson (Armageddroid), Tara Strong (Killgore), Eartha Kitt (Vexus, early episodes), Cree Summer (Vexus, later episodes/Tiff Crust/Stephanie), Steven Blum (Smytus), Jim Ward (Krackus), Grey DeLisle (Letta), James Arnold Taylor (Kenny Mogg), Moira Quirk (Britt Crust), Kath Soucie (XJ-2/XJ-3/XJ-4/XJ-5)

SYNOPSIS: Robot-teenager-cum-superhero Jenny struggles to have a normal life in the face of the regular demands made on her by her friends, enemies, and eccentric creator Dr. Wakeman alike.

COMMENTARY: One of the most delightfully entertaining programs of the 2000s. Renzetti and art director Kirwan worked in close collaboration to create an extremely unique design scheme for the program based on the art deco movement of the 1920s and 1930s. This gave the program a visual feel reminiscent of the theatrical animation of that time, as well as the illustrations prominently featured in numerous science-fiction magazines of the same vintage. As a consequence, the program combined a retro design feel with a very contemporary approach to racism and gender politics, focusing lucidly and highly effectively at times on the prejudice Jenny faced as both robot and girl. The characterization and plotting, for once, were up to the challenge that such an ambitious design scheme merited. Kawaye's multifaceted portrayal of Jenny as both a competent robot heroine and an emotionally insecure teenager would have been a difficult chore for any voice actor, but it was one that she handled with masterful skill, panache, and bravado. The others were equally well done, particularly Flynn as the Woody Allen-esque, nebbish Sheldon, who lighted up the few episodes in which he was spotlighted in exceedingly clever ways. Kitt was also very well cast and capped off a memorable multimedia career with her portrayal of the exceedingly duplicitous Vexus.

Despite the program's critical acclaim (it received an Emmy nomination as well as 11 Annie nominations), Nickelodeon abruptly canceled it in the



Jenny's friends make an awkward discovery about her. Nickelodeon/Photofest © Nickelodeon

fall of 2005, with a number of already-produced episodes still unaired. These first aired belatedly during 2008–2009. The complete series has been issued on three DVDs (one for each season) with the original production order intact, so it can be viewed and savored in the manner it richly deserved during its original run. This is definitely one that belongs to the ages.

***MY LITTLE PONY: FRIENDSHIP IS MAGIC* (2010–PRESENT)**

STUDIOS: Hasbro, Studio B, DHX Media

DISTRIBUTORS: The Hub (2010–2013), Hub Network (2013–2014), Discovery Family (2014–present)

CREATOR: Lauren Faust (series concept)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Stephen Davis, Kirsten Newlands, Chris Bartleman, Lauren Faust, Blair Peters, Beth Stevenson, Megan McCarthy, Jayson Thiessen, Sarah Wall, Asaph Fipke

PRODUCERS: Devon Cody, Sarah Wall

DIRECTORS INCLUDE: Jayson Thiessen, James Wootton, Jim Miller, Denny Lu, Tim Stuby

WRITERS INCLUDE: Lauren Faust, Amy Keating Rogers, Cindy Morrow, Chris Savino, Megan McCarthy, Charlotte Fullerton, M. A. Larson, Dave Polsky, Merriwether Williams, Corey Powell, Teddy Antonio, Josh Haber, Ed Valentine, Betsy McGovern, Natasha Levinger, Jayson Thiessen, Scott Sonneborn, Noelle Benvenuti, Joanna Lewis, Kristine Songco, Jim Miller, Neal Dusedau,

Nick Confalone, Gillian Berrow, Michael Fox, Will Fox, Dave Rapp, Michael Vogel, F. M. De Marco, Kevin Burke, Chris “Doc” Wyatt, Jennifer Skelly

VOICE ACTORS: Tara Strong (Twilight Sparkle), Cathy Weseluck (Spike/Mayor Mare), Ashleigh Ball (Rainbow Dash/Applejack), Tabitha St. Germain (Rarity/Princess Luna/Granny Smith), Andrea Libman (Fluttershy/Pinkie Pie), Michelle Creder (Apple Bloom), Claire Corlett (Sweetie Belle), Madeline Peters (Scootaloo), Nicole Oliver (Princess Celestia/Cherilee), Britt McKillip (Princess Cadence), Andrew Francis (Shining Armor), Kelly Sheridan (Starlight Glimmer), Peter New (Big McIntosh), Chantal Strand (Diamond Tiara), Shannon Chan Kent (Silver Spoon), Michael Dobson (Bulk Biceps), Kathleen Barr (Trixie), Brenda Chriclow (Zecora), Kelly Metzger (Spitfire), Matt Hill (Soarin), Ingrid Nilson (Maud), John De Lancie (Discord)

SYNOPSIS: Life in the kingdom of Equestria, specifically in the town of Ponyville, focusing on the struggles faced by the magically empowered unicorn Twilight Sparkle and her friends.

COMMENTARY: A far superior product to the two series that preceded it in enacting the toy line on-screen. Faust was personally recruited by Hasbro to recast the old property from scratch, and her experience in writing and producing such modern properties as the original *The Powerpuff Girls* (q.v.) and *Foster’s Home for Imaginary Friends* (q.v.) proved invaluable in providing a corrective to the vapid and bland programs that came before. Rather than the enacting of stale moral truths, this series focused on the strong-willed and individualized personalities of the “Mane Six” at its heart: Twilight Sparkle, tomboy athlete Rainbow Dash, fashion plate Rarity, salt-of-the-earth farmer Applejack, the aptly named Fluttershy, and perennially exuberant baker/party girl Pinkie Pie. The contrasts and conflicts between this group and the numerous supporting players gave this series a leg to stand on in terms of characterization, which in turn allowed for the creation of much more elaborate and intriguing plots, many instigated by the aptly named villain Discord, among others. The program has deservedly attracted an audience worthy of its above-average creative merit, not only among young girls (as would be expected), but also from another, entirely unexpected source: the young adoring male fans collectively known as the “Bronies,” whose support undoubtedly has helped to expand the show’s appeal as well as lengthen its longer-than-average production life.

Six seasons of the series have been produced, with a seventh scheduled to debut in the spring of 2017. A feature film version of the program, titled *My Little Pony: The Movie*, was released theatrically in 2017. There have also been a number of merchandising spin-offs, including some well-produced graphic novels.

MY LITTLE PONY AND FRIENDS (AND RELATED SERIES)

***My Little Pony and Friends* (1986)**

STUDIOS: Wildstar, Starwild, Hasbro, Claster, Marvel

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Joe Bacal, Margaret Loesch, Tom Griffin

PRODUCERS: Marja Dahl, Jeff Hall, Mike Joens

DIRECTORS: Bob Bemiller, Charlie Downs, Bob Kirk, Margaret Nichols, Bob Matz, Rudy Cataldi, Karen Peterson, Joe Morrison, Spencer Peel, Neal Warner, Lillian Evans, Stan Phillips, Norman McCabe, Gerry Chiniquy, Warren Batchelder, Bob Treat, Brad Case, Joan Case, John Freeman, Tom Ray, Bill Knoll, Milton Gray

WRITERS INCLUDED: John Semper, Cynthia Friedlob, Martin Pasko, Rebecca Parr, Michael Reaves, J. Brynne Stephens

VOICE ACTORS: Ginny McSwain (Megan); Susan Blu, Charlie Adler, Nancy Cartwright, Peter Cullen, Linda Gary, Scott Grimes, Keri Houlihan, Katie Leigh, Sherry Lynn, Kenneth Mars, Sarah Partridge, Frank Welker, Russi Taylor, Michael Bell, Bettina Bush, Jeannie Elias, Ian Freid, Susan Garbo, Ellen Gerstell, Melanie Gaffin, Skip Hinnant, Christina Lange, Jody Lambert, Kellie Martin, Anne Marie McEvoy, David Mendenhall, Scott Menville, Breckin Meyer, Laura Mooney, Andrew Porter, B. J. Ward, Jill Wayne, Bunny Andrews, Bill Callaway, Adam Carl, Philip Clarke, Danny Cooksey, Jennifer Darling, Marshall Efron, Patrick Fraley, Elizabeth Fraser, Liz Georges, Robert Ito, Renee Jacobs, Robin Kaufman, Danny Mann, Tress MacNeille, Terry McGovern, Michael Mish, Clive Revill, Stu Rosen, Neil Ross, Ken Sanson, Rick Segal, Judy Strangis, Lennie Weinrib, Charlie Wolfe, and Ted Ziegler (Additional characters)

***My Little Pony Tales* (1993)**

STUDIOS: Graz, Wildstar, Starwild, Sunbow

DISTRIBUTOR: Disney

PRODUCERS: Jay Bacal, Tom Griffin, C. J. Kettler, Roger Slifer, Terry Lennon

DIRECTORS: Karen Peterson, Graham Morris, Munir Bhatti, Rick Bowman, Rudy Cataldi, Barbara Dourmashkin, J. K. Kim, Marlene May, Erik Peterson, Brian Ray, Mitch Rochon

WRITERS INCLUDED: Roger Slifer, George Bloom

VOICE ACTORS: Brigitta Dau, Laura Harris, Willow Johnson, Lalaina Lindbergh, Shane Meier, Maggie O'Hara, Kate Robbins, Tony Sampson, Kelly Sheridan, Brad Swaile, Venus Terzo, and Chiara Zanni (Specific roles unknown)

SYNOPSIS: The adventures of the denizens of the mythical realm of Ponyland, anthropomorphic horses who embodied a variety of personality traits.

COMMENTARY: Launched in the early 1980s, the My Little Pony toy line was a blatant attempt to engage young girls as product consumers, in the same way as toy manufacturer Hasbro's efforts (see *G.I. Joe* and *Transformers*) were aimed at boys. Although the blatant sexism inherent in the marketing of the toys—and, as a consequence, these two series—were obvious, it did not prevent them from being successful in the marketplace with the target audience.

In the original 1986 series, the adventures of the ponies—who were the property of a young girl named Megan here—were featured in short serialized adventures, the better to also feature the friends of the title in similar installments. They were likewise products of the Hasbro empire: specifically, the Glo Friends, the Moondreamers, and the Potato Head Kids. The 1993 edition dropped *Friends* and focused on a mix of reruns from the old shows and

newly produced episodes, which made the anthropomorphism inherent in the concept much more blatant by transforming Ponyland into a place much more like the real world. Despite the continued sterility of the idea, these revamped episodes inadvertently provided the seeds for the much more creatively fertile *My Little Pony: Friendship Is Magic* (q.v.) in the future.

MYTHIC WARRIORS: GUARDIANS OF THE LEGEND

(1998–2000)

STUDIOS: Nelvana, Marathon, Hong Guang Animation, France 3

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATOR: Laura Geringer

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Michael Hirsh, Patrick Loubert, Clive Smith

DIRECTOR: Jim Craig

WRITERS: Kathy Slevin, Peter Colley

VOICE ACTORS: James Blendick (Hermes/Narrator), Lawrence Bayne (Hercules), Juan Chioran (Antonius), Rod Wilson (Castor), Paul Essiembre (Pollux), Caroly Larson (Andromeda), Robin Dunn (Perseus), Shannon Lawson (Cassiopeia), Janet Lane Green (Hera), Roger Honeywell (Ulysses), Jennifer Dale (Medusa), Ron Lea (Chiron), Norman Spencer (Hades), Lenore Zann (Persephone), Jesse Collins (Apollo), Gary Crawford (Zeus), Ben Campbell (Daedalus/King Midas), Amos Crawley (Icarus), Lally Cadeau (Athena), Torri Higginson (Circe), Natalie Brown (Atalanta), Wendy Lands (Aphrodite), Jonathan Potts (Prometheus), Terri Hawkes (Pandora), Greg Spottiswood (Bellerophon), Paul Hadad (Theseus), Julie Lemieux (Penelope), Philip De Wilde (Cadmus), Reagan Pasternak (Europa), Sally Cahill (Medea), Jeremy Harris (Damon), Lyon Smith (Pythias), Michael Hall (Acteon), Rob Stefaniuk (Phaeton), Robert Tinkler (Androcles)

SYNOPSIS: The adventures of the gods and goddesses of Greek legend, suitably reimagined for modern audiences and to meet late-1990s TV animation regulatory standards.

COMMENTARY: The series' jumping-off point was a series of books from Scholastic, written by Geringer and illustrated by Peter Bollinger. The program used the modernized approach adopted by the authors (for example, Perseus defeating Medusa via kickboxing) without departing too much from the mythical sources. The most obvious and dated aspect of the aforementioned regulatory intervention was the closing, Filmation-esque 30-second prosocial morals at the end, in which the characters mused on how the problems they faced in their adventures in their time were applicable to the problems of the youth of today.

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***NAPOLEON DYNAMITE* (2012)**

STUDIOS: Hess, Scully, 20th Century Fox

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX

CREATORS: Jared Hess, Jerusha Hess

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Jared Hess, Jerusha Hess, Mike Scully, Jeremy Coon

PRODUCERS: Tim Long, Claudia Katz, J. Michael Mendel

DIRECTORS: Dwayne Carey Hill, Raymie Musquiz, Crystal Chesney Thompson, Edmund Fong, Frank Marino, Stephen Sandoval

WRITERS: Jared Hess, Jerusha Hess, Julie Thacker Scully, Dan Vebber, Tom Gam-mill, Max Pross, Mike Scully

VOICE ACTORS: Jon Heder (Napoleon Dynamite), Aaron Ruell (Kip Dynamite), Sandra Martin (Grandma Carlinda Dynamite), Efren Ramirez (Pedro Sanchez), Tina Majorino (Deb), Jon Gries (Uncle Rico), Diedrich Bader (Rex)

SYNOPSIS: In the town of Preston, Idaho, awkward teenager Napoleon Dynamite disrupts the routine of everyday life with his wild antics.

COMMENTARY: Partially based on the 2004 film of the same name, written by the Hesses and directed by Jared Hess, which developed an enormous cult following in the years after its release; executive producer Coon was a producer of the film. The cast members of the film reprised their roles in the animated series, with the Hesses reshaping the structure to fit television with the aid of veteran writer/producer Scully, who had previously worked for *The Simpsons* (q.v.). Although initial reviews were positive, the premise proved far too limited in plot and characterization to be successful as a weekly television offering and was canceled after only six episodes had aired.

***NASCAR RACERS* (2000–2002)**

STUDIO: Saban

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX

PRODUCER: Dennis Woodyard

DIRECTORS: Dennis Woodyard, Dion Hopkins

WRITERS: Scott Peterson, Jeffrey Gatrall, Joe Goyette

VOICE ACTORS: Kathleen Barr (Megan "Spitfire" Fassler), Ian Corlett (Mark "Charger" McCutchen), Roger Cross (Steve "Flyer" Sharp), Andrew Francis (Miles McCutchen), Ron Halder (Gardner Rexton), Kirby Morrow (Redline), Richard Newman (Specks), Rino Romano (Carlos "Stunts" Rey), Dale Wilson (Duck Dunaka/Mike Hauger)

SYNOPSIS: In New Motor City, honest Team Fastex competes in high-speed auto races against corrupt Team Rexcor.

COMMENTARY: Begun in 1948, the National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing (NASCAR) was an outgrowth of high-speed auto racing that had been occurring in Daytona Beach, Florida, for decades, as well as the prac-

tice of bootleggers using high-speed automobiles to transport illicit alcohol during Prohibition. After the repeal of Prohibition in 1933, the vehicles were raced for sport, becoming popular ad-hoc entertainment in the southern United States and formalized by the creation of NASCAR. In the following decades, while retaining its deep loyalty among Southern patrons, the organization expanded its profile to include national and international followers, thanks to the enduring popularity of such well-known personalities as Richard Petty and Dale Earnhardt Sr. among its ranks. Today, NASCAR races are popular enough to be regularly broadcast on television, while the centerpiece of the season, the Daytona 500, has become one of America's most well-known sporting events.

The producers of this series clearly did not understand the appeal of the organization whose name they had licensed. They simply produced another standard-issue automotive action-adventure series with the name attached, with nary a Southern accent in sight among the voice actors' performances. Undoubtedly, however, the series must have piqued the interest of its broadcasting network, as eventually FOX would become one of NASCAR's longest-serving television home bases later in the 2000s.

NBC COMICS (1950–1951)

See *Tele-Comics/NBC Comics*.

NED'S NEWT (1998–1999)

STUDIOS: Nelvana, TMO-Loonland

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX (United States)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Michael Hirsh, Andy Knight, Patrick Loubert, Andrew Nicholls, Clive Smith, Darrell Vickers, Peter Volke

PRODUCERS: Patricia Burns, Vince Commisso

DIRECTORS: Rick Marshall, Greg Sullivan

WRITERS: Alan Daniels, Hugh Duffy, John Mein, Andrew Nicholls, John Pellatt, Georgia Pritchett, Terry Saltsman, Kenn Scott, Darrell Vickers, Darwin Vickers

VOICE ACTORS: Tracey Moore (Ned Flemkin), Harland Williams (Newton, early episodes), Ron Pardo (Newton, later episodes), Carolyn Scott (Sharon Flemkin/Mrs. Bunn), Peter Keleghan (Eric Flemkin), Tracy Ryan (Linda Bliss), Colin O'Meara (Renfrew/Doogie Pluck), Jim Millington (Usual Guy)

SYNOPSIS: After accidentally overfeeding his pet newt, Ned Flemkin transforms the creature into a monstrously oversized and energetic being, albeit one capable of reverting back to its normal form at unexpected and crucial moments.

COMMENTARY: A typical Canadian animated comedy series, trying too hard to be broadly and efficiently American in its presentation and stumbling all over its feet creatively in the process. The concept behind the series had worked well enough for sitcoms in the 1960s (see *Jeannie* and *My Favorite Martians*) but by the 1990s was deeply and incredibly lame—a fact that was apparent to everyone but the producers of the series and the executives who greenlighted its production.

NELVANAMATION (1977–1980)

STUDIOS: Nelvana, CBC, Viacom

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated (United States)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Jeffrey Kirsch, Robert Foster, Ted Kerneghan, Nigel Martin

PRODUCERS: Patrick Loubert, Michael Hirsh

DIRECTORS INCLUDED: Ken Stephenson, Giano Celestri, Greg Duffell

WRITERS INCLUDED: Larry Mollin

VOICE ACTORS INCLUDED: Joey Davidson, Martin Lavut, Richard Davidson, Duncan Regehr, Patricia Moffat, Jane Mallett, Marvin Goldhar, Greg Rogers, Chris Wiggins, Nick Nichols, Marion Waldman, Jim Henshaw, John Sebastian, Annabelle Kershaw, Laurel Runn, Diane Lawrence, Greg Swanson, Donann Cavin, Max Ferguson, Marie Aloma, Bill Osler, Rory Block, Richard Manuel, Sid Caesar, Catherine O'Hara, Jean Walker, Derek McGrath, Al Waxman, Toby Waxman, Garrett Morris, Maurice LaMarche, Jeri Craden, Melleny Brown, Larry Mollin, Don Ferguson, Phil Silvers, Bob Dermer, Paul Soles, Anna Bourque, Rick Danko

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: *Nelvanamation* was the umbrella name for this series of specials from Canada's Nelvana Studios, then recently launched and not yet as well known to American viewers as it would eventually become. Some of the original Canadian titles were changed by American syndicator Viacom, who also insisted on the inclusion of such American celebrities as Caesar, Silvers, and Morris in the voice casts to help the programs play better in the States. The programs featured included:

- *A Cosmic Christmas*: A science-fictional take on the story of the Three Wise Men.
- *The Devil and Daniel Mouse*: A pair of anthropomorphic folk-singing mice are lured by an infernal being with the promise of rock-and-roll stardom.
- *Romie O and Julie 8*: A pair of robots involved in Shakespearian forbidden love.
- *Intergalactic Thanksgiving* (a.k.a. *Please Don't Eat the Planet* [Canadian title]): Hardworking and slothful immigrant families compete for space on the planet Laffalot, which is threatened when the latter family's "food-making machine" malfunctions.
- *Easter Fever* (a.k.a. *The Jack Rabbit Story* [Canadian title]): The Easter Bunny finds himself the object of a Friars Club-style roast at the hands of anthropomorphic comedians.
- *Take Me Up to the Ballgame*: An alien sports promoter attempts to set up the first major intergalactic all-star game.

While the content of the individual entries varied, they were by and large well animated and produced, cementing Nelvana's reputation as a quality animation producer and ensuring that American and international content providers would begin trekking to their door requesting their services.

THE NEVERENDING STORY (1995–1997)

STUDIOS: Nelvana, CineVox, Dieter Geissler, TV KG, Ellipse, Family Channel, Pro Sieben, Canal France, Channel 4, Nickelodeon

DISTRIBUTOR: HBO (United States)

CREATOR: Michael Ende

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Stephane Bernasconi, Dieter Gessler, Philippe Gildas, Michael Hirsh, Patrick Loubert, Birgitta Peitz, Robert Rea

PRODUCERS: Philippe Grimond, Stephen Hodgins, Pamela Slavin

DIRECTOR: Mike Fallows

WRITERS INCLUDED: Peter Sauder

VOICE ACTORS: Christopher Bell (Bastian Bux), Richard Binsley (Barktroll), Geoffrey Bowes (Barney), Colin Fox (Large Head), James Rankin (Three Head), Howard Jerome (Falkor), Wayne Robson (Engywook), Lisa Yamanaka (Child-like Empress), Janet Laine Green (Xayide)

SYNOPSIS: While reading a fantasy book about the world of Fantasia, Bastian Bux is magically transported inside the book and becomes a player in its ongoing story line.

COMMENTARY: The concept originated in a novel by German author Ende, but the property became much better-known to North Americans through an acclaimed 1984 feature film, which combined live-action footage with then-state-of-the-art innovations in puppetry and special effects. The overall message—that reading is a good thing and having a vivid imagination is nothing to be ashamed of—carried over a decade later to this international television animation production, involving studios from several nations. The empowering message for children remained an obvious and appealing element of the property, though more jaded adults were likely resistant to its charms.

In addition to the feature film and its two sequels (one strictly a straight-to-video affair), the property also inspired a later live-action version, *Tales from the Neverending Story*, which debuted in 2002, also on HBO.

***THE NEW ADVENTURES OF BATMAN* (1977)**

See *Batman* (and related series).

***THE NEW ADVENTURES OF FLASH GORDON* (1979–1980)**

See *Flash Gordon* (and related series).

THE NEW ADVENTURES OF GILLIGAN/GILLIGAN'S PLANET

***The New Adventures of Gilligan* (1974–1977)**

STUDIO: Filmmation

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATOR: Sherwood Schwartz

PRODUCERS: Lou Scheimer, Norman Prescott, Don Christensen

DIRECTORS: Don Townsley, Lou Zukor, Rudy Larriva, Bill Reed

WRITERS: Marc Richards, Bob Ogle, Jim Ryan, Bill Danch, Chuck Menville, Len Janson

VOICE ACTORS: Bob Denver (Gilligan), Alan Hale Jr. (Skipper), Jim Backus (Thurston Howell III), Natalie Schaefer (Lovey Howell), Russell Johnson (The Professor), Jane Webb (Ginger), Jane Edwards (Mary Ann), Lou Scheimer (Snubby)

***Gilligan's Planet* (1982–1983)**

STUDIO: Filmmation

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

PRODUCERS: Lou Scheimer, Norman Prescott

DIRECTORS: Don Townsley, Lou Zukor, Rudy Larriva, Bill Reed

WRITERS: Marc Richards, Paul Dini, Tom Ruegger, Robby London

VOICE ACTORS: Bob Denver (Gilligan), Alan Hale Jr. (Skipper), Jim Backus (Thurston Howell III), Natalie Schaefer (Lovey Howell), Russell Johnson (The Professor), Dawn Wells (Ginger/Mary Ann)

SYNOPSIS: During a three-hour boat tour, the passengers and crew of the *S.S. Minnow* are stranded on a deserted island. Their constant attempts to escape fail, largely due to the bumbling ineptitude of the boat's first mate, Gilligan.

COMMENTARY: This scenario describes a surprisingly popular sitcom that first aired on CBS between 1964 and 1966 and then developed an astonishing cult following in repeated reruns over several decades, in spite (or because) of its lack of subtlety in its humor. These two animated versions were authorized and supervised by creator Schwartz, who developed them after repeated attempts to create live-action reunion projects failed (though they ultimately would come to fruition). *New Adventures* was the correct term for the initial animated version, as it essentially took up where the original program left off, spreading the story out over a further 24 installments. The original cast members reprised their parts, with the exception of Tina Louise (Ginger) and Dawn Wells (Mary Ann)—the former refused to have anything further to do with the property, and the latter was otherwise engaged at the time of the series' production. (Jane Webb played both Ginger and Mary Ann but was billed under her married name, Edwards, for the latter part). The central addition to the cast was a typical funny animal character, a monkey named Snubby who served as Gilligan's pet.

Gilligan's Planet represented a further extension of the concept, taking it into the farthest regions of space. This was the result of the professor managing to construct a rocket ship to transport the crew off the island (at last), but this quite obviously backfired when they became lost again. This was, however, the only major element of novelty added, as the plotting was essentially the same as before. In this version, Dawn Wells returned to the role of Mary Ann and also played Ginger. Only 12 episodes of *Gilligan's Planet* were produced, but the property has continued to survive and thrive in reruns and further live-action additions to the program canon.

***THE NEW ADVENTURES OF HUCK FINN* (1968–1969)**

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

CREATOR: Mark Twain

PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

ANIMATION DIRECTOR: Charles Nichols

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

LIVE-ACTION PERFORMERS: Michael Shea (Huck Finn), Kevin Schulz (Tom Sawyer), Lu Ann Hasham (Becky Thatcher), Ted Cassidy (Injun Joe), Dorothy Tennant (Mrs. Thatcher), Anne Bellamy (Aunt Polly)

ANIMATION VOICE ACTORS: Ted Cassidy (Injun Joe); Dennis Day, Hal Smith, Ted DeCorsia, Peggy Webber, Jack Kruschen, Paul Stewart, Mike Road, Vic Perrin, Charles Lane, Julie Bennett, Paul Frees, Marvin Miller, Joe Sirola, Keye Luke, Janet Waldo, John Myhers, Henry Corden, Don Messick, Daws Butler, Bernard Fox, Danny Bravo, Dayton Lummis, Jay Novello, Abraham Sofaer, Than Wyenn, and Bill Beckley (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: Huck Finn, Tom Sawyer, and Becky Thatcher flee the villainous wrath of Injun Joe as he pursues them through multiple dimensions of time.

COMMENTARY: Twain (né Samuel Clemens) created the central characters and situation in his 1876 novel *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and continued it in the 1884 follow-up *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, as well as some lesser sequels. Centered around a bucolic portrait of the author's native Missouri in the early 19th century, the novels focused on the rambunctious troubles caused by the title characters in their youth and adolescence. Despite continued controversy about the books' content (notably the latter book's regular and obvious use of the infamous *N*-word, though this was authentic to the time and place), they have become recognized as classics of American literature and have been repeatedly adapted to film and television in a variety of forms and ways, such as this series.

It was groundbreaking for its time in combining live-action footage with animated characters and backdrops, but time has revealed its flaws. The overlaying of the live and animated footage was not always perfect because there was no real attempt to create a direct blend; therefore the phoniness of the juxtaposition was fairly obvious. The story lines and characterizations did the concept even less justice. For example, one episode superficially blended the Twain characters with *Don Quixote*, which earned a sharp rebuke from *TV Guide* critic Cleveland Amory. Cassidy's overripe portrayal of the "half-breed" villain Injun Joe in both animated and live form was a further drawback that Amory singled out. However, the show's time on the air was already ending due to low ratings caused by its frequent preemption by NBC for sporting events.

***THE NEW ADVENTURES OF MADELINE* (1995)**

See *Madeline* (1993–1995).

***THE NEW ADVENTURES OF MIGHTY MOUSE AND HECKLE AND JECKLE* (1979–1982)**

See *Mighty Mouse Playhouse* (and related series).

***THE NEW ADVENTURES OF PINOCCHIO* (1961)**

STUDIOS: Rankin/Bass, Videocraft, Crawley

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

CREATOR: Carlo Collodi

PRODUCERS: Arthur Rankin Jr., Jules Bass

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Larry Mann (Geppetto); Stan Francis (Foxy Q. Fibble); Joan Fowler, Jack Mather, Paul Kligman, and Claude Ray (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: Animated puppet Pinocchio and his associate Cricket find themselves repeatedly at odds with villainous Foxy Q. Fibble and beatnik Cool S. Cat.

COMMENTARY: An early Rankin/Bass effort, consisting of 130 five-minute serialized installments that could be assembled into 26 half-hours if desired. The format deliberately avoided Disney's 1940 edition of the story, adhering more to an updated and modernized take on Collodi's original moralism yoked with the conventional storytelling methods of television animation of the time. There was a heavy emphasis on easily dated topical humor. The American producers outsourced their animation production to studios in Canada and Japan, which resulted in highly uneven visual imagery. However, the company was able to build on the limited success of this property to create the Animagic stop-motion animation projects that would make their reputation in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

THE NEW ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN

(1966–1967, 1969–1970)

See *Superman* (and related series).

THE NEW ADVENTURES OF TINTIN (1991)

STUDIOS: Nelvana, Ellipse

DISTRIBUTOR: HBO (United States)

CREATOR: Herge (Georges Remi)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Patrick Loubert, Michael Hirsh, Clive Smith, Philippe Gildar, Pierre Bertrand Jaume, Simon Hart

PRODUCERS: Philippe Grimond, Stephen Hodgins, Robert Rea

DIRECTOR: Stephane Bernasconi

WRITERS INCLUDED: Dennise Fordham

VOICE ACTORS (North American edition): Colin O'Meara (Tintin), David Fox (Captain Haddock), Wayne Robson (Professor Calculus), John Stocker (Thompson), Dan Hennessey (Thomson), Susan Roman (Snowy)

SYNOPSIS: Young reporter Tintin repeatedly finds himself in dangerous, adventurous, and heroic situations.

COMMENTARY: Since his creation in 1929, Tintin has been a beloved comic book figure, first in the French-speaking world (he originated in a Belgian publication called *Le Vingt-tieme Siecle*) and ultimately, through translation, the English-speaking one, as well (demonstrated most recently through an elaborate feature-film adaptation directed by Steven Spielberg). This animated version (in both English and French) is perhaps the most authentic of the several attempts made to bring Tintin to the screen, given the fact that it was directly authorized by Herge's executors, as well as by being produced by a studio with a reputation for authentic adaptations. On an elaborate budget of \$350,000 per

installment, the series was able to produce direct adaptations of Herge's comic book narratives in ways that retained their charm and excitement as well as their format. Consequently, it satisfied both admirers of Herge's work as well as viewers meeting the young but determined reporter for the first time.

THE NEW ADVENTURES OF WINNIE THE POOH (1988–1993)

STUDIO: Disney

DISTRIBUTORS: ABC, Disney

CREATOR: A. A. Milne

PRODUCERS: Karl Guers, Ken Kessel, Ed Ghertner, Russ Mooney

DIRECTORS: Karl Guers, Ken Kessel, David Block, Terrence Harrison

WRITERS INCLUDED: Mark Zaslove, Carl Crocker, Bruce Talkington

VOICE ACTORS: Jim Cummings (Winnie the Pooh/Tigger, later episodes), Michael Gough (Gopher), Tim Hoskins (Christopher Robin), Hal Smith (Owl), Paul Winchell (Tigger, early episodes), Pat Parris (Kanga), Nicholas Melody (Roo), John Fiedler (Piglet), Ken Sansom (Rabbit)

SYNOPSIS: The lives and adventures of the anthropomorphic residents of the Hundred Acre Wood and their human friend Christopher Robin.

COMMENTARY: British playwright, poet, and satirist Alan Alexander Milne created this universally beloved fantasy property in the 1920s, based on bedtime stories told to his son Christopher (the model for his fictional doppelgänger). These were placed on paper for posterity in such books as *Winnie the Pooh* and *The House at Pooh Corner*, with Milne's words complemented by illustrations by Ernest H. Shepard. Despite the books' growing iconic status, first in Britain and then elsewhere, Milne resisted any attempts at visual adaptation, so this did not occur until after he died in 1956. Disney produced the first major animated adaptations in a series of popular theatrical short films between 1966 and 1983, which were directed by veteran Disney animator Wolfgang "Woolie" Reitherman and included the distinctive voices of Sterling Holloway as Pooh and Paul Winchell as Tigger.

Logically, it was also Disney who produced the first television animation adaptation, on the same faithful terms as the theatrical shorts. The major difference was the substitution of Cummings for the late Holloway as Pooh; he also took over as Tigger when Winchell died. Being much calmer and more restrained in its characterization, plotting, and tone than its peers, the series immediately stood out and earned both viewership and acclaim (particularly in the form of two Emmy wins). In this manner, it was faithful to Milne's original conception while only making glancing references to events in the outside world, ensuring that it would have enduring appeal in the same fashion as its literary source.

The program first aired on its own between 1988 and 1989. In 1989–1990 it aired in tandem with *Adventures of the Gummi Bears* (q.v.) as *The Gummi Bears/Winnie the Pooh Hour*. Between 1990 and 1993, it aired on its own again until ceasing production. Despite this, it was returned to the ABC schedule in 1995 and remained there until 2003.

THE NEW BATMAN/SUPERMAN ADVENTURES (1997–2000)

See *Batman* (and related series); *Superman* (and related series).

THE NEW CASPER CARTOON SHOW (1963–1970)

See *Casper the Friendly Ghost* (and related series).

THE NEW FANTASTIC FOUR (1978–1979)

See *The Fantastic Four* (and related series).

THE NEW FAT ALBERT SHOW (1979–1984)

See *Fat Albert and the Cosby Kids/The New Fat Albert Show/Adventures of Fat Albert and the Cosby Kids*.

THE NEW FRED AND BARNEY SHOW (1979)

See *The Flintstones* (and related series).

NEW KIDS ON THE BLOCK (1990–1991)

STUDIOS: DIC, Big Step, Dick Scott

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Dick Scott, Andy Heyward, Maurice Starr, Robby London

PRODUCERS: Mario Pilusco, Jack Spillum

DIRECTOR: Mario Pilusco

WRITERS INCLUDED: Kayte Kisch

VOICE ACTORS: David Coburn, Loren Lester, Scott Menville, and Matt E. Mixer (New Kids); Dave Penny, J. P. Hall, Dorian Harewood, Janna Levenstein, Patricia Albrecht, Susan Blu, Thom Gray, Hamilton Camp, Jennifer Darling, Patrick Fraley, Linda Gary, Gaille Heiderman, Michael Horse, Clyde Kusatsu, Sherry Lynn, Kenneth Mars, Pat Musick, Samantha Parris, Rob Paulsen, Adam Phillipson, Maggie Roswell, Theresa Saldana, Leslie Speights, Cree Summer, Susan Ware, Joshua Weiner, and Michael Winslow (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: The animated adventures of the pop vocal group New Kids on the Block.

COMMENTARY: One of the original boy bands, the Boston-bred New Kids—Joe McIntyre, Donnie Wahlberg, Danny Wood, and brothers Jonathan and Jordan Knight—were assembled in the late 1980s by songwriter/producer/manager Maurice Starr, who had achieved success earlier in the decade with the R&B vocal group New Edition. Between 1988 and 1992, they achieved 10 *Billboard* top-40 hits, with 3 going to number 1. Thereafter, their popularity faded, despite the fact that they have continued to tour and record occasionally to the present day, achieving another top-40 hit in 2008.

This series represented another attempt by television animation producers to cash in on flash-in-the-pan music successes whose primary audience was children and adolescents by converting the characters into animated figures. The New Kids did not portray themselves but appeared in live-action segments at the beginning and end to expound on the themes portrayed in

what passed for a story in the narratives. These focused typically on the group being delayed on the way to one of their concerts until the end of the episode, when they performed a tune or two. A running gag featured a “fan-central” computer facility run by particularly obsessed female fans of the group who tracked their every move, which likely had its origins in the group’s real-life teenage female fan base. But those fans weren’t enough to keep the series on the air for more than a year, by which time the New Kids’ popularity had declined due to publicly depicted bad behavior and failed attempts to bring a more adult flavor to their signature sound.

***THE NEW PINK PANTHER SHOW* (1971–1976)**

See *The Pink Panther* (and related series).

***THE NEW SATURDAY SUPERSTAR MOVIE* (1972–1974)**

See *The ABC Saturday Superstar Movie* (a.k.a. *The New Saturday Superstar Movie*; 1972–1974).

***THE NEW SCOOPY DOO COMEDY MOVIES* (1972–1974)**

See *Scooby Doo, Where Are You?* (and related series).

***THE NEW SCOOPY DOO MYSTERIES* (1984–1985)**

See *Scooby Doo, Where Are You?* (and related series).

***THE NEW SHMOO* (1979)**

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

CREATOR: Al Capp

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCER: Art Scott

DIRECTOR: Charles Nichols

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Frank Welker (Shmoo), Delores Cantu Primo (Nita), Chuck McCann (Billy Joe), Bill Idelson (Mickey)

SYNOPSIS: The amorphous, shape-shifting creature known as the Shmoo assists teenage reporters Nita, Billy Joe, and Mickey in solving paranormal mysteries.

COMMENTARY: Capp invented the character of the Shmoo for his legendary comic strip *Lil’ Abner* in 1948. Meant to satirize the excesses of capitalism, the creature tasted like multiple types of meat when prepared in specific ways, laid eggs packaged in cartons, and gave milk in bottled form. Even when slaughtered in mass numbers for food, it replenished its ranks in numbers that were equally large. Thus, according to the strip’s continuity, it became necessary for it to be completely eliminated.

The liberal allegory of the Shmoo’s origins—the character was suppressed by Capp when he shifted his politics to the right in the 1950s—was somewhat lost on Hanna-Barbera when it adapted the character to animation in the late

1970s. Here, the character was simply a seal-like being with an ability to shape-shift into desired forms dictated by the very limited and derivative story lines. The limited appeal of the character led to its losing its own series and becoming merely a player in the ongoing *Flintstones* (q.v.) saga, first in the deceptively named series *Fred and Barney Meet the Shmoo* (they only “met” in the bumpers leading to commercial breaks) during 1979–1980, and then in pluralized form in the “Bedrock Cops” segment of *The Flintstones Comedy Show*.

NEW TALES FROM THE CRYPTKEEPER (1999–2000)

See *Tales from the Cryptkeeper*/New Tales from the Cryptkeeper.

THE NEW THREE STOOGES (1965)

STUDIOS: Cambria, Normandy, Heritage III

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Norman Maurer, Dick Brown

PRODUCER: Dave Detiege

ANIMATION DIRECTORS: Eddie Rehberg, Sam Cornell, Dave Detiege

ANIMATION WRITERS: Jack Miller, Sam Cornell, Art Diamond, Warren Tufts, Cecil Beard, Barbara Chaim, Jack Kinney, Nick George, Pat Kearin, Homer Brightman, Lee Orgel, Dave Detiege

VOICE ACTORS: Moe Howard, Larry Fine, and “Curly Joe” De Rita (The Three Stooges); Hal Smith, Peggy Brown, and Ned Lefebvre (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: The animated adventures of the famed comedy trio the Three Stooges, interspersed with connecting live-action segments.

COMMENTARY: Dating back to a vaudeville routine originating in 1923, the Three Stooges—initially Howard, Fine, and Jerome “Curly” Howard (later replaced in succession by Samuel “Shemp” Howard, Joe Besser, and De Rita)—first achieved fame in a long series of short films produced by Columbia Pictures between 1934 and 1958. The team was arguably at its creative peak when Curly was at its center, from the beginning until he retired following a stroke in 1946. After their dismissal by Columbia, their popularity was born anew through television distribution of their older films, which in turn led to them becoming in-demand lead and supporting characters in feature films until illness ended their careers—and lives—in the 1970s.

This hybrid animated-live-action property was designed to attract the children who had been responsible for the Stooges’ popular TV renaissance. Instigated by Maurer (Moe Howard’s son-in-law), the live segments reflected the reduced stamina and skill of the act in its aging form, while the animated segments were designed to be a more accurate reflection of the mayhem the team had unleashed in its prime. The live segments, however, proved to be better-produced and more memorable than the animated ones, although more of these segments were filmed (156) than the live pieces (40). The constant rotation of the live segments likely made many viewers tune out what they thought were reruns, which led to the program’s demise, although it managed to continue to circulate freely on the airwaves after its copyright license lapsed into the public domain. Moe Howard’s grandson Jeffrey Scott

(himself a noted television animation writer) supervised a 1992 repackaging of the animated material via DIC, whose boss, Andy Heyward, was a great admirer of the team.

NIGHTMARE NED (1997)

STUDIO: Disney

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATOR: Walt Dohrn

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Sue Shakespeare

PRODUCER/DIRECTOR: Donovan Cook

WRITERS INCLUDED: Mitch Wasson, Peter Gaffney, Gary Sperling

VOICE ACTORS: Courtland Mead (Ned Needlemeyer), Brad Garrett (Ned's Dad), Victoria Jackson (Ned's Mom)

SYNOPSIS: Lonely, myopic Ned Needlemeyer escapes the hassles of his life by retreating into a surreal dreamland of his own invention.

COMMENTARY: One of the great oddities of the Disney Studio's television output, a property that was originally developed by its creator as a grim and nihilistic place but was, through the mill of production, made only slightly more appealing by the application of inappropriate bright colors. Lasting a mere five months on the air, it was largely disowned by the Disney Studio, not achieving the frequent cable replay accorded its other properties, although it was briefly resurrected in the form of an online game.

THE NUTTY SQUIRRELS (1960)

STUDIO: Transfilm-Wilde

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

CREATORS: Don Elliott, Sasha Burland

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: As a retort to the success of the Chipmunks (see *The Alvin Show/Alvin and the Chipmunks*), jazz musician Elliott and composer Burland concocted a similar project, with the emphasis on using Ross Bagdasarian's sped-up recording methods for a depiction of the largely ad-libbed "scat" vocal style prominent in jazz. The record they recorded in this format, titled "Uh Oh! Part 2," was released on the Hanover-Signature label in 1959 and reached number 14 on the *Billboard* pop charts that year. Aping its predecessor, the record was credited to a pair of hep-cat rodents known as the Nutty Squirrels.

Upon hearing plans to adapt the Chipmunks to television animation, Transfilm-Wilde quickly sealed a deal with Elliott and Burland to bring the Squirrels to life in the same way. By 1960, 100 cartoons had been prepared and were ready to be played by syndicators, with the Squirrels depicted in cartoon form via UPA-style minimalism. But while they played well in some urban markets (Chicago's influential WGN programmed them six days a week), in other areas they tanked. Typical of the use and response there: a station in South Bend, Indiana, simply used them as a wraparound for broadcasts of Paul Terry's dated, silent *Farmer Alfalfa* films from the 1920s.



THE OBLONGS (2001)

STUDIOS: Oblong, Film Roman, Jobsite, Mohawk, Warner Brothers

DISTRIBUTOR: WB

CREATORS: Angus Oblong, Jace Richdale

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Bruce Helford, Deborah Oppenheimer, Jace Richdale

PRODUCERS: Angus Oblong, Scott Buck, Leonard Dick

DIRECTORS: Mike Kim, Kelly Armstrong, Jack Dyer, Joe Hornes, Bob Jaques, Skip Jones, Gary McCarver, Linda Miller, Vincent Waller, Monte Young

WRITERS: Scott Buck, Leonard Dick, Eric Friedman, Ben Kull, Jill Solloway

VOICE ACTORS: Will Ferrell (Bob Oblong), Jean Smart (Pickles Oblong), Randy Sklar (Biff Oblong), Jason Sklar (Chip Oblong), Pamela Segall Adlon (Milo), Jeannie Elias (Beth Oblong/Susie/Mikey), Lea DeLaria (Helga Fugley), Becky Thyre (Peggy/Pristine Klimer/Debbie Klimer), Billy West (George Klimer/James/Anita Bidet)

SYNOPSIS: The chemical firm Globocide owns two neighboring communities: the Hill, where wealthy snobs live, and the Valley, where working-class families, such as the Oblongs, reside. While the Hill people look relatively normal, the Valley people are grotesquely misshapen due to greater exposure to and aftereffects from Globocide's products.

COMMENTARY: A series that was derived from the works of San Francisco-based graphic novelist Oblong, in particular *Creepy Susie and Thirteen Other Tragic Tales for Troubled Children*. While the program had a unique graphic approach derived from its source, its heavy-handed messaging about the superiority of the working poor versus the idle rich and handicapped people versus "normal" ones quickly wore thin, and it lasted on the air for just over a month.

O CANADA (1997)

STUDIO: National Film Board of Canada (NFB)

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

Various producers, directors, writers, and voice actors

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: An anthology series derived from the archives of the NFB, showcasing the varied and entertaining product that has made the company a world leader in the production of theatrical animation. Ranging in age from the 1950s to contemporary times, the featured films included Academy Award-winner *Bob's Birthday*, which provided the basis for the later television animation series *Bob and Margaret* (q.v.).

THE ODDBALL COUPLE (1975–1977)

STUDIO: DePatie-Freleng

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: David DePatie, Friz Freleng

DIRECTOR: Lewis Marshall

WRITERS: Bob Ogle, Joel Kane, Dave Detiege, Earl Kress, John Dunn

VOICE ACTORS: Paul Winchell (Fleabag); Frank Nelson (Spiffy); Joan Gerber (Goldie Hound); Frank Welker, Joe Besser, Don Messick, Sarah Kennedy, Bob Holt, and Ginny Tyler (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: Fleabag, a slob dog, and Spiffy, a neat-freak cat, try to put up with each other while working as freelance reporters.

COMMENTARY: Best described as an animated bootleg version of Neil Simon's popular stage play *The Odd Couple*, which has been adapted for film and television multiple times since debuting in the mid-1960s, with varying degrees of success. This animated version was one of the lesser ones, on par with its studio's other failed attempts to turn live-action hits to their will, such as *The Barkleys* (q.v.) and *The Houndcats* (q.v.). The character of Spiffy was originally to have been named Sprucey, but this was vetoed by the network, allegedly on the grounds that children did not understand what the phrase "to spruce up" meant or that the name sounded too gay or both.

ODDITIES (A.K.A. MTV ODDITIES) (1994–1996)

STUDIO/DISTRIBUTOR: MTV

CREATORS: Eric Fogel (*The Head*), Sam Kieth (*The Maxx*)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Abby Terkuhle

PRODUCERS: J. Moynihan, John Lynn Jr., John Andrews, Claudia Katz, Nikki Vanzo

DIRECTOR (*The Head*): Eric Fogel

DIRECTORS (*The Maxx*): Yeol Jung Chang, Eugene Salandra, Ilya Skorupsky, Gregg Vanzo

WRITERS INCLUDED (*The Maxx*): Glenn Eichler, Claudia Katz

VOICE ACTORS (*The Head*): Eric Fogel, John Andrews, Gordon Barnett, Patricia Bibby, Jason Candler, Bill Chesley, Ted Gannon, Russ Hexter, Tad Hills, Melanie Holtzman, Chris Johnston, Mike Judge, John Lynn Jr., Susie Lewis Lynn, Clem Peckerwood, Mike Ruschak, Paul Williams, and Yong Hong Zhong (Specific roles unknown)

VOICE ACTORS (*The Maxx*): Michael Haley (Maxx); Glynnis Talken (Julie Winters/Gloriee); Amy Danles (Sara James); Patty Wynne Hughes (Mrs. James); Barry Stigler (Mr. Gone); David Valera (Tommy/Isz); Tony Fucile (Sergeant Ocono); Scott Curtis, Molly McLucas, David Thomas, and Chris Vanzo (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: An anthology series with three recurring components: *The Head*, about a man endowed with superpowers and a giant head via invading aliens; *The Maxx*, a downtrodden, homeless superhero who originally hailed from a parallel dimension, based on Kieth's graphic novel series from Image Comics; and linking *Oddities* segments produced by Moynihan. The program replaced *Liquid Television* (q.v.), to which it served a similar function, and was in turn replaced by another animated anthology series, *Cartoon Sushi* (q.v.).

O'GRADY (2004–2006)

STUDIO: S2N

DISTRIBUTORS: The N, Noggin

CREATORS: Tom Snyder, Carl Adams

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Carl Adams

PRODUCERS: Jack Ferraiolo, Will Shepard

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Melissa Galsky (Abby Wilde), H. Jon Benjamin (Kevin Harnisch/Iris/Philip Demorio), Holly Schlesinger (Beth Briggs), Patrice O'Neal (Harold Jenkins), Larry Murphy (Pete Klesko/Donald Lipschitz), Bill Braudis (Dr. Myers)

SYNOPSIS: The American town of O'Grady is periodically disrupted by a supernatural force known as "The Weirdness," which upsets the status quo by creating various illusions, projections, and modifications that affect the town's residents. Teenagers Abby, Kevin, Beth, and Harold try, often unsuccessfully, to live normal lives within the strangeness that results.

COMMENTARY: While it had an interesting central premise, the series was marred by a too heavy and too stereotypical focus on the town's teenage residents and their language and behavior. The idea also might have worked better if it had been animated in a more traditional and fuller animation style rather than the looser but more limiting house style of S2N.

OH YEAH! CARTOONS (1998)

STUDIOS: Frederator, Nickelodeon

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Fred Seibert

Various producers, directors, writers, and voice actors

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: An anthology project designed as a tryout venture for potential Nickelodeon show ideas, similar to Cartoon Network's *What a Cartoon!* (see *World Premiere Cartoons*), which Seibert had also developed and overseen. However, he functioned here as a producer rather than as an executive through his recently launched company Frederator. Three series—*The Fairly Oddparents* (q.v.), *ChalkZone* (q.v.), and *My Life as a Teenage Robot* (q.v.)—premiered on the program in embryonic form, while *Invader Zim* (q.v.) went directly to a series launch following its debut.

101 DALMATIANS (1997–1999)

STUDIOS: Disney, Jumbo

DISTRIBUTORS: Syndicated (1997–1998), ABC (1997–1999)

CREATOR: Dodie Smith

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Jim Jinkins, David Campbell, Tony Craig, Roberts Gannaway

PRODUCERS: Martha Ripp, Cydne Clark, Steve Granat, Victor Cook, Ken Boyer, Rick Schneider Calabash

DIRECTORS INCLUDED: Terrence Lennon, Karen Peterson, Thomas Ray, Victor Cook, Ken Boyer, Rick Schneider Calabash

WRITERS INCLUDED: Cydne Clark, Steve Granat, Jim Jinkins

VOICE ACTORS: Pamela Segall Adlon (Lucky, early episodes/Wizzer, first appearance), Debi Mae West (Lucky, later episodes), Kath Soucie (Cadpig/Rolly/Anita Dearly), Tara Charendoff Strong (Spot/Two-Tone), Jeff Bennett (Roger Dearly/Sergeant Tibbs/Lieutenant Pug/Swamp Rat), April Winchell (Cruella de Vil/Princess, early episodes), Michael McKean (Jasper), David L. Lander (Horace), Charlotte Rae (Nanny), Kevin Schon (Pongo, early episodes), Michael Donovan (Pongo, later episodes), Pam Dawber (Perdita), Danny Cooksey (Mooch), Thom Adcox Hernandez (Dipstick), Christine Cavanaugh (Wizzer/Dumpling), Toran Caudell (Tripod), Frank Welker (Scorch/Captain/Thunderbolt/Steven/Cydne), Jim Cummings (Colonel/Mayor Ed Pig), Tress MacNeille (Cornelia), Paddi Edwards (Lucy), Cree Summer (Princess, later episodes), Marla Gibbs (Duchess), Pat Corley (Ahab), Rachel Crane (Ivy), Cheri Dennis (Charlon), Rob Paulsen (Cecil B. de Vil), Tom Wilson (Starbuck)

SYNOPSIS: The eponymous characters live on an expansive farm property under the protection of humans Roger and Anita Dearly and are constantly on guard against a variety of animal and human enemies, most prominently black-and-white-haired corporate raider Cruella de Vil, who is out to appropriate their property for financial gain.

COMMENTARY: British novelist Smith originated the concept and the majority of the original versions of the characters in her novel *The Hundred and One Dalmatians*, first published in 1956. (A 1967 sequel, *The Starlight Barking*, abandoned the realism of the original project for a fanciful journey into science fiction.) Walt Disney adapted the book as an animated feature film in 1961, with a script by prolific children's author/illustrator Bill Peet, which remains one of the most beloved films in his company's canon and features one of its most menacing villains in the rapacious Cruella, who originally sought to make the title characters into a fur coat! In 1996, that film was remade as a live-action property, whose sole major asset was Glenn Close's high-camp portrayal of Cruella; a sequel, *102 Dalmatians*, followed shortly thereafter.

This animated version was clearly developed as an extension of the brand's corporate revival, but it modernized and Americanized the original source's quaint Britishness to great effect. Unfortunately, after a few installments, it fell into the standard Achilles heel of most of the Disney products of its time: repetitive and derivative story lines that did not give the characters the potential to truly be what they were capable of being. This was particularly regrettable in one case: Soucie's brilliant and enchanting performance as the highly intelligent, cagy, and deceptive Cadpig—a one-of-a-kind, unforgettable character.

THE OSMONDS (1972–1974)

STUDIOS: Rankin/Bass, Halas and Batchelor

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

PRODUCERS: Arthur Rankin Jr., Jules Bass

DIRECTORS: Arthur Rankin Jr., Tony Guy, Tony Zass

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Alan Osmond, Wayne Osmond, Merrill Osmond, Jay Osmond, and Donny Osmond (Themselves); Paul Frees (Fugi)

SYNOPSIS: The popular American vocal group the Osmonds tour the world as goodwill ambassadors for the U.S. music community.

COMMENTARY: Hailing from Ogden, Utah, the various members of the Osmond family have been popular entertainers in America and beyond for several decades (other notable members include their singer/actress sister Marie and younger brother Jimmy). Alan, Wayne, Merrill, Jay, and Donny began making television appearances together in the 1960s, notably as regulars on Andy Williams's variety series in that decade. However, they achieved wider recognition in the 1970s after signing to MGM Records and shifting from adult contemporary to pop in their sound. Beginning with the number-1 hit "One Bad Apple" in 1971, they had numerous top-40 hits over the course of the decade. Donny also had success as a solo artist and as a duo in tandem with Marie. Later, Alan, Wayne, Merrill, and Jay would shift to country music and have further success there.

This series was, in many ways, a companion to the earlier Rankin/Bass series *The Jackson Five* (q.v.), save for the fact that it had something of a regular, coherent story line, as per the synopsis. But the intent was clear: exploit this musical group while they are still hot, which is largely the unstated intent behind any series focused on a musical artist.

OSWALD (2001)

STUDIOS: HIT, Nicktoons

DISTRIBUTORS: Nickelodeon, CBS (2001–2002)

CREATOR/PRODUCER: Dan Yaccarino

SUPERVISING PRODUCER: Steve Socki

DIRECTORS: Ken Kessel, Christine Kolosov

WRITERS: Dan Yaccarino, Gary Apple, Kate Long, Frederick Stroppel

VOICE ACTORS: Fred Savage (Oswald), David L. Lander (Henry), Laraine Newman (Madame Butterfly), Tony Orlando (Sammy Starfish), Mac Davis (Bingo Bunny the Barber), Debi Derryberry (Weenie/Catrina), Crystal Scales (Daisy), J. Grant Albrecht (Leo), Sonny Chang (Andy), Richard Kind (Pongo the Friendly Dragon), Daran Norris (Egburt)

SYNOPSIS: Oswald, a derby-hat wearing octopus, lives in the Dada-like Big City and confronts problems with the aid of his friends.

COMMENTARY: Based on a series of books by author/illustrator Yaccarino, this program showed who its true target audience was by maintaining a gentle tone in spite of its outer visual design, though adults could appreciate the series in ways kids could not and vice versa. It was, however, perhaps the only animated series in this book where the title character could boast having a sentient hot dog (Weenie) for a pet.

OUT OF THE INKWELL (1962)

STUDIOS: Hal Seeger, Videohouse

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

CREATORS: Max Fleischer, Dave Fleischer

PRODUCER: Hal Seeger

DIRECTOR: Myron Waldman

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTOR: Larry Storch (All characters)

SYNOPSIS: Animated cartoon character Koko the Clown frequently strays from his meager existence on a drawing board to interact with the real world beyond.

COMMENTARY: The premise was the concept behind the popular theatrical animation series *Out of the Inkwell*, which was first produced between 1915 and 1929. It was the product of the Fleischers' experimenting with rotoscoping—the tracing of animated images based on live-action pictures—and served as the foundation of an influential animation studio that lasted well into the 1940s. It famously animated the definitive animated versions of Betty Boop, Popeye, and Superman, among others. In the majority of the episodes, Koko and his dog Fitz got up to mischief within and outside of the confines of the drawing board in amusing ways, with Max Fleischer himself portraying the artist who alternately controlled, belittled, and was frustrated by the characters (Dave had, in turn, served as the source of the original images for the clown's rotoscoping).

Producer Seeger, a former Fleischer employee, developed this television revival in response to a resurgence in Koko's popularity, which was the result of many local children's TV shows featuring *Out of the Inkwell* (with dubbed-in music because the original cartoons were silent) on their programs. The program would have the further advantage of being produced in color, as the black-and-white format of the original cartoons was not desired by syndicators. Waldman, another Fleischer veteran, orchestrated the filming, and Max Fleischer was coaxed out of enforced retirement to appear in the first installment (he wore a new toupee for the occasion). Alas, the clown was saddled here with cheap production values and lame supporting characters, and the project, unlike its well-remembered theatrical forebear, disappeared from sight and mind very quickly.

OVER THE GARDEN WALL (2014)

STUDIO: Cartoon Network

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATOR/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Patrick McHale

PRODUCER: Pernelle Hayes

DIRECTORS: Patrick McHale, Nate Cash, Steve Wolfhard, Natasha Allegri, Zac Gorman, Bert Youn, Aaron Renier, Jim Campbell, Lauren Park, Pendleton Ward, Steve McLeod, Nick Edwards, Tom Herpich, Mark Bodnar, Cole Sanchez, Vi Nguyen

WRITERS: Patrick McHale, Amalia Levvari, Tom Herpich, Cole Sanchez, Bert Youn

VOICE ACTORS: Elijah Wood (Wirt), Collin Dean (Greg), Melanie Lynskey (Beatrice), Christopher Lloyd (Woodsman), Jack Jones (Greg's Frog), Samuel Raney (Beast), Emily Brundage (Sara), Mark Bodnar (North Wind), John Cleese (Quincy Endicott/Adelaide), Tim Curry (Auntie Whispers), Noreen DeWulf (Pumpkin Gal), Frank Fairfield (Toy Maker), Chris Isaak (Enoch),

Shirley Jones (Beatrice's Mother), Janet Klein (Miss Langtree), Thomas Lennon (Jimmy Brown), Sam Marin (Mr. Langtree), Judah Nelson (Cloud City Reception Committee), Bebe Neuwirth (Marguerite Grey), Jerron "Blind Boy" Paxton (Highwayman), Cole Sanchez (Jason Funderburker), Shannyn Sossamon (Lorna), Fred Stoller (Fred), Deborah Voight (Queen of the Clouds), Audrey Wasilewski (Tavern Keeper)

SYNOPSIS: Half-brothers Wirt and Greg become lost in a magical forest known as the Unknown and must travel across it—with the aid of the elderly woodsman and a bluebird named Beatrice hoping to be restored to her original human form—to return to their home.

COMMENTARY: An unusually constructed series consisting of only 10 short segments, originally broadcast November 3–7, 2014. It was based on a short film McHale had originally produced as part of Cartoon Network's program development laboratory and was later adapted in comic book form. As a consequence of its abbreviated length, the telling of the central story takes precedence over any lazy time-wasting or time-filling comedy devices a regularly scheduled series might inflict on its viewers, so these elements are satisfyingly absent. The program was praised for its skilled animation production, for which it won two Emmys and a Reuben and received two Annie Award nominations, but it was criticized in some quarters for being too slow paced and folksy. Still, this is the kind of clever, nonthreatening, and intelligent storytelling that used to dominate children's literature and animation but seems increasingly absent in a world that has much less of a sense of wonder and enchantment than in earlier times. More projects built along these lines are very much welcome in the future.

OZZY AND DRIX (2002)

STUDIO: Warner Brothers

DISTRIBUTOR: WB

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Peter Farrelly, Bobby Farrelly, Sander Schwartz, Zak Penn

PRODUCERS: Alan Burnett, Bradley Thomas, Ron Myrick

DIRECTOR: Byron Vaughns

WRITERS INCLUDED: Alan Burnett, Doug Langdale

VOICE ACTORS: Phil LaMarr (*Osmosis* "Ozzy" Jones), Jeff Bennett (Drix), Alanna Ubach (Mayor Spryman), Jim Cummings (Police Chief Gluteus), Tasia Valenza (Maria Amino), Vivica Fox (Ellen Patella), Justin Crowden (Hector Cruz)

SYNOPSIS: White blood cell Ozzy and cold medication Drix are tasked with keeping the body of 13-year-old Hector safe and healthy.

COMMENTARY: A spin-off of the 2001 live-action/animation feature film *Osmosis Jones*, orchestrated by the Farrellys in their capacity as filmmakers and distributed by Warner Brothers. While the film's focus had been purely on gross-out comedy, the series balanced this with an educational component, given that it was focused primarily on an audience of young people. But, as with many theatrical-to-television adaptations, it didn't improve on its source.

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***PACKAGES FROM PLANET X* (2013–2014)**

STUDIOS: American Greetings, DHX Media

DISTRIBUTOR: Disney (United States)

CREATOR: Jeff Harter

PRODUCERS: Chris Bartleman, Lori Lozinski

DIRECTORS INCLUDED: Rob Boutillier, Josh Mephram, James Wootton

WRITERS INCLUDED: Thomas Krajewski, Kevin Campbell, Joel Bergen, Alex Muniz, Kim Duran, David Ihlenfeld, Jason Jordan, Michael Rubiner, Bob Mittenenthal, Eric Trueheart, Evan Gore, Heather Lombard, Devin Bunje, Nick Stanton, Jonathan Howard, Neil Alsip, Dan Smith, John Crane, Dale Schott, J. D. Smith, Rick Williams, Jenna McGrath, Ed Valentine

VOICE ACTORS: Vincent Tong (Dan Zembrosky), Britt Irvin (Amanda Highborn), Ty Olsson (Troll Moko), Brian Drummond (Corvis Copernicus/Leepthor), Tabitha St. Germain (Calimary), Colin Murdock (Duane Zembrosky), Nicole Oliver (Mrs. Zembrosky), Kyle Rideout (Terrence Buckshot), Michael Daingerfield (Mr. Dooley)

SYNOPSIS: In the town of Iron Bay, high school student Dan Zembrosky becomes the recipient of a series of items from Planet X, most of which he uses to his advantage in defending the town from alien invasion.

COMMENTARY: An interesting premise unfortunately executed with a lack of finesse. If the program had appeared as a full-length series instead of in the short-segment format in which it appeared, it might have worked, but subtlety apparently is the first casualty of time constraints in subpar 21st-century animation production.

***THE PAC-MAN SHOW* (AND RELATED SERIES)**

***The Pac-Man Show* (1982–1984)**

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATOR: Toru Iwatani

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: Iwao Takamoto, Kay Wright

DIRECTORS: Jay Sarbry, Joanna Romersa, Ray Patterson, George Gordon, Bill Hutten, Bob Hathcock, Carl Urbano, Rudy Zamora, Bob Goe, Terry Harrison

WRITERS: Jeffrey Scott, Stephen Hickner, Mitch Schauer, Tom Taranowicz, Wendell Washer, Roy Wilson

VOICE ACTORS: Marty Ingels (Pac-Man), Barbara Minkus (Ms. Pepper Pac-Man), Russi Taylor (Baby Pac), Frank Welker (Chomp Chomp), Peter Cullen (Sour

Puss), Alan Lurie (Mezmaron), Neil Ross (Clyde), Chuck McCann (Blinky/Pinky), Barry Gordon (Inky), Lorenzo Music (Super-Pac), Darryl Hickman (Pac Jr.)

Pac-Man and the Ghostly Adventures (2013–2015)

STUDIOS: 41 Entertainment, Bandai Namco, L.A. Screenings

DISTRIBUTOR: Disney (United States)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Avi Arad, Rick Ungar, Shukuo Ishikawa, Shin Unozawa, Junichi Yanagihira, Ken Iyadomi

PRODUCER: Alexandra Bland

DIRECTOR: Motonori Sakakibara

WRITERS (North American edition): Tom Ruegger, Paul Rugg, Sean Catherine Derek, Marcy Brown, Len Uhley, Ken Pontac, Glenn Leopold, Bob Forward, Jymn Magon, Dennis Haley, Mark Young, Eric Shaw, Michael Maurer, Steve Granat, Cydne Clark

VOICE ACTORS (North American edition): Erin Matthews (Pac-Man/Ms. Globular), Andrea Libman (Cylindria), Samuel Vincent (Spiralton/Lord Betrayus Spheros/President Stratus Spheros), Ian Corlett (Blinky/Sir Cumference/Mr. Dome/Pacinator), Lee Tockar (Inky/Kingpin Obtuse/Cyclops Ghosts/Ogle/Tentacle Ghosts/Professor Pointybrains/Count Pacula/Fuzbitz), Ashleigh Ball (Pinky/Spheria Suprema/Easter Pac Peep), Brian Drummond (Clyde/Butt-ler/Dr. A. H. Buttocks), Matt Hill (Skeebo), Mark Oliver (Mr. Strictler), Tabitha St. Germain (Sherry “Braces” Strictler/Rotunda/Granny), Gabe Khouth (Do-Ug/Tip), Kyle Rideout (Danny Vaincori), Kazumi Evans (Elliptika), Richard Newman (Santa Pac), Brendan Barrett (Spectre), Vincent Tong (Master Goo), Colin Murdock (Apex), Kathleen Barr (Madame Ghoulasha), Nicole Oliver (Jean), Paul Dobson (Dentures of Doom/Mummy Wizard)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: The enormously popular video game *Pac-Man* originated in the work of video game engineer Iwatani, who, after selling his invention to Japanese company Namco for the equivalent of \$3,500, was swindled out of the millions of dollars the game earned, prompting him to quit the field altogether. The game itself, one of the first to be aimed explicitly at children, was an enormous success and spawned the development and spread of the arcade video game industry in the 1980s. In one form or another, “Packy” has remained a beloved cultural icon to this day, as has his female doppelgänger, Ms. Pac-Man.

Given that the game had very little in the way of character, story, and conflict, it didn’t seem like a logical source for a dramatic (or comedic) adaptation, but Hanna-Barbera brushed this by the wayside when it made the first animated version to capitalize on what was unquestionably a hot commodity. In this series, Pac-Man and Ms. Pac resided in the logically named Pac-Land, where everything looked as ball shaped as the protagonists. Pac-Man was employed as the chief of security in the Power Forest, in which the Pac-Power-providing Power Pellets grew, and he protected them against the villainous Mezmaron and his ghostly henchmen (carryovers from the game). Unlike the game, where Pac-Man literally ate all in his path, he only undertook such measures in the name of defense, and even then, nobody actually

died. This was the heyday of nonviolence and prosocial moralizing, after all. In its original incarnation, the series ran in tandem with *The Little Rascals* (q.v.) and *Richie Rich* (q.v.) during 1982–1983 and with *Rubik the Amazing Cube* (q.v.) during 1983–1984.

The game's lack of dramatic attributes also didn't prevent the creation of a new Canadian-American-Japanese adaptation from emerging in 2013. Rather than merely a Pac-Land, this one was set on a planet called Pac-World, with numerous other subuniverses contained within. Pac-Man here was an adventurous high-schooler who, in the company of his pals Cylindria and Spiralton, confronted not only the villainous specters from the game (now commanded by the vainglorious villain Lord Betrayus) but a variety of monstrous and robotic foes, as well. Despite the presence of some seasoned veteran gag-smiths among the writing staff, the story arcs were limited due to the need to conform to preconceived Japanese-produced images, with the result being a twice-told story that wasn't funny the second time (or even the first).

PADDINGTON BEAR (AND RELATED SERIES)

***Paddington Bear* (1981)**

STUDIOS: FilmFair, G Films, Paddington and Co.

DISTRIBUTOR: PBS (United States)

CREATOR: Michael Bond

PRODUCER: Graham Clutterbuck

DIRECTOR: Barry Leith

VOICE ACTOR: Michael Hordern (Narrator/Others)

***Paddington Bear* (1989)**

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Charlie Adler (Paddington Bear), John Standing (Mr. Brown), B. J. Ward (Mrs. Brown), Cody Everett (Jonathan Brown), Katie Johnson (Judy Brown), Georgia Brown (Mrs. Bird), R. J. Williams (David Russell), Hamilton Camp (Mr. Gruber), Tim Curry (Mr. Curry)

SYNOPSIS: A bear "from darkest Peru" is discovered by the Brown family at the Paddington Train Station in London, England, and is adopted by them.

COMMENTARY: Originated by Bond in a series of popular children's books, the character of Paddington became well known in his native England, and his popularity eventually spread elsewhere. A reflection of this has been a number of adaptations to other media, notably a recent, unsuccessful feature-film adaptation and these two animated projects. The first version was a standard chapter-and-verse adaptation of Bond's stories by British and American animators, with veteran character actor Hordern functioning well in his vocal roles. In the United States, these short adaptations were bundled together into half-hour episodic form, with actor Joel Grey serving as host. This series

was later rebroadcast on the anthology project *Lunch Box* (q.v.). At the same time, Hanna-Barbera produced a more sitcom-like adaptation of the character for their syndicated omnibus *The Funtastic World of Hanna-Barbera* (q.v.). This, like the later feature film, sacrificed the charm of Bond's creation on the altar of North American slapstick, with expected results. The Canadian studio CINAR produced a third adaptation for French television in 2004, later seen in America in an English-dubbed version.

PANDAMONIUM (1982–1983)

STUDIOS: Intermedia, Marvel

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATORS: Fred Silverman, Jerry Eisenberg

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Fred Silverman, David DePatie

PRODUCERS: Jerry Eisenberg, Tony Benedict

DIRECTORS: Art Vitello, Brad Case, Nelson Shin, Milton Gray, Norman McCabe, Kent Butterworth

WRITERS: Jeffrey Scott, Dennis Marks, Don Sheppard, Barry Caldwell, Alex Lovy, Gary Goldstein, Harry Forsyth

VOICE ACTORS: Jesse White (Chesty), Cliff Norton (Timothy), Walker Edmiston (Algernon), Katie Leigh (Peggy), Neil Ross (Peter), William Woodson (Mondraggor), Julie McWhirter Dees (Amanda Panda)

SYNOPSIS: A trio of pandas combines forces with a pair of children to prevent the villainous Mondraggor from reassembling the all-powerful Pyramid of Power.

COMMENTARY: At the time this program first aired, American interest in panda bears had been piqued after China donated a pair of them to the National Zoo in Washington, DC, an event that was covered obsessively in the press. Silverman, who'd overseen the construction of numerous animated series during his checkered years as a television network executive, evidently took this as a sign that an animated series featuring pandas was a sure thing and worked with Hanna-Barbera veteran Eisenberg to assemble such a project. That the convoluted project that resulted was neither creatively nor commercially successful is a severe understatement.

PARTRIDGE FAMILY: 2200 A.D. (1974–1975)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCER: Iwao Takamoto

DIRECTOR: Charles Nichols

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Joan Gerber (Connie Partridge), Chuck McClendon (Keith Partridge), Susan Dey (Laurie Partridge), Danny Bonaduce (Danny Partridge), Brian Forster (Christopher Partridge), Suzanne Crough (Tracy Partridge), David Madden (Reuben Kinkaid), Julie McWhirter (Marion), Frank Welker (Veenie)

SYNOPSIS: The animated adventures of the musical Partridge Family in a retooled futuristic setting.

COMMENTARY: Originally broadcast on ABC between 1970 and 1974, *The Partridge Family* focused on a familial musical ensemble who traveled between engagements in a bus painted in psychedelic colors. The series also spawned several hit records allegedly performed by the group, specifically the number-1 hit “I Think I Love You,” though only series stars Shirley Jones and David Cassidy appeared on the records; Cassidy also had hits as a solo artist. Jones and Cassidy did not participate in this animated reworking of the property, in which the bus became a spaceship and two aliens came along for the ride, although the majority of the supporting cast reprised their parts. Typically, this series did little to extend or supplement the shelf life of the live-action property preceding it.

PAW PATROL (2013–PRESENT)

STUDIOS: Guru, Spin Master, Nickelodeon

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon (United States)

CREATOR: Keith Chapman

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Jennifer Dodge, Laura Clunie, Ronnen Harray, Keith Chapman, Scott Kraft

PRODUCERS: Patricia Burns, Matthew Wexler, Marilyn McAuley

DIRECTORS INCLUDE: Jamie Whitney, Charles Bastien

WRITERS INCLUDE: Scott Kraft, Kim Duran, Ursula Sullivan, Franklin Young, Carolyn Hay, Scott Albert, Simon Nicholson, Sheila Dinsmore, John Van Druggen, Kacey Arnold, Amy Keating Rogers, Elizabeth Keyishian, Charles Johnston, Hugh Duffy, Alex Ganetakos, Michael Stokes, Jeff Sweeney, Steve Sullivan, Andrew Guerdat, James Backshall

VOICE ACTORS: Devan Cohen (Rubble), Kallan Holley (Skye, early episodes), Alex Thorne (Zuma, early episodes), Italo Luiz (Ryder, early episodes), Gabriela Milani (Skye, later episodes), Max Calinescu (Chase, later episodes), Ron Pardo (Captain Turbot), Drew Davis (Marshall, early episodes), Christian DiStefano (Alex), Samuel Faraci (Rocky, early episodes), Elijah Hammill (Ryder, later episodes), Berkeley Silverman (Everest), Katherine Forrester (Katie), Jaxon Mercy (Ryder, later episodes), Stuart Ralston (Rocky, later episodes), Owen Mason (Ryder, later episodes), Julie Lemieux (Cali), Peter Cugno (Francois), Deanne DeGruitjer (Mayor Goodway), Blair Williams (Mr. Porter), Scott McCord (Jake), Gage Monroe (Marshall, later episodes), Lucius Hoyos (Carlos, early episodes), Tristan Samuel (Chase, early episodes), Stephany Saki (Farmer Yumi, early episodes), Carter Thorne (Zuma, later episodes), Daniel DeSanto (Daring Danny X), Hiromi Okuyama (Farmer Yumi, later episodes), Juan Chioran (Raimundo), Addison Holley (Julia), Jaiden Cannatelli (Carlos, later episodes), Moses Rankine (Julius), C. J. Dube (Genie), David Lopez (Tracker), Justin Lopez (Ryder, later episodes), Shoshanna Sperling (Mrs. Wingnut), Anya Cooke (Sweetie)

SYNOPSIS: In the town of Adventure Bay, a group of young dogs, each with specialized abilities and machines, provide assistance to the town’s residents, under the leadership of human boy Ryder.

COMMENTARY: Given the program’s origins in toy-centric children’s marketing and its growing presence within that marketplace, it is not surprising

that a fair amount of it is subliminally devoted to serving as a selling tool. That being said, the proactive and humanistic attributes at the heart of the central characters' actions give it an edge over other series aimed at the pre-school market, given that most of these series want to drive older viewers out of the room, while this one encourages them to stay. The assignment of roles based on character names (e.g., Chase is a police dog, Marshall a firefighter, Rubble a construction worker, Skye a helicopter pilot, and so on) is somewhat obvious, as are the repeated catch phrases ("Chase is on the case!") assigned to them. Yet it is constructed accessibly in the fashion of many series of the 1970s and 1980s, in simple narratives without elaborate complications and in such a manner that the characters can appeal to a wide range of children from varying ages, rather than cutting some out on the ground that the show is for babies. As a consequence, it has a great level of appeal and intriguing interest to it, of a kind that a great number of shows for this target audience do not bother to attempt, and its appeal to so many viewers in this light cannot be denied.

THE PAW PAWS (1985)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCER: Berny Wolf

DIRECTORS: Ray Patterson, Art Davis, Oscar Dufau, Don Lusk, Carl Urbano, Rudy Zamora, Alan Zaslove, Don Alvarez, Bob Goe, Rick Leon, Don Patterson, Irv Spence, Tim Walker

WRITERS INCLUDED: Don Nelson, Arthur Alsberg

VOICE ACTORS: Susan Blu (Princess Paw Paw), Thom Pinto (Brave Paw), Don Messick (Pupooch), Robert Ridgely (Mighty Paw), Sandy Stoddart (Laughing Paw), John Ingle (Wise Paw), Howard Morris (Trembly Paw), Stanley Ralph Ross (Dark Paw), Frank Welker (Bumble Paw), Ruth Buzzi (Aunt Pruney)

SYNOPSIS: A tribe of indigenous-people-styled bears, led by Princess Paw Paw, make their way through an enchanted forest, while their enemies, the Meanos, scheme to get rid of them.

COMMENTARY: A product of the cute-animal trend of the 1980s, as well as part of the continuing trend of appropriating and conflagrating indigenous traditions in the mass media. However, those looking for instances of appropriation would be hard-pressed to find specific examples here, other than the odd dance or custom; some of the supposedly indigenous cultural elements more closely resembled those of the Roma (a.k.a. gypsies). Still, it is clear that the producers weren't trying to give offense, but it is also undeniable that an attempted revival of this series or creation of a similar kind of project would meet with resistance in the 21st century from indigenous political activists—particularly if, as here, no actual indigenous people were involved in the production.

The series originally appeared as a segment of the syndicated omnibus *The Funtastic World of Hanna-Barbera* (q.v.).

PB&J OTTER (1998)

STUDIOS: Disney, Jumbo, Siriol Animation, Cardiff, S4C-Wales

DISTRIBUTOR: Disney (United States)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Jim Jenkins, David Campbell

PRODUCER: Bruce Knapp

DIRECTOR: Jeff Buckland

WRITERS INCLUDED: Eric Weiner

VOICE ACTORS: Gina Maria Tortorici (Baby Butter Otter), Jenell Brook Slack (Jelly Otter), Adam Rose (Peanut Otter), Gwen Shepherd (Opal Otter), Chris Phillips (Ernest Otter/Murchy Beaver/Cap'n Crane/Walter Raccoon), Cody Pennes (Pinch Raccoon/Scotch), Corrine Orr (Wanda Raccoon/Shirley Duck/Georgina Snooty), Eddie Korbich (Flick Duck/Edward Snooty/Ootsie Snooty/Bootsy Snooty), Bruce Johnson (Mayor Jeff), Jackie Hoffman (Mrs. Crane), Nancy Giles (Aunt Nanner)

SYNOPSIS: Peanut, Baby Butter, and Jelly Otter live on a houseboat with parents Ernest and Opal in the swampland community of Lake Hoohaw and are frequently forced to use their "noodles" to solve problems (with an accompanying dance).

COMMENTARY: An eccentric comedy series that managed to be entertaining while still fulfilling something of an educational mandate, which was provided to the series courtesy of the Cognitive Skills Group of Project Zero, affiliated with the Harvard Graduate School of Education. The program was popular enough to remain in circulation on its provider long after its production run ended, not unlike many other programs affiliated with that provider.

PEBBLES AND BAMM BAMM (1971–1972)

See *The Flintstones* (and related series).

PEEP AND THE BIG WIDE WORLD (2004–2011)

STUDIOS: WGBH, 9 Story, Discovery Kids, TV Ontario, Alliance Atlantis

DISTRIBUTORS: TLC (United States), Discovery (United States), Syndicated (United States)

CREATOR: Kai Pindal

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Kate Taylor

PRODUCERS: Kai Pindal, Marissa Wolsky

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Joan Cusack (Narrator), Scott Beaudin (Peep), Amanda Soha (Chirp), Jamie Watson (Quack), Robert Tinkler (Ant), Tessa Marshall (Beaver Boy), Catherine Disher (Dragonfly), Corrine Conley (Owl), Marium Carvell (Nellie), Colin Fox (Newton), Megan Mullally (Quack #2), Jayne Eastwood (Rabbit), Holly Hunter (Robin), Adrian Truss (Skunk), Ron Rubin (Bat), Kathleen Laskey (Squeak)

SYNOPSIS: Peep, a newly hatched chick, and his friends Chirp and Quack struggle to make sense of the park that functions as their "big wide world."

COMMENTARY: Based on a 1988 short film by Pindal, this Canadian-American coproduction was a simple and uncluttered exploration of the struggles of

growing up, with the unique complications of being a young bird along with them. The series was twice nominated for an Emmy, with Cusack winning the award for her omniscient but sympathetic narration.

PEG+CAT (2013–PRESENT)

STUDIOS: Feline Features, Fred Rogers, 9 Story, 9 Ate 7

DISTRIBUTOR: PBS

CREATORS: Jennifer Oxley, Billy Aronson

PRODUCERS: Unknown

DIRECTOR: Cory Bobiak

WRITERS INCLUDE: Billy Lopez, Billy Aronson, Kevin Del Aguila, Dustin Ferrer, David Cohen, Qui Nguyen, Jennifer Oxley

VOICE ACTORS: Hayley Faith Negrin (Peg), Dwayne Hill (Cat), Thamelela Mpumwana (Ramone), Tommy Wazelle (Pig), Angela Teek (Viv/Mama Bear), Jean Yoon (Connie), Rob Morrison (Chickens/Pirates/Three Little Pigs/Billy Goats Gruff/Seven Dwarves/Beethoven), Carys Casucci (Chickens), Christian DiStefano (Richard), Addison Holley (Tessa), Annick Obonsawin (Mora), Gabriel Giammaria (Jesse), Bryce Kulak (Giant), Shoshanna Sperling (Giantess), Emilie Claire Barlow (Mermaid), Kevin Brathwaite (Papa Bear), Phatt Al (Baby Bear), Allie Hughes and Jennifer Wallis (Blockettes), Kevin Del Aguila (Mack), Alison Jutzi (Peg's Mom), Kyle McDonald (George Washington), John Stocker (Albert Einstein), Julie Lemieux (Flat Woman), Linda Ballantyne (Marie Curie), Sandra Oh (President of the United States), Mika Shimozato (Aki)

SYNOPSIS: Preschool-aged Peg and her feline companion Cat are frequently confronted with mathematical problems, to which they inevitably find solutions.

COMMENTARY: A series designed to encourage an interest in mathematics among children aged three to five so that they can use it to aid them in their daily lives, derived from Oxley and Aronson's children's book *The Chicken Problem*. The educational nature of the series is reinforced by the fact that it looks like children's drawings on graph paper, by Peg's frequent interactions with viewers as if they are active participants in the narratives, and by the characterization and plotting being slight enough to accommodate didactic messages while still being interesting in and of themselves. That the program achieved its objective among its target audience is reflected by its popularity with that audience, while its critical reception is reflected by Emmys presented to the series as a whole, to its writing staff and composers, and for Negrin's engaging portrayal of Peg.

PELSWICK (2000–2002)

STUDIOS: CBC, Nelvana

DISTRIBUTORS: Nickelodeon (United States, 2000–2002), CBS (United States, 2002)

CREATOR: John Callahan

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: John Callahan, Patrick Loubert, Michael Hirsh, Clive Smith, Deborah Levin

PRODUCERS: Patricia Burns, Stephen Hodgins, Marianne Culbert

DIRECTORS: Charles Bastien, Sean Jeffrey, Larry Jacobs

WRITERS: Alan Daniels, Leonard Dick, John Mein, Andrew Nicholls, John Pellatt, Jennifer Pertsch, Al Schwartz, Kenn Scott, Todd Thicke, Darrell Vickers, Darwin Vickers, Mary Colin Chisholm

VOICE ACTORS: Robert Tinkler (Pelswick Eggert), Tracey Moore (Kate Eggert), Ellen Ray Hennessey (Priscilla Eggert, a.k.a. Gram Gram), Tony Rosato (Quinton Eggert), Phil Guerrero (Ace Nakamura), Peter Oldring (Goon Gunderson), Kim Kuhteubl (Sandra Scodde), Julie Lemieux (Julie Smockford), Chuck Campbell (Boyd Scullarzo), David Huband (Vice Principal Ziegler), David Arquette (Mr. Jimmy)

SYNOPSIS: Paraplegic 13-year-old Pelswick Eggert insists on living his life as a “normal” person, in spite of the various limitations thrown in his way.

COMMENTARY: A very rare attempt to depict physically challenged characters as protagonists in television animation—and television as a whole, for that matter. Creator Callahan is himself a paraplegic and gained notoriety as a syndicated cartoonist precisely for the matter in which he mocked the condescension and moral fatuousness of the fully abled toward people like him. As a consequence, *Pelswick* established much of its humor and (with typical accuracy for its studio) its drawing style by using Callahan’s as the model and surrounding the protagonist both with characters who manipulated him based on his disability and ones who refused to see it as a limitation (most notably Pelswick’s imaginary friend-cum-moral-conscience Mr. Jimmy, whom only he could see or interact with). Though Callahan toned down much of the angrier and adult-oriented elements of his humor for this series, his central message—the need to create a tolerant and accepting environment for young paraplegics—was clearly evident, and it made the series enduring in spite of the various sitcom clichés that the producers put Pelswick in over the course of its 26-episode run.

THE PENGUINS OF MADAGASCAR (2008–2015)

STUDIOS: DreamWorks, Nickelodeon

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

CREATORS: Tom McGrath, Eric Darnell

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Bob Schooley, Mark McCorkle

DIRECTORS: Bret Haaland, Nick Filippi

WRITERS: Todd Garfield, Ron Anderson, Bob Schooley, Mark McCorkle, Eddie Guzelian, Laura Gutin, Bill Motz, Bob Roth, John Behnke, Rob Humphrey, Matthew Negrete, Nate Knetchel, Chris Neuhahn, Scott Creamer, Brandon Sawyer, Paul Rugg, Kim Duran, Madellaine Paxson, Devin Bunje, Nick Stanton, Doug Molitor, Justin Charlebois, Ivory Floyd, Kurt Weldon, Dean Stefan, Thomas Hart, Ross Beeley, Tom Krajewski, Jess Winfield, Derek Iversen, Gabriel Garza, Evelyn Gabai, Jim Peronto, Michael Ludy, Mark Palmer, James Bates, Steve Aranguen

VOICE ACTORS: Tom McGrath (Skipper), Jeff Bennett (Kowalski), John DiMaggio (Rico/Bada/Burt/Hans), James Stuart (Private/Joey/Manfredi), Danny Jacobs (King Julien/Johnson), Kevin Michael Richardson (Maurice/Bing), Andy Richter (Mort), Nicole Sullivan (Marlene), Dee Bradley Baker (“Wild” Marlene), Conrad Vernon (Mason), Richard Kind (Roger), Wayne Knight (Max, a.k.a.

Moon Cat), Fred Stoller (Fred), Tara Strong (Eggy), Mary Scheer (Alice), Atticus Shaffer (Vesuvius Twins), Neil Patrick Harris (Dr. Blowhole), Diedrich Bader (Rat King), Cedric Yarbrough (Officer X), Nestor Carbonell (Savio)

SYNOPSIS: A team of penguins with the attitudes and mannerisms of military officers perform commando missions from their base in the zoo at Central Park.

COMMENTARY: A project derived from DreamWorks' long-running *Madagascar* feature-film series (as is the Netflix series *All Hail King Julien*) and, as such, containing the sort of slight, slapstick-oriented, and soporific comedy material common to most CGI properties and the *Madagascar* series in particular. That the program managed to last as long as it did is mostly due to the in-built value of the larger franchise of which it was a part and not on the derivative plotting and characterization that the high-quality CGI artwork did nothing to distract from.

***PENN ZERO: PART TIME HERO* (2014–PRESENT)**

STUDIOS: Disney, Mercury Filmworks

DISTRIBUTOR: Disney

CREATORS/EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Jared Bush, Sam Levine

DIRECTORS: Adam Henry, Tom De Rosier, Chuckles Austen

WRITERS: Jared Bush, Sam Levine, Jeff Poliquin, Joseph Scott, Heiko Dreigenberg, Stu Livingston, Wolf Rudiger Bloss, Kenny Bylery, Kathleen Good, Julia Miranda, Brandon Warren, Jase Ricci, Jean Sebastien Duclos, Paimen Kalayeh, Joe Oh, Kevin Hylton, Mike Winn, Elizabeth Rinehart, Chad Drew, Shane Morris, Adam Stein, Thomas Middleditch

VOICE ACTORS: Thomas Middleditch (Penn Zero), Adam DeVine (Boone Wiseman), Tania Gunandi (Sashi Kobayashi), Sam Levine (Phyllis/Phil), Alfred Molina (Rippen), Larry Wilmore (Larry), Lea Thompson (Vonnice Zero), Gary Cole (Brock Zero), Rosie Perez (Aunt Rose), Lenny Venito (Uncle Chuck), George Takei (Sylvester Kobayashi), Lauren Tom (Tia Kobayashi), Beau Bridges (Sheriff Scaley Briggs), Olivia Holt (Amber Briggs), Adam West (Captain Super Captain/Professor Evil Professor), Sean Astin (Blaze), Maria Bamford (Nug/Others), Wanda Sykes (Shirley B. Awesome), Henry Winkler (Snowman), Diana Rigg (Mayor Pink Panda), Elizabeth Henstridge (Princess), Michael Leon Wooley (General), Garry Marshall (Soda Jerk), Chris Parnell (Judge Blort Clooney), Bruce Vilanch (Himself), Paul Reubens (Milk Man), Kari Wahlgren (Bowling Ball), Brian Posehn (Beach Ball Grandpappy), Rena Strober (Queen/Orchid), Pamela Segall Adlon (Drab Lieutenant), Harland Williams (Helper Hue), Maurice LaMarche (Narrator/Fredricks), Sigourney Weaver (Lady Starblaster), Peter Stormare (Rufus), Kate Miccuci (Cute-ling General), Kumali Nanjiani (Cute-ling Mayor), Kenny Loggins (Montage Singer), Jeff Gordon (Wacky Bustygutty), Blake Anderson (Hogarth), Jason Alexander (Coach Wallace), Jane Kaczmarek (Coach Jackie), John Anderson (Mike), John Henson (Ron), Dee Bradley Baker (Referee)

SYNOPSIS: After his parents are imprisoned by a villain, teenager Penn Zero takes on their role as a part-time hero who is transported into a variety of alternate dimensions on dangerous missions.

COMMENTARY: A program with an interesting premise but a premise that is still undercut and watered down by a tendency toward overkill and facetiousness on the part of the writers. The greatest strength of the program comes in the diversity of the settings featured, which are richly laid out with CGI graphics, as well as a mixed attempt to present Penn and his equally part-time heroic comrades Boone and Sashi on multidimensional terms. However, as good as the program might be, many viewers will likely feel that they have either been this action-adventure-oriented way before or that it might have done better with a straighter approach to the narrative material rather than the comically cockeyed one seen here.

PEPPER ANN (1997–2001)

STUDIO: Disney

DISTRIBUTORS: ABC (1997–2000), Syndicated (2000–2001), UPN (2000–2001)

CREATOR: Sue Rose

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Sue Rose, Nahnatchka Khan

DIRECTOR: Brad Goodchild

WRITERS INCLUDED: Scott M. Gimple, Madellaine Paxson

VOICE ACTORS: Kathleen Wilhoite (Jennifer “Pepper Ann” Peterson), Jenna Von Oy (Trinket St. Blair), Pamela Segall (Moose), Clea Lewis (Nicky), Kath Soucie (Nicky’s Mother), April Winchell (Lydia Peterson), Don Adams (Principal Hickey)

SYNOPSIS: Twelve-year-old Pepper Ann Peterson struggles to define herself as a person while attending Hazelnut Middle School.

COMMENTARY: One of the more effective attempts at targeting the middle-school demographic in television animation, combining realism and fantastic speculation in surprising and effective ways, with good vocal performances anchoring the effect. It is a reminder of how the genre of television animation can address issues related to this demographic both seriously and sympathetically, as writer Gimple would show to a further extent in his later *Fillmore* (q.v.) for the same studio.

PERFECT HAIR FOREVER (2004–2007)

STUDIO: Williams Street

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATORS: Mike Lazzo, Matt Harrigan, Matt Maiellaro

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Mike Lazzo, Keith Crawford

PRODUCERS: Dave Hughes, Matt Harrigan

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Kim Manning (Gerald Bald Z), Matt Maiellaro (Uncle Grandfather/Rod the Anime God), Will Armstrong (Action Hotdog), Nick Ingkattawat (Norman Douglas, a.k.a. The Inappropriate Comedy Tree), Dave Hughes (Terry/Twisty), Dave Willis (Coiffio), Dennis Maloney (Catman), C. Martin Croker (Young Man), M. F. Doom (Sherman the Giraffe), George Lowe (Space Ghost)

SYNOPSIS: Gerald Bald Z embarks on a quest for a cure for his premature baldness.

COMMENTARY: A mostly on-target parody of the clichés and excesses of Japanese anime, despite its studio's and network's established habit for placing raunchiness ahead of subtlety. The fact that the program had an in-built continuity, unlike the studio's other self-contained-episode product, was a factor in preventing the weaknesses of the studio from being more apparent here than elsewhere.

THE PERILS OF PENELOPE PITSTOP (1969–1970)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera, Alex Lovy

DIRECTORS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera, Charles Nichols

WRITERS: Michael Maltese, Joe Ruby, Ken Spears, Alex Lovy, Earl Klein, Bill Perez, Howard Swift

VOICE ACTORS: Janet Waldo (Penelope Pitstop), Paul Lynde (Sylvester Sneekly/The Hooded Claw), Mel Blanc (Bully Brothers/Yak Yak/Chug-a-Boom), Paul Winchell (Clyde/Softy), Don Messick (Zippy/Pockets/Dum Dum/Snoozy), Gary Owens (Narrator)

SYNOPSIS: Heiress/auto racer Penelope Pitstop is repeatedly placed in life-threatening situations through the machinations of the villainous Hooded Claw (the secret identity of Penelope's lawyer Sylvester Sneekly), requiring the Ant Hill Mob to come to her aid.

COMMENTARY: A spin-off of *Wacky Races* (q.v.), bolstered by some above-average writing and acting for that period of time in television animation history and an effective channeling of the milieu of the silent-movie action/adventure serials suggested by its title. While it became repetitious when viewed in succession, it achieved its goal on an episode-by-episode basis, which was all that it was asked to achieve during that period.

PET ALIEN (2005)

STUDIOS: Mike Young, Antefilm, TFI France, Crest, Telegael, Taffy, John Doze

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATOR: Jeff Muncy

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Jeff Muncy, Sadaf Cohen Muncy

DIRECTORS: Andrew Young, Vijay Anad Raju, Vivek Karandikkar

WRITERS INCLUDED: Dan Danko

VOICE ACTORS: Charlie Schlatter (Tommy Cadle/Clinton Fillmore Jefferson XIII), Charlie Adler (Dinko/Flip/Cap'n Spangle/Dr. Daffodil), Jess Harnell (Gumpers/Swanky/Granville De Spray), Candi Milo (Gabby/Melba Manners/Mrs. Cadle/Tommy's Teacher)

SYNOPSIS: Earthling Tommy Cadle has his life permanently disrupted when he befriends a group of aliens.

COMMENTARY: A program with a default scenario and repetitive characterizations clearly borrowed from other series without an attempt to be completely original, which the CGI graphics do not disguise whatsoever. Harnell earned an Emmy nomination for his work on the series in 2005.

PETER PAN AND THE PIRATES (1990–1992)

STUDIOS: Southern Star, TMS, FOX

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX

CREATOR: James M. Barrie

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Buzz Potamkin

PRODUCERS: Takashi, Lee Dannacher

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS INCLUDED: Larry Carroll, David Carren, Chris Hubbell, Sam Graham, Matthew Malach, Michael Reaves

VOICE ACTORS: Jason Marsden (Peter Pan), Tim Curry (Captain Hook), Debi Derbyberry (Tinker Bell), Christina Lange (Wendy), Whitby Hereford (Michael), Cree Summer (Tiger Lily), Edmund Gilbert (Smee), Tony Jay (Alf Mason), Eugene Williams (Billy Jukes), Chris Allport (Tootles), Jack Angel (Cookson), Michael Bacall (Twin #1), Adam Carl (Nibs), Aaron Lohr (Hard to Hit/Twin #2), Scott Menville (Slightly), David Shaughnessy (Starkey), Michael Wise (Great Big Little Panther)

SYNOPSIS: The adventures of Peter Pan and his friends in the fantasy realm of Neverland.

COMMENTARY: Scottish playwright/novelist Barrie created these now-familiar characters and settings in a segment of a novel in 1901, but they only became well-known after being dramatized for the first time 10 years later. The character of Peter, the boy who “never grew up,” was inspired by one of Barrie’s older brothers, who had tragically died young and devastated his family in the process. In dramatic form, the play was a resounding success, and in both straight and musical forms, it has continued to be staged in to this day. It has also been adapted for film and television numerous times, most notably Disney’s 1953 animated feature-film version and Steven Spielberg’s 1991 live-action film *Hook*. Its identification as a work of children’s literature was so strong that Barrie willed control of the copyright of the work to the famous children’s hospital on Great Ormond Street in London upon his death.

The story of how this series came to be produced was an adventure in and of itself. One of the earliest animated productions to air on the recently created FOX network, it was created and developed without a great deal of lead time, and the final product suffered from the hurried production atmosphere. The characters and setting were designed in such a way that they resembled no other productions of the work, particularly Disney’s. Further production delays were caused when FOX’s affiliates, hoping for a masculine tone to the show, objected to the feminine tones employed by Peter’s original voice actor, causing the part to be recast. In the end, the program’s delayed production left the network with little usable footage to promote in advance ads, and the series never was able to fully acquire a regular, faithful audience. The only person who really benefitted from the difficult situation was Curry, who stole the show as Captain Hook and ended up winning an Emmy for his troubles.

For a later, slightly more faithful adaptation of the characters and milieu, see *Jake and the Never Land Pirates*.

THE PETER POTAMUS SHOW (A.K.A. *PETER POTAMUS AND HIS MAGIC FLYING BALLOON*; 1964)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTORS: Syndicated (1964), ABC (1966–1967)

PRODUCERS/DIRECTORS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Daws Butler (Peter Potamus/Yahooey), Don Messick (So So/Ricochet Rabbit), Howard Morris (Breezly), Mel Blanc (Sneezly/Droop-a-Long Coyote), John Stephenson (Colonel Fusby), Doug Young (Yippee), Hal Smith (Yappee/King)

SYNOPSIS: An anthology series with several components. Headlining were the adventures of loud-mouthed explorer Peter Potamus and his monkey companion So So. Also featured were the exploits of musketeers Yippee, Yappee, and Yahooey and, at different times, Breezly and Sneezly and Ricochet Rabbit (see *Magilla Gorilla* for more information on these components).

COMMENTARY: The second of Hanna-Barbera's tie-in series with Ideal Toys (the other being *Magilla Gorilla*, with which it shared segments). Though well-produced, it was not as amusing as previous, similar entries, suggesting Hanna-Barbera's use of the format was starting to wear thin. A few new installments were produced for the ABC run, which aired following the conclusion of the syndication engagement.

PHANTOM INVESTIGATORS (2002)

STUDIOS: (W)holesome Products, Columbia

DISTRIBUTOR: WB

CREATORS/DIRECTORS: Stephen Holman, Josephine Huang

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Ilene Staple

WRITERS INCLUDED: John Hoberg, Kat Likkell

VOICE ACTORS: Andrew Decker (Casey), Amber Ross (Kira)

SYNOPSIS: Four enterprising junior high school students establish an amateur detective agency to investigate supernatural phenomena; three of the four have supernatural abilities themselves.

COMMENTARY: A series produced on a limited budget in a manner that combined live-action footage with stop-motion imagery, which was perhaps its most notable feature. It did not attract enough attention among viewers and was canceled after only a few weeks on the air, with 7 of 13 produced episodes never airing at all.

PHANTOM 2040 (1994)

STUDIOS: Hearst, MINOS S.A., France 18, King Features

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

CREATORS: Lee Falk, Ray Moore

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Miller, David Corbett, Jeffrey Schon

PRODUCERS: Mary Chojnowski Corbett, Gwen Wetzler, Michael Lyman

DIRECTORS: Vincent Bassol, Bertrand Tager Kagen, Michel Lyman, Michael Kaweski

WRITERS INCLUDED: Judith Reeves Stevens, Garfield Reeves Stevens

VOICE ACTORS: Scott Valentine (Kit Walker Jr./The Phantom), Margot Kidder (Rebecca Madison), J. D. Hall (Guran), Ron Perlman (Graft), Jeff Bennett (Maxwell Madison), Deborah Harry (Vain Gloria), Mark Hamill (Dr. Jax)

SYNOPSIS: In the year 2040, Kit Walker Jr. fulfills a family legacy lasting several centuries by masquerading as the mysterious, heroic Phantom (a.k.a. the Ghost Who Walks).

COMMENTARY: Falk and Moore developed the character in a comic strip for the King Features syndicate, which debuted in 1936 and set the stage for much of the costumed heroics that would later come to dominate the comic book medium. The animated series featured a backstory as elaborate as that of the comic strip, focusing on the intrigue in a city-state created by the political decline of the world due to a shortage of natural resources and onto which the lead character and the various villains were overlaid. The series lasted for 35 episodes in its original run. In 1996, a feature film version of *The Phantom*, with Billy Zane in the title role and Treat Williams as the overacting villain, was released and ended up being a critical and commercial failure.

