

Trevor Noah is a brilliant standup comedian and author who I have admired ever since he took over for John Stewart on his political comedy show "The Daily Show". I chose him as one of my humorists to analyze because his book "Born a Crime" is one I have read several times and it has shaped my idea of comedy. In his book he delves into deeper more serious subjects but he delivers these messages through humor using satire. Trevor may have lived in an apartheid state, dealt with the trials of being biracial, and endured an abusive stepfather, but he tells these stories through jokes which is referred to commonly as dark or black humor. One example of Trevor using humor while discussing a dark topic is when he describes being "born a crime," a child of a biracial couple which was illegal under apartheid. He couldn't acknowledge his father in public and explained, "We were in the park, he was walking a good bit away from us, and I ran after him, screaming, "Daddy! Daddy! Daddy!" people started looking. He panicked and ran away. I thought it was a game and kept chasing him. (My mom) would hold my hand or carry me. But if the police showed up, she would have to drop me and pretend I wasn't hers, like I was a bag of weed." (27) The line about his mother pretending he wasn't hers and dropping him like a bag of weed is a metaphor that was purely his voice as a comedian being hilarious but also profound and dark.

The other humorist I chose to analyze is Hasan Minhaj, a standup comedian who worked on the Daily Show with Trevor Noah until he left to host his own show Patriot Act, which tackles politics, foreign issues, and other current events through a comedic lense. My favorite work of his has to be his standup special "Homecoming King" personally because, like Trevor, although he discusses racism he has endured and personal moments that have scarred him, he does so through irony and humor and uses techniques like defusing anxiety to lighten some of his more serious topics. One joke he made was a quick one-liner that always makes me laugh whenever I hear it. He states, "I don't care what you hear about our country's immigration policy, It's very difficult to get in here. It's not like a broken condom.." Another great one liner is "American (parents) hit your arm and bruise your body, immigrants (parents) slap you across the face and bruise your soul." Hasan uses blue and black humor as well as personal anecdotes throughout his special, allowing us to relate to his life or understand it better and laugh at it at the same time.

Although there may be darkness in life, sometimes laughing at it allows light to creep in and that's what both Trevor and Hasan do with their comedy. They both cover current events and politics with their jokes as that is their strongest form of humor and personally my favorite form of humor, but my favorite works of theirs discuss their personal trials and hardest parts of their lives growing up and in the present, and even if it their vulnerability is difficult to take in sometimes, it's always delivered with hilarious jokes so as to not totally darken the general mood.

I will not personally attempt to do a performance based humor project despite both of my inspirations being performers, but I will take their style with me when I start on my project. I am creating a poster that makes fun of a motivational quote I was constantly told as a child. My mother is a software engineer; she makes more than my father, as she should, and I was raised to be an independent woman and to never depend on any man. This is an important mindset to instill in your children and it is one I hold close and take into account with everything I do, however, sometimes I like to imagine what it would be like if I just didn't. What if I married a rich guy and painted in a house I make him build for me for the entirety of my life and use all of his money in the process. Better yet, why don't I marry a rich *white british* guy and use all of his money for my personal gain as payback for the time his people colonized my parents' homeland. This fantasy of mine and the whole idea of joking about more serious topics inspired my rendition of the quote "Be the CEO your parents wanted you to marry." My parents personally wanted *me* to be the said CEO in this scenario but I think that's what makes this that much funnier to me and makes it more satirical. So my quote will be "Be the CEO your parents wanted you to marry.. however, maybe consider marrying some rich british guy and using all of his money as reparations for colonization." Now I know this one man is not responsible for the colonization of an entire country however that's what is funny about it.

Joking about race and colonization, both extremely serious topics that have a great deal of important history behind them, makes the topics more approachable, something both Trevor Noah and Hasan Minhaj do with their jokes. I love using dark humor to make light of my trauma and hardships as a teenage woman of color. A couple of weeks ago in Redding I was called a "sand n-word" in a Goodwill while I was thrift shopping with my aunt. Although I experienced some racism and had a legitimate fear of being hate crimed, I got an amazing vintage leather jacket for only \$13 dollars. So after I said the jacket was "worth the slur". This part of my humor is entirely inspired and maybe stolen from my two biggest humorist inspirations and I plan to use their style of taking darker more serious subjects and making light of them in my own humor project.

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