

I found this a peculiarly challenging exercise - which is, of course, the purpose for doing it.

- I. Humor/Comedy that I find funny, but others may not:
 - A. Garrison Keillor - News from Lake Wobegon
 1. A Prairie Home Companion went national in 1980. Some of his best stories come from the period 1982 - 1990
 2. ONE example - not necessarily my favorite, but typical is Hog Slaughter - https://youtu.be/QEoMg7RZnoM?si=INrIEhY_PUvNK2RO&t=1069
 - B. Both Frasier and Seinfeld get better with age - I liked Frasier's snobbiness
 1. David Hyde-Pierce was a master at Physical Comedy Three Valentine's <https://youtu.be/HBFI00WSkXE?si=mvcAbYPO01SJEDnS>
 2. Seinfeld's genius - stories about nothing.
 - C. I have come to prefer Britcoms over US RomComs and most others
- II. Humor/Comedy that many find funny, but I do not
 - A. Nearly any "Comedy" show currently running on major TV (I think I'm just wired to be too serious)
 - B. Comedy Clubs, Live Stand-Up, Live Comedians - this is part of my long time "eschewment" of American Popular Culture
 - C. I had to "warm up to" some classics such as *The Office*, *Big Bang Theory*, even *Saturday Night Live*

For my examples in Section I

- **News from Lake Wobegon** was about life in a small town in the "Midwest" - whatever that means to those of you who are much more oriented to the East Coast. I find the references to the Lutherans and Roman Catholics quite funny: I like Ralph's Pretty Good Grocery, Chatterbox Cafe, and Cecil's 5 & Dime - but these could be stores in any small community.
- **Frasier** - was just an annoying but relatable "snob", with Niles the appropriate foil. I liked the fast moving dialogue and references to what we now call the "elite"
- **Britcoms** - more stories about the foibles of the main character in a setting of old, aging cultural more's. - Most translate to the human situations we all face of course.

For my examples in Section II

- Spending three years outside of US Popular Culture during my mid 20's had a profound effect on my world view - one of which has been the propensity to not see the humor in many American sitcoms - There are notable exceptions of course - but . .
- I have come to realize that I am a much more "sensitive" person than I would have thought - and have always taken exception to situations in which people laugh at (say) at

the expense of an audience member or individual. Again there are NOTABLE exceptions, especially these days.

- As described in the Intro - I've never particularly liked Sophomoric Comedy and take very slowly to most types of Dark Comedy
- Not sure why I have remained so skeptical of "popular" shows or series -guess it's basically not "laughing because I think I'm supposed to"

Regarding the role of Comedy (and Humor, it's cousin) and their connection to **Social Change and Advocacy**:

I agree completely. Comedy can be a powerful tool for social change by drawing attention to issues, disarming audiences, lowering resistance to persuasion, breaking down barriers, and stimulating discussion. Sadly, I suspect it works both ways, though I have no interest in spending time tracking down examples.

The Rutgers article provides an even closer look at the power of using comedy with people who have had VERY SIMILAR experiences (esp. Traumatic experiences) - it's not something I would connect to, but would not stand in the way of its development.

A big thanks to Geri and Pete for cutting through the clutter and putting together these helpful "axioms".

Respectfully Submitted –

Pat Newcomb
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