

*Exploration into Comedy Script Writing
for Animated Shorts*

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Innovations Project Report 2008

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Abstract

The aim of this project is to help me understand how to write funny animated shorts. I will study how to create a simple short story and the narrative structures used in animation. I also want to learn how to write comedy, although it is stressed that comedy can't be taught, some patterns tend to emerge and it is these patterns that i will explore and attempt to apply to a few of my own scripts.

This report is available to anyone who also wants to broaden their horizons in the world of comic animation and learn a few tips to help them become script writers.

1.Introduction

'You get to be an impish God... reform the world and take the piss out of it. You turn it upside-down and inside out. ... You change the world and have a brief moment a bit of control over it. At least you get to humiliate it for a moment and that's what all cartoonists get their kicks from'

As Terry Gilliam states in an interview with Paul Wells (1998, p127), animation is a medium of endless capabilities, however, coming up with a decent narrative, especially a comic one, needs thought and planning. To be able to sell any idea it is often how prepared you are about it which can make the difference. It is important to explore the different ingredients which help form a narrative and/or script for an animated short and what makes it funny.

This essay breaks the process down into analysing stories, the capacity for animation and essential qualities of comedy. Most of the points made throughout are simply guidelines, as much as the need for comedy is timeless, theories on what people find funny is completely relative.

2.Basic understanding of storytelling

To write any form of narrative, whether it is a novel , screenplay or in this case for an animation, you need to have a basic understanding of storytelling. It therefore makes sense to begin with an explanation of the modes of storytelling and the ways in which it is achieved. There seem to be hundreds of books teaching people how to write, and I am going to try and summarise the essential techniques which are relevant. There are three basic ingredients which needs to be established when creating a story; plot, characters and setting. Obviously if you are writing a novel then there are a few more attributes to take on board but I am going to stick to short stories to enable the transfer of them into writing animated shorts.

2.1 Plot

Inspiration for the premise of any narrative can come from anywhere; an experience you've had, or that others have had; a wondering thought or even the works of other writers. However the structure of these ideas can be broken down into some simple formulas. A strong piece of advice for the beginner about structure is to simply 'Put a man in a tree, throw some stones at him, get him down'. (Stewart, 2006) Which essentially means that you must establish a scenario or problem for your protagonist, add to the difficulty by 'throwing some stones' creating more obstacles to overcome. Finally you must bring him down from the tree, solving the problems that have arisen throughout.

For example, in Pixar's animated short, 'Knick Knack' (1989) We are presented with a little snowman who is jealous of the other sunny, happy souvenirs whilst he is stuck inside his cold snow globe. He then faces the problem of trying to escape from the globe to try to get to his the girl by the pool, with each failing attempt he's more determined. Until finally he falls from the shelf and escapes from his glass dome, he has been brought down from the tree! What makes this short so beautifully cruel however is that having landed next a new interest, the dome falls back over his head, separating him once more from the outside world.



Fig 1. Screenshot from 'Knick Knack' (1989)

So a story is essentially the retelling of an event or incident, generally involving something or someone changing over time, whether it be a physical change or a mental one. For example a journey will have been completed, or an opinion has been changed. This basic structure can then be presented in a specific genre and have an individual plot as well.

Christopher Booker believes there are seven basic plots to stories; (Booker, 2004) Overcoming a monster, rags to riches, the quest, voyage and return, comedy, tragedy and rebirth. Personally I think it a little naive and simplistic to classify both comedy and tragedy as types of plots. It would not be sufficient to describe the plot of a film by saying 'it's a comedy'. Furthermore you can have a plot that describes a voyage presented in a tragic way, or a comedic way and you can also have comedy horrors. Which would complicate the theme even more and so harder to classify the plot as a 'comedy' or 'tragedy'. To my mind, the genre or the theme can be classed as a comedy; but the plot cannot. So if we go by Booker's theory there are only five basic plots, which isn't really adequate and doesn't necessarily cover every plot, but the argument is digression as essentially are the several basic plots which are at the core of most stories ever written. Whether the audience does it consciously or not, they will have a basic expectation of each of these plots.

