

## Analysis

I chose to analyze the humor of Ryan Higa and SNL (specifically their short skits). Both comedians focus on crafting witty humor through performing scripted skits and creating short videos.

Ryan Higa, also known by his username, "nigahiga", is a content creator on Youtube who is known for making humorous skits and relatable videos. He was one of the first well-known Asian American content creators and comedians on social media from 2011-2015. In his video, "Honest Airline Commercial", he uses satire to make fun of notorious issues that occur in airports and on flights. The video is formatted as an airline commercial, using shiny transitions and smiling actors to really sell the "advertisement" look. This demonstrates his use of dramatic irony, as the situations and activities being described and shown in the video are not positive, desirable things - however, they are being shown in a video format that is intended to boost sales and draw more customers to their company. For example, a video clip of a flight attendant ignoring customers is voiced over by a man saying, "We take customer service very seriously here". Ryan Higa's humor techniques also work because he caters to the general public and thus targets common experiences that everyone can relate to. Most people in Ryan Higa's audience have seen the frustrating experiences of airports and flying, and so are able to relate to his comedic humor.

I also chose to study the humor seen in the skits that appear on Saturday Night Live. SNL is a live show based in New York that often hosts celebrity guests to participate in a variety of comedic skits, including their Cold Open series, monologues, "Weekend Updates", and other hilarious skits. Similar to Ryan Higa, in one of their skits featuring Sandra Oh, "Cut for Time: College Admissions", they use satire to criticize the notorious college admissions process and how, for many selective colleges, admissions counselors may pay more attention to wealth and legacy than actual merit and statistics. They also use exaggerism multiple times throughout the skit, a common theme in all of SNL's videos. For example, the admissions board in the skit chose to admit a student who was in juvenile detention for two stabbing cases over a student with outstanding essays and grades, simply because they were a 4th-generation legacy. While many people know that legacy now plays a bigger role in college admissions decisions, a general audience member would also know that the legacy advantage isn't strong enough to overlook federal crimes. SNL's humor also works in a way that their scripts are incredibly relevant to current events and news. For example, this college admissions skit came less than a month after Operation Varsity Blues, a notorious college admissions scandal in 2019 involving multiple top universities. SNL has also created videos immediately following events such as the Chinese Spy Balloon, FOX's Dominion lawsuit, the 2023 Miss Universe pageant, and more.

Both Ryan Higa and SNL take current and relevant topics and use their satirical humor as a way to criticize what almost everyone has generally accepted as "normal" in society. Their exaggerations in their videos allow audiences to truly see how ridiculous these situations are, and shine a light on them through one of the most popular forms of entertainment: comedy! In a way, they essentially use the "I'm joking, but not really" type of technique to help get their point across. However, despite a shared goal between the two comedians, they create their comedic effects in different ways. While Ryan Higa uses professional editing and well timed effects to evoke a laugh, SNL's live skits mainly use clever writing and rely more on the actors to bring out their humorous effects as intended.

## Reflection

When I think of humor, I tend to think of and gravitate towards situations where comedy comes naturally through conversations between people just speaking freely. I love witty humor! I feel as though comedy is best shared and understood where there's an underlying context that makes an entire joke funnier. For example, my friends and I have a running joke that one of our friend's dad jokes aren't funny, which is what makes us crack up each time we hear them try to tell jokes. Conversational humor also allows the contagiousness of laughter to spread among people. A scripted joke aired on TV definitely wouldn't receive the same amount of laughter as a joke told to a group of friends, whose laughs trigger more laughs in everyone else. My favorite moments with my friends are when we're all breathless from laughter, and each of us just keeps adding on witty comments that make us laugh all the more harder.

As a result, I value comedy that centers around current day events and topics. These days, culture and comedy on the Internet moves at such a rapid rate that it feels as though there are a new set of jokes every week. Whenever I see a witty remark or funny skit about some niche event that occurred recently, I like how it feels like I'm in on a really big joke. It's funny knowing that so many other people can understand such a specific and targeted video/skit. For example, on social media posts that cover breaking news, my favorite activity is to look at the comments of the post. There, I find so many clever and witty comments that can turn a serious topic into a funny and lighthearted quip. Overall, I enjoy comedy that I can connect with and have more than just a surface level understanding of.

However, on the opposite side, I generally don't enjoy comedy that feels forced. I was never really a fan of sitcom shows that had the automatic laughing tracks in the background - it made it feel as though a joke were only funny because there was a laughing track, and not the other way around. Shows like "The Office", which had lots of well-timed beats and gave the actors room for improv, are what I find funniest in the media. In my opinion, it takes a really dedicated and humorous actor to bring a comedy script to life. Typically, I've seen that comedy works better when the actor performing it truly embodies and embraces the joke they are saying, rather than just reading a script that they have no passion for.

I think Taylor and I's Met Gala project would definitely match these types of comedic themes. Because the Met Gala is such a relevant topic at hand, it will allow for lots of audience members to be able to understand the context of where the humor comes from as well as unspoken references to bizarre looks in the past. Although we will have a script, the subject gives room for lots of improv and well timed beats (like they do in the Office)! Our Met Gala project will include the famous Met Gala interviews, which would also allow us to mimic conversational humor and create witty remarks towards each other.

## Part 2

1.) Are you collaborating with others? **Yes\*** or No

*\*If Yes, list the names of your collaborators : Taylor Ewan*

2.) Which form of humor are you planning to develop? (See [menu.](#))

a.) Comedic Narrative/Satire

3.) What is the subject (or, in the case of satire, the target)? Why did you choose this subject?

a.) The Met Gala - we chose this subject because it's a relevant and current topic at the moment, and both of us have been following the bizarre fashion looks that have occurred throughout the years.

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.) Exaggerism - we plan to use this technique to exaggerate how bizarre the Met Gala outfits are by using unconventional items that typically wouldn't be used as clothing.

b.) Anecdotes - we could use this technique during the Met Gala interviews to bring short, bizarre stories to our "Met Gala". For example, this year both Doja Cat and Lil Nas X only responded with meows during their interviews: we could do a similar anecdote that is also incredibly bizarre and almost unbelievable.

c.) Satire - we could use satire in order to comment on/criticize the class disparity that the Met Gala demonstrates each year: while many celebrities pay for \$50k tickets each year, a good percentage of Americans make less than that in a year.

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 Taylor and I because we're both very present and active on social media, which is where much of the Met Gala conversation takes place. We also are very passionate about fashion and are knowledgeable about current celebrities that are regular attendees at the Met Gala, so we have lots of material that we could make fun of in this humor project. The Met is also technically an artistic museum, and we're both artists! I'm excited about this idea because when I first

suggested it, we immediately bounced off each other with ideas for situations we could mimic and looks we could exaggeratedly recreate. For this project, I hope that we can make the topic concentrated enough so that it caters to a specific audience, but also not so specific to the point that nobody understands it.

6.) If you get approval, what's your next step?

a.) Drafting a script and planning different anecdotes and outfits