



# The Mira Press Back to the Future

FOR STUDENTS,  
BY STUDENTS

**VOLUME 2 | 18TH AUGUST, 2020**

## From the Editors' Desk

No matter how hard we try, the past keeps calling us. So why not look at the past and make our present cheerful? When we thought of this theme, we relived our fond childhood memories through cartoons and we wanted all our committed readers to experience the same emotion. In this issue of The Mira Press we bring to you the funniest, happiest, craziest and cheekiest cartoons of our childhood. We hope you connect with them as much as we did.

Happy Reading!

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CONDENSED

# HISTORY OF CARTOONS

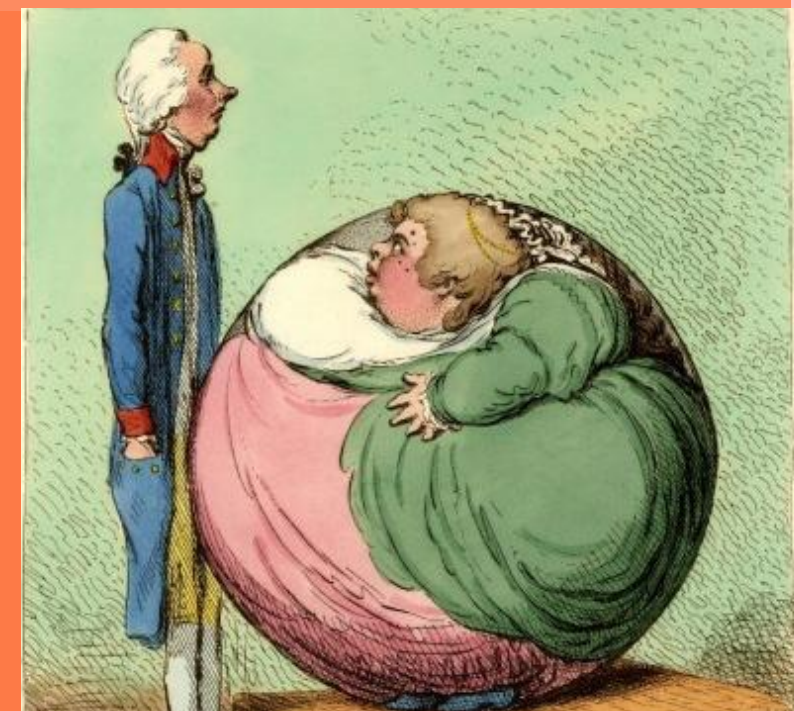


## THE 17TH CENTURY

The earliest caricatures were created by artists as preliminary sketches for paintings and profile studies of their models. Leonardo Da Vinci and Lorenzo Benini are a few of the artists whose sketches survive and have been extensively documented.

## THE 18TH CENTURY

Political caricatures came about in the late 18th century as a way of displaying criticism and discontent. James Gillray and George Cruikshank become the heralders of a pictorial satire movement. Initially pen and ink, artists began to use mediums such as watercolor and gouache.

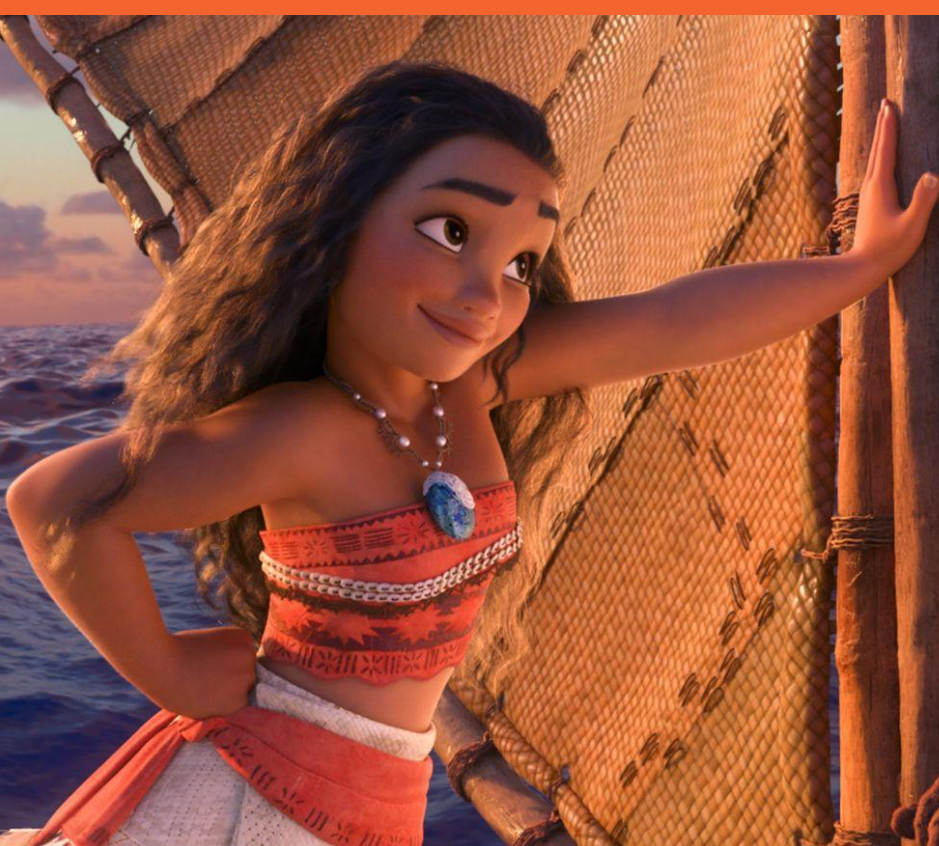


## THE 19TH CENTURY

Before film, animation began to be achieved with the use of devices such as thaumatropes, phénakistiscope, zoetropes, and zoopraxiscope that made use of painted images that would alternate or rotate in sequence to seem like they 'moved'.