2.2 Characters

To be able to create believable characters you need to be able to characterise them, understand who they are and what they're like. Robert McKee suggests 'True character is revealed in the choices a human being makes under pressure – the greater the pressure the deeper the revelation, the truer the choice to the characters essential nature' (McKee, 1997). So even if you're only writing a short story, knowing your character well enough means the story can almost write itself. However, when thinking of characters for animated shorts, we need to take into consideration how the character looks visually. We not want to waste time showing the character in the moral dilemma revealing the depths of his personality, this would take too long. We generally need the audience to 'get' our character from the offset. This means looking at the world of stereotypes and how people respond to them.

Stereotyping is quite a sensitive subject but cannot be escaped, especially when media is involved. Advertising is guilty of using stereotypes as they only have a limited amount of time to get their message across and so rely on the preconceived ideas viewers have about stereotypes to fast track their point over to the public. However, in the wonderful world of animation, stereotyping is much more accepted. This could be for a few reasons; one of these being that cartoons generally are not meant to be viewed and understood in malicious way, they are generally light humoured. Also cartoons are often a caricature of real life, an exaggeration of the norm. For example, Apu in 'The Simpsons' (1989) is a stereotypical Indian immigrant, working 24/7 at the local shop with an extremely strong Indian accent. Had this been a casting in a live action series there possibly would have been a debate about the political correctness of such a character; however, as it is treated in good humour it is not seen as offensive.



Fig 2. Apu from 'The Simpsons' (1989) a fine example of how stereotyping can be light hearted and inoffensive.

2.3 Setting

Sometimes the setting can be the inspiration for your entire story, however the story will obviously not develop until at least one character is introduced. This idea is applied similarly when it comes to characters and their stereotype. When an audience is introduced to a setting, there is a certain amount of expectation, whether it be a busy office of tightly packed cubicles or country farm land. Much like when you tell an old joke, if someone says 'knock knock' you know what's coming, and its how the joker decides to use this expectation to their advantage that makes the difference between whether it is funny or not.

Although these rules aren't applied in all animation it is important to be aware of them. This is because there is a certain amount of expectation that comes with each genre, traditional plot line and stereotype of character. Manipulating these guidelines is a great way to surprise your audience , a tool which plays a big part in comedy.

3. Writing for animation

Animation is a media of endless possibilities. Not only can you produce true to life animations, with straight forward, linear narratives but there are also countless ways to approach the narrative. Animations can be manipulated into the symbolic and metamorphic, by playing with time and space.

Metamorphosis means a complete change of image, shape or character. It is a process which is rather unique to animation as it means you can create a link between images using a fluid animation rather than simply editing two images together using a fade. A further explanation of this can be seen when Paul Wells states ' Metamorphosis also legitimises the process of connecting apparently unrelated images, forging original relationships between lines, objects etc., and disrupting established notions of classical story telling' (1998, p69). This disruption of natural story telling can add poignancy to your animation, as well being a great tool for humour.

One example of it being used in this way is in Bill Plympton animations. Bill Plympton is well known for his hand drawn animations, where he often contorts his characters, morphing them into impossible and sometimes grotesque situations. Plympton claims to be heavily influenced by Winsor McKay, 'He was independent, making his own films. He did all the drawings himself, as do I. He would take realistic situations and exaggerate them into the craziest surreal imagery, as do I. ... that metamorphosis, that wild exaggeration of images is something that I really find a lot of humour in.' (Timeout, 2007). A fine example of Plympton's work is 'Push comes to shove'(1991). This animation involves two men, stood next to each other, taking it in turns to perform extreme ways of hurting each other but all the while neither of them are getting hurt. With each 'attack' we are surprised with how Plympton manipulates the characters until finally it ends with a gentle flick being administered to the nose and the character breaking down and crying. After the repetition of the ridiculous with no reaction from either party, the fact that the final act is so docile and yet provoking such an extreme response makes it the funniest effect.



Fig 3. 'When Push Comes to Shove' (1991) Plympton demonstrates metamorphosis in his animation

Animation can not only manipulate images in impossible ways, it can also create impossible scenes and characters. Fabrication is what makes animation so magical, it 'essentially plays out an alternative version of material existence, recalling narrative out of constructed objects and environments, natural forms and substances, and the taken for granted constitute elements of the everyday world'.(Wells, 1998, p90) It's a medium which can bring to life inanimate objects, giving them soul and personality. This process of creating anthropomorphic creatures can be a natural way to write any script, by simply imagining what the objects and animals around you would say if they could talk.