***PHINEAS AND FERB* (2007–2015)**

STUDIO/DISTRIBUTOR: Disney

CREATORS/EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Dan Povenmire, Jeff “Swampy” Marsh

PRODUCER: Robert Hughes

DIRECTORS: Dan Povenmire, Zac Moncrief, Jeff “Swampy” Marsh, Robert Hughes, Jay Lender, Sue Perroto, Kim Roberson

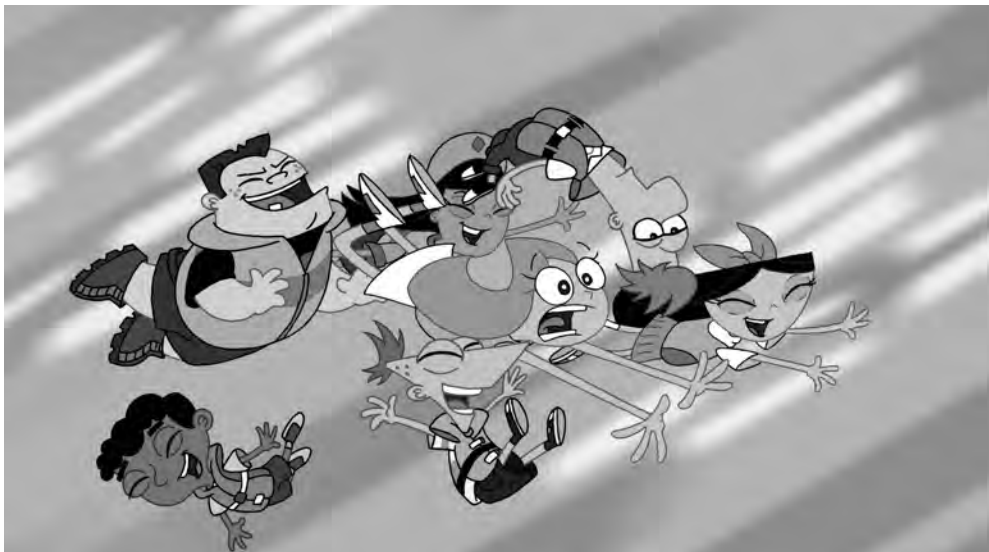
WRITERS: Dan Povenmire, Jeff “Swampy” Marsh, Chris Headrick, Jon Barry, Sherm Cohen, Antoine Guilbaud, Wendy Grieb, Kent Osborne, Kyle Baker, Patrick Ventura, Aliko Theofilopoulos Grafft, Mike Diedrich, Chong Lee, J. G. Quintel, Kim Roberson, Mike Roth, Jon Barry, Alex Almaguer, Timothy Bjorklund, Douglas McCarthy, Piero Piluso, Elizabeth Ito, Joe Orrantia, Perry Zombolas, Kaz, Scott Peterson, Edgar Karapetyan, J. G. Orrantia, Robert Hughes, Kyle Menke, Bernie Petterson, May Chan, Jennifer Keene, Martin Olson, Flammarion Ferreria, Tom Minton, Mike Milo, Derek Thompson, Seth Kearsley, John Mathot, Eddy Houchins, Eddie Pitman, Joshua Pruet, Michael Singleton, Bobby Gaylor, Mike Bell, Edward Rivera, Patrick O’Connor, Zac Moncrief, Calvin Suggs

VOICE ACTORS: Vincent Martella (Phineas Flynn), Thomas Sangster (Ferb Fletcher), Ashley Tisdale (Candace Flynn), Dee Bradley Baker (Perry The Platypus/Pinky The Chihuahua), Dan Povenmire (Heinz Doofenshmirtz), Alyson Stoner (Isabella Garcia-Shapiro/Jenny Brown), Maulik Pancholy (Baljeet Tjinder), Bobby Gaylor (Buford Van Stomm), Tyler Mann (Carl), Ariel Winter (Gretchen), Cymphonique Miller (Holly, early episodes), Diamond White (Holly, later episodes), Dana Davis (Holly, later episodes), Isabella Acres (Katie, early episodes), Soleil McGhee (Katie, later episodes), Isabella Murad (Milly, early episodes), Dannah Phirman (Milly, later episodes), Madison Pettis (Adyson Sweetwater), Tiffany Espinson (Ginger Hirano, early episodes), Michaela Zee (Ginger Hirano, early episodes), Ming Na (Ginger Hirano, later episodes), Richard O’Brien (Lawrence Fletcher), Caroline Rhea

(Linda Flynn Fletcher/Grandma Betty Jo Flynn), Kelly Hu (Stacy Hirano), Mitchell Musso (Jeremy Johnson), Jeff "Swampy" Marsh (Major Francis Monogram), Olivia Olson (Vanessa Doofenshmirtz), Eileen Galindo (Vivian Garcia Shapiro), John Viener (Norm the Robot), Allison Janney (Charlene Doofenshmirtz), Kari Wahlgren (Suzy Johnson), Barry Bostwick (Grandpa Clyde Flynn), Jane Carr (Grandma Winifred Fletcher), Malcolm McDowell (Grandpa Reginald Fletcher), John O'Hurley (Mayor Roger Doofenshmirtz), Jack McBrayer (Irving DuBois), Alec Holden (Django Brown), Jane Leeves (Admiral Wanda Acronym), Jennifer Hale (Carla), Amanda Plummer (Esmeralda Poofenplotz), Jaret Reddick (Danny), Carlos Alazraqui (Bobbi Fabulous), Steve Zahn (Sherman), Seth Green (Monty Monogram), Ming Na Wen (Dr. Hirano), Joe Orrantia (Rodney), Paul Reubens (Professor Parenthesis)

SYNOPSIS: Stepbrothers Phineas and Ferb, with the aid of their friends, plot and plan a variety of increasingly elaborate schemes during their summer vacation, for which their sister Candace intends to "bust" them to their parents, without success. At the same time, the boys' pet platypus Perry engages in secret agent combat with mad scientist Heinz Doofenshmirtz.

COMMENTARY: The synopsis can only hint at the bare bones of what this brilliant, joyous, and subtly humorous series was *really* all about; only by actually viewing it closely can it be understood. Unlike many long-running series, which typically peter out due to tired repetition, this program was a gem from its beginning to its end, over a much longer-than-average run for an animated program. It was blessed with multiple engaging characters; a seemingly endless supply of tuneful music (staged in marvelous and inventive ways by the directors); and a unique approach to plotting and storytelling, in which episode plots and subplots worked together in lockstep to achieve their goals (rather than being wholly independent of each other, as in other



Just another summer day for the lively stars of this instant classic. Disney Channel/Photofest © Disney Channel

series). You would be hard-pressed to find a program that is more easily accessible to multiple spheres of the diverse television audience, as well as another program that was able to mine a deeper vein of comedy and action gold out of what on the surface might not have seen to have much depth, while at the same time adapting to a variety of different time lengths and setting variations without compromising its quality in any way.

Povenmire and Marsh had first developed the concept while they worked as staff members of *Rocko's Modern Life* (q.v.), but it was not until both had earned further credentials as directors in the United States and England that they were able to convince Disney of the concept's validity. From the beginning, the creators established an enormous amount of creative control of their work independent of their employer, a control maintained over the program's run, which is highly unusual in the Disney Studio's history and makes the program stand out. (It also mirrors the seeming ease the program's title characters have in achieving their goals.) The pair added realism to their setting by borrowing from their own lives to flesh out the setting (the city of Danville, where the program is mainly set, to cite one example, was modeled on Povenmire's hometown of Mobile, Alabama), as well as by giving three-dimensional depth over time to characters who in other hands would have remained one-dimensional stereotypes. This was particularly true of Tisdale's portrayal of Candace, whose manic personal combination of fear, vengeance, angst, grace, poise, and confidence drives many of the story lines and, in many ways, makes her the program's *real* star.

There has never been a show like *Phineas and Ferb* in the history of the genre of television animation, a program that has easily defied and inverted so many of the persistent negative stereotypes and tropes of the genre on its way to creating richly original and satisfying results, not unlike the achievements of its title stars. And, although Povenmire and Marsh have since remained active as a team (a new series, *Milo Murphy's Law*, debuted in early 2017), there may never be so again. Those who know it love it, and those yet to do so are in for something special catching it in TV reruns and through DVD and Internet redistribution in the years ahead.

PICKLE AND PEANUT (2015–PRESENT)

STUDIO/DISTRIBUTOR: Disney

CREATOR: Noah Z. Jones

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Noah Z. Jones, Joel Trussell

DIRECTORS: Noah Z. Jones, Joel Trussell, Monkumus, John Aoshima, Sunil Hall, Andrew Overtoom

WRITERS: Noah Z. Jones, Joel Trussell, Dave Tennant, Mark Rivers, Benny Crouse, Greg Sharp, Ivan Dixon, Matt Harrigan, Edward D. Skudder, Greg Tuculescu, Kim Roberson, Jacob Sluka, Matt Chapman, John Mathot, Michael Bertino, M. J. Sandhe, Ryan Quincy, Monkumus, Brendon Walsh, Ryan Gillis, Sunil Hall, Reza Iman, Giovanni Cardenas, Tyler Chen, Victor Courtright, Nate Cash, Joe Horne, Noam Sussman, Sam Riegel, H. Michael Croner, Marianna Hersko

VOICE ACTORS: Jon Heder (Pickle), Johnny Pemberton (Peanut), Matt Chapman (Mr. Mjart), H. Michael Croner (Lazer/Mam Mams/Rat King), Noah Z. Jones (Champion Horse/Wayne/Jeffrey/Pigfoot), Dana Snyder (McSweats), Bennie Arthur (Spedacular Donkey), Abbi Jacobson (Sneaky Patty), Kevin Michael Richardson (Ragga), Joel Trussell (Mr. Whispers/Greg), Patton Oswalt (Papa), Jessica Lowe (Kylie/Mylie), Louie Anderson (Gory Agnes), J. B. Blanc (Bloodbeard), Roger Smith (PAL-SCAN), Kool Keith (D-Stixx), Paul Reubens (Couch Dracula), Shaquille O'Neal ('90s Adventure Bear), Greg Tuculescu (Radu), Toks Olagundoye (Francine), Danny Pudi (Bike Jumper), Steven Blum (Tad/Hunter)

SYNOPSIS: A shy, cowardly pickle and a peanut with aspirations of popularity work together at the Mjart Mart and get into humorous difficulties.

COMMENTARY: One of those series that is truly funny mainly to the people who created it and those who are truly in on the joke and not funny to anyone else. Jones showed with his earlier *Fish Hooks* (q.v.) that he wasn't interested in the subtle aspects of television animation narrative construction; this series, in which he has more direct creative control, seems to confirm that attitude. The fact that so many of the writers double as actors on the program seems to indicate that the scripts were written with the intent of allowing these people the novelty of reading their own words on the air and not so much with developing plots that can be completely understood nor characters the audience can relate to.

PIG GOAT BANANA CRICKET (2015–2017)

STUDIO/DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

CREATORS: Dave Cooper, Johnny Ryan

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: David Sacks, Dave Cooper, Johnny Ryan

PRODUCERS: Louis J. Cuck, Carl Faruolo

DIRECTORS: Nick Cross, Ben Jones, Gabe Swarr, Luke Brookshier, Joe Horne, Carl Faruolo, Kim Roberson, Ian Graham, Cosmo Segurson

WRITERS: David Sacks, Johnny Ryan, Nick Cross, Ben Jones, Brian Morante, Gabe Swarr, Doug Lieblich, Dalton Grant, John Trabbic III, Merriwether Williams, Brianne Drouhard, Monica Tomova, Phil Jacobson, Kahee Lim, Justin Charlebois, Sara Jerzykowski, Joe Orrantia, Jacob Fleisher

VOICE ACTORS: Matt Jones (Pig/He So Crazy Squirrel/Others), Candi Milo (Goat/Owl Woman Lady/Junior Ranger/Others), Thomas Wilson (Banana/Others), Paul Rugg (Cricket/Others), Jeff Bennett (Sleazy Beave/Rasta Rat/Ranger Rhino/Others), James Adomian (President of the Planet/Others), Yuri Lowenthal (Prince Mermeow/Junior Ranger/Others), Maile Flanagan (Junior Ranger/Others), John DiMaggio (Breakfast Burrito/Armpit Willy/Burgerstein/Others), Dyana Liu (Lady Primavera van der Snuggles/Others), Kurtwood Smith (Angry Old Raisin), Vanessa Marshall (Various characters), Tom Kenny (Quandarious Gooch/Others), Fred Tatasciore (Thomas Jefferson/Others), Justin Roiland (Psychopath Giraffe/Others), Carl Faruolo (That's Messed Up Son Koala/Others), Nika Futterman (Junior Ranger/Mariachi Possum/Others), Grey DeLisle (Sleeping Kid), Eric Bauza (Avocado/Mantis/Cow), Eric Edelstein (Timmy/Others), Echo Kellum (Guitar/Lil' Dr. Dirty), Rob Paulsen (Early

Bird/Others), Danny Jacobs (Barbershop Quartet/Others), James Urbaniak (Nose Picker Fish), Debra Wilson (Nasty Cat/Others), Nolan North (Lipstick Horse/Others), Gary Anthony Williams (DJ Wheelbarrow Full of Nachos/Others), Kari Wahlgren (Ashley/Others), Mo Collins (Feral Ann/Others), Maria Bamford (DeLooney Hamshank/Others), Mindy Sterling (Brainy Jane/Others), Dylan Saunders (Tooth/Others), Ashly Burch (Lila Twinklepipes/Others), Johnny Ryan (Alexander Hamilton/Others), Peter Giles (Wagon/Others), Si-rena Irwin (Shlaverne Difoziifini/Statue of Liberty)

SYNOPSIS: Pig (a dimwit obsessed with food), Goat (an ambitious singer/actress), Banana (a lazy con man), and Cricket (an intelligent scientist too smart for his own good) are roommates in a treehouse who each manage to get in and out of trouble on a regular basis with surprising ease.

COMMENTARY: Another series that words fail to accurately describe, and that a viewing of the series itself provides the only way to understand (if it can be understood at all). This is a fast-paced, slickly produced, and utterly hilarious program that, like everything and everybody within it, repeatedly defies and contests the limits of what can possibly be in animation. The design scheme is the vintage style dominating the so-called Golden Age of American animation between the 1920s and 1940s, with the characters sporting big eyes and fluid, flexible body movements, as well as backgrounds that are nearly as flexible and changeable as the characters. However, the episodes' narrative content is decidedly contemporary: television (a pipe dream in the Golden Age) plays a major role in a number of episodes, as do such features of modern life as the Internet. In this program's universe, the characters and settings are portrayed in aggressively literal terms (the character DJ Wheelbarrow Full of Nachos, for example, actually *is* a wheelbarrow full of nachos)



The four stars of a clever and perennially surprising program—although Cricket (second from right) seems to have only found this out now, unlike his friends. Nickelodeon Network/Photofest © Nickelodeon Network

with little to hide about themselves. Anchoring the ongoing madness are the four protagonists, who, in most episodes, are allocated solo space for individual adventures before reuniting to resolve their problems as a group in the end and whose diverse personalities make them very engaging and endearing to the audience. It is rare for a program to be both cutting-edge and retro in its presentation and even rarer for those elements to complement each other to create a positive final effect. This program is very definitely one of that elusive kind.

The program originated in a short film produced by Cooper, Ryan, and director Cross for Nickelodeon in 2012. In that film, titled *Pig Goat Banana Mantis*, it was revealed here that the title quartet had grown up in their treehouse under the protection of their Uncle Robot, until he broke down. In the process of development as a series, much of that background was discarded (save, perhaps, a reference in one episode where Goat reminds Pig they have been roomies for about 29 years!) to develop what became the established format. Jones, Milo, and Wilson had voiced their characters in the original film, with Rugg's Cricket replacing James Urbaniak's original Mantis during development.

***PIGGSBURG PIGS* (1990–1991)**

STUDIOS: Ruby-Spears, Fred Silverman, Sy Fischer

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Joe Ruby, Ken Spears

PRODUCER: Sy Fischer

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Robert Cait, Tara Charendoff, David Huband, Keith Knight, Jonathan Potts, Susan Roman, Ron Rubin, Norman Spencer, Greg Spottiswood, John Stocker, Peter Wildman, Harvey Atkin, Len Carlson, Don Francks, Catherine Gallant, Rex Hagon, Elizabeth Hanna, Robert Bockstael, Dan Hennessey, Gordon Mastern, and Allan Stewart Coates (Specific roles unknown)

SYNOPSIS: In the all-pig city of Piggopolis, Bo, Portley, and Pighead Bacon contend with the machinations of the villainous Rembrant Proupork.

COMMENTARY: A series that disappeared after its 13-episode run ended and has not been seen or heard from since. A major reason for this was the fact that it was on a network that, at the time, was new to the Saturday-morning game and consequently wasn't able to put it into a very competitive position on the schedule.

***THE PINK PANTHER* (AND RELATED SERIES)**

***The Pink Panther Show* (1969–1970)**

STUDIO: DePatie-Freleng

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

PRODUCERS: David DePatie, Friz Freleng

DIRECTORS: Friz Freleng, Hawley Pratt, Gerry Chiniquy, Brad Case, Arthur Davis, Dave Detiege, Cullen Houghtaling, Art Leonardi, Sid Marcus, Robert McKimson, Bob Richardson

WRITERS INCLUDED: John Dunn

VOICE ACTORS: John Byner, Dave Barry, Paul Frees, Rich Little, Marvin Miller, Arte Johnson, Arnold Stang, Tom Holland, and Don Diamond (Specific roles unknown)

The Pink Panther Meets the Ant and the Aardvark (1970–1971)

STUDIO: DePatie-Freleng

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

PRODUCERS: David DePatie, Friz Freleng

DIRECTORS: Friz Freleng, Hawley Pratt, Gerry Chiniquy, Brad Case, Arthur Davis, Dave Detiege, Cullen Houghtaling, Art Leonardi, Sid Marcus, Robert McKimson, Bob Richardson

WRITERS INCLUDED: John Dunn

VOICE ACTORS: John Byner, Dave Barry, Paul Frees, Rich Little, Marvin Miller, Arte Johnson, Arnold Stang, Tom Holland, and Don Diamond (Specific roles unknown)

The New Pink Panther Show (1971–1976)

STUDIO: DePatie-Freleng

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

PRODUCERS: David DePatie, Friz Freleng

DIRECTORS: Friz Freleng, Hawley Pratt, Gerry Chiniquy, Brad Case, Arthur Davis, Dave Detiege, Cullen Houghtaling, Art Leonardi, Sid Marcus, Robert McKimson, Bob Richardson

WRITERS INCLUDED: John Dunn

VOICE ACTORS: John Byner, Dave Barry, Paul Frees, Rich Little, Marvin Miller, Arte Johnson, Arnold Stang, Tom Holland, and Don Diamond (Specific roles unknown)

The Pink Panther Laugh and ½ Hour and ½ (1976–1977)

STUDIO: DePatie-Freleng

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

PRODUCERS: David DePatie, Friz Freleng

DIRECTORS: Friz Freleng, Hawley Pratt, Gerry Chiniquy, Brad Case, Arthur Davis, Dave Detiege, Cullen Houghtaling, Art Leonardi, Sid Marcus, Robert McKimson, Bob Richardson

WRITERS INCLUDED: John Dunn

VOICE ACTORS: John Byner, Dave Barry, Paul Frees, Rich Little, Marvin Miller, Arte Johnson, Arnold Stang, Tom Holland, and Don Diamond (Specific roles unknown)

Think Pink Panther! (1978)

STUDIO: DePatie-Freleng

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

PRODUCERS: David DePatie, Friz Freleng

DIRECTORS: Friz Freleng, Hawley Pratt, Gerry Chiniquy, Brad Case, Arthur Davis, Dave Detiege, Cullen Houghtaling, Art Leonardi, Sid Marcus, Robert McKimson, Bob Richardson

WRITERS INCLUDED: John Dunn

VOICE ACTORS: John Byner, Dave Barry, Paul Frees, Rich Little, Marvin Miller, Arte Johnson, Arnold Stang, Tom Holland, and Don Diamond (Specific roles unknown)

The All-New Pink Panther Show (1978–1979)

STUDIO: DePatie-Freleng

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

PRODUCERS: David DePatie, Friz Freleng

DIRECTORS: Friz Freleng, Hawley Pratt, Gerry Chiniquy, Brad Case, Arthur Davis, Dave Detiege, Cullen Houghtaling, Art Leonardi, Sid Marcus, Robert McKimson, Bob Richardson

WRITERS INCLUDED: John Dunn

VOICE ACTORS: John Byner, Dave Barry, Paul Frees, Rich Little, Marvin Miller, Arte Johnson, Arnold Stang, Tom Holland, and Don Diamond (Specific roles unknown); Larry Mann (Crazylegs Crane); Frank Welker (Crane Jr./Dragonfly)

Pink Panther and Sons (1984–1985)

STUDIOS: DePatie-Freleng, Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Billy Bowles (Pinky), B. J. Ward (Panky/Punkin), Sherry Lynn (Chatta), Marshall Efron (Howl), Jeannie Elias (Anney/Liona), Frank Welker (Finko/Rocko), Gregg Berger (Bowlhead), Sonny Melendez (Buckethead), Shane McCabe (Murfel)

The Pink Panther (1993)

STUDIOS: MGM, Claster

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Walter Mirisch, Marvin Mirisch, Paul Sabella, Mark Young

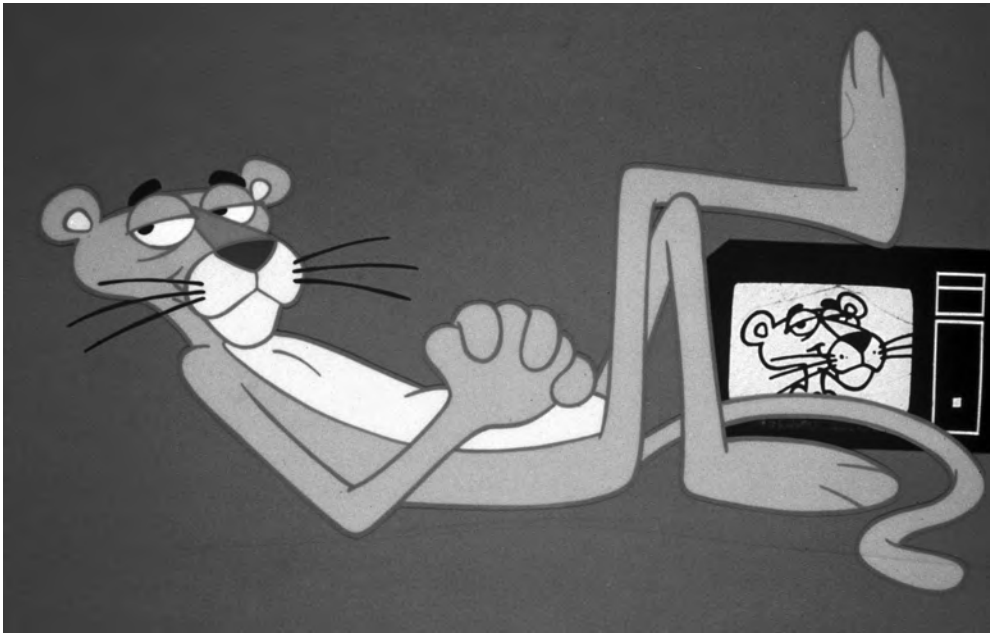
PRODUCERS/DIRECTORS: Charles Grosvenor, Byron Vaughns

WRITERS INCLUDED: Kelly Ward, Mark Young, Sindy McKay, Tony Benedict, Nick Meglin, Fred Crippen

VOICE ACTORS: Matt Frewer (Pink Panther); Sheryl Bernstein, John Byner, Dan Castalleneta, Brian George, Jess Harnell, Joe Piscopo, Charles Nelson Reilly, Wallace Shawn, Kath Soucie, JoAnne Worley, Ruth Buzzi, Hamilton Camp, Cathy Cavadini, Rickey D'Shon Collins, Troy Davidson, Philip Glasser, Paige Gosney, Gerritt Graham, Maurice LaMarche, Steve Macell, Danny Mann, Kenneth Mars, Bradley Pierce, Hal Rayle, Gwen Shepherd, Susan Silo, Jean Smart, Elmarie Wendel, and Thomas Wilson (Specific roles unknown)

SYNOPSIS: A pink-furred cat consistently eludes all who pursue him for various reasons.

COMMENTARY: The character made his debut in the main title sequence of the 1964 *The Pink Panther* (in the movie proper, it was the name of an exotic diamond), produced by the DePatie-Freleng Studio for United Artists. The sequence was such a hit with audiences that he was immediately made the star



He didn't need to say anything to communicate with us. NBC/Photofest © NBC

of his own series of theatrical short subjects, beginning with the Academy Award-winning *Pink Phink*. The panther continued to star in films until the end of the decade, when he first appeared in a repackaging of the theatrical films as a television series. This proved popular enough to endure in various forms across the 1970s, with the panther gradually being joined by other theatrical series characters from the DePatie-Freleng archives, who filled out the bill without upstaging him in the least. In 1978, a series of newly produced episodes of the panther aired, where he was paired with a new character, Crazylegs Crane, which kept the quality of the series high. This was not the case when Hanna-Barbera revived the panther as a paternal figure in *Pink Panther and Sons*; he took a backseat here to his offspring Pinky, Panky, and Punky. He continued to star in the odd television special during this time, as well.

The 1993 series was a more ambitious revival, though it departed from tradition by giving the panther a speaking voice, which caused a slight decline in his appeal. But that was the main deficit; the program as a whole was well-produced, and the producers of this series, in their revival of vintage DePatie-Freleng characters and creation of new ones, managed the rare feat of occasionally improving on their source material.

PINKY AND THE BRAIN/PINKY, ELMYRA, AND THE BRAIN (1995–1999)

STUDIOS: Amblin, Warner Brothers

DISTRIBUTOR: WB

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Steven Spielberg

PRODUCERS: Tom Ruegger, Rich Arons, Peter Hastings, Rusty Mills, Sherri Stoner, Liz Holzman, Charles Howell IV, John McCann

DIRECTORS: Al Zegler, Russell Calabrese, Robert Davies, Nelson Recindos, Audu Paden, Charles Visser, Dave Marshall, Gary Hartle, Jon McClenahan, Kirk Tingblad, Liz Holzman, Mike Milo, Rusty Mills

WRITERS INCLUDED: Charles Howell IV, Peter Hastings, John McCann

VOICE ACTORS: Rob Paulsen (Pinky), Maurice LaMarche (The Brain), Cree Summer (Elmyra), Nancy Cartwright (Rudy Mookich)

SYNOPSIS: Two laboratory mice from ACME Labs—one a genius, the other a Cockney-accented moron—repeatedly scheme to take over the world, with frequently disastrous results.

COMMENTARY: Beginning as a segment of *Animaniacs* (q.v.), this project was one of the more memorable productions of the decade, with a formula that, though glaringly predictable at times, never failed to entertain. In the later years of its original format, it became even more ambitious in nature, going as far as half-hours, which, while successful on an episode-to-episode basis, began to make the format repetitious and tiresome. However, an abrupt change in setting—with the characters oddly paired with Elmyra of *Tiny Toon Adventures* (q.v.) fame—completely removed all the innovation from the project, and it soon expired. The series' final go-round was as part of *The Cat and Birdy Warnertoone Pinky Brainy Big Cartoonie Show*, a rerun omnibus that aired on WB during the early months of 2000.

**One is a genius; the other's insane.
Guess who. WB/Photofest © WB**



PINKY DINKY DOO (2006–2011)

STUDIOS: Jumbo, Sesame Workshop, Cartoon Pizza, Abrams Gentile, Keyframe, AFN Family

DISTRIBUTORS: Nickelodeon, HBO

CREATOR: Jim Jenkins

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: India Ennenga (Pinky Dinky Doo), Felix Chrome (Tyler Dinky Doo, early episodes), Allison Wachtfogel (Tyler Dinky Doo, later episodes), Juan Van Michelangelo (Mr. Guinea Pig, early episodes), John Rogers (Mr. Guinea Pig, later episodes), Heather Dilly (Mrs. Dinky Doo, early episodes), Lindsie Van Winkle (Mrs. Dinky Doo, later episodes), Jim Jenkins (Mr. Dinky Doo), Katherine Rose Riley (Nicholas Biscuit, early episodes), Thomas Sharkey (Nicholas Biscuit, later episodes), Carolina Hernandez (Daffnee Toilette, early episodes), Anabelle Derrido (Daffnee Toilette, later episodes), Anne Stinkley (Ms. McGanza)

SYNOPSIS: A young girl named Pinky solves problems by constructing stories in her Story Box.

COMMENTARY: Jenkins, who had previously created and produced such series as *Doug* (q.v.) and *Jojo's Circus* (q.v.), turned his attention to preschoolers with this project, based on his long-running book series. The program had a set educational mandate focusing on the teaching of literacy, and consequently, any narrative elements that did not focus on this mandate were excluded—as were audience members not part of the show's target audience.

PINKY, ELMYRA, AND THE BRAIN (1995–1999)

See *Pinky and the Brain*/*Pinky, Elmyra, and the Brain* (1995–1999).

PIPPY LONGSTOCKING (1998–1999)

STUDIOS: Nelvana, Svensk Filmindustri, TFC Trickompany, Taurus Film

DISTRIBUTOR: HBO (United States)

CREATOR: Astrid Lindgren

PRODUCERS: Michael Hirsh, Patrick Loubert, Michael Shaack, Clive Smith, Lennart Wiklund

DIRECTORS: Clive Smith, Paul Riley, Peter Bohl, Florentino Gopez

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Melissa Altro (Pippi Longstocking), Richard Binsley (Mr. Nils-son), Noah Reed (Tommy Settergren), Olivia Garrett (Anika Settergren), Ben Campbell (Captain Efraim Longstocking), William Colgate (Eriksson), John McGrath (Puppet), Catherine O'Hara (Mrs. Prysselius, early episodes), Jill Frappier (Mrs. Prysselius, later episodes), Ray Landry (Mr. Settergren), Karen Bernstein (Mrs. Settergren), Len Carlson (Thunder Karlsson), Wayne Robson (Bloom), Rick Jones (Constable Kling), Philip Williams (Constable Klang), Chris Wiggins (Fridolf)

SYNOPSIS: Superstrong, independently wealthy, world-traveling orphan Pippi Longstocking acts in an eccentric manner that unnerves friends and foes alike.

COMMENTARY: A legendary figure in the history of children's literature got a fitting vehicle for her talents in this series, which accurately conveyed the particular charm and hyperbole that creator Lindgren and original illustrator Louis Glanzman installed in her and avoided some of the pitfalls evident in earlier attempts to depict her as a live-action figure. This series was a follow-up to a theatrical feature film produced by the same production team in 1997, which failed commercially. The program avoided some of the flaws of the film, including the elaborate musical numbers, and focused more succinctly on the kind of innocent mischief and merriment both Pippi and Lindgren were best known for.

THE PIRATES OF DARK WATER (1991–1992)

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, Fil-Cartoons, Tama

DISTRIBUTORS: Syndicated (as *Dark Water*; 1991), ABC (1991–1992)

CREATOR: David Kirschner

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: David Kirschner, Paul Sabella, Mark Young

PRODUCER: Joey Dorman

DIRECTOR: Don Lusk

WRITERS INCLUDED: Kristina Luckey, Laren Bright

VOICE ACTORS: George Newbern (Ren), Tim Curry (Konk), Peter Cullen (Mantus), Jodi Benson (Tula), Frank Welker (Nidder), Brock Peters (Blot), Jessica Walter (Queen), Hector Elizondo (Ioz), Jim Cummings (Skorian), Earl Boen (Lugg Brother), Rene Auberjonois (Kangent), Paul Williams (Garen)

SYNOPSIS: Ren, Prince of Octopon, works to protect his kingdom and the entire water-bound planet of Mer from consumption by the evil entity known as Dark Water.

COMMENTARY: A highly ambitious series with an extensive backstory, much better production values than was typically the case for television animation at this time, and an unmistakable proecology sentiment in its narrative. However, despite gaining a strong core base of teen and even adult fans, the program had the misfortune to air on a programmer that seemed to think young children were the only ones watching TV on Saturday morning, and these people weren't watching it. Consequently, the series ended, and creator Kirschner was soon afterward fired by Hanna-Barbera.

THE PJS (1999–2001)

STUDIOS: Eddie Murphy, Will Vinton, Imagine, Touchstone

DISTRIBUTORS: FOX (1999–2000), WB (2000–2001)

CREATORS: Eddie Murphy, Steve Tompkins, Larry Wilmore

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Eddie Murphy, Ron Howard, Will Vinton, Steve Tompkins, Larry Wilmore, Brian Grazer, Tony Krantz, Tom Turpin

PRODUCERS: Bill Freiburger, David Flebotte, Mary Sandell, David Bleman, Michael Price, J. Michael Mendel

DIRECTORS: Lyndon Barrios, Kyle Bell, Sean Burns, Mike Dietz, Mark Gustafson, Paul Harrod, Ric Heitzman, Mike Johnson, John Logue, Marv Newland, John Payson, Mike Wellins, Chel White

WRITERS INCLUDED: Ron Corcillo, Jonathan Goldstein, Michael Price, Maiya Williams, Terrence Winter, Janine Sherman

VOICE ACTORS: Eddie Murphy (Thurgood Stubbs), Phil Morris (Thurgood Stubbs, occasional episodes), Loretta Devine (Muriel Stubbs), Ja'net DuBois (Mrs. Avery), Crystal Scales (Calvin Banks), Michele Morgan (Juicy Hudson), Michael Chan (Jimmy Ho), Jenifer Lewis (Bebe Ho), Pepe Serna (Sanchez), Cheryl Francis Harrington (Mambo Garcelle, a.k.a. Haiti Lady), Shawn Howard (Smokey), James Black (Tarnell), Cassi Davis (HUD Woman), Marc Wilmore (Walter), Kevin Michael Richardson (Papa Hudson/Jamaican)

SYNOPSIS: Thurgood Stubbs, the cantankerous building superintendent of the Hilton-Jacobs housing projects, is frequently brought into situations that bring out his profanity-laced temper.

COMMENTARY: A series clearly drawn out of an African American social and political aesthetic, as per the other film and television projects involving creator/executive producer/star Murphy, paired with a new production method from Claymation master Vinton, here working with characters made from plastic foam rather than clay. Consequently, some aspects of the subject matter, as well as the production method, were unique for television animation of the period. The production was well-received in some quarters (it won two Emmys, one for DuBois's performance as an elderly thorn in Thurgood's side), but many others criticized it for the senseless and needless propagation of negative African American stereotypes.

***PLANET SHEEN* (2010–2013)**

STUDIOS: Omaton, Nickelodeon

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

CREATORS: Keith Alcorn, Steve Oedekerk

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Keith Alcorn, Steve Oedekerk, Jim Hope

PRODUCER: Paul Marshall

DIRECTOR: Mike Gasaway, Todd Grimes, Keith Alcorn, Bert Ring, Tom Morgan, T. J. Sullivan, Jeff Allen, Ken Mitchroney, Chad Van Der Keere, Francisco Avalos, Craig George, Ian Freedman

WRITERS: Jim Hope, Steven Banks, Sean Presant, Allen Jay Zipper, Jeff Goode, Keith Alcorn, Sindy Boveda Speckman, John Morey, Philip Vaughn

VOICE ACTORS: Jeff Garcia (Sheen Estevez), Bob Joles (Mr. Nesmith), Rob Paulsen (Doppy Dopweiler), Fred Tatasciore (Emperor), Candi Milo (Princess Oom), Soleil Moon Frye (Aseefa), Jeff Bennett (Dorkus Aurelius/Bobb), Thomas Lennon (Pinter)

SYNOPSIS: After sneaking into and flying his friend Jimmy Neutron's rocket, Sheen Estevez crash-lands on the planet Zeenu and becomes a confidant of the planet's emperor.

COMMENTARY: A spin-off of *The Adventures of Jimmy Neutron, Boy Genius* (q.v.) that lamely tried to get some more life out of the former's CGI graphics and poor plotting and characterization in a new setting. The producers would have been better off trying something entirely new rather than borrowing so many elements of a prior project that didn't entirely work and inventing a scenario and setting that did not entirely originate with them.

THE PLASTICMAN COMEDY-ADVENTURE SHOW (AND RELATED SERIES)

The Plasticman Comedy-Adventure Show (1979–1980)

STUDIOS: Ruby-Spears, DC Comics

DISTRIBUTORS: ABC (1979–1980), CBS (1983–1984)

CREATOR: Jack Cole (*Plastic Man*)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Joe Ruby, Ken Spears

PRODUCER: Jerry Eisenberg

DIRECTORS: Charles Nichols, Rudy Larriva, John Kimball, Manny Perez

WRITERS INCLUDED: Mark Jones, Elana Lesser, Cliff Ruby

VOICE ACTORS: Michael Bell (Plastic Man/Baby Plas), Melendy Britt (Penny/Chief), Joe Baker (Hoola Hoola), Peter Cullen (Mighty Man/Brandon Brucesty), Frank Welker (Yukk/Biff), Al Fann (Rickety Rocket), Bobby Ellerbe (Cosgrove), Dee Timberlake (Venus), Johnny Brown (Splashdown), John Bailey (Sunstroke), Jerry Dexter (Fangface/Fangpuss), Susan Blu (Kim), Bart Braverman (Puggsy)

The Plasticman/Baby Plas Super Comedy (1980–1981)

STUDIOS: Ruby-Spears, DC Comics

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATOR: Jack Cole (*Plastic Man*)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Joe Ruby, Ken Spears

PRODUCER: Jerry Eisenberg

DIRECTORS: Charles Nichols, Rudy Larriva, John Kimball, Manny Perez

WRITERS INCLUDED: Mark Jones, Elana Lesser, Cliff Ruby

VOICE ACTORS: Michael Bell (Plastic Man/Baby Plas), Melendy Britt (Penny/Chief), Joe Baker (Hoola Hoola)

SYNOPSIS: Criminal Eel O'Brien, after being exposed to a vat of acid, is able to contort his body into a variety of forms. He forsakes crime and becomes a costumed fighter for justice under the name of Plastic Man.

COMMENTARY: Artist/writer Cole created Plastic Man via the above scenario for *Police Comics* in 1941 and kept Plas going for most of the decade following; he was later revived less successfully, minus Cole, several times by DC, who inherited his copyright. The fact that Cole's work emphasized comedy as much as superheroics, with the hero's various manipulations of his body played for comic effect, attracted producers Ruby and Spears, as they wanted to produce a superhero series at a time when network antiviolence regulations kept many superheroes off the air. In this project, Plastic Man was assisted by a southern girl named Penny and Hoola Hoola, a Hawaiian man modeled on Lou Costello of Abbott and Costello (see *Abbott and Costello*) fame, as they were dispatched on missions by a woman known only as the chief. The one-hour series featured several supporting components, including *Mighty Man* and *Yukk*, respectively a diminutive superhero and the world's ugliest dog (who kept his face hidden by a miniature doghouse placed over his head); *Rickety Rocket*, a teenage intergalactic African American boy and his associates; and, resurrecting an earlier Ruby-Spears series, *Fangface* and

Fangpuss (see *Fangface* for more details on this project). Interspersed with this were the then-mandatory PSAs delivered by the star, which focused on consumer safety.

After one season, the supporting features were dropped, as the program contracted to a half-hour. This time, Plastic Man and Penny were married and the parents of a child predictably named Baby Plas, who also predictably had his father's abilities (the child starred in his own supporting segment). This lasted for another 13 episodes. The program was rerun on CBS during 1983–1984 and then entered syndication. Unlike other instances of network-to-syndication transition, no new animation material was produced, but it did feature linking live-action material of an actor dressed as Plastic Man serving as the host figure. Ironically, the program proved to be more popular and durable in this format than it was as a network feature.

POCKET DRAGON ADVENTURES (1998)

STUDIOS: DIC/D'Ocon Film, WolfMill, Bohbot

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

CREATOR: Real Musgrave

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Antoni D'Ocon, Craig Miller, Marv Wolfman, Kaaren Brown, Andy Heyward, Robby London, Michael Maliani

PRODUCER/DIRECTOR: Kurt Weldon

WRITERS INCLUDED: Marv Wolfman, Craig Miller, William Ruiz, Patrick Boylan

VOICE ACTORS: Ian Corlett (Filbert), Jason Stanford (Zoom Zoom), Samuel Vincent (Specs), Kathleen Barr (Scribbles), Tabitha St. Germain (Binky), Robert Smith (Sparkles), Terry Klassen (Cuddles, early episodes), Venus Terzo (Cuddles, later episodes), Christopher Gaze (Wizard), Saffron Henderson (Princess Betty Bye Bell)

SYNOPSIS: A group of tiny dragons undergo adventures through which they learn important prosocial messages.

COMMENTARY: A thin project based on the work of Texas-based cartoonist Musgrave via a computer game project from Ubisoft. While executive producer/writer Wolfman insisted the producers had an "incredible amount" of "freedom" in working on the series, those responsible for the game also spent much time hawkishly monitoring the series to make sure it conformed to their vision. This would have mattered much more if the 52-episode series had actually been successful critically and commercially, but it was neither.

POLE POSITION (1984–1986)

STUDIOS: DIC, Namco, LBS

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Andy Heyward, Jean Chalopin

PRODUCERS: Mitsuru Kaneko, Koichi Ishiguto

DIRECTOR: Bernard Deyries

WRITERS: Marc Scott Zicree, Chuck Lorre, Ted Pederson, Rowby Goren, Michael Reaves

VOICE ACTORS: David Coburn (Dan Darret), Lisa Lindgren (Tess Darret), Kaleena Kiff (Daisy Darret), Marilyn Scheffler (Kuma), Darryl Hickman (Roadie), Jack Angel (Dr. Zachary Darret), Mel Franklyn (Wheels), Helen Minniear (Teacher)

SYNOPSIS: After their parents are killed in a suspicious accident, the Darret siblings are left with the task of running the Pole Position Stunt Show, headlined by the computerized cars Roadie and Wheels, while engaging in crime-fighting at the behest of their uncle Dr. Zachary.

COMMENTARY: The backstory had been done previously by Hanna-Barbera's *Devlin* (q.v.), while humanoid automobiles was done better elsewhere, as well, notably by *Knight Rider*. About the only thing truly original about this hackneyed property was the Darrets' pet, a creature named Kuma, who was some sort of bizarre cat-monkey hybrid. The project originated in a video game from Namco and predictably departed little from this source without improving on it.

POLICE ACADEMY (1988)

STUDIOS: Ruby Spears, Warner Brothers

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

CREATORS: Neal Israel and Pat Proft

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Paul Maslansky, Joe Ruby, Ken Spears

PRODUCER: Larry Huber

DIRECTORS: Charles Nichols, Cosmo Anzilotti, Bill Hutten, Tony Love

WRITERS INCLUDED: Michael Maurer, Dorothy Middleton, Jack Mendelsohn

VOICE ACTORS: Ron Rubin (Mahoney), Charles Gray (Hightower, early episodes), Greg Morton (Hightower, later episodes/Jones), Denise Pidgeon (Hooks/Callahan), Dan Hennessey (Zed/Tackleberry), Len Carlson (Captain Harris), Howard Morris (Sweetchuck/Professor), Greg Swanson (Proctor), Gary Crawford (Commandant Lassard), Dorian Clark (House)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: The original *Police Academy* movie, released in 1984, was an unlikely source for a television animation adaptation. Produced by Maslansky, with a script by Israel, Proft, and director Hugh Wilson, the film focused on the process by which a group of unlikely recruits became officers of a police force in an unnamed city. The premise, as innocent as it sounds, was simply a pretext to indulge in the excessive R-rated comedy of the kind that dominated mainstream cinema in the 1980s—and, to a certain extent, now. The film's commercial success led to a sequel being made and then another and then another and so on, with a total of seven being produced between 1984 and 1994. A later live-action series adaptation in 1997 was less successful. Regardless, when the R-rated elements were pruned, you had the kind of slapstick comedy that appealed to children, so this animated adaptation played it clean to appeal to this demographic. The core group of characters from the films made a largely successful transition to animation, although none of the actors who played them in the live films made the transition. Not that this would have made much of a difference. Aside from the presence of a few stereotypical overacting supervillains in the cast, there wasn't much new ground for these cops to investigate—and not much new ground that hadn't been investigated by previous crimefighters, as well.

***POOCHINI* (1999–2001)**

STUDIOS: Wild Brain, EM-TV

DISTRIBUTORS: WB, Syndicated (2002)

CREATORS/PRODUCERS/DIRECTORS: Dave Thomas, Dave Marshall

WRITERS INCLUDED: Jim Gomez

VOICE ACTORS: Billy West (Poochini/Walter White/Mr. Garvey/Lockjaw), Dee Bradley Baker (Billy White/Knucklehead/Bunk), Leslie Carrara (Wendy White), Maurice LaMarche (Dirt)

SYNOPSIS: When his wealthy original master dies, Poochini the dog is sent to a pound, only to be adopted and made a pet again by the White family.

COMMENTARY: A culture-clash comedy that dealt largely with the title character having to adjust to a vastly changed lifestyle and circumstances. What was perhaps most notable about the program was that the characters and backgrounds were designed by Maurice Noble, the artist best known for his long and fertile collaboration with director Chuck Jones at Warner Brothers, though it did little to distinguish this particular production. Another interesting element was that some episodes contained some mildly risqué jokes that distributors could either cut or keep in as they wished.

***POPEYE* (AND RELATED SERIES)**

Note: This entry concerns only the made-for-television adventures of the character and does not include repackagings of the theatrical films that preceded them.

***Popeye the Sailor* (1960)**

STUDIO: King Features

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

CREATOR: Elzie Crisler Segar

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Al Brodax

PRODUCERS: Larry Harmon, William Snyder, Gerald Ray

DIRECTORS: Jack Kinney, Paul Fennell, Seymour Kneitel, Gene Deitch

WRITERS: Jack Mercer, Carl Meyer, Henry Lee, Ed Nofzinger, Al Bertino, Dick Kinney, Ralph Wright, Joe Grant, Milt Schaefer

VOICE ACTORS: Jack Mercer (Popeye/Wimpy/Rough House), Mae Questel (Olive Oyl/Sea Hag/Swee'Pea), Jackson Beck (Brutus/Others)

***The All-New Popeye Hour* (1978–1981)**

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, King Features

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: Alex Lovy, Iwao Takamoto

DIRECTORS: Chris Cuddington, Ray Patterson, Carl Urbano

WRITERS: Larz Bourne, Willie Gilbert, Jack Hanrahan, Jack Mercer, Bob Ogle, Chris Jenkyns, Doug Booth, Tom Dagenais, Don Heckman, Andy Heyward, Mark Jones, Glen Leopold, Kimmer Ringwald, Cliff Roberts, Dalton Sandifer, David Villaire

VOICE ACTORS: Jack Mercer (Popeye), Marilyn Schreffler (Olive Oyl/Sea Hag), Allan Melvin (Bluto), Daws Butler (Wimpy), Frank Welker (Dinky Dog), Frank Nelson (Uncle Dudley), Jackie Joseph (Sandy), Julie Bennett (Monica)

The Popeye and Olive Show (1981–1982)

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, King Features

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: Alex Lovy, Iwao Takamoto

DIRECTORS: Chris Cuddington, Ray Patterson, Carl Urbano

WRITERS: Larz Bourne, Willie Gilbert, Jack Hanrahan, Jack Mercer, Bob Ogle, Chris Jenkyns, Doug Booth, Tom Dagenais, Don Heckman, Andy Heyward, Mark Jones, Glen Leopold, Kimmer Ringwald, Cliff Roberts, Dalton Sandifer, David Villaire

VOICE ACTORS: Jack Mercer (Popeye), Marilyn Schreffler (Olive Oyl/Sea Hag), Allan Melvin (Bluto), Daws Butler (Wimpy), JoAnne Worley (Sergeant Blast), Marilyn Schreffler (Olive Oyl/Sea Hag/Alice the Goon), Hal Smith (Colonel Crumb)

Popeye and Son (1987–1988)

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, King Features

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Maurice LaMarche (Popeye), Marilyn Schreffler (Olive Oyl/Lizzie/Puggy), Allan Melvin (Bluto/Wimpy), Josh Rodine (Popeye Jr.), David Markus (Tank), Penina Segall (Woody), Kaleena Kiff (Dee Dee), Don Messick (Eugene the Jeep)

SYNOPSIS: The adventures of mariner Popeye, who becomes superpowerful upon the consumption of spinach.

COMMENTARY: Popeye made his debut as a supporting figure in the comic strip *Thimble Theatre*, created by Segar, in 1929. Gradually, he became popular enough to take over the leading role in the narrative. In 1933, he was licensed for film adaptation by Max Fleischer and Paramount Pictures and became a popular animated cartoon character, as well. The Paramount series remained in production until 1957, at which point Paramount sold the entire unit for television distribution to Associated Artist Productions, a subsidiary of United Artists. The distribution of these cartoons made Popeye even more popular than he had been before, a virtual TV icon of the baby-boom era. Yet King Features, Popeye's newspaper distributor, wasn't cut in on the profits of the theatrical cartoon package, so they attempted to remedy the situation by producing new animated Popeye cartoons of their own so that they could actually profit from their copyright again.

A series was set to debut in syndication in the fall of 1960, but in order to produce the amount of material needed within the two-year span the deal covered, King Features was forced to subcontract the work to several different animation studios around the world. Involved were Popeye's old home studio, Paramount, as well as Jack Kinney Studios, Rembrandt Films, Larry Harmon Studios, and TV Spots. As a consequence, the quality of the package was extremely uneven, with some material well produced and other installments extremely slipshod. However, their status as a color property gave



TV made him an even bigger star than before. © Photofest

them a leg up on the largely black-and-white theatrical cartoons, so they became a much more valuable commodity.

With the exception of a 1972 special, *Popeye Meets the Man Who Hated Laughter*, Popeye was not seen in a new animated form until 1978, when *The All-New Popeye Hour* debuted. This version necessarily downplayed the aggression and fisticuffs between Popeye and nemesis Bluto/Brutus that had dominated the earlier theatrical and television animation productions due to the excessive censorship of the time, instead focusing on means by which the two outwitted and outperformed each other. To create the full hour of programming needed, some supporting features were added: one not featuring the Popeye crew was *Dinky Dog*, the tale of an oversized, Marmaduke-like dog. This series shrank to a half-hour in 1980 and became *The Popeye and Olive Show*; now included was a prehistoric variant of the main concept, as well as *Private Olive Oyl*, dealing with Olive's adventures as a raw U.S. Army recruit.

In 1987, the most recent animated version of the characters aired in *Popeye and Son*. Here, Popeye and Olive had married and had become the

parents of a nine-year-old namesake boy—who *disliked* spinach! Bluto had likewise married a woman named Lizzie, and they had a son named Tank, who became Popeye Jr.'s nemesis—thus extending the Popeye–Bluto feud to another generation.

It should be noted that none of these more recent animated versions has anything near the sparkle and vitality of the original Max Fleischer-produced Paramount Popeye cartoons of the 1930s and 1940s, which remain the definitive animated version of the character and are still worth seeking out and watching wherever it is they may be found today.

POPPLS (1986)

STUDIOS: DIC, Those Characters from Cleveland

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Andy Heyward, Jean Chalopin, Tetsuo Katayama

PRODUCERS: Sangburn Kim, Kenneth Duer

DIRECTORS: Masakazu Higuchi, James Simon, Katsumi Takasuga, Osamu Inoue

WRITERS: Jack Mendelsohn, Bob Logan, Jack Hanrahan, Eleanor Burian Mohr, George Edwards, Jody Miles Connor, Jina Bacarr, Sharman DiVono, Sheree Guitart, Jack Olesker, Daniel Pitlik, Roger Scott, Michael Warren, Linda Woolverton

VOICE ACTORS: Valri Bromfield (Bonnie/Billy/Mike), Donna Christie (Potato Chip), Jeannie Elias (Penny), Danny Mann (Punkster/Putter), Sharon Noble (Pancake), Louise Vallance (Party/Punkity/Prize/Puffball), Maurice LaMarche (Puzzle)

SYNOPSIS: The Popples are beings made of fur able to contract into small balls; they make a popping sound as their bodies expand to full size.

COMMENTARY: A toy brand tie-in, built on the same lines as Those Characters from Cleveland's earlier *Care Bears* (q.v.). The episodes predictably involved how the creatures disrupted the lives of their human child friends Bonnie and Billy, mostly in positive ways. The Popples were extremely resourceful, being able to pull unlikely objects and items out of their bodies at random to facilitate their mobility in the world of human beings. When that failed them, they would appeal to the children in the audience to provide assistance, represented by a small animated hand giving them what they needed.

The program aired as a segment of DIC's syndicated omnibus *Kideo TV* (q.v.).

POP-UPS (1971)

STUDIO: Educational Solutions

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

PRODUCER: Paul Klein

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: A series of one-minute vignettes designed to encourage reading among young children, which aired as drop-in elements of NBC's Saturday-morning lineup during 1971.

POUND PUPPIES (AND RELATED SERIES)

Pound Puppies (1986–1987)

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, Tonka

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: Kay Wright, Berny Wolf, Lynn Hoag

DIRECTORS: Ray Patterson, Art Davis, Don Lusk, Carl Urbano, Rudy Zamora, Jay Sarbry, Frank Andrina, Oliver Callahan, Joan Drake, Bob Goe, Rick Leon, Don Patterson, Joanna Romersa, Paul Sommer, Tim Walker

WRITERS INCLUDED: Tom Ruegger, Charles Howell IV, Dale Barnhardt, Ric Estrada, Michael Kim, Art Leonardi, Jim Shull, Valerie Ventura, Jack White

VOICE ACTORS: Dan Gilvezan (Cooler), Ruth Buzzi (Nose Marie), Robert Morse (Howler), Nancy Cartwright (Bright Eyes), B. J. Ward (Whopper), Ame Foster (Holly), Pat Carroll (Katrina Stoneheart), Frank Welker (Dabney Nabbit/Cat Gut), Adrienne Alexander (Brattina Stoneheart), June Lockhart (Millicent Trueblood)

All-New Pound Puppies (1987–1988)

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, Tonka

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: Kay Wright, Berny Wolf, Lynn Hoag

DIRECTORS: Ray Patterson, Art Davis, Don Lusk, Carl Urbano, Rudy Zamora, Jay Sarbry, Frank Andrina, Oliver Callahan, Joan Drake, Bob Goe, Rick Leon, Don Patterson, Joanna Romersa, Paul Sommer, Tim Walker

WRITERS INCLUDED: Tom Ruegger, Charles Howell IV, Dale Barnhardt, Ric Estrada, Michael Kim, Art Leonardi, Jim Shull, Valerie Ventura, Jack White

VOICE ACTORS: Dan Gilvezan (Cooler), Ruth Buzzi (Nose Marie), Robert Morse (Howler), Nancy Cartwright (Bright Eyes), B. J. Ward (Whopper), Ame Foster (Holly), Pat Carroll (Katrina Stoneheart), Frank Welker (Dabney Nabbit/Cat Gut), Adrienne Alexander (Brattina Stoneheart), June Lockhart (Millicent Trueblood)

Pound Puppies (2010–2013)

STUDIOS: DHX Media, 9 Story, Hasbro

DISTRIBUTOR: The Hub

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Paul Germain, Bart Jennett

PRODUCERS: Alfred Gimeno, Elana Adair

DIRECTORS: Richard Weston, Greg Sullivan, Jos Humphrey, Tim Stuby

WRITERS: Paul Germain, Joe Ansolabehere, Bart Jennett, Mark Drop, Rachel Libman, Eric Trueheart, Rich Fogel, Billiam Coronel, Julie Selbo, Silvia Olivas, Steven Tsepelas, Tony Infante, Mike Ferris, Nancy Steingard, Peter Hannan, Janna King, Alan Hanson, Evan Gore, Merriwether Williams, Chelsea Meyer, Rich Whitely, Stephen Cedars, Temple Matthews, Phil Walsh, Eric Shaw, Benji Kleiman, Sib Ventress, Jon Rosenthal, Jos Humphrey, Joe Purdy, Lisa Melbye, Jean Ansolabehere

VOICE ACTORS: Eric McCormack (Lucky/Ace), Yvette Nicole Brown (Cookie/Fluffy), John DiMaggio (Niblet), Alanna Ubach (Strudel), Michael Rapaport (Squirt), Brooke Goldner (Rebound), Cree Summer (Cupcake), Jessica DiCicco (Patches), Rene Auberjonois (Leonard McLeish), M. Emmet Walsh (Olaf Hugglesbjork), Betty White (Agatha McLeish), Jim Parsons (Milton Feldwaddle), Dabney Coleman (Mayor Jerry, early episodes), John Larroquette (Mayor Jerry, later episodes), Grey DeLisle (Dot Henderson), Jeff Bennett (Claudio), George Takei (Mr. Julius), E.G. Daily (Dolly), Fred Stoller (Ralph), Jennifer Carpenter (Pepper), Lauren Tom (Agent Ping)

SYNOPSIS: Clandestinely, the dogs of a local animal shelter work to match abandoned members of their kind with kindly masters and mistresses.

COMMENTARY: Based on a long-lived toy line, the two animated versions of this property reflected the creative and structural states of the art of their times. The original series was based on an hour-long television special produced by Hanna-Barbera in 1985, though that project's escape-from-the-pound theme was discarded when it became a series. In this version, the characters were aided by humans with Puppy Power, a second-sight-like ability that allowed them to speak to the dogs conveniently in perfect English—and vice versa. This did not extend to the villains—all aptly named—though much trouble might have been avoided had that been the case. The comedy component was well handled here, given that some of the writers later went on to produce *Tiny Toon Adventures* (q.v.) and *Animaniacs* (q.v.), both later overseen by Ruegger.

While the concept remained the same for the 2010 revival, everything else was not. The somewhat-ad-hoc nature of the original operation was replaced with a stodgy military professionalism, typified by everybody taking things a lot more seriously than they really merited. There was also less outright villainy among the human characters—shelter manager McLeish, custodian Hugglesbjork, politician Feldwaddle, and animal control officer Ketchum (who did not speak) were played more for laughs than as genuine threats. The central characters were also assisted by a junior puppy unit and by a team of cats who performed the same operations and functions as the dogs for their species. As with many series that were based on outside sources, it filled time adequately but was nothing special.

THE POWERPUFF GIRLS

The Powerpuff Girls (1998–2005)

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, Cartoon Network

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATOR/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Craig McCracken

PRODUCERS: Genndy Tartakovsky, Chris Savino

DIRECTORS: Craig McCracken, Genndy Tartakovsky, John McIntyre, Randy Myers, Robert Alvarez, Rob Renzetti, Chris Savino, Brian Larsen

WRITERS: Craig McCracken, Don Shank, Chris Savino, Cindy Banks, Kevin Kallher, Dan Krall, David Smith, Michael Stern, Paul Rudish, John McIntyre, Clayton Morrow, Cindy Morrow, Rob Renzetti, Genndy Tartakovsky,

Charlie Bean, Lynne Naylor Reccardi, Lou Romano, Chris Reccardi, Steven Fonti, Lauren Faust, Mark Andrews, Shellie Kvilvang, Chris Mitchell, Dave Dunnet, Justin Thompson, Carey Yost, Paul McEvoy, Mark O'Hare, Alex Almaguer, Greg Colton, Brian Larsen, Mike Bell, Tim Parsons, Bobby London, Mike Kim, Bryan Andrews, Craig Lewis, Amy Keating Rogers, Thurop Van Orman, Ken Allen, Mucci Fassett, Jason Butler Rote

VOICE ACTORS: Cathy Cavadini (Blossom), Tara Strong (Bubbles), E. G. Daily (Buttercup), Tom Kane (Professor Utonium/Talking Dog/Him), Tom Kenny (Mayor of Townsville/Narrator/Mitch Mitchelson/Snake/Lil' Arturo), Jennifer Martin (Ms. Sara Bellum), Jennifer Hale (Ms. Keane/Princess Morbucks/Sedusa), Roger Jackson (Mojo Jojo/Butch), Jim Cummings (Fuzzy Lumpkins), Jeff Bennett (Ace/Grubber/Big Billy), Chuck McCann (Amoeba Boys), Rob Paulsen (Boomer/Brick)

The Powerpuff Girls (2016–present)

STUDIO: Cartoon Network

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATOR: Craig McCracken

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Nick Jennings, Bob Boyle

PRODUCER: Pernelle Hayes

DIRECTORS INCLUDE: Nick Jennings, Bob Boyle, July "Fitzy" Fitzmaurice, Abe Audish

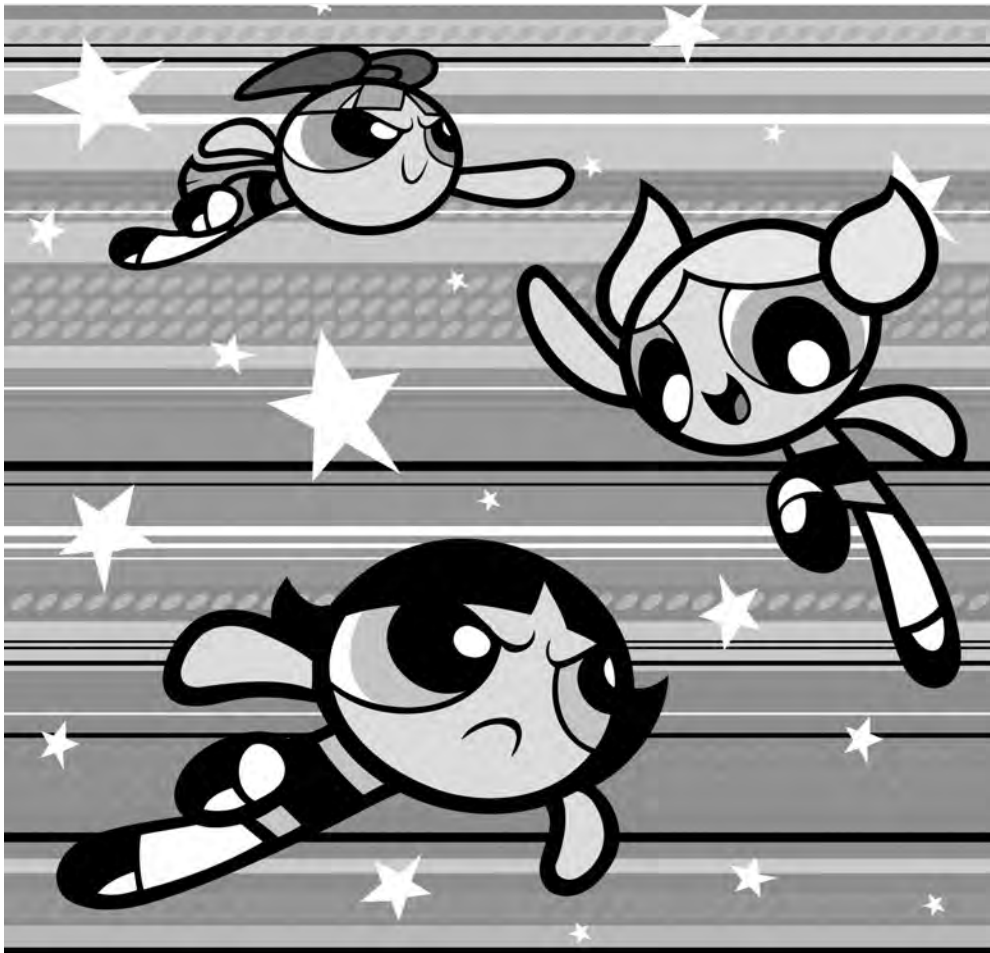
WRITERS INCLUDE: Jaydeep Hasrajani, Grace Kraft, Haley Mancini, Jake Goldman, Kyle Neswald, Benjamin Carow, Julia Vickerman, Diego Molano, Emily Brundige, Steve Szlaga, Vi Nguyen, Patrick McEowen, Leticia Abreu Silva, Alicia Chan, Roque Ballesteros, Kenn Navaro, Udomphorn Rau, Corrine Wong, Clara Yan, Joshua Zinman, Gina Ippolito, Andreas Schuster, Sergio Cilli, Heather Martinez, Hilary Florido, Phil Allora, Scott Bern, Gleb Sanchez Lobashov, Corey Booth, Cheyenne Curtis

VOICE ACTORS: Amanda Leighton (Blossom), Kristen Li (Bubbles), Natalie Palamides (Buttercup/Barbarus Bikini), Tom Kane (Professor Utonium/Him), Tom Kenny (Mayor of Townsville/Narrator), Jennifer Hale (Ms. Sara Bellum/Ms. Keane), Roger Jackson (Mojo Jojo), Jim Cummings (Fuzzy Lumpkins), Haley Mancini (Princess Morbucks), Jeff Bennett (Ace/Janitaur), Chuck McCann (Amoeba Boys), Jason Spisak (The Pack Rat/Silico), Eric Bauza (Allegro), Maurice LaMarche (Man-Boy), Lily Vonnegut (Bianca Bikini)

SYNOPSIS: Preteen superheroines Blossom, Bubbles, and Buttercup constantly have their hands full defending the city of Townsville from a wide variety of supervillains, criminals, monsters, aliens, and supernaturally powered beings.

COMMENTARY: Television animation has relatively few series that can legitimately be considered masterpieces. This brilliantly staged, technically inventive, and slyly humorous series is one of them.

Creator McCracken developed the trio at the center of the program while a student at California Institute of the Arts. After joining Hanna-Barbera as a staffer, in tandem with classmate Tartakovsky, he pitched the series to the company as part of the *What a Cartoon!* (see *World Premiere Toons*) omnibus. Two pilot films aired as part of the series, but full development as



The endearing stars of a brilliant series—before it was remade. Warner Brothers Pictures/Photofest © Warner Brothers Pictures

a series did not commence until production had concluded on Tartakovsky's *Dexter's Laboratory* (q.v.), to which McCracken had contributed. The same unit involved in *Dexter* produced the early *Powerpuff* installments, allowing McCracken and Tartakovsky to exchange production positions while continuing the partnership established on the early series.

However, this was very much McCracken's series, in the same way *Dexter* had been Tartakovsky's. This was established at the outset by a much more ambitious creative agenda, with fluid, galvanic, and cinematic animation and cinematography and finely honed character and background design wedded to an elastic structure to which any sort of story line, from epic to mundane, that the writers could think of could be used. Unlike many of his predecessors in the production and development of superheroics in television animation, McCracken was not afraid to pull his punches or give either his heroes or his villains any easy wins or unrealistic aid. He understood the

good and bad elements of the superhero genre much better than his predecessors, emphasizing the positive ones while making the negative ones grist for the humor mill. His personal touch in the production process was felt by the manner in which he personally made revisions to tabled ideas if he was not satisfied with them, a rarity in the increasingly laissez-faire manner in which television animation was written at that time. As a consequence, the series was, unlike so many others, animated in the literal as well as figurative sense. You almost felt the impact of thrown punches on your own body, so vividly constructed was the program's action.

Perhaps even more notable, and a much more enduring historical legacy for television animation, was the program's strident feminism, embodied in its heroines and, less positively, in not a few of its villains as well. The superhero subgenre, from its earliest days in comic books, had often been driven by a corrosive type of chauvinistic masculinity that, purposefully or not, excluded and marginalized women and girls, with only nominal exceptions. Certainly, television animation had played by that rule of thumb before this series but not after. While the trend toward openly feminist and empowered characters, superpowered and otherwise, had certainly existed prior to *The Powerpuff Girls*, the series' creative and commercial success, coupled with political changes in the outside world, made it impossible for any future television animation series to be produced without at least one empowered female character in the cast of characters—many of whom might likely have cited the girls as an influence on their conduct.

This series was, at the time of its original production, and remains now a landmark production in television animation history, one that reflects the kind of joie de vivre, drama, and humor that television animation can produce when it is at its most thoughtful and creatively unrestrained. Unfortunately, in the second incarnation of this series, the holders of the characters' copyright chose not to leave well enough alone and, instead of honoring this program's memorable and historic achievements, tarnished them.

The remake of *Powerpuff Girls* was one nobody wanted, least of all fans of the original series. Undoubtedly suggested by the major success of *Steven Universe* (q.v.), Cartoon Network raided its copyright archives and put the one show that fit that program's mold from the past back into production into its new standard limited (but not always limiting) 15-minute series format, pointedly not involving the creator and the original voice actors of the star trio (Tara Strong, the previous voice of Bubbles, voiced sorrow online at being recast) to emphasize how new things were going to be. However talented the on- and off-screen talent involved was and is, they faced a Sisyphean task trying to produce a new and improved version of something that was already a proven success and did not need to be improved upon, and this will forever taint the second version of the series. Granted, some aspects of this version are different—the girls are slightly older, they now attend elementary school rather than kindergarten, they have some new enemies (as noted in the voice actor credits) to go along with the old ones, and they have a new ally/friend in a unicorn-like pony named Donny. However, these cosmetic changes were not enough to deflect attention from the far less technically and creatively

ambitious writing and direction of this program vis-à-vis its predecessor. This was more than enough not only to remind veteran television animation viewers of the unique personal flair and style that Craig McCracken brings to all of his work but also of the sad ways cartoon characters can wither on the vine once they are permanently separated from the people who originally brought them into the world.

***PRINCESS GWENEVERE AND THE JEWEL RIDERS* (1995)**

STUDIOS: New Frontier, Bohbot

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

CREATOR: Randy Mogell

WRITERS INCLUDED: Katherine Lawrence

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Kerri Butler (Princess Gwenevere); Deborah Allison, John Beach, Laura Dean, Peter Fernandez, Bob Kaliban, Barbara Jean Kearney, Jean Louisa Kelly, Henry Mandell, and Corrine Orr (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: In the land of Avalon, the wizard Merlin empowers holders of magical Enchanted Jewels, led by Princess Gwenevere, to hold the balance between good and evil, the latter represented by the ruthless sorceress Lady Kale.

COMMENTARY: A series aimed at a mainly young female demographic, which was designed chiefly to hock an accompanying toy line from Hasbro. The program aired as a segment of Bohbot's *Amazin' Adventures* (q.v.) syndicated block.

***PRINCESS NATASHA* (2003–2006)**

STUDIO: Animation Collective

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS (2006–2007)

CREATOR: Larry Schwarz

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

SYNOPSIS: Natasha, Princess of Zoravia, while living as an exchange student in the United States, functions secretly as an espionage agent for her country in an effort to thwart her uncle Lubek's plans to seize the throne.

COMMENTARY: An interesting idea that might have worked better in a longer and less serious manner (segments were only between 6 and 12 minutes in length), as the similar but wackier *Star vs. the Forces of Evil* (q.v.) does. First produced for Internet distribution, the property aired on CBS as part of the *KOL Secret Slumber Party* block.

***PROBLEM CHILD* (1993–1996)**

STUDIOS: D'Ocon Film, Universal

DISTRIBUTOR: USA

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Robert Simonds, Scott Alexander, Larry Karaczewski

PRODUCERS: Antoni D'Ocon, Art Leonardi, Kathy Castillo

DIRECTOR: Antoni D'Ocon

WRITERS: John Loy, John Ludin, Wayne Kaatz, Ken Koonce, Mary Jo Ludin, Tom Mankte, Michael Merton

VOICE ACTORS: Gilbert Gottfried (Vice Principal Peabody), Ben Diskin (Junior Healy), E. G. Daily (Cyndi), Jonathan Harris ("Big" Ben Healy), John Kassir

(Yoji/Murph), Mark Taylor ("Little" Ben Healy), Nancy Cartwright (Betsy/Ross), Cree Summer (Spencer), Iona Morris (Miss Hill)

SYNOPSIS: The adventures of budding juvenile delinquent Junior Healy.

COMMENTARY: Loosely based on two live-action films from Universal; Gottfried had also appeared in those films. The program aired without prior fanfare from its studio, largely because it was ill produced and badly conceived. The attempt to justify the behavior of Junior and co-conspirator Cyndi was made by making the adult characters utterly unappealing and unethical—typical was Peabody's threat, in one episode, to employ corporal punishment on a mass scale on his students! Like the films that spawned it, it was worthless and became forgettable as soon as USA stopped running it.

PROJECT G.E.E.K.E.R. (1996–1997)

STUDIO: Columbia

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATOR: Douglas TenNapel

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Douglas TenNapel, Doug Langdale

PRODUCERS: Richard Raynis, Audu Paden, Monique Beatty, Greg Chalekian

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS INCLUDED: Doug Langdale

VOICE ACTORS: Billy West (G.E.E.K.E.R./Others), Cree Summer (Lady MacBeth, a.k.a. Becky/Nanny/Sonny/Others), Charlie Adler (Dr. Maston/Jake Dragon/Gene Damage/Others), Jim Cummings (Mr. Moloch/Will Dragon/Cosmotto/Others), Brad Garrett (Noah/Captain Wormhole), Danny Mann (Redjack), Ed Gilbert (Dinosaur Leader), Jeff Bennett (Larry the Virus), Dee Dee Rescher (Female Junker), Jason Marsden (Kid Dinosaur), Kevin Michael Richardson (Stonebender/Mr. Smiley/Others), Michael Bell (Toxic Moose)

SYNOPSIS: G.E.E.K.E.R., an all-powerful robotic humanoid, struggles to fit into a postapocalyptic humanoid society while on the run in the company of thief Lady MacBeth and anthropomorphic dinosaur Noah.

COMMENTARY: Well produced by the standards of its studio, with TenNapel (now a noted graphic novelist) providing an exceptional setting, as well as a humorous persona for his lead character to dilute dramatic tension. Unfortunately, it debuted at a time that prevented it from fully achieving the audience it deserved (a situation that, sadly, is common in television animation). CBS was in the process of getting out of the Saturday-morning TV business during the year it launched, and consequently the first season of the show was also its last.

PROSTARS (1991–1992)

STUDIO: DIC

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Andy Heyward, Robby London

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Townsend Coleman (Wayne Gretsky), Dave Fennoy (Bo Jackson), Dorian Harewood (Michael Jordan), Susan Silo (Mama), Diana Barrows (Denise)

SYNOPSIS: Superstar athletes Wayne Gretsky, Bo Jackson, and Michael Jordan confront a variety of evil threats with state-of-the-art gadgetry, as well as their athletic skills.

COMMENTARY: Wayne Gretsky was one of the highest-scoring players in the history of the National Hockey League; Michael Jordan was an equally dominant figure in the history of the National Basketball Association; and Vincent “Bo” Jackson achieved success both as a professional football running back and a professional baseball player, as well as a prominent commercial pitchman. At the time this series was conceived, each man was at the height of his career and had a strong following among sports-minded children, much like other real-life sports figures who had been exploited in television animation (see in particular *The Harlem Globetrotters* and *I Am the Greatest: The Adventures of Muhammad Ali*). The program was originally set to air on ESPN and be called *All-Stars*, but the cable channel passed on the series. However, a prominent tie-in with Nike shoes (which Jordan endorsed) remained in place. Despite some humorous touches (one villain was named Clockwork De L’Orange), the program had a foaming-at-the-mouth proecology stance much like *Captain Planet and the Planeteers* (q.v.) before it. The short run of the series, however, was strictly the result of NBC deciding to abandon Saturday-morning TV at the end of its only season.

THE PROUD FAMILY (2001–2005)

STUDIOS: Jambalaya, Disney

DISTRIBUTORS: Disney, ABC

CREATOR: Bruce Smith

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Bruce Smith, Ralph Farquhar, Kurt Albrecht, Willard Carroll, Thomas Wilhite, Calvin Brown Jr.

PRODUCERS: Doreen Spicer, T. Smith III, James West II

DIRECTORS INCLUDED: Mucci Fassett, Douglas McCarthy

WRITERS INCLUDED: Doreen Spicer, Silvia Cardenas Olivas, David Wyatt, Jane Hamil, Dana Hall, Calvin Brown Jr., Michael Carrington, James West II, Jeny Quine, Mark Swinton, T. Smith III, Bruce Smith

VOICE ACTORS: Tommy Davidson (Oscar Proud), Paula Jai Parker (Trudy Proud), Kyla Pratt (Penny Proud), Jo Marie Payton (“Sugar Mama” Proud), Karen Malina White (Dijonay Jones), Tara Strong (BeBe Proud/CeCe Proud/Puff), Soleil Moon Frye (Zoey Howzer), Alisa Reyes (LaCienega Boulevardez), Orlando Brown (Sticky Webb), Cedric the Entertainer (Bobby Proud), Phil LaMarr (Michael Collins), Raquel Lee (Nubia Gross), Kevin Michael Richardson (Dr. Payne), Cree Summer (Peabo), Aries Spears (Wizard Kelly/Lil’ Wiz Kelly), Ron Glass (Smart Baby), Carlos Mencia (Felix Boulevardez), Maria Canals (Sunset Boulevardez), Alvaro Gutteriez (Papi Boulevardez)

SYNOPSIS: Fourteen-year-old African American girl Penny Proud faces the struggles of growing up in the town of Wizville, California.

COMMENTARY: An animated sitcom, often predictable in its plotting and characterization but also with a raw, uninhibited personality that was distinctively African American, in part because it was created and produced by African American people themselves. This gave the program’s characters a degree of depth absent in other, less-successful attempts at making African American animated characters because there was a clear sense of reality as well as fantasy about the show. However, the series’ frequent use of an



It was both their surname and their attitude. Disney Channel/Photofest © Disney Channel

inside style of humor best appreciated chiefly or only by African American viewers, as well as an emphasis on employing dated slapstick with the adult characters (particularly Oscar), limited the show's appeal to those who were obviously and directly considered the target audience—that is, the African American population.

***PUCCA* (2006–2008)**

STUDIOS: Studio B, VOOZ, Disney

DISTRIBUTOR: Disney

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Chris Bartleman, Blair Peters, Michael Lekes, Marc Buhaj

PRODUCERS: Kristen Newlands, Lori Lozinski

DIRECTORS: Lyn Hart, Marion Deane, Dan Hughes, Rob Boutillier, Kenny Park, Jocelan Hilton, Dennis Crawford, Jeff Barker, Tim Packford, Sam To, Corey Evans, Sherwin Macario, Gerry Fournier, Kent Webb, Dan Hughes, Steve Whitehouse, Don Boone, Craig Wilson, Eduardo Soriano, Lazarino Baarde, Louie Escauriga, Leah Waldron, Clio Chiang, Mark Petlock, Glenn Kirkpatrick, Steven Lyons

WRITERS: Jack Monaco, Colin Yardley, Larry Raskin, John Kearns, Jack Alvino, Su Moon, Alain Matz, Mug Erskine Kellie, Shane Simmons, Brian Hartigan, Jack Monaco, Len MacKeigan, Julia Schroeder, Meredith Jennings Offen, Jayson Thiessen, Jamie Mason, Jeff Wastila, Steve Sullivan, Greg Sullivan,

Dallas Parker, Jonathan Groves, Mark Leiren Young, J. Larry Carroll, Doug Molitor, Paul Dawson, Phil Nice, Michael Lahay

VOICE ACTORS: Tabitha St. Germain (Pucca/Ring Ring/Others), Brian Drummond (Garu), Brian Dobson (Uncle Dumpling), Michael Dobson (Ho), Dale "Fish" Wilson (Linguini), Lee Tockar (Abyo/Dada/Policeman Bruce/Tobe), Chantal Strand (Ching), Kathleen Barr (Doga/Sssoso), French Tickner (Santa), Richard Newman (Master Soo), Dave "Squatch" Ward (Muji), Michael Dangerfield (Chang), Bill Mondy (Binggure), Shannon Chan Kent (Jing Jing), Louis Chirillo (Jumong)

SYNOPSIS: Eleven-year-old Korean girl Pucca has a crush on a slightly older young male ninja named Garu.

COMMENTARY: A Canadian-American-South Korean coproduction based on a series of short films created by a consortium in South Korea. The origins of the series may explain why there is virtually no dialogue in the show; instead, the characters tend to communicate in a nonverbal fashion via grunts, growls, giggles, and laughs. It also may explain the fact that it achieved wide popularity in the non-English-speaking world but was widely ignored in North America.

***A PUP NAMED SCOOPY DOO* (1988–1990)**

See *Scooby Doo, Where Are You?* (and related series).

***THE PUPPY'S FURTHER ADVENTURES/ THE PUPPY'S GREAT ADVENTURES* (1983–1984)**

STUDIO: Ruby-Spears

DISTRIBUTORS: ABC (1983–1984), CBS (1986)

CREATOR: Catherine Wooley

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Joe Ruby, Ken Spears

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Billy Jacoby (Petey), Nancy McKeon (Dolly), Michael Bell (Duke/Dash), Peter Cullen (Lucky), Tony O'Dell (Tommy), Josh Rodine (Glyder), Janet Waldo (Mother), John Stephenson (Father)

SYNOPSIS: Petey the puppy, in the company of his canine pals, searches for his lost family.

COMMENTARY: The character and concept were introduced in Wooley's children's book *The Puppy Who Wanted a Boy*, which Ruby-Spears adapted for television as a special in 1978. Three sequels were broadcast between 1979 and 1981, at which point the company, based on the ratings achieved, felt the property merited a series. Unfortunately, while the specials were well produced, the series never matched them in terms of quality because Petey lost a certain amount of his appeal as a weekly series. The scheduling of the show as a lead-in for the dramatically opposite *Scooby Doo* (q.v.) franchise did not help matters, and it soon disappeared in favor of other fare. The CBS broadcasts were reruns.

• Q •

Q. T. HUSH (1960)

STUDIOS: Animation Associates, M and A Alexander, National Television Associates

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTOR: Dallas McKennon (Q. T. Hush)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: The story of a private detective aided by his own shadow, an independent, cigar-smoking entity named Quincy, as well as a deerstalker, hat-wearing dog named Shamus, with the occasional input of Police Chief Muldoon. A color production, the series was produced to air either as a daily five-minute cliff-hanger or a weekly full-length series, depending on what the distributors wished. The majority of them chose the five-minute format, as Chicago's WGN did when it featured it on its airing of UPA's *The Dick Tracy Show* (q.v.).

QUACK PACK (1996–1997)

STUDIO: Disney

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

PRODUCERS: Toby Shelton, Kevin Hopps

DIRECTORS: Toby Shelton, Kurt Anderson

WRITERS INCLUDED: Kevin Campbell, Doug Langdale, Gary Sperling, Karl Geurs

VOICE ACTORS: Tony Anselmo (Donald Duck), Kath Soucie (Daisy Duck, early episodes), April Winchell (Daisy Duck, later episodes), Jeannie Elias (Huey), Pamela Segall (Dewey), E. G. Daily (Louie), Corey Burton (Ludwig Von Drake), Tim Curry (Moltoc), Roger Rose (Kent Powers), Patrick Fraley (Gwumpki)

SYNOPSIS: Donald and Daisy Duck traverse the world as a camera operator and on-camera journalist, respectively, for a television news/documentary series, often accompanied by Donald's nephews Huey, Dewey, and Louie.

COMMENTARY: The last gasp of a formula initiated by *Ducktales* (q.v.), in which Huey, Dewey, and Louie also appeared; they were teenagers in this series rather than young boys. The majority of the elements were just as hand-me-down and shopworn; Anselmo's portrayal of Donald and Burton's of Viennese-accented genius Ludwig Von Drake stood out and redeemed things but only slightly.

QUICK DRAW McGRAW (1959)

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, Columbia

DISTRIBUTORS: Syndicated (1959), CBS (1963–1966)

PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera, Alex Lovy

DIRECTORS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera, Charles Nichols

WRITERS INCLUDED: Warren Foster, Michael Maltese

VOICE ACTORS: Daws Butler (Quick Draw McGraw/Baba Looey/Snuffles/Snooper/Blabber/Augie Doggy/Others), Julie Bennett (Sagebrush Sal), Doug Young (Doggie Daddy), Don Messick (Various characters)

SYNOPSIS: Equine lawman Quick Draw McGraw bumbles his way through a variety of comical adventures. Also featured were the comical detective duo Super Snooper and Blabber Mouse and the canine father and son Augie Doggy and Doggie Daddy.

COMMENTARY: The Hanna-Barbera Studio was at the height of its powers with this hilarious and immensely satisfying program that remains as clever and amusing today as it was when it was first produced. Hanna and Barbera had an excellent showcase for their skill at timing action and staging gags; Foster, Maltese, and the other staff writers created excellent scripts; and Butler never sounded better, particularly as the likable but incredibly dense Quick Draw. Given the increasingly lackluster productions that would come from the studio in the following decades, it was sadly hard to believe that it had once produced superb, well-defined, and highly memorable shows like this one. The comic mind-set of the program's lead feature would be memorably echoed in later programs in the post-1990 era, most successfully in Craig McCracken's *Wander over Yonder* (q.v.).

• R •

***THE RACCOONS* (1985–1992)**

STUDIOS: Gillis-Wiseman, Atkinson Film Arts, CBC

DISTRIBUTOR: Disney (United States)

CREATOR/PRODUCER: Kevin Gillis

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Sheldon Wiseman

DIRECTORS: Kevin Gillis, Sebastian Gunstra

WRITERS: Kevin Gillis, Mary Crawford, Alan Templeton, Sheldon Wiseman, Jim Betts, Darson Hall, Sebastian Gunstra, Gerald Tripp

VOICE ACTORS: Len Carlson (Bert Raccoon/Professor Smedley Smythe/Pig 2/Pig 3), Bob Dermer (Ralph Raccoon/Lady Baden Baden/Bear), Susan Roman (Melissa Raccoon), Michael Magee (Cyril Sneer/Snag), Marvin Goldhar (Cedric Sneer), Carl Banas (Schaefer), Sharon Lewis (Broo/Sophia), Nick Nichols (Pig 1), Geoffrey Winter (Narrator), Murray Cruchley (Dan), Vanessa Lindores (Julie), Noam Zylberman (Tommy)

SYNOPSIS: Life in the Evergreen Forest is defined at opposite ends by the free-spirited, adventurous Bert Raccoon and his friends at one point and the plutocratic businessman Cyril Sneer at the other, in whose schemes the former group interfere.

COMMENTARY: The zenith of Canadian television animation, a program that succeeded on its own modest but exceptional terms rather than by openly aping American series, as is the more common route for series coming out of that country. The series was informed and defined by the aims of creator Gillis, who not only held the job titles noted in the credits but was also the program's resident musical composer, music playing a more vital role here than in other series. Especially compared to American series then and now, conflicts in the series were handled in a diplomatic fashion, with even central villain Sneer restraining himself from the kind of scenery-chewing his American counterparts indulge in habitually. Still, it was resident loose cannon Bert (a wonderful, multifaceted portrayal by Carlson) who defined most of the action, with everyone else mostly going along for the ride. The superb achievement of this series is an invaluable reminder of what Canadian television animation can be on the rare occasions when it chooses not to follow the dictates of the American market but defines itself on the terms of its own country's politics instead.

***RAINBOW BRITE* (1986)**

STUDIOS: DIC, Hallmark

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Andy Heyward, Jean Chalopin, Tetsuo Katayama

PRODUCER: Gaetano Vaccaro

DIRECTOR: Satoshi Hirayama

WRITERS INCLUDED: Lori Crawford

VOICE ACTORS: Bettina Bush (Rainbow Brite), Andre Stojka (Starlight), Robbie Lee (Twink/Indigo/Violet/Lala/Sprites), Peter Cullen (Murky Dismal/Monstromurk/Narrator), Patrick Fraley (Lurky/Buddy/Evil Force), Scott Menville (Brian), Mona Marshall (Red/Patty/Canary), Rhonda Allman (Moonglow/Tickled Pink)

SYNOPSIS: In the land of Rainbowland, Rainbow Brite serves as the main line of defense against the villainous Murky Dismal with the aid of her magically powered belt.

COMMENTARY: A typical 1980s product, being a good-versus-evil plotline based on a greeting card character and derivative in some ways from the Van Beuren 1934 theatrical cartoon *The Sunshine Makers*, although few of the kids who were the target market for the show would have seen *that* one when it came out. Several specials aired before a series was commissioned. Perhaps the most memorable aspect of the series was Stojka's portrayal of Rainbow Brite's horse Starlight, who was forever arrogantly referring to himself as the "most magnificent" of his kind "in the universe."

The series originally aired as part of DIC's syndicated omnibus *Kideo* TV (q.v.).

RAINBOW FISH (2000)

STUDIOS: Decode, United Media, Columbia

DISTRIBUTOR: HBO (United States)

CREATOR: Marcus Pfister

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Rhys Huber (Rainbow Fish), Erin Fitzgerald (Salmontha/Girly Girl), Chantal Strand (Sea Filly), Andrew Francis (Blue), Chiara Zianni (Ruby), John Payne (Sol), Ellen Kennedy (Aqua/Mrs. Chips), French Tickner (Principal Gefilte), Kathleen Barr (Wanda the Octopus), Christopher Gray (Chomper), Bill Switzer (Stingo), Alex Doduk (Sherman), Colin Murdock (Sir Sword)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: This adaptation of Pfister's popular children's book series departed little from its source, focusing on a young male fish with colorful scales and his similar aquatic companions as they learned typical lessons related to tolerance and understanding. Following its debut, the program chalked up a seven-year run on HBO.

RAMBO (1986–1987)

STUDIOS: Ruby-Spears, Carolco, Worldvision

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

CREATOR: David Morrell

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Joe Ruby, Ken Spears

PRODUCERS: Cosmo Anzilotti, Walt Kubiak

DIRECTORS: Charles Nichols, John Kimball

WRITERS INCLUDED: Mike Chain, Jack Bornoff, Kevin Altieri, Rich Childlaw, Rick Hoberg, Dick Sebast

VOICE ACTORS: Neil Ross (Rambo), Michael Ansara (General Warhawk), Alan Oppenheimer (Colonel Trautman), Lennie Weinrib (Gripper), Peter Cullen (Sergeant Havoc), Mona Marshall (Kat), Frank Welker (Mad Dog), Robert Ito (Black Dragon), James Avery (Turbo), Edmund Gilbert (Nomad)

SYNOPSIS: John Rambo leads the Force of Freedom, a military unit intent on disrupting the activities of SAVAGE and their leader, General Warhawk.

COMMENTARY: The character of John Rambo originated in Morrell's 1972 novel *First Blood* as a crazed Vietnam War veteran intent on gaining revenge for the shunning of his colleagues by America in the wake of that controversial war. Ten years later, the novel was adapted for the screen, with Sylvester Stallone as Rambo. The film's success led inevitably to sequels, with Rambo now recast as a heroic warrior engaged in rescuing fellow Americans from evil Communists. In turn, the fact that Rambo had a strong following among children led to this series, which grafted Rambo and his military mentor Colonel Trautman onto the established *G.I. Joe* (q.v.) format—military-based action with no deaths or severe injuries involved. Despite this handicap, Warhawk—drawn as a caricature of General Douglas MacArthur—and SAVAGE certainly kidnapped a lot of people, whom Rambo and company were inevitably forced to rescue—thus creating the plots and the rationale for toy-centric merchandising.

RANDOM! CARTOONS (2007)

STUDIOS: Frederator, Nickelodeon

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

Various producers, directors, writers, and voice actors

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: An omnibus series in the same mold as Nickelodeon's earlier *Oh Yeah! Cartoons* (q.v.), as well as Cartoon Network's *What a Cartoon!* (see *World Premier Toons*). Fred Seibert, who had overseen both of those projects, likewise was the guiding force for this one. Consequently, the objective was the same—to provide exposure to a variety of short-form projects and test whether they merited being expanded into full-length series—although the majority of the projects now came from a younger generation of less-established animators and filmmakers. The two most notable projects emerging from the series were *Fanboy and Chum Chum* (q.v.), airing on Nickelodeon, and *Adventure Time* (q.v.), which aired on Cartoon Network after Nickelodeon rejected it for series development.

RANDY CUNNINGHAM, 9TH-GRADE NINJA (2012–2015)

STUDIOS: Titmouse, Boulder Media, Rough Draft, Disney

DISTRIBUTOR: Disney

CREATORS/EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Jed Elinoff, Scott Thomas

DIRECTORS: Shaun Cashman, Joshua Taback, Mike Milo, Chuckles Austen, Stephanie Arnett, Sean Petrilak, Russell Calabrese, Felipe Salazar

WRITERS: Jed Elinoff, Scott Thomas, Hugh Webber, Mitch Larson, David Shayne, Russ McGarry, Dean Batali, Darrick Bachman, Dan Danko, Tom Martin,

Ryan Raddatz, Melissa Wong, Ryan Harris, Jim Martin, Arthur Pielli, John O'Bryan, Matt Fleckenstein, Nick Confalone

VOICE ACTORS: Ben Schwartz (Randy Cunningham/Ninja), Andrew Caldwell (Howard Weirnerman), Tim Curry (Sorcerer, early episodes), Ben Cross (Sorcerer, later episodes), John DiMaggio (Hannibal McFist/Robo-Apes/Mick/Gene Levine), Kevin Michael Richardson (William Viceroy III/Psycho-Bot), Andy Dick (Jerry Driscoll), Andy Richter (Disciplinarian), David Koechner (Mac Antfee), Jim Cummings (Catfish Booray), Jennifer Tilly (Sorceress), Dee Bradley Baker (Julian/Evil Julian/Juggo), Scott Menville (Bucky Hensletter), Dave Wittenberg (Bash Johnson), Cassie Scerbo (Heidi Weirnerman), Sarah Hyland (Theresa Fowler), Piper Curda (Debbie Kang), Jim Rash (Principal Irving Slimovitz), April Stewart (Marci McFist), Scott Thomas (Doug), Grey DeLisle (Flute Girl/Ms. Wickwacker), Laura Marano (Rachel), John Oliver (Coach Green), Kari Wahlgren (Morgan), John Witherspoon (S. Ward Smith), Megan Mullally (Mrs. Maureen Driscoll), Parvesh Cheena (Pradeep), Neil Flynn (Mr. Bannister), Carlos Alazraqui (Dave), Richard Kind (Mort Weirnerman), Keith Ferguson (Greg), Judy Reyes (Senora Jorge), Bobcat Goldthwait (Dickie), Annie Potts (Ms. Tawny Zingwald), Rob Paulsen (Jacques), Sterling Knight (Buttermaker), Jason Earles (Brent), Simon Pegg (Pitch Kickham), Steve Zahn (Terry McFist), Gilbert Gottfried (Ranginald Bagel), Joel McHale (First Ninja), Nat Faxon (Sinjin Knightfire), Robert Englund (Jason "Mudfart" Myers)

SYNOPSIS: For eight centuries, the town of Norrisville has been defended from the evil encroachment of the sorcerer and his minions by a lone ninja. Randy Cunningham, a freshman at Norrisville High, is the current holder of the ninja title, though only he and his best friend, Howard Weirnerman, know that they are one and the same.

COMMENTARY: A coproduction of Disney-financed production companies in America, Great Britain, and Ireland, with character designs by Jhonen Vasquez of *Invader Zim* (q.v.) fame. While an interesting concept on paper, it still traveled down much of the same roads done by *Kim Possible* (q.v.), *My Life as a Teenage Robot* (q.v.), and *Danny Phantom* (q.v.) before it in terms of overall episode content, particularly in mining issues related to teenage life and developing eccentric kid and adult characters to create humor. The show was marred further by a level of juvenilia and self-indulgence on the part of the writing staff that its predecessors largely avoided.

RAW TOONAGE (1992–1993)

STUDIO: Disney

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

PRODUCERS: Larry Latham, Ed Wexler, Kevin Hopps, Dan Rounds, Dave Block

DIRECTORS: Carole Beers, William Houchins, Marsh Lamore, James Walker, Dave Block

WRITERS: Kevin Hopps, Tom Minton, Steven Taylor, Laraine Arkow, Terrie Collins, Robert Schechter, Gary Sperling

VOICE ACTORS: Jack Angel (Jitters A. Dog), Gregg Berger (Grumbles the Grizzly), Corey Burton (Ludwig Von Drake), Jody Carlisle (Fawn Deer), Christine Cavanagh (Gosalyn Mallard), Brian Cummings (Bonkers Bobcat/Don Karnage/

Roderick Lizzard), Bill Farmer (Goofy), June Foray (Norman's Aunt), Patrick Fraley (Marsupilami), Terry McGovern (Launchpad McQuack), Gary Owens (Badly Animated Man), Rob Paulsen (Maurice), Samuel Wright (Sebastian), Alan Young (Scrooge McDuck)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: An omnibus series that was intended to provide an edgier and less-conservative style of humor from the Disney Studio but simply showed how, at the time, the studio was incapable of producing that type of humor in a series format. The program featured a variety of projects of varying lengths, tied together by a figure who hosted the individual episodes in linking segments. *Bonkers* (q.v.) and *Marsupilami* (q.v.) were resurrected after the program's end in their own eponymous projects.

READY JET GO (2016–PRESENT)

STUDIOS: Wind Dancer, Snee Oosh, Cake

DISTRIBUTOR: PBS

CREATOR: Craig Bartlett

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Dete Meserve, David McFadzean, Matt Williams, Craig Bartlett, Rusty Tracy

DIRECTORS: Craig Bartlett, Rusty Tracy, Zac Palladino

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Ashleigh Ball (Jet Propulsion/Man in the Moon), Kyle Rideout (Carrot), Meg Roe (Celery/Dr. Melendez), Brian Drummond (Face 9000/Dr. Berg), Dalila Bela (Sydney), William Ainscough (Sean), Jaeda Lily Miller (Mindy), Ian Corlett (Uncle Zucchini/Mr. Peterson), Spencer Drever (Mitchell Peterson), Keegan Connor Tracy (Dr. Rafferty), Amelia Shoichet Stoll (Lillian)

SYNOPSIS: Jet Propulsion is an alien from the planet Bortron 7 who lives in Washington, DC, where his parents do anthropological work on the culture of Earth.

COMMENTARY: Given that it is a PBS show, it is not surprising that this is an education-based program, with a focus on scientific, astrological, and anthropological themes and music attached. Bartlett is best known to older viewers as the creator of the far different *Hey Arnold!* (q.v.).

THE REAL ADVENTURES OF JONNY QUEST (1996)

See *JONNY QUEST/THE REAL ADVENTURES OF JONNY QUEST*.

THE REAL GHOSTBUSTERS (AND RELATED SERIES)

***The Real Ghostbusters* (1986–1988)**

STUDIOS: DIC, Columbia

DISTRIBUTORS: ABC (1986–1988), Syndicated (1987)

CREATORS: Dan Akroyd, Harold Ramis

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Joe Medjuck, Michael Gross, Andy Heyward, Jean Chalopin

PRODUCERS: Tetsuo Katayama, Len Janson, Chuck Menville, Robby London, Stan Phillips

DIRECTOR: Stan Phillips

WRITERS INCLUDED: J. Michael Straczynski

VOICE ACTORS: Lorenzo Music (Peter Venkman, 1986–1987), Dave Coulier (Peter Venkman, 1987–1988), Arsenio Hall (Winston Zeddemore, 1986–1987), Edward Jones (Winston Zeddemore, 1987–1988), Maurice LaMarche (Egon Spengler), Frank Welker (Ray Stantz/Slimmer), Laura Summer (Janine Melnitz, early episodes), Kath Soucie (Janine Melnitz, later episodes), Charlie Adler (Rafael), Jeff Altman (Professor Dweeb), Fay DeWitt (Mrs. Van Heuge), Cree Summer Francks (Chilly Cooper), Danny Mann (Linguini/Budd), Jeff Marder (Rudy), Alan Oppenheimer (Morris Grout), April Hong (Catherine), Katie Leigh (Jason), Danny McMurphy (Donald)

Slimmer! And the Real Ghostbusters (1988–1992)

STUDIOS: DIC, Columbia

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATORS: Dan Akroyd, Harold Ramis

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Joe Medjuck, Michael Gross, Andy Heyward, Jean Chalopin

PRODUCERS: Tetsuo Katayama, Len Janson, Chuck Menville, Robby London, Stan Phillips

DIRECTOR: Stan Phillips

WRITERS INCLUDED: J. Michael Straczynski

VOICE ACTORS: Dave Coulier (Peter Venkman), Edward Jones (Winston Zeddemore), Maurice LaMarche (Egon Spengler), Frank Welker (Ray Stantz/Slimmer), Kath Soucie (Janine Melnitz)

Extreme Ghostbusters (1997)

STUDIOS: Adelaide, Columbia, Bohbot

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Daniel Goldberg, Joe Medjuck, Richard Raynis

PRODUCERS: Duane Capizzi, Audu Paden

DIRECTORS: Chris Berkeley, Alan Caldwell, Vic Dalchele, Chris Dozois, Tim Eldred, Bob Fuentes III, Gloria Jenkins, Sam Liu, Audu Paden, Rafael Rosado, Frank Squillance, Scott Wood

WRITERS: Neil Alsip, Ernie Altbacker, Mark Amato, Dan Angel, Robin Bernheim, Billy Brown, Siobhan Byrne, Duane Capizzi, Patricia Carr, Steve Cuden, Adam Gilad, Barry Hawkins, Mark Hoffmeier, Marty Isenberg, Gary Kaplan, Greg Klein, James Krieg, Joseph Kuhr, Steven Melching, Reed Moran, Richard Mueller, Martin Olson, Steve Perry, Gregory Pincus, Thomas Pugsley, Lane Raichert, Steve Roberts, Laura Runnels, Neil Ruttenberg, Bruce Schaefer, John Semper, Robert Skir, Steve Slavkin, Richard Stanley, Dean Stefan, Larry Swerdlow, Alexx Van Dyne

VOICE ACTORS: Maurice LaMarche (Egon Spengler), Pat Musick (Janine Melnitz), Alfonso Ribeiro (Roland Jackson), Tara Strong (Kylie Griffin), Rino Romano (Eduardo Rivera), Jason Marsden (Garrett Miller), Billy West (Slimmer/Mayor McShane)

SYNOPSIS: The Ghostbusters are a team of paranormal investigators who specialize in tracking down and capturing ghosts and similar spiritual entities.