## THE 20TH CENTURY

Georges Méliès and Charles-Émile Reynaud were the frontrunners of animation in film. They created moving sequences with the use of stop trick effects, and moving painted sets. Later, the use of cell animation (frame-by-frame sequences) allowed for the earliest cartoon characters to come to life.



## THE 21ST CENTURY

With the invention of computer animation in the 1940s, CGI has jumped leaps and bounds with new innovations redefining the scene of the animation industry.

Animation and cartoons are consumed in almost every form of entertainment media available to us, and children around the world know the names of the most popular production studios.

# Cartoons: Over the Years

How did animation techniques grow?

Computer animation slowly developed in the 1950s. Later, CGI (computer-generated imagery) became the norm for cartoons and films. Various types of animation like full animation, limited animation and live action animation began to crop up on the average animator's radar.

What animation style do most animators prefer?

It is often a matter of personal preference, accounting for time and other factors.

Which was the first 2D animation film created?

Fantasmagorie is a 1908 French animated film by Émile Cohl. It is one of the earliest examples of traditional animation, and is considered by film historians to be the first animated cartoon.



Source: [Wikipedia](#)

How were cartoons traditionally made?

Cartoons were traditionally made by artists hand-drawing on paper! They would make hundreds of drawings and each would be slightly different than the one before: when animated, they would give the illusion of motion!



What is the difference between 2D and 3D animation?

3D animation looks more realistic, and is mostly or completely computer generated, while 2D animation tends to showcase individual artistic styles and is drawn frame-by-frame.

## FUN FACT!

“Toy Story” is the first feature length film fully modeled and created with the help of 3D technology!



Source: [Wikipedia](#)

# Representation in Animation

In today's media, animation has taken drastic measures to portray a correct and accurate representation of people and cultures. However, this was not always the case. Older animation had multiple displays of racism and prejudices against people of colour that were commonplace in an earlier time but are frowned upon today. A few of these instances/ displays of racism can be pointed to an old Disney favourite movie named "Fantasia" where there was the presence of a dark-skinned centaur who was added to the movie with the sole purpose of serving the whiter and light-skinned centaurs. This blatant and obvious enactment of racism and slavery is why the movie was recalled by the animation studio and all current copies of this movie have this particular scene either completely revoked or cropped out.