4. Writing Comedy

Sense of humour is very subjective thing, made harder by to pin down by the fact that genuine laughter is a involuntary reaction. Charles Darwin observed that laughter happens when two contradicting emotions or ideas cause different tensions in your muscles. (Cleese and Skynner, 1997) Writing comedy can never be specifically explained, only explored, and even then there isn't a guarantee everyone will find it funny. However this spontaneous reaction can often be bought down to three key elements; timing, exaggeration and surprise.

4.1 Script Writing Comedy

When it comes to script writing, a good comic dialogue can be quite a task. There is a difference between comedy and comic dialogue, after all comedy can have no dialogue at all. Most comedy which does have dialogue, what is said is often not the only factor in the amusement of the piece. Comic dialogue is comic because of the context of it, being often character driven, or by the setting and timing. After all, even stand-up comedians come up with a certain persona when delivering their routine, for example, the difference between Jack Dee and Peter Kay, Although both are anecdotal comedians, Jack Dee's dry, pessimistic delivery is integral to the humour. Similarly if Peter Kay was not so enthused by his nostalgic stories, the audience probably would not be so encouraged to laugh at them.

As a comedy script writer you need to be aware of what the character's saying as well as how he says it, which is often dependent on the context (again). A simple play on words is always a classic technique. For example, using the line 'no need to lose your head' about a execution by guillotine. It is important not to forget that sometimes the most simple jokes are still just as good as more complicated witticisms. Making a script funnier can be done merely by changing a few of the words to more amusing ones, such as replacing the words 'looked at' with 'ogled'. Some other ways of brightening up a script would to be use a bit more alliteration, and having 'c' and 'k' sounds as apparently they're funnier, so a story about a duck is found funnier than if it was about a goose.

A good voice actor is integral to comedy in animation and generally there will be a little bit of interpretation with any actor. As mentioned earlier good characterisation is important, good strong characters generally mean a good strong comedy. When writing a script for more than one character, it will generally work much better if these characters are distinctly different from each other. Ronald Wolfe (2003) says how 'in an ideal script...lines should not be interchangeable'. This is more specifically true to

any series' of scripts using the same characters as it is often the case where what the character is saying is not necessarily funny, but the recognition of comic characters (either as a type of character, or an individual that the audience knows) is generally enjoyable. For example, in 'The Simpsons' (1989) the script does not contain constant jokes, however we find ourselves laughing when Homer once again ignorantly misinterprets a situation. The audience can subsequently laugh at the characters as well as with them.

In 'Writing Comedy' by Ronald Wolfe (2003), he breaks down some hints for verbal gags;

Reversals - where you set up a scenario with two or more characters only to have it flipped on its head at the punch line.

Exaggerations - also known as 'so much' jokes, for example, 'he eats so much...' taking a situation to its extreme.

Comparisons - comparing someone or something to a something ridiculous, strange, or disgusting.

Switching - putting a stereotypical character out of their normal environment.

Role Reversals - similar to the reversal but instead putting the characters in each others position, rather than simply reversing the dialogue, swapping characters roles!

Surprise - simply create a situation, develop it and then knock it down catching the audience unaware.

Forwards and Backwards in time - this done by using a broad topic of modern culture and either setting it in the past, or showing potentially the consequence of it in the future in a humorous fashion.

Although some of these gags are still a good basis for a joke, they do not cover every form of the joke anymore. Particularly when it comes to animation because although dialogue can make or break comedy, it must be remembered that animation is a visual medium. Subsequently it is generally the combination of the visual with its accompanying sound complementing each other that make it successful.