COMMENTARY: The concept originated in the 1984 film *Ghostbusters*, written by (and starring) Akroyd and Ramis and directed by Ivan Reitman. The film—which emphasized comedy as much, if not more, than serious paranormal investigation—was a massive box-office success, with Ray Parker Jr.'s infectious theme song becoming a number-1 hit on the *Billboard* charts at the same time. It spawned a 1988 sequel as well as this animated series—whose *raison d'être* was the fact that the Ghostbusters had a strong following among children. The *Real* in the title was added to distinguish the show from Filmation's similarly constructed show (named simply *Ghostbusters* [q.v.]), which debuted around the same time and over which Filmation and Columbia were engaged in legal squabbling. For the most part, the original animated series had an emphasis on comedy similar to that of the film, thanks to the character of the ectoplasmic Slimer, based on a minor antagonist from the first film, which was emphasized by his elevation into the program's title in 1988. At the same time, the program was expanded into an hour from its original half-hour length, which it maintained for the remainder of its run.

In 1997, *Extreme Ghostbusters* (originally intended to be called *Super Ghostbusters*) revived the concept in a more serious way. In this version, Egon Spengler reemerged after a period of exile to become the mentor of a new multiethnic generation of Ghostbusters. The series stressed traditional values of tolerance and teamwork that were somehow lost among the amount of high-tech antighost weaponry used over the 40-episode run.

In 2016, Columbia released a new film version of *Ghostbusters*, with the protagonists now played by female characters (much to an expected and somewhat-misogynistic negative response from fans of the original films). There is no word yet on whether an animated TV series take on this version of the concept is in the works.

THE REAL STORY OF (1990)

STUDIOS: CINAR, France Animation, Western Publishing, CTV

DISTRIBUTOR: HBO (United States, 1994)

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: This series purported to tell the real story behind various well-known nursery rhymes and fairy tales, although most of these required a considerable amount of padding to become full half-hour stories. It originally aired in Canada as *Favorite Songs* in 1990. The most notable attribute of the series was its celebrity voice cast, which included such figures as Robert Stack, Shelley Long, Milton Berle, Stevie Nicks, Roger Daltrey, Edward Asner, Carol Kane, Huey Lewis, Glenda Jackson, Julian Lennon, Malcolm Jamal Warner, Patti LaBelle, John Ritter, Deborah Harry, Joe Piscopo, Robin Leach, Robert Gulliaume, Lauren Bacall, Martin Short, and Vanna White.

REBOOT (1994–1997)

STUDIOS: BLT, Mainframe, Alliance, Claster

DISTRIBUTORS: ABC (1994–1996), Syndicated (1996–1997)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Christopher Brough, Steve DeNure, Mark Ralston

PRODUCER: Jay Firestone

DIRECTORS: Nicholas Kendall, Ezekial Norton, Michael Robison, Dick Zondag, Alan Best, Owen Hurley

WRITERS INCLUDED: Mark Edens, Lane Raichert, Ian Pearson, Martin Borycki, Adria Budd, Katherine Lawrence, Mark Leiren Young, Christy Marx, Alan Swayze, Len Wein

VOICE ACTORS: Michael Benyaer (Bob, early episodes), Ian Corlett (Bob, later episodes), Kathleen Barr (Dot), Andrea Libman (Andrala as a girl), Jesse Moss (Enzo as a boy, early episodes), Matthew Sinclair (Enzo as a boy, later episodes), Christopher Gray (Enzo as a boy, later episodes), Sharon Alexander (Andrala as a woman), Paul Dobson (Enzo as a man), Tony Jay (Megabyte), Shirley Millner (Hexadecimal), Phil Hayes (Slash), Scott McNeil (Slash 2), Louise Vallance (Mouse), Michael Donovan (Mike the TV/Phong/Cecil), Gary Chalk (Hack), Donal Gibson (Ray Tracer)

SYNOPSIS: Inside a giant computer, the cybermetropolis Mainframe is defended by a variety of valiant figures from the villainous viruses Megabyte and Hexadecimal, among others.

COMMENTARY: One of the earliest and most effective usages of CGI production in a television animation program, in part due to the then-state-of-the-art graphics, but also because, unlike other later CGI series, the program used the graphics as a fundamental component of the storytelling, as opposed to a ploy to justify the show's reason for being. Still, it couldn't escape the fact that, as with most CGI products, the characters looked as if they were created artificially rather than being genuinely real personages. The concept originated among a team of British animators collectively known as "The Hub" (specifically, John Grace, Ian Pearson, Gavin Blair, and Phil Mitchell), who had been making films in this style since the late 1980s and whom executive producer Brough brought together to develop this unique project. The program debuted in 1994 on Canada's YTV network and earned record-high ratings there, a feat repeated later that year when it made its American debut on ABC.

RECESS (1997–2003)

STUDIO: Disney

DISTRIBUTORS: Disney, ABC, Syndicated, UPN

CREATORS/EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Paul Germain, Joe Ansolabehere

PRODUCERS: Howy Parkins, Chuck Sheetz, Mark Drop

DIRECTORS: Chuck Sheetz, Susan Dietter, Howy Parkins, Brenda Piluso, Joan Drake

WRITERS INCLUDED: Mark Drop, Holly Huckins, Bart Jennett, Phil Walsh, Nancy Lee Wynt, Richard Whitley

VOICE ACTORS: Ross Malinger (T. J. Detweiler, 1997–1999), Andrew Lawrence (T. J. Detweiler, 1999–2003), Ricky D'Shon Collins (Vince LaSalle), Jason Davis (Mikey Blumberg), Courtland Mead (Gus Griswald), Ashley Johnson (Gretchen Grundler), Pamela Segall (Ashley Spinelli), Allyce Beasley (Miss Alordayne Grotke), April Winchell (Miss Muriel Finster), Dabney Coleman (Principal Peter Prickley), Ryan O'Donohue (Randall Weems/Dave),

Toran Caudell (King Bob), Klee Bragger (Sam), Sam McMurray (Lieutenant Griswald), Anndi McAfee (Ashley Armbruster), Frances Smith (Upside Down Girl), Rachel Crane (Ashley Quinlan), Camille Winbush (Ashley Tomossian), Erik Von Detten (Erwin Larson), Katey Sagal (Flo Spinelli), Mayim Bialik (Kristen Kurst)

SYNOPSIS: Life at Third Street Elementary School is depicted during recess sessions.

COMMENTARY: A thoughtful and amusing program with well-defined characters, rapid-fire dialogue, and unique production eccentricities that immediately separated it from other series with a school setting, before and after its run. Germain and Ansolabehere took a balanced approach, not favoring the children above the adults or vice versa but instead showing the former as more mature than they appeared and the latter sometimes lacking in this character. They were likewise thorough in exploring the extent of their setting and characters as time and story length permitted, with an almost-anthropological level of detail, while constantly throwing curves in the audience's way. This, combined with a basic and unfettered graphic style, helped to give the series an appeal that allowed it to last longer than many of its peers. A theatrical feature-film version, subtitled *School's Out*, was released in 2001.

RED PLANET (1994)

STUDIOS: Gunther-Wahl, FOX

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX

CREATOR: Robert A. Heinlein

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Lee Gunther, Michael Wall, Mitch Schauer

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Patrick Fraley (Willis); Marcia Gaven (Jane Marlowe); Benny Grant, Mark Hamill, Jess Harnell, Haven Hartman, Roddy McDowall, Stanley Ralph Ross, and Nick Tate (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: Loosely based on Heinlein's late-1940s juvenile novel, this three-episode miniseries focused around New Aries, a colony of Earth located on Mars. The principals were siblings Jim and P. J., who attended Lowell Academy and were thus imbued with the knowledge needed in order to protect and preserve all-natural environments. The proecological stance was a departure from the conservative politics at the heart of Heinlein's literary oeuvre, but it earned the series attention and awards as a consequence.

REDWALL (1998)

STUDIOS: Nelvana, Alphanim, France 2, France 3, Centre National de la Cinematographie, Moltior, CTV, United Productions, Teletoon

DISTRIBUTOR: PBS (United States, 2001)

CREATOR: Brian Jacques

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Patrick Loubert

DIRECTOR: Raymond Jafelice

WRITERS: Michelle Goodeve, Glenn Norman, Steve Roberts, Tony Roberts

VOICE ACTORS: Tyrone Savage (Matthias Mouse), Alison Pill (Cornflower Fieldmouse, early episodes), Melissa McIntyre (Cornflower Fieldmouse, later

episodes), Janet Wright (Constance Badger), Richard Binsley (Basil Stag Hare), Diego Mattamoros (Cluny the Scourge), Chris Wiggins (Father Abbott), Lindsay Connell (Laterose), Alyson Court (Myrtle), Amos Crawley (Martin the Warrior), Tim Curry (Slager the Cruel, a.k.a. Chickenhound), Catherine Disher (Mrs. Churchmouse/Winifred/Sparra), Sarah Gado (Cynthia Vole/Tess Churchmouse), Jake Goldsbie (Vitch), Julie Lemieux (Sela), Tracy Moore (Warbeak), Ali Mukkadam (Felldoh/Jube), Susan Roman (Jess/Rosyqueen), Michael Seater (Mattimeo), John Stocker (Abbot Mordalfus)

SYNOPSIS: In the anthropomorphic medieval world of Mossflower Woods, a novice monk named Matthias serves as a major defender of the realm against the forces of evil.

COMMENTARY: Based on the long-running popular children's book series by British author Jacques, whose stated intention was to restore a gutsier style of action and adventure to children's literature that he felt had largely been watered down in modern versions of stories for children. As a consequence, when the series first aired in Canada in 1999 (and, as always with Nelvana, it was faithfully adapted), it had an edgier and more capriciously violent tone than many would think customary. When PBS optioned the program for American audiences, there was concern about the explicitly violent material, so Nelvana opted to provide it in a syndicated manner, allowing individual PBS stations to opt out of airing the show if they wanted to. Ultimately, the series aired in its entirety in America for its first two seasons; a third season aired only in Canada.

THE REGULAR SHOW (2010–2017)

STUDIO: Cartoon Network

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATOR: J. G. Quintel

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: J. G. Quintel, Brian Miller, Jennifer Pelphrey, Curtis Le-lach, Rob Swartz, Robert Sorcher

PRODUCERS: Janet Daymon, Ryan Slater, Chris Reccardi, Mike Roth, Sean Szeles

DIRECTORS/WRITERS: J. G. Quintel, Sean Szeles, Shion Takeuchi, Mike Roth, Jake Armstrong, Kat Morris, Paul Scarlata, Kent Osborne, Benton Connor, Calvin Wong, John Infantino, Minty Lewis, Henry Yu, Dennis Messner, Ben Adams, Andres Salaff, Toby Jones, Hilary Florido, Madeline Queripel, Sarah Olesyk, Hellen Jo, James Kim, Owen Dennis, Ryan Pequin, Casey Crowe, Sam Spina, Alex Cline, Nathan Bulmer, Gideon Chase

VOICE ACTORS: J. G. Quintel (Mordecai/High Five Ghost/Baby Duck 1/Guardian of Eternal Youth #4/Future Mordecai), William Salyers (Rigby/Baby Duck 2/Phone Guardian #2/Matchmaker McIntyre/Future Rigby), Sam Marin (Benson Dunwoody/Pops Maellard/Mitchell "Muscle Man" Sorenstein/Baby Duck 3/RGB2/Sensei/Garrett Bobby Ferguson Sr./Chong/Coffee Bean, later episodes), Mark Hamill (Skips Quippenger/Baby Duck 4/Louie/Translator), Roger Smith (Thomas/Nikolai/Baby Duck 5/Low Five Ghost/Garrett Bobby Ferguson Jr./Internet/Chuck the F. E. Stomach/Ybgir/John), Janie Haddad Thompkins (Margaret Smith), Courtenay Taylor (Audrey/Starla "Muscle Woman" Guts-

mandottir Sorenstein), David Ogden Stiers (Mr. S. Maellard), Linda Cardellini (C. J. Love), Minty Lewis (Eileen Roberts), David Kaye (Guardian of Eternal Youth #1), Robin Downes (Guardian of Eternal Youth #2/Gary), Roger Jackson (Guardian of Eternal Youth #3), Troy Baker (Guardian of Eternal Youth #5/Dr. Reuben Langer/Klorgbane the Destroyer), Julian Holloway (Death/Duck Collector), Julian Dean (Don), Carl Weathers (God of Basketball), Steven Blum (Techmo/John "Muscle Bro" Sorenstein), Rich Fulcher (Phone Guardian #1), Armin Shimerman (Dr. Henry), Matthew Mercer (Chance Sureshot/Recap Robot), Vanessa Marshall (Toothpick Sally), D. C. Douglas (Colonel Rawls), Feodor Chin (Earl), Yvette Brown (Seer), Fred Tatasciore (Father Time/"Muscle Dad" Sorenstein), Rich Sommer (Del Hanlon), Robert Englund (Anti-Pops), Kurtwood Smith (Gene), Thomas Haden Church (Quillgin), April Stewart (Susan), John Cygan (Capicola Gang Leader), Dawnn Lewis (Robot Duck), Laura Bailey (Natalia), Jennifer Hale (Jackie Carmichael), Keith David (Streaming), Donald Glover (Alpha-Dog), Tyler, The Creator and MC Lyte (The Crew Crew), Sean Szeles (Summertime Song), Scott Bullock (Coffee Bean, early episodes), Jason Mantzoukas (Mr. Ross), Matt Price (Quirton "Quips" Quippinger), Toby Jones (Hecho en Mexico), Edie McClurg ("Muscle Mom" Sorenstein), Jeff Bennett ("Party Pete" Hermanverfal/Eggsclent Knight), Grey DeLisle (Mona)

SYNOPSIS: In the town of West Anderson, California, anthropomorphic pals Mordecai (a blue jay) and Rigby (a raccoon) somehow manage to keep their jobs as public park groundskeepers in spite of their habitual slacking, goofing off, and blundering into bizarre adventures.

COMMENTARY: One of the type of program whose principal objective is not so much to be funny, exciting, or otherwise entertaining as it is to be consistently outré and strange as possible, thus belying the deceptive series name creator/executive producer/director/writer/star Quintel attached to it. As with other programs of this subgenre (see *Adventure Time* and *Sanjay and Craig*; also in this subgenre are various "Adult Swim" programs from Cartoon Network), the program really means anything to you only if you can decode whether it is funny by your individual standards. The fact that it ran for seven years, survived at least one format change, and received numerous awards and nominations over its run suggests means that some people did get it, but there are likely just as many viewers who will come away from watching this show bewildered rather than genuinely entertained.

THE RELUCTANT DRAGON AND MR. TOAD SHOW

(1970–1972)

STUDIO: Rankin/Bass

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATOR: Kenneth Grahame

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS/DIRECTORS: Arthur Rankin Jr., Jules Bass

WRITERS: Romeo Muller, William Keenan

VOICE ACTORS: Paul Soles, Donna Miller, Claude Rae, and Carl Banas (Specific roles unknown)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: An animated program based loosely on the short story “The Reluctant Dragon” and the novel *The Wind in the Willows*, the two best-known works of quintessentially British children’s author Grahame. The opening segment focused on the title character (named Tobias) and his relationship with a bumbling knight named Sir Malcolm, while the latter one focused on the overenthusiastic nobleman Mr. Toad from *Wind*. The segments bore little relation to Grahame’s source, though in the 1980s, Rankin and Bass would produce a far more accurate and effective adaptation of *Wind* for broadcast as an animated television special.

THE REN AND STIMPY SHOW (AND RELATED SERIES)

***The Ren and Stimpy Show* (1991–1998)**

STUDIOS: Spümcø, Games Animation, Nickelodeon

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

CREATOR: John Kricfalusi

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Vanessa Coffey

PRODUCERS: John Kricfalusi, Christine Danzo, Bob Camp, Jim Ballantine

DIRECTORS: John Kricfalusi, Bob Camp, Peter Avanzino, Howard Baker, Craig Bartlett, Ken Bruce, Jim Gomey, Ron Hughart, Mike Kim, Steve Loter, Chris Reccardi, Jim Smith, Vincent Waller, Bill Wray

WRITERS: John Kricfalusi, Bob Camp, Will McRobb, Vincent Waller, Bill Wray, Jim Gomez, Chris Reccardi, Peter Avanzino, Mike Kim, Ron Hauge, Elinor Blake, Richard Pursel, Jim Smith

VOICE ACTORS: John Kricfalusi (Ren, early episodes); Bob Camp (Ren, later episodes); Billy West (Stimpy/Ren, later episodes); Gary Owens (Powdered Toast Man); Michael Pataki (George Liquor); Randy Crenshaw, Edan Gross, Lesa O’Donovan, and Charlie Brissette (Vocalists); Cheryl Chase, Edan Gross, Charles Haid, Sharon Mack, Harris Peet, and Darrin Sargent (Additional characters)

***The Ren and Stimpy Adult Party Cartoon* (2003)**

STUDIO: Spümcø

DISTRIBUTORS: TNN, Spike

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Eric Gardner, Kevin Kolde

DIRECTORS: John Kricfalusi, Vincent Waller, Jonathan Yudis, Kelly Armstrong

WRITERS: John Kricfalusi, Jeff Amey, Eddie Fitzgerald, Michael Kerr, Richard Pursel, Jim Smith, Vincent Waller

VOICE ACTORS: John Kricfalusi (Ren), Eric Bauza (Stimpy)

SYNOPSIS: Anemic and acerbic chihuahua Ren Hoek and his dim-witted feline pal Stimpy undergo a series of flatulence-laden adventures.

COMMENTARY: One of the earliest and most successful productions of the Nickelodeon network and, off-camera, an abject lesson in how much control television animation creators really can have over their productions when bankrolled by larger corporate forces. Canadian-born Kricfalusi had previously been an animator for Filmation and Hanna-Barbera before graduating to directing with



The kings of bad taste in 1990s television animation. Nickelodeon Network/Photofest © Nickelodeon Network

Ralph Bakshi on *Mighty Mouse: The New Adventures* (q.v.). Despite displays of wildly aggressive behavior in preliminary pitch stages, Kricfalusi was granted a program slot on Nickelodeon and produced *Ren and Stimpy*, which became a major ratings hit, primarily among college audiences. This was in spite of an unhealthy obsession with usually censored topics and a propensity to dwell on such, which remained a central element of the producer's mind-set. Unfortunately, Kricfalusi's highly exaggerated and pointed comic style, coupled with his inability to produce episodes on the schedule the network wanted, got him into repeated conflicts with the network, who ultimately fired him. The remainder of the show's run was completed with producer/director/writer Camp at the helm and showed that the characters were able to exist and function well without their creator's involvement, although the creator's extremist attitude toward their adventures was somewhat curbed.

After an extended hiatus, *Ren and Stimpy* were revived in 2003, back under their creator's control as *The Ren and Stimpy Adult Party Cartoon*. With this title in place, many of the past conflicts about whether the original series was appropriate for children were put to rest, and the series could function this time as Kricfalusi likely wanted it to be originally. However, the same problems of unhinged comedy content and slow production processes reemerged, and this version of the show quickly and quietly disappeared.

THE REPLACEMENTS (2006–2009)

STUDIO: Disney

DISTRIBUTORS: ABC, Disney

CREATOR: Dan Santat

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Jack Thomas

DIRECTORS: Heather Martinez, Robb Pratt

WRITERS: Devin Bunje, Nick Stanton, Katherine Butler, Fred Gonzalez, Brandon Kruse, Bernie Pettersen, Broni Likomanov, Tom Krajewski, Rudi Berden, Fred Osmond, Jack Thomas, Aldin Baroza, Luke Cormican, Kevin Campbell, Aaron Rozenfeld, Scott Peterson, Danielle Koenig, Dave Williams, Darren McGowan, Jonathan Howard, Cynthia True, Annie Sertich, Tim Madison, Marty Isenberg, Joel Bergen, Alex Muniz, Bart Jennett, Stephen Lewis, Chris Otsuki, Robin Shorr, Sam Bullock, Eric McConnell, Fred Reyes, Randi Barnes, Tanyia Hossain, Spencer Walker, Carl Faruolo, David Ilhenfeld, David Wright, Calvin Suggs, Scott Tobis

VOICE ACTORS: Nancy Cartwright (Todd Daring), Grey DeLisle (Riley Daring/Buzz Winters/Lady Lady), Daran Norris (Dick Daring/Prince Cinnamon Boots), Kath Soucie (Agent K Daring), David McCallum (C.A.R.T.E.R.), Jeff Bennett (Conrad Fleem/Shelton Klutzberry/Principal Cutler/Dr. Hans Herkmer/’Puter Dude 13/Dingo McGee, early episodes), Lauren Tom (Tasumi/Jennifer), Erica Hubbard (Abbey Wilson, first season/Claudia, early episodes), Tempestt Bledsoe (Abbey Wilson, second season/Claudia, later episodes), Candi Milo (Jacob Jacobo/Shelly Klutzberry/Amanda McMurphy/Mrs. Shusher, early episodes), Jess Harnell (Donny Rotweiler/T-Bone), Dee Bradley Baker (Johnny Hitswell/Ace Palmero/Zephremiah/Silent Joe/Goober/Petrov/Garth the Janitor), Tara Strong (Sierra McCool/Skye Blossoms/Mrs. Shusher, later episodes), Rob Paulsen (Phil Mygrave/Fabian LeTool/Mr. Vanderbosh), Carolyn Seymour (Agent B), Michael York (Agent G), Bruce Campbell (Gordo Glideright), Jason Marsden (Dustin Dreamlake/Tiny Evil), Zac Efron (Davey Hunkerhoff), Chip Chinery (Mr. Kelpman), Mary Elizabeth McGlynn (Mrs. Kelpman), Jim Cummings (Wrestling Announcer), Miley Cyrus (Celebrity Starr, early episodes), Jessica DiCicco (Celebrity Starr, later episodes), Dave Wittenberg (Dr. Skorpius), John DiMaggio (Buck Spikes), Carlos Alazraqui (Dingo McGee, later episodes), Diedrich Bader (Robo Fleem SGX), J. P. Manoux (Mr. Fragile)

SYNOPSIS: Siblings Todd and Riley Daring use the services of the mysterious corporation Fleemco to replace individuals in positions of power with those who they feel will be better-suited for their particular interests.

COMMENTARY: An interesting concept that was executed well in its first season but became increasingly bungled and self-indulgent on the part of the writers in its second and last. It was in the earliest episodes that the strong satirical points about the lack of sociopolitical agency among children in American society and how individual action can and cannot create social change were at their most effective; the later ones focused too narrowly on the characters’ personal concerns. DeLisle’s exuberantly high-kicking portrayal of the socially conscious and romantically obsessive Riley was the highlight of the vocal performances, with Norris’s idiotic stuntman Dick Daring a close second.



Unlike its concept, this show was irreplaceable. Disney Channel/Photofest © Disney Channel

***RESCUE HEROES* (AND RELATED SERIES)**

***Rescue Heroes* (1999–2000)**

STUDIOS: Nelvana, Fisher-Price

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Michael Hirsh, Patrick Loubert, Clive Smith

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS INCLUDED: Brent Piasoski

VOICE ACTORS: Martin Roach (Jake Justice), Norman Spencer (Billy Blazes), Joe Motiki (Richmond “Rocky” Canyon), Lenore Zann (Wendy Waters), John Bourgeois (Warren Waters), Marc Donato (Tyler), Christopher Earle (Roger Houston), Paul Essiembre (Gil Gripper), Adrian Hough (Cliff Hanger), Lisa Messinger (Ariel Flyer), Rod Wilson (Jack Hammer)

***Rescue Heroes: Global Response Team* (2001–2003)**

STUDIOS: Nelvana, Fisher-Price

DISTRIBUTOR: WB

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Michael Hirsh, Patrick Loubert, Clive Smith

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS INCLUDED: Brent Piasoski

VOICE ACTORS: Martin Roach (Jake Justice), Norman Spencer (Billy Blazes), Joe Motiki (Richmond “Rocky” Canyon), Lenore Zann (Wendy Waters), John Bourgeois (Warren Waters), Marc Donato (Tyler), Christopher Earle (Roger Houston), Paul Essiembre (Gil Gripper), Adrian Hough (Cliff Hanger), Lisa Messinger (Ariel Flyer), Rod Wilson (Jack Hammer)

SYNOPSIS: The Rescue Heroes are an elite team of “international emergency response professionals” who respond to various crises from their space station headquarters, the Hexagon.

COMMENTARY: Based on a toy line, this simplistic project focused on imposing traditional educational values on a presumably young audience in typically blatant ways. The events of September 11, 2001, helped give the program an unexpected surge in popularity, while its formula was simplistic and durable enough to allow for later variations on the theme to emerge in recent years, such as in *Paw Patrol* (q.v.).

RETURN TO THE PLANET OF THE APES (1975–1976)

STUDIOS: DePatie-Freleng, 20th Century Fox

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: David DePatie, Friz Freleng

DIRECTOR: Doug Wilder

WRITERS: Larry Spigel, E. Jack Kaplan, John Buryett, Bruce Shelley, John Strong

VOICE ACTORS: Tom Williams (Bill Hudson, early episodes), Richard Blackburn (Bill Hudson, later episodes), Claudette Nevins (Judy Franklin/Nova), Austin Stoker (Jeff Carter), Edwin Mills (Cornelius), Philippa Harris (Dr. Zera), Henry Corden (General Urko)

SYNOPSIS: Three astronauts and their ship are sucked into an alternate time stream and onto a planet run by intelligent simians.

COMMENTARY: The source of this series was the novel *Monkey Planet* by French novelist Pierre Boulle via the 1968 film *Planet of the Apes*, starring a blatantly overacting Charlton Heston, and the several sequels produced in the wake of that film’s success. The series was set about 1,000 years after the events of the original film, but that was about all that was novel. Bill Hudson was simply assigned the token hero role that was played by other characters in similar series of that time and carried the weight of the program’s action-adventure content over the course of the 13 episodes produced. The franchise has since been successfully revived by 20th Century Fox in another series of ongoing live-action films.

RICHIE RICH (AND RELATED SERIES)

***The Richie Rich/Scooby Doo Hour* (1980–1982)**

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: Art Scott, Don Jurwich, Oscar Dufau

DIRECTORS: Ray Patterson, George Gordon, Bill Hutten, Bob Hathcock, Carl Urbano, Rudy Zamora, Bob Goe, Terry Harrison

WRITERS: Mark Evanier, Bryce Malek, Jack Mendelsohn, Dick Robbins, Jan Green, Rich Fogel, Jim Simon, Tom Yakutis

VOICE ACTORS: Sparky Marcus (Richie Rich), Joan Gerber (Mrs. Rich/Irona), Dick Beals (Reggie Van Dough), Bill Callaway (Professor Keenbean), Nancy

Cartwright (Gloria Glad), Stan Jones (Cadbury/Mr. Richard Rich), Frank Welker (Dollar)

The Pac-Man/Little Rascals/Richie Rich Show (1982–1983)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: Art Scott, Don Jurwich, Oscar Dufau

DIRECTORS: Ray Patterson, George Gordon, Bill Hutten, Bob Hathcock, Carl Urbano, Rudy Zamora, Bob Goe, Terry Harrison

WRITERS: Mark Evanier, Bryce Malek, Jack Mendelsohn, Dick Robbins, Jan Green, Rich Fogel, Jim Simon, Tom Yakutis

VOICE ACTORS: Sparky Marcus (Richie Rich), Joan Gerber (Mrs. Rich/Irona), Dick Beals (Reggie Van Dough), Bill Callaway (Professor Keenbean), Nancy Cartwright (Gloria Glad), Stan Jones (Cadbury/Mr. Richard Rich), Frank Welker (Dollar)

The Little Rascals/Richie Rich Show (1983–1984)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: Art Scott, Don Jurwich, Oscar Dufau

DIRECTORS: Ray Patterson, George Gordon, Bill Hutten, Bob Hathcock, Carl Urbano, Rudy Zamora, Bob Goe, Terry Harrison

WRITERS: Mark Evanier, Bryce Malek, Jack Mendelsohn, Dick Robbins, Jan Green, Rich Fogel, Jim Simon, Tom Yakutis

VOICE ACTORS: Sparky Marcus (Richie Rich), Joan Gerber (Mrs. Rich/Irona), Dick Beals (Reggie Van Dough), Bill Callaway (Professor Keenbean), Nancy Cartwright (Gloria Glad), Stan Jones (Cadbury/Mr. Richard Rich), Frank Welker (Dollar)

Richie Rich (1986)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: Art Scott, Don Jurwich, Oscar Dufau

DIRECTORS: Ray Patterson, George Gordon, Bill Hutten, Bob Hathcock, Carl Urbano, Rudy Zamora, Bob Goe, Terry Harrison

WRITERS: Mark Evanier, Bryce Malek, Jack Mendelsohn, Dick Robbins, Jan Green, Rich Fogel, Jim Simon, Tom Yakutis

VOICE ACTORS: Sparky Marcus (Richie Rich), Joan Gerber (Mrs. Rich/Irona), Dick Beals (Reggie Van Dough), Bill Callaway (Professor Keenbean), Nancy Cartwright (Gloria Glad), Stan Jones (Cadbury/Mr. Richard Rich), Frank Welker (Dollar)

Richie Rich (1988)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera
 PRODUCERS: Art Scott, Don Jurwich, Oscar Dufau
 DIRECTORS: Ray Patterson, George Gordon, Bill Hutten, Bob Hathcock, Carl Urbano, Rudy Zamora, Bob Goe, Terry Harrison
 WRITERS: Mark Evanier, Bryce Malek, Jack Mendelsohn, Dick Robbins, Jan Green, Rich Fogel, Jim Simon, Tom Yakutis
 VOICE ACTORS: Sparky Marcus (Richie Rich), Joan Gerber (Mrs. Rich/Irona), Dick Beals (Reggie Van Dough), Bill Callaway (Professor Keenbean), Nancy Cartwright (Gloria Glad), Stan Jones (Cadbury/Mr. Richard Rich), Frank Welker (Dollar)

***Richie Rich* (1996)**

STUDIOS: Harvey, Film Roman
 DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated
 EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Phil Roman
 PRODUCER: Bill Schultz
 DIRECTORS: Unknown
 WRITERS: Timothy Williams, Gary Conrad, Bill Matheny, Don Viramontes, Mimi Pond, Cyndie Shrader, Sid Jacobson, Robert Schechter, Alicia Marie Schudt, Jennifer Pritchard, Patrick Inness, Daniel MacKechnie, Richard Relanger
 VOICE ACTORS: Katie Leigh (Richie Rich/Irona), Susan Silo (Regina Rich), Rene Auberjonois (Richard Rich/Professor Keanbean/Chef Pierre), Martin Jarvis (Cadbury/Bascomb), Patrick Fraley (Dollar), Jeannie Elias (Gloria Glad/Reggie Van Dough/Freckles/Tiny)

SYNOPSIS: The adventures of the world's wealthiest boy.

COMMENTARY: He made his debut in Harvey Comics in 1956 and has remained one of the company's most popular characters ever since. Still, unlike some of the other properties of Harvey, such as *Casper the Friendly Ghost* (q.v.), he didn't show up in animated form until the 1980s, when the conspicuous consumption at the heart of the concept was at its most appealing and compelling. It remained so over the several times Hanna-Barbera repackaged it that decade. In 1995, Richie was made the central character in a live-action feature film starring Macaulay Culkin, which generated a whole new wave of interest in him. The following year, Film Roman revived him as an animated character, but unlike the Hanna-Barbera version, this was a short-form series of adventures, the better to pad the time out with vintage cartoons featuring Harvey-owned characters.

***RICK AND MORTY* (2013–PRESENT)**

STUDIOS: Justin Roiland's Solo Vanity Card, Harmonious Claptrap, Starburns, Williams Street, 20th Century Fox
 DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network
 CREATORS: Justin Roiland, Dan Harmon
 EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Dan Harmon, Justin Roiland, James Fino, Joe Russo II
 PRODUCERS: Kenny Micka, J. Michael Mendel
 DIRECTORS INCLUDE: Justin Roiland, John Rice, Jeff Myers, Bryan Newton, Stephen Sandoval, Wesley Archer, Dominic Polcino, Juan Meza Leon

WRITERS INCLUDE: Dan Harmon, Justin Roiland, Ryan Ridley, Eric Acosta, Wade Randolph, Tom Kaufman, Mike McMahan, Matt Roller, David Phillips, Dan Guterma, Alex Rubens, Jane Becker

VOICE ACTORS: Justin Roiland (Rick Sanchez/Morty Smith/Mr. Meeseeks/Mr. Poopybutthole/Ants in My Eyes Johnson/Real Fake Doors Salesman/Gazorpazorpfield/Tophat Jones/Baby Legs/Eyeholes Man/Stealy/Michael Thompson/Pichael Thompson/Cromulons/Taddy Mason), Sarah Chalke (Beth Sanchez Smith), Chris Parnell (Spencer Smith), Spencer Grammer (Summer Smith), Kari Wahlgren (Jessica), Phil Hendrie (Principal Gene Vagina), Echo Kellum (Brad/Jacob), Daniel Benson (Ethan), Aislinn Paul (Nancy), Alex Hirsch (Toby Matthews), Ryan Ridley (Frank Plicky/Cousin Nicky), Jess Harnell (Scary Terry/Ruben), John Oliver (Dr. Xenon Bloom), Dan Harmon (Birdperson/Kevin/Ice-T/Davin), Scott Chernoff (Revolio "Gearhead" Clockberg Jr.), Tom Kenny (Squanchy/Jon/Pencilvester/King Jellybean), Maurice LaMarche (Abra-dolf Lincner/Morty Jr. as an adult), Andy Daly (Krombopulos Michael), Christina Hendricks (Unity), John Kassir (Blim Blam the Klorblok), Chelsea Kane (Arthricia), Jeff Bergman (Alternate David Letterman), Bobby Moynihan (Alternate Bobby Moynihan), Rob Paulsen (Regular Legs/Snuffles, a.k.a. Snowball), Jan Michael Vincent (Himself), David Cross (Prince Nebulon), Rich Fulcher (King Flippy Nips), Nolan North (Scoopy Noopers), Kevin Michael Richardson (Frankenstein's Monster/Mrs. Refrigerator), Tony Barbieri (Mr. Beauregard/Uncle Steve), Keith David (Reverse Giraffe/President), Matt Walsh (Sleepy Gary), Tara Strong (Tinkles), Alfred Molina (Mr. Lucius Needful), Finnegan Perry (Morty Jr. as a baby), Will Jennings (Morty Jr. as a child), Richard Christy (Morty Jr. as a teenager), Jemaine Clement (Fart), Patton Oswalt (Beta VII), Stephen Colbert (Zeep Xanflorp), Nathan Fillion (Cornelius Daniel), Dana Carvey (Leonard Smith), Patricia Lentz (Joyce Smith), Jackie



Morty seems surprised at what's going on; Rick just doesn't care anymore. Adult Swim/ Photofest © Adult Swim

Buscarino (Annie), Gary Anthony Williams (Poncho), Cassie Steele (Tammy Gueterman), Alejandra Gollas (Lucy), Kurtwood Smith (Nathan)

SYNOPSIS: Alcoholic mad scientist Rick Sanchez moves in with the family of his daughter Beth and frequently embarks on adventures in alternate science-fiction universes, on which his emotionally unstable grandson Morty frequently tags along.

COMMENTARY: This is the sort of thing that is only funny if you get the joke behind it and is head-scratchingly weird otherwise. It combines two of the most persistent subgenres in television animation—the dysfunctional family and the sci-fi/fantasy adventure show—in ways that blatantly highlight the strengths and weaknesses of both concepts. While this is, in and of itself, a unique and somewhat inspired combination, it also prevents the series from having a steady sense of knowing what it wants to really be and executing ideas based on that understanding. One wishes the producers had firmly made up their minds about this before series production commenced, but it is clear that the very bizarre unpredictability at the heart of the series is what creates its appeal. It is therefore necessary to approach the series without genre-related stereotypes and expectations to truly appreciate the merits of the show within its overpowering and otherworldly strangeness.

***RICK MORANIS IN GRAVEDALE HIGH* (1990–1991)**

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, Turner

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: David Kirschner, Paul Sabella

PRODUCER: Robert Dranko

DIRECTORS: Robert Alvarez, Oscar Dufau, Don Lusk, Paul Sommer, Carl Urbano

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Rick Moranis (Max Schneider), Roger Rose (Vinnie Stoker), Barry Gordon (Reggie Moonshroud), Kimmy Robertson (Medusa), Frank Welker (Frankentyke/J. P. Ghostly III), Ricki Lake (Cleofatra), Jonathan Winters (Coach Cadaver), Shari Belafonte (Blanche), Georgia Brown (Ms. Crone), Jackie Earle Haley (Gill Waterman), Maurice LaMarche (Sid), Eileen Brennan (Miss Dirge), Sandra Gould (Ms. Webner), Brock Peters (Boneyard), Tim Curry (Mr. Tutner)

SYNOPSIS: Human high school teacher Max Schneider finds himself an instructor at a specialized school for monstrous beings.

COMMENTARY: A rather trite rehashing of a storehouse of monster-movie stereotypes, combined with equally dated images of what high school is supposedly like. The fact that Moranis received above-the-title billing (about the only such instance in the history of television animation) suggested that this was what was needed to get him to participate in what was, for all intents and purposes, a very derivative waste of time and space.

***RING RAIDERS* (1989)**

STUDIOS: DIC, Those Characters from Cleveland, Bohbot

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Andy Heyward, Robby London

PRODUCERS: Turk Savage, Ken Duer

DIRECTORS: Turk Savage, Dae Jung Kim

WRITERS INCLUDED: Phil Harnage, Lori Crawford, William Ruiz

VOICE ACTORS: Dan Gilvezan (Victor Vector), Efrain Figueroa (Joe Thundercloud), Stuart Goetz (Hubbub), Ike Eisenmann (Cub Jones), Gregory Martin (Kirchov), Jack Angel (Mako), Chris Anthony (Jenny Gail), Roscoe Lee Browne (Max Miles), Rodger Bumpass (Scorch), Townsend Coleman (Yasu Yakamura), Chuck McCann (Baron Von Clawdeitz), Susan Silo (Siren)

SYNOPSIS: A team of aviators drawn from the ranks of the past, present, and future combats the villainous forces of the Skull Squadron.

COMMENTARY: This was an unwieldy concept that lasted only for the length of a two-hour movie and five half-hour episodes. As with many programs of this time, it emphasized a "one world" idea, where people of various diverse backgrounds worked together for a common cause. Still, it was a program that wore its derivative aspects, specifically from *G.I. Joe* (q.v.), quite firmly on its sleeve.

***THE RIPPING FRIENDS* (2001–2002)**

STUDIO: Spümcø

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX

CREATOR/DIRECTOR: John Kricfalusi

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: John Kricfalusi, Annette Frymer, Kevin Kolde, Arnie Zipsky, Jacques Pettigrew

PRODUCERS: Hasmi Giakoumis, Lynda Hayners

WRITERS: John Kricfalusi, Ben Jones, Richard Pursel, Robyn Bird

VOICE ACTORS: Harvey Atkin (Crag, early episodes), Mark Daley (Crag, later episodes), Michael Kerr (Chunk), Mike McDonald (Rip), Mermie Mandeair (Slab), Miriam McDonald (He-Mom), Eric Bauza (Future Cat), Dwayne Hill (Rip's Shorts), John Kricfalusi (Citrucet), Phil LaMarr (Jimmy the Idiot Boy)

SYNOPSIS: The superheroic and ultramacho Ripping Friends defend the city of Haplessville from the wrath of various villains.

COMMENTARY: A superhero parody from the creator of *The Ren and Stimpy Show* (q.v.), whose inception predated that program but which shared with it a highly uncomfortable emphasis on flatulence and other body functions, robbing it of whatever comic potency it possessed. The FOX run featured episodes that had a considerable amount of material censored by the network (whereas, in Canada, the episodes aired unaltered).

***ROAD ROVERS* (1996–1997)**

STUDIO: Warner Brothers

DISTRIBUTOR: WB

CREATORS: Tom Ruegger, Jeff Gordon

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Tom Ruegger

PRODUCER: Bob Doucette

DIRECTORS: Brian Chin, Scott Jeralds, Herb Moore, Jon McClenahan, Brad Neave, Blair Peters

WRITERS: Brian Chin, Nick DuBois, Earl Kress, Jeff Kwitny, John Ludin, Tom Ruegger, Mark Seidenberg

VOICE ACTORS: Jess Harnell (Hunter), Tress MacNeille (Colleen), Kevin Michael Richardson (Exile), Jeff Bennett (Blitz), Frank Welker (Shag/Muzzle), Joseph Campanella (Master), Jim Cummings (Professor Parvo), Sheena Easton (Groomer), Larry Drake (Captain Zachary)

SYNOPSIS: The pets of various world leaders, plus outlier Muzzle, are turned into superheroic beings through the intervention of the mysterious Master.

COMMENTARY: A failed project from an otherwise reliable studio and producer, which nevertheless planted the seeds for later and better variations on the concept, such as *The Secret Files of the Spydogs* (q.v.), *Krypto the Superdog* (q.v.), and *Paw Patrol* (q.v.). What might be most notable about the show was the fact that a writer sued Warner for allegedly stealing his idea for a similar project—suggesting that there aren't *that* many new ideas in television animation after all.

***ROBOCOP: ALPHA COMMANDO* (1998)**

STUDIOS: Summit, MGM

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

DIRECTOR: Tom Tataranowicz

WRITERS: Brooks Wachtel, Gary Kaplan

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: David Sobolov (Robocop), Andrew Francis (Richie), Dean Haglund (Cornelius Neumeier), Janyse Jaud (Jennifer), Campbell Lane (Alpha Prime), Blu Mankuma (Sergeant Reed), Akiko Morrison (Special Agent Nancy Miner)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: The original *Robocop* film, released in 1987, concerned a Detroit police officer who, after being murdered, was reconstructed by Omni Consumer Products as a cyborg who obeyed orders without question and was impervious to attempts to influence him (such as bribery). Shortly afterward, the character assumed animated form as part of *The Marvel Action Universe* (q.v.). After a live-action sequel followed in 1990, the character went into creative limbo when his original studio, Orion, went bankrupt. Eventually, after the rights were held by others, he was twice revived—in a live-action series in 1994 and this animated version. Neither property bore much resemblance to its source, with this series doing little but insert the character into the now-shopworn *G.I. Joe* (q.v.) format, with typically dire results.

***ROBOT CHICKEN* (2005–PRESENT)**

STUDIOS: ShadowMachine, Stoopid Monkey, Stoopid Buddy, Williams Street, Columbia

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATORS: Seth Green, Matthew Senreich

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Seth Green, Matthew Senreich, John Harvatine IV, Eric Towner, Geoff Johns, Keith Crawford, Michael Lazzo

PRODUCERS: Alex Bulkely, Corey Campodonico

DIRECTORS INCLUDE: Matthew Senreich, Doug Goldstein, Tom Root, Seth Green, Chris McKay, Zeb Wells, Tom Sheppard

WRITERS INCLUDE: Seth Green, Pat McCallum, Matthew Senreich, Mike Fasolo, Charles Horn, Breckin Meyer, Jordan Allen Dutton, Erik Weiner, Hugh Davidson, Dan Milano, Kevin Shinick, Zeb Wells, Harp Pekin, Ben Schwartz, Geoff Johns, Matthew Beans, Brendan Hay, Daniel Libman, Matthew Libman, Eric Schaar, Harland Williams, Jessica Gao, Rachel Bloom, Jason Reich, Mikey Day, David Phillips, Tom Root, Mehar Sethi, Tom Sheppard, Brian Wysol, Shelby Fero, Joel Hurwitz, Deidre Devlin, Jeff Eckman, J. T. Krull

VOICE ACTORS INCLUDE: Jordan Allen Dutton, Candace Bailey, Abraham Benrubi, Rachel Bloom, Alex Borstein, Leah Cevoli, Rachael Leigh Cook, Hugh Davidson, Mikey Day, Eden Espinosa, Donald Faison, Tamara Garfield, Sarah Michelle Gellar, Douglas Goldstein, Ginnifer Goodwin, Clare Grant, Seth Green, Jamie Kaler, Mila Kunis, Jordan Ladd, Seth MacFarlane, Breckin Meyer, Dan Milano, Chad Morgan, Tom Root, Matthew Senreich, Kevin Shinick, Amy Smart, Adam Tallbot, Erik Weiner, Zeb Wells, Victor Yerrid

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: A stop-motion program that, since its debut, has served as the closest thing in television animation to a raucous sketch comedy show à la *Saturday Night Live*, with the same level of lowbrow humor emphasized. Much of the humor comes from placing previously existing characters, some action figures (cocreator Senreich and some of the writers



The *Saturday Night Live* of television animation—in all that the designation implies. Cartoon Network/Photofest © Cartoon Network

began in that area's fandom) and others television animation ones, in real-world situations of difficulty or rewriting their narratives to more firmly place this real-world element. As with other variety series, a number of varying features are in a rotation fashion and trotted out when the need for them manifests itself. Likewise with other variety shows, the viewers are often held hostage by the writers' particular sense of humor, usually of the adult variety, whether they like it or not. The program's overall quality is scattershot, with some segments working and others less successful, but it is at least successful with television industry insiders, as demonstrated by the five Emmys it has received over its run.

ROCKET POWER (1999–2004)

STUDIOS: Klasky-Csupo, Viacom

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

CREATORS/EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Arlene Klasky, Gabor Csupo

PRODUCERS: Cella Nichols Harris, Jim Duffy, Mark Risley, Susan Ward, Michael Bloom, Andy McElfresh, Victor Wilson

DIRECTORS INCLUDED: Dave Fontan, Michael Daedalus Kenny, Steve Ressel

WRITERS INCLUDED: Adam Beechen, Michael Bloom, Alain de Leonardis, Roger Eschbacher, Scott Gray, Andy McElfresh, David Rosenberg, Michael Rotman

VOICE ACTORS: Joseph Ashton (Oswald "Otto" Rocket), Shayna Fox (Regina "Reggie" Rocket), Ulysses Cuadra (Maurice "Twister" Rodriguez), Sam Saletta (Sam "the Squid" Dullard, early episodes), Gary Leroi Gray (Sam "the Squid" Dullard, later episodes), John Kassir (Ray "Raymundo" Rocket), Ray Bumatai (Tito Makani Jr.), Lombardo Boyar (Lars Rodriguez), Jennifer Hale (Paula Dullard), Dominic Armato (Sputz Prison), Stan Harrington (Mauri), Lauren Tom (Trish/Sherry), Jordan Warkol (Eddie "Prince of the Netherworld" Valentine), Henry Gibson (Merv Stimperton), Edie McClurg (Violet Stimperton)

SYNOPSIS: In the town of Ocean Shores, California, extreme sports devotees Otto and Reggie Rocket befriend Sam Dullard, a newcomer to town, who helps them resolve problems that inevitably result from their sports-related antics.

COMMENTARY: While the program boasted much of Klasky-Csupo's trademark idiosyncratic, European-influenced design style, the narrative and characterizations here were rather thin compared to their earlier efforts, given the narrowcasting and stereotypical assumptions it was based around. Nevertheless, the program found the audience who cared about it and managed to survive for an above-average time on the air purely on that basis alone.

ROCKET ROBIN HOOD (1967)

STUDIOS: Steve Krantz, Trillium

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER/DIRECTOR: Shamus Culhane

PRODUCER: Ralph Bakshi

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Carl Banas, Ed McNamara, Chris Wiggins, Bernard Cowan, Len Birman, Paul Kligman, Gillie Fenwick, and John Scott (Specific roles unknown)

SYNOPSIS: In the year 3000, the efforts of the National Outerspace Terrestrial Territories to control the entire universe are repeatedly thwarted by Rocket Robin Hood and his band of outlaws, operating from Sherwood Forest Asteroid.

COMMENTARY: This shotgun wedding between the mythology of Robin Hood and the stereotypical motifs of science fiction is mainly memorable for being a pioneering work of the Canadian television animation industry (some of the animation was done there, as was the voice work). Despite the involvement of distinguished veteran Culhane at the helm, the program took a number of obvious production shortcuts, including repeated reuse of footage whether it made sense in the context of individual episodes or not, that are glaringly and shamefully obvious at times. Still, it had some good qualities, as well. The producers had the good sense to update the weaponry, arming Robin and his men with a "powerful new weapon—the electro-quarterstaff," that served, in some aspects, as a precursor of *Star Wars'* lightsaber. As well, in linking segments between the main adventures, there were miniature portraits of Robin's associates (so we could get to know them better, presumably), such as Friar Tuck ("Some . . . think him fat, foolish and not worth worrying about, but *don't you believe it*," narrator Bernard Cowan told the audience about him in stentorian fashion). However, these could be as repetitive as the main feature and as tiresome. This might have been a much more skillful and entertaining series had more time and money been allocated in the production process to make it work smoothly.

ROCKO'S MODERN LIFE (1993–1996)

STUDIOS: Joe Murray, Games Animation, Nickelodeon

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

CREATOR: Joe Murray

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Joe Murray, Vanessa Coffey, Mary Harrington

PRODUCERS: Marty McNamara, Ken Kessel, Kristi Ann Pehrson

DIRECTORS: Joe Murray, Timothy Berglund, Roger Chiasson, Don Spencer, Doug "Mr." Lawrence, Stephen Hillenburg, Bill Lawrence, Jeff "Swampy" Marsh, Ken Kessel, George Chialtas, Roy Muerin, Pete Michels, Alan Smart, Howy Parkins, John McIntyre, Robert Hughes

WRITERS: Joe Murray, Vince Calandra, Jeff Myers, Kevin O'Brien, Martin Olson, Conrad Vernon, Robert McNally Scull, Nick Jennings, George Maestri, Jeff "Swampy" Marsh, Mark O'Hare, Dan Povenmire, Simon Scull, Ron Hauge, Nichole Poiniski, Ray Johnson, Don Spencer, Mark Ervin, Joe Suggs, Stephen Hillenburg, Doug "Mr." Lawrence, Tim Hill, Timothy Berglund, Andy Houts, Veronica Alcino

VOICE ACTORS: Carlos Alazraqui (Rocko/Spunky/Squirmy/Leon Chameleon/Conglomo Lizard #2/Earl/Garbage Strike Rat #1/Slippy, later episodes/Balding Eagle/Dingo/Granny Rocko/Colonel Frank Hutchinson/Gordon/Meatball/Seymour/Dan the Flyman), Tom Kenny (Heffer Wolfe/Bloaty/Chuck Chameleon/Conglomo Lizard #1/Garbage Strike Rat #2/Really

Really Big Man/Buddy Gecko/Captain Compost Heap/Dr. Bendova/Madame Doreeno/Norbert/Gib Hootsen/Mortimer Khan/Peaches/Dr. Phil/Bighead Studios Tour Guide/Sani-Tours Bus Driver/Shark Roast/Mr. Smitty/Grim Recycler/Tiger/Wallace/Grandma Wolfe), Doug "Mr." Lawrence (Filburt Turtle/Conglomo Lizard #3/Gilbert/Shellbert/Hopping Hessian/Peter Wolfe/Heffer's Real Father), Charlie Adler (Ed Bighead/Bev Bighead/Conglomo Lizard #4/Mr. Dupette/Gladys the Hippo Lady/Fatheads/Wild Pig/George Wolfe/Grandpa Wolfe), Dom Irrera (Slippy, early episodes), Linda Wallem (Dr. Paula Hutchinson/Alicia/Karen Chicken/Claudette/Crazy Aunt Gretchen/Missy/Pinky/Rocko's Car/Nurse Tammy Mouse/Tammy the Pig/Cindy Wolfe/Virginia Wolfe), Kevin Meaney (Widow Hutchinson), Jill Talley (Nosey), Joe Murray (Ralph Bighead), Alisa Wilson (Sheila)

SYNOPSIS: In the anthropomorphic American community of O-Town, an Australian immigrant wallaby named Rocko struggles with the difficulties of everyday existence—many of which, in his case, are caused or instigated by friends and acquaintances.

COMMENTARY: One of the funniest television animation programs of the 1990s, a rip-roaring satiric sitcom with a modest, likable lead character; a gang of extremely far-out supporting players; and a brilliant sense of comic timing, combined with an unexpected sense of depth and sympathy at prime moments in the narrative. Creator Murray was a novice at television animation production, despite a background in editorial cartooning and theatrical



As usual, Rocko and Heffer seem to be in a perplexing—but funny—situation. Nickelodeon Network/Photofest © Nickelodeon Network

filmmaking, but this was no handicap in terms of creating and filling out his remarkable characters and setting. He was likewise surrounded by highly capable voice actors (who, despite later successful work, rarely equaled their excellent jobs here) and a crew of very talented writers and directors, some of whom developed and advanced this show's gonzo production style in their later creations, ranging from *Spongebob Squarepants* (q.v.) to *Phineas and Ferb* (q.v.) in the decades ahead. This is a textbook example to television animators about how to create a series that can successfully be off-the-wall and realistic at the same time, while never being condescending, insulting, offensive, or excessively rude in the process. A hall-of-fame classic.

ROCKY AND HIS FRIENDS/THE BULLWINKLE SHOW

***Rocky and His Friends* (1959–1961)**

STUDIOS: Jay Ward, P.A.T.

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATORS/PRODUCERS: Jay Ward, Bill Scott

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Ponsonby Britt

DIRECTORS: Bill Hurtz, Pete Burness, Ted Parmelee, Lew Keller, Gerald Baldwin, Jim Hiltz, Sal Faillance, George Singer

WRITERS: Bill Scott, Chris Hayward, Lloyd Turner, Chris Jenkyns, George Atkins, Allan Burns

VOICE ACTORS: June Foray (Rocky the Flying Squirrel/Natasha Fatale/Nell Fenwick/Others), Bill Scott (Bullwinkle Moose/Mr. Peabody/Dudley Do-Right/Fearless Leader/Others), Paul Frees (Boris Badenov/Captain Peter "Wrong Way" Peachfuzz/Inspector Fenwick/Others), William Conrad (*Rocky and Bullwinkle* segment narrator), Edward Everett Horton (*Fractured Fairy Tales* segment narrator), Walter Tetley (Sherman), Hans Conreid (Snidely Whiplash), Charles Ruggles (Aesop), Daws Butler (Aesop Jr./Others)

***The Bullwinkle Show* (1961–1964)**

STUDIOS: Jay Ward, P.A.T.

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

CREATORS/PRODUCERS: Jay Ward, Bill Scott

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Ponsonby Britt

DIRECTORS: Bill Hurtz, Pete Burness, Ted Parmelee, Lew Keller, Gerald Baldwin, Jim Hiltz, Sal Faillance, George Singer

WRITERS: Bill Scott, Chris Hayward, Lloyd Turner, Chris Jenkyns, George Atkins, Allan Burns

VOICE ACTORS: June Foray (Rocky the Flying Squirrel/Natasha Fatale/Nell Fenwick/Others), Bill Scott (Bullwinkle Moose/Mr. Peabody/Dudley Do-Right/Fearless Leader/Others), Paul Frees (Boris Badenov/Captain Peter "Wrong Way" Peachfuzz/Inspector Fenwick/Others), William Conrad ("Rocky and Bullwinkle" segment narrator), Edward Everett Horton ("Fractured Fairy Tales" segment narrator), Walter Tetley (Sherman), Hans Conreid (Snidely Whiplash), Charles Ruggles (Aesop), Daws Butler (Aesop Jr./Others)



The most dynamic of duos, then and now. ABC/Photofest © ABC

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: One of the most exceptional series in television animation history and, as time has slowly revealed, one of its most creatively influential because many of the later generation of television animators have cited it as a primary influence on their own styles and referenced it in their work. That the program survived and thrived creatively in its time—and, significantly, in reruns far beyond it—is due to the creative due diligence of coproducers Ward and Scott and their unique ability to produce a comic style that attracted both children and adults—though the latter element frequently got the producers in trouble and possibly shortened what could have been a longer production run.

Ward, who had previously produced the original *Crusader Rabbit* (q.v.) with Alex Anderson, had originally intended to team with Shamus Culhane on a series called *Phineas T. Phox*, but that program idea was killed when they bitterly parted company. Ward then turned to UPA veteran Scott, who had been hired for that series as a scriptwriter, and they developed most of the ideas that would come to dominate the future project. They sold the series to ABC as a daily program, and the program went into production and became popular, despite the fact that the Mexican-produced animation was erratic and uneven, particularly in the earliest episodes. The program continued in the daily format for two years, after which it relocated to NBC as a weekly program, where it remained until it ceased production.

The primary characters of the series were Rocky the Flying Squirrel and Bullwinkle the Moose, who starred in the central *Rocky and Bullwinkle* segments and also appeared in other features. *Rocky and Bullwinkle* itself was a fast-paced adventure serial leavened with a considerable amount of humor and involved “our heroes” frequently—and unwittingly—thwarting the schemes of evil figures, most regularly and notably Boris Badenov and Natasha Fatale, spies from the pseudo-Communist republic of Pottsylvania.

The serialized nature of the adventures gave the writers a wide berth to spoof contemporary America as well as license to, in some ways, parody the stereotypical construction of fictional narratives themselves, long before this became commonplace in popular culture. Other features with the star duo included *Bullwinkle's Corner*, a mock poetry reading, and *Mr. Know-It-All*, where Bullwinkle tried and failed to present himself as an expert in a variety of fields.

Likewise thoughtful, funny, and clever were the supporting features. *Fractured Fairy Tales*, dominated by Horton's wry narration, wickedly decoded and parodied the stereotypical assumptions and limited gender politics of these traditional stories by bringing them squarely and firmly into the modern real world. *Aesop and Son* did the same with the title character's fables, with Ruggles contributing a warm portrayal of Aesop as narrator and father both. *Peabody's Improbable History* was equally revisionist, with the title character—a humanized, intelligent, and highly civilized dog—making sure certain historical events happened as they should, despite the seeming ineptness of those who perpetrated those events. The last feature to join the manifest was *Dudley Do-Right*, which Ward had first developed in the late 1940s. A fast and funny parody of Canadian-set Hollywood melodrama, it benefitted (as did all the features) from excellent voice work, particularly Conroid as the flamboyant resident villain, Snidely Whiplash.

The subversive nature of Ward and Scott's operation did not limit itself to the fictional narratives they produced but also extended to the way in which they were promoted, which was ultimately the cause of its downfall. During the NBC years in particular, the producers increasingly were at loggerheads with the network on censorship issues and proceeded to write many of those conflicts into the show, to the network's displeasure. Ward further tweaked things by engaging in a variety of elaborate, P. T. Barnum-esque stunts and promotions related to the show, from having mock Salvation Army workers parade around in front of NBC's headquarters to offering money to people who would promote the show while trying to assassinate world leaders in the process! The crowning glory of this was a failed attempt to gain statehood for Moosylvania, a fictional island on the Canadian-U.S. border (of which Bullwinkle was hereditary governor) featured in several episodes, which was indirectly thwarted by the events of the Cuban Missile Crisis. Ultimately, and understandably, NBC soon had enough of this and pulled the plug on the show in 1964.

Ward and Scott found themselves increasingly blackballed by the television networks, with the result being they were only able to produce two further series, *Hoppity Hooper* (q.v.) and *George of the Jungle* (q.v.), before being limited to advertising for the rest of their corporate existence through a lucrative contract with Quaker Oats. Production had largely ceased by the time of Scott's death in 1986, with Ward dying three years later.

Yet this program, like any classic product of popular culture, has long outlived those who created it to become and remain a cultural force in and of itself. In the years since it ceased production, it has been repeatedly revived in television reruns, been issued many times on VHS and DVD, and gained

admirers from multiple generations of people. Equally important, it was and is a significant taproot text in the evolution of television animation, establishing an all-ages, highly accessible style of comedy and satire that many producers in the future would try to emulate but only a select few would come close to equaling.

***ROD ROCKET* (1963)**

STUDIOS: Filmation, Jiro, Victor, Paramount

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

PRODUCERS: Lou Scheimer, Mark Lipsky

DIRECTORS: Lou Scheimer, Hal Sutherland

WRITER: Dick Robbins

VOICE ACTORS: Hal Smith (Professor Argus), Sam Edwards (Rod Rocket/Joey), Pat Blake (Cassie)

SYNOPSIS: Bespectacled young Rod Rocket and his friends transverse space in the *Little Argo*.

COMMENTARY: A series of 130 installments of five minutes each, this series is significant today as one of the earliest productions of the Filmation Studio and an early establisher of the education-plus-entertainment format that would dominate that studio's productions for the majority of its existence. It has largely been little seen and therefore not thought of since it was first broadcast.

***ROGER RAMJET* (1965)**

STUDIOS: Snyder-Koren, Pantomime, CBS

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Kenneth Snyder

PRODUCERS: Fred Calvert, Dick Crippen, Fred Crippen

DIRECTORS: Fred Crippen, Paul Shively

WRITERS: Gene Moss, Jim Thurman

VOICE ACTORS: Gary Owens (Roger Ramjet), Dick Beals (Yank/Dan), Gene Moss (Doodle/Noodles Romanoff), Joan Gerber (Dee/Lotta Love), Robert Arbogast (General G. I. Brassbottom/Ma Ramjet), Paul Shively (Lance Crossfire/Red Dog), Dave Ketchum (Announcer)

SYNOPSIS: "Daredevil, flying fool, and all-around good guy" Roger Ramjet serves as the central defender of America against evil, particularly in the form of the National Associations of Spies, Traitors, and Yahoos (NASTY).

COMMENTARY: A wickedly funny parody of adventure serials in the style of *Rocky and His Friends/The Bullwinkle Show* (q.v.), with writers Moss and Thurman matching Jay Ward's writers stride for stride in producing wicked dialogue and nonsequiturs, as well as anticipating the live-action *Batman* series in throwing one-word sound-effect title cards at the audience during fights. In addition to being a skilled aviator, Roger was a scientist and had developed "proton pills" that supposedly gave him the strength of 20 atom bombs, though only for 20 seconds at a time. Much has been made of his supposed reliance on drugs, although an erroneous idea, and it may have partially contributed to the program unjustly being placed on the sidelines in

the rerun market for so many years. Fortunately, with the advent of Cartoon Network and DVD reissues, the program has managed to be rediscovered and appreciated for what it really was. Among its fans in its initial run were several Hollywood celebrities, who, it is said, did voice work pro bono for the show without any on-screen credit.

***ROLIE POLIE OLIE* (1998)**

STUDIOS: Nelvana, Metal Hurlant, Canada-France

DISTRIBUTOR: Disney (United States)

CREATOR: William Joyce

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Joyce, Michael Hirsh, Patrick Loubert, Clive Smith, Fabrice Giger

PRODUCERS: Corinne Kopuer, Pamela Slavin, Pam Lehn, Stephen Hodgins

DIRECTOR: Mike Fallows

WRITERS INCLUDED: Peter Sauder

VOICE ACTORS: Cole Caplan (Olie), Kristen Bone (Zowie), Len Carlson (Pappy), Catherine Disher (Mrs. Polie), Robert Smith (Spot), Joshua Tucci (Billy Bevel), Adrian Truss (Mr. Polie)

SYNOPSIS: A young robot named Olie lives with his parents in a teapot in the Land of Curves and Curls and learns life lessons after a variety of slapstick-laden exploits in each installment.

COMMENTARY: Distinguished children's book author Joyce had originally conceived this series as a book project, but he failed to find a way to make it work in that format and put the idea aside until Nelvana persuaded him that the idea would work better as an animated series. That it did, with a charming, humorous style reminiscent of the live-action film comedies of the late 1920s and early 1930s, which would ultimately earn it an Emmy, among other awards, over its run.

***ROMAN HOLIDAYS* (1972–1973)**

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCER: Iwao Takamoto

DIRECTOR: Charles Nichols

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: David Willock (Gus Holliday), Shirley Mitchell (Laurie Holliday), Pamelyn Ferdin (Precocia Holliday), Stanley Livingston (Happius "Happy" Holliday), Dom DeLuise (Mr. Evictus), Hal Smith (Mr. Tycoonius), Hal Peary (Herman), Janet Waldo (Henrietta), Judy Strangis (Groovia), Daws Butler (Brutus)

SYNOPSIS: In ancient Rome, building engineer Gus Holliday is repeatedly confronted with comical situations that are beyond his ability to fix.

COMMENTARY: An embarrassingly bad attempt by Hanna-Barbera to repeat the success of *The Flintstones* (q.v.) by throwing that show's formula on another historical time period. Part of the problem lay in the fact that, unlike the

Stone Age, most people at least have a cursory idea of what the Roman Empire was really like and thus were unlikely to accept this version of life there as unconditionally as they had accepted the world of *The Flintstones*. Another problem was the fact that the studio was largely operating on creative autopilot during the time the show was produced, resulting in a series with characters that had only funny character names (as noted in the voice actor credits) and shopworn stereotypical comic scenarios going for it, which was simply not enough for it to succeed.

ROSWELL CONSPIRACIES: ALIENS, MYTHS, AND LEGENDS (1999–2001)

STUDIO: Bohbot

DISTRIBUTORS: Sci-Fi Channel, Syndicated, FOX

CREATOR: Kaaren Lee Brown

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Joe Pearson

PRODUCERS: Allen Bohbot, Stephanie Graziano

DIRECTORS: Tom Tataranowicz, Dan Fausett, Chuck Patton, Bradley Rader

WRITERS: Bob Forward, Greg Johnson, Randy Littlejohn, Christy Marx, Katherine Lawrence, James Bates

VOICE ACTORS: Saffron Henderson (Nema Perrera/Queen Mab), Janyse Jaud (Sh'lainn Blaze), Peter Kelamis (Simon Fitzpatrick), Scott McNeil (Nick Logan), Dale Wilson (Hanek)

SYNOPSIS: An "elite international cadre" of secret agents works to protect Earth from aliens who have assimilated into the planet's population.

COMMENTARY: In July 1947, several alien UFO craft are said to have landed in the town of Roswell, New Mexico, with their occupants exchanging words with the local population. The truth behind this event has never been verified completely, but it has spawned a small cottage industry of conspiracy-based tourism that has benefitted Roswell, at least, over several decades. This program took the event as its basis, using it to suggest the degree to which a variety of figures who have figured in Earth's mythology over centuries were actually of alien extraction. Despite this intriguing premise, however, it quickly narrowed down into the simplistic "get them before they get us" formula that has kept action-adventure-oriented television animation in creative gridlock for several decades now.

ROUGHNECKS: STARSHIP TROOPER CHRONICLES (1999–2000)

STUDIOS: Adelaide, Bohbot, Columbia

DISTRIBUTOR: Sci-Fi Channel, Syndicated

CREATOR: Robert A. Heinlein

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Paul Verhoeven, Richard Raynis

PRODUCERS: Audu Paden, Jeff Kline

DIRECTORS: Alan Caldwell, Andre Clavel, Audu Paden, Christopher Berkeley, David Hartman, Jay Oliva, Michael Chang, Sam Liu, Sean Song, Susan Blu, Vincent Edwards

WRITERS INCLUDED: Greg Klein, Greg Weisman, Marsha Griffin, Tom Pugsley
VOICE ACTORS: Rino Romano (Private Juan “Johnny” Rico), Irene Bedard (General Redwing), E. G. Daily (Private Isabelle “Dizzy” Flores), David DeLuise (Sergeant Francis Brutto), Bill Fagerbakke (Corporal Jeff Gossard), Nicholas Guest (Major Zander Barcalow), Jamie Haines (Lieutenant Jean Razak), Tish Hicks (Lieutenant Carmen Ibanez), James Horan (Corporal Richard “Doc” LaCroix), Alexander Polinsky (Robert Higgins), Steve Staley (T’Phai), Rider Strong (Carl Jenkins)

SYNOPSIS: In a futuristic universe, a group of teenagers are offered a chance to receive full galactic citizenship by participating in a war against insect-like aliens.

COMMENTARY: First published in 1959, *Starship Troopers* is arguably the most controversial work in the extensive canon of American science-fiction author Heinlein, largely because of the jingoistic philosophy, ardent promilitary sensibility, and libertarian politics undergirding the narrative, though that didn’t stop it from winning the Hugo Award as the best science-fiction novel of its year and remaining in print for many years to come. In 1997, it was adapted as a major theatrical feature film, directed by Verhoeven, who subsequently (as noted in the credits) became an executive producer of this elaborate CGI television project. While well produced on a technical level, the program’s production schedule and broadcast run was short-lived due to conflict between the producers, distributors, and animation production companies. This prevented it from finding and keeping the audience that would have made it the hit it likely could have been.

RUBIK THE AMAZING CUBE (1983–1985)

STUDIO: Ruby-Spears

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATOR: Erno Rubik

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Joe Ruby, Ken Spears

PRODUCERS: Mark Jones, Steve Weiner

DIRECTORS: Rudy Larriva, John Kimball, Norman McCabe

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Ron Palillo (Rubik), Michael Saucedo (Carlos Rodriguez), Michael Bell (Renaldo/Ruby Rodriguez), Jennifer Fajardo (Lisa Rodriguez), Angela Moya (Marla Rodriguez)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: Developed by Hungarian engineer Rubik, the logically named Rubik’s Cube was one of the most popular toys of the 1980s—and therefore, according to that decade’s logic, a prime candidate for television animation adaptation. The toy was built on a simple premise: It consisted of a metal frame on which different colored squares were overlaid, providing a puzzle that could be solved only when all of the blocks of the same color were aligned. Many tried, but few succeeded. The animated version made the cube into an anthropomorphic figure who had superheroic abilities but only when the squares of his body were aligned correctly (of course). The limitations of the format were balanced out somewhat by Rubik’s friendship with the Rodriguez family, who provided one of the few truly positive depictions

of Hispanic people in television animation up to that time. The program originally aired in tandem with Hanna-Barbera's *The Pac-Man Show* (q.v.) during its first season before being aired independently in its second year.

***RUDE DOG AND THE DWEEBES* (1989–1990)**

STUDIOS: Marvel, Sun Sportswear

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Margaret Loesch Stimpson, Joe Taritero

PRODUCERS: Bob Richardson, Hank Saroyan

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS INCLUDED: Hank Saroyan

VOICE ACTORS: Rob Paulsen (Rude Dog), Dave Coulier (Barney), Jim Cummings (Satch), Ellen Gerstell (Gloria/Kibble), Hank Saroyan (Tweek), Mendi Segal (Reggie), Frank Welker (Caboose/Rot/Seymour)

SYNOPSIS: The adventures of a cool, Cadillac-driving dog based in Beverly Hills and his sidekicks.

COMMENTARY: The superficiality of adapting characters who originated in a clothing line to television animation was confirmed when it immediately succumbed to stereotypical clichés, despite some good voice work (particularly Paulsen in the title role). It also had a unique design scheme derived from its source, but that, unfortunately, was about all it really had going for it.

***RUFF AND REDDY* (1957–1960)**

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, Columbia

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

PRODUCERS/DIRECTORS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Don Messick (Ruff/Narrator/Others), Daws Butler (Reddy/Others)

SYNOPSIS: A dog named Ruff and a cat named Reddy undergo many harrowing adventures.

COMMENTARY: A historically important venture, given that it was the very first production of the legendary Hanna-Barbera Studio, although the fact that it has not been seen or heard of for a number of years has limited it being seen as such. Clearly drawing inspiration from *Crusader Rabbit* (q.v.) and pointing the way toward *Rocky and His Friends/The Bullwinkle Show* (q.v.) in terms of length and content, Ruff and Reddy engaged in (typically nonviolent) combat with the cleverly named likes of the Mind Master of Mini-Mula; the Goon of Glocca Mora; Scary Hairy Safari; and the terrible twins from Texas, Killer and Diller. The program originally aired as a segment of an NBC children's program, where it alternated between vintage Columbia Pictures cartoons and live segments featuring host Jimmy Blaine and puppets operated by Rufus Rose. This run ended in 1960, but in 1962, Ruff and Reddy appeared again on another NBC children's show, this one hosted by Captain Bob Cottle, and once again briefly in syndication in 1964, before being rendered to unjust obscurity despite the growing popularity

and reputation of its studio. It has never been released on VHS or DVD (though hopefully this may change one of these days); however, select episodes now may be seen on YouTube.

RUGRATS/ALL GROWN UP

Rugrats (1991–2003)

STUDIO: Klasky-Csupo, Nickelodeon

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

CREATORS: Arlene Klasky, Gabor Csupo, Paul Germain

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Arlene Klasky, Gabor Csupo, Eryk Casemiro, Vanessa Coffey

PRODUCERS: Sherry Gunther, Mary Harrington, Cella Duffy, Paul Germain, Charles Swenson, Mark Risley, David Blum, Bee Beckman, Geraldine Clarke, Richard Gittelsohn, Pernelle Hayes, Steve Socki

DIRECTORS: Norton Virgien, Howard Baker, Jim Duffy, Steve Socki, Jeff McGrath, Craig Bartlett, Anthony Bell, Rick Bugenthal, Dave Fontana, Bob Fuentes, Chris Hermans, John Holmquist, Celia Kendrick, Igor Kovalov, Broni Likonov, Cathy Malkasian, Pete Michels, Carol Millican, Steve Moore, Michael Mullen, Raymie Muzquiz, Ron Noble, Steve Ressel, Mark Risley, Jeff Scott, Charles Swenson, Dan Thompson, Toni Vian, Barry Vodos

WRITERS INCLUDED: Paul Germain, Charles Swenson, Mark Risley, Craig Bartlett, Joe Ansolabehere, Steve Viksten, Peter Gaffney, Jonathan Greenberg, Rachel Lipman, Scott Gray

VOICE ACTORS: E. G. Daily (Tommy Pickles), Jack Riley (Stu Pickles), Melanie Chartoff (Didi Kerpacker Pickles), Kath Soucie (Phil/Lil/Betty DeVille), Cheryl Chase (Angelica Pickles), Michael Bell (Charles Finster/Drew Pickles), Christine Cavanagh (Chuckie Finster, early episodes), Nancy Cartwright (Chuckie Finster, later episodes), David Doyle (Grandpa Pickles, early episodes), Joe Alaskey (Grandpa Pickles, later episodes), Cree Summer (Susie Carmichael), Ron Glass (Randy Carmichael), Lisa Dinkins (Lily), Tress MacNeille (Charlotte Pickles), Tara Strong (Dill Pickles/Timmy McNulty), Debbie Reynolds (Lulu Pickles), Julia Kato (Kira Watanabe Pickles), Dione Quan (Kimi Watanabe Pickles), Philip Proctor (Howie DeVille)

All Grown Up (2003–2004)

STUDIOS: Klasky-Csupo, Nickelodeon

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

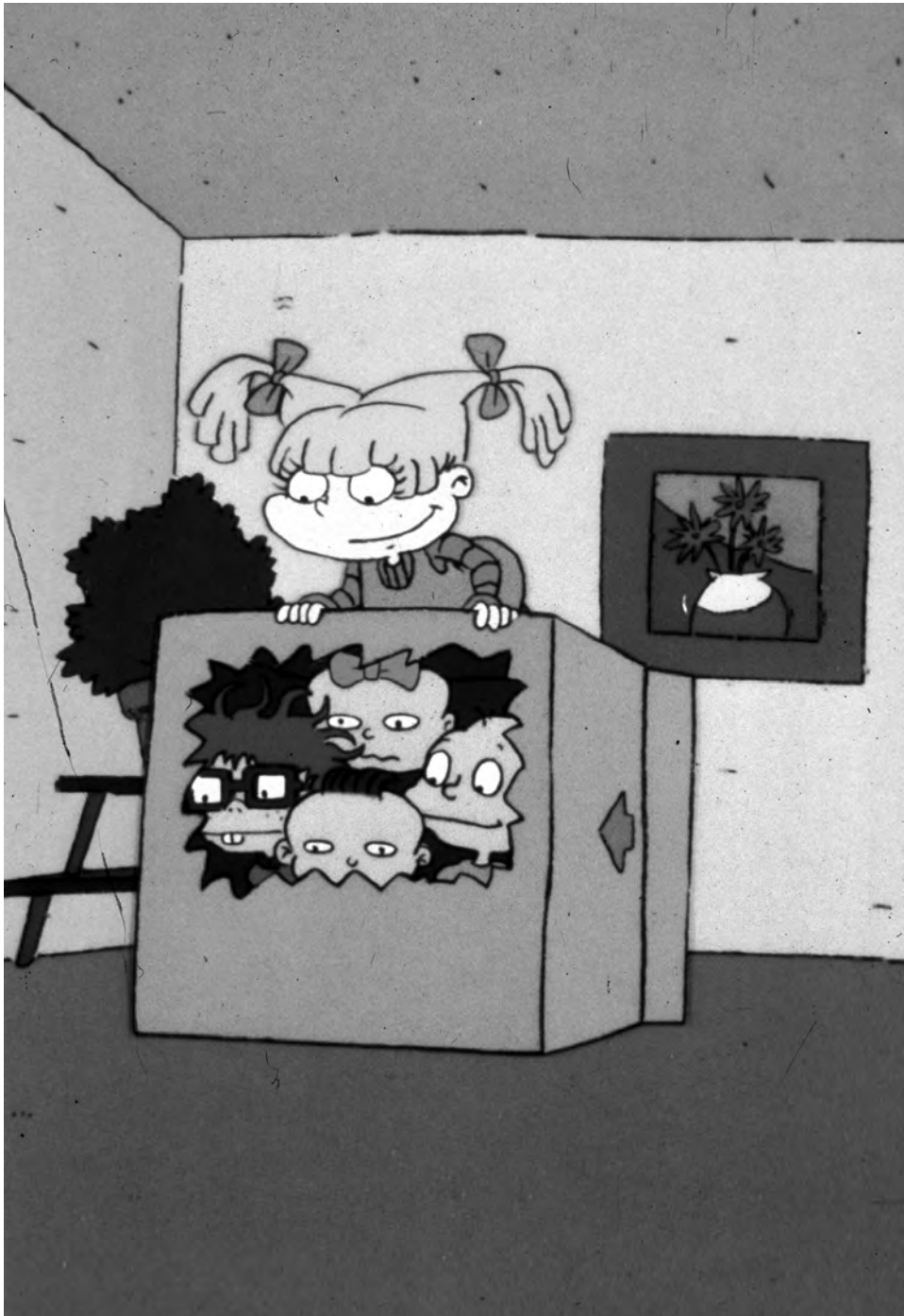
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Arlene Klasky

PRODUCERS: Eryk Casemiro, Pernelle Hayes, Kate Boutilier

DIRECTORS: Anthony Bell, Stig Bergquist, Paul Demeyer

WRITERS INCLUDED: Kate Boutilier, J. David Stern, David Weiss, Jill Corey, Barbara Herndon

VOICE ACTORS: Cheryl Chase (Angelica), E. G. Daily (Tommy), Christine Cavanagh (Chuckie), Kath Soucie (Phil/Lil), Dionne Quan (Kimi), Tara Strong (Dill), Cree Summer (Susie), Pat Musick (Harold), Joe Alaskey (Grandpa Pickles), Clancy Brown (Mr. Pangborn)



The name says it all. Nickelodeon/Photofest © Nickelodeon

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: One of the most creatively and commercially successful television animation programs of the 1990s was built on the simple premise of exploring the lives of young children from their own perspectives, plus the desire of the producers to produce an animated series that could truly attract multiple generations of viewers over time. Another contributing factor was the unique design approach of the Klasky-Csupo Studio, given that the founders were of Hungarian extraction and influenced far more by European traditions in animation than North American ones. There was also the extensive level of rewriting and other preproduction elements placed into every script before it was produced, much more so than in other series. Regardless of these factors, the true compelling element in the program was the interplay between the young protagonists (who could speak to each other in normal English but could not do that with adults) and the older, bullying Angelica, who acted as if she ran the place most of the time but usually ended up getting a comeuppance of some sort. Through an extensive original broadcast run, the program and its characters displayed an unexpected level of multifaceted storytelling that gained the program a strong fan base, as well as multiple Emmys. Besides the expected merchandising spin-offs, there were also no less than three theatrical features released with the characters, which, while commercially successful, started eroding the creative vitality of the concept by taking it too far away from its original premise.

The real nail in the coffin, however, came when the original show ended and its successor, *All Grown Up*, came around. The title said it all: rather than very young children, the protagonists had been firmly elevated into young adults—and, sadly, not that different from any others of the same kind then appearing in television animation. This version quickly bit the dust, but the original series continues to remain popular in reruns and DVD issues, fulfilling the creators' desire to develop a program with perennial all-ages appeal.

• S •

SABRINA (AND RELATED SERIES)

***Sabrina and the Groovie Goolies* (1970–1971)**

STUDIO: Filmmation

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATORS: Richard Goldwater, George Gladir, Dan DeCarlo

PRODUCERS: Lou Scheimer, Norman Prescott, Don Christensen

DIRECTORS: Don Townsley, Bill Reed, Lou Zukor, Rudy Larriva

VOICE ACTORS: Jane Webb (Sabrina/Aunt Hilda/Aunt Zelda); Howard Morris, Larry Storch, and Larry Mann (Additional characters)

***Sabrina, the Teenage Witch* (1971–1973)**

STUDIO: Filmmation

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATORS: Richard Goldwater, George Gladir, Dan DeCarlo

PRODUCERS: Lou Scheimer, Norman Prescott, Don Christensen

DIRECTORS: Don Townsley, Bill Reed, Lou Zukor, Rudy Larriva

VOICE ACTORS: Jane Webb (Sabrina/Aunt Hilda/Aunt Zelda); Howard Morris, Larry Storch, and Larry Mann (Additional characters)

***Sabrina, Superwitch* (1977–1978)**

STUDIO: Filmmation

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

CREATORS: Richard Goldwater, George Gladir, Dan DeCarlo

PRODUCERS: Lou Scheimer, Norman Prescott, Don Christensen

DIRECTORS: Don Townsley, Bill Reed, Lou Zukor, Rudy Larriva

VOICE ACTORS: Jane Webb (Sabrina/Aunt Hilda/Aunt Zelda); Howard Morris, Larry Storch, and Larry Mann (Additional characters)

***Sabrina* (1999–2001)**

STUDIOS: DIC, Hartbreak, Savage, Pearson

DISTRIBUTORS: Syndicated, ABC, UPN

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Savage Steve Holland, Paula Hart, Andy Heyward, Robby London, Michael Maliani

PRODUCERS: Melissa Joan Hart, Michael Silberkleit, Richard Goldwater

DIRECTOR: Scott Heming

WRITERS INCLUDED: Carter Crocker, John Hoberg, Mike Palleschi, Pamela Pettler

VOICE ACTORS: Emily Hart (Sabrina Spellman), Melissa Joan Hart (Hilda Spellman/Zelda Spellman), Nick Bakay (Salem Saberhagen), Bill Switzer (Harvey Kinkle), Chantal Strand (Gemini “Gem” Stone), Jay Brazeau (Uncle Quigley), David Sobolov (Spooky Jar), Cree Summer (Chloe)

***Sabrina's Secret Life* (2003–2004)**

STUDIO: DIC

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Andy Heyward, Michael Maliani, Claude Raivey, Michael Silberkleit

PRODUCER: Chuck Grimes

DIRECTORS: Pascal Gaugry, Scott Heming

WRITERS INCLUDED: Jean Chalopin, Cal Sides, Emmanuel Hernando

VOICE ACTORS: Britt McKillip (Sabrina Spellman), Maurice LaMarche (Salem Saberhagen), Tifanie Christun (Cassandra), Jane Montfee (Aunt Zelda), Moneca Stori (Aunt Hilda), Bill Switzer (Harvey Kinkle), Vanessa Tomasino (Martiza)

SYNOPSIS: A young apprentice witch humorously makes her way around the world.

COMMENTARY: First introduced in 1962 by Archie Comics, *Sabrina, the Teenage Witch*, as she was originally known, quickly became one of the company's most popular characters. Naturally enough, she ended up becoming an animated character during the 1970s, as a consequence of Filmation bringing most of the company's creations to animation during the decade. First teamed with *The Groovie Ghoolies* (q.v.), Sabrina then went off on her own, in a format that was not too different from that of the comics, given its narrative simplicity, although it was one Filmation found convenient to revive in reruns.

Sabrina achieved visibility with a new generation of fans due to the popularity of the 1996–2003 live-action series *Sabrina, the Teenage Witch*, featuring Melissa Joan Hart in the title role. This led to an animated revival, in which Hart, mother Paula, and sister Emily participated as producers and voice actors, as noted in the credits. The animated series was a prequel to the live show, in which the title character was now a 12-year-old junior high student, necessitating a slight title change. The program followed the standard production line of the era, balancing its humorous and magical context with mandatory prosocial material at the end. After *Sabrina's* 65-episode run ended, the character was resurrected in a 2002 special that served as the basis for *Sabrina's Secret Life*, in which the character was elevated to teenage status (again) and alternated between studying at a normal high school and at Witch Academy to refine her magical craft.

***SAGWA, THE CHINESE SIAMESE CAT* (2001)**

STUDIOS: Sagwa, Industrial FX, CinéGroupe

DISTRIBUTOR: PBS

CREATOR: Amy Tan

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Jacques Pettigrew, George Daugherty, Michel Lemire

PRODUCERS: Leon Arcand, Sophie Chicoine

DIRECTORS: Joseph Jacques, Christian Sarrazin

WRITERS INCLUDED: Alan Silberberg, David Wong

VOICE ACTORS: Holly Gauthier Frankel (Sagwa), Rick Jones (Fu Fu), Jesse Vinet (Sheegwa), Oliver Granger (Dongway), Ellen David (Mama Miao), Arthur Holden (Baba Miao), Neil Shee (Yeh Yeh), Sonja Ball (Nai Nai), Hiro Kanagawa (Magistrate), Khaira Ledeyo (Tai Tai), Kathy Tsoi (Ba Do), Leanne Adachi (Luk Do), Rosa Yee (Huang Do), Rangi Yu (Cook), Russell Yuen (Reader of the Rules)

SYNOPSIS: In 19th-century China, Siamese cat Sagwa and her family live in the house of a local magistrate who is fond of writing ridiculous rules into law.

COMMENTARY: Chinese American author Tan, best known for such books for adults as *The Joy Luck Club*, developed these characters and their setting in a series of children's books. The program had an aggressive educational agenda (not surprising given its distributor), which included a theme song sung in both English and Chinese and live-action wraparound segments exploring aspects of Chinese culture then and now.

SAM AND MAX: FREELANCE POLICE (1997–1998)

STUDIO: Nelvana

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX

CREATOR: Steve Purcell

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Patrick Loubert, Michael Hirsh, Clive Smith, Robert Ross, Gwenn Saunders Eckel

PRODUCER: Jocelyn Hamilton

DIRECTOR: Steve Whitehouse

WRITERS: J. D. Smith, Steve Purcell, Marty Isenberg, Robert Skir, Hugh Duffy, Bob Ardiel, Dale Schott

VOICE ACTORS: Harvey Atkin (Sam), Robert Tinkler (Max), Tracey Moore (The Geek)

SYNOPSIS: Freelance detectives Sam (a dog) and Max (a rabbit) embark on a variety of dangerous assignments.

COMMENTARY: Based on Purcell's comic book series, this was a hip, well-written program that was one of many of its kind deserving of a longer run than it received. Laden with a variety of inside jokes aimed more at adults than children, it was drawn in an amiable, traditionally cartoon style that allowed the show, in line with other programs from its studio, to maintain the graphic ambience of its source while expanding on it to take advantage of the television animation medium. This meant taking on the kind of slapstick Canadian animation studios usually bungle, but in this case, they succeeded with flying colors.

SAMMY (2000)

STUDIOS: Brad Grey, Desert Rat, NBC

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

CREATOR: David Spade

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Brad Grey, Marc Gurvitz, Richard Raynis, Drake Sather, David Spade

DIRECTOR: Jennifer Graves

WRITERS INCLUDED: Justin Adler

VOICE ACTORS: David Spade (Jamie/Sammy), Harland Williams (Todd), Bob Odenkirk (Gary), Andy Dick (Mark), Maura Tierney (Kathy), Julia Sweeney (Marie), Jeffrey Tambor (Steve), Olivia Hack (Lola), Janeane Garofalo (Emily Blake)

SYNOPSIS: Stand-up comedian Jamie achieves success as an actor on a popular sitcom, only to have his long-absent father suddenly reemerge in his life.

COMMENTARY: A vanity project for former *Saturday Night Live* star Spade, who played both the father and the son in this scenario. The fact that this scenario was based in part on Spade's relationship with his own estranged father made it smack much more of realism than fantasy; why the producers bothered to do it as an animated series is anybody's guess. In any event, it lasted for merely two episodes in the summer of 2000 before disappearing as quickly as it arrived on the NBC network schedule.

SAMSON AND GOLIATH (A.K.A. *YOUNG SAMSON*; 1967–1968)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera, Art Scott

DIRECTORS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

WRITERS: Tony Benedict, Walter Black, Dalton Sandifer, Ed Brandt

VOICE ACTORS: Tim Matthieson (Samson); Don Messick, John Stephenson, and Daws Butler (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: Teenager Samson and his dog Goliath can transform into a powerful superhero and a superpowered lion, respectively, whenever trouble looms, chiefly in the form of rampaging monsters.

COMMENTARY: This is the kind of one-dimensionally structured characters and narratives that gave television animation superheroics (to say nothing of the broader multimedia superhero genre) such a bad name in the late 1960s. If the producers had been willing to produce something with more depth to it, it might have succeeded, but they seemed content here to provide simply what their stereotypical audience wanted during that time and nothing else. The program's title was changed to *Young Samson* midway through its only season to avoid confusion with *Davey and Goliath* (q.v.), though it was highly unlikely that any sane viewers would confuse two vastly different shows.

SAMURAI JACK (2001–2004, 2017)

STUDIO: Cartoon Network

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATOR/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Genndy Tartakovsky

PRODUCERS: Dana Ritchey, Kelly Crews

DIRECTORS: Genndy Tartakovsky, Randy Myers, Rob Renzetti, Robert Alvarez, Chris Savino, Bryan Andrews, David Krentz

WRITERS: Paul Rudish, Genndy Tartakovsky, Chris Reccardi, Chris Mitchell, Charlie Bean, Carey Yost, Mike Manley, Mark Andrews, Bryan Andrews, Brian Larsen, Erik Wiese, Aaron Springer, Jim Smith, Don Shank, Darrick Bachman

VOICE ACTORS: Phil LaMarr (Samurai Jack); Mako (Aku); Sab Shimono (Emperor, early episodes); Keone Young (Emperor, later episodes); Grey DeLisle Griffin, Jeff Bennett, Jennifer Hale, Danny Mann, Jennifer Martin, Rob Paulsen, and Kevin Michael Richardson (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: Samurai warrior Jack is pursued through time and space by the evil wizard Aku, who intends to destroy him.

COMMENTARY: One of the most cinematically structured of all television animation programs, with an ambitious widescreen production mode and well-staged action sequences that set even its live-action contemporaries to shame. Tartakovsky's stated intent was to create an animated version of the Japanese action movies he deeply admired, and he succeeded, extending the cinematic style he had previously developed as a director of *The Powerpuff Girls* (q.v.) to considerable effect. As a consequence of the action-oriented focus, the acting here is less forceful and more restrained than it can be in



Genndy Tartakovsky's action-packed magnum opus. Cartoon Network/Photofest © Cartoon Network

other series, which can be a relief at times. The program ended its original production run with its plot elements unresolved; the belated final season succeeded in correcting this and bringing the narrative to a conclusion.

SANJAY AND CRAIG (2013–2016)

STUDIOS: Forest City Rockers, Nickelodeon

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

CREATORS: Jim Dirschberger, Jay Howell, Andreas Trolf

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Will McRobb, Chris Viscardi, Jim Dirschberger, Jay Howell, Andreas Trolf

PRODUCERS: Lisa Thibault Woods, Thurop Van Orman

DIRECTORS: Blake Lemons, Carl Faruolo, Matt Layzell, Tom Parkinson, Madeline Queripel, Tom King, Ryan Crego, Sean Charmatz, Sean Szeles, Mike Bell, Casey Alexander, Toby Jones, Neil Graf, Jim Dirschberger, Jay Howell, Abe Audish, Sarah Olesyk, Bryan Mann, Aminder Dhaliwal, Nick Bachman, Gina Gress

WRITERS: Neil Graf, Blake Lemons, Chris Viscardi, Abe Audish, M. J. Sandhe, Carl Faruolo, Bryan Mann, Jim Shellhorn, Kris Wemberly, Matt Laysell, Tom Parkinson, Andreas Trolf, Madeline Queripel, Jim Dirschberger, Tom King, Ryan Crego, Will McRobb, Greg Araya, Joe Stillman, Sasha Stroman, Sean Charmatz, Chris Viscardi, Dani Michaeli, Sean Szeles, George Gendi, Mike Bell, Scott O'Brien, Howie Perry, Casey Alexander, Zeus Cervas, Nick Bachman, Toby Jones, Nathan Bulmer, Derek Iversen, Aminder Dhaliwal, Grant Falardeau, Josh Engel, Jonny Van Orman, Gina Gress, Sarah Olesyk, Sheela Srinivas, Lauren Palmagiano, Jay Howell, Adam Aseraf, Bryan Caselli, Hunter Cope, Mike Bertino, Katie Crown, Bryon Dockins, Dodge Greenely

VOICE ACTORS: Maulik Pancholy (Sanjay Patel/Booger Johnson), Chris Hardwick (Craig Slithers), Kunal Nayar (Vijay Patel), Grey DeLisle Griffin (Darlene Patel/Sandy Dickson/Scabs Dickson/Brenda Dickson/Debbie Jo Sparkles/Hector's Grandmother), Matt Jones (Hector Flanagan), Nika Futterman (Belle Pepper), Linda Cardellini (Megan Sparkles/Mrs. Flanagan), Tony Hale (Mr. Leslie Noodman), Nolan North (Baby Richard Dickson/Ronnie Slithers/Huggle Bunny/Mr. Flanagan/Maximum Dennis/Chicken Chuck), Chris D'Ella (Remington Tufflips), David Hornsby (Tyson), Tania Gunadi (Sam Lastname), Dolph Lundgren (Himself), John DiMaggio (Penny Pepper/Noodman's Father/Noodman's Grandfather), Eliza Schneider (Grandma Wheezy), Toby Huss (Farmer Larry), Carl Faruolo (PMA Guy), Natasha Lyonne (Chido, early episodes), Pamela Adlon (Chido, later episodes), Fred Tatasciore (Barfy/Sweet Cheeks), Christopher Minz Plasse (Randy Noodman), Thurop Van Orman (Uncle Thurop), Adam DeVine (Raska Boosh), Sam Lavagnino (Mr. Munchie), Michael Leon Wooley (Chill Bill)

SYNOPSIS: In the town of Lundgren, 12-year-old Sanjay Patel and his anthropomorphic pet snake Craig get up to considerable mischief.

COMMENTARY: A hard show to classify. It was presumably intended to be a comedy, but what the jokes are can be hard to understand if you are not in on them. The production style and approach suggest a marriage between surrealism and magic realism in a way that is not common in television animation.

Likewise, the characters can hardly be considered, for the most part, sane: Nearly all of them (save, perhaps, for Belle Pepper) have some sort of psychological issue in their makeup, which they allow to dominate their appearances on the program. Nevertheless, despite a rather blatant obsession with bodily function humor, the program is enjoyable due to the engaging *joie de vivre* the characters bring to their animated lives. While not erasing all of their strangeness by any means, this at least partially redeems the series in the eyes of the viewers enough to get them to keep watching it.

***SANTO BUGITO* (1995–1996)**

STUDIO: Klasky-Csupo

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATOR: Arlene Klasky

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Arlene Klasky, Gabor Csupo

PRODUCERS: Laurence Bachman, Bob Hathcock, Norton Virgien

DIRECTORS: Bob Hathcock, Norton Virgien

WRITERS INCLUDED: Lane Raichert, Michael Merton, Mark Hoffmeier

VOICE ACTORS: Marabina Jaimes (Carmen De La Antchez), Tony Plana (Paco De La Antchez), Charlie Adler (Eaton Woode), George Kennedy (Ralph), William Sanderson (Clem), Michael Stanton (Burt), Joan Van Ark (Amelia), Richard "Cheech" Marin (Lencho), Candi Milo (Rosa), Henry Gibson (Mr. Mothmeyer), David Paymer (Professor)

SYNOPSIS: The anthropomorphic border town of Santo Bugito consists entirely of intelligent insects, many of whom hang out at Carmen's Cocina.

COMMENTARY: A program that combined an unusually sympathetic portrait of its lead characters with a Latin-infused cultural sensibility, both rare in television animation even for its particular time. Unfortunately, it was never able to develop a steady audience, being juggled over several time slots by its network, which opted to end it abruptly at the same time it ended its relationship with Saturday-morning animated fictional programming entirely.

***SATURDAY SUPERCAR* (1983–1985)**

STUDIO: Ruby-Spears

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Joe Ruby, Ken Spears

PRODUCER: Larry Huber

DIRECTORS: Charles Nichols, John Kimball

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Soupy Sales (Donkey Kong), Peter Cullen (Mario), Judy Strangis (Pauline), Frank Welker (Donkey Kong Jr./Q*Mungus/Q*Ball/Q*Dad/Coilee Snake/Ugg/Wrongway/Sam Slick/Monkey Biz Gang Member #1), Bart Braverman (Bones), Bob Sarlatte (Frogger), B. J. Ward (Fanny Frog), Marvin Kaplan (Shellshock "Shelly" Turtle/Sidney), Tex Field, Sr. (Tex), Alan Dinehart (Mac), Robert Ridgely (Pitfall Harry), Noelle North (Rhonda), Kenneth Mars (Quick Claws), Billy Bowles (Q*Bert), Robie Lee (Q*Tee/Q*Val), Julie McWhirter Dees (Q*Bertha/Q*Mom/Viper), Jim Piper (Space

Ace), Nancy Cartwright (Kimberly), Sparky Marcus (Dexter), Peter Renaday (Space Marshall Vaughn), Arthur Burghardt (Commander Borf/Mr. Friendly), Mea Martineau (Katy), David Mendenhall (Joey), Patrick Fraley (Monkey Biz Gang Member #2)

SYNOPSIS: Animated adaptations of seven popular video games—*Donkey Kong*, *Donkey Kong Jr.*, *Frogger*, *Pitfall*, *Q*Bert*, *Space Ace*, and *Kangaroo*.

COMMENTARY: An attempt by Ruby-Spears and CBS to cash in on the success Hanna-Barbera and ABC enjoyed with *The Pac-Man Show* (q.v.). That they overdid it is an understatement. Never mind that video games, at that time especially, were devoid of things like plot and characterization, which forced the animators to invent and modify things at will to create them—each also had to meet the demands of being a limited-run feature rather than a series in and of itself, which diminished their potential as individual attractions. *Frogger* and *Pitfall!* were featured only in the first season, *Space Ace* and *Kangaroo* only in the second.

THE SAVAGE DRAGON (1995–1998)

STUDIOS: Lacewood, Studio B, P3, Universal

DISTRIBUTOR: USA

CREATOR: Erik Larsen

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Duane Capizzi

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Jim Cummings (Paul “Savage” Dragon); Rene Auberjonois, Jeff Bennett, Paul Eiding, Jennifer Hale, Mark Hamill, Dorian Harewood, Tony Jay, Danny Mann, Rob Paulsen, Robert Picardo, Neil Ross, Kath Soucie, Marcelo Tubert, and Frank Welker (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: The half-human, half-reptile Savage Dragon uses his superhuman abilities to deal with the Superfreaks dominating the city of Chicago.

COMMENTARY: Based on Larsen’s popular comic book series and devoutly by the book as most comic book adaptations are. Only 13 episodes were produced, though they remained in circulation on the distributor well beyond the production period.

SAVE-UMS (2003)

STUDIOS: Decode, CBC, Discovery Kids, Dan Clark, C.O.R.E. Toons

DISTRIBUTOR: TLC (United States)

CREATOR: Dan Clark

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Steve DeNure, Neil Court, Beth Stevenson

PRODUCERS: Kim Hyde, John Mariella

DIRECTORS: Doug Masters, Aaron Linton

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Demore Barnes, Stephanie Beard, Carlos Diaz, Aaryn Doyle, Mitchell Eisner, Frank Ferlisi, Jordan Francis, Taija Isen, Alexandra Lai, Bryn McAuley, Marilo Nunez, Peter Oldring, Asa Perlman, Connor Price, Mark Rendall, Dolly Reno, Benny Schilling, Rob Smith, and Allison Vale (Specific roles unknown)

featured, made it a touchstone series for children of the decade—many of whom who, when they chose to become television animators themselves, would echo the series' production model to produce their own straight and satirical educational messages in their series.

The program was divided into subgroups with particular purposes. "Grammar Rock" focused on the particulars of speech. "Bicentennial Rock" explored American history in the lead-up to the American bicentennial in 1976. "Multiplication Rock," "Science Rock," and "Body Rock," among others, were self-explanatory. Also included in the group was an early-1980s series of explanatory features about computers, "Scooter Computer and Mr. Chips." For its 1990s production revival, the series added new entries to established features, as well as such all-new series as "Money Rock," created in the same vein.

The enduring appeal of the series has lasted well beyond its original production mandate, with videos, DVDs, CD compilations, and a stage adaptation of this unique and timeless feature manifesting over the years.