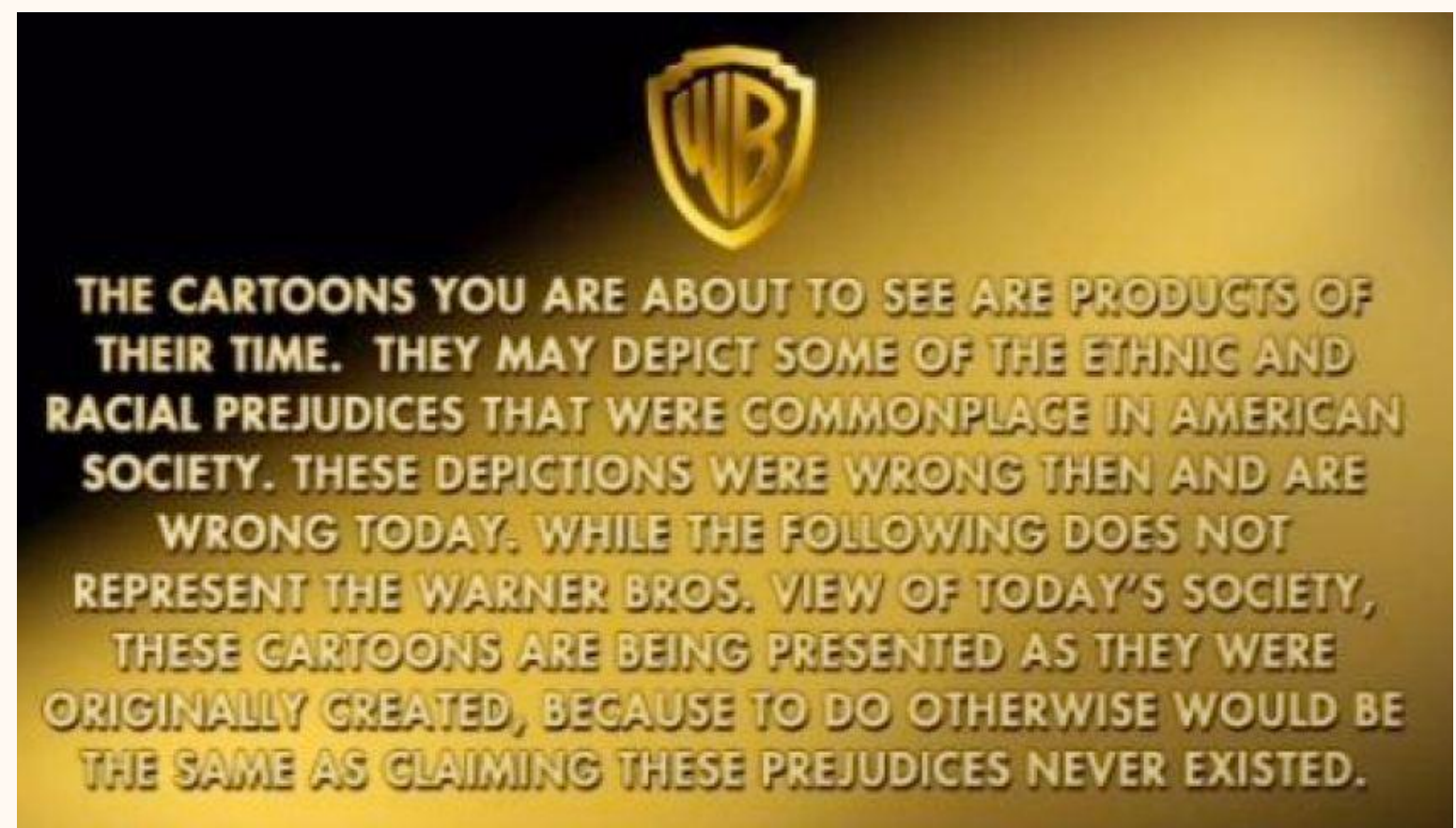


who don't know it, the 'Jim Crow Laws' was a bill passed in America which enforced racial segregation of people of colour. But I guess the real question here is that, if we think good representation is important, does that mean that we should censor and reject anything that has been made in the past just because it isn't positive representation?

No.

Just because something isn't technically progressive doesn't mean that it doesn't have value; although there are cases where the harm is done by negative depictions that outweigh the positive. That being said, I agree with the decision that others have made to release these animations unaltered while putting a disclaimer at the beginning of the film because to alter it would imply that these negative attitudes and depictions never happened. Because we should be aware of, and acknowledge the things we have done in the past to make better choices for our future.

The morals we hold now aren't perfect and it is pretty impossible to design something that pleases everyone, but we must take the first step today so that we may have a better tomorrow.



Another example are the crows from the movie 'Dumbo' whose mannerisms and speech all point to the stereotypical traits of the African-American population that reside in America. But just the showing these traits isn't inherently racist, is it? That is until you hear the name of the crow. "Jim Crow". For those of you

**By: Fariha Chagla  
Animation Student**

# What's your favorite cartoon?

My favourite cartoon was and is Tom and Jerry. My dad and I used to watch it together every morning before I went to school, and on every Sunday. That was 'our thing'. We also fight like Tom and Jerry, so there's that too.

Bhoomi Punjabi,  
TYBA



Sakshi Gidwani,  
TYBA



My favourite cartoon while growing up was Shinchan! He was mischievous and clumsy like me, and his antics never failed to make me laugh. He loved chocolates and hated capsicum; he was a kid and he was always himself regardless of what the people around him tried to influence him with. And who couldn't love his dog, Shiro?!

My favourite cartoon while growing up was Phineas and Ferb because they created all the amazing things one could imagine. It wasn't monotonous. Every episode of it excited me and the animation was colourful too. It wasn't just revolving around two characters; they often introduced new characters which were fun to watch. I wish it had been broadcasted for a longer period.

Monalisa Pradhan,  
SYBCA



Chandana Roy,  
SYBA



During my childhood, the Powerpuff Girls were a rage and everyone loved Blossom and Bubbles but me, I just was able to relate more with Buttercup. She's this sassy yet strong character, tomboyish at the same time. Something I really admired was that she never let too many emotions get to her. She's a perfect example of a girl trying to make a place for herself in the world while at the same time protecting and helping her sisters save it. Buttercup will always be that empowering character for me.

## Reimagining our Favorites: All Grown Up!



Artist: Gayathri Nair  
SYBA (A)

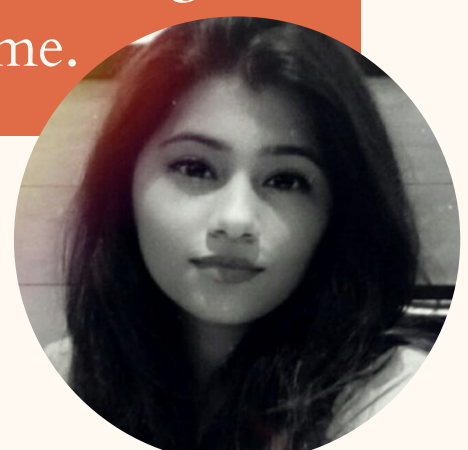
As a child, I was really fascinated & dazzled by "The Powerpuff Girls". Not only did I adore Blossom as a leader of the gang but I was also greatly impressed & inspired by the concept of the show because it featured the "Girls" as the superheroes who fight the bad guys & the wrongdoers. Also, I greatly related to the tomboyish character of Buttercup & I absolutely loved her aura & that 'spice' when she used to fight! As a fangirl of the show, I would've watched all the episodes several times & hands-down would love to binge-watch it again any day!

Simran Bhatia,  
TYBCA



To be honest, my favorite cartoon was Scooby Doo. I don't really know why, but maybe because they taught us that strangers aren't always the villains every time.

Zoya Kapadia,  
TYBA



## A Student Speaks

Since time immemorial there have been several debates regarding the function of art. In literary movements too, we have great personalities holding diametrically opposing views of art; on the one hand, where G.B. Shaw promotes the didactic nature of art; there is also Oscar Wilde who was at the forefront of the 'art of art's sake' aesthetic movement. Needless to say, one can never truly understand the influence of art on human lives. Yet, personally I am of the opinion that art has a tremendous impact on our lives but we don't give it much thought; to the point that we even fail to acknowledge its existence.