4.2 Comedy in Animation

Comedy is often said to be at the core of most animated films, after all this is the genre that all early animated films fell under. In terms of animated shorts there are still many different types of gags. I have included just a few, along with some case studies to back them up;

4.2.1 Surprises and exploiting expectations

The notion of surprise is intrinsic to writing comedy, looking back to the classic baby jokes such as peek-a-boo and a jack in the box, both have a build up of suspense. Leading the audience (or baby) in expectation, and culminating in a pop! This use of surprise is a very popular one in animated shorts that are under a minute as it can take the form of a quick joke. A simple situation is created with a single comic beat. A common set up for this is introducing a cute or innocent character and having random acts of violence happen to it. A prime example of this would be Juliet Stroud's animated short 'Snookles' (1986) where a very sweet pink baby dragon is asked to sing along with a blue bird, only to accidentally scorch him to cinders. This is also an

excellent example of using expectation and stereotyping to create humour. The cutesy nature of the animation triggers ideas of innocence as does the dragon in the nappy. This lulls the audience into false pretences and then the sudden surprise of Snookles harming the little bird is unexpected. Also, when he then goes on to stuff the charred bird into the tree to hide what he has done, it is funny as it is not how we'd expect a 'good' character to react.



Fig 4. Shot from 'Snookles' (1986) an animation which creates comedy from harming a very cute character.

You can also deliver these surprise pops in a series of punch lines, one after another building up generally into a final climactic joke. This works whether you choose to have different jokes, for example unfortunate events happening to a character, (Chuck Jones' Road Runner (1962)) or whether you choose to repeat the same joke. Repetition is key in humour, especially when creating any series'. The audience takes great pleasure in knowing the outcome, and enjoys awaiting the different ways of it happening. This is done in many cartoons such as Tom and Jerry (1965) and even in more adult ones such as South Park (1997). Each episode we know Kenny will die, and the boys will react with the same lines, but both when he dies (the expected) and how he dies (unexpected) are still entertaining.

4.2.2 Character driven comedy

As emphasised earlier, strong characters make a good comedy, and getting the audience to relate to that character plays a large part as well. 'Personality' animation creates a great range of comic purposes which are all about how the character performs to the camera. One way of doing this is through facial expressions, looking at the camera, any way of getting across the characters motivation and frame of mind is important. This way the audience knows the personality of the victim, so can differentiate between whether they are laughing apathetically at the innocent victim, or through malice at the deserved victim.

'Cane-Toad: What happened to Baz?' (2002) which is a rather grim character driven comedy, manages to create a reaction through several of these techniques. Daz is introduced to the camera, sat in a dog bowl and breaking wind, His character is built up for the audience as he talks to the camera a little unsympathetically about his missing friend Baz. Each time he suggests a new scenario we are showed a possibility of where Baz may be, and just before he dies, there is a quick glance at the camera. In the last clash with the lawnmower as he does it you can see him mouth a swear word. Although there is sympathy for Baz, each time we cut back to Daz we are reminded that it is just one theory and reminded that he is not necessarily hurt. We can also see

a bit of the relationship between the two toads and their different status' in the snap shots shown at the beginning. Baz is clearly a very sweet and innocent with his large eyes and big smile where as compared to Daz who has much more of a stern expression and though his monologue shows much more common sense and wit about him.

Status often plays a big part in any comedy. You can reduce a characters status through comic events, or have a battle of wits between two clearly dim-witted individuals. Many double acts will work with one character who clearly has a higher status than the other. This idea of character topology was explored by Norman Klein, when he looked at each characters role and function and broke it down into three principle roles, the controller, the over-reactor and the nuisance. He says 'the controller is usually indestructible in the cartoon, he may feel anguished, but he hardly gets hit...the over-reactor tends to takes the lumps, like the fall-guy in slapstick comedy...and the nuisance usually starts off the cartoon by annoying the over-reactor, who then keeps the gags flowing' (Klien, 1993)

4.2.3 Visual Puns

In animation, humour is based often on illogical sequences of events. In animation this is known as 'cartoon logic' (Scott, 2003). This means that although cartoons may take things to extremes, its never goes to the unfathomable; there is always a certain amount of sense in it all. This logic is especially applicable to the physical slapstick in animation such as Tom and Jerry (1965). For example if a cartoon character runs though a barbed wire fence it will get sliced up, much like a piece of dead meat, but of course no real harm will come to the character, which is of course why it is acceptable to laugh at such violence!