***SCIENCE COURT/SQUIGGLEVISION* (1997–2000)**

STUDIOS: S2N, Burns and Burns

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATORS: Tom Snyder, Bill Braudis

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Tom Snyder, Bonnie Burns

PRODUCERS: Loren Bouchard, Niki Hebert

DIRECTORS: Tom Snyder, Loren Bouchard

WRITERS: Tom Snyder, Bill Braudis, David Dockterman

VOICE ACTORS: Paula Poundstone (Judge Stone), Bill Braudis (Doug Savage), Paula Plum (Alison Krempel), H. Jon Benjamin (Professor Parsons), Fred Stoller (Stenographer Fred), Jennifer Schulman (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: The one and only series made for children produced in Snyder's popular but infamous limited animation "Squigglevision" process. In its initial incarnation, it was what the title said it was: various aspects of science were put on trial to establish whether they were verified truth. After the first season, the project was overhauled, with *Science Court* becoming a shorter segment of a new omnibus program called *Squigglevision* that also included lessons on math and vocabulary. This version of the show lasted for twice as long as the original.

***SCOOBY'S ALL-STAR LAFF-A-LYMPICS* (1977–1979)**

See *All-Star Laff-a-Lympics* (a.k.a. *Scooby's All-Star Laff-a-Lympics*, *Scooby's All Stars*; 1977–1979).

***SCOOBY'S ALL STARS* (1977–1979)**

See *All-Star Laff-a-Lympics* (a.k.a. *Scooby's All-Star Laff-a-Lympics*, *Scooby's All Stars*; 1977–1979).

***SCOOPY DOO, WHERE ARE YOU?* (AND RELATED SERIES)**

Note: Several incarnations of this program format consisted entirely of reruns of earlier versions; these versions of the program have been omitted from this listing.

***Scooby Doo, Where Are You?* (1969–1972)**

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera, Alex Lovy, Lewis Marshall, Iwao Takamoto

DIRECTORS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera, Charles Nichols

WRITERS INCLUDED: Ray Parker, Joe Ruby, Ken Spears, Larz Bourne, Dave Ketchum, Norman Maurer, Dave Lutz, Willie Gilbert

VOICE ACTORS: Don Messick (Scooby Doo/Others), Frank Welker (Fred Jones), Heather North (Daphne Blake), Casey Kasem (Shaggy Rogers), Nicole Jaffe (Velma Dinkley)

***The New Scooby Doo Comedy Movies* (1972–1974)**

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera, Alex Lovy, Lewis Marshall, Iwao Takamoto

DIRECTORS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera, Charles Nichols

WRITERS INCLUDED: Ray Parker, Joe Ruby, Ken Spears, Larz Bourne, Dave Ketchum, Norman Maurer, Dave Lutz, Willie Gilbert

VOICE ACTORS: Don Messick (Scooby Doo/Others), Frank Welker (Fred Jones), Heather North (Daphne Blake), Casey Kasem (Shaggy Rogers), Nicole Jaffe (Velma Dinkley, early episodes), Pat Stevens (Velma Dinkley, later episodes)

***The Scooby Doo/Dynomutt Hour* (1976–1977)**

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: Alex Lovy, Iwao Takamoto

DIRECTOR: Charles Nichols

WRITERS: Norman Mauer, Earl Doud, Jeff Maurer, Lee Orgel, Haskell Barkin, Donald Glut, Orville Hampton, Michael Maurer, Dalton Sandifer, Deidre Starlight

VOICE ACTORS: Don Messick (Scooby Doo/Others), Frank Welker (Fred Jones), Heather North (Daphne Blake), Casey Kasem (Shaggy Rogers), Nicole Jaffe (Velma Dinkley), Daws Butler (Scooby Dum)

***Scooby and Scrappy Doo* (1979–1980)**

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: Alex Lovy, Don Jurwich

DIRECTORS: George Gordon, Ray Patterson, Charles Nichols, Carl Urbano, Oscar Dufau

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Don Messick (Scooby Doo/Others), Frank Welker (Fred Jones), Heather North (Daphne Blake), Casey Kasem (Shaggy Rogers), Pat Stevens (Velma Dinkley, early episodes), Maria Frumkin (Velma Dinkley, later episodes), Lennie Weinrib (Scrappy Doo)

The Richie Rich/Scooby Doo Hour (1980–1982)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: Art Scott, Don Jurwich

DIRECTOR: Ray Patterson

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Don Messick (Scooby Doo/Others), Frank Welker (Fred Jones), Heather North (Daphne Blake), Casey Kasem (Shaggy Rogers), Pat Stevens (Velma Dinkley, early episodes), Maria Frumkin (Velma Dinkley, later episodes), Lennie Weinrib (Scrappy Doo)

The Scooby and Scrappy Doo/Puppy Hour (1982–1983)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: Art Scott, Iwao Takamoto

DIRECTORS: Oscar Dufau, George Gordon, Carl Urbano, John Walker, Rudy Zamora, Bob Goe, Bill Hutten, Tony Love, Don Lusk, Ann Tucker

WRITERS INCLUDED: Tom Ruegger, Jan Green, Alex Lovy, Lewis Marshall, George Singer

VOICE ACTORS: Don Messick (Scooby Doo/Scrappy Doo/Others), Frank Welker (Fred Jones), Heather North (Daphne Blake), Casey Kasem (Shaggy Rogers), Pat Stevens (Velma Dinkley)

The New Scooby Doo Mysteries (1984–1985)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera, Alex Lovy, Lewis Marshall, Iwao Takamoto

VOICE ACTORS: Don Messick (Scooby Doo/Scrappy Doo/Others), Frank Welker (Fred Jones), Heather North (Daphne Blake), Casey Kasem (Shaggy Rogers), Pat Stevens (Velma Dinkley)

The Thirteen Ghosts of Scooby Doo (1985–1986)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

DIRECTORS: Ray Patterson, Art Davis, Oscar Dufau, Tony Love, Don Lusk, Rudy Zamora, Alan Zaslove, Chris Cuddington, Bob Goe, Bill Hutten, Rick Leon, Jay Barby, Irv Spence, Tim Walker

WRITERS INCLUDED: Tom Ruegger

VOICE ACTORS: Don Messick (Scooby Doo/Scrappy Doo), Casey Kasem (Shaggy), Heather North (Daphne), Susan Blu (Flim Flam), Vincent Price (Vincent Van Ghou), Arte Johnson (Weerd), Howard Morris (Bogel)

A Pup Named Scooby Doo (1988–1990)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: Craig Zukowski, Scott Jeralds

DIRECTORS: Ray Patterson, Don Lusk, Craig Urbano

WRITERS INCLUDED: Bill Matheny

VOICE ACTORS: Don Messick (Scooby Doo), Casey Kasem (Shaggy), Christina Lange (Daphne), Kellie Martin (Velma), Carl Stevens (Fred), Scott Menville (Red Herring)

What's New, Scooby Doo? (2002–2006)

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, Warner Brothers

DISTRIBUTOR: WB

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Joseph Barbera, Sander Schwartz

PRODUCERS: Marge Dean, George Doty IV, Jim Krieg, Kathy Page, Ed Scharlach, Chuck Sheetz

DIRECTORS: Russell Calabrese, Jeffrey Gatrall, Scott Jeralds, Tim Maltby, Tom Mazzocco, Swinton Scott III, Chuck Sheetz, Joe Sichta

WRITERS: George Doty IV, James Kreig, Dwayne McDuffie, Ed Scharlach

VOICE ACTORS: Frank Welker (Scooby Doo/Fred), Casey Kasem (Shaggy), Mindy Cohn (Velma), Grey DeLisle (Daphne)

Shaggy and Scooby Doo Get a Clue (2006–2008)

STUDIO: Warner Brothers

DISTRIBUTOR: CW

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Joseph Barbera, Sander Schwartz

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Scott Menville (Shaggy/Dr. Trebla/Agent 4), Frank Welker (Scooby Doo/Agent 3/Agent 13/Menace), Jim Meskimen (Robi/Agent 1/Mark), Casey Kasem (Dr. Albert Shaggleford), Jeff Bennett (Dr. Phineas Phibes/Agent 2/Ricky)

Scooby Doo, Mystery Incorporated (2010–2013)

STUDIO: Warner Brothers

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Sam Register, Jay Bastian, Luke Biers, Finn Arnesen, Tina McCann

PRODUCERS: Mitch Watson, Victor Cook, Spike Brandt, Tony Cervone

DIRECTORS: Curt Geda, Victor Cook, Lauren Montgomery, Doug Murphy

WRITERS: Mitch Watson, Jed Elinoff, Scott Thomas, Michelle Lamoreaux, Robert Lamoreaux, Adam Beechen, Paul Rugg, Mark Banker, John McCann, Roger Eschbacher, Brat Jennett, Derrick J. Wyatt, Bob White, Michael Ryan, Benjamin Townsend, Marly Halpern Graser, Erin Maher, Kathryn Reindl, Jim Krieg, Joe Flaherty, Caroline Farah

VOICE ACTORS: Frank Welker (Scooby Doo/Fred), Matthew Lillard (Shaggy), Mindy Cohn (Velma), Grey DeLisle (Daphne), Lewis Black (Mr. E., a.k.a. Ricky Owens), Linda Cardellini (Marcie "Hot Dog Water" Fleach), Tia Car-

rere (Judy Reeves), Gary Cole (Mayor Fred Jones Sr.), Vivica Fox (Angel Dynamite, a.k.a. Cassidy Williams), Kate Higgins (Mayor Janet Nettles), Udo Kier (Professor Pericles), Tim Matheson (Brad Chiles), Patrick Warburton (Sheriff Bronson Stone), Jennifer Hale (Nova), Clancy Brown (Evil Entity)

***Be Cool, Scooby Doo* (2015–present)**

STUDIO: Warner Brothers

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Sam Register, Jay Bastian, Nicole Rivera, Meghan Bradley

PRODUCERS: Zac Moncrief, Michael Jelenic, Wade Wisinski

DIRECTORS INCLUDE: Shaunt Nigoghossian, Jeff Mednikow, Andy Thom, James Krenzke

WRITERS INCLUDE: Jon Colton Barry, Ken Daly, John Matta, Joe Purdy, Joe Bal-larini, Mary Halpern Graser, Kevin Kramer, Justin Becker, Steve Clemmons, Darren Grodsky, Danny Jacobs, Kevin Fleming, Robert Janas, Tom Konkle, Duane Capizzi, Amy Wolfram, Josie Campbell, Tab Murphy, J. M. DeMatteis

VOICE ACTORS: Frank Welker (Scooby Doo/Fred), Matthew Lillard (Shaggy), Kate Micucci (Velma), Grey DeLisle Griffin (Daphne)

SYNOPSIS: Scooby Doo, a dim-witted and easily scared Great Dane, investigates mysteries, some of supernatural origin, others not, with his human friends Fred, Daphne, Velma, and Shaggy.

COMMENTARY: The longest-lasting franchise in television animation history that was indigenous to the television animation genre and not imported from elsewhere, this simply formatted series has endured far longer than anyone might have expected on the television landscape and gone on to be successful in other popular culture media as well. Despite (or perhaps because of) its limited format, characters, and plotting, it gained immediate popularity in its first incarnation. It kept that up over time, in spite of increasing repetition in its story lines in its various incarnations, among multiple generations of viewers. It has also managed to survive the many mockeries of its obvious limitations in numerous parodies and satires, in television animation and elsewhere, over its existence.

It began simply enough in 1969, with Fred Silverman, the head of daytime programming at CBS, recruiting Hanna-Barbera to help realize a dream project: an adaptation of the old radio mystery program *I Love a Mystery*, cross-bred to a degree with the early-1960s sitcom *The Many Loves of Dobie Gillis*. That program's lead characters would become the models for their counterparts on the animated series, which would air on the network's Saturday-morning schedule. It was originally entitled *Mysteries Five*, which was then changed to *Who's Scared?* The final modification, and the switch to a more comedic emphasis from the proposed dramatic one, came as the result of the CBS board of directors objecting to the direction taken in the original project when it was presented to them, hence the emphasis on Scooby Doo's humorous cowardice, and likewise on the goofy mannerisms and behavior of Shaggy, while Fred, Daphne, and Velma handled the more serious aspects of mystery solving, such as they were. The inevitable perpetrators were inevitably unmasked as people whom the gang had met during the course of the

episode, who would exclaim that they would have gotten away with their misdeeds “if it weren’t for you meddling kids.”

It was a success, and Hanna-Barbera chose, for the most part, not to tinker with it. While a shrewd decision on a financial basis, it prevented the series and its format from trying to expand beyond its original creative focus to assume more depth. As a consequence, the series in its various incarnations, due to its popularity, came to represent the relative lack of creative depth and development in television animation as a whole. This was something other, later television animation programs would have to live down on the way to their own successes and explains why so many of them ended up satirizing Scooby and company in their narratives at one time or another.

Of the various incarnations, some did attempt to advance the format, with mixed success. *The New Scooby Doo Comedy Movies* was perhaps the most successful, integrating a wide variety of guest stars into an expanded version of the original show. *Scooby and Scrappy Doo* introduced Scooby’s miniature nephew, who was his exact opposite; he ended up being the target of the wrath of a whole generation of viewers for no good reason. *The Thirteen Ghosts of Scooby Doo* gave the show weight through the voice and presence of Vincent Price and a series of genuinely effective supernatural settings. *A Pup Named Scooby Doo* reduced the characters to childhood and featured Red Herring, a secondary character who was, obviously, repeatedly wrongfully accused. Following the success of the 2002 live-action feature-film version (in which Scooby was rendered as a CGI character), further animated variations occurred. *What’s New Scooby Doo?* merged the philosophy of the original series with newer elements introduced from the film. *Scooby Doo, Mystery Incorporated* blended a variety of inside jokes drawn from the Hanna-Barbera archives with fully developed mysteries and a largely unnecessary element of soap-opera-styled melodrama. This latter element was jettisoned for the more straightforwardly humorous *Be Cool, Scooby Doo*, which remains in production as of this writing. *Shaggy and Scooby Get a Clue* was an anomaly, portraying Scooby Doo and Shaggy as amiable slackers who inherited the fortune and weaponry of Shaggy’s mad scientist uncle—and therefore earned the wrath of the latter’s nemesis, Dr. Phibes, who schemed futilely to destroy them.

What was supposed to be a short-run project typical of late-1960s Saturday-morning TV instead became a highly successful, visible; and, above all, enduring media franchise, in spite or because of its obvious creative shortcomings. Undoubtedly, it will continue to be so in the future as well.

SEALAB 2020/SEALAB 2021

Sealab 2020 (1972–1973)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCER: Iwao Takamoto

DIRECTOR: Charles Nichols

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Ross Martin (Dr. Paul Williams), John Stephenson (Captain Mike Murphy), Josh Albee (Bobby Murphy), Pamelyn Ferdin (Sally Murphy), Bill Callaway (Sparks), Jerry Dexter (Hall), Ann Jillian (Gail), Ron Pinckard (Ed), Olga James (Mrs. Thomas), Gary Shapiro (Jamie)

***Sealab 2021* (2001)**

STUDIOS: 70-30, Williams Street

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATORS: Adam Reed, Matt Thompson

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Adam Reed, Matt Thompson, Michael Lazzo, Keith Crawford

DIRECTORS: Adam Reed, Matt Thompson, John Miller

WRITERS: Adam Reed, Matt Thompson, Chris Ward

VOICE ACTORS: Harry Goz (Captain Hazel "Hank" Murphy), Erik Estrada (Marco Rodrigo Diaz de Vivar Gabriel Garcia Marquez), Bill Lobley (Jodene Sparks), Brett Butler (Dr. Quentin Quinn), Kate Miller (Debbie DuPree), Ellis Henican (Derek "Stormy" Waters), Chris Ward (Hesh)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: First as tragedy, then as farce. The original *Sealab* series focused on oceanographer Williams (an indigenous man, specifically of the Chinook tribe) heading up an underwater community focused on undersea scientific research. This was typical 1970s television animation fare, pro-environmental to a fault but full of forgettable stories and characters. The second version was far different, being much more adult in nature. It was predicated on the fact that the Sealab crew was forced to permanently live on the craft due to environmental destruction above. Propriety and military discipline were abandoned in favor of ridiculous comic behavior and adult-oriented situations. Unlike other efforts by the same production team to remodel earlier Hanna-Barbera projects in adult form (see *Space Ghost Coast to Coast* under *Space Ghost* and *Dino Boy* and *Harvey Birdman, Attorney at Law*), this project failed because of a poor choice of source material to parody and the general laziness of the writing and directing. These things would also affect later series from the Reed-Thompson team, such as *Archer* (q.v.).

THE SECRET FILES OF THE SPYDOGS (1998–1999)

STUDIO: Saban

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX

CREATOR: Jim Benton

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Jim Benton, Daniel Kletzky, Michael Hack, Eric Rollman

PRODUCERS: Will Meugniot, Mike Joens

DIRECTORS INCLUDED: Will Meugniot

WRITERS INCLUDED: Jim Benton, Michael Ryan

VOICE ACTORS: Micky Dolenz (Ralph/Scribble), Adam West (Dog Zero), Mary Kay Bergman (Mitzy/Mitzy's Owner), Dawnn Lewis (Ayanna), Tress MacNeille (Erin/Rosie), Billy West (Noodle/Chukchi), Jim Ward (Angus/Bitochki/Dahg Chow), Jim Cummings (Von Rabie/Catastrophe), Jess Harnell (Frank/

Sir William), Michael Donovan (Stahl), Kath Soucie (Collar Communicator), Maurice LaMarche (Space Slugs), Ami Dolenz (Oatz Cautere)

SYNOPSIS: The canine members of the Spydogs repeatedly save the world from various kinds of villainy—all without their human masters even noticing.

COMMENTARY: One of the last great Saturday-morning programs, this was a hilariously funny and subtly satirical parody of the espionage genre at one end and the complicated and contradictory relationship between humans and dogs at the other. It benefitted not only from a very original basic concept but also from excellent writing, directing, and voice acting. The leads were very well-drawn-out characters, engaging and sympathetic, drawing us as much as they wanted into their worlds and work while at the same time keeping a paw's distance between the audience and their deeper hidden secrets. Even the villainy, usually stereotypical and overdone in these kind of series, was somewhat unique: It was hard to ignore or entirely forget such figures as Canadian-accented fleas, dim-wittedly sluggish aliens, and witch doctors used by television executives to make the world addicted to the tube! Nor, for that matter, such tactics as parodying *Cops* or doing a full-throttle musical as story lines.

The program deserved far better than the truncated life it led, but Benton, at least, has prospered since its demise, becoming well known through his graphic novel series intended for children, such as *Franny K. Stein* and *Dear Dumb Diary*, which display much of the same offbeat humor featured in *The Secret Files of the Spydogs*.

THE SECRET LIVES OF WALDO KITTY (1975–1976)

STUDIO: Filimation

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

PRODUCERS: Lou Scheimer, Norman Prescott

DIRECTORS: Don Christensen, Rudy Larriva

WRITERS: Bill Danch, Jim Ryan

VOICE ACTORS: Howard Morris (Waldo Kitty/Wetzel/Lone Kitty/Catman/Cat-zan/Robin Cat/Captain Herc), Jane Webb (Felicia/Pronto/Sparrow/Lt. O'Hoo-Ha), Allan Melvin (Tyrone/Mr. Crock/Brennan/Hench Dog/Dr. Moans)

SYNOPSIS: The daydreams of milquetoast kitten Waldo, who places himself in fictional roles that call for the heroism he lacks in real life.

COMMENTARY: The central premise here was borrowed from James Thurber's famed short story "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty," built around the same idea. (The story has been adapted twice as a feature film, neither in an accurate way.) Thurber's estate drew negative attention to the series by suing Filimation for supposedly infringing on its copyright; Filimation responded by retitling the series *The New Adventures of Waldo Kitty* for later off-network syndication. In actuality, the similarity to Thurber was slight, as the studio's approach to the material was less sophisticated than his work. What the program chiefly did was to allow the studio to parody properties it had already adapted to animation, such as *Batman* (q.v.), *Tarzan* (q.v.), and *Star Trek* (q.v.). The most notable element was the portrayal of Waldo, Felicia,

and Tyrone as live-action characters in the framing sequences, switching to animation for Waldo's daydreams.

***SECRET MOUNTAIN FORT AWESOME* (2011–2012)**

STUDIO: Cartoon Network

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATOR: Peter Brownhardt

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Peter Brownhardt, David Smith

PRODUCER: Pernelle Hayes

DIRECTORS INCLUDED: Chris Reccardi

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Peter Brownhardt (Festro/Dingle), Steve Little (Slog), Paul Rugg (Gweelock), Pat Duke (Fart)

SYNOPSIS: The Disgustoids, a quartet of monsters, are exiled from society for their unruly behavior. From their secret headquarters inside a mountain, they plan revenge through the enacting of crazy stunts.

COMMENTARY: Society was right to exile them, for this is the kind of extended dirty joke only a few people could really love. Despite acquiring a cult following and some Emmys for members of the animation crew, it didn't last. The show will likely be remembered less for its own merits than for providing the first appearance of Uncle Grandpa, later the star of his own series (see *Uncle Grandpa*)—the monster quartet had been his opponents in the original pilot film for that show.

***THE SECRET SATURDAYS* (2008–2010)**

STUDIO: PorchLight

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATOR/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Jay Stephens

PRODUCERS: Scott Jeralds, Fred Schaefer

DIRECTORS: Scott Jeralds, David Jay Baker, Vic Dal Chele, Rick Hoberg, Lothell Jones, Steve Jones, Mike Manley, Brandon McKinney, Chuck Patton, Tom Ryder, Christopher Schenck, Scooter Tidwell, Bret Blevins, Paul Harmon, Rafael Navarro, Chuck Drost, Edward Laroche, Rafael Rosado, Francis Barrios, Peter Ferk, Will Sweeney, Mark Howard, Tim Maltby, Chris Berkeley, Todd Waterman, Dave Schwartz, Rhoy Shishido, Shannon Denton, Charlie Grosvenor, Sebastian Montes, Garrett O'Donoghue, Mario Danna Jr., Jennifer Graves, Clint Taylor, Dave Chlystek, Rich Arons

WRITERS: Brandon Sawyer, Laura McCreary, Adam Beechen, Eddie Guzelian, Amy Wolfram, Ross Beeley, Josh Harmon, Scott Elder, Brooks Wachtel, Todd Garfield, Joelle Sellner, Mark Palmer, Andrew Robinson, Henry Gilroy, Alicia Sky Varinaitis, Chris Bowman, Bill Motz, Bob Roth

VOICE ACTORS: Sam Lerner (Zak Saturday/Zak Monday), Phil Morris (Solomon "Doc" Saturday/Dr. Odele/Tibetan Monk #1/Wyatt/Doc Monday), Nicole Sullivan (Drew Blackwell Saturday/Drew Monday), Diedrich Bader (Fiskerton/Dr. Henry Cheveyo/Maboul/Cody/Fiskerton Monday/Dr. Lee), Fred Tatasciore (Komodo/Zon/Dr. Basil Lancaster/Munya/Komodo Monday/Zon Monday/

Eterno), Will Friedle (Doyle Blackwell), Corey Burton (V. V. Argost/Leonidas Van Rook/Bud Harger/Gokul), Jeff Bennett (Dr. Arthur Beeman/Tibetan Monk #2/Ron Bantington), Susan Blakeslee (Dr. Miranda Grey/Rani Nagi), Danny Cooksey (Dr. Paul Cheechoo), Jerry Tondo (Professor Talu Mizuki), Adam Wylie (Ulraj), Brian Stepanek (Agent Epsilon), Scott Menville (Francis), Liliana Mumy (Wadi), Candi Milo (Dr. Pachacutec), Clancy Brown (Dr. David Bara), Jessica DiCicco (Tiacapan), Dee Bradley Baker (Honey Island Swamp Monster/Georgia Pig Man), Kari Wahlgren (Ruby/Abbey Grey), James Sie (Shoji Fuzen), Jess Harnell (Pietro "Piecemeal" Maltese), Rob Paulsen (Baron Finster), Brian George (Michel Grosshomme)

SYNOPSIS: In a world where cryptozoology is a genuine science and creatures of myth are reality, the Saturday family uses their scientific intelligence and superhuman abilities to protect human beings from cryptids and vice versa.

COMMENTARY: The overall concept was intriguing and interesting, but like many others of its ilk, it was ultimately deprived of its interesting elements through being overlaid onto generic, stereotypical action-adventure plotlines. While it is obvious that a considerable amount of effort went into getting the science correct and the animation itself was smoothly timed and flowed well, there seemed to be less effort to create episode story lines independent of each other, instead creating an extended time line that served to benefit the writers' abilities more than the viewers' patience. Given how strongly this program's design style was influenced by such 1960s action programs as *Jonny Quest* (q.v.), it might have been better if the producers had emulated that show's tight self-contained plotting as well.

***SECTAURS* (1985)**

STUDIO: Ruby-Spears

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Joe Ruby, Ken Spears

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Dan Gilvezan (Dargon/Dragonflyer), Peter Renaday (Pinsor/Battle Beetle), Peter Cullen (Mantor/Skito/Toxid), Laurie Faso (Zak/Bitaur), Arthur Burghardt (Spidrax/Spyderflyer), Frank Welker (Skulk/Trancula/Raplor), Neil Ross (Waspax/Wingid)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: This five-episode miniseries was a generic action-adventure project in the *Transformers* (q.v.) mode, with an equally strong debt to H. G. Wells's *The Island of Dr. Moreau*. The once-tranquil planet of Symbion played host to a lab experiment from which emerged the villainous insect mutants known as the Terror Troops. The title characters were created by the same team of scientists to get rid of the Terror Troops. So much for the plot of this one.

***THE 7D* (2014–2016)**

STUDIO/DISTRIBUTOR: Disney

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Tom Ruegger

PRODUCERS: Tom Warburton, Louis J. Cuck

DIRECTORS: Alfred Gimeno, Charles Visser, Jeff Gordon, Tom Warburton

WRITERS: Paul Rugg, Randy Rogel, John McCann, Tom Ruegger, Sherri Stoner, Roger Eschbacher, Deanna Oliver, Craig Shemin, Shea Fontana, Charles Howell IV, Cooper Sweeney, Lisa Arch, Gene Grillo, Blake Larson, Dean Batali, Mark Drop, Tom Ropelewski, Tom Rodgers, Sindy Boveda Spackman, Michael Loprete, Brad Rozman

VOICE ACTORS: Bill Farmer (Doc/Sir Yipsalot), Kevin Michael Richardson (Happy), Maurice LaMarche (Grumpy), Billy West (Bashful), Scott Menville (Sneezy), Stephen Stanton (Sleepy), Dee Bradley Baker (Dopey/Squire Peckington/Giselle), Leigh Allyn Baker (Queen Delightful/Snazzy Shazam), Paul Rugg (Lord Starchbottom), Kelly Osbourne (Hildy Gloom), Jess Harnell (Grim Gloom), Whoopi Goldberg (Magic Mirror), Jay Leno (Crystal Ball), Wallace Shawn (Not So Magic Mirror), Nancy Cartwright (Goldilocks), Jim Cummings (Roar), Michael McKean (Uncle Humidor), Rob Paulsen (Cobby/Finders Keeper), Cheri Oteri (Ginger Snaps), Jeff Bennett (Jack Flashback), Kelly Ward (Kittens), Jimmy Weldon (Woopy Doopty Schmoodely Duck), Debbie Reynolds (Grandmommers Whimsical), Deanna Oliver (Tangy), Sherri Stoner (Sweetie), Corey Burton (Lord Grudgemudger), Amy Sedaris (Nocturna), Petros Papadakis (King of Echoes), James Belushi (Coach Coachy), Phil Hendrie (Ranger Dirk Dumphrey), George Takei (Dr. Sweet Tooth), Jay Mohr (King Groucherooney), Tress MacNeille (Ginorma), Candi Milo (Baroness Bonbon), Ozzy Osbourne (Duke of Drear), Sharon Osbourne (Duchess of Drear)

SYNOPSIS: The 7D are the last line of defense for the kingdom of Jollywood when it is threatened by a variety of major and minor troublemakers, notably the magically empowered but incompetent Glooms.

COMMENTARY: An extremely hilarious comedy that is undeniably one of the best of its kind for its decade. It manages to be funny without insulting its viewers'



The designated protectors of the kingdom of Jollywood. Pretty intimidating, aren't they? Disney Channel/Photofest © Disney Channel

intelligence or trafficking in lowbrow or dirty material once, which is a feat in and of itself for its time period. Executive producer Ruegger, previously responsible for such hits as *Animaniacs* (q.v.) and *Tiny Toon Adventures* (q.v.), continued the cleverly funny and musical vein he had mined there, with the aid of confederates from those shows among the writers, directors, and actors. Everyone on-screen and off in this venture knows what their part is and plays it well, with a sense of being truly in on the joke, which the on-screen results demonstrate. This is the kind of program that aspiring television animation producers should study closely in order to produce the genre at its most effective. Its success is particularly important, as it demonstrates that, while television animation in the 21st century has become factionalized to appeal to distinct and different audiences, the most creatively successful programs continue to be ones that can appeal to a wide audience with the kind of infectious charm possessed by this series. Although production has now ended, one hopes the studio will continue to circulate it on its various media channels for many years to come. It deserves the chance to endure among multiple generations of viewers in the future.

SEVEN LITTLE MONSTERS (2000)

STUDIOS: Nelvana, Treehouse

DISTRIBUTOR: PBS

CREATOR: Maurice Sendak

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Maurice Sendak, John Carls, Michael Hirsh, Clive Smith, Scott Byer, Tom Pong, Martin Eloraga

PRODUCERS: Tracey Leach, Susie Grondin

DIRECTORS: Neil Affleck, Lynn Reist, Glenn Sylvester

WRITERS INCLUDED: Kim Thompson, Jeph Loeb

VOICE ACTORS: Sean Cullen (Four/Five/Seven), Dwayne Hill (Three), Debra McGrath (Mom), Colin Mochrie (Two), Michele Scarabelli (Six), Joanne Vanicola (One)

SYNOPSIS: The Seven Little Monsters live with their elderly gypsy-like mother at number 1234567 Chestnut Street.

COMMENTARY: A series based on a children's book series by Sendak and, based on the mandate of its distributor, focused on educational learning concerns for young children. The seven monsters were distinguished by their personalities, prominent body parts (nose, wings, and detachable head in three of them), and particular quirks (number 5, for example, had a soft drink addiction). The program aired as a 15-minute segment of PBS's "Bookworm Bunch" and featured a theme song performed by the Barenaked Ladies.

SHADOW RAIDERS (1998)

See *War Planets* (a.k.a. *Shadow Raiders*; 1998).

SHAGGY AND SCOOPY DOO GET A CLUE (2006–2008)

See *Scooby Doo, Where Are You?* (and related series).

SHAZZAN! (1967–1969)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera, Lewis Marshall

DIRECTORS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera, Charles Nichols

WRITERS: Tom Dagenais, Sloan Nibley, Walker Black, William Lutz

VOICE ACTORS: Barney Phillips (Shazzan), Janet Waldo (Nancy), Jerry Dexter (Chuck), Don Messick (Kaboobie)

SYNOPSIS: Teenaged twins Chuck and Nancy discover a magic ring that transports them to the era of the Arabian Nights and earns them the friendship and protection of Shazzan, an enormous but genial genie.

COMMENTARY: A typical late-1960s animated series, long on concept and design but devoid of plot, characterization, and competent execution. The stories took a long time to get going and stopped cold as soon as Shazzan was summoned, for he was infallible, with no weaknesses. (CBS executive Fred Silverman, who commissioned the show, said so himself after the fact.) All that could really be done with the idea was slog through 18 episodes with two 11-minute segments each, and then it was justly put out of its misery.

SHEEP IN THE BIG CITY (2000)

STUDIOS: Curious Pictures, Cartoon Network

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATOR/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Mo Willems

PRODUCERS: Kris Greengrove, Mr. (Tom) Warburton

DIRECTORS: Mr. (Tom) Warburton, Mike DeSeve, Maurice Joyce, Sue Perrotto, Karen Villareal

WRITERS: Mo Willems, Joey Mazzarino, David Wain

VOICE ACTORS: Kevin Seal (Sheep/General Specific/Ranting Swede), James Godwin (Farmer John/Private Public), Ken Schatz (Narrator/Ben Plotz), Mo Willems (Angry Scientist), Stephanie D'Abruzzo (Lady Richington), Christine Walters (Wonderful Boy)

SYNOPSIS: After escaping from Farmer John's farm, a sheep hides out from his pursuers within the confines of the Big City.

COMMENTARY: A weirdly off-kilter show with a particularly nonsensical style of humor that tended to appeal more to adults than to children, which might explain why it didn't last long beyond the 26 episodes produced in its original run. Yet it was enjoyable enough for its wordplay alone—characters such as Plot Device, Angry Scientist, and the Ranting Swede were exactly what their names implied they were. Although this program didn't last long, Willems has since used the particularly singular style of nonsense he developed here to launch a highly successful career as a children's book author and illustrator, with such books as the *Elephant and Piggie* and *Knuffle Bunny* series, among others.

SHELLEY DUVALL'S BEDTIME STORIES (1992)

STUDIOS: Think Entertainment, MCA, Universal

DISTRIBUTOR: Showtime

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Shelley Duvall

PRODUCERS: Carol Davies, Art Leonardi, Jim Wheeler, Courtney Conte

DIRECTORS: Art Leonardi, Courtney Conte, Jeff Stein

WRITERS: Shelley Duvall, Carol Davies

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: Beginning with 1982's *Faerie Tale Theatre*, actress-turned-producer Duvall achieved a considerable amount of success with adapting folk and fairy tales for contemporary children's audiences with the aid of highly visible actors and filmmakers involved in the production of episodes. *Bedtime Stories* expanded this idea to animation, with the intention of adapting obscure children's book texts to the moving media. Duvall hosted the program on a set that resembled an illustration from a pop-up storybook, although her tendency toward condescension to the audience weakened these segments. As with Duvall's earlier projects, high-profile celebrities were involved: The episodes were narrated by the likes of Ringo Starr, Bette Midler, Jean Stapleton, Dudley Moore, Rick Moranis, Bonnie Raitt, Michael J. Fox, Christian Slater, Sissy Spacek, Martin Short, John Candy, James Earl Jones, Steve Martin, Candice Bergen, Charles Grodin, Billy Crystal, Rhea Perlman, and Mary Steenburgen.

SHE-RA: PRINCESS OF POWER (1985)

STUDIOS: Filmation, Mattel, Group W

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Lou Scheimer

DIRECTORS: Gwen Wetzler, Lou Kachivas, Bill Reed, Marsh Lamore, Ed Friedman, Tom Sito, Richard Trueblood, Ernie Schmidt, Tom Tataranowicz, Steve Clark, Mark Glamack, Bob Arkwright, Bill Nunes

WRITERS: Larry DiTillio, Bob Forward, Steven Fisher, Michael Walker, Mike Chain, Philip Kassel, Michael Utvich, Francis Moss, J. Michael Straczynski, Robert White, Drew Lawrence, Robert Lamb, Lee Yuro, Linda Yuro, Chris Weber, Leslie Wilson, Don Heckman, Kathryn Brenner, Joseph Botsford, Carol Baxter, Gene Ayers, Karen Willson, Phil Harnage, Barbara Hambly, Durnford King, Coslough Johnson, J. Brynne Stephens, Frank Becker, Denis Higgins, J. Larry Carroll, Arthur Nadel

VOICE ACTORS: Melendy Britt (Princess Adora/She-Ra/Madam Raxx/Frosta/Others), George DiCenzo (Hordak), Linda Gary (Castaspella/Glimmer/Shadow Weaver/Catra), John Erwin (Broom/Prince Adam/He-Man), Erik Gunden (Kowl/Mantenna/Leech), Alan Oppenheimer (Skeletor), Erika Scheimer (Imp), Lou Scheimer (Lighthope/Spirit/Swift Wind/Horde Soldiers/Loo-Kee/Horde Prime/Sorrowful the Dragon/Others)

SYNOPSIS: Adora, the twin sister of Prince Adam of Eternia, uses her magical Sword of Protection to transform into She-Ra, the most powerful woman in the universe, to defend herself and her friends against the evil Horde.

COMMENTARY: The successor to *He-Man and the Masters of the Universe* (q.v.) has been criticized for its toy brand origins and its liberal borrowing from its predecessor, but an actual viewing of the program reveals a series that was equal to (and, in some ways, superior to) the program that came before it. It was particularly notable for its lead character, a woman of sound mind, highly resourceful, and possessing physical and moral strength in both of her identities. In her regular displays of power and agency, she was extremely unlike the majority of the female characters who had preceded her and clearly pointed the way for numerous strong females, in both comic and dramatic incarnations, in the genre. As with *He-Man*, the individual episode quality was hit and miss, with some working better than others. At its best, however, it was an extremely powerful action-adventure series, with a subtle, nondidactic educational undercurrent running beneath and complementing the action-adventure component. A landmark program not only for the exceptional skill with which it was produced but also for producing a powerful and admiral heroine unlike any before her and still unique among all that would come to follow in her path.

***SHERLOCK HOLMES IN THE 22ND CENTURY* (1999–2001)**

STUDIOS: DIC, Scottish Television Enterprises, Tribune Media

DISTRIBUTORS: FOX (1999–2000), Syndicated (2001)

CREATOR: Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Andy Heyward, Robby London, Michael Maliani, Elizabeth Partyka

PRODUCERS: Judy Reilly, Youngmee Kim, Thom Kohley

DIRECTORS: Scott Heming, Robert Brousseau

WRITERS: Patricia Allee, Jules Dennis, Janis Diamond, Benjamin Hurst, Len Janson, Katie Kuch, Randy Rogel, Frank Santopadre, Sheryl Scarborough, Barbara Slade, Matt Uitz, David Villaire, Phil Harnage

VOICE ACTORS: Jason Gray Stanford (Sherlock Holmes), John Payne (Dr. John Watson), Akiko Morrison (Inspector Beth Lestrade), Jennifer Copping (Deirdre), Richard Newman (Professor James Moriarty), Ian Corlett (Martin Fenwick), William Samples (Chief Inspector Charles Greyson), Jo Beates (Newscaster), Viv Leacock (Wiggins)

SYNOPSIS: Following his demise at Switzerland's Reichenbach Falls, master detective Sherlock Holmes is brought back to life in a futuristic London by scientist Sir Edmund Hargreaves and Scotland Yard inspector Beth Lestrade, the descendent of Holmes's police acquaintance, who has become the trustee of his body and legacy. Hargreaves has been falsely accused of resurrecting Holmes's enemy Professor Moriarty, now revived and creating mischief again, which necessitates the resurrection of Holmes, as well.

COMMENTARY: The man who is arguably the world's most famous fictional detective and among the world's most well-known fictional characters began his life in the novel *A Study in Scarlet*, first published in *Beeton's Christmas Annual* in 1886. However, he did not achieve a steady following until his doctor-turned-author creator—who had modeled Holmes's deductive

abilities on those of his medical instructor at Edinburgh University—began publishing a series of short stories featuring Holmes and his associate and chronicler Dr. John Watson in the *Strand* magazine soon afterward. So popular was he that, when Doyle killed him off in the 1893 story “The Final Problem,” considerable outrage resulted from the public; Doyle then had to resurrect him in subsequent pieces. In the years since, Holmes’s adventures have been reprinted in multiple editions for multiple audiences (including lavish annotated editions with deep scholarship on the man and his era). Other authors have written further stories about him, while on film a variety of actors, from Basil Rathbone to Robert Downey Jr., embodied him in productions with varying ranges of fidelity to Doyle’s “sacred” original stories. More recently, he has been featured in two dramatic television programs that bring him and Watson into our modern era: the American *Elementary* and the highly acclaimed *Sherlock* from the BBC.

This international production looked forward to these recent series by bringing a revived Holmes into a future era, a not entirely original idea (earlier films had done the same thing) but with interesting touches (the long-deceased Dr. Watson was replaced by an android bearing his name, while among the cases investigated was one involving werewolves from the moon). The program received an Emmy nomination for its network broadcast. After FOX canceled the program, the WB was originally set to add it to its schedule, but this was abandoned because of financial problems at that network; Tribune instead issued the program as a syndicated feature.

SHIMMER AND SHINE (2015–PRESENT)

STUDIOS: Nickelodeon, Guru, Xentrix

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

CREATOR: Farnaz Esnaashari Charmatz

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Farnaz Esnaashari Charmatz, Dave Palmer

PRODUCERS: Ian Murray, Michael Heinz

DIRECTORS INCLUDE: Scott O’Brien, Jay Baker, Dave Cunningham, Lacey Dyer, Carin Anne Anderson, Matt Engstrom, Enrico Santana, David Knott

WRITERS INCLUDE: Sindy Boveda Spackman, Gabriel Pulliam, Whitney Wetta, Jay Baker, Jennifer Bardekoff, Ryan Levin, Dustin Ferrer, Stephanie Simpson, Scott Gray, Brian Swenlin, Nicolle Wright, Jim Nolan, Kevin Hopps, Greg Weisman, Elizabeth Jordan, Francisco Paredes, Sarah Jenkins, Jerome Halligan, Rich Fogel, Melinda LaRose

VOICE ACTORS (American version): Eva Bella (Shimmer), Isabella Cramp (Shine), Alina Foley (Leah), Dee Bradley Baker (Larry/Tala/Nahal/Nazboo/Roya/Rocket), Lisette St. Louis (Leah’s Mom), Blake Bertrand (Zac), Angelina Wahler (Zoe), Maya Le Clark (Gabriella), Lacey Chabert (Zeta the Sorceress), Ariel Winter (Hildy), Maxie McClintock (Angellina), Nikki SooHoo (Princess Samira), Liam Knight (Selina), Jet Jurgensmeyer (Kaz), Andrea Libman (Sissy Starlight), Eric Idle (Captain Rainbow), Kerry Shale (Harold the Helicopter)

SYNOPSIS: Genies-in-training Shimmer and Shine are friends with human being Leah, for whom they grant wishes and help resolve problems.

COMMENTARY: A show that does for genies what *The Fairly Oddparents* (q.v.) did for fairies, despite being aimed at a younger audience and having more of an educational component. The similarities were further reinforced in later episodes, when Leah was transported to the genies' home-world Zahramay Falls, a Fairy World-like place. Here, Leah's neighbor Zac, who had previously been in the dark about the genies' existence, was brought in on the secret and given his own genie. Despite this change and an expansion of the cast to include others (notably Idle's somewhat deranged macaw), the format and the CGI animation largely remained as before.

THE SHIRT TALES (1982–1985)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTORS: NBC (1982–1984), CBS (1984–1985)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCER: Kay Wright, Iwao Takamoto

DIRECTORS: Ray Patterson, George Gordon, Bob Hathcock, Carl Urbano, Rudy Zamora, Bob Goe, Terry Harrison, Bill Hutten

WRITERS INCLUDED: Jan Green, Lew Saw, James Fletcher, Stephan Hickner, Roy Wilson, Jim Simon, Tom Yakutis, Bob Ogle

VOICE ACTORS: Ronnie Schell (Rick Raccoon), Pat Parris (Pammy Panda), Robert Allen Ogle (Digger Mole), Fred Travalena (Bogey Orangutang), Steve Schatzberg (Tyg Tiger), Herb Vigran (Mr. Dinkle), Nancy Cartwright (Kip Kangaroo, 1983–1985)

SYNOPSIS: The Shirt Tales, a group of anthropomorphic animals wearing T-shirts that can display bits of their dialogue on them, do good with a variety of technological tools at their disposal and have an ambivalent relationship with Mr. Dinkle, superintendent of the park where they live.

COMMENTARY: Based on a line of greeting cards from Hallmark, this was a poorly plotted and badly animated series that clearly existed as little more than a journeyman project for its studio. The simplistic nature of the project typified exactly whom the project was intended for, as well as exactly what level of intelligence that particular audience possessed in the eyes of the producers. In all accounts, this was one of the kind of overly cute and simplistic 1980s television animation programs that gave the genre a bad name then and still does to some people today.

THE SHNOOKUMS AND MEAT FUNNY CARTOON SHOW (1995)

STUDIO: Disney

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

CREATOR/PRODUCER: Bill Kopp

DIRECTORS: Daniel de la Vega, Eddy Houchins, Bob Shellhorn, Bob Baxter

WRITERS INCLUDED: Bill Kopp

VOICE ACTORS: Danny Mann (Shnookums, early episodes), Jason Marsden (Shnookums, later episodes), Frank Welker (Meat), Jeff Bennett (Pith Possum/Tex Tinstar), Charlie Adler (Chafe), Corey Burton (Ian/Krusty Rustnuckle),

Jim Cummings ("Tex Tinstar" Narrator), Brad Garrett (Commissioner Stress/Wrongo), Jess Harnell (Floyd the Rattler/Lieutenant Tension), Steve Mackall (Husband), Tress MacNielle (Wife), April Winchell (Doris Deer), Patric Zimmerman (Obediah the Wonder Raccoon)

SYNOPSIS: An anthology series with three components: (1) the feuding cat and dog duo Shnookums and Meat, (2) incompetent anthropomorphic superhero Pith Possum, and (3) dense western lawman Tex Tinstar.

COMMENTARY: Series creator Kopp had previously teamed with Savage Steve Holland to create the successful *Eek! the Cat* (q.v.) and tried to continue that show's wacky slapstick style here, but he and his colleagues instead fell flat on their faces from the first episode and never recovered. It wasn't that they weren't trying to be funny at all—there was obviously effort in that direction. However, each of the components was in and of itself very derivative of formats and ideas that dated back to the theatrical animation era, and Kopp was unable to do anything truly new and unique with any of them. Despite being part of Disney's daily syndicated mill, it aired only once a week (typically on Mondays), and therefore, unlike the other Disney syndicated series, only a small number of episodes (13) were produced, with some of the title characters' adventures being imports from their earlier existence on *Marsupilami* (q.v.).

***SID THE SCIENCE KID* (2008–2013)**

STUDIO: Jim Henson

DISTRIBUTOR: PBS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Brian Henson, Lisa Henson, Halle Stanford, Bradley Zweig

PRODUCER: Chris Pfourde

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS INCLUDED: Bradley Zweig

VOICE ACTORS: Drew Massey (Sid), Julianne Buescher (May/Grandma, early episodes), Victor Yerrid (Gerald/Mort), Alice Dinnean Vernon (Gabriela/Alice), Donna Kimball (Susie/Grandma, later episodes/Zeke), America Ferrera (Dr. Rosalind Cordova)

SYNOPSIS: Inquisitive young Sid explores the worlds of science with the aid of family, friends, and teachers.

COMMENTARY: A well-produced and innovatively structured show that dealt with various scientific issues in an evolving, thoughtful, and informative fashion. The production method was equally innovative, involving CGI animation combined with motion-capture technology that served as the basis for the characters' facial and body movements. The program received several Emmy nominations during its run, as well as a Genesis Award for a well-structured and nondidactic episode involving a tree stump.

***SIEGFRIED AND ROY: MASTERS OF THE IMPOSSIBLE* (1996)**

STUDIOS: DIC, Feld

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Andy Heyward, Robby London, Michael Maliani
 PRODUCERS: Ron Myrick, Sean Roche, Ritza Brown, Andre Djaoui, Sergio Gobbi
 DIRECTOR: Ron Myrick

WRITERS INCLUDED: Sean Roche

VOICE ACTORS: Andrew Hawkes (Siegfried Fischbacher), Jeff Bennett (Roy Horn),
 Charlie Adler (Loki), Barry Pearl (Rumpelstiltskin)

SYNOPSIS: Magicians Siegfried and Roy attempt to save the mythical land of Sarmoti from conquest by the villainous Titans.

COMMENTARY: A popular attraction for many years in Las Vegas, Siegfried and Roy perform a magic act featuring wild animals, elaborate costumes, and dazzling special effects. This might have been enough for a live audience, but in transferring the duo to animation, DIC obviously felt the need to put them into more of a traditional action-hero mode. This attempt at improvement didn't do enough: the series expired after four episodes, which could also be combined into an 80-minute feature film if so desired.

For an entirely different but equally unsuccessful later attempt to extend the duo's brand into animation, see *Father of the Pride*.

SILVERHAWKS (1986)

STUDIOS: Ruby-Spears, Lorimar-Telepictures

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Arthur Rankin Jr., Jules Bass

PRODUCER: Lee Dannacher

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS INCLUDED: Peter Lawrence, Lee Schneider

VOICE ACTORS: Bob McFadden, Earl Hammond, Larry Kenney, Maggie Jakobson,
 Peter Newman, Doug Preis, and Adolph Caesar (Specific roles unknown)

SYNOPSIS: The half-human, half-metal Silverhawks, so named for their birdlike appearance, attempt to thwart the efforts of alien gangster Mon Star to control the galaxy.

COMMENTARY: A toy brand tie-in series much like the same studio's earlier *Thundercats* (q.v.), though produced with slightly more humor and a bit more self-awareness of the fact that it was selling toys. Nonetheless, characters, settings, and even the prosocial epilogues were extensively derivative of those of other series, with little in the way of novelty provided.

SILVER SURFER (1998)

STUDIOS: FOX, Saban, Marvel

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX

CREATORS: Stan Lee and Jack Kirby (character); Larry Brody (series format)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Stan Lee, Avi Arad, Eric Rollman, Matthew Edelman

PRODUCER: Roy Allen Smith

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS INCLUDED: D. C. Fontana, Harlan Ellison, Jeffrey Knokey, Michael Gregory, Alan Swayze, Andrea Lawrence, Brooks Wachtel, Christopher Kane, Dallas Barnes, Larry Brody, Mark Hoffmeier

VOICE ACTORS: Paul Essiembre (Norrin Radd/Silver Surfer), Camilla Scott (Shalla Bal), Colin Fox (Uaru the Watcher), Aron Tager (Master of Zenn-La), James Blendick (Galactus), Gary Crawford (Thanos)

SYNOPSIS: After being exiled from his home planet, alien Norrin Radd (a.k.a. the Silver Surfer) attempts to prevent Earth from falling into the trap of endless warfare engulfing the rest of the galaxy.

COMMENTARY: Introduced in a 1965 issue of *The Fantastic Four*, the Silver Surfer was developed by Lee and Kirby as a response to the growing level of opposition emerging to the then-raging war in Vietnam, in which the United States was deeply involved. The surfer received his own comic in 1968, but it was received with such a polarizing response that it ceased publication in 1970, despite developing a strong fan base. He has been periodically revived since then, with this animated program part of that process. It was a well-produced series, with skilled animation and scripts from such top-drawer sci-fi/fantasy figures as Fontana and Ellison bolstering its appeal. While it was initially received well, it ended abruptly after only eight episodes, when Marvel was forced to suspend production on all of its animated series as a result of an outside business dispute that was driving the company toward bankruptcy. Financial security would become a problem for the company after this point until Marvel was purchased by Disney in the 2010s.

SILVERWING (2003)

STUDIO: Bardel

DISTRIBUTOR: Disney (United States, 2006)

CREATOR: Kenneth Oppel

PRODUCER: Kathy Schoch

DIRECTOR: Keith Ingham

WRITERS: Gary Jones, Richard Side

VOICE ACTORS: Bill Switzer (Shade), Sharon Alexander (Marina), Michael Dobson (Goth/Atlas), Richard Newman (Throbb/Zephyr/Brutus), Pam Hyatt (Frieda), Shirley Millner (Bathsheba), Randall Carpenter (Ariel/Penelope), Ian Corlett (Mercury/Sirocco), Matt Hill (Chinook), Lee Tockar (Hector/Luger/Romulus), Richard Cox (Orestes/Remus), Candus Churchill (Ursa)

SYNOPSIS: A "great battle" has been initiated among birds and animals to determine territorial and hunting rights. The bats have been ostracized by the other animals for refusing to take sides in the battle. A young bat named Shade unknowingly violates their punishment and attempts to avoid being killed for it.

COMMENTARY: A fairly accurate adaptation of Oppel's children's novel, spread out over the course of 13 episodes, despite minor variations and amendments to the source text. The episodes were structured into three miniseries: episodes 1–5 were labeled *A Glimpse of the Sun*; 6–9, *Towers of Fire*; and 10–13, *Redemption*. The program conducted its affairs well without stumbling and therefore stands as a high point in the often creatively checkered world of Canadian television animation.

THE SIMPSONS (1990–PRESENT)

STUDIOS: Gracie, 20th Century Fox

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX

CREATOR: Matt Groening

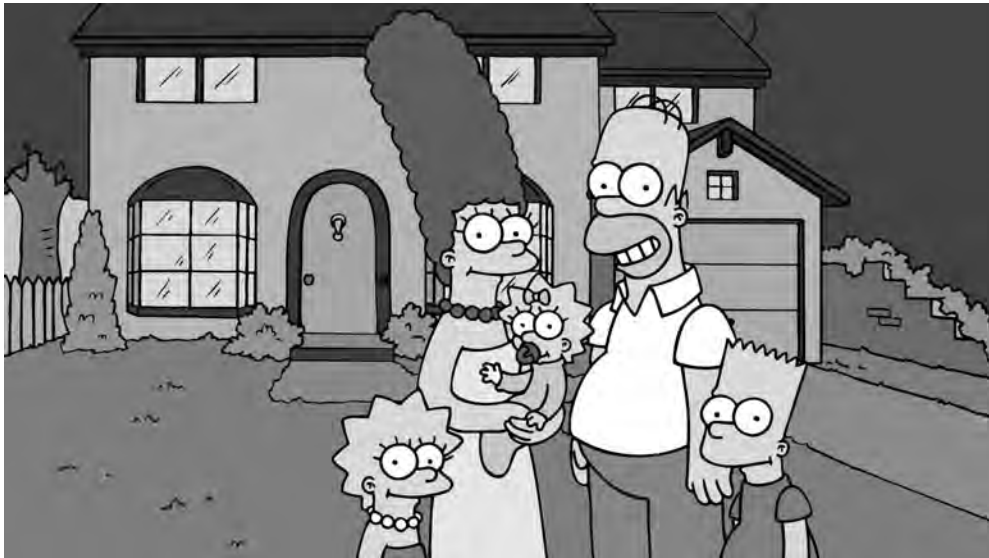
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS INCLUDE: James L. Brooks, Matt Groening, Sam Simon, George Meyer, David Mirkin, Bill Oakley, Josh Weinstein, Mike Scully, Al Jean, Mike Reiss

PRODUCERS INCLUDE: Jace Richdale, Richard Appel, Rob Lazebnik, Matt Selmán, Richard Raynis, Michael Schoenbrun, Jon Vitti, John Swartzwelder, Conan O'Brien, J. Michael Mendel, Joseph Boucher, Richard Sakai, Frank Mula, David Sacks, Bill Schultz, Mike Wolf, David Silverman, Paul Germain, Margot Pipkin

DIRECTORS INCLUDE: David Silverman, Wesley Archer, Rich Moore, Mark Kirkland, Jim Reardon, Brad Bird, Jeffrey Lynch, Carlos Baeza, Susan Dietter, Swinton Scott III, Steven Dean Moore, Mike Anderson, Dominic Polcino, Bob Anderson, Pete Michels, Neil Affleck, Milton Gray, Mark Ervin, Matthew Nastuk, Nancy Kruse, Michael Marcantel, Chuck Sheetz, Jan Kameron, Lauren MacMullan, Michael Polcino, Lance Kramer, Raymond Persi, Rob Oliver, Ralph Sosa

WRITERS INCLUDE: Al Jean, Mike Reiss, John Swartzwelder, Jon Vitti, Sam Simon, Jay Kogen, Wallace Wolodarsky, Matt Groening, Jeff Martin, George Meyer, Ken Levine, David Isaacs, David Stern, Conan O'Brien, Bill Canterbury, Dan McGrath, Frank Mula, Bill Oakley, Josh Weinstein, Greg Daniels, Jennifer Crittenden, Jonathan Collier, David Cohen, Penny Wise, Mike Scully, Ken Keeler, Richard Appel, Brent Forrester, Steve Tompkins, Dan Greaney, Rachel Pulido, Ron Hauge, Ian Maxtone Graham, Donick Cary, Steve O'Donnell, Ned Goldreyer, Joshua Sternin, Jeffrey Ventimilla, Larry Doyle, Brian Scully, Matt Selmán, Tim Long, Tom Martin, Julie Thacker, Carolyn Omine, John Frink, Don Payne, Joel Cohen, Bob Bendetson, Deb Lacusta, Dan Castelláneta, Dana Gould, Andrew Kreisberg, Marc Wilmore, Michael Price, Brian Kelley, Kevin Curran, J. Stewart Burns, Bill Odenkirk, Daniel Chun, Stephanie Gillis, Billy Kimball

VOICE ACTORS: Dan Castelláneta (Homer Simpson/Krusty the Clown/Abraham "Grandpa" Simpson/Mayor Joe Quimby/Others), Julie Kavner (Marge Simpson/Patty Bouvier/Selma Bouvier), Nancy Cartwright (Bart Simpson/Nelson Munz/Kearney/Ralph Wiggum/Others), Yeardley Smith (Lisa Simpson), Hank Azaria (Apu Nahasapeemapetilon/Moe Szyslak/Police Chief Clancy Wiggum/Dr. Nick Riviera/Professor John Frink/Others), Harry Shearer (Mr. Charles Montgomery Burns/Principal Seymour Skinner/Ned Flanders/Waylon Smithers/Otto/Others), Marcia Wallace (Mrs. Krabappel), Pamela Hayden (Milhouse Van Houten/Others), Phil Hartman (Troy McClure/Lionel Hutz/Others), Tress MacNeille (Agnes Skinner/Others), Maggie Roswell (Maude Flanders/Others), Kelsey Grammer ("Sideshow Bob" Terwilliger), Russi Taylor (Martin Prince/Others), Doris Grau (Lunchlady Doris), Frank Welker (Various characters), Karl Wiedergott (Various characters)



You know who they are. Fox Network/Photofest © Fox Network

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: This tart, rebellious, and often hilarious sitcom is unquestionably the longest-running animation series in television history (or of television comedy series in any form), as well as arguably being the most influential on the creative evolution and development of the entire genre of television animation after 1990. From its beginning, it has been a program with a tenacious creative drive, an aggressively satirical sense of humor, and a clever juxtaposition of highbrow and lowbrow comedic elements that was unique when it debuted and remains so now, in spite of the increasingly lackluster episodes that dominate the current edition of the program. While the title family remains to many the epitome of the so-called “dysfunctional” family, there is a considerable level of appeal and warmth in their personalities, together and separately, that calls into question the true meaning of that arbitrary label. Likewise, the vast supporting cast contains many absurd examples of Dickensian self-delusion and recklessness that have gained attention and appeal of their own over the years, further bolstering the program’s success. But the program might not have evolved and become as successful as it did were it not first broadcast on a relatively young and inexperienced network willing and able to take a chance on it.

It started humbly in 1987, when producer James L. Brooks recruited Oregon-born cartoonist Matt Groening to contribute animation sequences to a variety series starring Tracey Ullman. Originally, they were to have featured characters from Groening’s comic strip *Life in Hell*, but Groening chose instead to focus on an original concept, albeit one developed largely at the last minute. Despite the fact that the animated segments were only a couple of minutes long, the Simpson family—quite unlike any other depicted in animation prior to this time—soon developed a following independent of the series in which they were featured. The logical next step was to give the

characters their own program, which debuted in January 1990, preceded by a Christmas special the previous December.

Despite a rocky start, due to an initially conflicted relationship between the members of the production staff, the program soon became a success. Its initial and enduring appeal was based on the fact that it was not interested in being conventional: It turned clichés on their head repeatedly, did aggressive and confrontational parodies of pop culture past and present, and featured characters who were far more outspoken and countercultural than any that had previously appeared in television animation. This created as much controversy as it did popularity initially for the series, but this only served to prime the program's appeal and encourage the writers and directors to continue ever onward. The episodes produced during the program's first decade in particular are among the most creatively and technically ambitious—and mostly successful—episodes of television animation ever produced. This reflects how effective the genre can be when not restrained by creative or economic concerns. All of the elements involved in the production of the series congealed to create a memorable product in every aspect. That the program radically challenged and changed previously firmly ingrained attitudes toward plotting, characterization, joke writing, musical composition, and technical layout is, in retrospect, undeniable. The influence of the series is subtle but widespread; it is hard to imagine any of the innovations in these areas after 1990 happening as they did without *The Simpsons* as a precedent. This is a series that literally changed everything about television animation.

Continued production of the series, particularly in the years since a successful feature-film version was produced in 2002, has dimmed the glow of the program somewhat. The later generation of program writers, in particular, have tended to stay closer to the tried-and-true elements first refined by their more-reckless predecessors rather than going their own creative way, and the series has suffered due to this fact. However, that cannot in any way obscure what this program has achieved over the totality of its run. This series encouraged more multifaceted attitudes and standards toward technical production, direction, writing, and acting (Smith's perennially underrated but frequently excellent portrayal of Lisa Simpson deserves particular praise here) and set newer, better, and higher standards for at least one generation of television animators to aspire to. The brilliant, unprecedented, and unparalleled importance of *The Simpsons* will remain secure wherever in the world it is aired.

SINBAD JR. (1960, 1965)

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, Sam Singer, American International Television

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Tim Matheson (Sinbad Jr.), Mel Blanc (Salty)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: Presumably the son of the famed mariner from *The Arabian Nights*, this Sinbad was an honest sailor who drew superpowers from a magic belt he wore. Salty was his parrot sidekick and ended up with most of the good dialogue. The initial episodes were produced by the Sam

Singer Studio and had originally been slated for release by the Trans-Arts Company, but the deal fell through before this occurred. Hanna-Barbera produced the remainder of the episodes, with the final release including episodes produced by both studios.

***SIT DOWN, SHUT UP* (2009)**

STUDIOS: Tantamount, ITV, Adelaide, 20th Century Fox, Columbia

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX

CREATOR: Mitchell Hurwitz

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Mitchell Hurwitz, Josh Weinstein, Eric Tannenbaum, Kim Tannenbaum, Julie Meldal Johnsen

PRODUCERS: J. Michael Mendel, Claudia Katz

DIRECTORS: Dwayne Carey Hill, Raymie Muzquiz, Frank Marino, Stephen Sandoval, Ray Claffey, Crystal Chesney Thompson, Peter Avanzino

WRITERS: Mitchell Hurwitz, Jim Vallely, Alex Herschlag, Michael Colton, John Aboud, Aisha Muharrar, Aaron Ehasz, Dan Fybel, Rich Rinaldi, Richard Day, Laura Gutin, Josh Weinstein

VOICE ACTORS: Will Arnett (Ennis Hoftard), Jason Bateman (Larry Littlejunk), Kristin Chenoweth (Miracle Grohe), Will Forte (Stuart Proszakian), Tom Kenny (Muhammad Sabeeh Fa-ach Nubar, a.k.a. Happy), Nick Kroll (Andrew LeGustambos), Cheri Oteri (Helen Klench), Kenan Thompson (Principal Sue Seznol), Henry Winkler (Willard Deutschebog)

SYNOPSIS: The staff of Knob Haven High School seem to care more about their sex lives and vulgar minutiae than the actual work involved in their jobs.

COMMENTARY: An enormously unfunny misfire that brought a new low to the more adult end of the production of television animation, restricting itself to *Carry On*-style sex jokes and innuendo at the expense of doing anything more substantial. Hurwitz had previously been responsible for creating the low-rated but Emmy-winning live-action sitcom *Arrested Development* for the same network, and this program tried and failed to replicate that program's confrontational, edgy style in animation. Oddly, the program's format was based on that of a live-action series from Australia, which begs the question: Why was it done as an *animated* series in the first place?

***SITTING DUCKS* (2001)**

STUDIOS: Sitting Ducks, Kristin Company, Creative Capers, Universal

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network (2003)

CREATOR: Michael Bedard

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Michael Bedard, Loredana Cunti, Eliot Daro, Elizabeth Daro

PRODUCER: Brian Irving

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS: Michael Merton, Tim McKeon, Sib Ventress, Sindy McKay

VOICE ACTORS: Ian Corlett (Bill/Cecil), Kathleen Barr (Bev), Dave "Squatch" Ward (Aldo), Louis Chirillo (Ed), Phil Hayes (Oly/Fred), Jay Brazeau (Waddle/

Alligator), Michael Benyaer (Raoul), Cathy Weseluck (Drill Sergeant Duck), Gary Chalk (Gary the Parrot), Scott McNeil (Arnold the Alligator)

SYNOPSIS: Bill the duck and Aldo the alligator become unlikely friends in the territory surrounding the communities of Ducktown and Swampwood.

COMMENTARY: This series had its origins in the paintings of creator Bedard, who became well known in the 1980s for his portraits of ducks perennially placed in highly morbid scenarios. The program's characterization and plotting were somewhat routine, but its three-dimensional CGI background artwork was somewhat revolutionary for the time of its production.

***SKELETON WARRIORS* (1994–1995)**

STUDIOS: Landmark, Graz

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATOR: Gary Goddard

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Gary Goddard, Stephanie Graziano

PRODUCERS: Vic Dalchele, Robert DeLapp

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Nathan Carlson (Dr. Cyborn); Jeff Bennett, Earl Boen, Philip Clarke, Michael Corbett, Jim Cummings, Paul Eiding, Jeannie Elias, Linda Gary, Michael Gough, Jennifer Hale, Tony Jay, Danny Mann, Richard Molinaire, Valerie Pappas, Jay Rabson, Kevin Michael Richardson, Rodney Saulsberry, and Kevin Schon (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: The heroic Prince Lightstar defends the kingdom of Luminicity from the wrath of Baron Dark.

COMMENTARY: A derivative variation of *He-Man and the Masters of the Universe* (q.v.) that was clearly produced as a time-filling product and nothing else. The fact that it only lasted a single season on the air seems to confirm this assessment.

***SKY COMMANDERS* (1987)**

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, Kenner

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Robert Ridgely (Mike Summit), William Windom (Cutter Kling), Darryl Hickman (R. J. Scott), Lauren Tewes (Red McCullough), Bernard Erhard (General Plague), Richard Boyle (Books Baxter), Dorian Harewood (Jim Stryker), Tristan Rogers (Spider Reilly), Dick Gautier (Mordax), Paul Eiding (Raider Rath), Charlie Adler (Kreeg), B. J. Ward (Dr. Erica Slade)

SYNOPSIS: Mike Summit and his associates in Sky Command are tasked with defeating the omnipotent galactic overlord General Plague.

COMMENTARY: Yet another variation on *Star Wars*, this one based on a toy line produced by coproducer Kenner. Best described as journeyman work for all involved. It aired as a segment of *The Funtastic World of Hanna-Barbera* (q.v.).

SKY DANCERS (1996)

STUDIOS: Gaumont, Abrams/Gentile

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

CREATORS: Anthony Gentile, John Gentile

PRODUCERS: Anthony Gentile, John Gentile, Marty Abrams, Emanuelle Prevost

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS: Anthony Gentile, John Gentile, Lisa Morton

VOICE ACTORS: T. J. Benjamin, Andrea Burns, Thomas Cannizaro, Donna Daley, Jonathan Khan, Ciarrai Ni Mhaille, James Michael, and K. C. Noel (Specific roles unknown)

SYNOPSIS: Five ballet dancers with the power of flight protect their "Wingdom" from the wrath of the villain Sky Clone.

COMMENTARY: A derivative property based on a toy line introduced in 1994 from the Galoob Company. It was of the same ilk as the equally poor *Dragon Flyz* (q.v.) and *Happy Ness: The Secret of the Loch* (q.v.) from the same producers; all three properties lost money for the company due to a legal dispute involving syndication rights.

SKY HAWKS (1969–1971)

STUDIOS: Kenneth Snyder, Pantomime

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Kenneth Snyder

PRODUCERS: Paul Shively, Jean Lindsay, Charles Phalen, Dick Reed, Fred Crippen, Ed Smarden

DIRECTORS: George Singer, Fred Crippen, Joe Bruno, Irv Spector

WRITERS: Tony Asher, Larry Thor, Peter Dixon

VOICE ACTORS: Michael Rye (Mike Wilson), Iris Rainer (Carolyn Wilson), Casey Kasem (Steve Wilson/Joe Conway), Dick Curtis (Pappy Wilson/Red Hughes), Melinda Casey (Cynthia Hughes), Joan Gerber (Maggie McNally), Robert Arbogast (Buck Devlin)

SYNOPSIS: The Wilsons, a multigenerational family of pilots, operate an air shuttle service combining transportation and rescue missions with secret service work.

COMMENTARY: As with its contemporary *Hot Wheels* (q.v.), this program was a subtle tie-in with a Mattel toy product at a time when television regulators frowned on such practices. As a consequence, while the program's characters (with the exception of bad apple Devlin) promoted the importance of proper and safe air practice, that was not enough for the show to continue in light of the attitude at that time toward a too close relationship between fictional media and advertising.

SKYLAND (2005)

STUDIOS: Canada-France, Story 9, DQ, Method Films, Luxanimation, France 2, Canal J

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon (United States)

CREATORS: Emmanuel Gorinstein, Alexander De La Patelliere, Mathieu DeLaporte

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Tim Hamaguchi (Mahad), Phoebe McAuley (Lena), Jack Langedijk (Aran Cortes), Cameron Ansell (Chang), Alyson Court (Dahlia), Athena Karanis (Diwan), Alex Belcourt (Mila), Juan Chioran (Oslo), William Colgate (Vector), Milton Barnes (Wayan)

SYNOPSIS: In the 23rd century, fragments of the broken Earth center around a territory named Skyland. Here, a superpowered race called Seijuns has evolved, and they are caught up in a power struggle between the ruling Sphere and pirates from the outside world.

COMMENTARY: A multinational CGI production displaying characteristics of the technical and storytelling styles of the places (including Canada, France, and India) where the various elements of the series were produced. While impressive on a technical level, the spread of production over various entities ultimately resulted in a series where the sum of the parts was greater than the whole.

SKYSURFER STRIKE FORCE (1995)

STUDIOS: Ruby-Spears, Ashi, Bohbot

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Joe Ruby, Ken Spears

WRITERS INCLUDED: Jeffrey Scott

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Michael Donovan (Jack Hollister, a.k.a. Skysurfer One/Noxious, early episodes), David Kaye (Jack Hollister, a.k.a. Skysurfer One/Noxious, later episodes), Paul Dobson (Mickey Flanagan, a.k.a. Crazy Stunts/Chronozoid/Replicon), Ward Perry (Brad Wright, a.k.a. Soar Loser), Venus Terzo (Myko, a.k.a. Darklight and Lazerette), Janyse Jaud (Kim Sakai, a.k.a. Sliced Ice/Cerena), Richard Newman (Garland, a.k.a. X-Ploder and Five Eyes/Grenader/Foster), Alvin Sanders (Nathan James, a.k.a. Air Enforcer/Cybron/Wyland), Terry Klassen (Zachariah Easel/Adam/Hagedorn)

SYNOPSIS: A group of surfing enthusiasts become superpowered enforcers of justice with the aid of tricked-out "skyboards" that let them do surfing tricks in the air.

COMMENTARY: Not a toy tie-in series but stupid and vapid enough in idea, concept, and plotting to genuinely be one of that inferior type of action program. It first aired as part of coproducer Bohbot's *Amazin' Adventures* (q.v.) syndication block.

SLIMER! AND THE REAL GHOSTBUSTERS (1988–1992)

See *The Real Ghostbusters* (and related series).

THE SMOKEY BEAR SHOW (1969–1970)

STUDIO: Rankin/Bass

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Arthur Rankin Jr., Jules Bass

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Jackson Weaver (Smokey); Billie Mae Richards, Paul Soles, and Carl Banas (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: Smokey the Bear, the longtime mascot of the Forest Service (a division of the U.S. Department of Agriculture), was created during World War II as an outgrowth of a fire-prevention strategy sparked by fears of a Japanese invasion of the American mainland. He soon became a familiar figure in American culture, reminding everyone regularly that “only you can prevent forest fires.” This animated program had its roots in a Smokey comic book published by Dell between 1956 and 1961, which featured some of the most morbid contents ever featured in a periodical theoretically aimed at children (including death and economic exploitation of tragedy). However, Rankin/Bass was smart enough to remove most of the darker aspects of those stories in favor of comedy, although some of the plots were retained. Despite this fair attempt at lightening the content, the 17-episode program was repeatedly beaten in the ratings over its two-season run by other programs with truly carefree fare.

THE SMURFS (1981–1990)

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, Sepp International

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

CREATOR: Peyo (Pierre Culliford)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCER: Gerald Baldwin

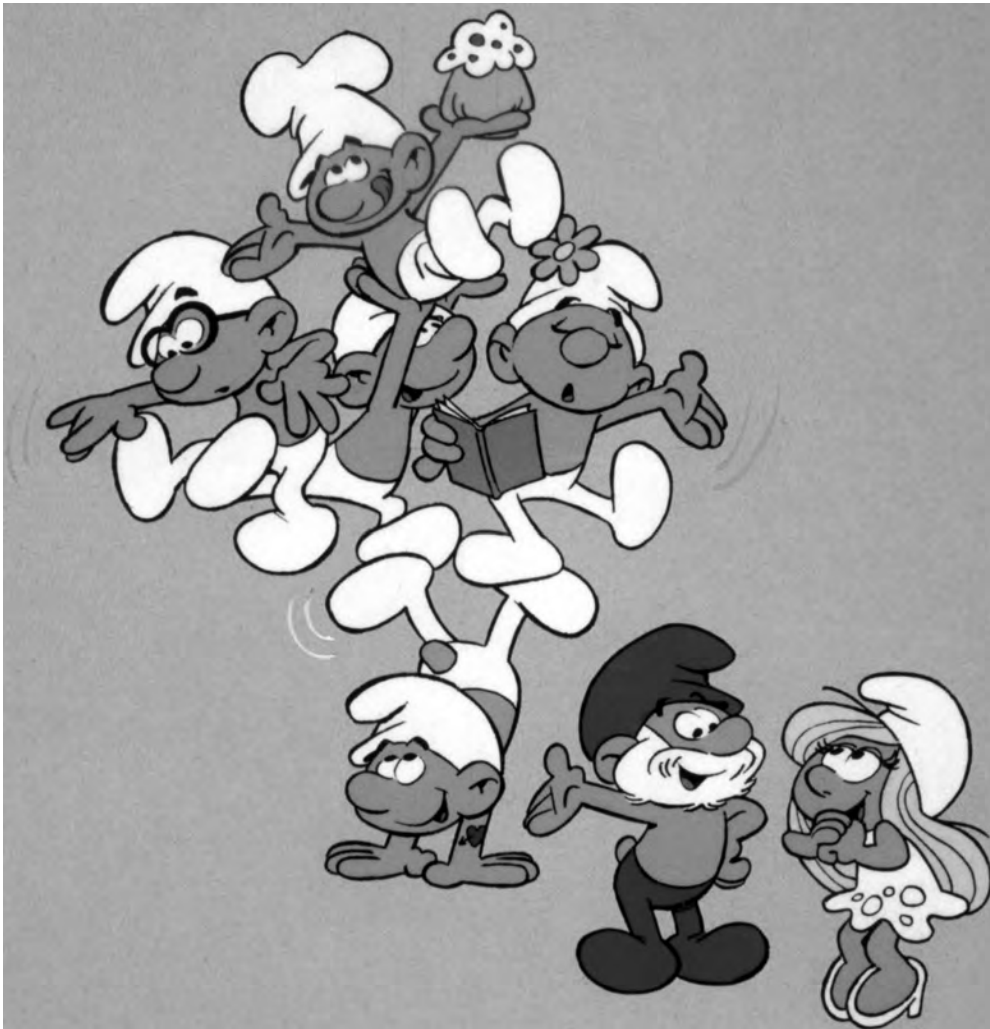
DIRECTORS INCLUDED: Jay Sarbry

WRITERS INCLUDED: Gerald Baldwin, Pierre Culliford, Yvan Delporte, Len Janson, Chuck Menville

VOICE ACTORS: Don Messick (Papa Smurf/Azrael/Dreamy Smurf/Sleepy Smurf/Others), Lucille Bliss (Smurfette), Danny Goldman (Brainy Smurf), Frank Welker (Hefty Smurf/Poet Smurf/Peewit/Clockwork Smurf/Puppy), June Foray (Jokey Smurf/Mother Nature), Michael Bell (Lazy Smurf/Handy Smurf/Grouchy Smurf/Johan), Hamilton Camp (Greedy Smurf/Harmony), Paul Winchell (Gargamel/Nosey Smurf/Others), Brenda Vaccaro (Scruple), Jonathan Winters (Grandpa Smurf), Bill Callaway (Clumsy Smurf/Painter Smurf), Alan Oppenheimer (Vanity Smurf/Homnibus), Bob Holt (King), Linda Gary (Dame Barbara), Marshall Efron (Sloppy Smurf), Alan Young (Scaredy Smurf/Farmer Smurf), Julie Dees (Baby Smurf/Sassette), Susan Blu (Nanny), Pat Musick (Snappy Smurf), Charlie Adler (Nat), Noelle North (Slouchy Smurf), Paul Kirby (Narrator #1), Kris Stevens (Narrator #2)

SYNOPSIS: The diminutive, blue-skinned, dwarflike Smurfs are repeatedly menaced by the wizard Gargamel, who is intent on exploiting them for his own magical desires.

COMMENTARY: Animator-turned-comic-strip-artist Culliford began to contribute to the Brussels, Belgium-based magazine *Spirou* in the late 1940s with the ongoing serial *Johan et Pirlouit*. In 1957, he introduced the diminutive “three apples tall” creatures originally known as the *Schtroumpfs*, who gained their own following and eventually their own independent position in the magazine in 1960. Although Peyo himself believed their appeal was limited and



The biggest—and smallest—stars of the 1980s. NBC/Photofest © NBC

intended them to be short-lived, this proved not to be the case. In Europe alone, they starred in nine theatrical cartoons between 1960 and 1966 and a feature film in the late 1970s.

They were, however, unknown quantities in North America, other than through toy distribution. Yet this quickly changed when Fred Silverman, then the president of NBC's entertainment division, happened to encounter some of the toys in a shop in Colorado. Immediately sensing the potential of the characters, Silverman talked Hanna-Barbera into producing a series based on them by guaranteeing they would have a slot on the network's Saturday-morning lineup if they did so. The studio agreed to these terms, as well as working closely with Peyo to develop the program—a foreshadowing of the creator-driven production model to come to television animation in the following decade. Immediately, the program was a success and lasted for a full

decade, usually at a full hour but at 90 minutes during 1982–1983. (Ironically, the characters lasted much longer at the network than their patron Silverman, who was fired within a year of their introduction.) The series continued to gain a wide audience after entering syndication in 1986.

The program was a trendsetter for its time, featuring a languid style that encouraged character development more than action. This was just as well, for the plots could become tedious and repetitive when seen in succession. The majority of the Smurfs were identified by social roles they held or personality traits they possessed, which, because they all dressed in the same white-colored clothing (excepting leader Papa Smurf, who dressed in red), helped tell them apart. Brainy Smurf, for example, was characterized by his intelligence, which frequently turned him into an arrogant loudmouth; Grouchy Smurf was as his name described, frequently prefacing sentences with “I hate”; Vanity Smurf was a narcissist; and so on. However, Winchell’s Gargamel frequently and often deservedly upstaged them with his flamboyant, theatrical villainy, which was one of the show’s great assets.

While enduringly popular, the show had its share of critics then and now. Some attacked it for the hivelike mentality under which the title characters operated, others for its open practice of both black (Gargamel) and white (Papa Smurf) magic, and still others deservedly for the paucity of female characters in the narrative. But this did little to halt the show’s program or the overall ongoing sweep of its narrative, nor from it ultimately winning three Emmy Awards during its run. It also did not prevent it from being the catalyst for a whole genial school of fantasy series who bore its influence well past its original run into the 1990s.

In recent years, the Smurfs have reemerged after a period of hibernation from the public limelight, thanks to a pair of theatrical feature films that depicted the Smurfs as CGI characters and others around them (including Gargamel) in live-action form. Side effects of this have been the reissuing of Peyo’s original comics in English-language form, as well as a DVD issue for this particular series. Consequently, the characters that their creator assumed would be forgotten after only a few years have proven to be durable cultural figures well into the 21st century.

***THE SNORKS* (1984–1988)**

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, Sepp International

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

CREATOR: Freddy Monnickendam

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera, Freddy Monnickendam

PRODUCERS: Iwao Takamoto, Gerald Baldwin, Larry Latham

DIRECTORS: Ray Patterson, Carl Urbano, Bob Goe, Don Lusk, Don Patterson

WRITERS INCLUDED: John Bradford

VOICE ACTORS: Michael Bell (Allstar/Elder 4), Frank Welker (Tooter/Occy), Brian Cummings (Dimmy), Frank Nelson (Governor Wetworth), Barry Gordon (Junior Wetworth), B. J. Ward (Casey), Joan Gardner (Mrs. Wetworth), Nancy Cartwright (Daffney), Edie McClurg (Mrs. Seaworthy), Clive Revill (Uncle Galeo), Peter Cullen (Elder 1/Elder 2/Elder 3), Gail Matthius (Baby Smallstar),



Another popular 1980s Belgian import. Hanna-Barbera Productions/Photofest © Hanna-Barbera Productions

Freddie Weber (Willie), Bob Holt (Mr. Seaworthy), Mitzi McCall (Auntie Marina), Joan Gerber (Mrs. Kelp), Robert Ridgely (Mr. Kelp)

SYNOPSIS: The fish-faced, snorkel-headed Snorks enjoy a fully modern existence in their habitation under the sea.

COMMENTARY: This series was cast in the mode of the same studio's earlier *Smurfs* (q.v.): created by a Belgian cartoonist and featuring characters with only nominal differentiations from each other. This one, however, had a more elaborate backstory centering on how they were discovered by the captain of a sunk merchant vessel in 1643; this was limited to the main title sequence, allowing the show to focus on more modern concerns in the main story lines. While the plots were simple and derivative, the animation was well done by studio standards, with a strong contrast drawn between the cartoony title characters and their more realistic antagonists, both from beneath the sea and from what they called "Dry Space" (i.e., land).

***SOFIA THE FIRST* (2012–PRESENT)**

STUDIO/DISTRIBUTOR: Disney

CREATOR: Craig Gerber

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Craig Gerber, Jamie Mitchell

DIRECTORS: Jamie Mitchell, Mircea Mantta, Larry Leichtler, Craig Carlisle

WRITERS: Craig Gerber, Erica Rothschild, Doug Cooney, Laurie Israel, Rachel Ruderman, Matt Boren, Carter Crocker, Elizabeth Keyishian, Michael Stern, Dani Michaeli, Krista Tucker, Allen Zipper, Vivian Meijia

VOICE ACTORS: Ariel Winter (Sophia), Darcy Byrnes (Princess Amber), Zach Callison (Prince James, 2012–2014), Tyler Merna (Prince James, 2014–2016), Nicholas Cantu (Prince James, 2016–present), Sara Ramirez (Queen Miranda), Travis Willingham (King Roland II), Jess Harnell (Cedric), Wayne Brady (Clover), Tim Gunn (Baileywick), Meghan Strange (Robin), Ashley Eckstein (Mia), Jennifer Hale (Cinderella), Linda Larkin (Jasmine, speaking voice), Lea Salonga (Jasmine, singing voice), Julie Nathanson (Belle), Jodi Benson (Ariel), Kate Higgins (Aurora), Katherine Von Till (Snow White), Ming Na Wen (Mulan), Mandy Moore (Rapunzel), Anika Noni Rose (Tiana), Ruth Connell (Merida), Kristen Bell (Anna), Idina Menzel (Elsa), Barbara Dirkson (Flora), Russi Taylor (Fauna), Tress MacNeille (Merryweather), Josh Gad (Olaf), Jeff Bennett (Merlin), Joe Ochman (Jiminy Cricket), Mae Whitman (Tinker Bell), Lucy Liu (Silvermist), Megan Hilty (Rosetta), Raven Symone (Iridessa), Ginnifer Goodwin (Fawn), Pamela Segall Adlon (Vidia/Rosey), Christina Hendricks (Zarina), Lucy Hale (Periwinkle), Coco Grayson (Princess Hildegard, speaking voice), Jenna Lea Rosen (Princess Hildegard, singing voice/Princess Cleo, singing voice), Harley Graham (Princess Cleo, speaking voice), Colin Ford (Prince Hugo, 2013/Prince Axel), Grayson Hunter (Prince Hugo, 2014–2015), Eric Stonestreet (Minimus), Jim Cummings (Wormwood), Isabella Acres (Jade), Diamond White (Ruby), Sabrina Carpenter (Princess Vivian), Ellie Kemper (Crackle), Bonnie Hunt (Aunt Matilda), Kiernan Shipka (Oona), Michaela Zee (Princess Jun), Kiara Muhammad (Princess Kari), Fiona Bishop (Princess Zoey), Megan Mullally (Miss Nettle), Merit Leighton (Lucinda)

SYNOPSIS: After her mother marries King Roland II, young Sofia becomes a princess of the kingdom of Enchancia and must adjust to her new social and magically empowered role.

COMMENTARY: A project tied into the larger Disney Princess media brand and, therefore, difficult to judge on its own independent creative terms. While the empowerment narrative at the center is always valuable in stories aimed at younger demographics, the one here is watered down by the enormous amount of subtle but obvious product placement and promotion featured within the series. The most direct manifestation of this is the regular appearance of female characters from Disney feature films, despite their important role in serving as mentors for Sophia. The general aura presented here is that you aren't likely to enjoy this unless you are a young girl strongly interested in being a princess, which is a far smaller part of the general audience than Disney seems to believe.

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG (AND RELATED SERIES)

Note: The 2003 series *Sonic X* was produced in Japan and therefore is excluded from discussion in this book.

***Adventures of Sonic the Hedgehog* (1993)**

STUDIOS: DIC, Sega, Bohbot

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Andy Heyward, Robby London

PRODUCER/DIRECTOR: Kent Butterworth

WRITERS: Reed Shelley, Bruce Shelley, Jeffrey Scott, Kevin Donahue, Phil Harnage

VOICE ACTORS: Jaleel White (Sonic); "Long" John Baldry, Gary Chalk, Ian Corlett, Phil Hayes, Christopher Welch, Kathleen Barr, Michael Benyaer, Jay Brazeau, Jim Byrnes, Babz Chula, Jennifer Copping, Michael Donovan, Terry Klassen, Wally March, Scott McNeil, Shane Meier, Jane Mortifee, Paula Newstone, John Stocker, Jayleen Stonehouse, Venus Terzo, French Tickner, Lee Tockar, Louise Vallance, Dave Ward, Cathy Weseluck, Alec Williams, Dale Wilson, Kylie Fairlie, and John Tench (Additional characters)

***Sonic the Hedge Hog* (1993–1995)**

STUDIOS: DIC, Sega

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Andy Heyward, Robby London

PRODUCERS: Dick Sebast, Antran Manoogian

DIRECTOR: Dick Sebast

WRITERS INCLUDED: Lori Crawford

VOICE ACTORS: Jaleel White (Sonic); Kath Soucie (Princess Sally); Charlie Adler, Mark Balou, Christine Cavanagh, Jim Cummings, Rob Paulsen, Bradley Pierce, David Doyce, Gailee Heiderman, Dana Hill, Danny Mann, Jason Marsden, Charlie Schlatter, Frank Welker, and William Windom (Additional characters)

***Sonic Underground* (1999)**

STUDIOS: DIC, Sega, Bohbot

DISTRIBUTORS: Sci Fi Channel, Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Andy Heyward, Robby London

PRODUCER: Shannon Nettleton

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS: Bruce Shelley, Pat Allee, Ben Hurst

VOICE ACTORS: Jaleel White (Sonic/Manic/Sonia), Gary Chalk (Dr. Robotnik), Maurice LaMarche (Sleet), Peter Wilds (Dingo), Ian Corlett (Cyrus/Knuckles), Gail Webster (Queen Aliana), Matt Hill (Trevor), Phil Hayes (Bartleby), Samuel Vincent (Sonic, singing voice), Tyley Ross (Manic, singing voice)

SYNOPSIS: Sonic the Hedgehog uses his wits as well as his lightning-fast speed to elude a variety of pursuers.

COMMENTARY: Created in 1991 by engineer Yuri Naka, Sonic was initially the star of a series of popular video games from the Sega Company, eager to have a product to compete with rival Nintendo in the marketplace. It wasn't

surprising that he eventually became an animated character, given his established appeal to younger audiences, and that DIC, who previously had success animating Nintendo products (see *Captain N: The Game Master* and *The Super Mario Brothers Super Show*), would get the contract to do the job. What was surprising was the disparity in tone between the projects in which he was featured. The syndicated series was a largely comic affair, where Sonic and his vulpine companion Tails eluded the villainous Dr. Robotnik, as in the game, with prosocial messaging liberally added. The network version was far different: While Robotnik remained the main adversary, he and Sonic were grafted onto a *Star Wars*-like space opera in which rocket jockey Sonic assisted computer expert Princess Sally in trying to find her missing father. Neither version was entirely successful creatively or commercially. Nevertheless, the studio tried again in 1999. In this version, Sonic was one of a group of triplets who were the children of the rightful Queen of Morbius, whose throne was usurped by the ubiquitous Robotnik. The trio possessed amulets that could, at a moment's notice, morph into musical instruments, so not surprisingly, they moonlighted as a rock group while being pursued by Robotnik and his canine bounty hunters.

***SOUTH PARK* (1997–PRESENT)**

STUDIOS: Celluloid, Brainiiff, Parker-Stone, South Park Digital, Comedy Central, Paramount

DISTRIBUTOR: Comedy Central

CREATORS: Trey Parker, Matt Stone

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS INCLUDE: Trey Parker, Matt Stone, Brian Graden, Deborah Liebling, Frank Agnone II, Bruce Howell, Anne Garefino

PRODUCERS INCLUDE: Dave Niles White

DIRECTORS INCLUDE: Trey Parker, Matt Stone, Eric Stough, Adrien Beard, Toni Nugnes

WRITERS INCLUDE: Trey Parker, Matt Stone, Dan Sterling, Philip Stark, David Goodman, Trisha Nixon, Nancy Pimental, Pam Brady, Kyle McCulloch, Robert Lopez

VOICE ACTORS: Trey Parker (Stan Marsh/Eric Cartman/Clyde Donovan/Dougie/Jimmy Valmer/Timmy Burch/Randy Marsh/Grandpa Marvin Marsh/Steven Scotch/Mr. Garrison/Mr. Mackey/Officer Barbady/Ned Gerblansky/God/Mr. Hankey/Tuong Lu Kim/Dr. Alphonse Mephesto/Moses/Santa Claus/Satan/Starvin' Marvin/Philip/Ms. Choksondik), Matt Stone (Kyle Broflovski/Kenny McCormick/Leopold "Butters" Scotch/Tweek Tweak/Bradley Biggle/Craig Tucker/Jimbo Kern/Gerald Broflovski/Stuart McCormick/Big Gay Al/Jesus Christ/Father Maxi/Terrance/Pip Pirrup/Saddam Hussein), Mary Kay Bergman (Wendy Testaburger, early episodes/Sharon Marsh, early episodes/Shelly Marsh, early episodes/Sheila Broflovski, early episodes/Liane Cartman, early episodes/Carol McCormick, early episodes/Principal Victoria, early episodes/Mayor McDaniels, early episodes/Ms. Crabtree, early episodes), Mona Marshall (Wendy Testaburger, later episodes/Sharon Marsh, later episodes/Sheila

Broflovski, later episodes/Linda Scotch), Eliza Schneider (Wendy Testaburger, later episodes/Sharon Marsh, later episodes/Shelly Marsh, later episodes/Liane Cartman, later episodes/Carol McCormick, later episodes/Principal Victoria, later episodes/Mayor McDaniels, later episodes/Ms. Crabtree, later episodes), April Stewart (Wendy Testaburger, later episodes/Sharon Marsh, later episodes/Shelly Marsh, later episodes/Liane Cartman, later episodes/Principal Victoria, later episodes), Jennifer Howell (Bebe Stevens), Jessica Makinson (Heidi Turner), Adrien Beard (Token Black), John Hansen (Mr. Slave), Isaac Hayes (Chef, 1997–2007), Peter Serafinowicz (Darth Chef)

SYNOPSIS: Life in the town of South Park, Colorado, where nothing is normal and everything is up for vigorous scrutiny and debate.

COMMENTARY: If Francois Rabelais had been a television animator in the late 20th and early 21st centuries, his programming would very well resemble this spectacularly vulgar and scatological program. Much like Rabelais's *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, *South Park* is full of smut and shock value done purely for the joy of doing it, at the expense of providing a narrative that is truly engaging to a wide audience. Unlike Rabelais, however, there isn't much of a point to the show beyond that. It just seems to be about taking the most offensive thing the producers can imagine happening and then letting it go for about a half-hour. In spite of (or because of) this, it has engaged a wide fan base, has found a number of celebrities willing to appear as guests, and has won five Emmys during its run.

Series creators/producers/stars Parker and Stone met while students at the University of Colorado and bonded over a similar sense of humor. Beginning their careers with a live-action musical about an ill-fated 1874 expedition to the Rockies that ended in cannibalism (not released on film until 1998), they turned to animation with a short piece about a fight between Jesus Christ and Santa Claus over the true meaning of Christmas, with four children as witnesses. These latter characters evolved into the protagonists of the series proper, who served as the center of a highly dysfunctional universe that was drawn as much from reality as fantasy, given how much topical humor was involved. The series inspired an equally offensive movie released in 1999, with the subtitle *Bigger, Longer, and Uncut*. Parker and Stone have since used the series as a springboard for other projects, notably the Tony-winning musical *The Book of Mormon*, while continuing to produce the program, done in a deceptively simplistic combination of traditional 2-D animation and CGI.

The beauty of this series is entirely in the eyes of the beholder, as there are as many (if not more) detractors of it as there are supporters. What is undeniable about it, however, is that, just as with *The Simpsons* (q.v.) before it, it has helped to establish new standards for what is permissible to be depicted in television animation, in both positive and negative ways. But where *The Simpsons* found effective ways to check its vulgarity with genuine creativity, *South Park* makes its vulgarity the heart and soul of what it is about, and the results are truly visible in every episode.

SPACE ANGEL (1961–1963)

STUDIOS: Cambria, TV Comics

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

CREATORS: Dik Darley, Dick Brown

PRODUCERS/DIRECTORS: Dick Brown, Clark Haas

WRITERS INCLUDED: Warren Tufts, Dave Detiege

VOICE ACTORS: Ned Lefebvre (Scott McCloud, early episodes); Jim Chandler (Scott McCloud, later episodes); Margaret Kerry and Hal Smith (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: Pilot Scott "Space Angel" McCloud commands the rocket ship *Star-duster* into intergalactic adventure situations.COMMENTARY: A series from the same studio that produced *Clutch Cargo* (q.v.), although with much better artwork thanks to the contributions of veteran comic book artist Alex Toth, among others, on the program's designs and some ahead-of-their-time special effects. Still, the program was burdened with Cambria's cumbersome SynchroVox voice animation system, which had humbled *Clutch's* effectiveness and did so again here. Oddly, the program originally aired without production credits of any kind; knowledge of these came later and through secondhand sources.**SPACECATS** (1991–1992)

STUDIOS: Paul Fusco, Marvel

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

CREATOR: Paul Fusco

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Paul Fusco, Bernie Brillstein

PRODUCERS: Leslie Podkin, Richard Trueblood

DIRECTORS INCLUDED: Karen Peterson

WRITERS INCLUDED: Rowby Goren

VOICE ACTORS: Charles Nelson Reilly (D.O.R.C.); Paul Fusco, Townsend Coleman, Patrick Fraley, Rob Paulsen, Robert Ridgely, Jack Angel, Gregg Berger, Sheryl Bernstein, Susan Blu, Hamilton Camp, Cam Clarke, Jennifer Darling, Walker Edmiston, Jeannie Elias, John Erwin, Lea Floden, Brad Garrett, Barry Gordon, Pat Musick, Jan Rabson, Hal Rayle, Maggie Roswell, Susan Silo, Kath Soucie, John Stephenson, and Lennie Weinrib (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: A series that combined animated main sequences with live-action linking segments featuring elaborate puppetry, from the team previously responsible for *Alf* (q.v.). The premise was that the all-cat planet of Triglyceride 7, ruled by the Disembodied Omnipotent Ruler of Cats (D.O.R.C.), had sent agents to Earth to see if the place could be tamed to their liking, as well as to stop any evil that interfered with their mission. The program was cleverly written and staged, with a fallible "Rocky and Bullwinkle" (see *Rocky and His Friends/The Bullwinkle Show*)–like narrator and other neat bits in the animated segments, while Reilly upstaged everyone during his short appearances, playing D.O.R.C. as an extremely bitchy drag queen. Unfortunately, bad reviews and small ratings meant it didn't last long beyond its original 13 episodes.

SPACE GHOST AND DINO BOY (AND RELATED SERIES)

***Space Ghost and Dino Boy* (1966–1968)**

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

DIRECTORS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera, Charles Nichols

WRITERS INCLUDED: Lewis Marshall, Paul Sommer, Bill Perez

VOICE ACTORS: Gary Owens (Space Ghost), Tim Matheson (Jayce), Ginny Tyler (Jan), Don Messick (Blip/Bronto), John Carson (Dino Boy), Mike Road (Ugh)

***Space Ghost Coast to Coast* (1994)**

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, Cartoon Network, Williams Street, Big Deal Cartoons, DESIGNefx

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Keith Crofford, Michael Lazzo, Matt Harrigan

PRODUCERS: Jim Fortier, Sheila Green, Dave Willis, Chip Duffey, Matt Maiellaro, Andrea Mansour, Andy Merrill, Natalie Zimmerman

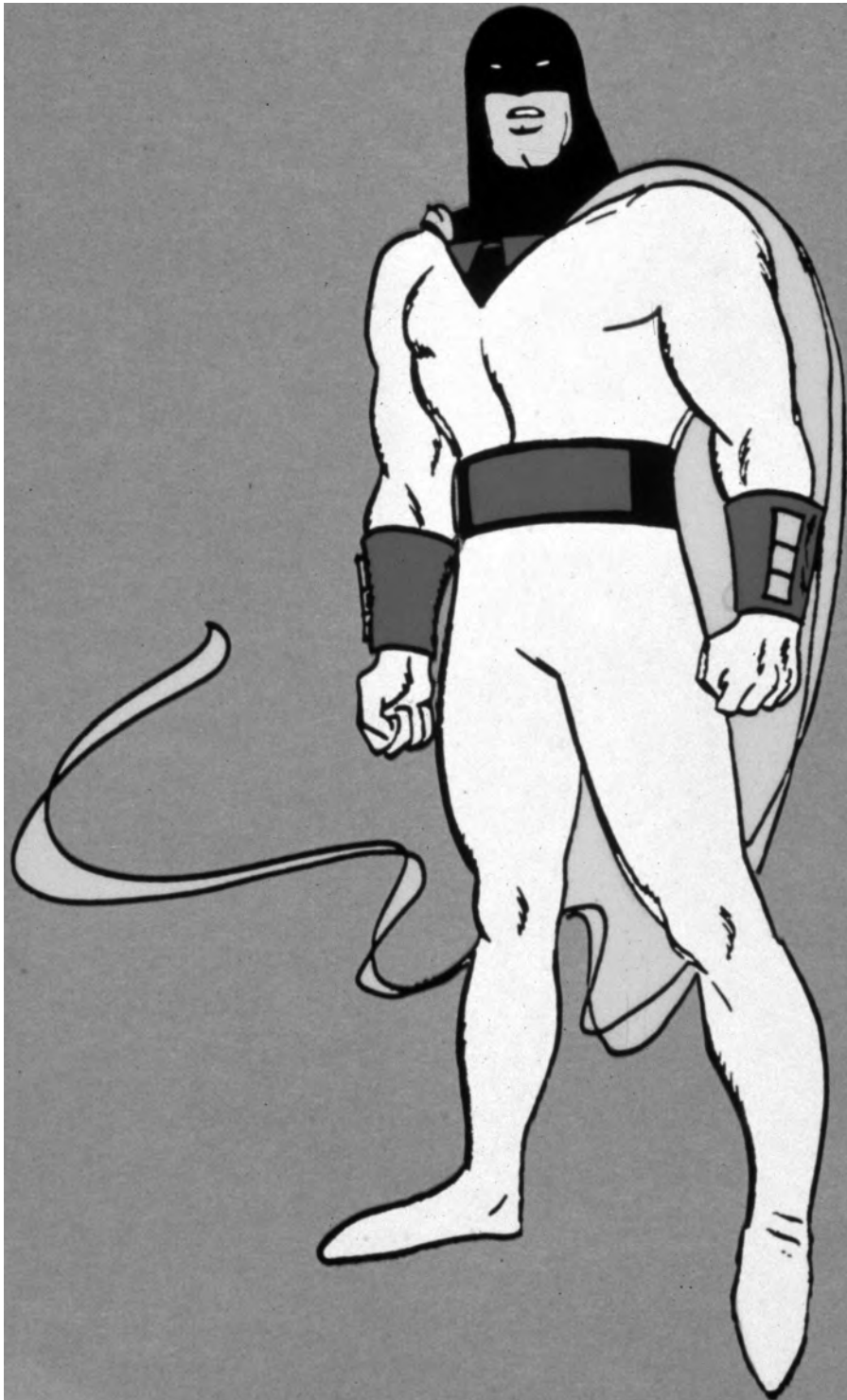
DIRECTOR: C. Martin Croker

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: George Lowe (Space Ghost), C. Martin Croker (Moltar/Zorak), Andy Merrill (Brak/Lokar), Don Kennedy (Tanzit), Judy Tenuta (Black Widow)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: In his original incarnation, Space Ghost was a standard-issue superhero figure, empowered by an Inviso-Belt that granted him both invisibility and superpowers. He traversed the universe in his Phantom Cruiser, aided by teenagers Jan and Jayce and their pet monkey Blip—whom he had to rescue from monstrous alien entities in practically every installment. The supporting feature was *Dino Boy*, a 20th-century boy who was mysteriously and inexplicably transported to a prehistoric realm, with a caveman and a young dinosaur as his allies. Reruns of *Space Ghost* were later combined with similar vintage segments of *Frankenstein Jr. and the Impossibles* (q.v.) for a new go-round in 1976, while in 1981, a new series of episodes was produced for the omnibus *Space Stars* (q.v.), with Gary Owens reprising the lead role.

