

### **Analysis**

I choose to examine the work of the two comedians Pete Davidson and Trevor Noah. I found Pete Davidson's 45-minute stand-up sketch on Netflix very entertaining as he addressed a lot of situations from his personal life as well as his breakup with Ariana Grande. Davidson also has a magical way of making it feel like there are multiple characters on stage when performing which brings his skits to life and makes them that much more entrancing. Trevor Noah had a much more fast paced approach. He also drew from his personal life but instead of the long stories that Davidson told he focused more on short witty comments referring to something he set up. This technique was effective because it kept the show lively and the audience engaged.

Pete Davidson addressed many touchy situations that made the audience laugh such as his recent breakup, smoking weed, and past controversy. Davidson's ability to take his unique stories and spin them to be comical is what makes his stand up work. One technique he used consistently throughout the 45 minutes is blue humor. He made fun of himself while talking about subjects such as cumming, gay people, and sex. However, he also included black humor at the end which I found very interesting. He began this section with, "we'll do some 9/11 jokes and then get the fuck out of here." He quickly followed this up with the witty comment, "this is the only time I will allow cheering for 9/11," which is followed by a lot of laughter. The reason Davidson is able to address this taboo subject is because his father was a victim of 9/11 which he explains before continuing. He sets up his story around a pool that his mom gifted him when his dad died. He then continues his stand up by making comments about the pool being related to death and how dark the whole idea of even getting a pool is. Through the lense of 9/11 Davidson is able to address other stories such as the pool. This gives him a range of topics and a plethora of content to make jokes from. He combines both topics when saying, "good thing Osamba Bin Laden didn't miss his alarm clock because then I wouldn't have a fucking pool." Although everything he is saying is extremely offensive, the way he delivers his jokes is what makes the black humor work. He says these lines in a half laughing way, half angry way. He seems frustrated about his dad while also being accepting of what happened. This gives the audience the ability to laugh and relate while also keeping the seriousness of the subject intact.

Trevor Noah also used personal situations in his stand up but addressed very different topics from Davidson. He talked about his african heritage, the evolution of the english language, and black people. I think that this is simply due to the fact that they are very different people. Trevor Noah is known for his ability to talk, as an author, and as a daily show host. One technique he implemented was banter. In his skit discussing

how Americans have butchered the English language, he started to banter with the audience. He sets up his initial story making fun of someone who says "heir" instead of "hair," and gets a reaction from the audience. Instead of stopping once his point about the language was made, he chose to continue by explaining "ant" versus "aunt." After getting another good reaction from the audience he continued using different words. Each story and word got the same pleasant reaction which is why he finished this banter by educating the audience of the correct way to say Zebra and said, "plus you cannot name them because you do not have them." This type of interaction with the audience brings them closer and makes them more comfortable, which in turn allows them to laugh at more of his jokes. Since Noah set this joke up near the beginning of his stand up it gave the audience a way to connect with him while he continued. He then was able to transfer to other topics about America through the transition of everything in America is different. The banter itself was funny because it was true. The audience could relate to every word he said and was probably thinking of a few of their friends who speak similarly.

When examining both of their work I found some techniques that I admired. For Davidson, he was able to pick up a lost joke, laugh at himself, and address awkward silences. Depending on what my humor project entails I hope to implement his techniques of being able to pick the comedy back up if something fails. Davidson set up a joke about a baby sucking on his thumbs, and when the reaction wasn't what he wanted he said, "it's okay, I always know that joke splits the room," which then led to the reaction he was initially looking for. Throughout the whole routine he is laughing at himself, which is kind of his *modus operandi* (M.O.) He takes situations he was in and turns them to be comical. I think that having the ability to laugh at yourself like this is needed for comedy especially when you are putting yourself out there in a way such as stand up. Trevor Noah's main technique was trying to get the audience to relate. I will definitely do this in my own humor project because it is the best way to create jokes you know are going to land. I valued the way Noah talked as well. While being funny he also came off as extremely educated. This gave him more likeability and made him more trustworthy. In order to create successful comedy the stories need to be personal to you, relatable to the audience, and delivered correctly. Both Davidson and Noah use comedy effectively in their stand ups because they are able to do these things.

## Proposal

1.) Are you collaborating with others?

No.

2.) Which form of humor are you planning to develop? (See [menu.](#)) **Note: due to our current shelter-in-place, all projects will be recorded and shared this year.**

I am planning on creating a mockumentary showing how my family has been dealing with the shelter in place. I am going to include my mom, dad, and sister.

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

The subject of the mockumentary is the current shelter in place. I chose to do this subject because it is accessible to me and relatable to everyone. I also have a lot of good ideas of how I want to include humor and how to set up each family with a seemingly different "character."

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):

**Blend Word:** I wanna create a funny word for one of the characters to keep using to explain their situation, I am not sure what kind of word yet though (if I don't do this I know for a fact I will be using a lot of exaggeration)

**Caricature:** I am definitely going to use this technique to have someone complain about how much this situation is affecting them in an over dramatic way

**Defusing anxiety:** the whole sketch is defusing the anxiety around the current situation at hand

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?

I am excited about this idea because I love creating documentaries, I think this will be a very fun family archive for the future, and I really want to hold a camera!!!! This brainstorming has already given me so many ideas for the script so I am excited to write them all down and turn it into a reality. I hope that I don't get frustrated during this process and that my family can pull it off. Humor is not our best suit but even if this turns out as a fail I think the process and getting my family to collaborate on something will make up for it.

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

If I get approval my next step is to outline the characters I want each person to portray and write the script.

