

Humorist Study

(Analysis/Reflection + Project Proposal)

Analysis

My influences for this humor project are Saturday Night live—for their comedic parodies and Ryan Higa—for his YouTube parodies and comedic skits. One is a nighttime show every Saturday, with a big production team and budget, while the other is a man with a small team creating short comedic skits. They have very different resources and styles, but both have effective comedy.

Saturday Night Live is known for creating both live performances and some pre-recorded skits. I am most inspired by their pre-recorded skits. One particular work of theirs that inspired me was their “Mario Kart Trailer”. Saturday Night Live often creates spoofs of recent events or recent shows. This trailer was a parody of the television show *The Last of Us* and the new *Mario* Movie. In this work, they utilized absurd humor by placing the mario characters into a more realistic and gritty world, but clearly unrealistic. The humor is very self-aware, having some dramatic irony. It also includes repartee with short quips and one-liners spoken by the characters. This is a highly produced short with a dark tone, but also somewhat goofy tone. I take inspiration from the way that they can combine these two tones together, in a way that can make the audience chuckle. The way that they can parody anything effectively is inspiring as well.

The second comedian I analyzed is Ryan Higa. He is a YouTuber known for his comedic YouTube skits. A large portion of my childhood was spent watching his videos. They always have the ability to put a smile on anyone’s face. A video of his that I analyzed is his video “Musicals in Real Life”. He has short skits throughout, broken up by comedic commentary about each section. It includes absurd humor, poking fun at the way that musicals are completely unrealistic to real life. No one would start dancing or singing in real life, and people would definitely find them strange and unusual. He also uses funny voices when saying the names of the musicals. He also uses modern references that wouldn’t fit in the stories that he is parodying, adding to the absurdity. I am inspired by the way that he utilizes humor and makes fun of subjects in a lighthearted way. I find the absurdity comedic and something that I would want to put in my own work. The editing style that is very unique to YouTube is also something that is very interesting and comedic. It works despite not looking the most cinematic or professional.

Saturday Night Live and Ryan Higa are two very different types of creators. It goes to show that anyone can make comedy, and that multiple different types of comedy can work. Entertaining comedy doesn’t need to have a high budget or production value. There is very little overlap in the type of comedy used in the two comedians, but both are entertaining and funny. Saturday Night Live draws in a crowd of theatre oriented people, and largely the general public as well due to their pop culture references. Ryan Higa has a large Asian audience, and a generally younger audience. They vary in many ways, but at the end of the day can bring a smile or a laugh to anyone.

Reflection

I haven't delved into comedy too much in my time creating films and other content. A lot of the comedy in my work hasn't taken too much thought, or wasn't necessarily intentional. I've tried my hand before at creating comedic works with horror comedy or utilizing black humor in darker comedies.

With this project in particular, I find that the most valuable humor techniques would be absurd humor, black humor, and situational humor.

Situational humor is used because the situation is very relatable to other students, as they also moved onto the new campus recently, and are the first ones to do things on the new campus. A conversation with Jack Dees and Annie Schwartz was also an inspiration in generating this idea. I was inspired to make something that people would relate to, as this new campus is something that a lot of people are excited about. The loud construction sounds in the background are definitely something that everyone has heard.

This humor is also a bit absurd, because some of the actions that we are the "first" to complete are not very normal things. Absurdity and randomness can really add an extra bit of humor. I am inspired to make things seem so absolutely strange or unusual. I find it humorous when things are so out of the realm of what would usually happen. A contrast between a relatively more normal Lillian and a strange me might add an extra bit of humor. There is clear evidence of this type of humor being used by both Ryan Higa and Saturday Night Live, and every time I see absurdity it makes me laugh.

Darker tones and black humor are another subject that I've considered using in a lot of my other works as well. It's more fun to create. Making light of dark situations helps us get past it. It also almost adds a layer of commentary on top of it. The piece that we create utilizes dark tones at the end, but in a way that doesn't take itself too seriously.

All of these techniques combining together creates fun and comedic atmospheres and works. An important part of humor is the fun in the creative process. All of it adds something to the conversation, and makes fun of the way things work and are.

Part 2 – Description of Proposed Project

Provide a detailed description of your project, including what you intend to develop (the form of humor, topic/content, techniques you plan to use, how many people you'll need to deliver the performance, visual aids/props, time, and any other details that will help to give me a picture of what you're planning to create. *This section is worth 25% of the grade for this assignment.*

- 1.) **Yes.** Fiona and Lillian
- 2.) Comedic Narrative
- 3.) The subject is the new Freestyle campus. A lot of people in Freestyle might relate to the feelings about the campus, and the absurdity. They might find solace in making fun of it.
- 4.) Banter–Lily and Fiona banter about each of the “firsts”. Black humor – it gets darker at the end. Situation humor – based on real conversations heard on the freestyle campus
- 5.) The new campus has been hyped up for so long.
- 6.) After we are approved, we will write the script

Note: Once you gain approval, make a new Google Doc titled LastName_FirstName-Humor Script, and begin drafting your own original project. If you are doing a non-narrative/non-performance project, such as a series of political cartoons or satirical images, you will need to use this document to explain your creative choices and how you applied comedic terms and techniques to your images.