

# 'The Boondocks' invades a civilized TV near you

The newest addition to Cartoon Network's 'Adult Swim' lineup premieres Sunday at 11 p.m.

BY KRISTEN GERHARD  
PULSE REPORTER

Aaron McGruder wanted to bring to life the characters of his acclaimed and infamous cartoon strip, "The Boondocks," from the moment they graced the pages of major newspapers in 1999. Today, more than 350 newspapers nationwide feature the still-framed satire of the dysfunctional Freeman family — Huey, Riley and granddad Robert. This Sunday, McGruder's dreams of breathing life into the Freemans' stories will become a reality when "The Boondocks" joins the Adult Swim lineup on the Cartoon Network at 11 p.m. with the series premiere titled "Garden Party."

Like the strip, the show focuses on the two black Freeman brothers — 10-year-old Huey and 8-year-old Riley — who are forced to live in the Chicago suburbs when their granddad becomes their legal guardian. Huey, a young leftist revolutionary, and Riley, a wannabe thug, inevitably clash with their predominantly white neighbors, creating material ripe with humor, as well as social and political commentary.

McGruder said that compared to the comic strip, the format of the show has been very liberating creatively. Developing the characters and creating more complex story lines are just a few examples of what the new, more open medium will allow him to do. The only real limitation to the television format, in which episodes can take months to

reach the screen, is the challenge posed by maintaining relevancy while focusing on issue or event-based jokes.

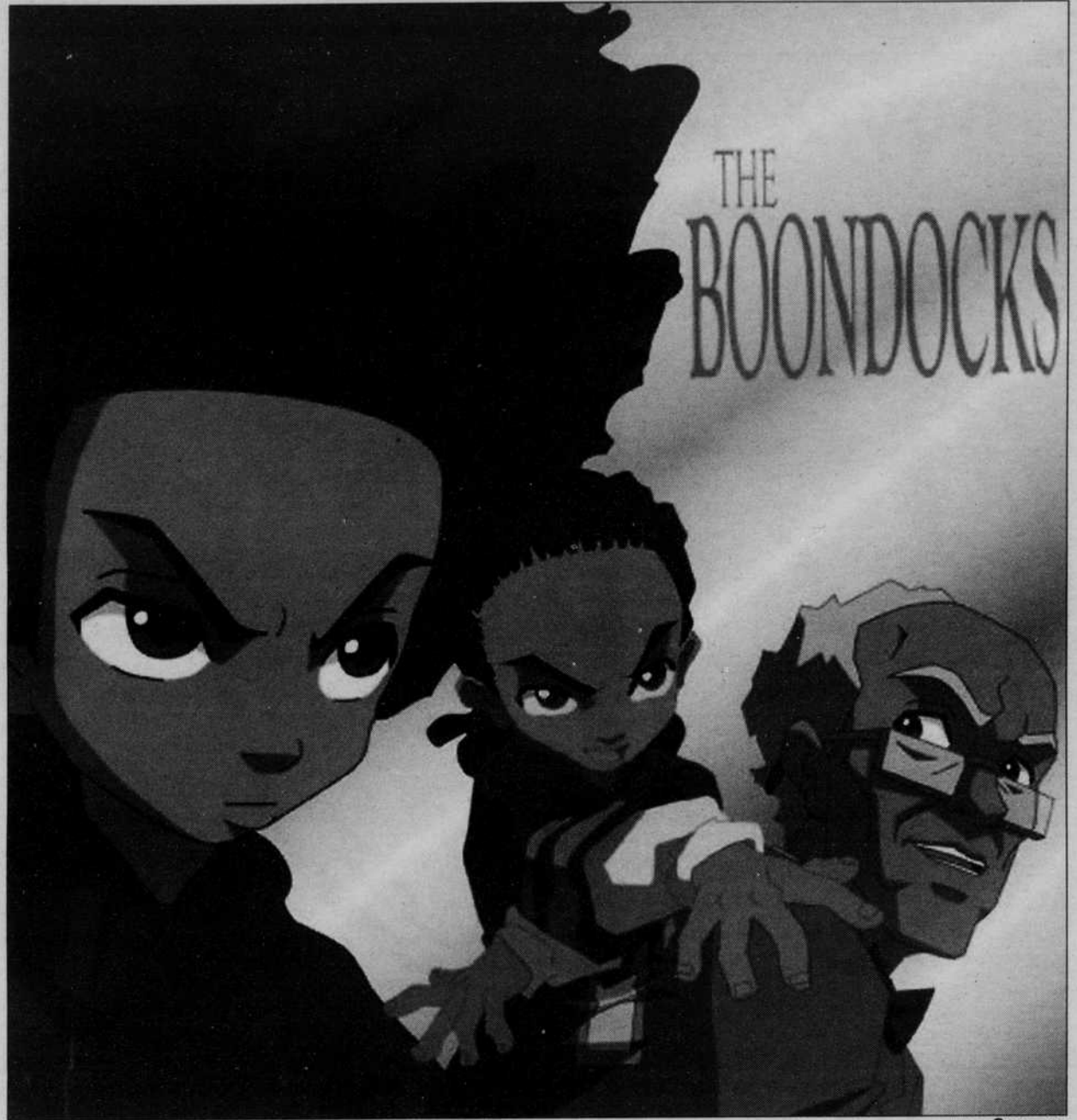
"Whenever you're doing something tied to real life and the news, even though you try your best, you're throwing curveballs," McGruder said. "Unpredicted things happen and you just got to deal with it."

Therefore, jabs at pop culture icons and other public figures will occur less in the show than in the strip, although McGruder said they're still trying to get in a few when they can. For instance, in the premiere episode, an unintelligent, gun-toting, trust-fund-dependant character named Edward III is intended to be loosely representative of President George W. Bush.

"We didn't want to tell a bunch of Bush jokes that would date the show," McGruder said. "So this seemed to be kind of a funny way to accomplish the same thing without being right on top of current events."

In much the same way, many of the heavier points made by "The Boondocks" fall more on the subversive side. Overall, when it comes to crafting comedy versus encouraging dialogue, McGruder said comedy comes first.

"We don't sit around thinking, 'Gosh, what do we want the young kids talking about today?'" he said. "We always start in the place of 'OK,




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what's going to make the young kids laugh?" because I do think, at any point in your life, you're watching TV for entertainment, and the politics

COMIC, page 11

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