The art in question- cartoons, have also been subjected to a similar fate. Believe it or not, the type of cartoon shows that one views in childhood contributes significantly to his/ her adult personality. Want proof?

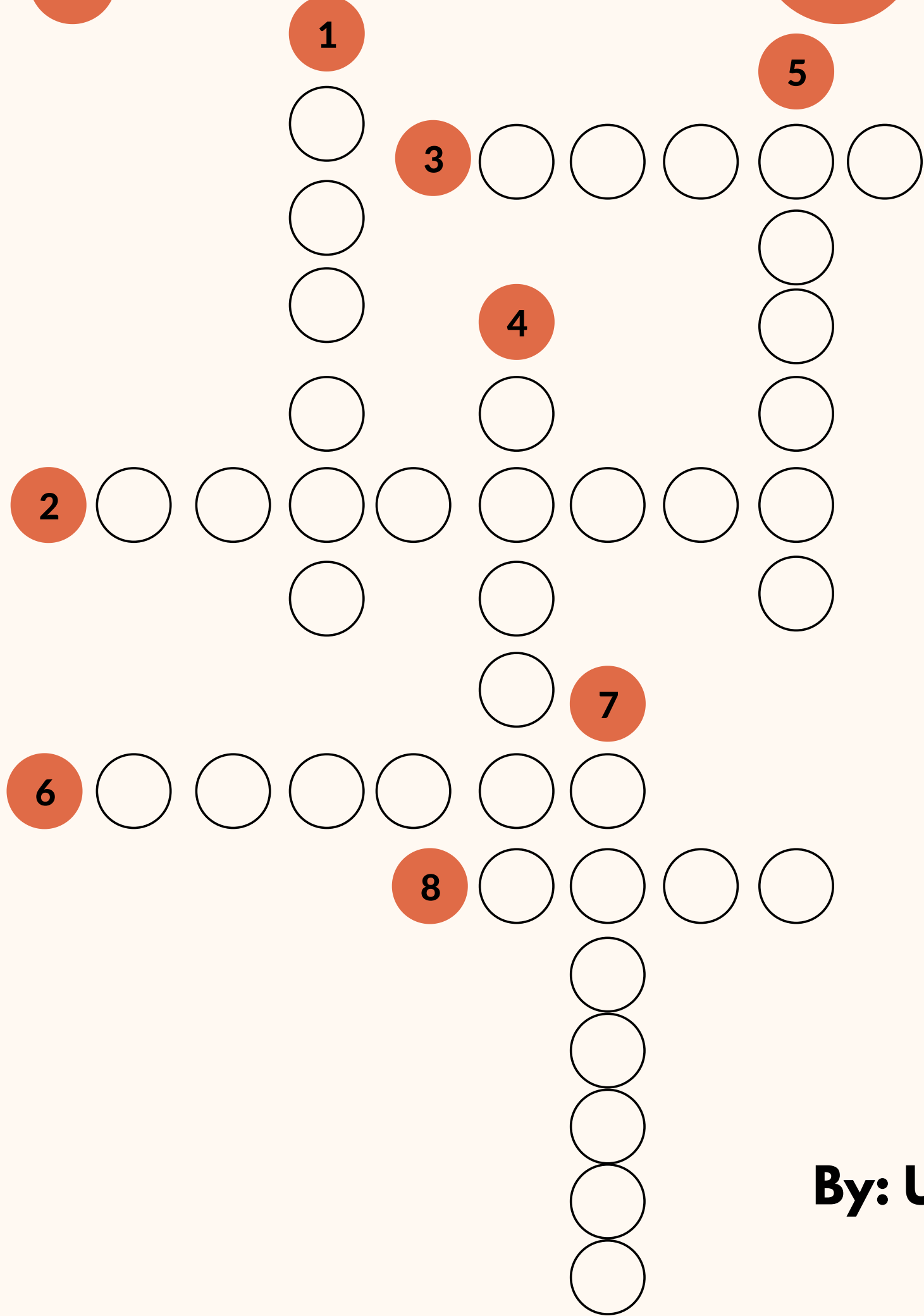
Well, if you loved to watch Popeye or Chhota Bheem for that matter, you sure ate a lot of spinach or laddoos! You didn't?

That's because spinach and laddoos stand for something bigger: inner strength. Young children need to believe that being stuck in quicksand isn't the end of the world; there's always a laddoo which can help them turn things around.

Cartoons across cultures are replete with teachings, values, themes and ideas that one only seems to relate to and comprehend, ironically, in adulthood. Yet, children can't be blatantly exposed to abstract ideas, nor can they be subjected to the injustices of life at such a tender age, no matter how important it is for them to know these things. Hence, animators and writers use symbolism and uncomplicated plots to convey the burdensome aspect of life in simpler terms. Themes surrounding body image, conflict resolution, rejection and failure, feminism, environment protection and countless other life lessons form an underlining thread in almost all cartoons, including The Looney Tunes, Phineas and Ferb, Doraemon, Johnny Bravo, The Power Puff Girls and Pokemon.

While you might think that cartoons were just meant to entertain us, there's apparently a lot more that cartoons have to offer us. So, are you ready to re-watch your favourite cartoons and explore their not-so-simple lives?