His second incarnation was quite different: as a talk show host. Designed to exploit the fact that Cartoon Network had a strong following of adult viewers, *Space Ghost Coast to Coast* featured the title character exhibiting a sense of humor seemingly out of place with his declamatory speaking style, which provided much of the show's laughs. Furthering this was the use of two of Space Ghost's old enemies, Zorak and Moltar, as his musical director and floor director, respectively: The latter frequently sought to undermine the show, proof that he hadn't abandoned being evil. However, Space Ghost's guests were all live-action figures, which added to the surrealism of the affair. The program was successful enough that it merited the continuation of the exploitation of the Hanna-Barbera archives with the witty *Harvey Birdman, Attorney at Law* (q.v.) and the less-successful *Sealab 2021* (see *Sealab 2020/Sealab 2021*).



From superhero to talk show host in three decades. CBS/Photofest © CBS

SPACE KIDDETTES (1966–1967)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera, Alex Lovy

DIRECTORS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera, Charles Nichols

WRITERS INCLUDED: Tony Benedict

VOICE ACTORS: Chris Allen (Scooter), Lucille Bliss (Snoopy), Don Messick (Countdown/Pupstar), Janet Waldo (Jenny), Daws Butler (Captain Skyhook)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: The title characters of this juvenile series were a group of young astronauts who congregated in an orbiting clubhouse and traveled variously by jet-powered backpacks and a makeshift rocket apparently of their own design. However, they were largely one-dimensional figures who were easily upstaged by the villain of the piece, Captain Skyhook, a campy figure straight from a British pantomime show, who foregrounded his role as the show's real star by narrating the main-title sequence and the episode introductions. His mischief-making was purely for show (as Butler's acting implied), and he would periodically rescue the Kiddettes (or they him) if there was real danger. As per the morality of the times, it was good clean fun where nobody *really* got hurt. Some elements of this premise would endure in later space-themed shows aimed at children, most notably and effectively in *Atomic Betty* (q.v.).

SPACE SENTINELS (1977–1978)See *Young Sentinels* (a.k.a. *Space Sentinels*; 1977–1978).**SPACE STARS** (1981–1982)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

DIRECTORS: Oscar Dufau, Charles Nichols, Carl Urbano, Rudy Zamora, George Gordon

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Casey Kasem (Program Announcer), Darryl Hickman (Kid Comet), David Hubbard (Molecularad), B. J. Ward (Elektra), Michael Winslow (Plutem), Alan Lurie (Uglor), Don Messick (Astro/Gloop/Gleep), Frank Welker (Cosmo/Blip), Lennie Weinrib (Dipper), Michael Bell (Space Ace), Mike Road (Zandor/Tundro/Zok/Igoo), Virginia Gregg (Tara), Sparky Marcus (Dorno), Keene Curtis (*Herculoids* Narrator/*Space Ghost* Narrator), Gary Owens (Space Ghost), Alexandra Stewart (Jan), Steve Spears (Jayce)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: This program was an omnibus feature that involved Hanna-Barbera resurrecting two proven action-adventure properties from the 1960s, a character from another series of that time as headliner of a comedy piece and a superhero program in the vein of the studio's *Super Friends* (q.v.) franchise. *Teen Force* was a relatively straightforward superhero program with adolescent heroes who traveled the cosmos doing good deeds (it later aired independently on the USA network between 1989 and 1992). *Astro*

and the *Space Mutts* featured the canine star of *The Jetsons* (q.v.), who, with his canine associates Cosmo and Dipper, served as the backup for the heroic Space Ace (drawn as a caricature of Burt Reynolds, for some reason). *The Herculoids* and *Space Ghost* (see *Space Ghost and Dino Boy*) were the same as their prior incarnations but without a considerable amount of their former vitality. The most notable aspect of the show was the "Space Stars Finale," in which everyone rallied together to fight a common foe. Otherwise, it was a derivative, badly animated program from a fallow creative period in the history of its studio.

SPACE STRIKERS (1995–1996)

STUDIO: Saban

DISTRIBUTOR: UPN

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Vincent Chalvon Demersay, Jacqueline Tordjman

PRODUCERS: Eric Rollman, Joel Andryc, Sam Ewing

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Richard Epcar and Mary Kay Bergman (Specific roles unknown)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: You wouldn't know it from the title, but this series bore a strong debt to Jules Verne. (When broadcast in Europe, the show was called *20,000 Leagues into Outer Space*, which made the source material more obvious.) The central focus was on one of Verne's most memorable characters, the enigmatic Captain Nemo. Unlike his literary equivalent, a nihilistic misanthrope, this Nemo was a heroic figure who piloted his space-ship (originally a submarine) *Nautilus* on missions designed to protect and preserve Earth's ecological balance. His nemesis was the Master Phantom (an ex-friend), a cyborg figure who commanded the fierce Phantom Warriors. The major gimmick of this program was that it featured action sequences staged in a 3-D format. As in the golden age of 3-D movies in the 1950s, one could only get the full effect as a viewer through donning specially designed "Strikervision" glasses.

SPAWN (A.K.A. TODD McFARLANE'S SPAWN; 1997–1999)

STUDIOS: Madhouse, D.R. Movie, HBO, Ko-Ko, Todd McFarlane

DISTRIBUTOR: HBO

CREATORS: Todd McFarlane, Larry Brody

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Todd McFarlane, John Leekley, Alan McElroy

PRODUCERS: Randall White, Catherine Winder, Terry Fitzgerald, Karen Horne, Hali Paul

DIRECTORS: Thomas Nelson, Frank Paur, Eric Radomski, Mike Vosburgh, Jennifer Yuh

WRITERS INCLUDED: Rebekah Bradford, John Leekley

VOICE ACTORS: Keith David (Al Simmons/Spawn), Richard Dysart (Cagliostro), Michael Nicolosi (Clown), Dominique Jennings (Wanda Blake), Victor Love (Terry Fitzgerald), Kath Soucie (Cyan), James Keane (Sam Burke/Tony Twist), Michael McShane (Twitch Williams), John Rafter Lee (Jason Wynn), Ronny Cox (Senator Scott McMillan/Billy Kincaid), Robert Forster (Major Forsberg)

SYNOPSIS: CIA assassin Al Simmons, after being killed, descends into Hell. After negotiating with Satan to return to Earth, he assumes the identity of Spawn, a superhuman "soldier of evil."

COMMENTARY: Canadian-born graphic novelist McFarlane first invented the character and premise in the early 1980s, but he set it aside during his years working for Marvel and DC; he did not want to share financial and creative control of the character with either entity. Spawn finally emerged in 1992 under the imprint of Image Comics, an independent comic book publisher, of which McFarlane was a cofounder. Immediately, it developed a strong cult following, and this led to a feature-film adaptation in 1997. This series was produced in the wake of that film and preserved the program's bizarre and surreal universe in an effective way, airing 13 episodes over 3 seasons in the late-night time slot that its deeply adult content deserved.

***SPEED BUGGY* (1973–1974)**

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCER: Iwao Takamoto

DIRECTOR: Charles Nichols

WRITERS: Jack Mendelsohn, Larz Bourne, Len Janson, Joel Kane, Jack Kaplan, Woody Kling, Norman Maurer, Chuck Menville, Larry Rhine

VOICE ACTORS: Mel Blanc (Speed Buggy); Arlene Golonka (Debbie); Phil Luther Jr. (Tinker); Michael Bell (Mark); Chris Allen, Hal Smith, Michelle Road, Sidney Miller, Ron Feinberg, Virginia Gregg, John Stephenson and Ira Paran (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: One of the many roles Mel Blanc portrayed during his long stint as a cast member of radio's *Jack Benny Show* was the title character's decrepit Maxwell automobile, with sputterings and stalling to show its age. (He assumed the role when an actual motor being used broke down during a rehearsal and his improvisations were felt to be funnier than the motor.) On this series, Blanc was able to reprise that portrayal in the character of the anthropomorphic automobile Speed Buggy, who spoke in addition to sputtering and stalling. Hardly as decrepit as the Maxwell, Speedy was more in the mode of the protagonist of Disney's popular *Herbie* movies, about a seemingly sentient Volkswagen. He served as the means of transportation for his teenage friends Debbie and Mark and the very Gomer Pyle-like mechanic Tinker as they encountered mystery and adventure in the fashion of *Scooby Doo* (q.v.). The fact that Speedy could fly as well as run on the ground gave them an advantage over the villains they faced. Despite its limited production run of 16 episodes, it was popular enough to be resurrected for later network broadcast runs in the late 1970s and early 1980s on both ABC and CBS.

***SPICY CITY* (1997)**

STUDIOS: Ralph Bakshi, HBO

DISTRIBUTOR: HBO

CREATOR/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Ralph Bakshi

PRODUCER: Catherine Winder

DIRECTORS: Ralph Bakshi, Ennio Toresan Jr., John Kafka, Preston Bakshi

WRITERS: Franz Henkel, Lou Walker, Douglas Brooks West, Preston Bakshi, Lawrence Chua, Willie Perdomo

VOICE ACTORS: Michelle Phillips (Raven); James Keane, Barry Stigler, Mary Mara, John Hostetter, Vince Belocchi, Letitia Hicks, Matt Miller, Andy Philpot, Alex Fernandez, Cecilia Noel, Ralph Bakshi, James Hanes, Carlos Ferro, Charlie Adler, Pamela Tyson, Tuesday Knight, Darrell Kunitomi, Grace Zandarski, James Asher, Tashia Valenza, Tony Amendola, Julia De Meta, Rick Najera, Lewis Arquette, Jennifer Darling, E. G. Daily, Matthew Flint, Joey Carmen, Michael Yama, Marnie Mosiman, Brenden O'Brien, Brock Peters, Pamela Tyson, Dave Fennoy, and Danny Mann (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: This six-episode miniseries harkened back to creator/executive producer Bakshi's heyday as a producer of adult-oriented animated feature films in the 1970s. An exercise in "cyberpunk noir" (Bakshi's term), the program married a hard-boiled detective narrative approach with a setting that was pure sci-fi. Raven, the sole recurring character, was the proprietor of a "social club" that functioned as the center of the narrative. As would be expected from Bakshi, there was a plethora of adult situations and well-drawn animated women, along with a great amount of computer-related material. Bakshi voluntarily shut down production of the series after six episodes after a dispute with HBO over the creative directions the program was taking.

SPIDER-MAN (AND RELATED SERIES)

Spider-Man (1967–1970)

STUDIOS: Grantray-Lawrence, Krantz

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATORS: Stan Lee, Steve Ditko

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Robert Lawrence, Ralph Bakshi

PRODUCER: Ray Patterson

DIRECTORS: Grant Simmons, Sid Marcus, Clyde Geronimi, Cozmo Anzilotti

WRITERS INCLUDED: June Patterson, Ralph Bakshi, Bill Danch, Al Bertino, Phil Baber, Dick Cassarino, Dick Robbins, Lin Carter

VOICE ACTORS: Bernard Cowan (Peter Parker/Spider-Man, early episodes/Others), Paul Soles (Peter Parker/Spider-Man, later episodes), Peg Dixon (Betty Brandt), Paul Kligman (J. Jonah Jameson)

Spider-Man and His Amazing Friends (1981–1982)

STUDIO: Marvel

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: David DePatie, Lee Gunther

PRODUCERS: Dennis Marks, Art Vitello, Don Jurwich

DIRECTORS: Gerry Chiniquy, Steve Clark, John Gibbs, Sid Marcus, Nelson Shin, Art Vitello, Bob Richardson, Tom Ray, Dan Thompson, Sam Weiss, Arnie Wong, Kent Butterworth, Milton Gray, Don Jurwich

WRITERS: Creighton Barnes, Doug Booth, Francis Deighen, Donald Glut, Jack Hanrahan, Christy Mark, Larry Parr, Jeffrey Scott

VOICE ACTORS: Stan Lee (Narrator); Anne Lockhart, George DiCenzo, Alan Dinehart, Jerry Dexter, Michael Evans, Walker Edmiston, Alan Young, Dennis Marks, William Woodson, John Haymer, Keye Luke, Allan Melvin, Sally Julian, Casey Kasem, Jack Angel, Michael Bell, Lee Brillee, Bill Boyett, Corey Buron, Susan Blu, Wally Burr, Bill Callaway, Hamilton Camp, Victoria Carroll, Phil Clarke, Hans Conreid, Regis Cordic, Henry Corden, Brad Crandall, Roberto Cruz, Peter Cullen, Brian Cummings, Jeff David, Jack DeLeon, Al Fann, Ron Feinberg, Elliott Field, June Foray, Patrick Fraley, Brian Fuld, Kathy Garver, Linda Gary, Dan Gilvezan, Bob Holt, Michael Horton, Ralph James, Lynn Johnson, Stan Jones, Lee Lampton, Morgan Lofting, Mona Marshall, John Mayer, Shepard Menken, Don Messick, Vic Perrin, Tony Pope, Richard Ramos, Robert Ridgely, Neil Ross, Gene Ross, Stanley Ralph Ross, Michael Rye, Marilyn Schreffler, John Stephenson, Ted Schwartz, Gary Seeger, Michael Sheehan, Andre Stojka, Janet Waldo, B. J. Ward, Frank Welker, and Paul Winchell (Additional characters)

The Incredible Hulk and the Amazing Spider-Man (1982–1983)

STUDIO: Marvel

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: David DePatie, Lee Gunther

PRODUCERS: Dennis Marks, Art Vitello, Don Jurwich

DIRECTORS: Gerry Chiniquy, Steve Clark, John Gibbs, Sid Marcus, Nelson Shin, Art Vitello, Bob Richardson, Tom Ray, Dan Thompson, Sam Weiss, Arnie Wong, Kent Butterworth, Milton Gray, Don Jurwich

WRITERS: Creighton Barnes, Doug Booth, Francis Deighen, Donald Glut, Jack Hanrahan, Christy Mark, Larry Parr, Jeffrey Scott

VOICE ACTORS: Stan Lee (Narrator); Anne Lockhart, George DiCenzo, Alan Dinehart, Jerry Dexter, Michael Evans, Walker Edmiston, Alan Young, Dennis Marks, William Woodson, John Haymer, Keye Luke, Allan Melvin, Sally Julian, Casey Kasem, Jack Angel, Michael Bell, Lee Brillee, Bill Boyett, Corey Buron, Susan Blu, Wally Burr, Bill Callaway, Hamilton Camp, Victoria Carroll, Phil Clarke, Hans Conreid, Regis Cordic, Henry Corden, Brad Crandall, Roberto Cruz, Peter Cullen, Brian Cummings, Jeff David, Jack DeLeon, Al Fann, Ron Feinberg, Elliott Field, June Foray, Patrick Fraley, Brian Fuld, Kathy Garver, Linda Gary, Dan Gilvezan, Bob Holt, Michael Horton, Ralph James, Lynn Johnson, Stan Jones, Lee Lampton, Morgan Lofting, Mona Marshall, John Mayer, Shepard Menken, Don Messick, Vic Perrin, Tony Pope, Richard Ramos, Robert Ridgely, Neil Ross, Gene Ross, Stanley Ralph Ross, Michael Rye, Marilyn Schreffler, John Stephenson, Ted Schwartz, Gary Seeger, Michael Sheehan, Andre Stojka, Janet Waldo, B. J. Ward, Frank Welker, and Paul Winchell (Additional characters)

Amazing Spider-Man and the Incredible Hulk (1983–1984)

STUDIO: Marvel

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: David DePatie, Lee Gunther

PRODUCERS: Dennis Marks, Art Vitello, Don Jurwich

DIRECTORS: Gerry Chiniquy, Steve Clark, John Gibbs, Sid Marcus, Nelson Shin, Art Vitello, Bob Richardson, Tom Ray, Dan Thompson, Sam Weiss, Arnie Wong, Kent Butterworth, Milton Gray, Don Jurwich

WRITERS: Creighton Barnes, Doug Booth, Francis Deighen, Donald Glut, Jack Hanrahan, Christy Mark, Larry Parr, Jeffrey Scott

VOICE ACTORS: Stan Lee (Narrator); Anne Lockhart, George DiCenzo, Alan Dinehart, Jerry Dexter, Michael Evans, Walker Edmiston, Alan Young, Dennis Marks, William Woodson, John Haymer, Keye Luke, Allan Melvin, Sally Julian, Casey Kasem, Jack Angel, Michael Bell, Lee Brillely, Bill Boyett, Corey Buron, Susan Blu, Wally Burr, Bill Callaway, Hamilton Camp, Victoria Carroll, Phil Clarke, Hans Conreid, Regis Cordic, Henry Corden, Brad Crandall, Roberto Cruz, Peter Cullen, Brian Cummings, Jeff David, Jack DeLeon, Al Fann, Ron Feinberg, Elliott Field, June Foray, Patrick Fraley, Brian Fuld, Kathy Garver, Linda Gary, Dan Gilvezan, Bob Holt, Michael Horton, Ralph James, Lynn Johnson, Stan Jones, Lee Lampton, Morgan Lofting, Mona Marshall, John Mayer, Shepard Menken, Don Messick, Vic Perrin, Tony Pope, Richard Ramos, Robert Ridgely, Neil Ross, Gene Ross, Stanley Ralph Ross, Michael Rye, Marilyn Schreffler, John Stephenson, Ted Schwartz, Gary Seeger, Michael Sheehan, Andre Stojka, Janet Waldo, B. J. Ward, Frank Welker, and Paul Winchell (Additional characters)

Spider-Man (1995–1999)

STUDIOS: Marvel, Saban, Graz, New World

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Avi Arad, Stan Lee, Bill Kerstetter

PRODUCERS: Bob Richardson, John Semper

DIRECTORS INCLUDED: Bob Shellhorn

WRITERS INCLUDED: John Semper, Marv Wolfman, Stan Berkowitz, Len Wein, Brooks Wachtel, Marty Isenberg, Stan Lee, Avi Arad, Sandy Fries

VOICE ACTORS: Christopher Daniel Barnes (Peter Parker/Spider-Man/Spider-Carnage/Ben Reilly), Sara Ballantine (Mary Jane Watson), Edward Asner (J. Jonah Jameson), Linda Gary (Aunt May Parker, early episodes), Julie Bennett (Aunt May Parker, later episodes), Liz Georges (Deborah Whitman), Joseph Campanella (Dr. Curt Connors/Lizard), Hank Azaria (Eddie Brock/Venom), Jennifer Hale (Felicia Hardy/Black Cat), Patrick Labourteaux (Flash Thompson), Gary Imhoff (Harry Osborne), Jim Cummings (Herman Schultz/Shocker), Marla Rubinoff (Liz Osborne), Martin Landau (Mac McGargon/Scorpion), Susan Beaubian (Mariah Crawford/Calypso), Neil Ross (Norman Osborne/Green Goblin), Efrem Zimbalist Jr. (Otto Octavius/Dr. Octopus), Roscoe Lee Browne (Wilson Fisk, a.k.a. the Kingpin), Maxwell Caulfield (Alistair Smythe/Ultimate Slayer), Rodney Saulsberry (Robbie Robertson), Dawnn Lewis (Detective Teri Lee), John Vernon (Dr. Strange), Ann Marie Johnson (Mousie), William "Pop" Attmore II (Robert Farrell/Rocket Racer), Edward Albert (Matt Murdock/Daredevil), Dorian Harewood (Lonnie Lincoln/Tombstone), Scott Cleverdon (Cletus Kasady/Carnage), Barbara Goodson (Dr. Ashley Kafka), Jeff Corey (Silvermane), Rob Paulsen (Hydroman)

Spider-Man Unlimited (1999–2001)

STUDIOS: Marvel, Saban, New World

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Avi Arad, Eric Rollman, Matthew Edelman

PRODUCER: Will Meugniot

DIRECTOR: Patrick Archibald

WRITERS: Diane Duane, Peter Morwood, Will Meugniot, Roger Silber, Michael Reaves, Robert Gregory Browne, Steve Perry, Larry Brody

VOICE ACTORS: Rino Romano (Peter Parker/Spider-Man/Goblin), John Payne (John Jameson), Kimberly Hawthorne (Karen), Christopher Gaze (Bromley), Akiko Morrison (Dr. Naoko Yamada Jones), Jennifer Hale (Mary Jane Watson/Lady Vermin of the Next-Men), Richard Newman (J. Jonah Jameson), Brian Drummond (Venom), Michael Donovan (Carnage), David Sobolov (Lord Tyger), Tasha Simms (Lady Ursula), Ron Halder (Sir Ram)

Spider-Man (2003)

STUDIOS: Mainframe, CTD, Marvel, Columbia, MTV

DISTRIBUTOR: MTV

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Brian Michael Bendis, Morgan Gendel, Brian Michael, Audu Paden, Rick Ungar

PRODUCER: Bob Richardson

DIRECTORS INCLUDED: Alan Caldwell, Audu Paden, Brandon Vietti, Tim Eldred

WRITERS INCLUDED: Brian Michael Bendis, Greg Johnson, Marsha Griffin, Morgan Gendel, Rick Suvalle, Scott Lipsey, Steven Kriozere, Todd Felderstein, Tracy Forbes, Whip Lipsey

VOICE ACTORS: Neil Patrick Harris (Peter Parker/Spider-Man), Lisa Loeb (Mary Jane Watson), Angelle Brooks (Indy Daimonji), Keith David (Agent Mosley), Michael Clarke Duncan (Wilson Fisk, a.k.a. the Kingpin), Ethan Embry (Max Dillon/Electro), Eve (Felicia Hardy/Black Cat), Gina Gershon (Shikata), Virginia Madsen (Silver Sable), Christian Maguire (Billy Connors), Ian Ziering (Harry Osborne), Rob Zombie (Dr. Curt Connors/Lizard)

SYNOPSIS: After being bitten by a radioactive spider, teenager Peter Parker becomes a superpowered fighter against crime.

COMMENTARY: One of the most popular of Marvel's stable of fallible superheroes, Spider-Man made his debut in the 15th issue of *Amazing Fantasy*, first published in 1962; he soon merited a comic book of his own. His popularity was based in part on his being part of Marvel's teenage fan base and because, like many of cocreator Lee's figures, he fought as much with his own personal demons as he did against superpowered villains. In Parker's case, this manifested itself not only in his typical teenage awkwardness but also in the great layer of guilt that came upon him when he was unable to save his beloved uncle from being killed. As stated in the first issue, he slowly came to understand that "with great power comes great responsibility," a phrase that could neatly describe the concerns underpinning every superhero's career. The great appeal "Spidey" had to a wide variety of comic book readers of different ages was later exploited in a short-lived live-action television series, several live-action feature films, and even a Broadway musical.



A friendly neighborhood hero in his 1980s edition. NBC/Photofest © NBC

The ongoing drama behind the comic book stories was, however, largely ignored in the first television animation adaptation of the character, much as the same studio's *Marvel Superheroes* (q.v.) had soft-pedaled the featured figures' backstories in favor of straightforward action. This version was a hodgepodge of production elements, with voice work done in Canada (Kligman's take on the tyrannical newspaper editor Jameson was the best here) and animation split between the Grantray-Lawrence Studio and some ex-Paramount animation staffers working under Ralph Bakshi's supervision. It was well produced for the time and was particularly adept at mimicking the subtle humor Lee introduced in his comic book scripts at appropriate times. Fifty-two episodes were produced, which did well in the ratings in their original run and then became a perennial feature in off-network syndication in both Canada and the United States.

The second incarnation of the character debuted in 1981 and had him teamed up with two teenaged superhero friends, Angelica "Firestar" Jones and Bobby "Iceman" Drake. These episodes were distinguished by an even deeper level of fidelity to the original drawings, as well as to both Parker's discomfort with his role and the citizenry's ambivalent attitude toward him. Teamed with episodes featuring fellow hero the Incredible Hulk (see *The Incredible Hulk*), this version existed in both 30-minute and 1-hour editions over a 3-year original broadcast period and was later rerun as part of the syndicated *Marvel Action Universe* (q.v.) omnibus.

Version 3 was arguably the best and most authentic animated version of the character yet. It helped that Stan Lee was actively involved in production (as he had not been before), serving as an executive producer and a writer,

along with some other distinguished comic book veterans in that latter capacity. Likewise, the show was well animated and continued to depict Parker's nebulous shifts between neurotic young man and powerful superhero effectively. Some of the villains were veterans of the Marvel universe, others new creations. But perhaps the most notable element of the show was the top-drawer players involved in the voice cast: Distinguished actors like Landau, Zimbalist, Browne, and Corey weren't the kind of people you expected to find in an animation voice actor cast list. They were bolstered by a stellar group of veterans of the field, headed by Asner as Jameson, now depicted as the head of a media conglomerate known as J3 Communications.

The fourth and fifth incarnations were business as usual, with lesser results. *Spider-Man Unlimited* focused on the character becoming a fugitive from justice after being falsely accused of destroying a space shuttle (his enemies Venom and Carnage were really responsible) and relocating to an alternate universe known as Counter-Earth, populated by human-animal hybrids known as bestials. This version was later combined with the previous incarnations in a package that was edited to reflect new realities in the world (most obviously, all images of the World Trade Center in the episodes' New York setting were removed so as to reflect the city post-9/11). The fifth version came in the wake of the popular 2002 live-action feature film and was a CGI instead of celluloid production. It had the advantage of having superstar graphic novelist Bendis as a writer and producer and Harris in the lead roles, but in terms of actually expanding the story arc of the character, it did not do so, instead simply reflecting the tried and true of what had come before, as distributor MTV probably would have preferred.

In recent years, thanks in part to Marvel's new corporate alliance with Disney, as well as regular exposure in special-effects-laden but dramatically limited live-action feature films, Spider-Man and his fellow Marvel heroes have arguably become even more popular than they ever were before. More recent appearances by the character and his ilk, as in an episode of *Phineas and Ferb* (q.v.), have demonstrated that animation continues to be one of the most effective ways of presenting their stories without dramatic or technological restraint. Therefore, it was not a surprise when Disney debuted a new Spider-Man animated program in the summer of 2017.

SPIDER RIDERS (2006)

STUDIOS: Cookie Jar, Yomiko, Bee Train

DISTRIBUTOR: CW

DIRECTOR: Koichi Masimo

WRITERS: Ted Anasti, Patsy Cameron Anasti

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Ron Pardo (Narrator), Julie Lemieux (Hunter Steele), Stacey DePass (Corona), Cameron Ansell (Prince Lumen), Melanie Tonello (Princess Sparkle), Tim Hamaguchi (Igneous), Lyon Smith (Magma), Joseph Motiki (Shadow), Caroly Larson (Venus), Lawrence Bayne (Mantid), Jack Langedijk (Buguese), Carman Menville (Grasshop), Ellen Ray Hennessey (Beerain)

SYNOPSIS: Young Hunter Steele falls into an alternate universe known as the Inner World, where he assists the heroic Spider Riders in their fight against the evil Invectids.

COMMENTARY: This Canadian-Japanese coproduction was derivative in the extreme, reflecting a dated mode of action-adventure production that was by now several decades old. But, as the program was clearly aimed at young boys aged 6 to 12, the producers were decidedly playing to this corner of the room alone, and everyone else viewing it, it seems, was meant simply to just play along.

SPIDER-WOMAN (1979–1980)

STUDIOS: DePatie-Freleng, Marvel

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATOR: Stan Lee

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: David DePatie, Friz Freleng

PRODUCER: Lee Gunther

DIRECTORS: Bob Richardson, Gerry Chiniquy, Sid Marcus, Dave Detiege

WRITERS INCLUDED: Jeffrey Scott

VOICE ACTORS: Joan Van Ark (Jessica Drew/Spider-Woman); Bruce Miller (Jeff Hunter); Bryan Scott (Billy Drew); Lou Krugman (Police Chief); Larry Carroll (Detective Miller); Dick Tufeld (Announcer); John Mayer, Vic Perrin, Ilene Latter, Tony Young, Karen Machon, and John Milford (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: As a child, Jessica Drew was bitten by an irradiated spider in her father's lab; he revived her with an untested serum known as No. 34, and she gained the powers and abilities of a spider in the process. Now the publisher of *Justice* magazine, Jessica moonlights as the powerful Spider-Woman when her abilities are needed.

COMMENTARY: There had already been a *Spider-Man* (q.v.), so why not a similarly designed woman? Stan Lee clearly had that in mind when he dreamed this up. This was not a simple rip-off, however. Far from being crippled by neurosis, Jessica Drew, in both of her incarnations, was one of the most formidable female characters in television animation for her time. Her powers far exceeded those of her male counterpart; besides wall-crawling, spinning webs, and enhanced strength, she also could fly and communicate telepathically with real spiders, as well as having a spider sense that allowed her to view events on a truly global scale. Her two male companions—photographer Jeff Hunter and boy genius nephew Billy—were often placed in the “female” position of being abducted, a neat role reversal. Still, the program's run was limited chiefly because it represented more of what male producers and executives assumed a feminist woman would be like rather than reflecting a truly female viewpoint. Note the absence of women's names in the production credits.

SPIRAL ZONE (1987)

STUDIOS: Atlantic-Kushner-Locke, Maltese, Orbis, Tonka

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Donald Kushner, Peter Locke

PRODUCERS: Edd Griles, Ray Volpe, Diana Dru Botsford, Brenda Kyle
 DIRECTORS: Pierre Decelles, Georges Grammat, Elayne Shina, Joe Cisi, Chiou Wen Shian

WRITERS INCLUDED: Jim Carlson, Terence McDonnell, Mark Edens
 VOICE ACTORS: Dan Gilvezan (Dirk Courage), Hal Rayle (Max), Denny Delk (General McFarland/Reaper), Frank Welker (Dr. Lawrence/Razorback), Michael Bell (Hiro), Mona Marshall (Katarina/Mommy), Neil Ross (Overlord/Tank/Bandit)

SYNOPSIS: The Spiral Zone, a green cosmic cloud, has laid to waste huge cities and turned those who encounter it into zombies. Commander Dirk Courage and his associates the Zone Riders are assigned to combat the Overlord, the creator of the Zone, and his minions and restore the Earth's natural state.

COMMENTARY: A typical bills-paying formula product of the 1980s, which, like many of its kind, both sold toys unashamedly and was heavily in debt to *Star Wars* in plot and tone. While impressively animated, the good production values were lost on a cast that was extremely wooden, overtly elaborate vehicles that didn't resemble their toy equivalents in the real world at all, and a paper-thin plot that was simply an excuse for one elaborate battle scene after another.

***SPIRIT OF FREEDOM* (1975)**

STUDIO: Shamus Culhane

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: A short series of vignettes about American history with (as the title implied) a blatant pro-American bias, designed to prepare younger viewers for the then-upcoming Bicentennial in 1976. The *Spirit of Freedom* of the title was a Yankee Doodle-type apparition who functioned as the host/narrator. The program's visual look was bolstered by the use as background art of genuine magazine art, engravings, and paintings from the 18th and 19th centuries.

***SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS* (1999–PRESENT)**

STUDIOS: United Plankton, Nickelodeon

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

CREATOR: Stephen Hillenburg

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Stephen Hillenburg, Paul Tibbitt

PRODUCERS: Donna Castricone, Helen Kafatic, Anne Michaud, Dina Buteyn, Jennie Hammond, Derek Drymon, Marc Ceccarelli, Vincent Waller

DIRECTORS INCLUDE: Alan Smart, Fred Miller, Tom Yasumi, Edgar Larrazabal, Sean Dempsey, Andrew Overtoom, Larry Leichliter, Lenord Robinson, Frank Weiss, Mark Caballero, Seamus Walsh, Bob Jaques

WRITERS INCLUDE: Stephen Hillenburg, Derek Drymon, Tim Hill, Paul Tibbitt, Jay Lender, Peter Burns, Doug "Mr." Lawrence, Mark O'Hare, Ennio Torresan Jr., Erik Wiese, Steve Fonti, Chris Mitchell, Sherm Cohen, Aaron Springer, Chuck Klein, Merriwether Williams, Vincent Waller, David Fain,

Walt Dohrn, Chris Headrick, Jim Schumann, C. H. Greenblatt, William Reiss, Octavio Rodriguez, Carson Kugler, Caleb Meurer, Dan Povenmire, Sam Henderson, Kent Osborne, Kaz, Heather Martinez, Mike Roth, Joe Liss, Zeus Cervas, Mike Bell, Brad Vandergrift, Garrett Ho, Mike Mitchell, Clint Bond Jr., John Magness, Tim Parsons, Ted Seko, Luke Brookshier, Tom King, Steven Banks, Maureen Muscarina, Marcelo Souza, Monica Tamova, Casey Alexander, Dani Michaeli, Dave Cunningham, Nate Cash, Tuck Tucker, Sean Charmatz, Ian Graham, Janice Tolentino, Richard Pursel, Eric Shaw, Greg Miller, Chris Reccardi, Charlie Bean, Derek Iversen, Marc Ceccarelli, Blake Lemons, Jack Pendarvis, Bob Camp, Fred Osmond, Kyle McCulloch, Lynne Naylor, Joe Wierenga, John Trabbic, Josh Androsky, Daniel Dominguez, Claire O'Kane, Solomon Georgio, Shellie O'Brien, Chong Lee, Andrew Goodman, Ed Baker, Ryan Kramer, Ben Gruber, Brian Morante, Kelly Armstrong, Adam Paiolan

VOICE ACTORS: Tom Kenny (Spongebob Squarepants/Gary/Patchy the Pirate/Elaine, later episodes/Harold Squarepants/Dirty Bubble, later episodes/Old Man Jenkins, early episodes/French Narrator/Nat Peterson, later episodes/Pansponge/Sandals Fishbowl, later episodes/Spongebuck Squarepants/Spongegar/Spongetron), Bill Faggerbakke (Patrick Star/Simipatrick/Patrick Revere/Pecos Patrick/Patar/Patron), Rodger Bumpass (Squidward Tentacles/Dr. Gilligan Scales/Mama Tentacles/Hopalong Tentacles/Squog/Squidly Tentacles), Carolyn Lawrence (Sandy Cheeks/Nancy Suzy Fish, later episodes/Sally, later episodes/Rosie Cheeks/Dark Knight/Tina Fran, early episodes), Clancy Brown (Mr. Eugene Krabs/Harold, later episodes/Scooter, later episodes/William Krabs/King Krabs), Doug "Mr." Lawrence (Sheldon Plankton/Larry the Lobster/Officer John, later episodes/Perch Perkins, early episodes/Elaine, early episodes/Old Man Jenkins, later episodes/Bubble Buddy/Fred Rechid, early episodes/Harold, early episodes/Sally, later episodes/Dead Eye Plankton/Planktonamor/Tom, early episodes), Jill Talley (Karen/Karen the Crystal Ball), Mary Jo Catlett (Mrs. Puff/Polene Puff), Lori Alan (Pearl Krabs/Queen Amphitrite, later episodes/Princess Pearl), Ernest Borgnine (Mermaid Man, 1999–2012), Joe Whyte (Mermaid Man, 2013–present), Tim Conway (Barnacle Boy), Brian Doyle Murray (Flying Dutchman), Stephen Hillenburg (Potty the Parrot, early episodes), Paul Tibbitt (Potty the Parrot, later episodes/Mrs. Betsy Krabs, early episodes/Doodlebob), Sirenica Irwin (Officer Nancy/Margaret Bubblebottom Squarepants/Mrs. Betsy Krabs, later episodes/Nancy Suzy Fish, early episodes/Sally, early episodes/Tina Fran, later episodes), Dee Bradley Baker (Officer John, early episodes/Perch Perkins, later episodes/Squilliam Fancyson/Old Man Jenkins, later episodes/Alaskan Bull Worm/Bubble Bass/Craig Mammalton/Fred Rechid, later episodes/Harold, later episodes/Monroe Timmy, early episodes/Nat Peterson, early episodes/Sandals Fishbowl, early episodes/Scooter, later episodes/Sea Bear/Sea Rhinoceros/Tom, later episodes/What Zit Tooya), Thomas Wilson (Officer John, later episodes/Flatts the Flounder/Fred Rechid, later episodes/Tattletale Strangler), John Rhys Davies (Man Ray, early episodes), Bob Joles (Man Ray, later episodes), Charles Nelson Reilly (Dirty Bubble, early episodes), Marion Ross (Grandma Squarepants), John O'Hurley

(King Neptune, early episodes), Kevin Michael Richardson (King Neptune, later episodes), Jeffrey Tambor (King Neptune, later episodes), Billy West (King Neptune, later episodes), Dee Snider (Angry Jack), John DiMaggio (Black Jack Squarepants), Matt Berry (Bubbles), Alec Baldwin (Dennis), Gene Shalit (Gene Scallop), Ian McShane (Gordon), Dennis Quaid (Grandpa Redbeard), Amy Poehler (Granny), Johnny Depp (Jack Kahuna Laguna), Patton Oswalt (Jim), David Bowie (Lord Royal Highness), Pat Morita (Master Udon), Sara Paxton (Monroe Timmy, later episodes), Mark Hamill (Moth), Grey DeLisle (Nancy Suzy Fish, later episodes), Alton Brown (Nicholas Withers), Pat Pinney (Painty the Pirate), Sebastian Bach (Prince Triton), Victoria Beckham (Queen Amphitrite, early episodes), Carlos Alazraqui (Scooter, early episodes), Gene Simmons (Sea Monster), Robin Sachs (Sgt. Roderick), Christopher Guest (Stanley Squarepants), R. Lee Erney (Warden)

SYNOPSIS: Dim-witted but optimistic fry cook Spongebob Squarepants is a regular source of amusement and aggravation in his underwater hometown of Bikini Bottom.

COMMENTARY: On a commercial level, this is one of the most successful comedy programs in the history of television animation, with the lead character and even some of the supporting ones gaining much higher public visibility than many of their peers and with the series spawning a small galaxy of media spin-offs, including two feature-film adaptations in 2004 and 2015, respectively. Creatively, however, it is much more of a Jekyll-and-Hyde affair: some installments are hilariously funny, others considerably more drawn-out and laborious. Whether you are a fan indicates whether you enjoy the show's unique, wacky approach to slapstick, which some of the show's writers refined here before going on to produce arguably superior programs in the future based on its model.



Absorbent and yellow and porous is he. Paramount/Photofest © Paramount

Creator Hillenburg developed this series out of his prior work as a marine biologist. This is reflected, in some ways, by the realistic efforts to create a natural setting and have the characters adapt to it rather than the other way around. (For example, Sandy Cheeks, the Texas-accented squirrel who is the lone mammal in the central cast, lives in an artificial arboretum and has to don an astronaut-style pressure suit to interact in the outside world with the other characters.) However, this tends to be outweighed by the high level of unrealistic overacting and vintage comedy gag-writing and story-plotting that dominates the show, which all too easily reminds us that this is still a stereotypical “cartoon.” This is not the kind of program you would watch if you wanted to appreciate comedy on a more cerebral level, but the continued large audience numbers the show regularly pulls in suggests that slapstick can still pay dividends in the television animation business. The program’s cultural visibility and acceptance has been further affirmed by the number of celebrities who have guest-starred (see the voice actor list) or appeared in the movie spin-offs.

The earliest episodes in the program are the most effective and funniest, in part because the format was then new and the writers were able to find enough variation in the idea to keep it going well. In recent years, however, the quality has declined in a quite noticeable way—there is only so much you can do with a good idea, after all, before it ends up becoming a millstone. As well known and likable as the characters have become, they can’t always save bad ideas from being bad.

Yet Nickelodeon seems not to have noticed, given how long and how much they have profited from this modest but successful franchise. Future episodes are forever being planned, and the Bikini Bottom gang may once again hit the big screen soon.

THE SPOOKTACULAR NEW ADVENTURES OF CASPER

(1996–1998)

See *Casper the Friendly Ghost* (and related series).

SPORT BILLY (1979–1980)

STUDIO: Filmation

DISTRIBUTORS: Syndicated, NBC (1982)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Lou Scheimer, Norman Prescott

DIRECTORS: Ed Friedman, Marsh Lamore, Lou Kachivas, Kay Wright, Lou Zukor

WRITERS: Paul Aratow, Jack Hanrahan, Paul Dini, Marsha Humphreys, Dan DiStefano, Coslough Johnson, Barry Gaines, Tom Ruegger

VOICE ACTORS: Lane Scheimer (Sport Billy), Joyce Bullifant (Queen Vanda/Sport Lillie), Frank Welker (Sporticus XI/Willie)

SYNOPSIS: Sport Willie, a clean-living, fairness-minded athletic alien, is dispatched to Earth by King Sporticus XI to protect the idea of fair play across the universe, chiefly from the villainous Queen Vanda.

COMMENTARY: One of the more thinly conceived Filmation programs, based on a sports mascot figure from Germany and originally designed for that market

despite being produced in the English language. The program's NBC run was confined to the affiliated stations the network owned.

***SPUNKY AND TADPOLE* (1958)**

STUDIOS: Beverly Hills Productions, TV Cinema Sales, Guild, Barnet

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Joan Gardner (Spunky), Don Messick (Tadpole/Others), Ed Janis (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: Young boy Spunky and his anthropomorphic teddy bear pal Tadpole have a variety of exciting adventures.

COMMENTARY: A short-form series that was seen both as a segment of established children's programs and a half-hour slot of its own. It has not been seen much since the mid-1960s due to shifting ownership issues and the fact that it wasn't very popular to begin with, despite the large amount of promotion it got on its original release. Messick's involvement on a rare non-Hanna-Barbera project is the program's major source of interest today.

***SPY GROOVE* (2000)**

STUDIO/DISTRIBUTOR: MTV

CREATORS/WRITERS: Perry Dance, Richard Register, Michael Gans

PRODUCER: Vicky Smith

DIRECTORS: Saul Blinkoff, Elliot Bour

VOICE ACTORS: Michael Gans (Agent 1), Richard Register (Agent 2), Jessica Shaw (Mac), Fuschia (Helen Troy), Dean Elliott (Narrator/Carlo Fabrini)

SYNOPSIS: Hipster secret agents 1 and 2 confront a variety of similarly conceived enemies.

COMMENTARY: A rather shallow update of the James Bond formula for the 21st century, with little to offer that was not already present in the Bond films themselves. Thirteen episodes were produced, but only six aired before MTV canceled the series.

***SQUIDBILLIES* (2005–PRESENT)**

STUDIOS: Williams Street, Warner Brothers

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATORS/PRODUCERS: Jim Fortier, Dave Willis

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Michael Lazzo, Keith Crawford

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Unknown Hinson (Early Cuyler), Daniel McDevitt (Rusty Cuyler), Dana Snyder (Ruby Jean "Granny" Cuyler), Patricia French (Lil Cuyler), Mary Kraft (Krystal), Elizabeth Cook (Tammi), Jesco White (Ga Ga Pee Pap "12 Gun" Cuyler), Todd Barry (Dr. Bug), Charles Napier (Sheriff, early episodes), Bobby Ellerbee (Sheriff, later episodes), Dave Willis (Deputy Dennis/Glenn/Ellis/Narrator/Santa Claus/Plumber Bubba), Todd Hanson (Dan Halen), Scott Hilley (Reverend), Pete Smith (Boyd), Dana Swanson (Glen's Wife), Brendon Small (Doctor), Stewart Brieuhut (Squid Jesus), Larry Munson (God),

Jim Fortier (Devil), Riley Martin (Horseman of Pestilence), Ned Hastings (Judge), Mick Foley (Thunderclap)

SYNOPSIS: The adventures of the Cuyler family, a group of anthropomorphic squids who live in rural Dougal County.

COMMENTARY: Part of the network's "Adult Swim" group, with a tone to match. It seems to reinforce, rather than try to challenge, existing stereotypes about southern "rednecks" and rural "white trash" people that have long held sway in American culture. The anthropomorphic angle to the lead characters is novel, but it isn't enough to make the show truly be funny, considering that the program's tone is almost exclusively morbid in nature.

SQUIGGLEVISION (1997–2000)

See *Science Court/Squigglevision* (1997–2000).

SQUIRREL BOY (2006–2007)

STUDIO: Cartoon Network

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATOR/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Everett Peck

PRODUCER: Pernelle Hayes

DIRECTOR: Raymie Muzquiz

WRITERS: Christopher Painter, Raymie Muzquiz, Joe Purdy, Stig Bergquist, Toni Vian, Howard Marguiles, Ted Stearn, Tuck Tucker, Mark Banker, Stephen Sandoval, Christo Stamboliev, Aldin Baroza, Gene Grillo, Michael Mullen, Scott Malchus, Patrick Kochajki, Dave Chlystek, Adam Cohen, Max Martinez

VOICE ACTORS: Richard Horvitz (Rodney J. Squirrel), Pamela Adlon (Andy Johnson), Billy West (Kyle), Carlos Alazraqui (Salty Mike), Tom Kenny (Leon), Kurtwood Smith (Bob Johnson), Nancy Sullivan (Lucille Johnson), Monica Lee Gradischek (Darlene), Corey Burton (Ranger Stu), Jason Spisak (Oscar), Eliza Schneider (Martha), Mona Marshall (Esther Flatbottom), John Stephenson (Grandpa Squirrel)

SYNOPSIS: Rodney, an anthropomorphic squirrel, has a checkered relationship with young Andy Johnson, for whom he is theoretically a pet.

COMMENTARY: A clever and highly eccentric sitcom that never really got the attention or respect it deserved. The supporting cast—particularly Schneider's obsessive-compulsive scientist-in-waiting Martha—was particularly well-done. Given that it was quite mild in tone, it was surprising that this was the work of the same man who produced the raunchy *Duckman* (q.v.) in the previous decade, but this is a testament to Peck's versatility more than anything else.

Following the program's cancellation as a half-hour program, several short films based on the series aired in the winter of 2008.

STAN LEE'S STRIPPERELLA (2003)

See *Stripperella* (2003).

STANLEY (2001)

STUDIOS: Jumbo, Cartoon Cola, Cartoon Pizza, Disney

DISTRIBUTOR: Disney

CREATOR: Andrew "Griff" Griffin

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Jim Jenkins, David Campbell

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Jessica Stone (Stanley), Charles Shaughnessy (Dennis), Khylan Jones (Mimi/Marcy), David Landesberg (Dad), Rene Mujica (Harry), Shaun Pyfrom (Lionel), Hynden Walch (Elsie), Candi Milo (Ms. Diaz), Ari Myers (Mom), Philece Sampler (Lester)

SYNOPSIS: Six-year-old Stanley uses his imagination to go on a variety of adventures with the assistance of his British-accented goldfish Dennis and other animals.

COMMENTARY: Based on British author Griffin's children's book series, this was a strictly by-the-numbers adaptation done with the Harvard Graduate School of Education providing education input. Shaughnessy won an Emmy in 2002 for his portrayal of Dennis, in which he was well-cast as a priggish snob.

STARCOM: THE U.S. SPACE FORCE (1987)

STUDIOS: DIC, Coca-Cola TV

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Andy Heyward

PRODUCERS: Richard Raynis, Kenneth Duer

DIRECTORS: Marek Buchwald, Kazumi Fukushima

WRITERS INCLUDED: Lori Crawford, Brynne Stephens, Lydia Marano

VOICE ACTORS: Rob Cowan (Dash); Robert Cait (Crowbar/Torvak); Phil Aikin (Slim); Neil Munro (Dark); Susan Roman (Kelsey); Marvin Goldhar (Vondar); Elva May Hoover (Malvanna); Don Francks (Colonel Brinkley); Dan Hennessey (Klag); Louis DiBianco (Romak); Marla Lukovsky, John Stocker, Greg Swanson, Jank Aszman, Hardee Lineham, Linda Sorenson, Doug Stratton, and Christopher Ward (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: The outer-space force known as Starcom is in conflict with the evil Shadow Force, led by the emperor Dark.

COMMENTARY: Another one of the *Star Wars* rip-offs that littered the television animation landscape during the lack-of-new-ideas period of the 1980s. This one was bolstered by the fact that it was supported by the Young Astronauts Council, an organization designed to encourage children to seriously study the science and technology of outer space. It was also underwritten by the toy company Coleco, which made a line of toys based on the show, and ultimately, commerce beat out education in the mandate, resulting in a thinly plotted, derivative program that lasted only 13 weeks on the air. It was later rerun on cable TV between 1993 and 1995.

STARGATE: INFINITY (2002–2003)

STUDIOS: DIC, 4Kids, MGM

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Andy Heyward

PRODUCERS: Eric Lewald, Michael Maliani

DIRECTOR: Will Meugniot

WRITERS INCLUDED: Bob Forward, Brooks Wachtel, Christy Marx, Katherine Lawrence, Randy Littlejohn, Len Uhley, Mark Edens, Steven Melching, Ted Pedersen, Michael Edens, Eric Lewald

VOICE ACTORS: Dale Wilson (Major Gus Bonner); Kathleen Barr (Draga); Mark Hildreth (R. J. Harrison); Mackenzie Gray (Pahk'kal); Bettina Busch (Seattle Montoya); Mark Acheson, Jim Byrnes, Tifanie Christian, Gus Gould, Ron Halder, Kimberly Hawthorne, Blue Mankuma, Cusse Mankuma, Moneca Stori, Lee Tockar, and Cathy Weseluck (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: Major Gus Bonner of Stargate Command and four pilots under his leadership work to clear the good name of their commander, whose reputation has been damaged by being accused of a crime he did not commit. At the same time, they intend to fulfill their mission to escort the alien Draga back to her home planet.

COMMENTARY: This program was derived from a 1994 feature film, in which a stone gateway on Earth leads to an alternate universe resembling ancient Egypt. Four years later, a live-action television series called *Stargate SG-1* was produced, which expanded the universe of the film; the gateway, thought destroyed, was actually still in operation and allowed people to travel wherever they wanted in the universe. Then came this animated version, which, although not officially part of the narrative canon, significantly borrowed from it nevertheless.

STAR TREK (1973–1975)

STUDIOS: Filmmation, Norway, Paramount

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

CREATOR/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Gene Roddenberry

PRODUCERS: Lou Scheimer, Norman Prescott, D. C. Fontana

DIRECTOR: Hal Sutherland

WRITERS: D. C. Fontana, Marc Daniels, Margaret Armen, David Gerrold, James Schmerer, Walter Koenig, Larry Brody, Len Janson, Chuck Menville, Stephen Kandel, Joyce Perry, Samuel Peeples, Howard Weinstein, Russell Bates, David Wise, John Culver, Paul Schneider, Larry Niven, David Harmon, Dario Finelli

VOICE ACTORS: William Shatner (Captain James Kirk); Leonard Nimoy (Mr. Spock); DeForest Kelley (Dr. Leonard "Bones" McCoy); James Doohan (Chief Engineer Montgomery "Scotty" Scott); Majel Barrett (Nurse Christine Chapel); George Takei (Lieutenant Sulu); Nichelle Nichols (Lieutenant Uhura); Roger C. Carmel and Ted Knight (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: The spaceship *Enterprise* is on a continuing mission "to boldly go" where human beings have never gone before in the universe.

COMMENTARY: Airline-pilot-turned-TV-screenwriter Roddenberry developed the concept for the original live-action *Star Trek* in the early 1960s, but he wasn't able to get backing to produce it until Lucille Ball's production company, Desilu, agreed to take a chance on it in 1966. (Paramount inherited



Boldly going where television animation never went before. NBC/Photofest © NBC

the series when it bought *Desilu* in 1968 and has therefore been the corporate entity that has benefitted from the franchise the most.) NBC scheduled the show only reluctantly, and its doubts increased when the show received middling ratings during its three-year run. However, the program quickly acquired a following of immensely devoted fans, whose lobbying prevented the show from being canceled after its second year but not so permanently. They remained loyal to the series in syndication, where it has remained in close rotation ever since it left the network airwaves. Paramount knew a good thing when it saw it, and beginning in 1979, several successful feature films based on the show were released in regular succession, up to today. In addition, beginning in the mid-1980s with *The Next Generation*, the show's fictional universe rapidly expanded to include several spin-offs, sequels, and reboots, with a new one that debuted in the fall of 2017 (*Star Trek: Discovery*). Through it all, the original show's cast remained largely in place for most of these ventures (including this animated one) and became, much to their surprise (and, in some cases, disgust), objects of great adulation to their admirers.

It was more to the show's rabid fan base rather than the stereotypical child viewers of Saturday-morning animation that the animated *Star Trek* was geared, and the final product showed that off. Filmmation outdid itself in terms of immaculately re-creating the live-action show's signature feel in graphic form. In addition, it preserved the subtle but progressive politics Roddenberry brought to the original show, where, within a military framework, the *Enterprise* crew members were presented as social and intellectual equals. It even went so far as to create episodes that were blatant sequels to episodes of the original series, further designing it to lure in fans. The involvement of Roddenberry and original series writer/producer Fontana (who, in a pioneering way for a woman staffer in television animation, held the same position she had on the original show) ensured that it was an accurate re-creation of what came before.

In later years, after it was off the air, the animated version became a subject of considerable scrutiny among fans of the franchise, with endless and pointless debates occurring about whether it could be officially considered part of the franchise's canon. Yet what is unquestionable is that it remains one of the few television animation adaptations to retain (and, in some ways, improve upon) the flair and style of its source and allow for it to play the same pioneering role in advancing the narrative scope of television animation as its source had for live-action science-fiction filmmaking. Ultimately, Paramount would vindicate the program's value when it issued it as a DVD set alongside all of its other issues of the ongoing *Star Trek* properties.

STAR VS. THE FORCES OF EVIL (2015–PRESENT)

STUDIO/DISTRIBUTOR: Disney

CREATOR: Daron Nefcy

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Daron Nefcy, Dave Wasson, Jordana Arkin

PRODUCERS: Aaron Hammersley, Dominic Bisignano

DIRECTORS INCLUDE: Mike Mullen, Aaron Hammersley, Piero Piluso, Dominic Bisigniano, Giancarlo Volpe, John Infantino, Brett Varon

WRITERS INCLUDE: Mike Mullen, Ian Wasseluk, Aaron Hammersley, Daron Nefcy, Lane Lueras, Dave Stone, Zeus Cervas, Bert Youn, Carrie Liao, Dominic Bisigniano, Christopher Graham, Piero Piluso, Carlos Ramos, Scott O'Brien, Kyle Neswald, Carder Scholin, Tyler Chen, Evon Freeman, Jushtin Lee, Le Tang, John Mathot, Zach Marcus, Aleth Romanillos, Sabrina Cotugno, John Infantino, Amelia Lorenz, Annisa Adjani, Natasha Kline, Mark Acland, Riccardo Durante, Cassie Zwart, Sarah Oleksyk, Gina Gress

VOICE ACTORS: Eden Sher (Princess Star Butterfly), Adam McArthur (Marco Diaz), Alan Tudyk (Ludo/King River Butterfly), Artt Butler (Mr. Diaz), Nia Vardalos (Mrs. Diaz), Jenny Slate (Pony Head), Grey DeLisle Griffin (Queen Moon Butterfly/Jackie Lynn Thomas), Nate Torrence (Ferguson), Matt Chapman (Alfonso), Dee Dee Rescher (Miss Margaret Skulnick), Nick Swardson (Dojo Sensei), Jon Heder (Oskar Greason), Rider Strong (Tom), Jeffrey Tambor (Glossaryck), Michael C. Hall (Toffee), Abby Elliott (Janna), Anna Camp (Pixie Empress), Danny Woodburn (Pixie Taskmaster), Jim Gaffigan (Father Time), Jamie Kennedy (Helios), Jessica Walter (Miss Heinous), Jodi Benson (Singing Teacher), Dave Allen (Mr. Candle), Mayim Bialik (Willoughby), Amy Sedaris (Lydia/Mina Loveberry), Yvette Nicole Brown (Brigid), Jerry Trainor (Roy), Nick Lachey (Justin Towers), Billy West (Hungry Larry), Steve Little (Spider with a Top Hat), Eric Olsen (Rock), Ron Lynch (Narwhal Husband), Maria Bamford (Make Up Blast), "Weird" Al Yankovic (Preston Change-O), Melissa Rauch (Baby), Zosia Mamet (Hekapoo), Carl Weathers (Omnitrix Prime), Constance Shulman (Milly), Dana Davis (Kelly), Patrick Stump (Ruberiot)

SYNOPSIS: Star Butterfly, princess of the alternate universe kingdom of Mewni, is given possession of a powerful magic wand on her 13th birthday. When she proves unable to control its powers, she is sent to Earth by her parents until such time as she can. On Earth, she befriends Marco Diaz, a school classmate with whose family she resides, and dodges regular attempts by her nemesis Ludo to destroy her.

COMMENTARY: A clever and amusing show that is equal parts 1930s screwball comedy, magically empowered anime adventure, and fish-out-of-water bildungsroman. The episodes are well thought-out and logically constructed, with a clear sense of internal narrative construction and flow lacking in many of its peers and predecessors. As well, the characters are well constructed; the title figure is impossible not to like, despite her eccentric personality, and the supporting figures are largely in the same line (Tudyk earned an Annie nomination for his threatening but humorous turn as the diminutive, squeaky-voiced Ludo). Neither the adventure nor the comedy elements dominate the affair, with each beneficially restraining the other to keep things flowing well.

Nefcy is only the second woman to have created a series as an individual for Disney, having been preceded by Sue Rose (see *Pepper Ann*). The series was in development for several years (Star and Marco were enemies in the first version, and Star had no magical abilities) and had been pitched in embryonic form to Cartoon Network before being accepted for production by Disney.



Her Royal Highness Star Butterfly (background) in butt-kicking mode, ably assisted by her pal Marco Diaz (foreground). Disney Channel/Photofest © Disney Channel

STAR WARS: CLONE WARS

Star Wars: Clone Wars (2003–2005)

STUDIOS: Lucasfilm, Cartoon Network

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATOR: George Lucas

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: George Lucas, Sam Register

PRODUCERS: Genndy Tartakovsky, Shareena Carlson

DIRECTOR: Genndy Tartakovsky

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Mat Lucas (Anakin Skywalker), James Arnold Taylor (Obi Wan Kenobi), Tom Kane (Yoda), T. C. Carson (Mace Windu), Daran Norris (Ki Adi Mundi/Daakman Barrek/Durge), Kevin Michael Richardson (K'Kruhk), Cree Summer (Luminara Unduli), Tatyana Yasukovich (Barris Offee), Grey DeLisle (Padme Amidala/Shaak Ti/Asaji Ventress), Andre Sogliuzzo (Captain Typho), Nick Jameson (Chancellor Palpatine), Anthony Daniels (C-3PO), Corey Burton (Count Dooku/Sam Hill), John DiMaggio (General Grievous, early episodes), Richard McGonagle (General Grievous, later episodes)

Star Wars: The Clone Wars (2008–2014)

STUDIOS: Lucasfilm, CGCG

DISTRIBUTORS: Cartoon Network (2008–2013), Netflix (2014)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: George Lucas, Catherine Winder

PRODUCER: Cary Silver

DIRECTORS: Dave Bullock, Dave Filoni, Brian Kalin O'Connell, Justin Ridge, Rob Coleman, Jesse Yeh, Atsushi Takeuchi, Stewart Lee, Giancarlo Volpe, Robert Dalva, Kyle Dunlevy, Duwayne Dunham, Walter Murch, Danny Keller, Bosco Ng

WRITERS: Steven Melching, George Kristic, Kevin Campbell, Henry Gilroy, Kevin Rubio, Paul Dini, Julie Siege, Katie Lucas, Bill Cantenbury, Drew Greenberg, Craig Titley, Brian Larsen, Scott Murphy, Randy Stradley, Eoghan Mahony, Wendy Meracle, Melinda Hsu, Andrew Kreisberg, Ben Edlund, Carl Ellsworth, Doug Petrie, Cameron Litvack, Katie Lucas, Steve Mitchell, Craig Van Sickle, Daniel Arkin, Christian Taylor, Matt Michnovetz, Bonnie Mark, Jose Molina, Brent Friedman, Chris Collins, Charles Murray, Jonathan Rinzler

VOICE ACTORS: Matt Latner (Anakin Skywalker/Others), Ashley Eckstein (Ahsoka Tano/Others), James Arnold Taylor (Obi Wan Kenobi/Plo Koon/Others), Dee Bradley Baker (Clone Troopers/Saesee Tiin/Onaconda Farr/Bossk/Arok The Hutt/Others), Tom Kane (Narrator/Yoda/Admiral Wulff Yularen/Others), Ian Abercrombie (Chancellor Palpatine, early episodes/Darth Sidious, early episodes), Tim Curry (Chancellor Palpatine, early episodes/Darth Sidious, later episodes), Ahmed Best (Jar Jar Binks), Clancy Brown (Savage Opress), Corey Burton (Count Dooku/Darth Tyranus/Cad Bane/Ziro The Hutt/Chairman Papanoida/Others), Terrence Carson (Mace Windu), Jim Cummings (Hondo Onaka), Olivia d'Abo (Luminara Unduli), Anthony Daniels (C-3PO), Robin Atkin Downes (Castas/Cham Syndulla/Cin Drallig/Ima Gun Di/Rush Clovis), Dave Filoni (Embo/Jakoli), Nika Futterman (Asaji Ventress/

Chi Eekway Papanoida/Gardulla the Hutt/Sy Snootles/TC-70), Brian George (King Katuunko/Chi Cho/Ki Adi Mundi), Anna Graves (Satine Kryze/Sugi/Meena Tillis/Tiplar/Tiplee/Others), Jennifer Hale (Aayla Secura/Riyo Chuchi), Tom Kenny (Nute Gunray), Phil LaMarr (Bail Organa/Kit Fisto/Orn Free Ta), James Mathis III (Gregar Typho), Angelique Perrin (Adi Galla/Mama the Hutt), Meredith Salinger (Barriss Offee/Che Amanwe Papanoida/Ione Marcy/Pluma Sodi), Kath Soucie (Mon Mothma/Jek Lawquane/Mina Bonteri), Jason Spisak (Lux Bonteri/Zinn Paules), Stephen Stanton (Mas Amedda/Tarkin/Colonel Meebur Gascon/Moral Eva/Others), Catherine Taber (Padme Amidala/Others), Tasia Valenza (Shaak Ti), Sam Witwer (Darth Maul), Matthew Wood (General Grievous/Battle Droids/Poggle the Lesser/Wat Tambor)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: Both of these very different-looking series focus on the time period featured in the trio of *Star Wars* films produced between 2002 and 2005, which were prequels to the events depicted in the original films produced between 1977 and 1983. The central events were the same, dealing with the conflict between the heroic Jedi Knights and the villainous Clone Army of the Republic, with both focusing on the efforts of Obi Wan Kenobi and Anakin Skywalker (the future Darth Vader) on the heroic side; the two played major roles in the original film trilogy as well, under different circumstances. The 2003 series played in limited form, as 25 short-form chapters of 2 to 3 minutes each, in traditional celluloid animation. The 2008 series, however, was a half-hour in length and filmed in a CGI format. This was among the last major *Star Wars* projects to personally involve franchise creator Lucas; a few years later, he would sell his company Lucasfilm to Disney, who would then produce further feature films in the franchise, as well as another animated project, *Star Wars: Rebels* (see following entry).

STAR WARS: REBELS (2014–PRESENT)

STUDIO: Lucasfilm

DISTRIBUTOR: Disney

CREATORS: George Lucas (fictional universe); Simon Kinberg, Dave Filoni, and Carrie Beck (series)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Simon Kinberg, Dave Filoni, Greg Weisman

PRODUCERS: Kiri Hart, Athena Yvette Portillo, Carrie Beck

DIRECTORS INCLUDE: Dave Filoni, Justin Ridge, Steward Lee, Steven Lee, Bosco Ng, Brad Rau, Sergio Paez, Saul Ruiz, Mel Zwyer

WRITERS INCLUDE: Greg Weisman, Henry Gilroy, Simon Kinberg, Kevin Hopps, Charles Murray, Matt Michnovetz, Steven Melching, Bill Wolkoff, Gary Whitta, Nicole Dubuc, Brent Friedman, Christopher Yost

VOICE ACTORS: Taylor Gray (Ezra Bridger), Freddie Prinze Jr. (Kanan Jarrus, a.k.a. Caleb Dume), Vanessa Marshall (Hera Syndulla/Marida Sumar), Tiya Sircar (Sabine Wren), Steven Blum (Zeb Orrelios/Alton Kastle), C1-10P “Chopper” (Himself), Sam Witwer (Emperor Sheev Palpatine/Darth Maul), James Earl Jones (Darth Vader), Matt Latner (Anakin Skywalker), Lars Mikkelsen (Grand Admiral Thrawn), Stephen Stanton (Grand Moff Wilhuff Tarkin/

AP-5/Obi Wan Kenobi as an old man), Brent Spiner (Senator Gall Trayvis), Kath Soucie (Minister Maketh Tua/Mira Bridger), Mary McGlynn (Governor Arihnda Pryce), David Oyelowo (Agent Kallus), David Shaughnessy (Commandant Cumberland Aresko/Taskmaster Myles Grynt), Dee Bradley Baker (Admiral Kassius Konstantine/Captain Rex/Commander Wollffe/Captain Gregor/Old Jho/Ephraim Bridger), Derek Partridge (Admiral/Commander Brom Titus), Leslie Miller (Captain Brunson), Greg Ellis (Baron Valen Rudor), Liam O'Brien (Yogar Lyste/Morad Sumar), Mario Vernerazza (Vult Skeris), Tom Kane (Colonel Wullf Yularen), Josh Gad (Controller), Jason Isaacs (Grand Inquisitor), Philip Anthony Rodriguez (Fifth Brother), Sarah Michelle Gellar (Seventh Sister), Robbie Daymond (Eighth Brother), Ashley Eckstein (Ahsoka Tano), Genevieve O'Reilly (Mon Mothma), Phil LaMarr (Senator Bail Organa), Keone Young (Commander Jun Sato), Jim Cummings (Hondo Ohnaka), Keith Szarabakja (Cikatra Vizago), Gina Torres (Ketsu Onyo), Kevin McKidd (Fenn Rau), Ray Stevenson (Gar Saxon), Sharmilla Devar (Countess Ursa Wren), Ritesh Rajan (Tristan Wren), Clancy Brown (Ryder Azadi), Peter MacNicol (Tseebo), Bryton James (Zare Leonis), Dante Basco (Jai Kell), Corey Burton (Quarrie), Gregg Berger (Kalani), Matthew Wood (Battle Droids), Nika Futterman (Presence), Tom Baker (Bendu), James Arnold Taylor (Obi Wan Kenobi as a young man), R2-D2 (Himself), Anthony Daniels (C-3PO), Billy Dee Williams (Lando Calrissian), Frank Oz (Yoda), Julie Dolan (Princess Leia Organa), Nathan Kress (Wedge Antilles), Forest Whitaker (Saw Gerrera)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: After acquiring Lucasfilm in the early 2010s, Disney wasted little time in exploiting the popularity of that company's biggest asset for its financial gain. While overseeing the enormous amount of licensed merchandise and book publications related to the *Star Wars* franchise, they also began producing new films in the series (*The Force Awakens*, 2015; *Rogue One*, 2016; *The Last Jedi*, 2017), which served the dual purpose of filling in the gaps within the original films' time lines and correcting some of the more grievous plotting and characterization errors that devotees of the project had long been calling for since George Lucas's second cycle of films disappointed them. This animated project, the first for the series under the Disney regime (and likely not the last), focused on a period of time in the chronology between the end of the second prequel cycle (in 2005's *Revenge of the Sith*) and the advent of the narrative of the original 1977 *Star Wars* film. To make a complicated story line clear: The Empire here is on the winning end against the Rebels and is intent on exterminating anyone possessing the Force and their associates. The central character of the series, teenaged Ezra, has the Force and therefore becomes a fugitive from the Empire, aided and abetted by a group of typically colorful associates. While the CGI animation is well-done, the narrative and characterization are somewhat staid and repetitive. It is clear from this series that Disney unfortunately views *Star Wars* as a business venture not unlike so many of its others. Therefore, its productions of the franchise are clearly meant only to maintain the creative status quo—not to creatively expand the narrative of “space opera,” as creator Lucas originally sought to do.

***STATIC SHOCK* (2000–2004)**

STUDIOS: DC Comics, Warner Brothers

DISTRIBUTOR: WB

CREATORS: Denys Cowan, Dwayne McDuffie

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Jean MacCurdy, Sander Schwartz

PRODUCERS: Denys Cowan, Alan Burnett, Scott Jeralds, Swinton Scott III

DIRECTORS: Denys Cowan, Dan Riba, Dave Chlystek, James Tucker, Joe Sichta

WRITERS: Chris Simmons, Dwayne McDuffie, John Ridley, John Semper Jr., Len Uhley, Paul Dini, Stan Berkowitz, Alan Burnett, Brooks Wachtel, Ernie Altbacker

VOICE ACTORS: Phil LaMarr (Virgil Hawkins/Static), Jason Marsden (Richie Foley/Gear), Kevin Michael Richardson (Robert Hawkins), Michele Morgan (Sharon Hawkins), Danica McKellar (Frieda), Kerrigan Mahan (Edwin), Danny Cooksey (F-Stop/Hotstreak), Crystal Scales (Daisy), Coolio (Replikon), R. J. Knoll (Aron), Richard Tatum (Omar Harmozi), Sheryl Lee Ralph (Trina Jessup), Kadeem Hardison (Adam Evans/Rubberband Man), Rosslyn Jordan (Shenice Vale/She-Bang), Carl Lumbly (Anansi), Brock Peters (Morris Grant/Soul Power), Rodney Saulsberry (Phillip Rollins/Sparky)

SYNOPSIS: After after being exposed to a mutated gas that gives him the power of electromagnetism, African American man Virgil Hawkins assumes the identity of the superhero Static to do good deeds in his troubled community.

COMMENTARY: While not the first animated African American superhero on television (as some sources erroneously reported), Static was featured as the star of an animated series that definitely succeeded in bringing a black presence to the often-white world of superheroes. (This was not confined to television superheroics of this time but also occurred in live-action feature films that slightly preceded the series, such as Robert Townsend's *The Meteor Man* and Damon Wayans's *Blankman*). The series was based on the comic book series developed for DC-distributed Milestone Comics by writer McDuffie, who retained a strong degree of creative control over the final product. The program was lauded for its strong stance on encouraging positive racial relations, which earned it a Humanitas Prize in 2003; however, being part of the DC media universe meant ongoing and gratuitous guest appearances from its other citizens, such as Superman, Batman, Robin, Martian Manhunter, the Flash, Green Lantern, Poison Ivy, and the Joker.***STEVEN SPIELBERG PRESENTS ANIMANIACS* (1993–1998)**See *Animaniacs* (a.k.a. *Steven Spielberg Presents Animaniacs*; 1993–1998).***STEVEN SPIELBERG PRESENTS FREAKAZOID* (1995–1996)**See *Freakazoid* (a.k.a. *Steven Spielberg Presents Freakazoid*; 1995–1996).***STEVEN SPIELBERG PRESENTS TINY TOON ADVENTURES*, 1990–1998)**See *Tiny Toon Adventures* (a.k.a. *Steven Spielberg Presents Tiny Toon Adventures*; 1990–1998).

STEVEN UNIVERSE (2013–PRESENT)

STUDIO: Cartoon Network

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATOR: Rebecca Sugar

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Rebecca Sugar, Ian Jones Quartey

PRODUCERS: Jackie Buscarino, Chuck Austen

DIRECTORS INCLUDE: Phil Rynda, Sue Mondt, Genndy Tartakovsky, Kevin Dart, Elle Michalka, Jasmin Lai, Ian Jones Quartey, Kat Morris, Joe Johnston, Ricky Cometa

WRITERS INCLUDE: Rebecca Sugar, Joe Johnston, Jeff Liu, Kat Morris, Ian Jones Quartey, Paul Villeco, Raven Molisee, Hilary Florido, Aleth Romanillos, Lamar Abrams, Luke Weber, Matt Braly, Hellen Jo, Katie Mitroff, Lauren Zuke, Colin Howard, Takafumi Hori, Madeline Queripel

VOICE ACTORS: Zach Callison (Steven Quartz Universe/Onion), Estelle (Garnet), Michaela Dietz (Amethyst), Deedee Magno Hall (Pearl/Pearls), Tom Scharpling (Greg Universe/Yellowtail), Grace Rolek (Connie Maheswaran), Matthew Moy (Lars Barriga), Kate Micucci (Sadie Miller), Jennifer Paz (Lapis Lazuli/Malachite), Shelby Rabara (Peridot), Kimberly Brooks (Jasper/Malachite), Susan Egan (Rose Quartz), Charlyne Yi (Ruby/Ruby Squad), Erica Luttrell (Sapphire/Padparadscha), Dee Bradley Baker (Lion/Centipeetle), Lamar Abrams (Buck Dewey), Reagan Gomez Preston (Jenny Pizza/Kiki Pizza), Brian Posehn (Sour Cream), Zach Steel (Ronaldo Fryman), Atticus Shaffer (Peedee Fryman), Billy Merritt (Mr. Fryman), Joel Hodgson (Mayor Dewey), Mary McGlynn (Dr. Priyanka Maheswaran), Crispin Freeman (Doug Maheswaran), Godfrey (Kofi Pizza), Toks Ogluandoye (Nanefua Pizza), Sinbad (Harold Smiley, early episodes), Colton Dunn (Harold Smiley, later episodes), Jackie Buscarino (Vidalia), Jon Wurster (Marty), Eugene Cordero (Jamie), Kate Flannery (Barb Miller), Dave Willis (Andy DeMayo), Andrew Kishino (Kevin), Patti LuPone (Yellow Diamond), Lisa Hannigan (Blue Diamond), Uzo Aduba (Bismuth), Christine Pedi (Holly Blue Agate), Della Saba (Aquamarine), Martha Higareda (Topaz), Ashly Burch (Rutile Twins), Kathy Fisher (Fluorite), Erika Odaka (Rhodondite), Aimee Mann (Opal), Nicki Minaj (Sugilite), Rita Rani Ahuja (Alexandrite), A. J. Michalka (Stevonnie), Alexa Khadine (Sardonyx), Natasha Lyonne (Smoky Quartz)

SYNOPSIS: The Crystal Gems, an ancient race of superpowered alien warriors, defend the Earth from attack by other aliens and evil members of their race. Steven, the child of a relationship between a Gem and a human musician and the youngest member of the group, is beginning to discover the full extent of his powers and history when the show's narrative begins; his gradual self-discovery plays a major role in many of the narratives.

COMMENTARY: This is arguably the most original and groundbreaking television animation superhero narrative to have been produced in the genre since the beginning of the second decade of the 21st century. Creator Sugar (the first woman to have created a series as an individual for Cartoon Network) has developed a highly complex and labyrinthine setting, characters, and backstory for her program that anchors it as much to reality as it does to the science-fiction notions that provide it with a framework. Even more impressively, in



Twenty-first-century superheroics, personified by Steven Universe (foreground) and his mentors, the Crystal Gems: Pearl, Amethyst, and Garnet (left, top, and right, respectively). Cartoon Network/Photofest © Cartoon Network

the tradition of Craig McCracken's original *The Powerpuff Girls* (q.v.), Rob Renzetti's *My Life as a Teenage Robot* (q.v.), and Butch Hartman's *Danny Phantom* (q.v.) in particular, Sugar and her team are clearly not interested solely in regurgitating traditional good-versus-evil politics or staging comedy for effect, which the weaker examples of the subgenre tended to limit themselves to in the past. Rather, as with those predecessors and their more sterling cousins in the comic book realm, the superhero genre is used here as a defense of those whom real-world society often marginalizes unfairly. Of particular importance is the program's groundbreaking portrayal of sexuality in a genre and medium usually considered nearly exclusively heterosexual. This is shown not only in the undisguised lesbian relations between the almost exclusively female Gems but also in the practice of fusion, by which two individuals can come to share the same physical body for an extended period of time. (Not surprisingly, the gay population makes up a large percentage of the show's enormous and vocal base of fans.) Like McCracken, Renzetti, and Hartman before her, Sugar is not content with simply retelling an old trope established long before her time but instead molds it to fit both her own desires and an era demanding a new approach to the way the story is told. This is despite being largely limited to segments of 15 minutes each (along with some additional material made exclusively for the Internet).

If this is what the future of television animation looks like, it is in very capable hands, indeed.

***STICKIN' AROUND* (1997)**

STUDIOS: Nelvana, Ellipse, Prima Italy TV

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX (United States)

CREATORS: Robin Steele, Brianne Leary
 EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Michael Hirsh, Patrick Loubert, Clive Smith
 PRODUCERS: Patricia Burns, Vince Commiso, Stephen Hodgins
 DIRECTORS: John Halfpenny, Brianne Leary, Robin Steele, Doug Thomas
 WRITERS: Mark Leiren Young, John May
 VOICE ACTORS: Ashley Taylor (Stacy Stickler), Ashley Brown (Bradley), Catherine Disher (Stella), Philip Williams (Stanley), Andrew Craig (Lance), Amos Crowley (Russell), Marianna Galati (Polly), Nicholas Rice (Mr. Doddler)
 SYNOPSIS: The adventures of Stacy Stickler and her friends, who have extremely active imaginations.
 COMMENTARY: What was most innovative about this series was its design scheme, a crudely drawn mélange of stick-figure characters and backgrounds resembling the drawings of a child. Cocreator Steele first developed the art technique with *Stick Figure Theater*, a segment of MTV's *Liquid Television* (q.v.), and he and Leary created the characters in this program in a series of short between-program segments that aired on CBS in 1994. Thirty episodes were produced, with two segments per program. The series lasted only two months on the air in its American incarnation, though episodes unaired on FOX aired as a segment of the *Three Friends and Jerry* series on Family Channel.

THE STONE PROTECTORS (1993)

STUDIOS: Ace Novelty, Fantasy, Liu Concept Design, Graz, Sachs
 DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated
 EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Stephanie Graziano
 PRODUCER: Michael Hack
 DIRECTORS: Richard Bowman, Bob Nesler, Sue Peter
 WRITERS INCLUDED: Peter Lawrence
 VOICE ACTORS: Don Brown, Ted Cole, Scott McNeil, Cathy Weseluck, Rob Morton, Jim Byrnes, Ian Corlett, John Tench, Terry Klassen, Louise Vallance, and Cam Lane (Specific roles unknown)
 SYNOPSIS: A teenaged rock group "short on talent and long on nerve" is transformed into a group of troll-like superheroes when extraterrestrial gemstones descend directly on them during a performance.
 COMMENTARY: Despite an extensive and convoluted backstory designed to justify everything, this series could not hide the enormous amount of both derivation and desperation inherent in its production and creation. The fact that a toy company specializing in novelty items was a coproducer should give you some sense of what was really being sold here.

STOP THE SMOGGIES (1991)

STUDIOS: Intital Audiovisuel, CINAR, Antennae 2
 DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated
 CREATOR/DIRECTOR: Gerald Potterton
 EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Micheline Charest, Ronald Weinberg
 PRODUCER: Christian LaRocque

WRITERS INCLUDED: Max Short

VOICE ACTORS: Teddy Dillon, Brian Dooley, Richard Dumont, Karen Marginson, Walter Massey, Stephanie Morgenstern, Joan Orenstein, Harvey Berger, and Pier Paquette (Specific roles unknown)

SYNOPSIS: The conflict between the professional polluters and litterers known as the Smoggies and the diminutive race known as the Suntots is depicted.

COMMENTARY: The involvement of Potterton, a distinguished animator and live-action filmmaker, is the one notable aspect of this Canadian import. It was known simply as *The Smoggies* in its country of origin; apparently, the imperative *stop* was needed in the title for Americans to get what it was about. While the Smoggies received top billing, just as much time was spent among the Smurf-like Suntots; both parties even shared the duties of singing the theme song. This synopsis was as complicated as the show ended up becoming. After its syndicated run, it aired again in America on HBO a few years later.

***STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKE* (AND RELATED SERIES)**

***Strawberry Shortcake* (2003–2008)**

STUDIOS: DIC, Those Characters from Cleveland, American Greetings

DISTRIBUTORS: Syndicated (2003–2006), CBS (2007–2008)

CREATOR: Muriel Fahrion (original character)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Andy Heyward, Michael Maliani, Kathy McConaughy, Mike Brown

PRODUCER: Kaaren Brown

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Sarah Heinke (*Strawberry Shortcake*), Rachel Ware (*Angel Cake*), Sarah Kolosky (*Custard*, early episodes), Anna Jordan (*Custard*, later episodes), Samantha Triba (*Ginger Snap*), Daniel Canfield (*Huckleberry Pie*, early episodes), James Street (*Huckleberry Pie*, later episodes), DeJare Barefield (*Orange Blossom*), Nils Haalund (*Pupcake/Others*), Pam Carter (*Sea Beast*), Susan Collins (*Papaya Parrot*), Melissa Deni (*Coco Calypso*), Laura Grimm (*Rainbow Sherbet*), Bianca Heyward (*Blueberry Muffin*), Hannah Koslosky (*Honey Pie Pony*), Katie Labosky (*Apple Dumpling*), Abbey Leib (*Seaberry Delight*), Rebecca Noddle (*Peppermint Fizz*)

***Strawberry Shortcake's Berry Bitty Adventures* (2010–2015)**

STUDIOS: MoonScoop, Iconix, American Greetings

DISTRIBUTOR: Discovery Family (United States)

CREATOR: Chris Nee (series format)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Michael Scott, Bill Schultz, Jeffery Conrad, Sarah Finn

DIRECTOR: Bob Hathcock

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Anna Cummer (*Strawberry Shortcake*, speaking voice), Tracey Moore (*Strawberry Shortcake*, singing voice), Janyse Jaud (*Orange Blossom*), Andrea Libman (*Lemon Meringue/Sweet Grapes*), Britt McKillip (*Blueberry Muffin*), Ingrid Nilson (*Raspberry Torte*), Ashleigh Ball (*Plum Pudding*),

Shannon Chan Kent (Cherry Jam, speaking voice), Victoria Duffield (Cherry Jam, singing voice), Aidan Drummond (Huckleberry Pie), Diana Kaarina (Sour Grapes), Rebecca Shoichet (Apple Dumpling)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: Strawberry Shortcake made her first appearance, as a greeting card emblem, in the public consciousness in 1979 via American Greetings and its branding unit, Those Characters from Cleveland. After Kenner Toys licensed the rights to produce toys based on the character, she became a successful franchise during the first part of the 1980s. Accompanying this was a series of television specials that marked the character's first appearance in television animation. When her popularity waned in the mid-1980s, she was abandoned. An early-1990s attempt at a revival was not successful, but another revival in the 2000s, from which these two programs emerged, was. While 20th Century Fox controls the character as a visual media figure, her rights in other media are controlled by DHX Media, which acquired her from the Iconix Brand Group (which acquired her from American Greetings in 2015) in 2017.

Much of the setting, plotting, and characterization of the two series were previously established in the creation of the brand and its related television animation specials in the 1980s, and the producers of the later editions did little except follow marching orders by reenacting what came before. One exception: Ms. Shortcake's nemesis in the specials, the Peculiar Purple Pie Man, was noticeably absent in both series for unknown reasons. Chiefly because of a lack of plotting, characterization, and true conflict and an emphasis on values important to the very young, the cumulative franchise is of little interest to older viewers.

STREET SHARKS (1995)

STUDIOS: Surge, Streetwise Designs, DIC, Bohbot

DISTRIBUTORS: Syndicated (1995), ABC (1996)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Andy Heyward

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: J. Michael Lee (Dr. Piranhoid/Dr. Paradigm), D. Kevin Williams (Big Slammu/Slobster/Killamari), Lee Tockar (Ripstar), Andy Rannels (Streex), Terry Berner (Slash), Pam Carter (Lena), Jim Hoggart (Bends), Matt Hill (Jab), Tony Wike (The Guy in the Sky)

SYNOPSIS: The Street Sharks—human—shark hybrids—defend humanity after rebelling against their creator, mad scientist Dr. Piranhoid.

COMMENTARY: Best described as *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* (q.v.) mashed up with *The Island of Doctor Moreau*. Piranhoid's plan to conquer the world by turning all humanity into creatures from the sea certainly sounded like something H. G. Wells might have written about, but Wells would have done it with far more subtlety, restraint, and taste than was exhibited here. The fact that the program died quickly in its original broadcast reflects how fast audiences rejected it as the toy-centric rip-off it really was, though it later enjoyed a two-year run on the USA cable network.

STRESSED ERIC (1998)

STUDIOS: Absolutely, Klasky-Csupo, Novanim Animation and Digital Services

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

CREATOR: Carl Goreham

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Claire Jennings, Carl Goreham, Arlene Klasky, Gabor Csupo, Miles Bulluogh

PRODUCERS: Hank Azaria, Mitch Watson, Stig Bergquist

DIRECTORS: Cathy Malkasian, Roger Mainwood, Steve Loter, Steve Ressel

WRITERS: Gavin Rodgers, Carl Goreham, Michael Hatt

VOICE ACTORS: Hank Azaria (Eric Feeble), Morwenna Banks (Claire Feeble/Heather Perfect), Doon McKichan (Maria/Allison), Rebecca Front (Liz), Xander Armstrong (Ray Perfect), Alison Steadman (Mrs. Perfect), Geoff McGivern (Paul "P. P." Power), Paul Shearer (Doc)

SYNOPSIS: The aptly named Eric Feeble repeatedly encounters stressful situations in his life that he is not able to cope with.

COMMENTARY: This was an American adaptation of an animated British sitcom that debuted earlier in 1998 on the BBC, with Azaria replacing original star Mark Heap in the title role and most of the other original British actors being similarly replaced. The pathetic situation of the title character, who never seemed to achieve his ambitions, was likely a turn-off to Americans expecting more valedictory behavior from fictional characters. The program's American run ended abruptly after three episodes, following mismanagement and neglect on the part of NBC; the British run of the series was only slightly longer.

STRIPPERELLA (2003)

STUDIOS: POW, Viacom

DISTRIBUTORS: TNN, Spike

CREATORS: Stan Lee, Kevin Kopelow, Heath Seifert

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Stan Lee, Gill Champion

PRODUCERS: Kevin Altieri, Kevin Kopelow, Heath Seifert

DIRECTOR: Kevin Altieri

WRITERS: Kevin Kopelow, Heath Seifert

VOICE ACTORS: Pamela Anderson (Erotica Jones/Stripperella); Sirenia Irwin (Persephone Cliché); Tom Kenny (Kevin Calhoun/Hal/Special Agent 14); Joey Lauren Adams (Catt); Maurice LaMarche (Chief Stroganoff); Kristin Davis, Rob Paulsen, and Jill Talley (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: Professional stripper Erotica Jones moonlights as superhero/secret agent Stripperella when not doing her "day" job.

COMMENTARY: Certainly the oddest creation in the multimedia canon of cocreator/executive producer Lee's storied career and definitely the most sexually explicit, given that it aired on a network that specialized in adult content. Despite these trappings, it was genuinely funny much of the time, thanks to some clever scripts by cocreators Kopelow and Seifert that had good jokes and gags mixed in with the more desperately adult material. However, that wasn't enough to disguise the fact that there was too much bump and grind

in there for some viewers, which was a major turn-off to them. Lee put his name in possessive form in the show's official title, but that didn't prevent a real-life stripper from suing him and series star Anderson for allegedly stealing her original idea.

***STROKER AND HOOP* (2004–2005)**

STUDIO: Williams Street

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATORS: Casper Kelly, Jeff Olsen

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Jon Glaser (John "Stroker" Strockmeyer), Speed Levitch (Hoop Schwartz), Paul Christie (C.A.R.R.), Curtis Armstrong (Double Wide), Gary Anthony Williams (Coroner Rick), Mary Birdsong (Keith Strockmeyer)

SYNOPSIS: The adventures of a pair of mismatched buddy cops.

COMMENTARY: A caricature of the stereotypical police and adventure programs of the late 1970s and early 1980s, with *Starsky and Hutch* and *Knight Rider* the primary targets. As with many of Williams Street's productions, the adult elements of the production outweighed any actual humorous integrity.

***STUART LITTLE* (2003)**

STUDIOS: Red Wagon, Columbia

DISTRIBUTOR: HBO

CREATOR: E. B. White

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Jeff Franklin, Bob Hathcock, Lucy Fisher, Rob Minkoff, Douglas Wick

PRODUCER: Jeff Kline

DIRECTORS: Rich Wilkie, Chuck Klein, Bert Ring

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: David Kaufman (Stuart Little); Hugh Laurie (Mr. Little); Myles Jeffrey (George Little); Jennifer Hale (Eleanor Little); Kevin Schon (Snowbell); Matthew Kaminsky (Rick Ruckus); Dee Bradley Baker, Quinton Flynn, Kathy Najimy, and Andre Sogliuzzo (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: A mouse named Stuart is born into a human family, who raise him as one of their own.

COMMENTARY: This scenario was the central theme of a 1945 novella written by humorist White, which remains one of his most beloved works, in part because he was able to work the dichotomy of a mouse in human society into some genuinely amusing situations. In 1999, the book was adapted into a technically impressive but creatively weak feature film, with a CGI version of Stuart (portrayed by Michael J. Fox) appearing superimposed over live-action footage opposite live actors; a sequel later followed. This conventionally animated version, with Kaufman replacing Fox, was equally conventional in its genuflection toward television animation clichés. Laurie, who had played Stuart's "father" in live-action form in the film, was the only actor to reprise his role here.

STUNT DAWGS (1992)

STUDIOS: Rainforest, Cluster

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Jeff Franklin, Steve Waterman

PRODUCER: Kevin O'Donnell

DIRECTORS: Michael Maliani, John Grusd, Blair Peters

WRITERS INCLUDED: Cliff MacGillvray, Jeffrey McNickel Rose

VOICE ACTORS: Neil Crone (Needham/Whiz Kid), John Stocker (Fungus), Greg Morton (Splatter/Crash/Velda), Greg Swanson (Lucky/Skid), Ron Rubin (Airball/Slyme), Harvey Atkin (Bad Year/Half a Mind), Lenore Zann (Sizzle), Barbara Budd (Nina Newscaster)

SYNOPSIS: A team of Hollywood stunt technicians doubles as crime fighters between working on film shoots.

COMMENTARY: This series was very loosely based on the 1980 film *Hooper*, starring Burt Reynolds, which has a similar premise; the lead "dawg" was clearly named after the film's director, Hal Needham. Unlike others of their kind, the group had a clear opposite number in the unethical Stunt Scabs, led by the reckless film director Fungus—who, interestingly, was trying (via lawyer Slyme) to get the heroic group to honor their contractual obligations to his film studio! Unfortunately, any attempt to create a sophisticated Hollywood satire with this material was not present due to bungled execution.

SUNDAY PANTS (2005)

STUDIOS: Various, including Cartoon Network, Curious Pictures, S2N, and Cosgrove Hall

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: An anthology project consisting of animated short films from around the world. Contributors included Monkumus, Lance Taylor, Lincoln Pierce, Tim McKeon, Adam Pava, Andy Fielding, Andy Merrill, Craig "Sven" Gordon, and Stuart Hill.

SUPER DAVE (1992–1993)

STUDIOS: Blye-Einstein, DIC, Reitalia

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX

CREATORS: Allan Blye, Bob Einstein

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Allan Blye, Bob Einstein, Andy Heyward, Robby London

PRODUCER: Michael Maliani

DIRECTOR: Joe Barruso

WRITERS INCLUDED: Reed Shelley, Bruce Shelley

VOICE ACTORS: Bob Einstein ("Super Dave" Osborne); Art Irizawa (Fuji Hakiyito); Charlie Adler, Jack Angel, Jesse Corti, Brian George, Don Lake, Susan Silo, Kath Soucie, Louise Vallance, B. J. Ward, and Frank Welker (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: "Super Dave" Osborne, a caricature of Evel Knievel and other star stuntmen, first appeared as a recurring feature of the Canadian-American cable sketch comedy series *Bizarre* (1980–1985), although

embryonic versions had appeared as early as the late 1960s, when creators Blye and Einstein (the latter portrayed him) were writers for the controversial *Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour*. In his sketches, Dave's largely humorless demeanor was juxtaposed with his elaborate stuntwork—which frequently backfired and caused him to receive huge, exaggerated injuries to his body—to often hilarious results. Super Dave was soon popular enough to develop a life of his own in an eponymous 1987 series, as well as in guest appearances on other series (such as *In Living Color*) and TV advertising campaigns.

Given that Dave's act was based largely on (stereotypical) cartoon-style humor, it seemed logical to make him an animated character. In the animated show, Dave, abetted by his Asian American stunt coordinator Fuji (Irizawa also reprised his part from the live show), worked as a globetrotting secret agent. His archrival Slash Hazard, a human-automobile hybrid who had taken his current form due to a car compressor accident involving Dave, sought revenge on him. Despite the efforts that DIC made to make Dave a genuine cartoon character, his act didn't work as well in animation simply because a cartoon character being severely injured doesn't have the same comic impact as a live person being hurt in the same way. There were other issues, as well, notably Irizawa's portrayal of Fuji as a stereotypical (though not racist) figure who apparently needed the involvement of a psychologist for the studio to fix it. The fact that the producers chose to buttress the end of the program with segments of the superior live *Super Dave* series only served to indicate how poorly produced the animation version really was in comparison.

Still, Dave's legacy lived on in television animation, in some ways, in the form of other inept fictional Knievel clones, most notably Dick Daring of *The Replacements* (q.v.).

***SUPER DUPER SUMOS* (2002–2003)**

STUDIOS: DIC, Ameko, Digital eMotion

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon (United States)

CREATOR: Kevin O'Donnell

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Andy Heyward, John Ledford, Michael Maliani, Steven S. H. Yoon

PRODUCERS: Kevin O'Donnell, Kaaren Brown

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Matt Hill (Booma), Ben Hur (Kimo), Cusse Mankuma (Mamoo), Richard Newman (Wisdom Sam), Chantal Strand (Prima), Deborah DeMille (Ms. Mister), Michael Dobson (Genghis Fangus/Billy Swift), Peter Kelamis (Dr. Stringer)

SYNOPSIS: A trio of teenage sumo wrestlers use their skills against the evil forces of BAD.

COMMENTARY: Practiced in Japan for centuries, sumo wrestling is a sport deeply connected to both the country's history and its dominant religion, Shinto. Bouts are fought in a circular ring known as a *dohyo* between two fighters known as *rikishis*. The object is for one of the *rikishis* to use force to push his opponent outside of the *dohyo* or to touch it with anything besides the soles of

his feet. Both the sport and its participants are heavily regulated by a national association. *Rikishis*, while in training, are required to live in communes known as *heyas*, and all aspects of their lives, from their dress to their meals, are dictated by traditions. Breaking or defying traditions can lead to *rikishis* or their “stablemasters” (i.e., trainers) being fined. Each *rikishi* is expected to take a performance name known as a *shikona*, which may or may not be their real name. Experts in the field are known as *yokozunas* (grand champions).

During the early 21st century, sumo wrestling achieved a surprising level of popularity in the wider world, even as its popularity in its native country went into decline. This series was an outgrowth of this, though it was more explicitly tied in to a line of toys, video games, and action figures from the marketing company Martin Yaffe International. Therefore, the show wasn’t so much an honoring of tradition as it was a marketing ploy, and it looked and showed it.

If only television animators had to abide by the same strict traditions as sumo wrestlers.

***SUPER FRIENDS* (AND RELATED SERIES)**

***Super Friends* (1973–1975, 1976–1977)**

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, DC Comics

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: Iwao Takamoto, Don Jurwich

DIRECTORS: Charles Nichols, Carl Urbano, Ray Patterson, Oscar Dufau, George Gordon

WRITERS: Jeffrey Scott, Rich Hoberg, Will Meugniot, Don Sheppard, Emilie Kong, Larry Latham

VOICE ACTORS: Danny Dark (Superman), Olan Soule (Batman), Casey Kasem (Robin), Shannon Farnon (Wonder Woman), Norman Alden (Aquaman, early episodes), Bill Callaway (Aquaman, later episodes), Frank Welker (Marvin/Wonder Dog), Sherry Alberoni (Wendy), John Stephenson (Colonel Wilcox), Ted Knight (Narrator)

***All-New Super Friends Hour* (1977–1978)**

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, DC Comics

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: Iwao Takamoto, Don Jurwich

DIRECTORS: Charles Nichols, Carl Urbano, Ray Patterson, Oscar Dufau, George Gordon

WRITERS: Jeffrey Scott, Rich Hoberg, Will Meugniot, Don Sheppard, Emilie Kong, Larry Latham

VOICE ACTORS: Danny Dark (Superman), Olan Soule (Batman), Casey Kasem (Robin/Computer), Shannon Farnon (Wonder Woman), Bill Callaway (Aquaman), Michael Bell (Zan/Gleek), Liberty Williams (Jayna), Buster Jones (Black Vulcan), Michael Rye (Apache Chief/Green Lantern), Frank Welker (Marvin/

Wonder Dog), Sherry Alberoni (Wendy), Bob Lloyd (Narrator, early episodes), William Woodson (Narrator, later episodes)

Challenge of the Super Friends (1978–1979)

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, DC Comics

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: Iwao Takamoto, Don Jurwich

DIRECTORS: Charles Nichols, Carl Urbano, Ray Patterson, Oscar Dufau, George Gordon

WRITERS: Jeffrey Scott, Rich Hoberg, Will Meugniot, Don Sheppard, Emilie Kong, Larry Latham

VOICE ACTORS: Danny Dark (Superman), Olan Soule (Batman), Casey Kasem (Robin/Computer), Shannon Farnon (Wonder Woman), Bill Callaway (Aquaman/Bizarro), Michael Bell (Zan/Gleek/The Riddler), Liberty Williams (Jayna), Buster Jones (Black Vulcan), Michael Rye (Apache Chief/Green Lantern), Frank Welker (Marvin/Wonder Dog/The Toyman), Sherry Alberoni (Wendy), Stan Jones (Lex Luthor), Ted Cassidy (Brainiac/Black Manta), Ruth Forman (Giganta), Marlene Aragon (The Cheetah), Dick Ryal (Captain Cold), Vic Perrin (Sinestro), Don Messick (The Scarecrow), Jimmy Weldon (Solomon Grundy), Stanley Ralph Ross (Gorilla Grodd/Narrator)

The World's Greatest Super Friends (1979–1980)

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, DC Comics

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: Iwao Takamoto, Don Jurwich

DIRECTORS: Charles Nichols, Carl Urbano, Ray Patterson, Oscar Dufau, George Gordon

WRITERS: Jeffrey Scott, Rich Hoberg, Will Meugniot, Don Sheppard, Emilie Kong, Larry Latham

VOICE ACTORS: Danny Dark (Superman), Olan Soule (Batman), Casey Kasem (Robin/Computer), Shannon Farnon (Wonder Woman), Bill Callaway (Aquaman/Bizarro), Michael Bell (Zan/Gleek/The Riddler), Liberty Williams (Jayna), Buster Jones (Black Vulcan), Michael Rye (Apache Chief/Green Lantern), Frank Welker (Marvin/Wonder Dog/The Toyman), Sherry Alberoni (Wendy), Stan Jones (Lex Luthor), Ted Cassidy (Brainiac/Black Manta), Ruth Forman (Giganta), Marlene Aragon (The Cheetah), Dick Ryal (Captain Cold), Vic Perrin (Sinestro), Don Messick (The Scarecrow), Jimmy Weldon (Solomon Grundy)

Super Friends Hour (1980–1983)

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, DC Comics

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: Iwao Takamoto, Don Jurwich

DIRECTORS: Charles Nichols, Carl Urbano, Ray Patterson, Oscar Dufau, George Gordon

WRITERS: Jeffrey Scott, Rich Hoberg, Will Meugniot, Don Sheppard, Emilie Kong, Larry Latham

VOICE ACTORS: Danny Dark (Superman), Olan Soule (Batman), Casey Kasem (Robin/Computer), Shannon Farnon (Wonder Woman), Bill Callaway (Aquaman/Bizarro), Michael Bell (Zan/Gleek/The Riddler), Liberty Williams (Jayna), Buster Jones (Black Vulcan), Michael Rye (Apache Chief/Green Lantern), Frank Welker (Marvin/Wonder Dog/The Toyman), Sherry Alberoni (Wendy), Stan Jones (Lex Luthor), Ted Cassidy (Brainiac/Black Manta), Ruth Forman (Giganta), Marlene Aragon (The Cheetah), Dick Ryal (Captain Cold), Vic Perrin (Sinestro), Don Messick (The Scarecrow), Jimmy Weldon (Solomon Grundy)

Super Friends: The Legendary Super Powers Show (1984–1985)

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, DC Comics

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCER: Iwao Takamoto

DIRECTORS: Charles Nichols, Ray Patterson, Carl Urbano, Oscar Dufau, George Gordon

WRITERS INCLUDED: Alan Burnett

VOICE ACTORS: Danny Dark (Superman), B. J. Ward (Wonder Woman), Adam West (Batman), Casey Kasem (Robin), Mark Taylor (Firestorm), Ernie Hudson (Cyborg), Frank Welker (Darkseid/Kabilak), Rene Auberjonois (Desaad)

Super Powers Team: Galactic Guardians (1985–1986)

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, DC Comics

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCER: Iwao Takamoto

DIRECTORS: Charles Nichols, Ray Patterson, Carl Urbano, Oscar Dufau, George Gordon

WRITERS INCLUDED: Alan Burnett

VOICE ACTORS: Danny Dark (Superman), B. J. Ward (Wonder Woman), Adam West (Batman), Casey Kasem (Robin), Mark Taylor (Firestorm), Ernie Hudson (Cyborg), Frank Welker (Darkseid/Kabilak), Rene Auberjonois (Desaad)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: This long-running franchise had its origins in 1940, when the company that would eventually become DC set up the Justice Society of America, which involved nearly all the superheroes whose adventures the company printed. Fictionally, the aim was to confront evil threats none of the heroes could confront with their own resources alone; in real life, it was meant to boost the heroes' publishing circulation, particularly for the lesser-known ones. The society was disbanded after 57 installments, but it was revived in the early 1960s as the Justice League of America, for roughly the same real and fictional purposes, and in one form or another, it continues to this day.

