

ANALYSIS

The first humorist I'm interested in analyzing is Diane Morgan, whose performance as Philomena Cunk is what I'll be focusing on. She's best known for her performances in mockumentaries, where she creates humor through the subversion of people's expectations on documentary presenters. Contrasting the idea of the educated, well-spoken, and formal presenters we often see in actual documentaries, she presents the character as overly casual, dim-witted, and somewhat socially inept, all with the veneer of a "proper" documentary. There's also often a heavy element of dramatic irony, especially in her interviews with professionals; she often asks what are quite frankly very stupid questions, seemingly completely unaware of or not caring how stupid they are. Though her humor tends to focus more on making fun of her own character, she also occasionally makes witty remarks about different topics, which can show her own views on a topic through the Cunk character without seeming too heavy-handed. She also includes short (often tangentially related) anecdotes ([especially about her mate Paul](#)), further adding to the humor found in her overly casual nature.

My second comedic inspiration is the work of Zach Hadel and Michael Cusack in *Smiling Friends*. *Smiling Friends* is an animated series focusing on the two main characters, Charlie and Pim, and their lives working for the company Smiling Friends Inc., whose purpose is to bring happiness to those who need it. Much of the humor in the series is found in the contrast between this supposed mission of the company and the realities of life, as Charlie and Pim's efforts to do their job more often than not go awry and bring elements of dark humor to the show. The absurd, slightly surreal nature of the setting, enhanced by the animation, also creates comedy—most of the character aren't human, varying greatly in appearance, and there are various other bizarre features of the setting, such as the haunted forest, literal hell, the enchanted forest, and the amusement park Dave Land. In contrast, the character's personalities are rather dull and realistic, and a lot of humor is found in the contrast between this and the setting.

REFLECTION

Personally, I've always been really amused by comedy which integrates the absurd into the everyday. I find a lot of humor specifically in scenarios of contrast, between the "normal" and the absurd, and understatement of the absurd as normal. Overall, I most enjoy absurd comedy, understatement of the extreme, and overstatement of the everyday, with opportunity for subtle, in-character commentary on real world topics.