Another form of visual humour in animation is using metamorphosis as mentioned earlier. This is generally found to be funny as it again is a surprise in the audience eyes when one thing or character morphs. This method can be found in endless examples as cartoons are infinitely malleable. Much like the 'Rope Dance' (1986) by Raimund Krumme. In this animation we see two men fight over control over a rope with a continually shifting rectangular frame. A more popular cartoon using this technique is Felix the Cat and the Magic Bag (1959). He uses his magic bag to morph into anything he needs like a canoe or a picnic table as well as using his tail to lasso the evil professor.

4.2.4 Black Humour and Obscenity

Black humour or black comedy is defined as serious subjects being treated in jest, and the humour is consequently often derived from the irony brought about by the treatment of the situation. It is often combined with obscene humour which derives from the shock and revulsion felt for what is being shown. It is a subject which takes a bit of care and sensitivity, and yet also requires the writer to be rather cruel and wicked. Originally simply mixing comedy with extreme violence was considered black comedy, One of the most famous children cartoonists, Tex Avery, recognizes the relationship between horror and humour. He thinks that 'playing on the notion that something may be frightening for an individual if it is happening to them, but amusing if the very same thing is happening to somebody else' (Wells, 1998, p145). True black

comedy is obviously more popular with the adult market. As this form of humour has been more common over the years, audiences are harder to shock and black comedy is getting more extreme, as far fewer subjects are considered taboo.

4.2.5 Parodies and Spoofs

Using existing material and then twisting it and embellishing it somehow is a timeless form of humour. Parodies are so successful because the audience should recognise the subject the writer is copying and instantly know the way in which it is altered, rewritten or presented. It creates endless comic surprises for the audience. The spoof is generally based on mockery of its subject, sometimes ridiculing them or changing them to the ridiculous. Parody takes several forms; one is musical parody, where someone will rewrite the words of a song. The other is self-parody in which an artist or character satirizes themselves or makes a generalisation of their work. The most common form of the spoof however, is to parody a specific genre, such as a parody horror, or documentary (which now has its own name; mockumentary)

One example of a parody animation is Dan Bransfield's *Fishman* (2002). The name itself mocks its origins, which is in fact, *Batman* (DC Comics). By simply changing it from being about a bat, a sonic hearing, flying, nocturnal mammal with a fair bit of mystery about it, to being fish man, a far less interesting, absent minded life form, it already sets the tone of the cartoon. The animation begins with two characters, remotely resembling *Batman* and *Robin*, mid action sequence on the way to stop a robbery, only to find parking difficult. *Fishman* has a very straight expression on his face, whilst his sidekick sits foolishly beside him with a snorkel over his face. This animation not only pokes fun at the arrogance of the superhero, but also at the uselessness of his sidekick.



Fig 5. 'Fishman' is an obvious parody of *Batman*, taking it to extreme ridiculousness

These different comic devices can be used as a simple short animation or be combined together to compliment each other, for example a black comedy parody! Whatever devices are used one of the most important aspects to think about is what audience is it being targeted.

4.2.6 Audience

Humour will also vary depending on whether people come from different generations, different cultures and social backgrounds. It is therefore important to identify your demographic before you attempt to create a humorous piece of animation though it is possible to appeal to a wide audience. For example although children tend to like more obvious slap stick humour and adults prefer a more knowing self conscious approach, several modern animated films have combined the two beautifully, making for popular family watching. For example in Toy Story 2 (1999) when Buzz is fighting Emperor Zerg the animation is very exaggerated and slap stick to entertain the children and yet when Zerg reveals he is Buzz's father, the adults laugh as they recognise the Star Wars reference.

5. My Scripts

This was the first script I tried to tackle was one which was thought up when staying in a Hostel called the Happy Apple when travelling in my year out. My friend and I disgust how we would much rather stay in a hostel called the Disgruntled Pear, it would be far more English, what with our natural desire for disappointment. This idea developed into an animation on how the tomato was constantly being rejected by the fruits. At one point we had decided they may be the from the retired hat of Carmen Miranda. As each character came out they caused both of us to laugh at the ridiculousness of such an idea.

Transferring it to a script however was a little more complicated than i thought. I used the 'comparison' technique when Happy Apple describes Grape as happy as a monkey with a bicycle as well as using a double-entendre when the homosexual banana claims to be straight. The language used is quite exaggerated and at times alliterative, all of which contribute to the humour of the animation. However i feel the pace of the conversation did not flow as smoothly as i would have liked. I thought the range of characters worked quite well, especially the dynamic between Happy Apple and Disgruntled Pear. I ended it with slap-stick smack to the head which is a sudden movement so it ends with a surprise and a smack to the head is always funny.

