

Cartoon spinoffs

Drawing from television success, cartoon creators try hand in print market

By Timm Doolen
Special to THE BATTALION

Look! Up in the sky! It's a bird! It's a plane! It's *Radioactive Man*?!?!? It's *Bartman*?!?!?

Yes, true believers, the earth has two new superheroes to save mankind from the evil elements in society.

"Radioactive Man" and "Bartman" are the two most recent comic books from "The Simpsons" television show.

The first two titles came out earlier this year: "Simpsons Comics," which recreates the Fox network's television show with new storylines, and "Itchy and Scratchy Comics," featuring the bloody exploits of Bart and Lisa Simpson's favorite television cartoon animals.

With the two most recent titles, however, creator Matt Groening ventures into superhero territory and beyond.

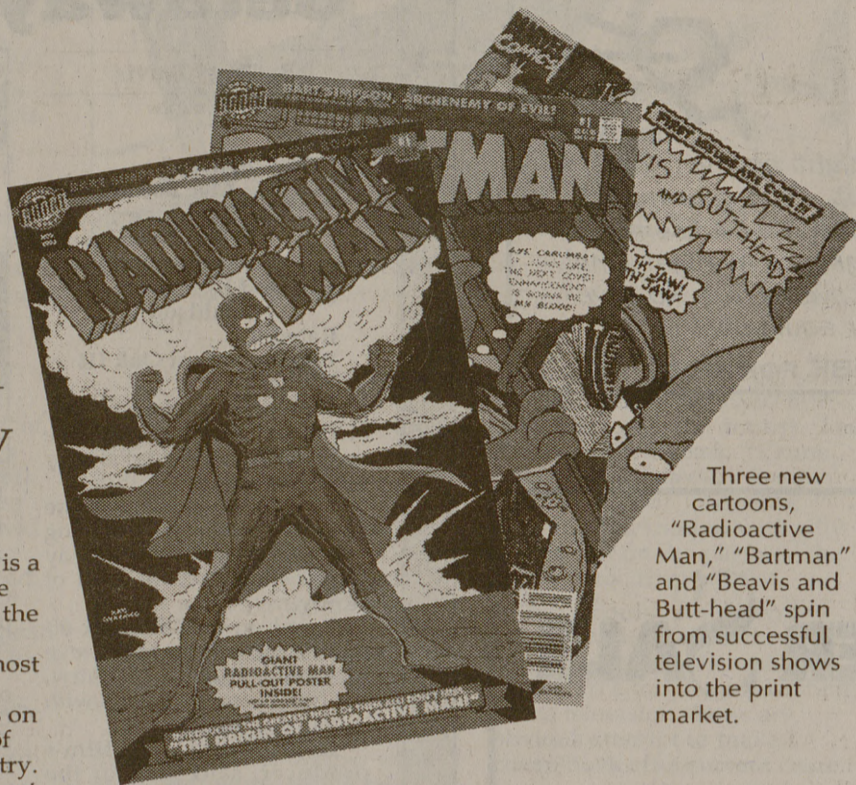
Radioactive Man can be

taken on many levels: he is a superhero and at the same time a superhero parody; the comic makes fun of other famous superheroes — most notably Superman and Batman — and comments on censorship and the state of today's comic book industry.

"Radioactive Man #1," set in 1952, includes Radioactive Man's origin (Claude Kane III's car breaks down too close to a nuclear bomb testing), and his first tangle with archrival Dr. Crab.

Both stories are filled with witty dialogue and spoofs of traditional comic book storytelling. For instance, after Kane (resembling a young Homer Simpson) gains his nuclear powers, he decides to take on a secret identity: "I'll need a disguise — something bold — something powerful — with future merchandising potential!"

"Radioactive Man" is the comic book counterpart to "Blazing Saddles" or "Spinal Tap."



Three new cartoons, "Radioactive Man," "Bartman" and "Beavis and Butt-head" spin from successful television shows into the print market.

Duh Nuh Nuh Nuh...