# CROSSWORD



- 1 A yellow sea sponge wears \_\_\_\_\_ pants
- 2 Kiteretsu's robot assistant
- 3 His best friend is Tessie Bear
- 4 This character has a pet dachshund named Weenie
- 5 She is the havoc creating elder sister of Dexter
- 6 Jungle jungle baat chali hai, pata chala hain chaddi pehen ke kya khila hain?
- 7 Who's the cowardly dog?
- 8 \_\_\_\_\_, the Explorer

## CROSSWORD SOLUTION VOLUME 1

1. Anxiety
2. Well-being
3. Happiness
4. Mental
5. Mood
6. Depression
7. Self-harm
8. Abuse

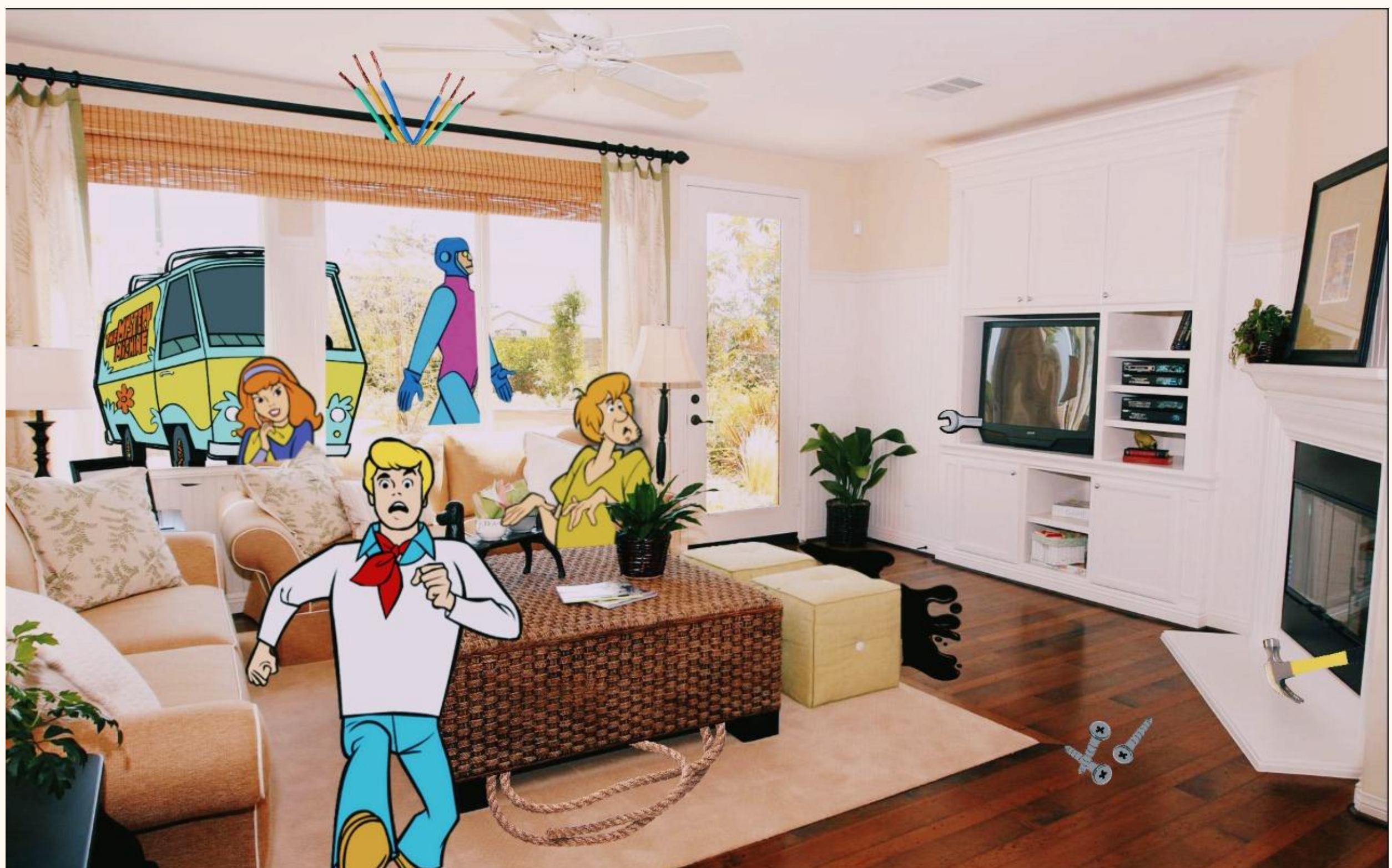
By: **Ummesalama Karu TYBA**

# One Minute Mystery!

The Mystery Gang is being chased by Charlie the Robot! Spot some items that might help them in capturing him to finally reveal who the real villain behind the conspiracy is!

### ITEMS:

- ROPE
- OIL SPILL
- SCREWS
- HAMMER
- WRENCH
- LIVE- WIRES



## On Media Today

Cartoons are definitely an essential part of every person's childhood. Personally, I have a lot of memories tied to my favourite cartoons, and I still revisit and watch a few episodes when I need to find an escape from my daily life. As a child, I wasn't the most social; I didn't make friends easily, and I really struggled with fitting in. My sister who is six years older to me was the only person I really got along with. Our weekday Cartoon Marathon would definitely top my list of things I miss from my childhood. It wasn't just about a 10-year-old and a 4-year-old sitting and wasting time in front of the idiot-box, it was more about us creating a love for certain shows we still miss till date.