Confession was quite difficult to write finding the line and how far you crossed it, black comedy is certainly an acquired taste and i found when discussing how far to take it, there was certainly different levels of tolerance. Clearly for an adult audience I tried to make sure i used the funny words such as duck and cockerel, keeping the well pronounced accent of the Reverend.

'Sheepargo' was just a bit of fun, playing with anthropomorphism and rewriting the classic hit by Chicago. It not only should appeal to the adult audience with the nostalgia of the song and how it was rewritten, but it should also appeal to a young audience with the appealing characters and slap-stick end.

Finally 'Hezwaan', a classic comedy full of slap-stick hilarity, a likeable character and unnecessary repartition. With this animation I tried to put much more emphasis on the physical side, it would be an animation with plenty of squash and stretch and exaggerated mannerisms. I also experimented with the use of repetition, giving the character a slogan of 'Hezwaan made earlier' which is what he says whenever he does something wrong.

6. Conclusion

Although it is still the case that humour cannot be taught, I now feel i have a much clearer understanding on the classic theories and ideas behind writing comedy. It made me realise how much you need to expose yourself to every form of comedy, and widen your comic spectrum. Especially as it was some of the lesser known animations which inspired me the most. Bill Plympton, more specifically, showed me how something so simple and repetitive could cause a great reaction. I feel that if i had more time i would have defiantly tried to talk to some writers and try to get some first hand opinions on their individual approaches to scripts and presenting them to commercial companies as that is where I would eventually like to take my work. As for the my scripts, I would love to develop them further. The Fruiton Valley script I would love to develop it into a series of animated shorts and to try and find a suitable visual style and try to give the characters a bit more substance. Similarly with 'Hazwaan' I would love to be able to develop a good character design. I feel all my scripts were a little underdeveloped and in parts quite generic. But as most story writers will tell you, whether it is for a novel or screen, script writing takes practice, and i feel that i am on course to practising my way to a comedy masterpiece!

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Images Used In Text:

Fig 1:

Image [online] Short Film. *Knick Knack*. 1989. Available from www.pixar.com/shorts/kk/index.html

Fig 2:

Image [online] .TV. *The Simpsons*. Available from <http://z.about.com/d/animatedtv/1/0/h/apu.jpg>

Fig 3:

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Fig 5:

Image [online]. Short Film. *Fishman*. 2002 Available from www.siggraph.org/publications/video-review/sig2002/web/FISHMAN.gif

8. APENDIX

Appendix A:

Friends of Fruiton Valley

Characters:

Happy Apple (HA): Irritatingly happy, a generally nuisance but an old childhood friend of Pear.

Disgruntled Pear (DP): Life long pessimistic, overall demeanour of disappointment, tends to take his anger out on anyone.

Germanic Grape (GG): Old German grape, a little senile, well past retirement, spends all of his retirement money in the pub.

Hypoglycaemic Lemon (HL): Thinks he's a bit of a ladies man however really is a bit of a sleaze, tends to constantly hit on the Stawbladies to up his sugar intake.

Strawbladies (SL): The females of Fruiton Valley, extremely voluptuous fruity characters very little common sense, constant teases of Hypoglycaemic lemon, they tend to hang out in small giggling groups.

Banana the Poof (BtP): He is a big gay banana who works behind the bar.

Pariah the Tomato (PT): the outcast of the group, tries different ways of convincing the others that he is in fact a fruit, he's a bit of a nerd and his pedantic nature only annoys the other fruit.

Pan into pub window, Pub is typical a typical English one, rather quiet roads, sign outside, Everyfruit's favourite watering hole.

Inside dressed in hideous patterned wallpaper, the mood is generally subdued, general low mumbles of the customers apart from the odd giggle from the Stawbladies and the jukebox on random. Happy Apple and disgruntled Pear are plating cards.

HA: OK, go fish

DP: What's the point, we spend every night in this pub and it doesn't get us anywhere, i need a job.

