



Humor in *The Good Place*

How do you build up humor in comedies?

Brainstorm possible humor devices

The Good Place is a 'fantasy comedy'

- Other types of comedy sub-genres are...

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Other types of comedy sub-genres are...

- sitcoms
- sketch comedy
- stand-up comedy
- parody (laughing at without condemning)
- satire (condemning)
- screwball comedy (bizarre, surprising - and improbable- situations or character)
- scatological humor
- political comedy
- black comedy
- Burlesque (literary, dramatic or musical work intended to cause laughter by caricaturing the manner or spirit of serious works, or by ludicrous treatment of their subjects)
- comedy of manners (takes as its subject a particular part of society - usually upper-class society- and uses humor to parody or satirize the behavior and mannerisms of its members)
- romantic comedy

Examples?

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Humor devices

- Situational irony: it occurs when incongruity appears between expectations of something to happen, and what actually happens.
- Dramatic irony: when the situation in which the audience of a play knows something that the characters do not know.
- Irony: a state of affairs or an event that seems deliberately contrary to what one expects and is often wryly* amusing as a result.
- Slapstick: deliberately clumsy actions and humorously embarrassing events.

* ironically, dry humor

Humor devices: examples

- Situational irony: the whole Good/Bad Place concept with intruders.
- Dramatic irony: Tahani in relation to Jianyu, Michael in relation to Jianyu and Eleanor...
- Irony: Michael telling off Eleanor, Michael being a weak God...
- Slapstick: The storm in ep. 1, Chef Alice, people flying, colors choice, clowns and curtain's music in Eleanor's place...

Humor devices

- Wit: intelligent humor
- Sarcasm: Closely associated with irony. The term is often used to describe a kind of mean irony that is intended to hurt somebody.
- Satire: Witty attack on something somebody disapproves of. Usually meant as a critique of mankind's or society's vices, follies or shortcomings.
- Understatement: the presentation of something as being smaller or less good or important than it really is. An understatement can be understood as an overstatement depending on the point of view.

Humor devices: examples

- Wit: intelligent humor (not always successful in Michael and Chidi)
- Sarcasm: Trevor and people in The Bad Place.
- Satire: Kamilah's character up to a extent, fake/bad Eleanor on Earth...
- Understatement: Trevor 'What is it you said happened to you? The same thing that happens to half of all kids in America.' → To undermine Eleanor's traumatic childhood. (ep. 9)
- Overstatement:

Humor devices

- Hyperbole/Exaggeration/Overstatement
- Lack of knowledge
- Puns: play on words, wordplay
- Confusion

Humor devices: examples

- Hyperbole/Exaggeration/overstatement: Chef Alice + Janet + Chidi + many of the celebrities mentioned.
- Lack of knowledge: Eleanor, Jianyu
- Puns: Jianyu + Tahani –f.ex., impressionist, doughnut, lest we forget, keep calm, go nuts...
- Confusion: Fake vs Real Eleanor, Jianyu vs Jason Mendoza

Humor devices

- Misbehavior
- Sexual jokes
- Malapropism: the use of an incorrect word in place of a word with a similar sound, resulting in a nonsensical, sometimes humorous utterance
- Vulgar language

Humor devices: examples

- Misbehavior: Eleanor, Jianyu + people from The Bad Place
- Sexual jokes: Eleanor was ‘flattened by boner pill truck’, Eleanor banging with the barman, The Bad Place wondering how come while eating they don’t listen to hardcore porn in The Good Place.
- Malapropism (the use of an incorrect word in place of a word with a similar sound, resulting in a nonsensical, sometimes humorous utterance): Jianyu
- Vulgar language: Trevor goes ‘These horndogs are vibing like mofos’
 - Horn(y) + dog: horn dogs
 - Mo(ther) + fu(cker): mofo

Humor devices

- Parody: imitation of something where the aim is to poke fun at the original. Closely related to...
- Caricature/Stereotype: Exaggerated example of a specific type of character.
- Oxymoron (verbal opposites) & incongruity (situational).

Humor devices: examples

- Parody: decoration in Eleanor's and Tahani's house, the parties, most characters at some point...
- Caricature/Stereotype: all characters, but especially, Jianyu + Tahani + Kamilah + Chidi
- Oxymoron (verbal) & incongruity (situational): Jianyu (defined as a "professional amateur DJ") + Eleanor then and now

Humor devices

- Intertextuality: References that become winks.
- *Lazzi*: A short physical act of comedy; for instance, a short interlude of funny exaggerated violence, somebody falling, etc.
- *Pathos*: when a character is so emotional that it becomes laughable.
- Surprise: Being surprised is often funny. As a humorous device, surprise is related to incongruity.

Humor devices: examples

- Intertextuality: allusion to songs, to other TV shows, to food...
- *Lazzi*: Michael acting as a teen, Janet learning anew, Janet falling on the beach...
- *Pathos*: when a character is so emotional that it becomes laughable. (Tahani, Janet – for her lack of emotions)
- Surprise: "Real" Eleanor's appearance, Janet's death on the beach with Jianyu's appearance but Chidi being the one pressing the button.