When the property was first adapted to animation in the early 1970s, the name was changed to the more benign *Super Friends* because the ABC network wanted to avoid even the hint of militaristic activity (implying the use of forceful violence, which the networks were desperately trying to avoid at this time; see *Justice League/Justice League Unlimited* for the property's



They're superheroes, and they're your friends. Hanna-Barbera Productions/Photofest © Hanna-Barbera Productions

later television animation existence under its real name). Indeed, not only was violence not prominently featured here but it was also replaced for the most part by a rather limited, specific, and obvious form of moral preaching to the children in the audience. Despite this, it functioned fine as the escapist entertainment it was explicitly meant to be and nothing else.

The program went through several evolutions over the course of its existence, though in all versions, DC's star trio—Superman, Batman, and Wonder

Woman—were present, assisted to a varying degree by Aquaman; Robin; several very prominent minority heroes (who were meant to create a positive image of inclusion but instead reinforced blatant ethnic stereotypes); and junior comic-relief associates, originally Marvin and Wendy and their Scooby Doo-like pet Wonder Dog, and later the alien, shape-shifting Wonder Twins and their pet space monkey Gleek, the designated Hanna-Barbera funny animal comic figure. It expanded to an hour between 1977–1978 and 1980–1983 but otherwise remained a half-hour. The most prominent variations on the rather restrictive, nonviolent format protocols were featured in *Challenge*, in which many of DC's most prominent bad guys banded together under the iron-fisted leadership of Lex Luthor as the Legion of Doom, and in the final two incarnations, where the comic-relief supporting figures permanently vanished so that the main group could concentrate on more serious combat with the villainous alien Darkseid and his minions.

THE SUPER HERO SQUAD SHOW (2009–2011)

STUDIOS: Marvel, Film Roman, Ingenious

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATOR: Stan Lee

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Stan Lee, Alan Fine, Simon Phillips, Eric Rollman, Joe Quesada, Dan Buckley, Jeph Loeb

PRODUCERS: Dana Booton, Cort Lane

DIRECTORS: Mitch Schauer, Michael Gerard, Patty Shinagawa

WRITERS: Matt Wayne, James Krieg, Mark Hoffmeier, Eugene Son, Charlotte Fullerton, Michael Ryan, John Rozum, Atul Rao, Nicole Dubuc, Tad Stones, Stan Berkowitz, Len Wein, Richard Purser, Jimmy Palmiotti, Tom Kenny

VOICE ACTORS: Charlie Adler (Captain Britain/Dr. Doom/Melter/Plantman/Sabretooth/Wrecker/Super-Skrull, early episodes/Doombots/Cynthia "Coco" Von Doom/Phil Sheldon), Alimi Ballard (Falcon/Thunderball/Power Man), Steven Blum (Wolverine/Heimdall, early episodes/Zabu/Abomination/Fin Fang Foom/Pyro/Thanos, early episodes/Redwing/Dr'oge), Dave Boat (Thor/The Thing/Uatu the Watcher/Trapster/Baron Mordo/Galactus' Mom/Captain Lichtenstein/John Porter/Adam Warlock/Dracula/Doc Samson/Man-Thing), Jim Cummings (Thanos, later episodes/Super-Skrull, later episodes/Human Torch, early episodes), Grey DeLisle (Ms. Marvel/Enchantress/Volcana/Frigga), Mikey Kelley (Silver Surfer/Dark Surfer/Iron Fist), Tom Kenny (Iron Man/Captain America/Colossus/Juggernaut/MODOK/Fandrai/Sentinels/Space Phantoms), Stan Lee (Mayor of Superhero City), Tara Strong (Invisible Woman/H.E.R.B.I.E./Scarlet Witch/Brinnie Bratton/Princess Annelle/Toro/Alicia Masters/Holoball/Iron Man as a baby/Carnage Queen), Travis Willingham (Hulk/Human Torch, later episodes/Skurge/Pile-driver/Hyperion/Zeus/Balder/Hans), Carlos Alazraqui (Cyclops/Ringmaster/Captain Australia/Reptil, early episodes), Shawn Ashmore (Iceman), Laura Bailey (Firestar), Dee Bradley Baker (Annihilus/Devil Dinosaur), John Barrowman (Stranger), Ted Biaselli (Hellcarrier/Loki/Mole Man/Tricepharous/Terrax/Volstagg), A. J. Buckley (Batrog the Leaper/Klaw/Toad), Scott Bullock

(Red King), Ty Burrell (Captain Marvel), LeVar Burton (War Machine), Taye Diggs (Black Panther), Michael Dorn (Ronan the Accuser), Susan Eisenberg (Power Princess), Robert Englund (Dormammu), Jonathan Frakes (High Evolutionary), Patrick Fraley (Beta Ray Bill), Nika Futterman (Captain Brazil), Greg Grunberg (Ant-Man), Mark Hamill (The Red Skull/Chthon), Jess Harnell (Odin/Crimson Dynamo/Hercules/Heimdall, later episodes/Impossible Man), Lena Headey (Black Widow/Mystique), Tricia Helfer (Sif), Cheryl Hines (Stardust), Lil' J. J. (Luke Cage), Josh Keaton (Moon Boy), Rod Keller (Bucky Barnes), Wayne Knight (Egghead), Maurice LaMarche (Magneto), Phil LaMarr (Captain Jamaica), Jane Lynch (Nebula), Jonathan Mankuta (Flatman/Zzzax), Jason Marsden (Nova), James Marsters (Mr. Fantastic), Scott Menville (Quicksilver), Jennifer Morrison (Wasp), Julie Morrison (Screaming Mimi/Songbird), Tamera Mowry (Misty Knight), John O'Hurley (Grandmaster), Jim Parsons (Nightmare), Adrian Pasar (Hawkeye), Rob Paulsen (Werewolf by Night), Kevin Michael Richardson (Nick Fury), Antony Del Rio (Reptil, later episodes/Tyler Klause/Red Ranger), Roger Rose (Dr. Strange/Bulldozer), Katee Sackhoff (She-Hulk, early episodes), Kevin Sorbo (Ka-Zar), Ray Stevenson (The Punisher), Fred Stoller (Molecule Man), Cree Summer (Storm/She-Hulk, later episodes), George Takei (Galactus), Michelle Trachtenberg (Valkyrie), Hynden Walch (Jean Grey), Jim Ward (Professor Charles Xavier), Adam West (Nighthawk), Dave Wittenberg (Miek/Korg)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: Consider this Marvel's belated response to both *Justice League* (q.v.) and *Super Friends* (q.v.), emulating the former in both production quality and all-star cast and the latter in terms of a light, inoffensive tone, albeit with the particular cross-eyed sense of humor that has always been Marvel's alone. It was based on a toy line from Hasbro that portrayed the Marvel figures in a cartoonish, self-parodic way, and therefore the show was obliged to follow that direction. Nevertheless, it was a satisfactory introduction to the overall Marvel universe for newcomers. It gave numerous talented voice actors satisfactory parts and—as always with Marvel—served as a less serious and more jocular opposite to the far more serious and somber recent animation work of its longtime rival DC.

***THE SUPER GLOBETROTTERS* (1979)**

See *The Harlem Globetrotters* (and related series).

SUPERMAN (AND RELATED SERIES)

***The New Adventures of Superman* (1966–1967, 1969–1970)**

STUDIOS: Fimation, Ducovny, National Periodical Publications (i.e., DC Comics)

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATORS: Jerry Siegel, Joe Shuster

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Allen Ducovny

PRODUCERS: Lou Scheimer, Norman Prescott

DIRECTORS: Hal Sutherland, Norman McCabe, Lou Zukor

WRITERS INCLUDED: Mort Weisinger, Bob Haney, Leo Dorfman, George Kashdan

VOICE ACTORS: Bud Collyer (Clark Kent/Superman); Joan Alexander (Lois Lane); Ted Knight (Perry White); Jackson Beck (Narrator); Jack Grimes, Julie Bennett, Janet Waldo, and Cliff Owens (Additional characters)

The Superman/Aquaman Hour of Adventure (1967–1968)

STUDIOS: Filimation, Ducovny, National Periodical Publications (i.e., DC Comics)

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATORS: Jerry Siegel, Joe Shuster

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Allen Ducovny

PRODUCERS: Lou Scheimer, Norman Prescott

DIRECTORS: Hal Sutherland, Norman McCabe, Lou Zukor

WRITERS INCLUDED: Mort Weisinger, Bob Haney, Leo Dorfman, George Kashdan

VOICE ACTORS: Bud Collyer (Clark Kent/Superman), Joan Alexander (Lois Lane), Ted Knight (Perry White/"Superboy" Narrator/Imp/Tusky/"Aquaman" Narrator), Jackson Beck ("Superman" Narrator), Bob Hastings (Young Clark Kent/Superboy), Janet Waldo (Lana Lang/Others), Marvin Miller (Aquaman), Jerry Dexter (Aqualad), Diana Maddox (Mera), Cliff Owens (The Flash/Others), Tommy Cook (Kid Flash), Julie Bennett (Wonder Girl/Others), Gilbert Mack (Hawkman), Pat Harrington Jr. (The Atom/Speedy), Gerald Mohr (Green Lantern), Paul Frees (Kyro/Guardian of the Universe)

The Batman/Superman Hour (1968–1969)

STUDIOS: Filimation, Ducovny, National Periodical Publications (i.e., DC Comics)

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATORS: Jerry Siegel, Joe Shuster

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Allen Ducovny

PRODUCERS: Lou Scheimer, Norman Prescott

DIRECTORS: Hal Sutherland, Norman McCabe, Lou Zukor

WRITERS INCLUDED: Mort Weisinger, Bob Haney, Leo Dorfman, George Kashdan

VOICE ACTORS: Bud Collyer (Clark Kent/Superman), Joan Alexander (Lois Lane), Ted Knight (Perry White/Imp/Tusky/"Aquaman" Narrator/Alfred, later episodes/"Batman" Narrator/Others), Jackson Beck ("Superman" Narrator), Janet Waldo (Lana Lang/Others), Marvin Miller (Aquaman), Jerry Dexter (Aqualad), Diana Maddox (Mera), Cliff Owens (The Flash/Others), Tommy Cook (Kid Flash), Julie Bennett (Wonder Girl/Others), Gilbert Mack (Hawkman), Pat Harrington Jr. (The Atom/Speedy), Gerald Mohr (Green Lantern), Paul Frees (Kyro/Guardian of the Universe), Olan Soule (Bruce Wayne/Batman/Alfred, early episodes), Casey Kasem (Dick Grayson/Robin), Jane Webb (Barbara Gordon/Batgirl/Catwoman), Ted Knight (Alfred, later episodes/Narrator/Others)

Superman (1988–1989)

STUDIOS: Ruby-Spears, DC Comics

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Joe Ruby, Ken Spears

PRODUCER: Larry Huber

DIRECTORS: Cosmo Anzilotti, Bill Hutten, Tony Love

WRITERS: Marv Wolfman, Martin Pasko, Cherie Wilkinson, Karen Willson, Chris Weber, Buzz Dixon, Michael Reaves, Larry DiTillio, Meg McLaughlin, Steve Gerber

VOICE ACTORS: Beau Weaver (Clark Kent/Superman), Ginny McSwain (Lois Lane), Mark Taylor (Jimmy Olsen), Stanley Ralph Ross (Perry White), Michael Bell (Lex Luthor), Lynn Stewart (Jessica Morganberry), Tress MacNeille (Martha Kent), Alan Oppenheimer (Jonathan Kent)

Superman (1996–1997)

STUDIOS: Warner Brothers, DC Comics

DISTRIBUTOR: WB

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Jean MacCurdy

PRODUCERS: Alan Burnett, Bruce Timm, Paul Dini, Glen Murakami

DIRECTORS: Hiroyui Adyama, Dan Riba, Curt Geda, Butch Lukic, Toshihinko Masuda, Tuichiro Yano, Bruce Timm, Leslie Lamers

WRITERS: Hilary Bader, Stan Berkowitz, Larry Brody, Alan Burnett, Paul Dini, Evan Dorkin, Sarah Dyer, Mark Evanier, Rich Fogel, Steve Gerber, Robert Goodman, Joe Lansdale, Bruce Timm

VOICE ACTORS: Tim Daly (Clark Kent/Superman/Bizarro), Dana Delany (Lois Lane), George Dzundza (Perry White), David Kaufman (Jimmy Olsen), Mike Farrell (Jonathan Kent), Shelley Fabares (Martha Kent), Christopher McDonald (Jor-El), Lauren Tom (Angela Chen), Victor Brandt (Professor Hamilton), Corey Burton (Brainiac), Malcolm McDowell (Corben/Metallo), Michael Ironside (Darkseid), Joely Fisher (Lana Lang, early episodes), Kelly Schmidt (Lana Lang, later episodes), Clancy Brown (Lex Luthor), Lori Petty (Livewire), Lisa Edelstein (Mercy Graves), James Belushi (Rudy/Parasite, early episodes), Brion James (Rudy/Parasite, later episodes), Bruce Weitz (Bruno Mannheim), Brad Garrett (Bibbo), Nicolle Tom (Supergirl), Bud Cort (Toyman), David L. Lander (Sqweek), Don Harvey (Gnaww), Gilbert Gottfried (Mr. Mxylptlk), Joseph Bologna (Dan Turpin), Joanna Cassidy (Maggie Sawyer)

The New Batman/Superman Adventures (Superman segments, 1997–2000)

STUDIOS: DC Comics, Warner Brothers

DISTRIBUTOR: WB

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Jean MacCurdy

PRODUCERS: Alan Burnett, Bruce Timm, Paul Dini, Glen Murakami

DIRECTORS: Hiroyui Adyama, Dan Riba, Curt Geda, Butch Lukic, Toshihinko Masuda, Tuichiro Yano, Bruce Timm, Leslie Lamers

WRITERS: Hilary Bader, Stan Berkowitz, Larry Brody, Alan Burnett, Paul Dini, Evan Dorkin, Sarah Dyer, Mark Evanier, Rich Fogel, Steve Gerber, Robert Goodman, Joe Lansdale, Bruce Timm

VOICE ACTORS: Tim Daly (Clark Kent/Superman/Bizarro), Dana Delany (Lois Lane), George Dzundza (Perry White), David Kaufman (Jimmy Olsen), Mike Farrell (Jonathan Kent), Shelley Fabares (Martha Kent), Christopher McDonald (Jor-El), Lauren Tom (Angela Chen), Victor Brandt (Professor Hamilton), Corey Burton (Brainiac), Malcolm McDowell (Corben/Metallo), Michael Ironside (Darkseid), Joely Fisher (Lana Lang, early episodes), Kelly Schmidt (Lana Lang, later episodes), Clancy Brown (Lex Luthor), Lori Petty (Livewire), Lisa Edelstein (Mercy Graves), James Belushi (Rudy/Parasite, early episodes), Brion James (Rudy/Parasite, later episodes), Bruce Weitz (Bruno Mannheim), Brad Garrett (Bibbo), Nicolle Tom (Supergirl), Bud Cort (Toyman), David L.

Lander (Sqweek), Don Harvey (Gnaww), Gilbert Gottfried (Mr. Mxylptlk), Joseph Bologna (Dan Turpin), Joanna Cassidy (Maggie Sawyer)

See also *Batman* (and related series) for that component's credits.

SYNOPSIS: Kal-El, an alien from the defunct planet of Krypton, fights crime and darker forms of evil as the heroic Superman while maintaining a secret identity as mild-mannered journalist Clark Kent.

COMMENTARY: The very first—and arguably still the most definitive—modern superhero made his public debut in the first issue of *Action Comics* in 1938, a publication that now sells for far more than its original \$0.10. He was the inspired creation of a pair of teenagers from Cleveland—Siegel and Toronto-born Shuster—who, unable to sell their products as newspaper strips, found the infant comic book business much more to their liking. The duo piloted their creation's adventures until 1947, when they were dismissed as a result of a compensation conflict with their publisher and were never again associated with the character. Siegel did eventually return to DC (as it eventually became) as a writer during the 1960s. (They were not properly acknowledged and compensated by DC until the 1970s, and that was only due to public lobbying by themselves and their families for recognition.) By then, however, Superman had long outgrown his creators and had been transformed into a buoyantly optimistic figure who came to represent “truth, justice and the American way.” He also expanded well beyond his original comic book origins, starring in a popular series of theatrical animated films produced by Paramount in the 1940s, a popular radio series of the same vintage, an equally popular live-action television series in the 1950s, and several live-



The Man of Steel as he looked in the 1990s. DC Comics/Warner Brothers Television/Photofest © DC Comics/Warner Brothers Television

action feature films spanning from 1978's *Superman* to 2016's *Batman vs. Superman: Dawn of Justice*. He has also remained popular in animation, as shown by these series as well as by his leading role in the *Super Friends* (q.v.) and *Justice League* (q.v.) franchises.

His earliest television animation appearances, in *The New Adventures of Superman* (so titled, presumably, to distinguish it from the earlier live series *The Adventures of Superman*) was indebted to his prior media incarnations in multiple ways. The writers had chiefly scripted earlier comic book adventures, so the episodes followed the pattern set there. In addition, Collyer, Alexander, and Beck were reprising the same roles they had played in the radio program, so another set pattern was relied on in the acting. Despite this—and what was perceived as poor-quality animation by critics—the show was an effective and charming production with unique touches (such as Clark Kent conspiratorily winking to the audience at the end of many installments, making it appear that they were in on his secret) that were absent from the largely serious Paramount cartoons that had preceded them. In 1967–1968, the program expanded to an hour as *The Superman/Aquaman Hour of Adventure*, which featured Aquaman (later to star in his own series; see *Aquaman*) and Superman's youthful adventures as Superboy, as well as other DC heroes appearing in animation for the first time, such as Hawkman, the Flash, and Green Lantern. The series remained an hour in 1968–1969, though it consisted exclusively of Superman and Batman (see *Batman*) adventures this time, before returning to a half-hour in 1969–1970.

Superman did not appear as a star in his own right again until an eponymous series in 1988–1989. Produced to commemorate his 50th anniversary, this series was very well-produced, with thoughtful and memorable stories from expert hands that showed how well suited animation was for showcasing the Man of Steel and his vast abilities. One of these provided a costarring opportunity for his female counterpart, Wonder Woman, whose appearances in animation have been considerably fewer in comparison with his. Each of these episodes closed with a short "Family Album" segment, which illustrated (often comically) an episode in the life of Clark Kent as a child or teenager. The program expired after one year due to low ratings, though its quality made it very worthy of a longer run.

Superman was revived again in 1996, by DC's corporate cousin, Warner Brothers Animation. The team assigned to him were veterans of a previous excellent revival of *Batman*, and they sought to achieve the same results here. They succeeded on a technical level, with some very fine production designs and well-designed action sequences. But the shift from the dark, pessimistic world of *Batman* to the more optimistic world of *Superman* was not entirely successful, largely because the writing and particularly the voice acting (with the exception, perhaps, of Petty's newly created, electricity-powered villainess Livewire) lacked much of the sparkle and fire that had distinguished the *Batman* programs. The contrast between the two properties was made even more apparent during the three years they ran as a joint feature on the WB, with each revealing the other's faults as much as their strengths.

Since then, Superman has not appeared in television animation much, other than in situations, like the *Justice League* franchise, where his presence is needed. He could easily be revived there, however, just as his colleague Batman constantly seems to be. Yet his historical importance to the entire superhero genre, whatever media form it takes, is without question, in part because he was the first of his kind to appear in so many media, and his appearances in all of them would come to fundamentally shape what kinds of narratives would expand (and arguably limit) what they would collectively achieve across the 20th and 21st centuries. In particular, every television animation superhero, comic or serious, who has come after him has been strongly influenced by him in one form or another in multiple ways, whether they or their creators know it or not, and they owe him a debt of thanks for pointing the way for them. His own television animation adventures give viewers a revelatory portrait of how important and influential he has been as a cultural figure over the long life span he has enjoyed as a fictional character.

THE SUPER MARIO BROTHERS SUPER SHOW (AND RELATED SERIES)

***The Super Mario Brothers Super Show* (1989)**

STUDIOS: Nintendo, DIC, Viacom

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

PRODUCERS: Andy Heyward, Robby London

DIRECTOR: Dan Riba

WRITERS INCLUDED: Reed Shelley, Bruce Shelley

VOICE ACTORS: "Captain" Lou Albano (Mario), Danny Wells (Luigi), Harvey Atkin (King Koopa/Mushroom Mayor/Tryclyde/Sniffet), John Stocker (Toad/Mouser/Troopa/Beezo/Flurry), Jeannie Elias (Princess Toadstool/Shyguy)

***Captain N and the Adventures of Super Mario Brothers 3* (1990–1991)**

STUDIOS: DIC, Nintendo

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

PRODUCERS: Andy Heyward, Robby London

DIRECTOR: Dan Riba

WRITERS INCLUDED: Reed Shelley, Bruce Shelley

VOICE ACTORS: Tony Rosato (Mario), Danny Wells (Luigi), Harvey Atkin (King Koopa/Mushroom Mayor/Tryclyde/Sniffet), John Stocker (Toad/Mouser/Troopa/Beezo/Flurry), Jeannie Elias (Princess Toadstool/Shyguy)

***Captain N and the New Super Mario World* (1991–1992)**

STUDIOS: DIC, Nintendo

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

PRODUCERS: Andy Heyward, Robby London

DIRECTOR: Dan Riba

WRITERS INCLUDED: Reed Shelley, Bruce Shelley

VOICE ACTORS: Tony Rosato (Mario), Danny Wells (Luigi), Harvey Atkin (King Koopa/Mushroom Mayor/Tryclyde/Sniffet), John Stocker (Toad/Mouser/Troopa/Beezo/Flurry), Jeannie Elias (Princess Toadstool/Shyguy)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: Modified from his original appearance as the villain of the original *Donkey Kong* video game, Mario the Brooklyn plumber, coupled with his brother Luigi, starred in an enormously popular series of video games from Nintendo beginning in 1983. Their popularity in both video-arcade-game and home-video-game-console format was staggering, and thus it was inevitable that they would be adapted to other media. The first adaptation was a mixed-media *mélange* that combined animated adventures of the brothers based on the game with live-action sequences featuring Mario and Luigi hanging out with their friends at Club Mario in their native Brooklyn, with another animated video game adaptation, *The Legend of Zelda* (q.v.). The later adaptations of the characters were more of the same, paired with the previously existing Nintendo derivation *Captain N: The Game Master* (q.v.). A 1993 live-action feature-film adaptation was a failure both creatively and commercially.

***SUPER POWERS TEAM: GALACTIC GUARDIANS* (1985–1986)**

See *Super Friends* (and related series).

***SUPER PRESIDENT AND SPY SHADOW* (1967–1968)**

STUDIO: DePatie-Freleng

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: David DePatie, Friz Freleng

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Paul Frees (President James Norcross/Others); Daws Butler (Richard Vance); Ted Knight, June Foray, Shepard Menken, Don Messick, Lorrie Scott, and Mark Scor (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: The two features of this show were (1) U.S. president James Norcross moonlighting as a superhero when not performing his official duties and (2) private detective Richard Vance aided in his investigations by his independently functioning shadow.

COMMENTARY: Perhaps the worst animated program in the late 1960s (its producers admitted it themselves), this program suffered more from featuring President James Norcross, which was arguably the most implausible superhero narrative idea ever invented, than Richard Vance, which had some potential but wasn't executed well. A product of its time more than anything else.

***SUPER ROBOT MONKEY TEAM HYPER FORCE GO!*
(2004–2006)**

STUDIOS: Disney, Jetix, Answer

DISTRIBUTORS: Family Channel, Disney

CREATOR: Ciro Nieli

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Ciro Nieli, Henry Gilroy, Randolph Heard

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Greg Cipes (Chiro), Kevin Michael Richardson (Antauri/Biff Beefy Box/Cloggy Colon Creature/Morlath), Corey Feldman (Sparx), Tom Kenny (Gibson/Sakko/Johnny Sunspot), Kari Wahlgren (Nova/Ma Shanko/

Leeah), Clancy Brown (Otto/Elevator Monster/Pa Shanko/Planetoid Q), Mark Hamill (Skeleton King/TV Monster/Skeleton King Droid/Alchemist), James Hong (Mandarin/Mandarin 2), Hynden Walch (Valeena Shanko, a.k.a. the Skull Sorceress), Jeffrey Combs (Gyrus Krinkel), Dee Bradley Baker (Professor Maezono), Eric Idle (Duke Scrapperton), Michael York (Master Zan), John Kassir (Wigglenog), Ashley Johnson (Jinmay), Keone Young (Super Quazar), Meredith Salinger (Aurora Six), Scott Menville (Slingshot), Robert Englund (Ringmaster), Frank Welker (Thingy), Lance Henriksen (Mobius Quint), Bruce Campbell (Clayton Carrington/Captain Shugazoom), Mako (Master Offay)

SYNOPSIS: In Shugazoom City, a young boy named Chiro accidentally revives the heroic Super Robot Monkey Team from inactivity and becomes a participant in their heroic ventures.

COMMENTARY: A neither-fish-nor-fowl action/comedy series that dutifully went its way through its complicated backstory, well-developed setting, and typically derivative good-versus-evil plotlines without really creating anything memorable in the process. Disney's lack of full commitment to this anime-indebted project was reflected when it canceled the program after it had concluded its final season with a cliff-hanger ending that was consequently never resolved.

THE SUPER SIX (1966–1969)

STUDIOS: DePatie-Freleng, Mirisch-Rich

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

PRODUCERS: David DePatie, Friz Freleng

DIRECTORS: Art Davis, Dave Detiege, Art Leonardi, Hawley Pratt

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Daws Butler (Magnet Man/Brother Matzoriley #1); Paul Stewart (Elevator Man); Arte Johnson (Super Scuba); Lyn Johnson (Granite Man); Charles Smith (Super Bwoing); Paul Frees (Captain Zammo/Brother Matzoriley #2); Pat Carroll, June Foray, Joan Gerber, and Diana Maddox (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: This project featured one of the more innovative ideas of the late-1960s superhero cycle—the title group were the staff of a “hero for hire” operation known as Super Services, Inc., who were employed only and specifically when their services were needed. Super Bwoing was not a superhero but an inept cowboy in the mold of *Quick Draw McGraw* (q.v.), whereas the Brothers Matzoriley were a group of comical-looking siblings with a variety of ethnic dialects, which was supposed to be what was funny about them. Though only one season of episodes was produced, NBC ran the series for three years in its time slot despite its malnourished performance in the ratings.

SUPER SUNDAY (1985)

STUDIOS: Marvel, Sunbow, Claster

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Joe Bacal, Margaret Loesch, Tom Griffin

PRODUCERS: Don Jurwich, Alex Lovy, Doug Booth, Roger Slifer

DIRECTORS: Gerry Chiniquy, Norman McCabe, Tom Ray, Bob Matz, Brad Case, Joan Case, Warren Batchelder, Karen Peterson, Al Kouzel, Flores Nichols, Bob Kirk, Bob Shellhorn, Bob Treat, Bill Exter

WRITERS INCLUDED: Alan Swayze

VOICE ACTORS: Charlie Adler, Michael Bell, Arthur Burghardt, Susan Blu, Corey Burton, Bill Callaway, Victoria Carroll, Nancy Cartwright, Fred Collins, Brad Crandall, Peter Cullen, Patrick Fraley, Linda Gary, Dick Gautier, Ed Gilbert, Chris Latta, Jason Naylor, Neil Ross, Stanley Ralph Ross, Richard Sanders, Susan Silo, John Stephenson, and Frank Welker (Specific roles unknown)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: A 90-minute block in the fashion of such contemporaries as *The Funtastic World of Hanna-Barbera* (q.v.), with each segment based on a preexisting toy product (not surprising, considering the program's vintage). *Robotix* was an uninspired *Transformers* (q.v.) variation involving the standard good-versus-evil fight between factionalized robots; the other three segments, *Bigfoot and the Muscle Machines*, *JEM*, and *The Inhumanoids*, are discussed under their own headings, as they aired on their own after this program's demise.

SWAMP THING (1991)

STUDIOS: Batfilm, DIC

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX

CREATORS: Len Wein, Berni Wrightson

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Benjamin Melniker, Michael Uslan, Andy Heyward, Michael Maliani, Robby London

PRODUCERS: Ken Duer, Kenneth Ito, Kevin Schmidt

DIRECTOR: Chuck Patton

WRITERS INCLUDED: Reed Shelley, Bruce Shelley, Lori Crawford, William Ruiz

VOICE ACTORS: Len Carlson (Swamp Thing); Harvey Atkin (Tomahawk); Phil Atkin (Bayou Jack); Don Francks (Arcane); Errol Slue (Dr. Deemo); Gordon Masten (Skin Man); Joe Matheson (Weed Killer); Paulina Gillis (Abby); Richard Yearwood (J. T.); Jonathan Potts (Delbert); Stuart Stone and Eva Almos (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: After scientist Alec Holland is turned into the monstrous-appearing title character through a laboratory accident, he wanders the swamps of Louisiana as an unheralded do-gooder.

COMMENTARY: This unlikely hero made his debut in a one-shot comic from DC in 1972 and was elevated to his own regular title in 1974. Prior to this animated program, he had also appeared in two eponymous films (1982 and 1989, respectively) and a live-action series airing on the USA network. In the program, Swamp Thing focused his energy on battling his nemesis, Dr. Anton Arcane, who'd been responsible for the lab accident that created him in the first place, as well as the similarly designed minions of the doctor known as the Unmen. Only five episodes were filmed before the series was abruptly canceled due to low ratings.

SWAT KATS: THE RADICAL SQUADRON (1993–1994)

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, TBS

DISTRIBUTORS: Syndicated (1993), Cartoon Network (1994)

CREATORS: Yvon Tremblay, Christian Tremblay

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Buzz Potamkin

PRODUCER: Davis Doi

DIRECTORS: Robert Alvarez, Frank Andria, Kunio Shimamura, Allen Wilzbach, Joanna Romersa, Ken Southworth, Rick Bowman, Joan Drake

WRITERS INCLUDED: Glenn Leopold

VOICE ACTORS: Charlie Adler (Chance Furlong/T-Bone/Murray/Creeplings/Zed); Barry Gordon (Jake Clawson/Razor); Gary Owens (Commander Ulysses Feral); Jim Cummings (Mayor Manx/Sergeant, 1994/Warden Meece/Morbulus); Tress MacNeille (Deputy Mayor Callico "Callie" Briggs); Candi Milo (Ann Gora); Rob Paulsen (Hard Drive); Paul Eiding (Dr. N. Zyme); Keene Curtis (Pastmaster); Linda Gary (Dr. Abby Sinian); Edmund Gilbert (Tiger Conklin/Sergeant, 1993); Mark Hamill (Burke/Johnny K.); George Hearn (Professor Hackle); Robert Ito (Mr. Young); Brock Peters (Dark Kat); Hal Rayle (Lieutenant Commander Steele); Neil Ross (Mac Mange); Frank Welker (Dr. Elrod Purvis/Dr. Viper/Volcanus); April Winchell (Molly Mange); Frank Birney and Earl Boen (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: The all-feline metropolis of Megakat City is frequently defended from evil by two humble garage mechanics who moonlight as superheroes.

COMMENTARY: While technically the creation of the Canadian Tremblay brothers, who were given animation supervisory chores on the finished product by then-Hanna-Barbera-president Fred Seibert, this series was a liberal borrowing from a great variety of comic and serious series of the past that had utilized parts of the premise more successfully. Response to the series was mixed, with some in favor and some not. Its historical importance is chiefly due to it being one of the first series to have a soundtrack recorded and mixed in full stereo sound, which is now commonplace but was revolutionary then.

SYLVANIAN FAMILIES (1987)

STUDIOS: DIC, Coca-Cola Telecommunications

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Andy Heyward

PRODUCERS: Robby London, Gaetano Vaccaro, Yolanda Gorick

DIRECTORS: Christian Jocquet, Kazuo Terada, James Simon

WRITERS INCLUDED: Phil Harnage, Lori Crawford

VOICE ACTORS: Frank Proctor (Woodkeeper), Len Carlson (Packbat/Papa Herb Wildwood), John Stocker (Gatorpossum/Grandpa Smoky Wildwood), Jeri Craden (Mama Honeysuckle Evergreen), Thick Wilson (Papa Ernest Evergreen), Ellen Ray Hennessey (Grandma Primrose Evergreen), Michael Fantini (Preston Evergreen), Noam Zylberman (Rusty Wildwood), Catherine Gallant (Holly Wildwood), Brian Belfry (Papa Slick Slydale), Diane Fabian (Mama Velveter Slydale/Grandma Flora Wildwood/Mama Ginger Wildwood), Jeremiah

McCann (Buster Slydale), Lisa Coristine (Scarlette Slydale), Chuck Shamata (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: A project very much in the vein of *The Care Bears* (q.v.), with a similarly family-friendly motif, based on a children's toy line. The title characters granted wishes to children, who then discovered the moral consequences of those wishes—thus making the series something of a more serious precursor to *The Fairly Oddparents* (q.v.). The program was rerun in its entirety on the PAX network during 1998–1999.

THE SYLVESTER AND TWEETY MYSTERIES (1995–2001)

STUDIO: Warner Brothers

DISTRIBUTORS: WB, Cartoon Network

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Jean MacCurdy

PRODUCERS: Tom Minton, James Walker, Mike Gerard

DIRECTORS: Lenord Robinson, James Walker, Karl Toerge, Al Ziegler

WRITERS: John Behnke, Rob Humphrey, Peter Minton, Jim Peterson, Scott Peterson, Timothy Cahill, Carolyn Gair Taylor, Julie McNally, Frank Santopadre, Karl Toerge

VOICE ACTORS: Joe Alaskey (Sylvester/Tweety/Charlie Dog/Announcer), June Foray (Granny), Frank Welker (Hector)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: The characters of Tweety, a baby-talk-spouting, infantile-looking canary, and Sylvester, a lisping, red-nosed cat, first appeared separately in Warner Brothers theatrical cartoons directed by Bob Clampett in the early 1940s. After Clampett left the studio, Friz Freleng revived the characters by teaming them up in a long-running series spanning from the late 1940s to the early 1960s. These films, known to younger audiences through their appearances in various Warner compilation television, home video, and DVD series, focused on how the seemingly innocent Tweety was regularly able to foil Sylvester's frustrated attempts to capture and eat him. This series was cast very much in the same mold, with the exception of the fact that the duo now accompanied their elderly owner Granny as she globe-trotted, solving mysteries; Hector, the loyal bulldog, foiled Sylvester's plans on the occasions that he did not screw them up himself. Despite an evocative re-creation of Freleng's original film-design scheme, down to reusing original character poses by the animators, the program, as with so many of the latter-day attempts to revive the Warner characters, fell further short of its creative target than its producers would have liked. Episodes of the series were also broadcast as part of the network omnibus *The Cat and Birdy Warneroonie Pinky Brainy Big Cartoonie Show* between 1999 and 2000.

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***TAK AND THE POWER OF JUJU* (2007–2008)**

STUDIOS: Nickelodeon, THQ

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

PRODUCERS: Nick Jennings, Jed Spingarn, Mitch Watson

DIRECTORS: Heiko Dreigenberg, Nick Jennings, Lane Lueras, Mark Risley, Jim Schumann

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Hal Sparks (Tak), Maurice LaMarche (Chief), Kari Wahlgren (Jeera), John DiMaggio (Keeko), Lloyd Sherr (Bantu Jibolba), Dannah Feringlass (Zaria), Patrick Warburton (Lok), Greg Cipes (Blod Oongatchaka), Moira Quirk (Bleeta Oongatchaka), Rob Paulsen (Party Juju), Scott Bullock (Psychic Juju)

SYNOPSIS: Tak, a member of the Pupununu tribe, has the ability to summon magical Jujus to solve his and the tribe's problems.

COMMENTARY: Based on a video game from Avalanche Software and inherently riddled with all the problems and issues relating to plot, characterization, and so on related to these kinds of series, though the CGI graphics were functionally used. A more troublesome issue with it was the rather stereotypical portrayal of the lead characters, which has historically been commonplace with both the indigenous peoples of the islands of southern Asia (whom the Pupununu are intended to represent) and indigenous peoples as a whole in the history of Hollywood filmmaking. It may have been this element that caused the series to cease production after a season, though expensive production costs and low ratings may have been more decisive factors in ending the series.

TALES FROM THE CRYPTKEEPER/NEW TALES FROM THE CRYPTKEEPER

***Tales from the Cryptkeeper* (1993–1995)**

STUDIOS: Nelvana, EC Comics, Tales from the Crypt Holdings

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATOR: William M. Gaines

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Richard Donner, David Giler, Walter Hill, Joel Silver, Robert Zemeckis, Toper Taylor

PRODUCERS: Michael Hirsh, Patrick Loubert, Stephen Hodgins, Alex Collett, Patricia Burns, Pamela Slavin

DIRECTOR: Laura Shepherd

WRITERS INCLUDED: Peter Sauder, Terry Black

VOICE ACTORS: John Kassir (Cryptkeeper), Dan Hennessey (Vaultkeeper)

New Tales from the Cryptkeeper (1999–2000)

STUDIOS: Nelvana, EC Comics, Tales from the Crypt Holdings, Fantome

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATOR: William M. Gaines

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Richard Donner, David Giler, Walter Hill, Joel Silver, Robert Zemeckis, Toper Taylor

PRODUCERS: Michael Hirsh, Patrick Loubert, Stephen Hodgins, Alex Collett, Patricia Burns, Pamela Slavin

DIRECTOR: Rick Marshall

WRITERS INCLUDED: David Finley, Deborah Goodwin, Ed Naha, J. D. Smith, Juan Coto, Peter Sauder, David Hines

VOICE ACTORS: John Kassir (Cryptkeeper), Dan Hennessey (Vaultkeeper)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: This program had its origins in *Tales from the Crypt*, a comic book published by EC Comics in the early 1950s. Introduced by the cadaverous Cryptkeeper, the book featured graphically violent *contes cruel* that saw perpetrators of evil deeds come to equally foul but fitting ends. Due to complaints against the graphic contents of the entire EC line, the book and the company came to abbreviated ends, but their legacy would live on long after the comics' production runs ended. One manifestation of this came when HBO revived *Tales* as a dramatic anthology program in 1989, adding sex and profanity to the violent mix and getting away with it precisely because of where it was broadcast.

ABC brought the concept belatedly to network television and for children four years later, with the high-profile executive producers of the original series involved and Kassir reprising his portrayal of the Cryptkeeper from there as well. However, in the process, the original appeal of the comics and the live show was largely destroyed in favor of conforming to the kind of standardized moral lesson telling that seemed to dominate network thinking about programming meant for children. The CBS revival had considerably higher budgets than the ABC original, but the muted on-screen content remained as limited creatively as ever.

TALES OF THE WIZARD OF OZ (1961)

See *The Wizard of Oz* (and related series).

TALE SPIN (1990)

STUDIO: Disney

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

PRODUCERS: Jymn Magon, Ed Ghertner, Robert Taylor, Larry Latham, Jamie Mitchell, Tim Walker, Mark Zaslove

DIRECTORS: Ed Ghertner, Robert Taylor, Larry Latham, Jamie Mitchell, Tim Walker

WRITERS INCLUDED: Jymn Magon, Mark Zaslove, Ken Koonce, David Wiemers, Duane Capizzi, Karl Guers, Bruce Talkington, Mark Evans, Michael Evans, Alan Burnett, Carter Crocker, Jeremy Kushner, Martin Donnoff, Libby Hinson, Eric Lewald, Julia Lewald, Bruce Morris, Cathryn Perdue, Steve Roberts,

Don Rosa, Dev Ross, Jeffrey Scott, Dean Stephan, Jan Strand, Steven Stusarcic, Ellen Svaco, Colleen Taber, Chuck Tately, Len Uhley

VOICE ACTORS: Sally Struthers (Rebecca Cunningham), Edmund Gilbert (Baloo), Jim Cummings (King Louie/Don Karnage), Tony Jay (Shere Khan), Patrick Fraley (Wild Cat), Janna Michaels (Molly Cunningham), Alan Roberts (Kit Cloudkicker, early episodes), R. J. Williams (Kit Cloudkicker, later episodes), Chuck McCann (Dump Truck), Charlie Adler (Mad Dog), Lorenzo Music (Dunder), Michael Gough (Spigot)

SYNOPSIS: Charter pilot Baloo the Bear regularly faces danger on his transport missions and further difficulties accompanying his relationship with his employer Rebecca.

COMMENTARY: Part of the "Disney Afternoon" programming cycle, this was another of the company's syndicated adventure-plus-comedy series, combining the standard borrowing from the studio's film heritage (Baloo, King Louie, and Shere Khan had all previously appeared in the 1967 animated version of *The Jungle Book*) with new (by the studio's standards) settings and characters. The borrowing extended to outside sources as well, from the adventure-oriented B films of the 1940s starring such aging has-been actors as Richard Arlen and Chester Morris to the comedic exploits of the Bowery Boys to the Indiana Jones movies. With such a lack of true inspiration and despite the presence of such positive female characters as Rebecca and her daughter Molly, it was not a surprise that the final results were extremely insipid and uninspired, even by Disney's lesser programming standards of this time.

TARZAN (AND RELATED SERIES)

***Tarzan, Lord of the Jungle* (1976–1977)**

STUDIO: Filmmation

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATOR: Edgar Rice Burroughs

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Lou Scheimer, Norman Prescott

PRODUCER: Don Christensen

DIRECTORS: Ed Friedman, Gwen Wetzler, Kay Wright, Marsh Lamore, Lou Zukor

VOICE ACTORS: Robert Ridgely (Tarzan); Lou Scheimer (N'Kima); Linda Gary, Joan Gerber, Ted Cassidy, Barry Gordon, Alan Oppenheimer, and Jane Webb (Additional characters)

***Tarzan and the Super Seven* (animated segments, 1978–1980)**

STUDIO: Filmmation

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATOR: Edgar Rice Burroughs

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Lou Scheimer, Norman Prescott

PRODUCER: Don Christensen

DIRECTORS: Ed Friedman, Gwen Wetzler, Kay Wright, Marsh Lamore, Lou Zukor

VOICE ACTORS: Robert Ridgely (Tarzan), Lou Scheimer (N'Kruma/Spinner), Diana Pershing (Isis), Bob Denison (Hercules), Michael Bell (Merlin/Sinbad/Super

Samurai), Kim Hamilton (Micro Woman), Ty Henderson (Super Stretch), Linda Gary (Kelly Webster/Web Woman), Joe Stern (Manta), Joan Van Ark (Moray)

The Tarzan/Lone Ranger Adventure Hour (1980–1981)

STUDIO: Filmmation

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATOR: Edgar Rice Burroughs

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Lou Scheimer, Norman Prescott

PRODUCER: Don Christensen

DIRECTORS: Ed Friedman, Gwen Wetzler, Kay Wright, Marsh Lamore, Lou Zukor

VOICE ACTORS: Robert Ridgely (Tarzan); Lou Scheimer (N'Kima); Linda Gary, Joan Gerber, Ted Cassidy, Barry Gordon, Alan Oppenheimer, and Jane Webb (Additional characters)

See also *The Lone Ranger*.

The Tarzan/Lone Ranger/Zorro Adventure Hour (Tarzan segments, 1981–1982)

STUDIO: Filmmation

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATOR: Edgar Rice Burroughs

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Lou Scheimer, Norman Prescott

PRODUCER: Don Christensen

DIRECTORS: Ed Friedman, Gwen Wetzler, Kay Wright, Marsh Lamore, Lou Zukor

WRITERS: Arthur Brown, Marty Warner, Robby London

VOICE ACTORS: Robert Ridgely (Tarzan); Lou Scheimer (N'Kima); Linda Gary, Joan Gerber, Ted Cassidy, Barry Gordon, Alan Oppenheimer, and Jane Webb (Additional characters)

See also *The Lone Ranger*; *Zorro* (and related series).

The Legend of Tarzan (2001–2003)

STUDIO: Disney

DISTRIBUTORS: UPN, Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Bill Motz, Bob Roth

PRODUCER: Steve Loter

DIRECTORS: Steve Loter, Troy Adomis, Chris Buck, Victor Cook, Kevin Lima, Don MacKinnon, Nick Filippi, Sean Bishop, David Bullock

WRITERS: Madellaine Paxson, Robert Askin, Ken Koonce, David Wiemers, Peter Gaffney, Michael Merton, Randy Rogel, Marv Wolfman, Gary Sperling, Eddie Guzelian, Michael Ryan, Bill Motz, Mirith J. S. Colao, Mark Palmer, Leslie Nordman, Carl Ellsworth, Jess Winfield, John Behnke, Rob Humphrey, Jim Peterson, David Slack, Adam Van Wyck

VOICE ACTORS: Michael Weiss (Tarzan), Olivia d'Abo (Jane Porter), Jeff Bennett (Professor Archimedes Porter), Susan Blakeslee (Kala), Jim Cummings (Tantor/Lieutenant Colonel Staquait), Jason Marsden (Mungo), Frank Welker (Manu), April Winchell (Terk), Erik Von Detten (Flynt), Rene Auberjonois (Renard Dumont), Dave Thomas (Hugo), Joe Flaherty (Hooft), Craig Ferguson (Samuel Philander), Diahann Carroll (Queen La), Taylor Dempsey (Jabarti),

Sheena Easton (Dr. Robin Doyle), James Avery (Chief Keewazi), Phil LaMarr (Basuli), Cindy Warden (Jamila), Fred Willard (Baruti)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: One of the 20th century's most popular and enduring fictional characters, Tarzan began his existence in a serial, *Tarzan the Ape Man*, by Burroughs (an author who turned to writing after failing at other careers), in *All-Story Magazine* in 1912 and published in book form soon after. Despite the lack of reality and logic in Burroughs's writing style—he gave his lead character not only superhuman physical abilities but also the ability to speak fluent French—and an overflowing romantic sensibility, the story and its star were enormously popular. Burroughs subsequently wrote and published another 23 Tarzan novels between that time and his death in 1950, in the process making as much money from marketing his character and licensing him to outsiders as he did actually writing about him. The biggest manifestation of this was Tarzan becoming a regular feature in motion pictures, from the silent era to a new film recently released, which largely followed Burroughs's novel formula without deviating from it too much. Arguably, the definitive portrayal of Tarzan in the movies was by former Olympic gold medalist Johnny Weismuller in the 1930s, who perfected a multi-octave vocal cry that is now strongly associated with the character. Further manifestations were appearances in television series, comic books, and comic strips, as well as such blatant parodies as Jay Ward's *George of the Jungle* (q.v.).

Tarzan's own appearances as an animated character, in contrast to his live-action film and TV work, were considerably more muted, at least in the Filmation series. The program was faithful to Burroughs's conception of him as both physically and mentally strong but departed from the story arc by not including his "mate" Jane in the stories. While the show benefitted from strong animation indebted to comic strip artist Burne Hogarth, it was less effective in terms of its plotting and storytelling. For this reason, Filmation soon lost faith in Tarzan as a solo star and began to team him up with other characters to lure viewers in. First, he was teamed with Batman and later with the Lone Ranger and Zorro, to similar effect. By far the most elaborate version of this was *Tarzan and the Super Seven*, which was a 90-minute block with several recurring animated features, as well as a live-action serial, *Jason of Star Command*. Among the animated segments were *The Freedom Force*, with a variety of superpowered mythological figures working in the vein of *Super Friends* (q.v.); *Super Stretch and Micro Woman*, a self-descriptive African American husband-and-wife superhero team; *Web Woman*, featuring a female scientist with the concentrated powers of all insects in her body; and *Manta and Moray*, the adventures, respectively, of the last survivor of a water-breathing Atlantean civilization and his female acquaintance.

When the Filmation run ended in the early 1980s, Tarzan lay dormant as an animated character until 1999, when he became the star of an animated feature film from Disney, which largely restored the Hollywood status-quo formula and grafted music by Phil Collins onto it. This led to the inevitable paint-by-numbers television adaptation, which featured Tarzan; his

very English “mate” Jane; and, for comic relief, Jane’s archeologist father, Professor Porter (who had been portrayed in a similar vein in the original Tarzan novel), as well as the neurotic elephant Turk, the tomboy ape Terk, academic-cum-con-man Philander, the villainous trader Dumont (who tried to lure away Jane’s affections), and his inept henchmen Hugo and Hooft (Flaherty and Thomas got a chance to revive their excellent parodies of Bing Crosby and Bob Hope, respectively, from their *SCTV* days here). The animation style of the feature film was retained, but while some episodes retained Burroughs’s ideas and themes and different modes of storytelling were used, proecological messaging won out more often. This was typified by an episode in which Tarzan encounters Theodore Roosevelt on safari and helps to convert him to the cause of wildlife preservation!

TAZ-MANIA (1991–1996)

STUDIO: Warner Brothers

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Jean MacCurdy, Tom Ruegger

PRODUCER: Art Vitello

DIRECTORS INCLUDED: Douglas McCarthy, Lenord Robinson, Art Vitello

WRITERS INCLUDED: Art Vitello, Bill Kopp, Tom Ruegger

VOICE ACTORS: Jim Cummings (Taz/Bush Whacker Bob/Buddy Boar/Wendel Wolf/Others); Miriam Flynn (Jean); Dan Castalleneta (Mr. Thickley); Kellie Martin (Molly); John Astin (Bull Gator); Phil Proctor (Willie Wombat); Maurice LaMarche (Hugh); Rosalyn Landor (Constance); Rob Paulsen (Didgeri Dingo/Axle/Dog the Turtle/Francis X. Bushlad/Others); Debi Derryberry (Jake); Kevin Thudeau and Edward Paulsen (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: The Tazmanian Devil, a whirling dervish of perpetual energy and inarticulate speech, made his first appearance in the 1954 Bugs Bunny cartoon *Devil May Hare*, directed by Robert McKimson. Four more films followed, in which he typically was portrayed as a dim-witted foil for the intelligent Bugs, but the devil soon developed a passionate fan following of his own, if the fact that the Warner Brothers Studio began to receive letters about him is any indication. It was perhaps to exploit this following that the studio eventually granted Taz his own program in the early 1990s, returning him to his native Australia. (Technically, the real devil, not nearly as ferocious, is native only to the island of Tasmania, located just off the southern coast of Australia, but apparently Australia was close enough for the producers.) Here, Taz interacted with his family (who, unlike him, all spoke actual English and behaved like human beings), worked as a bellhop in the hotel run by the short-tempered Bush Whacker Bob, and interacted with actual and would-be friends (Paulsen’s monumentally selfish canine con man Didgeri Dingo was by far the most memorable of these). Though some of the episodes were strongly written, including one that parodied the condescending techniques of some anthropologists in the field, others were not. Thanks to the generosity and support of viewers and its network, the show managed a longer-than-average run for programs of its kind.

***TEACHER'S PET* (2000–2002)**

STUDIO: Disney

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATORS: Gary Baseman, Bill Steinkellner, Cheri Steinkellner

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Gary Baseman, Bill Steinkellner, Cheri Steinkellner, Michael Price

DIRECTORS: Alfred Gimeno, Don MacKinnon, Ennio Toresan Jr., Timothy Bjorklund

WRITERS: Bill Steinkellner, William Coronel, Cade Chilcoat, Cheri Steinkellner, David Maples, Ford Riley, Jess Winfield, Jessie Jones, Jim Patterson, Laura McCreary, Michael Price, Nicholas Hope, Steven Leff

VOICE ACTORS: Shaun Fleming (Leonard Helperman), Nathan Lane (Spot, 2000–2001/Scott Leadready, 2000–2001), Kevin Schon (Spot, 2001–2002/Scott Leadready, 2001–2002), Rob Paulsen (Ian Wasalooskey), Debra Jo Rupp (Mary Lou Helperman), Wallace Shawn (Principal Stickler), David Ogden Stiers (Mr. Jolly), Jerry Stiller (Pretty Boy), Mae Whitman (Leslie), Cree Summer (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: Eight-year-old Leonard Helperman's life is complicated when his dog Spot masquerades as a human being at his school and becomes more popular than he is.

COMMENTARY: Begun with a concept and designs developed by cocreator Baseman, this series was streamlined into a sitcom-style structure by the Steinkellners, veteran live-action sitcom writers and producers. The tension between the design style and the plotting format was always present in the final product, and consequently, the program was not entirely what it could have been, despite a very intriguing premise, some good plots, and effective acting from television animation and live-action sitcom veterans alike (Lane earned an Emmy nomination for his work). A feature-film version of the show was produced in 2004 but bypassed theatrical release in favor of a direct-to-video issue.

***TEAMO SUPREMO* (2002)**

STUDIO: Disney

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Phil Walsh

DIRECTOR: Joe Horne

WRITERS: Phil Walsh, Kevin Campbell, Jason Berlin, Don London, Jack Monaco, Mark Myers, Ford Riley, Rico Gagliano, Scott Sonneborn, Barry Friedman

VOICE ACTORS: Spencer Breslin (Crandall, a.k.a. Captain Crandall); Alanna Ubach (Hector, a.k.a. Skate Lad/Brenda, a.k.a. Rope Girl); Martin Mull (Governor Kevin); Fred Willard (Paulsen); Julia Sweeney (Crandall's Mother); Brian Doyle Murray (Chief); Rachel Crane (Jean); Mark Hamill (Birthday Bandit); Tim Curry (Laser Pirate); Edward Asner (Mr. Large); Maurice LaMarche (Baron Blitz); April Winchell (Hypnotheria); Shelley Bennett (Hippy Chick); James Belushi, Wendie Malick, Michael McKean, Michael J. Pollard, Joe Flaherty, Sydney Walsh, Jeff Bennett, and Jess Harnell (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: Elementary school kids Crandall, Hector, and Brenda masquerade as a trio of superheroes—with surprisingly effective results.

COMMENTARY: If *The Powerpuff Girls* (q.v.) was the champagne of the superheroes-as-kids series format, this program was its equivalent to cheap beer. Like its forerunner, it drew its inspiration chiefly from the live-action *Batman* series from the late 1960s, in terms of flamboyant costuming by both heroes and villains and manic, unrealistic overacting by the latter. However, this series was nowhere near as ambitious or diverse in its plotting, artwork, and filmmaking techniques as *Powerpuff*, and it suffered enormously from the comparison, which might be why it lasted only nine months on the air in original production. The principal assets: Mull's clever portrayal of His Honor the Governor as an ultrahip, cooler-than-thou figure (a sharp contrast to *Powerpuff's* elderly and dim-witted Mayor of Townsville) and the heroes regularly gaining advice from Crandall's older sister Jean, who would repeatedly explain that she knew what to do because "I have to know this stuff if I'm going to be a (fill in the blank) someday."

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES (AND RELATED SERIES)

***Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* (1987, 1990–1996)**

STUDIOS: Murakami-Wolf-Swenson, Fred Wolf, Group W

DISTRIBUTORS: Syndicated (1987), CBS (1990–1996)

CREATORS: Peter Laird, Kevin Eastman

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Mark Freedman

PRODUCERS: Fred Wolf, Walt Kubiak

DIRECTORS: Fred Wolf, Bill Wolf, Walt Kubiak, Tony Love, Bill Hutten, Kent Butterworth, John Kafka, Neal Warner, Ron Myrick, Richard Trueblood, Bob Shellhorn

WRITERS INCLUDED: Bill Wolf, David Wise, Jack Mendelsohn

VOICE ACTORS: Townsend Coleman (Michaelangelo); Cam Clarke (Leonardo); Barry Gordon (Donatello); Rob Paulsen (Raphael); James Avery (Shredder); Patrick Fraley (Krang); Renae Jacobs (April O'Neil); Peter Renaday (Splinter); Jennifer Darling (Irma); Greg Berg, Jim Cummings, Joan Gerber, Dorian Harewood, Tress MacNeille, Nicholas Omana, Thom Pinto, Maggie Roswell, and Beau Weaver (Additional characters)

***Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* (2003–2010)**

STUDIOS: Mirage, 4Kids

DISTRIBUTORS: FOX (2003–2009), CW (2009–2010)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Gary Richardson, Frederick Fierst, Alfred Kahn, Norman Grossfeld, Thomas Kenney

PRODUCER: JoEllyn Marlow

DIRECTORS INCLUDED: Chuck Patton

WRITERS INCLUDED: Eric Luke, Greg Johnson, Marty Isenberg, Michael Ryan

VOICE ACTORS: Frank Frankson (Raphael/Others), Wayne Grayson (Michaelangelo/Others), Sam Riegel (Donatello/Others), Michael Sinterklaas (Leonardo/Others), Veronica Taylor (April O'Neil/Others), Scott Ray (Shredder/

Others), Darren Dunstan (Splinter/Others), Marc Thompson (Casey Jones/Others), Scott Williams (Dr. Baxter Stockman), Greg Carey (Hun), David Mansley (Bishop/Others), Karen Neill (Karai/Tang Shen), Christopher Adams (Cody Jones)

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles (2012–present)

STUDIOS: Lowbar, Mirage, Nickelodeon

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Joshua Sternin, Jeffrey R. Ventimilla, Ciro Nieli, Peter Hastings, Brandon Auman

PRODUCERS: MacGregor Middleton, Christopher Waters, Ant Ward, Patrick Krebs

DIRECTORS INCLUDE: Michael Chang, Alan Wan, Juan Meza Leon, Ciro Nieli, Sebastian Montes, Ben Jones, Rie Koga, Glen Murakami

WRITERS INCLUDE: Joshua Sternin, Jeffrey R. Ventimilla, Jeremy Shipp, Joshua Hamilton, Tom Alvarado, Russ Carney, Ron Corcillo, Kenny Byerly, Jase Ricci, Pete Goldfinger, Brandon Auman, Todd Garfield, Eugene Son, Kevin Burke, Chris “Doc” Wyatt, Thomas Krajewski, Nicole Dubuc, Gavin Highnight, Johnny Hartmann, Mark Henry, Peter Di Cicco, John Shirley, Christopher Yost, Doug Langdale, Henry Gilroy, Randolph Heard, Greg Weisman, Todd Casey, Andrew Robinson, Elliott Casey, Kevin Eastman

VOICE ACTORS: Jason Biggs (Leonardo, early episodes/Rat Man Freak), Dominic Catrabone (Leonardo, later episodes), Seth Green (Leonardo, later episodes/Ninja Commander, later episodes/Captain Reptile), Sean Astin (Raphael), Greg Cipes (Michelangelo/Rodriguez/Lil’ Rineo), Rob Paulsen (Donatello/1980s Raphael/That Other Guy/Sumo Glen/Micro Chip), Hoon Lee (Splinter, a.k.a. Hamato Yoshi/Hamato Yuta), Mae Whitman (April O’Neil/April Derp/Princess/Wizardess), Kelly Hu (Karai, a.k.a. Hamato Miwa), Josh Peck (Casey Jones/Skele-Lord), Corey Feldman (Spike, a.k.a. Slash), Peter Lurie (Leatherhead/Z), A. J. Buckley (Pigeon Pete), Robbie Rist (Mondo Gecko, a.k.a. Jason), Frank Welker (Dr. Tyler Rockwell, nonverbal vocalizations), Tom Kenny (Dr. Tyler Rockwell, speaking voice/Malfidor), Roger Smith (Timothy/Pulverizer/Mutagen Man), Robert Forster (Jack J. Kurtzman), Kevin Eastman (Ice Cream Kitty), Diedrich Bader (Bigfoot), Maurice LaMarche (Attila the Frog/Rasputin the Mad Frog), Jon Heder (Napoleon Bonafrog), Bill Moseley (Bernie), Nolan North (Garson Grunge/Muckman, early episodes/Chrome Dome/Kraang Soldiers/General R’Kavaka/Bishop/Pawn/Commander Grundch/Lunk/Mind Master/Graah/Slug People Leader), Grant Monninger (Garson Grunge/Muckman, later episodes/Joe Eyeball), Ashley Johnson (Renet), Jim Piddock (Lord Simultaenous/Overmind/VX3 Warbots), Minae Noji (Tang Shen/Alopex), David Tennant (Professor Zayton Honeycutt/Fugitoid), Gwendoline Yeo (Shinigami), Daran Norris (Wingnut), Jeff Bennett (Screwloose), Kevin Michael Richardson (Genghis Frog/Shredder, a.k.a. Oroku Saki/Super Shredder/Zombie Shredder/Shiva Shredder/Claw Shredder/Mini Shredder/Commander Zoran/Zarus/General Unsuru/Master C/Fake Master/Destroyo), Eric Bauza (Tiger Claw, a.k.a. Takeshi/Hun/Fulci Twins/Hammer/Ninja Commander, early episodes), Clancy Brown (Chris Bradford/Dog Pound/Rahzar/Neutrino Mercenaries/Lt. Zax), Christian Lanz

(Fishface, a.k.a. Xever Montes), Phil LaMarr (Dr. Baxter Stockman/Stockman Fly), Fred Tatasciore (Rock Steady, a.k.a. Ivan Steranko/Fungus Humungous/Skullface McGillin/Lt. Zorg/Grom), J. B. Smoove (Bebop, a.k.a. Anton Zeck/Grum), Michael Hagiwara (Hattori Tatsu), Roseanne Barr (Kraang Prime, early episodes), Rachel Butera (Kraang Prime, later episodes), Gilbert Gottfried (Kraang Subprime, a.k.a. Knight), Cassandra Peterson (Mrs. Campbell/Queen), Andrew Kishino (Fong/Sid), James Sie (Tsoi), Danny Jacobs (Snake-weed, a.k.a. Snake), Lewis Black (Spider Bytes, a.k.a. Vic), Jeffrey Combs (The Rat King, a.k.a. Dr. Victor Falco), John DiMaggio (Pizza Face, a.k.a. Antonio/Zeno), James Hong (Ho Chan), Jesse Ventura (Finger), Renae Jacobs (Mom Thing/Mrs. O'Neil), Robert Englund (Dire Beaver/Dread Beaver), John Kassir (Dark Beaver/Dave Beaver), Steven Blum (Speed Demon), Brian Bloom (Don Vizioso/Captain Ryan/Captain Dash Coolstar/Cyberoid X/Crognard/Muurg), Graham McTavish (Savanti Romero), Peter Stomare (Lord Vringath Dregg), Dwight Schultz (Wyrml), Ron Perlman (Armaggon), Charlie Murphy (Bellybomb, a.k.a. Vrax Belebome), Patrick Fraley (1980s Krang), Ted Biaselli (Scumbug), Mark Hamill (Kavaxas, a.k.a. Hot Head), Chris Sarandon (Dracula), Lucy Lawless (Hiidrala), Danny Trejo (Newtralizer, a.k.a. K'Vathrak), Keith David (Commander G'Throkka), Zelda Williams (Mona Lisa, a.k.a. Lieutenant Y'Gythgba), Michael Ironside (Emperor Zomorán), Michael Dorn (Mozar/Lt. Zovox), Lance Henriksen (Sgt. Zog), Kate Mulgrew (General Zera), Kate Micucci (Rook), Jim Meskimen (Carlos Gambe/General Griffin/Megalorelord Zarrik), Sab Shimono (Mr. Murakami), Kari Wahlgren (Joan Grody), Cam Clarke (1980s Leonardo), Barry Gordon (1980s Donatello), Townsend Coleman (1980s Michaelangelo), Paul Reubens (Sir Malachi, a.k.a. Martin Milton), John Boyega (Miyamoto Usagi), Scott Menville (Crankshaw/Dr. Blip/Spooch/Crankshaw Jr./Nefrini), Ben Cross (Dr. Mindstrong), Anna Graves (Celestial)

SYNOPSIS: After being mutated by exposure to radioactive waste, four young turtles are trained as ninja warriors by ninja master Splinter, himself mutated into a rat from the same waste.

COMMENTARY: This long-running multimedia franchise was created by Eastman and Laird in 1983 in a comic book series that, after a slow start, rapidly started to catch on, in spite of (or because of) the unique twist it brought on traditional action-adventure narratives. The concept's appeal to young readers was apparent from the start, and with the aid of the Archie Comics Group and Playmates Toys, who offered licensing opportunities in their media, Eastman and Laird toned down the more adult aspects of the original idea to appeal to them. Four years later came the first animation adaptation; in addition to the noted series in this entry, the characters have also appeared in several live-action movies and a live-action television series, which only served to further their appeal.

The first animated version featured the story line noted in the synopsis, but rather than the darker tone adopted by Laird and Eastman, producer Fred Wolf opted for a far lighter one, with even the darker moments undercut with humor and the menace of bad guys Shredder and Krang negated by a hostile (and comical) rivalry between them (Avery and Fraley, along with Paulsen's

scene-stealing portrayal of Raphael, were the highlights of the show's voice cast). April O'Neil, a minor character in the comics, was elevated, as a television journalist, to the closest thing the show had to a female lead and proved a model of resourcefulness in an era when female characters were not expected to be heroic. Other characters from the comics, such as hockey-mask-wearing vigilante Casey Jones and mad-scientist-turned-humanoid-fly Baxter Stockman, were also featured effectively. The program benefitted from the aforementioned humor that made it stand out from the crowd in a market where action-adventure shows were typically devoid of this feature, with many clever inside jokes and breaking-the-fourth-wall references to the audience involved. The program aired successfully in syndication for three years as a half-hour program before, in the wake of the first successful live-action film in 1990, relocating to CBS as an hour program, where it remained for six years; the half-hour edition remained in production during this time. Eventually, however, it came to an end, as well.

The second television animation program, coproduced by Laird and Eastman's production company Mirage, reverted to the more somber edition of the characters the creators had originally envisioned. April O'Neil was back, although this time she was the assistant of Baxter Stockman, until she quit his employ when the man's lack of sanity became evident. The central enemies here were a group called the Purple Dragon Gang, who were as all-business as the rest of the series. Unlike before, neither a wisecrack nor a witty pop-culture reference was to be found.

The 2012 edition was the first entry to be produced in CGI, and it was something of a neither-fish-nor-fowl amalgam of Wolf's lighter approach and the Eastman-Laird team's melodramatic one. Once again, April O'Neil served as female lead; however, this time she was a teenaged half-human/half-alien (as the result of her scientist father having a relationship with one) who possessed formidable mental superpowers. Casey Jones, also a teenager, was her romantic interest, although Donatello was also interested in her romantically. This version of the program, unlike the ones before, featured a much wider variety of villains and supporting characters, as seen in the voice actor credit list, and this created a broader range of story lines for the writers to develop for the characters than their predecessors had. Still, the producers didn't seem to know whether they were supposed to be serious overall, and their confusion was reflected in the final product. For its final season, the program's name was changed to *Tales of the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*; a projected successor program to this series is slated to be launched soon under the title *Rise of the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*.

TEEN TITANS/TEEN TITANS GO!

Teen Titans (2003–2006)

STUDIOS: Warner Brothers, DC Comics

DISTRIBUTOR: WB

CREATORS: Bob Haney and Bruno Premiani (original comic book format); Glen Murakami (television animation series format)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Sander Schwartz, Sam Register, Tramm Wigzell, Todd Casey

PRODUCERS: Glen Murakami, Linda Steiner, Bruce Timm

DIRECTORS: Michael Chang, Alex Soto, Ciro Nieli, Ben Jones, Christopher Berkeley, Matt Youngberg, Bob Kane

WRITERS: Rob Hoegee, Amy Wolfram, David Slack, Adam Beechen, Greg Klein, Tom Pugsley, Rick Copp, Marv Wolfman, Dwayne McDuffie, John Esposito, Richard Elliott, Simon Racioppa, Louis Hirshorn, Joelle Sellner, Melody Fox, George Perez

VOICE ACTORS: Scott Menville (Robin), Greg Cipes (Beast Boy), Khary Payton (Cyborg), Hynden Walch (Starfire/Blackfire), Tara Strong (Raven), Ron Perlman (Slade the Terminator), Rino Romano (Koi), David Sobolov (Cron), Dave Coulier (Tramm), Wil Wheaton (Aqualad), Lauren Tom (Gizmo/Jinx), Kevin Michael Richardson (Mammoth/See-More/Trigon), Andrea Romano (Headmistress), Freddy Rodriguez (Mas/Menos), Mike Erwin (Speedy), John DiMaggio (Brother Blood), Alexander Polinsky (Control Freak), Rodger Bumpass (Dr. Light), Thomas Haden Church (Killer Moth, early episodes), Marc Worden (Killer Moth, later episodes), Ashley Johnson (Terra), Glenn Shadix (Brain), Jason Marsden (Billy Numerous), Billie Hayes (Mother May-Aye), Tom Kenny (Mumbo), Dee Bradley Baker (Silkie)

***Teen Titans Go!* (2013–present)**

STUDIOS: Warner Brothers, DC Comics

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATORS: Aaron Horvath and Michael Jelenic (series format)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Sam Register, Jeff Prezenkowski, Christina Reynolds, Tramm Wigzell

PRODUCERS: Aaron Horvath, Michael Jelenic, Peter Michail

DIRECTORS INCLUDE: Luke Cormican, Peter Michail, Scott O'Brien, Aaron Horvath, Jeff Mednikow, James Krenzke, Noel Belknap, Bryan Newton, Dave Stone, Ed Skudder, Lynn Wang

WRITERS INCLUDE: Aaron Horvath, Will Friedle, Tab Murphy, Tom Pugsley, Steve Borst, Sholly Fisch, Amy Wolfram, Michael Jelenic, Adam Stein, Adam Beechen, Paul Giacoppo, Michael Ryan, Eric Rogers, J. M. DeMatteis, John Loy, Merrill Hagan, Jeff Mednikow, James Krieg, Sean Kreiner, Guy Stevenson, Adam Tierney, Justin Becker, Ben Joseph, Miles Hindman, Derek Iversen, Marly Glaser, Caldwell Tanner, Ben Gruber, Josephine Campbell, Emily Brundige, Christopher Gentile, Luke Cormican, Peter Michail, Brady Klosterman, Chad Quandt, Aaron Waltke, Jacqueline Melville, Rob Hoegee

VOICE ACTORS: Scott Menville (Robin/Speedy/Dr. Light, later episodes/Killer Moth/Brain/Billy Numerous/Pain Bot/Bird-a-Rang/Detective Chimp), Hynden Walch (Starfire/Blackfire), Greg Cipes (Beast Boy), Tara Strong (Raven/Jayna/Silkie/Batgirl), Khary Payton (Cyborg/Zan/Couch Spirit/Universe Tree/Batman), Wil Wheaton (Aqualad), Freddy Rodriguez (Mas/Menos), John DiMaggio (Brother Blood), Alexander Polinsky (Control Freak), Rodger Bumpass (Dr. Light, early episodes), Ashley Johnson (Terra), Lauren Tom (Gizmo/Jinx), Kevin Michael Richardson (Mammoth/See-More/Trigon),



Teens and Titans—though sometimes they'd rather be one than the other. Warner Home Video/Photofest © Warner Home Video

Pamela Segall Adlon (Ravager), Billie Hayes (Mother May-Aye), Tom Kenny (Mumbo), "Weird" Al Yankovic (Darkseid)

SYNOPSIS: From their headquarters in Titans Towers, the heroic Teen Titans fight evil in all of its forms—some of the time.

COMMENTARY: Originally, this franchise was developed by DC to showcase the young sidekicks of the main attraction heroes (such as Robin, the Boy Wonder, who has remained the one constant member) in their own adventures. In its original incarnation, it had expired by the 1970s but was revived with spectacular success in the 1980s by writers Marv Wolfman and George Perez. It was this version of the group that were properly the stars of these two animated adaptations, with Wolfman and Perez fittingly involved in the writing of the first one.

The Titans were presented first as tragedy in the 2000s and then as farce in the 2010s. The original version was the superior one, combining the Warner Brothers Studio's by-now standard handsome animation with some skilled writing and acting. Each season of the program emphasized the difficulties one member of the team (Starfire excepted) was having with their life, powers, and moral expectations, which gave the program an ongoing dra-

matic strength on the occasions when the more comic and campy elements seemed to outweigh the main narrative. (A feature-film length episode, *Trouble in Tokyo*, aired after the series proper ended).

However, this was not the case when the program was revived. Despite the involvement of much of the on- and off-screen personnel from the previous series, this version was incredibly different from its predecessor. Shorter in length (15 minutes as opposed to a half-hour), *Teen Titans Go* emphasized the *Teen* over the *Titans*. Rather than engaging in epic good-and-evil battles, this incarnation of the group seemed much more interested in avoiding doing so as much as possible, so this version of the show instead focused on very narrow comedic personality conflicts between them. The fast-paced, anime-like production style didn't help matters; it simply made them worse. A heavily publicized crossover episode with the revival of *The Powerpuff Girls* (q.v.) indicates to the greatest degree how both of these formerly well-produced television animation series had been effortlessly and shamefully debased creatively by those purporting to have their best interests as fictional properties at heart.

TEEN WOLF (1986–1989)

STUDIOS: Southern Star, Hanna-Barbera Australia, Kushner-Locke, Clubhouse, Atlantic

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

PRODUCERS: Buzz Potamkin, Jonathan Dana, Gordon Kent

DIRECTORS: Gordon Kent, Jon McClenahan, Darrell Van Citters

WRITERS INCLUDED: Buzz Dixon

VOICE ACTORS: Townsend Coleman (Scott Howard); Jeannie Elias (Boof); June Foray (Grandma Howard/Mrs. Sesslick); Stacy Keach Sr. (Grandpa Howard); James Hampton (Harold Howard); Donny Most (Stiles); Craig Schaffer (Mick); Will Ryan (Chuck); Sheryl Bernstein, Ellen Gerstell, Mona Marshall, and Frank Welker (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: Scott Howard keeps his identity as a lycanthrope secret unless circumstances cause him to convert into a human-like wolf.

COMMENTARY: Based (with some concept tweaking) on the 1985 live-action feature film, in which Michael J. Fox played the title role. In the film, only Scott and his father, Harold, were lycanthropes, whereas in the series, Scott's grandparents were also werewolves, and Scott's sister, Lupe, was well on the way to assuming the condition later in life. Similarly, Scott's condition was an open secret in the movie, whereas it actually was a secret in the series. Despite the limited premise, the producers did what they could with the material. A later sequel to the film, not involving Fox, was as much a failure financially as the original film had been a success. The concept has since been successfully revived as a recent live-action series.

TELE-COMICS/NBC COMICS

***Tele-Comics* (1949)**

STUDIO: Vallee Video

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Bob Bruce, Howard McNear, Pat McGeehan, and Lurene Tuttle
(Specific roles unknown)

NBC Comics (1950–1951)

STUDIO: Vallee Video

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Bob Bruce, Howard McNear, Pat McGeehan, and Lurene Tuttle
(Specific roles unknown)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: Unquestionably the most obscure program included in this book, given its age and its current lack of circulation outside of private collections. Consisting of segments of an average of three minutes in length, the format resembled that of newspaper comic strips, albeit with extremely limited camera movement. Featured in the syndicated version were *Brother Goose*; *Joey and Jug*; *Rick Rack*, *Secret Agent*; and *Su Lah*; the slightly better-known network version featured *Johnny and Mr. Do-Right*, *Danny March*, *Kid Champion*, and *Space Barton*. After the NBC run, the program returned to syndication until the mid-1950s, sometimes as its own program, other times as a filler segment for others. The advent of color television animation production reduced the value of this black-and-white program and others of its kind, with the result being their almost complete withdrawal from circulation.

TENKO AND THE GUARDIANS OF THE MAGIC (1995)

STUDIOS: Saban, Tour de Force

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Joel Andryc, Eric Rollman

PRODUCERS: Beth Gunn, Roger Slifer

DIRECTORS: Erik Peterson, Maxwell Beechraft, Brad Case, Joan Case, Consuela Cataldi, Rudy Cataldi, Jong Gil Kim, Tom McLaughlin, Marcus Myrick, Bill Reed

WRITERS INCLUDED: Roger Slifer, Don Manuel

VOICE ACTORS: Mary Kay Bergman (Princess Tenko); Thomas Lee, Webster King, Robbie Matthews, Michelle Alberts, Sofia Coleman, Derek Patrick, Gloria Bell, Michael Sorich, and Pearl Sutton (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: An animated vehicle for Japanese magician Princess Tenko (née Marie Akase), who had been a popular performer in her native country since the 1980s and later elsewhere. One of the few popular female figures in the modern field of prestidigitation, Tenko combined awe-inspiring illusions aimed at young children with sexual appeal aimed at adults. This program took aspects of Tenko's actual life and career and combined them with animation-based exaggeration—the latter was reflected in her being part of a group protecting the mystical gems that held the balance between good and evil in the universe. The genuine article appeared in live-action closing segments demonstrating magic tricks, with a regular warning to *not* attempt to re-create the illusions at home. The whole affair, as was now common for

syndicated series of this ilk, was tied in to a line of toys and dolls featuring Tenko as the star.

TENNESSEE TUXEDO AND HIS TALES (1963–1966)

STUDIOS: TOTAL Television, Leonardo

DISTRIBUTORS: CBS (1963–1966), ABC (1966)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Treadwell Covington, Peter Piech

PRODUCERS/WRITERS: Buck Biggers, Chet Stover

DIRECTORS: Pete Dakis, Sal Falliace, Lou Guarnier, Bob Schleh

VOICE ACTORS: Don Adams (Tennessee Tuxedo); Bradley Bolke (Chumley); Larry Storch (Mr. Whoopee); Kenny Delmar (Yak/Baldy/Commander McBragg); Jackson Beck, Ben Stone, Allen Swift, Delo States, Norman Rose, Mort Marshall, and George Irving (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: A TOTAL Television package whose central component was correctly identified as a pioneering educational feature. The title character (a penguin) and his associate Chumley (a walrus) were residents of the Megopolis Zoo, operated by one Stanley Livingston, and repeatedly turned to Mr. Whoopee (a vocal caricature of character actor Frank Morgan) for advice. Mr. Whoopee would comply with the aid of his three-dimensional blackboard, a collapsible and portable item that anticipated the similarly portable technology of the 21st century. Other supporting characters in the feature were a yak named Yak; an eagle named Baldy; and Livingston's henchman, very obviously named Flunky. The majority of the supporting components were culled from the same team's earlier *King Leonardo and His Short Subjects* (q.v.). The one other newly produced feature was *The World of Commander McBragg*, which featured an enormously long-winded British military officer (drawn as a caricature of British character actor C. Aubrey Smith, who was perennially typecast in those sorts of roles) telling a rather disinterested friend about one of his past exploits.

THESE ARE THE DAYS (1974–1976)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera, Iwao Takamoto

DIRECTOR: Charles Nichols

WRITERS INCLUDED: Myles Wilder, Ed Jurist

VOICE ACTORS: June Lockhart (Martha Day), Pamelyn Ferdin (Kay Day), Jackie Earle Haley (Danny Day), Henry Jones (Grandpa Jeff Day), Andrew Parks (Ben Day), Frank Cady (Homer)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: An animated program cast in the mold of the popular live-action series *The Waltons*, though set in an earlier time period. The nostalgic setting of the show's model remained in place, with an emphasis much more on gentle storytelling than comedy, as exemplified the absence of any funny animals in the cast. The second season of the program consisted entirely of reruns.

THINK PINK PANTHER! (1978)

See *The Pink Panther* (and related series).

THE THIRTEEN GHOSTS OF SCOOBY DOO (1985–1986)

See *Scooby Doo, Where Are You?* (and related series).

THIS IS AMERICA, CHARLIE BROWN (1988)

STUDIOS: Mendelson-Melendez, Charles Schulz, United Media

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATOR: Charles M. Schulz

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Lee Mendelson, Bill Melendez

DIRECTOR: Sam Jaimes

WRITERS: Charles M. Schulz, Lee Mendelson

VOICE ACTORS: Erin Chase (Charlie Brown, early episodes), Jason Rifle (Charlie Brown, later episodes), Ami Foster (Lucy, early episodes), Eric Gayle (Lucy, later episodes), Jeremy Miller (Linus, early episodes), Brandon Stewart (Linus, later episodes), Christina Lange (Sally, early episodes), Brittany Thornton (Sally, later episodes), Jason Mendelson (Peppermint Patty), Curtis Anderson (Schroeder), Keri Houlihan (Marcie, early episodes), Marie Wise (Marcie, later episodes), Tani Powers (Marcie, later episodes), Hakeem Samad (Franklin, early episodes), Grant Gelt (Franklin, later episodes)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: The second television animation series go-round for the cast of *Peanuts*, after the earlier *Charlie Brown and Snoopy Show* (q.v.). This eight-episode project had education on its mind, as in the show's cast appeared during crucial moments in American history. The programs were well-assembled, in the tradition of the production team, with the characters behaving in the historical settings as they would otherwise and the historical material presented subtly without condescension. After its initial run, it was rerun in its entirety in subsequent years on its original network. The series was tied in to "Read More about It," an educational project operated by CBS in conjunction with American libraries.

THIS JUST IN (2004–2005)

STUDIO: Nickelodeon

DISTRIBUTOR: Spike

CREATORS/EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Steve Marmel, Kevin Kay

PRODUCER: Irene Sherman

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS: Steve Marmel, Jeff Rothpan

VOICE ACTORS: Steve Marmel (Brian Newport), Phil Morris (Jimmy Townhouse), Peter MacNicol (Craig Tindle), Rudy Moreno (Henry), Alex Meneses (Sam), Gwendoline Yeo (Hu Tindle)

SYNOPSIS: Conservative journalist Brian Newport is perturbed by the increasing liberalization (as he sees it) of the world, as represented by his friends and colleagues.

COMMENTARY: A rare attempt to present a conservative political figure as a human being and not a caricature, as was creator/producer/writer/star Marmel's stated intention. The idea was interesting, but unfortunately, the producers chose to focus far too much on easily dated contemporary humor for source material, to its detriment, and the show has been seen only rarely after its original airdate as a consequence.

THE THREE ROBONIC STOOGES (1978–1981)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

DIRECTOR: Charles Nichols

WRITER: Norman Maurer

VOICE ACTORS: Paul Winchell (Moe), Frank Welker (Curly), Joe Baker (Larry), Ross Martin (Triple Zero)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: The second attempt to animate the legendary live-action comedy trio the Three Stooges, after the eponymous earlier *The New Three Stooges* (q.v.). In this incarnation, the Stooges were now superpowered bionic men (after the fashion of the popular *Six Million Dollar Man* series), acting as globetrotting secret agents answering to spymaster Triple Zero. In exploits written by Maurer (son-in-law of the late Moe Howard), their adventures ranged from being grafted into James Bond-style stories to confronting the giant of "Jack and the Beanstalk" fame. The segment had originated as part of the live-action/animation combo series *The Skatebirds* but was spun off into its own series when it proved to be more popular than the rest of the show; reruns of *The Clue Club* (q.v.), retitled *Woofers and Wimpy, Dog Detectives*, were used to pad the series out to a half-hour.

3-SOUTH (2002)

STUDIOS: MTV, Warner Brothers

DISTRIBUTOR: MTV

CREATOR/DIRECTOR: Mark Hentemann

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Mark Hentemann, Bill Freiberger

PRODUCERS: Kara Vallow, Steve Callaghan

WRITERS: Alan Cross, Bill Freiberger, Dave Jeser, Dave Lewman, James Venable, Joe Liss, Mark Hentemann, Matt Silverstein, Pat Pujolas, Paul Fories, Reid Harrison, Steve Callaghan, Eric Sommers, Erik Flesher

VOICE ACTORS: Brian Dunkelson (Sanford Riley); Brian Posehn (Del Swanson/Todd); Mark Hentemann (Joe); Kathleen Wilhoite (Cindy); Jeffrey Tambor (Dean Erhardt); Lori Alan, Rodger Bumpass, Tom Kenny, Joel Murray, and Eliza Schneider (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: The adventures of freshmen college students Sanford Riley and Del Swanson at low-market Barder College.

COMMENTARY: A fairly straightforward satire of American college campus life, best appreciated by those who had actually gone through the process of being university students in contemporary America. The unique animation style

resembled crude drawings drawn by children—which was mirrored in the equally crude tone maintained by the show's writers.

THUNDARR THE BARBARIAN (1980–1982)

STUDIO: Ruby-Spears

DISTRIBUTORS: ABC (1980–1982), CBS (1983–1984)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Joe Ruby, Ken Spears

PRODUCER: Jerry Eisenberg

DIRECTORS: Rudy Larriva, Charles Nichols, John Kimball, Bill Reed

WRITERS: Buzz Dixon, Mark Evanier, Steve Gerber, Martin Pasko, Ted Pedersen, Christopher Vane, Jeffrey Scott, Ray Thomas

VOICE ACTORS: Robert Ridgely (Thundarr); Nellie Bellflower (Princess Ariel); Henry Corden (Ookla); Rachel Baker, Marilyn Schreffler, Julie McWhirter, Joan Van Ark, Keye Luke, Stacy Keach Sr., Alan Dinehart, Shepard Menken, and Alan Oppenheimer (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: Two thousand years after a comet destroyed the original civilization of Earth, Thundarr, an ex-slave of the new totalitarian regime that has emerged, engages in adventures with his companions, the sorceress Princess Ariel and the lionlike mutant Ookla the Mok.

COMMENTARY: While it had an innovative concept and some salient points about how fragile a concept history really is, this series more often squandered its good production values in pointless displays of violence, particularly in the climaxes. Notably, Thundarr was aided in his fights not only by his physical strength but also through possession of a Sun Sword that gave him supernatural abilities. This sort of weapon would also be used to good effect later in *He-Man and the Masters of the Universe* (q.v.), *She-Ra: Princess of Power* (q.v.), and *Thundercats* (q.v.)

THUNDERCATS (1985)

STUDIOS: Rankin/Bass, Lorimar-Telepictures

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Arthur Rankin Jr., Jules Bass

PRODUCER: Lee Dannacher

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS INCLUDED: Leonard Starr

VOICE ACTORS: Bob McFadden (Snarf/S-S-Slithe), Earl Hammond (Mumm-Ra/Vultureman/Jaga), Larry Kenney (Lion-O/Jackalman), Lynne Lipton (Cheetara/Wilykit), Peter Newman (Wilykat/Monkian/Ben-Gali/Tyra), Earle Hyman (Panthro), Gerianne Raphael (Pumyra), Doug Preis (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: The Thundercats, exiles from the planet ThunDERa [*sic*], protect the world of Third Earth from the evil Mumm-Ra and his associates.

COMMENTARY: An undisguised effort to flog merchandise, given how poorly it was constructed as a work of animation on its own. The show was very much cast in the superior shadow of *He-Man and the Masters of the Universe* (q.v.), despite predating that program in development. Nevertheless, it did success-

fully flog the aforementioned merchandise, and no one asked any more of it for precisely that reason.

THE TICK (1994–1997)

STUDIOS: Akom, Graz, Sunbow

DISTRIBUTORS: FOX (1994–1997), Comedy Central (1996–1997)

CREATOR: Ben Edlund

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Nina Hahn, Joe Bacal, Stephanie Graziano, Tom Griffin, C. J. Kettler, Carole Weitzman

PRODUCERS: Ben Edlund, Dan Thompson, Art Vitello

DIRECTORS: Art Vitello, Hank Tucker

WRITERS: Ben Edlund, Henry Gilroy, Randolph Heard, Richard Liebmann Smith, Christopher McCullough, Ralph Soll, Jed Spingarn, Andy Yerkes, Art Vitello

VOICE ACTORS: Townsend Coleman (The Tick), Micky Dolenz (Arthur, early episodes), Rob Paulsen (Arthur, later episodes), Jess Harnell (Speak/Sewer Urchin), Cam Clarke (Die Fleidermaus), Jim Cummings (Mr. Mental/Multiple Santa), Dorian Harewood (Taft), Maurice LaMarche (Deadly Bulb/Mr. Smartypants/Thrakozog), Kay Lenz (American Maid), Kimmy Robertson (Dot), Susan Silo (Judge Janet), Jennifer Hale (Carmelita Vatos), Martin Jarvis (Breadmaster), Tony Jay (Chairface Chippendale)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: First published in 1985, Ben Edlund's underground comic *The Tick* was a clever parody of some of the worst excesses of comic book superheroics. The feature's strong emphasis on both verbal and visual humor made it a good candidate for television animation adaptation, and this happened in the early 1990s, with Edlund himself strongly involved in the producing, writing, and storyboarding of the series. The title character was an extremely powerful but also immensely stupid figure who was prone to speak with hyperbole; his sidekick (and roommate) was Arthur, a shy, incompetent erstwhile accountant dressed in what he claimed was a moth suit, with goggles to serve as a further disguise. The two of them, accompanied often by such "heroic" colleagues as Der Fleidermaus and American Maid, frequently went off looking for evil to fight, although more often than not, it found them, in very unlikely ways. The villains were cast very much in the same exaggerated mode as the heroes (Chairface Chippendale, for example, lived up to his name by actually having a chair where his head should have been). The extremely funny and satiric scripts mocked every kind of superhero figure and superhero plot imaginable, including those repeatedly used by the inferior television animation models that had preceded them, while also suggesting, though more humorously than other shows had, that being a superhero was as much a curse as a blessing in trying to live a normal life. By breaking ground as both a serious and a comic superhero program, *The Tick* clearly laid the groundwork for other superhero shows that played it both ways successfully, such as *The Powerpuff Girls* (q.v.).

The show was popular enough on FOX to merit a stint on Comedy Central, as noted in the credits, with new episodes produced specifically for that market. Unfortunately, a later attempt by FOX to revive the project



Making it safe for superheroes to be idiots. Fox/Photofest © Fox

in live action was a failure both creatively and commercially, lasting only for a very short time on the air. Amazon Prime has now launched a second live-action adaptation.

TIME SQUAD (2001)

STUDIO: Cartoon Network

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATOR/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER/DIRECTOR/WRITER: Dave Wasson

PRODUCERS: Victoria McCollum, Brian Miller

VOICE ACTORS: Rob Paulsen (Officer Buck Tuddrussell), Mark Hamill (Larry 3000), Pamela Segall Adlon (Otto Osworth), Mari Weiss (Officer Sheila Sternwell), Daran Norris (XJ5)

SYNOPSIS: A special group of soldiers from the Utopian year A.D. 100,000,000 is charged with making sure the events of the past occur as planned.

COMMENTARY: This might seem like an interesting idea—if you overlook the fact that *Peabody's Improbable History* on *Rocky and His Friends/The Bullwinkle Show* (q.v.) had done the concept better played for laughs, and such authors as Poul Anderson and Isaac Asimov had done the concept straight better a long time before. Though some of the ideas presented seemed funny on paper (e.g., Beethoven wanting to be a professional wrestler and Albert Einstein a used-car salesman), the execution by creator Wasson was somewhat off-kilter, despite his use of a rare Eastern-European-influenced drawing style. Also, like other projects of this kind, the program ran the risk of gaining (and did achieve) the wrath of those who actually practice historical research for a living.

TIMOTHY GOES TO SCHOOL (2000)

STUDIOS: Nelvana, Animation Services Hong Kong, Silver Lining

DISTRIBUTOR: PBS

CREATOR: Rosemary Wells

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Clive Smith, Diana Manson, Michael Hirsh, Patrick Loubert, Steven Ching, Tina Peel

PRODUCERS: Jocelyn Hamilton, Patricia Burns, Ruta Cube, Stephen Hodgins, Lan Lamon

DIRECTOR: Gary Hurst

WRITERS: Allan Parker, Andrea Robbins, Brian Pohlman, Dan Nosella, Dave Smith, Jerry Beninger, Karen Moonah, Kathy Paulin Longhead, Mitch Manzer, Patricia Lewis MacDougall, Ray Jafelice, Stephanie Gignac, Steve Remen

VOICE ACTORS: Austin Diullio (Timothy), Fiona Reid (Mrs. Jenkins), Lisa Yamanaka (Yoko), Tracy Ryan (Doris), Alyson Court (Nora), Laurie Elliott (Fritz), Mag Ruffman (Lily), Max Morrow (Charles), Linda Kash (Grace), Joanne Vanicola (Claude), Jamie Walson (Henry)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: Based on a book series by Wells, also the creator of *Max and Ruby* (q.v.), this educational program involved the title character, a five-year-old anthropomorphic raccoon, beginning his matriculation in kindergarten at Hilltop School. The students and teacher, Mrs. Jenkins, were

also anthropomorphic. The emphasis was on both the children at Hilltop and those watching at home learning prosocial values. Creator Wells was happy that the animated series based on her work aired on PBS as opposed to more commercial venues, which she considered to be far more “toxic.”

TINY TOON ADVENTURES (A.K.A. *STEVEN SPIELBERG PRESENTS TINY TOON ADVENTURES*; 1990–1998)

STUDIOS: Amblin, Warner Brothers

DISTRIBUTORS: Syndicated (1990), FOX (1992–1995), WB (1995–1998)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Steven Spielberg

PRODUCERS: Tom Ruegger, Alfred Gimeno

DIRECTORS: Glen Kennedy, Dave Marshall, Ken Boyer, Rich Arons, Art Vitello, Rich Arons, Art Leonardi, Eddie Fitzgerald, Kent Butterworth, “Alan Smithee,” Gerald Baldwin, Barry Caldwell, Norman McCabe, Byron Vaughns, Alfred Gimeno, David West, Jon McClenahan, Tony Craig, Greg Reyna, Michael Gerard, Rusty Mills

WRITERS: Paul Dini, Sherri Stoner, Tom Minton, Gordon Bressack, Charles Howell IV, Jim Reardon, Stephen Langford, Len Janson, Wayne Kaatz, Dale Hale, Rowby Goren, Don Dougherty, Tom Ruegger, Pamela Hickey, Dennis McCoy, Richard Mueller, Pat Allee, Ben Hurst, Nicholas Hollander, Eddie Fitzgerald, Michael Reaves, Bob Carrau, Sheryl Scarborough, Kayte Kuch, Stephen Hibbert, Chuck Menville, Grant Moran, Barry Caldwell, Chris Otsuki, Earl Kress, Beth Bornstein, Art Vitello, Bruce Timm, Douglas McCarthy, David Cohen, Roger Schulman, Buzz Dixon, Debra Blanchard, Therese Naugle, Kent Zbornak, Mike Kazaleh, Maurice Noble, Gordon Kent, Arleen Sorkin, Beth Milstein, M. D. Sweeney, Mark Saraceni, Renee Carter, Sarah Creef, Amy Crosby, Kevin Frank, Deanna Oliver, John McCann, George McGrath, Charlie Adler, Garin Wolf, Peter Hastings, Paul Rugg

VOICE ACTORS: Charlie Adler (Buster Bunny, early episodes/Others); John Kassir (Buster Bunny, later episodes/Others); Tress MacNeille (Babs Bunny/Others); Joe Alaskey (Plucky Duck/Others); Danny Cooksey (Montana Max); Maurice LaMarche (Dizzy Devil/Others); Gail Matthius (Shirley Loon/Others); Don Messick (Hamton Pig/Others); Kath Soucie (Fifi Le Fume/Lil’ Sneezer/Others); Frank Welker (Calamity Coyote/Furball/Go-Go/Dodo/Little Beeper/Others); Rob Paulsen (Blinky/Arnold/Fowlmouth/Others); Candi Milo (Sweetie); Cree Summer (Elmyra Duff/Others); Jeff Altman, Orson Bean, Michael Bell, Jeff Bennett, Bob Bergen, Jeff Bergman, Stephen Bishop, Noel Blanc, Casey Kasem, Susan Blu, Valri Bromfield, Julie Brown, Rodger Bumpass, Greg Burson, Pat Buttram, Hamilton Camp, Dan Castalleneta, Jim Cummings, Tim Curry, Louise DuArt, Patrick Fraley, Stan Freberg, Matt Frewer, June Foray, Ben Ganger, Danny Gans, Joan Gerber, Philip Glasser, Desiree Goyette, Edan Gross, Phil Hartman, Whitby Hereford, John Hillner, Carol Kane, Jim MacGeorge, James Mates, Edie McClurg, Cindy McGee, Brian Stokes Mitchell, Robert Morse, Vincent Price, Clive Revill, Andrea Romano, Roger Rose, Maggie Roswell, Nathan Ruegger, Fran Ryan, Jean Smart, Steven Spielberg, Sally Struthers, B. J.

Ward, Lennie Weinrib, Vernee Watson, Jonathan Winters, and Henny Youngman (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: The various adventures of the denizens of Acme Acres, as they study the art and science of being cartoon characters at Acme Looniversity.

COMMENTARY: While many television animation programs have openly modeled themselves on the classic Warner Brothers *Looney Tunes* and *Merrie Melodies* made between the 1930s and 1960s, the majority of them have failed to accurately produce a comparably enjoyable viewing experience. This consistently marvelous and entertaining program was one of the few of that kind that succeeded in its aims, and by a wide margin. It did so not by slavishly trying to reproduce the humor of a bygone era, as other imitators tried and failed to do, but by felicitously adapting its predecessor's production model to a new medium; a new mode of production; and, most importantly, a new era, with entirely new settings and characters to go along with it. In the process, it launched Warner Brothers, which previously had little or no original television animation identity, as a major contender in the business, as well as launching or furthering the careers of animators, producers, directors, writers, and actors who, collectively, would go on to expand television animation in forthcoming decades.

Executive producer Spielberg had originally brought the concept to Warner's door to possibly be produced as a feature film but was persuaded that it would work better as a series. He then recruited veteran television animation writer/producer Ruegger to develop it, and quickly, a diverse cast and setting came into existence. The per-episode budgets were much higher than other programs of the time, and it utilized far more celluloid drawings per frame than they as well (25 versus an average of 12), which contributed to a very slick and well-moving final product. Once produced and distributed, the program was an immediate commercial hit and a critical one, as well, going on to win multiple Emmy Awards over the course of its lengthy existence.

Like their forebearers at the original Warner Brothers Studio, the directors and writers of this program were not afraid to take chances with their material and were bold enough not to stick with a repetitive, locked-in format for the series, instead making nearly every episode a unique viewing experience in and of itself. Not many other series of the time, for example, would have done a full-episode parody of *Citizen Kane*, nor would it have executed the many other popular culture parodies it featured with the verve and style that it did. It helped immensely that the program's leading characters were portrayed as such charming, attractive, and consistently amusing figures (MacNeille's brilliant, groundbreaking performance as Babs stood out considerably here) and that even the most minor of supporting figures held some measure of appeal for viewers. As a consequence, the success of the program was greatly deserved, considering the amount of effort and thought clearly put into it.

When the program's original syndication run ended in 1992, it was immediately shifted to a network slot, first on FOX and then on the WB, with

new material produced for those markets, with equal success. Though some of the more topical material is dated, it remains a clever and well-produced program in all respects and a forerunner of many equally brilliant comedy shows to come in television animation history—most obviously, its immediate successor, *Animaniacs* (q.v.).

TOAD PATROL (2002)

STUDIOS: Toadbag, AKOM, Vision, Universal

DISTRIBUTOR: Disney (United States)

CREATOR: George Sarson

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Curtis Crawford, George Sarson, Peggy Sarson, Frank Shin, Nelson Shin, Frank Taylor, Jack Wilson

PRODUCER: Rick Morrison

DIRECTORS: Jerry Popowich, Nelson Shin

WRITERS INCLUDED: Kervin Faria, Clive Endensky

VOICE ACTORS: "Long" John Baldry (Mistletoad); Sonja Ball (Beauty Stem/Panther Cap); Kate Hurman (Hera the Outsider); Rick Jones (Erebus); Ann Leger (Daphne); Bryn McAuley (Oyster); Michael O'Reilly (Earthstar); Terrence Scammell (Puffball); Lorraine Ansell, Jack Eyamie, Dawn Ford, John Koensgen, Sylvain Landry, Liz McRae, Norman Mikael Berketa, Brady Moffatt, Nancy Neilson, Neil Shee, and Ross Wilson (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: A group of young toads, having missed the chance to participate in the Great Migration by being born too late, travel through the Great Forest in the hope of being reunited with their families and contemporaries.

COMMENTARY: Based on a popular series of books by Sarson and scrupulously designed and presented to resemble its source in every respect, with plots and dialogue to match. This Canadian-American coproduction was one of the few non-Disney series to be successfully aired on one of that company's cable channels.

TODD McFARLANE'S SPAWN (1997–1999)

See *Spawn* (a.k.a. *Todd McFarlane's Spawn*; 1997–1999).