Let's begin with Courage the Cowardly Dog. This was definitely one of my favourites on Cartoon Network. I mean the name literally says it all right? But Courage was, in fact, the bravest character on the show with the task of protecting his owners Muriel and Eustace from the monsters, aliens, demons, mad scientists, zombies and vampires they encounter on their doorstep. Courage is terrified of the tasks and the monsters he encounters but nevertheless goes to great lengths to protect his owners. I think this show speaks a lot about how we have the ability to go through great lengths to protect the people we love, no matter how terrifying it can be. Tom and Jerry of course, deserve a mention. I can never forget my grandparents sitting and watching Tom & Jerry with me. Its definitely is a timeless classic.

I think when we think about cartoons, we are instantly reminded of our childhood and innocence. Cartoons have a sense of comfort to them. Cartoons show that there is never really a limit to one's imagination. Cartoons give you the licence to dream. As kids we were not critical of our shows, we just took what they gave us, timeless entertainment and those warm fuzzy feelings of childhood. Maybe this feeling is what accounts for modern media incorporating characters, references and visuals into contemporary entertainment.

Scooby-Doo was a childhood favourite, and to see the Mystery Gang back together in a special episode of Supernatural drew the attention of fans all around the world. This sort of mish-moshing of genres, mediums and age-dictated entertainment has given rise to an entirely new brand of consumption during the contemporary age. Shows like Bojack Horseman and Family Guy play off of a base of relatable animation and cartoon styles while bringing in adult themes and comedy leading to a newly curated market of adult animation.

As an avid watcher of these shows, it's interesting to see how we, as creators in this age, manipulate our simplest sentiments to make such diverse forms of expression and mass communication.

**Writer: Kelly Colaco**  
**TYBA**



# What are the differences between Indian and International Cartoons?

We've seen a number of animated series as we've grown up; from Scooby-Doo and the Mystery Gang to Chhota Bheem and Mowgli. But what are the characteristic differences that make Indian cartoons just so understandable to the millennial Indian?

## VALUES VS. INFO

Indian television shows tend to focus on a value-based education, choosing to teach children moral and ethical norms that make them good members of society, for example: respecting the elderly. International shows, while also undertaking this, tend to be more information-based, educating children about rudimentary science, environmental concepts and language.



## GENRES

Generically, international television shows tend to span wider genres, including horror-thriller, fantasy and science fiction. For example, "Little Einsteins" and "Jimmy Neutron, Boy Genius". Most Indian-origin shows tend to revolve around our mythological knowledge bases or a rural/pastoral setting. These would include shows such as "Chhota Bheem" and "Little Krishna".

## FEMININE REPRESENTATION

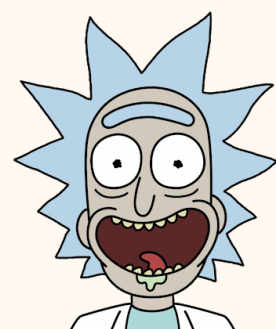
International television shows for children are much more inclusive of female characters as protagonists; often sharing or being the main lead of the show. A variety of roles and traits are portrayed through this character; showcasing personalities, interests, careers and more. Indian shows, on the other hand, tend to delegate the supporting role to the female character; often making her the mother or contemporary 'love interest' of the male lead.



**Writer: Monalisa Pradhan**  
**SYBCA**

# Cartoons for the (Young) Adult

Cartoons may be incredibly entertaining, but there comes a time when the casual simplicity of Phineas and Ferb's jokes just doesn't cut it. Luckily, adult animation is a genre in and of itself, and is constantly expanding. Here's a list of a couple of our favorite cartoons, stepped up a notch!



A pair of twins go on supernatural and paranormal adventures while visiting their grand-uncle in the mountains!



Best friends and brothers, Jake and Finn travel across the Land of Ooo, a post-apocalyptic world making friends and getting into trouble!

Morty thinks having a sociopathic scientist grandfather might not be so bad; that is, until he starts having to go on Rick's 'adventures'!



Follow Steven, a half-human, half-Gem boy on his journey of self-discovery and a little bit of world-saving!



Hank Hill is your average propane salesman and patriarch of the Hill family. Watch as he navigates hurdles of the everyday, mundane sort.



Bean isn't your regular Disney princess; she's got an elf companion and a personal demon! Speak of good company!



Nick Birch and his best friend, Andrew Glouberman try to get through middle-school (and puberty) rather unsuccessfully.



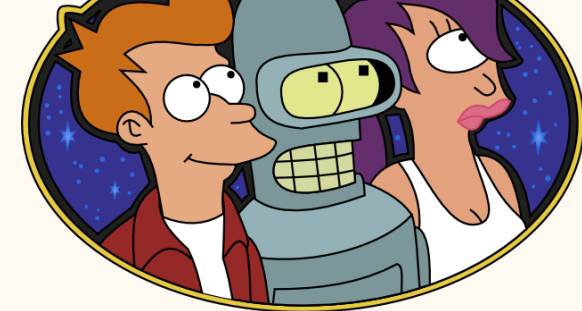
Watch as the Belcher family attempts to manage its family, and their hamburger restaurant!

Say hello to our favorite dysfunctional American family! With three kids, Homer and Marge have their hands full, don't they?

Between the antics of Eric, Stan, Kyle and Kenny, there's never a lull in any of our favorite episodes from South Park!



What does an anthropomorphic horseman do when he's a washed-up sitcom star? Ask Bojack; he knows better than anyone!



It's set in the future; what more is there to say?