HA: Don't be such a misery, Germanic Grape spends all his time here, and he's as happy as a monkey with a bicycle.

Camera pans over to Germanic grape in the corner, smoking a frankfurter DP looks confused

DP:What's that even meant to mean? and besides, he's mental, totally loosing it in his old age...he doesn't know where he is half the time

HA: Don't be stupid, he's happy to be alive!! he knows the Wurst is yet to come....get it? the wurst.... cuz he German!

Disgruntled Pear, is yet to react...looks around the room for anyone else to talk to

HA: Ah come on, you love me really? why else would you sit with me?

DP: Well lets have a look around shall we, we have the mental foreign grape, a great big yellow poofter, and a hypoglycaemic lemon who wont leave the biggest bimbo's of the berries alone!

HA: Awww, I'm touched, come on its your go!!

as they get back to playing cards the door swings open and Pariah Tomato enters, the pub falls silent

DP(*angrily*): What are you doing here?

PT:I'm allowed... Where does it say I'm not allowed?

HL: this is a fruit only pub, vegboy, clear off.

PT: how many times do i have to tell you? I am a fruit! Botanically I have seeds!! that means I'm a fruit dammit!

BtP: honey you're about as fruity as I am straight!

HA (*nudging DP*) : see what he did there straight?! banana?

DP: Look, what the barman says goes alright? just get out, you tasteless savoury geek.
The bar all join in in taunting Pariah Tomato until he eventually leaves. The bar falls silent.

HA: How about this one... Why couldn't the orange get up the hill?

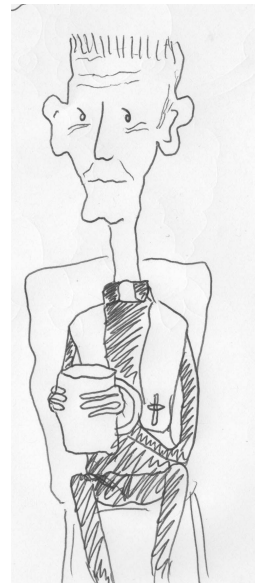
Disgruntled Pear just smacks him round the back of the head and he lands face down on the table.

Appendix B: an attempt at a black comedy

Confession

Rev. Paul Yates, sits in the confession box, being interviewed by the camera. He is a gaunt man, seems like even his coffee cup is too heavy to hold as it shakes slightly in his grasp. He has a quite aged raspy voice, slightly effeminate but well spoken.

Some days I can spend hours in here...just listening... I like to just sit and listen, just letting them talk, its a little game i like to play, I mean I know they're here for forgiveness from me...but if you just sit here, you can almost hear the guilt eat away at them, human behaviour, its fascinating when under pressure like that, left in a little wooden box of relief, with nothing but a little wicker hole to talk to. This one gentleman, Harold Pimms, part of the flock for years, nice man, 5 kids, does the Easter egg hunt, he came in here, wanting forgiveness for watching one of those blue movies... i stayed silent... he continued to describe the content, terrible stuff, ... interspecies relations... ducks and cockerels, donkeys and cucumbers... farm themed i believe, all sounded extremely strange ... he went on to say how he went to the local farmers market and bought a young Shetland and a turkey, said he wanted to create a small flying pony, i mean the insanity of it all! He told me how he strapped them together with duct tape, and just started yelling at them! he got so worked up telling me about it, I could feel him shaking on the other side of the bench, his wife walked in on him, forcing the turkey into the pony's anus... not a something you can excuse yourself from, he broke down that day, right here in this church ... haven't seen him in a while...poor bastard.



Appendix C: Parody

If you shear me now (Sheepargo)

At a sheering station, just as a farmer picks up a very fluffy young Ram, a spotlight appears and he begins to sing... accompanied by three back up sheep.

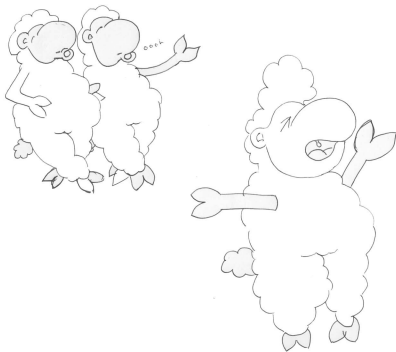
(to the tune of 'if you leave me now' by Chicago)

If you shear me now, you take away the warmest part of me!
if oooooonly my wool didn't grow.
'cuz with out my coat, i don't think i could function properly,
ooooh what would ladies think of me?

