

# **Humorist Study**

## **(Analysis/Reflection + Project Proposal)**

One of my biggest comedic influences, while not a person or direct humorist, is Cyanide and Happiness, a webcomic created by a few different co creators. Cyanide and Happiness, while definitely not the most family friendly, has been a very entertaining form of media that both my friends and I enjoy viewing. Some of the common themes I really get a laugh at is the extremely crude humor. Absurd humor, black humor, blue humor, caricatures you name it, they have it.

Perhaps it's the lazy stick figure designs that enhance the jokes that many would consider in poor taste, or maybe it's the witty puns and completely unexpected plot twists. Being a teenager is definitely a possibility as to why I find Cyanide and Happiness so funny, with immature jokes being the thing that always makes me laugh the most. However, I definitely do understand why some people may get offended at this web creation, as sometimes there are remarks that could be taken the wrong way. This includes racial jokes, gender stereotypes, or oversexualization. While these are meant to be ironic and not taken seriously, there is a reason why it's not a family friendly show/comic.

Another of my favorite comedic influences and humorists is Impractical Jokers. Impractical Jokers is a reality TV show, in which a group of four men perform pranks in real life with real people. However, these pranks are not meant to humor poor unsuspecting victims, but rather members of the group themselves. A lot of the humor techniques the Impractical Jokers use include blunders, exaggerism, and a BIG emphasis on practical jokes. Well, actually, impractical, hence their name. One of the biggest things that distinguishes impractical jokers from other pranksters (and the reason they get their name) is the fact that most, if not all, of their pranks target themselves as the victims, rather than random civilians. A practical joke targets someone to make them look foolish or to entertain others, but Impractical Jokers do the opposite by making themselves the butt of the joke.. Many of the pranks are incredibly embarrassing or even incriminating for themselves, which is what makes them so entertaining to watch.

A few examples of the type of pranks they like to pull are cutting people in a massive line, reciting an inappropriate (but funny) speech during an important event like a wedding, or saying absurd and random lines in important business meetings.

Something that distinguishes the humor of Cyanide and Happiness from Impractical Jokers can be pretty easy to discern. Cyanide and Happiness involves fake, animated or drawn characters, while Impractical Jokers involve real people. The extent of what could be said or done in Cyanide and Happiness would definitely overstep the boundaries in Impractical Jokers. However, both are still entertaining to watch, and I'm open minded and appreciative of all kinds of humor. I laugh at dad jokes, I laugh seeing my friends in embarrassing situations, and I laugh at some messed up jokes too.

Humor is one of the most important things in life in my opinion. Some may disagree, but when I think about not being able to laugh at one of Sky's absurd comments or some of those low quality TikTok videos, I would think life would be so boring. When I'm feeling down, laughing and humor will always be a way for me to feel a little up.

When considering my own project, some of the techniques I find the most inspirational are irony, practical jokes, and exaggeration. When doing my project, I think I want to be able to incorporate a combination of all of these. I know that I do each in real life; for example: irony - calling someone short when they're literally a centimeter shorter than me, practical jokes - sticking baby carrots into people's hoodies, exaggeration - pretending like I'm going to die when my Calculus teacher tells us we have a test next week. Taking inspiration from Impractical Jokers, I want to be able to use all of these themes and elements in order to create an entertaining and humorous result.

I also want to, if possible, incorporate elements of absurd humor and blue humor, as they will be much more unexpected and could add a little humor to an otherwise stale project. Taking this from Cyanide and Happiness, the absolute shocking and unpredictable humor always catches me off guard, but this is exactly what makes me laugh. I just have to make sure I don't cross the lines with these ones, especially blue humor. I think that there are so many different techniques that can be used for humor, and it's impossible to list them all specifically. There are so many small things that have the ability to make me laugh, and sometimes there isn't even a category for it. Maybe there should be a new category "stupid humor", cause stupid things always make me seem to laugh.

Always having been one of the less funny people among my friends, I think this project can be a challenge to test my potential. Maybe I'll end up failing miserably, maybe I'll stumble on my feet and blurt something out that is completely unfunny(very awkward when this happens). Although I sometimes feel insecure about it, I'm definitely more excited to give it a shot and hopefully make many people laugh when they watch me try not to embarrass myself.

When I really thought about it, I got confused - Why is it fun to watch people embarrass themselves? Apparently(according to a friend of mine) it's human nature... but what sort of human nature even causes that? I decided not to question it any further. Oftentimes I question exactly why I laugh at certain things, but really, ignorance is bliss and there isn't any point in questioning it.

During my project, I hope to be confident enough in my own humor to incorporate all of these elements, although in the moment I know it will be nerve wracking. Perhaps instead of trying to literally have every single element, I should just go for it and be natural. I think that will end up being more funny in the end too, as forced humor is generally not as funny as natural humor.

Considerations:

- You may opt to include outside research to supplement each of these sections, especially if you are interested in connecting which comedians influenced their work or criticism/reviews. However, outside research is not required.
- You will need to include a **Works Cited** for all sources analyzed. Please consult the [Purdue OWL MLA Guide](#).
- *The Humorist Analysis/Reflection is worth 75% of the grade for this assignment, while the Proposal below is worth the remaining 25%.*
- Heads up: You are required to explain at the end of your Humor Project performance/recording your comedic influences, which is also where this assignment comes in handy!

## 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.) Are you collaborating with others? **Yes\*** or No
  - a.) I will be working with Sky Gommeren and David Palacios
- 2.) Which form of humor are you planning to develop? (See [menu](#).)
  - a.) We are planning to develop a prank reality TV show, very similar to impractical jokers. We are going to try to embarrass our group members through extremely absurd pranks on random people.
- 3.) What is the subject (or, in the case of satire, the target)? Why did you choose this subject?
  - a.) Our subject is each other. We are going to devise ways that we can put each other in extreme situations where we have to try to dig our way out of (for example, a really funny prank the Impractical Jokers did - Joe and Sal had to professionally present a slideshow that Quinn and James made. However, there was a twist - they had to explain why it's ok to say "nice

boobies” or demonstrate how to tell an Indian their lunch smells funny). We chose this subject because performing pranks that aren’t at the expense of a random victim are much less dangerous, and because we want to see each other struggle in very funny situations.

- 4.) Which comedic [tools/techniques](#) do you plan to use, and why? (List at least 3 main ones and explain briefly how you plan to use them):
  - a.) We plan to use lots of irony, exaggeration, blue humor, and (im)practical jokes.
  
- 5.) Why do you think this is the right humor project for you? (If you have a group, can you assure me that everyone is invested in this idea and you won’t have trouble getting everyone to contribute meaningfully?) What makes you excited about this idea? What are some potential pitfalls you wish to avoid?
  - a.) I think this is the right humor project for me because I finally get a chance to work with some of my best friends, Sky and David, on a project that highlights our comedic chemistry together. I always end up laughing at a joke or something one of the two do, and I think this gives us the perfect opportunity to truly see how much humor and laughs we can bring as a group. I’m very excited to try to embarrass them in awkward situations, but I also do think it’ll be enjoyable(as well as awkward) getting out of my comfort zone to prank unsuspecting people.
  
- 6.) If you get approval, what’s your next step?
  - a.) We are going to begin brainstorming a multitude of different ideas and pranks that we would like to pull off, and a few that we are thinking of now are trying to convince random people to join fake charities or buy fake/obscure products.