An honorable mention to:  
**ARCHER**

A must-watch in anyone's opinion, it poignantly features African-American culture!

# On Positive Portrayals

Do you remember the first time you watched Aladdin? The bright colors, the giant domed exterior of the palace of Agrabah and the noticeably tanner main characters were things I believe every Middle-Eastern and Indian person could immediately relate to; increasing the thrill of being represented in a film by a prestigious studio. The debate that Aladdin unfortunately subsequently incited was not of representation, but of stereotyping and prejudice. The film is a product of its time, and is problematic on various fronts including but not restricted to its xenophobic content, concrete gender role representation, Islamic taboo and racist tropes. With the amount of social awareness and global presence in our day and age, the live-action version of the film raised our hopes of addressing these concerns and creating more forward and positive depictions. The film didn't quite hit the mark. Another example might be that of Apu Nahasapeemapetilon, an NRI Indian from the show, 'The Simpsons' who manages a convenience store in the town of Springdale. Voiced by American actor, Hank Azaria, he has been visualized with an unrealistic "Indian" accent and is a character clad in the subtle racism of the American imagination. This exact phenomenon prompted Indian-American comedian, Hari Kondabolu, to create a short documentary titled 'The Problem with Apu'.

But this brings up the question of positive portrayal and representation of the media. Recent web advocacy has alerted most of us to the minorities and communities that reside within our global society, and the need to address them is ever-pressing. One of these needs is that of representation; visualization on a public platform for the education of- and interaction with all. While positive representation for many communities has been long-coming, the tides are changing. Children's television programming, and specifically cartoons, have taken to a policy of inclusivity. The first and foremost purpose of this is to incite discourse.

A noteworthy example of this is the animated series, 'She-Ra and the Princesses of Power'. A reboot of the retro television show, the series chose to include LGBTQ+ imagery throughout their 52-episode run, and two of the main characters, Adora and Catra's friendship culminates into a romantic relationship at the conclusion of the second season, and has been regarded as revolutionary for LGBTQ+ representation in children's media. Disney's 2009 'Princess and the Frog' was another milestone in the mainstream portrayal of African-Americans, showcasing no stereotypes, but black culture in New Orleans, woman empowerment and proactive heroism. 'Avatar: The Last Airbender', a series geared more towards the young-adult demographic, is no less forward. The different factions existing within the animator's universe have been inspired by various real-world cultures such as the Inuit, Buddhist, Chinese and Polynesian.

Fingers crossed, there comes a time when the adult censorship on children's media is liberally minimised and discourse is not only encouraged, but embraced. We hope that these portrayals are the trickling streams before the flood of visual inclusion in media.

**Writer: Arman Chagla**  
**TYBA**

# Meet: Cute!

Munira Patrawala, an artist based in Nasik, defines herself as an illustrator, animator, designer, cartoonist, visual developer and soft toy enthusiast.

Although she spends most of her time in her own little bubble, Munira steps out from time to time to pour her imagination onto a canvas and give it life. Within the comforts of her office, she can take you on multiple trips of her fantasy lands using her art and design.



## How would you define yourself as an artist?

Ooh, this is hard. How do I answer this without sounding cocky? I love telling stories and making people smile.

Animation, illustration and design allow me to weave together stories with places and characters that would otherwise only exist in my head.

Bringing inanimate objects to life is thrilling on another level altogether, and I enjoy materializing my reveries into something tangible.



## What is the most important thing you have learned in your career as an artist on social media?

I am fairly new to the social media game, and by no means an expert. But one of the most important things I have learnt is – simply be you! People appreciate authenticity.

## Do you pursue art as a career?

Yes, I do! I work as an animator, illustrator, designer and dreamer. I'm quite the expert when it comes to dreaming.



## Have you found that your social media makes it easier for you to get work/ job opportunities?

To be honest, I didn't start my Instagram page to find work. It was something my friends and family used to urge me to do, so I decided to give it a go just for funnies! But yes, people certainly have reached out to me through it. A lot of artists make a living using social media. It certainly is a great platform to showcase art and find work.