The ewes agree a ram like me's divine
Why would you take such love away
With out that love you'd leave them all in wanting
leaving the lambs with out their daddy!
When your farm breaks down from lack of babes
you know you'll think back and say

Its 'cuz I stripped him down, and now my farm is going down the pan
OOO oh what a fool I've been!
So if you think of what...

Mid song, the farmer grabs the sheep off screen, wool flies everywhere, and he is returned to the screen in the buff



Appendix D: Slapstick

Heisyuan (Hez-waan) the TV chef

set is very typical tv kitchen layout, we see Heisyuan, our portugeise chef, smiling at the camera

Heisyuan:

Hullo, Good evening everybody and welcome to Heisyuan's Happy Hamper, where we have fun making lots of lovely food together!!! Today we are making fairy cakes!! First we need some nice

fresh butter

Heisyuan reaches into a small fridge, pulls out a out a huge cow, Mooing

Heisyuan:

Oop too fresh!

reaches back into the fridge and pulls out a chicken

Heisyuan:

Ooh lordy, what else is in here?

Heisyuan puts the chicken on the side and pulls out some butter.

Heisyuan:

Okeydokey, make sure your butter is nice and soft, so you can mix it with your sugar

Heisyuan pokes the butter, its rock hard... he pops it in his hands and blows on it and gives it another poke, still hard, he slams it on the work surface twice, the third time he misses it and it falls to the floor, he jumps on it in frustration and slips to the floor. He remurges from behind the counter

Heisyuan:

ooh lordy, i broke the butter. not to worry, Heisyuan made earlier!

He produces a bowl with butter some soft looking butter in it

Heisyuan:

Now, we mix in the sugar until nice and fluffy!

He pops the bowl under an electric whisk and starts it, the whisk starts to move too fast and begins to knock the bowl in circles. the mixture begins to fly around. Heisyuan begins to panic and tries to turn it off. the bowl flings out of control, off the whisk and he has to duck as it smashes against the wall behind his head.

Heisyuan:

Not to worry! Heisyuan made earlier!!!

He emerges once more with a fresh bowl

Heisyuan:

Alrighty, now we need some beaten eggs (*turns to the the chicken*) i do apologise Mrs chicken

Heisyuan rolls up his sleeves and punches the chicken in the face and an egg pops out the other end

Heisyuan:

Beautiful egg Mrs chicken! I thank you!

He cracks the egg into the bowl and and mixes it together.

Heisyuan:

Lovely creamy mixture you see! Ok time to find some flour!

He takes off a lid of a tin labelled 'Flour' and some daisies pop out of the lid, he looks confused, goes to the window, pulls out a plant pot and has a look in it

Heisyuan:

ah ha!

As he breaths in he sneezes and drops the flower pot, a big cloud of flower spreads over the already messy kitchen. Heisyuan has a sneezing fit

Heisyuan:

oh lordy, not to worry! Heisyuan made earlier!

Heisyuan stirs the flour into the mixture and begins to set out the cupcake holders.

Heisyuan:

We now, scoop all the goo into the holders

Heisyuan scoops out a portion of mixture over the tray, and it doesn't drip of, he starts to flick his wrist in agitation, and get it still doesn't come off the spoon. he then flicks his wrist so rapidly the mixture flies off the spoon and up in to the air, he looks up and it doesn't come down.

Heisyuan:

eh? huh, not to worry!!

he produces another tray of raw cupcakes.

Heisyuan:

now to the oven! be careful it can get very hot!

Heisyuan opens the oven only for a huge flame to engulf the kitchen and smoke blasts in front of the camera. When the smoke dies down the kitchen as charred, as is Heisyuan, he coughs and clears his throat, holds three signs, reading, 'not 'to' 'worry' and he jumps up and grabs the corner of the screen, pulls it back to reveal a new kitchen with fresh cupcakes on the counter. he smiles picks one up to take a bite, as he does this, the mixture from earlier drops down onto his head.