"Bartman" is a little less ambitious, but just as humorous. It tells of the "true life" adventures of Bart Simpson and his alter-ego, Bartman. In "Bartman #1," Bart foils a scheme by do-badders to inflate comic book prices (including "Radioactive Man.")

In case you haven't bought comics since you were a kid (or never bought them), in recent years comics makers have begun using gimmicks on covers to get people to buy them. There are holograms, embossed covers, die-cut covers, glow-in-the-dark

covers (featured on the real "Radioactive Man #1") — everything short of having fireworks explode when you turn each page. In "Bartman," Bart's friend Martin buys two copies of a comic packaged so specially it catches fire and self-destructs when opened.

Better than a special cover is a cover with a printing mistake, which makes it rare and pricey. Thus the "Bartman #1" plot: crooks cause printing errors and sell the "rare" comics at higher prices. But Bartman catches onto the scheme and swings into action.

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Weekend Highlights

Chris LeDoux plays B-CS tonight

Country singer Chris LeDoux will be playing tonight at the Texas Hall of Fame.

The former rodeo star, best known for his duet "Whatcha Gonna Do With a Cowboy" with Garth Brooks, will be appearing for one night only with special appearances by the Aggie Wranglers and Jack Ingram.

LeDoux was virtually unheard of until Garth Brooks sang of "... a worn-out tape of Chris LeDoux" on his debut album. But after years of selling tapes of his music from the back of a pickup, LeDoux has made a name for himself.

Tickets for LeDoux's show are available at Court's Western Wear, Rother's Bookstore and at the door.



Kevin Ivy/THE BATTALION

Award-winning Inkululeko! returns

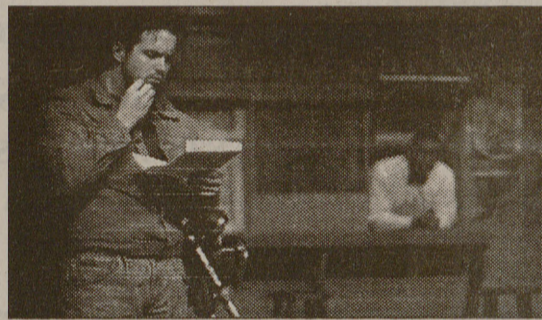
Texas A&M's Theatre Inkululeko! will present its production of "Saturday Night at the Palace" once again in Rudder Theatre on Feb. 17, 18 and 19.

The play has been selected to compete at the Region VI-Kennedy Center/American College Theatre Festival where six productions will be chosen for April showings at the Kennedy Center. As a prelude to the festival, the group has de-

cidied to present three more showings at Texas A&M.

Written by Paul Slabolepszy, the play is a South African view of what happens when people are willing to fight over symbols of power, even to the death. But its themes of racial prejudice and discrimination make it just as applicable in this country as well.

Tickets are available at the Rudder Center Box Office.



Kyle Burnett/THE BATTALION

The award-winning Inkululeko!, starring Steve Mize (left), Rapulana Seiphemo (far right) and Sam Levassar, Jr. (not pictured) returns to Rudder Theatre this weekend.

1994 MSC Miss Texas A&M University Scholarship Pageant

Saturday, February 19th 7:00 p.m. Rudder Auditorium



TANYA WILLIAMS
Benjamin Knox Gallery



DYANNA WILSON
First National Bank Key Homes



TRACEE CASTILLO
Frank Cox



WENDY CARTER
Zales Jewelers



SUSAN SANDFORD
Chi Omega Sorority



TOBEY CORDASCO
Aggie Band



JOLYNN MEYER
Epsilon Rho Chapter, AGD Chi Phi Fraternity



MEGHAN LEFTWICH
Aerofit



KAROL ANN TAYLOR
Allen-Olds-Cadillac-Isuzu



WENDY DIEDRICH
Carl Bussell's Diamond Room

Persons with disabilities please call us at 845-1515 to inform us of your special needs. We request notification three (3) working days prior to the event to enable us to assist you to the best of our ability.

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