TODDWORLD (2004–2008)

STUDIOS: Mike Young, L and G Creative Resources, Discovery Kids, Taffy

DISTRIBUTORS: TLC, Discovery Kids

CREATOR: Todd Parr

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Mike Young

PRODUCER: Marie Cecchino Brand

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Ryan Hirkida (Todd), Peter Kelamis (Pickle), Maggie O'Hara (Stella), Chantal Strand (Sophie), Doron Bell (Benny), Shirley Millner (Mitzi)

SYNOPSIS: A young boy with an active imagination interacts with his human and animal friends.

COMMENTARY: This multiple-nation production was an educational series based on the work of best-selling children's book author Parr (*The Mommy Book*,

The Earth Book, The Feel Good Book, etc.), whose distinctive simplistic drawing style resembles that of the first drawings produced by many children, which no doubt added to their appeal. Little needed to be changed to adapt Parr's direct and noncondescending storytelling style to animation, and therefore, the series served as both an extension of Parr's brand into animated media and an effective introduction to his work and style for those not already familiar with them.

TOM AND JERRY (AND RELATED SERIES)

The Tom and Jerry/Grape Ape Show (1975–1976)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATORS: William Hanna and Joseph Barbera (*Tom and Jerry*)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCER: Iwao Takamoto

DIRECTOR: Charles Nichols

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Marty Ingels (Beagle Beagle); Bob Holt (Grape Ape); Don Messick (Mumbly); John Stephenson (Schnooker/Others); Henry Corden, Joan Gerber, Bob Hastings, Virginia Gregg, Kathy Gori, Alan Oppenheimer, Allan Melvin, Hal Smith, Joe E. Ross, Jean Vander Pyl, Janet Waldo, Lurene Tuttle, Paul Winchell, Frank Welker, and Lennie Weinrib (Additional characters)

The Tom and Jerry/Grape Ape/Mumbly Show (1976)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATORS: William Hanna and Joseph Barbera (*Tom and Jerry*)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCER: Iwao Takamoto

DIRECTOR: Charles Nichols

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Marty Ingels (Beagle Beagle); Bob Holt (Grape Ape); Don Messick (Mumbly); John Stephenson (Schnooker/Others); Henry Corden, Joan Gerber, Bob Hastings, Virginia Gregg, Kathy Gori, Alan Oppenheimer, Allan Melvin, Hal Smith, Joe E. Ross, Jean Vander Pyl, Janet Waldo, Lurene Tuttle, Paul Winchell, Frank Welker, and Lennie Weinrib (Additional characters)

The Tom and Jerry/Mumbly Show (1976–1977)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATORS: William Hanna and Joseph Barbera (*Tom and Jerry*)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCER: Iwao Takamoto

DIRECTOR: Charles Nichols

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Marty Ingels (Beagle Beagle); Bob Holt (Grape Ape); Don Messick (Mumbly); John Stephenson (Schnooker/Others); Henry Corden, Joan Gerber,

Bob Hastings, Virginia Gregg, Kathy Gori, Alan Oppenheimer, Allan Melvin, Hal Smith, Joe E. Ross, Jean Vander Pyl, Janet Waldo, Lurene Tuttle, Paul Winchell, Frank Welker, and Lennie Weinrib (Additional characters)

The Tom and Jerry Comedy Show (1980–1982)

STUDIOS: Filmation, MGM

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

PRODUCERS: Lou Scheimer, Norman Prescott, Brian Cosgrove

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS: Jack Hanrahan, Steve Clark, Mike Joens, Charles Howell IV, Coslough Johnson, Tom Minton, Eddie Fitzgerald, Mike O'Connor, Jim Mueller

VOICE ACTORS: Frank Welker (Tom/Jerry/Others), Lou Scheimer (Nibbles/Others)

Tom and Jerry Kids (1990–1993)

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, TBS

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera, Paul Sabella, Jack Petrik

PRODUCERS: Don Jurwich, Kay Wright

DIRECTORS: Don Lusk, Paul Sommer, Carl Urbano, Oscar Dufau, Robert Alvarez, Jay Sarbry, Ray Patterson

WRITERS: Jim Ryan, Marty Murphy, Patrick Ventura, Jack Hanrahan, Sandy Fries, Dennis Marks, Eric Alter, Fred Kron, Barry Blitzer, Don Jurwich, Jerry Eisenberg, Arthur Alsberg, Don Nelson, Bruce Morris, Stewart St. John, Janice Diamond, Neal Barbera

VOICE ACTORS: Frank Welker (Tom/Jerry/McWolf/Wildmouse/Bat Cat), Dick Gautier (Spike), Patric Zimmerman (Tyke), Don Messick (Droopy/Bat Mouse), Charlie Adler (Dripple/Crazy Legs), Bill Callaway (Slowpoke Antonio), Patrick Fraley (Kyle/Yolker), Teresa Ganzel (Miss Vavoom), Phil Hartman (Calaboose Cal)

Tom and Jerry Tales (2006–2008)

STUDIOS: Warner Brothers, TBS

DISTRIBUTOR: CW

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Joseph Barbera, Rob LaDuca

PRODUCERS: Frank Molieri, Bobbie Page, Tom Minton

DIRECTORS: Neal Sternecky, Douglas McCarthy, Tim Maltby

WRITERS: Joseph Barbera, Charles Schneider, Spike Brandt, Tony Cervone, Chris Painter, Tom Minton, Mark Turosz, Bradley Zweig, Richard Pursel, Matt Wayne, Eric Shaw

VOICE ACTORS: Don Brown (Tom/Droopy, early episodes), Samuel Vincent (Jerry/Kid), Michael Donovan (Spike/Droopy, later episodes/Topsy), Colin Murdoch (Butch/Lightning), Reece Thompson (Nibbles, early episodes), Chantal Strand (Nibbles, later episodes), Nicole Oliver (Mrs. Two Shoes)

The Tom and Jerry Show (2014–present)

STUDIOS: Warner Brothers, Tring, Renegade

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Sam Register, Jay Bastian, Vivian Hernandez, Christina Reynolds, Nicole Rivera

PRODUCER: Bob Jaques

DIRECTORS: Darrell Van Citters, Bob Jaques

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: William Hanna (Tom/Jerry/Spike/Tyke, archival audio; uncredited), Harry Lang (Tom, archival audio; uncredited), Rick Zieff (Spike/Barkley/Skid/Dutch/Santa/Trucket Man/Squirrel/Man #3/Hotel Manager), Grey DeLisle Griffin (Ginger/Winston's Owner), Stephen Stanton (Uncle Pecos/Jack Benny Mouse/Commercial Voice/Rick, later episodes), Jason Alexander (Rick, early episodes), Kath Soucie (Tuffy/Mimi/Aunt Claire/Cozette/Gigi), Alicyn Packard (Toodles/Madame Beta/Matalyn), Rene Mujica (Newt/Bear/Tom's Seventh Life), Cree Summer (Beatie), Rachel MacFarlane (Hildy/Mummy), Joey D'Auria (Butch/Jeff/Meathelda), Sam Kwasman (Quacker), Gary Cole (*Cat and Mouse Detectives* Narrator), Chris Parnell (*Great Outdoors* Narrator), Simon Helberg (Napoleon/Bot-y Guard), Tom Kenny (Detective/Dr. Bigby/Hamster/Wilfred/Tom's First Life/Tom's Fourth Life/Tom's Fifth Life/Tom's Eighth Life/Ronnie Rabbit/Percy/Guard Dog), Nika Futterman (Polly/Baby), Charlie Adler (Polly's Owner), Dave Mitchell (Tom's Second Life/Tom's Third Life/Tom's Sixth Life/Petey/Mummy's Spellbook/Rat/Meathead), Phil Lollar (Monkey/Frank/Crooked Eddie/Man #1/Man #2/German Shepherd), Katie Leigh (Woman #1/Woman #2/Stardust/Gypsy Lady), Kari Wahlgren (Toots/Fifi), Cathy Cavadini (Toodles's Mom), Trevor Devall (Toodles's Dad/Clerk/Stinker/Shop Owner/Delivery Guy), Julie Wittner (Bunny/Roxie/Misty), Rob Paulsen (Scarf), Robin Atkin Downes (Large Marvin), Charlie Schlatter (Grayson), John Michael Higgins (Uncle Harry), Robbie Daymond (SiFu/Batboy/Ramone), Yvette Brown (Mama Mockingbird), Phil LaMarr (Tom's Shadow), Gilbert Gottfried (Geanie), Tara Strong (Tooth Fairy), Matt Taylor (Winston), Patton Oswalt (Carver), Jason Hightower (Red), Sean Donnellan (Lawyer), Marieve Herington (Ellen), Robert Cait (Carlton), Lesley Nicol (Maid)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: The long feud between a gray-furred cat named Tom and a maroon-colored mouse named Jerry began in the 1940 MGM cartoon *Puss Gets the Boot*, directed by William Hanna and Joseph Barbera when they were still an up-and-coming duo. The film was a smashing success with audiences, and Hanna and Barbera were instructed to come up with more of them—which they proceeded to do for the next 17 years. Overall, the series won seven Academy Awards and was nominated for others and was one of the high points of the Golden Age of theatrical animation, highlighted by superb comic timing (Hanna's speciality) and gag writing (Barbera's), as well as fluid animation and well-realized production designs by their specially assigned team. However, this consistently high level of production did not prevent the staff from being fired en masse when MGM closed its studio, but they quickly recovered by becoming the linchpins of Hanna and Barbera's soon-established eponymous studio.

Subsequent attempts at reviving the feuding duo in later years have been mixed, and nearly all have come short of the original Hanna-Barbera standard in varying degrees. In the 1960s, both Gene Deitch and Chuck Jones produced



The cat and the mouse in a détente moment. CBS/Photofest © CBS

new theatrical films about Tom and Jerry in their own idiosyncratic styles, but these only demonstrated how removed their approaches were from the original films. Then there was, in the 1990s, a poorly produced movie featuring them produced by Film Roman, about which the less said, the better. There have also been several attempts to bring them back as television animation characters, from the mid-1970s to today, which have demonstrated

collectively that Tom and Jerry were products of their original time and are still best appreciated as such.

The first attempt to revive them that failed was, ironically, by Hanna and Barbera themselves. The failure was, in their defense, not entirely their fault; the series was produced at the height of the antiviolence backlash in the industry, and the original Tom and Jerry cartoons were violent in the extreme, so some degree of compromise had to be made. This was achieved by making the duo friends (or, at the very least, what we might today call frenemies) rather than focusing on Tom trying to kill and eat Jerry, as in the past. As a consequence, the concept was diluted of all its comic potency. To compensate, the studio paired Tom and Jerry with some newly created characters. These included Grape Ape, an enormous King Kong-like creature fond of uttering his own name, and his con man pal Beegle Beagle (this pair starred in their own show on ABC from 1977 to 1978), as well as Mumbly, a trenchcoat-wearing PI dog, who was assisted by a fellow named Schnooker. Their adventures were no better or worse than Tom and Jerry's.

In 1980, Tom and Jerry were revived, this time under the auspices of the Filmation Studio, working with their original distributor, MGM. They were rivals again now, but any violence was rechanneled into safer contexts, such as athletic competition. Also revived to serve as a companion piece was Tom and Jerry's contemporary Droopy, the deadpan-voiced dog created by Hanna and Barbera's colleague Tex Avery, and the characters who had surrounded him in his original films. Although some of the scriptwriting was solid and benefitted from many of the artists ad-libbing their own gags in the material, it was still poor competition for the material featuring the characters that had preceded it.

Then there was the self-explanatory *Tom and Jerry Kids*. While the title characters were younger this time, there was a greater emphasis on reproducing the look, sound, and feel of the vintage Hanna-Barbera films, in part because Hanna and Barbera themselves were shaping the characters' destinies again. However, this was the main asset because the scriptwriters botched their efforts to make the characters hip by producing bad contemporary popular culture parodies in the midst of the action. Droopy was also featured here in a supporting component, in which he and his dead-ringer son Dripple traveled the world solving mysteries; this eventually graduated to a series of its own, *Droopy: Master Detective* (q.v.).

The next two kicks at the can reverted the characters to adult form and were also failures in fully translating their appeal to newer and younger audiences. *Tom and Jerry Tales* had the advantage of having Joseph Barbera, in one of his last productions before his death, take one more try at the duo; Droopy was featured again as a supporting actor in many segments. *The Tom and Jerry Show* tried to create variation by developing some new formats other than the central chase one for the pair; they were, for example, the pets of a pair of witches in one, and Jerry was a laboratory test subject, à la *Pinky and the Brain* (q.v.), in another. But it was still apparent to veteran viewers of the pair that these were not and in no way could be considered the definitive use of the duo. That remains, and likely always will remain, the classic MGM films of the 1940s and 1950s.

THE TOMFOOLERY SHOW (1970–1971)

STUDIOS: Rankin/Bass, Halas and Batchelor

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

PRODUCERS: Arthur Rankin Jr., Jules Bass

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Peter Hawkins, Bernard Spear, and the Maury Laws Singers (Specific roles unknown)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: A failed attempt to bring the nonsense school of literature, typified by the works of Lewis Carroll and Edward Lear, to television animation. The problem was that the approach to the material did not do it justice—the program was structured in the style of a revue à la *Rowan and Martin's Laugh-In* rather than a proper narrative. The majority of the cast members, headed by the bizarrely constructed Yongie Bongie Bo, were Lear's inventions, though the works of Carroll, Ogden Nash, and even Longfellow got shout-outs. The odd mélange lasted only a year on the air despite its noble intent. Later television animation series, notably *Chowder* (q.v.), would be far more successful in translating the Carroll/Lear school of nonsense to the genre on their own terms.

TOM GOES TO THE MAYOR (2004–2006)

STUDIOS: Dipshot, Absolutely, Williams Street, Cartoon Network

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATORS/DIRECTORS/WRITERS: Tim Heidecker, Eric Wareheim

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Tim Heidecker, Eric Wareheim, Bob Odenkirk

VOICE ACTORS: Tim Heidecker (Tom Peters/Jan Skylar); Eric Wareheim (Mayor/Wayne Skylar); Stephanie Courtney (Joy Peters/Renee); Craig Anton (City Councillor #1); Ron Lynch (City Councillor #2); Brian Posehn (Gibbons); Bob Odenkirk, Jack Black, Kyle Gass, Patton Oswalt, Jeff Goldblum, Jeff Garlin, Maria Bamford, John Ennis, Edward Herrmann, Michael Ian Black, Michael Q. Schmidt, David Cross, Sarah Silverman, Scott Chernoff, Fred Willard, Sir Mix-a-Lot, Dustin Diamond, Sean Hayes, Fred Armisen, Louie Anderson, Michael Hitchcock, Gary Busey, Tom Kenny, Robert Loggia, Judd Hirsch, Zach Gallifinakis, John C. Reilly, Brian Doyle Murray, Bob Balaban, Janeane Garofalo, Garry Shandling, Dave Foley, Michael Cera, Paul Reubens, Todd Barry, and Doug Lussenhop (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: In the town of Jefferton, entrepreneur Tom Peters frequently comes to the town's mayor for advice and assistance, only to have the mayor steal his ideas and put them into practice himself—poorly.

COMMENTARY: While the program was interesting on initial viewings, it quickly wore thin, in part because the premise was so limited. However, it was well-produced on a technical level, with an intriguing combination of traditional animation and live-action photography, which created a stark black-and-white moving image that resembled something like what an underground comic book would look like if the images moved.

TOM TERRIFIC (1957)

STUDIOS: Terrytoons, CBS

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

PRODUCER: Gene Deitch

WRITERS INCLUDED: Jules Feiffer

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTOR: Lionel Wilson (All characters)

SYNOPSIS: Tom Terrific, an energetic young boy, wears a funnel-shaped cap that allows him to shape-shift into a wide variety of physical forms and is consequently able to fight the forces of evil, typically personified by Crabby Appleton (who is apparently “rotten to the core”), with his lethargic canine sidekick Mighty Manfred the Wonder Dog.

COMMENTARY: Originally seen as a segment of CBS’s long-running children’s series *Captain Kangaroo*, where it remained from its original production date to the mid-1960s, this was a highly popular feature structured as a five-minute cliff-hanging adventure serial. Drawn up on a minimal budget, with very primitive music and limited but stylishly produced black-and-white animation, it was very much beloved in its time and still is thought of highly by animation historians (such as Leonard Maltin) who witnessed it in its original broadcasts. That it has that kind of recommendation speaks much for its quality, given the conditions under which it was made and originally broadcast. The program’s short format and its noncolor mode of production have made it extremely hard to find on broadcast television today, but YouTube—as it so often has with previously out-of-circulation visual material—has now made installments available for broadcast in their entirety through its service.

TOONSYLVANIA (1998)

STUDIO: DreamWorks

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Steven Spielberg, Bill Kopp, Rich Arons, Charlie Bean

PRODUCER/DIRECTOR: Jeffrey DeGrandis

WRITERS INCLUDED: Mike Peters, Kate Donahue, Scott Kreamer, Vinnie Montello, Steve Ochs, Chris Otsuki, Mitch Watson, Martin Olson

VOICE ACTORS: Wayne Knight (Igor); Brad Garrett (Phil); David Warner (Dr. Vic); Nancy Cartwright (Melissa Screech); Billy West (Fred Deadman/Newark/Professor); Valery Pappas (Stiffany Deadman/Miss Mann/Mother Screech); Tom Kenny (Ace Deuce); Jim Cummings (General Mills); Matt Frewer (Deadgar Deadman); Charlie Adler, Jocelyn Blue, and Jess Harnell (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: Spielberg’s first and only television animation production under the banner of DreamWorks, the much-hyped but ill-fated multimedia entity he established with David Geffen and Jeffrey Katzenberg, was, unfortunately, one of his weaker ones, despite the inclusion of the odd good segment or joke. Structured as a revue in the manner of *Tiny Toon Adventures* (q.v.) and *Animaniacs* (q.v.), the program tried—and mostly failed—to make good comic hay with the clichés of classic Hollywood horror and sci-fi films in the same way the earlier programs had succeeded in aping

the classic *Looney Tunes* style of the past. The main segments featured a parody of the old Frankenstein films, with the action revolving around overworked, hunchbacked henchman Igor (Knight's wonderful portrayal of him was one of the show's few true assets). Other features included *Night of the Living Fred*, a warped sitcom revolving around a family of zombies; the self-explanatory *Attack of the Killer B Movies*, parodying the kind of cheap filler productions that many directors (such as Roger Corman) and film studios (such as American International Pictures) made their living with in the 1950s and 1960s; and *Melissa Screech*, a rhyming-verse saga about an egotistical young girl, which resembled many of Hilaire Belloc's macabre *Cautionary Tales for Children* from an earlier time.

TOP CAT (1961–1962)

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, Columbia

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera, Alan Dinehart

DIRECTORS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera, Charles Nichols

WRITERS INCLUDED: Kin Platt

VOICE ACTORS: Arnold Stang (Top Cat); Allen Jenkins (Officer Charlie Dibble); Maurice Gosfield (Benny the Ball); Marvin Kaplan (Choo Choo); Leo De Lyon (Spook/Brain); John Stephenson (Fancy Fancy); Daws Butler, Don Messick, Paul Frees, Jean Vander Pyl, Bea Benaderet, and GeGe Pearson (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: A clever series from Hanna-Barbera's salad days, this program took as its model Phil Silvers's popular eponymous Emmy-winning sitcom of the 1950s, though it gave as much as it took in bringing itself to life. The title character was a yellow-furred feline who dressed in purple and directed the con-artistry activity of his confederates, which were as much about self-preservation as they were about potentially enriching themselves, as was the case with Silvers's Sergeant Bilko character. Officer Dibble, the local cop on the beat, was their nominal adversary, who, despite being a regular mark for their cons, could periodically also show sympathy toward them. They nevertheless bewildered him constantly, he not being intelligent enough to compete with them fairly. Despite being cleverly written, produced, and especially acted, the series was a failure in its original prime-time showing, in part because it did not attract enough adult viewers to make it financially viable. It did, however, eventually gain the audience it truly deserved on Saturday mornings and in syndication much later on, and "TC" would become a valued member of the Hanna-Barbera all-star stock company in later productions.

TOTAL DRAMA ISLAND (AND RELATED SERIES)

***Total Drama Island* (2007–2008)**

STUDIOS: Fresh TV, Elliott Animation

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network (United States)

CREATORS/PRODUCERS: Tom McGillis, Jennifer Pertsch

DIRECTORS: Todd Kaufman, Mark Thornton

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Christian Potenza (Chris McLean), Cle Bennett (Hatchet/D. J.), Sarah Gadon (Beth), Kristin Fairlie (Bridgette), Peter Oldring (Cody/Ezekiel/Tyler), Emilie Claire Barlow (Courtney), Drew Nelson (Duncan), Julia Chantrey (Eva), Dan Petronijevic (Geoff), Megan Fahlenbock (Gwen), Brian Froud (Harold), Rachel Wilson (Heather), Katie Crown (Izzy), Adam Reid (Justin), Stephanie Mills (Katie/Lindsay), Novie Edwards (Leshawna), Carter Hayden (Noah), Scott McCord (Owen/Trent), Lauren Lipson (Sadie)

Total Drama Action (2009–2010)

STUDIOS: Fresh TV, Elliott Animation

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network (United States)

PRODUCERS: Tom McGillis, Jennifer Pertsch

DIRECTORS: Todd Kaufman, Mark Thornton

WRITERS: Alice Prodanou, Nicole Demerse, Alex Nussbaum, Emily Andras, Brendon Yorke, Alex Ganetakos, Shelley Scarrow, James Hurst, Paul Poque, John Slama, Richard Clark, Alex Resnick, Heather Jackson, Ken Cuperus

VOICE ACTORS: Christian Potenza (Chris McLean), Cle Bennett (Hatchet/D. J.), Sarah Gadon (Beth), Kristin Fairlie (Bridgette), Emilie Claire Barlow (Courtney), Drew Nelson (Duncan), Dan Patronejivic (Geoff), Megan Fahlenbock (Gwen), Brian Froud (Harold), Rachel Wilson (Heather), Katie Crown (Izzy), Adam Reid (Justin), Novie Edwards (Leshawna), Stephanie Mills (Lindsay), Scott McCord (Owen/Trent)

Total Drama World Tour (2010–2011)

STUDIOS: Fresh TV, Elliott Animation

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network (United States)

PRODUCERS: Tom McGillis, Jennifer Pertsch

DIRECTORS: Todd Kaufman, Mark Thornton

WRITERS: Shelley Scarrow, Alex Ganetakos, Adam Rotstein, Doug Hadders, Terry McGurrin, Laurie Elliott, Alex Nussbaum, Emily Andras, Brandon Yorke, Michael Gelbart, Emer Connon, James Hurst, Nicole Demerse

VOICE ACTORS: Christian Potenza (Chris McLean), Cle Bennett (Hatchet/D. J.), Carla Collins (Blaineley), Marco Grazziani (Alejandro), Kristin Fairlie (Bridgette), Peter Oldring (Cody/Ezekiel/Tyler), Emilie Claire Barlow (Courtney), Drew Nelson (Duncan), Megan Fahlenbock (Gwen), Brian Froud (Harold), Rachel Wilson (Heather), Katie Crown (Izzy), Novie Edwards (Leshawna), Stephanie Mills (Lindsay/Kate), Carter Hayden (Noah), Scott McCord (Owen/Trent), Annick Obonsawin (Sierra), Julia Chantrey (Eva), Sarah Gadon (Beth), Lauren Lipson (Sadie), Dan Petronejivic (Geoff), Adam Reid (Justin)

Total Drama: Revenge of the Island (2012)

STUDIOS: Fresh TV, Elliott Animation

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network (United States)

PRODUCERS: Tom McGillis, Jennifer Pertsch

DIRECTORS: Todd Kaufman, Mark Thornton

WRITERS: Alex Ganetakos, Jenn Engels, Laurie Elliott, Charles Johnston, Scott Oleskiewicz, Alex Nussbaum, Eliza Crosland, Jeremy Winkels, Richard Clark

VOICE ACTORS: Christian Potenza (Chris McLean), Cle Bennett (Hatchet/D. J.), Kevin Duhaney (Cameron), Barbara Mamabolo (Zoey), Tyrone Savage (Lightning), Carleigh Beverly (Dakota), Jon Cor (Brick), Laurie Elliott (Jo), Brian Froud (Sam), Athena Karkanis (Anne Maria), Catilynn Medrek (Dawn), Ashley Peters (Staci), James Wallis (Scott), Stephanie Mills (Lindsay), Katie Crown (Izzy), Megan Fahlenbock (Gwen), Kristin Fairlie (Bridgette), Scott McCord (Owen), Drew Nelson (Duncan), Peter Oldring (Ezekiel), Rachel Wilson (Heather)

Total Drama All-Stars; Total Drama: Pahetikew Island (2014)

STUDIOS: Fresh TV, Elliott Animation

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network (United States)

PRODUCERS: Tom McGillis, Jennifer Pertsch

DIRECTORS: Todd Kaufman, Mark Thornton

WRITERS: Alex Ganetakos, Terry McGurrin, Laurie Elliott, Ed MacDonald, Miles Smith, Alice Prodanou

VOICE ACTORS: Christian Potenza (Chris McLean), Cle Bennett (Hatchet/Beardo/Leonard), Cory Doran (Mike), Megan Fahlenbock (Gwen), Barbara Mamabolo (Zoey), Stephanie Mills (Lindsay), Emilie Claire Barlow (Courtney), Kevin Duhaney (Cameron), Laurie Elliott (Jo), Brian Froud (Sam/Killer), Alex House (Alejandro/Jose), Drew Nelson (Duncan), Annick Obonsawin (Sierra), Tyrone Savage (Lightning), James Wallis (Scott/Cop #1), Rachel Wilson (Heather), Katie Crown (Izzy), Scott McCord (Owen), Peter Oldring (Ezekiel/Intern), Zachary Bennett (Shawn), Katie Bergin (Jasmine), Daniel DeSanto (Dave), Bruce Dow (Max), Kristi Friday (Scarlet), Christopher Jacot (Topher), Bryn McAuley (Amy/Samey), Sunday Muse (Ella), Sarah Podemski (Sky), Ian Ronnigen (Rodney), Rochelle Wilson (Sugar)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: Since the mid-1990s, the reality television genre has been as much a fixture of network television as was the western in the 1950s and 1960s. Largely consisting of competitions between unknown contestants for oversized cash prizes and mining as much drama as possible from the conflicts between the diverse personalities involved, they have achieved their objectives of gaining big ratings for their providers—at the expense of denying network space to fictional television producers, who have largely been forced to seek other venues for their work since the genre first gained popularity. The most popular and best-known of these programs is *Survivor*, with others following soon after, such as *The Amazing Race* and *American Idol*, among others.

If *Survivor* was meant to be tragedy, then this long-running Canadian franchise was clearly meant to be farce—in the extreme. First originating on a decrepit lake-surrounded island in southwestern Ontario and later switching to other locales (including a Toronto movie studio in *Total Drama Action* and a variety of locales in *Total Drama World Tour*), the programs have done their best to parody the worst excesses of the reality show genre—glamorous but out-of-touch hosts; ridiculous competitions between contestants; the brief confessional pieces where the contestants speak directly to the camera; and, above all, the fact that the majority of the contestants take the whole af-

fair much more seriously than it demands. Unfortunately, it is hard to parody something that *is* a parody in and of itself, and consequently, the producers have continually reduced the show to a parody of a parody of a parody and so on over time. Nevertheless, the program cycle, which accurately mimicks the structure of the programs it parodies, has gained a wide audience not only in North America but also overseas, though many installments have been doctored to meet time limits and censorship restraints in those countries.

Creators McGillis and Pertsch have also employed the Flash animation style here to good effect in other Canadian-produced series, notably the teen-centric *6teen*.

TOUCHÉ TURTLE (1962)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

PRODUCERS/DIRECTORS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Bill Thompson (Touché Turtle); Alan Reed (Dum Dum); Daws Butler and Don Messick (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: This short-run program took its cue from *Don Quixote*, as filtered through *Crusader Rabbit* (q.v.) and *Quick Draw McGraw* (q.v.). The title character, wearing a ridiculous plumed hat and armed with a sword, sought to fight all evil, in tandem with his aptly named canine companion Dum Dum. Though Thompson and Reed did the best they could to put life into the action, this was an early indication that the once-comically fertile Hanna-Barbera Studio had started on the way to becoming stuck in a rut.

TOXIC CRUSADERS (1991)

STUDIOS: Murakami-Wolf-Swenson, Sachs, Troma

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

CREATORS: Lloyd Kaufman, Michael Herz

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Fred Wolf

PRODUCERS: Lloyd Kaufman, Michael Herz, Jeffrey Sass, Walt Kubiak

DIRECTORS: Bill Hutten, Tony Love, John Kavka, Ed Love

WRITERS INCLUDED: Jack Mendelsohn

VOICE ACTORS: Gregg Berger, Susan Blu, Paul Eiding, Chuck McCann, Rodger Bumpass, Rad Rayle, Susan Silo, Kath Soucie, Ed Gilbert, Patric Zimmerman, and Michael J. Pollard (Specific roles unknown)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: This series had its origins in a quartet of films produced by the low-budget—and low-class—Troma Studio between the mid-1980s and early 1990s. The protagonist was the Toxic Avenger, an otherwise normal, if nerdy, human being mutated into a hideously deformed monster, who got his revenge by attacking those responsible for creating the toxic waste that deformed him. Although the series was not intended for young children by any means, the films inexplicably developed a cult following among that group. For this animated series adaptation, the title character was switched from an avenger to a crusader and was paired with several other hideously

deformed victims of corporate pollution and neglect, as they fought aliens from the planet Smogula, such as the creatively named Dr. Killemoff. It was, in total, a wretched exercise that was deservedly killed off after 13 episodes.

TRANSFORMERS (AND RELATED SERIES)

Note: This listing is of the *Transformers* series produced primarily in North America for North American audiences and does not include the programs based on the franchise produced in Japan for Japanese and overseas audiences.

***Transformers* (1984)**

STUDIOS: Marvel, Sunbow, Hasbro, Griffin-Bacal, Cluster

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Lee Gunther, Margaret Loesch, Tom Griffin

PRODUCER: Nelson Shin

DIRECTORS: John Walker, John Gibbs, Norman McCabe, Jeff Hall, Brad Case

WRITERS: Dick Robbins, Bryce Malek, Douglas Booth, Donald Glut, Alfred Pegal, Larry Struss, Earl Kress, Reed Robbins, Peter Salas

VOICE ACTORS: Michael Bell (Prowler/Scrapper/Swoop/Junkion); Peter Cullen (Optimus Prime/Ironhide); Jack Angel (Astro Train); Gregg Berger (Grimlock); Susan Blu (Arcee); Arthur Burghardt (Devastator); Roger C. Carmel (Cyclonus); Scatman Crothers (Jazz); Brad Davis (Dirge); Walker Edmiston (Inferno); Paul Eiding (Perceptor); Ed Gilbert (Blitzwing); Dan Gilvezan (Bumblebee); Buster Jones (Blaster); Stan Jones (Scourge); Casey Kasem (Cliff Jumper); Chris Latta (Star Scream); David Mendenhall (Daniel); Don Messick (Gears); John Moschitta (Blurr); Judd Nelson (Hot Rod/Rodimus); Hal Rayle (Shrapnel); Clive Revill (Kickback); Neil Ross (Bone Crusher/Hook/Springer/Slag); Frank Welker (Soundwave/Megatron/Galatron/Rumble/Frenzy/Wheelie); Corey Burton, John Stephenson, and Ken Sansom (Additional characters)

***Transformers: Generation II* (1993)**

STUDIOS: Sunbow, Cluster

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Lee Gunther, Margaret Loesch, Tom Griffin

PRODUCER: Nelson Shin

DIRECTORS: John Walker, John Gibbs, Norman McCabe, Jeff Hall, Brad Case

WRITERS: Dick Robbins, Bryce Malek, Douglas Booth, Donald Glut, Alfred Pegal, Larry Struss, Earl Kress, Reed Robbins, Peter Salas

VOICE ACTORS: Michael Bell (Prowler/Scrapper/Swoop/Junkion); Peter Cullen (Optimus Prime/Ironhide); Jack Angel (Astro Train); Gregg Berger (Grimlock); Susan Blu (Arcee); Arthur Burghardt (Devastator); Roger C. Carmel (Cyclonus); Scatman Crothers (Jazz); Brad Davis (Dirge); Walker Edmiston (Inferno); Paul Eiding (Perceptor); Ed Gilbert (Blitzwing); Dan Gilvezan (Bumblebee); Buster Jones (Blaster); Stan Jones (Scourge); Casey Kasem (Cliff Jumper); Chris Latta (Star Scream); David Mendenhall (Daniel); Don Messick (Gears); John Moschitta (Blurr); Judd Nelson (Hot Rod/Rodimus); Hal Rayle (Shrapnel); Clive Revill (Kickback); Neil Ross (Bone Crusher/Hook/Springer/Slag); Frank Welker (Soundwave/Megatron/Galatron/Rumble/Frenzy/Wheelie); Corey Burton, John Stephenson, and Ken Sansom (Additional characters)

Beast Wars: Transformers (1996)

STUDIOS: Mainframe, BLT, Alliance, YTV, Transformer, Cluster

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Christopher Brough, Barb Dawson, Steven DeNure, Asaph Fipke, Jonathan Goodwill, Robert Lantos, Ian Pearson, Stephanie Reichel

DIRECTORS: Steve Ball, James Boshier, Trent Carlson, Colin Davies, Andrew Doucette, Michael Easton, J. Falconer, Asaph Fipke, Bob Forward, Jonathan Goodwill, Owen Hurley, Nicholas Kendall, William Lau, Craig McEwen, Ezekial Norton, T. W. Peacocke, Ian Pearson, John Pozer, Steve Sacks, George Samilski, Mark Schiemann, Cal Schumiachter, Adam Wood, Michaela Zabranska

WRITERS INCLUDED: Bob Forward, Larry DiTillio

VOICE ACTORS: Don Brown (Scorponok), Jim Byrnes (Inferno), Gary Chalk (Optimus Primal), Ian Corlett (Cheetor/Sentinel), David Kaye (Megatron), Blue Mankuma (Tigatron), Scott McNeil (Dinobot/Rat Trap/Silver Bolt/Waspinator), Richard Newman (Rhinox), Pauline Newstone (Airazor), Doug Parker (Terrosaur), Elizabeth Savenkoff (Predacon Ship Computer), Venus Terzo (Black Arachnia), Alec Willows (Tarantula)

Beast Machines: Transformers (1999–2001)

STUDIOS: Mainframe, BLT, Alliance, YTV, Transformer, Cluster

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Christopher Brough, Ian Pearson, Stephanie Reichel, Steven DeNure

PRODUCERS: Jonathan Goodwill, Mark Ralston, Kim Wilder

DIRECTORS: Raul Inglis, William Lau, Gino Nichele

WRITERS: Marv Wolfman, Nick DuBois, Steven Melching, Brooks Wachtel, Len Wein, Bob Forward, Larry DiTillio, Marty Isenberg, Robert Skir

VOICE ACTORS: Kathleen Barr (Botanica), Jim Byrnes (Thrust), Gary Chalk (Optimus Primal), Ian Corlett (Cheetor), Paul Dobson (Tankorr/Obsidian), Patricia Drake (Strika), Brian Drummond (Jet Storm), Christopher Gaze (Diagnostics Drone), Alessandro Juliani (Night Scream), David Kaye (Megatron/Noble/Mainframe), Scott McNeil (Rat Trap/Waspinator/Silverbolt), Richard Newman (Rhinox/Tankorr), Elizabeth Savenkoff (Predacon Computer/Oracle), Venus Terzo (Black Arachnia/Quickstripe)

Transformers: Prime (2010–2013)

STUDIOS: Digitalscape, K-O Products, Darby Pop, Hasbro, Polygon

DISTRIBUTOR: The Hub

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Alex Kurtzman, Roberto Orsi, Jeff Kline

DIRECTORS: David Hartman, Todd Waterman, Shaunt Nigoghossian, Vinton Heuck, Kirk Van Wormer, Scooter Tidwell, Kevin Altieri, Steven Melching

WRITERS: Duane Capizzi, Nicole Dubuc, Marsha Griffin, Steven Melching, Joseph Khur, David Slack, Dean Stefan, Tim Jones, Mike Johnson, Mairghread Scott, Marty Isenberg, David McDermott, Matt Wayne, Robert Skir, Andrew Robinson, Greg Weisman, Michael Cassutt, Michael Stern

VOICE ACTORS: Peter Cullen (Orion Pax/Optimus Prime), Jeffrey Combs (Ratchet), Nolan North (Smokescreen/Skylynx), Michael Ironside (Ultra Magnus),

Sumalee Montano (Arcee), Kevin Michael Richardson (Bulkhead/Make-shift), Will Friedle (Bumblebee), Daran Norris (Knock Out), James Horan (Wheeljack), Dwayne Johnson (Cliff Jumper, early episodes), Frank Welker (Cliff Jumper, later episodes/Megatron/Soundwave/Terrocons), Billy Brown (Cliff Jumper, later episodes), Josh Keaton (Tailgate/Jack Darby/M.E.C.H. Surgeon), David Sobolov (Shockwave), Steven Blum (Star Scream/Bomb-shock/Darksteel), Adam Baldwin (Breakdown), Tony Todd (Dreadwing), Gina Torres (Airachnid), Richard Green (Skyquake), David Kaye (Hard-shell), Peter Mensah (Predaking), Tania Gunadi (Miko Nakadi), Andy Pessoa (Raf Esquivel), Ernie Hudson (Special Agent Bill Fowler), Markie Post (June Darby), Clancy Brown (Colonel Leland Bishop, a.k.a. Silas/C.Y.L.A.S.), Alexandra Krosney (Sierra), Brad Raider (Vince), Robert Forster (General Bryce), John Noble (Unicron), George Takei (Alpha Trion)

Transformers: Rescue Bots (2012–2016)

STUDIOS: Hasbro, Atomic Cartoons, Darby Pop, Vision Animation, Moody Street, DHX Media

DISTRIBUTORS: The Hub, Discovery Kids

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Jeff Kline, Brian Hohlfeld, Frank Molieri, Nicole Dubuc

DIRECTORS: Patrick Archibald, Nathan Chew, Tim Maltby, Kevin Altieri, Frank Squillace

WRITERS: Nicole Dubuc, Brian Hohlfeld, Greg Johnson, Bob Forward, Dean Stefan, Christopher Gentile, Luke McMullen, Ken Pontac, Warren Graff, Ed Valentine, Mairghread Scott, Thomas Pugsley, Greg Klein, Catherine Clinch, Steve Aranguen, Marty Isenberg, Brandon Easton, Zac Atkinson, Amy Gershwin, Greg Weisman, Steven Sears, Atul Rao, Chris “Doc” Wyatt, Kevin Burke, Jackson Grant, Shannon McKain, Steve Granat, Cydne Clark, Andrew Robinson, Claire Lee, Gregory Bonsignore, Frank Squillace, Len Uhley, Kim Beyer Johnson, Doug Molitor, Carin Davis, Joseph Kuhr

VOICE ACTORS: Jeff Bennett, Steven Blum, LeVar Burton, Lacey Chabert, Parvesh Cheena, D. C. Douglas, Elan Garfias, Maurice LaMarche, Jason Marsden, Shannon McKain, Diamond White, Imari Williams, Billie Hayes, Kath Soucie, Greg Ellis, and Ginny McSwain (Specific roles unknown)

Transformers: Robots in Disguise (2015–present)

STUDIOS: Hasbro, Darby Pop, Polygon

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network (United States)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Jeff Kline

PRODUCER: Adam Beechen

DIRECTORS INCLUDE: David Hartman, Scooter Tidwell, Vinton Heuck, Todd Watterman, Frank Marino

WRITERS INCLUDE: Adam Beechen, Duane Capizzi, Marsha Griffin, Nicole Dubuc, Steven Melching, Guy Toubes, Michael Ryan, Mairghread Scott, Dean Stefan, Stan Berkowitz, David McDermott, John Loy, Zac Atkinson, Howie Nicoll, Alex Irvine, Derek Dressler, Len Wein, Johnny Hartmann, Martin Fisher, Will Friedle, Andrew Robinson, Matt Wayne, Brian Hohlfeld, Shannon Denton

VOICE ACTORS: Will Friedle (Bumblebee/Righty/Butch), Darren Criss (Sideswipe), Constance Zimmer (Strong Arm/Filch), Khary Payton (Grimlock/Bisk/Divebomb), Eric Bauza (Drift/Headlock/Pseudo/Silverhound/Back/Forth/Major Mayhem #1), Roger Smith (Slipstream/Jetstorm/Airazor/Major Mayhem #3), Mitchell Whitfield (Fixit/Toolbox/Clinch/Major Mayhem #4), Peter Cullen (Optimus Prime), Arif Kinchen (Jazz), Kristy Wu (Windblade), Jeffrey Combs (Ratchet), Max Mittelman (Blur), Steven Blum (Aerobolt/Star Scream/Backtrack/Ransack/Polar Claw), Rick Pasqualone (Buzzstrike), Crispin Freeman (Sawtooth), Robbie Rist (Tricerashot/Swelter), Troy Baker (Steeljaw), Liam O'Brien (Underbite/Kickback), David Kaye (Hammerstrike/Slashmark), David Hunt (Chop Shop), Kevin Michael Richardson (Terrashock), Frank Stallone (TerraHoof), John Rocha (Springload), Eddie Deezen (Ped), Andy Milder (Quillfire), Kevin Pollak (Fracture), Daniel Roebuck (Malodor), Jim Cummings (Clampdown/Vehicons/Thermidor), Tom Kenny (Nightstrike), Charlie Schlatter (Vertebreak), Ted Biaselli (Octopunch), John DiMaggio (Groundpounder), Mark Hildreth (Scowl), Jackee Harry (Zizza), Grey DeLisle Griffin (Glowstrike), Victor Brandt (Scorponok), Fred Tatasciore (Saberhorn/Vehicons), Dee Bradley Baker (Bludgeon/Clout), Dave Fennoy (Overlord), James Arnold Taylor (Crazybolt/Bootswing/Arnold, later episodes), Gary Anthony Williams (Slicedice), Jonathan Adams (Razorpaw), Yuri Lowenthal (Glacius), Matthew Yang King (Simacore), Jeff Bennett (Axiom/Theorem), Carlos Alazraqui (Hammer/Anvil), Frank Welker (Soundwave), Gregg Berger (Stockade/Major Mayhem #2), Andre Sogliuzzo (Clawtrap), Jason Spisak (Paralon), Robin Weigert (Scatterspike), Kirk Thornton (Shadelock), Travis Willingham (Motormaster), Mikey Kelley (Heatseeker), Maurice LaMarche (Dragbreak/Drag Strip), Dave Wittenberg (Wildbreak), Chris Edgerly (Crustacion), Christopher Swindle (Ragebite), Michael Yurchak (Zorillor), Robin Atkin Downes (Jacknab/Pilfer), Ian Corlett (Shadow Raker), Adrian Pasdar (Micronus Prime), Troy Baker (Vector Prime), Gil Gerard (Megatronus/Fallen), Stuart Allan (Russell Clay), Ted McGinley (Denny Clay), Bailey Gambertoglio (Henrietta, a.k.a. Hank), John Katovich (Larry LaRue), Troy Baker (Arnold, early episodes)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: The impossibly long life of this storied Hasbro toy franchise in visual media began in the early 1980s and has continued, with some minor lapses, ever since. It would be impossible to fully chronicle every aspect of the conflict between the heroic Autobots and the villainous Decepticons here; others have done it better and more fully elsewhere. The characters have done their job of enriching the coffers of Hasbro so well over the years that they have merited expansion well beyond the series chronicled here, particularly in several full-length feature films, an animated one from the mid-1980s (which featured Eric Idle, Leonard Nimoy, Robert Stack, and Orson Welles among the voice actors) and several more live-action ones from 2007 on, all of which were, not surprisingly, underwritten by Hasbro.

To summarize: The good Autobots and the evil Decepticons are robotic beings who are able to shift form into a variety of motorized vehicles (or animals, in the *Beast Wars: Transformers* incarnation). They hail from the



The late-2000s model of the robots in disguise. Cartoon Network/Photofest © Cartoon Network

planet Cybertron, which was destroyed as a consequence of their warfare. Needing a place to hide, the Decepticons found Earth to their liking, with the Autobots following soon after. Each of these animated series (to say nothing of the many produced in Japan, as well) has simply stated and restated the facts already noted in far more cataclysmic and apocalyptic terms. Hasbro, at least, got its money's worth from the Transformers in these series.

TROLLZ (2005–2006)

STUDIO: DIC

DISTRIBUTORS: Disney, CBS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Andy Heyward, Michael Maliani

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Britt McKillip (Amethyst Van Der Troll), Chiara Zanni (Ruby Troll), Alexandra Carter (Sapphire Trollzawa), Leah Juel (Topaz Trollhopper), Anna Van Hooft (Onyx Von Trollenberg), Samuel Vincent (Alabaster/Bulbasaur), Matt Hill (Rock), Jesse Moss (Coal), Reese Thompson (Simon), Jason Connery (Mr. Trollheimer), Mike Antonakos (Flint), Armen (Jasper), Janyse Jaud (Snarf), Jane Mortifee (Chikarita)

SYNOPSIS: “Best Friends for Life” Amethyst, Ruby, Sapphire, Topaz, and Onyx use magical powers to help them fight evil and deal with everyday life.

COMMENTARY: Based very loosely on the popular Troll dolls from Denmark, which originated in 1959, although more specifically on a modernized re-branding for North America that failed in the marketplace. As in other cases, the series failed as both a marketing device and as a television series with independent, original creative merit.

T.U.F.F. PUPPY (2010–2015)

STUDIOS: Billionfold, Nickelodeon

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

CREATOR/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Butch Hartman

PRODUCERS: Deidre Brenner, Dave Thomas, Ray DeLaurentis, Randy Saba, George Goodchild

DIRECTORS: Butch Hartman, Gary Conrad, Michelle Bryan, Ken Bruce, John McIntyre, Kevin Petrilak

WRITERS: Butch Hartman, Scott Fellows, Ray DeLaurentis, Will Schiffrin, Kevin Sullivan, Aaron Hammersley, Brandon Kruse, Greg Rankin, Dave Thomas, Heather Martinez, Fred Gonzales, Matt Whitlock, Katie Rice, Joanna Lewis, Samantha Berger, Ed Barker, Steve Daye, Celia Kendrick, Rudi Bloss, Wolf Rudiger Bloss, Kevin Arrieta, Kristine Songco, Christo Stamboliev, Whitney Fox, Mike Dougherty

VOICE ACTORS: Jerry Trainor (Dudley Puppy/Dr. Rabies/Wanna Bee), Grey DeLisle (Kitty Katswell/Agent Bossy/Agent Goldfish/Agent Jumbo/Sally Mander/Tammy/Zippy/Ewe/R.I.T.A./Madame Catastrophe/Katty Katswell/Mrs. Katswell/Little Chipmunk Girl/Becky), Daran Norris (Herbert Dumbrowski, a.k.a. the Chief/Chameleon/Francisco/Bad Dog, later episodes/Bat/Jack Rabbit/Meerkat/Wolf Spitzer/Eric/Bob Barky), Jeff Bennett (Keswick/Agent Groundhog/Agent Nutz/Agent Seabiscuit/Larry/Ollie/Bad Dog, early episodes/Skunk/Owl/Duck/Bluffalo/Sharing Moose/Weasel/Overbear/Rodger/General Wart-hog), Matthew Taylor (Verminious Snaptrap/Agent Moby/Scary Jimmy/Escape Goat/Quacky/Rumble Bee/Mayor Teddy Bear/Phil/Mr. Wong), Rob Paulsen (Bird Brain), Eric Bauza (Leather Teddy), Mary Birdsong (Snowflake), Dave Boat (Slush), Chris Parnell (Caped Cod, early episodes), Mick Wingert (Caped Cod, later episodes), Carlos Alazraqui (Stink Bug), Candi Milo (Lunch Lady Bug), Leslie Carrara Rudolph (Mrs. Peg Puppy)

SYNOPSIS: Dudley Puppy, a physically powerful but mentally dull agent for the Turbo Underground Fighting Force (T.U.F.F.) in the city of Petropolis, frequently bumbles his way through missions but succeeds either by accident or with the intervention of his more competent female partner Kitty Katzwell.

COMMENTARY: A hit-and-miss affair with some positive elements but just as many negative ones. The program's setting is enormously imaginative and should satisfy anyone's curiosity about how a city with anthropomorphic citizenry should look like (if they are not familiar with the idea through Disney's later animated feature *Zootopia*, which has a similar setting); the excellent animation and production design support this image well. Unfortunately, the setting is not used to anywhere near the level it could have been in terms of fulfilling the program's potential. Despite the fact that some individual episodes are well directed, written, and acted (and are, consequently, hilarious), they are outweighed by the number that do *not* achieve their objectives (unlike the characters they feature). The writers and directors tended to draw too much on shopworn animated animal clichés to create characters (e.g., Agent Jumbo, an elephant who is afraid of mice) and equally shopworn secret agent movie and television program clichés (Hartman admittedly modeled the program after *Get Smart*, although the character of Dudley was created before the setting was) for things to work smoothly. Likewise, the voice acting is far too much in the shout-and-scream department (Trainor is primarily at fault here as Dudley, though the other performers do their share as well; DeLisle's Kitty is more multidimensional, thankfully) for everything to be completely believable. The habit of the characters closing the episodes by jumping in the air and assuming the status of living punctuation marks is overdone and unnecessary; there is no need to remind people watching a television program that they are actually doing so in such a blatant way.

Early episodes aired on the main Nickelodeon network, later ones on the Nicktoons service. Several of the program's later episodes aired overseas before they did so in the United States.

TURBO TEEN (1984–1985)

STUDIO: Ruby-Spears

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Joe Ruby, Ken Spears

PRODUCERS: Larry Huber, Michael Hack

DIRECTOR: John Kimball

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Michael Mish (Brett Matthews/Turbo Teen), T. K. Carter (Alex), Pamela Hayden (Patty), Frank Welker (Flip/Rusty), Patrick Fraley (Eddie), Clive Revill (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: As a result of a motor vehicle accident during a scientific experiment in fusion, teenager Brett Matthews is able to contort himself into an anthropomorphic car.

COMMENTARY: This is perhaps the most absurd concept developed for television animation in the genre's history. Despite (as noted in the synopsis) a basis in somewhat-plausible science, it was not produced competently enough to

make its premise anywhere near believable. Somewhat fittingly, the program met a swift demise in the ratings, as perpetrated by its time-slot rival, *The Smurfs* (q.v.).

***TUTENSTEIN* (2003)**

STUDIOS: PorchLight, Discovery Kids

DISTRIBUTORS: NBC, Discovery Kids

CREATOR: Jay Stephens

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Bruce Johnson, William Bauman, Jessica Hanlon

PRODUCERS: Fred Schaeffer, Tom Gleason, Mark Seidenberg

DIRECTORS: Rob LaDuca, Bob Richardson

WRITERS INCLUDED: Mark Seidenberg

VOICE ACTORS: Marcus Muldoon, Loren Manda, Baen Mosquito, Joseph Samuels, Anne Hawkins, Pryde Ballard, Vince De Castillo, John Harrison, Marisa Michel, Lex Lang, and Jeannie Elias (Specific roles unknown)

SYNOPSIS: Resurrected by a bolt of lightning, the mummy of a young Egyptian pharaoh tries to reassume his former position in the world.

COMMENTARY: A program for which the synopsis only provided a framework to educate children about the ancient world. As a consequence, it was lauded for its positive elements (including receiving an Emmy nomination), but veteran television animation followers undoubtedly were reminded too much of 1970s and 1980s series where educational information was slingshot into otherwise interesting creative premises (as this was) to their detriment because this was also what occurred with this program.

***12 OZ. MOUSE* (2005–2007)**

STUDIOS: Radical Axis, Williams Street

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATOR/WRITER: Matt Maillearo

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Matt Maillearo (Mouse "Fitz" Fitzgerald), Adam Reed (Shark), Kurt Soccolich (Rectangular Businessman), Matt Harrigan (Liquor), Scott Luallen (Rooster), Nick Weidenfeld (Stoned Peanut Cop)

SYNOPSIS: A beer-drinking mouse slowly uncovers the truth about his past life.

COMMENTARY: A purposely absurd program in the manner of David Lynch (the creator's admitted model), this series is typical of the style of its production companies, in taking a rather offbeat idea and executing it past the point of tolerance for the average viewer. This is best appreciated by the late-night viewers of "Adult Swim" and those devotees of Williams Street's work—of which there seem to be more than you would think.

***TWINKLE, THE DREAM BEING* (1993)**

STUDIOS: Sei Young, MBC, Calico, Zodiac

CREATOR/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Peter Keefe

PRODUCERS: Choi An Hee, Claudia Zeitlin Burton, Paul Vitello

DIRECTOR: Claudia Zeitlin Burton

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Tress MacNeille (Twinkle); Patrick Fraley, Russi Taylor, and Cam Clarke (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: On the Possible Planet, Twinkle the Dream Being is capable of granting wishes to the citizenry via the Wishing Star.

COMMENTARY: A rather infantile concept clearly intended for very young children. The imagination-versus-conformity concept was rather overplayed. The fact that the villainess, Diva Weed, who wanted to keep the Possible Planet a stupid and backward place, was known as the "Queen of Mean," should give you some idea of what the program's internal politics were—and how limited they were, as well.

THE TWISTED TALES OF FELIX THE CAT (1995–1997)

STUDIOS: Felix the Cat, Film Roman

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Phil Roman, Don Oriolo

PRODUCER: Timothy Berglund

DIRECTOR: Milton Knight

WRITERS: Jeremy Kramer, Milton Knight, Michael Polcino

VOICE ACTORS: Thom Adcox Hernandez (Felix, early episodes); Charlie Adler (Felix, later episodes); Cam Clarke (Poindexter); Phil Hayes (Roscoe); Cree Summer (Sheba Boporeba); Susan Silo, Patrick Fraley, Jennifer Hale, Jess Harnell, Janna Levinstein, Townsend Coleman, Kevin Schon, and Stan Freberg (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: The second television animation series featuring the legendary theatrical animation character (see *Felix the Cat*) and, by far, the better of the two. Unlike its financially and creatively malnourished predecessor, this program immaculately re-created the visual style of the original Pat Sullivan/Otto Messmer cartoons of the 1910s and 1920s, with music and sound attached this time, as well as incorporated some characters (such as boy genius Poindexter) from the earlier television animation program. The program was, at its best, as clever, intriguing, and amusing as the theatrical cartoons that provided its template over its 58-episode run. Unfortunately, this high-quality product abruptly came to an end when CBS unilaterally canceled all of its Saturday-morning animated series in 1997.

2 NUTS AND A RICHARD (2015)

STUDIO: Oasis Animation

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network (United States)

CREATORS: Jose Gaudet, Mario Tessier

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Jose Gaudet, Mario Tessier, and Richard Turcotte (Specific roles unknown)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: A vehicle for the French comedy duo Les Grandes Gueles (Gaudet and Tessier), who have been popular in their native country for more than 20 years, by a Canadian producer who assumed, at least

among French-speakers in that country, that they would have a ready-made audience. That being so and French-to-English translation being what it is, it might be hard for English-speaking viewers to completely appreciate or understand what is actually going on here.

2 STUPID DOGS (1993)

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, TBS

DISTRIBUTORS: Syndicated, TBS

CREATOR: Donovan Cook

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Buzz Potamkin

PRODUCERS: Donovan Cook, Larry Huber

DIRECTORS: Donovan Cook, Larry Huber, Joanna Romersa, Genndy Tartakovsky, Joan Drake, Frank Andrina, Allen Wilzbach, Rick Bowman, Vincent Waller, Robert Alvarez

WRITERS INCLUDED: Mark Saraceni, Roberts Gannaway

VOICE ACTORS: Brad Garrett (Big Dog); Mark Schiff (Little Dog); Brian Cummings (Hollywood); Jess Harnell (Secret Squirrel); Jim Cummings (Morocco Mole); Tony Jay (Chief); Charlie Adler, Yoshio Be, Jeff Bennett, Greg Burson, Ruth Buzzi, Carol Channing, Donna Cherry, Paul Eiding, Bernard Erhard, June Foray, John Frost, John Garry, Mark Hamill, Haven Hartman, Whitby Herford, Casey Kasem, Jarrett Lennon, Pat Lentz, Tress MacNeille, Rose Marie, Roddy McDowall, Scott Menville, Candi Milo, Pat Musick, Gary Owens, Rob Paulsen, Kimmy Robertson, Roger Rose, Stu Rosen, Neil Ross, Susan Silo, Kath Soucie, Ben Stiller, Tawni Tamietti, B. J. Ward, and Derek Webster (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: This is a program more memorable for what it led to rather than what it was. One of the first Hanna-Barbera series to employ the creator-driven model at other studios, it led off with the title component, focusing on a pair of dim-witted canines and their typically slapstick-laden adventures (Cook had originally pitched that concept to Amblin Entertainment, which rejected it, before Hanna-Barbera said yes). Supporting this was a revamped *Secret Squirrel* (see *The Atom Ant/Secret Squirrel Show* for the original), with producer Cook taking his own spin on the limited premise of the original and expanding on it considerably, mostly with felicitous results. However, the series is more notable historically for allowing director Tartakovsky (see *Dexter's Laboratory* and *Samurai Jack*), art director Craig McCracken (see *The Powerpuff Girls*, *Foster's Home for Imaginary Friends*, and *Wander over Yonder*), producer/director Huber (see *ChalkZone*), and writer Gannaway (see *101 Dalmatians*, among others) an early testing ground for the memorable concepts and techniques they would bring to their later projects, which helped to fundamentally reshape television animation later in the 1990s.

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ULTIMATE BOOK OF SPELLS (2001)

STUDIO: BKN International

DISTRIBUTOR: Disney (2002)

PRODUCERS: Unknown

DIRECTORS: Kathi Castillo, Dennis Graham

WRITERS: Sean Derek, Christy Marx, Randy Littlejohn, Sean Roche, Julia Lewald

VOICE ACTORS: Janyse Jaud (Cassy X); Ron Halder (Ultimate Book of Spells, a.k.a. U.B.O.S.); Cathy Weseluck (Verne); Jim Byrnes, Patricia Drake, Saffron Henderson, Kirby Morrow, Pauline Newstone, Nicole Oliver, and Blu Mankuma (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: Very much in the vein of J. K. Rowling's Harry Potter books, this Canadian series focused on a trio of apprentice wizards studying under the (obviously named) Miss Crystalgazer in Hamburg, Germany, while thwarting the efforts of the (stereotypically) evil wizard Zarlak to control all the world's magic, much of which he had already hoarded away in his underground headquarters. As with Rowling, there was a very obvious good-versus-evil plot thread and a balance between low comedy and dark drama, but whereas Rowling was able to provide an innovative approach to plotting, character development, and setting enrichment lacking in most of her predecessors, this series was too mired in the clichés of television animation (especially of the Canadian variety) to succeed.

ULTRAFORCE (1995)

STUDIOS: Malibu, DIC, Bohbot

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Andy Heyward

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Rod Wilson (Hardcase), Catherine Disher (Topaze)

SYNOPSIS: The Ultras, superpowered beings created by an alien race from ordinary human beings, are in conflict between the good and bad members of their race.

COMMENTARY: This was the sole animated program based on the work of Malibu Comics, a start-up organization whose founders included such sci-fi/fantasy luminaries as Larry Niven, Gerard Jones, Steve Engelhart, Steve Gerber, and James Robinson. The founders' work was anchored in a joint setting called the Ultraverse, wherein all the comics were set (Engelhart's character Nightman, who starred in his own live-action series in 1997, was one such character). Malibu was purchased outright by Marvel Comics in 1994, and the following year, this animated program based on the comics universe and tied into a toy line from Galoob, hit television screens. While it was well produced for a series of this kind and got high ratings, growing corporate con-

flict between Malibu and Marvel's executive staff led the program to come to an abrupt end, with Galoob killing the related toy line and taking a huge financial loss in the process.

UNCLE GRANDPA (2013–2017)

STUDIO: Cartoon Network

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATOR/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Peter Browngardt

PRODUCERS: Rossitza Likomanova, Audie Harrison

DIRECTORS: Peter Browngardt, Audie Harrison, Greg Miller, Marc Ceccarelli, Ryan Kramer, Casey Alexander, Myke Chilian, Fred Osmond, Dominic Bisciano, Luke Brookshier, David Gemmill, Andy Gonsalves, Chris Reccardi, Nick Edwards, Jon Vermiliyea, Kenny Pittenger, Jason Reicher, Nick Cross, M. Wartella, Pendleton Ward, Max Winston, Zac Gorman, Zeus Cervas, Brett Varon, Chris Allison, Ryan Jouas, Andres Salaff, Chris Prynosi, Marc M., J. J. Villard, Mike Carlo

WRITERS: Dave Tennant, Peter Browngardt, David Smith, Audie Harrison, Casey Alexander, Myke Chilian, Tom Kaufmann, Kelsy Abbott, Andy Gonsalves, David Gemmill, Wade Randolph, Kenny Pittenger, Ryan Kramer, Chris Allison

VOICE ACTORS: Peter Browngardt (Uncle Larry Grandpa/Himself), Eric Bauza (Belly Bag/Hot Dog Person/Xarna/Eric/Guillermo), Kevin Michael Richardson (Mr. Gus/Remo's Dad, later episodes), Adam DeVine (Pizza Slice), Tom Kenny (Tiny Miracle the Robot Boy/Dennis/Remo/Remo's Friend #2), Audie Harrison (Beary Nice), Brian Posehn (Charlie Burgers), Mark Hamill (Frankenstein), Rob Schrab (Evil Wizard), Lena Headey (Aunt Grandma, a.k.a. Priscilla Jones), Zachary Gordon (Belly), Jonathan Adams (Caleb), Jarid Root (Melvin/Spaghetti Legs), Grey DeLisle Griffin (Melvin's Babysitter/Mrs. Dumpty/Susie/Josie/Little Judy Jones), Pamela Segall Adlon (Mary), Dee Bradley Baker (Adam), Roger Smith (Angry Man Johnson), Carlos Alazraqui (Austin), Shaquille O'Neal (Himself), Jessika Van (Akira), Scott Menville (Riley), Nika Futterman (Isabella), Steven Blum (Ham Sandwich), Steve Little (Remo's Friend #1), Jon Heder (Kev/Viewer), Paul Rugg (Remo's Dad, early episodes), Tim Blaney (Emperor Krell), Henry Rollins (Skeletony), Ric Flair (Himself), E. G. Daily (Mouse), Andrew W. K. (Himself), "Weird" Al Yankovic (Weird Pal), Henry Winkler (Nacho Cheese), Buzz Osborne (Himself), Dale Crover (Himself), Adam Jones (Himself), Chris Archer (Himself), David Price (Himself), Jose Altuve (Himself), Noah Syndergaard (Himself), Robert Rodriguez (Himself)

SYNOPSIS: Uncle Grandpa—the uncle, grandfather, brother, and father of every child and adult in the universe—travels the world helping children and teenagers resolve their problems in entirely absurd ways, when not hanging out in his RV with his similarly strange friends.

COMMENTARY: One of the patently bizarre short-form programs that have become Cartoon Network's stock-in-trade during the 2010s. Unlike its contemporary *Steven Universe* (q.v.), on which Uncle Grandpa guest-starred in one installment, there isn't much of a coherent backstory to follow; the merits of each

episode are clearly meant to rise and fall on their own terms, à la *Adventure Time* (q.v.). Fortunately, the focus of the program on the affairs of children and teenagers has helped it avoid much of the narcissistic grossness that has ruined too many otherwise well-thought-out projects of this kind, and its metamorphic changing of format on a regular basis, also like *Adventure Time*, makes it intriguing, although this makes it hard for those wanting an extended narrative arc to fully appreciate it.

Creator Browngardt, who had worked on the equally bizarre *Chowder* (q.v.), had previously created *Secret Mountain Fort Awesome* (q.v.), on which Uncle Grandpa made his first appearance.

***UNCLE WALDO AND HIS FRIENDS* (1964–1967)**

See *Hoppity Hooper* (a.k.a. *Uncle Waldo and His Friends*; 1964–1967).

***UNDERDOG* (1964–1966)**

STUDIOS: TOTAL Television, Leonardo

DISTRIBUTORS: NBC, CBS

CREATORS/WRITERS: Buck Biggers, Chet Stover

PRODUCERS: Peter Piech, Treadwell Covington

DIRECTORS: Peter Dakis, Sal Faillace, Lu Guarnier, Bob Schleh

VOICE ACTORS: Wally Cox (Shoeshine Boy/Underdog); Norma McMillan ("Sweet" Polly Purebred); George Irving (*Underdog* Narrator/Ruffled Feathers); Sandy Becker (Sgt. Okey Homa); Kenny Delmar (Hunter/Colonel Kit Coyote/Commander McBragg); Mort Marshall, Delo States, Ben Stone, and Allen Swift (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: Underdog, a canine superhero, flies into action whenever and wherever his assistance is needed. Supporting features included *The Hunter*, about a southern-accented dog detective; *The World of Commander McBragg*, about a long-winded British military officer; *The Go Go Gophers*, a mock western; and *Klondike Kat*, about a feline policeman in northern Canada.

COMMENTARY: Arguably the best product of the underrated and underappreciated TOTAL Television Studio and certainly the best known. Although writers Biggers and Stover stuck close to a set formula for each serialized *Underdog* narrative and likewise for the others, it was a charming formula nonetheless—at least on the first viewing. The title star was a groundbreaking original superhero character for television animation, paving the way for countless others; his habit of speaking entirely in rhymed couplet verses could arguably make him one of the first rappers. His main antagonists were Simon Bar Sinister, a mad scientist modeled on Lionel Barrymore, and Riff Raff, a gangster modeled on George Raft—they had voices resembling their templates. The series continued to air in reruns on NBC into the early 1970s before going into off-network syndication. *The Go Go Gophers* and *Klondike Kat* also appeared independently of *Underdog* in a later series, with the former getting title billing. Underdog later appeared as the subject of a live-action feature film from Disney in the 2000s, which bore very little resemblance to the series other than the central concept and character names.



Never fear—he is here. CBS/Photofest © CBS

UNDERGRADS (2001–2003)

STUDIOS: Click, Decode, MTV

DISTRIBUTOR: MTV

CREATOR: Pete Williams

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Neil Court, Steven DeNure, Abby Terkuhle

PRODUCERS: David McGrath, Beth Stevenson

DIRECTORS: Pete Williams, Joanna Boreham, Jerry Popowich

WRITERS INCLUDED: Andy Reingold, Josh Cagan

VOICE ACTORS: Pete Williams (Parker “Nitz” Walsh/Justin “Gimpy” Taylan/
Cal Evans/Rocky Gambiani), Susan Dalton (Kimmy Burton), Jene Yeo (Jesse)

SYNOPSIS: Four high school friends adjust to university life at three different colleges in the same town.

COMMENTARY: Creator Williams used his own college experiences as the basis for this project, which gained a fan base precisely around the demographic it depicted. Several colleges actually held events for fans of the show to gather on campus. Despite this success, MTV was unwilling to continue the program beyond the 13 episodes originally produced. Given the setting, the related content, and the provider, it was not a surprise that the series was cited by the Parents’ Television Council as being one of three animated series on the air with the most offensive content; *South Park* (q.v.) and *Celebrity Deathmatch* (q.v.) were the others.

• V •

VALLEY OF THE DINOSAURS (1974–1976)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCER: Iwao Takamoto

DIRECTORS: Charles Nichols, Peter Luschwitz

WRITERS: Sam Roeca, Peter Dixon, Peter Germano, James Henderson, Ernie Kahn, Don Masselink, Dick Robbins, Henry Sharp, Jerry Thomas, Clark Haas, Cullen Houghtaling, Lewis Marshall, Paul Sommer, Irv Spector, Howard Swift

VOICE ACTORS: Mike Road (John Butler), Shannon Farnon (Kim Butler), Margene Fudenna (Katie Butler), Jackie Earle Haley (Greg Butler), Alan Oppenheimer (Gorak), Joan Gardner (Gera), Melanie Baker (Tana), Steacey Bertheau (Lock), Andrew Parks (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: While vacationing in South America, the modern American Butler family is swept back in time to the Stone Age.

COMMENTARY: One of Hanna-Barbera's better straight offerings of the 1970s, all comparisons to its live-action contemporary *Land of the Lost* notwithstanding. While the studio repeated the common antihistorical gaff of having humans and dinosaurs coexist (see *The Flintstones*), this was generously balanced by the fact that the Butlers were able to use the modern technology and ideas they brought with them to aid their new cavepeople acquaintances and that the latter occasionally reciprocated with aid of their own devising. Though the program was generally well written, it made the mistake of making the cavepeople too eloquent, as well as having many of the younger characters make inappropriate wisecracks at the wrong times in the action.

VAN-PIRES (1997)

STUDIOS: Abrams-Gentile, MSH, Entertainment Factory

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

CREATORS: Anthony Gentile, John Gentile

PRODUCERS: Anthony Gentile, John Gentile, Jonathan Stathakis

DIRECTORS: Anthony Gentile, John Gentile, Mike Slisko

WRITERS INCLUDED: Lisa Morton

VOICE ACTORS: James Michael, Jonathan Kahn, Max Grace, Donna Daley, Bruce Jay, Billy Boy, and Don Mayo (Specific roles unknown)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: A hybrid live-action/CGI program that involved a meteor crash that turned several abandoned cars into Van-pires, who craved natural gas as human vampires crave blood, and the Van-pire Hunters, a group of kids able to transform into motor vehicles of their own, who confronted them. One of several incredibly silly syndicated projects from the Abrams-Gentile Studio (see *Dragon Flyz*, *Happy Ness: The Secret of the Lock*, and

Sky Dancers) that brought television animation to a new low of creativity at the same time other contemporaries were reaching much farther in the other direction.

THE VENTURE BROTHERS (2004–PRESENT)

STUDIOS: NoodleSoup, World Leaders, Titmouse, Astro Base Go, Williams Street

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATOR/DIRECTOR: Christopher McCulloch (billed as Jackson Publick)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Christopher McCulloch, Doc Hammer, Keith Crofford, Michael Lazzo

PRODUCER: Rachel Simon

WRITERS: Christopher McCulloch, Doc Hammer, Ben Edlund

VOICE ACTORS: Christopher McCulloch (Henry “Hank” Venture/Sergeant Hatred, later episodes/Pete White/Pirate Captain/Rodney, the Action Man/Colonel Horace Gentleman/Kano/Mr. Cardholder/General Hunter Gathers/Mile High, a.k.a. Sky Pilot/Monarch/Henchman 24/Tim-Tom/Watch/Dr. Henry Killinger/Sovereign/Iggy Pop/Klaus Nomi/Monstroso/Torrid/Truckules/Intangible Fancy/Mr. Frost/Augustus St. Cloud, later episodes/Wild Fop/Don Hell/Dragoon/Steppenwolf/Nerve/Wes Warhammer/Colonel Lloyd Venture/Fantomas/Professor Richard Impossible, later episodes/Manservant/Fat Chance/Lyndon Bee Johnson/Radical Left/Scott Hall, a.k.a. Zero/Eunuch #1/King Gorilla/Mr. Monday/Dr. Septapus/Teddy/Cuckoo Clocker/Maybe Man/Brainulo/Tiger Shark/SPHINX Commander, a.k.a. Michael/Storm Front/Scorpio/General Manhowers/Venturestein/Ted/Groovy/Ned/Cody/Race Bannon/Dr. Z/Hadji Singh/Dr. Robo Z/Weatherbot 5/Ghost Robot), Michael Sinterklaas (Dean Venture), James Urbaniak (Dr. Thaddeus “Rusty” Venture/Dr. Jonas Venture Jr. [J. J.]/David Bowie/Augustus St. Cloud, early episodes/Oscar Wilde/Hamilton G. Phantomos, a.k.a. the Phantom Limb/Catclaps/Eunuch #2), Patrick Warburton (Brock Samson), “Soul-Bot” (H.E.L.P.e.R), Brendon Small (Sergeant Hatred, early episodes/Swifty/Hector/Dr. Vulcano/Mr. Yourname/White Noise/Action Johnny, a.k.a. Jonny Quest), Doc Hammer (Dermott Fictell Venture/William Whalen, a.k.a. Master Billy Quizboy/Mr. Doe/Shore Leave, a.k.a. Holy Diver/Gary, a.k.a. Henchman 21/Dr. Mrs. The Monarch/Kevin/Ward/Caecius/Vendata/Red Mantle/Sunsational/Tiny Joseph/Outrider/Desmond/Sam Turgens, a.k.a. U.S. Steel), Lisa Hammer (Triana Orpheus), Steven Rattazzi (Dr. Byron Orpheus/Haranguetan/Aleister Crowley), Charles Parnell (Jefferson Twilight), Dana Snyder (Alchemist/Mr. Sample), Paul Boocock (Dr. Jonas Venture Sr./Eugen Sandow/Samuel Clemens, a.k.a. Mark Twain/Tigerific/Sonny), T. Ryder Smith (Otto Aquarius/Lips/Baron Werner Undherbeit), Stephen DeStefano (Dr. Entmann), Toby Huss (General Timothy Triester/Copy Cat/Scaramantula), Bill Hader (Headshot/Dr. Phineas Phage, early episodes/Flying Squid/Professor Richard Impossible, later episodes), Paget Brewster (Amber Gold/Councilman 11/Vespertina), John Hodgman (Snoopy/Skiron/Dale Hale), James Adomian (Dr. Phineas Phage, later episodes), Larry Murphy (Monsenor/Diamond Backdraft/Wonderboy 5), Hal Lublin (Wide Whale), Barbara Rosenblat (Battleaxe), Jeffrey Wright (Dr. Nidaba, a.k.a. Think Tank), Clancy Brown (Red

Death), Stephen Colbert (Professor Richard Impossible, early episodes), Peter McCulloch (Professor Richard Impossible, later episodes), Mia Barron (Lady Hawk Johnson/Girl Hitler/Molotov Cocktease/Sally Impossible), Tim Meadows (Wind Song), Terrence Fleming (Colonel Bud Manstrong), Nina Hellman (Lt. Anna Baldavich/Dr. Tara Quymn/Nancy Quymn), H. Jon Benjamin (Master), Joanna Adler (Myra Brandish/Drew Quymn/Ginnie/Val), Sue Gilead (Princess Tinyfeet/Patty), Nathan Fillion (Brown Widow), Paul Tompkins (Blue Morpho), Cristin Milloti (Sirena Ong), Seth Green (Mrs. Z/Lance Hale), Kevin Conroy (Chuck Scarsdale, a.k.a. Captain Sunshine), Patton Oswalt (Wonderboy), Rachel Feinstein (Barbara Qantas, a.k.a. Barbie Q)

SYNOPSIS: Fraternal twins Hank and Dean Venture assist their scientist father in combatting the forces of evil.

COMMENTARY: A long-running superhero parody that manages to hit most of its targets most of the time, thanks to some cleverly satiric writing and pointed acting. In addition to spoofing the usual range of DC- and Marvel-derived superhero stereotypes, it has also managed to mock surprising but deserved targets in the television animation canon, such as *Jonny Quest* (q.v.), *G.I. Joe* (q.v.), and *Scooby Doo* (q.v.). While not of the same caliber as other su-



Hank and Dean Venture flanked by their father and bodyguard Brock Samson—but why are they riding the bus? Cartoon Network/Photofest © Cartoon Network

perhero parodies, pastiches, and satires, such as *The Tick* (q.v.; the creator of *The Tick* contributed to the writing of this show, as noted in the credits) and the original *Powerpuff Girls* (q.v.), this program remains a comic oasis in a subgenre that takes itself far too seriously much of the time (as seen in the recent spate of live-action films from DC and Marvel). As with many of this type of production, the creator and his primary writing collaborator seemed to have reserved the majority of the best speaking parts for themselves, to the detriment of the others in the cast.

VISIONARIES: KNIGHTS OF THE MAGICAL LIGHT (1987)

STUDIOS: Marvel, Sunbow, Hasbro, Claster, TMS

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Joe Bacal, Yutaka Fujioka, Tom Griffin

PRODUCERS: Jim Duffy, Tadahito Matsumoto, Barry Glaser, Sachiko Tsuneda

DIRECTORS: Yoshinori Kanada, Osamu Nabeshima

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Neil Ross (Leoric), Michael McConnohie (Ectar/Lexor), Bernard Erhard (Cyrotek), Jim Cummings (Witterquick/Bearer of Knowledge), Hal Rayle (Arzon/Wisdom Owl), Beau Weaver (Feryl), Susan Blu (Galadria), Chris Latta (Darkstorm/Cravex), Jonathan Harris (Mortedd), Peter Cullen (Cindarr), Roscoe Lee Browne (Reekon), Jennifer Darling (Virulina), Malachi Throne (Narrator), Ellen Gerstel (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: The good Visionaries and the evil Darklings are in conflict on the planet Prysmos, which is chronologically in a magic-ridden Dark Ages setting.

COMMENTARY: Essentially *Transformers* (q.v.) meets Camelot. The synopsis was basically all the show consisted of, despite an unusual level of humor (by the standards of the Hasbro–Marvel alliance) in the plotting and characterizations. The fact that this was meant to sell toys rather than be an entertaining show in and of itself, however, should be inferred by Hasbro's involvement.

VIVA PIÑATA (2006–2009)

STUDIOS: Bardel, 4Kids, Rare, YTV

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX (United States), CW (United States)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Deina Bhesina, Norman Grossfeld, Alfred Kahn, Barry Ward, Lloyd Goldfine

PRODUCER: Paul Griffin

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS INCLUDED: Mike DeSeve, Anne Bernstein, David Cohen

VOICE ACTORS: Dan Green (Hudson Horstachio/King Roario), Marc Thompson (Franklin Fizzybear), Brian Maillard (Paulie Pretztail), David Willis (Fergy Fudgehog), Kathleen Delaney (Tina Twingersnap), Jamie McGonigal (Teddington Twingersnap), Eric Stuart (Les Galagoogoo/Pecky Pudgeon), Rebecca Soler (Ella Elephanilla/Simone Cinamonkey), Mike Pollock (Langston Licktoad), Michael Baley (Professor Pester), Sean Schemmel (Chortles Chippopotamus), Pete Zarustica (Pierre Parrybo), Sieko Shih (Petunia Pretztail), Mike MacRae (Prewitt Proftiamole)

SYNOPSIS: The living piñatas of Piñata Island, when not filling themselves with candy, dream of the day when they will be selected to be used at special events.

COMMENTARY: Based on a popular Xbox video game, this Canadian-American production was a light CGI confection that made up slightly in enthusiasm what it lacked in multidimensional plotting and characterization. The project continued to air in Canada in reruns for two years after it ceased production.

***VORTECH: UNDERCOVER CONVERSION SQUAD* (1996)**

STUDIOS: Kenner, Mediatoon, Universal

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Ian Corlett (Hardfire); David Sobolov (Damian Roarke); Venus Terzo (Miranda Ortiz); Scott McNeil (Stinger); Jim Byrnes (Vance); Andrea Libman (M. J. Sloan); Michael Donovan, Thomas Pickett, Pauline Newstone, Dale Wilson, Paulina Gillis, Linda Boyd, Maine Miller, Colin Murdock, Christopher Gray, Richard Newman, Mark Hildreth, Chris Turner, Lenore Zahn, Saffron Henderson, and Elizabeth Savenkoff (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: Research scientist brothers Hudson and Damien Roarke develop a unique project called Viral Organic Regeneration (VOR) technology. Hudson chooses to use the technology for good, Damien for evil.

COMMENTARY: Tied in to a toy project, this short-run project was, not surprisingly, killed after 13 installments when sales of the toy proved disappointing to manufacturer Kenner. Given the derivative nature of the production of the series, it's more likely that it hurt rather than helped in the PR department.

***VOYAGES OF DR. DOLITTLE* (1984)**

STUDIOS: Knack Television, 20th Century Fox

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

CREATOR: Hugh Lofting

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: John Stephenson (Dr. Dolittle); B. J. Ward (Tommy Stubbins); Jeannie Elias (Maggie Thompson); Stan Jones, Bill Callaway, Ralph James, Jerry Dexter, and Linda Gary (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: The second television animation go-round for the physician who can communicate with animals (see also *Further Adventures of Dr. Doolittle*) was less successful than the first only because it was not syndicated—and therefore seen—as widely. In this one, the doctor traveled the world with child companions Tommy and Maggie and encountered such mythical figures as the two-headed, tail-less Pushmi-Pullyu in the process.

***VYTOR, THE STARFIRE CHAMPION* (1989)**

STUDIOS: Calico, World Events, Zodiac

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Peter Keefe

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Michael Horton (Vytor), Liz Georges (Skyla/Lyria), Peter Cullen (Myzor/Eldor), Neil Ross (Targil), Allison Argo (Baboose), Patrick Fraley (Windchaser/Mutoids)

SYNOPSIS: Space traveler Vytor and his companion Skyla must retrieve the powerful Starfire Orb from those who have plundered it.

COMMENTARY: A short-run five-episode project that simply went through its *Star Wars*-derived business competently but without inspiration. Whether it was meant to serve as the launching pad for a longer-run project is unknown, but it provided, at least with its proecological story line, a template that later series would borrow from extensively.

• W •

WABBIT (2015–PRESENT)

STUDIO: Warner Brothers

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Sam Register

PRODUCERS: Matt Craig, Gary Hartle, Jason Wyatt

DIRECTORS: Erik Kuska, Scott Bern, Sean Petrilak, Jessica Borutski, Robb Pratt, Erik Knutson

WRITERS: Erik Kuska, Jason Plapp, Dan Root, Roger Eschbacher, Joseph Adams, Josie Campbell, Rafael Rosado, Richard Pursel, Luke Brookshier, Kevin Fleming, Rob Janas, Michael Ruocco, John Infantino, Celia Kendrick, David “Pez” Hoffmann, Justin Becker, Scott Clemmons, Greg Araya, Thomas Krajewski, Bill Kopp, Matt Craig, Miles Hindman, Derek Iversen, Sean Godsey, Matt Craig, Kevin Kramer, Andy Gonsalves, John Loy, Joey Clift, Erik Knutson, Doug “Mr.” Lawrence, Amber Hollinger, John McCann, Joseph Limbaugh, Michael Ludy, Rebecca Allen, Katie Nahnsen, Paul Dini, Tom Minton, Amanda Davis, Brendan Kelly, Marly Halpern Glaser, Stephen Perlstein, Robb Pratt, Erik Money Penny, Frank Caeti, Martin Garcia, Scott Bern, Sean Petrilak, Kyle Stafford, Sahin Ersosz, Amanda Barnes, Alexis Notabartolo, Rafael Rosado, Joe Canale, Molly Erdman, Dave Schwartz, Karen Graci, Sharon Forward, Robby Wells, Chris Rutkowski, Dan Fausett

VOICE ACTORS: Jeff Bergman (Bugs Bunny/Foghorn Leghorn/Abraham Lincoln/Michigan J. Frog), Dee Bradley Baker (Daffy Duck/Squeaks the Squirrel/Carl the Grim Rabbit, early episodes/Kratos the Polar Bear/Shifty the Squirrel/Shelby the Dog/Officer Enforski), J. P. Karilak (Wile E. Coyote), Maurice LaMarche (Yosemite Sam/Woodrow), Matthew Mercer (Bigfoot), Carlos Alazraqui (Lester P. Lilelegs/Shameless O. Scanty/Elliot Sampson), Jeff Bennett (Winter Stag/Dr. Clovenhoof), Bob Bergen (Porky Pig), Steven Blum (Jack/Barbarian), Jim Cummings (Theodore Tasmanian), Grey DeLisle Griffin (Vera Vulture), Daran Norris (Sir Little Chin), Kevin Michael Richardson (King Thes), Fred Tatasciore (Carl the Grim Rabbit, later episodes), Candi Milo (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: Yet another attempt by Warner to get more blood out of a franchise that has already been bled nearly dry through thoughtless and uncomfortably bad resurrections. The star, as the title implies (it is based on Elmer Fudd’s lisped pronunciation of *rabbit* in the original *Looney Tunes*), is Bugs Bunny. He and the other characters enact story lines (two per episode) that, while heavily indebted to the original cartoons in presentation, also have elements related to life in the 21st century (spoofs of energy drinks, Über, and binge-watching, among other things) going for them. To the production team’s credit, they didn’t just resurrect the old characters and do new things with them but created entirely new characters, as well; the notable ones include

Bugs's buddy Squeaks, who appeared nearly as often as Bugs, as well as Lester Lilylegs, the highly effeminate vice president of the United States, for whom capturing Bugs will be a sign of showing his manhood to the boss and which (naturally) doesn't happen. This aside and despite valiant contributions from the directors, writers, and actors, the effort more often falls flat than succeeds. You cannot, after all, entirely succeed in producing a new work of art if somebody already did it much better than you did a long time before you.

WACKY RACES (1968–1970)

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, Heatter-Quigley

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCER: Iwao Takamoto

DIRECTOR: Charles Nichols

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Daws Butler (Peter Perfect/The Sergeant/Big Gruesome/The Red Max/Rufus Ruffcutt/Rock Slag/Gravel Slag), Paul Winchell (Dick Dastardly/Private Pinkley), Don Messick (Muttley/Sawtooth/Professor Pat Pending/Ring-a-Ding/Little Gruesome), John Stephenson (Luke Bear/Blubber Bear/The General), Janet Waldo (Penelope Pitstop), Mel Blanc (The Ant Hill Mob), David Willock (Narrator)



**A walking demonstration of how evil does not pay. CBS/Photofest
© CBS**

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: It isn't often that a series can be said to have spawned a whole subgenre in and of itself, but this one did, as well as two spin-offs (see *Dastardly and Muttley in Their Flying Machines* and *The Perils of Penelope Pitstop*). Suffice it to say, the program was all about a variety of auto races between unique individuals and their equally unique automobiles. The most memorable figure was unquestionably the resident bad guy, black-mustached Dick Dastardly, who, with the aid of his giggling canine companion Muttley, attempted to sabotage the other drivers in order to win but always without success. The show drew high ratings, so much so that Hanna-Barbera and other studios spent the balance of the 1970s creating copycat shows (noted in their individual series entries) that were about as successful in re-creating the oddly funny visual ambience unique to this program as Dick Dastardly was in his endeavors.

THE WACKY WORLD OF TEX AVERY (1997)

STUDIOS: Telecima SA, Milimetros, Les Studios Tex SARL, General Mills, DIC

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Andy Heyward

WRITERS INCLUDED: Steve Pesce, Lane Raichert, Jymn Magon

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Billy West (Tex Avery/Freddie the Fly/Sagebrush Sid), Alec Willows (Dan the Man), Terry Klassen (Maurice), Maurice LaMarche (Mooch/Mr. Squab/Narrator), Cree Summer (Khannie), Kathleen Barr (Chastity Knott), Ian Corlett (Pompeii Pete/Einstone), Scott McNeil (Amanda Banshee), Lee Tockar (Genghis), Phil Hayes (Power Pooch), Jane Mortifee (Mrs. Squab)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: Unquestionably one of the world's most influential animators, Frederick "Tex" Avery was a brilliant auteur of a director who put a uniquely personal stamp on his work at a time when animation directors were not expected to do so. Starting as an animator at Universal in the early 1930s, he moved later in the decade to Warner Brothers, where he began directing; Bob Clampett and Chuck Jones began as animators in his unit. At Warner, Avery developed his signature style: breakneck pacing; outlandish, over-the-top acting from his characters; and an amazing collection of seemingly nonstop jokes and gags. After a disagreement with the Warner management, he relocated to MGM, where, in the 1940s and 1950s, his idiosyncratic manner of animation production reached the pinnacle of its success. After leaving MGM, he worked briefly for Universal but then left theatrical animation to work in TV commercial production. At the time of his death in 1980, Hanna-Barbera had recruited him to develop new projects: *The Kwicky Koala Show* (q.v.) resulted from this.

This project aped Avery's name and production style but was not so much a tribute to his memory as an insult to it. As Avery's most popular characters were, for legal reasons, out of reach of producer Heyward, he substituted some creations of his own—including, appropriately, turning the Texas-born Avery into a cowboy figure. But this did little to prevent the series from failing. All the tricks of the trade Avery had used to perfection were employed regularly, but lacking the masterful way Avery himself employed

and often transcended the limits of his material, it was easy to spot how far the animators had missed the mark, and the program quickly expired.

***WAIT 'TIL YOUR FATHER GETS HOME* (1972)**

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, Rhodes Communications

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: R. S. Allen, Harvey Bullock, Zoran Janjic

DIRECTOR: Peter Luschwitz

WRITERS INCLUDED: Don Christensen

VOICE ACTORS: Tom Bosley (Harry Boyle); Joan Gerber (Irma Boyle); Lennie Weinrib (Chet Boyle); Tina Holland (Alice Boyle); Jackie Earle Haley (Jamie Boyle, early episodes); Willie Aames (Jamie Boyle, later episodes); Jack Burns (Ralph); Pat Harrington Jr., Gil Herman, Don Adams, Jonathan Winters, Monty Hall, Phyllis Diller, Joe E. Ross, Don Knotts, and Rich Little (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: Suburban patriarch Harry Boyle is frequently bothered by the trouble his family and neighbors get him in.

COMMENTARY: A mixed attempt by Hanna-Barbera to create another adult-oriented sitcom, as *The Flintstones* (q.v.) was originally meant to be. The animation was a cut above the studio's current standard, presenting James Thurber-like character designs set against European-art-influenced backgrounds. Some of the episodes were well written, and the show featured a memorable supporting cast, with Burns's Ralph, an excessively paranoid and self-defensive Communist hater, stealing every scene he was in. Unfortunately, any attempt being adult beyond that was diluted and conducted with some hesitation, and that limited the show's potential. Evidently, the producers' sympathies lay more with Harry Boyle's modest conservatism than they did with the more liberal attitudes displayed by his children.

***WALLY GATOR* (1962)**

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

PRODUCERS/DIRECTORS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Daws Butler (Wally Gator), Don Messick (Mr. Twiddles)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: This was another variation on the now-standard Hanna-Barbera funny-animal formula; it aired, along with its contemporaries *Lippy the Lion* (q.v.) and *Touché Turtle* (q.v.), as what was loosely defined as *The Hanna-Barbera New Cartoon Series*, sometimes as a complete program (with Wally often getting top billing) or as separate programs in separate time slots. Wally (whom Butler voiced in the manner of veteran comedian/actor Ed Wynn) was billed in the main title as the "swinging alligator in the swamp," which was inconsistent with the actual narratives, in which he was clearly a resident of an unnamed zoo and frequently fought a battle of wits with mild-mannered zookeeper Twiddles in order to gain his freedom.

WANDER OVER YONDER (2013–2016)

STUDIOS: Disney, Mercury Filmworks, Boulder Media

DISTRIBUTOR: Disney

CREATOR/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Craig McCracken

PRODUCERS: Lauren Faust, Dave Thomas

DIRECTORS: Eddie Trigueros, Dave Thomas, Craig McCracken, Lauren Faust, Aaron Springer, Benjamin Balistreri

WRITERS: Ben Joseph, Eddie Trigueros, Craig McCracken, Mark Ackland, Vaughn Tada, Johanna Stein, Tim McKeon, Justin Nichols, Greg White, Riccardo Durante, Dave Thomas, Chris Houghton, David Gemmill, Ed Baker, Matt Chapman, John Aoshima, Matt Danner, Steven Lambe, Chuck Klein, Howard Perry, Francisco Angones, Amy Higgins, Steve Day, Ryan Walls, Mike Chapman, Aaron Springer, Darrick Bachman, Scott Peterson, Mike Yank, Todd Casey, Noelle Stevenson, Nate Federman, Sam Riegel, Andy Bean, Rachel Vine

VOICE ACTORS: Jack McBrayer (Wander); April Winchell (Sylvia Zbornak); Keith Ferguson (Lord Hater); Tom Kenny (Commander Peepers); Fred Tatasciore (Captain Tim/Lord Dominator, masked); Sam Riegel (Emperor Awesome); Noel Wells (Lord Dominator, unmasked); Aziz Anzari (Westley); James Marsden (Sir Brad Starlight); Edie McClurg (Tourist); G. Hannelius (Little Bit); Will Arnett (Rider); "Weird" Al Yankovic (Dr. Screwball Jones); Jon Hamm (Cartoon Lord Hater); Eddie Deezen (Cartoon Peepers); Alex Hirsch, Jason Ritter, and Kristen Schaal (*Mystery Kids' Mysteries* cast)

SYNOPSIS: Wander, a cheerful, orange-furred, banjo-playing alien creature of unknown origin, and his equine companion Sylvia travel through the galaxy righting obvious wrongs when not pursued by their enemies: first, the flamboyant but incompetent Lord Hater and, later, the more competent and menacing Lord Dominator.



Wander seems to be enjoying himself, while Lord Hater isn't—like usual. Disney Channel/Photofest © Disney Channel

COMMENTARY: Without a doubt one of the best television animation programs of the 2010s, a show that walked a difficult tightrope between straightforward sci-fi-oriented action/adventure and hilarious comedy and did so in an extremely masterful way. This was not surprising, considering the program was created and produced by McCracken, who had expertly handled such a balance in the original *Powerpuff Girls* (q.v.), and produced by Faust (McCracken's wife), who did the same with *My Little Pony: Friendship Is Magic* (q.v.). The setting was superb, with an enormously diverse range of interplanetary settlements featured; the directing and writing was razor sharp and tight-knit, with a great number of interesting and intriguing characters featured within; and the voice acting (particularly that of McBrayer and Winchell) was excellent. As with his earlier programs, McCracken showed himself here to be one of the grand masters of modern television animation, with an unerring sense of taste, dramatic staging, and comedic ingenuity that made him and his colleagues models for how to produce television animation in a perennially effective and successful way. Unfortunately, Disney did not seem to share this viewpoint, for they sadly gave the show the chop long before it had fully exploited the potential of its setting and characters. This made it yet another casualty in the genre's history of how economic and political mismanagement damaged or snuffed out genuine creativity.

WAR PLANETS (A.K.A. *SHADOW RAIDERS*; 1998)

STUDIOS: Mainframe, Alliance Atlantis, Summit Media

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated (United States)

PRODUCER: B. F. Painter

DIRECTORS: Colin Davies, Owen Huntley, Phil Mitchell, Mark Sawers, Mark Schiemann, Dwayne Beaver, Anthony Atkins, Andrew Duncan, Vladimir Steffoff, George Samilski, Craig McEwen, James Taylor, James Boshier, J. Falconer, Steve Ball

WRITERS: Len Wein, Christy Marx, Marv Wolfman, Ken Pontac, Katherine Lawrence, Steve Cuden, Dan DiDio, Emma Bull, Will Shetterly, Brooks Wachtel, Art Holcomb, Gillian Horvath

VOICE ACTORS: Paul Dobson (Graveheart), Erika Okuma (Jade), Scott McNeil (Pelvus), Blu Mankuma (Lord Mantel), Jim Byrnes (Grand Vizier), Donna Yamamoto (Princess Tekla), Matt Hill (Prince Pyrus), Tegan Moss (Lady Zera), Mark Oliver (King Cryos), Gary Chalk (Emperor Femur), Tasha Simms (Lam-prey), U. K. (Voxxx), Alec Willos (Blok)

SYNOPSIS: Four planets named for their primary natural resource—Fire, Ice, Bone, and Rock—are in conflict, unaware that a survivor of the once all-powerful Beast Planet intends to destroy them all.

COMMENTARY: Originally known as *Shadow Raiders* in its native Canada because it was a blatant attempt to promote a toy line of that name from the Trendmasters Company there. While it featured some impressive CGI animation courtesy of the innovative Mainframe Studio (previously responsible for *Reboot* [q.v.]), the program failed to catch on south of the border and quickly disappeared.

WAYNEHEAD (1996–1997)

STUDIO: Warner Brothers

DISTRIBUTOR: WB

CREATOR: Damon Wayans

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Damon Wayans, Eric Gold

PRODUCERS: Grant Moran, Lenord Robinson

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS: Grant Moran, Diane Dixon, Kevin Hopps, David Wyatt, Janice Wells

VOICE ACTORS: Orlando Brown (Damey Wayne), Kim Wayans (Mrs. Wayne), John Witherspoon (Mr. Wayne), Gary Coleman (Kevin Wayne), T'Keyah "Crystal" Kemah (Aki/Roz/Shavonne), Tico Wells (Marvin), Jamil Smith (Mo Money Jr.), Shawn Wayans (Toof), Marlon Wayans (Blue), Frank Welker (Tripod), James Altuner (Monique)

SYNOPSIS: Clubfooted African American boy Damey Wayne entertains himself and his family and friends in a poverty-stricken neighborhood of New York City.

COMMENTARY: One of only a handful of television animation series with a primarily or exclusively African American cast. In this case, the driving force was creator/executive producer Wayans, who patterned the lead character (complete with club foot) after himself as a child. Damon first came to prominence as a cast member of the highly popular sketch comedy series *In Living Color*, created by and starring his brother Keenan Ivory and featuring several of their siblings, including Kim, Shawn, and Marlon. Since that program's end, the various members of the Wayans family have pursued solo careers as actors and filmmakers; in Damon's case, he has appeared in (and occasionally produced and written, as well) a number of films and television series with various degrees of success. *Waynehead* (the name was an inside joke among the male Wayans that referred to their similar hairstyles) was one of the more-sincere and less-overblown projects the Wayans family has involved itself in post-*In Living Color*, but appearing on the weak WB network meant the series received little promotion and less of an audience size, although it later reemerged in reruns on WB's corporate sibling Cartoon Network.**WAYSIDE** (2005–2008)

STUDIO: Nelvana

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon (United States)

CREATOR: Louis Sachar

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Scott Dyer, Doug Murphy, Lin Oliver

DIRECTOR: Riccardo Durante

WRITERS INCLUDED: John Derevlany, Lin Oliver

VOICE ACTORS: Michael Cera (Todd, pilot episode), Mark Rendall (Todd), Denise Oliver (Maurecia/Jenny/Bebe), Lisa Ng (Dana/Shari/Leslie/Rondi/Others), Martin Villafana (Myron), Kathy Najimy (Mrs. Jewls, pilot episode), Kathleen Laskey (Mrs. Jewls), Kedar Brown (Mr. Kidswatter), Sergio Di Zio (Louis), Jayne Eastwood (Mrs. Mush), Terry McGurrin (Stephen/John/Eric #1), Peter

Oldring (Joe/Eric #2/Le Chef), Ricky Collins (Eric #3), Julie Lemieux (Mrs. Gorf), Dwayne Hill (Mr. Blunderbuss)

SYNOPSIS: Elementary school kid Todd is transferred to Wayside, a school that is 30 stories high instead of flat on the ground, and tries to fit in among the highly eccentric students and faculty.

COMMENTARY: Based on Sachar's popular children's book series, although the producers took the liberty of eliminating some of the supporting characters and reshaping the backstories of the ones who were made the most prominent. They were clearly trying to produce something that was meant to be funny, but more often than not, it wasn't. The severe eccentricities of everyone except Todd made the school seem much more like an insane asylum to some viewers and confused them as much about the place as Todd himself was. It ultimately reflected the substantial difficulties Canadian television animation producers have with translating American ideas (Sachar is an American author) to their medium without unintentionally making themselves look like second-rate hacks compared to their American counterparts.

***WE BARE BEARS* (2015–PRESENT)**

STUDIO: Cartoon Network

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATOR/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Daniel Chong

PRODUCERS: Carrie Wilksen, Randy Myers

DIRECTORS INCLUDE: Phil Rynda, Sue Mondt, Robert Alvarez, Daniel Chong, Madeline Sharafian, Abe Audish, Bert Youn, Tom Law, Manny Hernandez, Guillermo Martinez, Adam Campbell, Eric Favela, Kyler Spears, Lauren Sassen, Vera Brosgol, Julian Narino, Danny Ducker, Louie Zong, Adam Campbell, Christina Chang, Sarah Soble, Mikey Heller, Kris Mukai

WRITERS INCLUDE: Daniel Chong, Madeline Sharafian, Teresa Hsiao, Tom Law, Mikey Heller, Susie Vitek, Monica Padrick, Spencer Porter, Louie Zong, Charlyne Yi, Shion Takeuchi, Molly Prather, Bert Youn, Edi Patterson, Trevor Jimenez, Lauren Sassen, Kristi Korzec, Danny Gendron, Guillermo Martinez, Danny Ducker, Kyler Spears, Sarah Sobole, Kris Mukai

VOICE ACTORS: Eric Edelstein (Grizzly), Sam Lavagnino (Grizzly as a cub), Bobby Moynihan (Panda), Duncan Joiner (Panda as a cub), Demetri Martin (Ice Bear), Charlyne Yi (Chloe Park), Jinkoo Jeong (Mr. Park), Niki Yang (Mrs. Park), Patton Oswalt (Nom Nom), Jason Lee (Charlie), Cameron Esposito (Ranger Tabes), Ellie Kemper (Lucy), Keith Ferguson (Little Bear), Kyrie Irving (Himself), Paul George (Himself), Damien Lillard (Himself), Grey DeLisle Griffin (Annie), Lou Ferrigno (Paul), Bo Burnham (Andy Bangs), Mel Rodriguez (Darell), Jake Johnson (Dave), Felicia Day (Carla), Darin De Paul (Yuri)

SYNOPSIS: A trio of young bears tries to make themselves comfortable in the city, in the process befriending a young Asian American child prodigy.

