

Part 1: The Humorist Analysis and Reflection

Analysis

For my humorist study, I decided to analyze two pieces of media that I'm a big fan of— the Office and Scott Pilgrim vs. The World.

For the Office, I analyzed one of its most iconic episodes: Dinner Party. This episode is pretty much universally praised for its humor, awkwardness, and character development. I like it because of its connection to the overall narrative arc of the Office. This episode is considered a turning point in the story and it's wildly entertaining because of that. The dialogue is also really natural and well written. I like how there's a lot of things that go unsaid but you can infer if you read between the lines or already know the plot to the Office. For example, when Jan plays Hunter's song to calm herself down and Michael talks loudly over it, the underlying context is that Jan had an affair with Hunter and Michael is jealous, but they're still staying together and their relationship is strained. I also really like the acting in this episode. Melora Hardin and Steve Carell play an awkward and strained couple so well, it was uncomfortable to watch at times. This is because it feels like something that could happen in real life, no matter how absurd the situation is.

For Scott Pilgrim, I analyzed the screenplay of the opening scene where all the friends are sitting together. I think the whole movie has a lot of really funny moments, but the opening scene has such natural dialogue and acting just like the Office so I decided to compare them. This scene portrays a group of friends and uses banter really well to show a group of friends who hang out together but slightly hate each other.

Just like in the Office, I think the acting is really natural and the characters seem like people you'd know in real life. The fast paced nature of their conversation adds to the comedic timing. Scott Pilgrim also has title cards for each person with a wisecrack about each character. This is one of the differences between the office and Scott Pilgrim. Scott Pilgrim is more absurd and comedic, probably because it was based off of an actual comedy. It has slapstick humor throughout with comic fight scenes and physical comedy, such as when Scott jumps out the window to avoid Knives knocking on his door. The humor is also enhanced with the cinematography. Edgar Wright uses a lot of whip pans and fast transitions to the next scene, blending conversations in different locations or cutting dialogue off. His unique filmmaking and direction style is something that inspires me in my own films and adds to the comedy in his films. On the other hand, the Office doesn't use a lot of slapstick humor or fancy editing. It's more based in reality and the life of people with a boring office job. In the later seasons they do get into more comedic situations. The Office is a mockumentary so the camera work is more simple and less stylized.

Despite their differences, both pieces of media are mostly character driven. The stories contain characters who could be considered caricatures or stereotypes. The characters' personalities are all very unique and comedic, almost exaggerated. But at the same time, the deliveries of the jokes are so natural that they seem like real people. Of course, they both star good actors who interpret the script and deliver funny, iconic lines.

Reflection

As for my own humor project, our group was inspired by the Office. We liked their character driven plots and talking heads. Since the Office is a mockumentary, we were inspired to create a mockumentary about Freestyle Academy. We incorporated talking heads as well as skits. We also liked how the characters played practical jokes on each other (for example, the iconic stapler in jello) and how the characters had banter with each other.

In the Office, they also have documentary style camera work. This is used for comedy when they zoom on specific characters or parts of the scene. We were inspired by this and used this at the end to zoom in on Will trapped in a car.

Personally I was also inspired by Scott Pilgrim's characters and their personalities. I like how they were stereotypical or caricatured versions of people you would meet in real life. We were inspired by this when writing our script because we made the characters stereotypes of ourselves or people we knew.

In both the Office and Scott Pilgrim, they have natural, well written scripts. Some scenes from the Office are even improvised. I was inspired by the conversational sounding dialogue and acting in both of these pieces of media. In our mockumentary, while we did have a script, most of it was improvised which made it sound even more natural and off the cuff. This also allowed for us to improvise jokes. The script was there simply to keep a narrative structure, but we tried to make our acting as natural as possible.

"House Tour from Hell - The Office Us." *YouTube*, YouTube, 6 Oct. 2020, www.youtube.com/watch?v=wFv3SQ0YTv0.

Wright, Edgar, and Michael Bacall. "Scott Pilgrim vs. the World." *The Internet Movie Script Database*, 2010, imsdb.com/scripts/Scott-Pilgrim-vs-the-World.html.

Part 2: Description of Proposed Project

For this project, I'm going to work with Will, Eva, and Ayan. We are going to work on a Comedic Narrative, specifically a mockumentary. We were inspired by sitcoms like the Office and Parks and Rec with their use of character based skits and talking heads. Our subject will be film students at Freestyle. We will follow the students as they work on their final film. We chose this target because we thought it would be funny and relatable to our immediate audience. Ayan, Eva, and I also made a short mockumentary last year and we wanted to expand on that with the filmmaking skills we have now.

For this project we are going to use situational humor for our skits. The "situation" will be one that many film students have experienced, which is working with a group that doesn't get along and has different creative views. This leads to arguments and funny scenarios. As for the characters, we will make them caricatures of ourselves or people we know. Making

our characters stereotypes will lend itself to comedy. It will also add to the relatability because the characters will be based off of people we all know. Finally, we're planning to use absurd humor. We have a scene in our mockumentary where one of our characters gets kidnapped and replaced by his jealous twin. This is an absurd situation that would most likely never happen in real life, and it will add a narrative arc to our mockumentary to make it more structured.

If we get approval, we will write our script and then start filming. We'll use all 4 people in our group to perform/crew for this project. Since we won't all be on screen at the same time we will act as well as be behind the camera. We're planning for our mockumentary to be around 3-5 minutes. As for props, we'll be using film equipment as props (since the mockumentary is about film students) and a body bag for the kidnapping part.

[The Office Dinner Party Scene](#)

[Scott Pilgrim Screenplay](#)