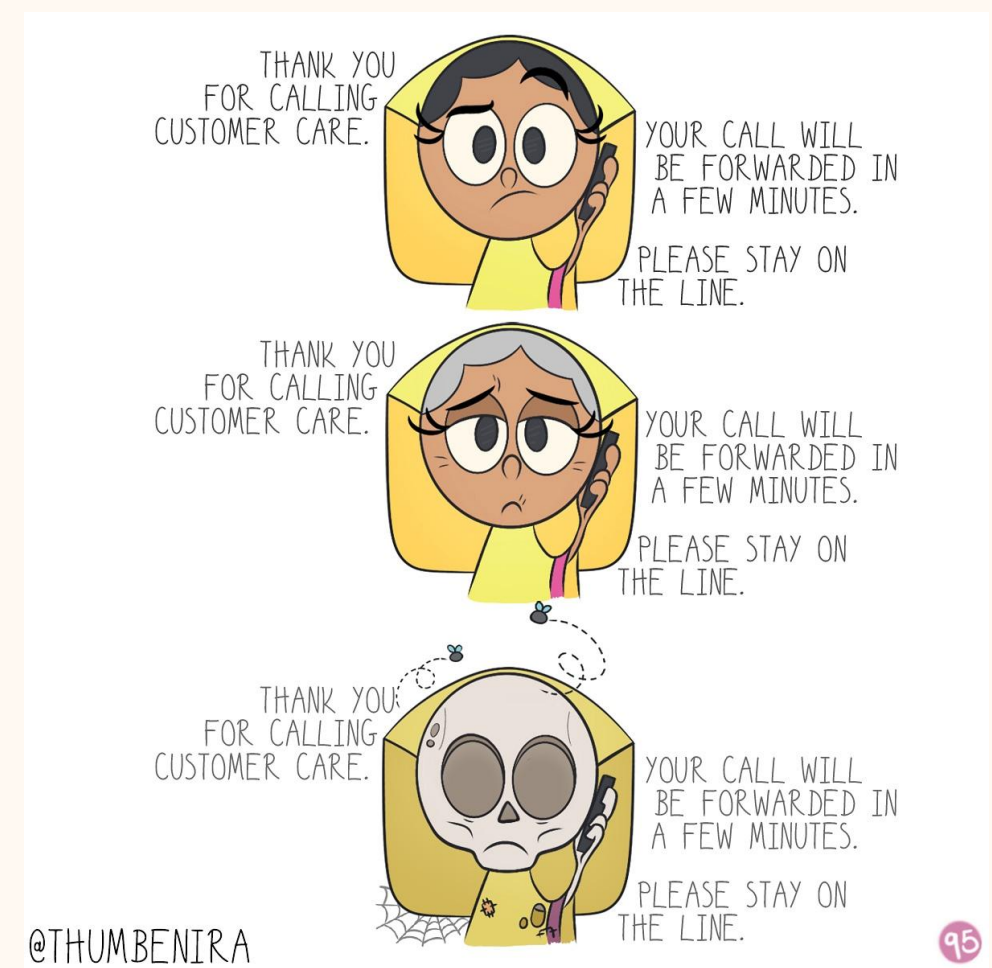
## What is it like being an artist in the digital age?

One word: mind-boggling! On the plus side, I have access to millions of talented artists miles away.

But there are murky parts too, like the threat of having my art copied, manipulated or stolen if kept open for everyone to view – something that I have struggled with in the past.

## Do you have a social media account where you post your work?

Yes! Just an Instagram account for now. You can find me [@thumbenira](https://www.instagram.com/thumbenira).



@THUMBENIRA

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## What do you have to say about commissions and the devaluation of artists during commissioning?

A lot of artists aren't confident in their abilities when they first start out, so it is common for them to undervalue themselves. I have been there too, and find myself constantly battling with it. As much as we'd like to push aside these matters and continue making art, it isn't practically possible. So, it is essential for artists to be able to gauge their abilities and charge people accordingly. Remember, self-criticism is one thing, self-deprecation another. Respect your work, and be fair to yourself.

# On Nostalgia and Kinder Things

Nostalgia. What a simple word to convey so much, Simply defined as a wistful desire to return in thought or in fact to one's past, nostalgia is a sentiment that expresses volumes. A longing for home, for simpler times; a longing for comfort. But why do I speak of nostalgia?

This beautiful little feeling sits at the back of our minds almost constantly, the metaphorical pearl in the oyster shell of our consciousness. It is not actively thought of but comes like a dream, uncalled for but welcome. It is an awakening of our yearnings, wafting visions of times gone by. What I miss the most, and what most people do, is their childhood; a time free from the burdens of society, a time when daydreaming took up a better part of our day. We long to experience things again; to stare in astounded terror as the sky shakes with thunder, to feel the cool patter of the first raindrops of monsoon on our skin. We think of early mornings in front of the television, waiting for our favorite cartoons to come on, and to sing its theme song freely.

Nostalgia is a kind mistress of minds; luring and motivating. She keeps us going; working tirelessly to achieve that moment of bliss when we've had our cake and eaten it too; having reached the place where our nostalgia resides and made our dreams a reality. We've all collectively flocked to what we know and long for and we hope that it'll keep us going until we've 'made it'.

Let us take for example, the Lord of the Rings. Written by J. R. R. Tolkien, the books are extensive and detailed, which the movies don't fail to incorporate to the best of their ability. But what stands out to me is this; the concept of nostalgia and the part it plays in our lives and the lives of those in this series. Frodo Baggins and Samwise Gamgee are our protagonists for the day along with a Fellowship of seven others. As the company is splintered due to choice and circumstance, we follow our heroes through the seemingly impossible task of getting to Mount Doom; a volcanic mountain nestled in the bosom of Sauron; the all-seeing Eye. As they succeed one trial after another, it is not riches or renown that they motivate themselves with; it is nostalgia. These visions of comfort warm our hearts in the bleak mid-winters of our lives.

The warm summer breezes of the Shire and the smell of ripening strawberries are what our young Samwise and Frodo yearn for and what, dare I spoil the surprise, they achieve.

And so, all I think that is left to ask is, what's your quest and what nostalgia motivates you?

**Writer: Arman Chagla  
TYBA**

# New on the Block:

Philadelphia-based artist Tyron Handy has recently gone viral on the internet for reimagining our favorite cartoon characters from 1990s and early-2000s television as black. His version of 'The Powerpuff Girls' as linked below depictses our beloved Blossom, Bubbles and Buttercup with varied shades on the skin-tone spectrum and natural hair. Bubbles rocks some dark afro-puffs, while Buttercup has some luscious and long curls. There might be those on the internet who aren't too fond of the reimagination, but we are loving it!



Credit: [@studio total onyx](#) 

**CURATED  
BY**

Arman Chagla  
&  
Ummesalama Karu



 [st.mirascollege](#)