COMMENTARY: Another of Cartoon Network's new abbreviated 15-minute series, this program has some interesting ideas at its core, but it isn't entirely able to produce material that is completely effective. However, it remains historically notable for being a rare case of an Asian American creator/producer

being able to produce a series within what is still largely a Caucasian production environment, and this may help it serve as a cultural signpost for minority producers in the television animation field in the years ahead—something that is always needed in the genre.

THE WEEKENDERS (2000–2004)

STUDIO: Disney

DISTRIBUTORS: ABC (2000–2001), Syndicated (2001–2002), UPN (2001–2002), Disney (2003–2004)

CREATOR/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Doug Langdale

PRODUCERS: Kallen Kagan, Natasha Kopp

DIRECTOR: Steven Lyons

WRITERS INCLUDED: Doug Langdale, Sam Kass, Sharon Lee Watson, Lance Kinsey, Evan Gore, Heather Lombard, Larry Spencer, David Warick, Amy DeBartolomeis, Jonathan Rosenthal, Rachel Powell, Steve Atkinsky, Dan O'Connor, Brian Palermo

VOICE ACTORS: Jason Marsden (Tino Tonitini/Colby), Phil LaMarr (Carver Descartes), Grey DeLisle (Lor McQuarrie/Others), Kath Soucie (Tish Katsufakis/Ruby), Lisa Kaplan (Mrs. Tonitini/Foods of the World Lady), Cree Summer (Mrs. Descartes/Others), Robbie Rist (Thompson Oberman), Jeff Bennett (Pizza Guy/Mr. Katsufakis/Mr. McQuarrie/Others), Tara Strong (Kandi), Kristen Kreuk (Gina), Kerri Kenney (Mrs. Katsufakis), Julianne Buescher (Frances/Bree)

SYNOPSIS: In the southern California community of Bahia Bay, middle school pals Tino, Carver, Lor, and Tish make it a point to spend as much time as possible together on the weekends, in the process learning more about themselves and others than they could have otherwise.

COMMENTARY: An exceptionally good program, for its time and also by the standards of those before and after it, chiefly because it defied many of the persistent stereotypes and recurring bad ideas in the genre and replaced them with unique approaches of its own. Rather than drowning in and choking on slapstick, it emphasized a restrained but always present dry wit that showed off the varying degrees of intelligence the characters possessed and relied on finely tuned dialogue, well thought-out (and realistic) settings, and interlocking recurring jokes. The series was anchored largely by Tino, who served as the central interlocutor and guide for the home audience: opening, closing, and commenting on the action in a warm manner, as if the whole audience were all among his many close, friendly acquaintances while at the same time exposing us to the whole range of his gregarious but intensely neurotic and insecure personality. His three best friends—would-be fashionista Carver, tough but sympathetic tomboy Lor, and highly intelligent and extremely literate (especially by television animation standards) and multitalented Tish—were equally sketched on multidimensional terms, and their interactions provided the grist for the majority of the plots. (The voice acting was one of the show's major assets, with Marsden, LaMarr, DeLisle, and Soucie contributing career-defining performances in their leading roles.) Creator Langdale likewise sketched in a well thought-out portrait for his setting (based on his hometown



How do you get stuff done during a weekend? Ask our four skilled experts here. Disney Channel/Photofest © Disney Channel

of San Diego) while also providing some eccentric supporting characters to further his show's humorous ambience when needed. He was surprisingly adept at including and involving educational material (as then required by his distributor and the FCC) in his narratives, in ways that both furthered the action and gave breaks from it while doing nothing to prevent his program from succeeding with aplomb in his aims.

Some level of the esteem that this program is held in can be gathered by the fact that it has been one of the very few Disney series of its time and after to receive a DVD release, as Disney, then and now, has tended to be stingier about sharing its animated television series in this format than other producers have been. This, and continued exposure in television and online

rebroadcasts, have reinforced the fact that, in a genre where sameness often rules, *The Weekenders* succeeded as a program on creative terms that were unique and engaging, and it gained an audience who loved and respected it precisely for that reason.

WEIRD-OHS (1999–2000)

STUDIOS: Weird Ohs, Mainframe, Decode

DISTRIBUTOR: Family Channel (United States)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Christopher Brough, Ian Pearson, Mark Ralston

PRODUCER: Kim Dent Wilder

DIRECTORS: Sean Frewer, Owen Hurley, Gino Nichele, Ezekiel Norton

WRITERS INCLUDED: Adrian Budd

VOICE ACTORS: Mark Atchison (Leaky Boat Louie), Kathleen Barr (Digger/Mama B Chassis), Gary Chalk (Uncle Huey), Ian Corlett (Wade/Baby Chassis), Tabitha St. Germain (Portia), Cusse Mankuma (Eddie), Scott McNeil (Daddy O Chassis/Davey/Killer McBash), Elizabeth Savenkoff (Slingrave Curvette)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: Based on a toy line, this was a rare exercise in slapstick comedy from a studio used to producing action-oriented material in a CGI format, and it showed just how ill-suited both the studio and CGI are at executing this kind of material with true knowledge and affection. The program aired on the Family Channel as part of a block of other Canadian imports, including *Angela Anaconda* (q.v.) and *The Kids from Room 402* (q.v.).

WHAT A CARTOON! (1995–2005)

See *World Premiere Toons* (a.k.a. *What a Cartoon!*, *Cartoon Cartoon Show*; 1995–2005).

WHAT-A-MESS (1995–1996)

STUDIOS: DIC, Link

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATORS: Frank Muir, Joseph Wright

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Andy Heyward, Robby London, Michael Maliani

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Ryan O'Donohue (What-a-Mess), Jo Ann Harris Belson (Felicia), Joe Nipote (Trash), Frank Muir (Frank/Narrator), Charity James (Duchess), Miriam Flynn (Mother), Michael Bell (Father), Debi Derryberry (Daughter), Adam Hendershott (Son), Dana Hill (Norton), Jim Cummings (President), Candi Milo (Ramona), Russi Taylor (Esmeralda)

SYNOPSIS: A well-meaning Afghan puppy of an exalted pedigree (his real name was Prince Amir of Kinjan) perennially but unintentionally gets into a lot of trouble.

COMMENTARY: This charming and understated show had its origins in a popular British book series by author Muir (who participated in the voice cast here, as noted in the credits) and illustrator Wright, which began in 1977. While DIC was forced to Americanize some aspects of the program to make the show work for North American audiences, other aspects were kept the same. The ungainly but dignified lead character was largely unchanged, with his bumbling attempts to provide help to his friends and family portrayed both

humorously and sympathetically; he was not unlike a human child in similar predicaments. The show played to the animation tradition regarding animal and children leads by portraying the puppy's human masters as headless cyphers, further denying them any real active role in the story by not giving them proper names, either.

An earlier British adaptation of the books, which has not been shown in North America, aired on the Central Television Network in the early 1990s.

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO ROBOT JONES? (2002)

STUDIO: Cartoon Network

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

CREATOR/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Greg Miller

PRODUCERS: Rob Renzetti, Brian Miller, Janet Dimon

DIRECTOR: Mike Bell

WRITERS INCLUDED: Zeke Kamm

VOICE ACTORS: Bobby Block (Robot Jones), Grey DeLisle (Mom Unit/Shannon Westaberg/Connie), Maurice LaMarche (Dad Unit), Kyle Sullivan (Timothy "Socks" Martin/Dan), Myles Jeffrey (Charles "Cubey" Mitchell), Josh Peck (Lenny Yogman), Austin Stout (Denny Yogman), Jeff Bennett (Principal Madman), Dee Bradley Baker (Mr. Uerkraut), Jonathan Osner (Tim Baines/Little Kevin), Rip Taylor (Mr. Mcmcmc)



Whatever happened to him, indeed? Here he is, flanked by his pals Cubey (left), Socks (second left), and Shannon (far right). Cartoon Network/Photofest © Cartoon Network

SYNOPSIS: A young robot attends a human middle school in order to understand and interpret the customs of the human race.

COMMENTARY: The title of this show has, somewhat ironically, been asked by its fans ever since it came to an end, for even by the standards of television animation, its run was unaccountably short. This came about it in part because Cartoon Network inexplicably aired it in a late-night time slot despite the fact that it was a very clean, family-friendly program that deserved to air earlier in the day. It also happened to be a well-produced series, with its half-dozen episodes well animated and written, with some cleverly constructed sequences and character designs (school principal Madman, for example, looked like a portlier version of Adolf Hitler, for reasons known only to the producers). The fact that Robot Jones fell in love with a fellow student—Shannon, who possessed braces and an artificial leg—was something that could have easily been more developed had the producers had more time and inclination to do so but unfortunately was not fully addressed. In all, this was a very good program that, as with many series in this book, never got the attention and respect that it truly deserved.

***WHAT'S NEW, MR. MAGOO?* (1977–1979)**

See *Mister Magoo* (and related series).

***WHAT'S NEW, SCOOPY DOO?* (2002–2006)**

See *Scooby Doo, Where Are You?* (and related series).

***WHAT'S WITH ANDY?* (2001–2002)**

STUDIOS: CinéGroupe, Teletoon

DISTRIBUTOR: Family Channel (United States)

CREATOR: Andy Griffiths

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Joseph Purdy

PRODUCERS: Michel Lemire, Daniele Joubert

DIRECTOR: Tim Deacon

WRITERS: Joseph Purdy, Michelle Lamoreaux, Robert Lamoureux, Kat Likkel, Michael Maler, Ford Riley, Tom Sheppard

VOICE ACTORS: Ian Corlett (Andy Larkin); Bumper Robinson (Danny, early episodes); Daniel Brochu (Danny, later episodes); Jenna Von Oy (Jen Larkin, early episodes); Jessica Kardos (Jen Larkin, later episodes); Colleen O'Shaughnessy (Lori, early episodes); Jaclyn Linetsky (Lori, later episodes); Dee Bradley Baker (Mr. Larkin, early episodes); Arthur Holden (Mr. Larkin, later episodes); Cathy Cavadini (Mrs. Larkin/Terri/Mrs. Weebles, early episodes); Susan Glover (Mrs. Larkin/Terri/Mrs. Weebles, later episodes); Danny Cooksey (Lik, early episodes); Mark Hauser (Lik, early episodes); Scott Parken (Leech, early episodes); Craig Francis (Leech, later episodes); Matt Holland (Craig); E. G. Daily, Holly Frankel, and Kath Soucie (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: What was “with” Andy was the fact that he was a self-glorifying prank artist who hoped to assume Guinness-World-Record status in that art. Based on a long-running children’s book series by Australian author

Griffiths, the show focused on the lengths to which Andy was willing to go to annoy his friends and family in the town of East Gackle by regularly and remorselessly making them the butt of his elaborate jokes. These included faking his own death to get out of detention at school and impersonating his sister at a dance! To be fair to Andy, each of the episodes attempted to allow him to discuss the events as he saw them, through a black-and-white scrawl-drawing technique that the show's producers referred to as "Doodlevision." But that did not prevent him from being guilty in the first degree of mischief making, especially in the eyes of viewers who had little toleration for this kind of mischief. Unlike many Canadian series, this program made it to America fairly quickly, debuting only about a month there after its Canadian debut.

***WHEELIE AND THE CHOPPER BUNCH* (1974–1975)**

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCER: Iwao Takamoto

DIRECTOR: Charles Nichols

WRITERS: Myles Wilder, Ray Parker, Larz Bourne, Len Janson, Chuck Menville, Bob Ogle, Dalton Sandifer

VOICE ACTORS: Frank Welker (Wheelie/Chopper), Judy Strangis (Rota Ree), Don Messick (Scrambles), Paul Winchell (Revs), Lennie Weinrib (Hi Riser), Rolinda York (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: A show about humanized automobiles that took a very limited idea and managed to expand it to create 13 episodes' worth of material. Wheelie was the protagonist, a Volkswagen Beetle-like underdog figure who communicated via horn blasts and subliminal messages projected on his windshield. His girlfriend Rota Ree was the same make and model as he was, and they were both threatened often by the other half of the title. This was Chopper, a motorcycle who wore a Kaiser Wilhelm helmet on his handlebars, and his goofball colleagues Revs, Scrambles, and Hi Riser, who were, unlike the others, able to talk. (Winchell's portrayal of Revs was based on the eccentric character actor Hugh Herbert, whose "Hoo hoo" catchphrase had been appropriated by Daffy Duck in his earliest screen appearances in the late 1930s.) There was little to show for the program other than some inspired background art by Fernando Montealegre, whose work gave Hanna-Barbera's more artistically barren series of this era a noticeable touch of class.

***WHERE MY DOGS AT?* (2006)**

STUDIOS: MTV, Six Point Harness, Enough with the Bread Already

DISTRIBUTOR: MTV

CREATORS: Jeffrey Ross, Aaron Lee

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Michael Bloom

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Jeffrey Ross (Buddy); Tracy Morgan (Wolfie); John DiMaggio (Dog Catcher/Others); Dean Edwards (50 Cent/Jay Z/Others); Jeff Richards (Rexia/

Tom Cruise/Courtney Love/Others); Lauren Tom (Britney Spears/Others); Jackie Harris (Paris Hilton/Others); Colin Mahan (Bruce Willis/Others); Greg Eagles and Aaron Lee (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: A pair of stray dogs struggles to survive on the streets of Hollywood, in the process overhearing and observing the activity of the city's celebrity residents.

COMMENTARY: This program had only one joke, and it was a bad one, making it the worst of MTV's various toe-dippings into television animation in the 1990s and 2000s. The program was played at an edgy, subversive level that was designed to shock rather than entertain, and it paid the price for this by having a justifiably short life span. One notorious example of what it called comedy was a sequence that showed rapper Snoop Dogg walking into a pet store, accompanied by two bikini-clad human women depicted and treated as dogs—for which the show was appropriately censored in the press.

***WHERE ON EARTH IS CARMEN SANDIEGO?* (1994–1999)**

STUDIOS: DIC, Broderbund

DISTRIBUTORS: FOX, Family Channel

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Andy Heyward, Robby London, Michael Maliani, Benjamin Melniker, Michael Uslan

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS: Bill Matheny, David Carren, Doug Molitor, J. Larry Carroll, Laren Bright

VOICE ACTORS: Rita Moreno (Carmen Sandiego); Rodger Bumpass (Chief); Jennifer Hale (Ivy); Scott Menville (Zack); Tim Curry (Dr. Gunnar Maelstrom); David Coburn (Lee Jordan); Asi Lang, Joani Pleasant, Jeffrey Tucker, and Justin Shenkarow (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: This overtly educational program is, so far, the only television animation program based on a long-running media franchise that began in the mid-1980s with a highly popular computer game from Broderbund Software. The protagonist was Carmen Sandiego, a former private investigator who had gone bad and become a successful thief. She was also the boss of a worldwide crime syndicate called the Villains' International League of Evil (V.I.L.E.), whose numerous operatives (the majority of which bore bad puns for names, such as Hardly Worthit) assisted her in achieving her objectives. The object of the original game was to catch Carmen and company in the act before they could get away with what they had in mind. The game's popularity led it to be adapted as a popular children's game show, *Where in the World Is Carmen Sandiego?* (a sequel, *Where in Time Is Carmen Sandiego?* was also given this treatment), and as this animated program, whose launch was delayed because Margaret Loesch, then head of FOX's children's television division, wanted it to be made with effort and quality. In this show, the investigation of Carmen's activity was conducted by gifted teenagers Ivy and Zack, who reported to the chief, a holographic disembodied head. Loesch's desire for a quality product was met with a series that literally drowned viewers in geographic, historical, and other information as it progressed, though fortuitously this did not affect the overall quality too much. In 1995, it was awarded an Emmy in its program class.

WHERE'S HUDDLES? (1970)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera, Alex Lovy

DIRECTORS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera, Charles Nichols

WRITERS INCLUDED: Harvey Bullock, Ray Allen

VOICE ACTORS: Cliff Norton (Ed Huddles), Mel Blanc (Bubba McCoy), Jean Vander Pyl (Marge Huddles), Marie Wilson (Penny McCoy), Paul Lynde (Claude Per-twee), Alan Reed (Mad Dog Maloney), Herb Jeffries (Freight Train), Dick Enberg (Game Announcer)

SYNOPSIS: Professional football player Ed Huddles and his friend/neighbor/team-mate Bubba McCoy are frequently suckered into plots to increase their meager income.

COMMENTARY: A stale attempt by Hanna-Barbera to produce another *Flintstones* (q.v.) in the modern world. Because the world of pro football seemed too limited to provide much to the writers and directors other than to provide them with a chance to stage well-orchestrated games called by veteran sports broadcaster Enberg, they too often relied on concepts and story lines that originated elsewhere, including *The Flintstones* itself, to pad things out. The fact that Ed and Marge's infant daughter was named Pom Pom and their dog was named Fumbles (he even wore a helmet and cleats!) contributed to comedic overkill that destroyed any original potential the show possessed. The program's original 10-episode summer run was intended to be a test run for the show, so it could air as a midseason replacement in the winter of 1971. This never came to pass, and the show was never seen again following another round of summer reruns later that year.**WHERE'S WALDO? (1991–1992)**

STUDIOS: DIC, Waldo Film

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATOR: Martin Handford

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Martin Handford, Andy Heyward, Peter Orton

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS INCLUDED: Phil Harnage, Bill Matheny

VOICE ACTORS: Townsend Coleman, Jim Cummings, Julian Holloway, Dave Workman, Joe Alaskey, Jack Angel, Jeff Bennett, Gregg Berger, Susan Blu, Carol Channing, Cam Clarke, Brian Cummings, Jennifer Darling, Jeannie Elias, Patrick Fraley, Maurice LaMarche, Mary McDonald Lewis, Michele Mariana, John Mariano, Chuck McCann, Pat Musick, Alan Oppenheimer, Rob Paulsen, Jan Rabson, Roger Rose, Susan Silo, and Frank Welker (Specific roles unknown)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: The title question was first asked in 1987 in an elaborate picture book by British artist Handford, the success of which led to several sequels that created a franchise that is still known and loved today. In the books, Handford would construct a variety of complicated landscape and crowd scenes in which he would insert Waldo, a tall, bespectacled young

man wearing a striped red-and-white sweater and a red tam-o'-shanter hat; the object of the book was to find the exact place in the drawings where Handford had sequestered his character. As this was not a suitable approach for an animated television series (except for a couple of short one-minute bookend sequences that replicated it), the majority of the show made Waldo into a conventional animated character, enacting good-natured adventures with his dog Woof and girlfriend Wilma, while occasionally confronting his villainous doppelgänger, Odlaw. The show's major comedic accent was an egotistical narrator who regularly engaged in snippy dialogue with the stars and home audience, à la his counterparts in *Rocky and His Friends/The Bullwinkle Show* (q.v.), to good effect.

WIDGET, THE WORLD WATCHER (1990)

STUDIOS: Calico, Zodiac

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

CREATOR/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Peter Keefe

PRODUCERS: Claudia Zeitlin Burton, Tom Burton

DIRECTOR: Tom Burton

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Russi Taylor (Widget); Jim Cummings (Megabrain); Kath Soucie (Brian/Christine); Dana Hill (Kevin); Tress MacNeille, Brian Cummings, Cam Clarke, Patrick Fraley, Peter Cullen, Cree Summer, and Townsend Coleman (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: Widget, an alien, has been appointed by his planet as a world watcher meant to confront both ecologically and nonecologically based forms of villainy on Earth and elsewhere.

COMMENTARY: A well-intentioned proecology project that was far more subtle and successful in achieving its aims than other series in that vein, such as *Captain Planet and the Planeteers* (q.v.). The program's success in the ratings justified its well-modulated approach, and that, considering its distributor's lack of economic and political influence in the media at the time, was no mean feat in and of itself.

WILDC.A.T.S. (1994–1995)

STUDIO: Nelvana

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATOR/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Jim Lee

PRODUCERS: Michael Hirsh, Patrick Loubert, Clive Smith

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS INCLUDED: Bob Forward

VOICE ACTORS: Dennis Akyama (Dockwell), Roscoe Handford (Zealot), Janet Laine Green (Void), Ruth Marshall (Voodoo), Sean McCann (Marlowe), Dean McDermott (Warblade), Paul Mota (Maul), Colin O'Meara (Grifter), Rod Wilson (Spartan), Maurice Wint (Helspont)

SYNOPSIS: A group of superheroic felines defend the universe from their evil opposite numbers.

COMMENTARY: Based on the popular Image Comics series developed by storied comic book veteran Lee, this project was likely chosen for an animated adaptation because the anthropomorphism lent itself well to that idea. Unfortunately, the series was poorly produced and received even poorer ratings, so that, while the comic book continued to be produced, the animated version was quickly killed and largely forgotten.

WILDFIRE (1986–1987)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: Joe Taritero, Peter Aries Jr.

DIRECTORS: Ray Patterson, Art Davis, Oscar Dufau, Don Lusk, Carl Urbano, Rudy Zamora

WRITERS: Jeff Segal, Kelly Ward, John Loy, Linda Woolverton, David Schwartz, Tony Marino, Jina Bacaar, Mark Edens, Eric Lewald

VOICE ACTORS: Georgi Irene (Princess Sara); John Vernon (Wildfire); David Ackroyd (John/Prince Coran); Jessica Walter (Diabolyne); Rene Auberjonois (Alvinar); Bobby Jacoby (Dorin); Lilly Moon (Ellen); Susan Blu (Brutus); Billy Barty (Dweedle); Victoria Carroll (Mrs. Ashworth); June Lockhart (Vesta); Amanda McBroom (Queen Sarana); Philip Clarke (Lord Samson); Keene Curtis (Charles Spec); George DiCenzo (Aragon); Bernard Erhard (Rothadode); Barbara Goodson (Nerissa); Dan O'Herlihy (Jovar); Diane Pershing (Lady Aura); Brock Peters (Thunderbolt); Roger Rose (Halavex); Jeffrey Tambor (Oberon); Townsend Coleman, Robert Jayne, Rob Paulsen, and Frank Welker (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: Sara, a 12-year-old girl from Montana, is befriended by a mystical talking horse named Wildfire, who takes her to the planet Dar-Shan (she is rightfully a princess of one of its realms), where they fight the evil schemes of the sorceress Diabolyne.

COMMENTARY: Hanna-Barbera was clearly trying to create a fantasy series for girls, especially girls who loved horses, when such a thing wasn't much of a priority for television animation producers, so they clearly deserved some points for trying. However, it was clear that, unlike their contemporary Filmation, they didn't really have too much in the way of plotting or dramatic chops to carry it off, with the result being something somewhere between Filmation's *He-Man and the Masters of the Universe* (q.v.) and *She-Ra: Princess of Power* (q.v.) and Disney's animated fairy tale movies. In addition, being a network show, it was confined to a single-season run of 13 episodes, so unlike the Filmation programs, it was constricted by predictable plotlines, with no chance of anything deeper possibly coming out of the whole affair at all—though its setting and concept may have inadvertently inspired a later and more amusing take on the princess/fairyland idea in *Star vs. the Forces of Evil* (q.v.).

THE WILD THORNBERRYS (1998–2004)

STUDIOS: Klasky-Csupo, Viacom

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

CREATORS: Arlene Klasky, Gabor Csupo, Steve Pepoon, David Silverman, Stephen Stusaric

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Arlene Klasky, Gabor Csupo, Eryk Casemiro

PRODUCERS: Cella Nichols Harris, Jeff McGrath, Kristy Ann Pearson, Kate Bouillet, David Regal, Laslo Nosek

DIRECTORS: Peter Avanzino, Anthony Bell, Becky Bristow, Carol Millican, Cathy Malkasian, Dean Criswell, Frank Marino, Jeff McGrath, Joseph Scott, Mark Risley, Max Martinez, Michael Kenny, Ron Noble, Steve Ressel, Sylvia Keulin

WRITERS: Tom Stern, Steve Skrovan, Leslie Rieder, Adam Beechen, Carolyn Omine, Barbara Herndon, Jill Gorey, Monica Piper, Kate Bouilliet, Mark Palmer, David Regal, Mark Steen, John Requa, Glenn Ficarra, John Dervilany, Elin Hampton, David Fury, Kathryn Wyland, Gene Grillo, Mady Julian, Arnold Margolin, Eva Almos, Ed Scharlach, Allen Zipper, Scott Gray, Sheila Anthony, Bob Daily, Joan Johnson, Alice Miller, Eleah Horwitz, Sarah Jane Cunningham, Suzie Villandry, Peter Egan, Emily Kapnek, Robin Riordan, Gail Barrick, Rick Gitelson, Marsha Griffin, David Rosenberg, Peter Hunziker, Earl Hamner, Don Sipes, Kathryn McCullough

VOICE ACTORS: Lacey Chabert (Eliza Thornberry), Jodi Carlisle (Marianne Hunter Thornberry), Tim Curry (Sir Nigel Thornberry), Michael “Flea” Balzary (Donnie Thornberry), Danielle Harris (Debbie Thornberry), Tom Kane (Darwin), Keith Szarabajka (Kip O'Donnell), Jerry Sroka (Neil Beidermann), Edward Asner (Frank Hunter), Betty White (Sophie Hunter), Lynn Redgrave (Cordelia Thornberry), Jonathan Taylor Thomas (Tyler), Jane Goodall (Herself)

SYNOPSIS: Preteen girl Eliza Thornberry accompanies her parents on their various documentary filmmaking expeditions and exploits her rare gift of communicating with animals to their advantage.

COMMENTARY: A highly interesting program with an intriguing premise; considerate and sympathetic characters (Curry's quintessentially British Nigel being perhaps the most memorable); and, as usual with Klasky-Csupo, a unique European-influenced design scheme. Eliza is unusual among television animation protagonists in having a homely physical appearance, something that producer Csupo intended from the start and that he fought Nickelodeon behind the scenes to keep; it was a masterful decision that likely helped to broaden the show's appeal. Between the fourth and fifth seasons, the program was featured in a popular 2002 feature-film adaptation, and then the following year, it was featured in another film, a star-crossed alliance with Klasky-Csupo's main breadwinner titled *Rugrats Go Wild*.



An adventurous family in a rare moment of repose. Nickelodeon/Photofest © Nickelodeon

***WILD WEST C.O.W.-BOYS OF MOO MESA* (1992–1994)**

STUDIOS: Gunther-Wahl (1992–1993), Ruby-Spears (1993–1994), RC Bee, Greengrass, King World

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATOR: Ryan Brown

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Lee Gunther, Michael Wahl, Joe Ruby, Ken Spears

PRODUCERS: Mark Freedman, Mitch Schauer, Glen Hill

DIRECTORS INCLUDED: Jeff Hall, Bill Knoll, Lynn Larson, Rich Collado, Daniel de la Vega

WRITERS INCLUDED: Cliff Ruby, Elana Lesser, Rick Fogel, Mark Seidenberg

VOICE ACTORS: Jeff Bennett, Troy Davidson, Patrick Fraley, Bill Farmer, Michael Horse, Charity James, Kay Lenz, Danny Mann, Joe Piscopo, Neil Ross, Robby Benson, Tim Curry, Michael Gough, Michael Greer, Kath Soucie, Sally Struthers, Russi Taylor, Charlie Adler, Jack Angel, Michael Bell, Corey Burton, Ruth Buzzi, Jodi Carlisle, Jim Cummings, David Doyle, Brad Garrett, Ellen Gerstell, Mark Hamill, Dorian Harewood, Kate Mulgrew, Rob Paulsen, and Stu Rosen (Specific roles unknown)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: This series was described by my fellow TV animation historian Hal Erickson as being a “frontier mutant” project, and having seen it myself at the time it aired, I can concur with that assessment. It was a bizarre attempt at an anthropomorphic western, resulting, according to the backstory, from the aftereffects of a comet strike in which cows and bulls, as well as coyotes, pigs, scorpions, and lizards, assumed humanoid form and speech. These beings then proceeded to resurrect every western cliché known to man—even those known to the very youngest in its intended audience. Gunther-Wahl’s half-baked attempt to do something with the limited prospects of the idea ultimately led to them exiting the project after its first year; Ruby-Spears took over for the second year, but its efforts were little better, and ABC finally gave up the ghost after that.

WILL THE REAL JERRY LEWIS PLEASE SIT DOWN?

(1970–1972)

STUDIO: Filmmation

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

CREATOR: Jerry Lewis

PRODUCERS: Lou Scheimer, Norman Prescott

DIRECTOR: Hal Sutherland

WRITERS: Bill Danch, Jim Ryan, Len Janson, Chuck Menville, Jack Mendelsohn

Note: Jerry Lewis possibly wrote for the series, but this report has not been confirmed.

VOICE ACTORS: David L. Lander (Jerry Lewis), Jane Webb (Geraldine Lewis/Rhonda), Howard Morris (Mr. Blunderpuss/Ralph Rotten Lewis/Won Ton Son/Professor Lewis/Hong Kong Lewis/Uncle Seadog)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: Jerry Lewis (né Joseph Levitch) is an iconic figure in American comedy history, as beloved in some circles (such as France) as

he is disliked in others. He first emerged in the public consciousness in the late 1940s in a partnership with singer/actor Dean Martin, who served as the unflappable straight man to Lewis's manic, incompetent, and nerdy comic persona. This lasted until the mid-1950s and involved the creation of a number of hit films as well as appearances on such television variety shows as *The Colgate Comedy Hour*. After they parted company, Lewis pursued a solo career with his established comedy persona, increasingly taking control of his films by directing, producing, and writing them. He continued to enjoy success until the late 1960s, when his increased age began to catch up with the youthfulness at the heart of his comedy style. His activity became more sporadic from that time until his death in 2017, focusing on a successful annual telethon designed to raise funds for research into combatting muscular dystrophy.

This animated project came toward the first low ebb in Lewis's career and was clearly meant to exploit his popularity, as well as the living cartoon quality of his live-action star vehicles (many of the best of these had been directed by Frank Tashlin, who had previously been an animation director at Warner Brothers during the 1940s). What passed for a plot involved the cartoon version of Lewis being employed as a jack-of-all-trades at the Odd-job Employment Agency, run by Mr. Blunderpuss. Jerry's sister Geraldine, his girlfriend Rhonda, and his pet frog Spot also figured prominently. This was all just an excuse to trot out Lewis's main character and several others from his films (notably from his 1965 multiple-character acting exercise *The Family Jewels*) in rather tepid sketches that truly suggested not only how unsuited Lewis was for being a television animation character but also how lame and unfunny his act had truly become by this point in his career.

WING COMMANDER ACADEMY (1996–1998)

STUDIOS: Electronic Arts, ORIGIN, Universal

DISTRIBUTOR: USA

PRODUCERS: Larry Latham, Adam Foshko

DIRECTOR: Susan Blu

WRITERS: Matthew Edens, Mark Edens, Brooks Wachtel, Francis Moss, Ralph Sanchez, Richard Mueller, Shari Goodhartz, Steve Cuden, Ted Pederson

VOICE ACTORS: Mark Hamill (Christopher "Maverick" Blair), Malcolm McDowell (Commodore Geoffrey Tolwyn), Thomas Wilson (Todd "Maniac" Marshall), Dana Delany (Gwen "Archer" Bowman), Michael Dorn (Alien)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: *Wing Commander* was a popular CD-ROM game from the early 1990s that involved an ongoing intergalactic war between the human Terran Confederation and various alien races. The game, which involved various plotlines, was among the first to use live actors as opposed to animated imagery as part of its design. This animated version was a logical extension of the brand into a conventional story line, with Hamill, McDowell, Wilson, and Delany reprising the roles they had originated in the game. The narrative was a prequel to the events in the game, making the characters younger versions of their previous selves in an attempt to attract younger audiences (and also coincidentally to sell merchandise related to the game and

show to them). A reduction of sequence numbers from the average of 450 per episode to 310 was done to give the program more of an anime look and feel. Though the program achieved a decent rating among adults, lack of interest from child viewers led to its cancellation. A live-action feature film released in 1999 did little but further the brand's reach into another medium.

WISHKID STARRING MACAULAY CULKIN (1991–1995)

STUDIOS: DIC, Macaulay Culkin

DISTRIBUTORS: NBC (1991–1992), Family Channel (1992–1996)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Andy Heyward, Robby London

PRODUCERS: Chuck Patton, Christopher Brough

DIRECTOR: Chuck Patton

WRITERS INCLUDED: Jeffrey Scott

VOICE ACTORS: Macaulay Culkin (Nick McClary); Quinn Culkin, Paul De La Rosa, Paul Haddad, Marilyn Lightstone, Judy Marshak, Andrew Sabiston, Stuart Stone, James Rankin, Harvey Atkin, Tara Charendoff, Joe Matheson, Benji Plener, Catherine Gallant, Susan Roman, and Greg Swanson (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: Latchkey kid Nick McClary uses his magical baseball glove to escape into a world of fantasy on a weekly basis.

COMMENTARY: One of the best-known child actors of the late 20th century, Macaulay Culkin secured his celebrity status as the star of the highly popular live-action film comedy *Home Alone* in 1990 and then went on to star in further projects with declining creative and financial success over the following decade. This animated program was a by-the-numbers series designed to exploit his celebrity, to the point of having Culkin appear in live-action sequences to bookend his animated adventures. This series is not noteworthy for its quality, but much more for being the very last television animation project on NBC before the network abandoned commissioning original television animation on Saturday morning on a largely permanent basis in 1992. Several new episodes were produced for the program's rerun cycle on Family Channel during the 1994–1995 season.

W.I.T.C.H. (2004–2006)

STUDIOS: Disney, Jetix, SIP, Super RTL, France 3

DISTRIBUTORS: Disney, Family Channel

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Greg Weisman, Jacqueline Tordjman

DIRECTORS: Jean Jacques Prunes, Christophe Villez, Olivier Poirrette, Isabelle Rifaux, Patrick Lambert, Thomas Astruc, Bruno Issaly, Miguel Gaban, Jean Charles Andre, Luc Blanchard, Laurent Jannet, Paul Beneteau, Olivier Guss Thulliez, Nathanel Bronn, Franck Leguay, Gilles Cazaux, Marc Crevisy

WRITERS: Andrew Nicholls, Darrell Vickers, Nancy Callaway, Trey Callaway, Andy Guerdat, Steve Sullivan, Bob Dolan Smith, Lisa Rosenthal, Amanda Shwartz, Julie Du Fine, Jamie Becker, Steve Billnitzer, Ursula Ziegler, Michele Gendelman, Greg Weisman, Cary Bates, Nicole Dubuc, Andrew Robinson, Samuel Bernstein, Jon Weisman, Kevin Hopps, Steven Peterman, Gary Donzig

VOICE ACTORS (North American edition): Kelly Stables (Wilhelmina “Will” Vandom), Candi Milo (Irma Lair/Mrs. Knickerbocker/Anna Lair/Trill), Kali Troy (Taranee Cook), Christel Khalli (Cornelia Hale), Liza Del Mundo (Hay Lin, early episodes), Laura Pelerins (Hay Lin, later episodes), Lauren Tom (Yan Lin/Young Yan Lin/Susan Vandom/Alchemy), Serena Berman (Elyon Brown, later Princess Elyon and Queen Elyon/Escanor), Greg Cipes (Caleb), Mitchell Whitfield (Phobos), Dee Bradley Baker (Martin/Sniffen/Aldarn/Frost the Hunter/Gargoyle/Khor/Mr. Huggles), Bryne Offutt (Uriah/Tom Lair/Vathek/Andrew Hornby), Kath Soucie (Nerissa), Jason Marsden (Matt Olsen/Shagon), Steven Blum (Raythorn/Blunk), Lloyd Sherr (Vathek/Coach O’Neill), Grey DeLisle Griffin (Lady Miranda, early episodes), Susan Silo (Lady Miranda, later episodes), B. J. Ward (Mage/Halinor), Loren Lester (Julian/Aketon/Tynar), Michael Bell (Drake/Crimson/Althor), Cam Clarke (Dean Collins), Susan Chester (Cassidy), Jim Cummings (Tridart the Despair), Michael Reisz (Nigel Ashcroft), Ogie Banks (Peter Cook), Justin Shenkarow (Eric Lyndon), Michael Gough (Oracle), C. C. H. Pounder (Kadma), Jeff Bennett (Tracker), Cree Summer (Ember the Pain), Iona Morris (Luba)

SYNOPSIS: A quintet of teenage girls possesses superpowers derived from the elements, which they use to defend a pair of universes against the forces of evil.

COMMENTARY: This multinational series was based on a popular Italian comic book and involved production companies based in both America and France. Contrary to the acronym that defined them, the quintet involved did not practice witchcraft—it simply reflected the first letters of the first names of the participants (Will, Irma, Taralee, Cornelia, and Hay Lin). The series itself reflected the labyrinthine plotting and characterization of the comic books to generally good effect. One episode aired in Great Britain in an edited form due to an extensive battle sequence in which the protagonists were severely beaten by a male antagonist (this was felt to be an allegory for domestic abuse by its British broadcaster), although the episode aired in full in North America without any concerns arising.

THE WIZARD OF OZ (AND RELATED SERIES)

Tales of the Wizard of Oz (1961)

STUDIOS: Rankin/Bass, Videocraft, Crawley

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

CREATOR: L. Frank Baum

PRODUCERS: Arthur Rankin Jr., Jules Bass, Larry Roemer, Anthony Peters, Bernard Cowan

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITER: Arthur Rankin Jr.

VOICE ACTORS: Stan Francis, Alfie Scopp, Carl Banas, Larry Mann, and Susan Conway (Specific roles unknown)

The Wonderful Wizard of Oz (1987)

STUDIO: CINAR

DISTRIBUTOR: HBO (United States, 1990–1992)

PRODUCERS: Micheline Charest, Ronald Weinberg, Elizabeth Klinck

DIRECTORS: Tim Reid, Gerald Potterton

WRITERS: Don Arioli, Tim Reid

VOICE ACTORS: Morgan Hallett (Dorothy), George Morris (Tin Man), Neil Shee (Cowardly Lion), Richard Dumont (Scarecrow), Margot Kidder (Narrator)

***The Wizard of Oz* (1990–1992)**

STUDIOS: DIC, TBS, Bohbot

DISTRIBUTORS: ABC (1990–1991), Syndicated (1992)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Andy Heyward

PRODUCERS: Michael Maliani, Robby London

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS INCLUDED: Cliff Ruby, Elana Lesser

VOICE ACTORS: Charlie Adler, Liz Georges, David Lodge, Tress MacNeille, Alan Oppenheimer, Hal Rayle, B. J. Ward, Frank Welker, Jack Angel, Hamilton Camp, Patrick Fraley, Bibi Osterwald, Rob Paulsen, Ken Sansom, and Susan Silo (Specific roles unknown)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: L. Frank Baum, a former farmer, businessman, and periodical editor, published the original book version of *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* in 1900. The book was an enormous success and launched the storied life of a fictional media franchise that remains one of the most beloved of its kind well into the 21st century. Prior to his death in 1919, Baum wrote nearly a dozen books about Oz (others added to the canon later) and other fantasies and books for children under his own name and pseudonyms; he also saw his work adapted as a popular musical on Broadway. The best-known media adaptation of the work is MGM's lavish 1939 musical *The Wizard of Oz*, featuring Judy Garland as Dorothy. However, Oz has been adapted and reinterpreted in other films, television series, comics, young adult novels, and Broadway productions over the course of the 20th century and into the 21st. As one of the few universal touchstone pieces of art directed primarily at children, it has been affectionately adapted and parodied by the Muppets and *Phineas and Ferb* (q.v.), among others.

These animated versions played close to Baum's novels by presenting his original stars as the protagonists and were as close as they could get legally to the 1939 adaptation to ensure public recognition. The Rankin/Bass version was a short serialized project of 150 five-minute episodes, with the producers differentiating the supporting cast from their erstwhile models by giving them actual names (the Scarecrow was named Socrates, the Tin Man Rusty, and the Cowardly Lion Dandy), though the actual production and character design was more memorable than what was done with it. The half-hour CINAR version used Baum's later books as their primary inspiration (because they were in copyright limbo); consequently, it included characters not featured in other Oz adaptations, such as Princess Ozma, the Gnome King, General Ginger, and Jack Pumpkin Head, as well as other aspects of the original book not used in the familiar film. It was a great improvement compared to its predecessor in terms of being faithful to Baum's original vision of his fantasy land. DIC's concurrent half-hour version, in contrast, used the 1939 film as a template, in part because it was produced in coopera-

tion with the then-owner of the film's copyright. While it also used some of Baum's original material as a source, it took more liberties and was thus less accurate. This program failed to attract attention in its network run but still got some action as a rerun property later to good effect.

WOLF ROCK TV (1984)

STUDIOS: DIC, Dick Clark

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

PRODUCERS: Jean Chalopin, Dick Clark, Andy Heyward, Toshitsugu Mukaitsubo, Kiyoshi Ieno, James Finch

DIRECTORS: Bernard Deyries, Rita Rokisky, Kazumi Fukushima

WRITERS: Mike O'Mahoney, Chuck Lorre, J. Johnson, Len Udes, Warren Taylor, Dennis Marx

VOICE ACTORS: Wolfman Jack (Himself); Siu Ming Carson (Sunny); Noelle North (Sarah); Robert Vega (Ricardo); Jason Bernard (Mr. Morris); Frank Welker (Bopper); Bill Callaway, Danny Mann, Linda Gary, Tress MacNeille, Patrick Fraley, Fred Travalena, and Barbara Goodson (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: A pioneering and iconic radio disc jockey, Bob "Wolfman Jack" Smith became a living legend during the 1950s and 1960s. Broadcasting from high-frequency stations based in Mexico, the Wolfman specialized in playing rock-and-roll music that more conservative American broadcasters of the time wouldn't have touched with a 10-foot pole and coupled that with a flamboyant, extravagant on-air personality far removed from the more-sedate broadcasters of the era. In the 1970s, he went mainstream, being featured prominently in George Lucas's nostalgic 1973 film comedy *American Graffiti* and hosting the popular late-night NBC variety series *Midnight Special*. By the early 1980s, he apparently was felt to be safe enough to be featured in an animated series, coproduced by his equally important rock-and-roll pioneer contemporary Dick Clark.

The show itself was nothing special, which was confirmed by the fact that it lasted barely a month on the air. The Wolfman here was the owner of a television station that specialized in playing the then-novel art form of the music video (MTV had turned it into an enormous part of the established music business's marketing machine by this time). He was assisted by his teenage programmers Sarah, Sunny, and Ricardo and their avian companion Bopper; Mr. Morris, the acerbic manager of the station, ran interference between them and the Wolfman. The program was briefly resurrected in syndication in tandem with DIC's earlier *Kidd Video* (q.v.) in 1989 under the title *Wolf Rock Power Hour*.

WOLVERINE AND THE X-MEN (2009–2010)

See *X-Men* (and related series).

THE WONDERFUL STORIES OF PROFESSOR KITZEL (1972)

STUDIOS: M.G., Worldvision

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

CREATOR/PRODUCER: Shamus Culhane

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: A three-minute educational project anchored by the heavily Jewish title character, whose name was derived from the Yiddish word for "tickle." The project had originally been intended to be an in-classroom teaching tool for schools, but an arrangement with the Bristol-Meyers Company allowed Worldvision to syndicate it nationally on television. The overall look and feel of the series was concurrent with an ad campaign for the American Dental Association that Culhane was producing at roughly the same time.

***THE WONDERFUL WIZARD OF OZ* (1987)**

See *The Wizard of Oz* (and related series).

***WONDER PETS* (2005–2012)**

STUDIOS: Little Airplane, 9 Ate 7, Nickelodeon

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

CREATOR/PRODUCER: Josh Selig

DIRECTORS: Jennifer Oxley, Ginny McSwain

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Sofie Zamchick (Linny), Teala Dunn (Tuck), Danica Lee (Ming Ming), T. J. Stanton (Ollie, early episodes), Cooper Coraro (Ollie, later episodes), Anne Meara (Ginny), Matthew Black (Jazz Mouse), Emlyn Morinelli (Mama Cow)

SYNOPSIS: A trio of classroom pets moonlights as a team of globetrotting heroes.

COMMENTARY: A uniquely produced series, combining puppetry and conventional photography to create realistic-looking character and camera movements, as well as a narrative structure that constructed episode segments as full-length operettas with original music provided by veterans of Broadway and the popular music business. It was effective in presenting its simple preschool messages and was deservedly awarded Emmys for its musical contributions.

***THE WOODY WOODPECKER SHOW* (AND RELATED SERIES)**

***The Woody Woodpecker Show* (1957–1958)**

STUDIOS: Walter Lantz, Kellogg's, MCA, Universal

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

PRODUCER/HOST: Walter Lantz

Various directors, writers, and voice actors

***Woody Woodpecker* (1999–2002)**

STUDIO: Universal

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX

PRODUCERS: Bob Jaques, Diane Crea, Alan Zaslove

DIRECTORS: Bob Jaques, Mauro Casalese, Alan Zaslove

WRITERS: Sean Roche, Bob Jaques, Jim Gomez, Travis Clark

VOICE ACTORS: Billy West (Woody Woodpecker/Wally Walrus), Mark Hamill (Buzz Buzzard, early episodes), Jim Cummings (Buzz Buzzard, later episodes), E. G. Daily (Knothead Woodpecker), Tress MacNeille (Winnie Woodpecker, early episodes/Splinter Woodpecker, early episodes), B. J. Ward (Winnie Woodpecker, later episodes), Nika Futterman (Splinter Woodpecker, later episodes), Andrea Martin (Ms. Meany), Rip Taylor (Papa Panda)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: Woody Woodpecker, who first appeared on camera in the 1942 cartoon *Knock Knock*, was one of the most hyperactive, brash, and destructive cartoon characters of the theatrical era. He outwitted his adversaries at the same time that he beat them into submission with whatever was handy. His extroverted personality and his distinctive chattering, multisyllable laugh made him the most popular creation of his producer, Walter Lantz, whose career spanned from the earliest days of theatrical animation to the early 1970s and whose other work was comparatively sedate and tame by comparison. In the late 1950s, emulating Walt Disney's success in television, Lantz brought Woody and the rest of his animated entourage onto the small screen, cheerfully hosting the show himself and introducing many of his younger viewers in particular to the exact minutiae of how animated cartoons were made in cleverly constructed sequences. Unfortunately, Lantz was not able to present his cartoons in their uncut original theatrical forms due to the censorship restrictions of the era; among other things, all references to drunkenness, adult sexuality, and insanity were cut (regardless of what they did to the continuity of the films), and all references (including entire films) to African American characters were suppressed to avoid charges of racism. Still, what remained was a charming and entertaining program nonetheless, and after its original run ended, it enjoyed a long and highly successful afterlife in syndication.

Woody remained enough of a well-known figure that Universal was able to revive him in an original series in 1999. While the producers were able to restore him to his original appearance and manner (which had been softened in the early 1950s), along with restoring the vintage look and feel of his best Lantz films, they still ran up against the stone wall of network television restrictions on violent activity; the show was consequently a shadow of what had come before—and what could have been. Featured here were Woody's principal antagonists—Swedish-accented Wally Walrus, scheming Buzz Buzzard, and the accurately named human being Ms. Meany—as well as some of the lesser-known figures who served as his allies—his girlfriend Winnie and his look-alike niece and nephew Knothead and Splinter. The program was received so tepidly that FOX played it on an occasional basis during its run and aired the complete run of produced material to satisfy the terms of its contractual arrangement with Universal and probably for no other reason.

WOOFER AND WIMPER, DOG DETECTIVES

See *The Clue Club* (1976–1979); *The Three Robonic Stooges* (1978–1981).

WORDGIRL (2007–2015)

STUDIOS: S2N, Scholastic

DISTRIBUTOR: PBS

CREATOR: Dorothea Gillim

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Dorothea Gillim, Deborah Forte

PRODUCERS: Will Shepard, Danielle Gillis

DIRECTORS: David San Angelo, Steve Young

WRITERS INCLUDED: Jack Ferriaolo

VOICE ACTORS: Dannah Feinglass Phirman (Becky Botsford/WordGirl/Clare McAlester/Chuck's Mom/Edith Von Hoosinghaus/Pretty Princess/Others), James Adomian (Bob/Captain Huggy Face/Hal Hardbargain/Candle Stick Maker/Timmy Tim Bo/Raul Demiglasse/Hunter Throbheart), Chris Parnell (Narrator/Henchman #1/Security Guard/Exposition Guy/David Driscoll/Mazo Race Car Driver), Maria Bamford (Violet/Sally Botsford/Leslie/Energy Monster), Ryan Raddatz (Todd "Scoops" Ming/Tim Botsford/Beau Handsome), Tom Kenny (Dr. Two Brains/T. J. Botsford/Brent the Handsome Sandwich-Making Guy/Warden Chalmers/Stu Brisket/Steve McClean/Phil), Fred Stoller (Chuck the Evil Sandwich-Making Guy), Jack Ferriaolo (Butcher), Patton Oswalt (Theodore "Tobey" McAllister III/Robots), Cree Summer (Granny May), Jeffrey Tambor (Mr. Big/Mr. Birg), Grey DeLisle Griffin (Beatrice Bixby/Lady Redundant Woman, later episodes/Ms. Question/Mrs. Ripley), John C. McGinley (Whammer), Pamela Segall Adlon (Eileen the Birthday Girl), Daran Norris (Seymour Orlando Smooth/Nocan the Contrarian), Kristen Schaal (Victoria Best/Mrs. Best), H. Jon Benjamin (Invisi-Bill/Reginald/Museum Curator), Larry Murphy (Amazing Rope Guy/Mr. Best/Principal/Bank Teller/Anthony), Mike O'Connell (Bill/Used Car Salesman/Joe), Danielle Schneider (Loretta Sanchez Johnson), Matt Besser (Rex/Zachary Zany/Others), Ron Lynch (Mayor), Jen Cohn (Ms. Champlain/Rich Old Lady/Others), Amy Sedaris (Miss Davis/Rhyme), Orlando Brown (Tommy), Kelly Miyahara (Emily), Jane Lynch (Miss Power), Edward Asner (Kid Potato), "Weird" Al Yankovic (Learnerer [*sic*]), John Henson (Captain Tangent), Ned Bellamy (Coach), Tyler Labine (Reason), Brian Posehn (Glen Furlblam), Josh Fadem (Victor Best), Elliott Gould (Masked Meat Marauder), Amanda Plummer (Lady Redundant Woman, early episodes), Sergio Cilli (Royal Dandy, early episodes), James Mathis III (Tiny Big), Stephanie Sheh (Little Mittens), James Urbaniak (Nick Michols), Tim Conway (Bampy Botsford), Ellie Kemper (Rose Franklin), William Mapother (Guy Rich), Jack McBrayer (Rex/Kid Math), Stephen Root (Professor Robert Tubing), Kevin McDonald (Baker/Magic Pony), Robin Reed (Mrs. Libri), Brian Doyle Murray (Police Officer), John Kricfalusi (Police Commissioner, early episodes), Wayne Knight (Police Commissioner, later episodes), Chris Williams (Judge), Rose Abdoo (Great Granny May), Judy Greer (Mrs. Dewey), Andy Dick (Milt), Jim Gaffigan (Mr. Dudley), Al Roker (Sonny Days), Nick Kroll (Reuben Grinder), Jill Talley (Babysitter), Alfred Molina (Patrick Needlemeyer), Peter Graves (Mr. Callahan), Paul Tompkins (Royal Dandy, later episodes)

SYNOPSIS: Becky Botsford, an alien from the planet Lexicon masquerading as an ordinary preteen girl, fights crime and illiteracy as the superheroine WordGirl.

COMMENTARY: A rarity among educational animated programs, in that it is something adults would actually enjoy watching with their children. It had a campy, self-mocking, and very clever sense of humor that placed it somewhat between the 1960s live-action *Batman* and *The Powerpuff Girls* (q.v.) in tone (Kenny's involvement as a voice actor on both animated programs provides another clear link between them). The Flash-animation is well done and expressive, and the scriptwriting (done by veterans of *The Onion* and *Family Guy* [q.v.], among others) is top-notch and ambitious, with the educational material inserted in such a subtle way that it never derails the entertainment value of the series. The producers had a clear sense of how to use superhero narratives for educational purposes in a way most earlier producers did not, and the final product reflected their aims very clearly, as well as being structured in surprising ways. (One episode, for example, recalled the film *Rashomon* in its use of multiple-perspective narration and points of view.)

The series originated as a series of short book-end segments featured on *Maya and Miguel* (q.v.) before becoming a series on its own. After the program ended its television run, several additional segments were produced, airing exclusively on PBS's Internet services.

**WORLD PREMIERE TOONS (A.K.A. WHAT A CARTOON!,
CARTOON CARTOON SHOW; 1995–2005)**

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, Cartoon Network

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Fred Seibert, Sam Register

Various directors, producers, writers, and actors.

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: This anthology project was designed to showcase the work of the new generation of animators that had come of age in the early 1990s, although it also featured projects developed by such storied veterans as Bruno Bozetto, Ralph Bakshi, Jerry Eisenberg, William Hanna, and Joseph Barbera (the latter pair worked independently, rather than together). Seibert, then Hanna-Barbera's president, worked with his counterpart at Cartoon Network, Betty Cohen, to coordinate a talent search to find material, which was designed to present new takes on the traditional short-form cartoon format of the theatrical era. The titles changed later in the run to reflect the fact that less original material was being presented. The talent hunt was a great success, presenting innovative material from the likes of Genndy Tartakovsky, Craig McCracken, John Dilworth, Van Partible, Pat Ventura, and Butch Hartman. Of the material that debuted here, five projects were expanded into well-regarded series—*Dexter's Laboratory* (q.v.), *Courage the Cowardly Dog* (q.v.), *Cow and Chicken* (q.v.), *Johnny Bravo* (q.v.), and *The Powerpuff Girls* (q.v.). Seibert would repeat the experiment through his

independent Frederator Studio with *Oh Yeah! Cartoons* (q.v.) and *Random! Cartoons* (q.v.), with an equal level of success.

THE WORLD'S GREATEST SUPER FRIENDS (1979–1980)

See *Super Friends* (and related series).

WOW! WOW! WUBBZY! (2006–2010)

STUDIOS: Bolder Media, IDT, Film Roman, Starz

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

CREATOR: Bob Boyle

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Bob Boyle, Fred Seibert, Phil Roman, Jay Fukuto, Susan Miller, Brendan Burch

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Grey DeLisle (Wubbzy/Buggy/Madame Zabinga/Kooky Kid/Sparkle/Others), Lara Miller (Widget/Huggy/Others), Carlos Alazraqui (Walden/Earl/Chef Fritz/Others), Tara Strong (Daizy/Shimmer/Others), Beyonce Knowles (Shine), Jeff Bennett (Cupid/Fire Chief), Jann Carl (Jann Starl), Tiki Barber (Touchdown Tiki), Phil LaMarr (Jam Jam James), Ty Pennington (Ty Ty the Tool Guy), Michelle Kwan (Michelle Kwanzberry)

SYNOPSIS: In the city of Wuzzleburg, inquisitive Wubbzy solves everyday problems and predicaments with the aid of his friends Walden and Widget.

COMMENTARY: A clever educational program that marked a broadcasting first, in that it made its first appearance as a video podcast before launching its run as a 26-episode series. Boyle had originally developed the concept as a children's book series, and it retained much of that flavor as an animated project, with simple dialogue and plots and a heavy use of music. Another broadcasting first was also achieved by the fact that Boyle had also developed *Ying Yang Yo!* (q.v.) for Disney, which aired at the same time—giving him a rare distinction for a non-studio-based independent producer.

THE WUZZLES (1985–1986)

STUDIOS: Disney, Murakami-Wolf-Swenson

DISTRIBUTORS: CBS (1985–1986), ABC (1986–1987)

PRODUCERS: Fred Wolf, Tom Ruzicka

DIRECTORS: Fred Wolf, Carol Beers, Vincent Davis

WRITERS: Mark Evanier, David Wiemers, Ken Koonce, Ted Perry, Bob Rosenfarb

VOICE ACTORS: Brian Cummings (Bumblelion/Flizzard); Henry Gibson (Eleroo/Girafbra); Jo Ann Worley (Hoppopotamus); Bill Scott (Moosel/Brat); Alan Oppenheimer (Rhinokey/Croc/Pack Cat); Kathy Helppie (Butterbear); Tress MacNeille (Mrs. Pedigree); Stan Freberg (Narrator); Gregg Berger, Steve Kramer, Will Ryan, and Frank Welker (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: On the island of Wuz, the fauna consists entirely of Wuzzles—illogical combinations of two entirely different bird, animal, or insect species.

COMMENTARY: An important series historically, primarily for the fact that it was the first television animation series to be produced by Disney, although

because it did not have its own television animation facilities yet, the animation itself was subcontracted to Murakami-Wolf-Swenson, which used the opportunity to begin its own successful brand as a producer in consequence. The program was constructed in a traditional cute-animal fashion (although religious fundamentalists of the time singled it out for having a demonic concept), but it was constructed with a surprisingly clever amount of wit that foreshadowed the comedic DNA of many future series from Disney and elsewhere. Freberg's comically pompous narration was the main asset, particularly when he teased the audience about all the activity in the story they had missed out on during commercial breaks!

• X •

***X-CHROMOSOME* (2000)**

STUDIO/DISTRIBUTOR: Oxygen Network

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Machi Tantillo

PRODUCERS: Marcy Carsey, Tom Werner, Caryn Mandabach

Various directors, writers, and voice actors

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: Launched in 2000, the Oxygen Network, whose principal financial backers included talk-show-host-turned-entertainment-mogul Oprah Winfrey, was designed to provide programming that reflected an explicitly feminine point of view not shared by other more-mainstream providers. One aspect of that mainstream denial was a lack of space and agency for female animators and female-centric themes in animation, and this anthology series was designed to rectify that problem. Typical features included *Avenue Amy*, the adventures of real-life sex columnist Amy Soehn; chick-flick movie parodies by clay animator Corky Quackenbush; *Drawn from Life*, sequences featuring minimalist animation and ad-libbed dialogue; and *Fat Girl*, the story of portly Kate Bloom. Two segments, *Bitchy Bits* and *Hey Monie*, graduated to full-length series status later on, the former under the title *Life's a Bitch* (q.v.).

***XIAOLIN SHOWDOWN* (2003)**

STUDIO: Warner Brothers

DISTRIBUTOR: WB

CREATOR: Christy Hui

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Sander Schwartz, Kim Christianson, Christopher Keenan

PRODUCERS: Christy Hui, Eric Radomski, Bill Motz, Bob Roth

DIRECTORS: Dan Riba, Steven Lyons, Tim Eldred

WRITERS INCLUDED: Bill Motz, Bob Roth

VOICE ACTORS: Rene Auberjonois (Master Fung/Narrator), Jeff Bennett (Clay), Danny Cooksey (Jack Spicer), Grey DeLisle (Kimiko), Tom Kenny (Raimundo), Wayne Knight (Dojo Konojo Jo), Susan Silo (Wuya), Tara Strong (Omi)

SYNOPSIS: A team of monks works to protect a group of sacred objects under their care from those who would steal them and use them for evil.

COMMENTARY: This was a clear attempt to produce a kind of English-language anime to exploit that genre's large North American fan base. While handsomely animated and splitting the difference well between comedy and animation, its creative value was muted by the fact that it was blatantly tied in to an overpromoted line of merchandise. *Avatar: The Last Airbender* (q.v.) and *The Legend of Korra* (q.v.) would tread down this creative road with much greater success in future years.

X-MEN (AND RELATED SERIES)**X-Men (1992–1997)**

STUDIOS: Marvel, Graz, Saban

DISTRIBUTORS: FOX (1992–1997, 2000–2001), Syndicated (1997–1999), UPN (1998–1999)

CREATORS: Stan Lee, Jack Kirby

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Stan Lee, Avi Arad, Joseph Calamari, Winston Richard

PRODUCERS: Richard Ungar, Will Meugniot

DIRECTORS: Dan Hennessey, Karen Peterson, Graham Morris, Larry Houston, Frank Squillace

WRITERS INCLUDED: Adam Gilad, Brooks Wachtel, Donald Glut, Douglas Booth, Len Wein, Mark Edens, Michael Edens, Joss Whedon, Steven Melching, Eric Lewald

VOICE ACTORS: Norman Spencer (Scott Summers, a.k.a. Cyclops), Cal Dodd (Logan, a.k.a. Wolverine), Alison Sealey Smith (Ororo Munroe, a.k.a. Storm, early episodes), Ilona Morris (Ororo Munroe, a.k.a. Storm, later episodes), Chris Potter (Remy, a.k.a. Gambit, early episodes), Tony Daniels (Remy, a.k.a. Gambit, later episodes), Catherine Disher (Jean Grey), George Buza (Hank McCoy, a.k.a. the Beast), Lenore Zann (Rogue), Alyson Court (Jubilation "Jubilee" Lee), Cedric Smith (Professor Charles Xavier), David Hemblen (Magnet), Tara Charendoff (Ilyana), Jeremy Ratchford (Banshee), Randall Carpenter (Mystique), Lawrence Bayne (Cable/Erik the Red), John Colicos (Apocalypse), Don Francks (Sabretooth), Ron Rubin (Morph), Philip Akin (Bishop), Lally Cadeau (Dr. Moira Taggart), Camilla Scott (Lilandra), Roscoe Handford (Ms. Marvel), Graham Halley (Pyro), John Stocker (Graydon Creed), Barry Flatman (Henry Gyrich), Robert Bockstael (Sauron), Christopher Britton (Mr. Sinister), Stephen Ouimette (Angel), Rick Bennett (Colossus/Juggernaut), Maurice Wint (Shadow King)

X-Men: Evolution (2000–2003)

STUDIOS: Marvel, Film Roman

DISTRIBUTOR: WB

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Stan Lee, Avi Arad, Rick Ungar, John Bush, John Hyde

PRODUCER: Boyd Kirkland

DIRECTORS: Frank Paur, Steven Gordon, Boyd Kirkland, Curt Geda, Doug Murphy, Gary Graham

WRITERS INCLUDED: Bob Forward, Christy Marx, Dennys McCoy, Katherine Lawrence, Len Uhley, Marsha Griffin, Sean Roche, William Cluverius, Rick Ungar, Greg Johnson

VOICE ACTORS: Kirby Morrow (Cyclops), Venus Terzo (Jean Grey), Brad Swaile (Kurt, a.k.a. Nightcrawler), Maggie Blue O'Hara (Kitty Pryde, a.k.a. Shadowcat), Megan Black (Rogue), Neil Denis (Evan, a.k.a. Spyke), Scott McNeil (Wolverine), David Kaye (Professor Charles Xavier/Jamie, a.k.a. Multiple), Kristen Williamson (Storm), Michael Dobson (Fred, a.k.a. the Blob), Richard Cox (Pietro, a.k.a. Quicksilver), Christopher Grey (Lance, a.k.a. Avalanche),

Noel Fisher (Todd, a.k.a. Toad), Colleen Wheeler (Darkholme, a.k.a. Mystique), Christopher Judge (Magneto), Michael Donovan (Sabretooth), Michael Adamthwaite (Colossus), Jim Byrnes (Nick Fury), Alexander Carter (Amara, a.k.a. Magma), Michael Coleman (Sunspot), Andrew Francis (Bobby Drake, a.k.a. Iceman), Mark Hildreth (Angel, a.k.a. Archangel), Matt Hill (Alan, a.k.a. Havok), Saffron Henderson (Callisto), Ellen Kennedy (Destiny), Michael Kopsa (The Beast), Campbell Lane (Jason, a.k.a. Mastermind), Megan Leitch (Tabitha), Andrea Libman (X23), Kelly Sheridan (Wanda, a.k.a. Scarlet Witch), Dale Wilson (Principal Kelly), Chiara Zanni (Jubilee)

Wolverine and the X-Men (2009–2010)

STUDIOS: Marvel, Toonz, First Serve, Noxxon

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Stan Lee, Eric Rollman, Ed Borgerding, Kevin Feige, P. Jayakumar

PRODUCER: Jason Nettler

DIRECTORS: Boyd Kirkland, Steven Gordon, Nick Filippi, Doug Murphy

WRITERS: Greg Johnson, Craig Kyle, Zoe Green, Bob Forward, Christopher Hicks, Francis Lombard, Christopher Yost, Len Uhley, Paul Giacoppo, Joshua Fine, Max Botkin, Kevin Hopps, Boyd Kirkland

VOICE ACTORS: Steven Blum (Wolverine/Vanisher/Vindaloo/Fever Pitch), Susan Dalian (Storm/Dr. Kavita Rao/Jean's Nurse), Jennifer Hale (Jean Grey/Boom Boom), Danielle Judovits (Shadowcat/Tilde Soames), Tom Kane (Magneto/Professor Thorton), Yuri Lowenthal (Iceman), Nolan North (Cyclops/Colossus/Pyro/Berzerker), Liam O'Brien (Archangel/Nightcrawler/Nitro), Roger Smith (Forge/Helion/Kamal/Rover the Sentinel), Fred Tatasciore (The Beast/Hulk/Blockbuster/Juggernaut/Harpoon), Kieren Van Den Blink (Rogue), Kari Wahlgren (Emma Frost/Magma/Dr. Sybil Zane/Kristie Nord), Jim Ward (Professor Charles Xavier/Warren Worthington/Abraham Cornelius/Sentinels), Charlie Adler (Mojo/Reavers), Tamara Bernier (Mystique), Clancy Brown (Mr. Sinister), Benjamin Bryan (Young Scott Summers), A. J. Buckley (Toad), Corey Burton (John Grey), Grey DeLisle (Psylocke/Spiral/Network), Alex Desert (Nick Fury), Richard Doyle (Senator Robert Kelly), Chris Edgerly (Agent Haskett), Crispin Freeman (Multiple Man/Maverick), Kate Higgins (Scarlet Witch/Pixie), Mark Hildreth (Quicksilver), Michael Ironside (Colonel Moss), Dominic James (Squidboy), Phil LaMarr (Gambit/Bolivar Trask), Peter Lurie (Sabretooth), Gabriel Mann (Dr. Bruce Banner), Vanessa Marshall (Vertigo), Graham McTavish (Sebastian Shaw), Liza Del Mundo (Polaris), Laraine Newman (Marjorie), Kevin Michael Richardson (Shadow King/Bishop), James Sie (Yakuza Leader/Sensei Ogun), Andre Sogliuzzo (Arclight), Steven Stanton (Blob), April Stewart (Selene), Tara Strong (Marrow/Dust/Firestar/X23/Stepford Cuckoos), James Stuart (Avalanche), Gwendoline Yeo (Domino/Master Mold/Mariko Yashida), Keone Young (Silver Samurai)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: From their beginning in 1963, the X-Men have been one of Marvel Comics' most popular and enduring franchises and have expanded beyond comics to include other media, including a well-received group of live-action feature films. The title group was, originally, made up of young men who received superpowers as a result of mutations in their genes and



Marvel's biggest franchise—before they made it to the movies. Fox Kids/Photofest © Fox Kids

worked with bald, fatherly Professor Xavier to harness their abilities for the good of society. The original version of the comic, which was tepidly received, ended in 1970, but the concept was relaunched with great success in 1975, particularly during the long tenure of Chris Claremont as the comic's writer. Initially, unlike the other Marvel heroes, animators shunned the X-Men (a name that was no longer accurate once superpowered women began to emerge in the ranks), largely because the conflicts depicted within were more ambiguous than the traditional good-versus-evil plotlines the networks preferred. In 1989, a pilot for a series called *Pryde of the X-Men* (which focused on one of the junior members of the team, a teenaged phaser named Kitty Pryde) was produced, but while it was handsomely animated, it was far too faithful to comic book storytelling techniques to work well on television. Eventually, however, the X-Men finally made it to television animation in the early 1990s.

Because Marvel was largely playing to its fan base at the time, the story lines and art design of the original *X-Men* series were derivative of Claremont's plots and the artwork of David Cockrum and David Byrne, but the program was still structured in an accessible way to get nonfans interested in what was going on. The core of the cast was those then prominently featured in the comics—Professor Xavier, Cyclops, Wolverine, Storm, Jean Grey, and the Beast—as well as some newer characters: Chinese American woman Jubilee, southerner Rogue, and Cajun ladies' man/gambler Gambit. The program mirrored the

complex soap-opera plotting used by Claremont (though this was somewhat modified to comply with television plot standards) and, also like the comics, drew upon the allegorical unease those in power felt toward the mutant heroes and villains, in terms very reminiscent of actual racism displayed in the recent past toward other minority groups. The allegory, in particular, gave the events a stronger dramatic footing than they would have otherwise and made the program compellingly dramatic viewing.

In the years since they became a blockbuster film attraction, the X-Men have returned twice to television animation, and (given Marvel's new alliance with Disney) they may well do so again in the future. *X-Men: Evolution* focused on the younger, teenage years of the protagonists and how they came into being. *Wolverine and the X-Men* gave star billing to one of the team's most popular members and focused on the measures he and his colleagues used to combat a vicious, apocalyptic threat to Earth, in a tightly written and directed 26-episode narrative.

THE X'S (2005–2006)

STUDIO/DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

CREATOR/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Carlos Ramos

PRODUCER: Dave Marshall

DIRECTORS: Jim Smith, Roque Ballestros, Alan Lau, Brad Rau, Vincent Waller, Carlos Ramos, C. H. Greenblatt, Erik Wiese, Carey Yost, Joe Daniello, Li Hong, Chong Lee, Louie Del Carmen, Andy Kelly, Marcelo Souza, Stephen DeStefano, Michael Mullen, Doug Langdale, Jean Texier

WRITERS: Doug Langdale, Carlos Ramos, Ralph Soll, Gene Grillo, Michael Ryan, John Behnke, Rob Humphrey, Earl Kress, Scott Peterson, Duane Colbert, Shahrzad Warkentin, Tracy Berna, J. G. Quintel

VOICE ACTORS: Patrick Warburton (Mr. X), Wendie Malick (Mrs. X), Lynsey Bartinson (Tuesday X), Jansen Pantiere (Truman X), Dee Bradley Baker (Ren X), Stephen Root (Homebase), Ronobir Lahiri (Mr. Y), Susan Pari (Mrs. Y), Soleil Moon Frye (Seven Y/Annasthesia Montihio), Laura Marano (Scout Y), Chris Hardwick (Glowface), Tom Kane (Lorenzo Suave/Some Old Guy), Randy "Macho Man" Savage (Sasquatch), Jason Schwartzman (Brandon, early episodes), David Hornsby (Brandon, later episodes), Carlos Ramos (Minions), Tom Kenny (Copperhead/Wally), Ashley Johnson (Kimla Meeks), Lindsay Sloane (Skipper Swenson)

SYNOPSIS: A team of spies works undercover as a normal American family.

COMMENTARY: While this show was handsomely animated, with some excellent and unique character and setting designs, it was, unfortunately, in the service of a premise that was shopworn and overused even by television animation standards. Creator Ramos and his associates clearly enjoyed animating their characters and settings much more than developing coherent and original characters and plots for them, for this aspect of the show was enormously weak and derivative. James Bond and his ilk had already been parodied one too many times in television animation by this point for most animators to find decent new ways of spoofing them, though they still keep trying even today. The decision to have the X's principal nemesis, Glowface, behave like

a simpering, overgrown child, pretty much sums the show's lack of original drive. The blatant overacting by the voice actors (especially Warburton, who constantly wavered between mumbling almost incoherently and shouting) proceeded to slam all the nails in the comedy coffin neatly in place.

Oddly, shortly after this program ended its run, Brad Bird and Pixar managed to do a similar premise more effectively—and subtly—with their Academy Award-winning film *The Incredibles*.

XYBER 9: NEW DAWN (1999)

STUDIOS: Bokabi, Saban

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Eric Luke, Philip Norwood, Nilo Rodis Jamero, Eric Rollman

DIRECTOR: Philip Norwood

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Rene Auberjonois (Xyber 9), Jason Marsden (Jack), Nika Frost (Anakonda), Chris Marquette (Ikira), Quinton Flynn (Mick), Tony Jay (Machestro), Tim Curry (King Renard), Jolie Jenkins (Princess Rozalyn), Rodney Saulsberry (Willy)

SYNOPSIS: Fifteen-year-old orphan Jack is picked to be the chosen one to save the planet Terrana from evil tyranny, which he does with the aid of the sophisticated portable computer Xyber 9.

COMMENTARY: A rather derivative series that simply walked in the footsteps of other, earlier, and better programs rather than presenting anything original on its own terms. Only 10 episodes of the production run aired in the United States, though all of them aired in the program's overseas broadcasts.

• Y •

YAKKITY YAK (2003)

STUDIOS: Studio B, Kapow, Nickelodeon

DISTRIBUTOR: Nickelodeon

CREATOR: Mark Gravas

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Chris Bartleman, Rob Simmons, Catherine Nebauer, Greg Ricca, Tim Brooke Hunt

PRODUCERS: Blair Peters, Greg Sullivan, Jamie Turner, Kathy Rocchio, Sandra Walters, Evan Bailey

DIRECTORS: Mark Gravas, Greg Sullivan, J. Falconer

WRITERS INCLUDED: Blair Peters, Ian Boothby, Jono Howard, Dennis Heaton, Kevin White, Ian Weir, J. Falconer, Steve Sullivan

VOICE ACTORS: Lee Tockar (Yakkity Yak), Pam Hyatt (Granny Yak), Brian Drummond (Keo), Scott McNeil (Professor Crazyhair), Jason Schombing (Trilobyte), Ian Corlett (Mr. Highpants/Rondo Jr.), Brenda Crichlow (Wanda Harper), Michael Dangerfield (Keo's Father), Tabitha St. Germain (Penelope), Andrea Libman (Lemony)

SYNOPSIS: In the town of Onion Falls, a teenaged anthropomorphic yak aspires to create a career for himself as a stand-up comedian.

COMMENTARY: A Canadian–Australian–American coproduction, with the Australian firm Kapow a recent start-up at the time. While the Flash animation was handsomely done, there was a bit less to be said for the originality of the plots and characters, which included a pineapple–human hybrid named Keo and a teenaged robot named Lemony (whom the title character was inexplicably in love with). Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller's similarly named song, a 1958 pop and rhythm-and-blues hit for the vocal group the Coasters, served as the program's opening and closing theme to good effect.

YING YANG YO! (2006–2009)

STUDIOS: Disney, Jetix

DISTRIBUTOR: Disney

CREATOR/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Bob Boyle

PRODUCERS: Tony Phillips, Steve Marmel

DIRECTORS: Mark Ackland, John Fountain, Ted Collyer, Llyn Hunter, Chad Hicks

WRITERS: Steve Marmel, Llyn Hunter, Rudi Berden, John Fountain, Bob Boyle, Chad Hicks, Craig Valde, Chris Romano, Eric Falconer, Bob Keyes, Chip Keyes, Doug Keyes, Angelo Libutti, Riccardo Durante, Eric Trueheart, Aydreia Ten Bosch, Evan Gore, Heather Lombard, Dermot Walshe, John Flagg, Marty Isenberg, Sib Ventress, Dan Ewald, Rajeev Sigamoney, Nick Cross, Andrew Tan, Mark Drop, Daniel Lafrance, Tavis Silbernagel, Angelo Libutti, Jeff Agala, Jennifer Muro, Kevin Faria, Troy Quane, Steve Remen, Jeff Barker, Bart Jennett, Larry Johnson, Warren Leonhardt, Danielle Koenig,

Paul Watling, Tom Mason, Dan Danko, Phil Walsh, Amy Wolfram, Mike Csunynoska, Spencer Walker, Rich Fogel, Rob Hummel, Frank Lintzen, Scott Sonneborn, Van Partible

VOICE ACTORS: Scott McCord (Yang/Yuck), Stephanie Morgenstern (Yin/Chung Pow Kitties), Martin Roach (Master Yo), Jamie Watson (Carl the Evil Cockroach Wizard/Zarnot), Tony Daniels (Kraggler/Ultimoose/Indestructo-Bob), Dwayne Hill (Dave/F. L. Smelfman/Roger Skelewog Jr.), Novie Edwards (Lina), Linda Ballantyne (Smoke/Saranoia/Ella Mental), David Hemblen (Night Master), Jonathan Wilson (Coop/Eradicus/Mirrors/Grizzleflavin/Pondscum), Megan Fahlenbock (Melodia), David Berni (Brother Herman/Molecu-Lars), Hadley Kay (Rainbow Mane), David Getindor (Getgle CEO), Peter Crugo (Rubber Chucky), Kathleen Laskey (Lie Fairy), Damon Papadopoulos (G. P./Dank/Dire), Rodger Bumpass (Lesson), Seth MacFarlane (Manotaur), Orlando Brown (Badfoot), Nancy O'Dell (Nancy O. Delffa), Jason Earles (Himself), Mitchel Musso (Himself), Mark Bowen (Fastidious James Spiffington)

SYNOPSIS: Rabbits Ying and Yo learn the martial art of Woo Foo from their panda instructor, Master Yo, and use it to combat evil of all kinds.

COMMENTARY: The show was clearly intended as a parody of martial arts movies and scored points for doing that accurately, along with taking on other aspects of the popular culture of the time. Having ongoing background story lines instead of having the episodes run independently of each other (as is more commonly the case in shows with this format) gave it a bit more plot depth than some other projects, but there was still the chance this way that first-timers tuning in late in the run would be confused by what was going on without background information. The main deficit was that the voice actors took things too seriously for the comedy to fully come off, which spoiled the effect of many of the enormous fusillade of jokes the writers hurled in the audience's path.

YOGI BEAR (AND RELATED SERIES)

***The Yogi Bear Show* (1961)**

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, Columbia

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

PRODUCERS/DIRECTORS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

WRITERS INCLUDED: Warren Foster, Alex Lovy, Michael Maltese

VOICE ACTORS: Daws Butler (Yogi Bear/Snagglepuss/Major Minor/Fibber Fox), Don Messick (Boo Boo Bear/Ranger John Smith), Julie Bennett (Cindy Bear), Jimmy Weldon (Yakky Doodle), Vance Colvig (Chopper)

***Yogi's Gang* (1973–1975)**

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: ABC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

DIRECTOR: Charles Nichols

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Daws Butler (Yogi Bear/Snagglepuss/Huckleberry Hound/Quick Draw McGraw/Augie Doggy/Wally Gator/Peter Potamus), Don Messick (Boo Boo/Ranger Smith/Touché Turtle/Squiddly Diddly/Atom Ant/So-So), Henry Corden (Paw Rugg), John Stephenson (Doggy Daddy), Mel Blanc (Secret Squirrel)

Yogi's Space Race (1978–1979)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCER: Iwao Takamoto

DIRECTOR: Charles Nichols

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Daws Butler (Yogi Bear/Huckleberry Hound), Joe Besser (Scare Bear), Mel Blanc (Quack Up), John Stephenson (Captain Snurdly), Frank Welker (Jabberjaw/Buford Bloodhound/Nugget Nose), Pat Parris (Cindy Mae/Rita), Dave Landburg (Woody), Marilyn Schreffler (Wendy), Frank Nelson (Mr. Fuddy), Henry Corden (Sheriff Dupres), Roger Deltz (Deputy Goofer)

Yogi's Treasure Hunt (1985)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: Bob Hathcock, Jeff Hall

DIRECTORS: Ray Patterson, Oscar Dufau, Tony Love, Rudy Zamora, Bill Hutten, Alan Zaslove, Robert Alvarez, Bob Goe, Rick Leon, Tim Walker, Irv Spence

WRITERS INCLUDED: Ron Campbell, Jeff Hall, Alex Lovy, Jean Marshall, Tom Ruegger, John Ludin

VOICE ACTORS: Daws Butler (Yogi Bear/Huckleberry Hound/Quick Draw McGraw/Snooper/Blabber/Augie Doggy/Snagglepuss); Don Messick (Boo Boo/Ranger Smith/Muttley/Others); Arnold Stang (Top Cat), John Stephenson (Doggy Daddy); Paul Winchell (Dick Dastardly); Dick Erdman, Dick Gautier, Arlene Golonka, Bob Holt, Stacy Keach Sr., Gail Matthius, Rob Paulsen, Joni Robbins, Ann Ryerson, Andre Stojka, Janet Waldo, and Jonathan Winters (Additional characters)

Yogi Bear (1988)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Greg Burson (Yogi Bear), Don Messick (Boo Boo/Ranger Smith)

Yo, Yogi! (1991–1992)

STUDIO: Hanna-Barbera

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera

PRODUCERS: Paul Sabella, Mark Young

DIRECTORS: Ray Patterson, Don Lusk, Paul Sommer, Carl Urbano, Jay Sarby, Joanna Romersa

WRITERS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Greg Burson (Yogi Bear/Quick Draw McGraw/Snagglepuss); Don Messick (Boo Boo/Atom Ant/Muttley); Greg Berg (Huckleberry Hound); Matt Hurwitz (Hokey Wolf); Arte Johnson (Top Cat); Allan Melvin (Magilla Gorilla); Rob Paulsen (Dick Dastardly/Hardy Har Har/Snooper); Henry Polic II (Baba Looey); Neil Ross (Morocco Mole); Hal Smith (Blabber); Kath Soucie (Cindy Bear/Secret Squirrel); John Stephenson (Diamond Doggy Daddy/Mr. Jinks); Frank Welker (Peter Potamus); Patric Zimmerman (Augie Doggy/Dixie); Charlie Adler, Lewis Arquette, Charlie Brill, Bernard Erhard, Patrick Fraley, Pat Harrington Jr., Nancy Linari, Gail Matthius, Mitzi McCall, Howard Morris, Roger Nolan, Ronnie Schell, Sally Struthers, B. J. Ward, and Lennie Weinrib (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: Yogi Bear, the famed connoisseur of “pic-a-nic” baskets who counts himself “smarter than the average” members of his species, is one of the best known and most beloved of all television animation characters. He first appeared in 1958 as a supporting segment of *The Huckleberry Hound Show* (q.v.), and befitting his then-minor status, the early installments of his adventures moved between several formats before focusing on the one favored most by audiences. This was his regular bait-and-



Yogi tries to convince Boo Boo he's right: Boo Boo isn't entirely convinced yet. Hanna-Barbera Productions/Photofest © Hanna-Barbera Productions

switch con games with Jellystone Park ranger John Smith, who represented parental-type authority that children in the audience could particularly relate to. Yogi's popularity was such that he was elevated to his own program in January 1961, supported by *Snagglepuss*, the adventures of a duplicitous, theatrical lion, and *Yakky Doodle*, about a supposedly defenseless duckling protected from harm by Chopper the bulldog. This lasted for two seasons in original production and featured the segment's most effectively written and staged episodes. Yogi's status as a popular icon was firmly cemented in 1964, when he top-lined his own feature film, *Hey There, It's Yogi Bear*, which firmly proved that he could be entertaining for much longer than television would allow.

While his original (and definitive) incarnation has circulated for decades in reruns, Hanna-Barbera has occasionally dishonored him, as it has with its other long-running franchises *The Flintstones* (q.v.) and *Scooby Doo* (q.v.), by featuring him in inferior television specials and series when they apparently had nothing better to produce to keep the studio open. In 1973, he top-lined *Yogi's Gang*, a thinly written educational product in which he and his vintage colleagues confronted a variety of morality-defying villains with such names as Mr. Bigot, Mr. Pollution, Lotta Litter, the Envy Brothers, and the Greedy Genie. Then came *Yogi's Space Race*, wherein Yogi competed in an interstellar *Wacky Races* (q.v.)-type event and was one of the Galaxy Goof-Ups, an interstellar police force whose members included studio veterans Huckleberry Hound and Jabberjaw and newcomers Scare Bear and Quack Up the Duck. The self-descriptive *Yogi's Treasure Hunt* had Yogi and company fulfilling the service of retrieving stolen cash and valuables for their rightful owners before Dick Dastardly and Muttley got their hands on them. But by far the worst of these was *Yo, Yogi!*—a blatant attempt by Hanna-Barbera to adapt its classic cast to a new generation of viewers by converting them into supposedly hip teenagers. (It was tied in to a cereal promotion, wherein certain episodes could be seen in 3-D if you had the right glasses for it.) Between these was a new series of traditional Yogi cartoons with a more modern and self-referential approach to the comedy, but these, too, paled in comparison to the original. Then, in the 2000s, came a hybrid live-action/CGI feature-film adaptation, featuring the voices of Dan Akroyd as Yogi and Justin Timberlake as Boo Boo interacting with a live-action Ranger Smith.

As with his equally overexposed brethren, Yogi is best appreciated in the material from the era when he first emerged because anything else made after that won't cut it in comparison, creatively or technically.

***YOUNG JUSTICE* (2010–2013)**

STUDIOS: Warner Brothers, DC Comics

DISTRIBUTOR: Cartoon Network

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Sam Register, Jay Bastian, Tramm Wigzell, Brian Jones

PRODUCERS: Greg Weisman, Brandon Vietti

DIRECTORS: Jay Oliva, Sam Liu, Christopher Berkeley, Michael Chang, Victor Cook, Tim Divar, Lauren Montgomery, Doug Murphy, Melchior Zwyer

WRITERS: Greg Weisman, Kevin Hopps, Andrew Robinson, Nicole Dubuc, Jon Weisman, Thomas Pugsley, Peter David, Brandon Vietti, Paul Giacoppo

VOICE ACTORS: Khary Payton (Kaldur'ahm, a.k.a. Aqualad/Jefferson Pierce, a.k.a. Black Lightning/Black Manta/Daniel Brickwell, a.k.a. Brick), Jesse McCartney (Dick Grayson, a.k.a. Robin and Nightwing), Jason Spisak (Wally West, a.k.a. Kid Flash), Nolan North (Conner Kent, a.k.a. Superboy and Kon-El/Clark Kent/Superman/Zatara, a.k.a. Dr. Fate/Brain, early episodes/Professor Ojo/Matt Hagen, a.k.a. Clayface/Match/Marvin White), Danica McKeller (Megan Morse, a.k.a. M'gann M'orzz and Miss Martian/Tuppence Terror/Marie Logan), Stephanie Lemelin (Artemis Crock, a.k.a. Artemis and Tigress/Catherine Cobert), Lacey Chabert (Zatanna Zatara), Crispin Freeman (Roy Harper, a.k.a. Speedy, Red Arrow, and Arsenal/Jim Harper, a.k.a. Guardian), Kittie (Raquel Ervin, a.k.a. Rocket), Cree Summer (Tula, a.k.a. Aquagirl/Mary West), Alyson Stoner (Barbara Gordon, a.k.a. Batgirl/Bette Kane), Logan Grove (Garfield Logan, a.k.a. Beast Boy), Eric Lopez (Jamie Reyes, a.k.a. Blue Beetle), Masasa Moyo (Karen Beecher, a.k.a. Bumblebee/Reach Scientist/Cat Grant/Wendy Harris/Greta Hayes, a.k.a. Secret), Kevin Michael Richardson (Mal Duncan, a.k.a. Guardian/John Stewart, a.k.a. Green Lantern/John Jones, a.k.a. J'onn J'onzz and Martian Manhunter/Nabu/Bruno "Ugly" Mannheim/Blackbriar Thorn/Vykin), Yuri Lowenthal (La'gaan, a.k.a. Lagoon Boy/Garth, a.k.a. Tempest/Cameron Mahkent, a.k.a. Icicle Jr./Tommy Terror), Cameron Bowen (Tim Drake, a.k.a. Robin/Winslow Schott, a.k.a. the Toyman), Mae Whitman (Cassie Sandsmark, a.k.a. Wonder Girl), Jason Marsden (Bart Allen, a.k.a. Impulse and Kid Flash/Ray Palmer, a.k.a. the Atom), Bryton James (Virgil Hawkins, a.k.a. Static), Phil LaMarr (Arthur Curry, a.k.a. Aquaman and Orin/Reach Ambassador/Green Beetle/L-Ron/Dubbilex), Bruce Greenwood (Bruce Wayne/Batman/Wotan/Rumann Hajvarti), Vanessa Marshall (Dinah Lance, a.k.a. Black Canary/Red Inferno/Amanda Spence/Noor Hajvarti), Michael Weiss (Nathaniel Adams, a.k.a. Captain Atom), Robert Ochoa (Billy Batson), Rob Lowe (Captain Marvel, early episodes), Chad Lowe (Captain Marvel, later episodes), George Eads (Barry Allen, a.k.a. the Flash), Alan Tudyk (Oliver Queen, a.k.a. Green Arrow/Psimon/Leonard Snart, a.k.a. Captain Cold), Dee Bradley Baker (Hal Jordan, a.k.a. Green Lantern/Monsieur Mallah/Teekl/Ultra-Humanite/Desaad/Dekan Drache, a.k.a. Felix Faust/Wolf/Serifan), Tony Todd (Arnus, a.k.a. Icon), Jeff Bennett (John Smith, a.k.a. Red Tornado/T. O. Morrow/Red Torpedo/Red Volcano/Abra Kadabra/Alfred Pennyworth/Nuidis Vulko), Maggie Q (Princess Diana/Wonder Woman), Miguel Ferrer (Vandal Savage), Oded Fehr (Ra's al Ghul), Mark Rolston (Lex Luthor/Jonathan Kent), Martina Sirtis (Queen Bee), Roger Smith (Ocean Master), Corey Burton (Brain, later episodes/William A. Zard, a.k.a. Wizard/Police Commissioner James Gordon/Uncle Dudley Batson), Thom Adcox Hernandez (Klarion the Witch Boy), Keith Szarabajka (Victor Fries, a.k.a. Mr. Freeze), Sarah Shahi (Crystal Frost, a.k.a. Killer Frost), Rene Auberjonois (Mark Desmond, a.k.a. Blockbuster), John De Lancie (Bromwell Stikk), Danny Trejo (Bane), Arnold Vosloo (Kobra), Nick Chinlud (Lawrence Crock, a.k.a. Sportsmaster), Peter MacNicol (Professor Ivo/Amazo/M.O.N.Q.U.I.s), Kelly Hu (Jade Nguyen, a.k.a. Cheshire/Lian Nguyen Harper/Paula Nguyen), Keone

Young (Sensei), Josh Keaton (Eric Needham, a.k.a. Black Spider), Fred Tatasciore (Ubu/Slade Wilson, a.k.a. Deathstroke, later episodes), James Remar (Joar Mahkent, a.k.a. Icicle Sr.), Adrian Pasdar (Hugo Strange), Dave Franco (Edward Nigma, a.k.a. the Riddler), Diane Delano (Devastation), Steven Blum (Count Vertigo/Rudy West), Brent Spiner (The Joker), Alyssa Milano (Pamela Isley, a.k.a. Poison Ivy), Grey DeLisle (Whisper A'Daire/Beautiful Dreamer), Benjamin Diskin (Billy Hayes, a.k.a. Harm), Adam Baldwin (Raymond Jensen, a.k.a. Parasite), James Arnold Taylor (Nathaniel Tryon, a.k.a. Neutron/Topo), Kevin Grevioux (Black Beetle), Wentworth Miller (Slade Wilson, a.k.a. Deathstroke, early episodes), Keith David (Mongul), Tara Strong (Serling Roquette), Edward Asner (Kent Nelson), Nicole Dubuc (Iris West Allen), Geoff Pierson (Jay Garrick), Kath Soucie (Joan Garrick/Mera/Lori Lemaris), Greg Weisman ("Snapper" Carr), Sheryl Lee Ralph (Amanda Waller), Bill Faggerbakke (Big Bear), Ariel Winter (Queen Perdita), Stephen Root (Jack Haly), Clancy Brown (King Faraday), David Sobolov (Lobo), Tim Curry (G. Gordon Godfrey), Michael Trucco (Adam Strange), W. Morgan Sheppard (Sardath), Jacqueline Obradors (Alanna), Gregg Rainwater (Tye Longshadow), Kari Wahlgren (Carol Ferris), Freddy Rodriguez (Eduardo Dorado Jr.), Janice Kawaye (Asami Koizumi)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: Another of Warner's elongated soap-operatic illustrations of the DC canon, no better and no worse than their other average adaptations of DC material. The difference here was that, as per the title, the younger sidekicks and companions of the main heroes were the stars, with the elder heroes for the most part remaining in the background unless their presence was called for. Although the animation and directing were as sharp as ever, there seemed to be an overwhelming feeling that the studio and publisher were simply coasting on their established reputations and their expectations that the majority of the followers of the show would simply be the faithful DC comic book and live-action film canon followers. This can be seen in how many characters (as noted in the voice actor credits) appeared in total on the program and how many of them had prior backstories that could be extensively mined for this series. A new version of this program is scheduled to debut in 2018 and promises little except the same old thing.

***YOUNG ROBIN HOOD* (1989)**

STUDIOS: Hanna-Barbera, CINAR

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated (United States, 1991–1992)

PRODUCERS: Cassandra Schaufhausen, Ronald Weinberg, Christian Davin

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS INCLUDED: Peter Landecker, Christophe Izard

VOICE ACTORS: Thor Bishopric (Robin Hood), Sonja Ball (Will Scarlett), Kathleen Fee (Matilda), Jessalyn Gilsig (Gertrude of Griswold), A. J. Henderson (Sheriff of Nottingham), Anik Matern (Maid Marian), Bronwen Mantel (Hagilah), Michael O'Reilly (Alan A. Dale), Michael Rudder (Prince John), Terence Scammel (Little John), Harry Standjofsky (Brother Tuck)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: Like the earlier *Rocket Robin Hood* (q.v.), this was a Canadian–American coproduction that was a new take on the familiar

and old-fashioned Robin Hood legend. The difference here was that, as the name implied, the majority of the personnel (even Prince John) were teenagers and young adults. Despite the introduction of new characters into the mix—such as Robin’s sorceress guardian Hagilah—things were still very much the same as earlier adaptations. The use of *Young* even in the dialogue (e.g., “Young Robin Hood will not escape me!”) foregrounded whom this show was supposed to be appreciated by—people who were even younger than the youthful cast of characters.

YOUNG SAMSON (1967–1968)

See *Samson and Goliath* (a.k.a. *Young Samson*; 1967–1968).

YOUNG SENTINELS (A.K.A. *SPACE SENTINELS*; 1977–1978)

STUDIO: Filmmation

DISTRIBUTOR: NBC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Lou Scheimer, Norman Prescott

PRODUCER: Don Christensen

DIRECTOR: Hal Sutherland

WRITERS: Michael Reaves, Kathleen Barnes, Jerry Winick, Donald Glut, David Wise

VOICE ACTORS: George DiCenzo (Hercules/Sentinel One), Dee Timberlake (Astrea), Evan Kim (Mercury), Ross Hagen (M. O.)

SYNOPSIS: The alien life force Sentinel One grants superpowers to three teenage Earthlings in exchange for their doing good work with them.

COMMENTARY: One of the weakest of Filmmation’s superhero shows, crippled mainly by the antiviolence regulations of the era. In the middle of its one and only season, the name was inexplicably altered to *Space Sentinels*, but this, and a move away from the weak time slot it was in, did little to save it from finally being canceled.

YO, YOGI! (1991–1992)

See *Yogi Bear* (and related series).

• Z •

ZAZOO U (1990–1991)

STUDIOS: Film Roman, Cuckoo's Nest, FOX

DISTRIBUTOR: FOX

CREATOR: Shane De Rolf

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Phil Roman

PRODUCER: Phil Mendez

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Michael Horton (Boink), Jerry Houser (Grizzle), Neil Ross (Logan/Chomper), Tress MacNeille (Ms. Devine), Lee Thomas (Seymour), Brian Cummings (Bully), Dorian Harewood (Rawld O/Buck/Poem Reader), Susan Silo (Tess), Danny Mann (Rarf), Stu Rosen (Dr. Russell), Scott Bullock (Sloggo Bonito)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: This was a “socially conscious” (i.e., educational) series developed by veteran children’s book author De Rolf and set at a university for anthropomorphic animals. The program combined traditional comic vignettes with readings of poetry and the like. Failing to gain attention, it was removed from the airwaves after four months, only to be put back at such an early time that many FOX affiliates chose not to air it at all, which basically sealed its fate.

THE ZETA PROJECT (2001–2002)

STUDIO: Warner Brothers

DISTRIBUTOR: WB

CREATOR: Robert Goodman

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Jean MacCurdy

PRODUCERS: Alan Burnett, Robert Goodman, Liz Holzman

DIRECTORS: Curt Geda, Tim Maltby, Bob Doucette, Liz Holzman, T. J. House, Rob Davies, Rob Davies, Olaf Miller

WRITERS: Robert Goodman, Hilary Bader, Kevin Hopps, Ralph Soll, Stacy Liss Goodman, Paul Diamond, Katy Cooper, Ned Teitelbaum, Joseph Kuhr, Randy Rogel, Lyle Weldon, David Benullo

VOICE ACTORS: Diedrich Bader (Infiltration Unit Zeta, a.k.a. Z), Julie Nathanson (Rosalie Rowan), Ulysses Cuadra (Bucky Buenaventura, early episodes), Blaine Barbosa (Bucky Buenaventura, later episodes), Kurtwood Smith (Agent James Bennett), Michael Rosenbaum (Agent West), Lauren Tom (Agent Lee), Erika Alexander (Agent Rush, early episodes), Dominique Jennings (Agent Rush, later episodes)

SYNOPSIS: A humanoid robot programmed to kill experiences a crisis of conscience when he discovers a potential target is innocent of a crime, and he goes on the run after defying his employers in the National Security Agency.

COMMENTARY: Debuting in an episode of *Batman Beyond* (see *Batman*), this was a rare attempt by the Warner Brothers Studio to produce an original dramatic television animation program that had nothing to do with DC Comics. While it was handled well in terms of production, the audience, as was common with the ever-feeble WB network, was not there to support it, and it went out of production after two cycles of programs had been completed.

ZORRO (AND RELATED SERIES)

Zorro (1981–1982)

STUDIO: Filmation

DISTRIBUTOR: CBS

CREATOR: Johnston McCulley

PRODUCERS: Lou Scheimer, Norman Prescott, Don Christensen

DIRECTORS: Unknown

WRITERS: Arthur Brown, Marty Warner, Robby London

VOICE ACTORS: Henry Darrow (Don Diego/Zorro), Christine Avila (Maria), Don Diamond (Sergeant Gonzales), Eric Mason (Captain Ramon), Julio Medina (Amigo/Miguel), East Carlo (Frey Gaspar), Socorro Valdez (Lucia), Carlos Rivas (Don Alejandro/Governor General)

Zorro (1997)

STUDIOS: Fred Wolf, Warner Brothers, Harvest, Carrington, Zorro, Sachs

DISTRIBUTOR: Syndicated

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Fred Wolf

WRITERS: Tim Minear, David Wise

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS: Unknown

VOICE ACTORS: Michael Gough (Don Diego/Zorro), Jeannie Elias (Isabella), Earl Boen (Captain Montecero), Tony Pope (Sergeant Pope), Patrick Fraley (Don Alejandro)

SYNOPSIS/COMMENTARY: The black-clad, noble bandit Zorro (whose name is derived from the Spanish word for “fox”) was first introduced in a 1919 short story by veteran pulp-fiction writer McCulley, whose other writing has largely been forgotten in the shadow of his legendary hero. Quickly outgrowing his pulp-fiction roots, Zorro was quickly embraced by other mass media, being portrayed on film by Douglas Fairbanks Sr. (in 1920’s *The Mark of Zorro*) and Tyrone Power (in the 1940 film of the same title). A later generation of viewers came to know him through a popular television series produced by Walt Disney in the late 1950s, featuring Guy Williams in the title role. Both of these animated projects used the Disney version as their main template, though borrowing from Zorro’s other media incarnations was also present. Filmation’s version was the better one, airing as part of an “adventure hour” that also featured *Tarzan* (q.v.) and *The Lone Ranger* (q.v.). While handsomely animated, this project downplayed violence as much as it could, making Zorro reactive rather than active as a swordsman (he contended that his soldier opponents were simply “doing their duty” when they tried to

take him on) and adding some new characters, particularly the female bandit Lucia, to a voice cast that was, uniquely for the time, primarily Latino. The episodes were capped with Filmation's traditional closing educational minutes, in which Zorro explained to his audience about aspects of life and culture in the pre-American California in which he lived. The 1997 edition was produced on the heels of the popular live-action feature film *The Mask of Zorro*, featuring Antonio Banderas as the masked man, and was a British-Irish-American coproduction. As with the earlier program, newer characters were introduced, namely Isabella, a woman gifted in swordsmanship who backed Zorro up in his duels. Zorro was also armed with futuristic (for his time period) technology, including grappling hooks, jet wings, and an early version of a jet pack. Though this version got good ratings when it debuted, this did not last, and the program came to an end after 26 installments.

THE ZULA PATROL (2005–2008)

STUDIOS: MarVista, The Hatchery, Zula, American Public Television

DISTRIBUTOR: PBS

CREATOR: Deborah Manchester

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Deborah Manchester, Beth Hubbard, Margaret Loesch

DIRECTORS: Brian Kindregan, Kent Butterworth

WRITERS: Cydne Clark, Steve Granat, Nicole Dubuc, Simon Jowett

VOICE ACTORS: Cam Clarke (Captain Bula/Multo); Colleen O'Shaughnessy (Zeeter/Traxie/Deliria); B. J. Ward (Wizzy); Nika Futterman (Wigg); Kurt Kelly (Dark Truder); Dave Wittenberg (Clويد/Buzzy/Others); Catherine Thompson (Earth/Sun/Black Hole/Others); Jeff Bennett, Rob Paulsen, Tom Kenny, Keith Ferguson, Niki Harris, Tim Whitnall, and April Winchell (Additional characters)

SYNOPSIS: The heroic Zula Patrol travels through space, confronting the bad behavior of evil villains and fixing it.

COMMENTARY: This being a PBS show, it was educational in nature, focusing on science, particularly Earth and solar science. Consequently, the entertainment value of the series was constrained, but the program was effectively produced and did its job well over a 26-episode span.

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