

Finding the Funny from Your Point of View

(Adapted from Flappers University Level 1)

Comedy comes from a place of truth rather than a place of funny. The truth is what you think or how you feel about something.

TOPIC + ATTITUDE = POINT OF VIEW

Topic: A statement about something or someone.

Attitude: Usually a negative about the subject.

Attitudes: W.A.S.H.E.S.

Weird (Anomaly/One of a kind)

Annoying (It bothers me.)

Stupid (There's gotta be a better way.)

Hard (Difficult)

Embarrassing (Something I don't want to admit.)

Scary (Things that frighten us.)

To find the funny in Bible stories:

Read the story in a variety of tones (happy, sad, sarcastic, suspicious, reflective, mansplaining, complaining, etc.).

Ask, "Who are the characters?"

"What do they do?" "What would I have done differently?"

"What should have happened that didn't.

"What solutions to problems were attempted?"

Ask "What meets your criteria for each W.A.S.H.E.S. attitude?"

"What prompts you to adopt these attitudes?"

"What do I take issue with and want to challenge?"

Additional Questions to Ask About a Story

Where in the story are the right words at the right time?

Where in the story are the wrong words at the wrong time?

Where in the story are the Wong words at the right time, or the right words at the wrong time?

Where is the physicality in the text?

Is something in the blocking or the choreography of the text that is off?

What is the thing that I, the teller, might struggle with?

What is the benign or even absurd suffering I, as the teller, might see in this text?

Is there something odd about the way the story is told?

GENERATING A ROUGH SETUP

(The setup is for you, what I'm going through. It builds tension.)

Statement of Fact or Situation): _____
(Topic)

...which is _____
(Attitude)

...because _____

(Reason This Attitude Applies to This Topic)

GENERATING A ROUGH PUNCH

(The punch generates laughter through a surprise following the setup.)

3 Kinds of Punches

1. Exaggeration/Understatement
2. Misdirection
3. Act-out

Rule of Three

Three is the minimum number to establish, and then break, a pattern. The rule of three lists two things to establish a pattern and a third to break it. It is a comedy structure that can facilitate each of the three kinds of Punches listed above.

Reshaping the Joke for a Bit

The product of the above formula, used to generate a joke or a punchline, is rough and needs to be reshaped according to the way you talk and the flow of the bit.

Progression of a Punchline in a Bit

1. Tell (Basic Punchline)
2. Show (Act-out)
3. Explain (Elaborate)